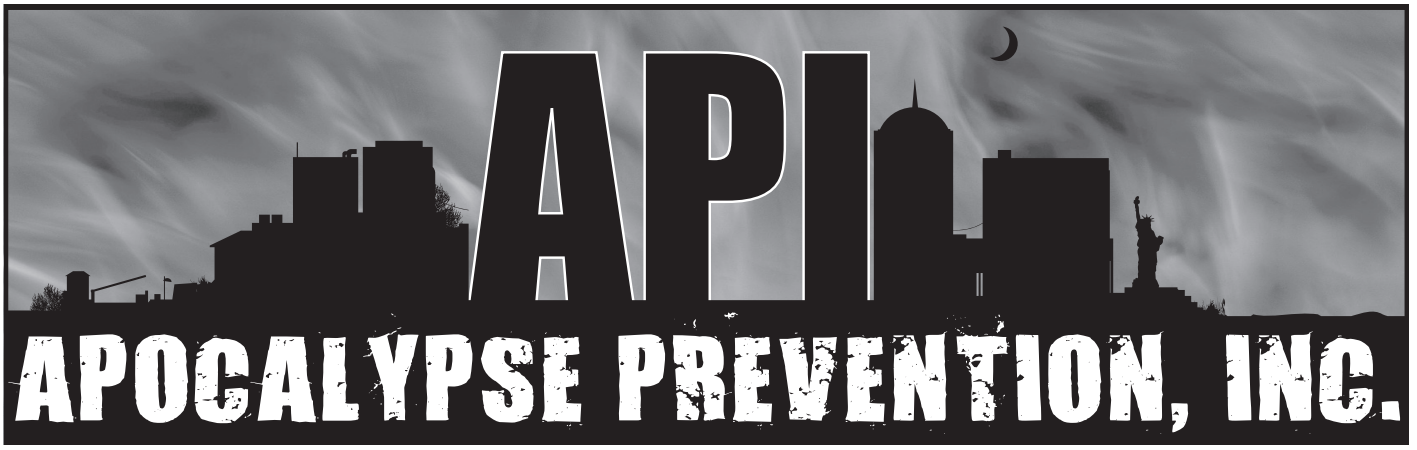
API

APOCALYPSE PREVENTION, INC.

The Roleplaying Game



An Action Horror RPG... with a twist of Humor.

Written by Eloy Lasanta

THIRD EYE GAMES

DGS
DYNAMIC GAMING SYSTEM

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Disclaimer: This book contains supernatural and magical themes, characters, and places. This is purely a fictional work and is for entertainment purposes only. Not recommended for those with closed minds or poor critical thinking skills.

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Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. in Brief

Setting Summary

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is a shadow corporation that has protected humanity and all of Earth's inhabitants from supernatural threats since the Black Plague. The company has its hands in almost every facet of human life, which has helped with stopping the world's end on more occasions than one would guess. Humans make up the vast majority of its employees and these agents investigate supernatural occurrences, settle disputes between supernatural communities, "greet" newcomers to Earth, and fight against evil supernatural forces.

Demons also live side-by-side with humanity on Earth. By definition, demons can be either humans that have been altered in some fashion (such as vampires or mutants) to become "not quite human" or beings that have traveled to Earth from entirely different dimensions in any number of reasons. Those given amnesty are required to register with the company so they can be watched, but are overall left to their own devices. Many demons work with API to protect the Earth on a daily basis, as it is their home too.

API has also developed technology outside of that which commonly known for the purposes of protecting the world. This new technology includes advances in the fields of medicine, robotics, and computers. The company equips agents with the necessary tools to fight against the End Times. A dark underworld thrives as well, filled with magic, demons, and the new addition of cybernetics and it exists underneath humanity's nose. That is API's job after all, to protect normal people from the truth that may kill them. In this world, knowing the secret alley to a local street doctor could land you a sweet cybernetic hand transplant and a man in a black suit can walk into your favorite magic shop and sanction them for selling wolfs bane.

Mood Summary

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is a game of Action Horror, with a twist of Humor. The setting is full of high intensity situations, full of drama and conflict. No game should have complete dreariness and neither should it be like a cartoon. The "things" fought in API are not kind (wanting to destroy Earth for one reason or another) and it's the agents' job to stop them by any means necessary. People's lives and the entire dimension are at risk, after all. But there is a bit a humor in everything. It could be that the monster inflicting horrible terror is no larger than your shoe, a scepter wielded by an antagonist has a phallic shape to it, or that the giant fish demon can hide themselves with just a trench coat and a fedora. These ideas add to a humorous tone to the game, but keep in mind that the horror remains.

Playable Races

Players take on the role of agent for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. from the various races that now inhabit Earth. The core races are:

- **Humans:** Creative and stubborn rulers of Earth
- **Burners:** Fire demons, refugees from a machine race
- **Changelings:** Shapeshifting demons that live beside humans
- **Lochs:** Giant fish-demons, dethroned from their kingdom
- **Spectrals:** Ghosts that did not enter the afterlife
- **Taylari:** Living vampires, much different than pop culture
- **Wolf People:** Werewolves of unknown origins

Some races are considered illegal, either through wrong-doing or the threat that their existence creates on Earth. These demons are hunted, captured, and deported if possible, but these endeavors also unfortunately end in blood shed. Playable Illegal races are:

- **Carriers:** Disease-eating demons that can create catastrophic pandemics
- **Oracles:** Demons that can tell the future, but bring bad luck in their wake
- **Tark:** Unstoppable juggernauts that steal human babies for feast and horrible experiments

Dynamic Gaming System

The DGS uses a single 1d20 for all its rolls, including all Skill, resistance, and combat checks. You only need one die to play this game! All basic mechanics essentially use the Attribute + Skill + 1d20 roll mechanic. However, combat attributes (bonuses to Strike, Parry, Dodge, etc.) are garnered from their Attributes and their Combat skills. Combat itself is fully immersive, making combat a fun and exciting addition to the game.

What is Roleplaying?

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is a tabletop roleplaying game (RPG) of Action Horror, with a twist of Humor. It contains all you need to create stories and characters in this unique world. One may pick up this book for the wonderful artwork or perhaps the concepts and ideas within. Whatever the reason, you are in for a treat.

Tabletop RPGs are usually similar to radio shows. The game is relayed verbally and everyone uses their imaginations to visualize the scene. The game can be played by two or more people. Tabletop RPGS are an ancient tradition with almost limitless possibility. Video game RPGs are fun, but players are too firmly limited to the designer's story, their characters, and the confines of their world. The player is limited in all they do when everything is decided by a computer system. They have only one course to take to complete a story, also decided by the game designers.

For this type of game, you need only your imagination, one twenty-sided die, and the willingness to get into character.

Game Master (GM)

One in your group takes the role of the Game Master (GM), who creates the story and the world. It is a big task, but very rewarding. The GM has the chance to develop plots, create mysteries, or plan elaborate puzzles for the players to solve. They also dictate the actions and statements of the world that surrounds the characters. They also act as the arbiter on any disputes that may arise. The others in your gaming group take on character roles and play through scenarios and stories within the GM's world. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is but a single setting and system used in the awesome past time of RPGs.

Players

While the players are not expected to create a world, they do create their character (using the rules in Chapter One). They get to choose their disposition, personality, background, and their every action and statement. Every piece of information you know about your character make it that much more fun to play and helps the GM craft specific stories that encompass elements of your character's background.

A Game Session

A Game Session is when you and your friends sit down around the table and commence with the storytelling. The GM sets the scene and the players decide how their characters respond. Below is a short example of how this should work:

GM – You arrive at the rendezvous point where you agreed to meet the witness to that murder. It took a lot to get her to agree to meet, since she's scared of what will happen to her family if the mob finds out. You're now standing in the vacant lot behind the burned down pizza shack. It's dimly lit by a street lamp that hasn't seen maintenance in a while.

Player 1 – Hey, we're API, we'll protect her. We try to show up about 20 minutes earlier than she does, so that she can show up, talk, and then leave, without having to wait around.

Player 2 – So, is the plan for you to keep watch while I talk to her?

Player 1 – Yes. I'm keeping watch for her and for any trouble.

GM – She shows up about ten minutes late, walking down the street with a hobble. She looks badly beaten and her clothes are torn. Everyone make a Perception check, Difficulty 20.

Player 1 and Player 2 roll 1d20, adding their INS Attribute and their Perception Skill. Player 2, since they are the one on the lookout, gains a bonus to their roll and succeeds.

GM – You also notice teeth marks in her neck. She continues to hobble to you and collapses into your arms, saying one thing before she passes out. "Save my son."

Player 1 – "You're son! What about your son? Where is he?"

GM – She doesn't wake up.

Player 2 – "Look, she's got bite marks. We've got a vamp in play here"

Player 1 – "Just great." Do we know any vampires?

GM – As agents, you do know of a few of their haunts. The nearest one is a nightclub owned by Carter, a fellow agent.

Player 1 – Then we'll go visit him when we get her to the nearest safe house. "Can you help me carry her?"

Player 2 – "Yes."

The GM would then decide if anything happens on their way to the safe house or to the club. He decides when and if the woman ever wakes up and if she is a vampire herself now. All of these possibilities make the game enjoyable for both the GM and the players.

API
Tampa, FL
October 16, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: New Agent
CC: Authorizing Elite Operative

By now, you have learned that the true meaning of API is Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. We are delighted you have joined our company in our cause to do just that! Your contribution to our global family is important to ensure our sustained success and growing protection of all countries. We hope that your career here will be a gratifying one.

Please read the attached New Agent Handbook thoroughly, as it explains what's expected of you as a new agent and defender of Earth, as well as information on your possible non-human coworkers and threats we currently face.

FYI: Your Employee Code is 387CT and you can pick up your specially designed Agent ID from your squad leader after creating a new identity, taking photographs, and providing your generic code for company records.

To reiterate from orientation, you are henceforth prohibited from contacting your former friends and family. Your continued existence must stay top secret and can cause problems if compromised. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if important rule is broken, up to and including termination.

Contact Hazel in HR for information on your 401K.

We would also request you to complete all the pending paperwork (Forms found at the end of the New Agent Handbook).

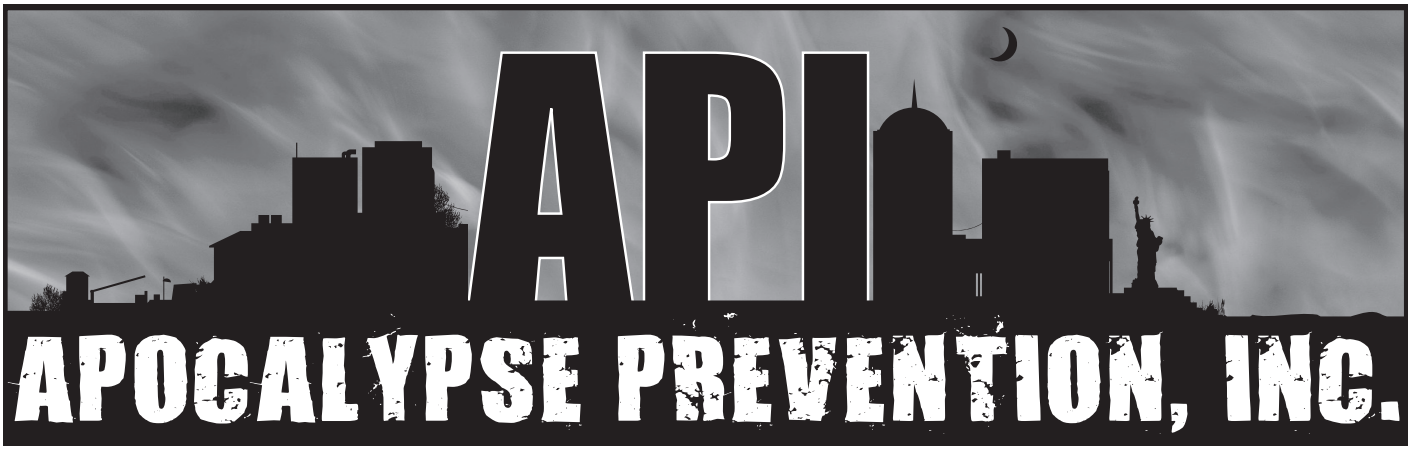
I welcome you on behalf of myself and Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.

Sincerely,

Annabelle Priscilla Isley

CEO, API-US

Attachment: New Agent Handbook
(Please complete and return Agent Information Forms)



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Chapter One: Character Creation

Character Creation

Below are the basic steps for creating a new character for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.

Step One: Concept, Passion, and Race
Step Two: Distribute Attribute Points (30)
Step Three: Distribute Skill Points (30 + IQ)
Step Four: Bonus Points (10) or (16 for Humans)
Step Five: Calculate Sub-Attributes and Combat Bonuses

Concepts

When brainstorming for initial character ideas, it is often easier to think of a basic concept that can be summarized in two or three words. This can be anything from "Wandering monk" to "Black Widow" to "Military Communications Expert". It is easiest to first identify your character's role in the world (i.e. their occupation), then take stock of the type of person that would ultimately end up in that position. However, the character is still a person with their own fears, personalities, and goals, no matter the occupation. Someone who chooses "Crime scene detective who always gets their man" is ultimately a quite different type of character than "Crooked cop who takes hand-outs from the mob". Another way of conceptualizing your character is to take stock of their personality and psyche before choosing their role. Below are a few other things to consider when pondering who the character really is:

Gender/Sexuality: Their gender and sexuality sheds light on how others view them and their view of the world. It is a fact of life that the world views people as either men or women. Most people identify more with one gender than another, but this is not always the case. Even while physically male, a character may be gay (sexually attracted to other men) or enjoy wearing women's clothing, but still be heterosexual. The same is true of women. Transgendered people take on the opposite gender's identity in all ways, from dress to lifestyle and some even go through surgery to physically alter their bodies to match.

Casting a Concept

Players new to roleplaying may find it difficulty to come up with a complete background for their character. It's ok! It takes time to develop the character creation muscle. Some players find it simpler to cast an actor or actress in the role of their character, basing them off of a character in pop culture or their favorite movie/TV show. For instance, a gun-totting casa nova type could easily be cast as Antonio Banderas in "Desperado"?

Of course, they are encouraged to personalize their character, perhaps with a slightly different Passion or with additional skills. This method of choosing a concept can help new players to ease into roleplaying and gives them a look, a feel, and an idea of how to portray their character more effectively.

Ethnicity/Race: Some parts of the world ignore the race issue, but such is not the case in the majority of the United States, where racism and prejudice still exist between all races. Prejudice even exists within particular races, where a person may not be dark enough or too dark to fit easily within racial boundaries. Some live truly colorblind, but most know the real world's harsh realities. Figuring out how the character views race can reveal many things. Are they a bigot, do they strive to unify the races, or are they colorblind?

Family Life: How a character was raised certainly has an impact on how they currently live. The relationship between their parents shapes their view on relationships between men and women, with the child often making the same mistakes as an adult. Some grow up with loving families, while others are abused, neglected, and mistreated throughout their lives. Others have siblings with which they constantly fought or competed. This creates a life pattern and forms a character's trust limitations.

Personal History: After leaving home, where did they go? Some try their hand at college, hitting the books to hopefully make something of themselves. Some settle down to get married and having children. Others get a job to make money and coast through life. Wannabe playboys and seductresses may leap from partner to partner and possibly sponge off of each. They may have joined the military and went off to see the horrors of war. Do they still live this way or are they trying to turn over a new leaf? These types of questions weigh heavily on a character concept.

Disposition: A character's disposition or demeanor is how their personality is perceived by those around them. This can be affected by looks, but even attractive people can berate or belittle those they consider "beneath them". They could be very polite to everyone, but may come off as naïve or innocent. Or they could be very gruff, making first contact difficult, but often have an inner fragility. A character's disposition is shaped by many of the other factors this section covers.

Occupation: After compiling all the other information about the character, their role should reveal itself. Some decide to follow in their parent's footsteps, learning the same profession/trade or possibly taking over the family business. Some attempt to strike out with their own business ventures, while others end up employees. They could go on to be a premiere butcher or chef, specialize in mechanics or robotics, or become a paranormal investigator. The possibilities are endless. If they joined Apocalypse Prevention Inc. as an agent, sub-contractor, or informant, what is their motivation for serving the company? Their reasons may gauge how closely the company watches their actions.

Passions

"Passion" is a character's drives, loyalties, connections, and motivations to get out of bed and act. No one can truly live their life without some sort of purpose that gets them through tough times and aspiration toward their goals. Some seek love for all and find comfort in the arms of another, while others visit their place of worship to pray for strength, seeking only the embrace of the divine. Some try to control every aspect of their lives, while others sink into their entomologist experiments and impressive bug collections. Passions are the core of a character and sheds light on their true nature.

There are positive and negative aspects to Passions. The positive is that their Passion keeps the character close to their humanity, even though the idea of humanity differs from culture to culture. Without an underlying purpose, a future goal, or some motivating factor in the character's life, they become nothing more than walking drones that drown in conformity. That type of life is seldom rewarding.

The negative aspects of a Passion are uncovered when an enemy, rival, or anyone of ill-intent figures it out. Passion is the key to a character's true nature and can be used against them under certain circumstances. Some wear their Passion on their sleeves for everyone to see, while others go to great lengths to hide their nature. Every character is different. An enemy that knows the character follows the Collection Passion may create elaborate traps with rare collectibles right in the center. If they follow the Deity Passion, an enemy may openly damn their god to rile them into a frenzied state.

Bonuses

As an additional benefit, when a character acts within the precepts of their Passion and affects the game in an interesting way, they are awarded additional Experience Points (XP) at the end of that game session. This may require a simple implementation, a leap of faith in their Passion, or fighting against an adversity centered on the Passion. The GM is the final arbiter of what falls under a bonus received for a Passion and what does not.

The GM can also choose to give a +2 bonus to a character's check if it directly aids them in achieving some facet of their Passion. This applies to extended and contested checks as well.

Example: *If the character recently met a girl, asking her to a movie may not warrant extra XP under the Love Passion. However, orchestrating an elaborate scenario where they ask a life-long crush to a grand ball, while simultaneously sweeping her off her feet by paying attention to all the little details (i.e. decorating the area with her favorite flowers or hiring a band to play her favorite song) definitely deserves consideration. The GM may even give the character the benefit of the +2 bonus to Persuasion checks for convincing the flower seller or band to help the character out.*

Changing Passions

Each character has a combination of every Passion within them. Their chosen Passion is the aspect that takes the forefront of their urges and currently motivates their actions. At times, their focus can and must change in order to maintain a healthy balance and avoid obsessions or mental deformities. This changing of Passions usually accompanies major life changes or epiphanies in their daily life.

For example, a character obsessed with acquiring more money (Greed) may be defended from a mugger by a courageous homeless man who asks for nothing in return. This could urge the greedy character to change their views and take a stand for the homeless (Community). Another character, faced with mid-life crisis, may need to turn their back on their religion (Deity) to walk down an unknown road (Questions).

When faced with these events, the character could change their ways, forsake their past efforts, and walk a new path. They could also just as easily change nothing about their current view of the world. Based again on their individual concept, they may not be affected by things that trigger stark changes in others. It is important to work with the GM to decide if a change in Passion fits the situation and future events for the story.

Passions and Concepts

Passions play a large role during character creation and development of your concept, working together to craft new ideas for generic concepts.

A doctor following "Power" may seek to climb the hospital ladder, until they have all employees under their thumb. Another could revel in the fact that they hold the power over life and death.

A doctor following "Death" may become obsessed with performing autopsies to be closer to sweet mortality or take up extra shifts in the morgue. Another may "let a few patients go" just to see the result.

A doctor following "Community" may devote their career to providing health care for the homeless, working with the Red Cross or other out-reach programs. Another may give up their practice and become a street doctor, living among the homeless to best give back.

Approval

The character seeks the approval of others or that of a single person. They may be a knight in faithful service to their king and country, seeking only the approving nod of their liege. Another may be a soldier that serves the armed forces to gain the favor of their squad. They could also be a career coal miner that seeks their father's approval through blood, sweat, and tears. These characters look beyond themselves, embodying the spirit of a true servant and often pride themselves on the work they perform for someone else's benefit. They are not conformists or followers, but seek respect from others.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character is noticed and commended by their liege or another superior.

Collection

The character is always looking for rare items to add to a personal collection. Some find and restore antique cars, rushing home from work to fix up junkers. Others collect magic scrolls, going around the world to unearth new, fascinating scripts. Whatever their poison, they have an underlying and unstoppable impulse to collect things. They often follow their impulse to careers that may directly relate to their obsession (i.e. an entomologist for a bug collector or a librarian for a collector of texts). Some obsessions reach dangerous heights, such as an ophthalmologist that collects eyes from his patients.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character gains another piece for their collection with some danger attached.

Community

The character is driven to make their community a better place to live. Some start out-reach programs, open homeless shelters, or work in soup kitchens. Others become teachers, running after-school programs for their

local community center. Some volunteer their time to organizations that help to clean up the streets. Others are more radical and become vigilantes, choosing to take on local criminal elements themselves. They have no other compulsion than to make their neighborhood safer. These characters often have a higher sense of their community than they do of themselves and see themselves as part of it, instead of as an individual.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character helps their community in a noticeable way.

Death

The character is obsessed with death and the events that it surrounds. This fascination makes them hang out in graveyards, some becoming gravediggers by trade. They may attend funerals for people they've never met and become spellbound at others' reactions to death. Some are awestruck by gore and become crime scene investigators to get closer to deaths. Others may even become murderers drunk off "giving" death to their victims. These characters feel a connection to the world by understanding the fundamental fact that everything dies.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character survives a true near-death experience.

Faith

The character holds their religion and faith at the forefront of their existence. This is often instilled into a child from a very young age by their family. Some have gone through horrible ordeals in their lives (i.e. divorce or drug abuse) and found that faith brought them through it safely. Some become priests, monks, or street preachers. These characters live by the tenets of their chosen religion and believe that their god(s) can aid against any obstacle or danger. They use faith to protect fellow worshipers, strangers, trusted comrades, and their high ideals.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character uses faith to bring themselves or others through hard times.

Greed

The character wants to acquire a lot of a particular thing. The most common Greed Passion is for wealth, with the character focusing on obtaining as much money as possible. But there are other types of Greed. A promiscuous playboy doesn't necessarily care for the women he dates. Instead, he cares only about the number of women he can accumulate. Greed is about craving an abundance of something, no matter the cost or how much of it the character already has. Some also gain extra joy by getting what they want at the expense of others.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character acquires a large abundance of their chosen obsession.

Honor Code

The character follows a code of honor that they are bound to obey. Examples from history include a knight's Code of Chivalry, a samurai's Way of Bushido, or devout Buddhist prohibitions to sex and alcohol, but there need not be a formal code to follow, as some characters simply have very high moral standards. Honor codes generally include tenets such as "No harm to women or children", "No lying", "No stealing", or "No killing". Those with warped senses of reality often create their own opposite codes of honor. In either case, these characters abide by strict personal or cultural rules.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character abides by their honor code with dire consequences.

