TRINITY CONTINUUM

ABERRANT



WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THE POWER OF A GOD?

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SPECIAL THANKS

To the original **Aberrant First Edition** and **Aberrant d20** crews. We build our work on the shoulders of giants.

To Alejandro Melchor. It's bittersweet that this is your last work. You were an amazing writer, and you are sorely missed.

To Stan Lee, who inspired the entire creative team of this edition of **Aberrant**, as well as millions of people all around the world. Excelsior.



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PREFACE

I've been passionate about superheroes for 45 years. My license plate holder says "Metropolis: City of Tomorrow" and, where the car once read "Eco-Boost," is emblazoned with "Superman Edition." When my wife and I went on our first date I asked her, "Who would win in a fight: Superman or Thor?" (We're married today, so, right answer.) I petitioned the phone company so the last four digits of my cell number would read KAL L. I sometimes yell "SHAZAM," you know, just to *see*. Passionate may be an understatement, but it wasn't always as acceptable to fly your superhero flag as it is today.

These characters represent something I've always connected with on a very fundamental level, something I wish there was more of in the world: altruism. With their powers they could easily rule the planet, but instead they sacrifice any chance at a normal life. Why? Because their calling is larger than that. Whether the threat is a bully, a shady government group, a gang of super villains, or an extraterrestrial armada fixated on wiping us out, these heroes *choose* to stand up to it. That message is very important to me, and I try to instill it in my own children. Just help; wherever you can, whenever you can, whomever you can.

Nerds hadn't won the war yet when I was a kid. I was routinely picked on for my love of comics, *Star Trek*, and the like. There was no internet to find like-minded fans, no Borg-like social media collective. That meant I had to decide: keep my passion hidden or embrace my love of the genre publicly. I chose the latter and, while I didn't go on a lot of dates, that sacrifice let me be true to myself. In fact, I felt like a superhero fighting the good fight; sacrificing for the bigger picture. My school peers later congratulated me for it; my yearbooks are filled with opening greetings like "Hey Captain Kirk," "What's up, Batman?" and "To Super-Dave."

There's also another aspect to superheroes that shouldn't be overlooked, and that's pure escapism. It's the part that tickles our child-brain's sense of wonder and imagination. Flight, immeasurable speed, invulnerability, the manipulation of Earthly and cosmic forces. Reading these books, it's impossible not to imagine that *we* are in possession of these powers. Every Wednesday (new comic book day for the uninitiated), I'm eager to step foot through the doorway that transports me into these worlds. Once there, *I'm the hero*. After reading each book, I'm also charged up and left wanting more. I crave a deeper connection.

For anyone who has felt the need to connect to these amazing universes, you know just how palpable it can be. After the attacks on the World Trade Center, an article in *Vanity Fair* observed that for weeks following the violence it was hard not to find a child in New York who wasn't wearing a superhero shirt. That's a powerful message. We want heroes to be out there, fighting on our behalf, and draping ourselves in their emblems can be a quick fix. Another is to watch movies and television shows, which is passive at best. To further make that connection, we play video games, allowing us to manipulate our favorite heroes on screen. We play miniature tabletop games to manifest these well-known characters in chess–like battles. We play deckbuilding card games that offer yet another outlet to step into the world of the superhero.

I often wonder if, granted similar amazing abilities, I could adopt a life of heroism and make the kinds of sacrifices my favorite characters make. The answer is no, of course, but that's why I read comics: they're aspirational. The problem is, none of these video games or books offer the real scratch for that aspirational itch. We get to ride along with our heroes, but we're never fully immersed in their worlds. What if there were a magic lamp that let you *be* the hero?

Trinity Continuum: Aberrant is that magic lamp. It's got the intricately-woven world of high adventure

that should accompany any superhero saga, along with a real-world formula where public perceptions shape the narrative, political responses help *and* hinder, secret government agencies prepare for the worst, and consequences for decisions you make carry real weight. RPGs give us a unique opportunity to explore not only the concepts of good and evil, but the human experience as a whole. This isn't following some pop-culture hero in a pre-written story, this is you as your own hero, building the story as you go.

Finally, it's no coincidence I reference "sacrifice" more than once. The world of the superhero is full of action, heroics, and triumph. Like any great story though, there must be equal doses of obstacles, tragedy, and defeat. **Aberrant** strives to hit that balance and delivers. Trouble may come in the shape of minor setbacks that dog your character, forcing you to think for solutions on the fly. Other circumstances will demand agonizing decisions, compelling you to save some over others. You may also find yourself following in the footsteps of legendary **Aberrant** characters like the Fireman; making the ultimate sacrifice in the name of idealism.

Can you juggle your secret identity while making life-and-death decisions? Which powers will you be armed with in the fight for justice? What sacrifices will you make for the good of your fellow human beings? Let's find out. Evil is on the march. Don your costume. Shout your magic word. Prepare your utility belt. It's time to save the world!

Dave Rossi

Associate Producer for *Star Trek*, and Superman enthusiast




PLEASE SAY SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.
AT LEAST THAT WOULD BE INTERESTING.
STOP PLAYING WITH THAT. YOU'LL PUT YOUR EYE OUT.
ANDRE "BENDER" CORBIN. EMOTION MANIPULATION.
LOOK, DETONATOR. DO YOU WANT TO...
IF YOU PUT YOUR WHAMMY ON ME, I WILL BLOW THIS CAR UP.
WON'T GO FOR YOU WITHOUT YOUR SAY SO.
I'M JUST SO BORED. SHE SHOULD HAVE LEFT BY NOW.
WAIT. SHE CONTROLS PLANTS, RIGHT?
SHE'S USING THE IVY TO GET OUT.
BENE "BOUNTY" MANATA. PLANT MANIPULATION.
RIGHT. LET'S MOVE.
OI! YOU THERE!
AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO BE THE COVERT TEAM?


ANDRE. HOW NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
I SEE YOU HAVE ANOTHER HAPLESS WOMAN ON YOUR ARM.
I'LL SHOW YOU HAPLESS YOU GREEN—
DET! STOP!
KA KOOM
CARMELITA "DETONATOR" AGUILAR. EXPLOSIVE TOUCH.
WHAT THE...!
BIND HER HANDS. AND HER MOUTH.
COME DOWN HERE!
AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO BE THE COVERT TEAM?


MMPH!
COME ON, BENE. NO NEED TO BEAT UP ON THE ROOKIE.
LET'S YOU AND ME TALK. LIKE OLD TIMES.
AND I SHOULD TRUST YOU?
WE BOTH SAW THE DANGERS PRESENTED BY THE ARROGANCE OF TEAM TOMORROW.
DIFFERENCE WAS I WAS SUSPENDED. YOU LEFT.
AND YOU WENT RUNNING BACK LIKE A GOOD LITTLE LAPDOG TO RUN THEIR COVERT-OPS GROUP.
LOVE, YOU NEVER COULD SEE WHAT I DO.
CRACK


LATER. TEAM TOMORROW SAFEHOUSE.
CAN I HAVE MY KNIFE BACK?
NO. WHAT THE HELL ARE WE DOING?
BOUNTY'S RUMORED TO BE RECRUITED INTO THE TERAGEN. ROUSSEAU WANTS TO KNOW FOR SURE.
SO WHY NOT LET THE POLICE HANDLE IT?
SHE HASN'T DONE ANYTHING ILLEGAL YET. SO WE WANT TO SEE WHAT SHE KNOWS FIRST.
IF SHE DOESN'T DIE FROM FLIRTING WITH YOU.
BOUNTY AND I WERE BOTH LOST. I FOUND MY WAY BY BUILDING SOMETHING UP.
SHE'S ONLY INTERESTED IN TEARING THINGS DOWN.
MMMMM...
HEY, THE CHAIR'S MADE OF WOOD. CAN SHE...?
CREAK
NAH. IT'S DEAD WOOD. SHE CAN'T WORK WITH THAT.


THEN LET'S HEAR WHAT SHE HAS TO SAY.
NOTHING TO EITHER OF YOU. YOU THINK, AFTER ALL THIS TIME, I WOULD SIDE WITH *TERRORISTS*?
WHY NOT? YOU FIT THE *PROFILE*. BASELINE HUMANS ARE RUINING THE PLANET, NOVAS ARE SUPERIOR AND SHOULD BE IN CHARGE, BLAH BLAH BLAH.
SEEMS LIKE YOU'D WANT TO *SIGN RIGHT UP*.
PLEASE. I DON'T WORK FOR ANYONE BUT *MYSELF*.
SNAP
AND NOW I'M GETTING *OUT* OF HERE.
LIKE HELL YOU WILL.
EASE UP. I'LL HANDLE THIS.
SHE DOESN'T WANT TO LEAVE. DO YOU, LOVE?


I... WANT...
YOU WANT TO TELL US EVERYTHING, DON'T YOU?
I... WANT...
I WANT ALL OF YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE!
OW.
SO MUCH FOR THE SOFT TOUCH. MY TURN.
ZZZZZTT
YOU'VE SEEN WHAT PROJECT UTOPIA OFFERS. NOW COME GIVE THE TERAGEN A CHANCE.

INTRODUCTION

"Picture yourself on that graph, sliding rightward and downslope toward the very brightest, down that gradually gentler hill, out over the top million, the top ten thousand — all far smarter than anyone most people ever meet — out to the top thousand — and now things are getting sparser — the last hundred, and it's not a slope at all now, just a dot every once in a while. Go out to the last few grains of sand, the smartest of the smartest of the smartest, times a thousand. It makes sense that people would be a little odd out here."

— Austin Grossman, *Soon I Will Be Invincible*

Trinity Continuum: Aberrant is a game of superpowered adventure in the near future of the **Trinity Continuum**. In 2018, novas — people with superhuman powers — first appeared following the explosion of a satellite high above Earth. Now, 10 years later, thousands of novas have transformed the world, using their extraordinary powers to fight crime, clean up the environment, invent new technologies, and create wonders. The presence of novas has also caused problems, and some fear the powerful individuals — first called "aberrants" — due to their unpredictable powers and impact they have on the world around them. Still, love them or hate them, people can't get enough of novas and being one is a ticket to instant celebrity, fame, and fortune.

Unlike the mainstream superhero comics and movies that helped inspire it, **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** not only assumes superhumans can change the world, it asserts that they cannot help but change the world, sometimes in unexpected ways. Power — including fame and fortune — exerts a kind of "gravity" that distorts everything around those wielding it. The question in the setting isn't so much "Will you change the world?" but "*How* will you change it?"

SACRIFICE

Trinity Continuum: Aberrant follows the theme of "hope, sacrifice, unity" found in the **Trinity Continuum** games, with sacrifice being its most prominent element. This plays out in several different ways, starting with the willingness of novas to sacrifice for the greater good of humanity. These rare superhumans could have almost anything, but many choose to respect the responsibility that comes with their powers, using them to help make the world a better place. It also considers how the private lives of novas are sacrificed on the altar of celebrity; once they are out in the public eye, their lives are never completely their own. There are also sacrifices others are willing to make to protect the world from potential threats posed by people with superpowers, whether they do so in the name of religion, reason, or realpolitik.

QUANTUM POWERS

The novas of **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** are true superhumans in the tradition of the superhero comic books with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortals and grander in scale than the Talents of the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** or the psychic powers of **Trinity Continuum: Æon**. With the ability to unconsciously manipulate the quantum forces of gravity, electromagnetism, and

the strong and weak nuclear force, novas are potentially capable of almost *anything,* limited solely by their imagination, willpower, and the extent to which they're willing to stretch their own limits. Of course, those limits may exist for a reason, because novas who exert too much power too quickly hasten the process of transcending their humanity, becoming something... other than human. Can you wield the power of a god to change the world without being changed by it in turn?

INSPIRATIONAL MEDIA

Thanks to an explosion in superhero and superpowered media in the past decade, there is no lack of inspiration, but the following media may aide some **Aberrant** players and Storyguides.

Comic Books

First and foremost are comic books and graphic novels, the original home of the "superhero" and the core inspiration for **Aberrant**. Read lots of them, these in particular:

Alters by Paul Jenkins and Leila Leiz — A new "alter" named Chalice explores her superhuman abilities and struggles with challenges, including coming out as transgender and living in a world where everyone is justifiably terrified of alters and their unexplained powers.

America's Got Powers by Jonathan Ross and Bryan Hitch — What do you do when a generation of young Americans on the West Coast gets superpowers? Have them compete on television, of course! This explores both the celebrity elements of novas and how the baseline powers-that-be might react to them.

The Authority, Planetary, and *StormWatch* written by Warren Ellis — Ellis' first twelve issues of *The Authority* are a tour de force and a great look at just how simultaneously easy and difficult it is for superhumans to change the world. *Planetary* is great for



inspiration about the Æon Society and "high weirdness" behind the scenes in the Continuum's history. Ellis's revamp of Image Comics' *StormWatch* title is great inspiration for a Team Tomorrow game, and elements of the Teragen as well.

Rising Stars written by J. Michael Straczynski — A meteor empowers a small generation of people *in utero*. They, and the world, deal with the effects of people with powers, including their relationship with law enforcement.

Watchmen written by Alan Moore — The essential deconstructionist comic book, which launched countless imitators and questions the whole "superhero" concept. Key inspiration for a deconstructionist **Aberrant** game and a great look at how the mere presence of superhumans distorts the world around them.

X-Men — No other long-running comic book series captures as many of the essential themes of **Aberrant** as Marvel's *X-Men*. There are too many to list here, so just go read about "the strangest superheroes of all!" who use their gifts to protect a world that hates and fears them.

Film and Television

The modern explosion in superhero film and television offers plenty of inspiration for **Aberrant**. This includes pretty much the entire "cinematic universe" of Marvel Entertainment films (such as *Iron Man, Avengers, Captain America: The Winter Soldier, Captain America: Civil War,* and *Ant-Man and the Wasp*) and the DC television shows primarily shown on the CW (such as *Arrow, The Flash, Supergirl, Legends of Tomorrow, Black Lightning,* and *Batwoman*). Others include:

Heroes — A great example of what **Aberrant** might look like right after novas started appearing, as well as issues with governmental control.

Marvel's Agents of SHIELD — This underrated series offers a great look at what it's like to be a baseline human (or Talent) in a world of superhumans. Essential viewing for a Directive series in **Aberrant**.

Marvel's Luke Cage — Luke Cage provides a study of a superhuman character trying to do some good on a local level, and how difficult that can often be.

The Boys — Not all the novas in **Aberrant** are as corrupt as the superheroes here, but how novas impact companies and the media are strong touchstones.

Umbrella Academy — A good exploration of the weirder potential for novas, and how relationships might be changed or distorted by quantum powers.

Novels

Sacred Band by Joseph D. Carriker, Jr. — A story set in a world where unexplained and often catastrophic "Events" grant people superpowers, and how the U.S. government eventually bans super-teams. It is about what happens when a group of LGBTQ supers decide no one else is looking out for their community, so they must, in potential violation of the law.

Soon I Will Be Invincible by Austin Grossman — A novel from the point of view of Dr. Impossible, a mega-genius supervillain grappling with why someone as smart as him keeps breaking the law and ending up in prison.

Wild Cards edited by George R.R. Martin — A long-running anthology and "braided novel" series dating back to the 1980s and recently revived, *Wild Cards* looks at an alternate history where an alien "wild card virus" creates superhumans (nicknamed "aces") following World War II. Full of inspiration about realistic people with superpowers and the "jokers" of the series offer lots of ideas for transformations for aberrants.

Video Games

Overwatch by Blizzard Entertainment — A near-future setting featuring armored high-tech heroes that can provide some inspiration for nova-made quantum tech, Elite mercenaries, and novas operating outside the law.

Some common jargon used by people 10 years after N-Day includes the following. Other new terms are defined as they appear in this book.

Aberrant: 1) A common slur term for a nova, particularly one with various transformations. 2) A member of the violent Aberrants faction of the Teragen.

***Æon* Society:** A worldwide aid and development non-governmental organization dating back to the 1920s.

baseline: A non-nova *Homo sapiens*.

core-tech: Nova-designed technology that can be replicated, mass-produced, and mostly understood by baseline designers.

dark star: A nova whose abilities are subtle enough for them to "pass" as a baseline.

Elite: A nova-for-hire. Originally referred to nova mercenaries and still commonly taken to apply to them.

eruption: The first manifestation of a potential nova's abilities, often accompanied by a violent release of force or energy, which led to its name.

eufiber: A nova-made carbon-silicate nanofiber with adaptive and conductive properties, used in a great deal of modern technology.

latent: A baseline with the potential to become a nova. At present, there is no means of detecting latency, or of knowing how many baselines are latents.

nova: From *Homo sapiens novus,* a theoretical subspecies of humanity with the mental ability to manipulate fundamental quantum forces to perform amazing feats.

Nova Age: A common term for the period of history which began when the first novas appeared in 2018.

nova tech: Technology created from the study of novas or their abilities, or created by novas, but understandable and usable by baselines.

One Race, the: Teragen nova supremacist term for *Homo sapiens novus*.

quantum: The smallest possible level of the fundamental universal forces novas are believed to manipulate to perform their various feats.

Quantum Flux: The theoretical state which allows latents to erupt as novas and permits nova powers to function, often seemingly in violation of the known laws of physics.

Quantum Tech: Technology created by and for novas and only usable by them due to their quantum-manipulating abilities.

Teras: A philosophical movement begun by nova Divis Mal with the Null Manifesto in 2023. It proclaims novas as a separate, sovereign species from humanity on an individual journey towards their own unique transcendence.

Teragen, the: Singular *Terat*. Broadly, the movement containing the adherents of the philosophy of Teras. Some Terats claim affiliation with a group or faction, although the Teragen acknowledge no hierarchy or group structure.



♩♪♫♬



MARCH 23RD, 2018. 12:18 P.M. WHEN THE WORLD CHANGED FOREVER.



IT CHANGED WITH THE TRAGIC EXPLOSION OF THE SPACE STATION ***GALATEA.***



THAT EXPLOSION WAS THE START OF WHAT WE NOW CALL ***"THE NOVA AGE."***



SOON AFTER, DOZENS OF PEOPLE ALL OVER THE GLOBE MANIFESTED ***STRANGE, ABERRANT*** POWERS.



THE ***ÆON SOCIETY*** STEPPED IN TO SHARE THEIR INITIAL FINDINGS WITH THE U.N.



AND THUS, THESE UNUSUAL PEOPLE WERE DUBBED HOMO SAPIENS NOVUS. OR ***"NOVAS."***



THE UNPOWERED, DUBBED ***"BASELINES,"*** WERE FRIGHTENED BY THIS NOVA OUTBREAK.



IN RESPONSE, THE U.N. ISSUED THE ***ZURICH ACCORD***, WHICH RECOGNIZED THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF NOVAS.



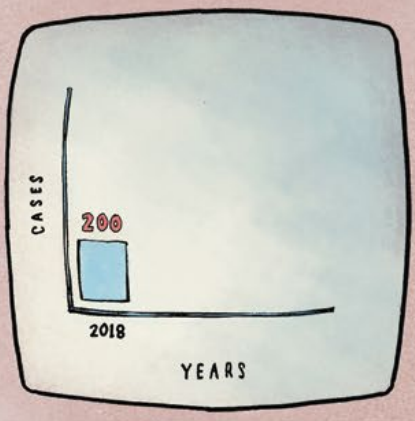
SOON AFTER, DOCTORS ***MAZARIN*** AND ***RASHOUD*** RELEASED THEIR RESEARCH INTO NOVA PHYSIOLOGY.



THE CELLULAR STRUCTURES THEY DISCOVERED WERE NAMED ***"MR COILS"*** AFTER THE TWO SCIENTISTS.



BY THE END OF 2018, THE ÆON SOCIETY ESTIMATED THERE WERE ***200 NOVAS*** WORLDWIDE.



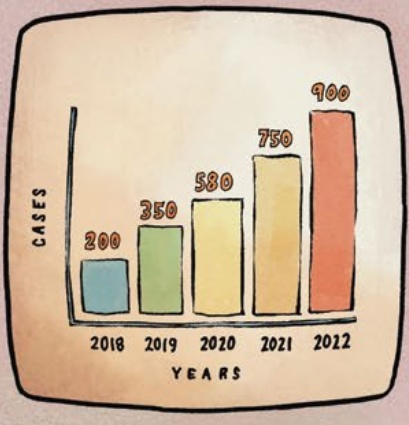
2019 SAW THE UNVEILING OF ***TEAM TOMORROW***, AS WELL AS THE ***RASHOUD FACILITY*** FOR NOVA TESTING.



BUT OTHER GROUPS, SUCH AS THE ***DEVRIES AGENCY***, ALSO SOUGHT TO RECRUIT NOVAS.



NOVAS CONTINUED TO APPEAR IN ***INCREASING NUMBERS*** OVER THE YEARS.



BUT IT WAS IN ***2023*** WHEN THOSE NOVAS UNDERSTOOD THE MEANING OF SACRIFICE.



A MYSTERIOUS BLAST. AND THE LOSS OF OUR GREATEST HERO.



WE'LL HAVE MORE AFTER THIS COMMERCIAL BREAK.



CHAPTER ONE: THE DAY THE WORLD CHANGED

"I never said, "The superman exists, and he's American."
What I said was, "God exists, and he's American."
— Dr. Milton Glass, *Dr. Manhattan: Super-Powers and the Superpowers, from Watchmen*

March 23rd, 2018, N-Day — the day the world changed forever. Following the tragic explosion of the space station *Galatea* in orbit, people around the world began displaying superhuman abilities of an unexplained nature, starting with New York City firefighter Randel Portman, later known as "the Fireman." In the days and weeks following, dozens more people manifested powers, leading to a worldwide state of emergency. It was soon clear that the world would never be the same again, as the miraculous and the extraordinary became the order of the day.

Now, 10 years later, the world is indeed a different place, but perhaps not as changed as some hoped or feared. Some 2000 people worldwide have "erupted" into what is believed to be a new evolutionary subspecies of humanity: *Homo sapiens novus* — commonly known as "novas" and less flatteringly as "aberrants." Their presence and powers have changed the world and may offer hope for a better future or a looming threat greater than any humanity has ever faced — or both.

ABERRANT TIMELINE

2018 — Eruptions

March 23, 12:18 p.m. GST: The research space station *Galatea* explodes, killing the astronauts on board and dumping radioactive material into Earth's atmosphere.

March 23, 3:31 p.m. GST: In New York City, firefighter Randel Portman manifests superhuman powers, absorbing all the heat and flames from a multi-alarm apartment building blaze without harm to himself. Portman's first superhuman feat is captured on video and he is quickly dubbed "the Fireman" by the media.

March - April: Dozens of other people with "aberrant powers" appear worldwide, leading to widespread panic, states of emergency, and emergency sessions of the United Nations.

April 2: The Æon Society initiates a dialog with the United Nations, offering to seek out and study the phenomenon to learn more about it. The term "nova" is adopted in response to the early suggested taxonomy of *Homo sapiens novus,* the scientific speculation that these people are a subspecies or mutant offshoot of baseline humanity. The term "baseline" enters common use not long thereafter.

May 1: The Æon Society publicly issues an invitation to open dialog with any interested novas to help them study and understand their abilities. The UN works diplomatically to assure the world that Æon can handle the nova outbreak, as more novas continue to manifest their abilities worldwide. The sometimes violent, elemental nature of the first manifestation of a nova's powers leads to the term "eruption."

June 30: The United Nations issues the Zurich Accord, affirming the human rights (and responsibilities) of novas: Whatever their abilities, novas are still human beings and must be treated accordingly.

PROFILE: HENRI MAZARIN AND FARAH RASHOUD



Despite the public perception of overnight success, Drs. Mazarin and Rashoud have both been involved in research for the Æon Society for years leading up to N-Day. Both have had long careers working for the Triton Foundation in their respective specialties, but it was the nova phenomenon that brought them together.

Since releasing their findings on MR coils and flux, both Henri and Farah have been on permanent loan to Project Utopia. Neither researcher has an official place in Utopia's organizational structure, but both are considered giants in the field, and everyone defers to them or seeks their advice on projects.

Their names are intertwined, but they each have their own interests and don't work directly together that often. Dr. Rashoud studies how emotional stressors precipitate the eruption process, and how these can be predicted, guided, or even prevented. Dr. Mazarin is more interested in nova physiology, medicine, and understanding how quantum flux can have such a varied expression of effects on human cells while maintaining a viable living creature. Henri is also concerned that, despite the numerous discoveries and papers coming from his lab, his career will never experience another shining moment of recognition without his constantly named partner; Farah is less concerned about this, in part because her name is synonymous with her screening procedures and Rashoud Centers around the world. This fact has caused some resentment and professional jealousy in Dr. Mazarin, but not enough to sour their relationship.

July 1: The Æon Society tasks its Project Utopia division with finding ways to harness the powers of novas for the good of the world, as much for public relations and to calm widespread fears as for practical reasons.

October: The aftershocks of N-Day create apocalyptic cults and backlash against novas, along with groups practically worshipping them. Public opinion on novas is deeply divided, with concern about when the continued eruption of new novas will end, if ever.

December 4: Drs. Mazarin and Rashoud, Triton Foundation researchers, release their initial findings from scientific studies of novas. These included what is termed "Mazarin-Rashoud (or MR) flux" detected in brain-scans, and "MR coils" in cellular examinations, the first clear physical differences discerned between novas and baseline *Homo sapiens*. Their use of "baseline human" in their writings reinforces the use of "baseline" in popular culture to refer to non-novas. The Mazarin-Rashoud report suggests nova abilities are based on mental manipulation of fundamental quantum forces: gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear force. This leads to the popular association of "quantum" with novas and their powers.

December 31: The Æon Society estimates there are some 200 novas worldwide.

2019 — Recruitment

January: The year opens with Project Utopia unveiling Team Tomorrow (T2M), the first nova recruits for their plans to improve the world. A week later, Utopia opens the first Rashoud Center for nova testing and evaluation in New York City. The DeVries Agency in South Africa begins actively

PROFILE: JANOS AND JANICE KARAGIAN



The Hungarian-born twins Janos and Janice Karagian are noteworthy among novas for several reasons. First, they are both novas, suggesting a genetic link in the potential for nova eruption, and therefore the subjects of intense scientific scrutiny to learn more. Second, they erupted at virtually the same moment and exhibit identical powers, which may support the notion of "sympathetic eruptions" or that "quantum resonance" plays a role in nova eruptions. Last and perhaps most important, the twins entered history as the first people to set foot on the Moon — without the aid of either spacecraft or spacesuits.

Since that historic day, the Karagian twins have been poster children for nova exploration of space. They were involved in the founding of the Daedalus League, an informal group of novas capable of and interested in travel and exploration outside of Earth's atmosphere and have remained active since. They spend much of their time working with private and government space agencies on new exploration projects, along with occasional and popular appearances on OpNet streams. The Karagians can both fly at high speeds and survive unaided in the vacuum of space. They have enhanced senses, including the ability to silently and mentally communicate with each other.

recruiting novas, becoming Project Utopia's first serious competition for nova employment. Team Tomorrow faces a baptism of fire when they confront the terrorist group Islamic Dawn in a daring raid.

February: Nova film-makers and videographers Christopher Gaal and James Najarian launch N!Sight, "about novas, by novas," and quickly become one of the most popular content providers in the world, particularly for their up close and personal videos and live streams of novas in action.

March: Inspired by N!Sight and Project Utopia, private corporations begin aggressively looking to recruit and hire nova "special talents." While the act is treated largely as publicity, there is also serious behind-the-scenes consideration of the potential business applications for the growing list of novas and their powers.

November 21: Japan announces *Saisho*, "The New Beginning," a series of government subsidies and initiatives designed to employ novas to revitalize Japan's tech-sector and overall economy. They also announce Nippontai, a national nova-team and potential competition for Team Tomorrow. It becomes increasingly clear that Japan intends to deal with the new "Nova Age" on its own terms, despite UN diplomatic efforts.

December 31: Novas continue to erupt throughout the year, despite falling radiation levels from the *Galatea* explosion. By the end of the year, there are 350 known novas worldwide, and the notion of "dark stars" or "stealth" novas — novas whose enhancements might be mistaken for extraordinary human talents or who are simply in hiding — has entered the public consciousness. This suggests there may be other novas, perhaps many others, who have gone unnoticed.

2020 — Change

January 1: Nova twins Janos and Janice Karagian, as part of the Artemis mission, become the first novas to set foot on the Moon *without* the aid of spacesuits or space vehicles. The "New Year's Flare" of light they emit from the lunar surface is visible to

observers on Earth. Their message back to Earth: "The first moon base will be intended as the home of Apollo, Artemis, and any gods we may send in future: Olympus."

January 28: The Triton Foundation announces the first successful gene-therapy for breast cancer and progress in similar therapies to treat other forms of cancer.

February 1: Project Utopia announces its worldwide environmental cleanup initiative, Operation Clean Sweep. Inspired by the Karagians's moonwalk, a group of novas founds the Daedalus League, dedicated to nova exploration of space.

April: Gill-breather technology becomes available, able to extract oxygen directly from water using a compact facemask without the need for bulky air-tanks.

September: Utopia announces that Operation Clean Sweep has successfully regenerated Earth's ozone layer to pre-Industrial Revolution levels.

November: A centrist Democratic administration sweeps into power in the United States, carefully treading the line between cooperating with Project Utopia and United Nations and asserting American sovereignty. Utopia's polling numbers exceed those of any American politician, and its initiatives are hugely popular, but Americans also poll as strongly opposed to "globalization" efforts related to Project Utopia and the United Nations, supportive instead of American sovereignty.

December 31: The Æon Society reports 580 known novas worldwide, with a steady and ongoing number of new eruptions.

2021 — War and Peace

January 24: Utopia-mediated negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian government result in the London Peace Accord, establishing an independent Palestine along the border of Israel and Egypt, and placing Jerusalem under the direct administration of the UN. Utopia agrees to help monitor the newly created border and provide humanitarian and infrastructure aid to Palestine.

February: A year after its founding, the Daedalus League assists in a joint US/EU mission for the first manned landing on Mars. Plans for a permanent manned base on Mars begin.

March: Utopia announces that bio-remedial bacteria introduced into the oceans by Operation Clean Sweep will restore water quality to pre-Industrial Revolution levels within five years, including consuming and breaking down vast quantities of waste plastic and petroleum. Nova genius Vladimir Sierka rises to power in Russia.

May: A series of border wars erupt in West Africa, as several nations field Elite nova mercenaries for the first time in open conflict. Utopia's attempt to intervene as the conflicts escalate is a disaster resulting in the deaths of Slag and All-Star, two members of Team Tomorrow, in combat with mercenaries. The T2M novas are unprepared to face hardened nova Elites with paramilitary training willing (even eager) to use deadly force.

June: Following the initial Team Tomorrow/Elite conflict in Africa, the UN Security Council invokes Directive 9 of Chapter V, Article 24, of its charter to establish an organization to monitor the activities of Project Utopia and the world's growing nova population, particularly in relation to international military conflicts. The organization is quickly dubbed "the Directive."

August: Nova fashion designer and fiber animist Anibal "Tejido" Buendía creates a carbon-silicate nanotube fiber that becomes known as "eufiber." The material shows a remarkable ability to channel and contain certain forms of energy and to reconfigure itself in response. Buendía weaves fabrics from eufiber that display a sensitivity and adaptability to nova powers. Project Utopia becomes the first organization to outfit novas in eufiber uniforms and begins investigating the other potential uses of the material.

October: Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow launch their World Crime Task Force, going after organized crime worldwide. Within months, the operations have led to hundreds of arrests and indictments, and the dismantling of organized crime cartels in several nations.

November: The Equatorial Wars, as they have become known, finally come to an end as Utopia and the UN negotiate a ceasefire in Africa. This leads to international negotiations about the military deployment and use of novas.

December 31: The Æon Society census reports some 750 known novas worldwide.

2022 — Connection

January: Project Utopia launches the OpNet initiative, to replace much of the world's metallic and fiber-optic cable with new high-capacity eufiber cables and wireless transmission networks.

March: Utopia scientists demonstrate a eufiber "loop" can contain an electrical charge with virtually



no power loss, leading to the creation of compact superconducting batteries with vastly improved storage capacity and virtually unlimited shelf-life.

June: Team Tomorrow announces it will be splitting into three separate teams based worldwide: T2M-Americas, T2M-Central in Europe, and T2M-Asia/Pacific.

September: The Triton Foundation successfully performs a synthetic pancreas replacement, a practical cure for diabetes.

September: India, China, and Pakistan face off over control of the Kashmir region. The incident is the first indication that China has a secret nova recruitment and training program. Team Tomorrow successfully intervenes to head off more serious conflict, and Kashmir becomes a demilitarized zone under UN and Project Utopia surveillance.

October: Mexico City is struck by a powerful earthquake, but T2M-Americas contains the worst of the damage and rescues survivors. Utopia's World Crime Task Force also turns its attention to the Mexican drug cartels.

December 4: A subway bombing in Tokyo draws attention to the Kamisama Buddhist sect. Three young fanatics are charged, although the leader of the sect, Bodhisattva Masato, denounces them and denies any knowledge of the attack. Investigation reveals the perpetrators were attempting to manufacture an "eruption crisis" to create more novas, or even become novas themselves.

December 31: The Æon Society census reports 900 known novas worldwide.

2023 — Buildup

January: Team Tomorrow Americas opens its new HQ in Mexico City.

February: Project Utopia begins extensive clean-up, reconstruction, and infrastructure projects in the Caribbean, particularly Cuba, Haiti, and Puerto Rico.

March: Team Tomorrow stages a dramatic rescue of an experimental space shuttle in low Earth orbit.

May 6: Project Utopia launches Operation Eden, a "re-terraforming project", and follow-up to Operation Clean Sweep, intended to revitalize the

PROFILE: DIVIS MAL

Perhaps the most famous — or infamous — nova in the world. The public has been obsessed with Divis Mal as a symbol of nova power and independence. He illustrates the potential threat posed by novas who refuse to play by society's rules but little is known about him. Whoever Divis Mal was before he erupted, there's no evidence anyone has managed to track down and confirm.

Mal is clearly a powerful nova who has demonstrated superhuman strength, fiery energy projection abilities, and the power to open spatial warps. Numerous other powers are attributed to him, such as superhuman charisma and powers of mind-control as the secret behind his public popularity and influence of the Teragen movement, but there has been no evidence of this apart from the a priori assumption. Despite his power, Mal demonstrates considerable restraint. He appears in public only rarely and seems to have little interest in directing the Teragen beyond his initial declaration of principles. Time will tell if that remains the case.



Earth's barren areas and reverse desertification and deforestation worldwide. Stage one is a re-greening of the desolate Ethiopian Highlands in Africa.

July: T2M member Tremor begins raising new islands near Venice to begin creation of the T2M-Central HQ.

August: Utopia begins construction of the new HQ of T2M-Asia/Pacific in the Talaud Islands of Eastern Indonesia.

September 25 — The São Paulo Blast: A mysterious blast levels some 30 square blocks in central São Paulo, Brazil. Team Tomorrow arrives on-scene immediately to offer emergency response, and the Fireman pushes his powers to the limit to extinguish all the fires set by the blast, as well as absorbing virtually all the radiation. While he succeeds, the effort is too much for him and the Fireman perishes, collapsing into a pool of liquified asphalt, rubble, and charred bone. The blast results in thousands of casualties and over $20 billion in damage, but the results could have been far worse, save for Team Tomorrow's intervention and the Fireman's heroic sacrifice. No one reputably claims responsibility for the blast and Project Utopia, along with Brazilian and international authorities, begins an immediate investigation.

October 7: The Triton Foundation announces it has developed a vaccine for HIV and the UN's World Health Organization begins distribution. Spontaneous celebrations occur in many cities around the world.

October 31 — The Null Manifesto: A carrier wave of unknown origin disrupts worldwide communications networks, broadcasting a message from a nova calling himself Divis Mal. He recites what he calls "the Null Manifesto" about the philosophy of "Teras," declaring that novas are a separate and sovereign species from baseline humanity. It goes on to say that they are not subject to human laws or mores, calling on fellow novas to claim their rightful power and place in the world. Project Utopia immediately denounces the Null Manifesto as divisive and reaffirms the human rights and responsibilities of all novas as outlined in the Zurich Accord. A nova dissident group calling itself the Teragen, followers of the Teras philosophy, announces itself not long thereafter.

December 31: The Æon Society census reports 1,048 novas worldwide. Drs. Mazarin and Rashoud receive the Nobel Prize for their work in studying nova physiology and abilities.

2024 — Consolidation

February: Investigations into the São Paulo blast stall with no apparent leads or indications as to the perpetrators. Conspiracy theories fly about the responsible parties, ranging from the Teragen followers of Divis Mal to the disastrous eruption of an unknown, powerful new nova or a "false flag" operation by Project Utopia to make Team Tomorrow the world's heroes.

March: Utopia, in cooperation with the Daedalus League and private and national space agencies, launch and activate the Webb Space Telescope, the most advanced orbital observatory to date.

June: Project Utopia demonstrates the world's first "hyperfusion" reactor, capable of using nuclear fusion to produce significant quantities of energy with virtually no harmful byproducts and no air or water pollutants. Hyperfusion technology is given to the United Nations to license to its member states. Shortly thereafter, the UN Security Council and General Assembly grant Utopia's Science and Technology Oversight Division the authority to monitor and regulate new technologies derived from novas and their research, despite the protests of many corporations and member-states. News of hyperfusion technology sends coal, natural gas, and petroleum futures into a steep dive and triggers a massive recession for the oil-producing nations of the Middle East and other parts of the world.

August: The FBI issues a report on the growth of nova-related cults in America and abroad, raising concern among the public regarding the existence and use of "hyper-persuasive" nova abilities, painting a clear picture that some novas may have what amounts to mind control powers.

September: Project Utopia establishes a special Rashoud Center designed to imprison criminal novas, quickly nicknamed "Quantanamo," despite the best efforts of Utopia's PR-personnel to squelch it. Utopia makes all diplomatic and legal efforts to encourage UN member nations to remand nova inmates to their custody for reasons of public safety.

September 25: On the one-year anniversary of the São Paulo blast, twin memorial statues of Randel Portman, the Fireman, are unveiled in both his native New York City (near the site where he erupted) and São Paulo (near the site where he died), each bearing the words "Sacrifice/Sacrifício" in English and Portuguese, honoring the nova hero who gave his life to save others.

September 30: The Supernova Sports League premiers, dedicated to staging nova-only sporting events, partially in response to the official banning of "enhanced persons" from most major professional sports and from the 2024 Olympic Games. The initial pay-per-view events are huge sell-outs.

December 31: The Æon Society census reports 1,200 novas worldwide.

2025 — Globalization

January: Project Utopia, in cooperation with the Daedalus League and private and national space-agencies, begins construction on the Earth Orbital Habitat, the first permanently manned space station, with completion expected in 2027.

The nova Gabriel "Miracle" Melchior assumes control of the Church of the Immanent Eschaton.

March: The OpNet project is complete; the new world-wide telecommunications network makes wireless information and communications access available virtually worldwide, with legal and diplomatic agreements in place to maintain and regulate the OpNet as a public utility.

April: Puerto Rico becomes the 51st state of the United States.

May: Several criminal incidents, including vandalism and even murder, are attributed to members of the Teragen. Other Teragen members point out the philosophy has no structure, leaders, or agenda, and that each Terat is responsible for their own actions. Nevertheless, the UN makes greater efforts to monitor "Teragen activities."

June 15: Pope Francis issues *Ad Dei Lucem,* a papal bull declaring that novas are human beings possessed of souls and, like all mortals, capable of salvation through the grace of Jesus Christ.

"Ironskin" Andy Vance, nova model and Elite, and Elizabeth "London Fog" Barton, city defender of London, start the Queer Nova Alliance (QNA), an informal group for LGBTQ novas worldwide.

August: Project Utopia's "State of the Environment" report shows progress on all fronts in terms of reducing greenhouse gases, slowing the rate of global warming, and cleanup of the world's water and soil. They estimate a restoration of pre-Industrial Revolution levels of pollution in the environment worldwide within three years and a reversal of global warming trends within two.

November: The Triton Foundation documents the first successful surgical spinal cord reconstruction and begins further developing medical applications of eufiber as a "conductive nerve replacement."

PROFILE: GABRIEL "MIRACLE" MELCHIOR



Gabriel believes fiercely in the power of God's love and that He has a plan for each of us. Gabriel felt God's presence throughout his life, until he erupted. Suddenly, that peace was gone, replaced with turmoil and flux. A lesser person's faith might have shattered but not Gabriel's. He saw his eruption as a sign that he was closer to God. His loss of clarity was proof he had risen above the flock and no longer needed God's constant reassurance. God's divine plan for Gabriel now involved imbuing him with power to choose his own path.

The world knows Gabriel as "the Miracle" due to his life-giving powers. The members of Gabriel's fundamentalist Christian church also use this moniker but privately refer to him as the savior's second coming. To them, Gabriel is Jesus reborn and a sign that the end times have arrived, with God once again walking the world as flesh to judge the sinners.

Gabriel is blessed with life-controlling powers and exudes charisma and magnetic presence. He suffers seizure-like episodes that impart prophetic visions and uses these to guide his flock through the extreme turmoil that he sees approaching.

December 31: The Æon Society census reports 1,360 novas worldwide.

2026 — Rebirth

January: The Triton Foundation announces its breast cancer treatment program has effectively eradicated the disease.

March: OpTek Cyber Products is founded in Detroit, a tech start-up focused on human-machine interface and advancements using eufiber and related technologies. This kicks off a trend of tech start-ups in "Motor City," taking advantage of available real estate and tax incentives.

April: Scientists at the international research station on Mars discover native microorganisms, the first known non-terrestrial life forms. Japan passes a law banning internal combustion engines within twelve months, requiring all vehicles and equipment after that point to be electrically powered.

May: Stage one of Operation Eden is complete, with the Ethiopian Highlands terraformed into a verdant, lush grassland. A grateful Ethiopian government grants Project Utopia a large tract of land for a new headquarters complex in Addis Ababa.

December 31: The Æon Society census reports 1,680 novas worldwide.

2027 — Aberrants

January: Addis Ababa becomes the new headquarters of Team Tomorrow Central, making four teams, with the new Team Tomorrow Europe remaining headquartered at the team's old Venice HQ. Utopia launches their "Team Tomorrow Academy" for the training of novas looking to join the illustrious team. Its teenaged nova students quickly pick up the nickname "Teen Tomorrow."

March: The UN promotes an international agreement banning the use of all nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and begins negotiations for ratification by all member states.

April: Mayor Frederick Rupert of Tampa, Florida pushes through a local ordinance banning "the nova terrorist organization Teragen" from the Tampa city limits. In a fiery speech, Mayor Rupert denounces novas as "aberrant freaks" and threats to public peace and safety. Days later, local authorities take the Terat Sluice into custody when he peacefully

defies the ordinance. He is remanded to the custody of Project Utopia and becomes a focus for protests against the unjust treatment of novas and violations of their civil rights.

May: The Terat Geryon assassinates Mayor Rupert "on behalf of all aberrants" on live video and promises similar retribution for "anyone who threatens the lives or freedom of the One Race." Geryon's violent faction of the Teragen quickly becomes known as "the Aberrants," a name they adopt. Other known Teragen members or sympathizers refuse to denounce Geryon's actions, although some call the assassination "impulsive" or "ill-considered."

August: Project Utopia receives an "advisory" seat on the UN Security Council.

November: Members of the Aberrant faction attack downtown Los Angeles, killing hundreds. It's unclear what the motive was for the attack, or whether it was associated with Rupert's assassination. Cestus Pax, leader of Team Tomorrow, releases a statement that the attackers will be dealt with.

December: The Æon Society census reports 2,000 known novas worldwide. Discussions of analysis of eruption stats and trends speculate whether the nova population will continue to grow at the same rate and, if so, for how long.

THE NOVA AGE

The dawning of what many now refer to as the Nova Age came in chaos and confusion. After the catastrophic explosion of the space station *Galatea,* some people began manifesting unexplained superhuman abilities, and then more, and more, until dozens of "novas" appeared worldwide. Those early weeks and months saw militaries put on high-alert, martial law declared in many nations and jurisdictions, and a constant bombardment of seemingly impossible news and video footage of those with "aberrant abilities," as people everywhere held their breath and wondered if the world had gone mad — or if they had.

The Æon Society and Project Utopia

The United Nations began an emergency session almost immediately after the first nova eruptions to prevent ensuing catastrophes from accidentally sparking war, and to figure out what was happening and what the international community could do about it. During this time, several closed-door meetings occurred between UN officials and representatives of the Æon Society, an organization known for its expertise in dealing with the unusual, one with a bold and hopeful proposal for the nations of the world.

Once the Æon Society was able to demonstrate some of the newly super-powered people were able to control their abilities, following the initial confusion of their manifestation, they proposed putting those abilities to work for the greater good. Æon would serve as a neutral non-governmental organization able to continue to research and gather information about the ongoing eruptions, while their Project Utopia division looked for ways to apply these amazing new powers.

Æon's efforts were successful: Intensive research led to the taxonomy *Homo sapiens novus* for what scientists believed was a subspecies of humanity capable of mentally influencing fundamental quantum forces. The nickname "nova" quickly caught on in popular culture, and Project Utopia's public relations division emphasized the name, along with "quantum powers" or "quantum abilities" in place of the previously common "aberrant abilities" used by some (typically nova-critical) segments of the media.

For several years, novas were all anyone could talk about. They were everywhere, with more appearing all the time, and Project Utopia was at the forefront, studying their powers, helping new novas cope with them, and putting their awesome abilities to work for the betterment of the world. Advances in international relations, technology, and tackling the world's problems happened quickly. To many, it seemed as if the world had turned a corner and the appearance of novas was a blessing of historic proportions, a new beginning for the world and humanity. If some questioned the pace at which changes were happening, or voiced concerns over the superhuman power accumulating under the aegis of one organization — no matter how humanitarian — they were largely drowned out by the daily onslaught of wonders and new opportunities.

The São Paulo Blast

On September 25th, 2023, some five years after the appearance of the first novas, tragedy struck

PROFILE: RANDEL "THE FIREMAN" PORTMAN



If novas have a patron saint, it is Randel Portman, the Fireman. A firefighter in New York City, Portman was the first publicly known eruption on N-Day. Recruited early on by Project Utopia, the Fireman became one of the first members of Team Tomorrow and a beloved American icon. His support for Project Utopia had a powerful influence over swaying public opinion in the United States.

The Fireman's humble nature and difficulties with his own celebrity only added to his popularity. He also faced challenges due to his newfound fame. His marriage eventually ended because of it, and there was a "Portman for America" movement to draft him to run for President, which he refused, saying "America has had enough of 'celebrity politicians'." Still, the Fireman always made time to connect with people, particularly kids, and sought to be a good role-model and public servant.

The Fireman's powers primarily involved energy absorption and manipulation. He could absorb heat and radiation, then convert it and release it as similar forms of energy. While responding to the aftermath of the São Paulo Blast, Portman absorbed the fires and radiation following the equivalent release of a tac-nuke. The strain was too much for him and, although he succeeded, the Fireman perished. He's remembered and memorialized as a hero worldwide and an example of what novas can aspire to be.

when a nuclear blast destroyed a section of São Paulo, Brazil. The world watched in abject horror and fearful hope as novas, led by Project Utopia's Team Tomorrow, responded to the crisis. The Fireman, the first public nova who erupted on N-Day, exerted his powers to their limits, and beyond, to contain the fires and radiation left by the blast. In moments, the fires were out, and the blast site was clear, but Randel Portman, the Fireman, was dead in a pool of melted asphalt and rock, too hot for anyone but his near-invulnerable nova teammates to even approach his body. Although nova first responders — and the Fireman's sacrifice — were able to contain the damage and prevent things from becoming much worse, the blast still claimed thousands of lives and caused billions in damage.

Following the São Paulo Blast, the fame and popularity of Team Tomorrow and Project Utopia skyrocketed. Any concerns about the Æon Society's handling of novas and their powers were set aside to give the organization even more resources and authority to investigate and prevent another tragedy like São Paulo from happening.

The Null Manifesto

Just over a month after the São Paulo Blast, another event shook the world, this time in the form of a statement. A powerful broadcast interrupted virtually all forms of media on Earth, seizing control of radio and television transmissions, and streaming across the internet. Billions of people heard the voice of a nova calling himself Divis Mal, and what he called "the Null Manifesto," declaring the philosophy of Teras, wherein every nova was a sovereign power, free from the constraints of human law and custom, and answering only to themselves and the demands of their own evolution and enlightenment. It was a call for novas to put aside "human" considerations and sparked an immediate counter-response.

The United Nations and Project Utopia denounced the manifesto and its author as divisive

and dangerous, reaffirming their commitment to the idea that novas were a part of the "human family" and "the community of nations." They pointed to the tremendous progress, peace, and prosperity the world experienced from everyone working together. Some commentators and officials went further, declaring Divis Mal and his so-called "Teragen" movement threats to public safety or even terrorist agitators. Others took up the cause of the Teragen and interest in the philosophy of Teras spread rapidly, with adherents of the philosophy interviewed everywhere in the media, capturing the attention of a scandalized but fascinated public. Debates over the validity and merits of Teras led to further questions about the role of novas in society: *Did* novas owe any responsibility to use their powers for the greater good? Were novas destined to transcend baseline humanity and leave everyone else behind?

The Aberrants

For more than three years following the issuing of the Null Manifesto, the debate over the Teragen and the role of novas in society, while heated, remained largely academic. While many self-proclaimed Terats flouted societal conventions, it was little more than titillating social media fodder, which only increased the movement's appeal among its fan base. Teras was on its way to becoming as co-opted by mass media and consumerism as any other cultural icon, with T-shirts like "I'm Mal-licious," "Divis Mal Was Right," and "#null-power" sold online and at boutique shops, and the "black null" logo popular among those looking to flout society's conventions, even baselines.

Then in the spring of 2027, Tampa, Florida, Mayor Frederick Rupert, himself no stranger to creating media controversy, pushed through a local ordinance banning the Teragen from the city limits as "threats to public safety" and denouncing them as "aberrant freaks." For a few weeks, Mayor Rupert became the most talked-about politician in the United States and there was discussion of his ambitions for higher office. The legality and ethics of his Teragen ban were discussed and debated widely, and one Terat, Sluice, even defied it in an act of civil disobedience and was arrested, adding further fuel to the fire.

Before the courts and public discussion could sort things out, just a few weeks after the passage of Tampa's Teragen ban, Mayor Rupert was giving a speech at a public rally, when he was assassinated by Geryon, a nova and member of the Teragen. Geryon claimed to act "on behalf of all aberrants" and, in an instant, views of the Teragen — and novas — changed. The martyred Mayor Rupert was right: There *were* "aberrant freaks" out there and they were very much a threat. Not all novas were costumed heroes, or even edgy, masked mercenaries — some of them were outright monsters, and no one knew exactly how many.

BRAVE NEW WORLD

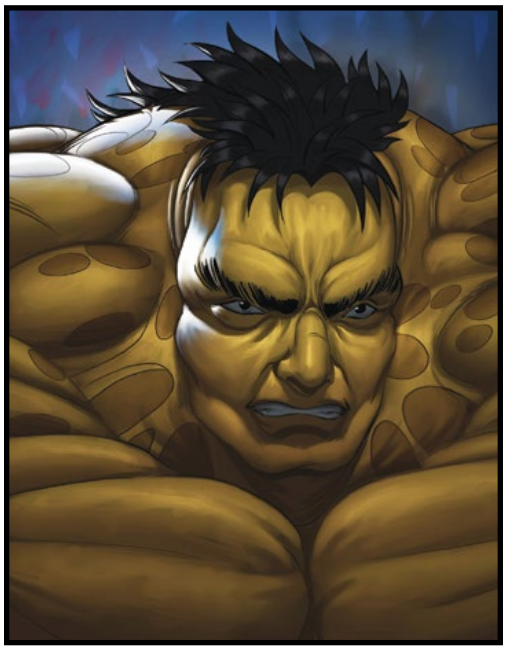
Just 10 years after the appearance of the first novas, many of the Æon Society's ambitious visions for the future have materialized. There are thousands of novas in the world and their amazing powers and achievements have become a part of everyday life, although still subject to near constant media broadcast and scrutiny, and with more caution and trepidation than in prior years. The presence and work of these novas, and organizations like Project Utopia, have changed the world, largely for the better.

The world is cleaner. The air, water, and even soil have been cleansed of industrial and commercial pollutants and waste, restoring them to levels unseen since the start of the Industrial Revolution in the western world. Hyperfusion reactors and superconducting batteries have begun to entirely replace the use of dangerous hydrocarbon fuels and dirty nuclear fission reactors, and newer, more sustainable technologies and industries have blossomed. Meanwhile older, more wasteful and less responsible industries are dying out.

The world is safer. The United Nations wields unprecedented influence and has begun to fulfill its charter as a forum for world peace and diplomacy. Novas have waged a largely successful "war on crime" that has helped to keep the peace in many parts of the world. New treaties have settled age-old conflicts, begun processes of disarmament, and ramped down international arms tensions. More and more, the few remaining international conflicts and "brush wars" are fought by Elite nova mercenaries rather than conventional forces.

The world is prosperous. Technology and innovation are at an all-time high in human history. New industries appear almost weekly, along with vast infrastructure improvement programs that employ huge

PROFILE: GERYON



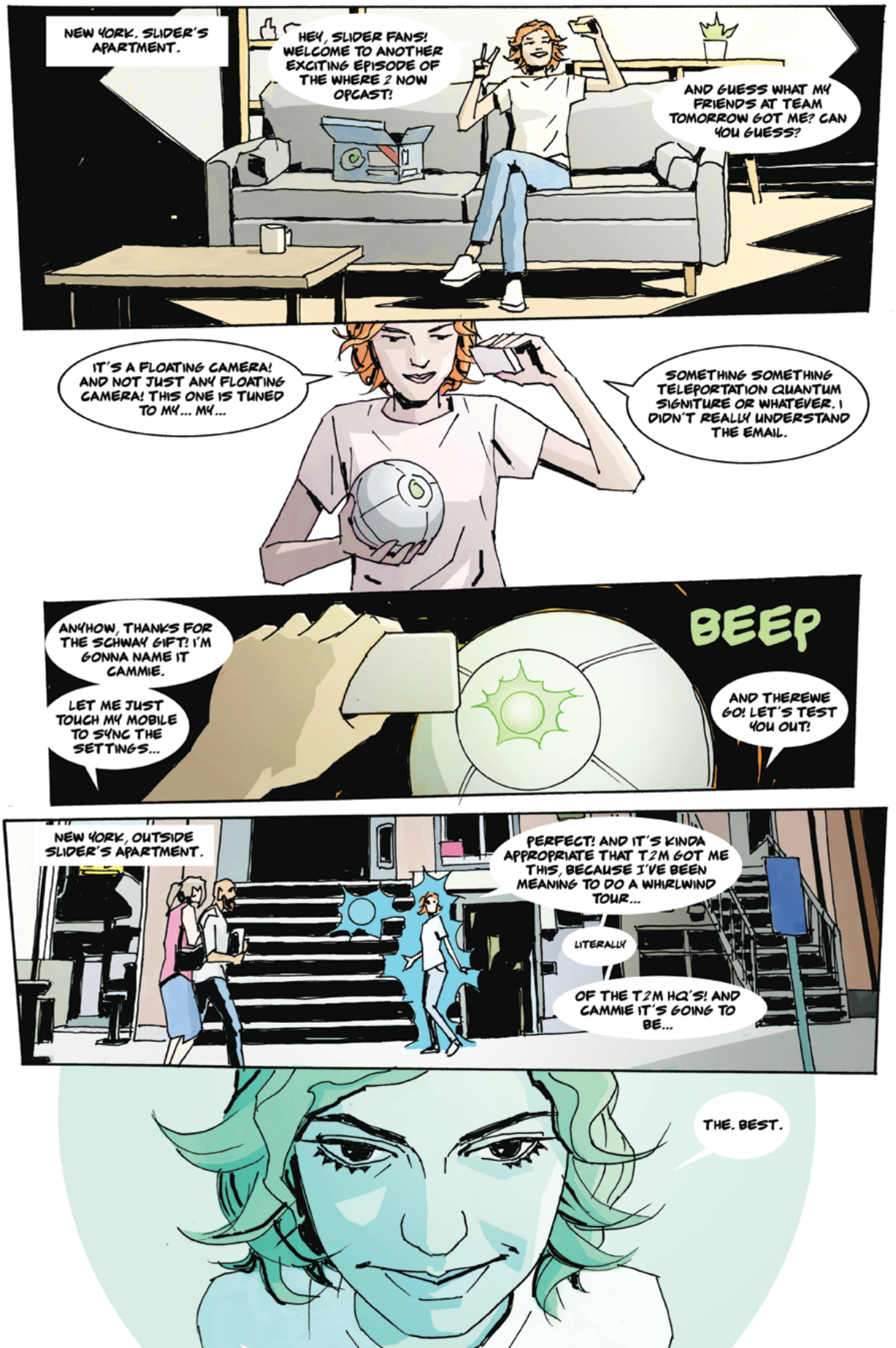
Nova Public Enemy Number One, Geryon's *nom du nova* comes from Greek mythology, that of a monstrous giant with multiple heads and other body parts, or perhaps after the chimerical demon from Dante's *Inferno*. Either is appropriate for a nova whose form is barely recognizable as human. Geryon is a misshapen giant with a hulking upper body, massive muscles, hunched back, and a comparatively small, normal-sized head. Even these qualities are transient, however, as he exhibits a form of adaptive shapeshifting, sprouting new body parts as needed, from wings to gills to a lashing tail with a poison stinger. Apart from his British accent, there is no indication of Geryon's citizenship or origins. He has truly left his baseline self behind.

Geryon embraces both the title and role of "monster," and since his first public appearances has been a fierce, even fanatical supporter of Teras and the notion that novas are not at all human. Following Frederick Rupert's denouncement of "aberrants," Geryon and his followers have taken the name as a defiant badge of honor and have made it clear: Any attack upon the One Race will be answered with force, until baselines learn to respect their betters. It is said, however, that Geryon has sworn never to kill a fellow nova, although few have been willing to test that assertion.

numbers of people in improving the world for everyone. There is a vast explosion in art, media, innovation, and entrepreneurship worldwide. These new businesses and business opportunities have driven down unemployment and helped to reduce income disparity, in turn expanding the tax-base for government-funded social and infrastructure programs.

The world is more interconnected. The OpNet is ubiquitous, fast, reliable, and largely free to its users, with access widely recognized as a public utility (if not a human right), making the old Internet seem as outdated as the Pony Express. Everyone (and everything) is online and events on the other side of the world can seem as close as next door. The distinction between society and "the media" has continued to blur, as people are able to view the world through the mobile cameras of millions anywhere at any given moment.

The world is hopeful. Despite disaster, tragedy, loss, and looming challenges, the mere existence of novas has infused the world with a sense of wonder. It seems like *anything* is possible, and that the bounds of human achievement are now limitless — or, at least, the bounds of *nova* achievement may be limitless. The lingering question remains: Will novas carry the rest of humanity along with them into the future, or leave everyone else behind as they ascend towards their destiny?


NEW YORK. SLIDER'S APARTMENT.
HEY, SLIDER FANS! WELCOME TO ANOTHER EXCITING EPISODE OF THE WHERE 2 NOW OPCAST!
AND GUESS WHAT MY FRIENDS AT TEAM TOMORROW GOT ME? CAN YOU GUESS?
IT'S A FLOATING CAMERA! AND NOT JUST ANY FLOATING CAMERA! THIS ONE IS TUNED TO MY... MY...
SOMETHING SOMETHING TELEPORTATION QUANTUM SIGNITURE OR WHATEVER. I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND THE EMAIL.
ANYHOW, THANKS FOR THE SCHWAY GIFT! I'M GONNA NAME IT CAMMIE.
LET ME JUST TOUCH MY MOBILE TO SYNC THE SETTINGS...
BEEP
AND THEREWE GO! LET'S TEST YOU OUT!
NEW YORK, OUTSIDE SLIDER'S APARTMENT.
PERFECT! AND IT'S KINDA APPROPRIATE THAT T2M GOT ME THIS, BECAUSE I'VE BEEN MEANING TO DO A WHIRLWIND TOUR...
LITERALLY
OF THE T2M HQ'S! AND CAMMIE IT'S GOING TO BE...
THE. BEST.


MEXICO CITY.
FIRST UP, TEAM TOMORROW AMERICAS!
RICARDO KEEPS SAYING I NEED TO COME DOWN HERE ON N-DAY BECAUSE IT'S AMAZING. REMIND ME TO GET ON THAT RABID FANBASE!
JUST IN TIME TO SEE ONE OF THE JUSTICIEROS AT WORK!
LOOKS LIKE I DODGED A BULLET NOT GETTING MUGGED, SO I'LL JUST LEAVE HIM TO MOP UP WHILE WE GO TO...
VENICE.
...THE EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS. THIS MIGHT LOOK OLD BUT IT'S ACTUALLY COMPLETELY NEW!
DID YOU KNOW THAT T2M DESIGNED THE BUILDING TO LOOK THIS WAY, LIKE, SO IT WOULD BLEND IN WITH THE REST OF THE CITY ARCHITECTURE?
ANYHOW, TIME TO HEAD TO MY HOME FROM HOME...
BEEP
ADDIS ABABA.
HEY CAMMIE, ZOOM IN ON THAT...
BEEP
BEEP
0:01
... UH, CAMMIE?
BOOOM!

CHAPTER TWO: N!SIGHT

"Folks needed help. They'd been needin' help for a long time. And I had lied myself into thinkin' that killin' bad guys was the best way to help... I looked around and I didn't know how to save anyone."
— Tara Lynn "Feral" Cooper, *Strong Female Protagonist*

On the surface, the world does not look too different than it was before the Galatea incident; people still go to work, raise their kids, pursue their goals, enjoy some leisure, and complain about their politicians — except now they are secure in the knowledge that the planet is not dying anymore, they communicate their little joys and sorrows though hyper-fast and stable connections, and they have clear role models they can look up to and follow in making the world a better place.

However, the world is fundamentally, and irrevocably *changed*. The existence of novas and the work of Project Utopia threw off all predictions and forecasts, and their collective efforts continue to change everything. Whether people embrace it or try to resist it, change is now the constant, and the way each nation rides this wave will define their role in whatever lies at the other end of this revolution.

NORTH AMERICA

The changes that started with the Galatea explosion continue to ripple and crash in North America, reshaping the lives of its inhabitants and leaving nothing as it used to be.

Joined together by geographical and commercial ties, the bonds of Canada, the United States, and Mexico have strained for decades. N-Day was the catalyst for many crises, movements, and trends that had been cooking for a while, not to mention the effects of new actors that entered play and rocked the delicate balance askew.

In this changing scenario, the countries of the Caribbean almost seem like an afterthought, but they are of great strategic importance to many factions — not just because they are a port of entry into the North American theater of influence, but because they are in and of themselves giving rise to new social movements and organizational models that are being exported elsewhere.

The novas in North America are setting fashion standards, social trends, and even the foundations of nova culture, from the city defenders of the United States to the masked *justicieros* of Mexico. Despite the global scope of Project Utopia and the worldwide spread of nova eruptions, North America has the largest concentration of novas; not only has there been more eruptions per capita, but many novas from other parts of the world flock to North America for one reason or another. Novas come to North America to figure out who and *what* they want to be.

Canada

To all appearances, Canada is weathering the changes of the nova age with aplomb and serenity, but anyone paying attention can notice that Canada is in the middle of a struggle to define itself.

A strong supporter of both the Zurich Accord and the initial steps that Project Utopia took regarding

PROFILE: ÉTOILE NORQUAY

Étoile Norquay is a Métis woman and activist for environmental protection and aboriginal civil rights. She became prominent when she was charged with tampering with oil pipelines and other acts of sabotage, but she was never caught — even as she was seen at every anti-oil protest held between 2022 and 2025. The charges were dropped in 2026, and Étoile became more vocal and visible, taking her actions to Toronto and Ottawa, always showing up to organize impromptu counter-protests against right-wing rallies.

Étoile is a Talent, with superlative expertise in evading pursuit and an uncanny knack for showing up when it will inconvenience her targets the most.



novas, Canadian policy has shifted slightly as many of Utopia's initiatives have affected the country directly.

Even before N-Day, Canada was facing political turmoil with the rise of right-wing politics that espoused isolationism and deregulation in vital areas such as healthcare and environmental protection, but common-sense politics and social pressure sided with Project Utopia's global, altruistic views, and reactionary positions remained in the fringe of political discourse.

Oil remains a thorny issue on many fronts; the dropping prices brought upon by the new hyperfusion standard affects export revenues, social pressure keeps pushing the government towards banning extraction altogether, and First Nations protests have successfully impeded the construction of new pipelines to connect with one of the few remaining clients for Canadian oil: the United States.

Environmental concerns are tipping the issue, however; Team Tomorrow helped the government contain a series of pipeline mishaps in 2026, and since then the oil industry lobby is being outmaneuvered by advisers from the Æon Society, experts from the Triton Foundation, and negotiators from Project Utopia, in what conspiracy theorists claim to be a concerted attack on Canadian sovereignty.

Excerpt from the 2028 Annual Global Overview Report, The Maxwell Mercer Foundation

The 2026 Census confirms our past projections, showing a sharp increase in the percentage of nationalized immigrants in Canada's population compared to the 2016 Census. Thanks to the Refugee Protection Act of 2020, Canada lifted the cap on the number of refugees and asylum seekers it welcomed who were turned away by United States authorities.

This measure proved timely, as the flow of West African refugees fleeing the Equatorial Wars in 2021 traveled directly to Canada rather than trying their luck in the United States. Canada's infrastructure and natural resources have not been overtaxed by this rise in population, thanks to the environmental efforts of Project Utopia and the Canadian government's cooperation in implementing farming techniques devised by the Triton Foundation and new housing developments supported by Project Utopia.

The diplomatic efforts of Project Utopia have exceeded our expectations in reducing international population displacement, which should show a sharp decrease in immigration rates in Canada for the next few years. We recommend asking for a partial demographic analysis next year to confirm.

Unfortunately, as we observed in the United States in the last decade, the transient rise in unemployment

ONTARIO

Under the excuse of wanting real solutions to economic woes, Ontarians have elected a series of increasingly conservative leaders who stand in stark contrast with the rest of Canadian politicians. As provincial authorities look the other way, nationalist and white supremacist groups operate with growing boldness, hiding their isolationist and prejudiced views behind anti-nova and anti-Utopia rhetoric. Over time, this Canadian province became a right-wing stronghold.

Team Tomorrow Americas monitors the activities of these groups but cannot intervene unless Canadian authorities request it. Utopia analysts believe it's only a matter of time before a rally turns violent.

rates Canada suffered from 2021 to 2026 is but one of the many factors strengthening nationalist and supremacist sentiments. We have cataloged at least five organizations espousing alarmingly racist views under the pretense of protesting Project Utopia, in addition to a general distrust of novas. We recommend advising Director Laragione to scale back Project Utopia's lobbying in Canada, or at least making it less obvious, in order to remove a factor of discontent and allow the good sense of the Canadian people to oppose this worrying trend.

Transcript from "We Must Decide", Kevin Hartland, Editor, CBC Opcast

Watching our ambassador to the UN sit meekly and abstaining every time the American ambassador so much as frowns is getting tiresome. We cannot deny that Canada and the United States are joined at the hip in some trade and political issues, but we must define our own stance.

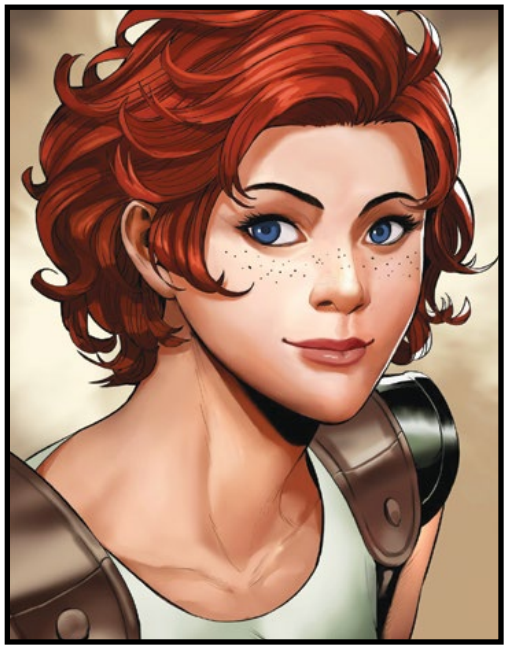
The world still thinks we are a forward-thinking country and jokes about our politeness mostly come from a place of respect, but we are putting this international regard in jeopardy with the current complacency that our officials are showing every time a thorny issue comes along.

Look, we have much to thank Project Utopia for, but also a lot to point fingers over. I agree that Utopia's control of technological research has crippled innovation in our industries, but I can also accept how much good they've done in helping with our environmental problems. Our government just ho-hums along, working with Utopia on some issues and playing dumb on others.

We must demand Parliament listen to us. Canadians as a whole support Utopia and accept novas, but our



PROFILE: JENNIFER "SLIDER" LANDERS



Jennifer Landers loved travel, seeing the world and new places. She erupted during one trip when a technical fault caused massive engine failure on her aircraft. Cestus Pax caught the plane and brought it safely to ground, preventing a massive explosion and possibly other casualties, and Team Tomorrow was bewildered when they found no one on board. Landers and every passenger and crew member suddenly reappeared in a flash of light as she completed her first-ever teleport. Pax was so delighted he offered her a spot on T2M as soon as she mastered control of her powers.

Jennifer's infectious enthusiasm for seeing wonder in nearly every situation has made her central to team morale — and a media darling. Slider still loves travel and can now see even more of the world. She devotes much of her (limited) downtime to fundraising for charities. In addition to her popular "Where2Now" Opcast, she semi-regularly hosts "viewer's choice" episodes, encouraging people to write in with their stories and where they want to go. She'll arrive at the lucky person's house, teleport their family to the destination, and fulfill their wish as best she (and Team Tomorrow) can. Sometimes she auctions the chance to the highest bidder and donates the proceeds to charity.

ministers don't want the American government to think that we do, so they shuffle their feet and fail to show a coherent position.

This state of political ambivalence is encouraging some fringe elements, and if you think last week's anti-Utopia protest in Toronto got a little rowdy, just wait a few more months of these people not facing any sort of official condemnation for their ideas. Just pick at their slogans a little and you'll find the ugliness under their words; these people are not only anti-Utopia, but anti-novas, anti-immigrants, and generally anti-everything that's made Canada so endeared among our friends and allies.

Our politicians must take a clear stand. Otherwise they'll force us to do it for them.

From "Where2Now" Opcast,
Jennifer "Slider" Landers

... and here we are! No, we're not in an alien ruin on Mars, we're at Pinewood Toronto Studios! I know, I know; this is different from other episodes and some of you may be wondering why I'm not at some beautiful natural spot.

Truth is, like many young kids with a streaming channel and too much time on their hands, I used to dream about being "discovered" by the film industry. I dreamed about taking over as the new actor to play a certain raider of tombs. But then major productions moved to India, not to mention that I erupted and joined Team Tomorrow, so I get to save the world for real. Fair trade, no?

[image distorts and turns blue for a second and the background is different, showing film equipment]

Fortunately for other dreamers, Toronto is picking up where Hollywood left off, and now it's the mecca of the indie film and OpNet drama industry! Two of my favorite OpNet series are filmed in this very soundstage... guess which ones in the chat, and at the end of the episode, a random lucky winner will get some nerdy loot I picked myself!

[screen distorts again, and now Slider is walking between large buildings]

Leave blockbusters and big-name films to Mumbai and Hollywood, Toronto is where you go when your

N!SIGHT

Two novas, Christopher Gaal and James Najarian, launched the first streaming portal by novas, and purportedly for novas, but the two videographers welcomed everyone who would bring their clicks and their eyeballs to their site. By giving any nova who signed up their own free streamcast channel, blog, and social media profile in its site, N!Sight skyrocketed in popularity and quickly outpaced other streaming services and social media platforms. They then purchased cable broadcasting infrastructure to put the last nail in the coffin of cable television.

N!Sight is a unique media giant, combining original drama content in many formats with reality shows, and actual news services with the most trustworthy reporting in the world. They also heavily encourage public participation in a variety of proprietary forums, chatrooms, and their social platform N!Volve.

Professional media products made in-house sit together with user-created content by enthusiastic fans, making N!Sight an unstoppable powerhouse that can rightly claim to hold the attention and creativity of the entire world.

vision is powerful, and your ambition is great. Here, you can mingle with people who are insanely creative and not afraid to take risks. Play nice and you'll be able to build something amazing and share it with the entire world!

The United States

In a single day, people in the United States saw one of their worst nightmares and one their loftiest dreams fulfilled in the space of hours. The specter of terrorism in space, followed by the rise of a superhero. As more novas erupted after the Fireman, the golden dream began to tarnish as legal and political realities complicated everything around novas. Then the national pride that was Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow moved their main offices to Africa as they rose to prominence, and every other country now had novas, too.

And yet, Americans still love novas. They obsess about them all throughout the media, which is simply an evolution of the celebrity culture that developed since the turn of the century. Novas are the new royalty of social media and reality programming, and whatever a nova wants to do with their abilities and career (such as renowned actor and producer Vitas Varnas), they will find a ready-made audience in the United States.

But Americans are slowly realizing that the dream was not going to go like the movies promised. The United States is trying to mend diplomatic bridges burned during the turn of the decade, but the "America first" mentality endures among many officials; this continues to keep allies at a distance and preferring to deal with Project Utopia, the new kid on the block who actually delivers what they promise.

The current Democratic government is trying to salvage the country's place in international affairs after a tremendous loss of credibility in the financial, political, diplomatic, and even human rights arenas, but they face an uphill battle; every day it becomes clearer that the US may never be as relevant on the world stage as it was before N-Day. With its advisory appointment at the Security Council, Project Utopia upstaged, and seems to have replaced, the United States as the ones who can step in and get things done.

In the face of this mounting irrelevance, the United States government leveraged its position in the UN Security Council to endorse Directive 9, and from then onward has thrown its support behind the secretive organization simply known as "The Directive" in a bid to maneuver around Utopia and their novas.

The American people are mostly unaware of the diplomatic cold war between their government and Project Utopia, who they see as a meddling outsider who wants to trample over their God-given rights even as they enjoy the products of Utopia's efforts. However, this distrust for the organization does not apply to novas, even those in Team Tomorrow. Americans are much more likely to accept a piece of news or proposal if it comes from a nova rather than from a government official or Utopia representative.

Project Utopia knows this and has used their own public relations expertise to bring the American people to the novas' cause, if not to Utopia's directly.

Excerpt from Project Stakeholder, April 15th, 2026, Department of Homeland Security

The nova situation in the homeland has escaped any semblance of control. We analyzed the Carter document and, frankly, its proposals fall short:

***1.** The "Flagbearer Initiative" is a joke. Not only did Japan already do this with Nippontai, the funding proposed would have us laughed out of any serious recruitment office and doesn't even compare to what Team Tomorrow offers their baseline pilots. Our counterproposal for this, if it is to work, is to outsource it to one of our contractors.*

***2.** Local Charters. Again, this is a post-facto proposal. Many cities across the continental US already are hiring what people are calling "city defenders". They are part rent-a-cop, part spokesperson, and all disaster in the making. I'd like to remind you about Flo-glow, the Boston city defender that injured an innocent family because some prankster reported a false hostage situation at their domicile, apparently over a video game. Next thing we know, we have Utopia invoking jurisdiction and forcing us to admit Flo-glow to one of their facilities because she found the prankster and almost killed him in public.*

If we're going to support local programs, we're going to have to run the novas through boot camp so they don't cause local governments more problems than they solve.

We are putting together a proposal of our own. We're still surveying the field, but let me turn your attention to crowdfunding. No, no agency will launch a crowdfunding campaign, but we are looking at novas who are launching theirs. Chicago already has one successful nova acting as city defender paid by online contributions from the public. These people are motivated, and we can divert funds to their patronage sites under different names so we can monopolize their "support tiers" with our own assignments, while having total deniability. I'm attaching the files of the most likely subjects.

From the 2028 Global Market Analysis Presentation: USA, DeVries Agency

The impact on our OpNet traffic has not been affected by Team Tomorrow's platform. As expected, most of their traffic goes directly to Jennifer Landers' stream, with very few clickthroughs. While the raw numbers still put us in second place behind N!Sight, a careful analysis shows that, while they have a lead in unique views, our platform has a deeper engagement with our visitors.

Most of this traffic comes from the United States. Marketing has truly leveraged the Americans' obsession with novas, and we have positioned our assets firmly in the American public's awareness, even without Project Utopia's and the Æon Society's massive public goodwill.

A historical analysis shows a consolidation of content from March 23rd, 2018, the so-called "N-Day." It started with literally thousands of forums and online communities launched to share conspiracy theories, news, and gossip, and then user-created content as soon as Team Tomorrow debuted, and eventually coalesced with N!Sight, DeVries Media, and Team Tomorrow as the top sites to find news and content about novas.

Despite this head start, Team Tomorrow has failed to capitalize on the nova culture in the USA The increase in the migration rate of novas into the United States due to this only helps with our recruitment activities, provided we maintain our current strategy when poaching talent fresh from the Rashoud Centers: Project Utopia can offer a single path to fame and fortune, we can offer dozens.

Team Tomorrow Global Diplomacy Guide: United States of America

Don't be lulled into a sense of security by the crowds waving and shouting your name. The people in the United States love us, but we must tiptoe around the authorities in order to get things done. More than in any other country, we must be mindful of local conditions; the way we approach the authorities can vary between states, even from city to city, so check back with this fact file every couple of months for updates by our team of analysts.

***New York:** The Big Apple is basically a second home for novas. The biggest OpNet studios are there, including N!Sight HQ, as well as high-end clubs, world-class restaurants, and everything a would-be celebrity could desire. This may attract some freelancers and Elites, but we are T2M and if we go to New York on the clock, we're possibly on United Nations business. One thing to remember is that this is the Fireman's hometown; most New Yorkers honor his sacrifice on behalf of humanity, but others think T2M got him killed on the other side of the continent where he had no business going. You know better; Randel Portman set an example for all of us, and no hateful comments section can destroy that legacy.*

One thing to prepare for when visiting New York is the nova and anti-nova cults. The Followers of the

PROFILE: GABRIEL "VANGUARD" DRAKE



California native Gabriel Drake was among the first novas to take up the role of "city defender," a nova in the employment of a municipality as it's on-call protector. Drake was part the first wave of novas to erupt in the week following N-Day and agreed to testing and training with Project Utopia but preferred not to leave the San Francisco Bay area to sign on with Team Tomorrow or other Utopia initiatives. Instead, Drake adopted the costumed nova identity of "Vanguard" and began doing good works in the Bay Area, which led to the city of San Francisco and the surrounding cities to contract him as the official city defender, a role he has held since then.

Vanguard cuts a heroic-looking figure in a white eufiber uniform with a red downward chevron on the chest and red stripes along the legs, complete with red cowl, mask, gloves, boots, and cape. Golden medallions fasten the cape to his shoulders and a golden belt finish off the ensemble. His nova abilities are primarily superhuman strength and durability, high-speed flight, and the projection of glowing force fields in different shapes he uses for protection and various utility effects.

Avatar are big fans, but do not engage with them under any circumstance without a Project Utopia liaison with you. You will also find protests claiming you are demons; don't pay those any mind. We are Team Tomorrow and we are here to protect the world, even if people don't like us.

Los Angeles: *The major Hollywood studios are on their way out, but the streaming platforms are stepping in and gobbled up many of the soundstages and offices, so Los Angeles still attracts the hopefuls who want a shot at fame without gaining powers. Although the California Governor's Office is currently sympathetic to our work, they are reluctant to ask for help. The city and its surrounding neighbors are undergoing a lot of social tension as the tech companies continue to push for gentrification of entire neighborhoods. If we go to L.A., we must step very carefully to avoid sparking any social unrest.*

Washington D.C.: *Unfortunately, neither T2M nor unsanctioned novas are welcome at the nation's capital. While not a no-fly zone, Project Utopia advises we avoid Washington D.C. due to the current political climate that has Congress stagnated on legislating about nova powers, which many compare to the debate around gun control; this continues to be a delicate matter in the US, exacerbated by Utopia's mandate to confiscate dangerous technology.*

New Orleans: *While we don't intend to babysit you, and you are free to carry on with your life while you're off duty, we strongly advise you to avoid New Orleans. New Orleans is a city where you can find every vice imaginable, and a few that you couldn't even fathom before. Many Terats like to party in the streets, and love to pick fights with recognizable novas like Elites and us. The World Crime Task Force keeps constant watch, but there's only so much we can do without the local authorities' permission.*

The South: *There is a low-intensity conflict brewing in the states bordering Mexico, and we must be very careful whenever we intervene. It has been two years since the last time Houston flooded and federal authorities turned away the Mexican Army's relief caravan, but their effects linger in the people's consciousness and xenophobia runs strong. Mexican vigilantes, mostly baseline justicieros, are crossing the border to pursue American arms traffickers, and they are not helping the situation.*

Mexico

Famous worldwide for hospitality and business opportunities, Mexico was also infamous for drug-related violence and corrupt government, but that infamy is a thing of the past and Mexico is on its way up. For Mexico, the age of novas truly began when Team Tomorrow responded to the 2022 earthquake in central Mexico. One month later T2M-Americas built its headquarters in Mexico City, concurrently focusing their anti-criminal activities against the drug cartels and anyone associated with them.

Since then, Project Utopia has collaborated closely with the Mexican government in many areas, often going straight to the local level while placating the federal authorities. This way, the services and infrastructure of many neglected communities were greatly improved, fully furnished schools were built, and security was guaranteed, slowly eroding the power base of both the cartels and corrupt officials.

The support that Æon, Utopia, and Team Tomorrow enjoy among the populace has overwhelmed the capacity of petty politicians to go about their previous tricks; for Mexicans, speaking against Utopia or novas is a sure sign that a politician has something to hide.

This drive forward is changing Mexico's economy from the ground up. The fear of extortion either by criminals or the government is gone, and small businesses, researchers, and artists are thriving thanks to private, institutional, and even government funding. This environment of progress and hope is also wearing down the xenophobic thorn in Mexican society, and refugees from Central America's conflicts are preferring to settle in Mexico rather than continue to the more hostile politics of the United States.

2028 Status Report Summary to the Æon Council: Mexico

There is still a red flag concerning the 2030 presidential elections. We are already in contact with the electoral authorities regarding the vulnerabilities of the new electronic voting system, but what still worries this commission is the renewed activities in the southern states by militias. These so-called "community police" became a thing of the past once the World Crime Task Force broke the last cell of the Gulf Cartel from the region, but someone is organizing new militia forces and stirring discontent, and they are threatening to blockade polling stations.

So far, support for the militias is limited to the towns where they originate. Montoya-Bernal grew up in this region and he advises patience. He asked us to investigate the leaders of the guerrilla forces that were likewise reconciled once our rural support programs helped them rebuild their communities, addressed long-standing social grievances, and Team Tomorrow guaranteed that their civil rights would be protected. He also advised us to look at the former leaders of a couple of unions that were ousted thanks to our anti-corruption initiatives.

We cannot discount the rumors of a Cartel Confederation that is trying to take the place of the old cartels; we finally got rid of their influence on Mexican politics and we cannot risk losing the ground that took so much effort to win.

In more pleasant news, we can finally close the 2022 Earthquake Relief Program. Assigning Miss Estévez as T2M-Americas' dedicated teleporter to carry materials accelerated the process of strengthening all vulnerable structures in the states of Michoacan and Oaxaca, and the new urban planning will also help alleviate the effects of tropical storms coming from the Pacific.

From "Enter Los Justicieros", episode 4 of N!Sight's *Novas in Hiding* documentary series

Narrator: One of the major Mexican contributions to nova culture is the tradition of masks. While Mexico has a long history of using masks in special religious festivities, and the masks used by luchadores are a common sight in pop culture, it was neither cultural appropriation nor trendy fashion that had novas putting on masks to create a persona to perform heroic deeds — it was the justicieros.

The word "justiciero" means "one who dispenses justice," but it's basically a vigilante. As early as N-Day, Mexico was in dire need of heroes, romantic figures that fought evil and gave people hope, and the justicieros stepped up, inspired by the heroic example of the Fireman and later Team Tomorrow.

The justicieros adopted colorful personas, a callback both to luchadores as well as the superheroes of American comics and movies. They protect their identities because they are not all novas, and even those who are prefer the layer of anonymity as well as the romanticism inherent in their roguish escapades, which is what prompted novas around the world to follow their example. Some, like the notorious duplicator Grash Uriza, also use masks to confuse any rivals and enemies.

What all justicieros have in common is that they refuse any association with either the government

PROFILE: RICARDO "CARAMBOLA" MONTOYA-BERNAL



Ricardo was born in southern Mexico, burning with ambition. The eldest child in a large family, he had to work to keep food on the table when the rest of his family seemed uninterested in improving their lot. This frustrated Ricardo, but family came first, and he provided as needed.

His thoughtful demeanor attracted the attention of his richer coworkers who thought poverty and quiet meant an easy target. Ricardo refused to rise to their taunts, fueling their anger. One evening after work a group of these bullies ambushed him, determined to shed his blood. Frustrated at his life, his family, and this pointless attack, Ricardo erupted, running circles around the bullies and throwing each one of them into the ocean 50 meters away.

With this new opportunity, Ricardo left home and joined N!ternational Wrestling Entertainment where he became a fan favorite as the human pinball "Rebote." The ratings-obsessed industry frustrated Ricardo, however, so after a year of failed matches he reached out to Team Tomorrow and was reborn as "Carambola."

Ricardo is fast, strong, and resilient, and luck almost always falls his way. He can fly and rebound off surfaces to keep his enemies guessing. Ricardo has risen to lead T2M-Americas and remembers his family. He sends money home every month, but only enough to cover their basics. If they want more in life, they need to take the initiative and work for it.

or Team Tomorrow. Some, like El Muerto, with his now-famous stylized skull face paint, cooperate openly with T2M, but most are vocal in their opinions that Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow are not doing enough to protect people in the furthest corners of Mexico, and are not pushing as hard as they could to fully eradicate corruption and injustice.

In this week's episode of Novas in Hiding, we'll follow Coyote Audaz, a justiciero who protects immigrants, refugees, and other vulnerable people, and has crossed the border enough times to have arrest warrants in Texas and Arizona. We'll show you what drives him, what people think of him, and what effect he's having in the world.

From "Where2Now" Opcast,
Jennifer "Slider" Landers

Hello, everyone and happy N-Day! I'm in Mexico City now, because Ricardo, you know, from T2M Americas, he said I haven't really celebrated N-Day until I do it in Mexico City, and he wasn't kidding! The party's in full swing now; I've come across three different street music bands, and vendors selling all sort of things! I got Pax a balloon with his face on it! He'll make a face, but I'm sure deep inside he'll love it, hah!

Restaurants are giving out snacks and drinks for free outside their doors, people are just jumping and laughing, their faces painted in blue and gold, and man! The energy all around me is great! And... wait! Oh, my god! Can you see this? It's a Divis Mal piñata! And, whoa! Is that me? Haha! I'm a piñata! I'll take that as being full of sweetness and not that someone would want to beat me up! Oh! Oh! Is that what I think it is? Let's take a closer look!

[image blanks and distorts]

It is! It's the Galatea! But what is it? Excuse me? Eh... qué es esto? Fuegos artificales? Oh, my god! It's fireworks! They're going to actually blow this up! It's going to be a-ma-zing! Oh! I think somebody recognized me!



[image stops, skips to an indoors scene]

Hey, people! Sorry for the skip; I have so much footage I'm going to have to edit it down to the highlights and upload them later. By the way; this is Doña Paquita; she runs this cute little cafe. Her daughter and her friends kinda adopted me earlier to show me around the best bars downtown and I just got them all home, because hooray nova alcohol metabolism and amazing warping powers, but Doña Paquita wouldn't let me go without serving me the best damn coffee I've ever had and her homemade tamales.

I'm going to get a bit moody and say today has been incredible. I'm used to being around fans and people asking me for my autograph, and I take every selfie with people that I'm able to, but today was... different. The people here didn't just make me feel welcome and admired, they made me feel like family.

The Caribbean

The countries of the Caribbean islands are some of the main beneficiaries of the social and environmental programs set forth by Project Utopia. The Æon Society runs most of these programs jointly through the Neptune and Triton Foundations, working to improve lives in every Caribbean nation. This endeared Utopia to the populace to an almost fanatical degree, and deeply hurt the interests of the United States and Europe in the islands.

After the Æon Society helped rebuild the storm-battered and neglected infrastructure of Puerto Rico, the United States finally granted it statehood. However, it was too little, too late, and with a mostly Latino population that fully supports Utopia's stated mission, all this accomplished was adding a pro-Utopia vote in the US Congress.

Haiti, another beleaguered and forgotten nation, saw the full force of Team Tomorrow Americas land with building materials and a complete medical team, helping the Neptune Foundation take over humanitarian efforts from the Red Cross. Utopia built several clinics and hospitals with a temporary staff. They would later be replaced with doctors and nurses mainly from Cuba, but also from across Latin America as an outreach program, turning Haiti and its neighbor, the Dominican Republic, into a nascent medical capital for the Caribbean and Central America regions.

Against all predictions, Cuba did not descend into chaos when the Castro regime opened elections and, together with Project Utopia, made a peaceful transition of power. This was accomplished thanks to Utopia's diplomatic corps, who negotiated an end to the US embargo, loaning the funds to buy off and

PROFILE: LA SABUESO



Stephanie Sevilla was a struggling B-movie actress trying to make the transition to streaming series in Los Angeles, doing everything her dignity would allow to become known. Volunteering for medical aid missions in her native Cuba was one of those self-promotion stunts that she felt good about but was utterly inept for. When her photo-op patient suddenly went into cardiac arrest, the stress and fear triggered her eruption. Her new powers told her that the patient had received adulterated medicines, and she uncannily followed the trail to another volunteer who was watering down the drugs so he could sell the real ones on the black market.

She discovered a new sense of purpose, then, using her new abilities to track down traffickers and criminals as a private consultant for Cuban law enforcement. Her 100% capture rate gained her the nickname of "La Sabueso" ("The Bloodhound"), and as her powers grew and she was exposed to the cruelty and pettiness of her targets, she also grew to hate them. If she catches her prey on her own, she delivers them to the authorities with a couple of broken bones. The Cuban authorities look the other way, but Team Tomorrow is becoming increasingly concerned about her methods.

return Guantanamo Base to Cuba's rule, and provided support and advice to prevent Cuba from falling prey to predatory interests from abroad.

From its headquarters in Mexico City, Team Tomorrow Americas conducts routine tours of the Caribbean islands, making sure everything remains on course, responding to storms and hurricanes that have grown less lethal thanks both to Utopia's environmental recovery projects and the much more solid infrastructure it helped build on the islands.

Security Report #20280712-AmC-2, INTERPOL

Rumors of a Cartel Confederation are more solid but still need confirmation. Lt. Maurice Dupain, our liaison in the Dominican Republic, aided the Dominican police in raiding a warehouse in the port of Haina and managed to send us a copy of a hard drive before local police took custody. We have found communications between two operatives known to have worked for the Cali Cartel from Colombia and the Gulf Cartel from Mexico. As you know, Team Tomorrow broke up the cartels, but we know that splinter groups continue to operate in their respective countries, and these communications show that they may be in contact and cooperating.

Collate this with our growing file on Zukhov's interests in Cuba, and the whole picture is not pretty. Utopia's political analysts have already warned us that the new prosperity in the islands would attract criminal interests due to their proximity to Mexico, Venezuela, and the United States. Every trail we follow is lost in New Orleans, so I don't think we can trust the Americans to cooperate; although, we might just tap that CIA cell they have in Cuba just to see what resources they can pull together, and from where.

Forward a copy of this report to Project Utopia's World Crime Task Force and notify me on their reply.

Torn by internal conflict and outside interference, the nations of Central and South America welcomed novas as a clear road for change. Hungry for heroes, people from Belize to Argentina see in novas a deliverance that their governments have long promised but never provided.

This poses a conundrum for Project Utopia, because it's not only the novas of Team Tomorrow who capture people's imaginations, but also glamorous Elites and charismatic Terats, and nova cults are a problem for South American governments.

Like Mexico of old, the different countries in the region are crippled by governmental corruption and outdated infrastructure. Project Utopia is tackling these problems and doing its best with the resources it can allocate to push the entirety of the Americas towards a better future, together, despite local differences that still make South American diplomacy a tricky field to navigate.

One of the major problems still plaguing Central America and their closest neighbors to the south is organized crime. Utopia's World Crime Task Force dismantled the powerful drug cartels, and Utopia's community outreach programs have driven farmers away from growing drug-related crops, but the surviving criminal cells are banding together in a bid to survive the new age of nova-enforced peace. This Cartel Confederation is still finding its feet, but they are already a cause for concern for international law enforcement.

Central America

Project Utopia has achieved peace, order, and prosperity in many regions of the world, but the countries of Central America remain a challenge as one of the last redoubts of systemic violence.

Utopia diplomats are careful not to publicly point at the United States and Russia as some of the reasons for the ongoing conflicts in Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua that are spilling out into El Salvador and Belize, but Team Tomorrow Americas keeps an eye on the United States every time they begin operations in any Central American country, and the Directive's White-and-Blues are already there.

Central America was on the road to recovery on its own before N-Day, and Project Utopia followed up on Guatemala and El Salvador, which were also affected by the 2022 earthquake that pummeled central Mexico. Ever since T2M established its Americas headquarters in Mexico City, criminal hot zones have begun to flare up.

A nova toppled the totalitarian government of Nicaragua, only to be killed by Matthew "Shellshock" Miller, an Elite who was a former member of the US-backed Contra death squads, paid for by the country's right-wing factions. Team Tomorrow Americas stopped Shellshock before he could target the civilian population and sent him back home, but the whole country descended into chaos and a UN-backed provisional government is trying to bring peace, with little result.

Around 2026, another nova began attacking

THE BABEL DOSSIER

In its document form, the eyes-only Babel Dossier records mysteries and enigmas that have bedeviled the Æon Society since its inception in the 1920s. Recently, the most trusted Proteus operatives have been granted access to some of the information locked away, because since N-Day, some of those enigmas are beginning to resurface.

The hidden corners of the Andes and the dark depths of the Amazon are home to many of these unsolved mysteries; some seem to be the stuff of myth and legend, like advanced technologies in Inca ruins, potential evidence of extraterrestrial intelligence, or hints that there have been novas before N-Day, along with people with different posthuman abilities.

The Æon Society prefers to devote its own resources to these regions, keeping Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow at arm's length unless some of the unexplained phenomena prove to be dangerously true.

PROFILE: ANIBAL "TEJIDO" BUENDÍA



The story of Anibal Buendía, also known as Tejido ("Weave") is truly "rags to riches." Buendía was a struggling fashion designer in their native Costa Rica, whose work earned enough attention to attend São Paulo Fashion Week. In the stressful lead-up to prepare, Buendía erupted, experiencing a "mad dream of dancing and transforming fabric" that turned out to not be a dream, but the first manifestation of their nova powers. Buendía is sometimes known as a "fiber animist," able to manipulate and reshape nonliving fibrous materials, especially fabrics.

Tejido's powers led to the creation of eufiber, a complex carbon-silicate nanotube material, which Buendía simply intended as an interesting new "microthread." When eufiber turned out to have tremendous technological applications, the nova patented it with help from the Æon Society and has since become a billionaire from licensing fees. Buendía's passion is still fashion, however, and they are a world-famous and sought-after designer. A Buendía original eufiber costume is a real coup for any nova, and the waiting list is months long. Tejido is famous for philanthropy in Latin America and abroad, and for support of the LGBTQ community, both financially and as an outspoken genderqueer role model.

military and civilian targets across Guatemala and Honduras, claiming allegiance to the Mara Salvatrucha or MS-13, but was struck down decisively by Team Tomorrow Americas and self-destructed before the claim could be confirmed. The Los Angeles-born gang was famous for its brutality but was never very powerful. However, it began to organize and work with the surviving drug cartel splinter groups, and MS-13 leveraged it's highly fragmented and leaderless structure to resist the efforts of T2M's World Crime Task Force.

All of this was made worse by disastrous storms in 2025 and 2027, and another major earthquake in early 2028, which strained the response capacity of both governments and T2M to deliver aid and begin rebuilding efforts.

Apart from Costa Rica and Panama, Central America is now a stew of state-sponsored, crime-driven, and politically instigated violence, displacing hundreds of people each year. Elites find steady work in the region from either governments or criminals; the Directive is quietly pushing its interests by supporting one faction or another, and Mexican *justicieros* are filtering through the borders to make things even more complicated for everyone in their well-intentioned, but often poorly planned, efforts to help people.

From N!Sight's *Nova Planet* OpCast, annotated by Agent M.V., The Directive

...which made a young man from Costa Rica into the center of a vast network spanning the globe.

[I bet the writers just bit back the comparison to a spider. —M.V.]

Buendía is nothing if not generous with their fortune. They have donated millions to develop Costa Rica's and Panama's infrastructure, making these two the first countries to fully replace their old copper and fiberoptic cabling with their eufiber improvements.

[And laid out additional thousands of miles of it behind the public's back. For the couple of days I was in Costa Rica to observe Buendía, I could detect the hum of quantum exchanges in places where there was supposed to be no cabling. I think this is why it's so hard to infiltrate Costa Rica,

THE SÃO PAULO BLAST

To date, the nuclear blast that almost wiped São Paulo off the map remains unsolved, as there were no credible claims and the blast itself destroyed any clue that might have been left behind by the culprits.

It was thanks to Team Tomorrow America's arrival and work that the tragedy did not claim more victims. Brazilians are forever thankful for the aid, but their highest regard goes for Randel Portman, the Fireman. Portman pushed his powers beyond the limit and absorbed all the radiation from the blast that threatened to make the rest of the area uninhabitable and kill thousands more.

The effort proved too much, and the Fireman was reduced to a charred skeleton, at the center of a crater of molten asphalt, to the shock of the entire world.

The reclaimed area now hosts the International Portman Park, and the Fireman's statue stands proud at its center, bearing the word "Sacrifice" in English and Portuguese. A twin monument in New York was unveiled at the same time, and is the benchmark for anyone, nova or baseline, who wishes to claim the title of "hero."

not only for our agents but the Cartel Confederation and the MS-13. The local authorities or Buendía themselves just know when we step inside their borders. —M.V.]

Once a quiet nation leading the race for renewable energy production in all the Americas, Costa Rica has pressed on and somehow become immune to the conflicts plaguing their neighbors. Anibal Buendía says they'd be more than happy to aid the rest of Central America to achieve the peace and prosperity of Costa Rica and Panama, as soon as their governments ask.

[And extend one of the most effective surveillance states tied to whatever it is they spin out. Buendía might just be the eccentric philanthropist they paint themselves to be, but nobody lays down a surveillance and communication network so thick in bandwidth without an ulterior motive. We just need to find a gap in that network to make sure. —M.V.]