Joy

The character is all about celebration and bliss. They smile through adversity, see the brighter side of awful situations, and attempt to bring a grin to others' faces. They focus on the "glass-half-full" mentality and love an audience. Some with warped humor or morality find the torture of others quite hilarious. If traveling with a squad that thinks this way, performing heinous acts technically brings joy to their comrades. These circumstances are few and far between, as they rarely bring joy to the victims.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character can reflect on a bad situation and see the good.

Love

The character is a hopeless romantic and seeks to bring love into the world. Love is an obsession to some, urging them to action to search for the person of their dreams. Others may fight for others to gain or keep love as well. Some may call them serial monogamists. When they have love, they are often doting and sometimes overly affectionate. These characters enjoy giving relationship advice and are always seeking love, feeling a connection to the world through the strongest of emotions.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character acts in a way that helps their own or another's love life.

Perfection

The character strives to perfect themselves in some way. "Perfection" has different meanings depending on cultural or personal beliefs. To some, perfection means the flawless, chiseled body of a professional weight-lifter. To others, perfection is having in-depth knowledge of any and every topic and spending hours memorizing encyclopedia volumes. Some take a psychological approach, weeding out bad habits and unwanted personality flaws. Others seek spiritual perfection, hoping to purify their souls of physical and emotional pollution. Less-sensible people may physically cut out pieces of their flesh that are "unclean".

Bonus XP: Whenever the character takes another step toward their personal perfection.

Power

The character endeavors to acquire power over all things, but not always for a particular reason. Some immediately jump to the head of any project to take lead, doling out positions and assignments. Others seek more subtle control, becoming "trusted advisors" and gaining the ear of the person who has power. These characters feel connected to the world by the amount of things or people they command and nothing else. Some don't wait for authority to be given and attempt to take it by force, which has led to many wars in Earth's history. Most also come off as arrogant and prideful.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character gains power over another or over some part of their own lives.

Protection

The character works diligently to protect something of value. Some protect a certain stretch of land, like their family's farm or encroachment upon Native American reservations. Others may protect a particular item, such as a family heirloom that has been handed down. They may also have another person to protect, be it a sibling, parent, or their own child. These characters devote their lives to defending. Their reason is precious to them and motivates them to fight against any kind of danger to keep it unharmed.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character has protected their item from a real threat.

Questions

The character quests for knowledge and experiences, asking important life questions. Some feverishly question medical phenomenon, such as a cure for cancer. Others wish to experience the swingers sub-culture, delving into the lifestyle head first. Some devote their lives to decrypting ancient texts to find answers to centuries old riddles. Others become perfect voyeurs, watching people's lives and documenting their findings. Their quest becomes an obsession, leading them to danger worse than possibly imagined. These characters seek answers about life above anything else.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character takes another step toward finding the answer to their question.

Rebellion

The character is a rebel at their core. Any person can be a rebel, as this Passion only requires that the character have something to rail against. Some are renegades literally fighting for justice on the streets, either through violence or protests. Others are pencil-pushers that take their time on paperwork just to piss off their bastard of a supervisor. They hold strong to their convictions and feel deeply for their cause. These characters feel connection to the world whenever they rebel, pushing them to do it more often in their daily lives.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character rebels against an ideal or person and gets others to join their cause.

Revenge

The character has been wronged by a person or entity in the past. They now devote their lives seeking revenge. It may be on a killer of a loved one, using all available resources to track them down, against a previous employer that fired them, or an organization that led to them losing their home. Methods range from outright brutal assaults (i.e. killing a person or causing property damage to an entity) to scoring a personal victory by forcing the subject to admit to their wrong-doings.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character gets one step closer to gaining their revenge.

Rivalry

The character bases their life on competition with another person. Some pit brother against brother for anything, from who gets the first driver's permit to who gets a particular girl's phone number. Some compete with coworkers, like "that damn Peter in accounting that just seems to be getting ahead without trying". Others even pick a celebrity or media figure as their rival, attempting to reach their level of perfection. A rivalry may push them to do better or to cause harm to their rival if they can't.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character gets a leg up on their rival.

Warrior

The character lives for the thrill of battle. Some are vicious personalities that seek to spill blood or are skilled strategists, using their intellect to carve a winning position in any fight. Others simply seek the greatest physical challenge they can face and will throw down their gauntlet to anyone worthy of their efforts. These characters love combat and fighting is what they do best. However, Warriors can quickly become an issue, as they have problems with the law or pick fights with anyone that looks at them the wrong way.

Bonus XP: Whenever the character wins in a one-on-one fight as the underdog.

Character Creation Reference Guide

Step One: Concept, Passion, and Race
Step Two: Distribute Attribute Points (30)
Step Three: Distribute Skill Points (30 + IQ)
Step Four: Bonus Points (10) or (16 for Humans)
Step Five: Calculate Sub-Attributes & Combat Bonuses

Step One

1. Choose a Concept.

2. Choose one of the following Passions:

- **Approval:** You seek approval of someone else
- **Collection:** You're always looking for new pieces for your collections
- **Community:** You work to better your community
- **Death:** You have an obsession with death
- **Faith:** You use faith to get through hard times
- **Greed:** You look to acquire a lot something
- **Honor Code:** You live by a code of honor
- **Joy:** You want to spread joy to the world
- **Love:** You fight for love (yours or others')
- **Perfection:** You seek perfection in everything
- **Power:** You want to accumulate power
- **Protection:** You protect something or someone
- **Questions:** You look for the answers to life's questions
- **Rebellion:** You live to rebel against everything
- **Revenge:** You have a lust for revenge
- **Rivalry:** You are in a never-ending competition
- **Warrior:** You live for the thrill of battle

3. Choose one of the following Races:

Legal (Page 18-31)

- **Humans:** The creative, stubborn rulers of Earth
- **Burners:** Fire demons, refugees
- **Changelings:** Shapeshifting demons living beside humans
- **Lochs:** Giant fish-demons, dethroned from their kingdom
- **Spectral:** Ghosts that did not enter the afterlife
- **Taylari:** Living vampires, much different than pop culture
- **Wolf People:** Werewolves of unknown origins

Illegal (Page 171-175)

- **Carriers:** Disease-eating demons
- **Oracles:** Demons that can tell the future
- **Tark:** Unstoppable juggernauts that steal babies

Step Two

1. Distribute thirty (30) points between your Attributes. Level 1-8 cost 1 point and Levels 9 & 10 cost 2 points. Every character must have at least 1 point in each and 10 is the maximum. Level 4 or Level 5 is average.

- **POW (Power):** Raw physical strength
- **AGY (Agility):** Dexterity, quickness, and grace
- **VIG (Vigor):** Physical stamina and endurance
- **IQ (Intellect):** Power and quickness of thought
- **INS (Insight):** Willpower, intuition, awareness
- **CHM (Charm):** Natural social graces

Step Three

1. Distribute thirty (30 + IQ) points between your Skill. Level 1-8 cost 1 point and Levels 9 & 10 cost 2 points. Level 10 is the maximum. Also choose a Specialty for Standard Skills at levels 4, 7, and 10. Choose a fighting technique for Levels 4, 7, and 10 for Fighting Style: Brawler, Elite, Martial Arts (Hard), or Martial Arts (Soft).

Standard Skills

Acrobatics	Knowledge
Arts	Linguistics
Athletics	Legerdemain
Beast Handling	Medicine
Computers	Perception
Crafts	Performance
Deception	Persuasion
Discipline	Stealth
Fortitude	Survival
Intimidation	Vehicle Operation

Combat Skills

Fighting Style: Basic	Fighting Style: Brawler
Fighting Style: Elite	Fighting Style: Hard
Fighting Style: Soft	Weapon Style: Ax
Weapon Style: Club	Weapon Style: Chain
Weapon Style: Knife	Weapon Style: Ranged
Weapon Style: Staff	Weapon Style: Sword

Step Four

1. Spend your starting Bonus Points (BP). Humans start with 16 BP, while other races start with 10 BP. Can be used to purchase Gifts or raise Attributes & Skills. You can also gain additional BP buy taking Drawbacks, or sacrificing Attributes and Skills. Please see page 46 for more information.

Step Five

1. Calculate Sub-Attributes

- **Health:** How much damage they can take before they pass out or die. (VIG x 3) + 10
- **Initiative:** Reaction time in combat. AGY + IQ
- **Movement:** Speed of movement. POW + AGY
- **Stamina:** Physical and mental endurance. (VIG + INS) x 3

2. Calculate Combat Bonuses

- **Strike:** Attack or touch opponent.
- **Dodge:** Sidestep or duck a Strike.
- **Parry:** Block or deflect a Strike.
- **Roll:** Avoid NL damage from a Strike or fall
- **Grappling:** Use a Grappling maneuvers.

Random Demon Maker

Players and GMs can create custom demon races by rolling on the Random Demon Maker chart, found on page 169.

Magic

Gifts

Born in Magic (4 or 8): Page 47
Inner Circle Opening (3, 5, or 7): Page 48
Magic Resistance (1-5): Page 48
Path Access (1): Page 48
Spell Knowledge (1, 2, or 3): Page 49
Spell Upgrade (1): Page 49

Paths of Magic

Animalia: Power and control over animals
Augmentation: Magical enhancement of the body
Blood: Manipulation of a vampire's blood curse
Death: Creation and control of ghosts and zombies
Domination: Control of other's thoughts and actions
Elements: Power over the elemental magic
Figments: Control of dreams and illusions
Fortune: Bending the rules of fate and divination
Health: Power over medical and cleansing magic
Mirrors: Strange power of reflections and light
Neutralization: Power of immobilization/negation
Portals: Creation of pathways and portals
Psychometry: Psychic power of visions upon touch
Sickness: Magic of pestilence, hatred, and disease
Telekinesis: Movement of objects with only the mind
Telepathy: Communication with only the mind
Time: Control over the flow of time
Wares: Manipulation/ synchronization with machines

Orders

Secret adept societies (See Magic, page 85)
Brotherhood of the Iron Skull: Privileged society of rich men, specializing in the Path of Death
Flower Children: Modern hippies, specializing in the Path of Elements
New Seekers: Meditation experts, specializing in the Path of augmentation
Psychics of Seville: Towns of psychics, specializing in the Path of Telepathy
True Faith Ministries: Traveling evangelists, specializing in the Path of Health
Wild Ones: Environmentalist coven, specializing in the Path of Animalia

Elite Training

Elite combat training is only available to humans. In order to learn the special techniques provided, the character must fulfill a certain list of requirements. See page 129 for more information.

Cybernetic Implants (Page 58)

Armor Plating (2 BP)
Armor Plating (Nanotech) (5 BP)
Audio Implants (3 BP)
Backups (3 BP)
Bionic Arm (3 BP)
Bionic Foot (3 BP)
Bionic Hand (3 BP)
Bionic Leg (3 BP)
Bionic Torso (BP 4)
Data Chip (3 BP)
Facial Implants (3 BP)
Follicle Implants (4 BP)
Interface (3 BP)
Nanotech Underlayer (4 BP)
Optical Implants (3 BP)
Pump (4 BP)
Voice Modulator (3 BP)

Experience Points (XP)

Use the following chart when spending XP to raise Attributes and Skills, buy new Gifts, or "buy-off" Drawbacks. See page 160 for more information.

1 Attribute Point	10 XP
1 Skill Point	5 XP
1 Bonus Point	5 XP

Starting More Powerful

At character creation, characters are assumed to be Rookies. They are just starting out as an API agent or have just discovered the magical underworld. However, the GM can give additional Bonus Points (BP) if they want their players to start the story with more power.

Rookies	+7 BP
Experienced	+15 BP
Heroes	+25 BP

Advanced Character Creation

Experienced players may move directly to selecting Gifts & Drawbacks with Bonus Points (BP) before selecting their Attributes or choose Skills before even knowing their preferred Race. This method is just as worthwhile as following the Basic steps and is encouraged for maximum comfortability of the character creation process as long as all the values add up correctly.

Sample Character Creation

Step One: Concept, Passion, and Race
Step Two: Distribute Attribute Points (30)
Step Three: Distribute Skill Points (30 + IQ)
Step Four: Bonus Points (10) or (16 for Humans)
Step Five: Calculate Sub-Attributes/Combat Bonuses

Step One: Concept, Passion, and Race

Concept

After reading the majority of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc, Dianna decides on the type of character she wants to create. She definitely wants to utilize magic and this magic would come from a long line of adepts in her character's ancestry. Going through the talking points described in the Concept section (Page 8), she names her character and decides on a background:

Candace Holbrook is a strong, sexual woman. No older than 20, she can have her pick of most men, but is mostly carefree under her overprotective parents' care (which made her slightly spoiled as well). She always appears happy. Her parents recently died mysteriously and left their secret magic books to her, along with a foreboding note. Apparently, they belonged to an ancient Order of adepts that they knew would assassinate them. She was left alone to find her family's murderers. She learned a few spells to aid her, since her enemies would be no different, and found a natural talent for them. She eventually discovered API and joined their organization as a way to gain more magic and hopefully get her revenge.

Passion

Next, Dianna picks Candace's Passion. From the background she created, there are essentially two to choose from: Greed or Revenge.

Greed applies because Candace wants to accumulate a lot of magic. With this, the need to get more becomes the focal point of her existence, whether or not there's an actual reason. This would lead her to any mission where she could learn new spells.

Revenge applies for obviously reasons, with her goal of avenging her parents' death. With this, she would be consumed with revenge and use her connections to follow leads to local Orders no matter the cost or how powerful she is currently.

Dianna decides to go with Greed, as she feels that Candace probably needs to grow a bit before she tackles a whole Order by herself. But she'll keep Revenge in the back of her mind, just incase something happens that makes her character need to change quickly.

Race

Dianna already decided that Candace would be Human before beginning. It makes the most sense to her concept to have a "normal" upbringing and then thrust into her magical destiny.

Step Two: Distribute Attribute points

Dianna wants Candace to be smarter and more socially powerful. The character hasn't had to do that much work, so she'll be understandably weaker physically. To reflect this, she distributes her Attribute points for above average Intellect, Insight, and Charm, while making Candace below average with Power and Vigor. She ends up with the following Attributes from her 30 points:

POW 3	AGY 5	VIG 3
IQ 6	INS 7	CHM 6

Step Three: Distribute Skill points

Because she gave Candace IQ 6, Dianna has 36 skill points (30 automatic skills point, plus her Starting IQ) that she can spend to reflect her character's training. While spending her points, she decides how they tie into Candace's background as well. She ends up with the following Skills and Specialties:

Acrobatics (Tumbling) 4	Knowledge (Magic) 4
Computers 3	Persuasion (Seduction) 6
Deception (Spotting lies) 4	Fighting Style: Basic 4
Discipline (Concentration) 6	Weapon Style: Staff 1
Fortitude 2	Fighting Style: Basic 4
Performance 2	

Candace practiced gymnastics as a kid and was a cheerleader, leading to Acrobatic 4 with a specialty in Tumbling. She also gained her Performance 2 at this time. Like many others her age, computers became second nature, giving her Computers 3.

As she got older, she learned to use her sex appeal to get what she wants, giving her Persuasion 6 with a specialty in Seduction. She also learned quickly how to spot lies men told just to pick her up, giving her Deception 4 with a specialty in Spotting lies.

When her parents died and left her with their magical texts, Candace poured herself into them, gaining Knowledge 4 with a specialty in Magic. Through her intense self-training, she became good at concentrating on her powers, gaining Discipline 6 with a specialty in Concentration.

Upon joining API, she received basic training to become an agent. She learned Fighting Style: Basic 4 and rudimentary use of a staff, gaining Weapon Style: Staff 1. She also hardened her body, gaining Fortitude 2.

Sample Character Creation (Cont.)

Step Four: Bonus Points

Because Candace is Human, she starts with 16 Bonus Points (BP) to spend on Gifts or additional Skill and Attribute points, instead of 10 BP that other races receive. This gives Dianna plenty of room to customize her adept and her spells to the fullest. After looking over the list starting on page 46, she decides upon the following Gifts:

Born into Magic (4)	Wealth (2)
Open 1st Inner Circle (3)	Attractive (2)
Open 2nd Inner Circle (5)	

Dianna wants Candace's magic to be natural, so she buys the Born into Magic Gift for 4 BP which gives her character free Mana to use to cast spells. She also spent 3 BP and 5 BP (8 BP total) to open two of Candace's Inner Circles. In addition to her magical Gifts, her character has a nest egg from her parents, giving her 2 BP of Wealth, and she is better looking than others, giving 2 BP of Attractive.

This spends her entire 16 BP, but she also takes the following Drawbacks:

Magic Addict (3)	Curious (2)
Deep Sleeper (2)	Combat Fear (2)

Because of Candace's "pampered" upbringing, Dianna decides that she is used to sleeping long nights and chooses Deep Sleeper to gain 2 BP. She is not really a fighter and second guesses her movements, giving her 2 BP of Combat Fear (-4 Initiative). She craves learning everything she can about everything, giving her the Curious Drawback for 2 BP. Candace has also become quite addicted to using her spells on a regular basis and she takes the Magic Addict Drawback to gain 3 BP.

This gives her an additional 9 BP to spend and she chooses to spend this on her Magic.

Choosing Magic

Candace only has a few books and she is also self-taught, so having a large number of spells doesn't make sense for her concept. With an IQ of 6, she can learn spells from up to three different Paths of Magic (Half IQ rounded down). Dianna wants to give Candace spells from the Path of Domination, Path of Mirrors, and Path of Telekinesis.

Going through the lists, she decides to purchase Mirror Image from the Path of Mirrors. Because this is a 1st Level spell, it costs her 1 BP. She then purchases Mind Trick from the Path of Domination and Unseen Hand from the Path of Telekinesis. In total, these cost her three of her 9 BP, leaving her with 6 BP.

She then picks Command from the Path of Domination, which is a 2nd Level spell. This costs her two of her 6 BP, leaving her with 4 BP.

Now, Dianna wants to spend the remaining 4 BP to upgrade her magic, showing Candace's personalizing of her parents' magic. Each Upgrade costs 1 BP, which means she can purchase four Upgrades. For Mirror Image, she purchases an Effect Bonus Upgrade, allowing her to create one additional copy of herself. She then purchases the Effect Bonus and Reduce Penalty Upgrades for Command, allowing her to affect one additional person with the spell, while also halving the penalty given to her for its use. Then, she buys a Reduce Mana Upgrade for Unseen Hand, reducing the Mana cost for its use.

Now that she has spent all of her BP, it is now time to move on to the final step.

Step Five: Calculate Sub-Attributes and Combat Bonuses

Dianna now goes through the Attribute and Skill sections to calculate Candace's bonuses. She receives the following bonuses from these sources:

Skill Bonuses

- **Acrobatics 4:** She gets +2 Initiative, +2 Dodge, and +2 Roll.
- **Fortitude 2:** She gets +2 Health
- **Fighting Style: Basic 4:** She gets +2 Health, +2 Stamina, +2 Dodge, +2 Roll, +2 Initiative, +1 Strike, +2 Parry, +2 Grapple, and +1 Damage

Sub-Attributes:

- **Health:** (VIG x 3) +10 (+4 from Skills) = 23
- **Stamina:** (VIG + INS) x 3 (+2 from Skills) = 32
- **Carry/Lift (POW 3):** 75 lbs. / 150 lbs.
- **AGY Combat Modifiers (AGY 5):** None
- **Max. Hold Breath (VIG 3):** 90 seconds
- **Memorize/Recall (IQ + Discipline):** +12
- **Magic Resistance (Half INS rounded down):** +3
- **First Impression (CHM + Deception):** +10
- **Initiative:** IQ + AGY (+4 from Skills, -4 from Combat Fear) = +11
- **Movement:** POW + AGY = 8
- **Base Damage:** -1 (POW 3) +1 from Skills = +0
- **Actions per Round:** 2 (No extra from AGY or Skills)
- **Throw Range:** AGY + IQ / Double / Triple = 11/22/33

And then, she's done! She's completed her first character and is ready to start taking Candace along her journey.

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.

Name: Candace Holbrook Race: Human Passion: Greed Player: Dianna

Concept: Vengeful Magic Horder Gender/Age: F / 20 Height: 5' 6" Weight: 120 lbs

Personality/Description: Cute and blonde (no matter how menacing she tries to look) with a black suit. She always looks happy and is usually smiling, but hides a soured past from her parents' death.

XP

HEALTH 23

112	-4
154	-8
128	-12

DAMAGE

Non-Lethal

Lethal

STAMINA 32

116	-2
184	-4
148	-6

Attributes

POW (Power)	3
AGY (Agility)	5
VIG (Vigor)	3
IQ (Intellect)	6
INS (Insight)	7
CHM (Charm)	6

Sub-Attributes

Base Damage -1

Carry / Lift 75 lbs / 150 lbs

AGY Combat Mod N/A

Extra Actions per Round N/A

Max Hold Breath 90 seconds

Memorize/Recall check +12

Magic Resistance +3

First Impression check +10

Skills

	Lvls	+/-	Total
Acrobatics (Tumbling)	4		4
Computers	3		3
Knowledge (Magic)	4		4
Deception (Spotting Lies)	4		4
Persuasion (Seduction)	6		6
Discipline (Concentration)	6		6
Fortitude	2		2
Fighting Style: Basic	4		4
Weapon Style: Staff	1		1
Performance	2		2

Gifts

	BP
Born into Magic	4
1st Circle Opening	3
2nd Circle Opening	5
Attractive	2
Wealth	2

Drawbacks

	BP
Magic Addict	3
Curious	2
Deep Sleeper	2
Combat Fear (-4 Init.)	2

Combat Actions & Reactions

Attack-Light (Spd 2, Stam 0, +2 Strike, +1 Dmg)
Attack-Full (Spd 4, Stam 1, +3 Dmg)
Attack-Strong (Spd 6, Stam 2, -4 Strike, +5 Dmg)
Co-op (Spd +2, Stam +1, -3 Strike, +25% Dmg)
Disarm (Spd 4, Stam 1, -4 Strike)
Draw Weapon (Spd 1+Size, Stam 0)
Feint (Spd 3, Stam 0)
Grapple (Spd 4, Stam 2)
Hold Action (Spd 1, Stam 0)
Move–Normal (Spd 4/2/1, Stam 0)
Move–Sprint/Rush (Spd 5, Stam 2)
Push (Spd 3, Stam 1)
Stand (Spd 4, Stam 1)
Summon Inner Strength (Spd 6, Stam 0)
Sweep (Spd 3, Stam 1)
Touch (Spd 1, Stam 0, +2 Strike)
Use Skill (Spd 6, Stam Varies)
Aim (Spd 3, Stam 0)
Auto-fire-Short (Spd +1, Stam +0, +25% Dmg**)
Auto-fire-Medium (Spd +2, Stam +1, +50% Dmg**)
Auto-fire-Long (Spd +3, Stam +2, +100% Dmg)
Throw Weapon (Spd 4, Stam 1, -2 Strike per Size)
Dodge (Spd 3, Stam 1)
Entangle (Spd 3, Stam 1, -4 Parry)
Parry (Spd 2, Stam 0)
Roll (Spd 1, Stam 0, +2 Roll)
Take Hit (Spd 0, Stam 0)
Take Hit Strategy (Spd 0, Stam 1, -4 Roll)

Combat Bonuses

+1 to Strike

+2 to Parry

+4 to Dodge

+4 to Roll

+2 to Grapple

Movement 8

Initiative Bonus +11

Actions per Round 2

Base Damage +0

Armor Rating (AR) N/A

Throw Range 11 / 22 / 33

Reload Modifier N/A

Aim Modifer N/A

Weapon: Staff Dmg +3 (M.)
Spd +3 Stam +1 Strike +1 Parry +2
Size 3 Range ___/___/___ Payload ____ RS ____
Actions per Round 2 Other 10 feet reach

Weapon: _____ Dmg +____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Other Abilities/Notes

Born in Magic – 7 free Mana (regain 1 every 10 minutes)
Attractive – +4 to CHM rolls using looks
Deep Sleeper – Requires 9 hours sleep
Curious – INS + Discipline vs. Insanity to resist

Path of Domination – Mind Trick, Command (2 targets)
Path of Mirrors – Mirror Image (2 copies)
Path of Telekinesis – Unseen Hand (5 Mana cost)

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HUMANS

Other Names: Norms, Baselines, Homo sapiens
Stereotypes: Resourceful, Creative, Weak

Origins

The Earth belongs to the humans, and they started Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. with the intent to keep it that way. However, humans have very little uniformity of theories or beliefs regarding their possible origins. No one truly knows, but many speculations exist, depending on their culture and lifestyle. Their intuitive creativity extends to the creation of diverse mythologies, religions, philosophies, and scientific theories.