Brazil

The largest country in South America is also one of the most ethnically diverse, with a population claiming ancestry from Portugal, Germany, Italy, Japan, several West African tribes, the many indigenous people, and a varied mix from many other countries. Although this has not directly translated to ethnic democracy, and the socioeconomic gap shows a clear ethnic bias, this diversity provided a fertile ground for nova acceptance.

After N-Day, Brazilians, particularly politicians, were rightly scared that a nova could erupt that would challenge the status quo, and the government was suspicious of Project Utopia, especially when they submitted a reforestation plan for the Amazon, which affected the logging interests to which many of the politicians were beholden.

There was a series of protests during 2022, with vast sections of the population demanding the government accept Utopia's aid in developing the Amazon as well as helping with social development in the favelas surrounding São Paulo. The founding of Team Tomorrow Americas brought novas even closer to Brazilians who demanded change.

Any misgivings Brazil, and the world, had about Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow disappeared in September 25th, 2023, when a nuclear blast wiped out nearly 30 blocks of São Paulo's downtown district. Team Tomorrow's rapid response averted any more loss of life and made them true heroes for all South America.

Since then, Project Utopia has an unconditional ally in Brazil, and the country has vastly improved. The Amazon rainforest stopped shrinking and began to grow back, Team Tomorrow helped guide vegetation around existing buildings to reach a seamless integration, and they did the same for the wetlands to the south, applying improved urban development and building more solid highways and railroads connecting Brazil to Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Even "homegrown" heroes like shapeshifter and teleporter Legion have become overnight sensations in Brazil.

Venezuela

The declining demand for oil was the final straw that brought down a failing regime, and what could have turned into a bloody civil war became a smooth transition of power thanks to Project Utopia, who had Team Tomorrow Americas act as observers in



the resulting election. The administration currently trying to put Venezuela back on its feet is trying to reach a middle ground between demagoguery and effective policies, internal demands and external pressure, and it has not been easy.

Like Brazil, Venezuela goes out of its way to cooperate with Project Utopia, granting the organization jurisdiction to conduct whatever operation or project they want. This way, the government improves its standing among the people who adore T2M, and

RECOVERED EMAIL FROM CORRUPTED DATADUMP, SOPHIA ROUSSEAU (ALLEGED)

...and that means you, pretty boy. This is deep recon and I don't want your face anywhere somebody can recognize you. If our intel is right, it will turn into search and destroy on a government-sponsored facility, and the last thing we want is a demolished lab linked to our beloved boy scouts.

Deep Forest confirmed quantum flux at the coordinates. Didn't tell him what for but [corrupted] and the trucks have provincial government logos. I'll run interference with the locals while you [corrupted] for good.

Best case scenario, this could be a job for S&T, but we don't want to embarrass the Brazilians. Worst case, we'll find Teragen. The Brazilians may be all too happy to sing our praises, but their adoration of all things nova also extends to those [corrupted], and I'll have to remind you, if you see a known Terat on the street, leave them alone. They are visitors and welcomed here, a bit unlike us and our little op. If you see them at the site, then by all means kick their asses, but use your judgment. Contact me if you are not sure who is a Terat and be honest with yourselves. If you don't think you can take them, take photos and retreat. With evidence of illegal activities, we can let the big boys in and wear our daylight faces, and let the Brick do the punching.

See you all twonight.

PROJECT UTOPIA EMAIL

To: Thetis

From: Achilles Epsilon

Subject: Too many to count…

Our people in Triton report that the samples we sent include a quantum-active virus that will not remain attenuated if used on live vaccines and may increase Quantum Flux in novas. We're looking at Indigo-level consequences, so I suggest taking this to the light and slam hints to S&T's face about Richter Biochem and their lab in Maracaibo.

Berlitz Healthcare, Inc. is clear. Although they received Tera#45BL and Tera#11AW in their installations, we found no evidence that they are working on any nova-related project. At most, I think Mendizabal is funneling money through his stake in Berlitz to pay the Terats. Which means that we still have eyes on the company. It was bad enough when Mendizabal hired an Elite as a showpiece/bodyguard for his anti-government rally but associating with two known Teragen militants cannot mean anything good.

I'm opening another vector to follow the Teragen's interest in playing mercenary for a wannabe politician, but my human-hour budget is almost depleted. Epsilon 6 and Epsilon 7 have not reported back from their mission into the Colombia border. I trust their skill and will give them another week. Tell the Council I will take it personally if I lose two of my best in their wild goose chase for an "Inca flying machine made of gold."

has driven growth wherever Utopia sets up camp, using Venezuela as a staging ground for operations in both the Andes and the Amazon.

However, the new government is trying to play more than one side, also welcoming international corporations with tax and legal incentives. While not publicized, one of these incentives is that Venezuela is not quick to report scientific and technological research to Project Utopia. So far, mostly United States and Japanese shell companies have established production centers and research sites, with the pharmaceutical and bioengineering fields dominating the landscape.

For reasons they have not fully explained, the Æon Council has instructed Project Utopia's Science & Technology division to be a little lax when enforcing their oversight on technological research as it sends its own personnel into the wilderness. Project Proteus and its agents use Venezuela as a honey trap for companies looking to carry out restricted or illegal nova-related research.

Colombia

Once the epicenter for the scourge known as the Medellín Cartel, Colombia was already leaving its violent past behind when the Galatea exploded. Despite the global excitement and confusion of the early days after N-Day, the Colombians kept their composure and continued with their ongoing efforts to improve their society; after all, the power of the cartels was already decreasing, and peace was achieved with the dissolution of the FARC guerrillas, industry was growing, and trade was booming.

But then the world began to change quickly, Project Utopia entered the world stage, and technology was advancing in leaps and bounds. Colombian authorities didn't take it kindly when Team Tomorrow attacked the remaining cartels. In their view, what they were achieving in a mix of police action and social programs would have had more lasting effects than simply bringing down the hammer on criminals. Now they must contend with the rising Cartel Confederation and blame Team Tomorrow's actions for it.

Another point of contention for Colombia is that it had begun investing heavily in nova-related research, and while it accepted that Utopia had the know-how to recognize technologies that might be too dangerous, it disagrees with the policy of Utopia's Science & Technology division of just taking such research away. For many in the Colombian scientific community, Utopia may know best most of the time, but not all the time.

Global Law Enforcement Review 2028, The Directive

General Rentería of the National Police of Colombia stopped being coy and submitted a dossier; Colombia wants to join the Directive, and they sent us everything they think might convince our organization to accept them. We assigned an analysis task force to fact-check the document and evaluate the country's potential.

As preliminary beneficial factors, it's sufficiently away from Mexico City to operate without Team Tomorrow hanging over every action we take but still in a strategic location to address situations in the rest of South America. In fact, our team discovered an email from President Ramos to Project Utopia proposing Bogotá as a site for Team Tomorrow Americas, which was obviously not approved.

In response to the meddling of Team Tomorrow in the fight against the Colombian cartels, the National Police of Colombia started a new unit codenamed "Macondo," after a fictitious town in the work of Colombian novelist Gabriel García Márquez. An amusing choice since the Macondo Unit officially doesn't exist. As explained, the Macondo Unit oversees cleaning up Team Tomorrow's mess with all the cartel splinters, but also investigates anything related to novas in support of the rest of their security forces.

On a preliminary overview, it would seem they are already comfortable with procedures very similar to our own. Macondo accepts members from all the other Colombian forces and have two tiers of screening: one for their regular troops, and another intended to put recruits under eruption-grade levels of stress. They had no success in triggering any recruit into becoming a nova, but there are a handful of Macondo officers who passed the second screening without erupting.

The Andes

The other countries that share the Andes mountains, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Perú, are taking different roads into the new age.

Landlocked and with the longest border with Brazil and the Amazon, Bolivia benefits greatly from Project Utopia's environmental efforts, which increased the health and acreage of its arable lands, and Team Tomorrow's work made it so those lands were not devoted to growing coca. The latter, however, is a point of contention as Bolivia is spearheading a lobbying campaign to make coca leaves accepted as a medicinal plant, as it has been since ancient times in the Andean region.

To protect its coca crops, Bolivia limits its cooperation with Team Tomorrow, creating a space where the gangs that survived T2M's anti-cartel

ENCRYPTED EMAIL

From: Nathan J.

To: Maggie M.

Subject: Dig up THAT file!

Attachments: registro_materiales_constr_15041940_ch.pdf

Maggie, the password of the attached file is the name of the Shinto priestess in Old Man Styles's tale about the Nine-Tailed Thief. I know you had to use a decryption key to read this email, but the double security warrants it. Let me summarize so you don't think I'm crazy:

It's an old materials shipping manifest. Sounds boring, right? But the manifest is dated 1940 and lists several locations along the southern Andes, Tierra de Fuego, the Argentinian plains, and the Paraguayan wetlands. Not places you send construction materials just as World War II is starting, right? Well, can you guess who the undersigned is? I'll give you a clue: It's an acronym.

Okay, it's REG! The Rational Experimentation Group your grandfather told us about! Those locations must be old research labs, and I can bet they built them for the Nazis. This thing is gold, Maggie! Radioactive gold that might melt your face off, but still! Open the file, check the locations, and cross-check with Babel. We must assign people to this, and I think it's going to need some quantum muscle if things turn out for the worst.

Love,

N.

PROFILE: "EL SUPAY"

All that Team Tomorrow Americas knows for certain about the Cartel Confederation is one name: "El Supay." According to locals and captured sicarios, El Supay is a sharply dressed gentleman with indistinct mestizo features, who walks into a parish to invite the local political lieutenant to contribute to the Confederation in minor or major ways. Nobody refuses; nobody has that kind of willpower.

El Supay has cultivated this quasi-mythical figure akin to the devil, starting with taking the name of the Inca god of the underworld. Apparently he is the reason the splinters of cartels and guerrillas from Mexico to Bolivia have agreed to work together, and T2M suspects he is a mega-charismatic nova who uses his power to bend wills and smooth out negotiations, and to erase his true appearance from the minds of people who interact with him, leaving only a folktale-shaped hole in their memories.



campaign could sneak in. Bolivia started following the US model of hiring city defenders, but a handful of novas affiliated with the Teragen arrived from Brazil and began doing the work for free, scaring criminals away from farming fields in exchange of a simple favor: being left alone.

Today, Bolivia's rain forest region is famous as a haven for Teragen and novas who simply wish to go off the grid.

Perú is aligning itself with Colombia by adopting a hard stance on its own security. The northeastern provinces are the preferred hiding place for criminals fleeing Colombia, and the public's initial love affair with novas is losing its shine for most of the same reasons as in Colombia. With a history of tackling their own internal problems, Peruvians did not wait for T2M and launched an aggressive anti-cartel campaign, occasionally hiring Elites, but most recently they have been cooperating with The Directive.

Many of the surviving criminal organizations from Colombia and Venezuela fled to Ecuador, where they disappeared for a while, but as early as 2026 rumors began about the Cartel Confederation. In Ecuador, splinters from Colombia's right-wing guerrillas were funded by the survivors of the Mexican Sinaloa Cartel and slowly bought off local officials to secure their hiding places. By mid-2028, Ecuadoran police estimated that the Confederation "owned" roughly one third of the northeastern provinces. Despite the government's cooperation with Team Tomorrow, the cartel splinters have evaded capture and have developed advanced ways to mask drug-related crops from satellite imaging, with complicity of authorities in small towns and far-off communities.

The Southern Cone

The first few years after N-Day, it was business as usual for the countries of the Southern Cone — Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay — but, as more novas erupted and Project Utopia's efforts encompassed the globe, the southernmost nations of the American continent braced for the effects of the new age.

Argentina took the lead, giving all sorts of legal and financial exceptions to novas who would accept working in the country; however, before any nova could take up the offer, the new and current administration revoked such wide-ranging privileges, arguing that Argentina had enough of would-be saviors, and instead reached for companies working on nova-derived technologies.

In the space of months, Argentina became the second largest producer of eufiber after Costa Rica,

reaching a deal with Anibal Buendía directly. With help from Utopia's social development advisors, Argentina began to thrive. With a sound economy and financial incentives for nova entrepreneurs, Argentina is in heavy competition with Colombia in technological research and development.

While the people embrace novas readily, they are warier about the Teragen than their neighbor, Brazil, and Team Tomorrow is a clear favorite in popularity polls. Despite this, the Argentinian government only consults Project Utopia when necessary, otherwise charting their own path.

As if to contest Argentina, the people of Paraguay and Uruguay are following Brazil's example and welcome all novas, regardless of philosophical leanings. Utopia's Environmental Division has worked to protect and enrich the biodiversity in the wetland region shared with Brazil, and the Triton Foundation established a network of small laboratories devoted to observing, cataloging, and analyzing the local flora and fauna. Professor Balmer himself has spent time in the wetlands to study the ecological interactions and apply the knowledge elsewhere, a fact that Paraguayan and Uruguayan media mention at every opportunity.

At odds with their neighbors, Chile and its people are more skeptical of novas and Utopia. The government petitioned Utopia to open a branch of Operation Eden and repeat the Ethiopian miracle in the Atacama Desert, but ecological feasibility studies are still ongoing, and Utopia is not providing anything resembling a start date. Public perception is that T2M-Americas did not respond as quickly to the Iquique earthquake of 2027 as they did for Mexico five years earlier.

While still not as blatantly difficult to Utopia as their neighbors to the north, the Chilean government nonetheless has little patience for the organization, especially as an off-hand comment by Firefox from T2M-Americas about the conflict with the Mapuche people became viral and sparked a worldwide trending topic in support of the indigenous people, setting back the government's position.

EUROPE

Europe remains a cultural and economic center of international affairs. Despite early predictions, the EU remained a stable and cohesive entity following the departure of the United Kingdom —perhaps due to the financial results of Brexit itself. With the rough years of the early 21st century already a fading memory, and economic crises no longer threatening to drag down the entire region's economy, the member states of the EU are no longer so fractious as they once were. The supranational organization's strong ties to the UN have ensured a steady flow of technological and nova assistance from Project Utopia that have elevated formerly fragile economies into steadily growing sources of wealth and security.

United Kingdom

Following Brexit, the UK suffered a (very predictable) economic downturn that it has yet to fully pull out of. However, the government and a significant proportion of the people of the UK remain steadfastly in support of isolation from the continent — enough to keep the Conservatives in power following Scotland's post-Brexit secession. As a result, despite the difficulties it's caused, the government continues to assert that Brexit was the correct choice, even if their isolationism is costing them access to some of the Nova Age's cutting-edge technology.

Despite tightened regulations on immigration and a steady increase in deportations, anti-immigrant sentiment remains high in England. It's become increasingly difficult to get anything but a short-term tourism visa for the UK — long-term work visas practically require an Act of Parliament. Naturalized citizenship is likewise hidden behind a bureaucratic labyrinth that few successfully navigate.

The loss of free movement may have slowed immigration, but it hasn't stopped emigration. Brain-drain is a serious problem in the UK, with many of the younger generation adopting the expat lifestyle to live and work in Europe or further abroad. To combat this, the government has tightened regulations and increased the paperwork necessary to obtain a passport, and so the percentage of UK citizens without one has risen steadily for the past five years. Tensions between the UK, Scotland, and Ireland are still simmering, but no one expects the issue to go away quietly. Meanwhile, the average age of the UK's population is rapidly rising and, unlike Japan, it's unlikely that robotics will stave off the demographic time bomb. Worst of all, to the government,

is the tendency for British novas to leave the country shortly after their eruption — almost 60% of the British nova population, according to reports, have either emigrated or are living as expatriates, a phenomenon the media refers to as "the nova diaspora."

The financial problems the UK has suffered have led to severe cutbacks in government services. The NHS has yet to be fully privatized, but Parliament has been chipping away at it bit by bit over the last 10 years. The few remnants of government-owned mass transit were handed over to private hands years back, and service has declined while costs to users increased sharply. The Tube looks worse than it ever has, and it's borderline intolerable in summer, when the ventilation is often inadequate.

England continues to dominate what's left of the United Kingdom, and much of the character and nature of the UK's current political climate originates here. Despite 10 years of the Nova Age, London looks much the same as it did (though perhaps a bit shabbier). Crime is on the rise, much of it directed at anyone who doesn't look sufficiently "British;" 2018 was only the beginning of government neglect (intentional or otherwise) of civil rights issues.

Scotland

Scottish independence was a controversial dream that resulted in two referendums — one, prior to Brexit, which failed, and one after (led by Kerr Halliway) that succeeded. Scotland officially became an independent country on January 1, 2020, and promptly petitioned to rejoin the EU; negotiations over resource rights, military access, and other matters have continued to plague relations between the two long after the UK washed its hands of its ties to the continent, and have slowed economic growth in the fledgling state. However, with London out of the European financial market, Edinburgh and Dublin are fighting for their former positions, and many of the businesses that vacated England post-Brexit have relocated either here or to Ireland. This has served to ameliorate the economic byproducts of the often-rancorous independence process.

Ireland

Having already won its independence from the United Kingdom well before Brexit, the Republic of Ireland was spared the economic chaos. Northern



PROFILE: LONDON FOG



London Fog (aka Elizabeth Deborah Barton, b. 1994) is the self-described city-defender of London, having formerly held the position in an official capacity beginning in 2023. When the Daily Mail outed her as transgender in 2025, publishing her previous name and a pre-transition photo obtained from her estranged family, the government nearly ended her contract under pressure from right-wing conservative groups — instead, they merely allowed it to lapse, making a lawsuit under the Equality Act 2010 more difficult. She remains active, however, having one of the highest incomes on 2gether, N!Sight's crowdfunding service, with contributors from the UK and around the world. Additionally, she retains licensing agreements with several businesses, both domestic and overseas, who are happy to bank on her continued popularity. The London authorities have continued their working relationship with her despite the government's lack of official endorsement. Following her outing, London Fog helped start the Queer Nova Alliance and has become a strong advocate for transgender equality internationally.

London Fog can control the weather on a macro and micro scale, including powerful gusts of wind, bolts of lightning, and extremes of heat and cold. Her eyes reflect the current state of the weather (or, perhaps, vice versa), and her hair is like a tenuous wreath of fog that likewise shifts with the local conditions.

Ireland, still part of the UK, was not, and even before Brexit people were relocating to the Republic of Ireland to stay in the EU. Now that there's a less porous border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, moving between the two has become significantly more difficult, but Northern Ireland still has one of the highest emigration rates in the UK, as youth relocate to the prosperous Republic where they can make three times what they'd make back in Ulster. Few are inclined to return, and many ultimately apply for Irish citizenship, allowing them the free movement through the EU that Brexit eliminated. Though it's been almost a decade since Brexit became official, many of these issues are still being hammered out in bilateral negotiations, and the list of problems to address continues every day.

Belgium

Having once been the crossroads of Europe for its strategically indefensible geography, Belgium is now the crossroads of the EU thanks to the ascent of both that organization and the UN. With increased attention from the rest of the world has come increased status; tourists flock to Belgium in numbers once reserved for much larger and established states, and international investment is at an all-time high (especially thanks to clever lobbying by the Belgian government during Brexit — half of the "new" corporations in Belgium are actually British transplants). The powerful rub shoulders with one another in Brussels, and in Antwerp the fashion runways welcome the glitterati — but like everywhere that fame and money congregate, there's more going on beneath the surface.

Brussels

Brussels, apart from being the Belgian capital, is host to the major political institutions of the EU. The former "European Quarter" of Brussels has exploded because of the EU's growth (both in size and influence), eclipsing the Old City which, while well maintained, has been largely ignored in the building boom.

EXCERPT FROM TEXT EXCHANGE FROM LEVIATHAN AND UNKNOWN PARTY

Unknown: I'm telling you, Del's a Terat!

Leviathan: If by "Terat" you mean "zip-fucker."

Unknown: Can we not with the "zip-fucker?" I GET why you feel this way, but can we not? After Geryon's little stunt and you all start calling yourself Aberrants which, like, I respect your right to reclaim slurs, but the Teragen needs all the good publicity it can get, and if we can convince Del to come out in support, it'd be a BIG deal!

Leviathan: Easy for you to say, "can we not," prettyboy.

Unknown: I mean, shit, Lev, if it makes you feel any better, I'd do you in a heartbeat.

Leviathan: Not my style.

Unknown: Not into dudes?

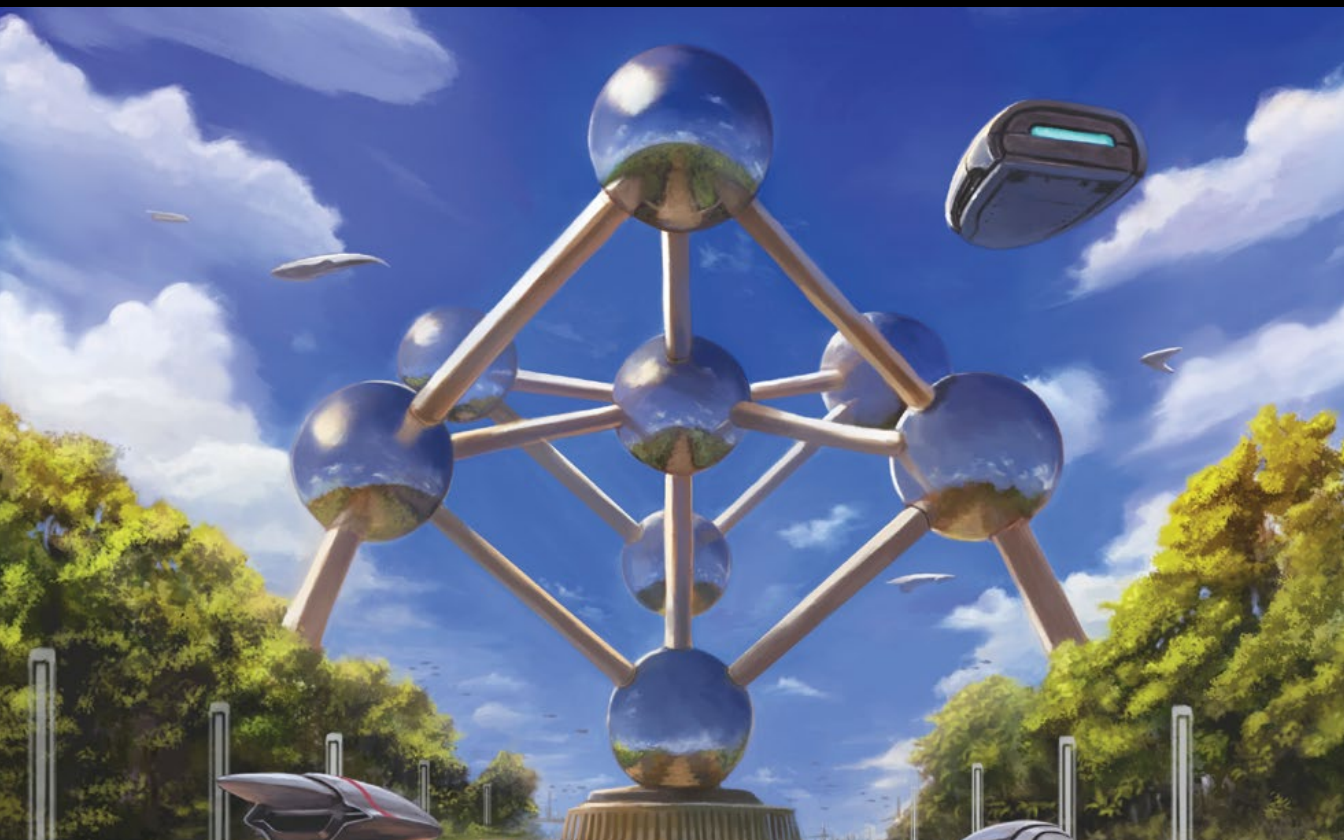
Leviathan: Nah. Not into people without scales.

Unknown: Ouch. That's gotta be a tiny dating pool, man.

Leviathan: You'd be surprised.

As the EU centralizes, the already labyrinthine political moves being made here have only multiplied. These moves not only take place above the table — high level bilateral negotiations, for example — but below it. Some estimates place the number of spies currently operating in Brussels so high that it strains credulity, but virtually everyone working in a legitimate capacity in the city has had an unusual encounter that they're certain was an attempt to recruit or suborn them.

Consequently, Brussels takes security very seriously. Apart from merely conducting regular surveillance sweeps, the EU has made provisions for a supranational team of six novas, who have maintained a 24/7 vigil in shifts ever since the São Paulo



PROFILE: DEL AVESKAMP



Born Adelheid, Del Aveskamp has been a mainstay in both nova and baseline fashion since her eruption in 2020. Tall, charismatic, and endlessly creative, she redefines fashion on a regular basis. Her public persona is theatrical and over-the-top, but she carefully guards her private life — she famously blacklisted a magazine after their paparazzi harassed her wife while they were on holiday, and to this day Del hasn't allowed them access to her events.

Del possesses inhuman precision and blinding speed, literally moving faster than the eye (or most high-speed cameras) can detect. She most frequently uses this to alter clothing on the fly — her most famous trick is entirely replacing a model's wardrobe mid-stride on the catwalk, moving more than quickly enough to preserve her modesty.

blast and regularly assist in breaking up clandestine operations. The Directive's European office is one building among many in the European Quarter (but one of the few built to withstand nova-scale combat), and its agents quietly watch for signs of nova subversion in the machinery of EU governance.

Antwerp

Once a little-known but rising corner of the fashion world, Antwerp has risen to take pride of place in the European fashion scene. While many designers had a hand in this, the Antwerp scene's staying power and visibility can in large part be attributed to Del Aveskamp, who made her name weaving clothes on the fly even before the introduction of eufiber. Any given night likely hosts some sort of debut, and many are accompanied by parties that last into the next day.

Germany

Germany remains one of the most influential voices in the European Union — their economy certainly gives them more than enough weight to throw around to keep it that way. From manufacturing to finance to entertainment and beyond, Germany has worked its way into practically every business sector imaginable in a big way. Still, for some, that's not enough.

The refugee crisis of the early 21st century put a great deal of stress on Europe, with nativist sentiment rising in response to a perceived "invasion" from the Middle East. Ultimately, that nativism resulting in Brexit, which sent shockwaves throughout the EU, and only the fortuitous advent of the Nova Age held the European economy together. With rising fortunes came a slackening of nationalist fervor, but as the new normal settled in, the usual suspects found something else about foreigners to complain about: Project Utopia's and United Nations regulating science and technology.

While it was non-controversial in the initial wake of the São Paulo bombing, five years on both business and cultural conservatives are beginning to have reservations. Not only has the UN shut down projects belonging to German novas, even German baselines have felt the sting — "derivative of novatech" can be stretched to include a lot of technological breakthroughs. Several German firms have relocated operations to countries that actively resist Utopia's Science and Technology Division, such as Japan.

The German Technological Liberties Union is a splinter of a far-right party that, aside from a social agenda that belongs better in the early 20th century than the 21st, is successfully agitating against

technological oversight, claiming that it violates the *Grundgesetz* (the German Constitution). They are expected to win, if not a plurality in the Bundestag come the next election, at least a few seats, which is more than an upstart party has any right to expect. Insiders are beginning to quietly talk in terms of *Verlassen* — not a German exit from the EU in the British model, which would probably cause the EU to collapse and destroy the German economy, but a German-led EU-wide repudiation of UN technological oversight.

France

France is not the only former colonial power in the world, but they do have the distinction of still maintaining colonial-era financial infrastructure across West Africa, which they make a tidy profit from. After the Equatorial Wars of 2021 — a crisis that France, if it did not precipitate, certainly participated in — and following Project Utopia's subsequent transformation of Ethiopia, the French government feared that their control would slip. In the last seven years, France has leaned hard on the old tradition of *Françafrique* — the notion that, despite the colonial era being over, France would continue to have a strong relationship with its former colonies. The late 20th and early 21st centuries saw a decline of the idea, in part due to the unpopularity of French neocolonialism in Africa. As West Africa tries to seize control of its own destiny, France (and numerous other corporate parties) have interfered in the process by quietly hiring Elites to do their dirty work. Sometimes, it's ensuring an election goes a certain way, other times it's annihilating a militant group in a single overwhelming strike, and sometimes it's just security for a particularly valuable rare earth metal deposit that Western interests are exploiting.

The last 20 years have also seen a refugee crisis affecting all of Europe, inflaming nationalist sentiment across the continent. France has been especially swept up in anti-Muslim sentiment: Traditional headwear is banned, public worship is restricted, and government services for anyone without generational roots in France are second-class at best.

Italy

Italy enjoyed a brief respite from its pop-cultural association with organized crime for a few brief years following the wild success of Project Utopia's World Crime Task Force, but in the power vacuum it left behind, the Camparelli-Zukhov megasyndicate arose. With T2M operating out of Venice, Italy

PROFILE: LEVIATHAN

Leonardo de la Rocha erupted early — only a few months after N-Day. Raised between New York, where his father lived, and his mother Teresa's native Venice, he was only fourteen when he erupted, transforming into a strange reptilian creature. His mother, a strict woman and a rising star in a local conservative political party, confined him in her home to save her career. Leonardo continued to mutate as he learned to control his abilities in isolation — further alienating his mother, who was convinced her son had become a monster. In the end, perhaps he did become a monster — he smashed his way free and fled into the canals; Teresa hasn't been seen since.

Leviathan is fully amphibious, covered in extremely hard scales, and possessed of great strength in proportion to his enormous body. His mastery of Flux is such that he can, to a certain extent, control its expression, effectively using mutation to shapeshift into yet more monstrous forms



has been spared much of the syndicate's corruption, but the eyes and ears of the syndicate are still operating right under their noses. Every politician, every police chief, every functionary the new and resilient syndicate suborns makes it that much easier for them to suborn the next. They're operating quietly here, for now, mainly in money laundering, but as T2M's indomitable image flags from losses to the Elites, the rising popularity of the Teragen, and the emergence of the Aberrants, it's only a matter of time before they move operations back into the open.

Vatican City

Two years into his papacy, Gregory XVII has yet to influence the Catholic Church to a significant degree. Born in Portugal, he is relatively young, conservative, and backed by sectors of the Catholic hierarchy determined to push back against what they see as relentless secular overreach. Rumor has it that this includes *Ad Dei Lucem*, the 2025 papal bull that pronounces novas human, and therefore that they have human souls in need of salvation. If this is true, Gregory XVII has yet to make any moves against it, but rumors circulate that a Third Vatican Council may be coming soon, which would give the pope the opportunity he needs to step the church's position back.

Venice

It wasn't so long ago that Venetians were struggling against the inevitable to preserve a city full of history and beauty against the relentless sea. Now, thanks to Project Utopia, Venice is secure, lifted and secured by a combination of nova powers and advanced technology. The canals still exist, but as part of the city's unique charm and design rather than an accommodation of ever-rising tides. The city has rebounded to heights of glamour and influence unknown since before Napoleon's invasion, not least because the city serves as the European headquarters of Team Tomorrow.

Though Team Tomorrow's headquarters lies on one of the artificial islands raised by Project Utopia, T2M has been careful to maintain the image of Venice (a concern raised by locals during Venice's bid to host T2M). As a result, the headquarters looks remarkably like the rest of Venice. Several small buildings, to all appearances separate, are subtly tied together into a single complex that harmoniously coexists with the native architecture — indeed, it's easy to miss if you're not looking for it. Despite the old-world charm, though, the HQ is relentlessly modern beneath the surface, with high-capacity OpNet access, modernized electrical systems with multiple redundant backups, and a state-of-the-art novatech security system that, rumor has it, can tell you what you had for breakfast if you make an evening visit.

Norway

Despite being heavily invested in its oil deposits, Norway has weathered the end of internal combustion without too much difficulty — a native plastics industry has sprung up and is taking advantage of the now-cheap oil and government subsidies, which have stabilized the job market and kept the economy ticking over. Those government subsidies reach essentially everywhere in the economy, and practically every citizen is in some way compensated for their work at least partially by the state.

Oslo was briefly in the running to play host to the European headquarters of Team Tomorrow, and this prompted a wave of new construction — particularly, of a model headquarters that Team Tomorrow could operate from while they constructed a more permanent facility (should they not desire to remain in the one provided). When they were passed over for Venice, however, the bottom fell out of the entire scheme, and the government has been trying to find a way to recoup their investment. The leading plan — still in the early stages — is to form a Norwegian national team of novas, modeled on Nippontai, to operate on T2M's level and raise the profile of the country. So far only a single nova, a local small-time hero who goes by Olav (his actual name), has expressed interest in such a scheme, which is so bogged-down in committee that it hasn't even got an official name yet.

Spain

Spain has always existed in a tension between the central government and its various and highly diverse nationalities — some of which, such as the Basques, Catalans, and Galicians, are known for consistently advocating for greater autonomy within the plurinational state. Driven by the sense of change the Nova Age has inspired, these struggles have only intensified over the last 10 years, driving the wedge between these nationalities and the central government deeper. Self-determination movements have become independence movements, some of whom move openly with widespread public

PROFILE: OLAV HALVORSEN

Olav is a young Norwegian man from Oslo. He lives with his mother, has a moderately popular outdoor skills lifelog stream on the OpNet, and is practically indestructible. Almost pathologically good-natured, he's a common sight around the city — far from only responding to dangerous emergencies such as building fires, he's happy to help people carry groceries, move couches, and a host of other things most novas would never bother with. His affable manner and a remarkable memory for names and faces has practically put him on a first-name basis with much of the city. He's never bothered with a costume or a *nom de masque*; when questioned, he shrugs and says he didn't think it seemed important.

Olav has demonstrated a high level of invulnerability to physical trauma, but other than that the only thing his eruption gifted him with was slight improvements to his already-impressive physique, which remains well within baseline limits.



support. The central government in Madrid refuses to budge on the issue, but privately worries that one or more separatist groups will scrape together the cash to hire an Elite to back them up if they rely on force of arms to keep the peace.

Ibiza

Long famed as the beating heart of its quintessential style of electronic dance music, the Nova Age has made Ibiza one of *the* places to be for fashionable young novas (and those who want to be seen alongside them), thanks to the Amp Room, a club designed to cater exclusively to novas and run by the mysterious Hermes Trimegisto. Despite the local government's attempts to foster a more family-friendly style of tourism, it's still widely known as the "Gomorrah of the Med," and the sheer degree of conspicuous consumption that wealthy novas bring with them and inspire in wannabes has only made the name fit all the better.

Portugal

Having steered away from austerity policies during the 2010s, Portugal's economy was primed and ready

EMAIL INTERCEPTED FROM DIRECTIVE SERVERS

From: acgg634o!@abgqe24.op

To: sp33vb0jg!@gn9apfp.op

Subject: Tracking Update

We're fairly certain, based on residual quantum levels (and a slow but steady depopulation in the local aquatic life) that Leviathan is making his home somewhere in Venice. Unfortunately, we've yet to tie it down, and thanks to the aquastabilization systems Utopia installed, it's impossible to track him to any specific location. Keep an eye on the place. He may not have to come up for air, but he'll show his face soon enough.

for the Nova Boom. There hasn't been a single quarter of negative economic growth in Portugal since 2018, not even during Brexit, and financial markets are taking notice. Despite being overwhelmingly Catholic, Portugal also suffers less from prejudice against Middle Eastern immigrants than elsewhere in Europe (particularly Eastern Europe) — opponents of immigration and accepting refugees do exist, but their voices are far from a majority.

Eastern Europe

Russia's influence in Eastern Europe has only increased over the past decade — Sierka's influence, in other words. Belarus, Ukraine, and the Baltic States increasingly look east rather than west for economic ties and trade partnerships, and though Poland remains an EU member state, it too is feeling the strain of Russian-funded agents and political parties that slowly but surely change the character of the state and the culture.

Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, though their economies are improving with further integration into the wider European economy, are the most common first point of contact for Middle Eastern emigration. The refugee crisis of the mid-teens resulted in reform to the immigration and asylum system, but even that couldn't prepare Europe for the sheer amount of human displacement caused by the collapse of the oil economy. Much of their law enforcement effort is geared towards preventing human trafficking and illegal immigration, and domestic issues are increasingly set on the back burner.

The Balkans, by contrast, are thriving and more integrated with the European economy than ever before — only Serbia remains a non-member state, accession negotiations having been repeatedly delayed by domestic political infighting. Croatia's economy is booming, the Nova Age having greatly expanded the ranks of the aspiring glitterati; Psyche's vacation to a seaside resort in 2026 caused tourism to jump almost 30% over the previous year. Naturism, long popular in Croatia, is enjoying a vogue, and there are entire resort-cities along the Adriatic coast that are officially clothing-optional — a rare few ban clothing in certain districts. Other Balkan nations are playing catch-up — Montenegro is conducting an experiment in total decriminalization of drugs and has legalized the sale of cannabis through licensed cafes and dealers; Bosnia and Herzegovina have built a small but growing film industry around the already influential Sarajevo Film Festival, which is now numbered among the "Big Four" alongside Cannes, Berlin, and Venice.

AFRICA

Utopia may have arrived in Africa, but it remains far from equally distributed. Although the Project has poured considerable resources into rebuilding and development, parts of the continent are still reeling from the damage of the Equatorial Wars and recovering from long-term economic depressions, themselves the results of generations of colonialism and exploitation. While Africa is beginning to experience something of a renaissance, some Africans question whether Project Utopia's largess is just another example of colonialism at work.

The most widespread changes in Africa are the results of Utopia's work. First, and perhaps foremost, is the distribution of the HIV vaccine, which has virtually eliminated the disease throughout the continent. Full distribution is still challenged by pockets of social resistance, lack of education, and corruption, including many fake vaccine scams which have robbed people of their life's savings while undermining trust in the World Health Organization's distribution plan. Nevertheless, Africa is considerably healthier as the menace of HIV/AIDS retreats into the shadows.

Project Utopia is also responsible for many infrastructure projects in Africa, including the expansion of roadways and improvements in power distribution and media access via the OpNet. These have opened new opportunities to distribute needed resources across the continent, so long as the new infrastructure remains undamaged, and the needed resources are not hijacked or sold on the black market after disappearing in a "clerical mix-up."

Lastly, Utopia has been actively involved in ecological restoration in Africa, starting in Ethiopia. The Project's efforts to reverse desertification and other ecological damage sometimes runs up against development and urbanization on the continent and must deal with local governments and border issues.

Northern Africa

Northern Africa remains strongly tied to Europe and the Middle East, although the decade since N-Day has seen the future of northern African nations moving more and more in line with the rest of the continent.

Egypt

Following all the changes of the past few decades, Egypt is a country struggling to find its place in modern Africa, in as much as it aligns with Africa at all. Egypt has long held ties to the Middle East and remains the headquarters of a decimated Arab League. Whereas the Arab nations once pledged billions to help Egypt following the coup in 2013, now Egypt finds itself the most stable nation of the League, trying to offer guidance and leadership to its allies.

Unfortunately, Egypt is not able to offer much in the way of material support. While it did not suffer the severe economic downturns of the larger oil-producing nations, Egypt's economy still took a significant hit, along with an ongoing decrease in foreign aid from the United States, particularly following the signing of the London Accords between Israel and Palestine. The past few years since the development of the OpNet have also seen the revival of Egypt's democratic movement, pitting democratic secularists and progressive Muslims against hardline Islamists in elections and forcing the hardliners further right to satisfy their political base and maintain support. For now, the progressives are gaining ground, in turn providing an example for similar movements throughout the Muslim world.

Libya

The fragile government in Libya was hit hard by the Equatorial Wars, which tore up large swaths of the southern part of the country. Then it was shattered by the collapse of the oil futures market. Radical Islamist factions attempted to seize power in Libya three years ago, plunging the country into another civil war. While the United Nations adopted a policy of containment and encouraging peace talks, various sides hired nova Elites, leading to further quantum-powered conflicts, and a refugee crisis in neighboring Egypt and Algeria, as well as across the Mediterranean in Italy and Greece. Ongoing conflicts have further devastated the nation, with a few failed ceasefires and peace agreements.

A turning point in the Libyan conflict occurred in the summer of 2027, when the Aberrants wiped out an al-Qaeda faction in the country that refused to work with Elites and advocated "death to all aberrant abominations." This led the surviving factions to turn to the United Nations with a new willingness to entertain diplomatic talks, particularly if they were backed up by Team Tomorrow's new presence in Ethiopia. UN diplomats are moving forward with talks to try and stabilize the Libyan state and create a new government with the support of Egypt, and Project Utopia has extended its willingness to help in rebuilding the nation's shattered infrastructure.

Algeria

Like neighboring Libya, Algeria was hit hard by the petroleum market crash, a severe economic depression settling over the country. Hardline nationalist and conservative elements gained greater power in the following election, which was widely criticized as biased and subject to a widespread online propaganda campaign. The new Algerian government promised recovery and prosperity. Since then, they have been working to strengthen long-term economic ties with Russia. This included aid from Russian economic advisors and the additional acquisition of Russian military equipment. The country is still working to replace the role of oil and gas exports in its economy, focusing on alternatives like solar development and hydrocarbon-based manufacturing, with extensive investment from Russian firms.

From a DeVries internal memo

Baraka is an Arabic term for "blessings" or "spiritual power." The north and west African Islamist cult using the term believes novas are bearers or vessels of baraka, spiritual power invested in them by Allah. The Baraka believe the way to receive spiritual power from another is to consume it — literally. Cells of the Baraka cult kidnap and murder novas (or people they believe to be novas) in order to cannibalize them. We know of several incidents in Morocco, Mali, and Ghana. We think at least some of the "nova poaching" Nigeria blames on foreigners is due to the Baraka. The cult operates in small cells, usually led by an "imam" or unofficial religious leader.

There is a practical element to the Baraka's depraved practices: They also "harvest" a great deal of biological material useful in extracting or developing nova-based bio-technologies, which they sell on the black market or trade for a share of those refined materials, like mite,

soma, or adrenocillin. They see those as "distilled" versions of the spiritual essence they seek, sacraments for their practice. They're also a source of cash to acquire things like mox and eclipsodol and the kind of tech they need to kidnap additional victims. Many Baraka cultists are habitual mite users, so they are a threat that should be taken seriously.

Addendum, Anna DeVries: *Orzaiz has made it clear he'll pay a bounty for evidence of any dead Baraka cell. While operatives should exercise caution and not go out of their way, this offers a potential side opportunity.*

Eastern Africa

Eastern Africa, centered on Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, strongly supports Project Utopia, given the miracles Utopia's "Operation Eden" has worked in the five years since it was announced. The nations of this region have seen the benefits of cooperating with Utopia first-hand, and many of them are eager to receive the same attention as Ethiopia, even if that sentiment is not universal.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia is held up as the example of what Project Utopia is trying to accomplish. With the aid of nova powers and nova-enhanced science, the Ethiopian highlands are flourishing, with an end to decades-long cycles of drought and desertification. New hybrid plant strains have increased crop yields to feed one of the most populous nations in Africa, only growing more so with the number of refugees who have arrived from neighboring Somalia and Sudan and parts of western Africa. The vast Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam provides hydroelectric power to the nation, exported to the rest of the continent, and the use of new solar power collectors is expanding in the region.

The capital city of Addis Ababa continues to grow into a high-tech modern metropolis as the presence of Project Utopia attracts new business and investment into the region. This development has drawn more people from the rural areas into the city, and housing construction can barely keep up with demand. The city's infrastructure has been heavily overhauled and improved, including sanitation, better roads, and expanded public transit, although there remains work to be done.

From *T2M N!Sight*, an op-cast documentary

Although Addis Ababa is home to sites like the African Union headquarters, the Lion of Judah Monument, and Africa Hall (the home of UN offices in the city) by far its most famous structure is also its newest: The Team Tomorrow Central headquarters, a shining tower of gold and silver watching over the central part of the city. Come with us and explore the Nege Yegebeya Bota or "Tomorrow Marketplace" crowded with tourists and merchants in the plaza around the headquarters. Then, step inside the shining silver walls and through the vitruvium doors into the vaulted central hall of the home of Team Tomorrow Central!

Kenya

Ethiopia's immediate neighbor to the south, Kenya is a new focus for Project Utopia's attention. Unlike Ethiopia, Kenya's challenges are more social than environmental. Utopia has pledged to aid the country's efforts to become carbon-neutral using hyperfusion in addition to geothermal and hydroelectric power generation. The United Nations is focused on human rights issues in Kenya, notably child labor, sex trafficking, and sexual and gender issues, including mistreatment of women and LGBTQ people. They have been using the distribution of the AIDS vaccine as an opportunity to further educate and advocate on these issues, with some pushback from local and international conservative factions.

Project Utopia's primary interest in Kenya is a proposed plan to use Mount Kenya as a site for an orbital mass-driver launcher or space-elevator. The mountain's high elevation and placement at the Earth's equator makes it the ideal location to minimize the amount of energy needed to achieve escape velocity and lift materials, and passengers, into orbit. Right now, the proposed plans are entirely theoretical, and work is focused on laying groundwork, reaching agreements with the Kenyan government and people, and finding ways to move forward with development with the least amount of impact to the environment and the people living on or near what is considered a sacred site to many Kenyans, some of whom are opposed to the project.

Utopia is not the only party interested in the development of Kenya, however. Both Russia and China have been heavily investing in the nation for the past decade or more. They are primarily interested in Kenyan mineral and land resources, although China has also expressed newfound interest in the development of Mount Kenya. The nation has raised concerns in the UN that have slowed Utopia's research into the development of an orbital facility, some think so China has time to offer a competing proposal.



Sudan

The Sudan sullenly straddles the fence between support for the United Nations and Project Utopia and disdain for their involvement in African affairs. Utopia and UN peacekeepers have worked to settle conflicts in the Darfur region of Sudan and to repatriate numerous Sudanese refugees in neighboring states who wish to return, although many have chosen not to do so. Utopia's World Crime Task Force, in cooperation with international authorities, has worked to eliminate human trafficking in Sudan, particularly in and around Darfur.

Political factions in both Sudan and Egypt publicly support a peaceful resolution of conflicts, but also maintain an unofficial rumor campaign that Project Utopia is anti-Muslim, and the ultimate goal of their human rights campaigns is the elimination of all religious involvement in government and the strict establishment of secular states. These rumor-mills and the spread of online memes makes securing the cooperation of the local authorities and population difficult and has even led to outbreaks of violence. UN investigators believe government factions have funneled money to extremist groups or even nova Elites to maintain conflict in the region to make things more difficult for peacekeepers.

Somalia

Somalia controls all the African coast east of Ethiopia, along with an extended shared border with Kenya. The nation has faced an ongoing undeclared civil war as hardline groups attempt to establish Islamist rule throughout Somalia, and a relatively weak central government is unable to contain them. For the time being, the United Nations has pursued a policy of containing the Somali conflict, although refugees stream into Ethiopia and across the gulf into Yemen. Ethiopian military forces — aided by the UN and Project Utopia — have reinforced the capital of Mogadishu to support the legitimate government and to maintain control of an important eastern port.

The military containment of Somalia inland and along the Gulf of Aden has put increased pressure on the Islamist dissident groups. There has been a resurgence of piracy in the Arabian Sea, with Somali pirates seizing ships and cargoes. Crews are either killed or occasionally ransomed, and Team Tomorrow has stepped in on occasion to rescue a pirated vessel off the Somali coast.

Western Africa

Western Africa, in contrast to the re-greening of Ethiopia, still bears countless scars from the start of the Nova Age, and from centuries of colonization before that. The nations of western Africa recall the heroic novas of Team Tomorrow coming to their rescue — and retreating from the battlefield bloodied, having lost at least two of their own, and letting the Equatorial Wars rage on for months more. Western Africa has learned a lesson: They cannot rely on outsiders for anything other than more conflict and more lives lost and must take care of their own.

Exactly how the nations of western Africa are incorporating that lesson differs. For many, it means warily eying their neighbors while stockpiling as many munitions and hiring or acquiring as many Elites, as they can. For others, it is looking to forge agreements without the aid or interference of outsiders to build a lasting and peaceful alliance but refusing to cede any independence in the process.

Nigeria

The west African nation of Nigeria is a prime example of the region's independence: President Alafin Sango was willing, even happy, to accept offers of aid from the UN and Project Utopia, and even made a proposal for Lagos as the site for a new Team Tomorrow headquarters, which was ultimately passed over in favor of Addis Ababa. Substantial loans, relief supplies, and infrastructure improvement projects were agreed upon and approved.

Not long thereafter, in late 2023, UN and Directive intelligence reported the first incidents of known adherents of the Teragen visiting Lagos, "to enjoy its beaches, nightlife, and culture," according to Count Raoul Orzaiz. In the past several years, Nigeria has positioned itself as a place "where novas are free to be themselves" and a number of local media outlets have run stories and editorials critical of what they describe as "the foreign poaching of African resources" including African novas, often with the pointed suggestion that Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow's presence in Ethiopia amounts to a foreign occupation. Nigeria is happy to accept Project Utopia's aid but reserves the right to continue to criticize both it and the UN, and openly cultivates friendly relations with the Teragen, DeVries, and other factions.

Nigeria has continued to enjoy growth and development as the most populous and wealthiest nation in Africa. The OpNet has brought new business and investment into the country and provided a substantial new platform for Nigeria's burgeoning media industry. Music out of Lagos' recording studios is gaining in popularity worldwide, and the city hosts an annual pan-African music awards ceremony. The nation's film and video production industry (nicknamed "Nollywood") has also seen a huge increase in production, with studios in Lagos, Enugu, and Kano turning out new releases to stream on the OpNet, making Nigeria's film industry the third largest in the world, behind India and North America. These and other growing tech industries have allowed Nigeria to weather the reduction in hydrocarbon income better than most nations.

The capital city of Lagos enjoys an international reputation as glittering modern metropolis, where virtually anything is available for the right price. It draws both locals looking to make it big and international tourists, many of them looking for a thrilling "sin city" experience or possibly the opportunity to see some of the various novas known to show up in Lagos from time to time. This includes infamous members of the Teragen, who often set off a paparazzi photo-frenzy when they show up in the city. Addis Ababa may be the shining new "city of the future," but Lagos is where the *fun* is happening.

While one set of rules apply to the glitterati of the urban centers, Nigeria continues to have a poor human rights record. Sectarian tensions and ethnic violence remain common between different tribal groups. Islamist hardline factions like Boko Haram still seek to abolish the secular government and institute Sharia law, and conservative Muslims regularly protest what they see as the excesses of the country's Elite. Pirates remains active along the coastal regions, focused more on hijacking valuable cargoes than capturing ships, unlike their east African counterparts. The police and security forces are widely known as corrupt and given to abuse, arbitrary arrests, and harassment, making the work of the World Crime Task Force difficult in Nigeria.

Southern Africa

South of the Equator, many of the nations of Africa have been entangled in military conflicts for decades. Some have emerged from recent civil wars or similar upheavals, and they also face widespread issues of corruption, corporate influence, and manipulation by rival foreign governments interested in the region's considerable mineral wealth, particularly the United States, China, and Russia.

PROFILE: ANANSI



"Our web reaches across the whole world now," says Anansi, the most infamous data-broker in Africa, perhaps even the world. Anansi's true identity is unknown; they always refer to themselves in the plural, so it's possible Anansi is actually a group rather than an individual. Likewise, it's unclear if they are or include any novas, but it seems likely, given Anansi's superhuman ability to access information. They first appeared about three years ago, sending anonymous, untraceable messages over the OpNet that began "Let us tell you a story..." but using the term *anansesem* or "spider-tale," an Akan expression for a children's story. Since then, Anansi has provided hacked documents, surveillance, and other data to different media outlets and law enforcement organizations, including Team Tomorrow.

Anansi appears to have no interest in industrial espionage or profit, since all efforts to hire or bribe them have been unsuccessful. They are solely interested in "spreading the stories of fairness, justice, and truth — especially truth" with a focus on Africa and events there. Online "prayers" and "petitions" to Anansi asking for their attention to a problem have become common, particularly in western Africa, and sometimes these requests are answered, although always in accordance with the mysterious storyteller's ethos.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

The south-central Democratic Republic of the Congo has been the site of some of the bloodiest warfare in the past 100 years. Since the region was invaded by a coalition of Rwandan and Ugandan military forces in the 1990s, there have been two recognized Congo Wars and at least two recognized major conflicts which have involved forces from neighboring Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia as well as Rwanda and Uganda. Much of this violence has been over control of the Congo's considerable mineral wealth, particularly in oil, diamonds, gold, and cobalt, and the international market for those goods.

The DRC's President Joseph Kabila, after serving two terms in office, was due to step down in 2016, but delayed the election until 2018, insisting a national census was necessary to ensure a fair election. In the wake of N-Day, President Kabila declared a state of emergency and delayed elections indefinitely, putting down massive political protests that followed in the capital city of Kinshasa. Ongoing unrest and protests led to a coup attempt, setting off part of the Equatorial Wars in 2021, in which hundreds of thousands of Congolese were killed. In 2023, President Kabila was deposed in a coup led by nova Elites which installed General Laurent Matanga as acting President. President Matanga has maintained the DRC state of emergency since his installation, along with a lucrative retainer to DeVries for "security and stabilization" purposes.

Since then, the DRC has been largely stable, with occasional uprisings and actions by rebel groups crushed by government forces supplemented by nova mercenaries. The UN has called for President Matanga to institute open elections in accordance with the nation's constitution but have been put off with the need for "stability in which to conduct open and fair elections." The UN Security Council members remain unable to agree on further action in the region, while also heavily invested in acquiring Congolese mineral resources.

PROFILE: RACHEL ALINSKY



Rachel loves to invent, tinker, and invent some more. She possesses a fiercely competitive streak and phenomenal work ethic, thanks to her overachieving siblings. While Rachel's elder brothers and sister all excelled in their chosen fields, Rachel had to work twice as hard to achieve good grades. She managed to scrape into the top 10 in her class on graduation and earned herself a place at MIT.

As the curriculum increased in difficulty, she studied even harder. She was soon exhausted, stressed, and freaking out over being unable to make her robotics final project work. Then, she erupted. That night opened her mind but didn't change her drive. Understanding came easy so she took on more. In 18 months, Rachel graduated with three bachelor's degrees, three master's, and two doctorates. Utopia offered her employment, but she rebuffed them as she wanted freedom to pursue her own interests. DeVries approached her with an offer of choosing her own research paths which she quickly accepted.

Rachel's nova talents are entirely focused on being the most prolific and talented inventor the world has ever seen. She has grown bored with conventional technology and fascinated by nanomachines and figuring out how to make them work. Right now, she's working on seeing how much power she can fit into ever-smaller devices.

From a Project Utopia internal memo, Dr. Spenser Balmer:

While I cannot confirm with absolute certainty that Bene Manata is responsible for the unusual growth and development of flora in Virunga National Park, I think it likely. I have not had contact with Bene since our parting of the ways, but I recognize her work when I see it. While I understand the United Nations and Project Utopia have concerns regarding the political repercussions, I would encourage consideration of the larger ecological issues as well. The humanitarian crisis in the Congo is but one facet of an even larger threat to life in the region. Nova intervention in such a biodiverse area, threatened by human warfare and poaching, promises to protect it. Whatever the other motives involved might be, I think some good has already come of it.

South Africa

South Africa has been described as "the most protest-rich country in the world," due to its multicultural makeup and long history of ethnic oppression and the struggle to create a more equitable society. Although South Africa shook off the chains of apartheid decades ago, the nation remains plagued by inequality, corruption, and ethnic conflict. Its national motto "Unity in Diversity" has yet to come to pass.

Nevertheless, South Africa has long been a mediator among its fellow African nations, and has economic and strategic partnerships with other nations, particularly the "BRICS" grouping of countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. These ties have only strengthened in the past 10 years, as South Africa seeks to leverage the second largest economy in Africa to expand into various cutting-edge technological fields.

The game-changer for South Africa in the nova age has been one name and one company: DeVries. Company founder Anna DeVries is a native of Johannesburg and took over her father's Executive

Actions business, turning it into an international powerhouse by employing novas as mercenaries. After a demonstration of their effectiveness at a Namibian diamond mine threatened by anti-government riots, the DeVries Agency quickly became the largest employer of freelance novas in the world. Since then, when Anna DeVries and her agency talk, the South African government listens, to the point of shielding the DeVries Agency from both international criticism and local protests. They only need to look at the number of other governments DeVries Elites have overthrown to encourage their desire to remain on the good side of the agency and its owner.

DeVries also has a velvet glove along with its iron fist: Rachael Alinsky, DeVries head of technological research and development. Dr. Alinsky is one of the most brilliant nova inventive minds in the world. Since she is constantly moving on to her next project, DeVries is happy to license many of Alinsky's concepts and prototypes for further development to assist South Africa's growing high-tech sector. Not only has the number of technology firms in the country doubled every year for the past three years, but more and more investment capital and interest are flowing towards South Africa.

THE MIDDLE EAST

The Middle Eastern region has seemingly been the center of global conflict since at least the end of the Second World War. Nations near and far have scrambled for control of the area and its resources. Foreign interests have sought dominance for their needs, either directly or through tangled webs of alliances, economic support, and political overthrow of less pliable governments. These interests rarely consider what the people of the region want or empower them to control their own destinies.

The beginning of the Nova Age brought great potential to the Middle East. Individuals erupted across the region's nations with the same regularity as the rest of the world. These individuals carried the promise of humanity's superhuman potential to aid their nations and bring strength and greater prosperity to the region. Sadly, this potential was barely realized. Sheer statistical weight of numbers meant these novas rarely emerged from the tiny population percentage of the ruling classes. Most novas left their homelands in pursuit of fame and fortune with others of their kind or joined the pursuit of global wellbeing over national interest.

Other novas — most commonly the downtrodden in oppressive regimes — decided to use their newfound power directly against the people who brought misery to their friends and families. Baseline despots were powerless to stop the onslaught of super-powered adversaries. Some managed to call in help and throw their accumulated wealth into the coffers of Elites agencies to purchase protection from the local nightmares their own policies had produced. Most were overthrown by the quantum-fueled powerhouses coming for them. What happened next usually followed the common path of the nova assuming power for themselves and discovering the oft-repeated historical lesson that toppling a government is far easier than maintaining good rulership. Equally frequently the nova lost interest after accomplishing her goal and left a power vacuum where the previous ruler sat, creating more chaos in the country.

Every country in the region has experienced difficulties, but not all of them have descended into poverty and turmoil. Unsurprisingly, novas (or their backing) have played an important part in many of these stable outcomes. The most apparent positive outcome on the world's stage is the nascent peace treaty between Israel and Palestine, thanks to Utopia's intervention and backing. Less obviously, the Saudi Arabian economy has stabilized and begun to show signs of strengthening recently, largely due to the eruption of a royal family member who has taken on the task of maintaining the nation as a regional powerhouse, a stepping stone to becoming a significant global player. Similarly, Iran has turned its attention inwards, reexamining its power structures and governmental processes to decide how it can best survive in the modern world.

From "New Power: The Hyperfusion Revolution," UN Publications, 2027

Admittedly, the clean power revolution ushered forth through hyperfusion and eufiber storage wasn't welcomed by everyone. The Middle East suffered more than any other area as the region's political turmoil made it almost impossible for outside assistance to reach the struggling nations and prevent financial disaster. This, coupled with entrenched reluctance from those who had grown rich from oil, led to the rapid

collapse of several national economies; 2024 was a dark year for these countries, eliminating oil as an energy source. As global oil prices plunged, so too did the fortunes of the ruling classes.

The masses sensed their leaders' weakness, sowing unrest through the populations. In response to falling prices, the OPEC tried to enforce reduced quotas on its member states to artificially maintain profits. This failed fast as non-OPEC oil-producers undercut the cartel to protect their own interests. Saudi Arabia and Iran were the first to abandon OPEC, triggering a rapid cascade of desertion. The OPEC limped along as a broken force for another few months before dissolving altogether by the end of 2026.

Lecture by Professor Fatima Hussein, School of Political Science, University of Nairobi

To see the Middle East as a homogeneous region is a mistake. Though every country in the area has had its challenges in recent years, and some are mere shadows of what they used to be, not every nation suffered — or still suffers — devastation and destruction. A few nations have managed to find stability and are on the path to societal advancement and economic prosperity. Unfortunately, the proximity of these nations to those that are caught in the twin spirals of violence and poverty forces a dramatic contrast between the two.

The region's instability has been profitable to those novas willing to take advantage of our "baseline" suffering. A bloodthirsty minority enact violent revenge on anti-nova clerics and regimes. While their experiences may garner some sympathy or understanding, their brutal methods can never be condoned. Harder to corroborate are those stories of novas who have carved out cults and kingdoms of their own from human populations too weak to resist. Project Utopia and the United Nations have so far declined to comment on these reports. Finally, those combat-hardened novas who call themselves Elites have made fortunes in the service of countries rich enough to pay their fees. Paradoxically, these novas are rarely called upon to use their full abilities, serving more as a deterrent against possible hostile actions from jealous neighbors and unwanted refugees.

Iraq and Syria

The loss of the oil industry was the single biggest factor in crushing the Middle East nations, but the lasting effects of war and extremism on nations that never experienced enough peace and prosperity to rebuild was similarly devastating. Unsurprisingly, the countries most devastated by the regional instability were those that had barely begun to emerge from civil or international conflict before the next disaster struck the area.

The multiple wars that raged across these nations at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st and the rise and fall of the Islamic State within their borders left both Syria and Iraq devastated even before N-Day. Though both the Syrian and Iraqi governments — backed by international allies — claimed victory against the extremists, the populations were exhausted and international interests in the region were similarly fatigued. The insurgent extremist elements and territorial holdouts were prime targets for novas victimized by similar religious hate mongers. These quantum-fueled individuals descended on the region with bloodshed and revenge in their hearts, and a willingness to claim their pound of flesh from anyone in the area, regardless of whether they were guilty or simply victims caught up in years of conflict.

Today, the Syrian and Iraqi governments are all but shattered and unable to mount any defense against rampaging Aberrants. The border between the two countries no longer exists for practical purposes and has engulfed Kuwait and a significant portion of north-eastern Jordan. Only the somewhat moderate religious stance and relative stability of the other bordering nations has kept the destruction from spreading further.

Iran

Iran has weathered the crisis better than anyone expected. Ironically, decades of UN-imposed sanctions taught Iran how to look inwards first for what it needed. In particular, the embargoes, tariffs, and other sanctions applied to Iranian oil forced the country to reinvent its economic and industrial base in the early decades of the 21st century. Iran turned towards biotechnology to increase food production and improve quality, and for its advantages in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries.

Iran saw opportunity in hyperfusion's destruction of the oil market. After decades of contention, it quickly abandoned its nuclear program, as nuclear weapons were little deterrent to human-sized threats that could strike and be gone before any retaliation. With Iran's nuclear program gone, the UN had little choice but to honor old agreements and open international gateways to other areas of trade and assistance.

Iran's economic recovery is not the nation's only

DIRECTIVE EMAIL INTERCEPT, IRANIAN GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION HUB

Mr. Prime Minister,

We have received another warning with locations, dates, times, and suggested counter-measure tactics. It is a single-sided typed sheet and was again left in a secure area where it could not help but to be discovered. Our intelligence agencies are still nowhere closer to identifying our "benefactor" or their motives. I suggest we commence preparations but proceed with utmost caution — though the last three missives have been accurate, we cannot fall to complacency.

POST-IT ADDED TO PRINTED EMAIL

Wesley,

Please schedule a meeting with my grandfather. You're welcome to attend as well. This kind of stunt has his fingerprints all over it. What's he up to?

Thank you,

Maggie

change. A growing political movement has swept across the country, encouraging greater Iranian isolation despite the world finally reengaged with them. Powerful conservative religious factions are hostile to the any nova presence in Iran. In response to this perceived discrimination, the Aberrant faction of novas has taken to raiding Iranian cities to cause as much mayhem and devastation as possible before fleeing. Somehow, Iran has found a way to predict when and where these attacks will occur and has countered the most recent attempts with targeted and very effective force.

Israel and Palestine

With the backing of the UN and the London Peace Accord bringing genuine peace to the two countries,



PRIVATE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SOPHIA ROUSSEAU AND JUSTIN LARAGIONE

Justin, thank you for acceding to the request to commit additional Utopian resources and expanding border patrols along the outer Israel-Palestinian border. We cannot only be content with keeping peace between two historic foes, as many external enemies turn envious gazes towards this UN jewel. My sources tell me that the Teragen's Aberrant faction is particularly interested in testing Utopia's resolve. I have embedded several Team Tonight monitors within your Utopian elements with authorization to summon my fast-response units as required. I predict it will be infinitely preferable if Team Tonight stops any invaders before they can reach the UN-protected area, and certainly less of a public relations headache for you.

neither Israel nor Palestine were adversely affected by the collapse of the oil industry. With a booming technology industry and national approach to renewable energies, Israel embraced the introduction of hyperfusion. For Palestine, the Accord set requirements on the UN to help build economic stability and not just provide border security, to help the country be able to stand on its own on the international stage. The UN and Project Utopia are both fiercely protective of the peace nova-backed negotiations brought to the region and are unwilling to let it end with the regional instability.

Saudi Arabia

The Saudi monarchy was long into its slow-but-steady economic and civil reforms when the first novas appeared. The country was still heavily dependent on oil production when hyperfusion was introduced and was hit hard by the desolation of the petroleum market but had some other industries — and foreign investment — to fall back on. The Saudi government was quick to desert OPEC to demonstrate its independence from the oil market to its allies, which bought it a little more time to work out how to recover from the financial blow.

The economic survival of the country came by chance when one of the princesses erupted in 2026. Supplementing her family influence with her quantum abilities, Princess Hanan carefully and quietly suggested several quick shifts to Saudi government policy that have stabilized the economy and began its trajectory towards growth. Her ideas and political maneuvering have made her a close confidant and advisor to the king, and she has managed to bring about several socially progressive changes — especially regarding the role of women — while avoiding angering religious conservatives in the government and society.

Though it is still early days, and the country has massive regional turmoil to navigate, Saudi Arabia has attracted the positive attention of Utopia and several multinational corporations. Saudi Arabia would greatly benefit if these organizations can be persuaded to move aspects of their operations to the country, and help Saudi Arabia rise above the unpopular impressions so much of the rest of the world has about the region.

ASIA

The countries throughout the massive continent of Asia have all greatly changed in the 10 years since the Galatea explosion. The emergence of novas has changed the world, and Asia has changed with it. Each of the global leaders in Asia has reacted to novas, Project Utopia, and the changes in the United Nations. Some have chosen to essentially close themselves off from international cooperation, while others remain supportive of global efforts. Even within the supportive, cooperative countries, there is a great deal of mystery and *realpolitik*.

While organized crime has been greatly diminished worldwide, powerful organized crime syndicates still exist across Asia. These syndicates influence everything from technology to politics. This is especially dangerous because many Asian countries are becoming increasingly prominent global players. Using the country's success and presence, the organized crime syndicates distribute illegal technology and install crime family heads into positions of political power.

Like the west, religious cults have formed around

novas throughout Asia. The most well-known is likely Japan's *Shindokyo movement*, but many across Asia see novas as avatars or other representations of enlightenment. Though this may not be limited to Asia, these religions have deep roots in Asian culture.

In the 10 years since N-Day, a great deal has changed throughout the world. While the borders may remain the same, the political, cultural, and economic situation across Asia is entirely different. Many countries rose to political prominence only to have major organizations like Project Utopia focus their time and attention on smaller, less developed countries. Similarly, many countries feel that Project Utopia is an untrustworthy organization and, while cooperation may be useful currently, it may not be the case for long.

China

Since N-Day, China has greatly increased its global influence. While the United States becomes less and less relevant as a world superpower, China, along with India and Brazil, takes the country's place. To move their country's interests forward and to protect their ongoing growth and prominence in economic and diplomatic arenas, China became a benevolent, reasonable, and cooperative global citizen. Although still under fire for their recent use of internment camps the current government has largely dismissed concerns as the actions of a prior administration. Not everyone's convinced of the change, particularly the recently freed members of the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Hui minority groups, but so far the Chinese government appears to be turning over a new leaf. As the country's economy and resources continued to increase, China quickly made and solidified relationships with powerful organizations like the UN and Project Utopia. However, China had hidden intentions in creating these relationships.

China's international policy can best be described as "playing it close to the vest." The UN and Project Utopia both offer immense opportunities and protection for China. With the emergence of novas, China is not the only nation that finds the allies in the UN and Project Utopia to be helpful, even if not ideal. While they may be willing to offer these organizations a seat at the table, it is only under their own terms. While China hasn't thus far outright rejected Project Utopia or the UN, the country doesn't always play by their rules. Rather than publicly reject the international organizations, China goes along with their plans, but the country always puts their own interests first.

The country is also well-known for its pragmatic approach to novas. Though many have come to trust novas over the past decade, China puts more emphasis on the mystery of novas than most countries. No one quite knows how eruption works and research is still being performed on superhumans to better understand them – and not always with the full cooperation of the nova. China, in the interest of keeping their country safe, has approached the phenomena with caution.

Transcript from "The Great Firewall"

Even with their new focus on international cooperation, China keeps its citizens locked away from the full OpNet via the so-called Great Firewall. This was an unpopular decision, but one on which the country was unwilling to compromise. This was, unintentionally, a representation of how China deals with the international community. China is willing to let Project Utopia and the UN in, but only under certain conditions that are sure to not change their control on the country's population. The firewall was part of their demands for even allowing the OpNet to be installed in their country. To avoid cutting Chinese citizens off from the OpNet entirely, their demands were met. This drew a great deal of criticism from journalists and free speech activists.

China has defended its actions, saying that their approach to the OpNet protects its citizens from manipulation. The country argues that they have a right to censor information within their borders. Censorship is something that the government sees as a great benefit: With only limited information, they believe that their population is easier to control. Additionally, it has the practical benefits of filtering out false or misleading news. When part of the population can become a nova at any moment, strict control is considered necessary.

However, the full OpNet can be accessed even in China by using VPN or TOR services. Despite being an extremely powerful and secure system, the OpNet is not immune to these holes in its security. Some suspect that these loopholes were purposefully ignored to allow Chinese citizens full access.

China has a complicated relationship with novas. While novas are an important show of strength both for the military and for their workforce, China also fears the consequences of rogue novas. To keep them in line, novas have the same OpNet censorship

and mandatory patriotism as the rest of the citizens. Additionally, novas are quickly identified and pulled out of the population for "training." Chinese novas have little choice other than to serve China.

Despite the incentives to stay closed off from the rest of the world, there are many reasons why China has made connections with Project Utopia. Even before N-Day, China was an ever-growing superpower. The country was hosting major international sporting events and was a major player on the world stage. Now, the same is true, but the country is more powerful and there are new factors in play. In order to keep its place as a global superpower, China must play by the new rules. Novas changed more than crime-fighting and technology when they erupted: They also became one of the most powerful political tools.

Novas are a powerful resource, and, like other countries and organizations, China sees the benefit in keeping novas on its side and obscuring the true number of novas in the nation. China has been "skimming" novas from its population. This secret project involves the country failing to accurately report their nova numbers while also convincing these novas to become completely loyal to their country. Without an accurate report of how many novas reside in China, it's tough for the international community to judge the power of the nation. This is exactly what China wants.

By skimming these novas, China is creating an army of nova soldiers of which few can judge the power. Though each nova has their own unique talents, they are each extremely useful to powerful institutions. There is a lot of incentive for countries to underreport their nova numbers until the newly transformed novas are completely loyal. China seems to be taking the lead on this method. While other countries are afraid to completely invest in their nova resources, China trains undocumented novas. In less than a decade after the first nova appeared, China had already shown off their secret nova soldiers in an international conflict.

This nova skimming became apparent to the rest of the world during the conflict in the Kashmir region. While the three countries (China, India, and Pakistan) battled, China displayed a show of force by using nova operatives. This took the other countries by surprise, though the move did not win them the conflict. Still, the country's nova skimming and training remains an open secret, as China has not officially acknowledged the program. Project Utopia intervened and demilitarized the region, which has been met with cooperation.

China has been doing a fair amount of research on novas. They have invested a great deal of resources into understanding how novas work, and, if it comes to it, how to stop them in case they go rogue. Their biggest project in this regard is the Directive. This project balances Project Utopia's optimistic view towards novas by providing an aggressive taskforce dedicated to defeating dangerous novas. China, along with several other countries, funds the Directive as a failsafe procedure.

In many ways, China's priorities to their country and the world's priorities are in line with one another. China wants to know more about novas, what other countries are doing, and how to stop novas that get too powerful and decide to cause mass destruction. These pursuits protect the integrity of the country and help the world along the way. The relationship, so far, has remained mutually beneficial.

Moving forward, China will likely continue to play both sides. While the country will appear to be a benevolent and cooperative country, it will likely also continue to deal in secretive nova skimming and government-sponsored censorship. These "dark stars" are expected when calculating total nova numbers, but most don't expect government-sanctioned dark star programs. Even with the world knowing about the project after the Kashmir conflict, China shows no sign of change. Their cooperation with world leaders does not mean they will abandon their own projects.

In their attempts to create a population optimized for its loyalty and power, the country has engaged in shady dealings. This isn't unheard of for nations who want to both protect and control their citizens. Where almost everywhere else in the world, novas are met with instant celebrity, Chinese novas are met with training and conditioning. These secret political dealings are a cause for concern for other nations around the world.

China's investment in both nova power and nova failsafe programs is the country's investment in its future. Though the country is expending a lot of resources to fund both projects, presumably, one of the two options will be correct. If the Nova Age continues then they have an army of novas on the side of China. If novas eventually start to take over, the country will be able to deal with that as well.

India

India's significant population means that it also has many novas. Like other countries populated with a great deal of novas, this has led to an increased amount of power on the global stage. India was a well-known country before N-Day, but the increase in novas has led to an increase in a very valuable resource. Additionally, like China, India took the opportunity after the Galatea explosion to become a more prominent global superpower. With so many novas, India has become more relevant in both global politics and pop culture.

Like the United States, India approaches Project Utopia cautiously. After their interference in the Kashmir region, the country is bitter towards the organization. India controlled a large amount of the land and a clear majority of the population. The region was fought over for decades with little diplomatic progress before devolving into a full-blown conflict. Project Utopia intervened and made the region a demilitarized zone. This compromise was accepted by the three nations, but this drove a wedge between Project Utopia and India.

This adds to a larger issue of India not getting enough positive attention from Project Utopia and The United Nations despite their global influence. Instead, the focus of Project Utopia and their allies in the international community has turned to less developed nations. Rather than pouring their resources into resource-rich nations like India, Project Utopia has focused their efforts on helping under-developed nations thrive.

As a result, India asserts that they do not need the organization's help. This helps them to save face: If they publicly state that they are not in need of any help, then they cannot be slighted when they do not receive it. The country asserts their sovereignty while also choosing to begrudgingly accept Project Utopia's demands rather than go to war with the international community.

India isn't where it wants to be politically. Now that it has achieved the status of an international political leader, it wants to take in the resources promised with the title. However, because Project Utopia's priorities are so different from the country's own, this is unlikely to happen. Once the country has reached the top, the rules have changed.

Beyond their international relations, India has built a culture around novas. Despite the Zurich Accord, some see novas as being on par with avatars. This changes public perception of novas as a whole. Even though eruption seems to be at random, a lot is immediately expected of novas. In many ways, novas truly are gods among humankind. However, despite their immense power, novas are still human.

Collectively, it's hard to group novas in such a simple way. Novas are as diverse as the rest of humankind. Some may have the potential to be prophets, but, among the thousands of novas, there are vast differences in morals. Even preaching messages of good can be dangerous when taken into the hands of overzealous followers. By becoming holy symbols, novas can revel in the attention and praise, or they give up their right to be wrong.

While some novas love the attention of being celebrities and holy figures, others are likely uncomfortable with the arrangement. However, novas often become used to their actions affecting more than just their own lives. Novas have power, and they often use that power to fight for what they believe in. Because their power is so vast, each action becomes a teaching for their followers.

Like in other countries, this brings some unwanted attention from critics. Following novas as holy prophets leads to everything from fanaticism to terrorism. These are dangerous consequences for a nation that just recently rose to top status. Beings with such immense power may be a sign, but a sign of what? While many novas do good deeds, just as many others use their powers for evil.

Excerpt from *From Krishna to Slider: Novas and Religion* by Dr. Vijay Laghari

When novas emerged, the general population used familiar stories from religion to explain the phenomenon. Followers of religions may assign avatar status to novas, or the novas themselves may declare themselves divine. However, when novas begin to deviate from the assumed actions of their avatars, their fanbase splits. While some see the nova's actions as new holy word, others are unwilling to accept the change.

There has been some conflict between novas who have been declared an avatar of a deity who has been decided is another nova. Devoted followers are unlikely to reconcile that the avatar can exist in two bodies. Depending on the nova's personal beliefs, they may publicly denounce the other nova. Alternatively, they may reject the idea that they themselves are divine at all. This may or may not sway their fans, however.

DIVINE NOVAS

In India as well as other countries, novas are so much more than just superpowered celebrities. In fact, they're closer to avatars. This is unsurprising, as cults have popped up around multiple novas worldwide. However, this goes beyond simple nova obsession and has a history rooted in India's culture.

When novas get their powers, responsibility always follows shortly after, but even novas likely didn't anticipate their ascension to avatar-status. This can be a great deal of pressure for novas who are suddenly expected to be perfect, holy beings. Novas, like everyone else, make mistakes and have imperfect morals. It's hard enough for the average nova to avoid disappointing their fans. It's especially difficult for novas who are largely perceived to be gods in human form.

Divine novas are found worldwide, but often, cultures will assign their own religious meaning to novas. In India and Japan, the novas become avatars, where as elsewhere, they may simply be religious prophets or an omen of what's to come. Individuals can assign their own meanings or follow individual novas, but the country's culture and major religious influences will color how baseline humans see novas.

This brings up interesting implications for novas who are thought to be divine. If they also follow these teachings, does the nova believe that they are a holy figure? If they do not believe, how do they feel about being seen as a holy figure? Is it possible to renounce their holy status without renouncing the entire faith?

Novas can use their power to fight for their morals. When there's many others watching and taking their actions as holy lessons, novas must decide how much, if at all, their followers will influence their actions. Moreover, there may be overt pressure from religious institutions for novas to perform in certain ways and publicly state certain viewpoints.

Because novas marked a major change in the world, people reacted with major changes in their spiritual beliefs. Before, prophets could perform miracles. Now, it's possible for your next-door neighbor to perform them as well.

Japan

Unlike other nations, Japan has chosen to mostly separate itself from the work of Project Utopia. While it isn't openly hostile towards the organization, it has chosen to become a competitor. Unlike other countries, who still publicly work with Project Utopia while secretly pursuing their own interests, Japan has cut themselves off almost entirely. They remain a member of the UN, but they largely choose to ignore Project Utopia.

Japan believes that they can harness the potential of novas, like Project Utopia. However, the island nation plans to do this entirely on its own. So far, this plan has been relatively successful. *Saisho*, a series of government subsidies incentivizing the employment of novas, has completely revitalized the country's tech sector and their overall economy. Japan was already a leader in technology, but The Nova Age has propelled Japanese-produced technology decades into the future in only 10 years' time.

Japan feels targeted by Project Utopia. This has led to an immense stand-off between Project Utopia and Japan. Neither is willing to cooperate with the other, and Japan's place in international politics largely came to a standstill as a result. The biggest drawback to this is the increased investigations into the country's tech sector. Because technology is their biggest export, these sanctions have the potential to be detrimental to the nation's growth. Japan almost left the UN over this, but has, for now, chosen to remain a member.

Japan's nervousness regarding Utopia's Science and Technology division largely has to do with the technology black market that operates within their country. The black market syndicate, Kuro-Tek, largely ignores Project Utopia's rules about prohibited technologies and produces them anyway, selling them to whoever will pay.

Despite being a small island nation, Japan has two of the most powerful crime organizations in the world: Kuro-Tek and the Yakuza. Originally, Kuro-Tek was a part of the Yakuza. The Yakuza, empowered by the massive decrease in organized crime, was able to become the dominate seller of

black-market technology. Eventually, the portion of the Yakuza dealing with the advanced technology split off and became Kuro-Tek.

While the island nation may isolate itself politically, it follows the cultural goings-on of novas worldwide. While the most famous novas in Japan are Japanese, Japanese fans are just as likely to be fanatical about a nova from anywhere else in the world. The Japanese obsession with novas has become a phenomenon.

Japan still exports and imports a great deal of pop culture. They adopt fashion from other countries worldwide and follow famous novas. Likewise, parts of the Western world remain obsessed with Japan and Japanese culture. Self-professed Japanophiles follow Japanese culture and their innovations in technology to the rivalry between Nippontai and Team Tomorrow Asia/Pacific.

Japan's view on novas is that they can be a powerful resource and should be used as such. In addition to Saisho, Japan is in the unique situation of having two superpowered teams looking out for them: Nippontai and Team Tomorrow. While the Team Tomorrow novas may have passed up their patriotic service opportunities in Nippontai, they still protect the nation and have become huge celebrities. Most Japanese people view novas as celebrities rather than threats.

On a practical level, it is useful to employ novas. Novas that specialize in technology helped to manufacture the sudden increase in technological innovation. This has been one of the hallmarks of the nation in the late 2010s and 2020s. Japan was always known for creating some of the latest and greatest tech, and, with Saisho, they have come out miles ahead of their competition. It will be a long time before Japan is unseated as the world's technological superpower.

Transcript from N!Sight's Documentary Special

The Shindokyo, a new religious movement in Japan, is increasingly popular among young people in Japan. Although they say it means "Teachings of the New Path", everyone knows the "shin" means god and those gods are novas.

Some believe that the sect is dangerous. After a 2022 subway bombing in Japan, Project Utopia and other law enforcement kept a close eye on the cult. Though the leader, the Divine Masato, claims to have had no knowledge of the attacks, some suspect that his teachings at least influenced the event. The suspects in the bombing admitted that they caused the explosion to force nova eruption.

The religion preaches non-violence, but the subway terrorist attack in Tokyo has left some questioning the religion. This has alerted the international community to the religion's presence. While many internationally judge the religion for the terrorist attack, many Japanese citizens still follow the religion.

The main tenets of the religion are that novas are avatars for divine beings. Novas, it claims, will lead the people toward enlightenment. According to the religion, all novas are enlightened. Some can reach the potential to become Bodhisattvas themselves. Eruption is considered a holy process and part of the path to enlightenment. This view can be traced to some Japanese trying to force enlightenment and dying in the process. This is similar in nature to the Western Church of the Immanent Eschaton. Religion springing up around novas is not uncommon, but it can lead to terrible consequences. Japan has some of the most severe of these cases.

The Shindokyo movement has been blamed in part for the exaltation and extreme celebrity of novas in Japan. While all novas are famous to some degree, many zealous nova fans live in Japan. As a result of the fame culture, the novas that the religion focuses on changes quickly as new and more interesting novas emerge and step into the spotlight. However, many novas still maintain their holy status among followers.

The "new messiah" complex of Shindokyo greatly mirrors celebrity culture. While many come and go, retaining their celebrity status among loyal followers, the bulk of the religion follows whatever nova is new and interesting. This creates many gurus in the religion. If every nova is a prophet, then there are conflicting teachings. Constantly shifting from nova to nova may help cover up moral inconsistencies.

N! Sight: Nippontai and Team Tomorrow-Asia/Pacific

Fans line the streets waiting for their heroes to come home. Scarves and hats say the name of their favorite team, and confetti swirls in the wind. While uninformed passerby may assume the crowds are for a professional sports team, they are gathered for novas.

Japan has two major nova teams: Nippontai and Team Tomorrow Asia/Pacific. In late 2019, not even a year after T2M's creation, Japan created their own national nova crime-fighting team. This quickly split the country, with some supporting their favorite novas from Project Utopia's T2M and others choosing to support their country's personal team of novas.

However, the presence of two super-powered teams hasn't been enough to entirely deter crime. While organized crime has been largely eradicated worldwide, the Yakuza, one of the most dangerous and well-known organized crime operations, still functions in Japan.

While Nippontai may not be as prolific worldwide, they certainly have fans across Japan. Huge crowds gather for a chance to see members of the team, and, when the team isn't busy fighting bad guys, they can be seen in advertisements and TV shows on any station. They can't even go anywhere in public without their picture and location being posted on social media, causing crowds to almost immediately gather.

Don't worry about T2M though! Their Japanese following is just as loyal. The rivalry between the two super-powered teams is generally good natured, even if some fans take it too far.

Russia

Russia, despite the crushing blow of hyperfusion technology making their resources in natural gas essentially worthless, have managed to stay a large part of the international economy. This is thanks to Minister of Finance Vladimir Sierka. Sierka, a nova skilled in economics, not only saved the country from near financial collapse, but maintains the country's stake in international progress.

Sierka also doubles as the shadow-ruler of Russia. Though Sierka is not the president, he is the one controlling the country from behind the scenes. Many remember Sierka's ingenuity that saved the economy so, though he makes less-than-ethical decisions, he remains in power.

However, Sierka is not the only one running the country from behind the scenes. Alexi Zukhov, one of the heads of the Megasyndicate, and the most powerful mob-boss on the Eastern Hemisphere, is involved with the country's shadow leadership. What most know about Zukhov is simply that he is the head of a criminal empire and one of the few remaining organized crime bosses. What many, including Zukhov himself, likely don't know is that Zukhov's ability to escape situations at just the right moment or use his utter ruthlessness to his advantage is due to extraordinary ability. Zukhov is a Talent, and his powers combine luck with ruthlessness.

Sierka and Zukhov take Russian oligarchy to an entirely new level. Sierka's brilliance saved the economy and serves to keep him — and the criminals he supports — in power behind the scenes. Their alliance keeps both men in power. This has led to much of Russia's economic success but, with criminals running the country, it's become nearly impossible to stop organized crime. Sierka's accomplishments have not gone unnoticed to the world, and it's likely that many are clued into what is really going on with the country's government.

This ideology has not been limited to Russia. The fatalistic viewpoints of the Russian people have crept into the minds of their allies who support the Directive. While the United States and Great Britain are already inclined to be distrustful of Project Utopia, Russian paranoia has seeped into other countries' policies towards Project Utopia. The countries involved with the Directive are much more likely to distrust Project Utopia and eventually progress into outright hostility toward the organization.

Due to the shadow government and Russian mafia, even novas often must keep a low profile and work behind the scenes to achieve their goals. Despite Russia's attempts at appearing open, within the country there is a great deal of secrecy. The best way to get something done in Russia is through espionage and backdoor dealings. Novas in this country will succeed if they understand the behind-the-scenes political structure.

Despite the instant celebrity of novas, in Russia, it's best to keep to yourself. Novas who flaunt their celebrity may catch the attention of organized crime or politicians with whom they have disagreed. Most powerful people in Russia are willing to work outside the law to achieve their end goals. This is just how things work in Russia. Novas who can adapt to the country's closed-off culture will do well.

Excerpt from "Modern Russia," part of N!Sight's *Global Culture in the Age of Novas*

Sierka's success with the country's economy has allowed him to operate for as long as he has. Though the country does not follow democratic law, as they want their citizens and the rest of the world to believe, there is still support for Sierka. However, even if the citizens of Russia wanted him out of power, it would be difficult to do without a full revolt.

Russia has never come to blows with Project Utopia in a combat situation, like in the Kashmir region, or had sanctions placed on them like Japan, but they are still suspicious of Project Utopia and their intentions with novas. Russia has seen first-hand what powerful tools nova can be, but the fatalistic culture brings natural suspicion.

PROFILE: VLADIMIR SIERKA



As a baseline, Vladimir Sierka was an economic mastermind who understood that all power came through control of resources. He constructed his authority through careers in the Russian Security Service, the Mafiya, and then politics. Unlike many other powerful men, Sierka controlled his ego and was smart enough to recognize the advantage of working in the shadows.

Sierka's eruption late in life gave him more tools for greater ambition. With quantum-fueled genius, Sierka ensnared Russian politicians, businesspeople, and criminal leaders in a tangle of favors and obligation. The dying oil market gave Sierka a rare challenge, maneuvering Russia's resources where needed to secure its economic future and his position as Minister of Finance, but with little doubt over who truly controls Russia.

Sierka has never revealed any powers besides his genius, though rumors abound. His beyond-human mind has come to see baselines as the greatest limitation on economic efficiency. Irrationality threatens the whole system. Economic perfection requires a rational arbiter like Sierka to oversee it. Unfortunately, late eruption has robbed Sierka of the time he needs to perfect the system, so he must first deal with the distraction of longevity. To this end, Sierka identifies novas with high survivability potential and arranges deadly challenges so he can study their responses. Unfortunately for his victims, these trials are intended to test the nova to destruction, as anything less would be unsuitable.

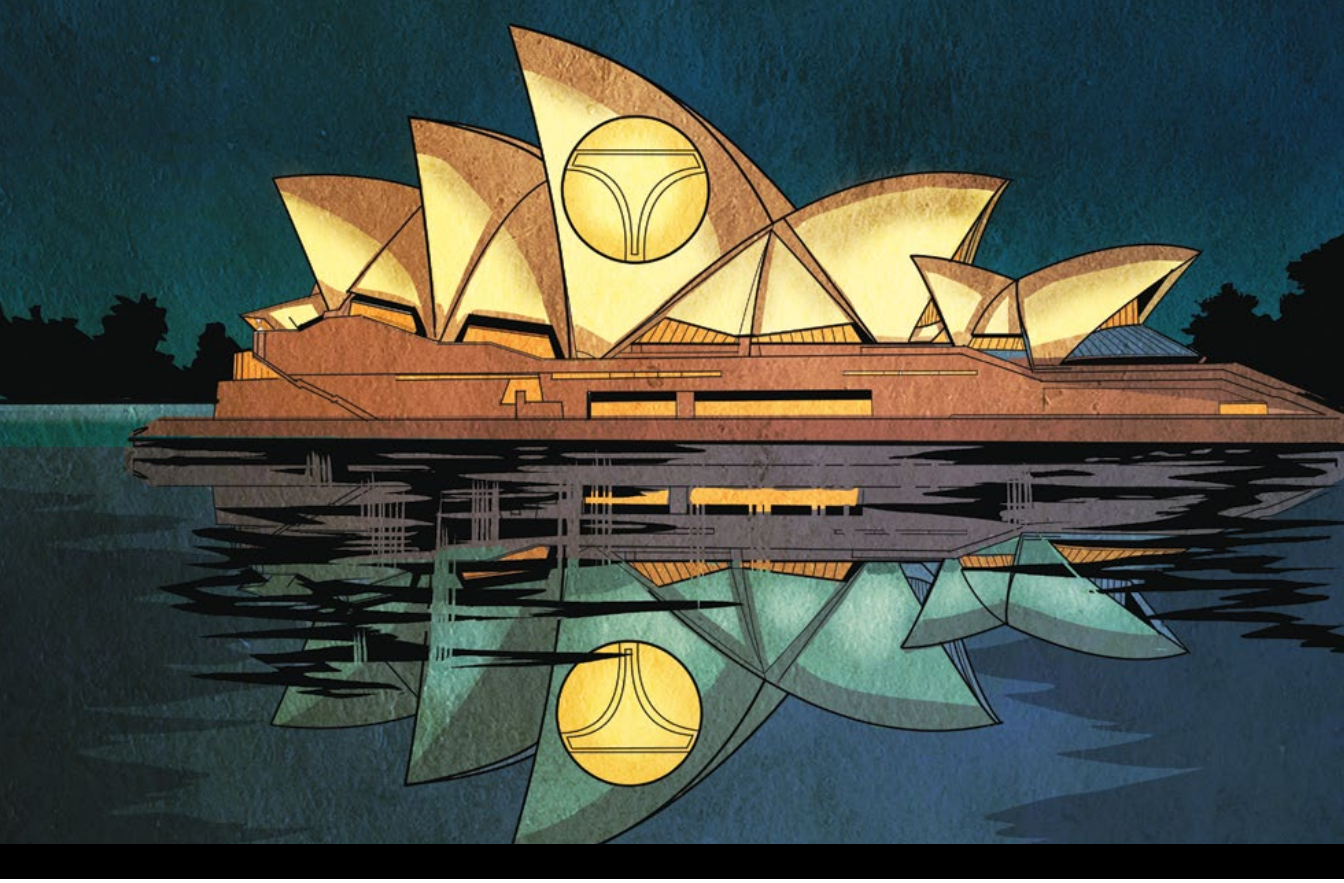
Russia, unlike some other countries, takes a genuine interest in maintaining its alliance with the UN. These alliances keep Russia an international leader. Sierka believes that this is in the country's best interest. While it may be tempting to hoard novas (like China's speculated "skimming" program), Russia chooses to openly report their nova numbers.

Still, Russia also participates in nova failsafe programs like the Directive. It is the view of many Russian people that the country should control more powerful nova assets, but the government believes firmly that fail-safe measures are the better long-term investment. Rather than hoarding and training novas to protect their country, they protect their country against novas.

AUSTRALIA

In the early years of the 21st century, Australia found itself pulled between powerful competing global interests. On one side was its longstanding traditional partners, Britain and the United States, with shared colonial heritage, alliances through war and peace, and similarities of culture and desires. On the other side was the rise of influence and power in Asian nations, especially China and the political responses from other Asian nations to ensure their interests weren't lost in the repositioning of 20th century geopolitical expectations.

The rise of populist isolationist politics within the traditional partners suddenly left Australia with the need to reinvent itself and rediscover its place in the world. Despite its ties to America and the UK, Australia had worked hard with its neighbors to position itself as both a Pacific nation and one with shared interests and goals to Southeast Asia. That the relationships were



often difficult and founded on mutual wariness didn't prevent the regional players from understanding their interests were better served together than apart.

Australia was as blindsided by the appearance of novas as any country. As a small population, the nation had few eruptions of its own, and those who did rarely stuck around for long. Much like the big-name Hollywood stars who had come before them, Australian novas quickly moved away from the country to seek their destinies elsewhere. They still had the Aussie sense of patriotism and love of country, but knew that fame, fortune, and adventure were ready for them to claim somewhere other than Australia.

As the world changed seemingly overnight, Australia needed to shift its stance once again. It wanted a piece of the new nova superstars but couldn't offer the enticements other nations could. Instead, Australia worked its reputation as a valued regional partner.

Excerpt from Opcast,
Daybreak with Stephanie Myers, Sydney edition

Melissa Gusmao is back home in Sydney, taking a break from her busy schedule spending her days designing high-yield, grow-anywhere crops to feed the world, and her nights glamming it up on the catwalk for her own fashion label. She's back in Australia fulfilling a promise to her childhood best friend, becoming maid-of-honor at the school-teacher's wedding. Daybreak was lucky enough to catch a few words with Melissa before her security team whisked her away to where she's staying at an undisclosed location.

Australia was just as eager to host Team Tomorrow's Asia/Pacific expansion as every other nation in the region. However, understanding the geopolitical currents and the financial and political capital required to make a successful bid, the Australian Government abruptly changed its tactic. Australia offered to support Indonesia's negotiations rather than making a play of its own. Indonesia initially met this sudden and surprising support from its southern neighbor with suspicion, but agreed to the offer, as the strength of both countries behind the representations to Team Tomorrow made it almost impossible for Utopia to say no.

When T2M-AP opened its doors on an eastern Indonesian island, Australia was positioned to offer support (backed by the Indonesian government) to the newly installed team. Australia had open spaces in abundance with old weapons testing ranges and training and wargaming grounds scattered across the country. Here, Team Tomorrow's novas could test out their powers or trial the workings of some

PROFILE: PRATIMA "SPLASH" BASHAM



Pratima's tragic story drives her to always do better and be stronger for the people who need saving. Pratima was raised in a traditional household in a small community on the banks of the Mahi River in India. She was happy surrounded by love and community. She fell in love with Aarav and was content with her life.

This all changed on Pratima's wedding day. At the end of the ceremony, Aarav escorted her to the boat they would take along the river to their new life together. Along the journey, the boat caught on something and capsized. When Pratima awoke, the currents had brought her safely to shore but there was no sign of Aarav. The river's waters parted as she cried and raged at it, revealing Aarav cold and dead and still trapped beneath the hull. The waters rose up and deposited man and boat on the river's banks. Pratima fell to her knees and wept while the quantum-suspended column of water broke and rained down upon her.

She left her village after the funeral and traveled the waterways to Mumbai where she applied to join Utopia. She would do everything in her power to save people from suffering loss as she had. Utopia was excited at Pratima's remarkable water and weather control powers, and her drive and dedication to human life made her a prime candidate for the new Team Tomorrow project they were building.

After a series of successes, Splash has recently taken on leadership of T2M Asia-Pacific. She's particularly enjoying the responsibility, living surrounded by water, and once again being closer to home.

new hyper-advanced piece of technology. In parallel, Australia marketed itself to Utopia as a resource hub for the Team Tomorrow facility, and a conveniently located area for manufacturing and shipping anything Utopia needed for the team.

From *Spotlight on Team Tomorrow, Asia-Pacific edition*

With rocket ranges for the Allies in World War 2 and nuclear testing during the Cold War, Australia has a long history of offering its open expanses to friends and allies to build a better war machine. Now, the concept is the same, but it's being offered in the name of peace. Like the rest of the world, the Australian people have opened their hearts to Team Tomorrow, and with T2M-AP as helpful neighbors, now is the perfect time to help the Team to perform at its best. And it's not just one location, either. Australia has a wide range of climates and challenges, and the Tomorrow Training Territories cover them all. AP's leader, Pratima "Splash" Basham, has invited us along to the baking-hot desert training facility today, where she's going to challenge herself with the hardest conditions for a water-controller. Come with us as we help put Splash to the test.

For the moment, Australia is content with its position on the world's stage. Playing a calm and consistent supporting role in the region and with its allies has won it respect in global politics as a relatively neutral facilitator when other nations need a third party to help them come to the negotiating table. By not forcing its way to the front on nova interests, Australia has managed to come out further ahead than if it had tried to dominate. The ongoing assistance to T2M-AP and Project Utopia provided the national push to improve and modernize

Australian infrastructure and open the previously sparsely populated 'top end' to a population boom following the vastly increased manufacture, storage and shipping moving through the port.

All Australia's major shipping hubs have benefited from the nova age with updated infrastructure and improved efficiency technologies. Hyperfusion engines power the vehicles constantly traveling the air, rail, road, and shipping lanes moving goods and materials across the country and to the world. By quietly supporting the UN and Utopia's global improvement programs, Australia has secured a comfortable if unremarkable existence for its people.

Opening remarks from Kenichi Takenaka, Kuro-Tek board meeting, 2023.

Esteemed family, thank you for your attendance today. Allow me to be blunt; Kuro-Tek is dying. Please, I know my words are strong, but listen and you will understand. We have survived Team Tomorrow's criminal purges; we have taken advantage of Saisho and all the funds that came from government coffers. We control the best designers in the world, and we give our customers what Utopia doesn't want them to have. However, despite our generous donations and alliances, government scrutiny — and that of Nippontai — keep our manufacturing potential to a minimum. We are unable to meet customer demand, and that is costing us money.

I will continue to be blunt. Our future no longer lies in Japan. We must look to outside manufacturing if we are to ensure supply in ways that will not be detected by the UN and its Utopian hounds. Thankfully, an opportunity has presented itself. I trust that you have all seen the news of Team Tomorrow's expansion around the world. Reliable sources tell me that the Australian government will back Indonesia's claim to the Asia/Pacific headquarters in return for Indonesia supporting Australia's bid for the lucrative manufacturing and supply contracts that accompany Team Tomorrow. My gifted associates have studied the Australian industrial infrastructure and distribution chains. They inform me that if we move now to establish our interests before the Utopians arrive, there is maximum chance that our own manufacturing requirements can be hidden within the chains and distributed around the globe under the Utopian's noses.