Some believe humans were created by an all-mighty deity, who also created the rest of the world as a paradise. Others believe in a multitude of gods, each one serving a specific role in the universe with their own titles and abilities. Another highly controversial hypothesis by Charles Darwin states that humans may have evolved from other similar animals.

More radical ideas suggest that humans were brought to Earth by aliens and are being watched and studied by these "visitors", while others disbelieve the world itself and consider humans nonexistent and reality an illusion. Needless to say, humans are a varied lot with billions of people subscribing to different philosophies about their origins and their true reason for existing. They hold on to these beliefs with great fervor, which has lead to many religious wars in their history.

Lifestyle

Humans have the highest population on Earth, exist in all environments, and live in many different cultures around the world. Earth itself is covered with a variety of differing landscapes and climates that lend themselves to certain occupations and tourists. Humans have hundreds of monotheistic and polytheistic religions that allow for all manner of lifestyles, some practicing rampant hedonism and others living pious, wholesome lives of worship. The United States is often called "the Melting Pot", due to the influx and mixtures of people from differing countries, backgrounds, and cultures.

Human lifestyle in the US weighs heavily on both wealth and reputation, which applies to any demons living there as well. "Money makes the world go around" some say and this is ultimately true in most situations. The US capitalist society creates insanely wealthy people and the homeless who scrounge for everything they have and own. The spectrum between these two groups grows wider every year. Most people fall somewhere in the middle, obtaining jobs that pay enough (or just enough) to keep up with their lifestyle. Some are bankers, bakers, or corporate drones, while others become extreme artists, philosophers, or follow other abstract careers. Some have charitable reputations, giving money and service to help the less fortunate. Others are stingy, hording their wealth away and some don't even pass it down to their children. A person's reputation is important in human culture. Liars, cheats, or worse are highly looked down upon.

No matter their culture origins, humans are prone to stark extremes in both action and emotion. Humans with true balance in their life are rare, because they are so easily shaped by experiences and prejudices passed down from their parents. A remarkable facet of human life is their ability to change their opinions, essentially changing one extreme for another. This is good if they become tolerant of individuals or learn multi-cultural awareness. But this can be bad if they give rise to prejudice actions against certain ideas or groups, be they subgroups of humans or demon races.

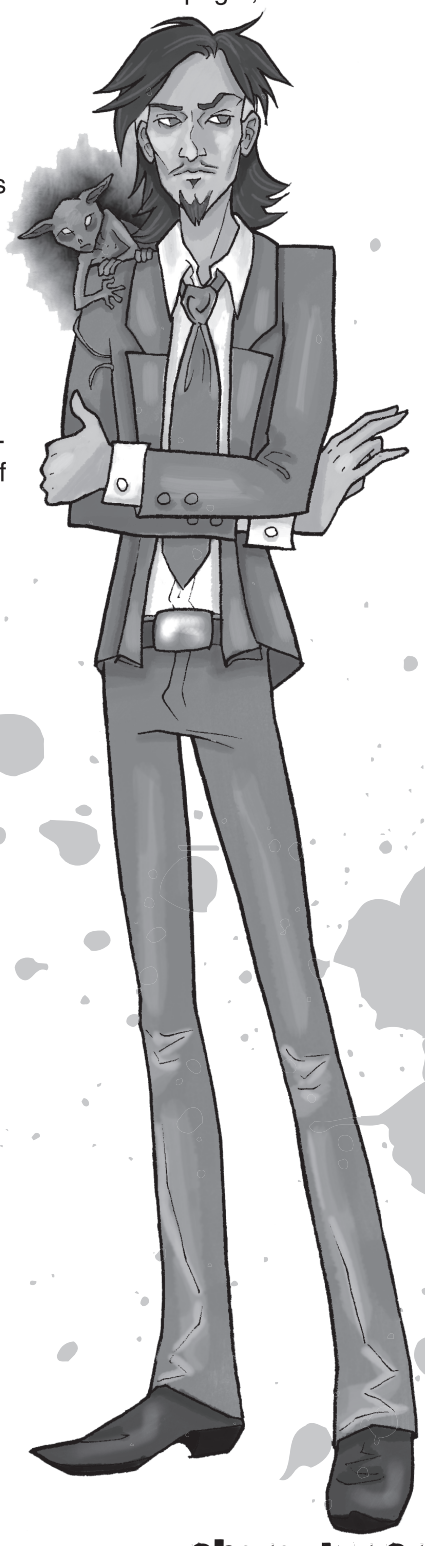
Recruitment

Humans encompass approximately 90% of employees for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. and command the majority of their special forces. They are also the only race eligible for Elite training (See page 129). With the incursion of demons to Earth, humans (through API) have developed advanced cybernetics, melding their bodies with machines in order to meet oncoming supernatural threats with equal force. Due to their versatility, humans can take any role in a squad of agents, from magic-using adepts to field medic or cybernetically-enhanced muscle to strategist.

Humans are naturally curious beings and have the urge to dig deep into mysteries that present themselves. Some humans seek out API after learning of the company's existence. The company is the place for humanity's paragons to assemble and protect the world from the unknown supernatural dangers.

Appearance

They are simplistic in design and believe themselves to be the model for demon races that have a similar appearance. They have even coined the term "humanoid", used to describe races that stand upright, with two arms, two legs, and a single head. Skin tones range from very dark to extremely pale, usually dependent upon their parental origins. Humans have no breeding limitations within their species, leading to various mixtures of color and size among their race. Their average lifespan is approximately 90 years of age, but the oldest human has been just shy of 120 years.



Many demons underestimate humans, considering them weaklings based on their lack of inborn supernatural ability. They may not have natural armor, beams that shoot from their eyes, or shapeshifting abilities, but what they lack in raw, supernatural power, they make up for with extreme ingenuity.

Gift – Human Ingenuity

Humans begin character creation with 16 Bonus Points (BP) (instead of 10), due to their highly-skilled and creative minds.

Agent Julius Parker

Race: Human
Passion: Community
Age: 42

Background: Agent Parker is a premiere Elite agent within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. He's been around for a long while and has trained some of the best agents in company history. As a young boy, he was taken in by the company after his family was murdered by intruding demons. For years, he followed vengeful urges, which encouraged him to join API at the age of 18. He went on to win medals and commendations, each bringing him up in rank. Twenty-five years later, he eventually grew to one of the highest ranks just below the Board of Directors. He's been offered higher positions, running HQs and helping to stabilize the company's position in the US, but he has declined each offer. He prefers to be in the field and travel the world as a constant force for Earth's protection.

Personality: Despite what one would assume of high-ranking, Elite agents, Agent Parker is very gentle and works well in a wise mentor role. He builds camaraderie with anyone he meets, but doesn't hesitate to remind agents of his station that he worked hard to achieve and their place within that hierarchy. He loves gambling (his only known weak spot).

Appearance: Agent Parker is a tall and thin, multicultural man with a thin mustache and patches of gray in his hair. He doesn't look imposing at all, even carrying a cane everywhere. This simultaneously acts as a weapon and a disguise used to make opponents underestimate "the guy with the cane".

Secrets: He knows the complete ins and outs of API. He even has insight into squabbles within the Circle of Ten from his interactions with Annabelle Priscilla Ilsley. He meets dozens of new races and trades secrets with them as well. In short, too many to describe.

Statistics: Health 44, Stamina 37, Initiative +24, Movement 15, AR 3/2, Actions per Round 6, Magic Resistance +6, Acrobatics +13, Athletics +12, Deception +15, Discipline +16, Fortitude +15, Knowledge (Demonology) +18, Perception +14, Stealth +14

Combat: Agent Parker has trained with the best and is easily one of the most accomplished fighters in the world, a genius at both close and ranged combat. **Bonuses:** +16 to all combat checks (+20 against Illegals), Damage +13 (L) (+18 (L) to Illegals)

Special Abilities: He is as good as he is through decades of body conditioning and training.

Implementation: Agent Parker is the go-to guy for events occurring in the US. Important portals, Elite training, and magical recitations are all examples of incidents that call his attention. GMs can insert this NPC into any story as the squad's leader, temporary cell commander, or higher-ranking agent sent in to "take over the case".

Burners

Other Names: Cauloni, Fire Starters, Drews
Stereotypes: Hot-headed, Sexy, Patriotic

Origins

Called the Cauloni in their native tongue, these demons are born from the deep fires of their volcanic dimension. They were brutally bound as slaves by a race of machines called Chromatics. Some were chained and forced to build incredible monuments and mine for precious minerals. Others were used for their natural pyrokinetic abilities as living batteries to fuel their machine captors' internal systems and feed their machine cities. After enslavement for over four hundred years (roughly eight generations), the Cauloni staged a somewhat unsuccessful rebellion. In the midst, the machines decided they no longer needed the Cauloni for labor and either massacred them or place them into suspended animation for later use as batteries. Hundreds of their kind escaped the dimension (not all in one piece) thanks to Septimos, the now great war hero that made the escape possible through decades of diligent research into Portal magic.

Their fateful portal opened in Tampa, Florida about twenty years ago and sparked controversy. They were immediately met by API agents, like other newcomers to Earth, and many within the company saw their usefulness right away. In time, the Cauloni were eventually invited to stay on Earth, as returning to their home world would surely spell death to the few that still remained. The Cauloni were happy to receive amnesty and their youth even took on the moniker of "Burners", as they "burned with pride".

Some joyfully took Earth as their new home world, becoming more patriotic than most humans about protecting the dimension from outside threats. Others think Earth is just a temporary resting place where they can gather their strength (and hopefully allies) to one day return to Caulon and destroy the Chromatics. They know this endeavor will take decades to complete, if not longer, but the Chromatics are unaging and can sustain themselves indefinitely using those Burners that were left behind.

Lifestyle

Today, Burners take on lives that resemble a human's, working as bartenders, business executives, criminals, or any other lifestyle. They excel in social enterprises and hardly ever work as simple followers or corporate drones, getting promotions quickly and efficiently. Many take their natural gifts and create their own businesses with their entrepreneurial spirit. Few take physically taxing occupations, as their frail frame and haunted memories cannot handle the abuse.

No matter how much they resemble humans or how much they strive to live among them, elder Burners constantly remind the young that they are not. Many Burners try to forget their terrible past and that others are still experiencing that horrible enslavement.

Burners keep close tabs on their brethren. Even great rivals rest easy in the presence of their "own kind". This is especially true for the generation of Burners born on Earth that have never known Caulon's splendor. With so few of them still alive, the elders often make it their mission to create social gathering opportunities, not unlike family reunions. However, these reunions regularly leave rented hotels or halls in flames.

Some Burners have the pleasure of working directly with Septimos, also called the Fifth Sun, and his followers. They hope to return to Caulon and wipe out the Chromatics, while rescuing the other Cauloni that are hopefully still alive and well.

Recruitment

API agents were the first to open their arms to the Burners and many of their best warriors were called to the company's banner. API's mission statement of protecting Earth makes most Burners gladly work with them, jumping at the chance to fight for their new homeworld. Others enlist to hopefully gain the company's alliance and clearance to launch a full assault mission to Caulon in the near future.

Appearance

Their resemblance to humanity certainly helps with blending into the general populace. Their hair colors and

personalities vary as often as humanity's, but they are much thinner and frail in appearance. Their skin tone is similar to sun burn and is hot to the touch, but some wear make-up to fit in more effectively. They have a penchant for spicy foods, a Romanesque accent, and are rarely ever found in cold climates. The only real difference from humans is their pointed ears and their… three-foot prehensile tail. Their tail has an arrow-like end, resembling depictions of a devil's tail from Judeo-Christian beliefs. Burners have an average lifespan of 60 years of age.

Gift – Energy Source

A Burner's energy can be used to power electronic devices or cause additional damage from their unarmed attacks. This ability can charge batteries in devices by expending one Stamina point for a small battery, two points for a car battery, and more for larger power sources. They can spend double this amount to power devices without a battery for one hour per POW level.

In combat, their hands crackle with energy, dealing +1 (L) for every 2 Stamina spent (Max +4 (L)). This effect lasts for 1 Round per POW level.

Gift – Fire Immune

Burners take no damage from fire

Gift – Path of Fire

As per the Path Access Gift for Path of Elements (Fire).

Drawback – Fragile Frame

As their hearts burn with fire, it courses through a frail frame almost unable to contain it. As per Weak Attribute Drawback for VIG.

Sam Tazin

Race: Burner
Passion: Rebel
Age: 26

Background: Unlike most Burners his age, Sam was raised with strong Cauloni roots. His ancestors were record keepers for their people many generations before the Chromatics took over. They passed this history from parent to child for hundreds of years and eventually to Sam. He works as a teacher in "Little Caulon", working closely with the Fifth Sun directly. Not only does he strive to teach their culture to the children, he also fights along side the Burner freedom fighters. He frequently leads missions on Earth to steal resources and research other races that may help in their efforts. The Fifth Sun has recently called out against illegal raids for resources, hoping to avoid involvement from Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. But in all his power, Sam is considered the figurehead for the larger battle. For all intents and purposes, Sam leads the army and has accepted API assistance on only a few occasions.

Personality: Stubborn and resourceful. He comes off as cocky, but in reality, he's just very busy and can't be bothered with nonsense. Upon meeting Sam, he doesn't seem like a father-type. This is because his goal was to help with their repopulation, not to become a parent. Raising his son has calmed his temper down quite a bit and he is very different in his presence.

Appearance: His general features match those of other Burners. Sam wears comfortable clothing and has a Mohawk. His air of arrogance is stifling, unless he's around his son, where he becomes almost gentle.

Secrets: Sam and his crew salvaged pieces from the most recent Chromatic that attack on Earth, while the rest self-destructed. The Fifth Sun's forces are researching the remains for clues to return to Caulon.

Statistics: Health 35, Stamina 30, Initiative +16, Movement 15, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Athletics +11, Computers +10, Deception +9, Discipline +14, Intimidation +10, Fortitude +9, Survival +12

Combat: He fights with a long staff crafted from heated alloys left over from salvaged Chromatic scraps. It is magical, can be drawn without an Action and cannot be Disarmed. **Bonuses:** Strike +13, Dodge +7, Parry +13, Roll +10, Grapple +12, Damage +3 (+8 (NL) with staff), No penalty to attack multiple opponents with staff

Special Abilities: Sam has opened his 1st Inner Circle and has all 1st level spells from the Path of Elements (Fire) and Path of Elements (Air), as well as Find Pathway from the Path of Portals, taught to him by Septimos directly.

Implementation: Sam can be implemented in any storyline that uses Septimos and his forces. He is by no means their best warrior, but has gained more of the Fifth Sun's trust than anyone else. The characters could meet him in their missions (as a friend or enemy). He could ask API for assistance in examining the secret Chromatic scraps or Burner characters may know him from their time in primary school.

Changelings

Other Names: Shyfters, Unknowns, Nobodies
Stereotypes: Expert spies, Deceivers, Loners

Origins

Little is known about the origins of the elusive demons called Changelings, even among their own kind. They have no other world to call home besides Earth and they have no written history, only stories passed from parent to child. They adopted their "Changeling" moniker from human legends of stolen children taken by faeries and swapped with their own (as if the pests could accomplish such a thing). This act has become a strong tradition in order to better associate their children with human culture. It is their greatest survival mechanism.

Changeling parents conduct a long and arduous search for the perfect surrogate family for their child. Each has their own criteria, whether they seek to teach their child discipline by placing them in a military home, compassion by placing them with a loving couple, diverseness by placing them in a multi-cultured household, or teach them survivalism by leaving them to an orphanage. The only real necessity is that the surrogate has a child that can be replaced with a Changeling child altered to copy their appearance. The tradition also says to devour the replaced child, but many modern Changelings believe this part to be both archaic and unnecessary. Changeling parents watch their children from afar, waiting until the fateful day when they can return to share the truth. Most wait until the child reaches puberty. This tradition and Changelings are believed to have existed beside humanity forever.

Lifestyle

Changelings are instinctual loners and rarely enjoy large crowds. They grow up human, but always have a sense that they are different from other people. Kids that sit and read during recess instead of playing, coworkers that no one knows outside of work, or strange neighbors that live upstairs and never talk to anyone could all be Changelings.

When tapped by their real parents, Changelings are taught to control their shapeshifting abilities, but are left alone afterward. Some may figure out their powers before being tapped, but never to their fullest potential. After their training, they have the choice of sealing away their gifts and continuing their human farce or taking on their lost demon ancestry in favor of their previous life. Most feel a sense of comfort in finally understanding why they felt so different.

Most Changelings continue to live their everyday lives, while also seeking adventure and intrigue with the help of their gifts. A life of crime is quite alluring when one can become a veritable chameleon in the black market. Others may become vigilantes, using their abilities to clean up their neighborhood while easily keeping a secret identity.

Recruitment

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has several Changelings under employment and the company happily extends help to the untapped. Likewise, they often become spies or double agents. Specializing in covert operations can get them rather large paychecks.

Appearance (Fear 0/13)

In their natural form, Changelings are thin and asexual with hairless silver skin. Their eyes are black voids and they have only small holes for their mouths, noses, and ears. They are an alien-looking bunch, lending to the idea that Changelings are actually "visitors" from outer space.

Through the Changeling tradition, they have a human form that is second nature to them. While naturally asexual, most identify with one gender more than another, carried over from their human years. Changelings rarely share their true form with others. Their average lifespan is slightly less than humans at 80 years of age.

Gift – Natural Shapeshifting

(Speed 6, Stamina 4)

Changelings are born with the uncanny ability to change their shape to mimic another person (human or demon) to near perfection. To flawlessly copy another's appearance, they make a Moderate (20) IQ + Deception

(Disguise) check. This ability can also provide a -5 to +5 modifier to CHM checks (based on the form taken). They can choose to shift only a small part of their body (i.e. vocal chords to mimic another's voice or skin color to gain a +4 bonus to Stealth) with a Moderate (20) IQ + Fortitude check for only 2 Stamina points.

Normally, assumed forms can take up the character's same mass, but they can raise or lower their size by 20% percent in order to take the correct shape. To do so, they make a Moderate (20) IQ + Fortitude check. The GM may call for higher Difficulties depending on the specific character's specialties. This size change is cosmetic and doesn't provide any additional bonuses.

Gift – Object Shapeshifting (Optional-5 BP)

(Speed 8, Stamina 5)

They can turn into inanimate objects (i.e. chair, door). Complex objects (i.e. motorcycle) are possible, but duplicating the proper working parts to be ridden is impossible. This applies to all objects with inner working parts. They prefer to become objects of a single piece.

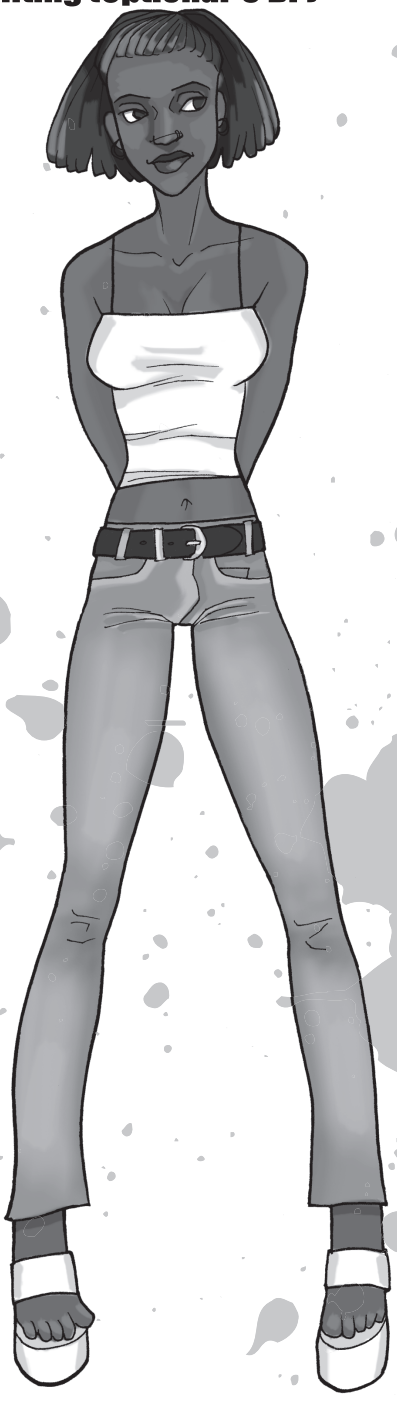
Gift – 2D Shapeshifting (Optional–4 BP)

(Speed 6, Stamina 6)

Crafty Changelings learn to flatten their bodies to become 2D. They can appear as part of a wall or floor design or to slip out of bars with ease. They have only 1/4 (round down) their Health in this form.

Drawback - Isolation

When able to become anyone, Changelings often lose their own sense of self and personality in the mix. They exhibit difficulty dealing with others on a personal level as their empathic comprehension wanes. As per Weak Attribute Drawback for INS.



Rachel Moore

Race: Changeling
Passion: Perfection
Age: 18

Background: Rachel grew up loved in a single-parent home with her mother. She knew she was different, but purposefully ignored these feelings and became a cheerleader, student council member, and other things that made her popular. On her 18th birthday, she looked in the mirror and saw her true form, but was never tapped by her true parents. She spent months figuring out her gifts on her own and spent her nights as a thief to try them out and make a little money on the side. She was located by Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. when a poor choice of marks turned out to be a rampaging demon who caught her in his pocket. She has since become a dedicated member of the company. She is still very inexperienced, but has perfected her shapeshifting with help from API's more-established Changelings.