Your folders contain all the details. I open the floor to discussion.

What few people understand — even most Australians — is that Australia does play a very important part in the modern world. While the image of Australia as a quiet team player way down on the far side of the world is true, it's just not the whole truth.

The masterminds behind Kuro-Tek, the black-market Yakuza offshoot, had interest in Australia's potential. They saw the manufacturing centers scattered across the country, all separated by so much space. The distributed manufacturing hubs had long been a point of contention between Australian industries, who wanted to keep everything close together to keep transport costs down, and the government, who needed to keep the wealth spread around to keep reelection hopes alive.

These political realities force Australia's states to divide manufacturing and distribution. The hubs in each state make some items but not everything. Smaller regional centers provide resources to the hubs to manufacture parts. The hubs ship parts they can't assemble to the states who can and receive what they need to manufacture their own goods in turn. The completed items move back around the country to retailers and consumers for domestic use, and distribution centers and ports to move them to the international market. It's wonderfully inefficient, completely consistent with the needs of a modern liberal democracy, and devilishly difficult to track everything.

Kuro-Tek wants profit, but manufacturing on the scale required to meet demand and hide from hostile forces is problematic. Australia has the manufacturing and transport infrastructure, and workforce not inclined to ask too many questions, that Kuro-Tek needs. Australia also doesn't have too many Novas snooping around, especially in the less glamorous areas of the country.

As Kuro-Tek's strategists predicted, Project Utopia spends generously for Australia's dependable supply system. Team Tomorrow invested considerable funds upgrading Australia's northernmost capital, Darwin, to be able to supply the Indonesian-based headquarters. Traffic through the expanded and upgraded loading docks and airport has skyrocketed with the demand. The city works 24/7 with ships and aircraft loading and unloading with more than just Utopia's needs to move the product to the world.

For Kuro-Tek, Australia is the gateway to the South East Asian market and beyond, subsidized by Project Utopia generosity, and hidden among officially marked Team Tomorrow signed-and-sealed

FORWARDED EMAIL

To: [REDACTED]

From: Corona

Subject: It doesn't make sense

One of my contacts forwarded this to me. It's what I've been telling you about. No one wastes this kind of time and money without reason.

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Hey mate,

We've had another order of those spec-adjusted servo motors to be shipped over to Adelaide. I spoke to the guy on the phone and told him the local mob could do it for a lot less, but he insists he prefers the Perth site's precision, or something.

Anyway, it's all been quoted and he's happy with it. We need to order in the specific circuits from Brisbane — I checked but there's none in Sydney or Melbourne suppliers at the moment.

I've padded out the date of supply in case we have shipping problems, and I just need your green light to get it started.

Cheers,

Johnno.

shipments. Demand for Kuro-Tek's black-market technology has never been higher, especially that designed by novas, or at least inspired by nova designs.

Kuro-Tek isn't too worried about Team Tomorrow discovering their supply chain. Utopia isn't the only group with novas on the payroll, and Kuro-Tek has some of the smartest brains money can buy. The manufacturing circuit is filled with bluffs and double-blinds that would make little to no sense to an outside observer, even if they had it all laid out before them. This arrogance may be the enterprise's undoing.

The system isn't impenetrable. Project Utopia knows that Kuro-Tek's products come from somewhere, and its Research Oversight section has a small taskforce dedicated to deconstructing and examining as many samples of Kuro-Tek product as Team Tomorrow operations can recover. The team has found minute particles in some devices, inadvertently locked within during manufacture. While not much to go on, extra-sensory nova abilities may be able to discern their origin and point the team in Australia's direction. In parallel, the Directive has unpicked the tangled supply chain as far back as Southern Asia, intriguingly hinting at links to T2M-AP.

At the same time, Kuro-Tek's novas regularly shuffle aspects of the system to obfuscate it further, but the system is most vulnerable during these transition phases. Kuro-Tek is currently moving a significant chunk of the delivery system to the more southern cities of Sydney and Perth to give time for trails leading to Darwin to cool. This may be noticed by Corona, Sydney's nova defender, who has busted several local Kuro-Tek-supplied criminal groups and is investigation the supply chain from the local Australian end.


RANDEL PORTMAN WAS ALWAYS A HERO.
GET ME A HOSE! NOW!
COME ON! COME ON!
ON N-DAY, HE DESPERATELY TRIED TO PUT OUT A BURNING BUILDING. BUT TO NO AVAIL.
HIS PANIC TRIGGERED HIS ERUPTION, CAUSING HIM TO PULL THE FLAMES INTO HIS OWN BODY, UNHARMED.
AAAAAAAAAAA!!
WHAT'S... WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?
HIS SELFLESS ACT AS THE FIRST NOVA EARNED HIM THE NAME THE FIREMAN, MAKING HIM AN AMERICAN ICON.
HE WAS THE FIRST MEMBER OF TEAM TOMORROW, AND HIS SUPPORT OF PROJECT UTOPIA HELPED SWAY PUBLIC OPINION.
HIS SUPPORTERS EVEN CREATED A GRASSROOTS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN FOR HIM.
PORTMAN 2020
AMERICA HAS HAD ENOUGH OF CELEBRITY POLITICIANS!
LET SOMEONE ELSE HAVE THE SPOTLIGHT. I'LL HELP PEOPLE IN MY OWN WAY.
BUT HE HUMBLY REJECTED THEIR OFFER.


DESPITE HIS DISLIKE OF THE SPOTLIGHT, THE FIREMAN SOUGHT TO BE A ROLE MODEL AND PUBLIC SERVANT.
HE WAS ALWAYS WILLING TO PUT HIS LIFE ON THE LINE, JUST LIKE HE DID EVERY DAY BEFORE N-DAY.
THE FIREMAN WAS A FIRST RESPONDER TO THE MYSTERIOUS SÃO PAULO BLAST, WHICH DEVASTATED THE CITY.
OH MY GOD.
AAAAAAA!!
HE PUSHED HIS POWERS TO THE LIMIT, ABSORBING THE ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A TACTICAL NUKE.
HOWEVER, THE STRAIN WAS TOO MUCH FOR HIM. ALTHOUGH HUNDREDS OF LIVES WERE SAVED, THE FIREMAN PERISHED.
HIS SACRIFICE IS STILL REMEMBERED TO THIS DAY.

CHAPTER THREE: REBORN IN FIRE

"Hear me... No longer am I the woman you knew! I am Fire and Life incarnate! Now and forever — I am Phoenix!"
— Jean Grey, *Uncanny X-Men #101*

CREATING NOVA CHARACTERS

Characters in a **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** campaign are most likely novas — people who have erupted with incredible powers and now face the choice of what to do with those powers in an increasingly complex and dangerous world. This chapter covers the process of creating nova characters, as well as rules specific to nova characters, new Paths, and new Edges suited to the **Aberrant** era. The process of character creation follows the guidelines given in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, apart from the differences detailed in the following sections.

The Nova Template

A *nova* is a human who has realized their potential power to manipulate fundamental quantum forces, "erupting" from their baseline human status to become a nova. Novas all possess a *Quantum Trait* that defines their energy-manipulating abilities and may have various *Mega-Attributes*, *Mega-Edges*, and *Quantum Powers* as manifestations of those abilities.

Novas are also subject to certain side effects from their quantum manipulations, creating a *Quantum*

TALENT AND PSIAD CHARACTERS IN TRINITY CONTINUUM: ABERRANT

While baselines are outclassed by novas on nearly all fronts, the Gifts of Talents from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** allow them to work with, or even go up against, novas. Many of the factions of the **Aberrant** era, particularly the Directive and the Æon Society, recruit Talents and playing a Talent is an excellent way for a "baseline" character to team up with a nova. While some organizations are aware of Talents and the nature of their abilities, to the general public, Talents are "merely" extraordinarily gifted or driven baselines.

Similarly, Psiads from **Æon Æxpansion** exist in the **Aberrant** era: Psions who spontaneously awaken to their abilities without the aid or focus of a Prometheus Chamber. With the limited understanding of psi in 2028 and the far greater number of novas, the handful of Psiads at this time are presumed to be novas with rare or unusual powers. Only the Æon Society and a few of the Teragen have any inkling that psionic abilities are in any way separate and distinct from — and to some degree opposed to — the Quantum Powers of novas.

CHARACTER GENERATION SUMMARY

STEP ONE: CONCEPT

Pick your character's name, background, and Aspirations.

STEP TWO: PATHS

Pick your character's Origin, Role, and Society Paths. New Role and Society Paths specific to **Aberrant** are provided on p. 99 and pp. 104–157.

STEP THREE: SKILLS, SKILL TRICKS, AND SPECIALTIES

Assign your skill dots, and pick skill tricks and specialties for any skills with a high enough rating.

STEP FOUR: ATTRIBUTES

Assign your attribute dots and choose your character's favored approach.

STEP FIVE: APPLY NOVA TEMPLATE

Up until this step, your choices have largely focused on your character's baseline existence. Now apply the nova template and spend Experience to choose your character's Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, Quantum Powers, and Quantum Trait rating.

STEP SIX: FINISHING TOUCHES

Spend any remaining Experience on rounding your character out, and calculate Defense, Speed, and Injuries. Do *not* take bonus traits as per **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 38 (those are rolled into the starting experience points that novas get).

Flux (or simply Flux) which can build up, causing *Transformation* of the nova's body and mind. Many believe this process is one of *Transcendence*, as the nova continues to change from merely human to something far beyond.

When applying the nova template to a character, include the following modifications:

- The character gains a Quantum Trait rating of 1 (see below).
- The character gains the Nova tier, with a target number of 7.
- The character gains one dot in one Attribute of their favored Approach.
- The character gains either one dot of the Fame Edge or one dot of the Alternate Identity Edge. "Relative obscurity" is not an option for novas in this era. These Edges can be improved normally.
- The player can spend 150 Experience to improve the character's traits, including acquiring nova traits like a higher Quantum rating, Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, and Quantum Powers, including Quantum Technology. Note that the bonus traits other **Trinity Continuum** characters gain during Step Six: Final Touches are "rolled in" to this Experience, novas do not also gain those bonus traits.

Quantum Trait

The nova's Quantum Trait determines the extent of their ability to control fundamental forces, their overall "power." Nova characters begin with a Quantum Trait of 1, which can be increased by spending Experience from their nova template. In **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** terms, novas are Nova tier characters, and their target number for all rolls is 7.

Nova Improvements

You can spend 150 Experience points to improve your nova character.

NOVA TRAITS

You can spend this Experience on nova traits like Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, and Quantum Powers, including power tags. You can apply negative power tags to reduce the cost of some Quantum Powers. See the Nova Experience Table (next page) for trait costs and Chapter 6 (p. 180) for details on these nova traits. Many nova traits have certain requirements, particularly Quantum rating, or a number of dots in another trait. Your character must meet these requirements in order to take that trait.

QUANTUM TRAIT

You can also spend this Experience to improve your character's Quantum rating. You cannot improve Quantum rating above 5 using Experience from the nova template, and the Storyguide may choose to set a lower limit on Quantum rating improvement during character creation.

NOVA TRAIT ADVANCEMENT

After character creation, you can only spend Experience to acquire or improve a nova trait after maxing it out (p. 181). This includes Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, Quantum, and Quantum Powers. You can still take transformations to reduce the Experience cost of nova traits. Additionally, at Quantum 6 or greater, you can take a high-level transformation to reduce the Experience cost of a nova trait by 9.

TRANSFORMATIONS

You can choose to take an additional transformation for your nova to reduce the cost of the nova trait (including Quantum): A low-level transformation reduces the trait's Experience cost by 3. A mid-level transformation reduces the trait's Experience cost by 6. You cannot have more total transformations than twice your Quantum rating. See Transformation on p. 90 for details.

BASELINE TRAITS

You can also spend Experience from your nova improvements on regular traits, including Attributes, Edges, Paths, Skills, and the like. You cannot take Transcendence or additional transformations to reduce the cost of these traits.

Creating More or Less Advanced Novas

The system in this chapter creates capable novas relatively early in their growth and development, but still with significant levels of power. It is also possible to begin a **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** chronicle with more experienced or powerful nova characters, or less powerful ones. Options include experienced novas who erupted years ago, as long ago as N-Day, or even earlier — as a handful of novas did exist then — or novas who possess extraordinary levels of power, beyond what most have when they first erupt. Likewise, not all novas erupt with the same levels or types of powers, and it is possible to start off characters with a lower power level than that given in the default system.

Creating more or less advanced characters is a matter of following the character creation rules in this chapter, and then adding a different amount of Experience points to spend at the end. The Storyguide should also decide whether more advanced characters are allowed to exceed the starting Quantum rating limit of 5. This is only recommended for a truly high power-level chronicle and, even then, advanced characters should be limited to a Quantum rating of no greater than 7. Similarly, less advanced characters might be limited to a starting Quantum rating of 2, noting that this bars them from several powers from Chapter 6 and limits them to just a couple of dots in many other powers.

NOVA ADVANCED EXPERIENCE TABLE

CATEGORY	STARTING EXPERIENCE	ADDITIONAL PATH DOTS REQUIRED
Low-Level	75	0
Default	150	0
Experienced	170	0
Veterans	210	0
Heroic	250	1
Exceptional	300	2

Novas and Scale

The Scale rules from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** play an important role in **Aberrant** because many novas have abilities that operate at Scale far beyond that of baseline humans, and not all nova abilities operate at the same Scale for the same things. There are novas with tremendous strength, speed, and toughness, for example, but also novas whose intellect, cunning, or presence far outstrip human capabilities.

The seven areas of Scale in **Trinity Continuum** are: Durability, Leadership, Might, Mental, Power, Size, and Speed. Increasing one type of Scale does not increase others and increases in Scale apply to actions that a higher-Scale character takes, the way they interact with the world and other characters around them.

Quantum Flux and Transcendence

The common belief in the **Aberrant** era is that eruption is a binary process: You start out as a baseline until one day, suddenly, you erupt and, bang!

NOVA EXPERIENCE TABLE

TRAIT	CHANGE	COST
Attribute	Add one dot to an Attribute	10 Experience
Edge	Add one dot in a new or existing Edge	3 Experience
Enhanced Edge	Gain a new Enhanced Edge	6 Experience
Path Edge	Add one dot in a new or existing Path Edge	2 Experience
Favored Approach	Change the character's Favored Approach	15 Experience
Mega-Attribute	Add one dot in a new or existing Mega-Attribute	12 Experience*
Mega-Edge	Add one dot in a new or existing Mega-Edge	12 Experience*
Power Tag	Add one point in a new or existing Power Tag	12 Experience
Quantum Trait	Add one dot to the character's Quantum Trait (up to 5)	16 Experience
Quantum Trait	Add one dot to the character's Quantum Trait (6+)	32 Experience
Quantum Power	Add one dot in a new or existing Quantum Power	12 Experience*
Remove Tag	Remove one point of a negative Power Tag	12 Experience
Skill	Add one dot in a new or existing Skill	5 Experience
Skill Trick	Add a Skill Trick to an existing Skill	3 Experience
Specialty	Add a Specialty to an existing Skill	3 Experience
Path	Add one dot in a new or existing Path (maximum five Paths)	18 Experience

** 6 Experience if the nova also takes a point of Transcendence* *(see p. 90)*

You're a nova, and that's that. In fact, eruption is just the beginning of an ongoing process. Novas are, in essence, living quantum flux zones, and their interaction with fundamental forces shape and change them even as they shape those forces. More experienced novas like Divis Mal and some of the elders of the Teragen, as well as some long-time associates of the Æon Society, have a greater understanding of this transformative process. A lot of other novas have no idea... yet.

Flux

Novas accumulate *Flux* from the use of their powers, particularly pushing those powers to their limits. Accumulated Flux can lead to an increasing Transcendence for the nova and causing Transformations, both physical and mental, what some call "aberrations" of body and mind. For many novas these amount to random mutations, but techniques known to the Teragen can control and direct the process, allowing novas to choose how they transform or to change those transformations.

Novas accumulate points of Flux in the following ways:

- **Botches:** When the player botches a roll with a Quantum Power, the nova gains a point of Flux. This is not the case with Mega-Attributes or Mega-Edges.
- **Maxing Out:** When a nova maxes out, exceeding their usual energy manipulating limits, they acquire a point of Flux. If they botch the

BUT TALENTS ALSO HAVE FLUX?

As **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** says, Flux is the inherent energy in the space between worlds, the overlapping potentiality of the continuum of parallel realities. Talents use this uncertainty to "push" reality one way or another to suit their needs. The powers of novas place them in a state of "quantum flux" as they exert their power over the fundamental forces of the universe. This energy can build up over time, pushing the nova further and further away from baseline humanity.

effort, they gain an additional point of Flux. They can also gain additional Flux in exchange for more successes on a maxing out effort. See Maxing Out, p. 181.

- **Rapid Recovery:** When novas force themselves to recover Quantum points faster than normal, they gain a point of Flux. See Quantum Points, p. 180.

Other specific ways of accumulating Flux are detailed in the text but are comparatively rare.

At Flux 10, the nova gains a point of Transcendence and their Flux rating resets to 0 (see below). Novas can shed accumulated Flux through grounding (p. 93) and channel it in specific way through chrysalis (p. 94).

Transcendence

Accumulations of Quantum and Flux lead to *Transcendence* for a nova, moving them further and further away from the human baseline. Novas gain Transcendence rating in the following ways:

- **Quantum:** A nova gains a point of Transcendence upon gaining their fourth dot in the Quantum Trait, and another for each additional dot in Quantum thereafter, so a nova with Quantum 8, for example, has a Transcendence rating of at least 5.

- **Power:** A nova can purchase a nova trait (Mega-Attribute, Mega-Edge, or Quantum Power) for half the normal Experience cost, if the nova also takes a point of Transcendence at that time. This applies both during character creation and later during character advancement.

- **Flux:** A nova whose Flux rating reaches 10 gains a point of Transcendence and the nova's Flux resets to a rating of 0. Novas can shed accumulated Flux through grounding and channel it in specific ways through chrysalis.

Transcendence rating has the following effects on a character:

- Half the difference between two characters' Transcendence ratings, rounded down, serves as an increase in Difficulty to form bonds between them (see "Intrigue" in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 87). So, a nova with Transcendence 4 and a baseline (Transcendence 0) have +2 Difficulty in forming bonds due to the nova's differences from ordinary humans.

- For each dot of Transcendence rating the nova has above 3, the nova acquires a transformation (see below): one low-level each at Transcendence 4 and 5, one mid-level each at Transcendence 6 and 7, and one high-level each at Transcendence 8 and 9.

If a nova reaches Transcendence rating 10, they transcend humanity altogether and become something *else,* what can truly be called an aberrant. The nova falls under the control of the Storyguide, who may choose additional transformations and adjust the character's other traits as desired. Novas undergoing full transcendence can twist and mutate in terrible ways, with no known limits.

Transformation

Transcendence changes the nova in various ways. These transformations range from the physical to the psychological and emotional, or even quantum-level shifts in the nova's relationship with reality as baselines understand it.

LOW-LEVEL TRANSFORMATIONS (TRANSCENDENCE 4 OR 5)

At this level of Transcendence, a nova's "otherness," previously just an impression at Transcendence 1 through 3, takes on a clear manifestation. Low-level transformations remain minor enough to be dismissed as quirks or even "fashion statements" and often are, but still make it clear novas are something other than human. A low-level transformation is generally good for a +1 Complication or increase in Difficulty in social situations, depending on the circumstances. Common examples include rumors and behind-the-scenes mistrust, or assumptions based on the nova's usual traits.

Aberrant Eyes: The nova's eyes transform, taking on an unusual quality, like a faint glow that shines brighter the more the nova spends Quantum points, or becoming completely black or red or some other solid color, cat-like with slit pupils, or even shifting through different appearances.

Anima Aura: A glowing, phantasmal aura sometimes manifests around the nova, ranging from a saintly halo or full-body glow to ghostly images associated with the nova's powers and personality such as psychological or mythic archetypes or symbols. The greater the nova's Transcendence, the more pronounced their anima aura becomes. Some even manifest phantom sounds or scents, ranging



from ghostly music to the smell of the sea, spices, flowers, or rotting flesh.

Epidermal Shift: The nova's epidermis transforms in some unusual but minor way, such as developing fur, feathers, or scales, changing to an unusual color anywhere along the spectrum, losing all pigmentation entirely, or acquiring a metallic sheen.

Feeding Requirement: This transformation sparks a dependence on some food, substance, or energy. It can range from eating only raw meat (and lots of it) to a need for live bugs, electricity, radioactive isotopes, or heavy metals. The feeding requirement causes the nova no harm — on the contrary, it becomes utterly necessary to maintain the nova's health and well-being.

Inhuman Beauty: A nova with this transformation is inhumanly, utterly flawless, but what should be a blessing just seems *too* perfect. At best, other people feel jealous and awkward, at worst, they sense something disturbing about the nova lurking beneath that beautiful façade.

Life Bane: The nova emits an invisible, low-level degree of quantum flux that is inimical to lower life forms. Plants, small insects, fungi, and similar life dies and withers in the nova's presence. The higher the nova's Transcendence, the faster and more profound the effect, ranging from a wake of brown and dying plant-life noticed in retrospect to watching plants and other lower life-forms within Close range blacken and shrivel in an instant as if consumed in an invisible fire.

Psychological Shift: This is the subtlest of low-level transformations, a shift in the nova's personality or behavior that might be dismissed as a personal quirk or the effects of post-eruption trauma or celebrity — and for some novas that is entirely the case. For others, the transformation of body and mind leads to psychological shifts like absent-mindedness, bad temper, obsessive thoughts, or strong phobias.

Vocal Shift: The nova's voice undergoes a change, becoming unusual in some way. It might be hollow

and echo, deep and raspy, low and whispering, buzzing and electronic, or any number of other odd shifts in tonal quality. Whatever the shift, there's no mistaking it when the nova speaks or vocalizes in any way.

MID-LEVEL TRANSFORMATIONS (TRANSCENDENCE 6 OR 7)

Transformations at this level cannot be so easily dismissed. They are clear evidence that something is profoundly *different* about the nova. Mid-level transformations can significantly affect the nova's life and are good for up to +2 Complications or Difficulty shifts when they come up.

Allergic Reaction: The nova suffers from exposure to a substance or environment that is largely harmless to baselines. Examples include materials like salt, iron, silver, or plastics, or energy like the ultraviolet radiation in sunlight, strong magnetic fields, or the like.

Energy Bleed: The powerful energies coursing through and around the nova tend to "bleed" into the environment. The nova is constantly giving off small "sparks" or bursts of energy, which can cause problems based on the nature of the energy, such as electricity, heat, magnetism, or radiation.

Hypersensitivity: One or more of the nova's senses is so acute that the nova is prone to overstimulation. They may suffer Complications or Difficulty shifts in environments that strongly affect that sense, ranging from bright or noisy situations to strong scents, and attacks targeting that sense gain up to 2 Enhancement against the nova.

Physiological Shift: This level transformation begins to reshape the nova's body in different noticeable ways, ranging from the nova becoming unusually tall or short, thin or broad, or the enlargement or diminishment of individual body parts, such as the head or hands. The nova might take on certain "anima" characteristics of an associated animal or other creature, such as a "demonic" shift complete with horns, pointed ears, red skin, a forked tongue and tail, bat-like wings, and cloven hooves.

Power Loss: Certain circumstances cause the nova to lose the use of their powers. It could be requiring a particular "talisman," what some call "Dumbo syndrome" — without it, the nova's powers don't work. The nova might lose their powers at night (or during the day), when trapped in an enclosed space (or otherwise faced with a phobia), when in a crowd (or when alone), and so forth. Only removal of the power loss condition can restore the nova's full abilities.

Psychological Disorder: At this level of transformation, the nova's psyche shifts in a significant and challenging way, ranging from amnesia, delusions, flashbacks, and compulsions to seizures, paranoia, or strongly obsessive behavior. The nova is functional — most of the time — but their psychological disorder occasionally overwhelms them.

Uncontrolled Dormancy: The nova effectively has two dots of the Dormancy Edge (p. 95), except the nova is not in full control of when they go dormant or when their nova abilities reassert themselves. Uncontrolled dormancy usually happens in response to some physical or psychological stimulus, such as anger, fear, or an environmental condition like darkness, cold, heat, or the like. The nova may have different conditions that trigger and end dormancy. Unlike Hyde Syndrome (see the following), a nova with Uncontrolled Dormancy does not necessarily have separate personalities or memories for their nova and baseline forms.

Uncontrolled Power: One of the nova's powers is not entirely under their control. The power can sometimes activate at the Storyguide's discretion, either at random or in reaction to the nova's subconscious impulses or even other transformations, particularly psychological ones. An uncontrolled power can cause any number of complications for a nova, and anyone known to have this transformation is likely to be viewed as a literal "loose cannon."

Vulnerability: The nova's transformed physiology becomes vulnerable to a specific form of harm, ranging from a type of energy, an environment, or a kind of attack, such as blunt-force trauma or cutting edged weapons. When attacking a nova with their vulnerability, the attacker gains additional 2 Enhancement on the action.

HIGH-LEVEL TRANSFORMATIONS (TRANSCENDENCE 8+)

Novas who carefully manage their accumulation of Flux and their Transcendence can avoid transformations of this level altogether, but other novas run into them quickly, and there is no mistaking these for anything other than the process of the nova becoming something non-human. Even once a nova has fully transcended, they might continue to accumulate these kinds of transformations, becoming almost alien beings from the perspective of baseline humanity.

Energy Emissions: With this transformation, the nova emits potentially lethal energy at virtually all times. This might be hard radiation, sudden bolts of electricity, intense heat or cold, or some combination

of forces. The Close area around the nova becomes an Environmental Hazard with an intensity equal to half the nova's Quantum or Transcendence ratings, rounded down, whichever is less.

Flux Emissions: Even more insidious than the emission of deadly electromagnetic energies, this transforms the nova's status as a "living quantum flux" into a condition affecting the environment. When anyone comes within Close range of the nova, and for every (Stamina) hours thereafter, roll the nova's Transcendence against the subject's Stamina. Each success from the nova imposes 1 Flux on the subject, even baselines and Talents. Characters can acquire Transcendence and transformation due to this Flux and even fully transcend, becoming Storyteller characters. Characters with a Psi rating are immune to the effects of this transformation.

Hardened Epidermis: The nova's skin and flesh harden, developing chitinous or armored scales or turning metallic or stone-like. The corresponding loss of sensation imposes a Difficulty increase equal to half the nova's Transcendence on rolls involving touch or physical sensitivity.

Hyde Syndrome: A nova with this transformation acquires the effects of two dots in the Dormancy Edge, except the ability is entirely outside the nova's conscious control, and their two distinct forms are "nova" and "aberrant." The aberrant form carries all the nova's transformations and has its own personality — and often psychological disorders. The nova form has no recollection or even awareness of the aberrant form or what it does. Transforming between forms takes a turn, but the nova identity cannot control when it occurs. (If the character wants controlled forms with the capacity to potentially hide or lose powers, see Dormancy, p. 95.)

Power Lock: One of the nova's personal range powers becomes permanent in duration. The nova cannot consciously turn off the power or end its effects. This can include the nova being permanently trapped in an altered form, transformed into a substance other than flesh, trapped within a force field, or other such effects. It usually complicates the nova's existence, makes it almost impossible to conceal their true nature, and may endanger those around the character. The power locked power stops working when the nova goes dormant but immediately reactivates when the character returns to their nova form.

Severe Psychological Disorder: At this level, transformed novas can suffer from severe disorders, including megalomania ("Is it a delusion when you really *are* a god?"), dissociative disorders and massive delusions ("Reality is whatever I want it to be!"), and sadism or a complete lack of empathy ("Humans are such small and fragile things. Irrelevant, really."). The behavior of such afflicted novas is difficult to predict, and they become capable of truly inhumane behavior, sometimes without even knowing it.

Twisted Appearance: The nova is twisted into something truly inhuman in appearance. Vestigial limbs or wings, inhuman faces, strange shapes shifting beneath the skin, random animal parts (including fish, reptiles, and insects), and skin sloughing away from raw muscle and viscera are just a few examples. Forms out of nightmares are possible, often with the nova reveling in their new form, or all too aware of just how hideous they have become.

GROUNDING

There are two primary ways of dealing with Flux and Transcendence: anchoring oneself in the mundane and human world to maintain those connections, or embracing the inevitable transformations in order to guide them along a particular path. Grounding involves the former, minimizing use of nova abilities and using ordinary interactions with baseline people and life to keep a nova more firmly grounded in their own humanity. It is a *memento mori* to stave off some of the effects of Transcendence.

If a nova spends a session utilizing all nova traits (Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, and Quantum Powers) at no more than half their rating and does not accumulate any additional Flux during that time, the nova's player can roll Quantum + Composure. Each success removes 1 point of Flux. Failure has no effect but awards the Consolation of 1 Enhancement on the next successful roll to reduce Flux. A botch *adds* a point of Flux and means the whole process must start over.

A nova who spends a session not using *any* nova traits at all, automatically sheds a point of Flux at the end of the session, but any return to their full nova form and powers disrupts the process, forcing them to start over.

Each scene of interaction with a baseline or baselines while not using any nova traits also allows the nova to spend one success from a bond to shed one point of Flux (see Bonds and Cooperation, p. 86 of the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**). If a nova employs their nova abilities during the scene, it

disrupts the process. They must engage with baselines on baseline terms.

Novas using the Dormancy Edge have an easier time grounding because they deliberately "turn off" their nova capabilities, preventing them from even using them accidentally or reflexively (see New Edges and Gifts, following).

Some novas choose to maintain "civilian" lives or even "secret identities" because of the value of grounding. Project Utopia psychologists and nova physiologists are aware that novas who maintain grounded lives seem to suffer from fewer complications due to the growth of their abilities and try to encourage this practice.

CHRYSALIS

Whereas grounding looks to tamp down a nova's inner fires, the process of chrysalis turns them into a crucible to burn away human frailty, transforming a nova into their ultimate, evolved form. A nova needs the Chrysalis Edge in order to do this (see New Edges and Gifts, following).

With chrysalis, when a nova attains a Flux rating of 10, they can choose to go into a deep meditative trance state wherein they exert influence over their Transcendence. This happens before the nova trades their accumulated Flux for a point of Transcendence, since their choices in the chrysalis can affect that. How long this trance state lasts depends on what the nova chooses to do in it.

While in the chrysalis state, the nova has the benefits of the Adaptation and Regeneration Mega-Edges, even if they do not have Mega-Stamina (see Mega-Edges, p. 181 and p. 194). They are unconscious and largely unaware of what is happening around them, immersed in an inner world. The nova's appearance may transform during this time, or the chrysalis may wrap them in a protective aura or cocoon. The outward effects tend to be greater the higher the nova's Quantum and Transcendence and the longer the chrysalis lasts.

Chrysalis has the following benefits and effects:

- Players can spend Experience points to improve or acquire nova traits for the character without the requirement of having maxed out that trait previously (see Maxing Out, p. 181), with a limit of adding no more than one dot to any given nova trait per chrysalis, including Quantum. This extends the duration of the chrysalis by days equal to the number of Experience points spent.
- Players can make greater tweaks to their nova's abilities while in chrysalis (see Tweaks, p. 39 of the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**): shifting one dot from one Mega-Attribute to another, from one Mega-Edge to another, or from one Quantum Power to another. Each dot shifted adds seven days to the duration of the chrysalis.
- The nova can swap an existing transformation for a new one of their choice (see Transformations, p. 90). The new transformation must be of the same level as the previous one, but otherwise the nova can dictate everything else about it. The new transformations are permanent once the nova emerges from chrysalis, at least until a future chrysalis, when they can be changed again. This extends the duration of the Chrysalis by a day per transformation.
- The player can spend Experience to reduce the nova's accumulated Flux, at a cost of 2 Experience per point of Flux. If the nova emerges from the chrysalis with a Flux of less than 10, they do not gain an additional point of Transcendence. This process takes an hour per point of Experience spent.
- If the nova takes on an additional transformation, they reduce their accumulated Flux to 0. The transformation must be of a level required by the nova's current Transcendence, or low-level, if Transcendence is 3 or less. This prevents the nova from acquiring an additional point of Transcendence due to accumulated Flux, channeling it "away" into further transformations. This process takes hours equal to the nova's current Transcendence, with a minimum of one hour.

The following new Edges and Gifts are available to **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** characters following the usual rules for Edges and Gifts from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**. **Aberrant** also introduces a new class of Edges known as Mega-Edges, which are superhuman level abilities. Mega-Edges are detailed starting on p. 186.

Nova Edges

These Edges are particular to characters with the nova template and a Quantum Trait rating of at least 1. They are not available to other characters.

ATTUNEMENT (• TO •••••)

One of the immediate aspects studies of novas revealed was they were largely "attuned" to their own powers in such a way that using those powers didn't cause them any harm. So novas able to project tremendous amounts of energy, for example, suffer no ill effects from doing so, even if they are otherwise no more resistant to that energy than a baseline.

Your character can spend one Quantum point to attune material to her "quantum imprint" allowing the item to adapt to her powers and not be harmed by them. She can attune a number of objects of size Scale 1 or lower equal to her dots in this Edge, or a single object of size Scale equal to her dot rating. (A set of clothing counts as a single item for this purpose.)

Your character can additionally attune a single Q-tech item of Rank equal to her dots in this Edge. To attune Q-tech, spend one Quantum point per the item's Rank. These Quantum points are invested into the item rather than spent, reducing the character's maximum number of Quantum points by the invested number until she removes the attunement from the device, or it is broken.

Characters who purchase this Edge at character creation start the game with a Q-tech device at a maximum Rank of the Edge's rating. To attune more than one Q-tech item, the character must purchase the Q-tech Mega-Edge (p. 194).

DORMANCY (• TO ••)

Transformations clearly mark some novas as something other than human. Additionally, all novas are living points of quantum flux, detectable to certain scientific scanning equipment as well as the powers of other novas.



Novas with the Dormancy Edge can deliberately "power down" their energy manipulating qualities to avoid being detected as novas. "Dorming down" in nova parlance takes a turn of concentration, after which all the character's nova traits are shut down.

While dormant, a nova has no access to any Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, or Quantum Powers. The nova remains in a dormant state until taking a turn of concentration to "power up" again. While dormant, rolls to discover their true nature gain +1 Difficulty per dot in Dormancy. Additionally, the dormant nova reduces their effective Transcendence rating by their Quantum rating, suppressing any associated Transformations for as long as the character remains dormant. Novas with Transcendence ratings higher than their Quantum cannot completely suppress their nature, although they can restrict their remaining Transformations to non-visible ones in hopes of maintaining a disguise.

Novas with two dots in Dormancy have entirely separate "nova" and "baseline" forms, if they wish, transforming between them. The baseline and nova forms may be completely different and cannot be physically linked.

EUFIBER (• TO •••••)

A nova with this Edge owns or has access to clothing made from eufiber, a nova-made material with special properties in terms of attunement to nova powers and energies.

Eufiber clothing can be attuned to its nova wearer without any need for the Attunement Edge (p. 95). This makes the eufiber immune to the side effects of the nova's powers, and allows it to morph, shift, and transform as needed to adapt to the nova's powers.

Eufiber can also retain a "memory" of certain pre-programmed configurations, up to one configuration per dot in the Edge, changing its color, cut, and shape as desired. It takes an action to will the eufiber to transform, but no roll or Quantum point expenditure is required.

Eufiber can store energy the nova can draw upon. Each dot in the Edge allows the nova to store 1 Quantum point in the eufiber's structure. The nova can draw upon these stored Quantum points and use them normally. Infusing Quantum points into eufiber at less than its full capacity takes one action to infuse a number of points equal to the user's Quantum rating.

Lastly, energized eufiber becomes highly resistant to damage, providing its wearer with armor with the Innocuous and Soft 1 tags, so long as the eufiber contains at least one Quantum point. Add additional armor tags equal to the number of dots in this Edge.

Path Edges

BORROWED RESOURCES (••)

Prerequisite: *Æon Society, Project Proteus, or Alternate Identity*

Your character can leverage their position in their regular job to acquire resources for a mission. Choose a resource, and its purpose, that your character may access through their Alternate Identity, such as a drug if the character fronts in the Triton Foundation, or contact information on a politician if the character fronts as an assistant in Æon's Global Liaisons. For the next day, you can add 2 Enhancement to actions that use your chosen resource. You may use this Edge only once each session, and the Storyguide can decide that you used up the resource and this benefit becomes unavailable.

CALL FOR BACKUP (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: *Project Utopia-Nova Affairs or Peacekeepers, or Team Tomorrow*

When you are in a tight spot, you can call for help, provided you have a means to communicate with Project Utopia or Team Tomorrow. Make a Command + Presence roll with a Difficulty of 2. If successful, Utopia or Team Tomorrow dispatches help depending on the dots you have in this Edge:

- Three agents from Security. They arrive in two hours or more, depending on how far you are from the nearest Rashoud Center or Utopia facility. Use the information for security personnel on p. 261.
- •• A squad of 10 from Peacekeeping. They arrive in 30 minutes, depending on how far you are from the nearest Rashoud Center or Utopia facility. Use the information for soldiers on p. 261.
- ••• One or two members of the nearest Team Tomorrow arena. They arrive in five minutes, depending on how quickly they can get hold of Slider. Use the information for an Elite (p. 269) or the information of specific T2M novas.

Every Enhancement used for the action reduces the response time by 15 minutes (•), 2 minutes (••), or 1 minute (•••).

Using this Edge counts as using a Connection with the same rating as the number of dots in this Edge. Each use reduces the rating until it reaches 0, but the rating recovers one dot for every week this Edge is not used. If this Edge is Revoked like a Connection, you

lose access to its benefits until you can resolve the Revoked condition, and even then, the support may be conditional until you can prove your reliability again.

CHRYSALIS (•)

Prerequisite: *Teragen*

By embracing their Transcendence and journey towards something beyond humanity, the Teragen discovered a technique for *directing* quantum instability into what they call the Chrysalis. While the nova is in an extreme state of quantum flux, they use meditative techniques to direct their "evolution" and exert influence over their transformations. Chrysalis requires the direction and oversight of an experienced mentor the first time a nova character performs it and, to-date, involves at least some understanding of the philosophy of Teras, around which the practice was built.

A nova with this Edge can use the options described under Chrysalis (p. 94) for dealing with their accumulated Flux.

EARNED TRUST (• OR ••)

Prerequisite: *Æon Society*

The Æon Society has a century's worth of humanitarian activities, and its members can reap the benefits of such good will. When your character presents credentials from Æon or one of its affiliates, they gain 1 Enhancement per point spent on this Edge on actions meant to overcome other characters' hostility, mistrust, or lack of confidence

FRIENDS EVERYWHERE (• OR ••)

Prerequisite: *Project Utopia*

Even if you kept to yourself during your work with Project Utopia, it's inevitable that you know people. Utopia makes sure you play well with others, and this extends to your professional life. Once per session per dot in this Edge, you can spend 1 Momentum to gain a contact from your Profession Path. This contact is temporary and only lasts until the end of the session, but any favor you owe them in return will remain due.

MICROGRAVITY TRAINING (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: *The Daedalus League, Direction Sense*

Your character is not disoriented when up and down are a matter of preference. You can reduce the Difficulty of any roll involving low gravity, weightlessness or free-fall conditions by an amount equal to the number of dots of this Edge. At the Storyguide's judgment, this Edge may also apply to underwater conditions. The character gains Enhancement to actions taken in zero-g equal to the number of dots in this Edge.

WELL-EQUIPPED (• OR ••)

Prerequisite: *The Directive*

Your character is always outfitted with the right things for the job at hand. Novas purchase this Edge at two dots and can spend Momentum as if it were Inspiration for Dramatic Editing (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook,** p. 154), only to generate a plausible advantage once within a scene involving having just the right piece of equipment. The equipment can be core-tech or nova tech, but not quantum tech (see the Chapter Seven: Technology, p. 228, for details) and it is good for that one scene or use. You must provide the Storyguide with a plausible explanation for how you happen to have access to the equipment, ranging from a hidden cache to having it concealed on your person, in your vehicle, or the like. Talents within the Directive can buy this Edge at one dot solely to use Momentum in lieu of Inspiration for this specific purpose.

Social Edges

FOLLOWERS (• TO •••••)

Novas who operate in public tend to attract followings. Typically, a nova has fans and casual "followers" based on their dots of Fame, but some novas have truly dedicated, even fanatical, groups of followers, which are covered by this Edge.

A nova's Followers are defined by an Arena, the same as Attributes: Choose whether the Followers are primarily Physical, Mental, or Social. Physical Followers tend to be bodyguards, laborers, even soldiers or security. Mental Followers are primarily consultants, assistants, advisors, or experts, and Social Followers tend to form an entourage — or even a cult of personality — around the nova.

Followers can take one Bruised and one Maimed Condition before being Taken Out. Their Defense is equal to half the rating of this Edge, rounded up.

Much like powers, Followers may also have tags to define important elements about them. Followers have one tag per dot in this Edge.

- **Access:** The Followers grant the nova access to some otherwise difficult to reach place or institution, such as the halls of government, diplomatic facilities, scientific research facilities,

and so forth. Each application of this tag provides a new form of access.

- **Arena:** The Followers operate in an additional Arena (Physical, Mental, or Social). With two instances of this tag, they operate in all three.
- **Defensive:** The Followers add 1 to their Defense. Alternately, if it fits their description, this tag adds 1 to the Difficulty of intrigues and opposed actions against the Followers instead.
- **Forceful:** The Followers are especially forceful and gain 2 Enhancement on actions meant to harm others within their Arena.
- **Helpful:** If a complex action fits within the Followers' Arena and description, the nova gains one additional Interval to complete it.
- **Number:** A group of Followers starts out at around 10–25 individuals. Each application of this tag increases their number: to 50, 100, 250, 500, and 1,000.
- **Powerful:** Choose one area in which the Followers have Scale, such as Might, Mental, Size, or Speed, and increase that Scale by 1.
- **Smooth:** The Followers improve the Attitude of Storyguide characters by 1, so long as they are present and the character is receptive, based on the Followers' description. In dealing with particularly opposed characters, they may worsen Attitude by 1 instead.
- **Tough:** The Followers have 1 point of Soft Armor.
- **Unruly:** The Followers don't take or follow orders especially well. All Difficulties to command them increase by 1, but the nova adds Momentum to the pool whenever they fail to meet the Difficulty.

When ordering Followers to do something, the dice pool is the higher of the Followers' Edge rating or the character's Command plus an appropriate Attribute. Commanding Followers is an Ordinary action but can be part of a mixed action, if the character is doing something else at the same time. Followers don't get a spot in the initiative roster or act independently — they always act on the commanding character's turn, and their action always uses up the character's focus. If the character is Taken Out, their Followers can continue acting on their turn, but their dice pool becomes the Followers Edge rating + the character's Attribute, without the benefit of Command.

If a character with Followers is present in a scene and either the character or the Followers suffer an Injury Condition, the character can choose whether the Condition affects them or the Followers.

Followers that are Taken Out typically return to their default state at the beginning of the next session, either recovered or replaced with new Followers. If being Taken Out means they are permanently removed from play and the Storyguide feels the Followers numbers are permanently diminished as a result, dots in this Edge may be assigned to another.

You may purchase this Edge multiple times to reflect different groups of Followers.

Gift

THE BIGGER THEY ARE

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

When necessary, the character can take on opponents *far* out of their league and somehow still manage to succeed.

System: Spend an Inspiration to activate this gift for one round. When in conflict with an opponent of higher Scale than you, reduce the difference in Scale between you by your highest Inspiration Facet, but not to less than 0, and ignore the rule that says you have no effect against an opponent with a Scale difference of 3 or greater. So, you are both more effective against higher-Scale foes and you *always* have a chance against them, regardless of their Scale. This Gift does not change your own Scale; it simply adjusts the Scale difference between you and your opponents for one round.

Trinity Continuum: Aberrant characters can make use of any of the Paths presented in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, and players are encouraged to create their own Origin and Role paths to suit their character concepts. A few new Role Paths common to novas in 2028 are offered here as additions and examples. For the Society Paths most common to novas in **Aberrant**, along with some thoughts on incorporating Society Paths from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, see Chapter Four, starting on p. 102.

Athlete (Role)

Your character excels at the physical, whether it is a sport (professional or otherwise), pursuing excellence at the Olympics or other competitions, or athletic performances. If a nova, their athletic career and pursuits may be constrained by the banning of novas from competition with baselines, limiting them to novas-only athletic and sporting events.

Example Connections: Agent, Fans, Manager, Sports Journalist, Teammates

Skills: Aim, Athletics (required), Culture, Integrity

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Ambidextrous, Fame, Hardy, Swift, Wealth

Celebrity (Role)

Some people are just born for the spotlight and others find ways to capture and hold it. Either way, your character is famous, although exactly for what is up to you. Your character splits a great deal of their time maintaining their fame, most likely by doing whatever made them a celebrity in the first place, and using their considerable audience for other things, like personal or charitable projects, political statements, or what have you. These days, there's also a fair amount of interacting directly with fans, either in person or online.

Example Connections: Fans, Fellow Celebrities, Legal Counsel, Manager, Politicians

Skills: Culture, Empathy, Humanities, Persuasion

Edges: Artistic Talent, Big Hearted, Fame (required), Followers, Patron, Skilled Liar, Striking, Wealth

Consultant Path (Role)

The character is an elite, but more in the sense of a professional consultant or high-paid specialist, brought in for a particular job. Their nova abilities may be only a part of their expertise, but they're a key factor in getting hired, and in the prices the character can charge for their services. Elites (p. 142) often have this Path.

Example Connections: Academic, Corporate Executive, Elite Agency, Government Official, Media Agent or Personality, Policy Wonk

Skills: Integrity, Persuasion, and two of Culture, Humanities, Medicine, Science, or Technology

Edges: Always Prepared, Fame, Patron, Striking, Wealth

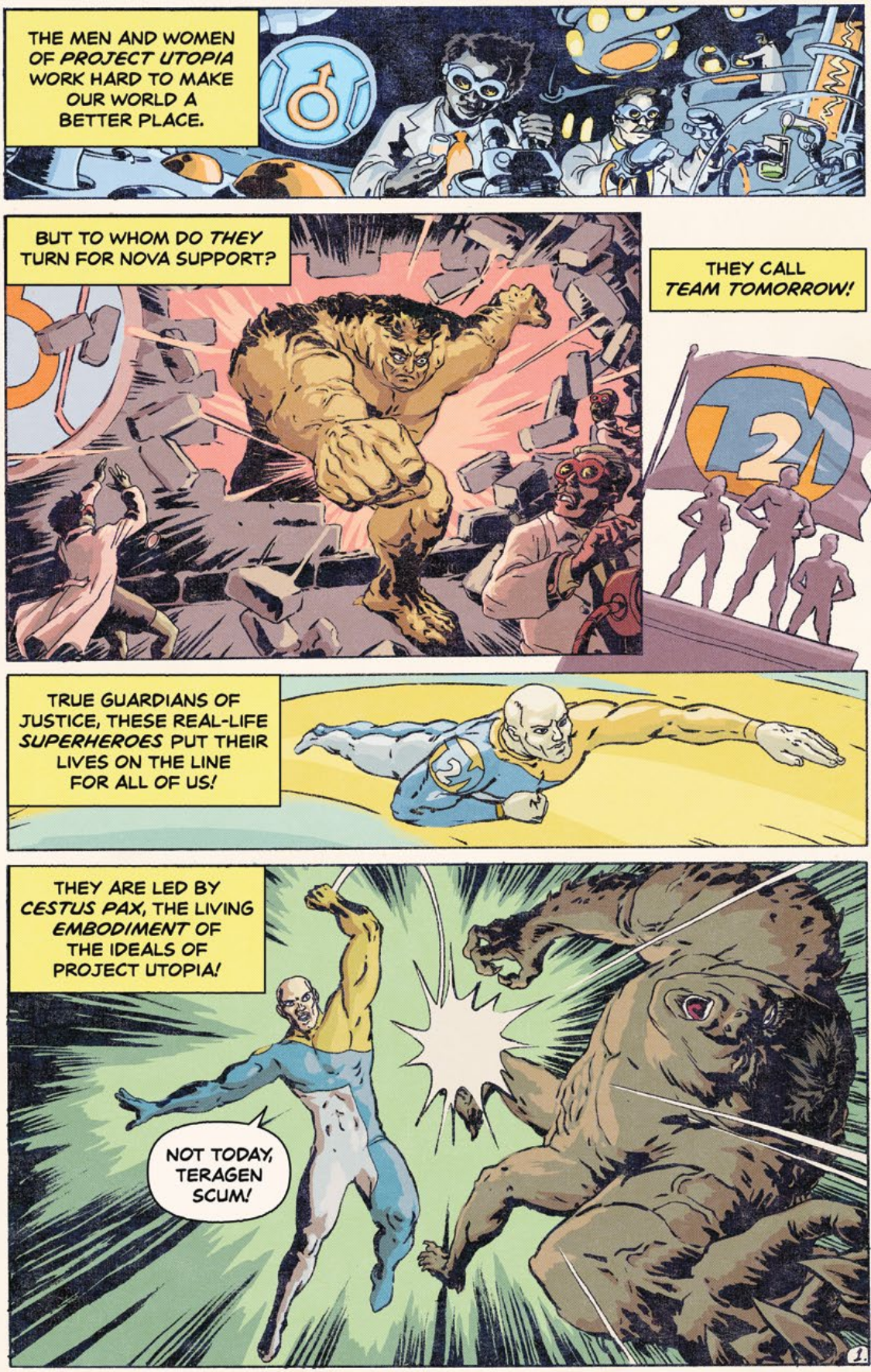
Corporate (Role)

More than ever, people in the Nova Age are learning to navigate the complex corporate world, especially if they have special abilities that make them the focus of corporate head-hunters around the world. Your character has stepped into that corporate sphere and learned to make a success of it, playing the game well for as long as it takes to achieve their goals.

Example Connections: Corporate Executives, Experts, Lawyers, Financiers, Investors

Skills: Command, Humanities, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Library, Patron, Skilled Liar, Wealth


THE MEN AND WOMEN OF *PROJECT UTOPIA* WORK HARD TO MAKE OUR WORLD A BETTER PLACE.
BUT TO WHOM DO *THEY* TURN FOR NOVA SUPPORT?
THEY CALL *TEAM TOMORROW!*
TRUE GUARDIANS OF JUSTICE, THESE REAL-LIFE *SUPERHEROES* PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR ALL OF US!
THEY ARE LED BY *CESTUS PAX*, THE LIVING *EMBODIMENT* OF THE IDEALS OF PROJECT UTOPIA!
NOT TODAY, TERAGEN SCUM!
1.

BUT THWARTING **NOVA TERRORISTS** IS ONLY **PART** OF THEIR MISSION. TEAM TOMORROW IS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR...

...RESPONDING TO *DISASTERS*...



SLIDER

...DECREASING LOCAL *CRIME*...



THORN

...IMPROVING URBAN *INFRASTRUCTURE*...



CESTUS PAX

...AND *HELPING PEOPLE* LIKE YOU AND ME!



SPLASH



CHAPTER FOUR: THE POWERS THAT BE

"We are in a war for a better tomorrow. Join us. Help us to not take the easy road, and I promise we'll fight every fight they can throw at us. Help us win the hard way — the right way — not with hate, not with retribution, but with wisdom and hope. Help us become champions."
— Kamala "Ms. Marvel" Khan, Champions

In 2028, simply being a nova isn't always enough. Having quantum powers is great, but to which group you belong matters just as much, if not more. Talents and baselines also band together into organizations to support or antagonize nova factions. The world is a strange and wonderful place, full of people with a dizzying collection of amazing powers, but at the end of the day to whom you give your allegiance matters.

The allegiance the characters follow plays a great part in establishing the mood and overall theme of their adventures, as each of the major factions in 2028 have distinct agendas and philosophies and are careful regarding who they admit within their ranks. This chapter includes the description, history, philosophy, and organization of each of the top players in the world of **Aberrant**, plus information on how to set a campaign built around them, together with their corresponding Path.

The Æon Society

A philanthropic organization with deep pockets and a long history, members of the Æon Society were the original creators of Project Utopia. Rather than let Project Utopia shoulder the entire burden, these idealists continue to work hard in their own ways to make the world of 2028 a better place. Play as part of the Æon Society if you want to tell stories about ground-level heroes, Talents, and maybe even a low-powered nova or two.

Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow

Stepping out of the shadow of the Æon Society, this private organization is dedicated to saving the world in any way it can. Their most visible project is Team Tomorrow, a group of novas acting as bona fide superheroes in a variety of global operations, but Project Utopia's reach is massive. Play as part of Project Utopia if you want to have a campaign about saving the world, particularly as part of a "traditional" superhero team.

The Teragen

Believed to be nova terrorists and supremacists, the Teragen is actually a group containing a wide range of individuals. However, these diverse (and often fractious) novas all agree on one cause: Novas are the next step in human evolution, and therefore must not be bound by limits imposed by baseline humans. Play as part of the Teragen if you want to play self-motivated novas enmeshed in the internal politics of similarly individualistic allies.

The Directive

While the United Nations have ceded unprecedented responsibility and authority to Project Utopia, the International Commission on Nova Activities — or simply, "the Directive" — is charged with overseeing the activities of the novas whose duty is saving the planet. These superspies often see the seedier side

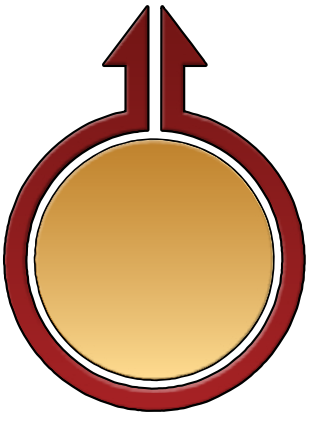
of nova life and fight dirty to get the job done. Play as part of the Directive if you're a Talent or baseline human willing to fight against renegade novas.

The Elites

Sometimes, it's all about the money. The Elites are a collection of mercenaries willing to sell their services, and quantum powers, to whomever is willing to pay for them. Some are security specialists, like the novas of DeVries, while others like Novelty Consulting act as business and technical consultants. Play as an Elite if you want flexibility. As an elite, you might be working with a handful of baselines acting as a bodyguard — sorry, "security consultant" — one week, before you fly halfway around the world to team up with massively powerful novas to stop a military incursion.

The Daedalus League

Some novas are less interested in saving Earth than they are in exploring what lies beyond. The Daedalus League is a private organization devoted entirely to the exploration of space, but what started as a venture from a group of enthusiasts is struggling to evolve into a more professional agency. Play as part of the Daedalus League if you're a nova, Talent, or baseline who wants to explore the mysteries and dangers of space travel.













ÆON SOCIETY

Most people who are aware of the Æon Society know them as a philanthropic organization with deep pockets, fond of funding humanitarian projects and, most importantly, as the people who created Project Utopia.

Few are truly aware of the society's reach and influence, and fewer still know its long and colorful history. Almost nobody realizes just how much Æon knows about the new world of super-powered individuals.

Members of the Æon Society prefer to be unassuming, offering their help or advice without leveraging their affiliation. Only during official events do the golden and silver pins with the Æon symbol come out.

Project Utopia, originally just one of many projects under Æon's purview, is shouldering most of the burden of making the world a better place along with the novas, but that doesn't mean Æon is just sitting back and watching the golden child grow. On the contrary, given what they know about the Inspired, the Æon Council is directing the organization's resources into many areas of the world, trusting Utopia to handle the most visible and world-changing affairs.

At its heart, Æon remains a group of idealists, and their ideals to guide humanity to the best possible future for everyone remains sound and firmly at the core of everything the organization does.

History

The Æon Society for Gentlemen was founded in Chicago in 1923 by Maxwell A. Mercer and a close group of friends and associates, most of whom had been affected by the Hammersmith Experiment (see Chapter Ten, p. 274 for more). Among these associates were two of Mercer's closest friends, Whitley Styles and Michael Daemon Donighal.

In its infancy, Æon was simply a club of explorers and adventurers seeking mysteries to solve, wrongs to right, and evil-doers to punch, but as Mercer and his associates became more aware of the world thanks to their travels, their focus shifted in the 1930s into an official philanthropist group, funded by the fortunes their founders had made during their adventures.

Just before World War II started, one of the society's founders betrayed them to one of their long-standing enemies and was killed as a result. Shaken by this development, the Society did not openly participate in World War II, but secretly funded several aid programs and initiatives and did not forbid any of the members from joining the fight to help the Allies.

Near the end of the War, the remaining members of Æon were forced to fight Michael Donighal under his nom-de-guerre, Doctor Primoris. Donighal disappeared, and Mercer became more reclusive.

The second half of the 20th century saw Æon become more public in its endeavors while remaining secretive in their knowledge. The age of wonders that gave rise to the society ended with the sobering display of technology's capacity for annihilation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As the world worked towards recovering from the war, it also became more mundane.

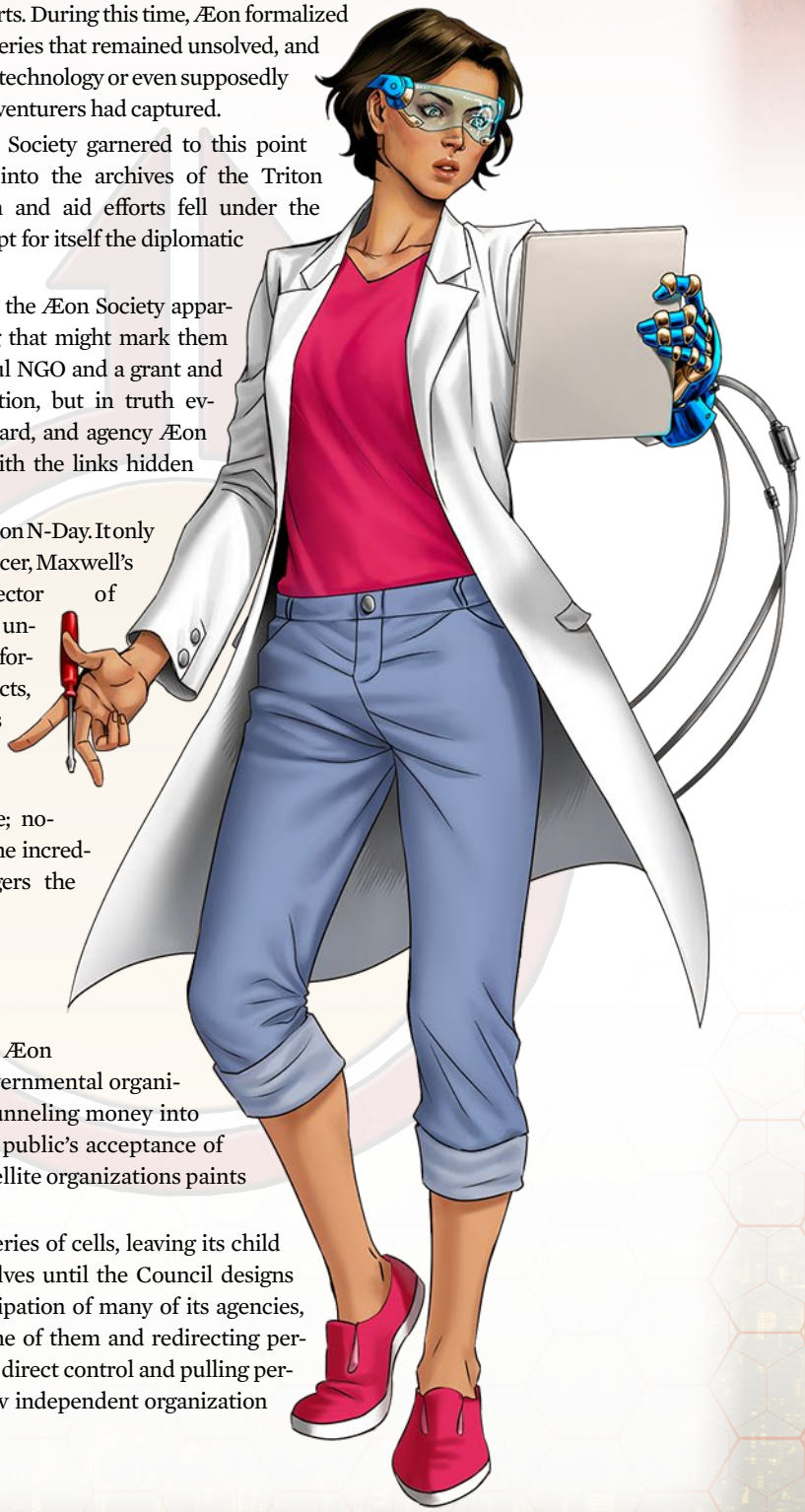
The organization grew in scope and complexity and began to diversify and decentralize its efforts under the direction of Michael Mercer, a man claiming to be Maxwell's son. He funded or outright created different foundations and charities, consolidating its internal efforts. During this time, Æon formalized the Babel Dossier, cataloging mysteries that remained unsolved, and moving every trophy of dangerous technology or even supposedly "occult" artifacts that the aging adventurers had captured.

Every scrap of knowledge the Society garnered to this point about the Inspired was folded into the archives of the Triton Foundation. Direct humanitarian and aid efforts fell under the Neptune Foundation, and Æon kept for itself the diplomatic and public relations duties.

By the end of the 20th century, the Æon Society apparently divested itself of everything that might mark them as anything other than a successful NGO and a grant and donations management organization, but in truth every foundation, project, grant, award, and agency Æon founded remains part of Æon, with the links hidden from the public.

This is why Æon was quick to act on N-Day. It only took a few calls from Margaret Mercer, Maxwell's granddaughter and current Director of the Society, for the Æon Council to understand what was happening, to formulate a plan, leverage their contacts, and convince the United Nations that they were the most qualified to handle the nova situation.

There was no deception there; nobody but Æon truly understood the incredible potential and terrible dangers the dawning age held for humanity.



Organizational Structure

The central organization of the Æon Society is that of a small non-governmental organization that works primarily in funneling money into worthy causes and handling the public's acceptance of such. Connecting the various satellite organizations paints a more complex picture.

This way, Æon operates in a series of cells, leaving its child organizations to manage themselves until the Council designs a project that requires the participation of many of its agencies, assigning the project either to one of them and redirecting personnel from the rest, or assuming direct control and pulling personnel as required, creating a new independent organization if needed.

THE ÆON COUNCIL

As a privately held organization, Æon is not required to disclose the identities of its board members. The Council is shrouded in secrecy, and only its members and the directors of Æon's child organizations know the full membership.

The Æon Council meets twice a month to discuss the routine operations of the organization and its subordinates, with one to three members assuming oversight over different projects or organizations. These meetings are scheduled more often during times of crisis. In late March of 2018 the Council met almost daily, for example.

Project Management Committee: Composed of volunteer members of the Council and their assistants, this Committee oversees designing, evaluating, and making major decisions regarding the different projects and organizations under Æon's oversight. The members of this committee are the ones who meet with the directors of child organizations to receive reports and to communicate the Council's rulings; when they do so, they don't reveal they are members of the Council. Margaret Mercer, granddaughter of Æon's founder, participates in many of the committee's projects, keeping quiet her role as the Æon Society's acting chairwoman.

ADMINISTRATION

This decidedly unglamorous department is nonetheless vital for the Society. Despite the routine duties of managing the organization's funds and balancing a budget, the sheer volume of resources under Administration's control makes it vital that those in charge are trustworthy. As a result, the Æon Council handpicks the top officials for this department, giving preference to long-standing employees for promotion.

Administration works in tandem with Global Liaisons in managing the Society's many charitable interests, with their joint crown jewel being the Maxwell Mercer Foundation, even though it's nominally managed by the Neptune Foundation.

GLOBAL LIAISONS

This department gathers the Society's experts in handling people. A mix between diplomatic corps, public relations, and marketing, Global Liaisons promotes Æon's image and influence, attends and organizes fundraisers, speaks to the media, and advises child organizations as well as governments and international agencies. It was Global Liaisons who first contacted the UN to offer Æon's resources to handle the nova situation, and its agents continue to travel the world mingling with both the powerful and the dispossessed.

PROJECT ODYSSEUS

Ever since its founding, the Æon Society has been devoted to nurturing humanity's drive to explore and push against all boundaries. Project Odysseus is a small undertaking within Æon in charge of funding the adventures of intrepid individuals who venture into the less known corners of the world.

Odysseus provides grants, scholarships, and support to independent journalists, photographers, anthropologists, archaeologists, paleontologists, environmentalists, extreme athletes, artists, and anyone else who presents an ambitious project that requires them to travel away from well-trodden paths. Nathan Jacobs is a frequent beneficiary of the project's funding, as his travels and investigations continuously put him in touch with the mysteries in the Babel Dossier.

Expeditions with a humanitarian or scientific purpose receive top priority, but it's not rare for simple challenges to human limits to receive funding, as well as advice on how not to get killed in the process.

THE BABEL DOSSIER

During the course of their escapades, the members of the early Æon Society assembled a collection of rare artifacts, ranging from captured technology and plans from their foes, items whose nature and operation remain unknown, carcasses of creatures unknown to science, and a record of rumors, incomplete findings, and other pieces of information that Mercer believed might be significant in the future.

This collection was called "The Babel Dossier" and was kept in a secure vault in the second basement of the Society's headquarters in Chicago. After the battle with Doctor Primoris in the 1940s, the Society decided to move the collection to a more secure and remote location, keeping only the catalogs of the archives on site.

Access to the Dossier was always heavily restricted and kept secret from new members until they proved their trustworthiness, but as Æon grew, the Dossier was mostly forgotten except by

PROFILE: MARGARET A. MERCER



It's not easy growing up in the shadow of the Man Who Saves the World. Margaret is like her grandfather in many ways but works hard to forge her own path. When Maggie graduated college, Max told her he needed to be absent from the coming age and he was counting on her to reshape the world in her own way. He smiled as he hugged her, but Maggie could feel the sadness within him. Her keen intellect and friendly personality — and prestigious family connections — have seen Maggie become a respected member of Æon Society leadership who has a keen interest in many of its current projects, including Utopia.

Maggie keeps two secrets very close to her chest: The first is that she is what the Æon Society calls a "psychomorph." She knows that there are others like her in the world and wants to know who and where these so-called "dark stars" are. Novas don't feel quite right to Maggie's senses. Novas are too valuable to the world to dismiss, but her premonitions and turbulent dreams give her reason to be concerned. Her second secret is that she doesn't believe her grandfather is as absent from world affairs as he wanted her to believe. He avoids the topic during their infrequent meetings, but she is very close to pushing him hard for answers.

the Æon Council and select few members from other branches.

Margaret Mercer was the latest custodian and curator of the Dossier until she became Chairwoman of the greater Æon Society. N-Day brought the Æon Council together with the directors of their major foundations and investments, and together they decided to reopen the Dossier for both study and further archiving of the developments in the nova age.

Margaret Mercer pulled together a team to update and upgrade the vault's security, digitize and organize all the information in secure and lasting media, and to keep tabs on new developments both for inclusion and to check for flags in case anything in the Dossier contains useful information for the present day, or if current events and discoveries can shed light on old enigmas.

Half of the archivists that updated the Dossier remain employed in its upkeep, while the rest returned to their previous positions in Æon and its affiliates. However, they are still considered "archivists" and alert Margaret Mercer of anything that might be of interest to the Dossier.

The Neptune Foundation

While the Æon Society itself continues to work and invest in humanitarian projects, they delegate field duties and more "grounded" operations to the Neptune Foundation.

From its headquarters in Belize in Central America, Neptune's mission is to help organize volunteers with training, resources, and their own professionals in initiatives that seek to improve the daily lives of people on the ground. They work closely with the International Red Cross as well as the Red Crescent and Red

Shield of David, Doctors Without Borders, and the United Nations.

Neptune Foundation's CEO, Dr. Naiara Dantas, does not talk publicly about how she wasn't pleased when Project Utopia was transferred to her portfolio from its original home in the Triton Foundation. Indeed, she was relieved when Margaret Mercer gave Justin Laragione the project's reins and he took it in a more autonomous direction.

Dr. Dantas works well with Laragione, which provides seamless cooperation between both organizations. Neptune provides the groundwork for Utopia's efforts in fostering good relations between novas and the rest of humanity, minimizing and remedying the collateral damage of nova activities.

EMERGENCY FIELD OPERATIONS

This Neptune division oversees all sorts of search-and-rescue operations. They maintain a core group of full-time members stationed in Neptune's headquarters, ready to deploy anywhere in the Americas to assist in disaster relief. They also employ a great number of reservists embedded in local emergency services to act both as liaisons and expert advisors, able to call in for help if needed, and coordinate with local volunteers registered with Neptune.

Classified as first responders, EFO teams work often with Team Tomorrow to respond to natural disasters, but also to help protect bystanders in extended nova conflicts. Local operatives are authorized to act spontaneously in sudden situations but are advised to call for support as soon as possible so that Neptune can coordinate with local authorities and, if necessary, leverage its relationship with Project Utopia.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

When the dust settles and everyone who needs rescuing is safe, Neptune continues to work in what they call "incident management," which is an elegant term for "clean-up duty." While Field Operations recruits emergency personnel, Incident Management deploys civil engineers, mobile kitchens, medical personnel and, above all, logistics experts.

Within Neptune, incident managers get a somewhat deserved reputation of being Team Tomorrow's cleaners, as they often step in to fix anything that T2M's actions might have disturbed. Many former Babel archivists work in Incident Management and do their best to abscond with potential new additions to the Dossier. After a series of awkward encounters with Directive officials over nova-related evidence, Neptune operatives have requested Æon to lobby for either clearer jurisdiction, or to dispatch Utopia agents directly and leave Neptune to do what it does best: Help people rebuild their lives.

THE MAXWELL MERCER FOUNDATION

Where Field Operations and Incident Management follow reactive procedures, the Maxwell Mercer Foundation prefers to be preventive.

The Foundation used to be the principal backer of Æon members' adventures, but as the Society expanded in size and scope, the Maxwell Mercer Foundation also grew into an organization that participated more closely with society, in addition to holding galas and fundraisers.

The Maxwell Mercer Foundation helps people with social development. They employ sociologists, journalists, social activists, attorneys, educators, and people with experience in community development. They provide legal aid to immigrants, help isolated communities secure a water supply, fund and implement literacy and art programs, and other activities meant not to repair damaged livelihoods, but to enrich them.

The Triton Foundation



The Triton Foundation did not exist as such until 1986, when the Æon Society consolidated all its interests in medical and biological research under the singular direction of Dr. Dragan Kuzlev as CEO. The Triton Foundation manages its projects from its central offices in Boston, but its operations are spread around the world in its associated research laboratories.

Triton became prominent when Drs. Mazarin and Rashoud took the first steps towards

understanding novas and their powers; they continue to collaborate with Triton researchers from their positions within Project Utopia.

Other companies in the field complain that Triton has an unfair advantage thanks to its access to Utopia research. In truth, Triton is also subject to Utopia's oversight regarding dangerous research, and both Utopia-derived results and the oversight reports are available upon request.

A deeper connection between Triton and Utopia remains unproven, but one does exist: Æon is the bridge that ensures that Triton scientists are the first to know of any breakthroughs before Utopia releases them, and in return Triton provides everyone under the Æon umbrella the medical tools they need to perform their duties to make the world a better place.

The Triton Foundation operates as a typical health research company, with administrative, legal, and other departments necessary to manage operations smoothly. Rather than have large divisions organized by medical field, each of the different laboratories is free to conduct their own research but, much like Æon, pulls resources together from its affiliates. Triton also coordinates joint projects from its different facilities. Such projects have resulted in the cure for cancer and the HIV vaccine, which are then assigned to labs as the different investigators return to their original offices.

OPERATION CORNUCOPIA

Utopia's Operation Eden made sure that the Earth's resources recovered after centuries of exploitation. Triton is following up with Operation Cornucopia, with the objective to research and develop new kinds of sustainable crops and other food technology that have minimal impact on the environment and maximum nutritional yield.

The Æon Society works hard to support this endeavor by making the research as transparent as possible and avoid the negative publicity that genetically modified organisms have carried for the good part of the 21st century.

PROJECTS CYCLOPS AND ARGONAUT

These initiatives started back with the original Æon Society for Gentlemen as a simple catalog of the flora and fauna (Cyclops) as well as exotic locations (Argonaut) that Æon members encountered during their adventures, but as it was transferred to the Triton Foundation, they expanded to cover research on plants, animals, geology, and ecology that might yield valuable data for pharmaceutical research.

PROJECTS PANDORA AND TANTALUS

These two projects are the only initiatives that Triton keeps under strict secrecy; their subjects of study are the Inspired. Triton is happy that Utopia's Science & Technology division focuses on novas and their quantum abilities, so it can keep its secret resources dedicated to unraveling the secrets around the other sources of power unleashed by the Hammersmith Experiment over a century ago.

Pandora studies people codenamed "psiads" and their subtle psychic powers, while Tantalus studies Talents, people with uncanny luck or superlative skill that allows for almost superhuman feats of daring. While Pandora researchers have made some headway, their Tantalus colleagues hit dead end after dead end, starting with a lack of definitive criteria that would qualify an individual as a Talent. The Æon Society grants select researchers from both projects access to the Babel Dossier to help them with new lines of research based on old information.

Project Proteus

Every light casts a shadow, and few understand this better than the operatives of Project Proteus. Ultimate pragmatists, the agents of Proteus know that sometimes unsavory means are the only way to avoid greater harm but also know that such means should always be the last resort and conducted with as much mercy as can be afforded.

Unlike other Æon affiliates, Project Proteus has no headquarters, and no infrastructure of its own. Like parasitic shadows, Proteus agents hold official positions in every other Æon affiliate and use the resources within reach to carry out Proteus' objectives.

PROFILE: THETIS



Thetis feels like she carries the weight of the world on her shoulders. She has another name she's known by within Project Utopia, but that's as false as her codename. It's simply a placeholder to keep her on the payroll. No one in Project Utopia has any idea who Thetis is, and that's exactly how the Æon Society wants it.

Thetis knows she's not the first person to carry the codename and the role. She knows better than to ask questions and expect answers, but also that her employers would be disappointed if she didn't do some digging. She's figured out that beneath the disguises, the previous Thetis was slightly younger than she is, naturally left-handed (though she used her right) and was Western-European even though her American accent was flawless. Thetis has duplicated all these traits for role consistency and has the goal of leaving even fewer clues to her successor.

Thetis is absolutely dedicated to Proteus' goals and hopes their contingency plans are never needed. She is ruthless and encourages loyalty to the mission even beyond loyalty to herself. Privately, Thetis is concerned that she faces a darker time than her predecessor. Proteus' projections indicate that at the current state of development, novas will be unstoppable by any contingency short of global destruction, and she doesn't know quite what to do about that.

Proteus was created at the behest of Thetis, the current director, as its own sub-agency within days after Project Utopia became public knowledge, but agents rumor that Proteus existed in one way or another since the end of World War II, and only after N-Day did it become necessary to expand its scope.

The stated mission of Project Proteus is to predict the worst scenario and take measures to prevent it, or if it's inevitable, to mitigate it. Armed with Æon's knowledge of how unstable and dangerous novas can become, the agents of Proteus rose to be those who watch the watchmen.

Like every other member of Æon, Proteus agents want humanity to advance in peace and prosperity, but the very nature of Proteus means that they are not naive enough to believe that building a utopia does not involve getting their hands dirty.

While the Proteus modus operandi includes sabotage, theft, violence, manipulation, and the destruction of a career or two, assassination is not on the menu. Thetis imparts on all her agents the idea that death is impractical and creates more trouble in the skein of events and should only be reserved for Medusa Infrared threats, as per the protocols (see below) every Proteus agent follows.

To protect its secretiveness, Proteus avoids leaving a paper trail or records of any sort, and thus their organization is loose, almost chaotic, but it's built on networks of relationships between agents, and a common language that includes nicknames and code phrases that meld perfectly within common parlance.

Thetis reports directly to the Æon Council, and has equal standing with every other affiliate director, so even if she occupies a dead-end

position in Utopia's Administration division, she sees eye-to-eye with Director Laragione. Under her direction, "Directors" Ozaki and Iktome keep the tangled web of sleeper agents working with astounding efficiency, transferring operatives between Æon affiliates and external agencies where they can best contribute to Proteus' mission.

Proteus has no real hierarchy, but agents have nicknamed themselves into general categories based on the nature of their work.

THE STALKS

The spies and analysts of Proteus have day jobs that put them in direct contact with the flow of information and creation of knowledge. Their current nickname arose from a joke between analysts referencing a fictional monster with dozens of eyes mounted on stalks, which can observe everything, replacing the statelier "Panoptikons," and just on the brink of devolving into simply "stalkers."

Stalks in the field work in organizations and agencies external to Æon, including deep undercover agents within the Directive itself. Analysts and archivists operate mostly inside Utopia and Triton, but there are agents hidden in the ranks of Interpol and the World Trade Organization, passing on interesting bits of knowledge that higher-ranked analysts in Æon can piece together.

The Cassandra Initiative: Harnessing developments in artificial intelligence and machine learning, the Stalks put together a system that spews out event models that attempt to predict the results of current events. The system is limited and yields mostly nonsense, but Thetis encourages the agents in charge of the initiative to interpret the readouts using their own intuition. Margaret Mercer has shown interest in the program, much to Thetis' curiosity.

PROJECT NEMESIS

The agents of Nemesis are embedded in law enforcement and security agencies around the world, including Utopia's Peacekeeping Corps, and one particularly daring agent in DeVries. Their goal is to monitor and gently nudge the development of legislation in relation to novas, as well as studying nova criminals and their methods. Unlike Stalks, Nemesis agents see action often, and it's not rare for an entire squadron in a police force to be entirely under Proteus control.

ACHILLES TEAMS

The closest Proteus has to a dedicated paramilitary force, Achilles members hold jobs and positions completely unrelated to their role within the Project and take "vacations" or suffer "accidents" when activated.

Achilles teams are assembled on a per-mission basis and are the ones that handle dangerous and direct missions such as sabotage and extraction, as well as exploration and reconnaissance too dangerous for sleeper agents. Also, Achilles teams are the most likely part of Proteus to employ novas, identified as likely candidates during the assessment process in Rashoud Centers.

THE MEDUSA PROTOCOLS

A special team of analysts under Director Iktome collates information received from all branches of Proteus with the purpose of devising plans and countermeasures in case novas go rogue. In a way, the Medusa Protocols are the heart of Proteus' mission, and Thetis uses her influence to make sure that Proteus has whatever tools the Medusa Protocols require, be it a country's national policy on novas, a tailored virus, or a prototype weapon.

With the sheer variety of nova abilities and physiologies, Proteus has hundreds of Medusa Protocols, some of them customized for specific novas, others dealing with certain power sets, and classified by purpose. What all Medusa Protocols have in common is that they are in ongoing development.

- **Medusa Green:** These protocols diffuse a nova without harm. They include researching the backgrounds of specific novas with a psychological profiler and tailoring a sedative to tone down a nova's mood.

- **Medusa Yellow:** These protocols are designed to stop a nova cold and restrain them and include measures to cancel, counteract, or withstand some nova powers. Proteus keeps tabs on Utopia's Science & Technology

PROJECT PROTEUS AND TEAM TONIGHT

Although they share a philosophy of pragmatism and both undertake missions best described as black ops, Proteus does not run nor is involved with Team Tonight. In fact, the members of Team Tonight have the most comprehensive Medusa Protocols.

Thetis prefers not to take chances when it comes to Sophia Rousseau and keeps Achilles operatives well away from Team Tonight operations, although Proteus has managed to maneuver and dictate some of T2N's missions simply by filtering information through Utopia's channels.

division for hints that someone, somewhere, is making an effective quantum attenuator.

- **Medusa Red:** These protocols cripple novas permanently, or at least in the long-term. They include such extreme measures as breaking a fast-running nova's legs, destroying a relationship to trigger a nova's depression, or exploiting some other weakness.
- **Medusa Infrared:** Plain and simple, infrared protocols are strategies and measures to kill novas in full use of their powers.

Running an Æon Society Campaign

An Æon Society campaign is perfect for telling stories about ground-level heroes; normal yet extraordinary people who pull together to make life better for others using skill and wits in a world where superpowers exist. The Æon Society is spread wide in its interests and activities, which offers an equally wide array of choices for stories with characters from very different backgrounds.

The Æon Society has been putting together multidisciplinary projects for nearly a century, and they are very good at matching people together for specific tasks. The characters can belong to a task force under one of Æon's affiliates, but with plenty of "loaned" members from other parts of the vast Æon family. If they work effectively as a team, Æon might decide to keep them together, and they could eventually begin their own branch, either a Project, Operation, or a Foundation of their own.

Recovering a lost satellite that fell in Germany's Black Forest can involve rangers from the Neptune Foundation, an intrepid reporter funded by Project Odysseus, and a couple of "hired" bodyguards who are actually an Achilles team from Project Proteus interested in the information that could be salvaged from the satellite.

Tracking down a gang poisoning the streets of Portland with a nova derived drug could require an investigator from Neptune's Incident Management with the help of Æon's Global Liaisons to cooperate with local police, while a Triton scientist works to develop an antidote, with aid from a curiously helpful FBI agent who is a member of Project Nemesis.

Tracking down the bizarre mysteries of the Babel Dossier can make for a long campaign where Babel archivists travel the world, recovering one piece of forbidden knowledge every week through sheer ingenuity, or they could find themselves in conflict against organizations like the Megasyndicate or the Directive, who have a very different idea of what progress in the world means.

Also, given its history and nature, Æon employs hundreds of Talents and, if everyone agrees, an Æon team can even include a low-powered nova or two.

An Æon Society campaign offers flexibility to both the players and the Storyguide, with the chance to change the tone and goals of the story as it progresses with Æon assigning the characters to missions that require their growing expertise.

The Æon Society Path (Society)

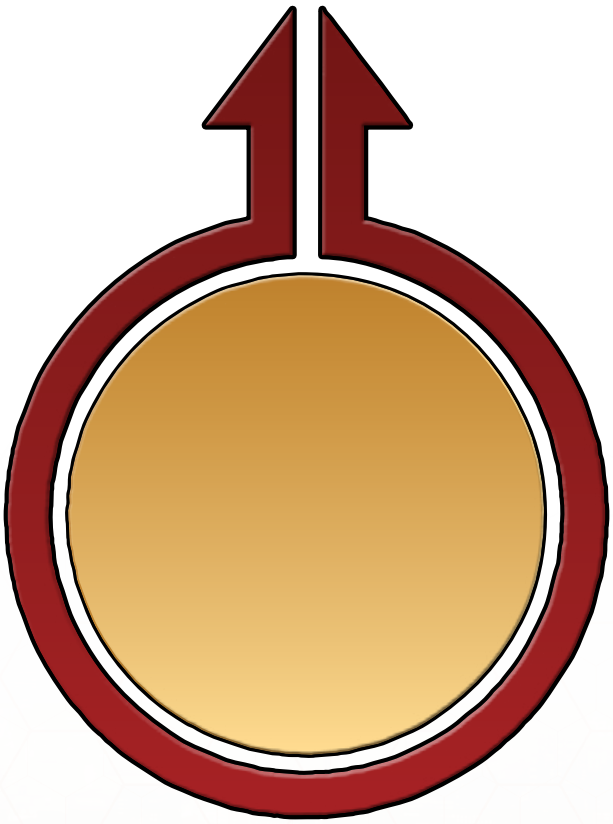
Your character belongs to one of the most respected and established organizations in the world, with access to vast resources, both

material and intangible. Æon only accepts people who want to make the world a better place, whether they are baseline humans, Talents, or novas. The Society offers a variety of fields from the adventurous humanitarians of The Æon Society core organization who lend their talent and resources, the first responders and developers of The Neptune Foundation who lay their lives on the line of duty, the scientists and scholars from The Triton Foundation who abandon everything in the pursuit of knowledge, or the pragmatic agents of Project Proteus who are ready give up their morality as long as others can remain idealistic.

Example Connections: Æon Council, Project Utopia, Team Tomorrow, international relief agencies, allies in government positions, grateful citizens

Skills: Humanities, Persuasion, Science, Larceny

Edges: Followers, Library, Wealth; Alternate Identity (required for Proteus), Skilled Liar (Proteus)



PROJECT UTOPIA

Saving the world is a great responsibility, but Project Utopia stepped up to the task, and has been doing just that for the last decade.

People often forget that Project Utopia is a private organization, especially because all the work they do to improve the lives of people around the world is expected more from the actual governments. Utopia flies against everything people think a private organization is about, proving every day that greed need not be part of an operating procedure, and government oversight is not required because you can trust Project Utopia to always do the right thing.

Grown from a simple idea the Æon Society brought before the UN during the *Galatea* crisis and its aftermath, Project Utopia massively expanded in size, responsibilities and scope. Harnessing the powers of novas to improve every aspect of life on Earth,

History

The recent history of Project Utopia is the history of the world during the years after N-Day, but it was not an idea that was born spontaneously. The Æon Society has known about quantum powers for almost a century, although they didn't quite understand their nature, nor were they so world-changing back then.

When the *Galatea* exploded, the Æon Council paid attention, and when The Fireman erupted in front of the world, they acted. A "Project Utopia" already existed within the Triton Foundation to study quantum-based abilities, and it took a week of intense work for the Æon Council to move it to the Neptune Foundation and tailor it as an initiative that studied the possible applications of parahuman abilities for the betterment of the world. Æon then presented the draft proposal to the United Nations with a clear mission statement: to create a brighter tomorrow, with the power of today.

After the UN accepted the plan, Project Utopia grew with the backing — and the money — of the Æon Society, but its successes and breakthroughs pushed it towards self-sufficiency within months, allowing it to become semi-autonomous and to be regarded by the public as its own organization. The Æon Council granted Utopia what it needed from all Æon's family of projects and foundations, such as Drs. Mazarin and Rashoud, who originally worked for The Triton Foundation where they helped coin the term "nova."

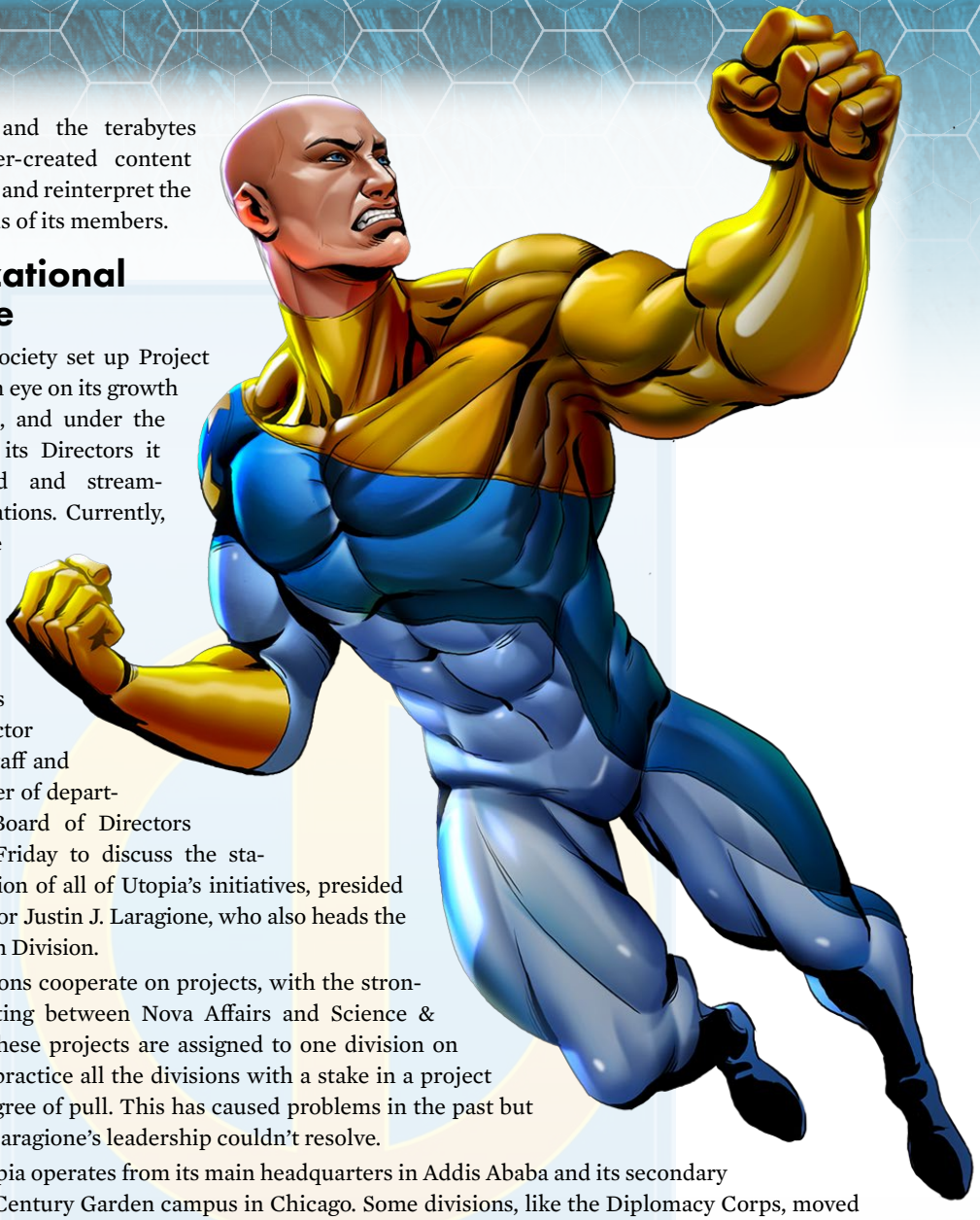
Projects such as Operation Clean Sweep, Team Tomorrow, the London Peace Accord, cleaning the oceans and restoring the ozone layer, the World Crime Task Force, the OpNet global upgrade, Caribbean reconstruction, Operation Eden, the Kepler Orbital Telescope, hyperfusion technology, and hundreds of less public small-scope contributions have convinced most of the world to take Project Utopia at face value, even against setbacks like the Equatorial Wars and doubts arising from its advisory seat on the UN Security Council.

Utopia's history is an open book, easily available in its own public records, news archives,

OpNet clips and the terabytes worth of user-created content that chronicle and reinterpret the inspiring deeds of its members.

Organizational Structure

The Æon Society set up Project Utopia with an eye on its growth and its future, and under the leadership of its Directors it has expanded and streamlined its operations. Currently, there are nine divisions managing Utopia's activities, each with its own Director and its own staff and varying number of departments. The Board of Directors meets every Friday to discuss the status and direction of all of Utopia's initiatives, presided over by Director Justin J. Laragione, who also heads the Administration Division.



Some divisions cooperate on projects, with the strongest ties existing between Nova Affairs and Science & Technology; these projects are assigned to one division on paper, but in practice all the divisions with a stake in a project have some degree of pull. This has caused problems in the past but nothing that Laragione's leadership couldn't resolve.

Project Utopia operates from its main headquarters in Addis Ababa and its secondary offices in the Century Garden campus in Chicago. Some divisions, like the Diplomacy Corps, moved out to locations better aligned with their areas of expertise, and others have major branch offices to coordinate Utopia's different task forces, like the Project Eden offices in the middle of the Ethiopian Highlands or their offices in the UN building in New York.

Of these facilities, the only one surrounded by necessary secrecy is the Advanced Contention & Rehabilitation Site ("Green Acres" for Utopia personnel, "Quantanamo" in the OpNet) where Utopia incarcerates nova criminals that their home governments agree to extradite. The exact location of the ACReS is information reserved for law enforcement and military agencies, for security reasons, but rumors abound placing it in Bahrain, Guantanamo, somewhere off the coast of San Francisco, the North Pole, and even outer space.

Otherwise, there is very little that Project Utopia does behind the general public's back, and most of that is related to internal affairs. Like its parent organization, Project Utopia is a private entity with no legal obligation to disclose many of its inner workings, but Project Utopia nonetheless issues annual and monthly reports to the UN, which are freely available online or upon request. Some information is redacted to protect the confidentiality and privacy of Utopia employees, but inquiries will find no fault on how Utopia manages its resources.

PROFILE: JUSTIN LARAGIONE



A man accustomed to fighting for what he believes in, the Director of Project Utopia is a product of America's turbulent years around N-Day. Justin was born in Los Angeles to Italian American and African American parents. His father left when he was an infant and never came back. His mother raised Justin to be true to himself no matter what. Despite his keen intellect and worth as a human being, Justin experienced the everyday prejudice that led people to call the cops when a black man was nearby, or the excessive way in which those police enforced unnecessary stops and searches. He believed that America could be more than this, but it needed leaders to set an example to follow.

Justin joined the Coast Guard — partly to stay close to the beaches he loved — where his commanding officer recognized Justin's talent. Buoyed by the support of his new mentor, Justin studied law and public relations, and the military agreed to sponsor him through Harvard. He joined the State Department after completing his tours and excelled through postings to the United Nations and the White House. The experience left the brilliant young diplomat somewhat disillusioned with the system, but throughout Justin's stellar career, the Æon Trinity was watching. When they needed someone to head their newly recognized Project Utopia, they knew just who to ask.

ADMINISTRATION

The Admin division performs the very unglamorous and routine work that keeps Utopia functioning. Balancing budgets, human resources, keeping track of supplies great and small, routine tech support, sanitation, landscaping, and other basic office work. Nevertheless, any random person would sell a kidney to work for Project Utopia in any capacity. Leon Hidaki, Chief of Human Resources, makes sure that Utopia hires the best person for any position, going the extra mile to do background checks and personal interviews, while quietly reporting to his true superiors in Project Proteus. Project Utopia does not outsource *any* job at Administration, but it does hire and help with the relocation and work permits of anyone in the world who is accepted.

Finance Department: The responsibilities of Finance are as large as its personnel. Under the watchful and meticulous eye of Chief Juliana Waters, Finance receives, processes, and assigns vast amounts of money, and cooperates closely with all sources of revenue, including the subsidiary companies that report to Legal, the Diplomacy Corps who organize fundraisers, and Æon Council members who approve additional grants and donations.

LEGAL

An organization with global reach must also navigate a vast labyrinth of legislation, and the attorneys, counselors, paralegals, and local consultants of the Legal Division relish the challenge. They handle the necessary proceedings to hire people from around the world, protect the interests of employees, including novas in both Utopia and Team Tomorrow, and get their people out of general trouble.

THE WORLD CRIME TASK FORCE

This project is under the nominal purview of the Legal Division but includes personnel from all over Utopia and Team Tomorrow. Laragione has received proposals to promote the task force into a full sub-division, but he's waiting to see how the mix of downward trends in global criminal activity and the rise of larger organized crime organizations plays out during the coming months.

Group leader Melanie Brock from Legal reports to Justin Laragione, but she lets David Vidulić from Social Development assign mission priorities and ex-Interpol Haajid Kalhoro from Security to run actual investigations and coordinate with Peacekeeping and Team Tomorrow. Task force agents refer to their leaders jokingly as "the Trinity," but there is a lot of respect for the results their seamless cooperation has delivered.

Director Stewart Long cooperates with Administration's Finance department to manage external business relations, providing investment capital for promising start-ups, and handling the licenses for Utopia's technological developments as well as other business interests.

The largest subsidiaries provide much needed revenues that pay for Utopia's other operations in addition to donations. Utopia avoids publicizing their stakes in other businesses, but do not hide them either. Some of the most profitable Utopia subsidiaries are:

- **QuanTech Corporation:** Makes law enforcement and security products and equipment other than weapons.
- **Nova Services International, Inc.:** A talent agency that puts novas in touch with potential employers. It both helps Utopian novas find one-time jobs to occupy their free time, and novas who leave a Rashoud Center without joining Project Utopia. The agency has the authority to flag certain employment requests as priority charity projects with a minimal fee for the client, but it does not force any nova to accept such requests.
- **Merced Farmacéutica S.A. de C.V.:** This pharmaceutical company produces mostly over-the-counter products based on more advanced research, selling them at low costs. It makes proprietary and generic drugs and high-quality health care supplies and home care equipment.
- **inNovaToys:** This is a toy manufacturer that licenses the likeness of Team Tomorrow novas.
- **Quiet Volcano Studio:** This gaming studio produces T2M-themed videogames for all gaming platforms, including interactive novels and graphic adventure games, as well as top-notch VR titles.
- **Year-Long Entertainment:** An animation studio and comics publisher, this company produces licensed cartoons and animated films, as well as different comics narrating the mostly real adventures of Team Tomorrow.

SECURITY

The Security Division grew out of Administration as Utopia's needs to protect its assets began to include infiltration by world governments — the United States' in particular. Director Moses Miller and his assistant, Josephine O'Reardon, run Security Division as a mix between a private security firm, a law enforcement organization, and an intelligence agency, with Inspection Chief (and secret nova) Athena Boyd making people nervous across the entire Project Utopia. It investigates and deals with both internal and external threats that go from stolen office supplies to industrial espionage from a private corporation.

DIPLOMACY CORPS

According to the career diplomats in this division, bringing people together is a tougher job than cleaning the oceans. The Diplomacy Corps are an anomaly in the hierarchical order of Project Utopia, moving frantically from one corner of the world to the next trying to put out fires before they spread.

Also, this division does not share office space with others but operates from the Utopian Center for Peace in Geneva, Switzerland under its workaholic leader, Director Ilsa Mortensen. To facilitate their work, the Diplomacy Corps are divided in regional sections, tending to whatever crises arise within their jurisdiction. These sections and their chief diplomats are: Middle East Section (Darton Fitzwalter), Europe Section (Irena Calpeggio), Africa Section (Martin Zeleny), Indian Sub-Continent Section (Roger Crosby), and Americas Section (Leticia Sandoval).

PEACEKEEPING

The Peacekeeping Division is basically a private army with a force of 3,000 fighting troops plus support personnel, all under the command of General Broughton Kiser, the Division Director and a long-time agent of Project Proteus. What separates Peacekeeping from a regular mercenary outfit is that its services are only available to the United Nations. Before Utopia can deploy its troops, the mission must be approved by both the Board of Directors *and* the Æon Council, but the process is usually swift. Peacekeeping troops cooperate often with Team Tomorrow, providing ground and tactical support.

Kerberos Company: Led by Major Rhea Sorenson, this company is composed of grizzled veterans from militaries around the world. Highly professional and effective, Kerberos' soldiers and officers are all members of Achilles Teams from Project Proteus.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Notable Spanish socialite Maria Villarreal leads some of the most capable employees in Utopia outside the Diplomacy Corps, making sure that the public has a good disposition towards the organization. While PR work certainly involves some manipulation and social engineering, Villarreal set forth a strict code of ethics that prohibits actual dishonesty and spin-doctoring, and recommends adhering to Utopia's ideals of transparency, arguing that it's much better to apologize, remedy, and learn than to dig new holes to cover an old one. The Public Relations Division is composed of the following departments:

- **Donations and Charity:** Seeks and manages donations from private individuals as well as corporate and state actors, in coordination with Legal and Finance. These are the social butterflies with a plan and a mission, often acting in unison with Æon's Global Liaisons.
- **Social Media:** Handles Project Utopia's and Team Tomorrow's online presence, managing official accounts and advising Directors and novas on online behavior. They are long-suffering community managers and forum moderators. They regard Slider as their patron goddess thanks to her natural online savvy and her "Where2Now" streamcast, and Junior Community Manager Sadeta Bajric is a rising star in this department thanks to her masterful handling of online trolls.
- **Media Relations:** Spokespersons who talk to the media on behalf of other Divisions and novas, preparing press releases, holding press conferences, monitoring public opinion, and producing their own promotional materials to share with media companies and platforms.
- **Coaching:** Advisors and consultants who prepare other Utopians to handle social events and teach them how to talk to the press and government officials.
- **Community Outreach:** The boots on the ground, joining other Utopia teams to help them present a good image for Utopia with as little interference on the actual mission as possible, as well as to gauge local public opinion.
- **Damage Control:** Not a department but a multidisciplinary task force that convenes when something happens that may harm Utopia's image. They might become a permanent department as their work is diversifying into countering conspiracy theories, dispelling rumors and misconceptions, and otherwise engaging in anti-propaganda campaigns and psyops operations.