Personality: She is a bright girl and it shows. At the same time, an observant person can tell that she is projecting the perfect form of herself, which is quite different than what she truly has inside. She always puts on a mask, because she doesn't know who she really is at this point in her life.

Appearance: Rachel is an attractive black girl, with short dreads and a winning disposition. She often wears trendy clothes to fit into crowds and is not above wearing a disguise if need be.

Secrets: None that anyone wants to know.

Statistics: Health 28, Stamina 25, Initiative +11, Movement 9, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Arts +6, Computers +9, Discipline +8, Fortitude +12, Performance (Singing) +10, Legerdemain +10, Persuasion +14, Stealth +9

Combat: She's learned a bit about fighting recently, but is far from a master of any form. Rachel has basic fighting skills. **Bonuses:** Strike +8, Parry +7, Dodge +6, Roll +8, Grapple +11, Damage +1

Special Abilities: Also has 2D Shapeshifting.

Implementation: Rachel is easy to add to any story. She is not far beyond starting characters, so she can be an additional team member to a squad. She has a penchant for sneaking after other agents to watch them do their job, which can also put her into the middle of the squad's action. She can easily be a love interest as well. Her own personal goals are to one day locate her real parents and find out what happened to them and why she was never tapped.

LOCHS

Other Names: Sedrone, Nessies, Gills
Stereotypes: Wise, Monstrous, Slimy

Origins

Lochs come from Domainya, a dimension made entirely of water, where they were feared and known as the Sedrone (a rough human translation of their language). In Domainya, the Sedrone were cruel and oppressive rulers of other aquatic races, living indulgent, decadent lives on their follower's backs. The wisest of these seemingly obedient races created a virus called the Contagion to push the ruling demons from their high pedestals. The Contagion is an epidemic that makes breeding between Sedrone impossible.

In an understandably fuming rage, the Sedrone army launched and slaughtered even their loyal subjects. They left nothing alive in their destructive wake and, to this day, their decimated kingdoms are still stained blood red. Sedrone were never a scientific race and left themselves with no clue to the source of their blight or how to cure it. Many believed their once-powerful race was now destined to fade away.

They traveled to Earth seeking a cure for the Contagion. As aquatic beings, they stuck to bodies of water (i.e. swamps, lakes, lagoons) in their search for anyone with answers to stop their extinction. However, their appearance quickly frightened off most humans. Sheltered away from humanity, they became myths and legends commonly known as loch ness monsters or creatures from the black lagoon. Some of these proud demons brought rages of blood and sex to humanity, killing and defiling any that searched for them.

Joining with Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. shed some light on their future… while they could no longer breed with each other, the Contagion did not halt their breeding with humans. After experimentation, human females that give birth to a Loch child die during or after childbirth. Human males often die well before that.

Lifestyle

The Lochs have fallen from grace and many have been intensely humbled by the experience. They have done soul-searching and become wise men or therapists to others, spreading their new-found wisdom to any that would listen. They hope to guide others to avoid grim fates like that of the Sedrone. Some even pursue science to find a cure or a way for humans to survive the birthing process.

Others chose to stay in the Amazonian jungles where they first arrived. They angrily rail against their doomed fate, instilling themselves with enough hate to survive in the harsh lands of Earth where every step could mean extinction. They viciously attack anyone that crosses their path, lending credence to myths that Lochs are only monsters.

Most Lochs, no matter their methods, are looking for humans to mate with them. Obviously, their appearance makes coercing humans to mate a tricky ordeal. It's a scary thought and the actual experience itself is as well. However, they are in a race against time, with their youngest killed by travelers and their oldest dying in Earth's severe conditions.

Recruitment

Before the Contagion, Loch recruitment averages were low and the demons' population on Earth sparse at best. However, now that the Lochs are in need of help, they enlist with Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. quite frequently. Image Emitters (See page 53) allow them to appear human and fit in. They are in high demand, used to help find new mates. API knows the chosen humans' fate if they mate with the Lochs in disguise, but they are considered acceptable casualties in exchange for the powerful warriors they receive in the fight to defend Earth.

Appearance (Fear 18)

Loch's stand up to ten feet tall and are very muscular, humanoid fish-demons. Most have wide gaping mouths and bulging eyes, with spiked fins that extend from their bodies. Some possess features resembling other aquatic creatures, like lobster claws for hands or tentacles that extend from their head like hair. They have clawed and webbed fingers and toes to aid in their swimming and combat. Their skin and scales feel smooth like a snake, not slimy as others might assume.

Their language is guttural and cannot be spoken by non-aquatic races. They have learned to conform their vocal chords to Earth's atmosphere and speak our languages, but make the sound of sludge bubbling in the back of their throats while they speak. Their average lifespan is about 250 years of age.

Gift - Aquatic

Lochs can breathe above and below water normally and without penalty. They move at double their Movement in water and can speak their aquatic language while submerged. They get a +10 bonus to all Athletics (Swimming) checks and are immune to damage from the ocean's crushing depths or the Crushing spell from the Path of Telekinesis.

Gift – Gigantic

Lochs have immense size and strength, being considered giants compared to humans. **Bonuses:** +12 Health, +5 to Lifting rolls, +4 Stamina points, +3 to Fortitude checks, and +2 Base Damage. If striking with their claws, damage inflicting is Lethal. Their size makes them suffer a -3 penalty to AGY-based rolls that require manual dexterity (i.e. picking a lock, typing, etc.). Clothing and armor requires special sizes to fit correctly. Cannot select the Giant Gift.

Drawback – Slow and Steady

Their bodies are much slower than a human's, due to their tremendous strength and size. As per Weak Attribute Drawback for AGY.

Jonah

Race: Loch
Passion: Love
Age: 102

Background: Jonah has served Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. for nearly twenty years, providing muscle for his squad and fighting back sea-dwelling threats. He is the captain of his own fishing boat to make a little money while scouting the coasts. Recently, he has fallen for his latest client, Carmen Soto. He has an undying love for her and they have engaged in a sordid affair for months. Kota, his Loch spouse, knows nothing of these events. He loves them both and couldn't bear to leave one or the other. This constant state of confusion over his next move plagues his actions, which may lead to his suspension from API. The fact that he is pregnant by Carmen definitely puts his decision on a time table.

Personality: He has a fun-loving, personable disposition. A friend to everyone he meets, he takes up surfing and fishing as hobbies. He turns a blind eye to others that talk badly about him and has tons of self-confidence. He is also slightly naïve, trusting anyone that hasn't betrayed him yet.

Appearance: A large brute, Jonah is a strong force. He has long catfish-like whiskers and stands hunched over. His coloring is similar to the Earth "jewfish". He is often found in either surfer jams or his captain's uniform. Using his Image Emitter, he appears as a Hispanic male in his late-20s.

Secrets: Only he knows of his pregnancy or that the child belongs to Carmen. These secrets are even kept from his squad-mates. He knows the coastline well, including the locations of heavy sea-threats and hiding places.

Statistics: Health 48, Stamina 36, Initiative +14, Movement 10, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +3, Art +7, Athletics +14, Beast Handling +10, Discipline +7, Fortitude +16, Intimidation +15, Vehicle Operation (Boats) +13

Combat: Jonah is straight forward and leaves strategy to other fighters. He hits often and hits hard. That's how he wins. **Bonuses:** Strike +14, Parry +11, Dodge +10, Roll +13, Grapple +18, Damage +6 (L)

Special Abilities: Jonah was one of the first Lochs implanted with modern cybernetics. He has the Armor Plating (Nanotech), found on page 59.

Implementation: Any story that occurs near the docks, coastline, or out at sea can include Jonah. He is useful as chartered transportation to take the characters to their location or as easy muscle if the characters need combat assistance. His personal issues can be fun to delve into for social characters that may be able to help or give advice.

Spectrals

Other Names: Ghosts, Caspers, Haunters
Stereotypes: Troubled, Scary, Damned

Origins

Spectrals are the ectoplasmic, spiritual by-product of losing one's life and exist for a multitude of reasons. Some ghosts feel the urge to complete their unfinished business on Earth and ignore the Bright Lights when they open. They may stay to watch over their families, aid in important business deals left undone, or seek one more touch from a loved one. They give up their afterlife, because they're not done living.

Some were victims of horrible acts, leaving their souls so defiled that the Bright Lights never appeared. Even those that led virtuous lives and should have truly deserved passage to the afterlife can be stuck as ghosts. They often go on to protect justice or haunt criminals that would dare harm innocents, attempting to keep others from their fate.

Others are truly damned… as they are brought back from death. They walked into the Bright Lights, felt the undying warmth of bliss, but was ripped from its embrace. If not contained, they often become hostile and haunt locations where they can take their rage out on unsuspecting passersby. Even the sanest Spectral's mind breaks down from the harshness of their current existence, leading many to become Spirit Eaters (See page 167).

Lifestyle

A Spectral's "deathstyle" is fueled by their Passion. They are urged not to waste a single moment of their precious time. They always seem to be in a hurry, despite their unaging properties. The spend their days seeking out their true purpose for existing, whether it be protecting loved ones, working for redemption for past wrongdoings, or even chasing down their enemies for revenge. Murder victims may even attempt to solve their own death, using their ghostly state for easy surveillance and investigation.

Too many ghosts assembled in one area is ample bait for roaming Spirit Eaters or ambitious necromancers. Therefore, they rarely have large gatherings, but two or three purposefully congregating is not uncommon. Meetings usually involve helping each other on personal quests or exchanging new ways for the dead to affect the world (Spectral Skills).

Another frequent goal for some is to find a way to be rid of their ghostly existence. Normally, the only end is when their ectoplasmic bodies are dispelled by spiritual damage or devouring by a Spirit Eater. They seek true ways to unlock these secrets, some hoping their Bright Lights will reopen through good deeds. Others have become scientists of death, trying to find ways to force the Bright Lights to open. To date, no attempts have been successful, but they can't be knocked for trying. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. aids in this afterlife research, funding trips into other dimensions in search for a cure… for death.

Some Spectrals are at peace with their spiritual existence and even evolve into spirits of hate, spirits of love, and even elemental spirits.

Recruitment

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. rarely "recruits" their Spectral agents. Instead, they are largely composed of former employees that the company just couldn't "let go". Most had some sort of influence or status within the company and are still expected to uphold their duties. There are some from outside the company that also prove to be useful. API often makes deals with these Spectrals to care for their loved ones in their stead or help the Spectral with personal goals as payment.

Appearance (Fear 13)

They appear in death as they did in life, with the same personality and physical features. Their wardrobe matches the clothing they wore when they died and their hair style never changes (which some have come to dread). They are not fluid creatures. They are forever trapped in the visual representation of their death, including any scars they may have acquired. A prostitute that chose the wrong "john" may appear as a completely naked, glittery ghost with scars all over her body. A marine who died in

battle may appear perfectly normal, except for half of their face being blown off. There are even a few ghost pirates on payroll. Manifestations of the obviously dead can be startling to onlookers. It was not until Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. invented the Ectoplasmic Reorganizer (See page 53) that ghosts were able to change their appearance. Spectrals can exist (lifespan) as long as they have a Passion to keep them on this plane.

Gift – Ghost Form

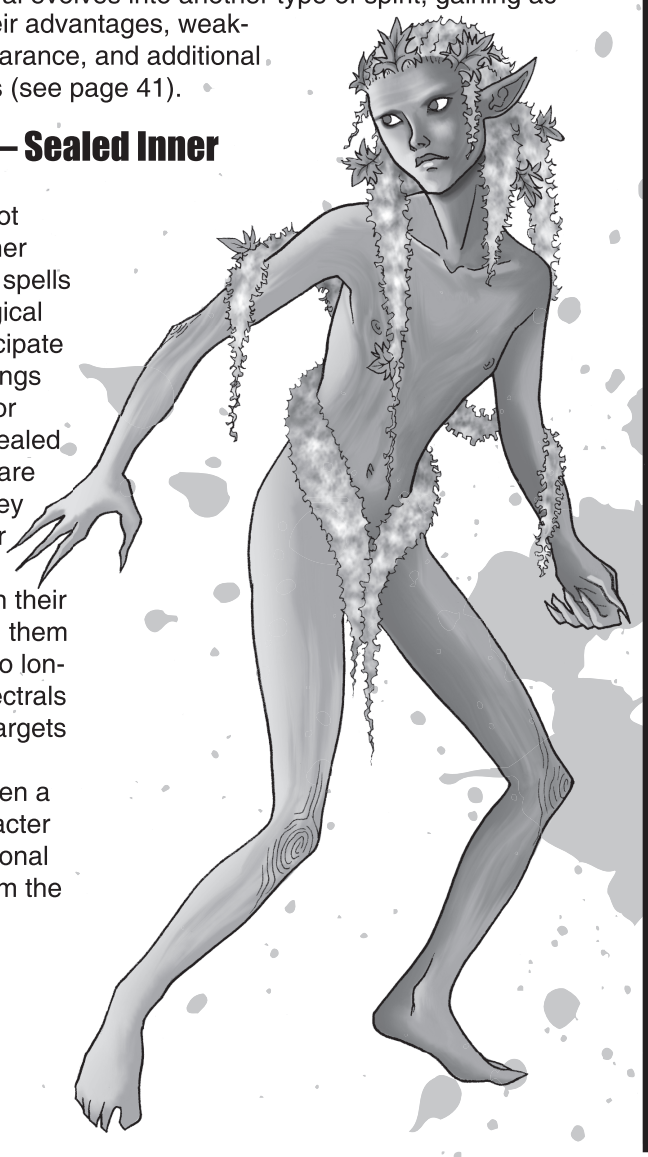
Spectrals are invisible, providing excellent espionage benefits, and immaterial, protecting them from physical harm. They may walk through doors or walls without restriction. Passing through a person leaves the target with shivers down their spine and gives them a -2 penalty to all checks for one minute (these effects are not cumulative). They can also see other invisible creatures (i.e. other spirits, those using invisibility spells, etc.). However, they are unable to affect or communicate with the living world without purchasing the appropriate Spectral skills (See page 41). Without the need to sleep, this combination of abilities can prove very helpful for any squad.

Gift – Evolved Spirit (Optional–3 BP)

The Spectral evolves into another type of spirit, gaining access to all their advantages, weaknesses, appearance, and additional Spectral skills (see page 41).

Drawback – Sealed Inner Circles

They cannot open their Inner Circles, learn spells from any magical Path, or participate in group castings from a scroll or tome. Their sealed Inner Circles are the reason they can exist after death, as the Circles hold in their soul. To open them would be to no longer exist. Spectrals also remain targets of the Path of Death and even a player's character gets no additional protection from the effects.



Peter Rose

Race: Spectral
Passion: Protection
Age: 46 (Died at 30)

Background: Peter died an unhappily married man with three children. Upon dying, he watched as his family mourned and eventually moved on with their lives, all but forgetting about him. He tried to move on as well, finding the hidden glen where he first met his widowed wife. Eventually, the anger and resentment left him, but he clung too heavily to his happier memories. He and his wife made love many times in that glen and he made it his new mission to protect it. Peter is now a Nymph, combining the evolution of a Sex spirit (Conceptual) and a Wood Spirit (Elemental). He often manifests and has his way with women and men that venture to his glen alone. It has become the haven for couples, protected from any enemies because Peter protects lovers.

Personality: Peter has less of a personality and more of an ongoing obsession. The protection of his glen comes above anything else. He talks of love and his wife very fondly, but doesn't remember her name, as he is more wrapped up in the idea than the actual woman.

Appearance: He looks humanoid, but has leaves for hair and wooden skin. He exudes and almost uncomfortable sexual nature and is always nude. His look is asexually appealing, making him attractive to both men and women.

Secrets: None outside hiding places and histories of the glen.

Statistics: Health 30, Stamina 25, Initiative +16, Movement 15, Actions per Round 2, Magic Resistance +4, Acrobatics +14, Deception +8, Perception +13, Persuasion +18, Stealth +15

Combat: Peter doesn't fight often. Being a spirit, he also has little need for physical combat. Every so often, an exorcist arrives to banish him from his glen, but he always returns to take his revenge. **Bonuses:** Strike +9, Parry +8, Dodge +10, Roll +10, Grapple +13, Damage +2

Special Abilities: Has access to Inspire (Sex) and Possess Element (Wood), found on page 147.

Implementation: Peter was and currently is an official API agent. However, he is strictly responsible for protecting his glen and the surrounding areas. He is assigned to any squad taking missions near his domain, easily making the spirit a part of your story. He infuses sex into any story, making the characters (male or female) explore their sexual urges using Inspire. He may also enhance or cause drama for romantic storylines.

Taylari

Other Names: Living Vampires, Parasites, Vamps
Stereotypes: Brooding, Monsters, Immortal

Origins

Legends of vampires permeate our history and have been heavily shaped by pop culture, literature, and film. Meeting a Taylari in-person proves how vastly different they are from the rumors. Unfortunate events surrounding the first vampire, Taylares, and the ancient gods cursed their kind to dislike sunlight, be repelled by garlic, and crave blood to survive. Otherwise, they are very similar to everyday humans. Taylari can be either created or born, which is a foreign concept to most so-called vampire experts. Created Taylari usually come from seduced or coerced Thralls tricked into accepting the "gift of everlasting life". Some people still fall for that story. Some other are created by new vampires reluctant to kill their first victim or from a vampire attack.

Born Taylari take on Vampire Family traits (See page 151), passed down by their cursed blood. Children raised in a vampire household are taught the values of their Vampire Family, as well as acceptance of their curse at an early age and how to tolerate drinking blood. Orphaned Taylari grow up with no clue about their true origins, constantly questioning their place in the world. Doctors may diagnose them with ailments like bi-polar disorder to hemophilia.

When a Taylari dies, they become a Taylari Mortus or "dead vampire", losing all intelligent thought and becoming horrible, bestial creatures. They hunt from shadows and attack anyone they see with no concept of friend or foe (See Taylari Mortus on page 168).

Lifestyle

Taylari often lead normal lives and become upstanding members of society. They tell their friends that work has them tied up while they actually go out to feed at night. Younger vamps still ask their parents for money, but may spend it on a six-pack of Blood Beer (See page 52), instead of liquor. Most take nighttime positions, as they still need a job to make money. Their choice of lifestyle is unlimited and they have all the time in the world to try out new things. A Taylari ages one year for every five that pass. This adds layers to a Taylari's worldview, lifestyle, wardrobe, and their lingo.

Their existence as a Taylari is automatically someone else's doing. Either they were born and owe their parents (or Vampire Family) for their curse or they must repay their creator for their new life. Much of their lives is spent performing errands or missions until their "masters" release them from their debt. This takes longer if they also receive tutelage along the Path of Blood. Vampire Families seldom let their children go at all.

They constantly wrestle with blood cravings and the effects it may have on their immortal souls. They are caught in an unending fight between life and death, which may be perpetuated by their own actions. Does killing another hasten their own spiritual degradation into hell or bring them closer to immortality? Each character decides their destiny and outlook, but tread carefully for fear of becoming one of the Taylari Mortus.

Recruitment

Recruiting Taylari to Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is like training a cat. They are fickle about organizational affiliations, especially if they already belong to a Vampire Family, and they quickly lose interest if they become bored. When they do get involved, they are a great asset and bring mastery of the night and blood to their squad's aid. They are especially fond of missions to hunt down and destroy the Taylari Mortus, as Taylari as a whole like to self-police their kind. Otherwise, Taylari are usually caught up in their own life of underworld politicking or just trying to survive. A lot of newer Taylari join API, having just been created or just learning the truth about their birth.

Appearance (Fear 0/15)

Taylari have paler complexions and wear sunglasses to protect their sensitive eyes. Older vampires find it hard to adapt to modern fashions, preferring to dress in the style of "their time". Born Taylari adapt easier to these types of changes. The average lifespan of a Taylari is 365 to 390 years of age. When it is time to feed or scare, they reveal their Face of Death, where their facial features become contorted and bestial versions of themselves. They also bear their true weapon… their fangs.

Gift – Vampire Abilities

The Taylari receive the following abilities from their vampiric nature:

- **Lifespan:** They age 1 year for every 5 that passes after the age of 15 (born) or as soon as they are created.

- **Nightvision:** Taylari can see at night as if it were day, taking no penalty from darkness (unless magical).
- **Tough:** They are extra tough, gaining +8 Health.
- **Resistant:** Their cursed blood fights infection and poisons that enter their body. They gain a +10 bonus for any VIG + Fortitude checks against poisons, drugs, or disease. If they fail, they only suffer half the effects.
- **Face of Death (Fear 13):** They gain fangs that deal +3 (L). Damage dealt with a Bite Action (See Grapple on page 68) is added to the Taylari's Health on a one-for-one basis. However, this cannot be used to go above their maximum Health or to regenerate limbs and organs. Victims must also make a Moderate (20) VIG + Discipline (Pain) check or lose 5 Counts from paralysis.

Gift – Path of Blood

As per the Path Access Gift for Path of Blood, a Taylari-only path of magic.

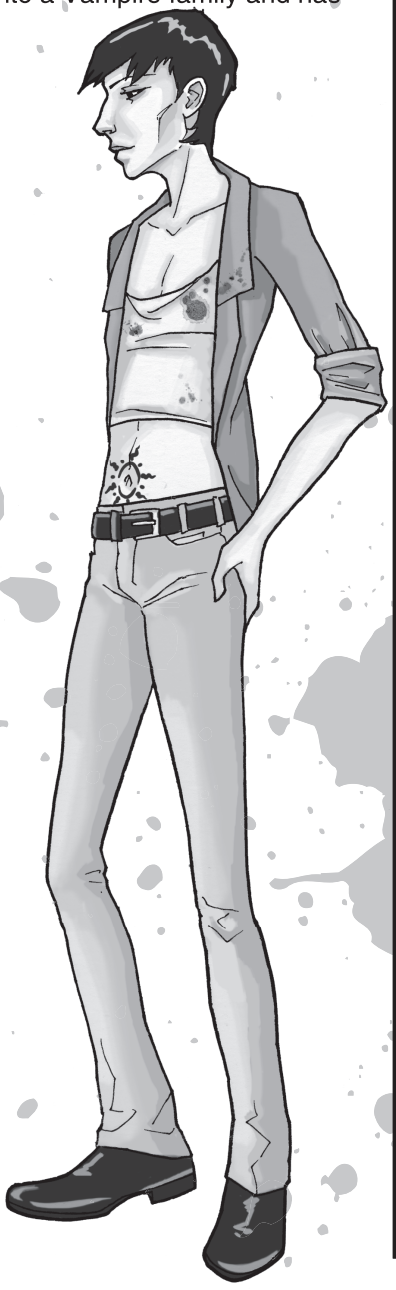
Gift – Vampire Family (Optional–3 BP)

The character was born into a Vampire family and has access to all their advantages and weaknesses (See page 151).