NOVA AFFAIRS

This division represents Utopia's original reason for existing: Handle the nova situation, help

them understand their powers, and find a place in the world to uplift humanity. With a more scientific than administrative approach, Director Dr. Nigel Carstens applies the knowledge gleaned from the research of the Science & Technology Division and grants almost total autonomy to his department chiefs to handle administrative tasks for nova employees, relieving Administration so they can focus on baseline personnel. Because of its strategic access to novas, this division has the highest rate of infiltrated Proteus agents of any division in Utopia, providing the information necessary to prepare the Medusa Protocols. Nova Affairs Division includes the following departments.

- **Nova Relations:** This is the Human Resources department for Utopian novas, whether they work for any Utopia division or Team Tomorrow. As part of its services, Nova Relations conducts regular psychological reviews of nova employees, along with counseling.

- **Nova Health:** More than a glorified infirmary, Nova Health takes care of novas thanks to its close collaboration with the Science & Technology Division, developing and applying treatments for people with wildly different physiologies which include resistance to normal medication. Nova Health offers its physicians the choice of working in comfortable and fully equipped offices for treating novas, or in the field, joining Team Tomorrow missions acting as a combat medic.

- **Recruitment:** Because of the risk and expertise required in detecting, finding, and approaching new novas, the Recruitment department was separated from Nova Relations so it could train its "Intervention Teams" to be both bold and discreet, with the chief mission to help the nova come to terms with their new abilities, with full freedom of choice, and protection against more dishonest actors who might want to approach them. The Intervention Teams operate *almost* like a black ops team, thanks to their coordinator, Paul Bleeker, an ex-military Proteus agent.

- **Rashoud Centers:** There is at least one Rashoud Center in every country on the planet, and this department oversees managing them all, making sure they have everything necessary to help novas master their powers. Rashoud Centers have personnel from all other sections in the Nova Affairs Division so they can provide complete service to both fledging and experienced novas who seek their services. This section also manages the prison-like Advanced Contention & Rehabilitation Site, with the help of the Security and Peacekeeping sections and the unflinching vigilance of Chief of Security Zareck Cigielski, who is also a nova.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

As Nova Affairs is Utopia's *raison d'etre*, Science & Technology is the means by which Utopia works towards a brighter future. S&T is the largest division, commanding vast resources in pursuit both of scientific understanding and technological advancement. It's also the division with the most far-reaching and influential departments. Dr. Evard Burghalter leads this division with a loose hand and an open disposition, but an ironclad adherence to ethical standards.

- **Biological Sciences:** This department is responsible for most of Utopia's revenues, studying novas and deriving new medical knowledge from their findings. They share information with the Triton Foundation under the table. Drs. Henri Mazarin and Farah Rashoud work in this department but do not care to lead it, so they are free to conduct their research, which is currently trying to understand the mechanics of quantum eruption.

- **Chemistry & Pharmaceutics:** Once part of Biological Sciences, C&P is now focused on developing new drugs from the research of nova physiology, both for use on baselines and novas. They work closely with Nova Affairs' Nova Health department.

- **Environmental Development:** Led by Dr. Spenser "Antaeus" Balmer himself, this department oversees the most spectacular and telegenic contributions to the world: Operations Clean Sweep and Eden. They research environmental protection and recovery, as well as terraforming technology for use on the Moon and Mars.

PROFILE: DR. SPENSER "ANTAEUS" BALMER



The brilliant mind behind many of Project Utopia's environmental initiatives, Dr. Spenser Balmer, more widely known as Antaeus, is one of the most intelligent novas in the world. He's named for the giant in Greek myth who drew his strength from the Earth, and Dr. Balmer certainly does the same. He can animate plant-life of all kinds, accelerate its growth, and alter environmental conditions to promote or retard the growth of plants in an area. Antaeus's own form is decidedly "green" as well; his skin is emerald with chlorophyll, his hair and beard are of a moss-like texture, and his eyes are black with vivid green pupils.

Spenser Balmer was born in Manchester, England, and earned a doctorate in environmental science from Oxford University. A life-long advocate of environmental causes, he was involved in several conservation groups, including some accused of illegal activities during their protests. Already well acquainted with the UN bureaucracy before he erupted, Antaeus was quick to volunteer his services to Project Utopia and was placed in charge of the organization's environmental initiatives. Antaeus is also famous for his interest in the philosophy of Teras "as a means of exploring nova potential," although he claims no other affiliation with the Teragen.

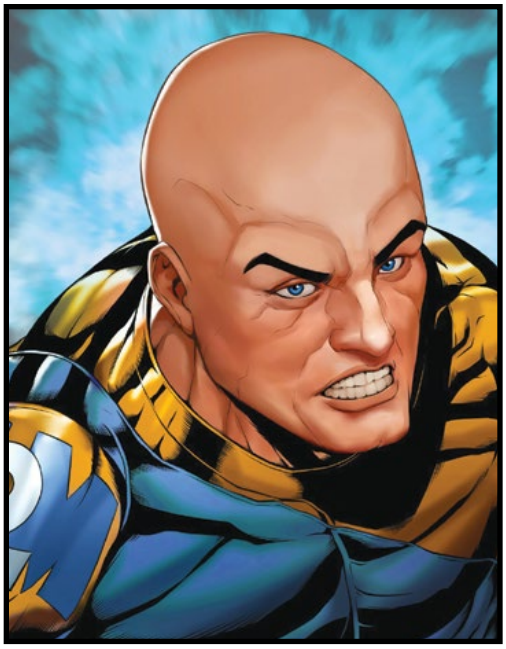
- **Applied Technology:** Like its name suggests, this department oversees using the knowledge derived from nova research to create new or innovative technologies like OpNet. It's two main sub-departments are Materials Engineering and Space & Aeronautics, which have brought great revenue as well as achievements like the Kepler Orbital Telescope and the work on new materials by the nova Jinshu Shan.
- **Research Oversight:** The only part of Project Utopia that is actually hated despite the best efforts of Public Relations, this department is in charge of executing the United Nation's mandate to evaluate and restrict new technologies that are too dangerous to proliferate, and have to work often with Peacekeeping, both for their subjects' safety and their own.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The scholarly activists of the Social Development Division work around the clock to solve the problems plaguing human societies around the globe, which is often an even more thankless job than the Diplomacy Corps', but they find their reward in the smiles of people they help. Social Development oversees projects that grow or diminish as the global situation changes, and Director Robin Woodlawn has proven adept at reading local conditions with a keen sense of opportunity in order to shift resources to existing programs or create new ones. These programs address issues of poverty, economic and social inequality, crime prevention, hunger and food distribution, population control, education, voting and civil rights, refugees, and so on.

Their advice and programs are not always welcome, and there are times when they don't have the resources or the time to help, but they never stop trying.

PROFILE: SAM "CESTUS PAX" WILLIAMS



Forty years before N-Day, Samuel Iosefa Williams lost control of his car and flipped it into the ditch on the side of the road. Glowing silver with quantum fire, Sam watched everyone he loved die on the side of the road as none of his newfound powers could save them. Broken and without family or purpose, Sam hid himself from the world. It wasn't until N-Day, when he saw live footage of the Fireman saving the day, that he knew he wasn't alone and had a chance to reinvent himself.

Utopia quickly invited Sam — now Cestus Pax — to be the core of its new Team Tomorrow project after seeing his power levels rate off the charts. The world calls Pax the most powerful nova alive, and he may well be. He's incredibly strong, fast, and durable, and can manipulate kinetic energy for offense and defense. Pax loves being part of a team, but he's uncomfortable with leadership and making decisions where people could get hurt. Nonetheless, he was brought up to believe that power brings responsibility — something he carries decades of guilt for ignoring and failing his parents' expectations. Other novas respect Pax's raw power, and he now has the Team Tomorrow family to watch over. Pax believes in Utopia's ideals and wants to make a better world for everyone.

Team Tomorrow

When Project Utopia proposed harnessing the powers of novas to make the world a better place, few expected them to announce Team Tomorrow. There on stage in front of the entire world, stood bona fide superheroes, guardians of peace and justice.

Team Tomorrow started with lofty goals, but soon came head to head with reality as they suffered their first setback during the Equatorial Wars, where defeat spelled the death of one of their members. Adapting and quite literally "getting serious," Team Tomorrow refined its methods, upgraded their training, and cooperated more closely with Project Utopia to be the effective force for stability they had promised to be.

Led by Cestus Pax from the T2M Central headquarters, Team Tomorrow is currently split into 4 arenas of operation. Team Tomorrow responds to natural disasters, terrorist threats, rogue novas, and rampaging Elites only they are equipped to handle, but they also work tirelessly to prevent more crime, build infrastructure, and help people with their lives.

Thanks to their association with the United Nations, Team Tomorrow has virtual global jurisdiction, and thanks to Project Utopia's guidance, they use it wisely.

SUPPORT STRUCTURE

Each branch of Team Tomorrow follows the same general structure, with around 10 novas and 100 support personnel at each headquarters. As a point of contact, each branch has a baseline director that works in tandem with the nova field leader to coordinate missions and assignments. Each

PROFILE: PETER "THORN" KNORR



Knorr came to the superhero business through an unusual path. He was a mercenary in the Equatorial Wars who specialized in working alongside Elites. The missions were always tough, but Knorr's final mission was suicidal. Battle-hardened Elites with a thirst for blood overpowered Knorr's nova allies who fled, leaving the baselines to their fate. Knorr's unit died in moments. As a sadistic Elite approached Knorr, the injured, dying, and desperate man reached into the earth and caused enormous vines to rip from the soil. They ensnared the nova, tore at his flesh and ground him to pieces on their tough, sharp thorns. Exhausted, Knorr managed to call for evacuation, swearing off his blood-soaked lifestyle.

Knorr worked in Utopia's Operation Eden for years before growing bored. He craved the thrill of action but not the death. Despite some misgivings over Knorr's past, Utopia valued his tactical and unit dynamics experience and accepted his application to Team Tomorrow. His personality and leadership skills let him rise to take leadership of T2M-Europe.

Thorn is strong and resilient and controls plant life — especially the thorny vines that erupt around him — but his great tactical mind and commanding presence let him bring the team together and increase its effectiveness. Despite the good Thorn has done, Knorr's past continues to haunt him. He regularly attends therapy for what he experienced and doesn't know if he can ever do enough to make up for it.

branch also has its own Administration, Public Relations, Transportation, Intelligence Services (which are the link with the World Crime Task Force), Munitions, Housing, and Health and Recreation departments who also work in close contact with their counterparts in Project Utopia.

Adding novas to each Team is a staple of both fiction and reality media, but the same exhaustive process applies to baselines as well, only without the quantum testing.

Team Tomorrow recruits must prove not only their expertise and diligence, but also their idealism, ethics, moral caliber, and creativity through a series of screening and vetting processes, followed by comprehensive training, orientation, and incorporation activities.

T2M-CENTRAL

The Central team is considered the core group of the team, based in the new headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While their main area of influence is Africa due to the lingering effects of the Equatorial Wars, the presence of Slider means the team can appear out of nowhere at any moment, to respond to any emergency should any of the other teams needs assistance. Cestus Pax is both the director and field leader of T2M Central, with Anthony "Lightning" Chang, Allison "Psyche" Pflazgraff, Jennifer "Slider" Landers, Force, and Pualani "Pele" Kapunani as the main nova operatives.

T2M-AMERICAS

The relocation of the Americas team to Mexico City caused some diplomatic grumblings and bad

PROFILE: VIOLET "TANK" CHAO



Officially a support member of Team Tomorrow, Violet's name is well-known, but she prefers to keep her accomplishments as unknown as possible. Though Utopia would love to advertise Violet's importance, they've so far respected her wishes. Few baselines realize how many owe their lives to her.

The different Teams Tomorrow always try to take "Tank" along when conducting high-risk, high-power missions in populated areas. She hates the codename, but it's well-suited as Violet is practically invulnerable and projects a probability-affecting zone within which people are much less likely to come to harm. Falling debris will narrowly miss rather than crushing a victim, and gunfire and shrapnel inflict grazing or otherwise survivable flesh wounds rather than mortal injuries. Violet is also fast, strong, and attuned to the flow of chaotic conflict around her.

Violet is a devout pacifist who abhors violence. She has never raised a weapon in anger, though she's passed all mandatory T2M training. She even avoids using non-lethal self-defense moves, if possible. Violet is more likely to stand between an attacker and his target and take every shot or punch he has until he loses the will to fight than she is to fight back.

blood, especially after the sacrifice of Randel "The Fireman" Portman, but none of this has impaired the team's performance. With the United States, Brazil, Central America, and Chile as part of their jurisdiction, T2M-Americas often must walk on eggshells, and receive additional assistance from Project Utopia in dealing with the very different governments. William F. Reed is the director but trusts Ricardo Montoya-Bernal as nova field leader due to his local expertise. Melissanda Estévez is the team's teleporter, which is extremely handy to cover the Americas from the North to South Pole. The main nova field team is rounded up by Ana Graça Texeira, Firefox, Makara, and Andrew "Skew" Parker.

T2M-EUROPE

From its headquarters in Venice, the European team mostly deals with political violence and enjoys a healthy level of cooperation from the different governments. Director Marta Csepregi has repeatedly asked Cestus Pax to transfer novas who are more socially or politically savvy, or at least strengthen the intelligence detail, as she worries that field leader Peter "Thorn" Knorr might be relying too much on Figment's powers for infiltration as their best and only source of covert action. The rest of the field team includes Griffin Armstrong, Uta "Tremor" Stentz, Gvuthbjorg "Ragnarockette" Danielsdottir, and Bryan "Saxon" Graham.

T2M-ASIA/PACIFIC

Field leader Pratima "Splash" Basham was one of the original members of Team Tomorrow and was more than happy to get her own team near her home, with the headquarters located on Talaud Island, Indonesia. She works closely with director Gerald London to deal with the most difficult arena thanks to the tensions between India

PROFILE: ANDRÉ "BENDER" CORBIN



International bad-boy of the Project Utopia set, André Corbin was a young professional football (or "soccer" in some parts of the world) player in his native Scotland when he erupted suddenly — and quite publicly — on the pitch during a World Cup match, with a kick that sent the ball flying into the opposing net, then through it *and* the wall behind it. It sparked a riot where spectators were injured. Later tests revealed Corbin's nova ability to heighten emotions, leading to his codename "Bender," although it quickly took on a dual meaning thanks to his infamous presence on the party circuit.

Bender's membership in Team Tomorrow was short-lived, given his well-known problems with authority and his near-constant presence in the gossip columns. Suspended from T2M, his public role with Utopia is that of spokesperson and popular media figure. In truth, Bender was chosen as field leader for the secret Team Tonight covert operations group. At least some of his public bad boy persona is maintained as cover, and Corbin is far more serious than most people know.

Bender has low-level Mega-Attributes, making him stronger, faster, and tougher than a baseline, along with nova perceptive and social abilities. His eponymous power is influence over the emotional atmosphere of an area.

and Pakistan, China's bull-headed non-cooperation, Russia's ambitions, and Japan's stand-offishness. Splash trusts the disarming power of Ichiko "Ishin-denshin" Iko to smooth out any diplomatic entanglement and is equally deft in assigning other team members to adapt T2M's approach to each case. Although she might not like it, she knows she can depend on Cestus Pax and T2M Central to assist if she needs more firepower. In the field, Splash commands Gina Benet, Violet "Tank" Chao, and Jiro "Smoke" Kioshi.

T2M AUXILIARIES

Team Tomorrow keeps around a dozen novas as retainers in an auxiliary role. Some of them work for Utopia and T2M borrows them for specific missions, others left the team full-time but still desire to help, some have very specific abilities that makes them unsuitable for general missions, and others just want to lend a hand. The best-known auxiliaries are Dr. Spenser "Antaeus" Balmer, Delaney "Firefly" Croft-Martin, and a nova simply known as "It."

TEAM TOMORROW ACADEMY

Founded in 2027, this experimental program is meant to train and educate novas under the age of 20, aiming for them to join any of the Team Tomorrow arenas when they become adults, as well as to promote the Utopian ideals among young people around the world.

One year later, the first generation of the nicknamed "Teen Tomorrow" have seen action dealing with petty crime and other young novas who follow a more destructive path. So far, the enthusiastic young novas have dominated all streamcast channels and are small social media sensations,

PROFILE: SOPHIA ROUSSEAU



Rousseau loves being a woman of mystery. She delights in playing the mysterious benefactor and femme fatale, always with a light laugh and a tantalizing smile. Though her name is known around the world, no camera has ever clearly caught her image. Something always obscures the shot. When Rousseau appears in public, it's without warning but plenty of fanfare, and no one ever remembers her departure. She moves with equal ease through the social circles of the Teragen, Elites, and Utopia. Sophia Rousseau is an independent force with many more stories about her than could possibly have occurred.

This public image is as much misdirection as everything else she portrays. In truth, Rousseau is the mastermind behind Team Tonight. She is a psiad with strong precognitive powers who has seen (and fears) the worldwide chaos and destruction that unchecked quantum powers will bring. She knows that avoiding the bloodshed is almost impossible, but she's determined to try. Rousseau's carefree persona covers a calculated ruthlessness that will do exactly what needs to be done, though she's not without mercy and has no desire to drag innocents into her work. Rousseau usually supervises T2N ground teams, but when she needs to lead a mission directly, the body count will be exactly what it needs to be with no collateral damage.

with no tragedy or minor setback, but Cestus Pax is worried that this idyllic venture may not last, and the Academy alums might soon bite off more than they can chew.

TEAM TONIGHT

Officially, there is no "T2N." Only the Æon Council, and the people with top clearance in Utopia and the UN are aware of this team of "misfits and malcontents with a working moral compass."

Team Tonight handles the missions that Team Tomorrow cannot handle due to political and operational complications, free from the public eye to do what needs to be done, ensuring that Utopia can continue to work towards a better society. While this may put them in the same track as Project Proteus, members of Team Tonight are unaware of the project's existence, and the scope of their mission is wider.

Team Tonight is under the tight oversight and coordination of the mysterious Sophia Rousseau, who has access to Nova Affairs' recruitment files and has an uncanny sense to identify who would be good recruits, mostly picking candidates from Team Tomorrow rejections on grounds of ethics, but never if morals are faulty. With the exception of Rousseau and Asa "The Mole" Karadakas, who works in the Administration Division where nobody knows he's a nova, all other members of Team Tonight are not employed publicly by Project Utopia; their field leader, André "Bender" Corbin, was even suspended from T2M on disciplinary grounds, and Carmelita "Detonator" Aguilar made the headlines for her rather explosive failure to qualify for membership in T2M-Americas.

Because Team Tonight has no qualms in engaging in destructive and downright illegal activities, Laragione activates them *only* when all other avenues to resolve a problem have failed. Missions have included demolishing the last redoubt of the Gulf Cartel in Mexico before the Directive could destroy evidence of ties with an American informant, kidnapping a would-be autocrat from Honduras without alerting his nova hired muscle and dropping him anonymously at The Hague, and blowing up a Japanese satellite that used restricted tech before it could reach orbit.

Running a Project Utopia Campaign

Whatever form it takes, a Project Utopia campaign is about saving the world. For baselines, whether they are scientists, diplomats, soldiers, scholars, athletes, or anything else, Utopia offers many ways to contribute to its efforts. Because it can organize multidisciplinary teams from its many divisions, characters can still cooperate as a single task force regardless of what they do.

A charity ball where the Megasyndicate will purchase the plans for restricted technology gives the chance for members of the Diplomacy Corps and Public Relations to get into some fine espionage action with the help of an agent of Research Oversight and a technician from Applied Technology, plus a Security agent for support.

Rumors of a new nova lead an Intervention Team from Nova Affairs to a cult's private enclave, requiring the fine touch of the Diplomacy Corps and help from Legal to deal with authorities.

If the characters are novas, they have a chance to be part of Team Tomorrow. A classic campaign begins with their application to Team Tomorrow (or into Teen Tomorrow if all the characters are younger), follow their training, their first missions, and then become whatever the Storyguide and players want the campaign to be.

The characters can be tracking a dangerous Aberrant and must bring him down, but in their pursuit, they come across more reasonable Terats who can be talked to and who make good points.

The characters could also be part of the World Crime Task Force and face mostly baseline enemies, going about the routine of breaking up minor gangs until their targets aim hyper advanced weapons at them that can actually hurt novas, and then it becomes a mission to stop the proliferation of this kind of armament.

As a Storyguide, you can use Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow to help your players should they become stuck; an official could just give one of them a call and provide clues or even orders that jostle the characters back into the story.

Even if the characters decide to go against orders to do something that is good, they still have the option open to join Team Tonight. You don't need to use the established members, instead having Sophia Rousseau approach the characters so they can become the actual Team Tonight.

Whether they are baselines or novas and whether they work for Project Utopia or Team Tomorrow, the characters are in the unenviable position to change the world through their actions or inaction. Don't be afraid to play the consequences of characters exerting their influence or making right or wrong decisions, because that is what **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** is all about.

Project Utopia Path (Society)

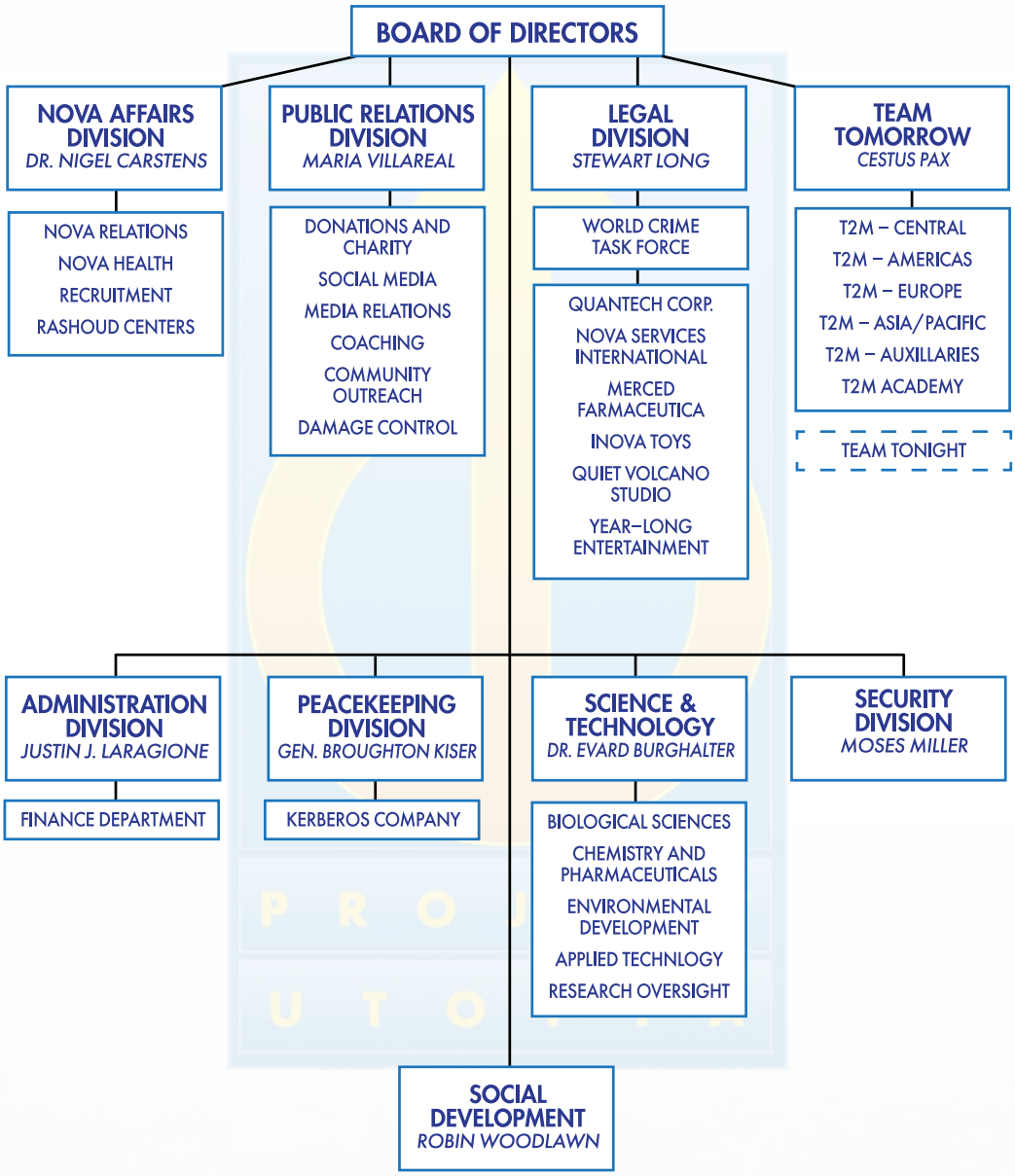
You are part of a force of change, employed by the largest and most complex entity in the world. As part of Project Utopia, you are expected to do and be your best, doing your part at maximum effort to drive humanity to a bright future. You can be a scientist, a diplomat, member of a support team, a field medic for superpowered individuals, or you can be one of these Inspired, lending your power to Utopia's vision either as an employee or a member of the admired and respected Team Tomorrow; that is, if you have what it takes.

Example Connections: Æon Society, Project Utopia, Team Tomorrow, squad of Peacekeepers, doctor from Nova Affairs, DeVries recruiter

Skills: Choose four appropriate for your division of Project Utopia. For Team Tomorrow: Athletics, Close Combat, Command, Integrity

Edges: Library, Small Unit Tactics, Big Hearted, Fame, Patron, Wealth

PROJECT UTOPIA
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



THE TERAGEN

Marvels, portents, monsters... the novas of the Teragen are all these things and more. While many like to paint them as nova supremacists and outright terrorists (some of them are), the Teragen as a group is made up of a wide range of individuals drawn together by a common belief: Novas transcend baseline humanity, and therefore have a responsibility to themselves to explore the full extent of their potential, without being bound by human limits.

The history of the Teragen in the Nova Age begins with the Null Manifesto. Divis Mal issued his statement to the world on October 31st, 2023, describing the philosophy he called "Teras," and it was clear his message resonated with many novas. Not long thereafter, images of Mal were everywhere, along with his rising phoenix emblem and the "black null" logo. Many novas adopted his philosophy, calling themselves "Teragen" while others discussed and debated the truth and value of its ideas. Still, everyone was talking about what Divis Mal had to say and what it meant for the future of novas and the world.

The media and the OpNet obsessively followed Divis Mal after that, capturing his every appearance in public, along with whoever he associated with and what they were doing. Stories circulated about exclusive "salons" hosted by wealthy and influential novas like Pedro Santiago and Raoul Orzaiz, where Divis Mal and a handful of others gathered, a "Pantheon" of novas discussing and debating. Some attendees of these gatherings, like Santiago and Orzaiz, or Caroline Fong, were already well known. Others, like Jeremiah Scripture, Narcosis, and Geryon, became known from their associations with the inner circle of the Teragen. Whereas Divis Mal shunned the spotlight following the Null Manifesto, refusing all requests for interviews, the novas closest to him did not. Many were happy to either step into the light, or to make it known to their fellow novas they had insights to share.

Factions

It would be misleading to say the Teragen even has a "structure," given how anti-hierarchical Terats tend to be, but there are certain factions and cliques within the Teragen community, based around shared interests and goals. Most of these factions consolidate around charismatic and visionary — or at least driven — leaders, although leadership among the Teragen tends to be more by example or sheer power (physical, social, or otherwise) than any formalized process of appointment or election. Even among the various factions, there's a great deal of crossover, with Terats involving themselves in whatever draws their interest. "Membership" in a faction tends to be more about regular association than anything else, and some Terats associate with multiple factions or none at all.

THE PANTHEON

The so-called Pantheon is the ultimate clique within the Teragen, the sign you have truly arrived, and the pinnacle of a group that claims to have no hierarchy. It is the inner circle invited to attend Divis Mal on those occasions when he chooses to hold court, and whomever they choose to admit to their ranks for the in-between occasions when Mal isn't feeling sociable and the Pantheon gathers in his absence. Such invitations



are few and far between, as the members of the Pantheon tend to jealously guard their status. The Pantheon's current ranks, other than Divis Mal himself, include:

Altaz "The Apothecary" Zia: A former Triton Foundation researcher in Europe, Dr. Zia's fascination with novas led to his own eruption. His bio-manipulative and healing powers have allowed him to continue his obsession with studying the nature and development of the One Race.

Angela "Narcosis" de la Cruz: A rare instance of someone seeking eruption and finding it, Narcosis is almost impossibly alluring and influential. She makes no secret of having started the Pandaimonion faction to enjoy herself, and her abilities, to the fullest.

Bene "Bounty" Manata: One of the most recent additions to the Pantheon, Bene Manata erupted in Ethiopia, where she studied with Terat and T2M member Antaeus. She later left Project Utopia and traveled to the central Congo region, accepting an invitation to meet with the Pantheon and join them.

Caroline "Xing" Fong: Caroline belongs to the prestigious and wealthy Fong family of Hong Kong, although she attended primary school and university in England. She has formidable radiant energy projection powers.

PROFILE: COUNT RAOUL ORZAIZ



The Terat most often seen by viewers around the world is Count Raoul Orzaiz, the media's favorite "spokesperson" for the Teragen. He has appeared in numerous interviews since he publicly declared his adherence to Teras shortly after the Null Manifesto broadcast. Handsome, stylish, and incredibly charming and well-spoken, Count Orzaiz is a media darling who doesn't seem to seek the spotlight, but nevertheless it always manages to find him. He is in many ways an ideal face for the Teragen, since he exhibits no outward manifestations of the nova nature he so proudly proclaims.

Orzaiz's family is from the Basque region of Spain, aristocratic old money, lending the Count a natural ease with his air of superiority and *noblesse oblige*. He adds to this with a shaved head, neatly trimmed goatee, and fondness for expensive European menswear, lending him an alluring, slightly "sinister" look. He entertains regularly at his Spanish estate, including various members of the Teragen among his guests. Orzaiz is somewhat coy concerning the full range of his nova abilities. Still, his reputation as an outdoorsman makes it clear he is stronger, faster, and tougher than any baseline, even if not to the level of the strongest and fastest novas. Many speculate that his extraordinary charm and even good fortune are also nova abilities.

Count Raoul Orzaiz: The smooth and urbane Count Orzaiz is a favorite "spokesperson" for the Teragen among baseline media, owing to his tremendous charisma and generally calm demeanor. He's the epitome of the Network faction, looking to create and sustain relationships.

Geryon: A monster in both appearance and manner, Geryon is a hulking brute who morphs through various inhuman adaptations to suit his circumstances and whims. He created the Aberrant faction when he decided to eliminate a baseline "enemy of the One Race" and to do the same to others who would challenge nova sovereignty.

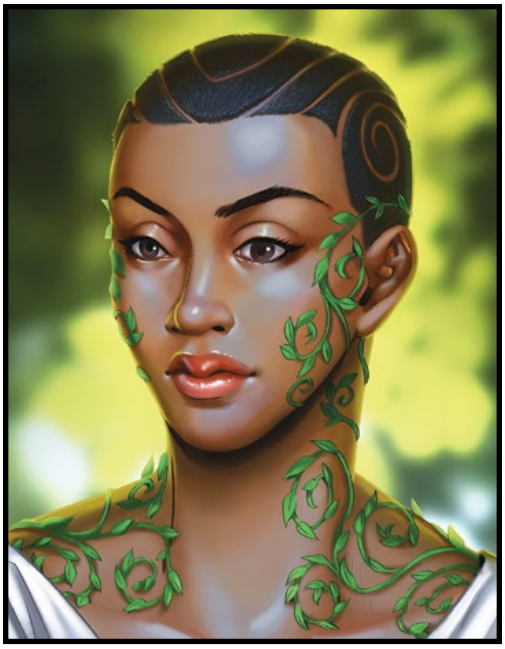
Jeremiah Scripture: The so-called "Voice of Mal," Scripture is his consort, companion, and spiritual counsel. He's the most influential Terat within the Cultus Nova faction, which he named. Scripture is a universal translator with powers over air and light, shown in the continuous light haloing his head and shining from his eyes.

Marcel "The Apostle" Delorimier: The Apostle may be one of the most beautiful and charismatic beings on Earth, his very touch narcotic and addictive. A protege of Caroline Fong's, the Apostle is true to his name in his devotion to Divis Mal and the Cultus Nova.

Meena "Dalit" Harjapatan: Meena was born into the "untouchable" Dalit caste in Mumbai. She erupted during an attempt to gang-rape her, and fled following the grizzly deaths of her attackers, adopting the name and status of her former caste as a badge of honor. Dalit has bio-sculpting powers.

Pedro "The Mathematician" Santiago: The Chilean majority shareholder of the CORE International corporation, Pedro Santiago is an

PROFILE: BENE "BOUNTY" MANATA



Bene Manata joined many of her fellow Ethiopians in flocking to Addis Ababa to witness and partake in the miraculous new growth and prosperity brought about by Project Utopia. Her own sense of wonder was so profound that Bene erupted herself, creating a lush area of greenery and growth around her, like a living manifestation of the promise of Operation Eden. Her heart and mind overflowing with new possibilities, Bene became a student of Dr. Spenser Balmer, studying ecology and her newfound abilities.

They also discussed the nature of life and philosophy, including Antaeus's interest in Teras. Bene — Bounty — became a stronger believer in the truth of the One Race than even her mentor. She increasingly questioned Project Utopia's intervention in places around the world, including her homeland, and the rightness of novas acting as servants to baseline agendas. This led to a growing rift between Bounty and her Utopian colleagues, including Antaeus, until one day she simply left Addis Ababa and disappeared.

A slim African woman with close-cropped hair, Bounty is usually clothed only in leafy vines, flowers, and mosses. Her powers allow her to accelerate and direct the growth of other life forms, particularly plant life.

organizational and financial genius, able to understand and calculate probabilities instantly.

Natalia "Swarm Queen" Dornova: A former Elite, the Russian-born Dornova left that life behind to accept an invitation to join the Pantheon. Swarm Queen has various insect themed powers, including transforming into a flying mass of wasp-like insects.

Tarik ibn'Mahmoud: A Jordanian industrialist, Tarik came to the attention of the Pantheon when he assisted in rooting out a plot to pin a series of killings in the Middle East on the Teragen. A growing influence within the Cultus Nova, Tarik can change his appearance and infect subjects with a wide range of pathogens.

THE ABERRANTS

The Aberrants are angry. Some of them are angry at being treated like monsters. Others are angry because they are monsters. Whatever the case, they are all pissed, and someone is going to *pay*. The Aberrants formed as a reaction to baseline mistrust and mistreatment of novas, particularly factions of baseline society either proclaiming novas were inhuman monsters or living weapons needing to be controlled (and possibly used). While many in the Teragen, Mal included, were inclined to simply ignore baseline threats to nova rights, dignity, and sovereignty as irrelevant, others were not willing to do so.

The spark that lit the fire of the Aberrants was the efforts of Tampa Mayor Frederick Rupert to ban "aberrants" from the city limits, a questionable civil rights issue, legally speaking. The matter is still working its way through the US court system, but it is a moot point for Mr. Rupert, as Geryon took it upon himself to assassinate the politician on live video to make it clear any threat against the One Race would be answered with

PROFILE: JEREMIAH SCRIPTURE



Like many prominent members of the Teragen, Jeremiah Scripture's life pre-eruption remains a mystery. He has been referred to as a beloved disciple and long-time companion of Divis Mal, who he says, "opened my inner eyes to the mysteries of the universe and the glory of my true self through his love." Scripture has a religious devotion to Mal and the philosophy of Teras, making him the unofficial guru of the Cult of Mal, since he is more likely to offer them guidance than the object of the Cult's devotion.

Scripture's name may originate with his religious inclinations or his nova ability to understand and speak virtually any language. He also appears to have power over air, light, and "the web of fire girding the Earth," which may refer to the OpNet or some New Age notion of ley lines. Scripture appears vaguely middle-aged, completely bald and clean-shaven, with a continual halo or crown of ghostly light playing around his head. His eyes are no longer visible except as glowing lights, as if lit from within. While apparently physically blind, Scripture claims to see with "clear inner sight." He most often wears flowing robes of white with gold and red accents.

force, claiming the label of "aberrant" as a badge of honor. This strike became a rallying point and, from then on, Terats and sympathizers who were tired of baseline bullshit found an excuse and a justification to strike back.

Geryon remains the most vocal member of the Aberrants and does his best to give the movement some direction and guidance. He feels the Aberrants as a group should adhere to two key guidelines: First and foremost, they are protectors of the One Race, even those who do not recognize their protection. Geryon himself won't kill another nova unless he has absolutely no choice; any such death is a terrible loss, whereas baselines are countless and disposable. Second, the Aberrants respond to threats to their people quickly and forcefully. Baseline affairs do not concern them except as they affect the One Race, and it is important for humans to learn that interference in nova affairs — especially threats to nova welfare — will *not* be tolerated.

Within the Pantheon, Swarm Queen, the Apothecary and, to a lesser extent, the Apostle support the cause of the Aberrants. Count Orzaiz, the Mathematician, and their Network allies have made it clear they disapprove of the Aberrants's methods, if not their goals, feeling that answering baseline slurs and threats with force simply exacerbates the conflict and lends credence to their fears. The Cultus Nova is split on the Aberrants, with Scripture tending to agree with the voices of moderation and the Apostle and Mahmoud supporting the notion of teaching baselines to respect their betters.

The Apothecary has sought to marry the Aberrants' violent "activism" with his own mystical insights into Teras, suggesting there is power to be had in embracing the archetype of the Monster, casting aside baseline notions of morality, beauty, and "goodness." This message has found some fertile ground among the Aberrants, some of whom are already quite monstrous by

human standards. The Swarm Queen is intrigued by Zia's notions, linked to the hedonism and self-aggrandizement of the Pandaimonion.

THE CULTUS NOVA

There is a fine line between philosophy and religion, and the Terats associated with what Scripture calls "The Cultus Nova" (literally "the new culture") tend to erase that line altogether. Of course, philosophy and religion are a somewhat different matter when *you* are a god. The theology of the Cultus Nova is ultimately apotheosis, the notion that each nova has the potential to grow into a god-like being, and the right and responsibility to explore this potential.

The Cultus Nova got its start with Scripture, Divis Mal's long-time companion, who holds a far more mystical view of the link between the fundamental forces of the universe and novas. Once, he and Mal were lovers, before their relationship moved "beyond all that." Now the pleasures of the flesh pale in comparison to the splendor of the cosmos. For the most part, Mal seems content to allow his "beloved Jeremiah" to oversee the Cultus, and to serve as an example for it. Scripture emphasizes that his goal is for younger novas to emulate and learn from their elders, following them on the path of Teras, and worshipping neither them nor the path. This message does not always come through clearly. Younger novas like the Apostle burn with the fanaticism of the newly converted, and swing between worshipful adoration and following the advice of their elders for deep introspection and development.

The role of baselines within the Cultus Nova remains a topic of considerable discussion. Officially, they can have no part in a path meant for the One Race and them alone, but it is clearly also human nature to both worship and fear power — and they do. This has led to the so-called "Cult of Mal," which Scripture allows to continue, and even occasionally encourages. Novas still arise from the baseline population, so it is useful for the Cultus — and therefore Teras — to have a presence within the cultural zeitgeist. It certainly has helped to recruit new novas to the Teragen, although not always in the most desirable ways. The notion of taking a more direct hand in gathering or guiding baseline worshippers led to the formation of the Pandaimonion.

More recently, the Cultus Nova has seen some other sects form. Tarik ibn'Mahmoud serves as the imam, of sorts, to the Companions, his own mixture of Teras, the Cult of Mal, and Islam. Mahmoud suggests novas are especially favored by Allah and a part of His divine plan for the future of the world. The young nova Clarion, who erupted as part of a Cult of Mal ritual, has "apprenticed" himself to the Apostle, forming a sect he calls the Kabal, made up mostly of younger followers eager to either attain greater power as novas or to follow Clarion's example and "unleash their inner potential" using meditation, ritual, and often harsh and violent ordeals to trigger an eruption.

THE NETWORK

No one is an island, not even a member of the One Race. While Terats recognize each of them is sovereign and answers to no higher authority, those involved with what they call the Network also recognize the importance of relationships. It's foolish to simply cut one's self off from the rest of the world, especially when "soft power" — social power — can be a nova's greatest asset and weapon.

For some involved with the Network, like the Mathematician, the faction's approach is purely practical; novas must live in the world, and most of them are not completely independent. Others, like Count Orzaiz, supplement the practical with the fact that the world has so very much to offer. Why isolate yourself, when the power and prestige that comes with being a nova can open so many doors to you? Other Terats refer to Orzaiz and those who emulate him as "the Casablancas" for their desire to simultaneously socialize with everyone while also claiming complete neutrality. Finally, Terats like Synapse see the Network in a literal form: The connections created by the OpNet and global telecommunications. Better the Teragen be involved — and, ideally, in control — there than trying to be separate and above it all.

THE PANDAIMONION

What's the point in being a living god if you don't have worshippers? That's the question Terats associated with the Pandaimonion ask themselves before going out and finding some. The faction started out as sect of the Cultus Nova but quickly spun off into a significant faction and

influence in its own right. The Pandaimonion's name comes from the ancient Greek *daimon* or *daemon*, one's inner genius or guiding spirit, a concept Divis Mal talked about early on. Preceded by the *pan-* or "all," the Pandaimonion heralds the age or culture of living gods, who each embrace their own unique power and divinity.

Although the Pandaimonion sounds deeply philosophical, practically speaking, the faction is an opportunity for Terats to indulge in self-aggrandizement, cults of personality, and sheer hedonism as "divine paths to enlightenment." Angela "Narcosis" de la Cruz started and sets the tone for the movement and is the kind of goddess most Terats of the Pandaimonion aspire to be: A nova-hot media star who is an object of desire for millions and who can have anything (and anyone) she wants, whenever and however she wants them. Narcosis presides over a cult of seemingly endless Dionysian excess, where the adoration of her worshippers is a better high than any drug, without ruling out enjoying plenty of those, too. Natalia "Swarm Queen" Dornova's Club Zmei in Russia is similar: a combination temple and brothel that lures followers like bees to nectar. Dalit's private clinic in India, on the other hand, has far fewer religious overtones, but still caters to the ideal of the Pandaimonion: to be eternally young, beautiful, healthy, and powerful, no matter what it takes.

Running a Teragen Campaign

A Teragen campaign for **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** is wide-open territory, given the range of interests held by different Terats. A campaign presumes all the player characters are adherents of Teras, or at least hangers-on or otherwise interested in the philosophy and the dynamics of the group.

A Teragen campaign has two main threads: First are the various goals and ambitions of the player characters, whatever they may be, particularly as they intersect with the goals of other Terats. The second thread is the internal politics of the Teragen. Whether or not the player characters want to involve themselves in the movement's internal struggles, they cannot help but be affected by them. The more prominent and powerful they become, the more they will be expected to align themselves with one faction or another. Eventually, they may become prominent enough to draw the attention of the Pantheon, perhaps even receiving an invitation to join their ranks, which is where the serious political maneuvering happens.

The uppermost ranks of the Teragen are seething with the potential for conflict. Despite their proclamations about the unity of the One Race, it's clear many members of the Pantheon hate each other, or at least would have few qualms about stabbing each other in the back, if the opportunity arose. What's more, adoration and loyalty can quickly turn to betrayal and hatred and things can get ugly. Sooner or later, there is going to be serious conflict. If nothing else, Divis Mal, as aloof patriarch of the most powerful, dysfunctional family in the world, grows increasingly frustrated with the Teragen's inability to follow the clear (to him) example he has laid, and may decide it is time to clean house to ensure the success of his vision for the One Race.

Teragen Path (Society)

A character on this path is more connected-with the Teragen than simply declaring affiliation, as some do. They are both a follower of the philosophy of Teras and connected with the larger community, since the highly independent Terats are often driven by factions and associations. Virtually any nova might belong to the Teragen, since the path claims to embrace all members of the One Race and seeks to realize their full potential.

Path Concepts

Celebrity Rebel, Former Utopian, Mystic Seeker, Nova Rights Activist, Salon Philosopher, Would-be Cult Leader

Example Connections: Celebrity, Media Personality, Religious Figure, Socialite, Teragen (any faction)

Skills: Command, Culture, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Chrysalis, Covert, Eufiber, Fame, Followers, Iron Will, Patron, Skilled Liar, Striking, Wealth

ARE WE THE BADDIES?

It would be easy to characterize the Teragen's members, and particularly the Aberrants, as supervillains. Indeed, many media outlets have no problem using that label, along with "terrorist" and "extremist." But just because the latest OpNet editorial decries members of the Teragen as villains doesn't make it universally true — even if Project Utopia quietly encourages that spin.

In truth, the Teragen's members are so divided, the only thing you can say about the group as a whole is that they're *angry*, many of them with good reason. Yes, some novas are revered and worshiped, but most of the time they're attractive, and that's by human standards. Even well-respected novas like Antaeus can't escape baseline ridicule because they don't measure up to the aesthetics of beauty that were established long before N-day. That's all before you consider that some politicians and policy makers aren't sure if novas count as humans from a civil rights perspective. Some Aberrants want to use their quantum powers to tear it all down.

If you're a fan of other **Trinity Continuum** games like **Æon**, you know the Aberrants are responsible for some awful things, but they don't represent all Teragen, and just because something's set in one possible future of **Aberrant** doesn't mean it needs to be true in your game. In the end, members of the Teragen believe they are just as much in the right as Project Utopia, and they may push the Aberrants out for the greater good.

How villainous the Aberrants end up being is up to the Storyguide. If you want to use the Aberrants as classic, Silver-Age-style villains, that's easy to do. You can even have them break off from the rest of the Terats if you want some distance from this faction. Alternatively, all the arguments of terrorism and extremism can be put at the feet of a couple of radical novas who are taking the Teragen's name in vain.

If any player wants to play a member of the Teragen but doesn't want to get wrapped up in the potentially extremist views of the Aberrant cause, don't force them. The Storyguide can simply rule that their type of Aberrant differs in this version of the **Trinity Continuum**. In the end, having a good time is more important than whatever is written here.

THE DIRECTIVE

The Nova Age has vastly increased the importance and influence of the United Nations, and the UN in turn has given unprecedented responsibility to the Æon Society and Project Utopia, but not without taking some precautions. The use of Directive 9 of Chapter V, Article 24, of the UN Charter is one such precaution. With it, the UN established an international agency charged with overseeing the activities of novas in the world, recognizing their potential global impact. The International Commission on Nova Activities (ICNA) is more commonly known to the world simply as "The Directive."

History

The potential for the Directive began during the UN Security Council meetings and emergency sessions following N-Day, although it was more than three years before the invocation of Directive 9 and the formal establishment of the organization. Russian security advisor Petr Ilyanovich made a case to the Security Council early on for the establishment of a UN commission to address the potential implications of "the aberrant powers issue" when what to even call the people displaying such unusual abilities was still being debated.

Ultimately, the Æon Society's ability to quickly address concerns won out, but Ilyanovich never entirely abandoned his proposal. Instead, he continued working his connections in the international intelligence and security community. He focused primarily on G20 nations with a strong independent streak that expressed concerns over national sovereignty following the Æon Society's handling of nova-related issues, such as the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, China, and Japan. The Equatorial Wars served as the final catalyst for Russia's case to the Security Council: Both nation-states and private corporations were fielding novas in a para-military capacity, and Team Tomorrow's initial effort to contain this conflict was a catastrophe. Clearly, the international community needed to exert further oversight. Directive 9 was invoked and an international commission was formed. To seal the deal, Ilyanovich was willing to step aside from the role of leading the new organization in favor of a compromise candidate, Canada's Mara Bakshi.

Since its creation, the Directive has followed its mandate to oversee the activities of novas on behalf of the international community, protect human rights and national sovereignty against nova-related threats, and engage in information gathering and field operations that deal with those threats as they arise, in cooperation with national law-enforcement and military institutions. To some, the Directive is a shield to protect baseline humanity and ordinary citizens of nations around the world from the hazards of living in the Nova Age. To others, the organization is a collection of international busybodies rattling sabers and trying to slow progress towards a better world, while shoring up outdated nation-state structures. As Director Bakshi is fond of saying, "The Directive's successes and failures are secret, and must remain so."

Recruitment

You don't contact the Directive; the Directive contacts you. The organization does not accept

applications. Instead, it is made up of hand-picked agents, recruited from UN member nations, and approved by the Director and the Council. The Directive tends to prefer agents with a great deal of field experience in intelligence, law enforcement, or military operations, but its methods are its own, and sometimes it chooses recruits from very different backgrounds because of some special expertise or other quality known only to the recruiters themselves. The Directive is known to recruit based on recommendations from its agents, and several newer agents have proven themselves to the senior operatives in the field.

The agency takes care of its own. Since Directive agents are essentially expected to dedicate their lives to their work, they're well paid and all their essential needs are looked after. For many of them, the organization arranges a suitable cover story for their employment, typically a desk-job for a tech or consulting firm, or similar corporate position that involves a lot of travel, something not unusual for someone decamping from military or government service into the private sector.

New Directive recruits undergo a period of training and evaluation before they are assigned to their duties, including firearms, basic "tradecraft" (espionage), and technical skills. Sometimes circumstances require putting a recruit into the field immediately. In those cases, training and evaluation come later, assuming the recruit makes it that far. Like its recruitment standards, the Directive's training and evaluation methods are its own, and some would-be recruits are judged unsuitable to serve. The dismissal of a Directive agent is a rarity, but it does happen, and the Director has the right to fire anyone who doesn't meet her standards.

Active Directive agents are given a Greek letter and numerical code, such as "Alpha-2" or "Epsilon-10" that they use as call-signs and code-names. Letters may be repeated, but numbers are not, and a particular code combination is "retired" with the agent who held it. Agents often adopt pseudonyms using the equivalent letters and alphabetical counts of their codes for initials, so "Epsilon-10" might also be known as "Ephram Jones," for example. Some are also fond of using Roman numeric plays on their number codes, such as "Ephram X. Jones."



Structure

For an international agency, the Directive has a surprisingly loose structure, built on a hierarchy of the Council, the Director, senior agents and department heads, and then individual operation cells — semi-autonomous teams of agents working in the field.

THE COUNCIL

The Directive is governed by a council of 10 members appointed by the United Nations, including at least one representative from each of the five permanent Security Council member nations. Current Directive Council members include General Wei Qiu (China), Erich Galt (Germany), Mitsu Nakamura (Japan), Petr Ilyanovich (Russia), Sir Calvin Lathrop (UK), and Elliot Stinson (USA). The Council reports directly to the UN General Assembly and Secretary General. Their responsibility is oversight of the organization and its operations, and most business is decided by a simple majority vote. In instances of tie votes among the Council, the agency Director can serve as a tie-breaking vote.

THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Mara Bakshi is the first, and thus far only, Director of the Directive. A former Minister of the Canadian Parliament, Bakshi holds a doctorate in Political Science from the Université du Québec à Montréal. Prior to her political career, she was a police officer in her native Montreal. Bakshi speaks fluent English, French, and Hindi, and prides herself on following the same training regime as Directive operations agents, saying she doesn't ask anything of them she isn't able to do herself. Bakshi understands she was considered a "compromise candidate" to lead the organization but nonetheless prides herself on keeping the Directive focused on its mission and steering clear of the rocky shoals of political entanglement as much as humanly possible.

DEPARTMENTS

The Directive is organized into various departments overseeing different areas of interest and responsibility within the agency. Some of the departments have sub-departments of their own, particularly the Intelligence and R&D Departments, which tend to have different specialties. The primary departments are Administration, Recruitment & Training, Research & Development, Intelligence, and Operations, each with its own department head who reports to Director Bakshi.

The Admin department handles the logistics and structure necessary to keep the Directive running, including management of all its physical assets and finances. It is the least glamorous but the most necessary of the departments. Recruitment & Training oversees both the process of recruiting and vetting new personnel as well as training field agents, both new hires and keeping existing agents up to date in their skills.

A little-known element of the R&T Department's work is regular psychological evaluations of personnel, particularly field operatives. The cover story is that these evaluations are for the maintenance of the agents' mental health and fitness for duty, which is partially true. They are also an effort to detect any nova-related psychological influence operatives may be under and to undo it (if possible) or isolate the affected agent before Directive security is compromised.

Research & Development studies a great deal of the information brought in by the Intelligence department to learn more about novas. R&D also develops and refines new technologies to ensure the Directive and its agents have the most cutting-edge equipment — a challenge in an age where the cutting edge is both quantum level and moving fast. It's also R&D's job to study any technology brought-in by Operations, often to find out how it works and what, if any, dangers it may pose, along with how the agency can potentially put it to work.

CELL TEAMS

The Directive's field operatives — members of the Intelligence and Operations Departments — are organized into cell teams. A cell team is expected to work closely together but to have limited direct contact with the main body of the organization. A part of this is intended to insulate the Directive from undue influence, since one thing the organization has noticed in its study of novas is that many of them are *very* influential. Based on information from Project

Utopia and additional analysis from its own R&D Department, the Directive thinks the prevalence of nova cults is far more than just an issue of celebrity.

Intelligence cells are information gathering and analysis groups, focused on tracking various kinds of information about or relating to novas. They vary in size from six to as many as four dozen or so members, depending on what areas they cover. Some intelligence cells are isolated, operating from innocuous-seeming office parks and similar places. Other cells do more field observation, often posing as journalists, fans, or tourists, and making use of drones and covert surveillance techniques and equipment.

Data from Intelligence cells is regularly backed-up and transferred to the Directive, including incident reports and recommendations for any follow-up investigation or action. Intelligence cells are particularly on-alert for signs of nova-related trouble, new or potential eruptions, and activities by nova cults and related groups. They classify priorities and potential threat levels as: alpha (no threat), beta (potential threat), gamma (increasing threat), delta (active baseline threat), and omega (active nova threat).

Operations cells are smaller and more mobile, with rarely more than a half-dozen members. They are the Directive field agents who are most likely to see action directly assessing and dealing with nova-related threats. The agency generally prefers a "combined arms team" approach to operations cells, grouping together agents with diverse skills so the cell is prepared for different contingencies. An Operations cell often has one or more technical experts assigned to it, either on a regular basis or temporarily from R&D.

Operations cells are also assigned a handler, an administrative interface with the main agency. In the Directive, handlers all use codenames, and an Operations cell is supposed to know as little as possible about the personal life of their handler. Similarly, handlers are meant to not get personally involved with the operatives. Their job is to deliver mission parameters and information, and to take reports, recommendations, and requests back to Directive administration, nothing more. Because of this, Operations cells have a wide latitude in terms of carrying out their missions and are expected not to report to their handler other than to report success or that the mission has gone completely south — assuming the cell survives it.

Operations

The Directive's mandate is to monitor the activities of novas in general, and Project Utopia and the Æon Society in particular. They gather intelligence and, when necessary, act to protect people and national interests from "unconventional threats." They also have a responsibility to assist other legal authorities, as well as Project Utopia and Æon Society, in the pursuit of their goals. When there is evidence of terrorist activity, that is reported to the appropriate national security or law enforcement agency.

This puts the Directive in the uncomfortable space of serving as the "internal affairs cops" of sorts for novas, particularly Utopia. Unsurprisingly, many resent the agency for this, and treat them with passive-aggressive disdain, if not outright defiance. Certainly, the Directive's legal authority to conduct what amounts to surveillance on private citizens of different nations is murky, to say the least. For now, it's justified by the need to regulate potentially dangerous abilities and resources, much like the licensing of weapons and other regulated equipment. Likewise, allowing oversight by the Directive is the price the Æon Society pays for the extraordinary latitude granted to it (and its Project Utopia) by the United Nations.

If the Directive is alerted to a potential threat, either from its own intelligence gathering or through the resources of other law enforcement or intelligence networks, it acts to deal with that threat. The kind of action depends on the situation and the decisions of the Director and the Council. If evidence points to a terrorist conspiracy, that is referred to the appropriate national and international authorities. When the evidence suggests the terrorists belong to a nova cult (or worse yet are members of the Aberrants), that's when the Directive steps in.

In fact, nova cults of various sorts are often the focus of Directive operations. Such cults are too closely connected with novas and their abilities for conventional authorities to investigate them

safely. They often extend across national boundaries, and they involve large numbers of baselines. What's more, nova cult activities tend to be too widespread and dispersed for nova operatives like Team Tomorrow to deal with them, except possibly at the endgame. Even then, while the novas take on the nova head of a cult, someone must deal with its members. The Directive has undercover operatives within most of the larger nova cults and related organizations for intelligence-gathering purposes.

The Directive likes to handle problems that come to its attention on its own when possible but does sometimes pass them along to Team Tomorrow and similar nova teams like Nippontai, as well as local municipal defenders. Even then, the Directive may insist on including one or more of its agents in the operation for oversight purposes. Directive agents pride themselves on using a combination of skill, tactics, and technology to take on rogue novas and win, but they're aware of the dangers of doing so, and understand it is sometimes wiser to fight fire with fire. Similarly, Project Utopia tends to be reluctant to involve the Directive in its operations unless it is deemed necessary, even though the agency is required to render assistance to Utopia and other legitimate organizations in dealing with nova-based concerns.

Two areas of friction between the Directive and Utopia are nova eruptions and technological oversight. Because the Directive monitors and gathers information about novas, they often dispatch an Operations cell to investigate a known eruption event. Project Utopia experts also try to contact a new nova as early as possible. The same is true of other factions, particularly the Teragen, which has been more aggressive in recruiting newly erupted novas — or "giving them an alternative to Utopian brain-washing," as the Apostle once put it. All of this tends to place even more stress on what an already delicate situation, and Utopia's Rashoud Center experts often remind the Directive that their job is to *observe* in such situations. The Directive, naturally, counters that is true until there is a clear threat, whereupon they can (and do) act.

Similarly, the Directive resents the UN decision to grant Project Utopia's Science & Technology Oversight division the authority to monitor potentially dangerous technologies. The agency feels that oversight is their responsibility and putting Utopia in charge is a case of assigning a fox to guard the henhouse. The Council often takes opportunities to interpret the Directive's intelligence gathering and threat neutralization mandates quite broadly when it comes to nova and quantum technology. While Utopia's Oversight gets to decide whether a technological innovation or device is dangerous, the Directive asserts a right to monitor such things and act in situations where a "clear and immediate threat" is perceived. This has led to a few instances of Oversight personnel showing up, only to find Directive agents have already "dealt with the threat" and the technology in question has been "taken as evidence for analysis."

Running a Directive Campaign

The super-spy agency extraordinaire, the Directive is a great means to run an **Aberrant** campaign focused on Talents from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, with novas primarily as antagonists or background characters. Nova or psiad characters in the cell would be at the Storyguide's discretion (see "The Nova Question" sidebar), but the default is that the Directive goes for the best of the best among baselines, meaning they also net a lot of Talents.

The Operations cell is the basic building block of the Directive's field agents, and all the player characters can be members of the same cell. They might have additional Storyguide character members or specialists at the Storyguide's discretion, and they work with a handler within the Directive who assigns them their missions and receives their reports, a useful "mouthpiece" for the Storyguide. At least initially, the cell is insulated from much of the rest of the organization but, as the agents progress, they're likely to draw the attention of Directive higher-ups and learn more about the organization's activities.

While you can run a Directive campaign as primarily straight-up techno-thriller espionage, it is also an excellent opportunity to delve into the conspiracy potential of the Nova Age. If anyone is likely to uncover the information others would

THE NOVA QUESTION

A key question to answer in a Directive campaign is: Does the Directive recruit novas? The official answer is up to the Storyguide and the group, but the Directive is pragmatic enough to recognize they need every advantage they can get, while at the same time cautious enough to want to avoid drawing a lot of attention. This makes the organization ideal for "dark star" novas — those having some abilities but able to pass in baseline society and be mistaken for merely highly skilled agents. Generally, such novas blend more easily with Talents in a Directive campaign as well. The guidelines for novas apply equally to psiads in a Directive campaign, since the distinction between the two is largely lost on the organization thus far. Storyguides running a Directive campaign may want to limit the powers of nova player characters, perhaps providing them with only 75 XP to spend on additional traits (see Creating More or Less Advanced Novas, p. 88).

prefer to keep hidden, it's the Directive, and then it may be up to the Operations cell to decide what to do with what they have learned.

Directive Path (Society)

The character is an operative of the Directive, often someone with an intelligence, military, or law-enforcement background, reflecting the Directive's training and areas of operation. A character must be chosen as a recruit by the Directive to take this path, and generally must remain in good standing with the organization to continue to advance in it.

Path Concepts

Government Intelligence Agent, Law Enforcement Officer, Military Special Ops, Scientific or Technical Expert

Example Connections: Defense Contractor, Diplomatic Attaché, Government Official, Intelligence Operative, Law Enforcement

Skills: Aim, Larceny, Integrity, Technology

Edges: Covert (one dot required), Always Prepared, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Iron Will, Small Unit Tactics, Sniper, Well-Equipped



ELITES

Not every nova wants to work for a nonprofit to save the world or follow some guru's philosophy towards supposed enlightenment. Some novas just want to use the extraordinary abilities they've acquired to do one thing: make money. These nova for-hire have come to be known as Elites, and many of them take the name seriously. They are among the most business- and media-savvy of their kind, and Elites have found any number of ways to cash-in on their nova powers. The most common is security and military work — so much so that the stereotype of an Elite is a mercenary — but there are Elites in almost every field.

History

It didn't take long after N-Day for some novas to realize what a gold-mine their abilities could be and for others to begin paying them for the use of those abilities. The first Elite agency got its start in 2018 and various others soon followed. Corporations and national governments also realized the potential inherent in novas and actively began looking to recruit and hire them. The legal mechanisms of various nations scrambled to address the notion of private individuals, businesses, and even governments hiring superhuman beings, but even 10 years later, they are only beginning to address that open barn door, long after the horses have all trotted off to war.

And war was the first use the world found for Elites. At least part of the reason was likely that the first nova contract business, the DeVries Agency, grew out of a failed mercenary company. Owner Anna DeVries turned her father's former Executive Actions business into one that fielded agents like Crystalhawk and the Pursuer, rather than baseline soldiers. DeVries' success in Africa quickly made the concept popular, and the new company could barely keep up with the demand for "private nova security consultants" in Africa and abroad. By 2021, several nations in equatorial Africa fielded nova Elites in border conflicts against each other. Team Tomorrow attempted to intervene; it was a disaster for the Project Utopia novas, resulting in the deaths of All-Star and Slag, two members of T2M.

Rather than flinch away from the deadly reality of nova Elites, the world suddenly saw their full potential. DeVries parlayed the Equatorial Wars into the kind of publicity money can't buy, while Project Utopia largely left the battlefield to the Elites, at least for a while. By the time the United Nations took action to negotiate agreements regarding the military use and deployment of novas, the nimble Elites had already secured their positions and moved on. DeVries and other Elite agencies and corporations have supported UN efforts to limit the use of novas in national militaries and municipal police forces, precisely because of loopholes allowing for the hiring of mercenaries as "private security."

Since those early years, Elites have diversified virtually everywhere. No longer just mercenaries, they are nova talent for hire in almost any field imaginable. Businesses find uses for Elites in mining, exploration, construction, demolition, and a variety of heavy industries, along with delivering payloads into space, a lucrative sideline for novas with extra-atmospheric capabilities.



Elite agencies represent novas who are negotiators, models, spokespeople, or consultants on a wide range of fields, particularly business, economics, law, and technology. Name a job, and chances are there is an agency devoted to finding a nova able to do it for you far better than any baseline.

Masks and Branding

The first mercenary Elites emulated the knights of old, and modern militaries, in adopting "heraldry" in the form of colorful uniforms. They used masks and codenames to conceal their identities, both to protect their private lives and to maintain the mystique that came with an Elite persona. While no one had reason to fear engineer Klaus Kleisner, the golden skull mask of Totentanz still strikes fear into people around the world. Since then, branding — in the form of costuming, masks, codenames, and emblems — has become *de rigueur* for Elites, so much so that agencies have whole divisions devoted to it, such as DeVries' Superimpose. Choosing the right image is vital and making sure that image isn't already trademarked even more so.

While Team Tomorrow and Nippontai go in for a certain amount of team unity in their uniform designs, Elites are incredibly individual. That freedom of expression is a selling point to new novas considering what to do with their abilities, and Elite recruiters put it to work. Who wouldn't want the glamor of being the next Crystalhawk or Lotus Infinite, or the next ultimate badass like the Pursuer or Totentanz? While Elites who work primarily as consultants don't go in for masks and costumes quite as much, they still find the notion of a strong brand effective. After all, who sounds more capable: Lucas Strand or Matrix, Master of Machines?

The Elite fascination with brand identity has led to certain customs and traditions in the subculture, most of them derived from the early days of Elites operating in the field as mercenaries. One is a kind of "debutante" ceremony or celebration, where the nova appears in public in their Elite persona for the first time, complete with costume and mask, declaring their new identity to the world. While this often takes the form of a corporate press conference and party, the Elites take it quite seriously, and Elite watchers obsess over new premiers, as they're most commonly known.

A related tradition is for a victorious Elite to unmask their defeated opponent, representing stripping away

PROFILE: TOTENTANZ



The nova killer didn't set out on this path. Klaus Kleisner was a happy and peaceful engineer, in love with the woman who made his life complete. Klaus was smart, focused, and better with computers than with emotions. Erica was the light to his darkness. She delighted in everything, wore her heart on her sleeve, and adored Klaus and all his focused, structured ways.

Klaus' world shattered when a confrontation between Team Tomorrow and the Megasyndicate burst onto Klaus and Erica's street. The quantum-powered battle rained bricks and debris from the buildings onto the couple. Klaus' final human memory was blood red as masonry fell on Erica and crushed her. Totentanz emerged from the rubble, force field protecting him but not her. Cold fury wrapped itself around his heart.

Totentanz is no random serial killer. He despises novas who lack control and reserves special contempt for Utopians. He'll fight wherever DeVries sends him but insists on assignments where he might clash with Team Tomorrow. He is the ultimate nova predator. Strong, tough and fast, he fades from view and strikes without warning, sapping his victims' quantum flux and powers. He can heal others and will rescue baselines in need, but rarely helps novas.

their mystique, their power, and claiming it for themselves. In some cases, Elites will even do this rather than kill an opponent, especially since fortunes and loyalties shift and Elites can sometimes find themselves on opposite sides of a conflict. An unmasked Elite is recognized as having lost, and it is considered extremely bad form for the Elite to take up the same mask and identity without either buying or winning it back from the victor. Sometimes this is merely a token "payment," even acknowledgement of their opponent's victory, and a magnanimous winner may return their defeated foe's mask as a gesture of conciliation.

The association of masks with Elites is strong enough that Project Utopia discourages their use among their own novas, and mask-wearing novas are often assumed to be mercenaries or Elites of some kind, regardless of their affiliation.

Elite Agencies

Elites are, by their nature, often free agents of some sort, working for whomever is paying the bills that day. Many choose to set up their own freelance businesses selling their services. Others find it easier to sign-on with a nova "talent agency" that handles all the logistics, hands out jobs, and cuts checks — after their percentage, of course. While there are numerous nova contracting and consulting firms, three remain at the top of the game as the most successful and influential Elite agencies in the world.

THE ARGUS AGENCY

Scottish nova John Argyle erupted following an auto accident in 2020. He lost the use of his legs but gained remarkable powers of intellect and insight, including an almost precognitive sense of what would happen in the future. Initially, Argyle

wanted to use his abilities to help warn people of how to steer clear of potential problems. Unfortunately, he couldn't explain his intuitive process to anyone else, and many of his warnings were ignored before it was too late. Unwilling to play the role of Cassandra, Argyle instead took the opportunity to try and minimize some catastrophes by pointing nova clients towards otherwise unforeseen opportunities, gaining a reputation for providing services no one even knew they needed yet. That allowed him to build his Argus Agency into a nova Elite business, matching novas with potential clients, and undercutting some of the business of his competitors. "There before you need us" is the company's motto.

The Argus Agency is headquartered in Argyle's native Edinburgh, with operations around the world. The company is best known for "crisis management" services directed by Mr. Argyle, where Argus agents are on-hand to deal with a problem right after — or even before — it arises, such as when they returned stolen plans to a Japanese corporation less than an hour after company officials realized the theft occurred, or when Argus Elites were on-hand to stop a border invasion as it happened. This is further reinforced by the work of Evelyn "Evac" Piedmont, a nova teleporter who serves as primary transport for Argus teams.

John Argyle encourages a certain amount of *pro bono* work on the part of his Elites, sometimes sending them on personal missions paid for by the company. The occasions when they get to prevent a crisis while also showing up Team Tomorrow and the competition are some of the best publicity and advertising around, so Argyle considers it money well spent. Don't be fooled: John Argyle still makes a *lot* of money, which he is using to fund further eufiber spinal cord replacement research after the Triton Foundation's successful surgery in 2025.

DEVRIES

If there's one name in the Nova Age virtually synonymous with Elites, it's "DeVries." Both Anna DeVries and her company, the DeVries Agency, put the concept of novas for hire on the map, and DeVries still bills itself as "The Elite Standard," the largest and most profitable nova contracting agency in the world. Anna DeVries is not just the owner; as the old saw goes, she was also a client. DeVries herself erupted in 2018 and took to the field during her company's first operation, protecting a corporate diamond mine in Namibia from rioters and shoring up the shaky Namibian government. She transformed the failed Executive Actions business she inherited from her father from a disgraced mercenary company into a contract employer of "special assets" — novas.

It wasn't long thereafter that DeVries was competing with Project Utopia to recruit newly erupted novas. Whereas Utopia offered scientific and medical treatment and the opportunity to improve the world, DeVries offered cold, hard cash in substantial amounts, along with a generous benefits package. Although some accused the company of predatory hiring practices, every contract DeVries signed with one of its nova clients was upheld as above-board and legal. The company was also not above advertising itself as a business "by novas, for novas," with the implication that Project Utopia was run by baselines looking to put novas to work for them.

Initially, DeVries' Elite operatives found work as "private security" for a variety of national and corporate clients, essentially paid mercenaries. "Elite" became common for referring to these hired novas, and DeVries and its employees gladly embraced the term. After the initial success of mercenary operations during the Equatorial Wars, DeVries diversified, expanding into corporate and consulting work of all kinds and recruiting a wide range of nova talent beyond just paramilitary types. DeVries spun off the company's mercenary operations into DeVries Tactical Solutions, while the DeVries Agency proper focused on a wider portfolio of job opportunities for novas.

NOVELTY CONSULTING

Based in Hong Kong and founded by the brilliant nova Amanda Wu, Novelty Consulting is the premier Elite agency in business and technical consulting. It began as Ms. Wu's own consulting business, putting her considerable intellect to work on behalf of a variety of clients. As time went on, Novelty recruited other novas and

PROFILE: ANNA DEVRIES



No one doubted Holger DeVries's daughter Anna was destined for greatness. Her father saw to it that she had the best tutors and training money could buy, and simultaneously doted on her and drove her to achieve. Thus, when Anna DeVries, CEO of the DeVries Agency, walks into a room she immediately owns it. DeVries always presents a flawless image: Tall, toned, and tanned, she wears her blond hair in a loose braid and favors tailored linen suits but is just as stylish in desert fatigues or a designer evening gown.

DeVries's own status as a nova is well known. She erupted in 2018 while completing her MBA in London. She was just down the street when Hazel Dryden was attacked by a mugger. Dryden erupted, emitting a sonic blast that shattered glass for several blocks. In turn, DeVries suddenly manifested the ability to make the terrible sound stop. She saw the immense potential of novas and transformed the company she inherited from her father into a nova "employment agency." Dryden became one of the first novas to sign with the DeVries Agency later that year, as Crystalhawk. No doubt part of DeVries's confidence in dealing with fellow novas is knowing she can neutralize their powers at will, and rumor has it she can do far worse, if necessary.

sub-contracted some of the work, as well as diversifying their range of expertise and clients.

Novelty is known as an international nova thinktank with connections to some of the most intelligent minds on Earth. They step in to provide expert advice on technical issues of all kinds, ranging from engineering and science to programming, communications, economics, public relations, and more. While Novelty does offer security services, they are generally more in the vein of security systems consulting, although one can hire nova bodyguards as well. Novelty tends to leave the paramilitary operations to other Elite agencies, although they say no job is truly outside their field.

It's widely known that Amanda Wu's thinktank is also something of a shark tank: Wu herself is fiercely competitive and encourages the same in her associates and employees. Nova Elites working for Novelty are expected to work and are held to high standards of excellence meant to be worthy of the name "Elite." That said, Ms. Wu and her peers also like to enjoy themselves, and Novelty Consulting's soirees in Hong Kong, London, Paris, and elsewhere are legendary. Rumors that they also provide Novelty with an extensive collection of blackmail material have never been proven.

Elite Operations

Get the job done and get paid. That's the Elite credo. It's all just business, whether it is arranging (or fighting) a hostile corporate takeover or toppling (or propping up) a tin-pot dictator. Elite operations and business tend to break down into four main categories: military, security, public relations, and various kinds of consulting work.

MILITARY

Thanks to things like the Equatorial Wars and the spectacular battlefield images of nova

mercenaries in action, military operations are still what come to mind when many think of Elites. Novas can be frighteningly effective forces on a battlefield, some with the capabilities of tanks or warplanes but even greater speed and mobility than a lone commando or drone. Nova Elites find roles in nearly all elements of military operations, from using their powers to gather intelligence and perform reconnaissance to direct combat operations and even to the clean-up, triage, and repairs that come after a battle.

While Elite military operations are often quite bloody, sometimes Elites on the field help to limit the conflict. First, just facing a force of Elite novas has been known to make some sides back down without a single shot or quantum blast fired. Elites cultivate a fearsome reputation precisely because it makes others reluctant to fight them. Additionally, some Elite-versus-Elite conflicts get settled when one side defeats the other without killing them and the defeated Elites quit the field. Faced with victorious nova foes without any of their own, a lot of combatants surrender. This makes some Elite military conflicts almost like professional fighting bouts, something not lost on the Elites, the media, or the huge viewing audience.

SECURITY

Having a nova bodyguard, much less an entire security detail, is a sure sign of status in the world, and nova security protects heads of state, corporate executives, religious leaders, and other very important people with the means to pay for them. Since covert assassination is one of the paramilitary operations other Elites are hired to carry out, such bodyguards may have to deal with more than just baseline threats. In fact, "security operations" are often just thinly veiled military ops for Elites, especially when it comes to corporate clients who need a level of deniability. Right from the beginning, multinational corporations have been hiring Elites to safeguard assets and personnel, knowing full well that they will provoke a conflict wherein the novas will be "forced" to take out terrorists, rebel factions, or even troublesome governments, with the corporation claiming self-defense.

The more recent trend in municipal defenders has been a new wrinkle on security work: Cities hiring novas to work essentially as full-time superheroes, combating crime, aiding first responders, doing public service, and serving as a kind of spokesperson and ambassador for the area. Generally, city defender has been recognized as a pretty sweet gig, provided the nova is agreeable with all the strings that come with the deal. Public opinion ranges from fanatical devotion to such novas (like that of local sports franchises) to complaints that it is a huge waste of public funds on what amounts to a publicity stunt.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Novas have an additional power, the power of celebrity, at their command. Sometimes a client simply wants to hire an Elite nova for their image or their presence. Elites are like star athletes when it comes to endorsement deals and licensing. The prestige of being seen with an Elite bodyguard can be almost as important as the protection that nova brings, especially at a high-profile public event. Likewise, some Elite "consulting" work is more about the nova's presence as an expert lending confidence to a situation rather than any actual expertise the Elite can provide (although many nova consultants hate this sort of work it tends to be easy money).

Novas with social abilities also find various opportunities in public relations. An Elite negotiator or mediator can often seal a deal in record time, favorably for their client. Why employ a cadre of nova mercenaries when an Elite envoy can talk with an opposition leader and convince them to sign an agreement, or even to peaceably resign? This use of nova abilities has come under scrutiny of late, and many are questioning the degree of mental and social influence certain novas can exert. Until the legal experts have sorted it out, however, the opportunities for nova negotiators are many.

CONSULTING

Novas perform a wide range of consulting, putting their powers and abilities to work for different clients. This is the catch-all category for hiring an Elite to do a job that isn't military, security, or PR work of some sort.

Technical consulting of all kinds is common for novas known to have particular expertise. This ranges

EARNING AN HONEST PAYCHECK

Many people think of the Elites as little more than soulless mercenary thugs who will threaten, assault, and kill anyone for a few bucks, but they are a lot more than that. Putting aside that many mercenary novas use their brains as much as their brawn, it's entirely possible to be a good person without running a non-profit.

Some Elites require an ethics clause before they start work. If they are ever forced to take an illegal or unethical action (as defined in the legal language of their contracts), the contract is null and void and they get a "kill fee" of 10-25% of the agreed-upon payment. Usually the action is protected by a nondisclosure agreement, so the Elite can't turn around and sell the story to the media, but only a particularly naïve nova allows for an NDA that doesn't expire after a few years. If a client seems reluctant to agree to an ethics clause, it's probably best that the nova walks away at the start before both parties are in too deep.

Others are more...well, *mercenary* in terms of what work they will or won't take on. Just as they may have flexible morals, they may choose to have flexible pay rates. Sometimes that's as simple as a "friends and family" reduced rate for personal clients, but it might also be a case of offering a lower rate for people who are particularly hard-up and need help. Some Elites will even work pro bono, although often they'll write it off as an "exchange of services" or some other equally vague term. Being a nice person is one thing, but it's bad business to seem like you can be taken advantage of.

It's certainly possible to play an Elite campaign full of moral compromises and ethical shortcuts, but it's not the *only* way. It's equally possible to portray freelancers who only work for clients in whom they believe, rather than the first paycheck that walks through the door. At the end of the day, if the players and Storyguide want to run an Elite game where the characters charge fair rates for good work without dealing with sketchy clients, that's totally up to you.

from high-tech companies bringing in genius nova engineers and scientists to review certain projects or help move them along, to Elite business consultants with uncanny economic and managerial insights, or nova political consultants able to analyze polling and population data and extract information better than the best baseline experts or software.

Transportation is a common form of consulting for novas with powers like supersonic flight or teleportation. In addition to getting things places far faster than conventional means, a nova courier is often more capable of self-defense when it comes to potential interference. A flying nova, or a teleporter or warper, can also smuggle things (and people) easily across borders. Nova transportation is also in high demand when it comes to boosting payloads into Earth orbit, or transporting them to the Moon or Mars.

Nova Elites also do various sorts of specialized labor involving their powers. An aquatic-adapted nova can do deep-sea research more easily than any drone and assist in exploration as well as mining and plans to construct oceanic cities. Several manufacturing processes rely on novas able to transmute materials to provide rare elements or engineer compounds that would be too expensive or difficult to produce otherwise. Likewise, novas with the ability to eliminate various kinds of waste materials can largely write their own ticket to deal with as much of it as they can, from rendering nuclear waste harmless to transforming mountains of garbage into useful resources.

Running an Elite Campaign

An Elite campaign allows a great deal of flexibility for an **Aberrant** game, much like Elite employment. The player characters can work a variety of jobs for different clients around the world. One week, they're in a warzone fighting other nova Elites and conventional forces, the

next, they're exploring the bottom of the ocean or attending a corporate gala as security or spokespeople. Then they could be bodyguards, investigators, and working rescue operations the next month. The characters could be contracted agents of an employer like DeVries, or free agents able to work for whomever they wish but having to compete with Elites who have a lot more support from their employers.

An Elite campaign allows for a lot of options in terms of player characters as well. While a group of Elites might regularly work (and hire out) as a team, more often teams are put together on a per-job basis. This allows players to swap around different characters from one story arc to the next, and can be used to account for why a particular player's character isn't around for a story, if the player is unavailable: They're probably on another job elsewhere, or weren't needed for this one.

Elite Path (Society)

The character is a classic Elite — a mercenary nova fighting on whatever battlefield their current client wants. The Elite might work with a known agency or primarily freelance, and might focus on a particular kind of military or security operations, but in all cases is known for combat capabilities and a willingness to get the job done, no matter what it might be.

Path Concepts

Elite Celebrity, Former Soldier, Nova Ronin, Paramilitary Commander, Security Consultant

Example Connections: Elite Agency, Fellow Mercenary, Former Client, Government Official, Old Combat Buddy, War Correspondent

Skills: Aim, Athletics, Close Combat, Integrity

Edges: Always Prepared, Danger Sense, Fame, Hardy, Small Unit Tactics, Wealth



DAEDALUS LEAGUE

Born from sheer enthusiasm and love, the Daedalus League is fulfilling one of humanity's most powerful drives: to go beyond, to explore the blank spaces in the maps just to see what's out there, and to be the first people to reach places once thought unreachable.

The exploration of space is the main reason for the Daedalus League to exist, refusing membership with any private or state sponsor, limiting such contacts to joint efforts and partnerships that leverage their sheer excitement and curiosity.

It's only in recent months that the founding members of the League began to take themselves more seriously, stepping up their efforts in space exploration with a more professional approach, since up until now they operated more as a group of friends with a common interest than a true influential agency.

This consolidation is bringing a new issue to the fore: What kind of organization do they want to become? Their near monopoly on space-capable novas puts them in a position to guide humanity side by side into the stars, impose their views on what space exploration should be, or simply stand aside and do what they love while waiting for their baseline peers to catch up.

So far, the League appears to be following the first option, with closer cooperation — but never subordination — with groups like Project Utopia, NASA and ESA, building the foundations for a much wider future.

History

Unlike many organizations in the Nova Age that were created out of necessity or a desire for profit, the League rose organically, a coincidence and a whim that caught on and lit the imagination of thousands.

It all began when twins Janos and Janice Karagian took their world-famous trip to the Moon as part of NASA's Artemis mission, having reached it under their own power, and stood on the lunar surface without the aid of any life support equipment. This event gave the world plenty to talk about, especially an op-ed column by Meredith Yates in *The New York Times* that called the Karagians' feat a mere publicity stunt and an ego trip for the novas, calling into question the actual usefulness of novas in real space exploration.

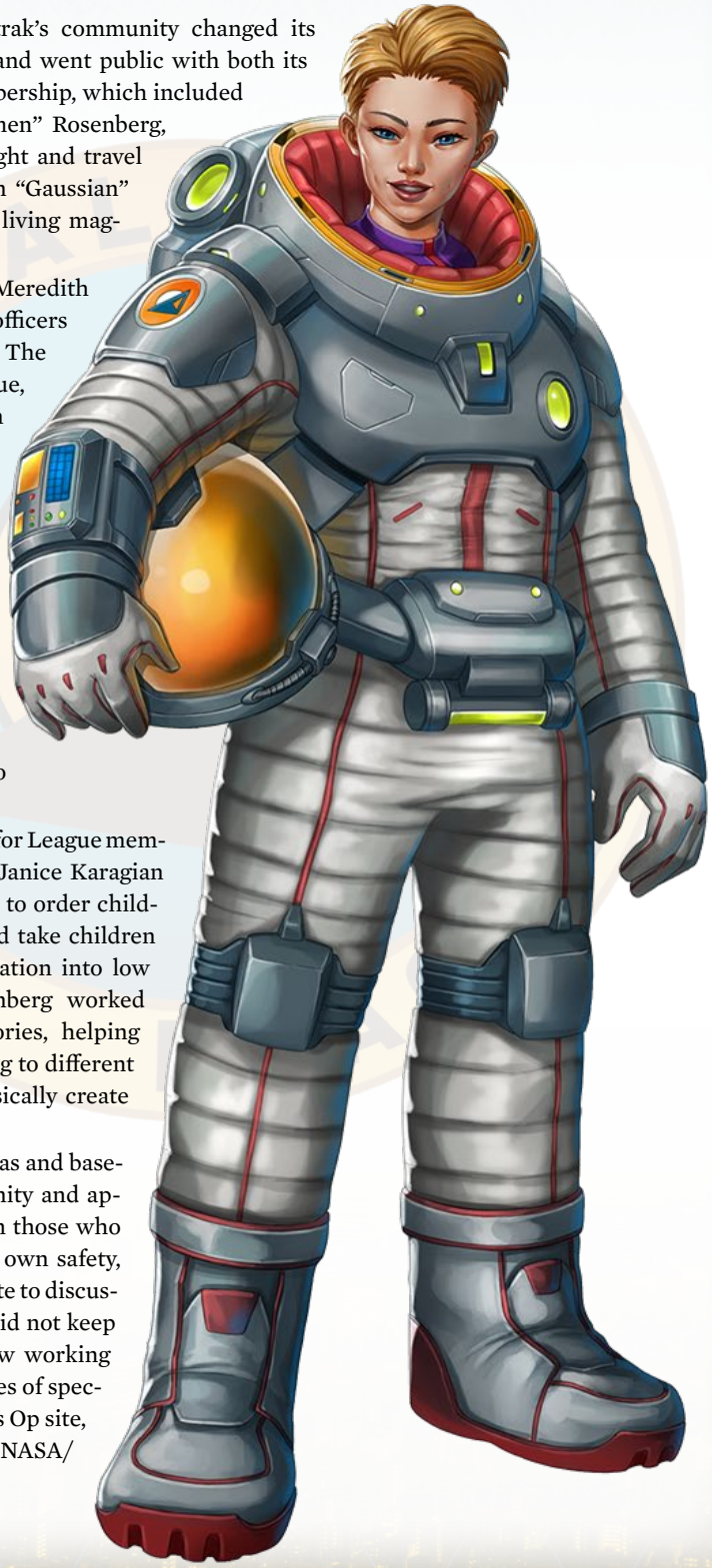
While the Karagians didn't respond to the journalist, another nova, Cyrus Katrak, was inspired into action; a couple of days later, he gifted her with a collection of soil samples from Jupiter's moons.

Katrak, an American anthropologist, had always loved everything about space; he ran a Reddit community of other space exploration enthusiasts that, after his eruption, migrated seamlessly to N!Sight. The Karagians' Moon landing was received with unbridled enthusiasm, and Katrak had to urge the members of his community not to harass or move against *The New York Times* for their ensuing editorial. The day after Katrak's own feat, Yates wrote a public apology for her earlier editorial and since then has been one of the League's staunchest supporters in the media.

That was just the beginning. The public's response to his little stunt showed Katrak that, despite the enthusiasm for what Project Utopia was achieving on Earth, there were still people

looking beyond, and he started making calls. He met with the Karagian twins, and he contacted the novas in his OpNet community via private message, as well as others who could be useful or showed a shared enthusiasm for space.

About two weeks later, Katrak's community changed its name to the Daedalus League and went public with both its mission statement and its membership, which included the Karagian twins, Milo "Lumen" Rosenberg, who could turn himself into light and travel at near light speed, and Sharon "Gaussian" Monashi, who can turn into a living magnetic field.



With help from the *Times'* Meredith Yates, Katrak got in touch with officers from NASA and Project Utopia. The latter tried to recruit the League, offering them their own division within the international organization, but Katrak and the Karagians replied with the first of many such refusals.

The only support the League accepted came from a strings-free grant from the Æon Society, whose Project Odysseus was created to fund exactly the kind of endeavors that the League intended to undertake.

For a year, the main activities for League members were mostly showing off. Janice Karagian used part of the League's funds to order child-sized vacuum suits so she could take children from the Make A Wish Foundation into low orbit. Meanwhile, Milo Rosenberg worked closely with several observatories, helping them calibrate readings by flying to different parts of the solar system to basically create reference noise.

The League grew as both novas and baselines joined the online community and applied for real membership; even those who were rejected, mainly for their own safety, stayed in the forums to contribute to discussion. During this time, Katrak did not keep secret that the League was now working on something *big*, sending ripples of speculation in the Daedalus League's Op site, with many pointing at the joint NASA/

ESA mission for a Mars landing pulling down their schedule.

In 2021, the rumors were proven true as Katrak posted photos from the surface of Mars, together with the rover and NASA/ESA astronauts. Upon return, the Daedalus League clarified that Katrak had been transporting the components of the surface mission throughout the past year, massively lightening the spaceship's load so that it was better outfitted to keep its occupants alive.

This victory made the League's popularity soar, and its members entered into collaboration agreements with several parties. In a public statement, Janos Karagian revealed they had refused a mission from an unnamed government to secretly put a weapons satellite in orbit. He made it clear that the League was diametrically opposed to weaponizing space or make it exclusive to a wealthy few and would not lend themselves to any such request. The recently formed Directive interpreted this as a warning and increased the Daedalus League's threat rating.

Despite the growth in popularity and scope, the League continues to operate more like a hobbyist's club, organizing more outings to the Moon for members who cannot travel on their own, while individuals push their own limits, like the famous walk on the surface of the Sun by Katrak and Rosenberg, or the Karagians' lone expeditions to Venus. They also plan to build a lunar base, nicknamed "Olympus" as a nod to the Apollo and Artemis missions. Critics once more pointed out that the Daedalians were more interested in self-satisfaction than in actual space exploration, but many defenders refuted this by highlighting how many space programs had jump-started their progress thanks to receiving help from the League's members.

In 2024, the League proved its worth once more by helping Utopia launch and put the Webb Space Telescope in operation. This would be the first project where the League asked for payment in favors rather than in funding or equipment. In exchange for their assistance, the members of the Daedalus League asked for first access to the telescope's readings as well as privileges to conduct readings of their own; by this time the League included a handful of baseline astronomers and astrophysicists.

The "inner circle" of the League began discussing the direction they wanted to go and then held the first full meeting of the Daedalus League to discuss their ideas with the rest of their community. From this meeting, the League once again reinvented itself and emerged as a better-defined organization, with their own programs, projects, and divisions, as well as people designated to oversee them.

With a clearer view of their objectives, the Daedalus League announced their interest in helping the Utopia-led consortium of state and private organizations that was building the Earth Orbital Habitat. The novas who could help and still held jobs elsewhere quit them to devote all their time to this task, which reduced the project's timetable by a significant amount.

Currently, while the League is still decentralized and the different "heads" run their areas from their own homes, they now have a central office in the finished part of the Earth Orbital Habitat, a concession they added to their compensation for their involvement.

Organizational Structure

The Daedalus League is barely organized given their small numbers and the competing interests of managing League business and going into space that many members endure. Rather than having strict divisions and departments, the League has several programs or plans with one member acting as a project manager. Membership of each program is fluid and based mostly on volunteering, with trust and commitment playing a large part in channeling the enthusiasm of program participants.

Also, a single member can oversee more than one program, and temporarily assign responsibility to somebody else. The organization is still small enough that its informal methods work, helping keep intact the members' passion for space exploration.

MEMBERSHIP TIERS

The Daedalus League intends to stay as horizontal and democratic as its size demands, but as in any human groups, a hierarchy of authority developed since the first time it adopted its name. There is no official charter that describes the

GAINING MEMBERSHIP AND RANK

Joining the Daedalus League is as easy as signing up for their forums or becoming a crowdfunding patron. Climbing into official membership takes a lot more effort, as the applicant must prove they have something to contribute to League efforts. While this sounds elitist, the Daedalus League doesn't have the budget or the patience to carry people who won't be a full part of their activities, but they are picky also because they are worried that unprepared or unfit new members pose a risk to themselves and to others.

Space-capable novas take top recruitment priority, whether they can withstand the conditions of space or other planets, provide means of fast travel and ability to leave Earth's atmosphere, or, in the rarest of cases, both. The League will help procure training, equipment, or cooperation to compensate for a nova's vulnerability to space conditions or the lack of travel powers.

Once accepted, new official members join a meritocracy where their own efforts and degree of participation dictate their amount of authority or consideration. The more they do to help their fellows, the higher they will climb. The core Daedalians take time to listen to all their members, but they place higher value on the opinions of a few.

A Daedalian will know they have entered the Central Command when Katrak asks them to take charge of some plan or idea.

authority or obligations, but the hierarchy exists unwritten, based on merit and a sprinkle of social positioning.

Central Command: Also called the Inner Circle, the core, and the "gold shirts," these are the founding members of the League as well as those who've done the most for the organization for long enough to earn this consideration. Members of Central Command can trust that their voice will always be heard and most of their proposals followed, only challenged by their peers. Cyrus Katrak, the Karagian twins, Milo Rosenberg, and Sharon Monashi are the most visible "commanders," joined by other space-capable novas. This amount of respect also goes, ironically, to Meredith Yates, who has helped the League with their media relations and networking, and to Aariyan Ikalvaanan, a young baseline astrophysicist who has helped everyone in the League get a much firmer grasp on space travel and everything it entails.

Away Team: Also called spacenoids, belters, and the "red shirts," these members are a mix of novas and baselines who have been to lower orbit and beyond by any method, including hitching a ride with Katrak or one of the Karagians. While technically they are regular members of the League, the Away Team has the respect of others precisely because they embody the core ideals of the organization: traveling to space. Dafileh Kirouri, a daredevil athlete whose eruption made her immune to radiation and extreme temperatures, is one of the best known "aways."

Engine Room: Also known as cadets, rank and file, and the "blue shirts," these Daedalians have not been to space yet, but they have skills that help the League in various ways or are under training in anticipation of their first sojourn. Members of any STEM profession have the best chances to join the League in various capacities. While they are less likely to be picked for a space expedition, they can enter their name in a monthly raffle to hitch a short ride into orbit or, as started in 2027, to visit the Earth Orbital Habitat. The latter visits are becoming more commonplace, with views of establishing a personnel roster to work in shifts in the League's new orbital office.

Viewers: Also known as "the fandom" or, more diplomatically, "community members," these are not members of the Daedalus League per se but belong to their OpNet site's community and are patrons of the group's crowdfunding sites. Katrak insists that everyone who is an official member of the League treat the viewers as fellow Daedalians. It's an open secret that the gold shirts plan to induct the community members into their activities

once they reach a part of their overall plan to expand the League into something grander. A new nickname is catching on in the League's forums for this membership tier: "colonists."

PLANS AND PROGRAMS

When they reformed into their current organization, the Daedalus League classified its efforts and activities and assigned project leaders to coordinate them. Most of them are just things the League members were already doing but now with a name and better-defined responsibilities. Program leaders have final authority on what goes on within their program, but it is common practice for them to change their mind when offered a better alternative from any source, even from the "viewer" members.

Code Voyager: Scouting Program

Milo "Lumen" Rosenberg oversees this program, tasked with going ahead to new destinations to check out conditions. All the Central Command participate in these activities but bow to Rosenberg's authority and responsibility.

While not an astrophysicist himself, his work with scientists from observatories around the world and invaluable help in calibrating the Webb Space Telescope marked him as the best suited in the Central Command to coordinate the League's own astrophysics resources. Baseline astronomers and engineers volunteer to work with Rosenberg poring through the information they get from the Webb Telescope and other observatories to choose new destinations.

Members of the Scouting Program have contacts among the world's scientific community (or are members themselves), and recently they've been asking for outside help in calculating projected planetary orbits as well as showing a deep interest in the Kuiper Belt, the asteroid field orbiting the edge of the Solar System.

Code Pathfinder: Space Travel Program

While the Pathfinders are under the responsibility of Janos Karagian, he and Cyrus Katrak share the burden of the most important aspect of the Daedalus League. What started as a hobby for them is now a job and the fulfillment of their dreams.

As the top novas who can take other people into space, Karagian and Katrak have their hands full. They busy themselves in taking materials between Earth and the Orbital Habitat, testing and placing the beacons from Project Lighthouse, or assisting space agencies with their probes and rovers. The one responsibility they never shirk is taking members for their first spacewalk. The shared joy reminds them of why they are doing what they are doing.

The next step in the program's evolution is getting the Daedalus League their own space shuttle. They have already refused offers by different militaries who want to crew a loaned shuttle with their own personnel.

The Toybox: Supplies Program

Under the responsibility of Cyrus Katrak, the people in The Toybox are managing the League's material resources, which have been growing as of late. Katrak set up an inventory database but he no longer runs it, leaving that responsibility to Masahiko Shirogane, a baseline engineer who many suspect has contacts with Kuro-Tek, because he makes miracles when the League needs a particularly hard-to-find part.

The efforts of the entire Central Command have secured several spacesuits, some of them prototypes, as well as experimental spacewalking gear for members whose powers (or lack thereof) prevent them from moving in space unaided.

Shirogane coordinates a small army of DIY aficionados, mostly members of the League's online community, but also from outside (who promptly join the forums or are directly made official members).

Project Lighthouse: Mapping Program

A joint effort by the Toybox and the Voyager scouts, under the coordination of Janice Karagian, Pathfinder also collaborates with Project Utopia's Science & Technology Division in developing a series of beacons that emit an information-carrying quantum signal, as well as receivers that can read it without the aid of nova powers. The purpose of these beacons is to establish a system of "lighthouses" in the orbit of all planets, akin to Earth's GPS network. These beacons will have many useful applications: telemetry for space probes and landers, reference for radio telescopes and, of most importance for the League, helping spacefaring novas orient themselves in the middle of space.

Code Fleshbag: Human Resources and Relations Program

Under an apparently derogatory nickname, Meredith Yates and Janice Karagian oversee everything human-related. Janice unwittingly volunteered herself when online traffic showed she was taking the most membership applications of other leaguers, and the reorganization meeting made this responsibility official.

She called upon Yates to take a bigger role in the League than supporting them from her position in *The New York Times*, and Yates accepted, downsizing her job as editor to have more time to help the Daedalians with their public relations, leveraging her contacts among Project Utopia and the different space agencies. Yates was instrumental in getting Katrak in touch with Utopia to offer their assistance with both the Webb Telescope and the Orbital Habitat.

Janice also relies heavily on volunteers to help her manage people, which goes from spacewalk applications to figuring out if certain members can help with the other programs.

Code Spartacus: Peacekeeping Program

This is Sharon Monashi's pet project, and only its handful of members and Central Command know about it. Ever since the Daedalus League received its first proposal to put weapons in orbit, the League has been wary of world governments trying to stake out space as their own and keep everyone grounded, so Monashi took it upon herself to take steps to prevent this.

She and the other six members of Spartacus have a mostly complete map of every military satellite in orbit and are in the process of finding every military launchpad. They have taken no overt action other than listening in on satellite chatter with Monashi's powers. Katrak warned her that while she's free to continue monitoring the satellites in case their owners become involved in illegal or overly oppressive activities, the League has no real jurisdiction and any urgent finding she makes should be communicated to Project Utopia or the UN; the League will disavow her if she does anything that harms others.

Project Catapult: Orbital Habitat Program

Cyrus Katrak just opened this project and is still taking on applicants from all membership tiers. The League now has a base in orbit: a modest module in the Earth Orbital Habitat just for themselves. The members of Central Command are using it extensively as a stop in their trips across the Solar System, and they want to bring up more people to help with maintenance and to train them to get their "space legs" in the relative safety of a shielded area the size of a small house.

Katrak and Meredith Yates are still negotiating with the Habitat's administrative board to get certifications and clearance for baseline League members.

THE FUTURE AND BEYOND

There are many rumors surrounding the Daedalus League and their plans. Most of their followers and admirers can't wait to see what they do next, while their detractors speculate about the possible dangers of allowing such a rogue group do what they want in humanity's final frontier. Not that anyone has the power to stop them.

So far, the group stands united in their purpose to advance humanity's exploration of space, but controversial topics are cropping up with greater frequency in the League's private forums. Questions of ethics and mandate are becoming more common and the debates more heated, addressing the role of the League in international affairs and what they should do — if they should do anything at all — in the face of private entities staking out their own space programs.

Katrak and the League's leadership maintain a position of respecting individual freedom, reminding everyone that the ideals of the League are to help all people enjoy the freedom of reaching space, bypassing the restrictions of political or financial privilege, and that includes the freedom of quitting the League if someone doesn't agree.

Personal politics are coloring the relationship between Daedalians as well; the Karagian twins have opposing views regarding Project Utopia, with Janos believing that helping the Utopians will further the League's own goals while Janice is not comfortable following someone else's agenda in her own humanitarian activities. It's no secret among the gold shirts that Monashi agrees with most of the Null Manifesto but has been polite enough to never bring it up in planning meetings.

TO SEEK OUT NEW LIFE

Humanity will contact alien species during the age of **Trinity Continuum: Æon**, some of which have had contacts with novas before and not always amicably. The player characters could be those novas, during their adventures with the Daedalus League. A race called the Qin will become humanity's ally, while other species known as the Chromatics and the Coalition will be extremely dangerous foes.

You can use the aliens in **Æon**, or you can come up with your own. The galaxy is unfathomably big, and novas can have the ability to reach its furthest corners. With this possibility, stories involving alien species can be anything you want.

Despite these conflicting positions, Katrak's strong leadership and powerful vision is holding the League together, but he knows they are at a crossroads, and the decisions the group takes today will define their very identity for decades to come.

Katrak maintains a cohesive spirit for the League because he, and the rest of Central Command, is not the least bit coy about their ambitions and their grand, ultimate plan. The Daedalians' objectives are so wild that few outsiders take them seriously: They plan to leave the confines of the Solar System once humanity's efforts to explore and travel to the local planets are secured. They want to achieve this within the next two decades.

They are training their nova and baseline members to withstand the hardships of working in space, they are making sure that Earth develops the technology they will need out there, and they are stoking the fires of imagination in the general populace. Once their checklist is complete, they will be ready to boldly go.

Running a Daedalus League Campaign

The Daedalus League is the place to be for novas, Talents and baselines who want to strap on to their seats and blast off into space. In the present Nova Age, space efforts are just beginning, but plans to build permanent settlements in orbit, on the Moon, and even on Mars are well underway.

Novas who can move and survive in space will have a fast track into Central Command and will be the vanguard in the League's current projects, with plenty of opportunities to compete with other novas who want to stake their own claim into the halls of fame of space exploration.

However, the most exciting possibilities of stories featuring the Daedalus League are about the mysteries and dangers of space missions.

The new crew of Project Catapult finds the dead body of a scientist from a participating agency and must find the cause before the administrative board decides to evacuate the entire station and ruin the League's plans.

Gaussian can approach the characters asking for their help, as her people identified a space worthy launchpad in territory known to be controlled by the Megasyndicate and fears that it might be an attempt to *criminalize* space.

The Karagian twins offer the League's help in a test flight and stage it as a race to the Moon and back, with the characters piloting the experimental ship, or flying against it.

The characters begin their story as test pilots of a ship that hits a strange quantum field that triggers their eruption, and they must figure out what caused that field and what it might mean for the future of space exploration.

Cyrus Katrak (or a warp-capable player character) hits an undetected space anomaly in their latest jump, which strands the characters on an unknown planet outside the Solar system, and they find that they are not alone.

A Daedalian campaign has the potential not only to escape the confines of Earth and the Solar System but also the scope of a regular **Aberrant** campaign. With complete freedom from the events and conflicts on Earth and whatever impact the player characters can have on them, the campaign can go full throttle with the science fiction elements and feature a conflict between two alien species that only the characters have the power to resolve, have them become space pirates that seek

to undermine a tyrannical galactic empire before it finds Earth, or discover that space hides terrible cosmic phenomena that can drive people mad.

The Daedalus League is aiming for the ultimate freedom of space travel, and a campaign centering on them should reflect that.

Daedalus League Path (Society)

You have the right stuff to become a space explorer, one of the proud and the few. You proved your passion for space and gained the notice of Cyrus Katrak or any other member of Central Command, and now you participate in projects where even crunching numbers is exciting. You can be a Mega-Intelligent gadgeteer figuring out ways to take everyone to space, a savvy manager who knows how to get things done in one of the most complex human endeavors, or you can be a daredevil ready and capable of visiting orbits and pushing past the gravity well.

Example Connections: Project Utopia, NASA, ESA, state or private space agencies, spacesuit designer, astronomy hobbyist, astrophysics professor, test pilot.

Skills: Athletics, Pilot, Science, Technology

Edges: Breath Control, Direction Sense, Fame, Hardy, Keen Sense, Microgravity Training, Ms. Fix It



ALTERNATE ALLEGIANCES

The above Paths represent major powers within the world of **Aberrant**, but there are many other possible allegiances players may wish to join. Apart from creating custom Paths for such occasions, the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** has many Paths representing Allegiances that are still very good fits for **Aberrant**.

Archangel

Novas have brought the dream of the superhero to life — but also the dream of the supervillain. As such, many novas are caught up in dealing with other novas, and the little people are the ones most likely to wind up running for cover or caught up in schemes that fly below nova radar. Just because the world is going in a positive direction, after all, doesn't mean that the world is a utopia — there's plenty of powerful people casually ruining the lives of people with no power to defend themselves or to strike back, and thus there will always be room for Archangel's work.

That said, standing up to the big guy is a much taller task in **Aberrant**, where the big guy might actually be several stories tall or able to kill with a thought. Though Raoul Orzaiz, an outspoken member of the Teragen, has been careful to downplay his familial connection to Archangel, operatives are going to be under even more potential scrutiny from the powers that be, adding an additional challenge to an already dangerous job.

Alert Status 1

Alert Status 1 was born in the crucible of the Cold War, where global thermonuclear war threatened to annihilate humanity. Throughout it all, Alert Status 1, an unofficial international working group of intelligence and military professionals, worked to keep the situation from boiling over. N-Day was a moment of blinding terror for them — imagine a human being who is essentially an autonomous warhead! Reaching out through levers of power in member states, Alert Status 1 influences the UN and, through it, Team Tomorrow, but sometimes direct action is the only way to save the world. No one wants another São Paulo — an event that Alert Status 1 is still investigating.

The São Paulo Blast is an excellent cold-open to an Alert Status 1 campaign, since the mystery behind it is still unresolved. Playing an Alert Status 1 campaign in **Aberrant** is a lot like playing a normal Alert Status 1 game — working behind the scenes and leveraging soft power to avert crisis points before they spark wider destabilization and conflict. This is a worm's-eye view of the Nova Age, baselines working to protect their own in the face of the posthuman.

National Office of Emergency Research

The US government is not *entirely* staffed by fools, and the career officials at the NOER who have been dealing with the unusual and the mysterious for their entire working lives are treating the "nova situation" as just another (albeit massive) problem to solve. The primary working group for national nova research, they've become the Los Alamos of the Nova Age, researching ways to weaponize (and counter) nova abilities — in effect, they're a US-only alternative to the Directive, whom they frequently butt heads with over jurisdiction. Their archives are full of notes on specific novas — ways to influence them, ways to subdue them, ways to conduct alpha strikes should the need arise; details that Proteus moles happily pass on for inclusion in the Medusa Protocols. The NOER is considering taking the next step: putting together a secret nova team specifically geared to swiftly neutralize existential threats to the increasingly marginalized United States.

Players in a NOER **Aberrant** campaign might be that team, which could serve as the backdrop for straightforward heroism or for slowly discovering corruption lurking inside the system. The threat of such a team could also serve as antagonists in a non-NOER campaign — there's plenty of people with good reason to be concerned about the government building a superpowered paramilitary.

Les Fantômes

Crime isn't what it used to be. Les Fantômes used to be the darlings of Europe, with fingers in every pie and heist after magnificently planned heist executed without flaw. Then, Project Utopia destroyed the criminal underworld that Les Fantômes depended upon, while leaving their greatest enemies, the Camparelli and Zukhov families, to join forces. Now, former thieves who lived in luxury when they

weren't cracking safes are forced to live like spies, constantly looking over their shoulders and worrying who's been compromised by an implacable foe that wants nothing more than to kill them.

A Les Fantômes campaign in **Aberrant** will likely still focus on heists — it's at the heart of the skillset for members — but rather than robbing the rich for the hell of it and recovering stolen art, these heists are targeting the Camparelli-Zukhov Syndicate and everyone under their sway. Ironically, their greatest allies in this war for survival are likely to be Interpol and Project Utopia, the very people who put them in such danger to begin with — but crime makes for strange bedfellows.

The Theseus Club

The Theseus Club was founded to hunt wolves in sheep's clothing; humans who hunted others for sport at first, then later fascists, serial killers, and others who forsook their humanity to prey on others. In a world where Talents represent the best and brightest, this was a hard-enough task — now, they must worry about novas who cross that line as well. On the other hand, now the ultimate trophy for someone who hunts humans *is* a nova — which means Theseus might well find itself protecting novas from organized killers loaded for bear.

An **Aberrant** campaign based on the Theseus Club is one where the word "underdogs" doesn't even begin to cut it. A nova who enters the Theseus Club's crosshairs is one who has no compunctions about using their powers against baselines in the cruelest ways imaginable but is skilled enough to avoid official action from Team Tomorrow. While Project Utopia might want to bring such a monster to justice, they're not going to be amenable to the Theseus Club's methods or goals, especially if the evidence is such that it wouldn't hold up in a court of law.




I HAD HIM RIGHT WHERE I WANTED HIM.
I'M TIRED OF PLAYING GAMES! COME OUT!
I'M NOT PLAYING, LOVE.
TICK TOCK.
KRA KOOM!
AAAAAA
AAAAAAH!
AHHHAHA!
IS THAT THE BEST YOU'VE GOT?
OR MAYBE HE HAD ME.


MY TURN, I THINK-
AIR! FORGOT HE... COULD CONTROL... THE AIR...
ANOTHER WAYWARD SOUL WHO WILL SOON FALL TO THE MIGHT OF...
THE TERAGEN
WHUMP

CHAPTER FIVE: NEW SYSTEMS

"My body may have its limitations,
but when I put my mind to it, there's nothing I can't do."
— Cyborg, Teen Titans

The **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** showed us the very limits of human ability, and Æon showed us how, working together, we can surpass those limitations. Aberrant, by contrast, demolishes limitations. It's a game of apotheosis, of mortals with the might to casually remake the world, twisting reality to meet their designs.

In addition to the following new rules, this chapter also presents Tones, varying takes on how to tell stories with Aberrant, from the shining heights of Silver Age do-gooderism to the cynical depths of the Iron Age, along with Subgenres to further focus the game.

SCALE

Nova powers are off the charts of normal baseline capabilities, and this is represented as levels of Scale. Because Scale is such an integral part of Aberrant's mechanics to represent the novas' exceptional power, the use of Scale requires a stricter quantification than in **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** (p. 74). The game uses Scale to describe novas' awesome powersets and we've broken those down into seven categories: Durability, Leadership, Mental, Might, Power, Size, and Speed.

- **Durability:** A measure of the resistance something has to damage or being broken. Often compared to power which is used to overcome durability. When dealing with dramatic Scale, durability Scale applies to a character's armor for purposes of the Inflict Damage Stunt.
- **Leadership:** A measure of the social influence an entity has over others. Often used as the scope or depth of influence the entity can express to get others to do as she wishes.
- **Mental:** A measure of intellect and computing capacity. Often compared via the speed and capacity of data collection and manipulation.
- **Might:** A measure of the physical force an entity can exert. Often described as the ability to move objects or manipulate entities with size Scale.
- **Power:** A measure of the damage output of an entity. Used to overcome durability or output great amounts of energy.
- **Size:** A measure of the volume and mass of an entity. Generally used to describe high volume entities, though sometimes items with large mass and small volume gain size Scale. At Storyguide discretion, entities with Size Scale may gain an equal increase in Power and/or Durability Scale.
- **Speed:** A measure of velocity both inside and outside a vacuum. Often described as the time it takes to perform certain actions.

Some of these categories have clear opposition to one another such as power vs. durability — to overcome a building's higher durability, having durability Scale yourself isn't that useful, but having power Scale would negate it. Others of these categories oppose themselves, such as a nova's leadership Scale being

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Storyguides, sometimes it can be hard to discern how high the Difficulty should be for a particular task. Particularly in a game like **Aberrant** where novas throw around super-heroic abilities all the time. In general, Difficulty should be from 1 to 5, with 1 being an average Difficulty for a task performed by a skilled baseline. This chart can give you an idea of how to scale an evasion attempt.

Level of Difficulty	Challenge Example
1 Minor	You want to escape a pursuer.
2 Notable	You try to evade coordinated pursuit from trained police officers.
3 Significant	You attempt to outrun a police car on foot.
4 Major	You try to escape pursuit by parties capable of tracking your Quantum signature.
5+ Extreme	You want to slip from the clutches of teleportation-capable novas.

used to oppose her rival's. In cases where a different Scale opposition makes sense, use them. A nova's mental Scale may allow her to overcome another's negative size Scale (p. 164) advantage when trying to hide, or a nova's speed Scale may allow her to overcome the Difficulty of scaling up the side of a mountain. In these instances, when utilizing *dramatic* Scale, having more Scale in the opposition grants + 2 Enhancement for each difference in level of Scale. So, a speedster with speed Scale 5 attempting to quickly scale up a size Scale 4 building will gain + 2 Enhancement on the endeavor. Otherwise, the difference in Scale acts as a Difficulty to a dramatic roll. A baseline attempting the same feat would suffer a +6 Difficulty to scale the building quickly due to its Size.

Novas are larger than life — literally, in a mechanical sense. They extend themselves far beyond where anything human ought to be, violating physics wholesale as they go. When novas exert themselves, they are capable of transcending baseline notions of size and Scale. Consequently, the Scale system is extended to include levels up to 10 to accommodate this.

Extreme Scale

The following listing extends Scale beyond the 1-6 range.

7 SUPREME

Examples include a metroplex spanning multiple cities (such as the Boston-Washington Corridor in the United States), software that thinks on a human level, or novatech versions of mundane weapons of mass destruction with vastly increased effects.

8 BEWILDERING

This scale is the limit of baseline understanding of the world. Examples include major landmasses, a self-aware AI capable of outthinking any human, or exotic weapons that tamper with the fundamental forces of physics as we know them.

9 INCONCEIVABLE

This scale represents the beginnings of true Transcendence, where baseline comprehension begins to fail. Examples include entire continents

SCALE IN OPPOSITION

Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook p. 112, discusses the amount of damage someone with a higher or lower power Scale can inflict on something with durability Scale, citing that you cannot affect anything with more than three Scale levels higher than you. This is true not only for the power and durability Scales, but all Scales in opposition. When comparing Scale of any kind, the entity with more than three Scale levels dictates the results of the conflict.

SCALE EXAMPLES

SCALE LEVEL	DURABILITY	LEADERSHIP	MENTAL	POWER	MIGHT	SIZE	SPEED
1: Standard	Basic clothing	Your neighbor	A normal person	A knife	Someone who lifts	Person-sized	A decent sprinter
2: Formidable	Kevlar armor	Your supervisor	Chess grandmaster	Pistol, rifle	Strong-man	Car, large animal	Horse, deer
3: Impressive	Armored vehicle	Upper management, church leader	Computer	Anti-personnel gun	Gorilla	Small building	Cheetah, car
4: Awesome	Reinforced concrete	CEO, city leader	Supercomputer	Anti-tank launcher	Mobile suit, forklift	Largest animal on earth	Race car, small plane
5: Incredible	Reinforced steel, skyscraper	Military General, respected authority	Cloud computing	Rockets	Wrecking ball	Building complex	Airliner at subsonic speeds
6: Astonishing	Titanium, armored vault	Leader of a small nation or state, beloved celebrity	Quantum computing	Nuclear bomb	Earthquake	Small city	Supersonic speeds
7: Supreme	Novatech armor	World leader, leader of a large nation	Quantum field theory computing	Novatech weapons	Can move major land masses	Large metroplex	Escape velocity
8: Bewildering	Cosmic materials	Divine being	AI singularity	Weapon that can bend physics	Can manipulate quantum forces	Major land masses, continents	Orbital speeds
9: Inconceivable	Q-tech armor	God-like entity	Intelligence to make humans look fungal	Weapons that violate physics	Can knock worlds out of orbit	Planets, stars	Speed of light
10: Transcendent	Materials beyond human comprehension	A literal God	post-singularity AI hacking reality	Weapons that can erase space-time	Can move time itself	Solar system	Faster than light

or worlds, AI as far beyond humans as humans are beyond fungus, or technology that not only violates physics as we know it but contaminates it with entirely new and alien paradigms.

10 TRANSCENDENT

Baseline minds may be able to approximate understanding of effects at this level, but any real comprehension is completely impossible. Examples include solar systems and the distances between them, a post-singularity AI that is actively hacking the substrate of reality, or weapons that simply erase space-time. A nova operating at this level is barely constrained by the universe itself, let alone small ideas like "mass" or "causality."

Negative Size

Novas (and things of the Nova Age) can also be extremely small, smaller than our current understanding of physics even allows for. Negative Size represents the progression of size Scale below the human norm (Size 1) rather than above it, and is as follows:

0 MEDIUM

This Size represents anything roughly one-quarter to one-half the size of an average adult human. This might include pets, drones, children, little people, and so on. Apart from accessibility issues or difficulty handling equipment designed for full-size adults, however, adjustments between Size 0 and Size 1 are unnecessary. (It is the same as Scale 0 in **Trinity Continuum: Æon**, p. 267.)

-1 SMALL

This describes anything between 20 and 50 centimeters in size.

-2 TINY

This describes anything between 5 and 20 centimeters.

SCALE RECAP

Aberrant makes more use of the Scale mechanic than most other Trinity Continuum games. You can read up on it in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** on pp. 74-75, but it's worth reiterating some of those rules here, for ease of reference.

Scale describes a difference between two or more entities that is so large that it should not be tracked with simple dice roll successes. For example, a race between a fast and practiced runner against a bicyclist might be close, but neither would be able to beat a train. Scale has two components: **narrative** and **dramatic**.

Narrative Scale describes the multiplier you should apply to successes, or to the trait itself for resisted rolls for the difference in Scale. When comparing Scale to minor characters and story elements, such as scenery, bystanders, and minor combatants, feel free to handwave the Scale multiplier as a rough narrative benchmark, simply saying the characters are creating massive havoc. If a roll is called for, multiply the successes by the difference in Scale between the actor and the minor element (doubled at a difference of 1, tripled at 2, etc.), or you can assume one success for every three dice and then multiply that result.

Dramatic Scale is how much the Scale affects characters and other elements that are central to the story. Dramatic Scale provides an Enhancement or Difficulty to actions against narratively-important characters or objects; for static values, apply half the value of the dramatic Enhancement. In cases where the significantly greater size, speed, power, or other characteristic of one entity would help it accomplish a task before or against another entity, that entity receives two Enhancement for each difference in their Scale. When taking actions against a higher Scale entity that does not take actions, the difference inflicts a +2 Difficulty instead.

Scale comes into play for *dramatically important challenges* only; it's the job of the players and Storyguide to bridge the divide between the narrative and dramatic effects of Scale. Scale describes a relationship, not a set and immutable trait. As the difference in Scale grows, the uncertainty of the outcome shrinks. When an outcome is certain, rolling is not needed. For example, a fighter jet will always beat a standard human in a race.

As with other Enhancements, Scale can include drawbacks. For example, a giant mecha would run low on power in a long battle and would have trouble dodging attacks.

-3 MINIATURE

This describes anything under 5 centimeters.

-4 MINUSCULE

This describes anything under a centimeter.

The Micro-Field

Beyond minuscule size, things actually shift to a different field, the "micro-field," well below the Scale of the normal-sized world and interacting with that higher scale only slightly or tangentially. Characters in the micro-field are effectively "elsewhere" in relation to normal Scale characters and things. See Conditions and Fields on p. 74 of **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**.

-5 MICROSCOPIC

As the name implies, you'd need a microscope to resolve anything at this size. Amoebas and large microscopic critters.

-6 CELLULAR

This describes anything cell-sized or smaller.

-7 MOLECULAR

Able to squirm inside a cell without destroying it. Virus-sized. Can manipulate molecular bonds with bare hands.

-8 ATOMIC

Literally small enough to touch atoms and pull them apart (dangerous!).

-9 VANISHING

This is the limit to which novas can descend — beyond the Quantum Barrier lies, as far as they can see, nothingness, just the yawning gulf between protons and electrons, between gluons and quarks. Novas are creatures of the Quantum, and the Subquantum is forever beyond them.

Size Scale differences for very small characters may improve their ability to go unnoticed or manipulate small things, but increase the difficulty of interacting with larger things, even to the point of turning ordinarily automatic tasks into something requiring a roll and allocation of successes, such as climbing a set of stairs becoming the equivalent of climbing sheer cliffs.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Novas wield tremendous power, and nova conflicts can result in a lot of collateral damage. To simulate this, certain nova attacks during a conflict contribute to a *Collateral Pool*.

Building the Collateral Pool

Collateral is a give-and-take situation. Whenever novas unleash their full power, they add to the Collateral Pool, but they can also try to mitigate their damage.

Scale: When a nova exerts high Scale might or power in a field, the Storyguide can add half the action's Scale (rounded up) in dice to the Collateral Pool. A Scale 3 action, for example adds two dice (3, divided by 2, rounded up from 1.5 to 2). This can include some uses of Mega-Might, Quantum Attack, and other abilities with might or power scale affecting the physical field around the nova.

Attacks: Add additional dice to the Collateral Pool for each of the Area, Destructive, Explosive, or Incendiary tags each time a character makes an attack using them. For example, an Area (2) Incendiary attack adds three dice to the Collateral Pool.

Cutting Loose: Additionally, a nova can "cut loose" with their powers, gaining up to 5 Enhancement on a roll using a nova ability but for each point of Enhancement applied the nova increases the Collateral Pool by one as well.

Rolling the Collateral Pool

When the Collateral Pool reaches 10 dice, the player who brought it to that threshold rolls the Collateral Pool. Any additions to the pool over 10 dice are added as Enhancement to this roll. This resets the Collateral Pool to zero. The Storyguide uses success from the roll to purchase Stunts from the following list:

Harm (variable): This Stunt can be purchased only once per target. Choose one:

- Spend one success per target to deal an Injury Condition to a target of lower Tier
- Spend successes equal to the target's Defense to inflict an Injury Condition to a target of the same Tier or higher.

Hazard (2+ successes): Environmental indirect damage affects anyone in the field of the conflict with Damage rating 1 per two successes spent on this Stunt. This can be anything from a gas leak or raging fire to a field of radiation or arcing electricity. Two successes can also be spent to extend the hazard for another round (giving it the Continuous (rounds) tag) or to give it the Deadly tag. See Other Forms of Damage on p. 106 of **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**.

Incite (2 successes): Angry mobs arrive, the action is caught on film, or a personal nemesis catches wind of what is happening. Contributors to the Collateral Pool have a +1 Difficulty to social interactions for the rest of the session for each time this Stunt is chosen, to a maximum of +3.

Knockdown (1 success per target): Knock targets prone.

Pin (2 successes per target): A massive piece of rubble falls either on a single major character in the scene, or any number of bystanders, trapping them until they break free or are rescued.

Raze (1 success + size Scale): Destroy an object established in the field, such as a building, the getaway car, an armored vehicle, etc.

OTHER COLLATERAL SITUATIONS

It's possible to use the Collateral system outside of action/adventure situations. Novas influence every sector of human life, changing it radically, and those changes often cause unintended side effects — hyperfusion cored out economies reliant on fossil fuels, causing a wave of migration, for example. Reserve the Collateral Pool for significant events, such as a nova endorsing (or running as) a political candidate, releasing new technology in an unrestricted fashion, and so on.

Scatter (2 successes): All minor characters are forced out of field or scene by the collateral damage.

Storyguides can come up with additional Collateral Pool Stunts to suit certain arenas, such as a conflict happening in a transformer sub-station — or a hyperfusion plant, for that matter!

When the Collateral Pool is in play, players can interact with the Collateral Pool in the following ways:

Self-Sacrifice: Convert the amount of dice the character would be adding to the Collateral Pool to a Complication to their next action. Failure to buy off the Complication inflicts Injury Conditions for each point remaining.

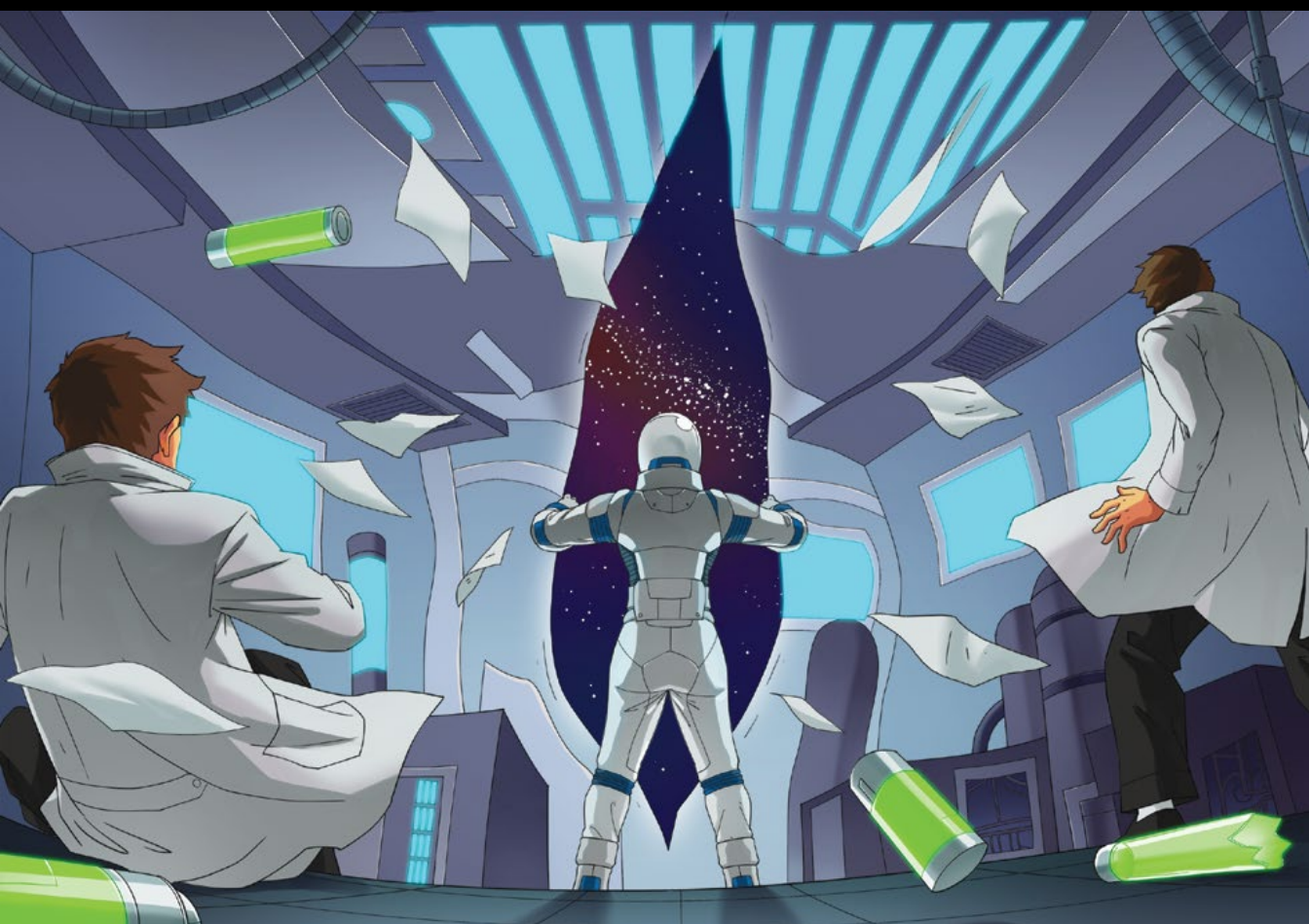
Stunt: *Contained Chaos (variable)*: Successes subtract dice from the Collateral Pool on a one-to-one basis. *Contained Chaos* cannot be used during any action or other Stunt that adds to or makes use of the Collateral Pool.

SPACE TRAVEL

Relativistic Travel

The Nova Age is a new Space Age — at least for novas. Turns out it's difficult to keep baselines alive in space or at the acceleration novas are capable of (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 117). Not even all novas are proof against vacuum or radiation but those who are can simply aim themselves at wherever they want to go (more accurately, wherever where they want to go *will be*) and fly. For everyone else, options for nova-based space travel are as follows: be carried, be teleported, or traverse a warp.

Traveling by accelerating in normal space is, to put it mildly, the scenic route. In theory, any nova capable of reactionless flight could accelerate up to just beneath the speed of light — 1g of sustained acceleration puts someone into a thoroughly relativistic regime within a year. However, it's not that simple. Most novas need sleep, air, food, water, and the various accoutrements of life. That requires a spacesuit — for longer journeys, some sort of living space and a hefty load of consumables (e.g., oxygen, calories), which rapidly adds up



RELATIVISTIC TRAVEL TIMES

SUPPORTED SPACE SPEED	DISTANCE COVERED
1	Earth to Moon in two weeks; interplanetary travel impractical
2	Earth to Moon in three days; Earth to Mars in two months
3	Earth to Moon in twelve hours; Earth to Mars in one week
4	Earth to Moon in four hours; Earth to Mars in three days
5	Earth to Moon in two hours; Earth to Mars in 36 hours
6	Earth to Moon in one scene; Earth to Mars in one day †

† — This represents 2-3 gravities of constant acceleration

UNSUPPORTED SPACE SPEED	DISTANCE COVERED
1	Earth to Moon in two weeks
2	Earth to Moon in three days; Earth to Mars in six weeks
3	Earth to Moon in six hours; Earth to Mars in two days
4	Earth to Moon in one scene; Earth to Mars in one day
5	Earth to Moon in ten rounds; Earth to Mars in four hours
6	Earth to Moon in two rounds; Earth to Mars in 30 minutes†

† — At this acceleration (thousands of gravities), the nova essentially reaches the speed of light in a vacuum. Light-travel-time between various solar system and interstellar bodies is well documented. Hope you brought a book.

INTERSTELLAR TRANSIT TIMES

DISTANCE	TRANSIT TIME
Anywhere on the same planet	Instant
To a nearby moon	1 minute
Within the same solar system	10 – Quantum minutes
Within the same galaxy	8 – Quantum hours*

*30 minutes at Quantum 8, 15 minutes at Quantum 9

in terms of mass, and that's not including a means to amuse oneself — space travel takes a *long time* and there's *nothing to do*. While it's true that in space, a very small force can add up over time, these needs put a hard cap on just how far many novas can travel through space, and how fast they can do it.

There are two kinds of Space Speed: Supported, for novas who are carrying a support system of some kind with them, and Unsupported, for novas effectively flying alone and unaided through space, accelerating constantly towards the destination until the halfway point, and accelerating *away* from the destination for the remainder of the journey to cancel out any velocity relative to the target. A nova transporting passengers always uses Supported Space Speed.

Spaceflight is highly unintuitive — the distances involved, the motion of celestial bodies, and the lack of landmarks add up to make it extremely easy to miss your mark. Maneuvering to meet objects in Earth orbit is a Difficulty 2 Science + Intellect roll; transiting from the Earth to the Moon is Difficulty 4. Failures on either are unlikely to be pleasant, and botches run the risk of serious injury or even the prospect of being lost in space. Mega-Intellect or a computer guidance system make both actions trivial

and are required for any journeys through space longer than Earth to Moon. Novas using Supported Space Speed cannot fly directly from the surface of the Earth (or another planet) unless they can lift the entirety of their support system unaided. In orbit, if a payload mass is more than the nova can lift in Earth's gravity, reduce Space Speed by 1 for every level of might Scale (or Mega-Might) the nova lacks.

Calculate Space Speed on both charts according to the following formula: Any nova capable of flight in a vacuum has an initial Space Speed of 1. Every two dots in Flight adds 1 Space Speed (round down); Mega-Speed adds 1 Space Speed for every two dots of Mega-Dexterity (round up). One milestone is equal to about one day's travel unless otherwise stated.

Interstellar Transit Times

Unlike moving to points on and around the Earth, teleporting or warping to other star systems is not *quite* instantaneous. Transiting further distances requires a certain amount of time, per the Transit Time Table. Those teleporting this distance don't experience the transit time; to their subjective point of view, the transit is just a few moments. Those traveling through a warp *do* experience the transit time, like flying fast down a glowing corridor, although travelers may still experience a subjective transit shorter than the passage of time in the outside universe. Because of this, off-planet warps cannot have the Clear tag; the transit within the wormhole renders it ineffective.

GENRE

Aberrant is a game of superhuman power, a genre that spans myriad sub-genres. Superhero comics run the gamut from Siegel and Shuster's high-idealism Superman to Alan Moore's cynical take on Miracleman and back again, and even when one comic draws on the ideas and cultural baggage of another, they're often very different animals. No one would ever mistake The Authority for Justice League of America, even though both are ostensibly about superhero teams who confront existential threats to Earth (also, multiple Authority characters are deliberate homages to JLA mainstays), because for all their similarities their methodologies and their themes are completely different. The Justice League imprisons supervillains, whereas the Authority lives in a world where the only reasonable solution to a superpowered villain is frequently to kill them before they kill millions. When Bizarro turns up to threaten Metropolis, Superman handles the problem without loss of life — when things go bad in Miracleman, cities burn and hundreds of thousands die.

Similarly, an Aberrant campaign can have many different themes and many different styles, echoing those of superheroic storytelling at large. Some campaigns will be closer to the Golden and Silver Age ideal of a superhero, where heroes are good, and villains are bad; others will turn the realism dial to the maximum in pursuit of Iron Age grittiness.

It's not just a question of modifying the setting, though — it's the Storyguide's responsibility to ensure that the world as the players experience it through their characters reflects the themes, mood, and style the campaign evokes. To aid this, we've divided superheroic storytelling into three broad tones and provided a list of Subgenres to further define the nature of the campaign. Each includes rules that will change the experience of play to suit that Subgenre.

WHITHER THE GOLDEN AGE?

The Golden Age was an era of two-fisted adventurers tackling relatively small-scale problems; **Aberrant**, by contrast, is all about the high-flying comics that followed (although future material may address this). However, if you're keen on it, it's possible to run a Golden-Age campaign with lower-powered or "stealth" novas, preternaturally gifted physically and mentally but not quite superhuman. Many Four-Color rules are good fits for a Golden Age campaign but be choosy — plenty of classic *Superman* stories grappled with real-life issues.

OPTIONAL RULE: KESSLER SYNDROME

Orbit is less about going up and more about going sideways fast enough that you miss the Earth when you fall. Most things in orbit and in space beyond orbit are moving *unfathomably fast,* kilometers per *second* relative to any given object (or nova). This is how asteroid impacts can cause mass extinctions — force equals mass times acceleration. Most objects in orbit are very small, which means they'll "only" hit like bullets.

Storyguides who wish to emphasize how dangerous space is can simulate this effect by rolling a single die for each milestone spent in spaceflight. If this die shows a 1, roll a 10 dice attack on the nova. Only novas with Mega-Cunning or foreknowledge of incoming space debris may apply their Defense to this attack. During near-lightspeed travel, motes of interstellar dust or hydrogen hit like artillery shells, and blue-shifted photons will hit like gamma-rays (or worse); without a radiation shield between the nova and her direction of relative flight, she's exposing herself to an extremely high-radiation environment (more so than space is already, that is).

Some novas, of course, are just plain bullet- and radiation-proof. It's unlikely, however, that her support system or anyone she's carrying with her can say the same.

SUPERHEROES THROUGH THE AGES

The history of superheroes in the comics medium is often divided into several different eras, running from the inception of superheroic storytelling to the modern day. Here's a (very) brief overview:

Golden Age: Traditionally dated to the publication of *Action Comics #1* in 1938, the initial boom of superheroes followed publishers trying to capitalize on the wild success of Superman. This rapid proliferation of characters created many iconic heroes who are still actively published today. The Golden Age continued through the 1940s, until the superhero fad began to lose steam.

Silver Age: After the decline of superheroes, comics proliferated across a host of genres — crime and horror comics became especially popular, provoking a backlash that led to the creation of the Comics Code Authority in 1954, which banned most of the popular themes and content of the day. Publishers turned back to superheroes as avatars of good, clean fun; the introduction of the Flash in *Showcase #4* (1956) is usually considered the beginning of the age, which ran through around 1970.

Bronze Age: There's no clean delineation between the Silver and Bronze Age — rather, it was a process of creators moving away from the limitations of Silver Age storytelling to tackle issues of racism, drug abuse, poverty, and environmental crises; Gwen Stacy's death in *The Amazing Spider-Man* #121 was a clear sign that things had changed. Claremont's 17-year run on *X-Men*, which began in 1975, gave us many of the stories we're still retelling today in reboots and cinematic adaptations.

Iron Age: The Iron Age's very existence is controversial. Following the end of the Comics Code's power, the Bronze Age's willingness to tackle real-world problems culminated in an age of gritty anti-heroes and realistic violence that set the standard for comics ever since; Batman and Wolverine owe their modern image to the explosion of their popularity in the Iron Age.

Modern Age: The Modern Age runs, depending on who you ask, from either the 80s or the 90s through today — a long run by any standard. Some people throw out terms like "Electrum" or "Platinum," citing the resurgence of Silver-Age scale and themes with modern sensibilities and updates, to break it up. It's hard to characterize the Modern Age, in part because it's become the age of the reboot, but the rise of cinematic adaptations of superhero stories is perhaps the clearest gauge of the tenor of the genre.

Tones represent the broad strokes of storytelling, the most basic assumptions about the setting, theme, and mood of the campaign. *Four-Color* campaigns hearken back to the Silver and Bronze Ages; good guys are good, bad guys are bad, and moral choices are generally obvious and clear. *Cinematic* campaigns come straight from the Modern Age, with high action and complex motives and themes that make the world just as much a character as the heroes. Finally, *Deconstruction* campaigns take every assumption about superheroes and subverts or inverts them, echoing the anti-heroic vigilantism of the Iron Age where no one could be entirely trusted, and the world was a dark and dirty place.

The following rules represent those basic setting and theme assumptions, giving a mechanical handle for the Storyguide to make the world of **Aberrant** come alive.

Four-Color

Four-Color stories are about good vs. evil, drawn in clearly defined lines. There are heroes and villains and precious little between them save the masses of humanity whose best and worst traits they exemplify and for whose hearts they continually do battle. Every Four-Color game, even those not based upon conflict between heroes and villains, is defined by that dichotomy of good and evil. As such, players and the Storyguide should decide during character creation whether they wish to play heroes or villains — the campaign will take a very different tack depending on that choice!

- All novas are either heroes or villains. Optionally, some novas may be neutral, but they should lean one way or the other even if they don't put on a costume.

VIOLENCE

Even though Four-Color campaigns typically personify problems, making them addressable with two-fisted action, the Storyguide should tone down the violence — specifically, the consequences thereof. The following optional rules serve to guide the mechanical aspect of play towards that goal.

- Only action and attacks by villains or heroes using the Cutting Loose option add to the Collateral Pool.
- The Collateral Pool *never* attacks innocent bystanders. Property damage is fair game but should remain localized.
- Characters who are Taken Out are unconscious or otherwise incapacitated by default. Death or serious injury is rare in Four-Color, especially those hewing close to Silver Age norms, and even an untimely demise might merely be a ruse (in fact, it's likely to be).

FLUX AND DETERMINATION

Heroes and villains are both larger than life, yet many have ordinary lives apart from their career in the cape. Partially, this is a defense mechanism — a secret identity protects one's friends and loved ones from reprisal by nefarious villains — but it's also a way for heroes to keep themselves grounded in humanity despite their tremendous power.

In addition to the grounding option to mitigate Flux (p. 93), characters can use their Determination to do so as well. Determination represents a hero's devotion to a cause or a villain to an ambition.

- The nova selects a virtue or ambition (truth, justice, etc.) and ties it to a Favored Approach

CROSSOVER CAMPAIGNS

While having heroes and villains fighting alongside each other might seem implausible, some of the best moments in superhero comics come when the villain acknowledges that, just this once, he's got to team up with his nemesis to defeat someone that's too evil even for his liking. Once the world is safe, it's back to trying to conquer it, usually by stabbing the hero in the back to start with! It's entirely possible to build a campaign around an arc like this, but be sure to play up the tension inherent in having a hero and a villain forced to work together — for example, having them share a Momentum pool, which villains are sure to want to use selfishly!

HEY, COULDN'T YOU USE THIS TO....

Yes, you can use the Goliath system to model novas destroying a major industrial complex, a city, or a government, if that's the sort of game you're running. You could also use it to model a heist! Ultimately, the form of the Goliath isn't as important as what it's able to do to the novas and how long it takes the novas to dismantle it.

(Force, Finesse, or Resistance). Replace any Flux she gains while upholding that virtue or ambition with a Condition, representing the struggle to contain herself within her chosen boundaries.

- When a nova's Flux rating reaches 10, she does not immediately gain Transcendence and reset her Flux to 0. Instead, she's confronted with a dramatic and dangerous situation that tests her chosen virtue or ambition. If she falters or otherwise betrays that cause, she resets Flux and gains Transcendence normally. If she perseveres, however, she experiences a significant change — it may be a quantum healing trance, a sudden burst of heretofore-unknown reserves of power, a "mysterious scientific accident," a moment of transcendence, or the like. This allows the nova to gain any of the benefits of Chrysalis described in Chapter Three, but taking effectively no time.

Cinematic

Cinematic stories take the world we know and turn it on its head. A CEO has got a suit of indestructible power armor. A government agent can step through shadows to anywhere he likes. Cinematic stories blend the believable with the outlandish — part of making successful films is, after all, maintaining a suspension of disbelief, and using the modern world (or something close enough to it) as a backdrop is a great way to do that. A Cinematic campaign represents the default take on **Aberrant** — a world like ours, but flashier and more exciting.

GOLIATHS

Aberrant is a game of high-flying action, sometimes involving heroes ganging up on something bigger than them and punching (or blasting) it into submission. Still, at a certain point even Scale breaks down — how do you fight something so huge that even a nova's tremendous might is, at worst, a fleabite? How do you fight something so strange and powerful that it barely even exists in our reality?

The *Goliath* system is an optional set of rules for **Aberrant** that allows novas to fight even on scales they can't otherwise affect. This is suitable not only for fighting entities or weapons that dwarf even mountains but for novas operating at Negative Size against objects or people of ordinary size.

Use the following template for Goliaths:

Threat: Threat represents the Goliath's willingness or ability to directly attack the nova, rated from 0-5; 0 represents a Goliath that is unaware of the characters' actions, 5 representing a Goliath that is both highly aware of and actively trying to harm the characters. If the Goliath takes an action, roll its Threat as a dice pool and apply Scale.

Quantum: If the Goliath has quantum powers (either from being a nova or from being nova-or-quantum-tech), it has a Quantum rating from 1-5.

Size: The size (in terms of Scale) of the Goliath relative to the attackers; if Sizes vary, use the smallest Size in the group and apply Enhancements relative to that Scale.

Scale: This represents the Scale of the Goliath's power relative to the novas and the environment.

Extras: If the Goliath has any particularly unusual abilities, list them here.

- A Goliath is any target that, reasonably speaking, a nova could not disable or destroy within a scene with normal attacks or nova powers. This may include hardened targets, targets that are too large or dispersed to meaningfully destroy within the time frame, targets with specific immunities, targets capable of annihilating the nova with little to no effort, or targets that are otherwise unassailable.

- Characters assaulting a Goliath must pass a given number of milestones, equal to the Goliath's relative Size + Quantum + Threat, to destroy it. The difficulty of each milestone is equal to the Goliath's power Scale and represents minutes equal to the Goliath's Size. Failure on milestones may inflict Conditions; Complications on milestones may include increasing the Goliath's

awareness of the characters (and therefore its Threat). Success on a milestone represents focused but significant damage done to the Goliath.

- When all milestones are passed, the Goliath is effectively destroyed, even if its physical form is intact.

Examples of Goliaths include Galactus or Ego the Living Planet (Marvel Comics), the asteroid that caused the K-T extinction event, Unicron (*Transformers*), the Yellowstone caldera supervolcano — anything big enough that even a superhero would need to team up to deal with it.

Deconstruction

If Cinematic campaigns are about pushing past the impossible in outlandish ways, a Deconstruction campaign is the chain of reality dragging heroes and villains back down to Earth. It's not that novas are less *powerful* in this genre, only that their power comes with far more consequences. Storyguides should play up the Collateral Pool and results of a battle between novas; be ruthless with Conditions and Complications, and generally portray the world as a mess even before the novas get involved.

QUANTUM INSTABILITY

Nova's in this genre are even less stable. When a nova's Flux rating plus their Transcendence rating equals or exceeds 10, the nova enters a state of *quantum instability*, prone to chaotic and random shifts and phenomena. The nova acquires a temporary transformation based on *current* Transcendence +1: so low-level for Transcendence 1–4, mid-level for rating 5–6, and high-level for Transcendence 7 or greater.

What's more, this temporary transformation can shift, turning into something else, or cycling through different transformations. So, a nova with Transcendence 3 and Flux 7 or greater, for example, goes into quantum instability and gains a temporary low-level transformation. The nova might manifest Aberrant Eyes or an Anima Aura one day, then go through a Psychological or Vocal Shift the next. The choice of transformation and the shifts between them are ultimately up to the Storyguide, with input from the player.

The quantum instability lasts for as long as the nova's Flux and Transcendence ratings total 10 or more. If Flux is reduced (either by bleeding it off or by reaching rating 10) the period of instability ends. A nova can also suppress a transformation caused by quantum instability by spending one Quantum point per minute or round. This is a strictly temporary solution, as it prevents the nova from recovering Quantum points, and they will eventually run out. A dormant nova does not display quantum instability, but it returns once the nova's powers are active again.

Quantum instability is often a harbinger of future transformations and, when the nova's Transcendence rating increases, a prior transformation from quantum instability may "set" and become permanent.

VIOLENCE

Violence in a Deconstruction campaign isn't certain, but when it happens it's likely to be swift and brutal. The best way to win a fight, after all, is to ensure the other guy never gets to throw a punch, and with novas, the best way to do that is to alpha-strike them so hard they're not likely to survive it.

The following rules turn up the consequences of violence to a sobering degree. There is no "good" fight in a Deconstruction campaign; even a fight the characters walk away from is going to change lives, and likely not for the better.

- The Collateral Pool starts out at five dice and resets to five dice after it is rolled.
- If damage against a baseline character is reduced to 0 by any means, they still receive one Injury Condition.
- If the Collateral Pool attacks bystanders who are otherwise insignificant characters, treat each success as a serious injury or fatality to a separate individual.

SUBGENRES

Subgenres focus a campaign, putting the spotlight on elements of the world of **Aberrant** and pushing the themes associated with that Subgenre to the fore. Every Subgenre will look a little different when paired with one of the three campaign Tones — sometimes this will be a largely narrative or aesthetic change, while other times specific rules will shift the mechanical aspect of **Aberrant** to better fit the tone.

Celebrity

The following optional rules lend a campaign centered on celebrity life a frenetic energy and a sense of connection to "your sort of people" far more than "the common people" who obsess over your every move. When you can wind people around your little finger, after all, what's left but the drama and intrigues of high society?

- Novas may purchase Anonymous, Loaded, and Respected Authority.
- All novas receive Fame •• and Wealth •• for free. If a nova takes Covert, Alternate Identity, or Anonymous, her public persona is well known, though paparazzi are doubtless trying to uncover her secret identity.
- All novas possess at least leadership Scale 2 for the purposes of any direct conversation with a baseline, and leadership Scale 1 for the purposes of addressing a group of baselines.

Crime-Fighting

Campaigns about fighting crime are the gold standard of superhero storytelling. Depending on the Tone, however, Crime-Fighting may entail doing battle with individual villains or struggling against the heartless machinery of conspiracies that dwarf even a nova's power.

- *Four-Color only:* Heroic novas automatically gain Respected Authority for law enforcement and emergency services (though some individuals may be outliers who resent the hero's intrusion).
- *Villains only:* The Storyguide creates a Nemesis character who is hot on the characters' trail. Every session, the Storyguide rolls that



character's Investigation pool against a variable Difficulty (determined by how obvious the characters were that session), with milestones equal to the number of player characters. When all milestones are completed, it indicates that the Nemesis has found a lead, and the characters must deal with them in the next session!

Espionage

Subtlety isn't always a feature of **Aberrant** campaigns, but if the focus of the game is on espionage, it's much more likely that it will be. Even within this Subgenre, though, there's myriad variations, from George Smiley to Jason Bourne and back again. These rules focus more on the subtlety aspect of espionage; Special Ops is the Subgenre dedicated to tightly focused and highly professional violence.

- All characters receive the Alternate Identity Edge at two dots for free.
- Characters may plant false information to mislead opponents. This requires an Enigmas (for hard information) or a Persuasion (for human interaction) action. When investigators uncover this false information, compare the successes on the fabricator's roll to the successes on the investigator's roll. If the latter is larger, the investigator correctly determines the information is false. If, however, the fabricator wins the challenge, the investigator accepts the information as genuine. False information serves as an Enhancement if used by the fabricator against the investigator, or as additional Difficulty or Complications if the investigator attempts to use it for Enhancement.

Horror

Campaigns centered around the horror of the transformation all novas are going through are a tight needle to thread. These campaigns center on lost humanity, but what *is* humanity? What's lost as novas become something *else* — and is that bad, or just *different*? What's so great about being human anyway? Indeed, the most terrifying thing for some novas, so married to their humanity, is the thought that someday they might start to *like* what they've become.

- Every time a nova would gain Flux, double the amount she would gain.
- Novas gain Flux every time they roll more than five successes on any given roll using a power (Enhancements don't count — dice only).
- All novas begin play with at least one transformation, even if their Transcendence isn't high enough to otherwise cause it.
- Quantum Instability from the Deconstruction genre exists but occurs when Flux + Transcendence equals or exceeds 7, rather than 10.

Politics

Admit it: there's at least one politician you've always wanted to slug right in the teeth, even if you'd never really *do* it — even if you're not morally opposed to violence, the consequences would be *dire*. But what happens when the consequences *aren't* so dire? What happens when a nova with Mega-Intellect *knows*, for a *fact*, that overthrowing the government would make things better for everyone? What happens when a nova with Mega-Presence casually suggests policy changes that lawmakers instantly adopt as dogma? Can politics-as-usual even *exist* in a world like **Aberrant**?

- Power seeks out power: All novas receive Patron • - ••• at a rating of their choice, unrestricted by Path. If a nova declines this free Merit, there will still be plenty of prospective Patrons — and enemies — waiting in the wings.
- Politics isn't always about friendship — sometimes it's about leverage. Characters who have dirt on a target may use that to artificially shift Attitude for the purposes of a single project (nothing in politics happens quickly). The successes on the roll to acquire the information (regardless of who ultimately leans on the target with it) determine how much an Attitude may be shifted — one for a single success, two for three successes, and three for five successes. Using this, however, lowers the Attitude of the target toward the leveraging character by 1 for all other purposes, permanently. Alternately, leverage can serve as an Enhancement on actions where that leverage applies, be it to a single individual or an entire government.

Rescue Operations

Rescue Operations are the classic Project Utopia campaign, but the characters don't necessarily have

ACTUALLY, THIS REPRESENTS...

The X-Men began as stand-ins for marginalized groups of people, to examine issues of oppression, alienation, and so on through their lives. Here's the problem with using superheroes to represent marginalized people: In real life, they can't shoot lasers from their eyes, control the weather, or instantly heal any injury. Superpowers — key word, "power" — represent agency that systems of oppression actively exclude marginalized people from.

This is not to say that you can't run games about marginalized novas. Even novas are going to be subject to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc. Celebrity is no shield against these evils (if anything, it magnifies them). Be aware of that, and be aware that people at your table have probably experienced bigotry in their daily life. Some people won't want to deal with that; others might well *want* to engage with it in a setting where they have the power to do something about it.

Even if no one at your table experiences bigotry in their real lives, consider whose stories you're telling when you bring those things into your game.

to be with the UN or Project Utopia. Players might be freelancers, or simply concerned citizens who happen to have superpowers. Storytellers can model disasters using the Goliath system, above, providing milestones for the characters to work towards as they combat the disaster. The following optional system helps simulate the chaotic and dangerous environments inherent to disaster situations.

Instead of a Collateral Pool, dangerous situations have a *Catastrophe Pool*. The Catastrophe Pool starts with dice equal to the situation's Threat — the more dice, the more serious the disaster, and the more susceptible the disaster site is to further damage from collapsing structures, fire, toxic effluence, etc. Unlike the Collateral Pool, the Catastrophe Pool only changes when the Storyguide decides it's appropriate, which may be in response to player action.

Instead of nova-powered attacks, the Catastrophe Pool is triggered by attempts to use nova powers to rapidly change the situation — lifting a collapsed building (thus possibly causing a collapse elsewhere), using a quantum energy beam to cut into the side of a capsized ship (and possibly hitting a fuel line), and so on. Catastrophe successes cause additional Complications on subsequent rolls or inflict harm to baselines or novas in harm's way. Careful planning may allow player characters to act without triggering the Catastrophe Pool, at Storyguide discretion, but this may require time that victims do not have.

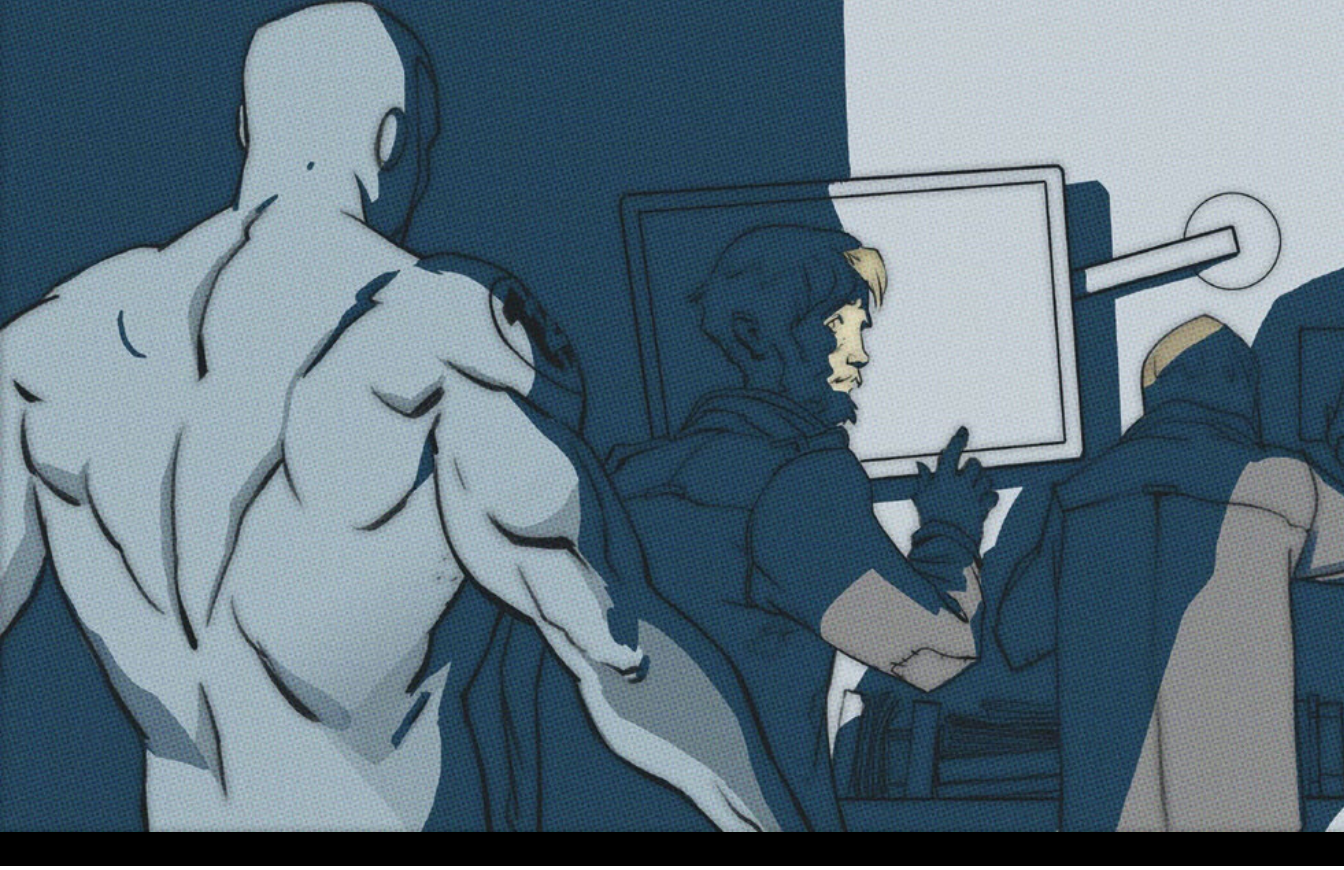
Social Commentary

These campaigns are tailor-made for the Teragen, but any faction's novas will eventually have to grapple with the questions raised by Divis Mal's philosophy. *So what* if novas aren't human — what does that change? How? Is it inevitable? How will society react? It's more than just humanity, though; even though **Aberrant** is thoroughly fantastic, it's close enough to our world that real-world issues will peek through, and, through the lens of novas, be reinterpreted and reexamined.

- Baseline Attitudes to novas are always one higher or lower than they would otherwise be.
- *Optional*: Mitoids are Nova tier (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 71) in addition to the normal effects of mite.
- Make frequent use of the Collateral Pool outside of action/adventure contexts — society is *constantly* dealing with the ripple effect of nova disruption. Anything might trigger this, from an errant comment on social media to physical collateral damage during a fight that gets picked up by the media.
- When designing Storyguide characters, consider what facet of modern life they most clearly represent — fame, power, corporate overreach, social media, etc. Don't make them one-dimensional, but clearly tie them to the issue. *This* is the senator who wants a Nova Registration Act; *this* is the CEO who gets regular injections of nova blood trying to engineer his own eruption, and so on.

Space Exploration

The final frontier it may be, but there's more to Space Exploration than simply pointing up and flying away. Exploration means mysteries to



solve, obstacles to surmount, and unknown dangers to brave.

- *Optional:* The Adaptation Mega-Edge protects against the vacuum and hard radiation of space without any need to spend Quantum points. Powers that grant longer-term immunity to environmental hazards function as normal.

- *Optional:* Novas may elect to take a point of Flux to adapt themselves to high-radiation conditions for a scene.

Special Ops

Special Ops campaigns focus on superhumans who work in the shadows rather than high-flying action — which isn't to say that Special Ops games can't be action packed, only that the action must (or at least *should* stay) on the down-low. Team Tonight, the Blacks Ops division of Team Tomorrow, is tailor-made for a campaign like this one.

In addition to the Collateral Pool, Special Ops campaigns have an *Exposure Pool*. This pool starts at zero dice and adds one die in the following situations: the team does something flashy or noticeable (Storyguide's discretion, though she should warn the players first); the team leaves evidence of their presence behind; the team leaves witnesses behind. Appropriate botches should also add to the Exposure Pool.

Unlike the Collateral Pool, the Exposure Pool is only rolled after the mission. Successes on this roll measure the degree to which the team has exposed themselves to outside scrutiny; the Storyguide may use success to inflict Conditions on player characters or Complications on later actions. Whoever is sponsoring the team (likely a Path) is unlikely to respond well to high exposure missions and may require the team to clean up their own messes or, if the team is irretrievably exposed, potentially withdraw support.

A *burned* team has no official support, and is likely watched or pursued by rivals, enemies, and state powers — in other words, a persistent Path Revoked Condition. If they continue to conduct operations, the Exposure Pool reflects willingness on the part of others to tolerate the team's unsanctioned activities.


ARE YOU **SURE** ABOUT THESE RESULTS?
I CHECKED THEM TWICE.
THEN YOU'D BETTER GET SOMEONE FROM UTOPIA ON THE LINE. NOW.
Y-Y-YES MA'AM.
CHECKED THEM TWICE MY ASS.
BEEP
ARE YOU **OKAY**? I HEARD YOU WEREN'T FEELING WELL.
ÆON SOCIETY RASHOUD FACILITY.
PATIENT "JANE DOE." NEWLY ERUPTED NOVA.
IT HURTS, DOCTOR.
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!


IT'S OKAY! DON'T TALK! WE'LL--
ALERT! QUANTUM BUILDUP IN ROOM 113! ALERT!
AAAAAAAAH!
KRA-KOOM
CRACK!!

CHAPTER SIX: POWERS AND ABILITIES

"Do you guys just put the word 'quantum' in front of everything?"
— Scott Lang, *Ant-Man and The Wasp*

Novas are distinguished from baseline humanity by their incredible powers, many of them things once considered scientifically impossible, and still not entirely explainable. While the prevailing theory is that novas mentally manipulate the fundamental forces of gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear force at the quantum level, the exact mechanism by which they accomplish this remains unclear. What is clear is that novas possess tremendous power, which can grow and change over time, and the powers they have demonstrated to date may only be a fraction of their full potential.

QUANTUM

Novas have a mental and physical connection to the fundamental forces making up the fabric of the universe, what has come to be called their "quantum power." In **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** game terms, the Quantum Trait measures the strength of that connection and a nova's overall power.

Quantum Points

Although a nova's potential to manipulate quantum forces may be theoretically limitless, the body and mind of a mortal nova is still limited to channeling or controlling so much energy at once. This energy manipulating capacity is measured in *Quantum points* and is determined by the nova's Quantum Trait.

Quantum Point Total: A nova has Quantum points equal to 10 plus five times their Quantum rating. So, a Quantum 1 nova has 15 Quantum points, while a Quantum 9 nova has 55 Quantum points. Novas spend Quantum points to activate many of their nova traits, particularly Quantum Powers. A nova without any Quantum points remaining cannot activate any nova traits requiring them but otherwise retains all their nova traits.

Quantum Point Recovery: A nova regains Quantum points equal to half their maximum in between scenes when the nova rests (see Units of Time in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 75). A nova unable to rest or still utilizing quantum powers (including continuous powers lasting hours or days) in between scenes does not recover.

Faster Quantum Recovery: Novas can recover Quantum points faster. If the character's player accepts a point of Flux, the nova regains all expended Quantum points between scenes if able to rest, or half their maximum in Quantum points without rest or while continuing to utilize quantum powers.

QUANTUM RATING	QUANTUM POINTS
1	15
2	20
3	25
4	30
5	35
6	40
7	45
8	50
9	55

THE MEDUSA PROTOCOLS

Project Proteus maintains what it calls "The Medusa Protocols," approaches for neutralizing or overcoming nova powers, and the novas who possess them. Examples of the Medusa Protocols are scattered in sidebars like this one throughout this chapter in reference to certain powers, and Storyguides are encouraged to create their own approaches to deal with the superior powers of novas.

Maxing Out

Novas are capable of some amazing things just as part of their powers and Mega-Attributes, but they can go beyond even that when they really try. To "max-out" their power, a nova takes a point of Flux (p. 89) and spends Quantum points to assemble a pool of dice, one point per die, up to a maximum number of dice equal to their Quantum rating. They roll those dice as a reflexive action. Failure means nothing happens, except the expenditure of the Quantum points, and the nova receives Momentum. A botch means the nova gains an additional point of Flux. A nova can apply an Enhancement to the maxing out roll by taking additional points of Flux, 1 Enhancement per Flux point, up to a maximum of their Quantum rating.

Maxing Out Stunts: Successes from the roll can be spent for the following Stunts for one action or power use at one success each:

- Add one dot to an existing Mega-Attribute, Mega-Edge, or Quantum Power. While maxing out, the nova can ignore one dot of the increased trait's requirements. Beyond that, they must meet the increased trait's requirements but can spend maxing out successes to do so.
- Add one point in a power tag to one of the nova's Quantum Powers. This includes increasing an existing power tag it does not normally possess.
- Remove one point in a negative power tag on one of the nova's Quantum Powers.
- Gain one dot in a Mega-Attribute, Mega-Edge, or Quantum Power the nova does not already possess. The nova must meet the trait's requirements to do this but can spend maxing out successes to meet the requirements.
- Add one dot to the nova's current Quantum Trait rating.

Maxing Out Duration: The benefits of maxing out last for one use of the power, and end when the power's duration does, unless the character's player chooses to spend additional Quantum points equal to the maxing out successes to maintain them for another use. This is in addition to any Quantum points spent to use nova traits that turn. Once the nova stops spending the Quantum points to maintain the maxed-out benefits, they lapse.

Maxing Out and Advancement: Maxing out has a relationship with nova advancement — just like a bodybuilder has to stress muscles to promote growth, a nova has to max-out in order to gain power. To spend Experience to improve a nova trait, the nova must have maxed it out at least once since the last improvement. To spend Experience to acquire a Mega-Attribute, Mega-Edge, or Quantum Power, the nova must have acquired it at least once by maxing out, so the nova understands how to get to that level of achievement. To spend Experience to improve Quantum rating, the nova must have maxed it out at least a number of times equal to the current rating since the last increase (so once for Quantum 1 to 2, twice for 2 to 3, and so on). There's no "playing it safe" when it comes to the growth of nova powers — you must push past your limits and take a risk. Of course, novas who max out too frequently risk accumulating enough Flux to lead to further Transcendence and Transformations.

Burning Out

Novas who run out of Quantum points are not actually "out of juice" — they don't lack power, but they have temporarily exceeded the ability of their body and mind to safely channel it. Sometimes, however, a nova needs to call upon their powers whether they're ready to handle it or not.

For every two Quantum points a nova expends after reaching zero Quantum points, the nova takes an Injury Condition. This is considered lethal damage, and novas can be Taken Out by this damage (commonly known as "burning out"). The nova suffers the Injury Condition *after* taking the action where they spend the Quantum points.



Overcharging

The reverse of burning out, some Quantum Powers or unusual effects cause novas to have an excess of Quantum points, above their usual maximum. This can create some problems when novas greatly exceed their normal capacity for containing and channeling energy.

A nova with more than their normal amount of Quantum points acquires either the Aberrant Eyes or Anima Aura transformation, as their nova nature literally shines out. When they have 150% or more than their normal amount of Quantum points, they acquire both previous transformations as well as the Energy Bleed transformation, giving off random sparks or flashes of energy. At 200% or more, the nova acquires the Energy Emissions transformation, barely able to contain the sheer amount of power. For each minute the nova remains at this level of Quantum points, they also suffer either an Injury Condition or acquire a point of Flux, as the nova's player chooses, until their Quantum point total drops below 200% of normal.

When the nova's Quantum point total drops, the nova loses any temporary transformations due to the Overcharging, but any Injury Conditions or Flux acquired remain and must be dealt with normally.

Note that novas can't "accidentally" overcharge through the normal acquisition of Quantum — once you reach your maximum, you stop accumulating points. Overcharging only occurs for powers and effects that specifically allow for acquiring more Quantum points than usual.

Quantum Transcendence

A nova who achieves a Quantum rating of 10 undergoes a transformation into another state of being altogether. They effectively transcend all relatable limits — and possibly the material universe altogether. Some believe Quantum 10 novas become virtually omnipotent, capable of creating their own realities, which they become a part of, or that they "become one with everything" and transcend physical existence. Exactly what happens is unclear, since no nova has yet made this transition in the **Aberrant** era, and records of the later parts of the era are lost or unclear. Still, this is likely what happened to many **Aberrant** era novas by the time of **Trinity Continuum: Æon**; they achieved quantum transcendence and are just... gone.

MEGA-ATTRIBUTES

The nova ability to channel fundamental forces and to transform themselves gives them the potential for superhuman Attributes that go well beyond the limits of human ability. These enhanced Attributes are known as *Mega-Attributes*. For novas, Mega-Attributes replace the higher-Tier ability to raise regular abilities above a rating of 5; novas that have greater abilities have dots in Mega-Attributes instead.

Acquiring Mega-Attributes

Like other nova traits, Mega-Attributes are acquired by spending Experience while applying the nova template during character creation, or while advancing a character with that template in game play. The nova must have a Quantum rating equal to or greater than the desired Mega-Attribute rating as well as a number of dots in the normal Attribute equal to or greater than the desired Mega-Attribute rating (or five dots in the normal Attribute, for Mega-Attribute ratings of 5 or greater). So, for a nova to acquire a rating of 3 in a Mega-Attribute, that nova must have at least Quantum 3 and three dots in the underlying normal Attribute.

Mega-Attributes and Scale

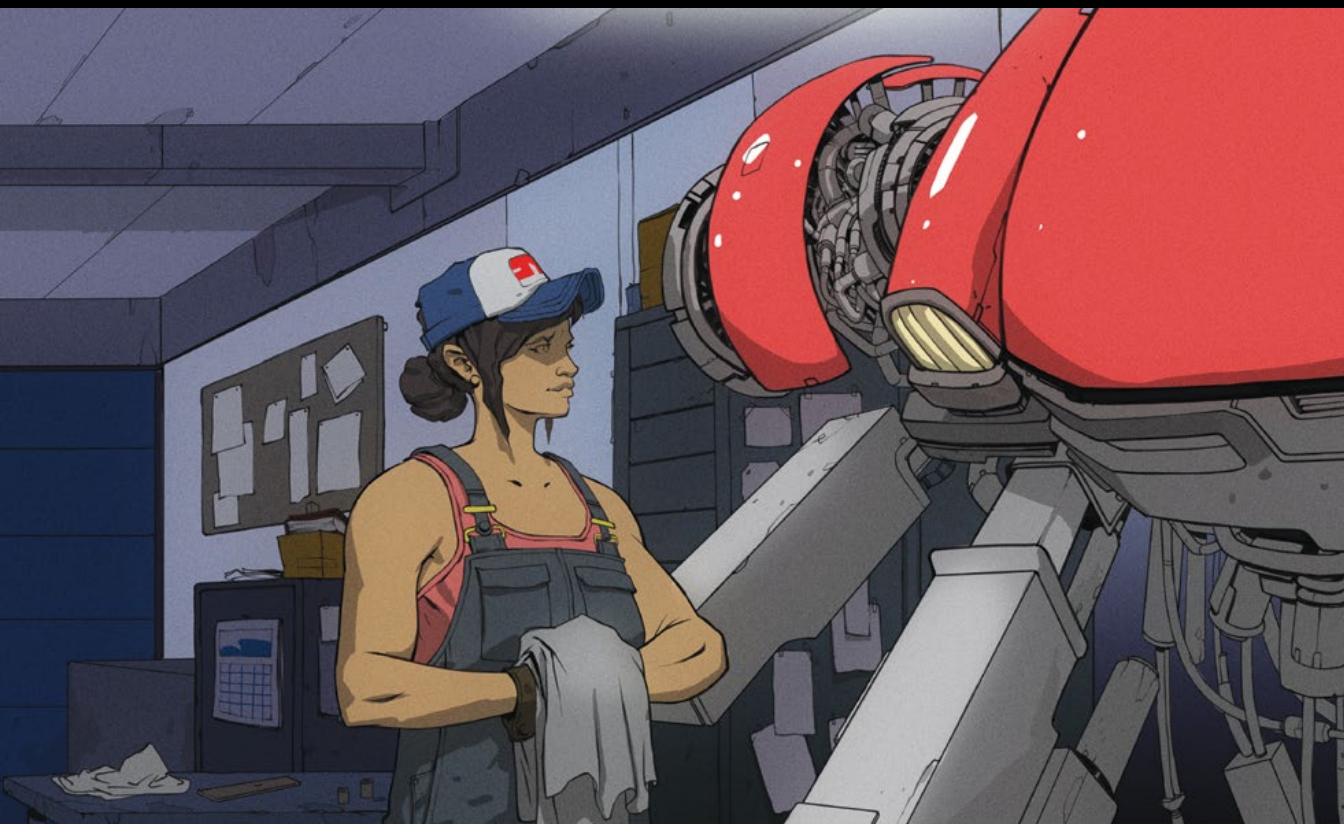
More than any other nova trait, Mega-Attributes interact with the Scale mechanics. Generally, each dot in a Mega-Attribute increases the nova's Scale in a specific area by one. The specific Mega-Attribute descriptions explain which areas of Scale are affected. Some Mega-Edges further expand a Mega-Attribute's relationship with different Scales. For example, Mega-Speed applies a nova's Mega-Dexterity to the character's speed Scale as well.

As with other uses of Scale, a nova's Mega-Attributes generally provide a measure of Enhancement on actions relative to the Scale of the task or the opposition the nova faces and generally multiply the nova's capabilities for dealing with things on a dramatic level. They also act as the Attribute for specific Mega-Edge rolls.

Mega-Intellect

Mega-Intellect improves the raw computing power of a nova's mind, to the point where high-level Mega-Intellect novas can function like "living databases" who seem to know *everything*. What they don't know, they can easily figure out. Mega-Intellect is a key Attribute for nova super-science (p. 233). Mega-Intellect grants:

- Increase in mental Scale equal to its dots for Intellect rolls.



MEGA-ATTRIBUTES AND STEALTH NOVAS

While the popular conception of nova Mega-Attributes are the higher ratings, with abilities a hundred or a thousand times greater than a baseline, some novas have subtler, but still superhuman, levels of Mega-Attributes, and often a wider range of them. These so-called "dark stars" or "stealth novas" have only one or two dots in any given Mega-Attribute, but that's still enough to make them more capable in that area than almost any baseline human, particularly if their underlying Attributes are rating 3 or higher. A nova with one dot in *every* Mega-Attribute — possible with just the starting amount of Experience from the nova template — is better than a baseline at virtually *everything*, and still has Experience left over for, say, a Mega-Edge or improving their skill ratings as well. Such "dark stars" also have the advantage of needing lower Quantum ratings for their nova traits, and thus less likelihood of accumulating Transcendence and Transformations.

- Dots equal to its rating to distribute among the following mental Edges: Iron Will, Lightning Calculator, Photographic Memory, and Speed Reading.

Mega-Cunning

While Mega-Intellect is pure "brain power," Mega-Cunning novas think (and often act) *fast*. They're hyper-aware, able to react to things before most people are even conscious of them, and able to detect things many baselines cannot. Mega-Cunning comes with superhuman reflexes, sharp senses, and often unusual sensory abilities, beyond those possessed by baseline humans. Mega-Cunning novas gain:

- Increase in speed Scale equal to their dots when rolling Initiative.
- All the Keen Sense Edges (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 60), with an Enhancement equal to their Mega-Cunning dots.

Mega-Resolve

Mega-Resolve grants novas a level of focus and determination far beyond that of ordinary people, able to exercise tremendous "mind over matter" to block out distractions, ignore pain or discomfort, or focus on incredibly minute and complex tasks for long periods of time. Mega-Resolve novas:

- Reduce Complications due to Injury Conditions by their Mega-Resolve dots, so Mega-Resolve 4+ means no injury Complications at all.
- Increase leadership Scale equal to its dots for the purposes of resisting social influence to encourage or prevent behavior or shift attitude.
- Ignore points in Complications due to fatigue, pain, starvation, thirst, or similar problems equal to their Mega-Resolve dots.
- At Mega-Resolve 5+ the nova no longer needs to sleep, although they do need rest, based on their Stamina rating.

Mega-Might

Mega-Might increases a nova's muscle power far beyond human limits. At high levels, Mega-Might novas can lift multiple tons and smash steel and stone with their bare hands. Like several other nova abilities, Mega-Might is at least partially based in a nova's ability to manipulate quantum forces — no amount of body modification would allow a human-sized being to exert the kind of force powerful Mega-Might novas do. At least part of their power seems to bend or ignore concepts like leverage or structural weaknesses. Mega-Might novas:

- Increase might Scale by their Mega-Might dots for lifting and moving, and power Scale for damaging things using sheer muscle power.
- The nova can also throw anything they can lift a number of range bands equal to their Mega-Might dots (Extreme range at Mega-Might 4+). If they throw an object as an attack, it gains the Thrown and Pushing tags.

Mega-Dexterity

Mega-Dexterity grants novas superhuman grace, flexibility, balance, and coordination. They can perform challenging feats of acrobatics and complex movement with the ease of walking across a room. It doesn't make the character *faster* (see the Mega-Speed Edge, p. 192, for that), but inhumanly dexterous. Mega-Dexterity novas:



- Ignore one point of Complications on Dexterity actions per Mega-Dexterity dot. Once Complications are reduced to 0, any remaining dots in Mega-Dexterity lower the Difficulty of a Dexterity roll to as low as 1. High Mega-Dexterity novas can perform virtually "impossible" feats of grace and coordination with the ease of walking across a room.

Mega-Stamina

While all novas tend to be fit and can withstand the effects of their extraordinary powers, those with Mega-Stamina have truly superhuman constitutions and resistance to harm. Those with high levels of Mega-Stamina are virtually immune to the needs of mere mortals and may even possess vastly increased lifespans. Mega-Stamina novas:

- Increase durability Scale by one per Mega-Stamina dot for resisting pain and conditions relating to Stamina, such as fatigue, hunger, or thirst.
- Gain Enhancement equal to their Mega-Stamina dots on Stamina + Resolve rolls to resist indirect damage.
- Divide the time required to resolve an Injury Condition by their durability Scale (Mega-Stamina rating +1).
- Mega-Stamina novas have increased lifespans. Mega-Stamina rating at 5 and below grants you an additional 40 years of life, and a rating of 6+ means you effectively no longer age.

Mega-Presence

While novas are often called "godlike," it is those with Mega-Presence who truly make others feel as though they are face-to-face with a living god. They can change the atmosphere of a room simply by entering it and people often hang on their every word and deed. While all novas are famous, those with Mega-Presence can hardly help but become celebrities, or even centers of their own cults of personality, drawing attention wherever they go, sometimes whether they want to or not. Mega-Presence grants:

- Increase in leadership Scale equal to its dots for Presence rolls.
- The benefits of dots in the Fame Edge (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 61) equal to the Mega-Presence dots. Like other characters with Fame, Mega-Presence novas cannot have the Covert Edge or the Anonymous Enhanced Edge, unless they also have the Dormancy Edge (p. 94).

- The benefits of dots in the Followers Edge (p. 97), starting at one dot at Mega-Presence 5 and increasing by one per additional dot.

Mega-Manipulation

While Mega-Intellect novas seem to know everything, and Mega-Cunning novas are aware of everything, it's novas with Mega-Manipulation who really know people inside and out: what they want, what makes them tick, and how to nudge things to get them to do whatever the nova wants. While a Mega-Presence nova can inspire fanatical devotion, one with Mega-Manipulation can make people dance to their tune without even knowing they're doing it. Mega-Manipulation grants:

- Increase in leadership Scale equal to its dots for Manipulation rolls.
- Dots equal to its rating to distribute among the following social Edges: Animal Ken, Skilled Liar, Striking, and Wealth.

Mega-Composure

Mega-Resolve lets novas block out distractions and focus intensely. Mega-Manipulation lets them understand other people. Mega-Composure, by contrast, gives novas unprecedented insight into and control over themselves. They're often more aware of how the actions and words of others influence them than the people trying to exert influence. Indeed, the efforts of baselines to manipulate a Mega-Composure nova seem simplistic and child-like by comparison. Where ordinary people panic or feel a rush of emotion, a nova with Mega-Composure has a superhuman (some would say inhuman) ability to compartmentalize and put aside such feelings. Mega-Composure novas:

- Reduce any Complications due to emotional or social distractions by their dots in Mega-Composure, such that Mega-Composure 4+ novas are virtually unflappable, regardless of the circumstances. Once Complications are reduced to 0, any remaining dots in Mega-Composure lower the Difficulty of a Composure roll to as low as 1.
- Increase leadership Scale equal to its dots for the purposes of resisting social influence to encourage or prevent thought or shift attitude.
- Dots equal to its rating to distribute among the following Edges: Always Prepared, Covert, Danger Sense, and Iron Will. If the nova has Iron Will •••, spend two dots to gain the Indomitable Enhanced Edge, and can spend Quantum points instead of Inspiration to activate it.

MEGA-EDGES

Just as baseline characters have access to various Edges representing unusual or specialized training or abilities, novas have access to Mega-Edges, representing specific superhuman capabilities. Mega-Edges are often specialized manifestations of a nova's Mega-Attributes, although that is not always the case. Like regular Edges, they are rated in dots, and some Mega-Edges have a range of dots. In addition to any other prerequisites associated with a Mega-Edge, a character must have the nova template and a Quantum rating of at least 1 to acquire a Mega-Edge.

Acquiring Mega-Edges

Novas acquire Mega-Edges during character creation by spending Experience from their nova template, as detailed in Chapter Three, p. 89. The nova must meet any prerequisites given for the Mega-Edge to acquire it, and some Mega-Edges have increasing requirements based on the desired number of dots.

Mega-Edges are acquired in much the same way after character creation: The nova's player spends earned Experience and the nova must meet any prerequisites of the desired number of dots in the Mega-Edge before purchasing it. In addition, Mega-Edges acquired in-play require the nova to have maxed-out to gain the Mega-Edge temporarily at least once.

As with other nova traits, players can acquire a dot in a Mega-Edge at half the usual Experience cost by adding a dot to the character's Transcendence rating (p. 90).

ACCURACY (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Dexterity equal to Edge dots

The nova's grace and speed from Mega-Dexterity applies to their accuracy as well. For each dot in this Mega-Edge, the nova gains 1 Enhancement on Aim + Dexterity rolls.

ADAPTATION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Stamina •••

The nova is sustained almost entirely by quantum energies, able to survive in any environment. So long as the nova has at least one Quantum point,



they are immune to any indirect damage with the Environmental tag and can do without all the various necessities of life like breathing, eating, drinking, sleeping, and such. Some novas spontaneously develop physical adaptations to their environment with this Edge, while others are simply immune. Adaptation is automatic and requires no Quantum point expenditure, but in some especially hostile environments, like the vacuum of space or an alien planet, the Storyguide may require a cost of a Quantum point per scene for the nova to survive.

ANIMAL MASTERY (• OR ••)

Some novas exhibit an unusual connection with animals, allowing them to command and even communicate with them. With one dot in this Mega-Edge, a nova can roll either Empathy or Survival + Presence, with success allowing them to command a normal animal to do as the nova wishes, or spend a Quantum point to understand concepts communicated by the animal's body language, behavior, and vocalizations, allowing them to "speak" to animals. With two dots, the nova can do both. In cases of an animal influenced by another nova, these become opposed rolls. A nova with Animal Mastery can also generally interact with animals as if they were people in terms of forming bonds and exercising influence.

BODY MODIFICATION (• TO •••••)

The nova's body has transformed, acquiring some useful physical trait or modification. Body Modifications are permanent and require no Quantum points to use or maintain. For each dot in this Mega-Edge, choose one of the following modifications. Players may come up with new modifications, if they wish, subject to the Storyguide's approval.

- **Adhesive Grip:** The nova can adhere to surfaces, allowing them to move along vertical and inverted surfaces at normal walking speed. Gain 1 Enhancement to actions in which having a strong grip would benefit the character.
- **Bioluminescence:** The nova can shed light strong enough to illuminate a Short distance around them.

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: MENTAL INFLUENCE

Perhaps the most dangerous ability novas possess is influencing the minds of others, not only because of what they can make people do, but also because the ability is so difficult to detect and counter. Unlike the common fictional trope of "a voice in my head telling me what to do," nova mental influence is often insidious, and victims later describe "overwhelming urges" or "wanting to do something" without really knowing why at the time. It often takes the form of people simply *liking* the nova a great deal (even loving or fearing them) and wanting to please, or at least not displease, them.

At present, the most effective known means of warding off nova mental influence, apart from considerable training in psy-ops and mental discipline, is sensory isolation. Most manipulative novas cannot exert influence over people who cannot hear or see them. Even still, operatives confronted with a nova with considerable mental influence must be prepared to make some difficult decisions.

- **Chromatophores:** The nova's skin can change color at will. The character gains 2 Enhancement on actions to remain concealed, so long as the nova is wearing attuned eufiber or most of their skin is uncovered.
- **Claws:** The nova has sharp claws or talons. The character's unarmed attacks gain the Edged and Brutal tags. For more effective or enhanced claws, see the Quantum Attack power (p. 219).
- **Extra Limbs:** The nova has an extra limb, either a normal arm and hand or else a tentacle, tendril, or prehensile tail. The extra limb is useful as an arm and provides 1 Enhancement for mixed actions where having an extra hand would be useful. Characters can take this modification more than once, gaining an additional limb each time, although the Storyguide should feel free to cap the Enhancement bonus provided by multiple Extra Limbs at 3, unless the nova also has the Multitasking Mega-Edge (p. 193).
- **Gills:** The nova has functional gills, allowing them to breathe normally under water. Additionally, gain 1 Enhancement to physical actions while under water.
- **Spines:** The nova's body is covered with sharp spines, thorns, or the like. This inflicts rating 1 Contact damage for anyone touching or striking the nova, resisted by a Stamina + Resolve roll. For enhanced Contact damage, see the Quantum Aura power (p. 219).
- **Webbing:** The nova's hands and feet are webbed, increasing the character's speed Scale for swimming by 1.
- **Wings:** The nova has a full-sized pair of wings, which might be bat, bird, or insect-like, or else underarm flaps like those of a flying squirrel. These wings allow the nova to fly at speed Scale 1. For half Experience cost, the nova's wings are only capable of gliding, covering a horizontal distance equal to starting altitude, and unable to gain altitude without an updraft or the like.

CALMING COMPOSURE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Composure •

The nova's superhuman composure has a calming effect on others. The nova's player can spend one Quantum point and roll Empathy + Composure, reducing any emotional atmosphere present in the area by one per success for the duration of the scene. This affects both positive and negative atmospheres, possibly reducing the total atmosphere to no modifier at all.

COMPELLING PRESENCE (••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Presence ••

More than just charismatic or manipulative, the nova can exert superhuman influence over others, having them do as they are commanded. This may involve biochemical pheromones, subtle manipulation of neurochemistry or synaptic signals, or some entirely unknown mechanism. Whatever it is, the nova speaks, and people obey. The effects of the command last for the scene, or until the command is completely carried out, whichever comes first.

The nova must be within Short range of the target, who must be able to hear and understand the nova's command. Spend one Quantum point and roll

Quantum + Presence (Mega-Presence applies leadership Scale to this roll). Unwilling targets resist with Integrity + Presence. Success allows the nova to give the target instructions and have them followed, with the Difficulty based on what the command asks of the target, as given on the Command Intensity table.

DIFFICULTY	COMMAND
1	Inconsequential: A largely unconscious action like coughing, scratching, or absent-mindedly setting something down.
2	Minor: Any decision where the target has no real emotional investment, like choosing an outfit or what to eat for lunch.
3	Major: An action that is against the target's normal personality, like breaking the rules, or hindering or harming someone with no emotional connection.
4	Massive: An action that is against the target's best interests or runs counter to emotional connections, like betraying a friend or an oath.
5	Complete: The target will do anything the nova commands.

DEFENSE (• TO ••••• ••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Dexterity • or Mega-Cunning •

Add one die to the character's Defense pools equal to the higher of her Mega-Cunning or Mega-Dexterity Attribute rating, plus one die for each dot in this Mega-Edge (see Defending on p. 103 of **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**).

DENSE FLESH (• TO ••••• ••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Stamina equal to Edge dots

Gain an additional Injury Condition box for every dot, alternating between Bruised and Injured, so Dense Flesh •••• gives two additional Bruised and two additional Injured Condition boxes.

DETECTION (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

This Mega-Edge attunes the nova to sense a quality or substance beyond the use of their ordinary five senses and the abilities of the Quantum Sense Mega-Edge (p. 195). This can include things like living beings (or specific life-forms like mammals or humans), types of energy like electricity or radiation, specific substances like ferrous metals or conductive materials. The nova's player should choose what they can detect, with the approval of the Storyguide, and can generally pick things up within Medium range. In some instances, a Quantum + Cunning roll can provide successes allocated to what the nova learns via their Detection. Additional dots in this Mega-Edge extend the nova's Detection radius by one range band — out to Extreme (1,000 km) at five dots, or add an additional quality or substance the nova can detect.

DIGITAL MANIPULATION (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Intellect equal to Edge dots

With fine control over light and electricity, the nova can influence digital computers, which are found practically everywhere in the 21st century. The nova can affect any computer within Close range with a single success on a Technology + Intellect action, with Difficulty determined by the device's resistance to intrusion and hacking: 0 for most simple devices, 1 or 2 for moderately resistant devices, and at least +2 for military or security devices. The nova can substitute their dots in Digital Manipulation for one of these two traits, if its rating is higher.

With control over the device, the nova can order it to do anything it is physically capable of doing, including displaying or transmitting data stored on it. If the nova has the Digital Scan Mega-Edge, they can also read data directly from a controlled digital device, regardless of any encryption or security measures.

DIGITAL SCAN (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

You can "read" digital data from a computer storage device within Close range. If the data is encrypted in some fashion, roll Technology + Cunning to read it, with the Difficulty determined by the sophistication of the encryption. If you also have the Telecommunication Mega-Edge (p. 196) you can use Digital Scan at Visual range.

DREADFUL PRESENCE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Presence •

The nova can exude a sense of dread or menace, creating an atmosphere of unease. The nova's player can spend one Quantum point and roll Command or

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: SENSORY ENHANCEMENTS

While the extremes to which nova senses can extend makes it difficult to conceal operations and information from them, it is also noteworthy that they open those novas up to avenues of attack as well. A close-range hypersonic pulse, radio wave burst, or flare of infrared light can momentarily stun a nova sensitive to such things with little effect on nearby baselines. This underlines the importance of learning and understanding a nova target's capabilities to exploit any such opportunities.

Integrity + Presence, with each success causing one shift in an atmosphere of "Dread," which creates a negative attitude towards the nova, but provides 1 Enhancement per shift for efforts to inspire fear or intimidate others.

FAST WORKER (••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Resolve •

The nova can work more effectively over long hours to get more done in less time. Reduce the time between crafting milestones by one item Rank for each dot of Mega-Resolve the character possesses. If this would reduce to below Rank 1, gain Enhancement equal to the overflow instead.

FORESIGHT (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning • or Mega-Intellect •

Like a chess master, the nova is always thinking multiple steps ahead, aware of all the possibilities, and preparing for any eventuality. From planning out an elaborate invention in her head to making sure there are no clues left behind for the crime of the century, she always has the answers. For each dot in Mega-Cunning and Mega-Intellect, the nova's player can re-roll one die roll per session and choose which of the rolls to use as a result, based on the nova's superior insight. Additionally, the nova can use the Dramatic Editing rules (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 154), spending re-rolls as if they were Inspiration for this purpose. A nova's re-rolls from Foresight refresh at the start of each session.

HOMUNCULUS (•)

One of the most disturbing nova abilities, the nova can "bud" or otherwise split off a Condition Box worth of body mass and shape it into a small creature with limbs, senses, and a specific purpose, such as "follow this person and report back" or "lurk here and attack anyone who tries to pass." The box is considered filled while the homunculus is away and clears when (or if) it comes back. The nova has a general sense of the homunculus's location and well-being, but otherwise has no sensory connection to it. They can remerge with the separated body mass by touch, gaining all its experiences as if the nova were present for them. The nova regains the separated Condition Box when reabsorbing the homunculus.

HYPNOTIC PRESENCE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Manipulation •

Similar to Compelling Presence, the nova's voice, manner, and presence have an entrancing quality. When influencing a target with a positive attitude towards the nova, the player can buy a 1-point Stunt from an Influence action to place the target in a hypnotic trance and roll Quantum + Manipulation. Unwilling targets resist with Integrity + Presence. Success allows the nova to implant commands and instructions, with the Difficulty based on what the command asks of the target, as given on the Command Intensity table for Compelling Presence (p. 189). Instructions implanted by Hypnotic Presence may be forgotten and carried out by the subject later.

The nova can also implant hypnotic suggestions that cause the target to forget or misremember things with successes required based on the Command Intensity table: one for something inconsequential, up to five for something vital to the target's life or sense of self.

IMMEDIATE CONNECTION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Presence •

When forming a Bond with someone, the nova's presence is such that they can skip over a milestone and do so immediately. They make such a strong impression that they and other characters can bond right away. In situations where more than one milestone is necessary to form a bond, the nova can ignore one milestone per dot in Mega-Presence — a high Mega-Presence rating allows the nova to meet a complete stranger and experience a deep connection "at first sight."

IMMUNITY (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Stamina •

Subtract the nova's Mega-Stamina dots from the rating of hazards such as diseases, irritants, and toxins affecting the nova's physiology. If reduced to zero, the hazard has no effect, otherwise it continues to affect the nova at its reduced rating.

INSTANT EXPERT (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Intellect •

A Mega-Intellect with this Mega-Edge can quickly and temporarily acquire new skills. When encountering a task for the first time, the nova's player can roll Quantum + Intellect, with each success becoming a temporary dot rating in the task's related skill. The Difficulty of this roll is the character's current skill rating, if any, so it is harder for an Instant Expert to pick up extra dots in skills they already know well, rather than temporary expertise in something they've never learned. The temporary skill dots last for the duration of the scene or the task, whichever is longer.

INSTANT INFLUENCE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Manipulation • or Mega-Presence •

When a nova with Instant Influence first encounters someone else in a scene, they can make a reflexive Persuasion + Manipulation or Presence roll to immediately attempt to shift that person's attitude. The nova does not have to speak or even interact with the other person, just be in their presence.

INVENTOR (••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Intellect •

The nova understands how to turn her mind to best effect when creating something new. When engaging in Mega-Crafting, apply the Enhancement bonus gained from the character's Mega-Intellect as Scale on top of whatever other Mega-Attribute the character is utilizing for the roll. If she is using Mega-Intellect, double the Scale's Enhancement bonus.

MASS INFLUENCE (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Manipulation • or Mega-Presence •

When the nova attempts to shift the atmosphere (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 90) they increase the size of crowd they can affect with no increase in Difficulty by their dots of Mass Influence. Each further increase increases your Difficulty by 1. So, if you have Mass Influence •• and are trying to change the atmosphere for a group of a hundred people, that is a +1 increase in Difficulty for you. If the nova wishes to use social influence on more than one person or animal at a time, she can apply her appropriate leadership Scale to apply the influence to the same sized groups of people without making a mixed action. At Leadership Scale 6+ add an additional 500 people to the size of the crowd.

•	Five people
••	50 people
•••	100 people
••••	200 people
•••••	500 people

MASTERMIND (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Intellect •

Some Mega-Intellect novas think many moves ahead and seem prepared for anything. Whenever a Mastermind nova is the target of a procedural action (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 81), the nova gains a pool of points equal to their Mega-Intellect, which can be spent on the following benefits at a cost of one point each:

- Increase the Difficulty of a roll associated with the procedural action by 1.
- Reduce an Enhancement gained from the procedural action by 1.
- Change a clue associated with the procedural action to point towards a different conclusion.
- Provide 1 Enhancement to the nova's allies in opposing or thwarting the procedural action.

MEGA-CRUSH (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Might •

The nova can channel additional energy to enhance their power to bend, break, or crush inanimate objects. For each Quantum point the nova spends, shift their power Scale up by 1 for those purposes, up to a maximum number of points equal to their Quantum rating. So, a Mega-Might 2 nova who spends three Quantum points using Mega-Crush has power Scale 6 against inanimate objects, the same as Mega-Might 6. The nova pays the Quantum point cost for each feat of Strength performed with



this Mega-Edge. Mega-Crush cannot bring a nova above might Scale 10.

MEGA-HEARING (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

A nova with this Mega-Edge can hear especially high- and low-frequency sounds (ultrasonic and infrasonic) as well as "hearing" radio transmissions. In some instances, the Storyguide may require a Science + Cunning roll for the nova to properly interpret what they hear.

MEGA-LIFTING (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Might •

The nova can channel additional energy to enhance their lifting ability. For each Quantum point the nova spends, shift their might Scale up by 1 for lifting purposes, up to a maximum number of points equal to their Quantum rating. So, a Mega-Might 2 nova who spends three Quantum points using Mega-Lifting gets added to Scale 1 for might Scale 6 for lifting purposes. The nova pays the Quantum point cost for each feat of Strength performed with this Mega-Edge. Mega-Lifting cannot bring a nova above might Scale 10.

MEGA-SCENT (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

The nova's sense of smell is greatly heightened, allowing them to identify individuals solely by scent and to recognize any scent they have previously encountered. The nova gains Enhancement equal to their Mega-Cunning dots on all actions to track someone by scent or to find or recognize clues where scent is a component. At Mega-Cunning 5+, the nova no longer needs to roll to find someone by scent unless they have a Quantum power to mask it.

MEGA-SPEED (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Dexterity •

A nova with this Edge moves *fast!* This Mega-Edge increases the nova's speed Scale by their Mega-Dexterity dots for running, swimming, and climbing. So, a Mega-Dexterity 4 nova becomes speed Scale 5, for example, able to run as fast as an airplane flies!

MEGA-VISION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

The nova's visual spectrum extends into the infrared and ultraviolet regions, allowing them to see

normally in all but absolute darkness and to pick up heat traces and track subjects using them. The nova can also magnify visible light to see extremely small or distant objects with a Scale magnification factor equal to their Mega-Cunning rating.

MICRO-MANIPULATION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

A nova with this Mega-Edge can manipulate things at a very fine size Scale with great precision. The nova suffers no increase in Difficulty or Complications from working with subjects as small as Size –3. If the nova has Mega-Cunning 3 or greater or Mega-Vision, this increases to Size –5. In instances where minute and detailed manipulation is helpful, the nova gains Enhancement equal to their Mega-Cunning dots.

MIND OVER MATTER (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Resolve •

A nova with this Mega-Edge can exert conscious control over their body processes. Spend one Quantum point and roll Quantum + Resolve. If successful, the nova can multiply or divide the time a body function requires by Mega-Resolve dots + successes, such as dividing the time to resolve an injury or multiplying the time they can go without air, food, or water. This does not affect Regeneration (p. 195) which is effectively instantaneous but does combine with the reduced healing times from Mega-Stamina. The nova can spend successes affecting multiple bodily processes, if desired, but must spend an extra success per additional process. The effects last for the duration of the scene or process.