Drawback – Vampire Vulnerabilities

Their vampire existence brings certain disadvantages as well:

- **Sunlight:** They do not burst into flames in sunlight, but they still feel uncomfortable during daylight hours. They suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls at any time the sun hangs in the sky and a -4 penalty in direct sunlight.
- **Fire:** Fire causes double damage to Taylari.
- **Garlic:** The scent of garlic can repel a Taylari about ten feet. They must make an INS + Discipline check to get any closer, with Difficulty based on the amount present. Ingesting Garlic is equal to Moderate (20) poison (without their +10 bonus). A failed check causes them to vomit uncontrollably and take 3 (L).
- **Slow Healer:** Their blood curse slows their natural healing rate, forcing them to rely to drinking blood. They begin play with the Slow Healer Drawback.



Lucas Carter

Race: Taylari (Born)
Passion: Approval
Age: 60 (Looks mid-twenties)

Background: Carter is a whirlwind. He was raised within the Sol Vampire Family and his father led all the other families in their city. He was heavily indoctrinated into vampire politics and was groomed to be his father's successor. He hated the idea and rejected his heritage, taking a fair share of money and leaving the confines of his family. He became a premiere escort for rich politicians, went on to be the "it" homosexual in the club scene, and eventually bought his favorite clubs.

Years later, he learned that his father had been killed and was stalking the city as a Taylari Mortus. He joined Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. to receive necessary backing to take down his father before the other Taylari did. He now serves a limited term with the company, enjoying the power it gives him to make a real difference. He is still trying to live up to the memory, but in a different way than was expected.

Personality: He is a ball of excitement, always with smiles and fun. But underneath it all, his true friends know that he hurts inside. He is often depressed about the last argument he had with his father, but is filled with hopes for tomorrow.

Appearance: Carter is openly gay and isn't scared to show his sexuality, wearing clothes reveal his pale skin at every opportunity. He has short black hair, is very attractive, and his Sol tattoo on his stomach. Most mistake it for a tribal mark, but it is actually derived from his family line.

Secrets: He has information on the big-wigs of vampire society and has a lot of contacts. He has many Thralls that allow him to look in on his enemies and trades his information quite often to the highest bidder.

Statistics: Health 42, Stamina 40, Initiative +14, Movement 10, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +4, Acrobatics +10, Deception +9, Discipline +8, Fortitude +9, Performance (Dance) +12, Persuasion +11

Combat: Carter is a dancer in combat, moving in near-rhythmic dodging, but never developed his fighting to an art. He prefers guns and other ranged weapons, but also fights with knifes when needed. **Bonuses:** Strike +9, Parry +8, Dodge +10, Roll +8, Grapple +16, Damage +4 (+3 (L) from Bite)

Special Abilities: He was taught magic by his father and has opened his 2nd Inner Circle. Carter follows both the Path of Blood (Blood Knowledge, Plasma Tentacles, and Mimicry) and Path of Neutralization (Disrupt and Paralyze). As a member of the Sol, he suffers no penalties from Sunlight or daytime (see page 151).

Implementation: Carter may cross paths with the characters at one of his night clubs, may be a member of their squad, or may even be a love interest of a male character. They could help him with his quest to find his father or they may need him for his special insight into Taylari culture.

Wolf People

Other Names: Ferals, Moonies, Pups
Stereotypes: Reckless, Muscle, Bestial

Origins

Wolf People are most well-known for their ability to take a Half-Wolf form, becoming a powerful werewolf. This form provides them with great strength, remarkable speed, and a certain bad attitude. No one knows the real origin of Wolf People and the debates continue throughout history. From the meshing of wolf and human spirits to carnival freaks, the theories vary as widely as the compounded proof that they are all wrong. Some say it's a curse and others a gift, but the Wolf People just call it life. They inherit their unique powers from one or both of their parents. Not all children of the Wolf People receive the gift, proving that their genes are very selective.

They grow up like other children, wishing to their dreams, whether it is to become a firefighter or developing anarchistic tendencies. Some even long to become a street thug, just waiting to cause some damage. It all depends on their upbringing. Their outlook changes when puberty strikes (some Wolf People are early bloomers). They have nightmares that drive them almost insane and then awaken one day covered in fur, but without recalling the events of the pervious night.

Lifestyle

Wolf People are a mixed bunch regarding lifestyles, as they are all raised with different values. Some Wolf People don't want adventure. Instead, they try to meet their soul mate and seek a normal life with white picket fences and whatnot. Others take their animal side to the extreme, assuming their wolf form and running into the forests to live forever with their "true brethren". These Wolf People actually believe they evolved from bestiality, a disturbing and often ignored hypothesis.

Most Wolf People take a middle road between docile human and ravenous animal. They decide what they want and use their unique abilities to achieve their goal. In high school, they may showboat their strength to join the football team, chase babes, or to return the beat-downs they'd previously received in their geekier days. If they were bullies from the start, they may receive more from their extortion of the local businesses from "that evil look in their eye". They are all taught to be careful of how much they use their were-forms. Too many reports of "wild dog" attacks bring suspicion upon their kind from Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.

Recruitment

Some seek answers to the true origin of their kind and their powers, hoping to one day gain actual control over the Animal Mind. Others join simply to get a badge and permission to cause "official" havoc. While they serve most often as muscle for the best Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. squads, they bring many other things to any group to which they belong, including animal magnetism and tracking proficiency.

They are often regarded as second class citizens by other agents, due to one of their kind that went rogue not long ago. While some of the strongest muscle on the team, they are often treated like "children with behavioral problems" by outranking agents. Many leave the company from such treatment, but others know the perks of the position totally outweigh the inconvenience. Few actually care enough to catch a case of hurt feelings.

Appearance (Fear 0/17)

Wolf People are often more muscular or voluptuous than average humans. They have slightly sharpened teeth and nails, but appear as human for most intents and purposes.

In Half-wolf form, they grow hair all over, their face picks up wolf-like features, their ears come to a point, and their muscles budge with pumping adrenaline. The fur color and style can range from black or white to grey or light brown or even a combination. The average lifespan of a Wolf Person is about 85 years of age.

Gift – Half-Wolf Form

(Speed 5, Stamina 2 per Round)

The Half-wolf form is their biggest asset in combat. They can take this form at will and can stay in it until they fall asleep, are knocked unconscious, or are reduced to Stamina 0. It provides the following bonuses:

- **Combat Bonuses:** +2 Actions per Round, +3 bonus to all combat rolls (including initiative), and +2 Base damage (+3 (L) to Bite Actions.)
- **Extra Tough:** +12 Health (temporary) and +4 bonus to all Intimidation checks
- **Animal Mind:** They suffer a -4 penalty to all IQ or INS checks, as their mind lacks the focus needed.

Gift – Wolf Form (Optional-5 BP)

(Speed 10, Stamina 7)

The Wolf Person surpasses their Half-wolf form and can actually become a wolf. This aids with wilderness survival, interacting with real wolves, accessing small spaces, or pulling off their actions as random dog attacks. There is no duration limit, but another Action is required to return to their human form. The character keeps their Attributes and appears as a larger version of a regular wolf. **Bonuses:** +1 bonus to all combat rolls, +1 Action per Round, +4 to Survival checks, double Movement, and can perform Dog/Wolf maneuvers (See page 162).

Gift – Path of Animalia

As per Path Access Gift for the Path of Animalia.

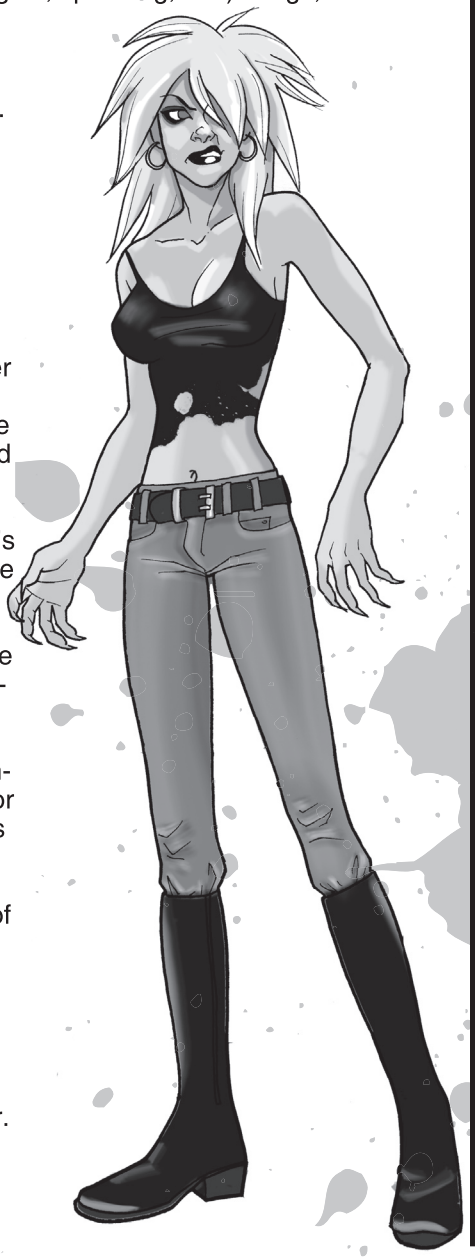
Drawback – Lunacy

During a full moon (as well as the day before and day after), Wolf People lose control of themselves to their powerful Animal Mind. They lose all inhibitions for sexual or exciting (random fights, speeding, etc.) things, but can attempt a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check to resist these urges for a short time. Taking their Half-Wolf form raises the Difficulty to resist to a Tough (30) check instead.

A failed roll drives the character to act out against their better judgment. They may find someone they are attracted to and spend the night in wild, sexual bliss (not always with their target's consent). Others leave a trail of dead bodies, thinking that bathing in blood was fun at the time. Many lock themselves up during the full moon period, not wanting to harm themselves, their friends, or any innocents. Others revel in the wildness of their nature and welcome this period of the Animal Mind.

Drawback – Silver

They take double damage from weapons forged from silver.



Trina Mathers

Race: Wolf Person
Passion: Warrior
Age: 28

Background: Trina's upbringing differs little from the typical Wolf Person. She grew up in a slew of foster homes, eventually being adopted into an abusive home where she was molested throughout her childhood. She had her first change at 14 years old, where she killed her foster parents and ran away to live on the streets. She was taken in by altruistic API agents and given a good life a few years later.

She became an agent at the age of 20 and fought beside their agents with years of pent up aggression. But her poor treatment by others within the organization made her quit after only three years of service. She took her earnings and best wishes of those that raised her to open her own bar, called the Rusty Nail. It has become a frequented spot for bikers and gang members. She enjoys the rough element, as it keeps her battle skills sharpened.

Personality: She is often gruff and has a no-nonsense attitude. She doesn't take crap from anyone and is quick to fight if there is even the suggestion of action against her. Trina suffers from the temper of Wolf People to a startling degree, leading to more fights than your average person. She loves to fight and to test her skills against any willing to get beaten.

Appearance: She's a hot biker chick, with long blonde hair. She wears a lot of leather, spikes, and denim, like other bikers. Her Half-Wolf and Wolf forms have a white coat and are quite beautiful to behold.

Secrets: Trina ran with API for a long time and still knows company protocol, cell locations, and can spot another agent from a mile away. Her memory wasn't erased, because of her usefulness as an informant. She also knows that API has had people following her since she left. Who knows why?

Statistics: Health 35, Stamina 38, Initiative +16, Movement 12, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Athletics +12, Beast Handling +13, Discipline +8, Fortitude +13, Intimidation +12, Persuasion +10, Survival +12

Combat: Trina acts quickly and fights dirty. She has no problem scratching, biting, or kicking in sensitive places. She learned a lot as an API agent and can certainly take care of her own. She doesn't change into her Half-Worm form unless absolutely necessary, knowing that changing too often calls API to her bar. **Bonuses:** Strike +13, Parry +13, Dodge +12, Roll +15, Grapple +16, Damage +4

Special Abilities: Has the "Wolf Form" Gift, allowing her to change into either the Half-Wolf or Wolf forms.

Implementation: Trina's interesting to incorporate into stories. She is useful as a cooperative informant or even as an antagonist if the characters cross her. Her bar can be used as a meeting ground, making it easy to implement her into the story. She may take enough interest in the character's mission to offer to help out. She has her own agenda and may not always be on the up and up.

Attributes

Now that the character's Concept, Passion, and Race have been chosen and at least partially fleshed out, the player can now think about Attributes, which represent the character's natural abilities. Attributes are a way to quantify how physically strong they are (Power), how quick and agile they are (Agility), how much of a beating their body can take (Vigor), how intelligent they are (Intellect), how observant and wise they are (Insight), and how socially graceful they are (Charm). These are very important factors that form the foundation of how the character has lived his or her life and what they are capable of doing without training.

Attributes are rated from 1 to 10, with 4 or 5 being average. The maximum for any Attribute is 10, which represent to pinnacle of quality for that Attribute. To have Intellect (IQ) 10 is to be a veritable genius, while having Power (POW) 10 means they are as strong as an Olympic weight-lifter. For those unfamiliar with the concept of numerically assigned attributes, try recalling the numbering system used in school to rate another's looks or smarts. If they were a 10, they were the head of the class or the unattainable beauty, but most of us would be just fine sitting with a 5 or 6 at lunch time.

At character creation, thirty (30) Attribute points are provided to distribute as the player chooses. Purchasing level 1-8 costs one Attribute point, while purchasing level 9-10 costs two Attribute points. Based upon their Race, these costs may vary slightly. Every character must have at least one level in each of the six Attributes.

Power (POW)

This Attribute measures the character's raw physical strength and gauges the damage of their hand-to-hand strikes, distance of their jumps, and the amount of weight they can carry/lift. POW is important for characters that are physically fit and well-versed at dealing large amounts of destruction.

Base Damage

Base Damage is the minimum amount of damage that the character inflicts with unarmed attacks, before applying modifiers from combat maneuvers or weapons. Damage dealt is subtracted from the target's Health.

Level 1: -3	Level 6: 1
Level 2: -2	Level 7: 2
Level 3: -1	Level 8: 3
Levels 4: 0	Level 9: 4
Levels 5: 0	Level 10: 5

Carrying/Lifting

Characters can carry up to 25 lbs. per POW level and can lift double that amount. Carrying more than their allowed limit incurs a -4 penalty to all rolls until they lessen their load. Carrying their top lifting weight is very difficult and they cannot take other Actions or Reactions while doing so. Each Round they carry their Lifting weight costs them 2 Stamina points (See page 64). To exceed their Lifting limitation, the character can roll POW + VIG at a Moderate (20) difficulty, plus +2 Difficulty per additional 25 lbs they wish to lift. Carrying this increased weight incurs a 3 Stamina point cost per Round.

Agility (AGY)

This Attribute measures the character's dexterity, quickness and grace in movement and gauges how balanced they are, their flexibility, and how much manual dexterity they have for intricate work requiring a steady hand. AGY is important for characters that are lithe, nimble, and quick on their feet.

Combat Modifiers

(To Strike/Dodge/Parry/Roll)

AGY applies special combat modifiers to the character's Strike, Dodge, Parry, and Roll values. In essence, the character is faster, so they have an easier time striking their opponent or avoiding attacks.

Level 1: -3	Level 6: +1
Level 2: -2	Level 7: +2
Level 3: -1	Level 8: +3
Levels 4: 0	Level 9: +4
Levels 5: 0	Level 10: +5

Extra Actions per Round

Faster movement equates to more Actions possible in a single Round. At AGY level 8, 9, and 10, the character gets +1 Action per Round.

Balance

Roll AGY + Acrobatics to check the character's balance to avoid falling, recover from a stumble, or to gain their footing. A successful check means they catch themselves without much harm or ill-effect.

Vigor (VIG)

This Attribute measures the character's physical stamina and endurance and gauges their resistance to poisons/drugs, exhaustion rate, and how much damage their body can take before death. VIG is important for powerhouse characters or self-destructive types (intentional or otherwise).

Holding Breath

Characters can hold their breath for up to thirty (30) seconds per VIG level. Each 30 seconds after the first costs one Stamina point.

Disease Resistance

Roll VIG + Fortitude to avoid Infection or contracting a transmutable disease. Diseases can be caught from failed medical experiments to promiscuous sexual trysts

Sleep

The average person needs at least seven hours of sleep for optimal performance. If the character gets five or less hours of sleep, they make a Moderate (20) check against exhaustion or start the day with -5 Stamina points and a -2 penalty to all rolls. This penalty applies until they make up their lost sleep with a nap. This same check can be made to stay awake later than 24 hours, with +5 Difficulty per 12 hours.

to a rabid monkey bite. A successful check means the character is immune to that instance of exposure. This does not mean they are immune to further exposure. See Infection and Disease on page 75.

Poison/Drugs Resistance

Roll VIG + Fortitude to resist detrimental effects of poison or drugs. This includes manufactured poisons, recreational drugs, and alcohol poisoning. Difficulty is based on the drug's potency and how it's administered. See Poison/Drugs on page 76.

Shock/Death

Roll VIG + Fortitude to resist the character's body from going into Shock from blood loss or electrocution. The same check is used to resist Death, giving a character that has taken too much Lethal damage one last chance to survive. See Shock and Death on page 76.

Unconsciousness

Roll VIG + Fortitude to resist the effect of Knockouts or the natural urge to Sleep. This check is made whenever the character may involuntarily lose consciousness.

Intellect (IQ)

This Attribute measures the character's power and quickness of thought and gauges their intelligence, their wit, and their ability to learn/memorize new information. IQ is important for intelligent and witty characters.

Bonus Skill points

Every character begins character creation with thirty (30) Skill points, plus a number of additional Skill points equal to their starting IQ. ***Example:*** *A character with IQ 5 starts character creation with 35 Skill points.*

Memorization/Recollection

Characters may purposefully recall or memorize information at will. They make an IQ + Discipline check to determine the amount of information they can force into their minds. If the character did not previously attempt to purposefully remember said information, they can check to recollect, but suffers a -4 penalty.

Simple (10): name, address, or phone number.
Moderate (20): Shakespeare monologue
Tough (30): Complicated scientif formula
Legendary (40): Memorize an Encyclopedia volume.

Insight (INS)

This Attribute measures the character's mental endurance (willpower), intuition, and awareness and gauges their resistance to mental degradation, mental attacks, and intimidation. INS is highly important for achieving a wise, perceptive, and strong-willed character.

Fear/Awe Resistance

Roll INS + Discipline to resist the effects of Fear or Awe. If the situation warrants it, GMs may ask for a check versus a scary or impressive monster, location, or circumstance. A successful check leaves the character's outlook unchanged by the terrifying display or the impressiveness of the situation. Some demons have a natural Fear effect. A scared character may make rash decisions, run and hide, or may even develop trauma-related insanities. In combat, they suffer a -5 penalty to their Initiative checks.

Insanity Resistance

Roll INS + Discipline to resist mental degradation from trauma. They may face life-changing experiences, like the loss/death of an important loved one or the first time a soldier actually kills someone. In these situations, make a check to resist taking on a mental illness. See Insanity on page 77.

Magic Resistance

INS measures the character's willpower against magical energy that would attempt to invade their mind, body, or soul. Magic Resistance checks are made by rolling 1d20, and then adding a bonus equal to 1/2 the character's INS (rounded down).

Shrug Off Pain

Roll INS + Discipline to temporarily shrug off Pain penalties. Some pain is brought on by loss of Health, stress-related situations, or from excruciating drug-related experiences. See Pain on page 76.

Attribute-only Rolls

If the GM decides that a task requires a check, first determine what Attribute it falls under. Then determine if there is a complimentary Skill to add as a bonus to the check. If there is no applicable Skill or the character has no levels in the appropriate Skill, they can still attempt their action with an Attribute-only check. This, of course, lessens the chances for success.

Some actions combine two Attributes for a check, instead of using the standard Attribute + Skill equation. For example, Pulled Strikes requires an IQ + AGY check, reflecting the Agility needed to strike in the right way, along with the Intellect to pull back.

Charm (CHM)

This Attribute measures the character's natural social graces and gauges their ability to coerce or intimidate others. CHM projects their overall presence to the world and is important to characters that have a knack for dealing with and influencing others.

First Impressions

During a first meeting with a new acquaintance, the character may make a First Impression check to appear different than they normally would. This includes making oneself seem friendlier or appear more confident. They can also appear extra mean, tough, or intimidating, just as easily as wimpy or weak. The character makes a CHM + Deception or CHM + Performance (Acting) check to use this ability. **Note:** This is just the first impression. As the character interacts with their target, their words and actions carry more weight than any impressions made beforehand.

Simple (10): Fool someone they've never met before

Moderate (20): Fool someone who's seen them act normally at times

Tough (30): Fool someone with in-depth knowledge, even though they've never truly met

Legendary (40): Fool someone they've known their whole lives

Derived Attributes

Health

Health is the numeric representation of the character's physical condition. With a higher Health score, they can take more damage before dying. A lower score leaves them fragile and easily maimed or killed. For more on Health, see page 75.

Starting Health: (VIG x 3) + 10

Initiative Bonus

An Initiative bonus is the numeric representation of the character's awareness of combat positioning, a culmination of their physical reflexes and speed of thought. With a high Initiative, characters can act first and have their choice of Action. For more on Initiative, see page 65.

Starting Initiative: AGY + IQ

Stamina

Stamina is the representation of how far the character is physically and mentally willing to go to accomplish their goals. It is a combination of their endurance and willpower to continue pushing forward. For more information on Stamina, see page 64.

Starting Stamina: (VIG + INS) x 3

Movement

The character's Movement score gauges the speed at which they travel by foot. However, there are different ways to travel:

- **Walking:** The character's normal starting movement is equal to their POW + AGY in feet while they walk or briskly jog.
- **Running:** Walking and running do not require dice rolls under normal circumstances. Characters run at a top speed equal to their POW + AGY x 20 yards per minute

Chasing

If one character chases another, they both spend 1 Stamina point, make a 1d20 + Movement check, and compare the results. The gap between the two increases or decreases based upon the difference between the winner and loser's rolls. The winner gains a number of feet in the race equal to that difference. Each contested roll takes 1 Round to perform. If they succeed in catching their opponent, roll character reroll Initiative and start a new combat Round.

For example: *Chris is 5 ft. (Movement 10) from Eloy (Movement 8) and decides to run away for dear life. He makes a contested roll of 1d20 + 10 against Eloy's 1d20 + 8. Chris rolls 19 and Eloy rolls 24. Because Eloy rolled 5 higher than Chris, he catches up with him and can now enter Combat.*

at the cost of 2 Stamina points per minute, which follow the normal rules for Exhaustion. GMs may require an AGY + Athletics or AGY + Acrobatics check if the character's way is marred by obstacles (i.e. rough terrain). A failed check results in trips, forcing a Balance check. A roll of a Natural 1 (Critical Failure) indicates that they also possibly take damage depending on the circumstances.