MOVEMENT MODE (• TO •••••)

Novas with this Mega-Edge have one or more additional modes of movement. For each dot, choose one of the following:

Burrowing: The nova can burrow through the ground at their normal walking speed. Speed is halved for soft stone, one-quarter for hard rock, and doubled for soft or loose sand or soil. The nova can choose to leave a tunnel behind as they burrow or to have it collapse behind them as they move. An additional dot in this Movement Mode either increases the nova's burrowing speed Scale by 1 or allows the nova to "swim" through all forms of natural earth and rock without leaving any evidence of their passage.

Clinging: The nova can stick to surfaces, allowing them to climb or hang from walls, ceilings, and overhangs without any need for a roll, and to move along them at their normal ground speed.

Gliding: The nova can glide along air currents, allowing them to fall any distance and land softly without harm. The nova can laterally move a distance equal to the vertical distance they descend and can bank and change direction as they do so.

Skimming: The nova can move across the surface of liquids at their normal movement speed without sinking so long as they continue to move. For an additional dot in this Movement Mode, the nova can also stand still or even lie prone without breaking the surface tension of the liquid unless they choose to do so.

Slithering: The nova can move at their normal ground movement speed while lying prone.

Swimming: Swimming is not considered Difficult Terrain for the nova (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 81). Each additional dot in this Movement Mode increases the nova's speed Scale with swimming movement by 1.

Swinging: The nova can generate rope-like lines that attach to surfaces, allowing them to swing on them. This gives the nova speed Scale 1 movement, and an individual swing can be as long or as high at the highest point where the nova's swing-line is attached.

For the ability to truly fly or teleport, see Quantum Powers (p. 223).

MULTITASKING (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning • or Mega-Dexterity •

This Mega-Edge makes a nova incredibly effective at doing multiple things at once. When the nova's player declares a mixed action, the maximum number of actions is equal to Cunning plus the higher of the nova's Mega-Cunning or Mega-Dexterity ratings. The nova also gains 1 Enhancement per additional action, to a maximum of the higher of their Mega-Cunning or Mega-Dexterity ratings. So, a nova with Cunning 3, Mega-Cunning 2, and Multitasking could take up to five total actions in a single action and would gain 2 Enhancement.

OVERWHELMING DENIAL (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Composure • or Dreadful Presence

Something about the nova with this Mega-Edge makes people want to look away, to pretend they never even saw

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: INFORMATION COMPARTMENTALIZATION

With the extent of nova mental and sensory acuity, perhaps the best means of keeping information from them is not to share it at all. People cannot reveal what they do not know, even under nova influence or scrutiny, although the nova ability to assess clues from observation should not be underestimated. Wherever possible, compartmentalize access to sensitive information, and make use of disinformation in some instances to ensure nova targets either learn nothing from a subject, or are actively misled.

such a thing, so much so they can sometimes convince themselves that is the case. The nova applies their Mega-Composure dots (or their Mega-Presence dots, if it has a higher rating and they have the Dreadful Presence Mega-Edge) as an Enhancement to actions to hide their activities. When successful, others struggle to recall things about the nova or to investigate their activities. Witnesses become forgetful and uncooperative when questioned, records tend to go missing, and so forth, to the point of the nova being considered an "urban myth."

PERFECTIONIST (••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Intellect •

The nova can attempt to overcome additional Crafting Complications within a milestone period. The character can spend Quantum instead of successes to overcome a Complication (instead of spending successes) a number of times per crafting project equal to her Mega-Intellect. The player can choose whether to apply this power to the Complications after seeing the results of her roll — essentially, the nova experiences such breakthroughs that she moves onto improving the device as she works.

PRETERCOGNITION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

Subconsciously attuned to potential threats, the nova increases the cost of all uses of the Inflict Damage Stunt against them by 1. They reduce any Surprise Complication imposed on them by an ambush (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 103) by their Mega-Cunning dots. The Storyguide should also alert the nova's player if the character's action, the actions of others around them, or the environment might cause negative consequences for the character in the following rounds. This includes both physical harm and negative social consequences, such as a serious faux pas or raising someone's suspicions. The nova can sense the potential danger, but does not necessarily know what it is, and nothing prevents the character from going through with a chosen course of action.

PRODIGY (•)

Prerequisite: At least one dot in the chosen skill

Each skill is a separate instance of this Mega-Edge. A nova who is a Prodigy in a skill can spend one Quantum point to use *any* skill trick associated with the skill as if the nova possessed that skill trick. The player must still spend Momentum to activate and use the skill trick as usual in addition to the Quantum point. So, a Technology Prodigy, for example, could spend one Quantum point to gain one use of any of the Technology Skill Tricks listed in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** (p. 53), or any other Technology Skill Trick the Storyguide allowed.

PROLIFIC (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning ••

The nova is adept at juggling dozens of projects without hesitation. Each dot in this Mega-Edge adds another project per Rank that the character can manage simultaneously.

Q-TECH (• TO ••••• ••••)

Quantum Technology is rare and precious, only useful to the novas who have attuned it. While attuning a single Q-tech item of relatively low power is something anyone with the Attunement Edge (p. 95) can do, only those with this Mega-Edge can attune more than a single Q-tech item at a time.

A character can have a number of additional Ranks worth of Q-tech items attuned to her equal to her dots in this Mega-Edge plus her Quantum rating. For example, a nova with Quantum 3 and six dots of Q-tech, may have attuned through this Mega-Edge a single Rank 9 Q-tech item, three Rank 3 items, or a Rank 4 and a Rank 5 item, and so on.

If you purchase this Mega-Edge at character creation, your character may start play with a number of Ranks of Q-tech devices based on the Edge's rating. You can learn more about Q-tech on p. 232.

QUANTUM CONVERSION (•)

The nova can convert their "potential" quantum energies into a release of electromagnetic energy, such as electricity, heat, radiation, or even gravity expressed as kinetic force. The nova lacks much fine control over this energy release but can produce a burst of energy for one Quantum point, producing an environmental hazard with a Damage Rating equal to half the nova's Quantum rating (rounded up) for one target within Short range. The nova can also ignite flammable objects within that range or hurl an object with a size Scale equal to or less than half their Quantum rating.

The nova can also convert potential energy gradually, spending a Quantum point to shed enough light to see by, raise the nearby temperature (mitigating all environmental cold damage with the Continuous (minute) or Continuous (hour) tags), or generate enough electricity to power equipment or charge batteries. This affects a Short Radius and has a Continuous Duration of (Quantum) minutes.

QUANTUM LEAP (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Might ••

The nova with this Edge applies their Mega-Might to jump long distances — each dot counts as a range band (one dot allows jumping to Short, two dots to Medium, three dots to Long, and so on).

QUANTUM SENSE (•)

The nova with this Edge is especially sensitive to the ebb and flow of fundamental forces, particularly the manipulation of those forces. By spending a Quantum point, the nova can roughly sense their surroundings (sizes, shapes, and distances) for a scene, even if deprived of their other senses. Additionally, the nova can roll Quantum + Cunning with a difficulty of 1, applying successes to sense the capabilities of another nova within Long range: One success each provides the rough level of the nova's Quantum, Flux, or Transformation ratings, their current Quantum Point total, or one of the nova's Quantum Powers or Mega-Attributes and their number of dots in it. The Storyguide may also rule that novas with Quantum Sense sometimes pick up on significant quantum events spontaneously, providing a story hook.

QUICKNESS (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Dexterity •

The nova can perform routine physical actions not requiring a roll, such as reading, typing, cleaning and organizing, and so forth much faster than normal, increasing their speed Scale by their Mega-Dexterity dots to determine how quickly they can complete a task. So, for example, a nova with Mega-Dexterity 3 and Quickness can perform routine physical tasks with speed Scale 4. Quickness does not affect ordinary or mixed actions involving dice pools (for that, see Multitasking, p. 193).

RAPID STRIKE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning • or Mega-Dexterity •

A nova with Rapid Strike can land multiple swift hits in close combat or attack multiple nearby foes at once. When making a close combat attack, the nova may spend a Quantum point to either add Enhancement equal to the higher of their Mega-Cunning or Mega-Dexterity ratings or apply the same attack successes from one attack against all targets within Close range.

REGENERATION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Resolve • or Mega-Stamina •

While novas with Mega-Stamina are fast healers, those with this Edge can literally heal in seconds! A nova with Regeneration can spend Quantum points as a reflexive action to remove Injury Conditions and physical Status Conditions, with a cost of 3 for a Status Condition, or a cost equal to the unmodified penalty imposed by an Injury Condition (1 for Bruised, 2 for Injured, and 4 for Maimed; Storyguide characters pay 2 to recover a point of Health). They can also instantly regenerate lost or crippled body parts: one Quantum point for an eye, hand, or foot, two points for a limb or non-vital organ, three for a vital organ, and four to regenerate the spine or brain.

The nova is limited to spending no more Quantum points per turn on Regeneration than the lower of their Quantum or their prerequisite Mega-Attribute rating, but points spent can carry across from turn to turn. So, a Mega-Stamina 1 nova with Regeneration can heal a Maimed condition in four turns, for example, or a Status Condition in three, spending one Quantum point per turn. Healing conditions caused by Aggravated damage (p. 200) requires double the normal Quantum points.

RESOURCEFUL (••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

The nova is adept at overcoming obstacles and making do with whatever she has available. You can remove the need for one rare or exotic material per dot of Mega-Cunning the character possesses,

potentially reducing the requirement to zero. This removes any additional Milestones associated with locating and procuring those rare or exotic materials.

REVEALING COMPOSURE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Composure •

Composure and certainty radiate from the nova such that others find it harder to dissemble and others easier to discern the truth. The nova's player can spend one Quantum point and roll Empathy + Composure to create an atmosphere where each shift provides 1 Enhancement for efforts to discern the truth about the situation and increases the Difficulty of deception by 1.

REVEALING READ (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

With a superhuman degree of cunning and perceptiveness, a nova with this Mega-Edge can guess what someone is thinking or figure out their secrets with such a degree of accuracy that they seem able to read minds. The nova observes the target and makes an Empathy + Cunning roll with a difficulty equal to the target's Composure reduced by the nova's Mega-Cunning to a minimum of 1. With one success, the nova learns a single superficial fact or surface thought. A single success is also enough to know whether the target is lying or telling the truth as they understand it. Additional successes reveal more or deeper information, up to five successes for deeply hidden or even repressed thoughts. Along with the information, the nova gains Enhancement equal to the successes when using the information to later influence the target.

SCANNING SENSE (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Spectrum Vision

The nova can emit radio wave pulses or ultrasonic impulses to get a picture of their surroundings, out to Medium range. Scanning Sense doesn't provide fine details or distinguish visual things like colors, but can pick up shapes and outlines as well as pierce barriers such as walls and allow the nova to operate normally in areas of low or no visibility. The nova's radar pulses are detectable by Spectrum Vision and other abilities able to pick up on the method the nova uses to sense the world. Additional dots in this Mega-Edge can increase the range of the nova's Scanning Sense out to Long (1 km) and then Extreme (10 km), and an additional dot can give the nova's Scanning Sense a "passive mode" that is undetectable even by Spectrum Vision and similar devices.

SENSORY SHIELD (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •, Mega-Resolve •, or Mega-Stamina •

The nova's senses are especially resistant to sensory overload or overstimulation, removing Complications targeting the senses by the highest of the nova's Mega-Cunning, Mega-Resolve, or Mega-Stamina dots, or adding an equivalent amount of Enhancement to resist such effects.

SHOCKWAVE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Might •

By slamming or stomping on the ground, the nova can roll Close Combat + Mega-Might to attack all targets within Close range, spending successes on the following Stunts that affect all targets:

Inflict Damage (0 success + opponent's Armor): Deal an Injury Condition to the target.

Knockdown (1 success): The target is knocked prone.

Stunned (2 successes): Impose a Stunned condition on the target, which wears off in Might + Mega-Might rounds.

SPECTRUM VISION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Vision

A nova with Spectrum Scan can perceive more extended electromagnetic frequencies beyond infrared and ultraviolet. This means the nova can see radiation and radioactive sources, see through solid objects other than those that block out radiation, and can operate in complete darkness, as they do not rely solely on visible light for perception.

SUBTLE PRESENCE (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Composure •

The nova's self-control is enough to blend into the background, becoming socially and personally unremarkable. Subtract the nova's Mega-Composure dots from any Mega-Presence dots as well as from the nova's Transcendence in terms of how noticeable the nova is and the character gains 1 Enhancement per Mega-Composure dot on actions to go unnoticed by other people.

TELECOMMUNICATION (•)

A nova with this Mega-Edge can send and receive communications signals like a living radio, although the nova does not emit or receive radio waves. Nevertheless, the nova can transmit to other radio receivers,

communications devices, or to anyone with a Quantum rating (that is, other novas) and receive communications back from them as well. Theories suggest some form of non-local quantum entanglement as the "communications medium." The nova can send both audio and visual information and receive the same, if the transmitter is another nova or a device with audio-visual capabilities. Telecommunication works at visual range or on any subject the nova knows reasonably well, although a Technology + Quantum roll may be required to transmit to or receive from a new or previously unknown subject.

TECHNIQUE (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Quantum equal to Edge dots

Select this Mega-Edge to apply to a particular "base" Quantum Power. A nova can have multiple Technique Mega-Edges, each applying to a different Quantum Power.

For each dot in this Mega-Edge, the nova can use the base Quantum Power to duplicate the effects of another, including the same power with a different set of power tags applied to it. In effect, the power gains an additional "setting" able to do something else. This configuration of powers is called a Power Suite (p. 198).

The nova must meet all the prerequisites and requirements for the Technique's powers, and a Technique power cannot have an Experience cost greater than that of the base Quantum Power, although it may be less. This includes all of the power tags (positive and negative) associated with each power, but *not* any reduction in Experience cost for a power acquired with a transformation, since the Experience reduction for the transformation is assumed to apply to all of that power's Techniques as well. You do not spend the experience for the Techniqued Quantum Power, as the cost is covered by the purchasing of the Technique Mega-Edge.

For example, the nova Umbra has Shroud ••• (Visual) purchased with the transformation Aberrant Eyes (Umbra's eyes are always pools of complete blackness). When Umbra decides to acquire Technique (Shroud) • and apply that dot to a new power setting, the Technique power can have an Experience cost of 36, the same as the three dots of Shroud without the –3 adjustment for the low-level transformation. Umbra decides to acquire a Quantum Attack, a "lash" of pure darkness. Since she is only Quantum 2, she can't have more than two dots in Quantum Attack. She applies the remaining dot (12 Experience) to the Ranged (Short, 1) tag.

Using Quantum Powers applied through the Technique Mega-Edge in conjunction with their base Quantum Power requires a mixed action, even if that power is normally reflexive. The nova must additionally spend Quantum points as normal to activate any powers in her Power Suite.

TECHNOLOGIST (••)

Prerequisite: Mega-Resolve •

The nova is adept at optimizing the capacity of her quantum imprint to attune Q-tech devices more efficiently. When attempting to overwrite attunement on a device or utilize an unattuned piece of Q-tech, gain Enhancement equal to the character's Mega-Resolve to the roll.

TELEPRESENCE (•)

Prerequisite: Mass Influence •••

Your Mega-Social influence extends to all forms of telecommunication where your audience can hear you — or even just see you for abilities that do not require sound.

THUNDERCLAP (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Might •

By slamming or clapping their hands together, the nova can roll Close Combat + Mega-Might to attack all targets within Close range, spending successes on the following Stunts that affect all targets:

Deafened (1+ variable successes): For each success, the target takes a +2 increase in Difficulty for all actions involving hearing.

Knockdown (1 success): The target is knocked prone.

Shove (1+ variable successes): For each success, push the target back a number of meters equal to Might + Mega-Might.

Stunned (2 successes): Impose a Stunned condition on the target, which wears off in Might + Mega-Might rounds.

TOUGHNESS (• TO ••••• ••••)

Prerequisite: Quantum equal to Edge dots

The nova is far tougher than a baseling human. The nova always counts as wearing armor with Soft 1 and the Complete (3) tag, protecting against all forms of damage. Additionally, each additional dot after the first provides +1 durability Scale to the nova. In addition, you may purchase the

Environmental (1,2) and Hard Armor (1, 3, 5) tags as regular Power Tags for this Mega-Edge.

ULTRAPERIPHERIAL PERCEPTION (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Cunning •

The nova seems to have literal "eyes in the back of their head" when it comes to awareness of their surroundings. The nova is considered to have a full 360-degree view around them and has no "blind spots" even for things directly behind them, making it much for difficult for someone to sneak up on or blindside them. As such, they always gain one success on surprise checks, even if the roll fails or botches.

UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR (•)

Prerequisite: Mega-Intellect •••

You can understand any language, if exposed to it for more than a few moments. It takes a number of rounds equal to 10 minus your Mega-Intellect dots to grasp the language. Once you have, you retain fluency in it permanently.

QUANTUM POWERS

The nova ability to manipulate fundamental quantum forces manifests in numerous different ways, ranging from projecting and controlling different types of energy to defying gravity in order to fly or the ability to control, animate, or rearrange various forms of matter, to name a few. Every manifestation of this ability outside of Mega-Attributes and Mega-Edges is a *Quantum Power* and these are often as unique as a nova's own personality. While every nova theoretically has the potential to wield *any* Quantum Power, the circumstances of the nova's eruption, along with their personality and conscious as well as subconscious wishes, tend to dictate which powers novas manifest and develop over time.

Acquiring Quantum Powers

During character creation, a player spends Experience provided by the nova template to give the nova dots in various powers. Some Quantum Powers have a minimum Quantum rating the nova must have in order to have 1 or more dots in that power. The nova must meet the Quantum minimum to acquire the desired dots in that power. Unless specified otherwise, a Quantum Power can have a maximum of 9 dots, or the limit set by its Quantum minimum, whichever comes first.

Following character creation, Quantum Power acquisition works in much the same way: The player spends earned Experience to add dots in Quantum Powers, either existing ones or new ones. The nova must meet the Quantum minimum for the desired dot(s). In addition, the nova must have acquired the added dot(s) of the new Quantum Power at least once by maxing out (p. 181). This indicates the nova has shown the potential for that power and understands how to achieve it on a permanent basis.

Power Tags

Quantum Powers can also have various *power tags* that modify the power's use or effects. Some powers offer a choice of power tags upon acquiring certain dots in the power, while other tags can be applied to the power for an additional cost in Experience, the same as adding a dot in another nova trait.

Power tags are generally permanent once applied to a power and are always in use as given in the tag's description. A nova is generally limited to no more points in a single power tag than the nova's Quantum rating but can otherwise have as many total points in tags as the power calls for and the nova's player chooses to apply Experience to acquire.

Power Suites

The Technique Mega-Edge (p. 197) enables a nova to use one Quantum Power to duplicate the effects of another, including the same power with a different set of power tags applied to it. This creates a configuration of powers known as a *Power Suite*, one power capable of a multitude of different effects. This can essentially be thought of as a power with multiple "settings" able to do different things.

While Techniques and Power Suites greatly broaden a power's usefulness for a relatively low Experience cost (just one dot in a Mega-Edge versus multiple dots in a new power), they do have some limitations. A Power Suite still counts as a single Quantum Power, regardless of having the Technique Mega-Edge. This is important in terms of other nova traits affecting powers, including things like Quantum Disruption, Quantum Imprint, and Quantum Theft. Moreover, while a Power Suite may have multiple effects, using more than one of them at a time in a round counts as a mixed action, even if that effect would normally be a reflexive action.

For example, Splash has Elemental Mastery (Water) ••• with Quantum Anima as its base effect. With two dots in Technique (Elemental Mastery) she chooses for the first dot a Quantum Attack • with the Beam and Ranged (Short, 1) tags, and, for the second dot, a Quantum Deflection ••• power. If she later adds a third dot in Technique (Elemental Mastery), Splash might acquire a fog-bank Shroud ••• (Visual) with two extra points in the Area tag to increase it to Medium or Environmental Anima ••• (Complication 3) using water and moisture to make things slick or otherwise hazardous. She could also add another Quantum Attack with different dots or tags, or any number of other powers.

Power Themes

The Quantum Powers described in this chapter focus on their game system mechanics, rather than how they appear in use, because nova powers are as individual as the nova using them. While all novas manipulate quantum forces for their power effects, each does so in their own fashion, and most of this complex manipulation is unconscious; the nova *wants* something to happen, and it does. One nova's Quantum Attack might be a blazing beam of purple energy that carries a powerful kinetic impact, while another might be a jagged blue-white blast of lightning, or a jet of red-hot fire, or a pulsing blast of radiation, or any number of other things.

Nova powers tend to be clustered around certain themes, usually influenced by the nova's personality, subconscious, and the circumstances of their eruption. Splash from Team Tomorrow, for example, wields power over water in its various forms, and her quantum powers tend to involve manipulating, creating, or using water in some way. Geryon's powers revolve around his monstrous form and ability to transform into even more dangerous shapes. Antaeus's powers are tied to the earth and the natural world. Tejido's power theme is creation and manipulation of fibers and weaving them into new forms.

Power Tags

Power tags modify nova traits, particularly Quantum Powers but sometimes also Mega-Attributes and Mega-Edges, much like armor and weapon tags in **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** modify the traits of weapons and armor. Indeed, many power tags are the same as armor or weapon tags from other **Trinity Continuum** books, updated and modified to apply to nova powers. All Power Tags are available to Quantum Powers, Mega-Attributes, and Mega-Edges as is appropriate for the Quantum ability. The Storyguide is the final arbiter of which Power Tags are appropriate for which Quantum Powers.

Acquiring Power Tags

Novas acquire power tags like their other nova traits, by spending Experience from their nova template or earned Experience from advancement. A one-point power tag costs 12 Experience, the same as a dot in another nova trait. Some dots in nova traits also grant free points in power tags for that trait. See the individual descriptions for details.

A nova cannot have more points in a single power tag than their Quantum rating. So, a nova with Quantum 4 is limited to no more than four points in any individual power tag, although the nova may have an unlimited number of one-point power tags on a single power. The Storyguide may also set a reasonable limit on the total power tags for any given power, as best suits the needs of the game.

Power tags, once acquired, are permanent, the same as other nova traits. For powers with variable or "adjustable" power tags, see the Variable power tag (p. 204) as well as the Power Suite option.

Negative Power Tags

Nova traits can also have *negative* power tags, which are expressed as a negative value like "Reduced range (–1)." A negative power tag weakens or limits a power rather than adding or expanding its options.

Negative power tags subtract from the value of positive power tags to determine their overall cost, so a power with four points in positive tags and two points in negative tags only pays for a net two points in power tags total. In essence, each point of negative power tags grants a point of free positive tags. If a power has *only* negative power tags, then the negative tags subtract from the overall cost of dots in the power on a one-for-one basis. If negative tags reduce a power's effective dots to zero, then the power costs only 6 Experience, but its cost cannot be reduced below that; any additional negative tags have no effect on cost.

Power Tag Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the available power tags, with the tag's name, its point value listed in parenthesis, and a short description of its game effects. Some power tag descriptions will specify a particular type of power or nova trait to which the tag applies. Other nova traits cannot apply this tag, except with the special permission of the Storyguide. For example, if a power tag specifies "a damaging attack power,"

then it only applies to nova traits able to inflict Injury Conditions. Similarly, "an armor power" applies only to traits which provide an Armor rating, and so forth.

AGGRAVATED (2)

An attack with this tag inflicts persistent injuries on targets that take Injury Conditions. Persistent injuries take twice the amount of time to heal and require double the normal successes and Quantum points to treat, including with powers like Healing and Regeneration.

AREA (2, 4, 6, 8)

With this tag, a power that affects a single target can now affect all targets within Close range of a point within the power's range. A target within the power's area must make an immediate Athletics + Dexterity roll (Difficulty 1) or suffer the power's effect. Each additional application of this tag increases the range band of the Area by one, to Short (4), then Medium (6), and Long (8). The two-point version of this power tag is equivalent to the Explosive (Thrown or Ranged) weapon tag.

BEAM (1)

An attack power with this tag can project a continuous beam or stream, allowing for use of the Spray Stunt:

- *Spray (Variable):* The attacker can spend an entire Round "spraying" the attack over an area, affecting every target within Close range of the primary target. The attacker can make a separate non-mixed roll against each target in this area and can use either the *Inflict Damage* or the *Pin Down* Stunts (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, pp. 104–105) separately on each of these targets. The Spray Stunt cannot be used as part of a mixed action. Also, using it subtracts 1 from the attacker's Defense for the Round, because of the necessity of focusing and aiming the spray.

BESTOW (1)

A Personal range power with this tag can be bestowed on a subject within Close range of the nova, rather than used by the nova. So, for example, a nova could Bestow a Boost, Flight, or Teleport power to a subject, who can be another nova, a baseline, or a Talent, but *not* a psiad. The subject controls the use of the power and takes any actions necessary to use it, but the bestowing nova pays the Quantum point cost and the power still uses their Quantum and power ratings. The subject controls the power's Duration and can choose to stop using it, but the bestowing nova can stop granting the power at any time and the bestowal has a Maintained duration, which can itself be increased by the Duration power tag.

BESTOW ONLY (0)

Like the Bestow tag, except the nova can only bestow the power on others and cannot use it themselves.

BLINDING (1)

An attack power with this tag does not inflict damage, instead the attacker gains access to the Blinding Stunt:

- *Blinding (1+ success):* Each success spent imposes +2 Difficulty on the target's actions requiring sight.

At the Storyguide's discretion, a version of the Blinding tag may exist for special senses other than sight, including Mega-Cunning Edges and nova abilities like Quantum Sense.

BRUTAL (1)

This attack power can inflict massive trauma. Reduce the successes required for the Critical Stunt with this attack by one.

CHARGE (1)

Charge attacks pack an extra punch but need to recover or recycle after each use. A Charge attack gains 1 Enhancement towards inflicting Injury Conditions, but after it is used, the nova must spend one action doing nothing else to recover use of the attack.

COMPLETE (3)

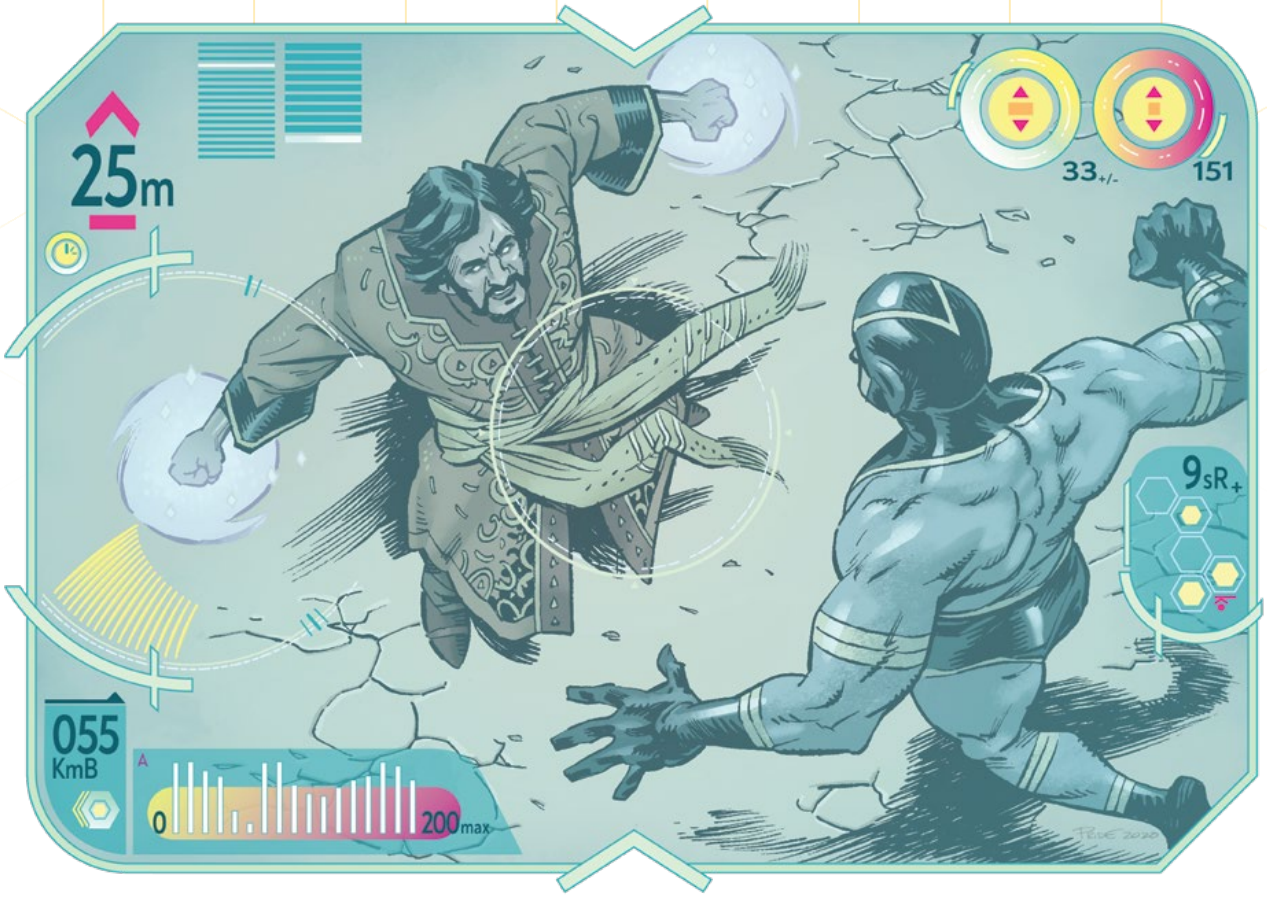
An armor power with this tag protects against all three types of damage: Ballistic, Edged, and Blunt.

DAMAGING (1)

An attack power with this tag combines a tag that normally *substitutes* for an attack's damage, such as Entangle or Stun, with an attack that does damage. So, a Damaging Stun Attack, for example, has a total tag value of 2, and both inflicts the attack's normal damage *and* the Stunned Condition.

DEADLY (1)

A damaging attack with this tag inflicts more serious injuries. Healing an Injury Condition caused by a Deadly attack requires an extra success (and Quantum point, for healing powers).



DEAFENING (1)

An attack with this tag does not inflict damage, instead the attacker gains access to the Deafening Stunt:

- *Deafening (1+ variable success):* Each success spent imposes +2 Difficulty on the target's actions requiring hearing.

DESTRUCTIVE (2)

Damaging powers with this tag can easily pierce armor and cut through tough materials. The attack reduces the target's worn Armor rating by 2 and can also slowly cut through most walls, doors, and other objects.

DISINTEGRATING (1)

If a damaging attack with this tag Takes Out a target, the attacker can allocate an additional success to destroy the target, reducing it to nothing more than fine dust, ash, vapor, or even a cloud of component atoms.

DURATION (1)

A power with this tag extends its Duration by one step each time it is applied, from Instant to Concentration, then to Maintained, then Continuous (rounds), Continuous (minutes), then hours and days.

ELECTRICAL (1)

Powers that inflict electrical damage often have the Stun or Non-Lethal tags but can also be quite deadly. Damaging powers with this tag ignore armor unless the armor has the Environmental (1 or 2) tag. Electronic devices of Size 0 or smaller struck by an Electrical attack automatically shut down for at least five minutes, unless they are specifically hardened against electromagnetic disruption (meaning they cannot be connected to an external network like the OpNet).

ENTANGLE (2)

An attack with this tag does no damage, instead allowing the attacker to allocate successes to Entangle Stunts (following). Targets must escape

entanglement to act normally. Escaping from entanglement requires an Athletics + Dexterity roll with a difficulty equal to the number of successes rolled on the Entangle attack. The target can do nothing else while making this roll.

Entangle Stunts include:

- *Hobble (2 successes):* Reduces the target's Defense against all other attacks by 1.
- *Slow (1+ success):* Each success spent reduces the target's speed by 1.
- *Takedown (1 success):* The attack renders the target prone (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 106).
- *Paralyzed (3 successes):* The target gains the Paralyzed Status Condition (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 108).

ENVIRONMENTAL (1, 2)

An armor power with this tag protects the wearer from environmental conditions. For one point, this tag protects against suffocation, vacuum, poisonous gases, and extreme heat and cold with the Continuous (minutes) tag. For an additional point, it also reduces the damage rating of a single other environmental threat by 4, such as anything with the Continuous (rounds) tag.

GAS (3)

An attack with this tag produces a cloud of gas, affecting everyone within Close range of the target. The power's damage ignores armor unless it has Environmental protection against suffocation.

HARD ARMOR (1, 3, 5)

An armor power with this tag grants the character additional Injury Condition boxes. The one-point version grants one condition box, the three-point version grants two condition boxes, and the five-point version grants three condition boxes. Once filled, these boxes remain so until the end of the scene. There is no Complication attached to the Injury Condition boxes provided by Hard Armor.

IMMUNE (1)

The user is immune to the effects of their own power with this tag. This includes instances of the power being reflected on them or duplicated or stolen.

IMPERVIOUS (1)

Armor powers with this tag are immune to the effects of the Piercing power tag.

IMPOSE (1)

This is the offensive version of the Bestow tag. The nova imposes the effect of a Personal range power to a target within Close range without the target's consent or cooperation. So, for example, the nova causes the target to Morph or to Teleport. Unlike Bestow, powers with the Impose tag *do* work on psiads. The imposing nova controls the power's effects and Duration and the imposed power lasts for its usual Duration. Imposed powers that normally do not have a dice pool require a roll of Quantum + Power rating against the target's Defense.

IMPOSE ONLY (0)

Like Impose (above), except the nova can only Impose the power's effects on others and cannot use the power themselves.

INCENDIARY (2)

An attack with this tag inflicts burning damage, ignoring armor unless it has the Environmental tag. Incendiary attacks can also ignite flammable materials, creating additional environmental threats at the Storyguide's discretion. A blaze set by an Incendiary attack usually has a rating the same as the attack. Incendiary attacks also gain access to the Ignite Stunt:

- *Ignite (4 successes):* The target is set ablaze and takes Continuous (rounds) damage from the attack.

INTRINSIC (0)

This power is installed in a Q-tech device, contributes to the device's activation cost, and remains active as long as the nova keeps the Quantum points spent activating the device committed. This tag can only apply to powers with a Duration greater than Instant.

MODULAR (1, 2, 3)

This power is installed in a Q-tech device and is designed to be removed and replaced with alternative modules specifically crafted for this device. The length of time required to remove and replace modules depends on the value. For one point, the module requires a Scene to remove or install. For two points, the module can be removed or installed in a Round, and for three points, the module can be removed or installed

as an ordinary action (including being part of a mixed action). When exchanging modules with different tag values, the slowest module dictates the time required. See Q-Tech on p. 232 for more information.

NON-LETHAL (2)

An attack power with this tag normally produces the Stunned Status Condition (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 108), but if the attacker allocates at least four successes to the attack, the target gains the Unconscious Status Condition (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 108). The attacker can accumulate successes over the course of several attacks, as long as four successes are accumulated before the target throws them off. Conscious targets can roll Stamina + Resolve once per Round to throw off the effects of this attack, with each success reducing the total number of attack successes by one, but targets can perform no other actions while making this attempt.

NON-PENETRATING (0)

A damaging attack with this tag excels at damaging unarmored targets. It gains 1 Enhancement for inflicting Injury Conditions, but also doubles the value of all soft armor against it.

PIERCING (1)

A damaging attack with this tag excels at overcoming armor and reduces the target's soft Armor rating by 1 for each dot of the associated attack power. Armor with the Impervious tag is unaffected.

POISON (2, 3)

Skin contact or injury from an attack with this tag automatically causes an additional Injury Condition or the Unconscious Status Condition from a toxin carried by the attack. For three points, the attack can have either effect, chosen when it is used.

PUSHING (1)

An attack power with this tag packs a lot of kinetic force and tends to send targets flying. Gain 1 Enhancement only for the Shove Stunt for each point in this tag. The attack's might or power Scale bonus also applies.

RAMP UP (–1 TO –3)

It takes longer for the nova to "power up" to use a power with this tag. The nova must use up their Focus for one round doing nothing but preparing to use the power. On their next turn, they can activate the power normally. Each additional application of this tag, up to a total of three, adds an additional round where the nova must ramp up in order to use the power. Ramp Up often exists in conjunction with a super-charged Technique (p. 197) power with other added power tags.

RANGED (1)

A power with this tag increases its range by one step each time it is applied, from Close to Short, Medium, Long, then Extreme (Kilometers) or Visual range. A Ranged attack power generally uses the Aim skill to construct dice pools, unless the power's description specifies otherwise.

REDUCED COST (2)

The power's total Quantum point cost is reduced by one for each instance of this tag. Cost can be reduced to zero, but the nova must still have one or more Quantum points available to activate the power, even if not required to spend any of them.

REDUCED DURATION (–1)

The power's Duration is reduced by one step, such as from Maintained to Concentration. A Continuous Duration power is reduced to the next lowest base time, such as hours to minutes, while a Continuous (rounds) Duration power is reduced to Maintained.

RESTRICTED (–1 TO –3)

A power with this tag has a restricted range of targets that it works on. For a one-point tag, the power does not work on a minor category of targets, roughly a quarter of usual, such as Quantum Anima that cannot move anything made mostly of aluminum, or Cloak that doesn't work in direct sunlight. For a two-point tag, the power doesn't work on roughly half of the usual number of targets, such as not affecting women (or men), only affecting aquatic life-forms, only affecting organic (or inorganic) matter, or not working during the day (or night). For a three-point tag, the power only works on a relatively narrow range of targets, such as only affecting children or the elderly, or only canines, or objects colored green.

SMASHING (1)

An attack power with this tag is considered one power Scale higher for damaging or destroying inanimate objects, as opposed to living or animate targets, for each point in this tag.

SONIC (1)

An attack power with this tag ignores armor unless it has the Environmental (1 or 2) tag.

SPREAD (1)

An attack power with this tag projects a spread of energy or projectiles. This reduces a target's Defense by 2 at Close or Short range. At longer ranges, however, a Spread weapon suffers a +1 increase in Difficulty to attack a target.

STUN (1)

An attack power with this tag does not inflict Injury Conditions with the Inflict Damage Stunt, instead it inflicts the Stunned Status Condition with a +2 Complication.

SUBTLE (1 OR 2)

Nova powers are normally quite noticeable (see Power Themes, p. 199). A power with this tag is more difficult to notice and has no obvious auditory or visual effects associated with it. A Subtle power is still detectable to Quantum Sense (p. 195) and possibly other Mega-Sense Edges. Applying two points in this tag makes the power's use completely undetectable, although its effects can still be noticed normally. The one-point version of this tag is equivalent to the Silent weapon tag. The two-point version is equivalent to the Innocuous armor tag.

THROWN (1)

An attack power with this tag can be thrown at targets up to Short range using the Athletics skill. Each additional application of this tag increases the attack power's range by one band.

VAMPIRIC (2, 3, 4)

A damaging attack with this tag fuels or heals the nova attacker with life force from the damaged target. For each Injury Condition inflicted on the target, the nova gains one of the following benefits (chosen when this tag is applied to the power): removes an Injury Condition, removes one point in Complications related to fatigue, or regains two Quantum points. For a three-point tag, Vampiric gives the nova the choice of two of these benefits when it is used. For a four-point tag, it gives the nova the choice of any of the three when the Vampiric attack is used.

VARIABLE (X)

A power with this tag actually has multiple tags or combinations of tags it can switch between, changing from one configuration to another. Choose the maximum points in tags the power can have at any one time (including reducing costs for negative tags, minimum 0) and add one per additional configuration the power can switch to. A power can have Variable tags as well as fixed tags, such as a power that always has Charging but also a set of Variable tags. In this case, the fixed tags are not counted towards the dots in Variable tags. Free tags provided by the power's dots are always considered fixed and not Variable.

Using Quantum Powers

Generally, a nova can use their powers with just a moment's concentration to will something to happen. Activating a Quantum Power requires its listed action and spending Quantum points equal to its listed cost, given in the individual power's description (starting on p. 206).

Quantum Powers and Reflexive Actions

Powers requiring a reflexive action can be used in addition to performing any other action, including using other powers. Like other reflexive actions, these do not use up the character's focus. Also, like other reflexive actions, if a player wants to activate a reflexive action power for their character while they do not have Focus, the player must ask the Storyguide for permission to do so. The Storyguide is free to set a reasonable limit on the number of reflexive action powers a nova can activate in a round.

Quantum Powers and Mixed Actions

Quantum Powers can be a part of a mixed action, either activating multiple powers at once, or activating a power in conjunction with performing some other actions. As usual, a mixed action involving one or more powers uses the lowest applicable dice pool for any of the actions and must allocate successes to the Difficulty of each action. For a mixed action involving a Power Suite, activating a reflexive action power or one with no dice pool requires spending an additional Quantum point on top of their normal activation cost.

Example: *Splash has Elemental Mastery 3 focused on water and the Techniques of Quantum Anima, Quantum Attack, and Quantum Deflection. If she wants to use a waterspout to catch a hostage after blasting the gunman holding her, while simultaneously*

NOVA MENTAL POWERS

While novas have several extraordinary mental powers, particularly mental Mega-Attributes and sensory abilities, it is noteworthy that novas do not have *psionic* powers, and therefore lack two specific capabilities: precognition and telepathy. These powers are solely the province of psionics and Inspired individuals with a connection to the Implicate Order. See **Trinity Continuum: Æon** for details.

That said, novas often have capabilities that work effectively like precognition and telepathy. Some novas have such a degree of Intellect or Cunning that they can calculate probabilities unconsciously and instantaneously, allowing them to anticipate the most likely outcomes of events in ways that seem prescient, sometimes complete with "visions" of possible outcomes. Likewise, some novas have such a degree of mental or social abilities they can guess what someone else is thinking with such a high level of accuracy they're effectively able to "read minds." Some nova powers also allow for the transmission of messages over great distances, which is functionally like "telepathic communication," and nova Mega-Social abilities give some of them a degree of influence that is effectively "mind control."

Beyond the limits of precognition and telepathy, novas can duplicate virtually all of the physical effects of psionic modes, although they do so through quantum manipulation of fundamental forces, rather than psi. Novas can control matter and energy much like psychokinesis, for example, or use quantum entanglement to perceive over great distances or teleport from place to place. Given the outward similarities, it's little surprise that psiads in this era are generally mistaken for novas, and most people aren't aware of the "blind spots" in nova powers, assuming instead that precognitive and telepathic abilities are rare.

deflecting any incoming attacks, that is three actions, even though one of them (Deflection) is normally a reflexive action. Splash must spend a Quantum point to do the mixed action, allocate successes from her Quantum + Power roll between all the actions, and spend the additional Quantum points necessary to activate her Quantum Anima power as well as the Attack and Deflection techniques.

Power Stunts

While the powers in **Aberrant** cover a wide range of abilities and effects, they cannot account for everything a nova can possibly do, and novas are ultimately limited only by their force of will, imagination, and the extent of their energy manipulating abilities. From time to time, players will come up with things they would like for their nova character to do not specifically covered by the description or game system of their powers. In these cases, the Storyguide may wish to call for a *Power Stunt*.

Much like other Stunts, a Power Stunt involves allocating successes from a power use action to a specific effect. Unlike the specific Stunts given for actions in this book and in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, however, Power Stunts are more freeform and the number of successes required to do them are left up to the Storyguide, using the following guidelines.

To perform a Power Stunt, the player spends one Quantum point and rolls the power in use. If the power does not have a regular dice pool, roll Quantum + Power rating. If the roll fails, the nova acquires a point of Flux for overextending their powers (as well as the usual Compensation). If it succeeds, apply successes towards the desired Stunt. In general, successes can duplicate dots in another power or effect — one dot per success, or cause some dramatic effect, ranging from minor with one success to truly massive with five or more successes. Use the existing Stunts from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** as guidelines and examples.

Example: *Antaeus's player wants to use the nova's power over the forces of the natural world to accelerate the rot and decay of a wooden structure. There's no specific power for this, although things like a Disintegrating Quantum Attack or Molecular Manipulation do come close. The Storyguide calls for a Power Stunt and Antaeus's player rolls a dice pool of his Quantum + Nature Mastery power rating, with a total of four successes. The Storyguide felt that two were enough to*

accelerate the rot of the structure enough to collapse it, and that four only speed up the process, so she describes how the wood and other organic parts of the old building visibly decay and crumble before everyone's eyes before the structure groans and collapses.

Some Power Stunts may be so minor, in the Storyguide's view, as not to require either a Quantum point or a dice roll to accomplish. If a nova with Cold Mastery, for example, wanted to produce a handful of snow or to cool down someone's drink with a touch, that's little more than a fun story detail, and the Storyguide can simply allow the player to narrate the action without any need for a roll or other game mechanics. Generally, if a "stunt" fits the theme of the nova's powers and has no real impact on gameplay, feel free to let players just improvise it as part of the narrative.

Power Descriptions

Descriptions of the various Quantum Powers available to nova characters in **Aberrant** follow. Each description begins with a list of the following power parameters. Power tags may alter some of these parameters (p. 199).

Quantum Minimum

Each power has a minimum Quantum rating a nova must have to acquire that power. Generally, the more powerful or complex a power is, the higher its Quantum Minimum, and lower Quantum novas may have to "grow into" higher rating powers. All Quantum Powers have a default minimum Quantum rating of 1, since that is part of the nova template.

Some powers have a Quantum Minimum expressed as "X + Dots," which means the nova must have a Quantum equal to the value X plus the number of dots they wish to acquire in the power. If the Quantum Minimum is just "Dots" then the value of X is zero.

Likewise, some powers have a Quantum Minimum expressed as "Dots – X" where only higher ratings of the power have a Quantum Minimum and lower ratings do not. So, a power with a Quantum Minimum of "Dots – 2" has no minimum, for example, until four dots, which requires Quantum 2, and +1 Quantum per dot beyond that.

Lastly, some powers in future products may have a Quantum Minimum expressed as "X or Dots" where only the higher of the two options applies. So, a power with **Quantum Minimum:** 3 or Dots has a minimum of 3 for one, two, or threes dots in the power, but Quantum 4 for four dots, increasing by one per dot thereafter.

Once a nova reaches the limit of a power's Quantum Minimum, they cannot increase dots in the power until they have first increased their Quantum rating to meet the minimum. So, for a power with a Quantum Minimum of 1 + Dots, a Quantum 3 nova could have two dots in that power, but no more until they increased their Quantum rating, and it would take a Quantum of 6 to have five dots in the power.

Action

Each power has a type of action required to use it, either ordinary or reflexive for most powers. These are subject to the usual rules for characters performing actions when they have Focus during play. Powers requiring an ordinary action to use can also be used as part of a mixed action, unless specified otherwise (p. 204). Multiple reflexive action powers do not require a mixed action, nor do they use up the character's Focus, although the Storyguide can set reasonable limits on the number of reflexive powers a nova can activate at once.

Cost

A Quantum Power requires a certain number of Quantum points to activate (p. 180). These points are spent from the nova's total when the power is activated but before any dice roll is made. Generally, Quantum points are spent regardless of whether the attempted power use is successful or not. In some cases, additional Quantum points may be spent to improve or augment the effects of a power once it has been used successfully.

Additionally, Continuous Duration powers require the nova to spend Quantum points equal to the power's Cost to extend their duration when it would lapse. These Quantum points are spent at the start of the nova's turn when they are required.

If a nova is unable to spend the necessary Quantum points to meet a power's Cost (including by Burning Out; p. 181) then the nova cannot use that power.

Dice Pool

Some Quantum Powers have a specific dice pool for actions involving them. The traits used to assemble the dice pool are listed here. For many powers this is the nova's Quantum rating + Power rating, listed as "Quantum + Power". If the power does not have a dice pool (usually because it does not require a roll to use) it is listed as "None." As with other mixed actions, a mixed action involving Quantum Powers uses the lowest total dice pool from all the desired actions.

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: ABSORPTION

While it might seem that the power to absorb any kind of incoming attack would make a nova invulnerable, we know full well from the fate of the Fireman that even nova energy absorption has its limits. Rather than switching attacks to find something the target is more vulnerable to, it may be a useful tactic to bombard a nova with as much energy as they can absorb. The resulting overcharge can potentially overload and damage them, if it is maintained.

Range

Each power has a standard range at which it operates:

- *Personal* range powers affect only the nova.
- *Close, Short, Medium,* and *Long* range powers work at the listed distance (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 80). Close range powers generally require touch or physical contact of some kind, unless described otherwise.
- *Extreme* range powers work at distances greater than a kilometer (the maximum effective Long range) and usually list their maximum range, such as "Extreme (1,000 km)."
- *Visual* range powers operate on any subject or target the nova can perceive. On a planet such as Earth, this distance is usually limited by the curvature of the horizon and the size of the target, but it can include targets as distant in some cases as a visible star in the sky. The Storyguide should generally decide if an intended target is visible to a nova using a power with this kind of range.

Duration

Each power has a set duration, describing how long it lasts:

- *Instant* powers last only long enough to create an effect, such as unleashing a Quantum Attack. The results of the effect, such as the damage inflicted by that attack, may last for some time, but the power lasts for only an instant. Novas pay the Quantum point cost of an Instant power each time it is used.
- *Concentration* powers last so long as the nova concentrates on maintaining them. Each power a nova is concentrating on creates a Complication on all their subsequent actions equal to the number of powers; if the nova fails to overcome it when taking an action, their concentration lapses and the power stops working. Novas pay the Quantum point cost of a Concentration power when it is activated, and it remains in effect without any additional cost for as long as the nova concentrates.
- *Maintained* powers require a modicum of the nova's focus and concentration. So long as the nova is conscious and capable of action, the power's effects continue. If the nova is rendered unconscious or incapable of taking any actions, all maintained power effects end. Some maintained powers require additional expenditures of Quantum points to maintain. If the nova chooses not to spend the points, or is incapable of doing so, the power's effects end.
- *Continuous* powers remain in effect for a certain amount of time without any further effort from the nova, usually based on the nova's Quantum and power ratings, whether the nova is conscious and capable of action or not. The default is Quantum + Power rating in rounds, then minutes, hours, and days, and the power's duration is listed with the base time, such as "Continuous (Rounds)". Once the time expires, the nova can pay the power's Quantum point cost as a Reflexive action to continue the power. If the nova chooses not to spend the points, or is incapable of doing so, the power's effects end.

ABSORPTION

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Reflexive
Cost: None
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Personal
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

The nova can capture and absorb incoming energy and use it to refuel their own abilities. This power works either against radiant energy (electromagnetism) or kinetic energy (such as punches

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: CLOAKING

The potential threat of an invisible attacker may be countered using advanced sensor equipment, particularly infrared goggles. Even novas with wider-band cloaking abilities are detectable using physical means: A thin coating of dust, flour, or graphite powder can temporarily reveal the nova's position (unless the coating material also becomes invisible) as well as showing footprints where the target moves. In many indoor situations, both emergency fire extinguishers and sprinkler systems can be useful countermeasures against cloaked targets. In extreme situations, turn the tables on an invisible attacker using a combination of visual impairment (darkness or smoke) and enhanced sensors like night-vision or infrared.

or impacts), define which when the nova acquires this power. (Note that novas do not count as power sources for Absorption; see Quantum Leech on p. 222 for that ability.)

When the nova is hit with an attack of the type they can absorb, roll Quantum + Absorption as a reflexive action. Each success subtracts one success from the incoming attack and adds one point to the nova's Quantum point total. Any remaining successes from the attack can be applied to overcoming the nova's armor for Stunts such as Inflict Damage, assuming there are sufficient successes left.

Quantum points gained from Absorption can replenish the nova's spent points up to their usual total. Any extra Quantum points beyond that fade at a rate of one point per (Quantum + Absorption) rounds, until the nova reaches their usual Quantum point total. See Overcharging on p. 182 for the effects of a nova with Quantum points over their usual maximum.

Absorption can apply the following special power tags:

- **Broad (2):** The nova can absorb both radiant and kinetic energy.
- **Duration (1):** The power's Duration extends to Continuous (minutes) for the fading of additional Quantum points. A second application of this tag extends it to Continuous (hours).
- **Restricted (–1 to –3):** The nova's Absorption affects only a specific kind of energy, with the tag value based on how restricted it is, such as –1 for only blunt kinetic damage, –2 for only electrical energy, or –3 for only hard radiation.
- **Siphon (1):** The nova can "draw" from power sources at Close range without touching them as an ordinary action. Roll Quantum + Absorption, with each success granting the nova one Quantum point, up to a maximum of the rating or Scale of the power source. A second application of this tag extends the nova's energy drawing range to Medium, and then Long for a third tag. At the Storyguide's discretion, Siphon can be used to draw upon a particular environmental element, such as smoke, shadows, or greenery (plant life) as well as energy. If the nova can only use Siphon and loses the ability to absorb incoming attacks, this tag is a cost of 0.

BOOST

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

The nova channels forces to enhance one of their own Attributes, chosen when this power is acquired. The attribute gains a number of dots equal to the Boost rating. If raised to five dots, any additional Boost rating applies dots of the appropriate Mega-Attribute instead. So, a nova with Might 3 and Boost Might 3 would gain Might 5 (from 2 dots of the Boost) and Mega-Might 1, for example. A nova cannot use Boost to increase a Mega-Attribute above her Quantum. The dots gained from Boost fade at a rate of one per (Quantum + Boost) rounds unless the nova spends the power's Cost again to maintain it.

Boost can apply the following special power tags:

- **Extra Attribute (1):** The nova's Boost affects two Attributes at once rather than one. For each additional application of this tag, the Boost affects an additional Attribute. Multiply the power's Quantum point Cost by the number of Attributes affected.

- **Variable Attribute (1):** The nova can choose which Attributes the Boost affects when it is used, up to the limit set by the power and its Extra Attribute tags.

CLOAK

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Maintained

The nova can manipulate energy wavelengths to cloak themselves from detection, essentially becoming invisible by controlling the energy they reflect, disappearing from the visible spectrum. The nova remains detectable to the wider range of electromagnetic radiation, infrared and below, and ultraviolet and above.

While cloaked, the nova gains 3 Enhancement to any Defense rolls and stealth-related actions. The nova can also make surprise attacks even after combat has started, if attacking someone unable to detect them.

For each additional dot in this power, choose a one-point power tag which can include one of the following special tags:

- **Broadband (1):** The nova's Cloak extends to the full electromagnetic spectrum, making the nova invisible to all wavelengths of radiation, including infrared, ultraviolet, and radar.
- **Chemical (1):** The nova can Cloak their biochemical emissions, preventing anyone from detecting them by scent, including technological "chem-sniffers."
- **Sonic (1):** The nova can Cloak any sonic vibrations they emit, preventing anyone from hearing any sound they might make.

DENSITY

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point per dot activated
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)



The nova's density increases, making them more massive, stronger, and tougher. For each dot activated, the nova gains a dot of Mega-Might and the Toughness Mega-Edge, which can bypass the normal Might requirement for the nova's Mega-Might. The nova also attains the *mass* of something with a size Scale equal to half the activated Density dots (rounded down), although their actual size doesn't change. So, a nova with Density •••• active is as massive as a size Scale 2 object.

Density can have the following special power tag:

- **Non-Living (1):** The nova's dense form is immune to some of the concerns of living beings, perhaps involving a transformation into a dense, non-living material like stone or metal. While the Density power is active, the nova is immune to any Ingestible or Injectable Indirect damage and any Environmental Indirect damage with the Continuous tag.

ELEMENTAL MASTERY

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Varies
Cost: Varies
Dice Pool: Varies
Range: Varies
Duration: Varies

A nova with Elemental Mastery has power over a particular element or force, including things like cold (or ice), darkness, electricity, fire (or heat), gravity, light, magnetism, or radiation, or elemental forces like air, earth (including soil and rock), plants, water, or weather. Players should feel free to come up with other elements or forces suitable for Elemental Mastery with the Storyguide's approval.

Choose one of the following base effects for the nova's Elemental Mastery: Environmental Anima, Quantum Anima, Quantum Attack, or Shroud, all using the chosen element as the medium. The nova can acquire the other effects as Techniques (see the Technique Mega-Edge, p. 197, and Power Suites, p. 198), along with other Techniques that fit the theme of the Elemental Mastery. Examples include Absorption, Flight, Illusion, Quantum Aura, Quantum Construct, Quantum Deflection, Quantum Field, and possibly others. The Elemental Mastery suite may also include various Quantum Attacks with their own power tags as Techniques.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANIMA

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: None
Range: Medium
Duration: Maintained

By manipulating various forces, the nova creates changes in the surrounding environment, from raising or lowering the temperature, to condensing moisture out of the air to create fog or precipitation or shifting the ambient light level or even changing the local gravity.

When this power is acquired, the nova can create one of: a level 1 Barrier to movement, a +1 Complication, or level 1 Environmental Damage with the Continuous (hour) and Deadly tags per dot, limited to terrestrial environmental conditions. The nova can also reduce Environmental Complications and Indirect Damage by the number of levels they can create. Dot allocations are fixed once chosen.

Environmental Anima can have the following special power tags:

- **Continuous (1):** Each application of this tag shifts the power's Environmental Damage up a step, to Continuous (minute) and then Continuous (Round).
- **Non-Terrestrial (1):** The nova can create non-terrestrial environments, including toxic or radioactive atmospheres and changes in local gravity. As a 0-point power tag, the nova can *only* create non-terrestrial environments and not terrestrial ones.
- **Ranged (1):** Each application of this tag increases the Environmental Anima's range band by one, starting from Medium to Long, then to Extreme (10 kilometers), and a factor of x10 per tag. This tag cannot be applied more times than the power's rating.
- **Variable (1):** The nova can mix-and-match levels of Barrier, Complication, and Environmental Damage when they use this power and can change the allocation at will as a reflexive action.

FLIGHT

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 2 Quantum points

ELEMENTAL THEMES

The following are just some of the possible themes for an Elemental Mastery power. The Storyguide should work with the nova's player to agree on a suitable theme, base effect, and available Techniques for any new theme players might come up with.

Entropy: The nova influences the forces of chaos and the breakdown of systems. This theme is unusual in that Quantum Disruption is often its base power, although Environmental Anima or a Quantum Attack are also common, especially an Attack with the Area tag. Many entropic Techniques are different kinds of Attacks.

Gravity: The nova controls the fundamental force of gravity, usually first manifesting as Quantum Anima for moving objects by shifting their gravitational pull, or Environmental Anima for changing local gravity, branching out into Techniques like gravitic force blasts (Quantum Attack) and gravitic propulsion (Flight).

Kinetic Energy: The nova exerts Elemental Mastery over the force of motion. Quantum Anima is typically the base power for this Theme, although it could be a Quantum Attack of pure force.

Magnetism: Generating and controlling magnetic fields usually manifests as Quantum Anima for moving ferro-metallic objects, then allows the nova to develop Techniques like magnetic force blasts (Quantum Attack), magnetic force fields (Quantum Field), and magnetic levitation along lines of force (Flight), to name a few.

Plants: The nova exerts Elemental Mastery over plant life, typically using Quantum Anima to give it animation and movement and allowing them to grab and manipulate other objects with plant tendrils and branches.

Primal Elements: This theme usually revolves around one of the "primal" elements like air, earth, fire, or water, with the nova generating and controlling that element as a medium for their Elemental Mastery. Quantum Anima is the most common base power, although Quantum Attack is common for Fire Mastery.

Radiant Energy: Common Elemental Themes revolve around a form of radiant energy, such as electricity, heat, or radiation, or their *absence*, such as cold or darkness. The base power for a Radiant Energy Theme is commonly a Quantum Attack using that energy, like a lightning bolt, heat blast, or radiation beam. For the absence of an energy, the base power is commonly Environmental Anima (for cold) or Shroud (for darkness), although it could be Quantum Attack for these as well.

Space: The nova manipulates the fabric of space itself, changing momentum by "curving" space (Quantum Anima for moving objects), Environmental Anima to create Barriers to movement. Teleport and Warp are also potential Techniques for Space Mastery.

Time: Able to dilate the flow of time, the nova can use Environmental Anima to create Barriers to movement by slowing time or can gain the benefits of the Mega-Speed or Quickness Mega-Edges as Techniques by speeding up their own timeframe. Time Mastery Quantum Attacks may include rapidly aging a target (an Aggravated Poison Attack) or Entangle Quantum Attacks that "freeze" targets in time.

Weather: Something of a mix of the primal elements, Weather Mastery is based off Environmental Anima, changing the local weather conditions, then branching out into Techniques like various Quantum Attacks: hurricane gusts, lightning bolts, pelting hail, and targeted tornadoes, to name a few.

Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Maintained

The nova can fly without any visible means of support, or sometimes even propulsion. While some novas use energy discharges or atmospheric manipulation to fly through action-reaction, many appear to directly manipulate gravity or space itself to propel them in whatever direction they wish. The nova's speed Scale equals their dots in Flight and aerial maneuvers roll Athletics + Dexterity, but may substitute Flight dots for Athletics, if its rating is higher.

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: CONCENTRATION

Most nova powers require at least a modicum of concentration to use and maintain, therefore take measures intended to make concentration and focus as difficult as possible for the target, including the use of flash-bangs, strobes, sonic screamers, and similar measures, as well as irritants like pepper-spray or tear gas. It is surprising how many novas have relatively vulnerable eyes and ears compared to their more general physical durability.

Flight can have the following special power tag:

- **Surfing (–1):** The nova creates some type of surface to carry them aloft, like a bridge or platform of solidified energy or created matter. The nova can potentially be pushed or knocked off this surface, causing them to fall until they can take another action to reactivate their Flight power and "catch" themselves. Flight with this tag rarely exceeds three dots. Surfing is often accompanied by the Bestow and Reduced Cost tags.

GROWTH



Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point per dot of Growth activated
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

One of the more mysterious Quantum Powers from the scientific point of view, Growth allows a nova to change the apparent ratio of their size to that of the surrounding environment. In essence, the nova enlarges, becoming a giant interacting with a significantly reduced (to them) environment. For unknown reasons, novas using this power do not appear subject to things like the square-cube law, which would make a human-shaped creature incapable of supporting its own weight at vastly increased size. Presumably, mechanisms like the physics-violating capabilities of various Mega-Attributes are at work.

Each activated dot of Growth increases the nova's size Scale by 1 and the nova gains the benefits of one dot of Mega-Might as an effect of their new size. This does not stack with any actual Mega-Might dots, only the nova's higher effective rating applies. The nova gains all the benefits of their size Scale, including durability relative to smaller Scale attacks.

The nova remains at the chosen increased size for a number of rounds equal to dots in Growth, then must pay an additional Quantum point to extend the duration for the same number of rounds. The nova must also pay the cost again to increase the number of active Growth dots, up to their maximum. The Duration power tag extends Growth to a Continuous (Minutes) duration, then Continuous (Hours). The nova can end the power's duration, returning to normal size, or drop to a lower Scale of Growth, at any time as a Reflexive action with no Quantum point cost.

HEALING

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Close
Duration: Instant

The nova's touch can mend damaged biological organisms, repairing damage and injury. The nova spends successes from the Quantum + Healing roll to mend Injury and Status Conditions: An Injury Condition costs successes equal to its unmodified penalty (one for Bruised, two for Injured, and four for Maimed), while a physical Status Condition costs three successes. Any leftover unspent successes from Healing have no effect. The nova can also add an Enhancement up to their Healing rating to this pool by spending additional Quantum points at a cost of two points per 1 Enhancement. So, a nova with Healing 3 could add up to 3 Enhancement to a successful Healing roll by spending six additional Quantum points (2 per Enhancement). Healing aggravated damage requires twice the number of successes as usual (see the Aggravated power tag, p. 200).

The nova is limited to spending successes from their Healing roll per condition equal to their Healing rating. This means Healing is effectively limited in the conditions it can cure based on its rating: Bruised at one dot, Injured at two dots, Status Conditions at three dots, and Maimed at four dots. At five dots and greater, a nova can use Healing to restore life to the recently dead! This costs five successes for someone dead up to (Quantum rating) rounds — under a minute or two — and restores the subject to a Maimed injury condition. An additional success affects a subject dead for (Quantum) minutes and then hours at seven successes. Beyond that, even nova powers cannot restore a dead body truly to life.

There is a limit on how much quantum power can force living organisms to mend. Healing can safety apply up to 10 total successes to a living creature within a 24-hour period. Each success applied beyond that also imposes a point of Flux on the subject, including baselines and Talents. This affects subjects normally, including acquiring Transcendence at Flux 10, which can cause even non-novas to mutate strangely over time. Psiad resistance to Flux means additional Healing successes beyond 10 simply have no effect on them, positive or negative, until at least 24 hours have passed.

Healing can also be used to cure diseases at Storyguide discretion.

ILLUSION

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 3 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Visual
Duration: Concentration

The nova manipulates electromagnetic forces to create realistic audio-visual projections. Success grants the nova Enhancement equal to their successes + Quantum. These successes are then spent to create or modify the illusory projections, using the guidelines on the following table. If the nova doesn't have enough points for a desired effect, they must create a simpler or smaller illusion or abandon the effort. Observers may normally roll Integrity + Cunning against a Difficulty equal to the user's Quantum to notice something "off" about the illusion, detecting it for what it is, unless the nova spends two extra successes to make it perfectly convincing. Even then, illusory projections have no substance, and are not detectable to senses other than sight and hearing.

POINT COST	EFFECT
1	Create a static, stationary illusion of up to Size 1.
1	Allow the illusion to move normally at up to Speed 0.
1	Increase the Size of the illusion effect by 1.
1	Increase the Speed of the illusion effect by 1.
1	Allow the illusion to emit sounds, including speech.
2	Make an illusion effect perfectly convincing (no roll to detect it).
2	Create multiple stationary illusions within Close range of a single point.
3	Create multiple stationary illusions within Short range of a single point.

MOLECULAR CHAMELEON

Quantum Minimum: 4
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 1 Quantum point per dot distributed (see description)
Dice Pool: None
Range: Close
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

The nova can duplicate the quantum signature of a nonliving substance by touch, taking on some of its properties. By touching an object as an Ordinary action, the nova can spend Quantum points on a one-for-one basis to allocate Molecular Chameleon dots to other nova traits suitable for the material making up the object. By touching a steel post, for example, the nova could assign dots to Mega-Might and Toughness, while touching a pool of water might result in dots assigned to Phasing (Liquid) and Plasticity.

The nova's player can suggest suitable traits for the substance, as approved by the Storyguide, and the Storyguide sets appropriate limits to traits based on the substance. The Mega-Might and Toughness from steel, for example may be limited to no more

than three dots, whereas novastalo (p. 230) might provide five or more dots. It may be helpful to note traits associated with certain substances for easy reference. The nova can only duplicate the properties of non-living matter (to duplicate nova powers, see Quantum Imprint, p. 221).

The nova retains the duplicated properties for the Molecular Chameleon power's duration or until the nova duplicates a different substance.

This power has the following special power tags:

- **Defensive (2):** The nova can reflexively assume the properties of an incoming attack to avoid it. Roll Quantum + Molecular Chameleon. Each success can increase the Difficulty for the attack to inflict an Injury by 1, and the nova can duplicate some of the attack's properties, redistributing Molecular Chameleon dots accordingly.
- **Energy Chameleon (1):** The nova can duplicate the properties of intense energies as well, anything powerful enough to cause damage in a round, either attack or environmental. So, the nova could duplicate electricity from a live wire but not a spark of static and could duplicate the light from a laser but not a shaft of sunlight. In this case, roll Quantum + Molecular Chameleon, increasing the Difficulty by the energy's Enhancement for damage (if any). Success means the nova takes no damage from the energy and assumes some of its properties.
- **Extra Properties (1):** Each application of this tag allows the nova to duplicate an additional number of power dots equal to their Molecular Chameleon rating from one substance, but they cannot assign more dots than their power rating to one trait. So, a nova with Molecular Chameleon 3 and one application of this tag could duplicate up to six dots of traits from a substance, with no one trait having more than three dots.

MOLECULAR MANIPULATION

Quantum Minimum: 3
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Medium
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

The nova manipulates and alters molecular bonds to mold and reshape nonliving matter as if it were soft clay. Molecular Manipulation can also change the phase state of matter, making liquids solid, for example, or causing solids to flow like liquid. It can turn gases into a thick, viscous material. This does not change the chemical nature of the material: "Solid water" is not ice and retains its normal temperature and chemical properties.

The nova can affect any Size 1 object within range. Each increase in size Scale requires an additional success. Affecting an object attuned by a nova (including attuned eufiber) increases the Difficulty by the nova's Quantum rating. Once the user is manipulating an object, each change requires a Reflexive action. Molecular Manipulation lasts a default of Quantum + Power dots rounds. Reshaped solids retain their new form when the power ends, but liquids and gases do not.

Molecular Manipulation may have the Restricted power tag (p. 203) limiting the types of matter the nova can affect. If the nova is only able to move the affected matter, see the Quantum Anima power instead (p. 218).

MORPH



Quantum Minimum: Dots – 3
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Personal
Duration: Maintained

A nova with this power can manipulate and reconfigure their own body, giving them considerable control over their appearance. Spend successes to change appearance as given on the following table; the nova can spend 2 Quantum points to gain 1 Enhancement to a maximum of 3 Enhancement on the roll. This ability can be used for disguise — changing appearance as desired within the number of successes — or to impersonate a specific individual. Success on the roll allows the nova to spend successes to change their appearance, as per the chart below. The nova

does not, however, gain any of an imitated nova's Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, or Quantum Powers. For that, see the Quantum Imprint power (p. 221).

SUCCESS COST	EFFECT
1	Change cosmetic features (skin, hair, and eye color, etc.)
1/2/3	Small/great/extreme alteration in height or weight.
1	Change sexual characteristics
4	Impersonate individual
5	Detailed impersonation, down to molecular level

Morph can have the following special power tags:

Form Mastery (1): Choose a specific form with a point cost equal to or less than your dots in Morph. This includes impersonating an individual at Morph 4 and a detailed impersonation at Morph 5. You can assume this form as a Reflexive action without the need for a roll simply by spending a Quantum point.

PHASING

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Concentration

The nova puts their body (along with any attuned material) into a state of quantum uncertainty that changes their phase state from solid to another state of matter, based on their number of dots in this power. While in a different phase state, the nova is immune to any Ingestible or Injectable Indirect damage and any Environmental Indirect damage with the Continuous tag.

- Liquid: The nova's body can flow like a liquid, passing through any space that's not watertight (given time). The nova's liquid body is immune to Ballistic and Edged damage, which pass right through, although Impact damage can still disperse portions of the nova's body and inflict Injury Conditions.
- •• Gaseous: The nova's body is like a cloud of gas or very fine particles, able to pass through any opening that's not airtight. The nova's gaseous body is immune to Ballistic, Edged, and Impact damage, although Energy, Explosive, and Spread attacks still damage it. The gaseous body can drift slowly through the air at speed Scale 0 and ignore the effects of gravity, however, the nova has no effective Might rating or ability to exert physical force in this state.
- ••• Plasma: The nova's body is a field of coherent energy, unaffected by physical damage but still damaged by energy attacks, except for one energy type defined by the nova's player when this power is acquired (see Elemental Mastery for some ideas). The nova can ignore gravity and float in any direction at speed Scale 1. The nova has no effective Might rating or ability to exert physical force in this state.
- •••• Immaterial: The nova's body is in a quantum phase that does not interact with ordinary matter or energy at all. They are immune to all damage, although not to powers or effects that work on the nova's mind or traits like Quantum points. The nova has no effective Might rating or ability to exert physical force in this state, since they cannot touch ordinary matter.

Each dot in Phasing beyond four applies one dot in power tags to the power, most commonly Duration. Phasing can also have the following special power tags:

Restricted to Phase State (–1): This tag actually applies to *other* nova traits, which the character can only access and use while in a particular phase state, examples include Environmental Anima, Flight (enhancing speed in gaseous, plasma, or immaterial form), Quantum Attack (using the state's substance), Quantum Aura (plasma state), and Shroud, to name a few.

Variable (1): The nova can assume any of the phase states of their Phasing rating or less, rather than just the state of their rating, shifting between them as a reflexive action.

PLASTICITY

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Maintained



Transforming the structure of their body, the nova becomes malleable and stretchy, like soft rubber. The nova can elongate and reshape their body, extending their reach a number of range bands equal to their Plasticity dots (up to Extreme range), or flattening or compressing to squeeze through a space only (10 – Dots) centimeters wide. They gain Enhancement equal to their Plasticity dots for tasks where extreme flexibility and reach would be useful. The nova gains the Reach tag on their close combat attacks. At two dots in Plasticity, their Close attacks gain the Entangle tag as well. While in their malleable state, the nova gains one point of Impact Resistant Soft Armor per dot of Plasticity.

QUANTUM AGENT

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 3 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Medium (how far the agent can be manifested from the nova)
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

One of the most profound nova abilities infuses matter or coherent energy (ultimately the same thing from a quantum power perspective) with a semblance of life. Essentially, the nova conjures a semi-independent being — the agent — out of nothing to do as the nova wishes.

The Quantum Agent is a Storyguide character using the guidelines given on p. 139 of the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** with the following traits:

- **Size:** The agent is a size Scale 1 creature, the same scale as a human.
- **Primary Action Pool:** Equal to twice the Quantum Agent power rating.
- **Secondary Action Pool:** Equal to half the Primary Pool, rounded down.

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: QUANTUM AGENTS

In dealing with novas able to conjure other beings apparently out of nowhere, it is important to treat any such manifestations as potentially real and dangerous, even if they may prove to be mere illusions. What's more, treat such beings as if they are automatons, no matter their appearance, since they are most likely immune to conditions affecting real creatures. Chances are they'll need to be blown apart in order to stop them. Keep in mind that evidence to date suggests taking down the creating nova will *not* stop these agents, at least not initially, so do not depend on that strategy. Likewise, even if it appears possible to negotiate with such an agent, remember it is equally possible the controlling nova can see and hear everything the agent does. Any information uncovered by a nova's agent must be considered compromised.

- **Desperation Action Pool:** Equal to half the Secondary Pool, rounded down.
- **Health:** The number of Health Boxes the agent has, equal to its Quantum Agent power rating +1.
- **Defense:** The base Defense of the agent, equal to half its Quantum Agent power rating, rounded up.
- **Initiative:** Use the agent's Secondary Action Pool as its Initiative.
- **Powers:** The agent has one dot in nova traits (Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, or Quantum Powers) per dot of Quantum Agent rating, divided as the nova wishes within the agent's theme. The agent's Quantum rating is treated as equal to the Quantum Agent power rating. If desired, one dot of powers can be traded for four dots in regular Edges, or one dot in powers can be traded for a one level increase in the agent's size Scale.

The nova can also lower the agent's effective rating in order to assign an additional dot to nova traits, such as a nova with Quantum Agent 4 summoning a rating 3 agent with five dots in powers (four from power rating, plus one from lowering the agent's effective rating).

- **Agent Theme:** Like other Quantum Powers, Quantum Agent follows a theme, which defines the type of agent the nova summons. Common themes include the following:

‡ *Alien:* The Quantum Agent takes the form of an alien being, from a stereotypical science-fiction character to a bizarre non-Euclidean monster.

‡ *Clone:* The nova summons an agent that appears identical to the nova and has similar abilities. The more powerful the nova's other traits, the more dots in Quantum Agent are needed to create a comparable duplicate. This theme is more common for stealth novas who create clones, often with the Multiple tag (p. 218).

RATING	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	DESPERATION	HEALTH	DEFENSE	POWERS
•	2	1	1	2	1	1
••	4	2	1	3	1	2
•••	6	3	2	4	2	3
••••	8	5	2	5	2	4
•••••	10	6	3	6	3	5
••••• •	12	8	4	7	3	6
••••• ••	14	9	4	8	4	7
••••• •••	16	10	5	9	4	8
••••• ••••	18	12	6	10	5	9

‡ *Imaginary Friend:* The agent takes the form of a figure from the nova's imagination, perhaps even childhood, taking on qualities of an "imaginary friend," and often having powers like Cloak, allowing them to appear and disappear at will.

‡ *Machine:* Quantum agents are not actual living beings and so might appear as machines such as robots or vehicles, although they're neither — just constructs of quantum energy.

‡ *Mount:* The agent is a creature able to carry the nova as a mount, from appearing like a horse to some mythic creature.

‡ *Mythic:* The agent takes the form of a mythic creature of some type, from a demon or angel to something like a griffon, unicorn, or dragon.

- **Agent Independence:** Quantum agents are only semi-independent, able to carry out commands given to them by the nova, but otherwise lacking in initiative or direction. On the upside, an agent is completely loyal to the nova and cannot be swayed or affected by any sort of intrigue. An agent lacking any commands generally does nothing, unless the nova is in immediate danger, in which case the agent generally does what it can to assist and keep its creator out of harm's way. Agents with the Independent tag (next column) have more self-direction.

- **Multiple Agents:** The Quantum Agent power usually summons or creates a single, specific agent, but the nova can have a Power Suite (p. 198) of multiple Quantum Agent powers to summon different agents with different appearances and distributions of traits.

Quantum Agent can have the following special power tags:

- **Horde (1):** The nova can create a larger number of Quantum Agents that are minor characters (see Minor Characters on p. 138 of **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**). One application of this tag creates 2 agents, then 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 250, 500, and 1,000. A nova can have a maximum rating in this tag equal to their Quantum rating. Horde agents have the usual traits for Quantum Agents of their rating, but do not take defensive actions, use their Desperation Pool for initiative, have half the number of dots of nova traits (round down), and do not have Health boxes; whenever they are successfully damaged, they are Taken Out.

- **Independent (1):** The Quantum Agent has more independence, able to make decisions and come up with plans on its own. It remains completely loyal to the nova and unaffected by intrigues attempting to change that but exactly how the agent interprets "loyalty" may vary, and it *can* be affected by intrigues attempting to sway its attitudes and actions otherwise, and fooled by deception and outright lies.

- **Memory Absorption (1):** When the nova ends a use of Quantum Agent within Close range of the agent, the nova gains memories of all the agent's experiences as if they had experienced those events themselves. If the power also has the Sensory Link tag, Memory Absorption can occur over any distance.

- **Sensory Link (1):** The nova can perceive through the agent's senses, like a use of the Remote Perception power (p. 222) as if the nova were experiencing what the agent experiences. This does not require any additional expenditure of Quantum points but does require Concentration, like the regular Remote Perception power.

QUANTUM ANIMA

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Long
Duration: Concentration

The nova channels fundamental forces to impart movement and animation to otherwise inanimate matter, allowing them to move things at a distance without physical contact or the usual transfer of kinetic energy. A nova's Quantum Anima has an effective lifting ability equal to Quantum + Power rating in place of Athletics + Might. Quantum Anima has no action/reaction connection to its wielder — so the nova cannot be "pulled" by something they are moving, nor can they normally lift or move themselves (although they can still lift something they're standing on or sitting in, such as a platform or vehicle).

Additionally, for each dot in this power, the nova's player can choose one of the following power tag improvements. The player may substitute another regular power tag for one of these at the Storyguide's discretion and can also apply power tags to the power by spending Experience.

- **Duration:** The power's duration improves to Maintained.
- **Grab:** The nova can use the power to grab already animate targets to hold or move them. The grab works like a Quantum Attack (below) with the Entangle power tag at a rating one less than the Quantum Anima rating. It requires a Quantum + Power roll against the target's Defense.
- **Manipulation:** The nova can use Quantum Anima to delicately manipulate things, shifting multiple moving parts or performing complex tasks like typing or rapidly assembling (or disassembling) something. The Storyguide may require a roll to perform the task, in which case, the nova's Quantum Anima dots substitute for Dexterity rating.
- **Might:** The power's might Scale increases by 1.
- **Ranged:** The power's range increases to Visual.
- **Strike:** The nova can use the power to direct sheer kinetic force against a target. This works like a Quantum Attack (below) at the Quantum Anima rating and requires an Aim + Dexterity roll against the target's Defense.

QUANTUM ATTACK



Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Close Combat + Dexterity or Might (Close) or Aim + Dexterity (Ranged)
Range: Close
Duration: Instant

The most common offensive nova power, Quantum Attack wields fundamental forces like a weapon against a target. Quantum Attack is a Close range power by default, unless the Ranged tag is applied to it (as is often the case). The attacker can use any of the appropriate action Stunts with the attack, Close Combat Stunts for a Close attack, and Shooting Stunts for a Ranged attack.

Quantum Attack provides Enhancement equal to Quantum/2 and the Close tag. Each additional dot after the first provides +1 power Scale to attacks.

The nova can spend points equal to their dots in the power to apply additional power tags from: Aggravated (2), Beam (1), Brutal (1), Charge (1), Deadly (1), Destructive (2), Electrical (1), Entangle (2), Explosive (Ranged, 2), Gas (3), Incendiary (2), Non-Lethal (2), Piercing (1), Pushing (1), Poison (2), Poison — Non-Lethal (2), Ranged (Short, 1; Medium, 2; Long, 3; Extreme, 4), Sonic (1), Spread (1), Stun (1), Variable (1), Variable Ammo (2, 3), or Variable Poison (3). The nova can also spend Experience normally to apply additional power tags to the Quantum Attack.

A nova's Quantum Attack is defined as a particular type of effect (unless it has Variable tags) and usually originates from the same place, such as the nova's hands (most common), arms, eyes, forehead, mouth, chest, or the like.

QUANTUM AURA

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Maintained

The nova surrounds their body in a damaging aura of some type, usually radiant energy, but it could also be intense cold (absorbing radiant heat), orbiting shrapnel, or some similar effect. While the power is maintained, the nova does indirect Contact damage with a rating equal to the Quantum Aura dots.

QUANTUM CONSTRUCT

Quantum Minimum: Dots + 1
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Medium
Duration: Maintained

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: QUANTUM DISRUPTION

The nova ability to disrupt other nova powers pointed towards the existence of a mechanism for doing so, which led to the development of electronic quantum disruptors. Unfortunately, such devices are currently both require very close range and a considerable amount of power, so they are limited to restraint methods for captured nova subjects rather than having much use as a means of taking down an active nova in the field. Research and development on more advanced applications is ongoing.

One of the more inexplicable nova powers, Quantum Constructs are, apparently, fields of force which are visible and solid, probably involving some form of gravity manipulation along with strong and weak nuclear forces. The nova can create these constructs at will, forming them into any shape, although simple geometric shapes are the most common: spheres, cubes, flat walls or barriers, and so forth.

A nova can create a Quantum Construct up to size Scale 1, and it has durability Scale 1 with a soft armor rating of Quantum/2 and the Complete (3) and Environmental (2) tags. The nova can spend an additional Quantum point to be able to move the Construct at speed Scale 1, plus 1 Scale per additional Quantum point up to the dots in the power. A Quantum Construct can support weight with a might Scale equal to its durability Scale.

Quantum Constructs are not themselves useful for attacks, but novas often acquire Technique Mega-Edge dots for this power, applying them to powers like Quantum Attack with the Entangle tag (for grabbing and restraining) or straightforward damage. Trapping a target in a hollow Quantum Construct large enough to contain them involves an Aim + Dexterity roll against the target's Defense, with at least three successes for an Entrap Stunt.

Each dot of Quantum Construct beyond the first gives the power one of the following tags, which can also be applied separately as regular power tags:

- **Durability (1):** The durability Scale of the Quantum Constructs increases by 1.
- **Invisibility (1):** The nova's Quantum Constructs are transparent to visible light and cannot be seen except using the Spectrum Scan Mega-Edge or similar sensing mechanisms.
- **Multiple (X):** The nova can create multiple Quantum Constructs at once by paying the power's cost multiple times, up to a maximum number of times equal to the power's dots, so long as all the constructs are within the power's range and do not exceed its other parameters.
- **Ranged (1 or 2):** The power's range increases to Long, and then to Extreme if this tag is applied a second time.
- **Selective (X):** The nova can spend additional Quantum points to adjust the permeability of a Quantum Construct. For each point spent, the nova may define something able to pass through the construct as if it weren't there, from oxygen to water, metal, people, or electricity for examples.
- **Size (1):** The maximum size Scale of the Quantum Constructs increases by 1.

QUANTUM DEFLECTION

Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Personal
Duration: Instant

The nova can use fields of force and energy manipulation to turn aside attacks. Roll Quantum + Power. Each success can add 1 to the nova's Defense that round. This is in addition to the nova's normal Defense Stunts in that round.

QUANTUM DISRUPTION

Quantum Minimum: 3
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Medium
Duration: Instant

The nova can disrupt other manipulations of fundamental forces on the quantum level, effectively blocking or dissipating the effects of other nova's Quantum Powers. Roll Quantum + Quantum Disruption and

apply successes as an increase in Difficulty to the target's next use of a Quantum Power. Alternately, the nova can spend successes to "buy down" the effect of an existing Quantum Power, including Mega-Attributes and Mega-Edges. If it is reduced to 0 or fewer successes, its effects end, and reducing its successes may reduce its overall effect, even if it is not eliminated.

The Duration tag applied to Quantum Disruption extends its Duration to Concentration, maintaining any effects for as long as the nova concentrates. Additional tags increase the power to Maintained and then Continuous (Rounds).

Quantum Disruption can have the following special power tags:

Reflexive (2): The nova can make a Quantum + Power roll to "block" the use of a Quantum Power as a reflexive action, so long as the power user or target is within range.

QUANTUM FIELD



Quantum Minimum: Dots
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Maintained

A protective field of energy forms around the nova's body, like a skintight aura. One dot of Quantum Field grants the nova durability Scale 1 soft armor with a rating of Quantum/2 and the Complete (3) and Environmental (1) tags. Each additional dot after the first adds +1 durability Scale. The nova can also acquire Environmental (2), Hard Armor (1, 3, 5), and Innocuous (2) as regular power tags.

QUANTUM IMPRINT

Quantum Minimum: 4
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum Points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Close
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

The nova can partially duplicate the quantum signature of another nova. In essence, by touching another nova, the Quantum Imprint user can copy one of the nova's traits temporarily. The target nova does not lose any power or suffer any other effect from the Quantum Imprint.

To use the power, the nova rolls Quantum + Quantum Imprint against the target's Defense. If successful, the nova can duplicate one of the target's Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, or Quantum Powers, with the following limitations:

- The nova gains dots in the duplicated power equal to the target's dots or the nova's dots in Quantum Imprint, whichever is less.
- The duplicated power works at the lower of target nova's Quantum rating and the Power Duplicator's Quantum rating.
- The nova must pay an additional Quantum point over the duplicated power's normal Cost to use it.

Otherwise, the nova retains the duplicated power for the Quantum Imprint's duration. To duplicate a different power, the nova must allow the duration of the previous Quantum Imprint to lapse.

Quantum Imprint has the following special power tags:

- **Extra Power (1):** Each application of this tag allows the nova to duplicate an additional power from the target with one use of Quantum Imprint. So, a nova with Quantum Imprint 3 and three dots of Extra Power could duplicate four different nova traits (Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, or Quantum powers) from a target, all up to a maximum of three dots. Each instance of this tag increases Quantum Imprint's Cost by 1 Quantum point.
- **Impersonation (2):** In addition to duplicating some of the target's powers, the nova can also transform to look like the target as if they had four successes with the Morph power (p. 214). They can spend an additional success from the Quantum Imprint roll to make this a detailed impersonation.
- **Reduced Cost (2):** This power tag can reduce either the Cost of activating Quantum Imprint by 1 point or eliminate the requirement to pay an additional Quantum point to use a duplicated power.

- **Theft (2):** The power is stolen instead of duplicated — the target loses dots in it equal to the nova's Quantum Imprint dots for as long as the user of Quantum Imprint possesses it.

QUANTUM LEECH

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 1 Quantum point
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Close
Duration: Instantaneous

The nova can drain the quantum energy from other novas and use it to fuel their own powers. The nova makes a Quantum + Quantum Leech power roll against the target's Defense. Each success allows the nova to take one Quantum point from the target and add it to their own Quantum point total. Leeched Quantum points can replenish the nova's points up to their usual total. Any extra points beyond that "bleed off" at a rate of one point per (Quantum + Quantum Leech) minutes, if they are not used, and make the nova subject to overcharging (p. 182).

REMOTE PERCEPTION

Quantum Minimum: 3
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Visual
Duration: Concentration

Using quantum entanglement, a nova with this power can shift their perceptions, allowing them to sense a point outside of their body as if they were physically present there. The target location must be in visual range or known to the nova, and perceiving a known location has an increased Difficulty of +1 (or more, if the nova only knows the area slightly). The nova perceives the location as if physically present for as long as they concentrate and can use successes to search for clues using sensing (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 83). Any of the nova's Mega-Edges affecting their senses work through Remote Perception as well.

A nova can use Remote Perception at interplanetary or even interstellar ranges to perceive celestial bodies, such as picking out a planet or star in the night sky. In this case, their perceptions are vague and limited: Each success can tell the nova one important fact about the scanned body, such as its gravity, atmosphere, climate, or the like. Fine details cannot be perceived at these distances. The nova can, however, spend two successes to treat the location as "known" for the purposes of powers like Teleport and Warp.

SHRINKING



Quantum Minimum: Dots – 1
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 1 Quantum point per dot activated
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

The paired opposite of the Growth power, Shrinking allows a nova to change the apparent ratio of their size to that of the surrounding environment. The nova reduces in size, becoming minuscule in comparison to what appears a much larger environment. As with Growth, novas using this power do not appear subject to things like the square-cube law and appear perfectly capable of breathing and otherwise functioning normally at reduced size. Presumably, mechanisms like the physics-violating capabilities of various Mega-Attributes are at work.

The nova gains a negative size Scale (p. 164) equal to the active dots in Shrinking. The nova also gains 1 Enhancement to Defense rolls for each level of size Scale an attacker has greater than their own, so a size Scale –4 character gains 5 Enhancement on Defense rolls against a Scale 1 foe.

The nova remains at the chosen reduced size for (Quantum + Shrinking) rounds, then must pay an additional Quantum point to extend the duration for the same number of rounds. The nova must pay the Quantum point cost again to increase the number of active Shrinking dots, up to their maximum. The Duration power tag extends Shrinking to a Continuous (minutes) duration, then Continuous (hours). The nova can end the power's duration, returning to normal size, or revert to a higher size Scale, up to their normal Size, at any time as a Reflexive action with no Quantum point cost.

Shrinking has the following special power tags:

- **Growth Momentum (1):** If the character enlarges as part of a Close attack, they can use the momentum of their growth as an Enhancement on the attack, equal to half the number of size Scales they shift. So, if a character goes from Size –3 to Size 1 (four shifts), they gain Enhancement 2 on the Close attack.
- **Tiny Titan (1):** The nova retains might Scale 1 at size Scale 0 through –4, meaning they can be as strong as a normal-sized person even while as tiny as an insect. Additionally, the nova can exert Mega-Might increases in Scale at reduced size, but each dot of Mega-Might so used costs one Quantum point per use. So, exerting Mega-Might 3 at reduced size costs three Quantum points per use as the nova further bends the laws of physics. This tag does not allow a nova to exert might Scale across the micro-field (p. 165) but does allow them to retain Mega-Might Scale increases relative to the size Scale of things in the micro-field. For example, a Mega-Might 2, size Scale –7 Tiny Titan effectively has the same might Scale as size Scale –5 microscopic organisms.

SHROUD

Quantum Minimum: 2
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Short
Duration: Maintained

The nova screens out or jams certain energy wavelengths to block sensory scans in an area within range, either blocking visible light to create an area of complete darkness or jamming sound waves to create an area of complete silence. Choose one of these effects (Darkness or Silence) when the nova acquires this power. The Shroud extends out to the Short range band from the chosen target point.

Anyone within the affected area, or trying to sense something in it, suffers a Complication to actions requiring sight or sound up to the Shroud's power rating. Failure to buy off the Complication results in one of the following (player's choice): the character drops an item (darkness), reveals an important piece of information (silence), falls prone (darkness), loses track of his friends, or takes an Injury Condition (darkness). The nova is unaffected by their own Shroud field but is affected by other Shroud powers or similar environmental effects unless they have appropriate sensory Mega-Edges.

For each additional dot in this power, choose a one dot power tag, these are most commonly Area or range, to expand or extend the effect. Shroud can also have the following special tags:

- **Broadband (1):** The nova's Visual Shroud extends to the full electromagnetic spectrum, rendering the area "dark" to infrared, ultraviolet, and radar scanning, as well.
- **Dual (1):** The Shroud effect blocks both light and sound at the same time.
- **Variable (1):** The nova can switch the Shroud effect between blocking either light or sound at will as a reflexive action.

TELEPORT



Quantum Minimum: Dots + 1
Action: Reflexive
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Instant

The nova shifts their position in spacetime through quantum entanglement, instantly relocating from one place to another that is within Medium range and visible to the nova, or a location especially well-known to the nova. Only the nova's body and any attuned materials (p. 95) make the transition; anything else is left behind, even if it is touching or carried by the nova.

The nova can substitute a Quantum + Teleport roll for a Dodge Stunt, applying successes an opponent must overcome in order to inflict an Injury. This costs the usual two Quantum points and the nova cannot teleport more than a single range band.

For each additional dot in Teleport after the first, the nova may apply one of the following power tag improvements:

MEDUSA PROTOCOL: TELEPORTATION

This is one of the most problematic nova abilities, both in terms of confronting a nova and containing them long-term. The primary solution in both cases relies upon the commonly observed limitation that the teleporter must be able to see or know their destination. This means limiting the teleporter's field of vision, using means like smoke, flash-bangs, or other obscurement, can limit their potential destinations. This goes together with interfering with focus and concentration. In the event of capture, keeping the nova disoriented and unaware of their relative location appears to interfere with their ability to teleport safely; some type of innate "safety mechanism" seems to kick in to prevent them from displacing in space until they have some sense of their location relative to their intended destination.

- **Distance:** Each dot in this tag extends the nova's Teleport distance by one step, out to Long, then Extreme (i.e., anywhere on the planet).
- **Impose:** The nova can touch a target within Close range and teleport the target up to their maximum distance. This requires a Quantum + Teleport roll against the target's Defense.
- **Interplanetary:** The nova can teleport interplanetary or even greater distances. This still requires line of sight (even just looking at a particular star in the sky) or a known destination, the latter usually acquired through experience or other abilities. Such long-distance teleports are *not* instantaneous; use the transit times given for space travel (p. 168). From the point of view of the teleporter, no time passes, even though it does for the rest of the universe.

TRANSFORMATION

Quantum Minimum: 4
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 1 Quantum point per dot distributed (see description)
Dice Pool: None
Range: Personal
Duration: Continuous (Rounds)

A nova with this power can manipulate and reconfigure their own body, giving them considerable control over their physical attributes. For as long as the Transformation power is maintained, the nova can distribute the power's dots among the effects of any of the following nova traits: Physical Mega-Attributes, the Body Modification or Toughness Mega-Edges, any sensory Mega-Edge, or the Quantum Powers Growth, Morph, Plasticity, Quantum Attack (physical natural weapon attacks only), and Shrinking. They can also be used to buy tags for those traits.

The nova must meet any prerequisites for the temporary traits, and must activate and use these temporary traits normally, including their action, Quantum point cost, and duration. The nova can redistribute their Transformation dots as an ordinary action whenever they have Focus in a round. When the Transformation power's duration ends, any temporary traits acquired through Transformation also end.

Transformation can have the following special power tags:

- **Extra Traits (1):** Each application of this tag allows the nova to distribute an additional number of power dots equal to their Transformation rating, but they cannot assign more dots than their power rating to one trait. So, a nova with Transformation 3 and one application of this tag could allocate up to six dots of nova traits, with no one trait having more than three dots. Each instance of this tag increases Transformation's Cost by 1 Quantum point.
- **Reflexive (2):** The nova can redistribute Transformation power dots as a Reflexive action whenever they have Focus in a round, rather than requiring their ordinary action.

TRANSMUTATION

Quantum Minimum: 4
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 3 Quantum points
Dice Pool: Quantum + Power
Range: Close
Duration: Instant

Manipulating matter on the quantum level, the nova can transmute one nonliving substance into

SUCCESS COST	EFFECT
1	Pure element, like gold or oxygen
2	Single molecular substance, like water
3	Simple solution (one substance dissolved in another, such as saltwater)
4	Complex solution
5+	Multiple substances fused together
+1	Toxic or dangerous substance: Apply successes as Environmental Damage.
+1	Create a substance from nothing (+1 Quantum point)
+2	Create exotic matter that defies known physical laws (+2 Quantum points)

another or even seemingly create nonliving matter out of nothing. The nova can transmute a mass of up to size Scale 0, with each increase in Scale or costing one success. Allocate other successes from the Quantum + Transmutation roll to effects, as shown on the following table.

Transmutations are permanent, although some forms of exotic matter may have a Continuous (Minutes) duration, at the Storyteller's discretion, needing the support of the nova's powers to continue to exist. Transmutation has no effect on living matter.

Some novas have the Restricted power tag (p. 203) on their Transmutation, limiting either the substances they can transmute, the results they can create, or both.

WARP

Quantum Minimum: Dots + 2
Action: Ordinary
Cost: 2 Quantum points
Dice Pool: None
Range: Close
Duration: Concentration

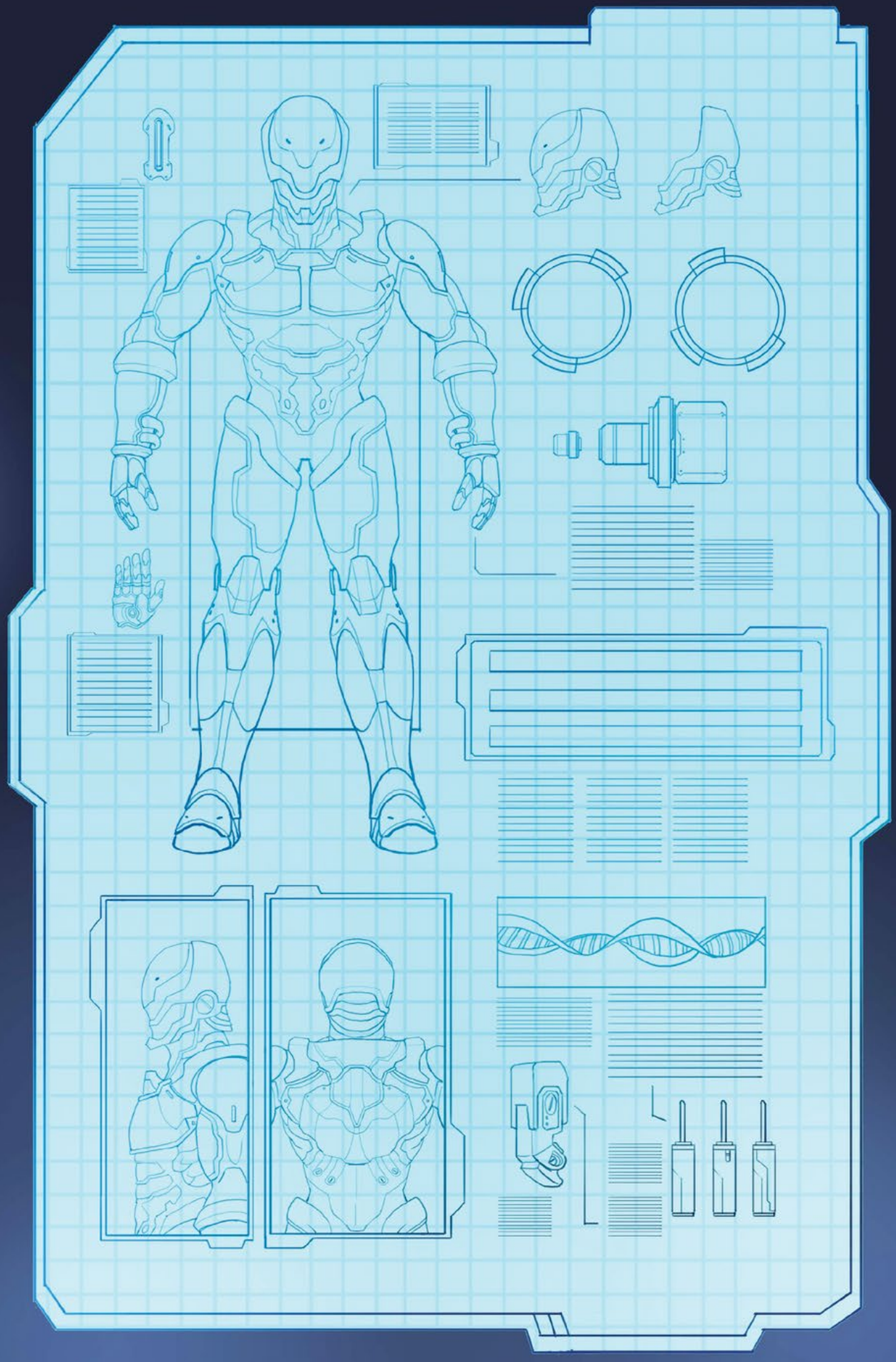
One of the more impressive Quantum Powers, the nova warps space, connecting two distant points through an opening in spacetime, commonly known as a wormhole. The warp appears somewhere in Close distance to the nova and connects to another point the nova can see or knows reasonably well, including a celestial body visible in the sky. The warp is Size 1, large enough for a human-sized being to pass through it and lasts for as long as the nova concentrates and spends Quantum points. The opening looks like a flat plane with an indistinct surface: roiling mist, shimmering energy, strobing or swirling colors, or even a black void.