- **Jumping:** Characters can jump a number of feet equal to their POW + Athletics horizontally and half this distance (rounded down) vertically. Checks require a successful POW + Athletics check. They can add another 25% to this total with a running start of at least 10 ft. A failed check means the character missed their intended target and may need an AGY + Acrobatics roll to catch themselves. They can jump 50% of their maximum distance without spending Stamina, but must spend 1 Stamina point for any farther jumps. A Critical Failure means the character falls, but cannot catch themselves.
- **Climbing:** Climbing requires an AGY + Athletics check. The character travels no more than half their Movement while climbing. A failed check means they make no progress on their way up or may have slipped down. A Critical Failure means the character falls. If they attempt to climb at their full movement or are faced with an especially steep surface, they must spend 1 Stamina point for every 10 ft.
- **Swimming:** Characters with at least Athletics 1 can swim. No rolls are required in calm waters and they can travel half of their normal speed. Swimming in rough waters may require a POW + Athletics roll and 2 Stamina points per minute to fight the currents. A Critical Failure means the character flounders and likely drowns.

Skills

Now that Attributes have been allocated, it's time to decide what fields the character has studied or practiced (Skills). Every character begins creation with thirty (30) Skill points, plus a number of bonus Skill points equal to their starting IQ level (i.e. IQ 5 provides a bonus 5 skill points, totaling 35).

Each Skill is rated 1 to 10, just like Attributes, with level 1 being a hobbyist's interest in that skill and level 10 representing complete mastery in their chosen field. There is no limit to the skill level they can start with, but the Skill point costs increase at higher levels. Skill level 1-8 cost one Skill point and level 9-10 cost two Skill points per level.

Combat skills cost the same as Standard skills. Fighting Style: Basic and all Weapon Style skills are open during character creation. They can also gain access to Fighting Style: Brawler, Elite, Martial Arts (Hard) or Martial Arts (Soft) by purchasing the Combat Training Gift for 3 BP (See Gifts & Drawbacks). Each Combat skill level provides combat bonuses and techniques that one can only gain through its special training. **Note:** No character is required to take Combat skills if it doesn't coincide with their concept. Some get by on their wits alone.

Using Skills

Skill checks should only be used to enhance the story and never in place of descriptive storytelling. Most actions do not require an actual roll. A character doesn't need a skill check to drive to work, but would use Vehicle Operation to lose a tail if followed. Rummaging through a grocery store dumpster would not require a Survival check to find edible food. No rolls to Strike are needed to slap someone in the back of the head for a crude joke, as Acrobatic dodging rarely factors into that sort domestic squabble.

Standard skill may have different applications, but they are calculated the same. The player rolls 1d20 then adds the values of the applicable Attribute and Skill needed to successfully complete the action as bonuses to their roll (or check). Attributes used for Skill checks are not stagnant, as many skills have various uses. Performing Internet research uses IQ + Computers, while typing speed uses AGY + Computers. CHM + Performance would be used to gauge an audience's reaction, while AGY + Performance would measure the performance on a technical level.

Difficulties:

Simple (10):	Basic application of the skill.
Moderate (20):	Advanced applications of the skill.
Tough (30):	Complex applications that require more work than usual.
Legendary (40):	Almost impossible feats.

In most cases, the character is assumed to take the appropriate length of time to successfully complete their task with a single check. A Tough (30) Computers check to hack into a bank security system may require 20-30 minutes of in-game time before the character knows they were successful. A sketch may only require a Simple (10) Art check and five minutes, but an ornate sculpture may need a Moderate (20) Art check and take two days to complete. As a general rule, if the task is basic and can be finished in a few days, then it requires only one check. See Extended Rolls for longer tasks.

Untrained Skill Checks

If a character attempts a task for which they do not have the appropriate Skill, this qualifies as an Attribute-only check. There is no penalty to the roll, but without experience, they have a much lower chance of success. Natural talents (Attributes) can only get a character so far without training.

GMs may rule out certain skill attempts if the character does not have at least one level in the appropriate skill.

For instance, most wouldn't even know where to start to crack a vault or pick locks without at least Legerdemain 1.

Contested Checks

When one character is trying to stop another from using their skill or is resisting the effects of that skill, Contested checks come into play. The first character rolls their 1d20 + Attribute + Skill against the defender's 1d20 + Attribute + Skill. The character that rolls the highest after applying applicable bonuses is the winner of the contest. Ties always go to the defender.

Contested checks are applied when using skills against other players' characters or important NPCs. For other checks, GMs are encouraged to apply a Difficulty to the check for simplicity. Attempting to pick the pocket of someone walking down the street would carry a Simple (10) Difficulty. If the mark is a police officer or a demon with extra eyes, the Difficulty should be higher. Breaking the task down a single check helps to make game sessions flow faster and easier.

Extended Checks

When Skill checks need to account for an extended amount of time (i.e. longer than a few days), the check is split into a series of rolls called Extended Checks. The GM decides on the length of time taken with each check, as well as the total amount of successes needed. If restoring an old car to mint condition, the GM may rule that the character needs to make one Crafts check for each week of in-game time and that they need ten (10) total successes to complete the task. A failed check would delay its completion for another week.

Rolling Natural 20

If the player rolls 1d20 and it lands on 20, this is considered a Natural 20 or a Critical Success for their skill check. This may give additional or more in-depth information on a Knowledge check, an especially stylish looking jump from an Athletics check, or a rave review about their wonderful violin skills from a Performance check.

Even if the character's total roll does not equal to the Simple, Moderate, or Tough target difficulty, a Natural 20 concludes that fate has stepped in and allowed the task to take place. This rule does not apply to tasks with a Legendary (40) Difficulty or to combat rolls, as fate can only do so much.

Rolling Natural 1

If the player rolls 1d20 and it lands on 1, this is considered a Natural 1 and reaps a Critical Failure. Even if their Attribute + Skill + modifier check is higher than the target Difficulty, they will automatically fail their task. Critical Failures are also much worse than a normal failure and should be described in an extraordinarily horrible detail. Everyone makes mistakes. A skilled doctor may botch a surgery, a cook may make a horrible bad meal, and the most observant person overlooks details.

Trying Again

If the character fails their initial skill check, they may try again and again until they succeed. However, they suffer a -4 penalty to their check each time they try back to back or with the same materials. If the circumstances change (i.e. they take a moment to compose themselves or obtain new materials to work with), they start fresh and eliminate any penalties to their next check. Critical failures don't usually receive a second chance, but the GM has the final say on this rule.

Skill Specialties

When a Standard Skill reaches level 4, 7, and 10, the character can select a Specialty, which provides a +2 bonus when using it for that specialized purpose. A scientist with Knowledge 6 could have a Specialty in Hard Science, while a private detective with Stealth 5 may choose a Specialty in Shadowing. Example Specialties are listed with each Skill description. Players and GMs should create new Specialties to match their particular concept if those provided are not appropriate.

GMs may also require a Specialty to signify training outside of the norm. A Helicopter Specialty may be needed for Vehicle Operation, since it falls outside of vehicles used by most characters. Local history may be needed for Knowledge to know a particular town's hidden aspects.

The character may choose to apply multiple bonuses to the same Specialty, providing up to a +6 bonus to a certain type of check. Specialties are the reason that some characters truly surpass others and are able to accomplish feats previously thought impossible.

Combat skills do not have Specialties. Instead, characters recieve one combat Technique at levels 4, 7, and 10. This does not apply to Fighting Style: Basic.

Teamwork

Certain tasks are simply too big for one character to pull off by themselves. If two or more characters have the same skill, they can work together toward a single goal with a Teamwork check. All participating characters must be within three skill levels of each other. If one character has a far lower skill level, they are a liability to a more experienced character and cannot provide a bonus.

First, choose which character will be attempting the task (project leader) and which characters are helping. The helpers first make a Moderate (20) check for the skill they are attempting with each success giving a +2 bonus to the project leader's skill check. A Natural 20 gives a +4 bonus instead. A Natural 1 gives a -2 penalty to the project leader. Four is maximum number of helpers, as too many cooks in the kitchen can be a bad thing.

Harmony Check

Through experimentation, characters may find that certain Skills crossover, working in harmony with each other. Training in rhythmic movement (Performance) may aid in certain Acrobatic feats that require timing. Knowledge (Local History) of the local celebrity's vice may help with a Persuasion attempt to get the zoning board off their back. An acute level of Perception may help with the evaluation of a car's ability take a tight curve during the use of the Vehicle Operation skill.

Harmony checks work the same as Teamwork checks. After deciding that a secondary Skill may assist in the use of a primary Skill, the character makes a Moderate (20) skill check for the secondary Skill. Success adds +2 to the primary Skill check. If they roll a Natural 20, they receive a +4 bonus instead. Rolling a Natural 1 gives a -2 penalty.

Tools

Certain tools or equipment can be used to enhance a job or task. Grip gloves assist Athletics (Climbing) checks, a choke leash may assist with certain Beast Handling (Training) checks, and a character with the right materials and studio space may more easily unleash the artist within, gaining a bonus to Arts checks. Tools generally provide anywhere from a +1 to +5 bonus to appropriate Skill checks, depending on how much the tool impacts the Skill and circumstances. GMs can also grant environmental Tool bonuses. Perhaps a singer gains a bonus to their Performance (Singing) check due to the acoustics in the theater.

Skills List

Skill Level Cost: 1-8 x1, 9-10 x2
Specialties at Level 4, 7, and 10

Standard Skills

Acrobatics	Knowledge
Arts	Linguistics
Athletics	Legerdemain
Beast Handling	Medicine
Computers	Perception
Crafts	Performance
Deception	Persuasion
Discipline	Stealth
Fortitude	Survival
Intimidation	Vehicle Operation

Acrobatics

Some characters are born lithe, flexible, and with quick reflexes. Others have to train. This Skill involves physical training of acrobatic maneuvers, such as swinging, jumping, tumbling, rolling, and balancing. Acrobatics is used for displays of death-defying aerial feats and can be a vital asset in combat. Acrobatics is generally based on AGY. In addition, this Skill provides +1 Initiative, +1 Dodge, and +1 Roll at Level 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10.

Possible Specialties: Landings, Flips, Balance

Simple (10): Cartwheel or other basic tumbling/flips

Moderate (20): Walk a tightrope, advanced flips or gymnastics displays

Tough (30): Trapeze act, contortion to fit through prison bars

Arts

The Arts Skill represents an understanding of expressing oneself through an artistic medium. An AGY + Arts check is used for implementation of artistic tools. An IQ + Arts check is used to ensure the expression sounds/flows properly on a technical level. An INS + Arts check is used to ensure the proper emotion is conveyed. **Note:** Art is subjective and even a finely-crafted piece may sit in a barren gallery, unsold and misunderstood.

Possible Specialties: Drawing, Painting, Photography, Sculpting, Speeches, Song writing

Simple (10): Draw with reasonable proportions

Moderate (20): Compose an impressive speech

Tough (30): Create a piece of art that could sell for a considerable amount of money

Athletics

The human body can be strengthened through training in and enjoyment of vigorous physical activities. This includes competitive sports, working out, or other exercise. The Athletics Skill covers swimming, climbing, throwing, jumping, and high-adrenaline, contact sports. In addition, this Skill provides +1 Strike, +1 Parry, and +1 Grapple at Level 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10.

Possible Specialties: Climbing, Hurdles, Scuba

Simple (10): Climbing a fence, jump a small hurdle

Moderate (20): Run an eight minute mile, reach the top of a mountain climbing wall

Tough (30): Spend a night leaping across rooftops

Beast Handling

Characters with the Beast Handling skill have knowledge and experience with animals, from breeding to training to everyday care. With this training comes understanding of bestial motivations and emotions, as well as ways to calm or aggravate them. CHM + Beast Handling checks are used to train, calm, aggravate an animal, while INS + Beast Handling checks are used to read an animal's next moves. IQ + Beast Handling checks are used for formulating diets for basic care or creating a perfect breeding environment.

Possible Specialties: Training, Breeding, Empathy, Particular species (Dog, Cat, Horse, etc.)

Simple (10): Basic pet care, simple command training (sit, stay, heel, attack, etc.)

Moderate (20): Calming a wild animal, train complex commands with up two steps

Tough (30): Breeding qualities into animals, breaking a wild animal, train intricate commands with 3+ steps

Computers

Computers are in every facet of modern life and this Skill represents use/development of computer operating systems and software. This includes surfing the net, computer terminology, using applications, security systems, developing software, and hacking. AGY + Computers checks are used for typing speed if in a crunch for time, but most Computers checks use IQ. Difficulties are determined by the complexity of the software used or developed or by the computer's security level if hacking.

Possible Specialties: Research, Graphics, Hacking, Security systems

Simple (10): Basic online research and application use

Moderate (20): Develop applications with up to two primary uses, hack a computer with standard security, in-depth Internet research

Tough (30): Develop application with 3+ uses, hack into a bank computer

Crafts

Some may possess a knowledge of using items (like wielding weapons or operating vehicles), but they don't always understand how they work. Crafts represents the character's experience with creating (or destroying) physical works with their hands, including building a car engine or assembling a computer. Unlike aesthetic use of the Arts skill, Crafts objects are primarily for practicality. Checks for manual dexterity or hand-eye coordination for building use AGY + Crafts. Inspecting the integrity of an item uses INS + Crafts. IQ + Crafts checks can be used to create blueprints (recipes) or create repair strategies.

Possible Specialties: Armor, Computers, Cooking, Cybernetics, Firearms, Mechanics, Tailoring, Crafting, Sabotage, Appraising, Jury-rigging

Simple (10): Crafting a spear or knife, automobile tune-up, repair dents in armor

Moderate (20): Sew a ball gown, jury-rig a machine to work temporarily

Tough (30): Create a delicacy fit for a king, craft a suit of plate armor, rebuild a jet engine

Deception

The art of Deception is a skill that many attempt to master, but few succeed. Anyone can pull off a white lie, but this Skill represents expertise in making the unbelievable believable. Deception may be used to hide emotions or surprised reactions, sense the same in others, or create clever disguises. The character rolls CHM + Deception against the target's INS + Deception. A success makes the lie convincing enough not to contradict. Be careful with lies, as target may not respond in the way you might assume. IQ + Deception is used to create a disguise.

Possible Specialties: Spotting Lies, Exaggeration, Misdirection, Hiding emotions, Disguise

Simple (10): White lies or lying to someone when they have no information to contest

Moderate (20): Convince someone who has proof to the contrary, basic disguise

Tough (30): Beating a polygraph, changing someone's basic beliefs, spot-on disguise

Discipline

Having strong willpower and a resistant mind is helpful in times of stress or war. The Discipline Skill is experience in focusing the mind and ignoring the outside world. This covers concentration and meditation, as well as dispelling pain, resisting threats or interrogation, acquiring mental illnesses, and succumbing to fear. Characters can obtain this skill through mental training, such as military or martial arts experience, or they may just have a natural talent. Common applications of this Skill resist coercion or manipulation with an INS + Discipline check.

Possible Specialties: Concentration, Resist Intimidation, Meditation, Resist Fear

Simple (10): Ignore minor distractions or temptations

Moderate (20): Keeping your cool in a gun fight

Tough (30): Seeing through hallucinations

Fortitude

Some train their bodies to stave off negative effects, including modern primitives hanging from hooks through their skin, firefighters building up a heat tolerance, a drinker becoming numb to liquor, or a competitive eater expanding their stomach. VIG + Fortitude checks are used to resist poisons or drugs to the body, as well as the effects of Bleeding, Shock, and Death. In addition, this Skill gives +1 Health for each level purchased.

Possible Specialties: Resist poison/drugs, Resist inebriation, Resist Shock

Simple (10): Resist the urge for another cigarette

Moderate (20): Out-drink your alcoholic friend

Tough (30): Respond coherently to an emergency after a night of drinking

Intimidation

A favored Skill to impose your will upon others, threaten them (directly or otherwise), disturb or scare someone, or crack another's resolve for interrogation. This Skill most commonly uses CHM + Intimidation. Physical threats, such as showing off muscle, may use POW + Intimidation along with a show of strength. A scientist would use IQ + Intimidation to recite little known facts and let a rival know they are a mental threat. Targets make an INS + Discipline to contest Intimidation.

Possible Specialties: Stare-Down, Interrogation, Subtle threats

Simple (10): Scare children or an obviously lesser, give the evil eye

Moderate (20): Scare an equal, interrogate a nervous person

Tough (30): Shaking the resolve of someone who believes their better, interrogate someone with steel nerves

Knowledge

Knowledge can come from many sources, including book learning and street smarts. IQ + Knowledge is used for researching information, with Difficulty depending on how deep it is buried. GMs should allow Specialties in any Knowledge type that applies to a character's concept.

Possible Specialties:

- **Animal lore:** Animal kingdoms, phylum, and species.
- **Demonology:** Demon etiquette, customs, and possible powers or weaknesses.
- **Geography:** Geographical names and locations of countries, cities, bodies of water, landmarks, etc.
- **Local History:** Local landmarks, public figures and personalities, and local legends.
- **Occult:** Myths, legends, urban legends, magic, etc.
- **Religion:** World religions from Christianity to Buddhism to Wicca and their differences/similarities.
- **Science (Hard):** Chemistry, biology, genetics, etc.
- **Science (Soft):** Anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics
- **Sports Trivia:** Sports figures, rules, player stats, etc.
- **Street Smarts:** Criminal underground, drugs, gang activity, dealing with black markets, etc.
- **World History:** History of other countries, but their view may be skewed by individual ethnicity.

Simple (10): Basic library knowledge

Moderate (20): Professional knowledge (advanced scientific procedures, origins of less popular myths)

Tough (30): Scholarly knowledge (mating habits of a near extinct species or very remote locations)

Linguistics

Linguistics represents understanding of communication as a whole. Every character begins with their birth language(s) at character creation and then receives one additional language for every two levels of Linguistics. IQ + Linguistics checks can decipher verbiage meaning for other languages in the same family. So, a French linguist may garner meaning from basic English or Spanish phrases by basing the translation on their own language. They can also read body language, facial expressions, or even read lips with a INS + Linguistics check. IQ + Linguistics can be used to decipher coded languages if they figure out the root family being used. CHM + Linguistics can help to get points across in a different language. This skill covers reading and writing, unless otherwise stated.

Example Language Families:

- **African:** Afro-Asiatic (North, East, and Southwest Africa), Nilo-Saharan (Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya), Niger-Congo (tonal language), Khoisan (clicking languages), Egyptian
- **Aquatic:** Guttural demon language. Applies to Lochs and other aquatic demons
- **Asian:** Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese
- **Germanic:** German, Dutch, Swiss, Finnish, Hungarian
- **Indian:** Bengali, Hindi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Urdu
- **Middle-Eastern:** Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Hebrew, Greek, Turkish
- **Orchestral:** Demon languages, with high pitched tones and rolling tongues. Applies to Burners and Oracles
- **Romance:** English, French, Italian, Spanish, Romanian, Portuguese
- **Slavic:** Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Rusyn
- **Sign Language:** Use of hands to communicate, dialect taken based on above regions. Changelings learn a special sign language known only to their kind.

Possible Specialties: Deciphering, Cracking Codes, Reading lips, Body language

Simple (10): Translate and make out basic phrases in the same family

Moderate (20): Read lips, read body language, decipher basic phrases in a different family

Tough (30): Crack or decipher language codes, read a complex emotion (anxious, bitterness, worry),

Legerdemain

The Legerdemain skill represents experience with precise sleight of hand movements, such as card tricks, picking pockets, picking locks, or palming. Many use this skill to become magicians, con artists, or criminals, and to escape from cuffs or swipe a target's wallet. AGY + Legerdemain is most commonly used for checks. CHM + Legerdemain checks are used to impress someone with sleight of hand proficiency. INS + Perception or INS + Legerdemain checks can be used to contest use of skill against the character.

Possible Specialties: Misdirection, Safes, Juggling

Simple (10): Stealing from a child, simple coin tricks

Moderate (20): Stealing from adults, picking a padlock

Tough (30): Breaking into a bank safe

Medicine

Medicine is one of the hardest fields of study, but also one of the most gratifying. This Skill represents training in general medicine and other medical knowledge. It can be used to treat injuries, diagnose symptoms, prevent sickness and diseases, or create poisons and antidotes (See page 76). An IQ + Medicine check is used to recall specific medical knowledge. INS + Medicine is used for diagnosis. AGY + Medicine is used for surgeries and other duties that require a steady hand. Discipline checks are needed to use this Skill during stressful situations without making horrible mistakes.

Possible Specialties: Certain field (Pediatrics, Obstetrics, Cyber-doc, etc.), Diagnosis, Surgery

Simple (10): Recall drug side effects, basic First-aid

Moderate (20): Full medical diagnosis, creation and applications of poisons

Tough (30): Surgery, Emergency medicine

Perception

Perception measures the character's observation and awareness to their surroundings. An INS + Perception check is used when looking for minute details in the environment, searching a room, or using any of the five senses. As a resistant skill, Perception lets a character see through lies or protect items from being stolen.

Possible Specialties: Specific sense (Sight, Hearing, etc.), Search, Resist Deception

Simple (10): Search through files, hear through a door

Moderate (20): Spot a detail someone is trying to hide

Tough (30): Search a cluttered room, listen in on a conversation across the room

Performance

This skill represents the training and practice of entertaining others with the ability to carry a tune (Singing), masterfully strum a guitar (Instrument), or even accurately perform a monologue with the right accent (Acting). This skill is different from the Arts skill, as it is primarily focused on the presentation and playing to an audience. An AGY + Performance check may be used to ensure that the certain dance or instrument fingering is technically correct, but a CHM + Performance check is needed to see how the audience responds.

Possible Specialties: Strings, Singing, Dancing, Specific instrument, Acting

Simple (10): Satisfy an audience that is indifferent or already enjoys the performer

Moderate (20): Satisfy an audience with split opinions about the performer

Tough (30): Satisfy a very rowdy audience or an audience that does not like the performer

Persuasion

Every character has some way to get the things they want. Some rely on physical force, while others learn to exercise a bit of Persuasion. One catches more flies with honey than with vinegar, no? It can be used to convince another to do something and includes seduction, negotiation, haggling, inspiring another to confide a secret, or showing remarkable leadership. A CHM + Persuasion check is used most often with this Skill.

Possible Specialties: Seduction, Oratory, Leadership

Simple (10): Buy a cheaper used car, seduce a letcherous person

Moderate (20): Haggle for 50% off, get someone to give up a secret

Tough (30): Seduce someone that's not interested, fast-talk a used car salesmen

Stealth

Characters with Stealth have practiced moving quickly and silently, rapidly finding a hiding place, concealing small objects on their person, skulking through shadows, and summarily blending in their environment. Stealth can also be used to perform quick acts with notice, such as hiding a message via sign language. Sneaking uses an AGY + Stealth check, while hiding uses an IQ + Stealth check. Perception is used to contest Stealth.

Possible Specialties: Shadowing, Concealment, Hiding in crowds, Hiding in shadows

Simple (10): Sneaking for cover with distractions

Moderate (20): Shadowing a paranoid person

Tough (30): Sneaking into a government facility in broad daylight

Survival

The Survival Skill teaches the character to survive in various landscapes and terrain. This includes tracking an animal through jungle, finding shelter in the arctic, and hunting lizards in the desert. Survival is important for foraging edible, non-poisonous food or navigation through difficult territory. This Skill is also used to cripple another's use of Survival, such as covering tracks or path misdirection. An IQ + Survival check is most common for this Skill.

Possible Specialties: Tracking, Foraging, Navigation, Certain type (i.e. arctic, desert, jungle, urban).

Simple (10): Camp building (i.e. starting fire and building shelter)

Moderate (20): Dowsing, basic path navigation

Tough (30): Defining/categorizing plant-life, navigation through undefined terrain

Vehicle Operation

This Skill assesses a character's ability to operate vehicles. This includes master equestrians, race car drivers, jet pilots, or trick motorcyclists. Most checks involve AGY + Vehicle Operation for technical control of the vehicle, while INS + Vehicle Operation checks are used to spot a tail. IQ can be used for knowledge of car makes and models, horse breeds, etc.

Possible Specialties: Automobile, Horse, Motorcycle, Plane, Skateboard, Ship, Spotting a Tail, Sharp Turn

Simple (10): Keep control when obeying the speed limit

Moderate (20): Keep control when breaking the speed limit

Tough (30): Roof-jumping your motorcycle over a helicopter

Spectral Skills

These Spectral-only skills are needed to effect their environment. Spectral Skills follow the same purchasing scale as other skills, costing one Skill point for level 1-8 and two Skill points for level 9-10. At least one level is required to attempt use of a Spectral skill. Using a Spectral skill costs the character 2 Stamina points and has duration chosen by the GM (if not specified in the skill description). Evolved spirits have additional Spectral skills available to them (See page 147).

GMs are encouraged to give one or two additional levels in Manifest if the character is traveling with a squad that cannot normally see or interact with them. This ensures that they do not fade into the background and receive the same attention as the living characters.

Affect Senses

Haunting spirits use this skill to manipulate their surroundings and enhance their frightful presence. One sense (Sight, Hearing, Touch, or Smell/Taste) is chosen upon purchase and they can then create sensations that coincide with their selection. Manipulating sight may create intricate illusions, such as bleeding or warped walls or making a statue's eyes follow the target. Manipulating hearing may fill the target's ears with disturbing breathing, rattling chains, or painful moans. Touch may affect the temperature in the room to cause chills or make the target feel spider legs crawling on their necks. Smell/Taste may create foul odors of blood, rotting fish, or dead bodies. Affect Senses is purchased separately for each sense, but they are easily used together (See Harmony rules on page 37). Checks are made using INS + Affect Senses.

Possible Specialties: Most have specialized effects for which they become known. Be creative.

Moderate (20): Affect the target's sense, possibly forcing a Fear check

Float

The Float skill explains many myths of flying spirits. Without it, a Spectral must "walk" the Earth, bound by gravity and needing to walk, run, or travel in cars the same as everyone else. This skill allows the Spectral to levitate their ectoplasmic bodies and break these rules. Duration of Float is equal to their INS level in minutes. Their Movement while floating is raised along with their skill level as follows: Level 1-3: Half Movement (rounded down), Level 4-6: Full Movement, Level 7-9: +50% Movement (rounded down), and Level 10: Double Movement. Other skills and combat checks suffer a -2 penalty while floating, due to the concentration needed. Checks are made using AGY + Float.

Possible Specialties: None.

Simple (10): Float up to 10 ft.

Moderate (20): Float up to 25 ft.

Tough (30): Float up to 50 ft.

Manifestation

The Manifestation skill allows the ghost to manifest (or appear) for a brief time. While manifested, others can see, hear, and even smell the ghost in some cases. The sense of touch is a function of the Stir skill. Those Spectrals that work with the living on a daily basis take this skill at high levels in order to interact with their coworkers. Checks are made using IQ + Manifestation.

Possible Specialties: None.

Simple (10): Appear transparently and speak a few words or just speak without appearing

Moderate (20): Appear translucently for about ten minutes

Tough (30): Appear opaquely for about an hour

Possess Being

Spectrals can actively possess people or animals with this skill. If they have a willing subject (i.e. adepts with the Commune spell), no check is needed to enter their body and there is no limit to duration until the target resists. Resistant targets force a contested check of the Spectral's CHM + Possess Being against their INS + Discipline. Control of the target's body lasts for one minute, plus one additional minute for every 2 rolled higher than the victim. In combat, they can control their victim for a single Action or Reaction, plus one additional for every 3 rolled higher than the victim. The host's consciousness is repressed and they remember nothing of their actions after the duration ends. The body retains its current Health and Stamina scores, including any penalties the target had before possession.

Possible Specialties: None.

Simple (10): Possess the weak-willed, such as a child or mentally-challenged person

Moderate (20): Possess a target of average willpower

Tough (30): Possess a hardened or brainwashed target

Possess Object

Spectrals with this skill can possess non-living objects. This differs from Stir, as the ghost does not simply move the object, but becomes the object. The size of the object possessed affects the Difficulty, as stretching or shrinking their ectoplasmic body is often extremely complex.

Upon possession, the Spectral gains full access to all the item's internal parts. For instance, if they possess a gun, they can pull the trigger or jam the object. If they posses a car, they can start the engine and drive around without limit. If they possess a house, they gain access to all doors, windows, electrical systems, and appliances that may be connected. They also have the ability to react to anything that happens inside or around the object, but does not gain omniscient perception or spontaneous knowledge of all inner functions. For instance, if the Spectral is affecting one room of a possessed house, an INS + Perception check is needed to tell if things are also happening in other rooms. If the engine goes out while possessing a car, the ghost still needs a successful Crafts check to diagnose the issue.

Other Spectral skills work well in conjunction with Possess Object. Float can be used to make items fly, Manifestation can make objects appear demonic, and Affect Senses may create an eerie hum from the object. Checks are made using VIG + Possess Object.

Possible Specialties: Particular types of items.

Simple (10): Items close to the Spectral's size

Moderate (20): Much smaller items (i.e. gun, coin, or game controller)

Tough (30): Much larger items (i.e. car, house, etc.)

Stir

Ghosts normally phase through anything they attempt to touch. However, those with Stir have overcome this handicap. This skill requires a conscious act that the Spectral must check for each time they attempt to move or affect an object or person. When the target is moved, the effect is over. If they hold on, they need only check again if their grip is interrupted. Each level essentially unlocks the character's POW levels on a one-to-one basis. For instance, a ghost with POW 6 must have Stir 6 to unlock their full POW. If that character has Stir 4, they only have access to four levels of POW. This skill can also be used to wield a weapon. They must have both POW and Stir levels equal to or exceeding twice the size of the weapon to wield it with enough force to inflict damage. They must check for Stir each time they strike an opponent or parry with the weapon to maintain their grasp. If they fail, the weapon phases through their hand and immediately drops to the ground. They must also have levels in the appropriate weapon skill to wield without the -4 penalty for untrained use. Checks are made using POW + Stir.

Possible Specialties: Lifting, Wielding weapons, Shoving, Intricate work (i.e. writing or typing)

Moderate (20): Match the character's POW level

Combat Skills

Skill Level Cost: 1-8 x1, 9-10 x2
Techniques at Level 4, 7, and 10

Fighting Style: Basic	Fighting Style: Brawler
Fighting Style: Elite	Fighting Style: Hard
Fighting Style: Soft	Weapon Style: Ax
Weapon Style: Club	Weapon Style: Chain
Weapon Style: Knife	Weapon Style: Ranged
Weapon Style: Staff	Weapon Style: Sword

Fighting Styles

All characters can purchase levels of Fighting Style: Basic at character creation, which represents little to no actual combat training. With the appropriate Gift purchases, the fighter can also purchase levels in one of the four special Fighting Styles: Brawler, Martial Arts (Hard), Martial Arts (Soft), and Elite (Page 129). Using multiple fighting styles is very easy, as bonuses from each Fighting Style simply stack upon each other. When learning a new style, apply the bonuses from the new style on top of the character's existing bonuses.

Every fighter is assumed to start with the ability to perform Two Actions per Round, plus those gained from purchasing levels in Fighting or Weapon Styles. Characters may also receive extra Actions from a high AGY or natural demon abilities.

Fighting Style: Basic

Practice in the basic teachings of close combat, focusing primarily on protecting oneself. Fighting Style: Basic is common among those who have gotten into a few minor scrapes in their lives, but do not have any type of real fighting experience or training.

Level 1:	+1 Dodge, +1 Roll, +1 Initiative
Level 2:	+2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Grapple
Level 3:	+2 Stamina, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll, +1 Initiative
Level 4:	+1 Damage, +1 Parry, +1 Grapple
Level 5:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll
Level 6:	+2 Health, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 7:	+2 Stamina, +1 Damage, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll
Level 8:	+2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 9:	+2 Stamina, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll
Level 10:	+1 Action per Round, +4 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +2 Initiative, +1 Grapple

Fighting Style: Brawler

When a character becomes an experienced fighter, they can be considered Brawlers. Fighting Style: Brawler represents street-fighting, wrestling, and all-out brawls. This style is favored by thugs and tough guys. Also, the character gains one Brawler Style Technique at levels 4, 7, and 10.

Level 1:	+2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +2 Grapple
Level 2:	+1 Damage, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 3:	+2 Stamina, +2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +2 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 4:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 5:	+5 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Grapple
Level 6:	+2 Stamina, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +2 Initiative
Level 7:	+1 Action per Round, +2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Grapple
Level 8:	+2 Health, +1 Damage, +2 Parry, +2 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 9:	+1 Action per Round, +2 Health, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +2 Initiative
Level 10:	+2 Stamina, +1 Damage, +5 Health, +2 Strike, +1 Dodge, +2 Roll, +1 Grapple

Brawler Techniques

Adaptive Combatant

The fighter is accustomed to using their environment to their advantage. They receive a +2 bonus to all Parry rolls starting on the 2nd Round, as it takes a Round to acclimate to their surroundings. Opponents also receive an additional -2 penalty to Strike the fighter when they have Cover. This technique can be taken a second time to double the effect.

Back Breaker

(Grappling Maneuver)

Requires Body Slam. When the fighter lifts their opponent, instead of simply slamming them to the ground (like Body Slam), they are crashed into the fighter's knee. This technique inflicts +3 (L) and forces a Stand Action to get back up.

Body Slam

(Grappling Maneuver)

The fighter lifts their opponent and then slams them hard to the ground. This technique inflicts +4 (NL) damage and the opponent must make a Stand Action to get back up. This technique can be taken a second time to raise Damage bonus to +6 (NL).

Close Line
(Speed 4, Stamina 2, -4 Parry)

If targeted by a Rush or Strong Attack Action, the fighter can attempt to intercept and deal damage to the attacker instead. Close Line is a defensive attack, protecting the fighter from harm and knocking their opponent to the ground (requiring a Stand action to get back up), while inflicting +1 (NL). If the fighter's Close Line check fails, they take full damage as per normal.

Ground Fighter

The fighter can battle as easily on their knees or back than they can on their feet. They suffer no Low Ground penalties and their opponent loses any High Ground bonus they would have received as well.

Stomp

If the fighter has the High Ground, they gain +6 Strike (instead of +4) and deals +2 Damage when they land their hit from above. This technique can be taken a second time to raise the bonuses to +8 Strike and +4 Damage.

Sucker Punch
(Speed +3, Stamina +1, -4 Strike)

The dirty fighter finds an opening and strikes the opponent in a weak spot inflicting +50% (NL) (rounded up).

Tuff Mutha

The fighter can take a hit quite well, making them more durable. They gain a natural AR 2/0. This technique can be taken up to two additional times, each time adding another AR +1/+0.

Fighting Style: Martial Arts (Hard)

This Skill marks specific training in Hard-style Martial Arts, such as Tae Kwon Do, Sumo, Boxing, or Tiger Kung Fu. Hard styles focus on offensive techniques with fast and hard strikes, as well as physical training to increase endurance. Also, the character gains one Hard Style Technique at levels 4, 7, and 10.

Hard Style Techniques

Boxer's Hands

The fighter's fists become lethal weapons, gaining a +2 Base Damage bonus. This technique can be taken up to two additional times, each time adding +1 Damage.

Coil and Strike
(Speed 10, Stamina 2)

A technique taught by Snake Kung Fu, the fighter holds their action for 10 Counts, without Movement and suffers a -5 penalty to all Reactions. Then, they receive a +10 bonus to Strike and +3 Damage to the following attack. Cannot be used with Simultaneous Actions.

Level 1:	+1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 to Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 2:	+2 Health, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 3:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 to Roll
Level 4:	+2 Stamina, +2 Health, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 5:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 to Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 6:	+2 Stamina, +2 Health, +1 Dodge, +1 Dodge, +1 Initiative
Level 7:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 to Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 8:	+2 Stamina, +2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 to Roll, +1 Initiative
Level 9:	+1 Action per Round, +2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 to Roll, +1 Initiative, +2 Grapple
Level 10:	+3 Stamina, +2 Health, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative

Fierce Strikes
(Speed +2, Stamina +1, -4 Strike)

By focusing their energy into a powerful attack, the fighter can change their unarmed damage type to Lethal.

Ground Fighter

The fighter can battle as easily on their knees or back than they can on their feet. They suffer no Low Ground penalties and their opponent loses any High Ground bonus they would have received as well.

Sucker Punch
(Speed +3, Stamina +1, -4 Strike)

The dirty fighter finds an opening and strikes the opponent in a weak spot inflicting +50% (NL) (rounded up).

Tiger Claws
(Speed +3, Stamina +1, -4 Strike)

The fighter attacks with his nails, ripping into the target's flesh with each strike. This effect halves the damage inflicted (rounded up), but each strike gives the target a cumulative -2 pain penalty to all rolls for 1 Round. This technique can be taken a second time to raise the effect to a -4 penalty or extend the duration to 2 Rounds.

Whirlwind Assault

The fighter is well-versed in multi-opponent combat and suffers only a -1 cumulative penalty for striking separate targets in the same Round (instead of -2). This technique can be taken a second time to remove the penalty entirely.

Fighting Style: Martial Arts (Soft)

This Skill denotes specific training in a Soft-style Martial Art, such as Swan Kung-Fu, Aikido, or Judo. Soft styles focus on defensive techniques, using the opponent's momentum against them and striking pressure points. Also, the character gains one Soft Style Technique at levels 4, 7, and 10.

Level 1:	+2 Health, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 2:	+2 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative
Level 3:	+2 Health, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 4:	+2 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative
Level 5:	+1 Action per Round, +3 Health, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 6:	+2 Stamina, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative
Level 7:	+1 Action per Round, +3 Health, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 8:	+2 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +2 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 9:	+1 Action per Round, +4 Health, +1 Damage, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +2 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 10:	+4 Stamina, +5 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +2 Initiative

Soft Style Techniques

Adaptive Combatant

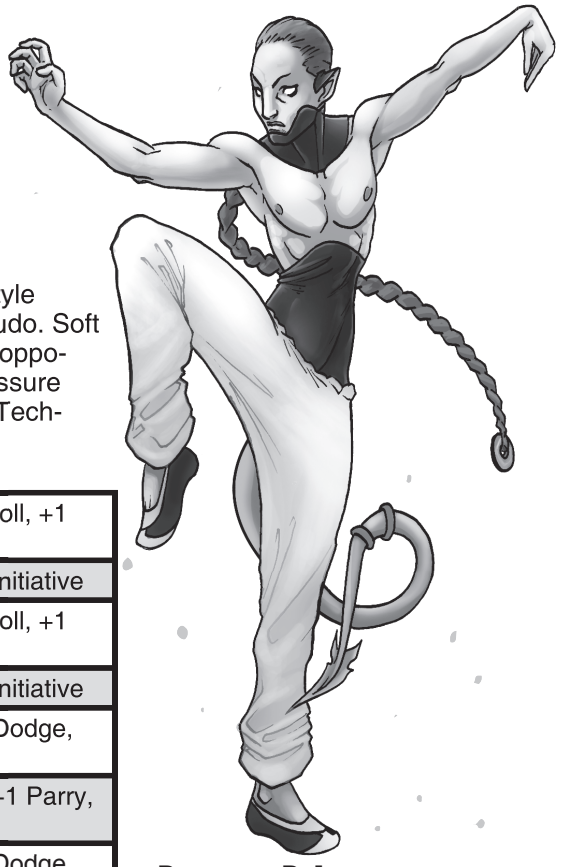
The fighter is accustomed to using their environment to their advantage. They receive a +2 bonus to all Parry rolls starting on the 2nd Round, as it takes a Round to acclimate to their surroundings. Opponents also receive an additional -2 penalty to Strike the fighter when they have Cover. This technique can be taken twice.

Deflecting Throw

(Speed 3, Stamina 2, -4 Parry)

The fighter blocks an incoming strike and uses the attacker's momentum to throw them. If successful, the attacker must immediately make a Balance check of Difficulty (15), plus the difference in their rolls. If the attacker fails, they are thrown to the ground a number of feet away equal to twice the defender's POW and take +1 (NL). A Stand Action is needed to get back up.

Example: *Elgin attacks and rolls 16. Kat makes a Deflecting Throw check for 22. Elgin must make a Balance check at a difficulty of 21 (22-16=6). If Kat has POW 4, Paul would be thrown 8 ft, and would also take 1 (NL) (Kat's Base damage 0 + 1).*



Focused Strikes

The fighter has honed their skills through intense training to strike specific parts of their opponent's body with ease. Penalties for Targeted strikes are reduced by 3. This technique can be taken up to two additional times with cumulative effects.

Leaping Dodge

(Speed +2, Stamina +1, -4 Dodge)

The fighter dodges an incoming attack and leaps a distance equal to half their movement away from their opponent. This puts space between them and usually forces a Move Action to enter close combat again.

Pressure Points

Requires Focused Strikes. Through precise placement of their strikes to exposed pressure points, the fighter can inflict their Base damage with a Touch Action (See page 70). This technique can be taken up to two additional times, each time adding +1 (NL).

Push Hands

(Speed 4, Stamina 1, +0 (NL), -4 Strike)

Taught from Tai Chi, this technique lets the fighter throw their opponent off their balance with a strategic and powerful shove. Similar to a regular Push Action, but throws the opponent 3 ft per POW level. The fighter also inflicts their Base damage automatically. They must make a Stand Action to get back up. This technique can be taken up to two additional times, each time adding +1 (NL).

Quick Recovery

If knocked down, this technique allows the fighter to recover quickly, reducing the Speed of a Stand Action to 2, instead of 4.

Weapon Styles

Similar to selecting multiple Fighting Styles, bonuses from Weapon Styles stack on top of the character's existing bonuses, but only apply when wielding that particular weapon type. This rule also extends to reductions of Speed (always to a minimum of 1) and Stamina costs, extra Actions per Round, or extra Damage. The only exceptions are Health bonuses, as some weapon training hardens the body at all times, and Dodge bonuses, as getting out of the way carries over into unarmed battle as well.

Level 1 of any Weapon Style removes the -4 penalty to using the weapon untrained only.

Weapon Style: Ax

This style covers training in wielding any ax, from a battle-ax to fire-ax to tomahawk. Wielding an Ax-style weapon trains the fighters to go for death blows, instead of attempting fancy maneuvers. At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), the character gets +1 Strike and +1 Damage. Even levels provide the following:

Level 2:	-1 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry
Level 4:	+3 Health, Axes treated as -1 Size, +1 Parry
Level 6:	-1 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry
Level 8:	+3 Health, Axes treated as -1 Size, +1 Parry
Level 10:	+1 Action per Round, +4 Health, +2 Strike

Weapon Style: Club

Characters with Weapon Style: Club can wield bats, hammers, maces, and most other bludgeoning weapons with expertise. These fighters focus on a balancing speed and damage, hoping to beat their opponent before they even get to counterattack. At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), the character gets +1 Strike, +1 Parry, and +1 Disarm. Even levels provide the following:

Level 2:	-1 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry
Level 4:	+1 Action per round, +1 Damage, +1 Parry
Level 6:	-1 Speed, AP 1, +1 Strike
Level 8:	+1 Action per round, +1 Damage, +1 Parry
Level 10:	-1 Stamina, AP 2, +2 Strike, +1 Parry

Weapon Style: Chain

Training in chain weapons includes lengths of chain, whips, nunchaku, yo-yos, or even razor blades attached to the ends of swinging glow sticks. Chain-style fighters are quick and chaotic, but prefer to keep a distance. At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), the character gets +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, and +1 Entangle. Even levels provide the following:

Level 2:	+1 Parry, +1 Disarm, +1 Sweep
Level 4:	-1 Speed, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge
Level 6:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Parry, +1 Sweep
Level 8:	-1 Speed, +1 to Disarm, Reduce Multiple opponent penalty to -1
Level 10:	+1 Action per Round, +2 Strike, +1 Disarm, +1 Sweep

Weapon Style: Knife

This is practice in wielding knives, from daggers to hunting knives. Knife-fighters are quick on their feet and even quicker in thought, striking vital points whenever possible. At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), the character gets +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, and +1 Legerdemain (Concealment) checks to hide knives. Even levels provide the following:

Level 2:	-1 Stamina cost, +1 Strike
Level 4:	-1 Speed cost, +1 Strike
Level 6:	Reduce Draw Weapon Speed by 1, +1 Damage, +1 Strike
Level 8:	-1 Speed cost, Simultaneous Actions penalty reduced by 2
Level 10:	+1 Action per round, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, Simultaneous Actions penalty reduced by 2

Weapon Style: Archery/Thrown or Firearm

Weapon Style: Archey/Thrown or Weapon Style: Firearm is training in precision and accuracy with ranged weaponry. Ranged fighters stick to the background and take out opponents from afar. The character must choose either Archery/Thrown or Firearms when purchasing (each is separate, but provide the same bonuses). At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), all ranged weapon types give the character +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, plus those bonuses listed below:

Level 2:	-1 RS, Aim Action +4 Strike, +1 Strike
Level 4:	+1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge
Level 6:	-1 RS, Aim Action +5 Strike, +1 Strike
Level 8:	+1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge
Level 10:	+1 Damage, -1 RS, Aim Action +6, +1 Strike

Weapon Style: Staff

Characters with Weapon Style: Staff train with staves, spears, lances, and other polearms with long range. Staff-style fighters use their range to protect themselves and deliver bone-breaking attacks. At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), the character gets +2 Parry and +1 Disarm. Even levels provide the following:

Level 2:	+1 Action per round, +2 Health, +1 Strike
Level 4:	-1 Speed cost, +1 Strike, +1 Disarm
Level 6:	+1 Action per round, Reduce Multiple opponent penalty to -1, +1 Strike
Level 8:	-1 Speed cost, +2 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Disarm
Level 10:	+2 Actions per round, No penalty when fighting Multiple opponents, +1 Strike

Weapon Style: Sword

Weapon Style: Sword covers training for all types of swords, including rapiers, broadswords, or two-sword fighting. Sword fighters are feared worldwide for their speed and accuracy. At odd levels (3, 5, 7, and 9), the character gets +1 Strike, +1 Parry, and +1 Disarm. Even levels provide the following:

Level 2:	+1 Action per round, +2 Parry
Level 4:	-1 Speed, +1 Damage, +1 Strike
Level 6:	+1 Action per round, -1 Stamina, AP 1
Level 8:	+1 Damage, +2 Strike, AP 2
Level 10:	+1 Action per round, -1 Speed, AP 3

Gifts and Drawbacks

Gifts and Drawbacks are provided to players as tools to customize their characters beyond racial abilities and descriptions. Each Gift and Drawback is listed along with a numerical value. This value is its cost in Bonus Points (BP) and Drawbacks return their value in BP. If listed in a range (i.e. 1-5), the character can purchase the Gift or Drawback as many as five times, applying the listed effect each time. If listed separately (i.e. 2 or 4), they can take the two-point or the four-point version, but not both.