Warping across planetary distances is essentially instantaneous. Crossing interplanetary or longer distances uses the transit times given for space travel (p. 168) for how long it takes to traverse the warp to the other side.

For each additional dot in Warp after the first, the nova may apply one of the following power tag improvements, which can also be acquired as regular power tags:

- **Clear:** The warp provides a clear "window" to wherever it opens, allowing anyone to look through it and see what is on the other side, and for those on the other side to do the same, provided the warp is across a planetary distance. A Clear warp allows for the targeting of ranged abilities through it. For an additional power tag, the warp can be One-Way, clear on one side, but obscured on the other.
- **Duration:** The power's Duration improves by one step, from Concentration to Maintenance, then Continuous for Rounds, Minutes, Hours, and finally Days.
- **Impose:** The nova can cause a wormhole to appear within the power's range and engulf a target, forcing them through the warp. This requires a Quantum + Warp roll against the target's Defense +1; otherwise the target evades the engulfing warp.
- **Ranged:** The range at which the warp's closest end can appear increases, from Close to Short, then Medium, Long, Extreme, and Interplanetary (out to any point the nova can perceive or knows well). At the far end, this allows a nova to connect two distant known points with a warp even while unable to perceive either of them.
- **Size:** The warp's size Scale increases by 1, enlarging what can pass through it.


NOW..
I THINK I'LL CALL YOU
"KAVACHA"
THREE HOURS AGO
ON SECOND THOUGHT, COMPUTER, PAINT IT BLUE INSTEAD.
COMPLYING..
ALAS, POOR YORICK. YOUR EUFIBER IS STILL OUT OF ALIGNMENT.
I'M GOING TO NEED SOME COFFEE FOR THIS.
SIX HOURS AGO
COME ON COME ON..
"THERE"
TWELVE HOURS AGO
COMPUTER, ADJUST THE HELM OPTICS THREE DEGREES AND START PRODUCTION.
COMPLYING
FIFTEEN HOURS AGO
LAST NIGHT..
I SHOULD BUY A MATCHING ISLAND FROM THE ROYALTIES FOR THIS.



CHAPTER SEVEN: TECHNOLOGY

"I always call it the Garage. Doesn't matter where it is. This one's on the Helicarrier. The Garage is where my real work gets done."
— Tony Stark, *Invincible Iron Man*

Novas can't help but shape the world around them. The fields of science and technology are no different. Across the world, novas are discovering new ways to study and explore everything around us. They're inventing new hypotheses and theories to explain the nature of the universe and how humanity can harness and tame it.

The control of quantum forces gifts novas with a view of the world that baselines will never truly experience. Though this sounds elitist — and can be dangerously so in the hands of some novas — most novas who turn their minds to pushing technological boundaries are ultimately doing so because they want to help bring others on their own journey of self-discovery. That they stand to gain fame and fortune through doing so is a powerful motivator to some, true, but a surprising number of nova inventors happily gift their inventions to the world for anyone to build. Unfortunately, sometimes despite the altruistic motives of these individuals, they don't stop to consider the larger implications of their work on the economic, commercial, or political landscape, or the destruction their inventions could cause.

Developing nations are benefitting from this technological revolution even more than their established counterparts. For those novas seeking to improve the world, these countries are where they want to roll out their newest life-improving inventions, to get them where they're most needed. This has led to no small amount of resentment among some of the more developed nations, but the simple fact is that retrofitting aging infrastructure isn't as simple — or as glamorous — as bringing health and prosperity to people who've gone without for too long.

Like many aspects of their existence, novas rewrite the rules and forge their own expectations when it comes to technology. Nova inventors can build technological wonders in a matter of months that which would take a dedicated team of developers years of hard work to accomplish. With the right powers novas can even surpass these limitations, absent-mindedly assembling lesser creations while concentrating on some other task or pulling together advanced technology to replicate other powers in only days or weeks.

In the Nova Age, the way novas invent and build new technologies follows the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** Super-Science rules (pp. 90-99) as adapted and expanded on here.

BLEEDING EDGE DESIGN

Nova technological developments and inventions can be divided into three categories. The first, *core-tech*, is nova-designed technology that can be replicated, mass-produced, and mostly understood by baseline designers. This level of technology may incorporate peculiarities in the production method, or involve combining resources in previously unconsidered ways, but otherwise there's nothing in the design that human ingenuity couldn't have achieved given enough time and effort. Core-tech need not be more advanced than the current level of human equipment. Indeed, some novas have achieved their fortunes by designing, patenting, and marketing improved versions of everyday products,

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

As far as these rules are concerned, core-tech, nova-tech, and quantum-tech are clearly distinct types of technology in the **Aberrant** period. This doesn't mean that the people of the time know of, understand, or even use these distinctions. Most people don't care if a device can be bulk manufactured, or whether it requires a nova's intervention in the creation process. To the average person on the street, anything designed by a nova is "nova-tech."

The exception is quantum technology. While most people are just as likely to call these devices nova-tech, the obvious demonstration of replicating nova powers makes these devices resonate more within the public consciousness. Hyperfusion just works, but the nova Singularity's gauntlets project gravity waves and turn the world upside down!

or more efficient and cost-effective ways of mass producing them.

The second category of technical advancement is referred to as *nova-tech*. Nova-tech is somewhat more difficult to define than core-tech. Essentially, nova-tech relies on novas to exist. This isn't limited to only being designed by novas but could include inventions that incorporate exotic materials produced by nova powers or drawn from nova physiology. While a baseline could develop the theoretical design for a piece of nova-tech, they couldn't build a prototype, much less move into mass production, without the required nova capabilities or samples. This breadth of design both confuses but defines nova-tech. Whereas the production process for a nova-derived pharmaceutical may be manufactured entirely through baseline methods as long as the supply of nova blood remains steady, another facility might require no exotic materials to produce its virtually-controlled microsurgical implant machines but can't without a nova with the right molecular manipulation powers to assemble them.

Finally, quantum technology — *Q-tech* — requires a nova to be able to function. Q-tech interacts with a nova's quantum imprint at a fundamental level to be able to function at all. Non-nova study of Q-tech can barely make any sense of how it works, even for apparently simple objects. In fact, some Q-tech simply shouldn't work according to any known laws of physical science, but they still do. A nova could build Q-tech versions of otherwise mundane technology, such as a toaster that happens to be powered by pure quantum flux, but few would bother except to amuse themselves. Q-tech can replicate Quantum Powers through technology. This is how several nova geniuses overcome their inherent lack of ability to fly or shoot power bolts from their fists.

Core-Tech

In the short time since they first appeared, nova-designed core-tech has changed the planet in dramatic ways. Faster, smarter computers with greater connectivity than ever before. New alloys and building materials letting engineers and architects create more resilient and cheaper structures. Limitless supplies of clean energy and near-perfect transmission systems to power the world. Few people can keep up with the rate of change as nova scientists seem to be racing in an ever-faster development cycle to see what they can come up with next.

The most important point about core-tech is that baselines can make it. Originally, novas had to conceive the design and follow the Crafting process to bring the item into being, but once it existed, others could follow the path. Increasingly with the advent of exotic materials and better understanding of novel processes, baseline inventors are improving on well-known designs to begin their own core-tech revolution. Like other mundane manufacture, making core-tech is simply a question of resources.

This isn't to say that core-tech can't have fantastic abilities. The nova technological revolution hasn't been driven by unique suits of armor that let a nova inventor engage in fistfights with her peers. No, the refinements to everyday items — and the exponential improvements to some of them — is what has changed the world for the better.

The core-tech revolution has been a cascading process of technical developments leading to a slew of cutting-edge inventions that lead to more technical developments and so on. Out of all this, developments in energy production and storage, and materials science are the foundations for everything that followed. These inventions are so well-known and ubiquitous in everyday life that few people ever stop to remember

that they didn't exist only a short time ago. Without the miracles of eufiber, hyperfusion, vitruvium, and novastalo, many other core-technologies wouldn't exist. Even many nova-tech and Q-tech inventions incorporate elements of these items in their design.

HYPERFUSION

Invented in 2022 by Dr. Soguk Birlesme, a diligent researcher and brilliant man who later proved to be a nova — though debate still exists around whether he invented hyperfusion before or after erupting — he has chosen to remain out of the spotlight and gave the hyperfusion reactor to Utopia to manage its release to the world. Baseline scientists still only poorly understand how the hyperfusion reactions are sustained without harmful radiation or byproducts, but the reactors are simple enough to build and maintain, leading to their rapid adoption across the world. The reactor design is almost completely incapable of experiencing harmful, catastrophic accidents. Damage to a hyperfusion reactor either reduces its output or has it shut down completely to an inert state. Combined with super-conductive eufiber technology, the energy from hyperfusion can be transmitted almost anywhere, or stored in high-capacity, super-efficient batteries.

EUFIBER

A carbon-silicate nanotube fiber invented by nova Anibal Buendía, eufiber displays near-perfect superconducting ability to certain kinds of energy, while being an equally almost-perfect repository to other energies. Inexpensive to make, light-weight to transport and easy to use, eufiber has replaced wires, cabling and fiber-optics in most building construction and electronics manufacture, as well as opening the door to human-machine interface by bridging the electrical signal gap between living nervous systems and manufactured circuitry. Eufiber can also be manufactured in a range of textures and colors making it a highly sought-after textile bringing high-tech connectivity and function to everyday garments. Additionally, eufiber is highly sensitive to quantum imprints and quickly "attunes" itself to a nova wearer's powers, allowing the nova to unleash her quantum abilities without fear of destroying her clothes.

MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

Across the world, novas with the ability to sense molecular or atomic arrangements within substances have added volumes to the base curriculum of the materials sciences. As a result of the new understanding, chemists and metallurgists have produced numerous variations of well-known substances that humanity has relied upon for building everything from household goods to households themselves. Two well-known products are *novastalo*, a practically indestructible alloy only marginally heavier than aluminum, and *vitruvium*, a glass-like material stronger than steel and unreactive



to most chemical agents, but these are only the beginning. Malleable memory materials have led to tools that can shift between several pre-programmed settings, meaning workers have entire toolboxes available while only carrying a few items. Liquid-phase construction materials can be transported as component ingredients, mixed to engineering requirements and 3D-printed onsite into whatever a build requires. The time saved in such an approach has aided the rapid development of housing and infrastructure in previously neglected parts of the world.

TRANSPORT

High-capacity, portable energy and ultra-light, strong materials have paved the way for new generations of safer, more reliable vehicles. These advances have also let engineers revisit concepts previously limited to theory. Long-distance air travel is faster and safer than ever with hypersonic passenger jets able to achieve speeds many times that of sound, significantly cutting travel times. A new generation of suborbital commercial jets are hitting the commercial airways, moving people to the other side of the world in less than an hour.

Planes and helicopters are no longer the only flying transport. The same engines and light-weight materials have fulfilled the long-desired dream of flying cars. Though so far only available to government agencies — usually police and emergency services — low-altitude vehicles ranging from motorcycle to small van size are an increasingly familiar sight in wealthier cities to help first responders get to where they're needed without being slowed by ground-based traffic.

HEALTH AND LIVING

In the biological fields, nova designs have led to the development of a wide range of medical, pharmaceutical, and genetic advancements — generally distributed to the world through Triton Foundation. HIV and most cancers have been eradicated, and effective gene therapies for inherited diseases are widely (and cheaply) available. Cheaply manufactured artificial blood and replacement organs have reduced the cost and waiting times for many medical procedures and have all-but eliminated complications from immune system rejection. Pushing the boundaries of genetic research and combining it with other technologies has allowed adventurous humans to modify their bodies to explore the oceans as aquamorphs, and seeding nutrient-treated eufiber with stem cells has bridged the gap between the human nervous system and computer processors to begin an age of cybernetic enhancement.

Nova-tech

Nova-tech is the cutting edge of what baselines will ever get to use. While core-tech is nova-designed, humans have the capacity to continue to manufacture items without novas. Not so with nova-tech, which requires novas to be involved in the process.

Despite nova-tech being described as a single category, it has two mostly distinct halves. The first comprises those designs that incorporate some exotic nova-derived material but use otherwise normal manufacturing processes. This category straddles the line between core-tech and nova-tech, as humans can produce these items as long as some nova keeps them supplied with the exotic ingredients — willingly or otherwise.

The second category needs novas to be involved in the creation process and can only be "mass-produced" in limited batches. These items rely on novas using their powers in the manufacturing process to produce or stabilize some component, to break something down into a vital and exotic subcomponent, or includes a step needing superhuman abilities to accomplish.

Because of their essential involvement in the process, novas have cornered the market in most nova-tech, and it is highly sought after as a result. Novas can name their price for many items with confidence that someone will pay it and procuring a nova-tech item is more often decided by who someone knows and what influence they can bring on the creator.

A pseudo-third category of nova-tech includes products specifically designed to work on novas themselves. These products also fall into one of the previous categories — either requiring nova-derived materials or needing nova intervention — but aren't intended to have any baseline applications. Examples of these technologies include moxinoquantamine, or mox, a neural inhibitor that impedes novas in using their powers, and adrenocilin, a stimulant known on the street as "plus," which has the opposite effect but is dangerously addictive. Mox and plus are most often found in pharmaceutical form, but the effects have also been replicated in electronic induction formats, including collar inhibitors that weaken the nova's powers, and boost harnesses that help channel the nova's abilities to new heights.

MOSTLY HARMLESS

While moxinoquantamine doesn't appear to cause an adverse reaction in baselines, medical researchers have noticed that some waste byproducts from metabolizing the chemical bioaccumulate in baselines. The scientists aren't sure precisely what effect this will have on exposed humans over time, but they're cautious. The discovery means that humans don't just pump aerosolized mox through the air conditioning systems of sensitive locations 24/7 as a precaution against novas.

The scientists are right to be concerned. The chemical byproducts don't just accumulate, they absorb Flux from quantum-rich environments and give human tissues long-term exposure to the transformative energies. A baseline gains a point of Flux whenever she is exposed to mox more times than her Stamina. See Quantum Flux and Transcendence, p. 88, and Healing, p. 212, for more detail on how Flux affects baselines.

Some nova-tech designed for novas can also affect baselines. Limited exposure to some, like mox, poses little threat to baselines while others, like plus, are dangerously toxic to baseline humans as the chemicals overcharge and destroy their cells. Other nova-tech has roughly the same effect on novas and baselines but is far more dangerous to humans. The drug mite, concocted from MR coils isolated and synthesized from nova tissue samples then spliced with steroid cocktails, gives novas a short-lived superhuman strength boost before fading back to the individual's normal levels. In humans, repeated use of the drug promotes massive rapid muscle growth to peak human levels — even minor superhuman levels — but also diminishes emotional control and enhances anger. This has led to what the media calls "mitoids" unleashing their anger on their fellow humans with often tragic results.

Q-tech

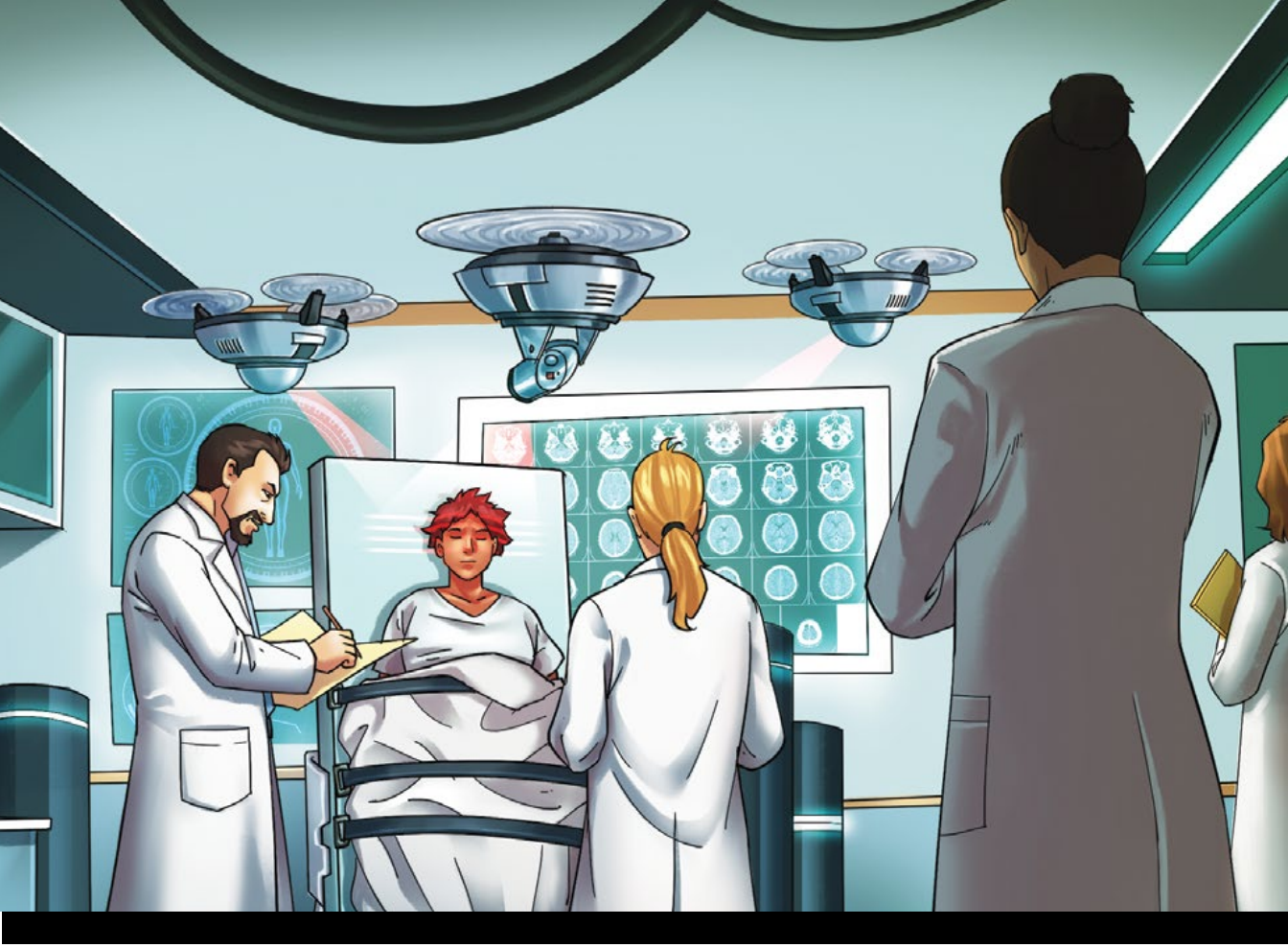
The culture shock that humanity has experienced with nova-designed core-tech and nova-tech is nothing compared to the items designed by novas, for novas. Every piece of quantum-tech — or Q-tech, as dubbed by fans — is a unique blend of science, art and power. To baseline researchers who have the privilege of studying Q-tech, some items are so fantastically complex that non-novas will never understand any of their workings. Other pieces are deceptively simple, appearing to conform within current baseline technological limits. Regardless of whether they appear straight-forward or defy imagination, no Q-tech will function without a nova, as every piece requires a living quantum flux field to work.

Scientists — even nova scientists — haven't yet definitively uncovered why this is the case. For some technology, the reasoning appears straight forward. The raw energy that's intrinsically part of every nova is the most powerful portable fuel imaginable, beyond even the most advanced hyperfusion batteries. When powering an inertia-less antigravity aircraft or a suit of powered armor barely larger than the wearer yet faster, tougher and better armed than the most advanced baseline fighter jet, nothing could provide the necessary power except the physics-defying powers of a nova. However, other Q-tech devices such as advanced firearms, hyper-advanced computers, or robots capable of independent action, seem like they should fall into the nova-tech field and work from conventional power sources.

Put simply, Q-tech requires a nova to power it because every piece of Q-tech replicates the workings of nova powers. Even when a nova power performs a function that can be achieved in non-nova ways, the power itself channels quantum flux to manipulate the raw fundamental forces of creation to create its effect. When using Q-tech, a nova channels flux through the technology to replicate the effect of a power, regardless of the appearance or complexity of the technology. Though novas can use Q-tech to reproduce a power they already possess, this is almost never the case. Novas most frequently build Q-tech to unlock access to powers they don't possess but want. Without a nova to provide the quantum flux to power the technology, it's essentially just inert junk.

Nova Devices

A nova may have up to twice her Wealth rating plus her Quantum rating in core-tech or nova-tech items. Devices bought with the Artifact Edge (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 66) do not count toward this limit. Novas can attune a single Q-tech device with the Attunement Edge (p. 95) and can attune more Q-tech items with the Q-tech Mega-Edge (p. 194). Q-tech devices cannot be purchased with the Artifact Edge.



NOVA SUPER-SCIENCE

Nova scientists have reshaped the world, somehow making the impossible possible through their technology. Every nova has the potential to invent miraculous new devices but not all nova inventors are created equal. Just as some novas can bench press a warship while others can barely lift their own body weight, so too can some novas churn out advanced technology in a fraction of the time it would take any other inventor. Some can even create the fantastic from seemingly everyday materials and without access to exotic ingredients.

What separates these specialized nova inventors from baselines is superhuman levels of intelligence. Just as superhumanly strong novas require Mega-Might to lift impossible loads and maintain structural integrity while holding these objects, Mega-Intellect novas reshape the rules of crafting new objects to shift the odds in their favor.

Nova Crafting

Novas without Mega-Intellect can invent new technologies. Their quantum-fueled abilities aren't as tuned towards technological discovery as some of their peers, but this is no more unfair than a character who concentrated on intellectual tasks complaining that they can't throw quantum bolts with as much force as someone focused on energy projection.

All novas can engage in Super Science by following the rules in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** (pp. 90-99), substituting the nova-specific tables below. Instead of crafting Advanced, Inspired, and Powered items, they craft core-tech, nova-tech, and quantum-tech (or Q-tech), respectively, and allow for the same Scale bonuses as mentioned in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook.**

NOVA CRAFTING (WITHOUT MEGA-INTELLECT)

RANK	MAXIMUM ENHANCEMENT	MAXIMUM EDGE DOT	MAXIMUM TAG BONUSES
1	2	One dot of Mental, Physical, and Social Edges	1
2	3	Up to three dots of Mental, Physical, and Social Edges	2
3	4	Up to five dots of Mental, Physical, and Social Edges OR Up to three dots of Style Edges OR Up to two dots of Quantum Abilities	3
4	5	Up to nine dots (all types)* but no more than three dots in Quantum Abilities	4
5	6	Up to 11 (all types)* but no more than five dots in Quantum Abilities	5

* Nova inventors can't construct devices that implement Powered Edges.

When building Q-tech, a nova inventor must meet the Quantum minimums for any power she builds into a device, but she need not possess the power herself. No single Quantum Power, Mega-Attribute, or Mega-Edge can have a higher dot rating than the device's Rank. This applies to both Crafting and Mega-Crafting. In addition to the dots associated with Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, and Quantum Powers, positive power tags each count as a dot for the purpose of filling a device's capacity. See Quantum Technology (p. 240) for more information on how Q-tech works.

Mega-Crafting

Novas with even a single dot of Mega-Intellect follow the rules below instead. Additionally, these characters can purchase Mega-Edges to further enhance their already prodigious grasp of the creative process and reshape the technological world to bring even more reward to their efforts.

Crafting core-tech items for a nova with even one dot of Mega-Intellect is a trivial task, requiring little time and effort as long as she has the correct materials for the job. Even then, she is intelligent enough to bypass certain material requirements as long as she can find, or produce, a suitable substitute. She can ignore the normal Skill and specialty requirements necessary for crafting a new item. When crafting a core-tech item, the player makes a single roll with a difficulty equal to the item's Rank. If successful, the item is fully crafted with only a single Milestone's worth of time passed.

The character's Mega-Intellect gives her a mental Scale over the complexity of the core-tech, and provides Enhancement based on the difference. The technology's complexity Scale is set by the Storyguide, though the item's Rank can be used as a guideline for this decision. Items up to Rank 2 have complexity Scale 1 while items of Rank 3-4 have a complexity Scale of 2 and anything at Rank 5 or more might have a complexity Scale of 3. No core-tech should have a complexity Scale above 3. If the nova has a mental Scale 3 steps higher than the complexity Scale of the item she is trying to create, she doesn't even need to roll to successfully craft it.

Mega-Intellect novas can make even more advanced technologies than baselines or normal novas, able to craft items up to Rank 9. Additionally, they can add more improvements to an item per Rank than lesser creators, as shown in the nearby table. As with the normal super science rules, Rank 1 and 2 items can have their maximum number of Enhancements and Edges without increasing the item's Rank, whereas the player can choose how to combine Enhancements and Edges for items of Rank 3 and above, to a maximum not exceeding the Enhancement rating for the item's Rank, or otherwise increase the item's Rank by 1. Mega-Intellect novas are still bound by the requirement to meet Quantum minimums for installed powers, and no installed Quantum Ability can have more dots than the device's Rank. See Quantum Technology (p. 240) for more information on how these devices work.

Mega-Crafting Nova and Q-tech

The mega-crafting rules for nova- and Q-tech creations are the same as found in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** pp. 92-96 with a few exceptions. While Complications for crafting

MEGA-CRAFTING

RANK+	QUANTUM MINIMUM	MAXIMUM ENHANCEMENT	MAXIMUM EDGE DOTS	MAXIMUM TAG BONUSES
1	1	3	Up to three dots of Mental, Physical, and Social Edges	2
2	1	4	Up to five dots of Mental, Physical, and Social Edges OR up to four dots of Style Edges	3
3	1	5	Up to 10 dots (all types)* but no more than three dots in Quantum Abilities	4
4	1	6	Up to 15 dots (all types)* but no more than five dots in Quantum Abilities	5
5	1	7	Up to 20 dots (all types)* but no more than seven dots in Quantum Abilities	6
6	4	8	Up to 25 dots (all types)* but no more than nine dots in Quantum Abilities	7
7	5	9	Up to 30 dots (all types)* but no more than 12 dots in Quantum Abilities	8
8	6	10	Up to 35 dots (all types)* but no more than 15 dots in Quantum Abilities	9
9	7	11	Up to 40 dots (all types)* but no more than 20 dots in Quantum Abilities	10

* Nova inventors can't construct devices that implement Powered Edges.

+ Any item crafted above Rank 5 is considered Q-tech.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NOVA- AND Q-TECH

When a player decides on a new crafting project, you may wonder if the project is inherently Q-tech or nova-tech in its design. The answer to this question is one of practicality and a conversation between the Storyguide and player. If the item is something completely new and contingent on the use of Quantum Abilities, it is inherently Q-tech. If she wants to mass produce that design, she will need to shift the paradigm to make it nova-tech. If the technology is new but something you could imagine existing in a few years, or doesn't rely completely on Quantum Abilities (though can include one or two of them) then that would be nova-tech. If the nova has maybe reverse engineered someone else's Q-tech device, she can shift the paradigm and create it as nova-tech. Any item crafted above Rank 5 is considered Q-tech.

There is no hard and fast rule for deciding what constitutes the difference between a nova-tech item and a Q-tech item at lower Ranks. Storyguides should use their best judgement on if an item is inherently using Quantum Abilities or is simply a device that can be powered by one.

these items might be more specific than budgeting or a time crunch, novas run into their own sets of Complications. The Storyguide is encouraged to come up with appropriate Complications befitting a project that requires Quantum energies to create.

Whenever the nova forms a dice pool related to the crafting project, she may apply her Mega-Attributes as various types of Scale to overcome the Difficulty or Complications, usually adding 2 Enhancement per dot of Mega-Attribute. As the Storyguide can change the specific dice pools required throughout the project, the player must describe how the Mega-Attribute applies to a given action. The Storyguide is free to disagree that the explanation fits the scenario, and therefore deny the use of the Mega-Edge, with one restriction — Mega-Intellect, Mega-Cunning, or Mega-Resolve can be applied to every crafting action. No action exists in the super science crafting process that can't be enhanced by one of those nova abilities. Storyguides are encouraged to be flexible and allow the players to use their character's powers in inventive ways and should work with the players to shape the description of how a Mega-Attribute applies to an action if the player is having difficulty. This application of Mental Mega-Attributes doesn't stack with any other Mega-Attributes relevant to the action — the player must decide which one to use but can use any applicable Mega-Edges from the other Mega-Attribute. This Scale is, as before, compared to the complexity Scale of the item. Again, this is determined by the Storyguide, though we've included suggestions in the table on p. 237.

Milestones, crafting times, and introduction of Flaws works the same as normal crafting, though novas tend to craft even their wildly outlandish technology faster than baselines. A modified milestone chart can be found below. Additionally, nova- and Q-tech often need rare or exotic materials at higher Ranks. Sometimes those materials are so rare that the character may need to travel to another part of the world to find it, or maybe it can only be found with another nova. The more complex the level of technology, the more rare items the nova needs to craft it. Each rare material is represented as an additional Milestone the nova must overcome when crafting the item.

A nova can create Q-tech devices that are simply modules that go inside other Q-tech devices. Crafting a module counts as its own crafting project, with a few differences. The module can only contain a single Quantum Ability. The module's item Rank is 1 plus the dot rating of the Quantum Ability included in the module, divided by 2 (round up). Modules cannot function on their own and must be installed in a more complex Q-tech device with appropriate module slots open for use.

Quantum Technology Power Tags

When creating a Q-tech device, nova crafters have access to two additional tags which they can apply to their creations. Specifically, these power tags apply to the Quantum Powers installed on the device.

INTRINSIC

The Quantum Power with this tag activates at the same time the device activates and remains active for as long as the device is active. Powers without this tag must be activated by the nova for each use. Only powers with a Duration longer than Instant can carry this tag.

MODULAR

The Quantum Power with this tag is part of a separate device which is plugged into the Q-tech item. A modular power can be removed or placed into any item with the appropriate modification slot open. When initially crafting (or designing) the device, the crafter can sacrifice one dot worth of Edges to make the item Modular. She defines at that time if the module is for a Mega-Attribute, Mega-Edge, or Quantum Power. She can sacrifice additional Edge dots to create more slots for additional modules.

When a character purchase a new Quantum Ability with experience, she may purchase the Modular tag on that ability to slot it into her device. Modular powers must got into slots of the same type. A modular Mega-Attribute can't fit in the space left by a Modular Quantum Power. Powers with the Modular tag may also have the Intrinsic tag, purchased separately.

Crafting Q-Tech Costs

Unlike core-tech and nova-tech, Q-tech requires a nova inventor to invest part of herself in the invention, to make the device resonate with quantum energies and make the impossible possible. For the character, this investment takes the form of a Quantum cost. The inventor can make plans, gather materials, and construct a device in her workshop, but without investing a part of herself into the device, it will remain an inert mass of junk. She must invest one Quantum point per Rank of the item, which counts as its attunement cost.

Quantum spent in this way is gone forever, or at least until the Q-tech is question is destroyed and the

RANK	TIME BETWEEN MILESTONES	LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY	COMPLEXITY SCALE	EXOTIC MATERIALS REQUIRED
1	One scene	Items that enhance an already-existing object	1	0
2	Two scenes	Items created from scratch, though often based on existing theories and technology	1	0
3	Three scenes	Items on the bleeding edge of current tech, possibly five to 10 years ahead of its time	2	1
4	One session	Leaps and bounds ahead of current tech and scientific theory	2	1
5	Two sessions	Decades ahead of current science, the type of invention that would be a lifetime's work for a baseline scientist	3	2
6	Three sessions	Centuries ahead of current science, inconceivable for a baseline scientist to achieve	4	2
7	Four sessions	The realm of science-fiction, acting in contravention of existing scientific understanding and theory	5	3
8	Five sessions	Science-fantasy, with seemingly no basis in scientific limitations	6	3
9	Six sessions	Pure wish fulfillment with few limitations	7	4

nova reclaims her Quantum, or she relinquishes her attunement to the item. Reduce the character's maximum Quantum Point pool by the number of points she has in Q-tech.

Additionally, the player must have attunement slots available for the device, either through the Attunement Edge (p. 95) or the Q-tech Mega-Edge (p. 194). If she does not have enough attunement slots available for the Rank of the item, she must spend Experience immediately to compensate. This Q-tech item is precious to its wielder. Only the nova who is attuned to the device can use it, but that doesn't mean it can't be lost, stolen, or destroyed. If the item is lost or stolen, the character does not regain her spent Quantum. If the item is destroyed, she regains her spend Quantum.

A nova can craft modules to add to her Q-tech device after she's created it by using the Modular power tag. Modules are created by purchasing the Modular Power Tag for the Quantum Power. These Modules do not require Quantum investment, nor do they count against the Rank of the Q-tech device.

Repairing, Reverse Engineering, and Reforging

Nova-created equipment tends to be hard wearing unless designed to break or filled with inescapable Flaws. Nonetheless, devices can be damaged or broken through deliberate action or misadventure. Repairing a super science device requires another creation project, halving the Difficulty, number of milestones, and exotic materials required to initially create the item. The Storyguide sets the requirements and what steps each milestone represents. Repairing an item counts against the number of simultaneous projects a character can manage, at the item's original Rank.

Nova-designs are resistant to reverse engineering by anyone less enhanced than the nova. How difficult it is for a character to understand the workings of a nova-created device depends on how similar the character's experience is to that of the original creator, as outlined in the nearby table.

The system to reverse engineer a device is similar to repairing the item, except exotic materials

DAMAGED TECH (STATUS CONDITIONS)

The device is damaged, possibly from misuse, misadventure, or being pushed beyond its design limits. The three Status Conditions below apply to devices in the same way Injury Conditions apply to living characters. Each Condition shares the same Resolution.

Glitch -1

The device is not responding properly and is difficult to use.

Malfunction -2

The device works sporadically and unreliably.

Shutdown -4

The device is broken and barely works at all.

Resolution: Repaired by an appropriate technician, applying the severity of the Status Condition as Difficulty to repair rolls.

aren't required. Each Flaw in the item counts as a Complication equal to the dots in the Flaw, which must be bought off during milestones as if the character was crafting the device. Failing to overcome these Complications means the character believes those Flaws to be intrinsic aspects of the device — these Flaws are automatically added to any copies of this device she makes and can't be bought off through spending successes. Successfully completing the reverse engineering project gives the character a pool of Enhancement equal to the Rank of the original device. This Enhancement can be spent as the character desires to assist her rolls in crafting her own version of the device and can even be spent after she has seen the number of successes her roll generates.

Novas can also reforge inventions by following the rules in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** (pp. 97-98). As per those rules, if the nova isn't the device's original creator, she needs to reverse engineer the item, discovering how the device works before she can improve upon it.

Shifting the Paradigm

Novas change the world around them simply by existing. What was once impossible, and the province of imagination alone, becomes commonplace on social media and news broadcasts. People come to expect more out of what is possible.

This carries through to technology. Few people can keep up with the future shock generated by nova inventors simply doing what their powers and awareness drives them to do. Limitless clean, portable energy was in early development before novas dropped the hyperfusion reactor onto the world. All-temperature superconducting fiber that was also fashionable was science fiction before eufiber. Eventually, artificial gravity crystals are going to be an accepted part of space travel.

Novas do more than just change expectations of what's possible. Over time, over iterations of inventions that constantly push the boundaries of science and reason, novas change what is possible. A nova who takes the time and effort to refine and rework her inventions can eventually find that the functions of the invention may come more easily — not just to her, but to everyone. A nova technologist who builds a Q-tech flying suit incorporating the Flight Quantum Power may be frustrated that her baseline friends can't use it. Over time, as she modifies and refines the design time and again, she works out how to replicate the effects of Flight without needing the Quantum Power. The miniaturization and precision of the thrusters, and construction of lightweight batteries still requires her attention in the Crafting process, but she's able to build a harness for each of her friends. The technological reproductions may not be quite as fast or as maneuverable as her Q-tech suits, but they work. The nova inventor has successfully shifted the paradigm for this technology from Q-tech to nova-tech.

With many more iterations and dozens or hundreds of redesigns of the suit, the inventor eventually creates a design (along with manufacturing instructions) that baselines can build for themselves, successfully shifting the paradigm from nova-tech to core-tech. Again, this version may not have all the capabilities of the more advanced versions, but they do work. Soon the market is flooded with individual flying harnesses, with the social flow-on effects this causes — but that's

REVERSE ENGINEERING TABLE

SITUATION	MODIFIER
Mega-Intellect dots	+/–difference between character and device creator
Character is lower Tier than creator	+2 Difficulty per Tier
Reverse engineering core-tech	+0
Reverse engineering nova-tech	+1 Difficulty
Nova reverse engineering Q-tech	+2 Difficulty
Non-nova reverse engineering Q-tech	Impossible

hardly the nova inventor's concern.

Following this pathway is essentially how eufiber and hyperfusion became easily manufactured and ubiquitous baseline equipment. Neither of these technological wonders started out as plans that baselines could build by following the steps. Their inventors invested considerable time and energy into bringing these inventions to the masses. Some other nova inventors with experience in the paradigm shift wonder what the original versions of these technologies were for.

Shifting in Game

Shifting the paradigm isn't quick or easy, and most nova inventors don't even know it's possible. So far, only the most focused or obsessed individuals have cracked the secret. To shift the paradigm, a nova inventor must undertake another crafting project for essentially — but not precisely — the same piece of equipment. Doing this is its own special crafting project with a Rank and Difficulty equal to the Rank of the item in question. The timeline for each Milestone is doubled. There are no Flaws; instead not buying off Complications leads to additional time added as the nova fidgets and reworks her design. Failed rolls simply stall the project, waiting for another Milestone to pass as she attempts to perfect and simplify the design. The nova can decide to abandon the project at any time, losing only time and probably a considerable amount of money and materials in doing so. When she's finished with the initial crafting project, she must Reverse Engineer her finished design to finally change the Paradigm and she can now craft a nova-tech version of the device.

When creating a nova-tech version of the device, the nova deconstructs her Q-tech device and uses its parts to create it. It serves as any and all material requirements, including exotic materials. In doing this, the nova reclaims her invested Quantum.

The early versions of paradigm-shifted devices are rarely as efficient or compact as later iterations. A nova-tech version of the device must be the same Rank as the Q-tech, even if the device itself doesn't require all the capacity of that rank. In constructing the nova-tech version, the nova inventor uses the device's Edge dots to install the functions of a single dot of a Quantum Power, Mega-Attribute, or Mega-Edge, as per the table below. This is specifically only replicating the primary effect of the power, not the power itself, and the final device doesn't require attunement or Quantum points to operate. A more conventional power source is considered to be factored into the design.

If the character wants to shift the paradigm again and learn how to make the device as core-tech, she follows the same steps, as above.

POWER TYPE	EDGE DOTS USED
Mega-Attribute	2
Mega-Edge	1
Quantum Power	3

QUANTUM TECHNOLOGY

Quantum technology opens the gateway to technologists gaining access to powers their peers manifest directly, or for novas to expand what powers they can use. Q-tech devices can provide Enhancement or Edges much like core-tech and nova-tech but incorporating these quantum powers separates the invention from other technologies. Regardless of what form they take, or how the inner workings appear, Q-tech won't work without the interaction of an active quantum flux field, which only novas possess. Because of this, Q-tech can't be used by baselines or psiads and follows the additional rules and considerations presented here.

Attunement

Much like the act of creating Q-tech, using it requires a nova to invest part of her power into the device to function. Without this investment the device will remain inert, unable to impart any function to the user, even those that don't replicate Quantum Powers. For Q-tech to function, it must harmonize with a living quantum flux field. This harmony forges the necessary link between the device and fundamental forces so it can replicate Quantum Powers. Harmonizing Q-tech is known as attunement. In fact, characters can attune a single Q-tech item through the Attunement Edge (p. 95), though to attune more powerful or multiple items, they must purchase the Q-tech Mega-Edge. Characters who build their own Q-tech devices are already considered attuned to the device, but must have slots available through the above mentioned Edges.

Overwriting Attunement

If a nova acquires Q-tech that she wants to attune, and the previous owner is unwilling or unable to remove her attunement, he can overwrite the previous attunement with his own. Doing so requires the nova to regularly interact with the device as with any attunement, but he must do so for a minimum number of days equal to the device's Rank *plus* the owner's Quantum trait. At the end of each day he rolls Quantum — if he succeeds that day counts towards the total. If the nova botches he loses all progress and must start again. After completing the required number of days, the nova must pay the attunement Quantum cost. The Q-tech is now attuned to the new nova and the overwritten Quantum returns to the previous owner (see below).

Switching Attunement

Due to the nature of harmonizing Q-tech devices with a nova's Quantum imprint, Quantum used by a character in Attuning a device is effectively out of reach for a period equal to the Rank of the device in weeks. The nova can't voluntarily remove the attunement during this period, though this doesn't protect a device from theft and overwriting. If another nova does overwrite the character's attunement before the commitment period has expired, the character regains her Quantum maximum and it can replenish normally. After the minimum period has passed, the character can sever attunement with a moment's concentration and her Quantum point maximum is increased by the amount spent on the item.

Using Q-tech when Unattuned

It is possible for novas who are not attuned to a Q-tech device to gain some limited use from it. The player rolls the nova's Quantum trait, and on a success can use the device for one Scene before it shuts down. The character must pay the usual Quantum points cost for any powers as if she was the attuned user and must overcome +1 Difficulty as the Q-tech lacks the intimate familiarity with the nova's quantum imprint. A nova can only attempt this once per device — if she tries a second time, or botches the Quantum roll on her first attempt, the Q-tech is damaged and must be repaired (p. 237) before anyone can use it again. Talents can also attempt this, spending a point of Inspiration and rolling their Intuitive facet instead of Quantum. If successful, the character can use the device as would a nova, spending Inspiration in place of Quantum points. Psiads can't attempt to use Q-tech at all.

Activating Q-tech

Attuning a device only makes it compatible with a specific nova, it doesn't provide the energy it needs to work. The nova needs to spend Quantum points to fuel the Q-tech. If attuning is making sure the device has the correct plug to fit into the power socket, providing the Quantum points is equivalent to flipping the switch on.

To power a Q-tech device, the nova must spend and commit Quantum points while the item is active. If the nova stops committing the Quantum points at any time the device instantly stops working. Additionally, the device's creator can choose to install powers with the Intrinsic power tag. These



powers activate when the nova activates the device and are available as long the nova keeps committing the Quantum points used for activation to the device. The nova must pay the standard activation cost of all other powers each time she wants to use them. Only Quantum Powers with a Duration of Concentration, Maintained, or Continuous can be intrinsic, and each contributes to the device's activation cost. Mega-Attributes are usually installed as intrinsic powers, but the inventor can reduce the device's crafting Difficulty by not applying this tag. Because Mega-Attributes do not normally have a Quantum Point cost for use, determine the Quantum point cost to activate Q-tech Mega-Attributes (intrinsic or otherwise) as half the Mega-Attribute's dot rating, rounded up.

A device's Quantum points activation cost equals the device's Rank, plus half the normal activation cost of all the intrinsic powers (rounded up). If the device's use imposes Flux, the nova incurs these Flux points when she activates the device, not each time she chooses to use one of the device's powers.

Using Q-tech

When activated, a Q-tech device uses the nova's skills and Attributes to determine dice pools. The device may have been constructed with Enhancements, Edges, or Mega-Attributes that modify rolls. Similarly, Flaws in the construction process may impose Difficulty or Complications. Apply each of these modifiers to roll results as normal.

Q-tech can provide a character access to powers that are normally beyond her reach. If the nova's Quantum trait is less than a power's minimum required Quantum rating, the character can still use it but suffers a Complication equal to the difference. If she fails to buy off this Complication, she doesn't have full control of the power and the Storyguide can either impose Flux points equal to the residual Complication or inflict some other unfortunate narrative consequence on the character.

Conversely, a nova may use a device that imparts a power she already possesses. In this case, the nova's own power increases the effectiveness of the Q-tech, providing 1 Enhancement to rolls using that power.

Modular Powers

Some Q-tech devices include modules that can be swapped for out as the situation demands — sometimes quite quickly. (See Power Tags, p. 199). The device doesn't have to be deactivated to exchange modules. Removing a module with an intrinsic

power releases the Quantum points required for its activation. Adding a module while the device is active requires the nova to spend one Quantum point, and if the module contains an intrinsic power, the character must also spend half the power's normal activation cost (round up) which remains committed as long as the device is active.

Maxing Out Q-tech Powers

Much like a nova can "max out" her own powers, a nova can attempt to push powers in Q-tech beyond their design limits as well. The nova can choose to either take a point of Flux or allow the device to gain a level of the Damaged Tech Status Condition (p. 238), and spends Quantum points to assemble a pool of dice, one point per die, up to a maximum number of dice equal to their Quantum rating or the device's Rank, whichever is lower. The player rolls these dice as a reflexive action. On a Failure the Quantum points are lost, and the nova receives Momentum. A botch means the nova gains an additional point of Flux or the device gains an additional level of Damaged Tech. The nova can spend Successes in the following ways:

- Add one dot to one of the device's Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, or Quantum Powers.
- Add one point in a power tag to one of the device's Quantum Powers. This includes increasing an existing power tag the power does not normally possess.

Maxing out Q-tech usually lasts one round, the same as if a nova maxed out her own powers. She can extend the maxed-out duration for another round by spending additional Quantum points equal to the maxing out successes, but the device automatically gains a level of the Damaged Tech Status Condition (p. 238).

New Nova-technology Flaws

In addition to the existing crafting Flaws on pp. 98-99 of the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, nova-designed devices can possess the following additional crafting Flaws.

COSTLY TO RUN (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Core-tech and nova-tech

The device requires Quantum Flux to function, even though it isn't Q-tech. When activating the device, a nova must touch it and spend one Quantum point per dot of this Flaw or the device refuses to function. This cost need only be spent once per day when first activating the device.

DIFFICULT TO REPAIR (• TO •••••)

The device is hard to repair when damaged and requires an additional milestone per dot.

EXPENSIVE ATTUNEMENT (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Q-tech

The device requires additional effort for a nova to attune. Each dot of this Flaw adds one Quantum to the device's attunement cost.

HARD TO USE (• TO •••••)

The device has some artifact of its construction that impacts its use. A weapon might always manage to hit some bystander or ally when it misses the target, no matter how well its sights are calibrated, or a healing device might inflict other trauma on the patient even as it sutures his physical wounds. The Storyguide and player should work together to determine the exact effect. Using the device imposes a Complication equal to the dots in this Flaw. Failing to buy off this Complication causes the unwanted side effect.

IMPRECISE (• TO •••••)

The device is difficult to use in the manner intended, inflicting Difficulty to operate equal to the dots in this Flaw to rolls.

KICKSTART REQUIRED (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Q-tech

The device requires extra Quantum flux to get it working. When activating the device, the nova must spend an additional Quantum point per dot of this Flaw or it won't function. The nova doesn't have to keep these Quantum points committed, but if she doesn't, the device begins to shut down and will become unpowered in six rounds, minus one per dot in this Flaw.

SLOW ACTIVATION/DEACTIVATION (• TO ••••• EACH)

The device requires considerable time to equip, use, or remove. Examples include an automated process that constructs a suit of armor around the character, or a device that needs to cycle through an extensive boot up sequence before being ready for use. The device requires its Rank in Rounds per dot to activate/deactivate, and this Flaw can be taken separately for activating or deactivating the device.

ITEM	RANK *	ENHANCEMENT	EDGES	QUANTUM POWERS	TAGS	FLAWS
Bullet Dodging Shield	3+	3	Deflection Adept, Durability 2	Quantum Deflection	Modular: Mega-Edge	—
Cyber Suit	7+	4	Mega—Might 3 (Intrinsic), Mega—Dexterity 1 (Intrinsic), Digital Scan, Spectrum Vision (Modular), Ultraperipheral Perception (Modular)	Flight (Modular), Quantum Attack 4 (Aggravated, Beam, Ranged: Medium)	Modular: Quantum Power 2, Mega-Attribute 2, Mega-Edge 3	Kickstart Required 2
Gadget Belt	3	1	Fast Draw, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Mega—Dexterity 1 (Intrinsic), Multitasking 2	—	Modular: Mega-Attribute 1, Mega-Edge 1	—
Intelligent Car	4+	1	Mega—Intellect 1 (Intrinsic), Mega—Dexterity 1 (Intrinsic), Digital Manipulation 2, Mega—Speed	—	Modular: Mega-Attribute 2	Limited Resources
Quantum Attack Module	3+	1	—	Quantum Attack 4 (Deadly, Piercing, Ranged: Long)	Modular: Quantum Power 2	—
Size Changing Suit	8+	5	Mega—Might 3	Growth 6 (Intrinsic), Shrinking 6 (Intrinsic)	—	Difficult to Repair 5
Teleportation Device	4+	1	—	Teleport 3 (Distance Extreme)	—	—
Telecommunication Module	1	1	Telecommunication	—	Modular: Mega-Edge 1	—

*Item Ranks with a + are considered Q—tech items.

SLOW ATTUNEMENT (• TO •••••)

Prerequisite: Q-tech

The device takes longer to attune than most Q-tech inventions. Though the device costs the same Quantum investment, attunement requires one additional day per dot of this Flaw.

TEMPORARY ATTUNEMENT (•)

Prerequisite: Q-tech

The device can't hold attunement for extended periods. The device automatically de-attunes after a number of weeks equal to its Rank. This frees the Quantum invested in the device and must be attuned again before use.


CAN'T YOU GO ANY FASTER?
I COULD AND THEN YOU'D DIE FROM LEAD POISONING
FROM ME SHOOTING YOU
DANA, NO ONE SAY'S 'LEAD POISONING' ANYMORE
WOOOOSH
SHUT UP, GARY AND RESPECT HOW CLEVER I AM
THE PLANS SAID WE NEED TO TURN LEFT HERE
HANG ON. WHAT'S THAT..?
WHY WON'T THE LIGHTS TURN ON?
AH! HERE WE GO!
OOF
WHAT THE-?


DID YOU HAVE TO GIVE HIM LEAD POISONING?
IT WAS HIM OR ME
DO PEOPLE STIL SAY 'IT WAS HIM OR ME'?
NOT IF THEY WANT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY
JACKASS
GARY, WHAT THE HELL? WHY ARE YOU BLOCKING THE DOOR?
SMALL PROBLEM, DANA
AH
HEY!
SORRY, AGENT DELTA-13. YOU SEE, I'M ACTUALLY A NOVA...
AND I'VE DECIDED TO SWITCH SIDES

CHAPTER EIGHT: STORYGUIDING

"Life doesn't give us purpose. We give life purpose."
The Flash, *Blackest Night #8*

In **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant**, the Storyguide takes on the role of the narrator. They guide the plot and control the non-player characters and setting. The Storyguide also creates scenarios for the players. The players then play as their characters and use the rules of the game to determine what happens.

Aberrant lets players take on the role of novas, Talents, and psiads. Taking on these powerful personas allows the players to become active participants in the story being told. The characters probably won't succeed in every task, but they aren't limited to pre-made outcomes.

The appeal of games like **Aberrant** is that it is based in player choice. Players can customize their character as much as they want, and their character can make whatever decisions they desire (though this is not necessarily without in-world consequences). Using the world outlined in this book, players insert their own nova avatars into the setting and play through stories created by the Storyguide.

The Storyguide must balance the game to make it challenging for the players but not impossible. They must do this both on a rules-oriented level and story-wise. Again, the characters don't need to succeed all the time, but they should generally have both successes and failures throughout the story. A scenario that's designed to make the characters fail constantly may be frustrating for the player. Similarly, a game that is filled with successes may bore the players.

Though the Storyguide's role is important, the cooperative aspect of storytelling is what makes tabletop roleplaying games work. Storyguides put a lot of effort into creating scenarios, but it only becomes complete when the players begin to play. If there is one rule that Storyguides must follow, it is to communicate with and respect their players. As long as the game continues to be fun for everyone at the table, even unexpected outcomes can turn into something great.

CHOOSING A TONE

The Four-Color, Cinematic, and Deconstruction Tones (p. 171) are the first thing Storyguides need to worry about in **Aberrant**. Consider the three Tones and how they will affect your group's encounters and story. In a world filled with novas, each action has a consequence. This fits into the game's main theme of sacrifice. Every action leads to an equal reaction. In what way does this reaction occur? How does it affect your group?

While one person is the Storyguide, **Aberrant** is, at its core, a collaborative storytelling experience. The entire group participates in crafting the story, though the Storyguide provides narration and voices for non-player characters. The Tones help everyone know what to expect in a game of **Aberrant**. While specific consequences will occur in the moment, Tones help to give players an idea of what themes and tropes to expect. The Storyguide will narrate through the lens of these Tones while the group plays through the game.

The Storyguide (and also the players) is expected to understand the chosen Tone. If a story in Four-Color Tone begins to take dark, ironic twists, then there has likely been a miscommunication somewhere along the line. Tones exist so the players know what to expect when performing their actions. The Storyguide should be aware of it when designing the twists and turns in their story. It's like

comparing old, golden age comics with modern superhero movies: While both are fun and enjoyable, they tell different stories and the world reacts in different ways to character action.

Each Tone is enjoyable in its own way, but not every story will be as effective in some Tones. For instance, in Four-Color Tone, the good guys win and the bad guys lose. There are consequences for players' actions, but the Tone is designed to maintain the status quo. In Four-Color Tone, everything is a clear moral choice. It largely lacks gray areas. So, if the group is made up of heroes, they will likely stay heroes and vice versa. In each Tone, the Storyguide should design scenarios that fit the themes and tropes of that Tone. The more the Storyguide drifts away from the Tone, the more the game starts to fall apart.

Four-Color Tone can still be used to evoke themes of sacrifice and changing the world. Even if the good guys win, they may lose some things along the way. Many classic superheroes would fit into Four-Color Tone very easily. While classic comic storylines involve binary good or evil choices, there still is a great deal of sacrifice involved. Because this is of the central themes of **Aberrant**, the Storyguide will need to consider how to fit this in while still maintaining the bright and optimistic world created in Four-Color Tone.

Cinematic and Deconstruction Tones fit in easily with **Aberrant's** theme of changing the world, for better or worse. Though Deconstruction and Four-Color Tones are essentially opposites, both can implement the game's main themes. Deconstruction Tone subverts the expectations of Four-Color Tone, but, in both cases, the world is changed because of the group's actions. The Tone simply guides how it changes.

In Cinematic or Deconstruction Tone, a character's good intentions may lead to terrible consequences. This is perfect for players who want to play through a game that doesn't heavily rely on classic superhero tropes. Cinematic and Deconstruction Tone have lots of twists and turns, and it's easy to surprise players with the unexpected. However, the Storyguide should be careful when telling the difference between subverting player expectation and ruining players' plans for no reason.

In Cinematic and Deconstruction Tone, players' actions lead to major changes within the world. In these Tones, the players are more likely to accidentally set off a chain of events that will change the course of history. The players can still be heroes, but they must also examine their choices and realize that they cannot take anything for granted. In these Tones, the Storyguide should focus on how superpowered actions affect the history of humankind.

In all the Tones, there are cultural touchstones for the Storyguide and the players. To comic book and superhero fans, these Tones will all likely sound very familiar. This keeps the game accessible to new and old superhero fans. New fans will be able to play off of familiar tropes until they get their feet wet in the system. Once this happens, they can branch off in unique directions while keeping in the same theme and tone.

CHOOSING A SUBGENRE

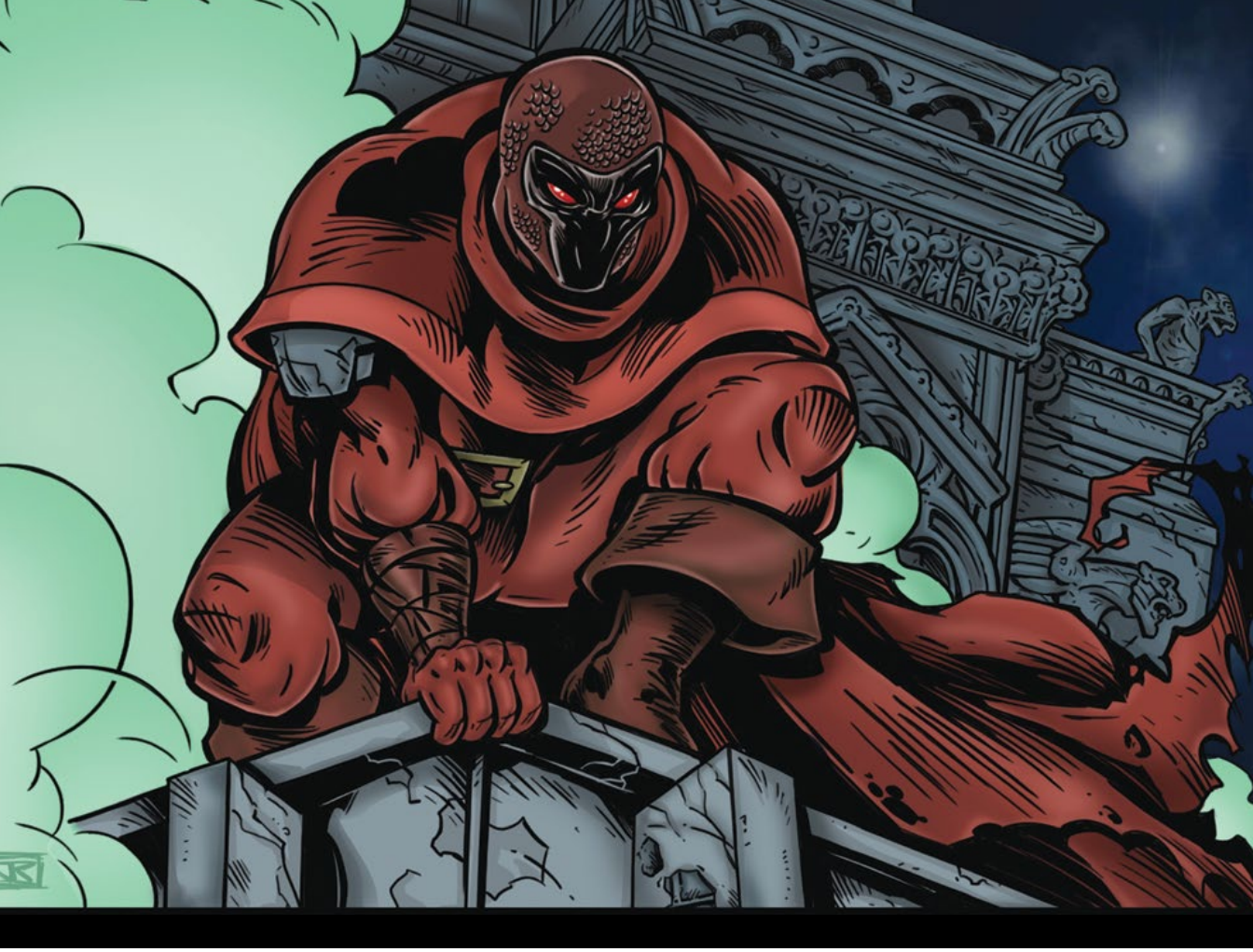
Now that the Storyguide and players have agreed on a Tone, they need to discuss the Subgenre (p. 174) of the game. Is your story focused on a team of vigilantes with a strong moral code? Does it heavily include corrupt politicians? Is it set in space? These types of questions are what a Storyguide should consider when the Subgenre has been chosen.

Like Tones, Subgenres define player expectation. Though the Storyguide may be creating plot points for it, it's important that the players know what kinds of characters to make. After the Subgenre is chosen, the Storyguide should consider the finer points of the genre and what larger implications they have for the world. Especially for Subgenres like Politics or Social Commentary, the players' actions will greatly affect the story and the public's perception of novas. The Storyguide can think of interesting ways to explore those tropes without venturing too far from the game's genres.

Celebrity

All novas are famous to some degree. However, these types of stories would focus on fame and the consequences that come with it. When creating a game with a celebrity focus, consider how fame affects novas. Becoming a nova is a seemingly random occurrence. How would the average person react to becoming a celebrity overnight? Some novas, when fame is thrust upon them, become addicted to it. Cults of personality are also a huge part of the world. How will nova fan clubs affect the players? Consider the ways in which fan clubs can become more akin to cults.

Scenarios with a Celebrity Subgenre should heavily feature public perception of novas both as



a whole and individually. The attitude toward novas differs greatly from location to location, but the celebrity status of individual novas may remain the same. How do your players reconcile the two sometimes opposing views?

Additionally, Storyguides creating a Celebrity Subgenre game should consider the effects of technology on celebrity culture. **Aberrant** is set in the future and features more advanced technology. Consider how the rise of social media influences celebrity culture. Give your characters opportunities to react to things like going from having three followers on social media to three million. How does social media look in another decade? When novas can broadcast their thoughts and activities to the world with a click of a button, what consequences does that bring?

Crime-Fighting

This is a classic superhero trope. Do-gooders, when given extreme power, will use it. Crime-fighting can have a positive impact on communities, as vigilantes can tread where law enforcement cannot, but traditional law enforcement is still a prominent element. Even if a player circumvents the law to enact justice, the justice system may not see it that way.

Consider how different communities react to crime fighters. Some may be prejudiced against novas and consider their attempts to help at interference. Others may like novas or a nova may be operating in their own neighborhood, leading to camaraderie with their baseline human neighbors. Consider also the effect that the Tone will have on public perception of crime-fighting novas. Deconstruction Tone in particular will turn the do-gooder superhero trope on its head.

The Crime-Fighting Subgenre doesn't have to be just simple muggings in dark alleyways. Players can take on the role of detectives, searching for clues and patterns. They can also tackle organized crime. Though organized crime has mostly been abolished thanks to Team Tomorrow, it remains a major issue in some parts of the world. Don't be afraid to approach the Subgenre from unique angles.

Espionage

The various factions within the setting like to keep an eye on one another. In this Subgenre, players have the opportunity to explore the goings-on of multiple groups or people within the universe. Seeing what's going on beneath the surface can lead to interesting opportunities. This also gives players the chance to sneak and listen rather than monologue and fight.

Espionage is a special skill that gives the players as many opportunities to succeed as it does to fail. If the players do fail and are found out, that doesn't necessarily mean that the story stops. The faction being spied on may be interested in what the novas have to offer. This could lead to the characters engaging in the activities they sought out to stop.

Consider the hidden or unknown parts of the setting when planning an Espionage game. The main goal of this Subgenre is for players to uncover information. The more interesting the information, the more compelling the story. Storyguides can come up with their own secrets to hide throughout the world or choose some from this book (such as those in Chapter Ten, starting on p. 274).

Horror

No one knows exactly what happens during a nova's transformation process. Once the transformation begins, it's unclear when or how it will end. This genre allows the group to explore the innately terrifying scenario of anyone becoming a super-being at random. From the biological process of eruption to the discovery of how far a nova can be pushed, many parts about being a nova are truly horrifying.

There's also some opportunity to include gothic horror in this Subgenre. Though **Aberrant** is set in the future, Storyguides can still include elements of romanticism in their plot. Combining romantic elements with frightening visuals can take your players on an emotional — and terrifying — journey.

One of the best ways to incorporate horror into your scenario is using details. Getting into exactly what the players are seeing in all its gory detail is one step to creating a Horror game (just make sure they're okay with depictions of gore before you start tossing entrails at them). Have your characters explore the side of nova evolution that goes beyond bright costumes and superpowered teams. What happens when the superhero veneer designed by Project Utopia is taken away? This, combined with a pacing that steadily builds suspense, will keep players on the edge of their seats.

Politics

Aberrant can be a highly political game. The many factions must play a careful game with one another to protect their own interests while tearing down their enemies. In this genre, players can choose to align themselves with political factions, possibly taking others down along the way. Alternatively, players can choose to not align with any factions and instead focus on taking down entire political systems.

Every scenario in **Aberrant** will be at least somewhat political. However, to create a scenario that focuses primarily on politics, consider adding some social or legal chaos that the characters must deal with. Every choice the characters make about politics, even choosing to not engage, is political, and the Storyguide should treat it as such.

In turbulent times, politics is on everyone's minds. The Storyguide should consider this when creating the story. In the ten years since N-Day, major political changes have occurred, and some are still in the process of occurring. The players and Storyguide should have a good amount of background knowledge of the history since N-Day and the different factions in the world, in order to make these changes feel important and real.

Rescue Operations

Novas can be particularly helpful during search-and-rescue missions. Their superpowers help to speed up operations where time is of the essence. Using this genre could bring your group to any location. The group will then help survivors from natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and more.

Rescue Operations scenarios will be inherently stressful. There is often a limited amount of time, so the characters can often not create an ideal situation in the given amount of time. Characters should know early on that time is a limited resource. Once they get their mission, the clock has already begun ticking down.

This Subgenre can bring out a lot of emotions in characters. Most novas want to help others as much as possible. However, in this genre, there will be many obstacles preventing them from reaching their end goal. This genre also lends itself characters only achieving partial success. Is partial success

going to be enough for novas who want to help, or will it end up feeling like failure?

Social Commentary

What does it mean to be human when some humans are superpowered? Novas, by nature of their celebrity and abilities, suddenly become extremely privileged. What does this mean for the baseline humans who may feel left behind? When novas can shape the world to their will simply by being powerful, there are going to be social consequences.

Because some novas are seen as divine, they must deal with the intersection between faith and celebrity. Not every nova, especially those spurned by religion, will like this, but it's an inevitable part of having incredible power in places where religion is very prominent. At what point do fans become worshippers?

Moreover, because novas earn their power at random, many underprivileged people quickly gain incredible power. How will they use that power? How do their previous experiences shape their experiences as a nova? How much does personal experience shape the definition of justice?

Space Exploration

The Daedalus League and other paths give novas the opportunity to explore the universe. While there is a great deal happening on earth, the universe offers infinite possibilities. Characters can lay the foundations for extraplanetary colonies or map out distant planets. This science-fiction genre gives the Storyguide the opportunity to create alien species and worlds: ones where the politics and etiquette may not be entirely like Earth.

While novas may be incredible beings on earth, when faced with the entirety of the universe, what do superpowers really mean? This genre allows superpowered humans to explore humanness in the context of the universe. Though novas may not experience things in the same way by merit of their powers, Earth is still everyone's home. Once novas begin to explore space, they must consider what their journey means for all of humankind.

In this Subgenre, the Storyguide must make decisions on what is beyond our planet's atmosphere. When players reach a distant planet, do they find alien life? Is it friend or foe? Do they realize that we may be alone in the universe? When faced with one of the most important discoveries of humankind, how do the characters react? Whatever the players discover, it should seem alien and otherworldly.

Special Ops

This is your group's chance to explore playing nova special operatives. They can be Elites, working only for money; peacekeepers, trying to thwart terrorists; soldiers, fighting for their chosen cause; or anything else the group comes up with. This Subgenre is heavily focused on military tropes and combat.

Just because special operatives are often combat specialists does not mean there is no opportunity for roleplaying in this Subgenre. Even the most hardened Elites must interact with others to get the job done. This Subgenre is more focused on action and adventure, certainly, but don't forget to add in compelling emotional elements as well. Watching a few war movies will help you see the overlap of warfare and character.

CREATING SCENARIOS

The Storyguide's biggest job is to create scenarios for the players. While players can voice their opinions on what type of game they would like to play, ultimately, the story is the responsibility of the Storyguide. However, this doesn't have to be an overly complicated task. Some Storyguides prefer to have just a few notes before they start, while others spend hours created detailed outlines so they can focus on other things during the actual session. Neither way is wrong; it simply depends on the Storyguide's preparation style.

When in doubt, new Storyguides should err on the side of preparation. Storyguides need not write entire scripts, but they should generally have notes on the plot points and locations that will be encountered during the session. This is a handy reference for the Storyguide and a place to make notes in case things change. As the Storyguide gets more familiar with the process, then they can adjust to their preferred preparation style.

When beginning the design process, consider how books, movies, and television shows in that genre tell a story. Though these mediums are fundamentally different from roleplaying games, many of the same practices to crafting a story still apply. A Storyguide should consider how these stories are told, along with prevalent tropes and themes.

Additionally, Storyguides should understand the **Aberrant** rules. While the Storyguide doesn't need to know every rule, they should know how the system works and be able to answer most player questions without having to devote too much time to looking up the answer. Rather than memorizing entire tables, Storyguides should focus on learning the game design of **Aberrant**. If a Storyguide understands why and how the rules fit into the world, then she will be able to explain it to her players and, if she doesn't know the answer, make an educated guess.

Regardless of how much preparation goes into the plot, the Storyguide's priority should always be nova agency and choice. When designing encounters, keep in mind that there should be more than one or two choices for each decision. Moreover, Storyguides should remember that the players may come to a decision that the Storyguide has never considered. Even with lots of preparation, flexibility is of the utmost importance.

However, sometimes things just get out of hand. The players may go entirely into left field and ignore the plot in favor of other, more interesting things. The best advice for this is to not take it personally. For many people, games like **Aberrant** are a way to wind down, and players sometimes get distracted or silly while playing. However, if players consistently ignore the series' Tone or Subgenre, then it's likely time for a discussion about expectations for the game and what everyone in the group (including the Storyguide) wants from playing.

While creating scenarios and series that emphasize choice, it's important to ask your players what is important to their characters. Getting a basic backstory that can be implemented in the story is the easiest way to do this. It not only gives characters a personal connection to what is happening, but it also can lead to situations with many possible outcomes. When players are creating their characters, ask them to come up with a backstory that has a few loose ends. One or more of these loose ends can be tied up during the series.

Playing with tropes is another good way to bring choice into the scenarios. While plenty of classic comic book villains present the heroes with binary choices (save your partner or save a school bus full of innocent children), the villains in your scenario can create more complicated situations. Defeating the villain and saving everyone should be difficult, but technically possible, while the chance for partially succeeding is much higher. The chance for failure should, as always, be present, but not the only option.

Challenging your players to come up with interesting, innovative solutions to problems will keep things fresh in the series. The scenarios should not all have the same solution and creating scenarios where combat doesn't have to be the only option could subvert your players' expectations in interesting ways. Some villains may be willing to negotiate or may eventually see the error of their ways.

If characters make an interesting, unexpected choice that greatly impacts the story, the best thing to do is to follow their line of action. Even if it means going off-script for the story, the Storyguide should always allow players the chance to make their own decisions, even when it affects the Storyguide's ideas. Ideas can be added back in later, but if a player goes in an interesting direction, the Storyguide should follow along.

Every action in **Aberrant** has a reaction. Often, this will come in the form of consequences for players. When characters make major decisions and act them out, the Storyguide should be considering how this affects the world around them. As discussed previously, characters' actions change the world, but how do they change the nova? Storyguides should consider the changes to the world and give their characters plenty of opportunities to roleplay through the new changes to the world and themselves.

When Scenarios Go Bad

The scariest thing as a Storyguide is for a series to get entirely derailed. In these situations, finding blame isn't nearly as important as finding solutions to problems. If the problem is a player at the table, then that is addressed far differently than if there is something wrong with the pacing of the story.

Storyguides should view each session as a fresh start. Even in games where everyone has a great time, there's almost always room for improvement. Storyguiding is often a learning process. What is challenging for one Storyguide may be easy for another and vice versa. Storyguides should focus on being a consistent narrator for the game and making sure the game is sufficiently fun for everyone. Then, even with some mistakes, everyone at the table is heard and improvements can be made.

If a character goes completely out into left field in a way that disrupts the story and the other players,

it's up to the Storyguide to deal with it. The most straightforward answer to this is to simply ask the player what their goals are. If they're just goofing around, it's simple enough to get the story back on track. However, there is a chance that the player might have an interesting, previously unconsidered idea. If that is the case, then the Storyguide should follow it while keeping the other players' interests in mind as well.

It's easy for one player to get carried away while the others just stay along for the ride. The Storyguide should be aware of spotlight sharing throughout their game. If one character gets an inordinate amount of attention, it makes it less fun for the other players. If one character is receiving too much of the spotlight, think of ways that the other characters' talents or interests could be explored.

Power and Responsibility

The Storyguide will frequently have to consider how the group uses their power. In all the Tones and Subgenres, players are presented with choices. With their celebrity influence and superpowers, novas must carefully consider what actions they take.

When the players choose factions to align with and factions to be against, they are changing the world, whether they like it or not. If the players align with Project Utopia, even with the purest intentions, this can cause reactions they may not anticipate. Likewise, teaming up with the Teragen can have a similar side effect. It is up to the Storyguide to decide how one faction gaining more power affects the world.

Similarly, not acting is itself an action. Players, when faced with difficult choices, may decide to do nothing and let things play out. This is a valid option, but it doesn't free them from their responsibilities as novas. This could, for example, upset their allies or disappoint fans. These scenarios create interesting roleplaying (and, potentially, combat) encounters. A major drawback of being a nova is that action is often expected and often criticized.

Turning decisions over to mentors can have lasting consequences. Mentors are not perfect beings, so, while their advice may be good-intentioned, it could also lead to unintended story developments. Mentors have the potential to be ignorant or stuck in their ways. Or, alternatively, mentors could be hiding an ulterior motive. A trusted teacher could give their student some advice that leads them down a path of intentional destruction.

Even in Four-Color Tone, there are limitless opportunities to throw an interesting kink in the players' plans. This isn't intended to punish the players every time they play. Rather, it is to present new and interesting story opportunities. If a player fails in a mission and refuses to take responsibility for their actions, then they will have many people to answer to.

It can be tempting for characters to shift responsibility or bypass it altogether. After all, no one asked the novas if they wanted to be novas. Some characters will take the responsibility that comes with being a nova very seriously while others will resent it. If characters choose to not take responsibility for their actions, then the Storyguide can react as the people populating the world. Rarely do people like novas who cannot own up to their actions. This gives the characters an opportunity for introspection.

HANDLING POWERS

Characters in **Aberrant** are designed to be powerful. So, the Storyguide must make appropriate challenges for the characters. The Storyguide must strike a balance between playing to the characters' strengths and giving them something interesting to face off against.

Powers in **Aberrant** are fantastic. To some, they look like miracles or magic. These abilities dazzle all other humans. However, they must be strong enough to go up against a significant challenge. To do this, the Storyguide must first judge the characters' stats. Physically strong characters will be better at different challenges than intelligent characters. Even if a character is not particularly skilled at the challenge, they may be able to simply overpower the opposing force anyway. This can be disruptive to the story and the other characters.

Typically, when one character can overpower every obstacle, it is both a story problem and a player problem. While the player in question may not be acting maliciously, it can affect the others at the table. Moreover, by creating stronger challenges specifically for one player, the others may not be able to scale their powers as easily. When this happens, the Storyguide needs to address the problem on both levels so the game can continue without issue.

PLAYING CHARACTERS WITH SKILLS DIFFERENT FROM YOUR OWN

In **Aberrant**, players can take on any role, and play a character of any ability. However, issues may occur when creating a character whose skills differ too much from the players.

The Storyguide is extremely useful to the players in this situation. For example, for particularly bright characters, the Storyguide, rather than have the character make a roll to know the answer, can lead that character in the right direction. If a player is trying to figure out how to translate a code, the Storyguide may decide beforehand that the highly intelligent character has come across a similar code before. Without giving the player the answer, the Storyguide can help them get to the answer.

With charismatic characters, it's often hard for shy players to succeed. However, charisma does not always mean the same thing to everyone. A handsome businessman may be charismatic, as is the bubbly teenage girl who instantly becomes everyone's best friend. Charisma doesn't always have to be suave and sexy. It can just mean that your personality makes people like you in most situations. Looking at charisma from this angle gives players many more options.

Additionally, there is the option to roll dice when the player is truly stuck but the character would likely succeed. This is less roleplay intensive and might end up feeling less satisfying for the player but might lead to victory for the character.

On the player side of the problem, like with most player problems, sometimes the solution is as simple as talking to the player. While the player shouldn't be told to stop playing their character, the Storyguide and the player have an opportunity to explore different avenues the character can take. Rather than focusing on losing powers, the player and Storyguide should focus on evolving the character in a way that better fits the story. For a physically strong character, this could mean that the character begins some serious introspection at the violence caused by their hand. They still have their powers and the ability to use them, but they may hesitate in battle or simply subdue instead of killing.

However, if the problem character is not a player character, then Storyguides have more resources to work on them. It's okay for some enemies to just get away. This is a classic plotline, and it gives the characters something to work towards. A recurring enemy is a good addition to a story. However, the characters have to see victory along the way. If an enemy is simply much stronger or smarter than them, then the characters must adapt. However, if every enemy is like this, then the Storyguide should adjust the difficulty of the encounters.

Moreover, Storyguides have the option to build stories around bypassing powers altogether. For strong characters, this could mean that the characters must become negotiators for their chosen faction. Smart characters may have to dig through rubble in a sudden emergency. Creating an environmental or social encounter is a good way to surpass combat powers and let the players think how their characters would solve a problem.

Part of character creation could be a discussion of how the characters tackle issues outside of their area of expertise. These situations will occur for superpowered novas. A nova who is very stealthy may one day get caught and become faced with a powerful physical threat. This nova has the option to face the threat head on or use their intellect to escape the issue. Players presented with similar scenarios may have to use skills they don't normally rely on to circumvent issues when plans go awry.

CHANGING THE WORLD

The world until the starting point of **Aberrant** in 2028 is outlined for you. Now, it is up to the Storyguide to decide when and where the scenario begins.

Novas, by nature of being novas, are international celebrities, and their actions are often seen as political statements. As a result, nearly every scenario that's run in **Aberrant** changes the world. The players create changes by performing actions and role-playing, and the Storyguide adjusts the world accordingly. By the end of the scenario, the world will look different than when it did when the scenario began.

This can be a daunting task for the Storyguide. However, with a little improvisation and an understanding of the **Aberrant** setting, the Storyguide can adjust the world as the game goes. While the world changes, it's important to keep in mind what the public knows. During an espionage mission, it may not ever be revealed that the characters were involved, but the world still will likely change because of the mission. Likewise, actions taken in public may be misinterpreted or rejected, changing the public's perception of the players' characters.

As the game progresses, Storyguides should consider how long lasting each change to the world is. With the rapid consumption of media, the public may be fired up about a cause, only to be focused on something else a week later. This does not mean that the characters' actions were inconsequential, but it does mean that the characters will have to be skilled at enacting long-lasting changes.

It's important for the Storyguide to consider how each of the factions in a scenario would react to major actions. The focus should be on the factions most present in the story, but the Storyguide should also generally know the priorities of all factions. For instance, the Daedalus League may not be entirely invested in a mission with the Yakuza while it's occurring, but if the characters try to join the Daedalus League later, their history with organized crime may come up.

The factions each have their own priorities. Based on these priorities and ethics, the Storyguide will decide how the factions interpret the characters' actions. If a faction feels slighted, directly or indirectly, they will feel less inclined to help the characters in the future. If the characters directly fight certain factions, it could also turn into all-out war. Characters must decide if the risk of casualties is worth the fights they face.

The characters' actions are what drive the story. Otherwise, the plot wouldn't progress forward. The Storyguide must consider how the characters' moral decisions affect the game. This is where Tones come in. Moral decisions will play out differently in each Tone. A plan that may work in Deconstruction Tone may end in disaster in Four-Color Tone. Players and the Storyguide alike should be well-versed in the Tone they are using.

Keep in mind which of your players' actions will drastically change the world. Although nova celebrity means that many of their actions will be viewed by their fans, small acts will change the world differently from large acts. Being kind to a stranger may be a temporary boost to publicity, while thwarting an assassination attempt may be international news. Even if the character remains anonymous during this act, the thwarted attempt will still likely have an impact on how the government views security threats and how they feel about novas.

The public should be viewed almost as if it is its own faction. Depending on where the scenario takes place, the typical baseline will have different views on novas. The characters' actions could change the public's minds (at least temporarily), or it could make their views worse or even not change them at all. Ultimately, the public will be influenced by propaganda from other factions as well as their experience with novas. Swaying public opinion is often a plot option.

From a mechanical standpoint, Storyguides must measure how much the characters have changed the world. Normally, a Storyguide can look at the rolls taking place as the characters perform their actions. If during a rescue mission, the novas save 90 out the 100 trapped people, then the public perception of the rescue will likely be positive. However, if they only save 20 or 30 out of the 100, the public will likely be upset and wonder why as the focus shifts from the lives saved to the lives lost.

The trick is to take quantifiable values and easily defined moving parts. Even in a role-playing situation, this can be affected by how well the characters succeed in interacting with the non-player characters. Convincing a world leader to sign a peace treaty, for example, has a far bigger impact than convincing a police officer to look the other way while the characters commit acts of vigilantism. Both are successful actions, but they have far different impacts on the world.

EVOKING SACRIFICE

In **Aberrant**, sacrifice is the main theme. Even though the characters have superpowers, they won't be able to simply punch their way out of every difficult scenario. Along the way, some things will be lost. This may be due to the negligence of the characters or the inevitability of everything eventually being lost.

In every story, regardless of Tone or Subgenre, sacrifice is a primary theme. Most scenarios can encompass this theme by presenting the characters with difficult choices that can't simply be solved by brute force alone. This doesn't mean that the scenario has to be impossible. Rather, it means that the scenario needs to be designed with the theme in mind.

A character's sacrifice can be implemented in many ways. Novas already sacrifice a great deal when they get their powers and become public figures. To achieve their goals, they often give up their ability to keep a quiet, private life. They may leave family and friends to seek out opportunities across the world. On a more physical level, during major encounters, they may have to leave a few people behind in order to save many others.

Not every sacrifice that occurs in the scenario needs to be emphasized or emotionally drawn out. Some sacrifices are small. Novas may increasingly lose touch with non-nova family and friends to pursue the game's main storyline. Novas often give up hobbies and personal interests to make time for their obligations as novas. The tone of the game doesn't always have to be dreary just because the main theme is sacrifice.

While games that are gritty and dark are enjoyable, **Aberrant** is designed to support whatever Tone the Storyguide uses with the scenario. It's still possible to evoke this theme while having a light-hearted game. Many recent superhero movies are fun action-comedies, but the characters often sacrifice a great deal along the way. These sacrifices can be notable without breaking the overall Tone of the scenario. A character may choose to sacrifice themselves to stop an enemy, but they always have the option to do so in a cool and exciting way. Even something as simple as throwing in a cool one-liner rather than a long final farewell can keep a serious sacrifice in line with a light-hearted story.

Even in a serious setting, too many big sacrifices can



become overblown or discouraging for the players. To keep a balance of putting stress on the characters while the players continue to have fun, consider steadily increasing or mixing up the severity of the characters' sacrifices. This gives the characters time to feel the weight of what they've lost, which allows the characters to work through the scenario in the chosen Tone.

Making Sacrifice Meaningful

When everything is a sacrifice, nothing is a sacrifice. Not every decision the players make must end in disaster. Sometimes things can work out. It's the uncertainty that makes the choices difficult.

Even if the plan generally ends up working, there can still be sacrifice that may end up being more meaningful. A character who chooses to sacrifice himself, but then ends up surviving the encounter may, for example, later develop emotional trauma. This may end up being a more compelling turn of events for the players. It shows the players that there are consequences other than death or bodily harm.

Character death isn't always the most meaningful sacrifice. Sacrifices are useful when the players work through them in roleplay. While character death can be roleplayed by the other characters and doesn't need to be entirely discounted, having a player feel their character's sacrifice is a powerful part of roleplaying.

ALLEGIANCES

Although novas are extremely powerful, the true power in **Aberrant** lies in the factions. The allegiance of the novas in a group tends to inform their morals and interactions with others in the world. A nova aligned with Project Utopia and Team Tomorrow will be treated very differently from a nova aligned with Teragen, for example. Character allegiances should have an influence on the design of the scenario. It makes sense for the factions with which the group is aligned to be major players in the scenario. The scenario doesn't have to revolve around their faction to be involved, however: There can be hints of factions across the setting and plot. For example, a member of the Daedalus League would keep their faction's interests in mind when on an espionage mission in Russia.

Factions may expect certain behaviors out of the characters. The players can choose if they want to follow the rules or risk their alliances. If a player does choose to go against their faction, they should face consequences. Not every consequence needs to be particularly severe, but no faction likes their allies working against them. It may make them angry that their deal was not kept, or worse, it may look like the character is a spy sent from another faction.

Mixed Allegiance Campaigns

It is possible to play mixed allegiance campaigns, but Storyguides should approach the situation cautiously. Even if the characters are on opposing sides, they need to have a reason to work together. In a cooperative storytelling game, it's difficult to combine characters with deep moral differences into one group.

However, there is still potential for characters to find common ground. While allegiances may dictate a character's worldview and political stances, characters often care about a great deal more. Finding common ground within the group can lead to interesting roleplaying scenarios and a way to explore the viewpoints of multiple factions at once. The characters don't have to be best friends to team up.

In addition to finding common ground, there is potential for characters to work against one another. The potential for sabotage should be discussed with the group beforehand, as players get very attached to their characters during games. If the players are actively trying to play against one another, it's important that everyone know this going into the game. If the scenario is designed with characters working against one another, one of the biggest challenges will be holding together two or more different major storylines. One solution to this is to have the scenario be somewhat limited, mostly focusing on combat and factional politics. The characters would likely miss out on role-playing much of a personal life, but it would allow them to fight for their faction uninterrupted.

Other solutions would be to focus on roleplaying scenes. While most roleplaying games naturally fall into scenes anyway, this would be far more structured. The scenes would cut harder from one to another, and there would be less room for spending in-character time doing things like haggling over small items. This takes some planning on the Storyguide's part to ensure that the spotlight falls on each character equally.

DRAMATIC EDITING

Dramatic Editing is largely limited to Talents to give them an advantage against novas and psiads (although a couple of powers allow novas limited access to Dramatic Editing). That said, if you want to expand its use to non-Talent characters, that's up to you. Just be aware that it takes away a key advantage that Talents have.

There's also the option of simply not changing how the game is run and just allowing characters to be aligned with opposing factions. While some issues may occur along the way, the Storyguide and players are free to experiment with their own solutions.

Campaigns Without Allegiances

Having a group with no allegiances can be tricky, but it can also lead to interesting scenarios. While factions are an important part of the world, they do not have to be important to player characters. However, the players should consider why the character chooses to not align with any faction. Deciding to be an unaligned character is still a conscious choice, after all.

Having characters without allegiances does not mean allegiances need to be absent from the campaign. Characters can have former allegiances or sworn rivalries with one or more faction. Either of these choices can include factions in the scenario without having characters decide about their personal allegiances. Players should consider, however, why their characters have chosen to not seek allegiance with another faction.

There are a few ways to approach characters with no allegiance, current or former. The group might be shopping around for allegiances. During their encounters and other nova duties, the characters can research and even talk to various factions throughout the setting. This try-before-you-buy approach may upset some factions, but others may be happy to have a potential new ally. Presumably, one of the major story points will be the characters' decision on which, if any, faction they will join.

Eliminating factions and the need for allegiances entirely is possible, but it strays further away from the setting. **Aberrant**'s setting is political and eliminating the various factions of the world takes away from the highly political nature of novas. A character can choose to ignore the fact that there are factions and decide to be entirely neutral, but, due to the nature of nova celebrity, there is a good chance that this choice would be criticized (or perhaps lauded) by the public. In either scenario, the outcome is a political reaction.




IT'S NOT MUCH FURTHER. OR MAYBE A LOT FURTHER. THE READINGS ARE WEIRD.
SILHOUETTE. TEEN TOMORROW. GENIUS.
DOES THAT THING EVEN WORK? LOOK AT BOWSER. HE'S EXHAUSTED.
BLOODHOUND. TEEN TOMORROW. DETECTIVE.
WHO'S A GOOD DOG?
BOWSER. JUST HAPPY TO BE HERE.
HE CAN'T BE EXHAUSTED, BLOODHOUND. BOWSER IS A QUANTUM PROJECTION MANIFESTED FROM YOUR MIND.
SMACK!
DON'T LET HIM HEAR YOU SAY THAT! HE'S VERY SENSITIVE.
BUT I JUST SAID HE'S... UGH, WHATEVER.
POINT IS, THE FLUX IS TOO HIGH AROUND HERE. I CAN'T PINPOINT THE DISTURBANCE.
UH... SILHOUETTE? I THINK I FOUND IT.
GRRRRR!
SUSAN. CLONED DINOSAUR. NOT HAPPY TO BE HERE.


DISTRACT THE DINOSAUR! I HAVE A PLAN!
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO...?
OH GREAT, YOU'RE ALREADY INVISIBLE. NEAT.
UH, HEY, NICE GENETIC MONSTROSITY. YOU DON'T WANT TO EAT ME.
WOO WOO WOO!
I'M JUST A STREET RAT WITH DELUSIONS OF DETECTIVE-HOOD.
BOWSER! NO!
YIP!
KRUNCH
EAT SCIENCE!
ZAAAAAP

CHAPTER NINE: OPPONENTS AND ALLIES

"You're much stronger than you think you are. Trust me."
Superman, *All-Star Superman*

BASELINES

Baselines are an important part of the **Aberrant** world. Despite their lack of powers, they can still influence events and people with their actions and words. There are many more baselines than there are novas. They take positions of power and influence and they populate every part of the world. Additionally, baselines make up a large majority of the criminal world. While super powered novas have an advantage on the competition, baselines manage to get by just fine.

Baselines can be enemies, allies, or simply just the people who populate the world around the nova characters. Putting in a variety of baseline characters will help the world feel more diverse and fleshed out.

EXECUTIVE

Andrew always knew what he needed to do to get to the top. Even when he was at the bottom of the corporate ladder, he still knew exactly who to schmooze and what work to put his name on, so he could quickly rise through the ranks. It was no surprise when Andrew quickly rose from junior vice president, to senior vice president, then, eventually, to president and CEO. He is both ambitious and ruthless: the only thing he wants to save more than his current corporation is himself. It's a dog-eat-dog world out there, and everyone knows that the strong are better able to survive. The corporate ladder climbers take this lesson to heart. Workers are mere cogs in a machine designed to benefit Andrew and the others like him. While they may start out passionate about the work they do, it's rare that someone ends up at the top by being friendly and morally righteous. Sometimes you have to think outside the box to get the job done.

Executives are the people who have talents specific to the corporate world. They are ambitious, hungry, and willing to do whatever it takes to achieve their ends. This doesn't always lead to the most morally righteous outcomes. Executives are in it for themselves. To most, they are the physical representation of greed, capitalism, and the exploitation of workers.

Primary Pool: 6 (job description)
Secondary Pool: 4 (corporate politics)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Edges: None
Source: None

EXPERT

Behind every great innovation is someone working tirelessly around the clock to make it happen. Kali is no exception to that. While some pursue their interests to demonstrate competence (or even creativity), Kali sets out to show that she is the best and she knows more than almost anyone else in the world. In tech circles, she's a rock star, capable of anything she sets her mind to. Her understanding of technology is incredible for a baseline. Though novas are essential

to rapid innovation, they need a team of experts to support them and their emerging technology.

However, it's easy to get lose the big picture while focusing on innovation. Not every expert will follow the same moral path. While many pursue knowledge — or even try to pursue good, it doesn't always work out that way. Still, a fair number of experts pursue knowledge to improve the world. Whether or not their expertise will help or hurt is often unknown.

Primary Pool: 7 (area of expertise)
Secondary Pool: 5 (public relations)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Library •, Lightning Calculator, Ms. Fix It
Source: None

SECURITY

Avery enjoyed their job working private security. What started as a gig watching public libraries overnight quickly turned into something much more. Avery was never satisfied just playing on their phone or watching movies until their shift was over. They went from job to job, slowly climbing their way up the ladder until finally landing a gig doing personal security for a very important client. Avery takes their job very seriously and will do whatever it takes to protect their client.

Security personnel in **Aberrant** are meant to protect everyone from baselines to novas. While some of these important persons may be formidable in a fight on their own, everyone knows minions can slow down heroes by a significant margin. While the person they are guarding can focus on other tasks, security can focus on physical structures and the wellbeing of their client.

Primary Pool: 6 (combat)
Secondary Pool: 4 (security procedures)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Edges: Danger Sense, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Safe House, Wealth •
Source: None

SOLDIER

Aiysha came from a military family. Her father, his siblings, her grandfather, and all her siblings served in various branches of the armed forces. Aiysha knew from a young age that she would follow suit. While she knew more than some of her follow soldiers about what boot camp would entail, the physical and mental pressure it put on her was still brutal. Despite the difficulties, she pushed through. Aiysha was put on the front lines to defend her country. She pursued the start of her career in the military, and her specialized knowledge helps her in every combat situation she comes across.

Not all soldiers are novas or even enhanced baselines. While some receive specialized equipment, many baseline soldiers rely on more traditional combat techniques. Novas will likely encounter soldiers as both allies and enemies when dealing with international conflicts. Soldiers are not always in battle, but they are disciplined and focused in every situation.

Primary Pool: 7 (combat)
Secondary Pool: 5 (security procedures)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Hair Trigger Reflexes, One Against an Ocean, Tough Cookie
Source: None

Organized Crime

One of the first goals of Team Tomorrow was to eliminate organized crime. While their efforts largely succeeded, some organized crime families survived despite the fallout. Organized crime has been mostly eradicated by nova heroes, but some crime organizations had enough resources to weather the attack on crime.

These organizations have global influence and are tied to extremely powerful and well-protected people. While these crime families may have taken a loss, they still operate throughout the world.

The Megasyndicate

The Camparelli-Zukhov Megasyndicate (often referred to simply as "The Megasyndicate") is one the last remnants of the mafia. When Team Tomorrow took on the ambitious task of wiping out organized crime, the Megasyndicate formed to protect two powerful crime



families. Rather than fall to Team Tomorrow or destroy one another, Luciano Camparelli made the unprecedented decision to propose an alliance to Alexi Zukhov, a Talent and leader of the Russian Mafia. Despite the distrust between the two men, the Megasyndicate has prevailed in the underground crime world.

While the Megasyndicate is run by baselines, they have quite a few nova Elites in their employ. However, this isn't enough to catch the attention of nova-focused organizations like the Directive. Their small team of Elites combined with their paranoid surveillance of potential enemies and allies makes them a formidable foe.

The Megasyndicate functions with Alexi Zukhov and Luciano Camparelli as the respective heads of their crime families. Together, they oversee the operation of the Megasyndicate's general business. A lesser council advises them, but, ultimately, Zukhov and Camparelli hold all the power. When it comes to the few topics on which the two men differ, Zukhov tends to win their battle of wills, but these disagreements are rare.

The organization deals in many illegal activities, including assassination, extortion, and smuggling. While they're willing to negotiate a great deal, even the Megasyndicate has its limits. For example, they are often unwilling to put a hit out on novas. For a high price, they will take out lesser known and less powerful novas, but extremely famous or powerful novas will likely be a job they pass up.

The Yakuza

If you ask a Yakuza member, they would tell you that the first members of the Yakuza were *machi-yakko*: "servants of the town." They believe that the crime organization's start was with noble mercenaries hired to protect the villages. However, most believe that the Yakuza's actual beginnings were in groups of gamblers and swindlers.

More recently, the Yakuza has learned to adjust to the Nova Age. Despite the traditionalist leanings, parts of the Yakuza openly supported *Saisho*, Japan's "New Beginning" for its business sector. Parts of the Yakuza supported *Saisho* financially and even convinced some politicians to back the plan. *Saisho* was

a huge success, and the members of the Yakuza that supported the plan became increasingly powerful within the isolated country. *Saisho* also lead to the creation of Kuro-Tek.

The Yakuza managed to avoid Project Utopia's attempt to eliminate organized crime through the country's isolationist policies and Nippontai, Japan's own nova team. When Team Tomorrow came to dismantle the Yakuza, the Japanese government claimed that it had already been taken care of by Nippontai. While some of the Yakuza was legitimately arrested by the nova team, powerful portions of the organization continued to operate.

The Heaven Thunder Triad

The Heaven Thunder Triad is a Chinese crime organization. The crime family came to be well-known before even the American Mafia. The group operates out of China, and its goals vary from assassination to drug-dealing. One of their signature creations is mite: A drug made from novas. This drug enhances baseline performance to nova levels. Most believe that the Triads harvest novas to make this.

While the Heaven Thunder Triad is based in Hong Kong, each branch of the triad operates independently. Within these branches are rigid hierarchies, with each section having its own cell leader. The Triads are also deeply involved in religious rituals. When the organization was smaller, the ceremonies to initiate members were long and drawn out, but now they are much quicker but still involve members swearing oaths and a blood covenant.

CRIMINAL

Robert fell in with a bad crowd at an early age, and things escalated from there. Eventually, he became a career criminal. Not even the appearance of novas could dissuade him from a life of crime. Money, jewels, art: You name it and Robert dealt in it. In the criminal underbelly of big cities, his talents are put to good use. He's able to network with other criminals throughout the city, but he's not quite top dog. There are still much larger crime bosses to worry about. Robert is more akin to a foot soldier. He's able to get out into the world and do his business without worrying about enemies picking up too much on who he is outside of chance encounters with heroes.

Criminals can be found nearly everywhere in the world of **Aberrant**. From petty thievery to mafia thugs, criminals are readily available at every turn. Criminals are familiar with the areas in which they do their work, and they're usually able to distract those around them long enough to steal something or make their getaway. However, they aren't to be mistaken with the major crime bosses of the world. While some can make a living from a life of crime, very few are able to boast their status to more than their local counterparts.

Primary Pool: 7 (stealing)
Secondary Pool: 5 (getting away with stealing)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Always Prepared, Covert ••, Danger Sense, Swift
Source: None

Kuro-Tek

Kuro-Tek split off from the Japanese Yakuza. Their goals were mainly to create technology outside of Project Utopia regulations. At first, it made sense for the organization to operate within the Yakuza, eventually, the technological boom coming out of Japan pulled enough focus away from the crime organization. To best focus on the black-market technology, Kuro-Tek pulled away and became its own organization. They subsequently used their clout with powerful Japanese organizations to become independent from the crime organization. The Yakuza, dependent on government protection to continue their operations, had no choice but to accept the arrangement.

Project Utopia's need to regulate all technology coming in the Nova Age offended the small island nation. The country sees *Saisho* as one of the greatest successes in their history. Project Utopia's regulations, they fear, will hinder that same progress. As a result, while Kuro-Tek is a black-market organization, much of the Japanese government is willing to turn a blind eye to the illegal activity as long as the government can maintain plausible deniability of their actions.

KURO-TEK OPERATIVE

Shirou was always adept at creating new technology. When *Saisho* was announced and subsequently passed by the Japanese government, he was excited and ready

to join the tech sector. However, just as technology was booming, Project Utopia set strict regulations in place. Shirou worried that this would cause technological innovation to come to a grinding halt. Still, there were whisperings that the Yakuza was doing its best to slip black market tech into the hands of whoever could pay the price. Eventually, Shirou decided it was time to switch from the legal but heavily regulated work he had been doing to the underground, illegal work with Kuro-Tek.

Primary Pool: 6 (technology)
Secondary Pool: 4 (shady dealing)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Edges: None
Source: None

NOVA CULTS

With the rise of novas came the rise of religious organizations worshipping the super powered beings. With the world changing, people worldwide also had to change their worldviews. No longer are miracles limited to foretold prophets. Anyone can theoretically experience eruption and become a nova, and, as a result, any nova can become the next messiah.

All religions need followers. Many baselines have joined these religions worldwide. Though they all center on the nova phenomena (and some may even overlap in ideals), each explains the changes in the world in their own way. Some see novas as demons, while others see them as gods or angelic messengers. In either case, these views influence the cultural perception of novas.

Church of the Immanent Eschaton

The Church of the Immanent Eschaton believes that novas are holy beings. The followers of this religion consider novas to be angels on earth. The head of the religion is the nova Gabriel "Miracle" Melchior. Melchior got his start preaching to the masses about how novas are sent to save the souls of those on earth. Despite preaching about angels and salvation, he is overwhelmingly distrusted by many in the international community.

The church is one of the many major religious organizations that draw a distinction between novas and the rest of humankind. According to Melchior, novas are divine beings rather than humans. Essentially, if novas are beings meant to guide humankind to the light, then they don't have to listen to humanity's rules.

The church has attracted a variety of people looking for salvation. The church teaches that the world will end soon, and everyone will be saved or sent to hell. The church, of course, promises salvation. Baselines and novas alike subscribe to its teachings. In the age of novas, it's difficult for some to not see novas as messiahs sent from heaven to guide humanity. The followers of this religion take nova teachings — especially Melchior's — as gospel. The followers of this religion, while they may be harmless in many cases, will fight to protect their beliefs and worldview.

Church of Michael Archangel

If the Church of the Immanent Eschaton is one end of the spectrum, then the Church of Michael Archangel is the other. The church is the opposition to the belief that novas are gods or avatars. However, the Church of Immanent Eschaton and the Church of Michael Archangel do overlap in some cases. Both agree that novas are figures from scripture and are definitely not human. The main difference in their beliefs come from how exactly the super powered inhuman novas fit into their religious ideology.

The church believes that, rather than angelic messengers, novas are demons sent to destroy the earth or have made deals with the devil. Baselines who are already inclined to not trust novas are likely to find their place in this religion. They believe that worshiping novas is inherently wrong, and that they are the ones to stop it. This group sees themselves as martyrs against the cause of stopping nova supremacy and infiltration.

One of the main beliefs in the church is that the media is designed to turn the hearts of the masses toward evil. If one believes in the teachings of the church, this is a natural conclusion to draw. The media is a large part in bringing all novas into celebrity status. When the news reports on every tweet or post made by a nova, it's no wonder that they become instant sensations. The followers of the church shun this.

Cult of Mal

The Cult of Mal is a group within the Teragen that follows Divis Mal's teachings as holy word. While Divis Mal was a major part of the Teragen, he was not the only driving factor in its success. Jeremiah

Scripture, Mal's longtime partner, was a major part in founding the religion.

Not all Teragen follow the cult. In fact, many find it to be harmful. The zealotry of the cult members drives away potential Teragen who may be searching for answers about their place in the world but not necessarily religious enlightenment. As a result, many in the Teragen have come to resent Mal, despite his part in the group's creation and subsequent success.

The cult is made up of primarily baselines. These baselines are fans of Mal and want to do their part to follow his message. Interestingly, the cultists don't see themselves as followers. Rather, the cultists see themselves as leaders. They are leaders sent to spread Mal's holy word.

Kamisama Buddhism

Kamisama Buddhism is a mixture of the Shinto and Buddhist religions. The founder, Bodhisattva Masato believes that novas are divine avatars, meant to lead the world to enlightenment. Many in Japan follow this religion, despite being criticized by the international community. The group has been accused more than once of pushing extremists to commit acts of terror. The most notable event occurred in December of 2022. Three fanatics bombed a subway in Tokyo, trying to encourage spontaneous eruption of novas. Though Bodhisattva Masato denied knowledge of the attack, the events are still largely associated with the Japanese religion. The followers of the religion argue that the subway attack was carried out by fanatics and is not representative of the religion as a whole. Similar comparisons can be drawn to most religions.

One of the other main features of the religion is their ever-changing messiahs. The religion is enmeshed with celebrity culture, and, as a result, new novas become famous and worshipped until the next one comes up. While some still eagerly follow their favorites, many simply worship whoever is new and exciting. This catapults unsuspecting novas to the status of religious icons. Kamisama Buddhists believe that all novas are potential Bodhisattvas. As a result, they focus on helping novas reach their full spiritual potential.

CULTIST

Grayson was looking for answers. What place did he have in this new world? What place did anyone — nova or baseline — have? He searched for answers everywhere. At first, he looked inward, grasping at the corners of his beliefs, but it just wasn't fully formed. The news constantly cycled through the various religious interpretations of novas and the cults that surround them. That's where he found his answers.

Primary Pool: 6 (cult business and general weirdness)
Secondary Pool: 4 (variety of menial jobs)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Edges: None
Source: None

ENHANCED BASELINES

In addition to regular baseline archetypes, some baselines have added abilities to make them more challenging for novas. Through outside forces, these baselines are stronger, faster, and better equipped to deal with conflict in a world with novas. Using drugs, cybernetics, exo-suits, and biochemical treatments, these baselines are ready to face off against any conflict.

MITE BRUISER

Zoya was forever looking for the next way to become stronger. She had already beaten every opponent she had come up against while boxing, but she was never satisfied. She found that she couldn't push herself past what she felt was an arbitrary physical limitation. Then, a friend at the gym introduced her to Mite. Mite pushed her past her limitations, and she became stronger than ever. However, the media quickly caught wind of the drug, and she was banned from the sport. Zoya, however, was already hooked on the drug. Her need to win and her addiction to Mite led her out into the streets, where she roams looking for a fight against baselines and novas alike.

Primary Pool: 6 (boxing)
Secondary Pool: 4 (looking for another hit)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3

Health: 3
Edges: Forceful Martial Arts •••, Mega-Lifting
Source: Quantum •• (Quantum points 20)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Might ••

SPEED JUNKIE

Camila always wanted to go faster. A runner throughout middle school and high school, she could never achieve the speeds she wanted. She had hoped she would become a nova and finally run as fast as she had always hoped, but, try as she might, eruption never came. She became depressed and, unsatisfied with her natural abilities, gave up running. She went through life in a haze, resigned to never feeling the high of running, when she was offered the opportunity to feel it once again and then some. Eventually, a friend referred her to a secret biotech research firm. Camila applied to the program and was soon accepted. Her enhancements allowed her to move as fast as she once dreamed, but the experimental nature of the procedure left her with quickly deteriorating health. Now Camila is racing the clock.

Primary Pool: 6 (running)
Secondary Pool: 4 (academics)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Edges: Mega-Speed, Quickness, Rapid Strike, Swift
Source: Quantum •• (Quantum points 20)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Dexterity ••

CYBER-SOLDIER

Chen knew from a young age that it was her duty to fight for her country. She considered fighting for the nation she grew up to be the greatest honor. However, she and other soldiers began to wonder what their place in the battlefield would become with the emergence of novas and Elites. Soon though, the rise of cybernetic enhancements began to change battles. While a group of Elite novas could still overtake an ill-prepared battalion, the cybernetics greatly improved their chances on the battlefield, and it changed the way wars are fought. Chen and her fellow soldiers became a mixture of human and machine to better improve their abilities. On the battlefield, these soldiers are a dangerous new type of combatant.

Cybernetic enhancements don't just improve the abilities of novas. They can also be given to baselines to create a non-nova super soldier. This is one way to combat the super powered novas in large conflicts. Baselines are far easier to find and train than novas, as novas are rare and may receive better offers to fight on a different side. Cybernetics can be installed onto loyal soldiers, and then they can be deployed into the battlefield with enhanced abilities.

Primary Pool: 7 (military conflict)
Secondary Pool: 5 (cybernetic repair)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Accuracy •, Dense Flesh •, One Against an Ocean, Telecommunication
Source: Quantum ••• (Quantum points 25)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Dexterity ••, Mega-Stamina •••

EXO-SUIT

Amelia first wore the exo-suit to help her carry more medical supplies. As a first responder, she sometimes needed to get in and out of dangerous situations quickly, sometimes helping to mend others as she went. The suits helped her and the rest of her team carry more and move faster while expending less energy. Amelia was easily the most skilled with the exo-suit, however. Soon, others began to take notice. After receiving an offer she couldn't refuse, she turned her attention from rescue to combat. While the actions may seem antithetical to one another, she hopes that they will achieve the same goal: helping others by helping the cause.

Exo-suit wearing baselines can save their energy while performing superhuman tasks. They can, in turn, focus more on their and their opponent's next move. The exo-suits allow them to perform like novas, but with the inherent drawback that they are using separate technology rather than their own bodies. However, with the right training, this process can become fluid.

Primary Pool: 7 (combat)
Secondary Pool: 5 (first responder)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3

Health: 4
Edges: Dense Flesh •, Mega-Crush, Mega-Lifting, One Against an Ocean
Source: Quantum ••• (Quantum points 25)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Might ••, Mega-Stamina •

NONHUMAN ANTAGONISTS

In addition to the slew of human characters, **Aberrant** features innumerable nonhuman antagonists. These are more than simple obstacles that spring up in the paths of nova heroes. These antagonists seek out the destruction of others (purposefully or not). This is only a sample of the options for nonhuman antagonists in the **Aberrant** setting.

ROBOT

X-572 was programmed to do one thing: destroy. It didn't have a choice in the matter. While the pieces that created the mechanical entity could have been used in a machine to help others, instead, they were taken and taught to kill. X-572's mechanical parts aren't evil. They merely have evil thrust upon them from an outside entity. X-572 marches towards its enemy (which happens to be any intruder) and attacks, not because it wants to do evil, but because destruction is all it knows how to do.

Robots are a science fiction staple that heroes may encounter during an **Aberrant** game. Enemies program robots for a variety of purposes, but the classic example is to protect them or to distract the heroes. Mad scientists love to push the limits of what is possible and creating an army of humanoid robots is an easy way to protect their interests.

Primary Pool: 7 (destroy enemy)
Secondary Pool: 5 (march relentlessly toward enemy)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Adaptation, Dense Flesh •, Mega-Crush, Mega-Lifting, Sensory Shield
Source: Quantum ••• (Quantum points 23)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Dexterity •••, Mega-Might •••, Mega-Stamina •••

DRONE

Drones can fulfill a variety of purposes. They can be an extra set of eyes from above, they can attack invading heroes, and they can slowly whittle down the enemies' resources without having to risk human life. Therefore, they're favored by baselines and novas alike. Drones can be equipped with cameras, weapons, or whatever will be light enough to still allow it to fly. And, if it gets shot out the air, you can always make another one out of the same cheaply produced materials.

Primary Pool: 6 (observe specified target)
Secondary Pool: 4 (attack specified target)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Edges: Detection ••, Digital Scan, Telecommunication
Source: Quantum •• (Quantum points 20)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Cunning ••

MAKING NOVA ANTAGONISTS

Making nova or enhanced baselines is like making other antagonists (as per **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 137). Their Source is Quantum. They can use their Edge points to get Mega-Edges as well, if they are appropriate. As a good rule of thumb, double or triple the number of anomaly points, and assign them as dots in Mega-Attributes and quantum powers.

Even in the case of enhanced baselines, assume they use Quantum as the base for their abilities even if the in-world source is something like drugs or cybernetics. However, enhanced baselines generally tend to only have Mega-Attributes and Mega-Edges.

The Storyguide can choose to track Quantum points, just like player characters. However, for minor characters or just as a fast-and-dirty hack, assume a character can activate their powers a number of times equal to their Source.

TIGER

Klechka, a large male amur tiger, never planned to leave Russia. In fact, he didn't have much of a concept of Russia. What he had a good idea of was his territory in the mountains. Klechka was vaguely aware of people around him, but he always kept his distance, until one day he felt a small pinch in his side, and then darkness. When he woke up, there was no snow or other tigers. Instead, he was in glass cage, spending his days looking at strange people in various odd costumes. Normally, he was simply thrown a dead chicken to eat, but, on special days, he was let out and let to chase down his prey like he was most used to. On these days, he could once again feel the cold snow fall on his fur, no matter the weather.

Villains love to have all sorts of exotic animals to both impress and terrify. The animals can use their natural beauty to impress guests, and their predatory instincts to terrify enemies. Given the right situation, a loose wild animal can be, at the very least, disruptive to a nova hero. However, most large, carnivorous exotic animals will do much more than disrupt and will actively impede super hero interference.

Primary Pool: 7 (bite and slash prey)
Secondary Pool: 5 (hunt prey)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Danger Sense, Keen Sense (Hearing, Sight, Smell and Taste), Swift
Anomaly Powers: Enhanced Attack (Aggravated), Extraordinary Speed, Heightened Reflexes

CLONED DINOSAUR

It's hard to be a modern dinosaur. While most of her kind lived 66 million years ago, Susan was only born a few years ago. Well, if you can call it born. She was created in a test tube: A patchwork creature made from parts of DNA from birds and other animals that can trace their ancestry to dinosaurs. The hope was that, given the opportunity, she would cause immense chaos. Susan simply wasn't meant to live in modern times. Her dinosaur instincts and abilities are unfamiliar to modern heroes. Likewise, she was not designed to live in the modern world.

While many dinosaurs are docile enough, they're not necessarily going to be cloned for that. Scientists always seem to favor cloning dinosaurs with dangerous attacks, or at least massive size. To fulfill their purposes, they dip into the past and bring back some of history's deadliest predators.

Primary Pool: 8 (rampage)
Secondary Pool: 6 (instinctual reaction)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Edges: Hardy • (radiation), Iron Will ••, Keen Sense (Smell and Taste), One Against an Ocean
Anomaly Powers: Enhanced Attack (Aggravated), Extraordinary Speed, Hardened Skin, Heightened Reflexes

NOVA ANTAGONISTS

When novas emerged, the world was changed on every level. In the new world, factions, old and new, have a great deal of influence on politics and economics. Political and social structures worldwide were disassembled and built up again to accommodate for the new types of humans.

TERAT

When Radeyah erupted, she knew immediately why she always felt different. She had spent her whole life around baselines, and, try as she might, she never seemed to fit in. At first, she thought that it was her. She thought that something was wrong with her. When she realized the full potential of her nova powers, she realized that it was everyone else who was different. She had ascended to something else. She was never human. Radeyah saw herself as so much more.

Primary Pool: 7 (smartest woman in the room)
Secondary Pool: 5 (you want to be me)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4



Edges: Hypnotic Presence, Mastermind, Patron •••

Source: Quantum ••• (Quantum points 25)

Quantum Powers: Digital Manipulation •••, Mega-Intellect •••, Mega-Manipulation •••

ABERRANT

Itsuki became heavily involved in trying to make the world a better place after their eruption. They fought against evil, helped in natural disasters, and did their best to be a good role model in the press. Eventually, however, all novas find their allegiances. Itsuki found theirs in the Aberrants, a subset of the Teragen.

Primary Pool: 8 (making friends and influencing people)
Secondary Pool: 6 (leveraging power)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Edges: Foresight, Instant Influence, Wealth ••••
Source: Quantum •••• (Quantum points 30)
Quantum Powers: Cloak ••• (Sonic), Mega-Cunning ••, Mega-Presence ••••, Quantum Attack ••

ELITE

Jasper, like all novas, was shocked when his eruption occurred. He had never considered himself to be heroic or even all that interested in morality. However, he was immediately thrust into fame and surrounded by novas who, despite his own apathy, believed in something. In his eruption, Jasper later realized, he came into a great opportunity. Through no effort on his part, he was granted super powers: ones that made him strong and able to fight. While he needed to expend the effort to train, he quickly realized that the payoff would be well worth it. Uninterested in fighting for one particular cause, Jasper became an Elite, and fought for whoever paid him the most. In choosing to become an Elite, Jasper became Musketeer.

Elite mercenaries are a highly trained group of novas. Even an unskilled nova has the potential to best baseline combat groups. Elites, however, easily

take down anything in their path — except maybe other Elites. These novas are some of the deadliest weapons in the world, and they sell their unbelievable power to the highest bidder. Not all novas who accept payment for the fighting skills are Elites.

Primary Pool: 8 (fighting for the highest bidder)
Secondary Pool: 6 (business sense)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Edges: Accuracy ••, Eufiber •, Mega-Crush, Mega-Lifting, Quantum Leap
Source: Quantum •••• (Quantum points 30)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Dexterity ••, Mega-Might ••••, Mega-Stamina ••, Quantum Attack ••••

TALENT AND PSIAD ANTAGONISTS

Talents and psiads are a part of the **Aberrant** universe, though few know of their existence. While the Æon Society is aware of the distinction between novas and psiads, most consider psiads to simply be novas. Likewise, most Talents are seen as incredibly lucky or successful baselines.

COMMANDO

Unbeknownst to him, Lance's success as a military commando had less to do with natural talent and hard work than he thought. Rather, his success was extraordinary, though he wasn't a nova. Even without eruption, he was able to subconsciously push the odds to his favor. This helped him stay alive and get his team in and out of tough situations.

Primary Pool: 7 (soldier)
Secondary Pool: 5 (pilot)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Aim ••, Far Reaching Influence, Hair-Trigger Reflexes, Ms. Fix-It
Source: 3
Facets: Destructive •, Intuitive ••, Reflective •••
Gifts: Knee Deep in Brass, Steady Hands, Trigger Discipline

SUPER-SPY

Cleo, if that is her real name, gave up her real life and identity to become a spy. Though some of the most successful spies are novas, their international fame makes it hard for them to act covertly. As a result, governments and private organizations alike recruit baselines to do the missions requiring the deepest cover. In the right circles, Cleo was well known for being able to get in and out of any situation, no matter how bad the odds looked.

Primary Pool: 7 (espionage)
Secondary Pool: 5 (political intrigue)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Covert •••, Iron Will •, Hair-Trigger Reflexes
Facets: Destructive •, Intuitive ••, Reflective •••
Gifts: Saw That Coming, Easily Dismissed, Impeccable Timing

PSYCHIC

While Isabella appeared to be a nova, she was actually a clairsentient psiad. Because she possessed such substantial powers, she was quickly recruited by the Megasyndicate to assist them in their work. Whenever something or someone important went missing, she used her abilities to find and help retrieve it.

Primary Pool: 7 (clairsentience)
Secondary Pool: 5 (finding what's lost)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Detection ••, Foresight, Iron Will •, Skilled Liar
Source: Quantum ••• (Quantum points 25)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Cunning ••, Mega-Intellect •••

PSI MODES

Psiads are covered more extensively in **Trinity Continuum: Æon**. We've emulated them using Mega-Attributes, Mega-Edges, and Quantum Powers — they aren't the same as novas, but you can use these mechanics if you don't have access to **Æon** or prefer to keep the rules consistent with **Aberrant**.

KINETIC

Siobhan used her abilities as an electrokinetic psiad to her advantage. After joining the Teragen, she often found herself in conflict with others. It turns out that not everyone likes the idea that novas are supreme beings. She quickly became used to using her powers to stun enemies or throw up a shield to protect others. As a result, she became a great defender for the cause.

Primary Pool: 7 (electrokinesis)
Secondary Pool: 5 (protecting others)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Covert •, Iron Will ••, Small Unit Tactics
Source: Quantum ••• (Quantum points 25)
Quantum Powers: Mega-Resolve •••, Quantum Attack (non-lethal) ••, Quantum Deflection •



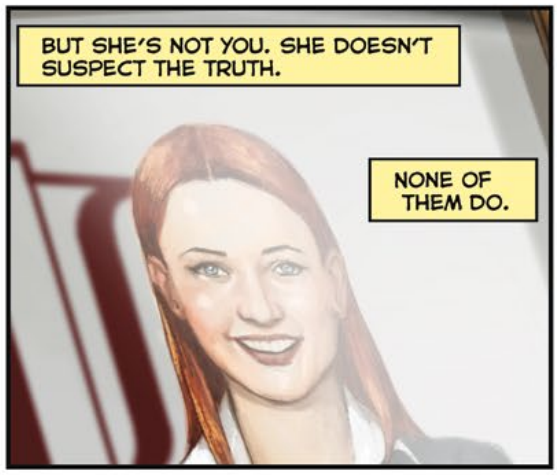

DEAREST MAXWELL, IT HAS BEEN A HUNDRED YEARS.

A *CENTURY* SINCE THE HAMMERSMITH EVENT.
Maxwell.
It has been a hundred
A century since
Hammersmith even

A CENTURY OF *FRIENDSHIP*. A CENTURY OF *HATE*. AND YET, ...
EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE GONE...


... YOU ARE STILL THE ONLY ONE I CAN TALK TO.
THE ONLY ONE WHO *UNDERSTANDS*.


YOU'D BE PROUD OF YOUR GRANDDAUGHTER, MAX.
SHE'S MADE YOUR SOCIETY A RIGHT PAIN IN MY ARSE.


BUT SHE'S NOT YOU. SHE DOESN'T SUSPECT THE TRUTH.
NONE OF THEM DO.


ALL OF THEM, INSPIRED AND BASELINES ALIKE, THINK THAT NOVAS CAME ABOUT...
...BECAUSE A FECKING SPACE STATION EXPLODED.
NO, IT WAS ME. I FINALLY REPLICATED HAMMERSMITH'S EXPERIMENT.
I SHATTERED THAT ALIEN COCOON SMOTHERING HUMANITY'S POTENTIAL.
IMAGINE THAT. DR. PRIMORIS — DIVIS MAL NOW — FINALLY BEATS THE GREAT MERCER CLAN.
SO NOW CAN YOU SEE WHAT I WANTED, MAX? WHEREVER YOU ARE, CAN YOU, IN YOUR HEART

CHAPTER TEN: SETTING SECRETS

"It's a strange world."
"Let's keep it that way."
— Elijah Snow and Jakita Wagner, *Planetary #2 "Island"*

This chapter draws back the curtain on the secrets and mysteries of the **Aberrant** era of the **Trinity Continuum**. If you are not a Storyguide planning on running a chronicle, you may want to skip over this information to avoid spoilers and preserve some surprises to the setting.

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE INSPIRED

In the early 1920s, a "telluric engine" created by Sir Calvin Hammersmith exploded at his estate in Britain. The explosion killed Hammersmith and released a pulse of energy that empowered hundreds of Talents, and gifted hundreds of others with low level psionic and quantum powers. Smaller-scale catalyst events had occurred in the past, as well as a few localized experiments or accidents. However, "the Hammersmith event," as it became known, was the first world-wide phenomenon to awaken the dormant potential of humanity.

The event also granted far more impressive powers to the three people closest to the telluric engine when it exploded. Michael Donighal, later known as Divis Mal, gained an unusual degree of quantum power, the mysterious Max Mercer became an exceptionally powerful Talent, and Dr. Hammersmith's servant Sara Kaur, eventually known as Dr. Saraswati Kaur (S.K.) Bhurano, developed unusually powerful noetic powers. All three of them also acquired extremely extended lifespans, and it may well be that they are all effectively immortal.

In the 1920s, Max Mercer created the Æon Society and recruited other Inspired individuals. Over time, the effects of the Hammersmith event diminished, and no new people gained powers. Many Inspired saw their powers fade as they grew old, and other unusual phenomena vanished into obscurity. However, Mercer maintained his interest in both Inspired individuals and the future of humanity.

Several people, including Michael Donighal, attempted to recreate the Hammersmith event, but without success. The process was difficult and much of the initial success an accident, but there was also a more sinister reason. The energies released by the Hammersmith event traveled far beyond the Earth, and a few alien species noticed it, including a powerful and ruthless psionic species called the Doyen (described in **Trinity Continuum: Æon**, pp. 359-361). In an attempt to contain the dangerous potential they saw in humanity, the Doyen placed an energy barrier around the Earth that limited the effects of any future empowering events. Through the rest of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century, any similar events produced by natural forces, strange experiments, or visiting aliens could only affect people within the immediate geographic area.

N-Day

Although many attribute N-Day to the destruction of the *Galatea* spreading radiation through the Earth's upper atmosphere, or some as yet unknown quantum phenomenon or fluctuation in the cosmos, the truth is that the Nova Age is the fruition of the work of Divis Mal, alias Doctor Primoris, alias Michael Daemon Donighal, the most powerful nova empowered by the Hammersmith event a century ago.

Early on, Donighal disagreed with Max Mercer about the future and responsibilities of the Inspired, those empowered by the Hammersmith Event.

Mercer believed it was the responsibility of the Inspired to safeguard humanity, explore the world's wonders, and to make things better for everyone. Donighal, whose life experience had been quite different from Mercer's, argued the Inspired had no responsibilities to anyone other than themselves and exploring their own vast potential. They were the future of humanity and those who lacked the ability (or the vision) to follow them to the heights of achievement were meant to be left behind in the dustbin of history, an evolutionary dead-end. For years, the two rivals pursued their own particular vision of the future, often on their own or with allies, sometimes at odds with each other, neither able to convince the other to understand his particular point of view.

Donighal, under the alias of "Dr. Primoris," focused his efforts on understanding the nature of his own transcendence and that of others like him. In later years, he and his allies looked for ways to enhance their potential and to trigger it in others, similar to the Hammersmith Event. This involved a great deal of experimentation, some of it ethically dubious. Dr. Primoris set up various experiments, stole the scientific research and equipment he could not acquire by other means, and tested different devices intended to trigger potential quantum powers. He also discussed and debated his philosophy with rare peers and allies, particularly Jeremiah Scripture, who Donighal first met in the 1950s. This led to the formation of the philosophy of Teras, the inner circle of the Teragen, and the first experiences with Chrysalis and the transformations it could direct.

The Nova Age is a manifestation of Divis Mal's vision; N-Day was when he and his allies finally managed to recreate their own version of the Hammersmith experiment, unleashing a quantum wave that shattered the Doyen energy barrier around the Earth and triggered the nova potential latent in a portion of humanity.

DIVIS MAL

You could almost feel bad for Divis Mal. He's so brilliant, so certain he's right, and so very *alone* in the world. He's sure that if only he could make people *see,* then humanity could rise above its petty mediocrity and achieve its full potential — or at least those with any potential at all could do so. If only... if only, and that's what this is all about: Mal's grand experiment, to finally ignite the fiery potential of the nova, of the One Race, and make it into a shining beacon to light the way to a limitless future, with him as the modern Prometheus, stealing fire from Heaven, the defiant Lucifer, the Light Bringer. The problem is, Mal cares far more about being right than he does about the future, and we all know how things turned out for Prometheus and Lucifer.

The nova who now calls himself Divis Mal was once Michael Damien Donighal, a brilliant and fiery young Irishman, a scholar, scientist, and philosopher, who attended Sir Calvin Hammersmith's demonstration of the Telluric Engine and found his destiny. Bathed in the unearthly energies of that explosion, Donighal experienced what could only be described as the unleashed glory of the cosmos, a moment of infinite power and potential, a glimpse of what he and humanity could become, and he has been seeking to recapture that glorious light ever since.

A homosexual born and raised in the early 1900s long before the term "gay" meant anything other than "happy," the brilliant Donighal always felt isolated, hiding his true self and "the love that dare not speak its name." His loneliness transformed into emotional armor and disdain for most of humanity, who were incapable of understanding him and his intellect, even more so when he became something more than human. Nevertheless, Donighal believed he had found a kindred spirit in Maxwell Mercer, another attendee of the Hammersmith experiment, who was likewise changed by it. It was Michael Donighal who appeared by Mercer's bedside in the hospital when the missing American finally reappeared, and he has kept secret how he found Mercer and brought him back.

In those heady early days, Max and Michael both held to the vision inspired by their transformations, but it soon became apparent that they held different hopes for the future. Donighal adopted the moniker "Dr. Primoris" in part to mock the sophomoric sobriquets of his Society fellows. Mercer believed their newfound power and insight came with a responsibility to protect and elevate humanity, whereas Donighal felt the majority of humanity was beyond hope, and the best they could do was to find and nurture others like them, the very best in human potential, those who were clearly superior and would light the way to the future. The rest would be sacrificed on the altar of necessity. It



was this fundamental disagreement that eventually drove Donighal away from the Æon Society, becoming a sometime foe of his old friends. He changed his middle name to Daemon to reflect his view of himself as a "genius" or "guiding divinity."

The Divis Mal of the **Aberrant** era is, in many ways, a different man from the Dr. Primoris or even the Michael Donighal known to the Æon Society in decades past. When he realized the potential of the philosophy of Teras and of the efforts to recreate the Hammersmith Event, Donighal entered Chrysalis and transformed himself into his vision of the fiery light-bringer. He sacrificed his old identity and was reborn like a phoenix from the ashes of his prior self, no longer Dr. Primoris or Michael Donighal, but Divis Mal, the rebel angel, the light-bearer, the beacon for humanity's future.

MAXWELL MERCER

"Your legacy is our future." When Divis Mal says this to the world before leaving Earth for good at the end of the Aberrant War, he's really talking to one person: His old friend and rival, Max Mercer. Mercer was right — the damnable Mercer was *always* right. Of course, Max Mercer has had the advantage of considerable foresight, not just because he's a visionary futurist with great faith in humanity, but also because he is one of the world's most potent Talents, and a time-traveler.

Mercer is, in many ways, the ultimate expression of the Talent potential for "shifting" timelines to select for the most favorable outcomes. The initial energy bombardment of the Hammersmith Event "untethered" Mercer in time-space, resulting in a dizzying "grand tour" of the past and future and insights into what had been and would (or might) be. When Max Mercer woke up in a hospital bed, months after the Hammersmith experiment, he was truly a changed man. He was inspired by all that he had seen and experienced, and by his own unleashed potential. With the help of Donighal and others, Mercer founded the Æon Society to safeguard and guide the future of humanity, a future Mercer was uniquely situated to "look in on" occasionally to steer things in the right direction.

The more Mercer tried his hand at steering the future, however, the clearer it became that "the future" was no more fixed than the past. Significant changes tended to split the timeline, creating or

connecting with, another branch of the infinite Continuum. After struggling with the question of whether there was any point to acting at all, Mercer refocused his — and the Society's — efforts on more subtly trying to make the world a better place and, if not to change the future per se, at least to try and find the best overall route to get there.

Max Mercer is maintaining a particularly light touch when it comes to the Nova Age. He knows this experiment on the part of his old friend and rival Michael Donighal won't end well, but he also knows that Michael needs to see and experience it for himself, and that some good will ultimately come out of it, particularly so long as Project Utopia continues to apply unleashed nova potential to some of humanity's problems. Some of the seeds planted at this time won't come to fruition for a century or more, but it is important that they do. For now, Mercer is allowing Divis Mal's star to ascend, watching, waiting, and preparing for what comes next.

DR. KRONA BUSH

The future quantakinetic proxy of the ***Æon*** era is also around during the Nova Age. In fact, her role in **Aberrant** is not so different from her post-purge role in ***Æon***, with the primary difference being that Bhurano is not currently rebuilding a psi order and looking for revenge against the alien Doyen. Instead, she's lying low to stay out of the conflicts between the Æon Society and Divis Mal while she studies the quantum and sub-quantum nature of reality, research that eventually leads her to develop the high-level quantakinetic modes known in the future.

Saraswati Kaur (S. K.) Bhurano worked for Sir Calvin Hammersmith as a domestic servant, then known as "Sara Kaur." Even before the day of the fateful experiment, her intellect and intense curiosity caught the attention of her employer, who indulged her desire to explore many of the books in his personal research library. Bhurano was one of the three people closest to the Telluric Engine when it exploded, and its energies awakened within her vast noetic potential, a moment of infinite oneness with the Implicate Order of things, in which Bhurano felt she could perceive the pattern of time-space, laid out before her like Indra's infinite net of jewels.

Unlike Mercer and Donighal, Bhurano has lived and worked largely behind the scenes since her transformation, adopting various pseudonyms and identities over the years. By 2028, she is going by "Dr. Krona Bush," an eccentric Indian heiress, giving her the resources and the influence to pursue her work. Let the men have their bluster and philosophical arguments and grand schemes; she has libraries and lifetimes of reading, research, and study into the very nature of reality to pursue. Krona Bush is the most powerful and experienced psiad in the world and is well aware of the taxonomy of the Inspired, and of the existence of a handful of other psiads amidst the Talents and novas of the present age.

Bhurano could be a patron for psiad characters in the **Aberrant** era, or even an all-psiad chronicle, or she might employ a mixed group of agents (Talents, psiads, and novas) to assist with her research, more focused on the relationship between psi and quantum since N-Day. Over 100 years old, Bhurano has amassed considerable personal resources, along with a breadth of psi powers to deal with many problems. Her development and mastery of quantakinesis is still generations away, although the first stirrings of the concept can be found in her current research into novas and their powers.

THE ÆON SOCIETY

The Æon Society is *far* more than just an old-money philanthropic foundation. It has been involved in exploration of the strange and unknown for over a century, focused on protecting the world and ensuring a better future for humanity. Max Mercer founded the Society after the Hammersmith Event and even had the cooperation of Michael Donighal in those early days before the two of them went their separate ways. In the 1920s and 30s, the Æon Society included many of the Inspired individuals in the world at the time. They investigated unusual phenomena, sought to expand the boundaries of knowledge, and fought against threats both human and beyond.

As detailed in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, the Æon Society has worked behind the scenes since the first decades of its founding. As its original members retired or died off, Max Mercer

oversaw the development of the Society into a true multinational philanthropic organization with the goal of uplifting and guiding humanity. For 80 years, the Æon Society dealt with things most people could scarcely imagine, and quietly advised governments and leaders around the world. They also compiled the most in-depth research into the Inspired and the potentials latent in humanity.

When N-Day came and the first public eruptions occurred, Æon was the first to realize what was happening, who might be responsible, and what could be done. They were able to advise and calm a panicked United Nations and to see the opportunity inherent in the chaos and change of those early days. Just as the Society had embraced the Inspired following the Hammersmith Event, so would they take in these new novas by the hand and help them to use their powers for the betterment of humanity and the world. Æon's expertise, influence, and clear plans — plus the looming threat posed by the apparent involvement of Dr. Primoris — was more than enough to convince the UN Security Council in closed-door meetings, and so Project Utopia gained untold resources to achieve the Society's dream of a better world for everyone.

The Æon Society is doing what it has always done: Try to protect the world and make it better for everyone. Under the guidance of Margaret Mercer, their founder's granddaughter, a hopeful younger generation of Society members finally feel that they have an unprecedented opportunity to achieve their goals. For the good of the future, Max Mercer won't tell them otherwise.

Project Proteus

While the Æon Society is made up of idealists, they are not fools. Their Proteus Division has run the numbers and detailed simulations based on everything they know about novas, their powers, and their current rate of eruptions and development, and the potential outlook is worrisome. They know there's potential for the (often literal) explosive growth in novas and their powers to go terribly wrong, and that humanity needs to be prepared if and when that happens.

So since the very first days following N-Day, while Project Utopia representatives negotiated with the United Nations and worked to calm the public and recruit novas to the cause, Project Proteus worked behind the scenes to prepare for the day they hoped would never come, when baseline humanity (and their Inspired allies) would need to fight a war against nova-kind. If that day comes, they must be ready, and they will be.

THE TERAGEN

The Teragen is more than just a loose alliance of novas connected by a mutual philosophy. Its core membership, the so-called Pantheon, is made up of close allies of Divis Mal, many of whom have possessed and developed their powers before N-Day. Indeed, the nature of the Teragen, as a group and a movement, and what they will become, is at the heart of the **Aberrant** era and its future.

The Teragen truly begins with Jeremiah Scripture and his fateful meeting with Michael Donighal in the 1950s. Donighal recognized in Jeremiah a kindred spirit in more ways than one. The two became lovers, partners, and Michael facilitated Jeremiah's realization of his stalwart power, the first instance to prove both what would become the philosophy of Teras and the possibility of deliberately awakening latent human potential.

Over the years, the two found and gathered others like them, examples of what humanity could become. Together they explored the bounds of that potential and how to awaken it in others, discussed and debated the nature of power, transcendence, and personal development. Donighal and Scripture inspired in others a vision of a glorious new race, the One Race, reborn in fire and ascending to a limitless future, and they sought ways to make it happen.

For much of the latter half of the 20th century, the loose alliance of the Teragen pursued the goal of awakening their people, including extensive research and experimentation. Much of this was covert and illegal, involving acquiring the necessary materials and information by whatever means necessary. For a group that had already declared themselves beyond human notions of morality, the justifications were easy ones, the sacrifices necessary ones.

Now, at last, the Teragen dream has been realized and the Nova Age has dawned. They have issued their manifesto and called upon their people to reach for their destiny. Their membership has swelled, and diverse ideas and alliances have sprung up, and it only remains to be seen if the fire they have stolen from heaven will light the way to the future or consume the world.

What really happened on September 25, 2023, the day when a nuclear blast wiped out central São Paulo, resulting in thousands of casualties, along with the heroic sacrifice of the Fireman? Nobody knows, and officially, that's how it's going to stay. From the point of view of **Trinity Continuum** "canon," the cause of the São Paulo bombing will remain a mystery, left for individual Storyguides to do with as they wish in their own chronicles. There isn't going to be an "official" explanation or backstory assigned to the event, and any of the possible explanations put about in the setting could be true — indeed, all of them are, somewhere out in the Continuum. Of course, there's nothing that says you even have to decide on "the" truth regarding São Paulo in your own chronicle. It may just be a tragic event that happened years ago that no one has been able to explain. Some possible explanations to consider include:

An Accident

The blast was a terrible accident, probably some form of super-science gone wrong. It happened some nine months before Project Utopia announced practical hyperfusion technology, so it could have been the result of early experimentation or a failed hyperfusion prototype, either on the part of Utopia or Æon Society researchers or independent experimentation. A nova inventor might have been experimenting on their own, probably with makeshift supplies and equipment, and limited safety measures and failsafes, if any. If there was an effort to steal or destroy the results of these experiments, something could have gone wrong, setting off the fatal explosion. Naturally, the blast would have destroyed all evidence at ground zero. The later development of hyperfusion might even have been some good that came out of this disaster, based on study of what caused the blast.

A Black Operation

The conspiracy theorists are right, and the São Paulo Blast was a "black operation" undertaken by Project Utopia or its Proteus Division to set Team Tomorrow and Utopia up as heroes and saviors, able to swoop in and protect people in the aftermath, and building an effective case for Utopia's Science and Technology Oversight to more strongly police new technologies. It's no accident that international opinion swings strongly in favor of the United Nations, Utopia, and Team Tomorrow following the tragedy.

This is a particularly dark and cynical explanation for an incident resulting in the deaths of thousands, to say nothing of setting up the Fireman's possibly intentional sacrifice. It would permanently tarnish, if not outright destroy, Project Utopia's credibility and good name if it were true and the truth became known. Still, it may suit certain styles of chronicle, and it presents a powerful moral dilemma for the player characters who uncover the conspiracy: Do they reveal the truth and compromise all the good Utopia has done, or keep the secret and live with the knowing that Utopia's success is built on a lie and the murder of thousands?

An Eruption

The São Paulo Blast wasn't a nuclear device, but the result of the eruption or unleashed powers of a nova. It's noteworthy that the blast occurred just a month before Divis Mal revealed himself to the world in all his glory with the Null Manifesto broadcast. The blast could have been the result of Mal's sudden and destructive emergence from Chrysalis, the "phoenix fires" of his rebirth. Brazil has served as a haven for the Teragen now and in the recent past and might have done so during that time. An eruption incident could have been another nova as well, who either perished in the blast — or is still alive and living with the knowledge of what they have done.

An Invasion

For a truly odd explanation, the Blast might have been caused by a catastrophic conflict between one or more of the alien Doyen and earthly foes (**Trinity Continuum: Æon**, p.359). The aliens exist as charged-plasma energy beings, so it's possible a conflict between them and novas, psiads, or even foes armed with super-science weapons could result in what could be mistaken for a nuclear blast. If so, what were the Doyen doing on Earth and did the result of this conflict scare them off or are they still around, looking to prevent humanity from achieving the quantum-manipulating potential that could threaten them?

N-Day Plus One

The Blast was a failed attempt to set off another N-Day event, to "juice" the further eruption of novas among the population. Either the device used was faulty or someone or something interfered, resulting in a catastrophic release of energy without an accompanying quantum wave to trigger more eruptions — or the effort worked all *too* well, and a new nova erupted too quickly and forcefully, right at ground zero (a variation of the eruption scenario) which prevented the quantum wave from forming and triggering further eruptions worldwide.

Terrorism

The Blast was a terrorist attack, either using a "suitcase" tactical nuke or unleashed nova powers (or some combination thereof). In this instance, the Storyguide will need to consider why terrorists would choose São Paulo as a target and why no one ever claimed responsibility for the attack. It may be that one of the claims later publicly dismissed is actually true but, even then, what was the attack meant to achieve? It could well be that the blast was a combination of terrorism and an accident: A terrorist cell planned to use a stolen or homemade tac-nuke elsewhere. When confronted, the terrorists armed the nuke and it went off. Now both the authorities and the surviving members of the terrorist organization are looking to cover up their involvement in the debacle.

THE FUTURE AND THE ABERRANT WAR

Readers of **Trinity Continuum: Æon** know — or at least think they know — what is coming: In 30 years, the Nova Age of **Aberrant** gives way to war between baseline humanity and insane Aberrants as the world's superhuman protectors and champions become increasingly erratic and conflicts between them turn increasingly violent and destructive. Some novas try to contain things, but it's not enough, and in some cases it only makes things worse. This is where we look at a possible future timeline that leads towards the **Æon** era, with an emphasis on the notion that it doesn't *have* to. The Continuum is vast, and **Æon** is a *possible* future, not necessarily the only one, just as the Nova Age is a possible future of the **Trinity Continuum: Adventure!** era and even the modern-day world described in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**. This section looks at some possible future events and turning points in the Nova Age of **Aberrant** and how Storyguides can make use of them in their own games.

The Utopia-Teragen Conflict

The most immediate looming conflict is between Project Utopia and the Teragen, particularly the Aberrant faction of that movement. The Teragen represents novas relieved of all responsibilities and respect for human law and society, and the Aberrants are novas who are angry and ready to lash out to prove their power and establish their independence. They have already committed acts of murder and terrorism in the name of "aberrant rights" and solidarity, and they are not likely to stop any time soon.

In the future of the **Aberrant** timeline, Geryon and his Aberrants attempt to "crash" a meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York City in the coming year, claiming a "sovereign right" to address that body and issue a series of demands on behalf of nova-kind. Team Tomorrow scrambles and intercepts the Aberrants when they arrive at UN Plaza and a short but epic and destructive fight breaks out, the first major group battle between novas in a large city. T2M drives the Aberrants off, and the rogue Teragen jump to the top of Public Enemy lists around the world.

You can insert the nova characters from your own chronicle into this conflict on either side, or as third parties looking to further their own goals. They might be able to talk-down the confrontational novas and prevent the fight or jump in and get it started — possibly even making it that much worse. The event is a turning-point in Continuum history, and a significant part of the reason why the term "aberrant" becomes associated with the threat of uncontrolled novas in this era.

Hearts and Minds

Another important element of the Utopia-Teragen conflict is not the physical quantum-powered battles, but the struggle for the hearts and minds of both novas and baselines around the

world. Factions of the Teragen make more of a point of seeking out newly erupted novas and offering them a choice other than "baseline brainwashing" at a Utopia-run Rashoud Center. Project Utopia wants to keep more novas from joining the Teragen, particularly violent factions like the Aberrants. At the same time, Utopia wants to respect each individual nova's freedom of choice and win them over because of Utopia's ideals and vision, not through force or coercion.

At the same time, both nova factions must deal with baseline opinions and politics. The Aberrants make Utopia's job more difficult by giving all novas a bad name and exacerbating baseline fears and the desire for novas and their powers to be more carefully regulated. Every atrocity strengthens the argument that novas are simply too dangerous to be allowed to exist unregulated and tightens the nature of those regulations. The Teragen, despite having declared their independence from baseline humanity, still lives among them and is not only hated and feared, but sometimes obsessively loved and even worshipped. Some novas find the notion of being a god a tempting one indeed, but do ties to baseline followers truly further the cause of the One Race?

The Teragen Purge

At the same time as the conflict between the Teragen and Utopia is heating up, the Teragen is also going through some internal struggles. The movement is already factionalized, and the activities of the Aberrants make it only more so. More and more novas join the Teragen without truly learning or embracing the philosophy or practice of Teras, drawn by the promise of unlimited power and freedom, and a chance to thumb their noses as authorities like Utopia. Factions like the Cultus Nova and the Pandaimonion become caught up in being worshipped as gods and squabbling amongst themselves as gods are wont to do.

The radicalization of the Aberrants spreads among the Teragen as that faction gains members and momentum. The aloofness of the elder members of the Pantheon, with their "do what thou wilt" approach, frustrates the new generation of Terats. Eventually, they revolt against their elders, with young and ambitious fanatics like the Apostle and Mahmoud in the lead. Even Geryon is caught off-guard by the viciousness of the rebels, and of his fellow Aberrants who don't hold to his vow to never kill other members of the One Race. What's worse, Divis Mal, the "father" of the movement, refuses to take sides, and instead allows the conflict to play out, not even aiding his most trusted long-time friends. This is seen as a betrayal by many, who become disillusioned with Mal's vision and "leadership."

The Purge has the potential to transform the Teragen from a loose philosophical movement into



a radicalized nova terrorist organization fueled by a fanatical cult. It may also create various splinter factions and even further conflicts.

Interstellar Colonization

Novas have already helped to establish permanent human presences on the moon and Mars by 2028, and things will soon go a step further — one step for novas, and a giant leap for humankind. By the 2030s, novas with interplanetary and interstellar travel capabilities like the Daedalus League aid in establishing the first human colonies outside of Earth's solar system. That means early exploration of other star systems to find potential colony worlds is just beginning to take place in the late 2020s, where the default start of an **Aberrant** chronicle is set.

While **Trinity Continuum: Æon** details several extrasolar colonies established during the Nova Age, the events of the Aberrant War and the Crash make it likely that knowledge of some nova-established colonies is lost by that era. In fact, there's at least one rediscovered by Earth long after the Aberrant War, and there could well be others. This opens a lot of room for Storyguides looking to run some stories — or even an entire chronicle — based around characters exploring space in **Aberrant**.

Novas spread out into space for different reasons: some simply wanting to explore and go where no one has gone before, others mindful of opportunities for humanity to spread out among the stars, and some believing the stars to be the future of novas alone. Given the relative rarity of novas, especially those able to travel interstellar distances, all those motives can find themselves in close proximity.

Future Shock

An important element of **Aberrant** is that not only do novas have the potential to change the world, their presence and activities *inevitably* changes the world, sometimes despite their best efforts. Every change brought about by nova abilities sends shockwaves and ripples out in direct proportion to how big the change is, leading to all kinds of unintended consequences. One example is the development of hyperfusion: It would seem like cheap, clean, and virtually limitless energy would be nothing but a boon, but the world has to deal with the sudden shift in the value of fossil fuels, the collapse of economies based on them, questions concerning the control and licensing of the new technology, and many other things as a result of it.

Aberrant is a great setting to explore the effects of such sudden change on the world. You can extrapolate from the timeline and events in this book, or just from the goals and actions of the characters in your chronicle. If a Mega-Intellect invents some revolutionary new technology, how does it alter the world, and how do those changes affect its inventor in turn? If a Mega-Social nova decides to spark and push social change, what are the outcomes? While Storyguides should be careful not to throw up roadblocks or give the players the impression that "no good deed goes unpunished," playing out the effects of change on the setting can lead to some interesting and dramatic storylines.

The Aberrant War

The Aberrant War is the Sword of Damocles that hangs like a shadow over the entirety of the **Aberrant** era. According to **Æon** history, in less than 30 years, the Nova Age will end in disaster. Increasing quantum flux among novas leads to more and more uncontrolled transformations, as well as psychological problems due to transformations and quantum instability. The rift between novas and baseline humanity continues to grow, and the dangers and unintended consequences created by novas and their powers begin to outweigh the benefits of their continued work to improve the world for everyone, until most of the baseline population turns against their former benefactors, seeing them as inhuman threats.

The Aberrant War makes several things clear: First, that Divis Mal's experiment in a mass nova awakening is a disaster. Too few novas have embraced the philosophy of Teras and learned to control and moderate their transcendence process, and even many Terats have failed to do so, drunk on the godlike power that they wield. Without this moderation, dangerous quantum flux mutations run rampant. Second, Project Proteus is forced to begin implementing many of its failsafe measures for dealing with dangerous novas and it becomes apparent that baseline humanity has *never* truly trusted novas, and that they have been right all along not to do so. This revelation is disillusioning and disheartening to the remaining relatively sane and stable novas, some of whom feel betrayed or that they have wasted their efforts to help improve the world for a baseline population that now hates and fears them.

Aberrant Storyguides have free rein, of course, to handle the lead up to the Aberrant War as they

choose. The Continuum is vast, and there are timelines where the War can be averted. Perhaps the characters in your own campaign can make a difference and head off the deterioration of novas, finding a better way to teach and implement the chrysalis techniques and understanding of quantum flux possessed by the Teragen. Maybe they forge lasting alliances and find ways to make Project Utopia last. In the **Trinity Continuum**, the future is not yet written, and the possibilities for your own campaign are endless.



APPENDIX: NOVA QUICK CREATION

The guidelines in Chapter Three (p. 86) are designed to allow players to create whatever sort of nova characters they want, within the limits of the dots and Experience they have to allocate. Sometimes, however, you want to create a nova character quickly on the spot, or a player may prefer a more guided approach without quite such a range of options. These nova quick creation guidelines are intended to move you quickly through the process, ending up with a character who is as balanced as one from the standard character creation process with less decision-making and in a fraction of the time.

The creation process initially works like that outlined in Chapter Three of **Aberrant** and the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** for Steps One through Four: choosing the character's Paths, Skills, and Attributes. The primary difference comes in Step Five when applying the nova template. Players also have the option of using some random die rolls to help quickly select options for a character's Paths and other traits.

Step One: Concept

Players using the quick creation system may want to put this step "on hold" initially, letting the progress through the other steps inform the potential concepts for their character. This is particularly true for players looking to use the system for inspiration because they don't yet have a concept in mind. The same is true for the character's Aspirations: When using this system, you may want to wait and decide them at the end of the process, once a clear picture of the character has emerged.

Step Two: Paths

Players choose their character's Paths normally but may wish to roll on the following tables for quick options or inspiration, if they are having a difficult time choosing. Certain Paths — particularly Society Paths — may be restricted, so consult the Storyguide about any such restrictions in the game before proceeding and remove them as options (re-rolling if they come up randomly).

D10	ORIGIN PATH
1–2	Adventurer
3–4	Life of Privilege
5	Military Brat
6	Street Rat
7–9	Suburbia
10	Survivalist

D10	ROLE PATH
1	Charismatic Leader
2–3	Combat Specialist
4–5	Detective
6	Medical Practitioner
7	Pilot
8	The Sneak
9–10	Technology Expert

D10	SOCIETY PATH
1–2	Æon Society
3–5	Project Utopia
6–7	Teragen
8	Directive
9	Elite (1–5: Consultant, 6–10: Elite)
10	Daedalus League

Distribute three dots among each Path's skills and two dots among each Path's Edges.

ARCHETYPE

D10	ARCHETYPE
1	**Elemental:** You wield the powers of a particular force or element.
2	**Fighter:** Your abilities make you an especially effective combatant.
3	**Genius:** You excel in an area of intellectual endeavor, more than most can imagine.
4	**Morph:** You can transform your body in various ways.
5	**Mover:** You get around, moving in ways (and at speeds) most cannot.
6	**Paragon:** You are the peak of human achievement—in almost everything.
7	**Performer:** Whatever else you can do, you are a social *tour de force.*
8	**Sneak:** Your abilities focus on stealth, infiltration, and avoiding detection.
9	**Summoner:** You can call up or create things to do things for you.
10	**Tank:** You're superhumanly strong and tough.

Step Three: Skills

Distribute the six additional dots the character receives for skills and choose a Specialty and a Skill Trick for any skill with three or more dots.

Step Four: Attributes

Players choose how to allocate their character's Attributes but may wish to make use of the following random options for quick-picks or inspiration, if they're in need of either.

- **Arenas:** Roll a die for each Arena: Physical, Mental, and Social. The highest die result is the character's top-ranked Arena, the second highest middle-ranked, and the lowest bottom-ranked. Re-roll any ties.
- **Approach:** Roll a die for each Approach: Force, Finesse, and Resilience, re-rolling any ties. The highest die result is the character's Favored Approach.

Allocate the character's Attribute dots based on their chosen Arenas and Favored Approach.

Step Five: Select Archetype

Choose one of the nova archetypes from the following list or roll a die to choose one at random.

Go to the archetype's description and fill-in its options. Different archetypes offer different options, so review the choices carefully. Archetypes with options also offer a "quick-pick" with the options already chosen for you, if you don't want to bother choosing. Just use these instead.

ARCHETYPES

The following archetypes provide allocations of the Experience from the nova template. Each archetype offers a description of its theme, a listing of the traits associated with it, and a list of variations for modifying it. In some cases, archetypes offer quick choices between different options to round them out.

ELEMENTAL

Elemental Mastery is the core power of the Elemental, the ability to manipulate a particular element, force, or energy for various effects. Elementals have a good balance of defense, movement, and some type of offense using their powers, depending on the base technique of their Elemental Mastery. The powers outside of the nova's Elemental Mastery are usually also facets of controlling a particular element, but not acquired as Techniques, so they are not saddled with the limits associated with a power suite, making it easier for the nova to use them all at once.

Attributes: +1 dot to an Attribute of your choice [10 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Dexterity

Quantum: 3 [32 Experience]

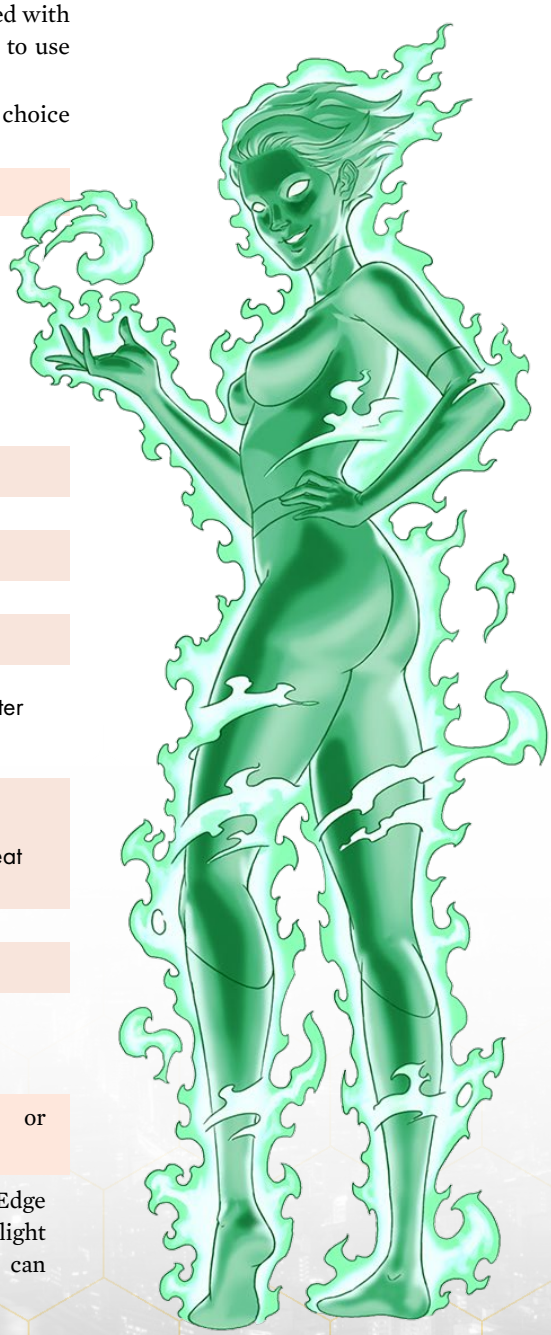
Quantum Powers: Elemental Mastery 3, Flight 3, Quantum Field 3 [108 Experience]

Choose an element and base technique from the Elemental Mastery description or roll randomly (d10):

1	*Entropy:* Quantum Disruption
2	*Gravity:* Quantum Anima
3	*Kinetic:* Quantum Anima
4	*Magnetism:* Quantum Anima
5	*Plants:* Quantum Anima
6	*Primal:* Choose or roll (d10) one of: (1–2) Air, (3–4) Earth, or (5–7) Water (all Quantum Anima) or (8–10) Fire (Quantum Attack).
7	*Radiant:* Quantum Attack. Choose or roll (d10) one of (1–2) Cold, (3–4) Darkness, (5–6) Electricity, (7–8) Heat or (9–10) Radiation.
8	*Space:* Quantum Anima
9	*Time:* Environmental Anima
10	*Weather:* Environmental Anima

Variations:

- *Absorption:* Substitute Absorption 3 or Quantum Aura 3 for Quantum Field.
- *Mastery:* Substitute Technique Mega-Edge dots for Elemental Mastery in place of Flight or Quantum Field dots. This variation can eliminate Flight and Quantum Field as separate powers, making them techniques of Elemental Mastery (along with four other Technique tags) but this makes those powers more complicated to wield at once.
- Take 12 Experience worth of transformations and add a dot of the Technique Mega-Edge for your Elemental Mastery.



The Fighter is focused on abilities making them a fierce combatant. Unlike the Paragon, who is good at everything, the Fighter is *very* good at one thing. Still, Fighters have a lot of low Scale superhuman abilities, making them better than baselines in a number of areas.

Skills: +1 dot each in Aim, Athletics, and Close Combat [15 Experience]

Edges: Allocate five dots among any of the following Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Always Prepared, Fast-Draw, Forceful Martial Arts, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Iron Will, Precise Martial Arts, Small Unit Tactics, Sniper [15 Experience]

- *Close Fighter Quick-Pick:* Always Prepared, Forceful Martial Arts 3, Iron Will
- *Ranged Fighter Quick-Pick:* Fast-Draw, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Sniper 3

Quantum: 1 [0 Experience]

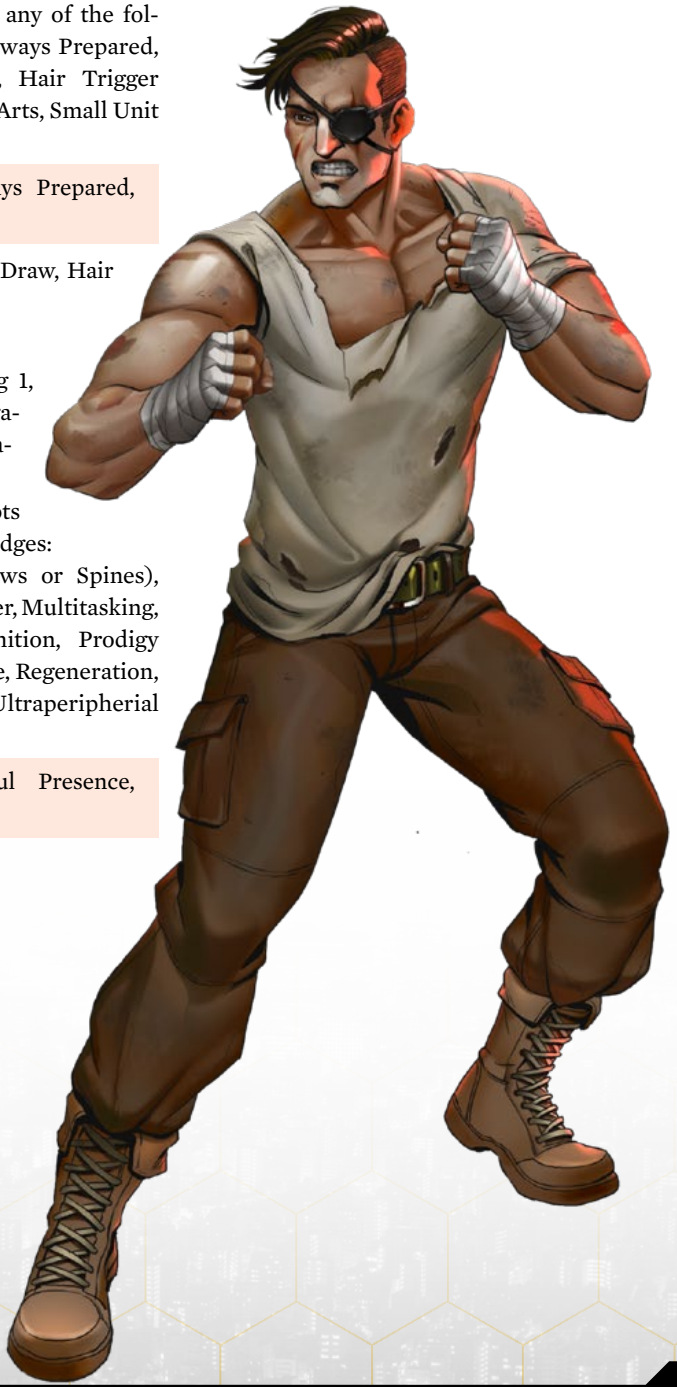
Mega-Attributes: Mega-Cunning 1, Mega-Resolve 1, Mega-Might 1, Mega-Dexterity 1, Mega-Stamina 1, Mega-Composure 1 [72 Experience]

Mega-Edges: Allocate four dots among any of the following Mega-Edges: Accuracy, Body Modification (Claws or Spines), Dreadful Presence, Mind Over Matter, Multitasking, Overwhelming Denial, Pretercognition, Prodigy (Aim or Close Combat), Rapid Strike, Regeneration, Subtle Presence, Toughness, Ultraperipherial Perception [48 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Accuracy, Dreadful Presence, Prodigy, Regeneration

Variations:

- *Hunter:* Apply one or more of your Mega-Edge dots to Mega-Hearing, Mega-Scent, or Mega-Vision instead.



GENIUS

The Genius is, by definition, brilliant in some field of the Mental Arena. While most think of Geniuses as technical, novas are often geniuses in other areas of the Mental Arena as well.

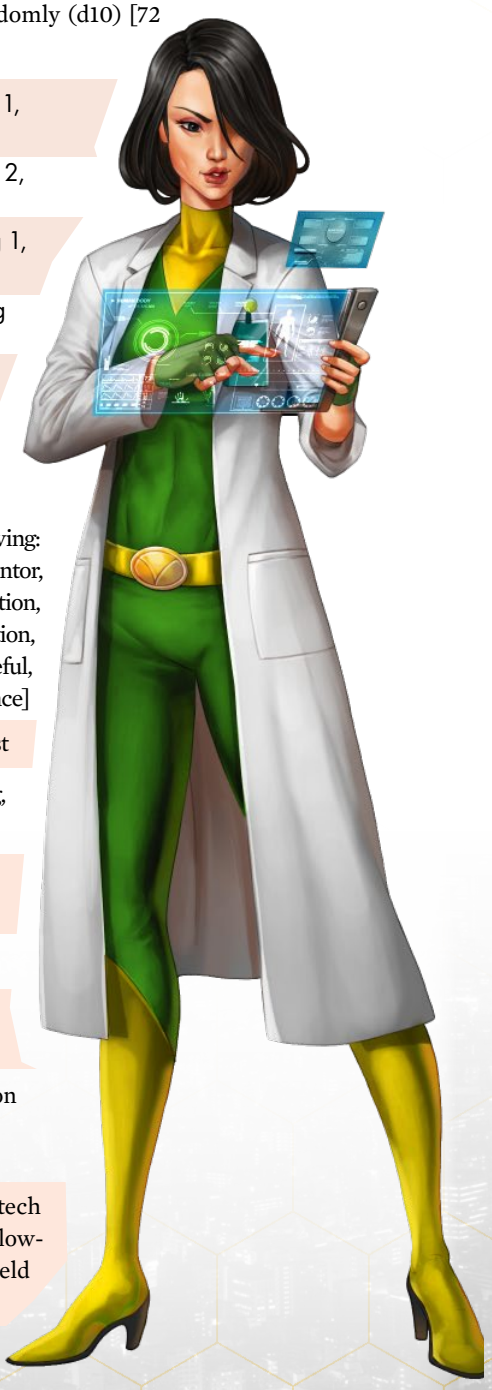
Attribute: +1 dot in a Mental Attribute of your choice [10 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Apply the bonus to the underlying Attribute of your highest Mega-Attribute (following).

Quantum: 3 [32 Experience]

Mega-Attributes: Choose one Mega-Mental Attribute at three dots, one at two dots, and one at one dot. Take a quick-pick option or roll randomly (d10) [72 Experience]

1–2.	*Quick-Pick – Builder:* Mega-Intellect 2, Mega-Cunning 1, Mega-Resolve 3
3.	*Quick-Pick – Hacker:* Mega-Intellect 3, Mega-Cunning 2, Mega-Resolve 1
4–5.	*Quick-Pick – Intellect:* Mega-Intellect 3, Mega-Cunning 1, Mega-Resolve 2
6–7.	*Quick-Pick – Inventor:* Mega-Intellect 3, Mega-Cunning 1, Mega-Resolve 2
8–9.	*Quick-Pick – Observer:* Mega-Intellect 2, Mega-Cunning 3, Mega-Resolve 1
10.	*Quick-Pick – Schemer:* Mega-Intellect 3, Mega-Cunning 1, Mega-Resolve 2



Mega-Edges: Allocate three dots to your choice of the following: Detection, Digital Scan, Fast Worker, Foresight, Instant Expert, Inventor, Mastermind, Mega-Hearing, Mega-Vision, Micro-Manipulation, Mind Over Matter, Multitasking, Perfectionist, Pretercognition, Prodigy, Prolific, Quantum Conversion, Quantum Sense, Resourceful, Technologist, Telecommunication, Universal Translator [36 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick – Builder:* Fast Worker, Mind Over Matter, Technologist
- *Quick-Pick – Hacker:* Digital Scan, Multitasking, Telecommunication
- *Quick-Pick – Intellect:* Instant Expert, Prodigy (Humanities), Universal Translator
- *Quick-Pick – Inventor:* Inventor, Prolific, Resourceful
- *Quick-Pick – Observer:* Mega-Hearing, Mega-Vision, Quantum Sense
- *Quick-Pick – Schemer:* Foresight, Mastermind, Pretercognition

Variations:

- *Quantum Tech:* Spend all three Mega-Edge dots into the Q-tech Mega-Edge. Attune 6 Ranks of Quantum Tech from the following: a Rank 3 weapon (Quantum Attack 2), Rank 3 force field (Quantum Field 2), or Rank 3 personal flight device (Flight 2).

MORPH

A Morph is a transforming nova, able to alter their body in different ways. Morphs have a great deal of flexibility (both figuratively and often literally) but their powers can be somewhat complex as well, something players should be aware of. For a face-changing infiltrator type, see the **Sneak** archetype, specifically the Chameleon.

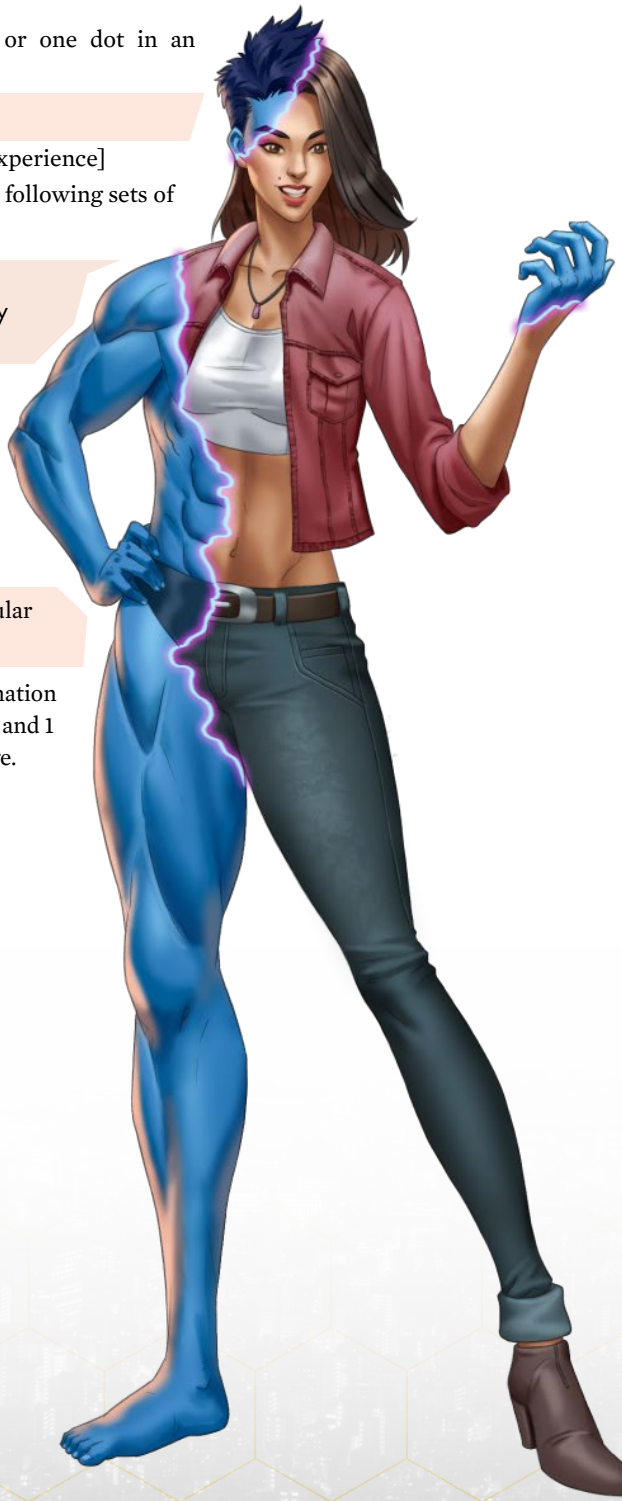
Edges: Choose two dots in Edges or one dot in an Enhanced Edge [6 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Photographic Memory 2

Quantum: 4 (Transcendence 1) [48 Experience]

Quantum Powers: Choose one of the following sets of powers or roll a die: [96 Experience]

1–3	*Material Mimic:* Molecular Chameleon 5 (Defensive, Energy Chameleon)
4–7	*Shapeshifter:* Transformation 5 (Extra Traits, Reflexive)
8–10	*Stretchy:* Mega-Dexterity 1, Multitasking, Phasing 1, Plasticity 5



Variations:

- Replace the Defensive tag of Molecular Chameleon with Extra Properties.
- Replace the Reflexive tag of Transformation with another instance of Extra Traits and 1 dot in a Mega-Attribute or Mega-Edge.

MOVER

The Mover focuses on getting from place to place quickly, although exactly how the nova does so may vary, including running incredibly fast, flying, or even teleporting or warping space. Movement effects are not the sole province of this archetype, but the Mover is usually the best, and the fastest.

Attributes: +1 dot in Dexterity [10 Experience]

Quantum: 3 [32 Experience]

Mega-Attributes: Mega-Dexterity 3, Mega-Stamina 1 [48 Experience]

Mega-Edges: Accuracy or Rapid Strike [12 Experience]

Quantum Powers: Choose one of the following sets of powers or roll a die: [48 Experience]

1–2	*Aquatic:* Body Modification 1 (Gills), Mega-Might 1, Movement Mode (Swimming) 2
3–4	*Flier:* Flight 3, plus Accuracy or Rapid Strike
5–6	*Speedster:* Mega-Speed, Movement Mode 1 (Skimming), Multitasking, Quickness
7–8	*Teleporter:* Quantum Sense, Quantum Attack 1, Teleport 2 (choose one tag)
9–10	*Warper:* Flight 1, Remote Perception 2, Warp 1

Variations:

- Trade Aquatic dots in Mega-Dexterity for Mega-Might.
- Trade Flier dots in Flight for Quantum Attack.
- Trade Warper dots in Remote Perception for Quantum Attack.



PARAGON

The Paragon does a little bit of everything, pretty much better than everyone, at least so far as baselines are concerned. In one of the three Arenas (Physical, Mental, or Social) the Paragon is the peak of human ability in all three attributes, and their nova potential sees to it that they're fairly impressive to above average in all of the others as well.

Skills: +8 dots in Skills of your choice, up to a maximum of five dots per skill [40 Experience]

Attributes: +11 dots in Attributes of your choice, up to a maximum of five dots per Attribute. Coupled with your base attribute dots, you can have five dots in your three primary attributes, four dots each in your secondary attributes, and three dots each in your tertiary attributes. [110 Experience]

Choose one of the following configurations or roll a die:

1–3	Physical Paragon: Physical Attributes at five dots, Social Attributes at four dots, Mental Attributes at three dots.
4–6	Mental Paragon: Mental Attributes at five dots, Social Attributes at four dots, Physical Attributes at three dots
7–9	Social Paragon: Social Attributes at five dots, Mental Attributes at four dots, Physical Attributes at three dots.
10	Reroll.

Quantum: 1 [0 Experience]

Variations:

- Shift attribute dots around, with the limit that no attribute goes above five dots or below one.
- Trade one bonus attribute dot for two bonus skill dots or vice versa.
- Trade three of your bonus skill dots for five additional skill tricks (see Skill Tricks in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, p. 45).
- Trade 1 attribute dot and 1 skill dot for 1 Mega-Attribute dot and one skill trick.
- In place of the previous skill and attribute bonuses, instead gain one dot in each Mega-Attribute, +2 dots in Attributes (*Quick-Pick:* +1 Dexterity, +1 Resolve), +2 dots in Skills (*Quick-Pick:* +1 Athletics, +1 Integrity), and +9 dots in Edges (*Quick-Pick:* Adrenaline Spike, Danger Sense, Iron Will 1, Lightning Calculator, Photographic Memory 2, Speed Reading). You can trade two Edge dots for an Enhanced Edge dot or four for a Mega-Edge dot.



PERFORMER

Similar to the Genius, the Performer is brilliant, but in an element of the Social Arena. Some Performers live for the spotlight and work best front and center before an audience while others prefer to operate behind the scenes in more subtle ways.

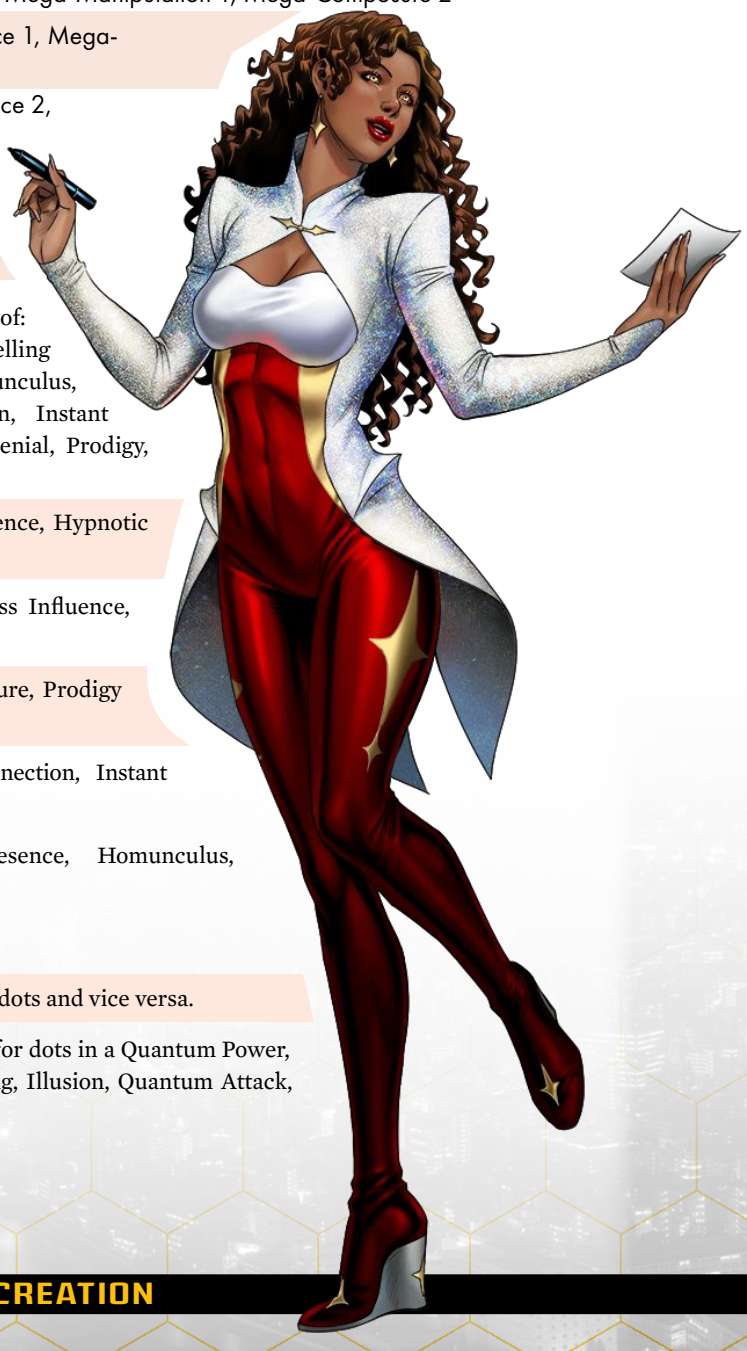
Attribute: +1 dot in a Social Attribute of your choice [10 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Apply the bonus to the underlying Attribute of your highest Mega-Attribute (following).

Quantum: 3 [32 Experience]

Mega-Attributes: Choose one Mega-Social Attribute at three dots, one at two dots, and one at one dot. Choose a quick-pick option or roll a die: [72 Experience]

1–2	*Quick-Pick – Controller:* Mega-Presence 3, Mega-Manipulation 2, Mega-Composure 1
3–4	*Quick-Pick – Diva:* Mega-Presence 3, Mega-Manipulation 1, Mega-Composure 2
5–6	*Quick-Pick – Inquisitor:* Mega-Presence 1, Mega-Manipulation 2, Mega-Composure 3
7–8	*Quick-Pick – Persuader:* Mega-Presence 2, Mega-Manipulation 3, Mega-Composure 1
9–10	*Quick-Pick – Shadow:* Mega-Presence 1, Mega-Manipulation 3, Mega-Composure 2



Mega-Edges: Allocate three dots to any of: Animal Mastery, Calming Composure, Compelling Presence, Detection, Dreadful Presence. Homunculus, Hypnotic Presence, Immediate Connection, Instant Influence, Mass Influence, Overwhelming Denial, Prodigy, Revealing Composure [36 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick – Controller:* Compelling Presence, Hypnotic Presence, Immediate Connection
- *Quick-Pick – Diva:* Instant Influence, Mass Influence, Prodigy (Culture)
- *Quick-Pick – Inquisitor:* Calming Composure, Prodigy (Empathy), Revealing Composure
- *Quick-Pick – Persuader:* Immediate Connection, Instant Influence, Prodigy (Persuasion)
- *Quick-Pick – Shadow:* Dreadful Presence, Homunculus, Overwhelming Denial

Variations:

- Trade Mega-Attribute dots for Mega-Edge dots and vice versa.
- Trade Mega-Attribute or Mega-Edge dots for dots in a Quantum Power, particularly Environmental Anima, Healing, Illusion, Quantum Attack, or Shroud.

A Sneak focuses on being able to move and act without being detected.

Quantum: 2 [16 Experience]

Mega-Attributes: Mega-Cunning 1, Mega-Dexterity 1, Mega-Composure 1 [36 Experience]

Mega-Edges: Choose three of Mega-Hearing, Mega-Scent, Mega-Vision, Micro-Manipulation, Movement Mode (Clinging or Gliding), Multitasking, Pretercognition, Quantum Sense, Spectrum Vision, Subtle Presence, Telecommunication, or Ultraperipherial Perception

- *Quick-Pick:* Mega-Vision, Movement Mode (Gliding), Subtle Presence [36 Experience]

Quantum Powers: Choose one of the following sets of powers or roll a die: [48 Experience]

1–2	*Chameleon:* Morph 4
3–4	*Ghost:* Phasing 4
5–6	*Shadow:* Shroud 4 (Broadband, Dual, Variable)
7–8	*Shrinker:* Shrinking 3 and choose one more Mega-Edge
9–10	*Unseen:* Cloak 4 (Broadband, Chemical, Sonic)

Variations:

- Trade one choice of a Mega-Edge for an additional dot in a Mega-Attribute.
- Trade one dot of a Mega-Attribute for an additional Mega-Edge.
- Swap out the tags (if any) on a Quantum Power.
- Swap one dot of Shrinking or a Mega-Edge dot for Animal Mastery 2 with the Restricted 1 tag (*Quick-Pick:* Only Size Scale –1 and smaller creatures).



SUMMONER

A Summoner specializes in creating things, essentially out of nowhere. Some nova summoners shape quantum energy into different solid shapes to serve a variety of needs while others actually summon animate and seemingly living creatures out of nowhere to serve them.

Attributes: +1 dot in an attribute of your choice [10 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Resolve

Quantum: 3 [32 Experience]

Mega-Attributes: Mega-Resolve 1 [12 Experience]

Quantum Powers: Quantum Field 3 [36 Experience] plus choose one of the following or roll a die [60 Experience]:

1–5	*Shaper:* +1 dot of Quantum (and 1 Transcendence), +1 dot in a skill of your choice (*Quick-Pick:* Integrity), +1 dot in an Edge of your choice (*Quick-Pick:* Iron Will), Quantum Construct 3 (choose two tags from Durability, Invisibility, Multiple, Ranged, Selective, or Size; *Quick-Pick:* Durability and Size)
6–10	*Summoner:* Quantum Agent 3 (choose two tags from Independent, Memory Absorption, Multiple, or Sensory Link; *Quick-Pick:* Memory Absorption, Sensory Link)

Variations:

- Swap Mega-Resolve for the Quantum Conversion Mega-Edge.
- Trade a dot of Mega-Resolve or Quantum Field for a dot of Flight or Teleport.



The Tank is an archetypal nova: superhumanly strong and tough, sufficient to take on a literal tank. Some nova tanks look the part, with powerful, massive physiques, but others are deceptively normal looking in comparison to their tremendous strength and stamina.

Attributes: +1 dot to Might or Stamina [10 Experience]

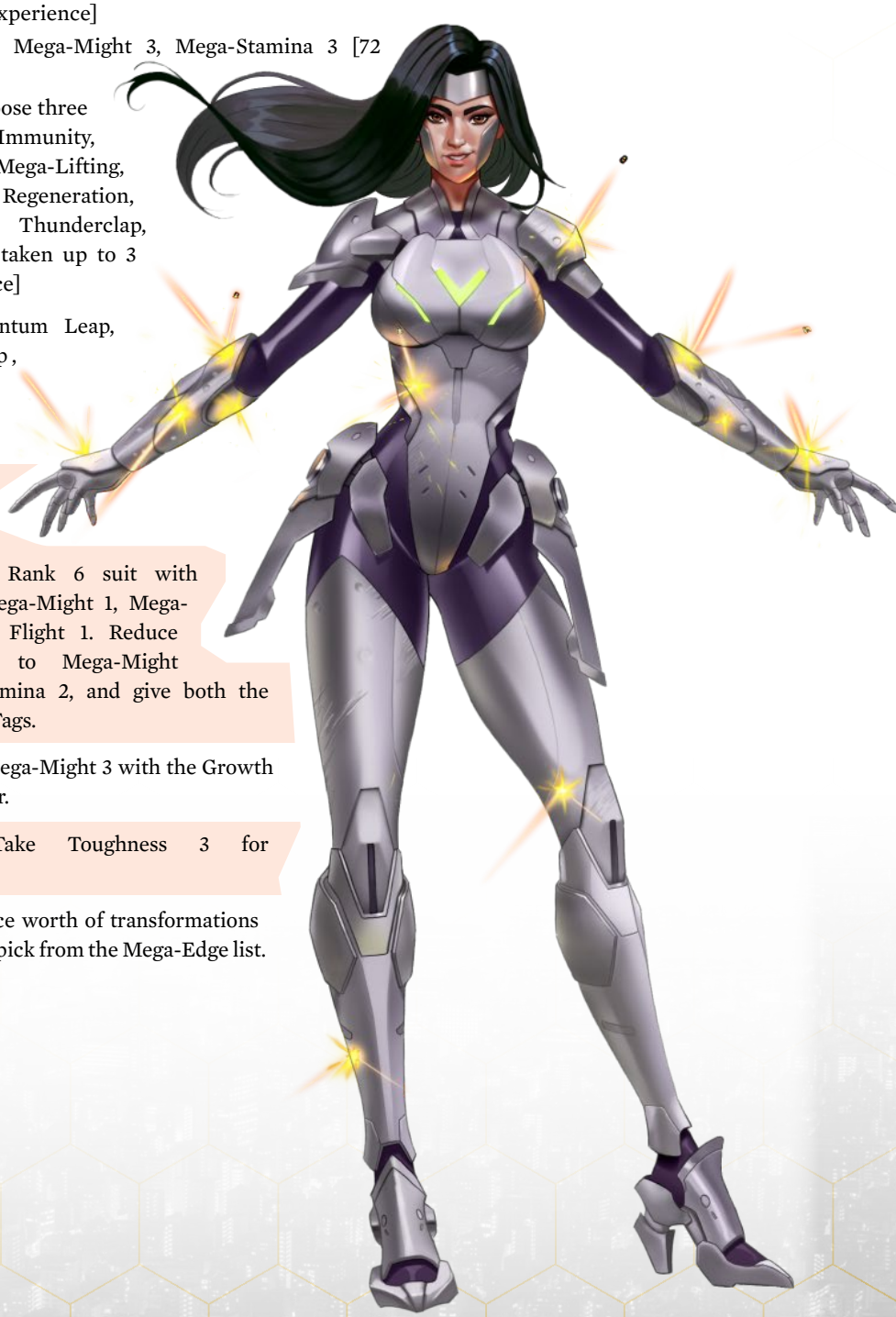
- *Quick-Pick:* Might

Quantum: 3 [32 Experience]

Mega-Attributes: Mega-Might 3, Mega-Stamina 3 [72 Experience]

Mega-Edges: Choose three from Adaptation, Immunity, Mega-Crush, Mega-Lifting, Quantum Leap, Regeneration, Shockwave, Thunderclap, Toughness (can be taken up to 3 times) [36 Experience]

- *Quick-Pick:* Quantum Leap, Thunderclap, Toughness



Variations:

- *Battlesuit:* Take Q-tech 3 for Mega-Edges. Gain a Rank 6 suit with Toughness 2, Mega-Might 1, Mega-Stamina 1, and Flight 1. Reduce Mega-Attributes to Mega-Might 2 and Mega-Stamina 2, and give both the Modular Power Tags.
- *Giant:* Replace Mega-Might 3 with the Growth 3 Quantum Power.
- *Invulnerable:* Take Toughness 3 for Mega-Edges.
- Take 6 Experience worth of transformations for an additional pick from the Mega-Edge list.

EXAMPLES

The following examples demonstrate the Nova Quick Creation system in action.

DR. PHANTOM

Alex wants a quick nova character for a game he's going to sit-in on.

Step One: *He goes for an easy concept: An ex-military guy, who has some combat skills and can pretty easily fit in with most adventures.*

Step Two: *Choosing Origin, Profession, and Society paths, Alex goes the fairly easy route of Military Brat (his character is from a military family and background). He considers Combat Specialist, but instead decides to go for Medical Practitioner, thinking his character was a combat medic, maybe even a military physician. For Society path, he picks Æon Society as a good middle of the road option. Alex picks three skill dots and two Edge dots from each of his character's paths, ending up with: Command 1, Humanities 1, Integrity 1, Medicine 2, Persuasion 1, Science 1, Survival 1, Technology 1, and Adrenaline Spike, Allies, Always Prepared, Earned Trust 2, and Iron Will.*

Step Three: *Now Alex allocates six additional dots to his character's skills, giving him a final set of: Aim 1, Athletics 1, Command 1, Humanities 2, Integrity 2, Medicine 3, Persuasion 1, Science 1, Survival 2, Technology 1. He takes the Diagnostic Expert skill trick and a specialty in Diseases. Alex is thinking his character has seen action in dangerous parts of the world treating disease outbreaks.*

Step Four: *Alex ranks his characters Arenas as Mental, Physical, and Social, distributing six, four, and two attribute dots among them for Intellect 3, Cunning 3, Resolve 3, Might 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 1*

He decides his character's Favored Approach is Resilience, putting an additional dot in each of those attributes for Resolve 4, Stamina 3, Composure 2. This guy is bright, focused, quick, and cool under pressure, although he sometimes loses his temper dealing with people.

Step Five: *Now it's time to apply the nova template. Wanting to move things along, Alex decides to just roll for an archetype, getting an 8 on the die. That's a Sneak. He takes all of the quick-pick options and rolls Ghost for the power package. Alex decides his character erupted under combat conditions when he desperately needed to reach a victim trapped behind rubble, gaining the power to pass through the solid barriers in his way. Folks nicknamed him "Doctor Phantom" after that and he applied to the Æon Society to use his abilities and medical training to help people in high-stress rescue operations.*

Step Six: *Since Doctor Phantom is a nova, he skips over the bonus traits (already a part of his nova template Experience). He has an additional Injured Condition (for Stamina 3). His Defense is 1.*

VECTOR

Rose is creating a nova character for a long-term *Aberrant* game but feels a bit paralyzed by the range of options, so she decides to use nova quick creation to help move things along and offer some inspiration.

Step One: *Rose doesn't really have a concept yet. Part of the process is to help inspire her to come up with one, so she puts this step on hold for the moment.*

Step Two: *Rose rolls for the character's three Paths, getting results of 2, 5, and 4. Looking at the tables she sees an Origin Path of Adventurer, a Role Path of Detective, and a Society Path Project Utopia. Interesting. Rose takes note of these and their associated Skills and Edges. She has three skill dots and two Edge dots for each Path, going with: Aim 1, Athletics 2, Close Combat 1, Enigmas 2, Integrity 2, Survival 1, and Free Running 2, Friends Everywhere 2, Photographic Memory 1, and Swift.*

Notions are definitely starting to form about this character, who is quick, agile, and capable of taking care of themselves, with a sense of adventure, exploration, and possibly a taste for danger or dangerous situations.

Step Three: *With six additional dots to allocate to Skills, Rose boosts Athletics and Enigmas to 3 each, qualifying for one Skill Trick on one of them and a specialty for both. For Athletics, she chooses No Barrier, which seems to fit the character's quick and unrestricted movement, and a specialty of Climbing. For Enigmas, she*

goes with Connecting the Dots and a specialty in Puzzles. The remaining four dots she allocates to an extra dot in Aim, plus Empathy 1, Humanities 1, and Technology 1. She briefly considers Larceny but feels like it doesn't fit the emerging picture of the character, who overcomes such challenges with athletic ability and technical skill.

Step Four: *Rose rolls for Arenas, getting 7, 9, and 4. That makes Mental her character's top-ranked Arena, Physical middle-ranked, and Social bottom-ranked, which definitely works with Rose's emerging conception. She rolls 8, 2, and 9 for Approaches, making Resilience her character's Favored Approach. Rose immediately feels like that's wrong and decides to go with Finesse instead (which was what she felt she wanted when she rolled). There's nothing wrong with ignoring die rolls that don't fit!*

She distributes six, four, and two attribute dots among the Arenas for Intellect 3, Cunning 3, Resolve 3, Might 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 2. Then she adds one dot each to the character's Finesse Attributes, for Cunning 4, Dexterity 4, and Manipulation 2.

Step Five: *Now comes the nova template! Rose rolls a 1 on the Archetype table — an Elemental. She further rolls a 3 on the Elemental Mastery table for a Kinetic. Going with all of the quick-pick options, she increases the character's Dexterity to 5 and adds Kinetic Mastery 3, Flight 3, and Quantum Field 3, along with a Quantum rating of 3. Clearly, her character is capable of directing the energy of motion, and fits into the idea so far of a quick and agile presence. She glances over the variations given for the archetype, but none of them grab her, so she sticks with what she's got.*

Step Six: *The character has no additional Injury Conditions and a Defense of 1. Rose considers and decides her character is a bit of a daredevil and explorer who erupted during an accidental fall from a high, vertical climb that would have led to her death, if not for her newfound power to channel and direct kinetic energy. She uses the code-name "Vector" working for Project Utopia, putting her considerable powers to work in tasks ranging from rescues to construction around the world. She loves to travel, and her style is to always be on the move.*



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TRINITY CONTINUUM
ABERRANT

Name: _____ Origin Path: _____
Player: _____ Role Path: _____
Concept: _____ Society Path: _____
Additional Paths: _____
Moment of Inspiration _____

SKILLS

Aim:	○○○○○	Integrity:	○○○○○
Athletics:	○○○○○	Larceny:	○○○○○
Close Combat:	○○○○○	Medicine:	○○○○○
Command:	○○○○○	Persuasion:	○○○○○
Culture:	○○○○○	Pilot:	○○○○○
Empathy:	○○○○○	Science:	○○○○○
Enigmas:	○○○○○	Survival:	○○○○○
Humanities:	○○○○○	Technology:	○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

☐Force	Intellect ●○○○○○		Might ●○○○○○		Presence ●○○○○○
	Mega Intellect ○○○○○○		Mega Might ○○○○○○		Mega Presence ○○○○○○
☐Finesse	Cunning ●○○○○○		Dexterity ●○○○○○		Manipulation ●○○○○○
	Mega Cunning ○○○○○○		Mega Dexterity ○○○○○○		Mega Manipulation ○○○○○○
☐Resilience	Resolve ●○○○○○		Stamina ●○○○○○		Composure ●○○○○○
	Mega Resolve ○○○○○○		Mega Stamina ○○○○○○		Mega Composure ○○○○○○

QUANTUM

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Quantum Points: _____

PATH CONTACTS

_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

TRANSCENDENCE

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Flux: _____
Transformations: _____

ASPIRATIONS

_____
_____
_____

EDGES

_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

MEGA EDGES

_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

ARMOR

Armor	Base	Hard	Soft

INJURY CONDITIONS

☐ Bruised _____ +1
☐ Bruised _____ +1
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ Injured _____ +2
☐ Injured _____ +2
☐ Maimed _____ +4

Taken Out

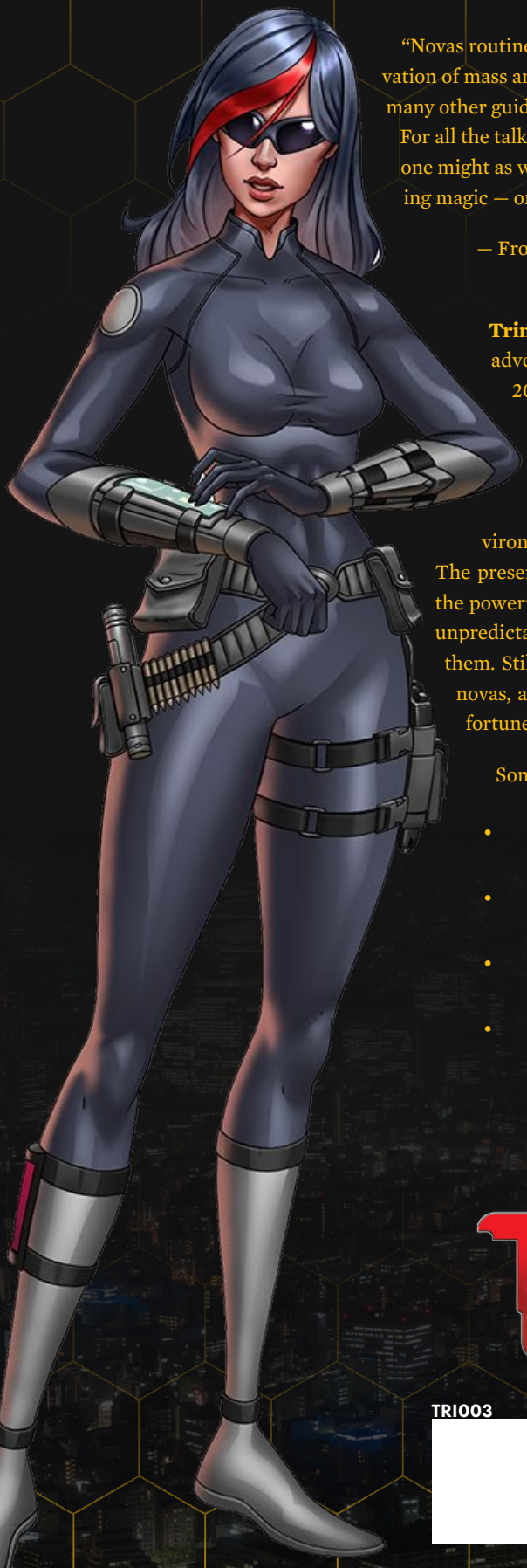
SPECIALTIES / SKILL TRICKS

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

QUANTUM POWERS

Name	Powers	Min	Action	Cost	Pool	Range	Duration	Tags

Defense = Appropriate Resilience Attribute
Armor: _____ Experience: _____



"Novas routinely and cavalierly seem to ignore things like the conservation of mass and energy, the laws of motion, the square-cube law, and many other guidelines used to bring predictability to a chaotic cosmos. For all the talk of 'quantum entanglement' and 'fundamental forces,' one might as well say that novas are, for all intents and purposes, using magic — or selectively editing reality to conform to their wishes."

— From *Gods Among Us: Novas and the Future of Humanity*

Trinity Continuum: Aberrant is a game of superpowered adventure in the near-future of the **Trinity Continuum**. In 2018, novas — people with superhuman powers — first appeared following the explosion of a space station high above Earth. Now, 10 years later, thousands of novas have transformed the world, using their extraordinary powers to fight crime, clean up the environment, invent new technologies, and create wonders. The presence of novas has also caused problems, and some fear the powerful individuals — first called "aberrants" — due to their unpredictable powers and impact they have on the world around them. Still, love them or hate them, people can't get enough of novas, and being one is a ticket to instant celebrity, fame, and fortune.

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- Details on the super-powered novas and how they fit into the **Trinity Continuum**
- Updated Storypath rules and character creation information for novas
- Dozens of character biographies to quickly populate the world of 2028
- Storyguide advice on how to run **Aberrant** in a wide variety of tones and sub-genres

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