Gifts are boosted natural talents or social status, such as the character's Wealth, their existing social Connections, received Combat Training, or whether they have opened their Inner Circles of magic. Characters begin character creation with 10 Bonus Points (BP), except for humans that start with 16 BP. BP can be spent on Gifts or can be traded for Attribute points (2 BP for 1 Attribute point) or Skill points (1 BP for 1 Skill point). **Note:** It still costs multiple Attribute and Skill points to get Level 9 or level 10.

Drawbacks are penalties, complications, or defects a player can use to further define their character's weak spots. Characters can obtain up to an additional 10 BP by taking Drawbacks and applying negative qualities. While characters may purchase Attribute and Skill points with BP, so too can they sacrifice Attribute and Skill points to gain additional BP (1 Attribute point = 2 BP and 1 Skill point = 1 BP). They can gain up to 5 BP from sacrificing Attributes and Skills.

Certain Gifts can be purchased at any point in the game (even after character creation), while others obviously cannot. For instance, the Giant Gift is generally only available during character creation, as characters do not spontaneously grow larger than other humans (unless the GM orchestrates these events). The GM has final decision on which Gifts and Drawbacks they wish to allow in their games and which are appropriate for a particular concept. Also, directly contradicting Gifts and Drawbacks cannot be purchased together. Example: Perfect Memory and Absent Minded cannot be taken together.

Gifts

Ally (1-5): No one is alone in the world. This Gift represents a friend, family member, or mentor that is there to aid the character. The level depends on how close the Ally is to the character. Unlike the Follower Gift, an Ally is not under the character's employment and does not HAVE to help them.

(1) Acquaintance they can call every so often to ask a question

(2) Friend they can borrow a few bucks from as long as it doesn't put them out

(3) Childhood friend that lets them crash on the couch until they find their own place

(4) Best friend that helps out any way they can, as long as it doesn't negatively impact them to an extreme extent

(5) Brother (or blood brother) willing to sacrifice things in his own life for the character

Quick Reference List

Gifts

Ally (1-5)
Ambidexterity (3)
Animal Companion (3)
Attractiveness (1-5)
Body Builder (4)
Born into Magic (4 or 8)
Cat-like Balance (1-5)
Combat Training (3)
Connections (1-5)
Directional Sense (1)
Double-jointed (2)
Dumpster Stomach (2)
Enduring (1-5)
Follower (1-5)
Giant (5)
Good Reputation (1-5)
Home Turf (4)
Improvisational Fighter (3)
Increased Initiative (1-5)
Inner Circle Opening (3, 5, or 7)
Iron Will (1-5)
Library (1-5)
Light Sleeper (2)
Lucky (3)
Magic Resistant (1-5)
Order Membership (3)
Pain Resistant (2, 4, or 6)
Path Access (1)
Perfect Memory (3)
Punctual (1)
Quick Draw (2)
Quick Healer (6)
Rank (1-5)
Resistant Body (1-5)
Sharp Senses (3)
Spell Knowledge (1, 2, or 3)
Spell Upgrade (1)
Sprinter (1-5)
Throwing Arm (3)
Tough (1-5)
Wealth (1-5)
Wrestler (4)

Drawbacks

Absent-minded (4)
Addiction (4)
Bad Reputation (1-5)
Big Mouth (2)
Bleeder (3)
Blind (6)
Combat Fear (1-5)
Compulsion (3)
Curious (2)
Deep Sleeper (2)
Disfigured (4)
Enemy (1-5)
Graceless (1-5)
Illegal (2)
Illiterate (2)
Indebted (2)
Lecherous (2)
Lifesaver (3)
Magic Addict (3)
Magic Restriction (2)
Minority (1)
Obese (4)
One arm (4)
One-eye (4)
Paraplegic (6)
Phobia (3)
Poor Hygiene (1-5)
Poor Senses (2 or 5)
Scrawny (1-5)
Shy (2)
Sickly (1-5)
Skill Deficient (3)
Slow Healer (4)
Speech Impediment (2)
Unattractiveness (1-5)
Unlucky (3)
Ward (3)
Weak Attribute (5)
Weak-willed (1-5)
Weak Stomach (2)

Ambidexterity (3): The character is adroit at performing tasks with both hands equally. Some are born with this skill, while others work hard to master it. This removes the -4 penalty to using their Off-hand and reduces the penalty of hand-based Simultaneous actions by two.

Animal Companion (3): The character has a loyal, trained animal that is their friend and companion. Their pet is specially trained (choose up to four commands) and the two communicate well. Common choices are dogs, birds, or horses (See Animals on page 161).

Attractiveness (1-5): Let's face it. Attractive people usually have more life options available to them. Each BP spent gives a +2 bonus to CHM checks that are affected by looks (excluding Intimidation checks). Cannot be taken by Changelings.

Body Builder (4): The character is body conscious, lifting weights, working out, and exercising almost to the point of excess. **Bonuses:** +4 Health, +5 to Lifting rolls, +2 Stamina points, and +1 Base Damage

Born into Magic (4 or 8): The character is literally born into magic, having a number of personal Mana points equal to their INS level. This Mana continuously circles around their aura and can used for spells without the need to sacrifice Stamina. Personal Mana replenishes at a rate of 1 every 10 minutes. For 8 BP, the character gets 2 Mana points per INS level.

Cat-like Balance (1-5): The character can easily walk a tightrope, blindfolded, without special shoes. This Gift gives a +2 bonus to Balance checks per BP spent.

Combat Training (3): The character has received combat training (martial arts school or life experiences). This lets the character purchase levels from Fighting Style: Brawler, Elite, Martial Arts (Hard), or Martial Arts (Soft). Each is purchased separately. Fighting Style: Elite has prerequisites found on page 129.

Connections (1-5): The character has influence and/or contacts within an important institution. This Gift reflects both how wide their influence spreads and the extent of their power. The more they use these ties, the weaker they may become. They could have a friend who is a low-ranking reporter **(Media 1)**, have a contact within the courts that can "lose" paperwork **(Judicial 2)**, or be the head of their local church and have the congregation at their command **(Church 5)**. Using these contacts is performed through roleplay. The GM may ask for a CHM + Persuasion + Connections check for particularly complex or strange requests. ***Examples:*** *Church, Corporate, Judicial, Media, Police, Political, Underworld*

Directional Sense (1): The character has an innate sense of direction, regardless of the time of day. This gives a +4 bonus to all Survival or Vehicle Operation checks involving Navigation.

Double-jointed (2): The character may have a career as a circus contortionist or just stretch every morning. This gives a +4 bonus to Acrobatics checks involving Flexibility.

Dumpster Stomach (2): The character can essentially eat anything without suffering extreme ill effects. This includes undercooked or raw meats, rotting or moldy foods, bugs or worms, roots or branches, and (under the worst of circumstances) shoelaces. This gives a +5 bonus against Poisons/Drugs that are ingested.

Enduring (1-5): Endurance training and exercise gives the character +2 Stamina points per BP spent.

Follower (1-5): The character has someone that works for them. They may be a kid who looks up to them, a powerfully-built bodyguard, a prudent butler, an efficient personal assistant, or a bound slave (if the character is especially ruthless). A Follower's value represents how helpful they actually are and they receive five (5) Skill points per level to spend. All followers have Attributes of 4, unless raised by the GM. Followers take to (often enjoying) being ordered to action by the character, but there is little besides loyalty or a paycheck keeping them there. If mistreated, abused, or constantly belittled, they may betray the character at their worst moment possible.

(1) Child or someone with limited faculties
(2) Mundane person with no real training above normal
(3) Capable employee with a few tricks in their sleeve
(4) Valued and irreplaceable assistant
(5) Truly remarkable and talented follower

Giant (5): The character is bigger and taller than other humans. **Bonuses:** +8 Health, +3 to Lifting, +2 Stamina points, +2 bonus to Fortitude, and +1 Base Damage. Due to their size, they suffer a -2 penalty to AGY for manual dexterity (i.e. picking a lock, typing, etc.). Clothing/armor also requires +1 Wealth for special sizes that fit correctly.

Good Reputation (1-5): The character has a reputation for something good, whether truly deserved or not. This could be for a personality trait, such trustworthy, highly intelligent, tough as nails, or incredibly kind. It may also be for an occupation, such as being a great mechanic, intoxicating songstress, or best cat burglar for the buck. BP needed for a Good reputation represents how far this information has spread.

(1) Within a certain social circle
(2) Citywide
(3) Statewide
(4) Countrywide
(5) Worldwide

Home Turf (4): The character knows the ins and outs of their neighborhood and use it to their advantage. **Bonuses:** +2 bonus to all Stealth, Knowledge (Street Smarts), Knowledge (Local History), and Survival checks while on their Home turf.

Improvisational Fighter (3): The character is proficient in fighting with whatever is handy. This Gift reduces the Improvised weapon penalty to -4 (instead of -8). If they use an improvised weapon that falls under a Weapon Style known to them, they receive no penalty. For more information, see page 68.

Increased Initiative (1-5): The character is quicker to act and react than the average person. Each BP spent gives a +2 bonus to their Initiative score.

Inner Circle Opening (3, 5, or 7): Characters must open their Inner Circles to cast magic. Opening the 1st Circle costs 3 BP, the 2nd Circle costs 5 BP, and the 3rd Circle costs 7 BP. **Note:** The 1st Inner Circle must be purchased before the 2nd Inner Circle, and the 2nd before the 3rd Inner Circle. Opening Inner Circles lets the character access the appropriate spell level and changes the Stamina-to-Mana sacrifice ratio. GM permission is expressly required to purchase the 3rd Circle during character creation. See Magic on page 81 for more information.

Iron Will (1-5): The character's mind is particularly resistant to attacks to its integrity. They may be hardened veterans or stalwart adventurers that don't know the meaning of the word fear. The character chooses one type of mental danger (Fear/Awe or Insanity) and receives a +2 bonus to that type of Discipline check per BP spent. This Gift can be taken many times to reflect separate bonuses.

Library (1-5): The character owns a research library or has access to another's. Each BP spent gives a +2 bonus to Knowledge (Research) rolls, representing the level of information the library provides. One library cannot have every piece of information available, so levels allow for a certain number of researchable topics, based on their concept.

(1) Shelf in their room (1-3 topics)
(2) Waist-high, full book shelf (4-10 topics)
(3) Wall to wall library (11-25 topics)
(4) Huge room of knowledge (26-50 topics)
(5) Library building (Any topics)

Light Sleeper (2): The character only needs to sleep four hours each day to feel fully rested (instead of six to seven hours). Exhaustion checks from sleep are needed without at least two hours of sleep. See Exhaustion from Sleep rules on page 33. **Note:** Spectrals do not sleep.

Lucky (3): Once per session, the character may reroll a Natural 1. If the second check is a Natural 20, the effect is neither automatic nor a Critical Success, but still succeeds if they made the target difficulty. Rolling another Natural 1 means luck has passed them over this time.

Magic Resistant (1-5): The character's inner power provides additional mystic defense. This Gift gives a +1 bonus to Magic Resistance checks per BP spent.

Order Membership (3): The character is a member of an Order, a secret society of adepts. They gain access to the Order for Allies or Followers, reduced cost of specific spell upgrades, and access to their Order-specific spell. See Orders on page 85 for more information.

Pain Resistant (2, 4, or 6): The character has a natural tolerance for pain. For 2 BP, they get a +2 bonus to Pain checks and all Pain penalties are reduced by two from having low Health. For 4 BP, they get a +4 bonus to Pain checks and Pain penalties are reduced by four. For 6 BP, they get a +8 bonus to Pain checks and Pain penalties are reduced by eight.

Path Access (1): The character gains access to one additional Path of magic. This path does not count toward the limit of Paths from which they can learn based on IQ. This Gift can be purchased up to three times, in addition to any from the character's race. See Learning Magic on page 83 for more information.

Perfect Memory (3): The character has an uncanny memory and can remember just about anything they hear or read. They need not make Memorize or Recollection checks, unless they are in stressful situations. In this case, they still receive a +5 bonus to their check.

Punctual (1): The character has an innate sense of time and can tell time without a watch with a good deal of accuracy. This gives a +2 bonus to checks where timing is essential (i.e. certain combat or athletic maneuvers).

Quick Draw (2): The character always keeps their weapon ready to be drawn. They can perform a Draw Weapon Action at half the normal Speed (rounded up).

Quick Healer (6): The character naturally heals at double the normal rate. They regain Health at a rate of 8 (NL) per hour of rest and 4 (NL) per hour of light activity or 8 (L) per day of rest and 4 (L) per day or light activity. This Gift cannot be taken by Taylari.

Rank (1-5): The character has achieved a level of status within an organization. This includes the police, a social club, an Order, a Vampire Family, or even Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. Each level gives a +2 bonus to Persuasion checks for commands or leadership with those within the organization. **Note:** High rank brings more responsibility.

Resistant Body (1-5): The character's is particularly resistant to physically harmful effects. They choose one type of physical danger (Death, Disease, Poison/Drugs, Shock, or Unconsciousness) and receive a +2 bonus to that type of Fortitude check per BP spent. This Gift can be taken many times to reflect separate bonuses.

Sharp Senses (3): One of the character's senses (sight, hearing, touch, or smell/taste) is much sharper than normal. They get a +4 bonus to checks with this sense. This can be taken many times to reflect different senses.

Spell Knowledge (1, 2, or 3): The character purchases a spell. 1st level spells cost 1 BP, 2nd level spells cost 2 BP, and 3rd level spells cost 3 BP. **Note:** They must first unlock the appropriate Inner Circles to purchase spells of that level (See the Inner Circle Opening Gift). They also must find a suitable teacher to learn spells and should explain this source when purchased.

Spell Upgrade (1): This Gift gives the character one spell Upgrade to personalize their magic. They must have already opened their Inner Circles and purchased the spell to upgrade. See Upgrades on page 84.

Sprinter (1-5): The character has increased their running speed. For each BP, they receive +2 Movement and +1 Health.

Throwing Arm (3): The character is practiced in throwing with great precision. This Gift doubles their throwing Range and gives a +2 bonus to Strike and +1 Damage to throwing weapons.

Tough (1-5): The character is extra tough and can take a lot of damage. They get +3 Health per BP spent

Wealth (1-5): The Wealth Gift determines the character's lifestyle and "disposable" income for expenses outside of everyday life, such as weapons or other equipment (See on page 52).

(0) They may share an apartment or still live with parents and own an inexpensive vehicle, like a moped or bicycle. Disposable: $250 a month

(1) They may have their own apartment and have upgraded to motorcycle or POS car. Disposable: $500 a month

(2) They may own a condo or townhouse and have a car of normal quality. Disposable: $1,500 a month

(3) They may own a small or medium home with some equity and have a car or SUV. Disposable: $4,000 a month

(4) Very well off and may have a large house and perhaps their hands in stock trade. Disposable: $9,000 a month

(5) A veritable millionaire with a mansion, a time share with a private jet, and most things they desire. Disposable: $20,000 a month

Wrestler (4): The character has become a proficient fighter within close quarters. **Bonuses:** +2 Strike to initiate Grapple, +2 Grapple, +2 Stamina points, and +4 Health.

Drawbacks

Absent-minded (4): The character forgets facts easily and often misses important details in information or their surroundings. They suffer a -3 penalty to all Memorizing, Recollection, & Discipline (Concentration) checks, as well as a -2 penalty to Perception checks.

Addiction (4): The character is addicted to some type of drug, including alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or cocaine. They are beyond the days when it was new and exciting and now need the drug for normal daily functioning. Most drugs cause debilitating and harmful effects to the body, also taking either -2 Stamina points or -3 Health (player's choice). As long as the character gets a daily (or hourly in the case of smoking) dosage, they can function normally. If they go a day without their drug, they become jittery and suffer a -3 penalty to all rolls. A few more days and that penalty doubles. If they go a week, they face withdrawal and will do anything to get the drug, even injuring their comrades. They can make a Tough (30) INS + Discipline check against Addiction (Insanity) at intervals decided by the GM.

Bad Reputation (1-5): The character has a reputation for something bad, whether deserved or note. This includes personality traits, such as traitorous snitch, highly dangerous, completely incompetent, or liability. It may apply to being horrible at an occupation, such as being someone that crashed a plane, or very good at a controversial occupation, like an abortion doctor. BP gained from the Bad Reputation Drawback represents how far this reputation has spread.

(1) In a specific social circle
(2) Citywide
(3) Statewide
(4) Countrywide
(5) Worldwide

Big Mouth (2): The character has difficulty keeping their mouth shut and has a tendency to blurt out everything on their mind. This could be a sarcastic statement, an inappropriate joke in the face of danger, or a damaging secret. They must make a Moderate (20) IQ + Discipline check to avoid speaking their mind at the wrong time.

Bleeder (3): The character has a family history of hemophilia or they are often struck in weak spots. They take 5 (L) damage per Round of Bleeding (instead of 3 (L)). They also suffer a -4 penalty against Shock. See Bleeding/Shock on page 76 for more information.

Blind (6): The character either has no eyes or their eyes no longer work. They automatically fail any rolls

involving sight and suffer the -15 penalty to combat rolls. See Blindfighting on page 75.

Combat Fear (1-5): The character is not paralyzed with fear, but they freeze easily in combat. For each BP, they suffer a -2 penalty to their Initiative.

Compulsion (3): The character has a compulsion to perform a specific action. This includes kleptomania, pyromania, having to line up their silverware before eating, or counting sidewalk cracks as they walk. They can make a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check against Compulsion (Insanity) to avoid it for an instance.

Curious (2): The character has an insatiable hunger to know everything about everybody and everything. If someone is whispering, they just have to know what is being said. If presented with a button, they can't wait to see what it does. They can attempt an INS + Discipline check against Compulsion (Insanity) to keep from giving into their curiosity. GMs determine the Difficulty based on the motivation's strength.

Deep Sleeper (2): The character needs at least nine hours of sleep per day to function and feel rested (instead of the normal seven hours). Exhaustion checks from sleep are needed without at least seven hours of sleep. See Sleep rules on page 33. **Note:** Spectrals do not sleep.

Disfigured (4): The character is hideously scarred from a car accident, fire, birth defect, or other horrible fate. Social checks that involve appearance automatically fail unless the target has a very open mind. Conversations over the phone work fine, but most face-to-face deals have a problem. Cannot be taken with Unattractive. Spectrals must have Manifestation 2+ to take Disfigured.

Enemy (1-5): The character has acquired another's ire and made an enemy. The Enemy rating represents the danger they present. **Note:** Not all enemies go for physical attacks. Some attack one's job, livelihood, or reputation before ever throwing a punch.

(1) Rowdy neighbor that sends his dog to crap in their yard or other things to annoy

(2) Enemy that goes out of the way to stop the character's progress

(3) Someone with connections that can cause trouble with the law or another source

(4) Rival with a bad temper that fights any time the meet, even seeking them out on occasion

(5) A crime boss with a hit out on the character

Graceless (1-5): The character is naturally clumsy and loses their balance easily. This Gift gives a -2 penalty to Balance checks per BP spent.

Illegal (2): The character is an unregistered demon or a member of an illegal race. If caught or questioned while doing something illegal or remotely magical, there are dire consequences from API. This Drawback is required to play as a Carrier, Oracle, or Tark. See Antagonists on page 170 for more information.

Illiterate (2): The character can speak their starting language, but lack the ability to read, maybe from a learning disability or isolation in their early life. Either way, they cannot read.

Indebted (2): The character has no money to their name. They are often homeless, living on the streets or mooching from friends and family. They are not only dirt poor, but they've maxed out every credit card and even loan sharks can't find a reason to work with them. If they happen upon a windfall, someone's always looking for payment that they are owed.

Lecherous (2): The character always on the prowl for sex, often coming off as creepy. They suffer a -2 penalty to CHM checks with someone that they find physically attractive, having a hard time paying attention to the conversation when their mind lingers on sex. They also suffer a -4 penalty to resist Persuasion (Seduction).

Lifesaver (3): The character cannot stand the sight of another in pain, even if they caused it themselves. They also cannot resist helping someone in need, even if their better judgment would tell them to do otherwise. They can attempt a Tough (30) INS + Discipline check against Compulsion (Insanity), but few bother to resist doing the "right thing".

Magic Addict (3): Magic is akin to an addictive drug for some adepts. Some start to lean on magic too often, which can leave them drained at times. When the adept has a problem that can be solved with a spell they currently know, they feel the urge to use it, no matter how easily done by hand. They can attempt a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check against Compulsion (Insanity) to resist. In a show of being grandiose, they also use the highest level spell appropriate. For instance, the Skeleton Key spell could easily be used to open a door, but they would choose Summon Path to make the whole area conform to their will instead.

Magic Restriction (2): The character has no mystical energy within and cannot use magic as described in the Magic chapter on page 80. They cannot open their Inner Circles or purchase spells of any kind. They can still participate in group castings from a scroll or tome, but must spend 3 Stamina points per Mana (instead of 2). They also suffer a -1 penalty to their Magic Resistance checks.

Minority (1): The character is part of a minority that is looked down upon, including Black people, Latinos, Gays & Lesbians, hippies, or modern primitives. This Drawback should only be taken if it applies to the location they

spend the majority of their time. For instance, an openly gay character in San Francisco would not benefit from this Drawback.

Obese (4): The character is so overweight that it impairs their normal movement. They suffer a -10 penalty to all Athletics and Acrobatics checks and -5 Movement. All physical actions require +1 Stamina point, and they lose 2 Stamina points per Round of combat (instead of 1). They also receive a +10 bonus on checks where weight is an advantage, like tackling, pinning, or ramming.

One arm (4): With only one arm, the character's lifting weight is equal to their carrying weight (instead of double). They may still attempt a Lifting check to lift more. See Lifting/Carrying on page 32. They also suffer a -3 penalty to Parry and Grapple checks.

One-eye (4): With only one eye, the character suffers a -4 penalty to sight-based Perception checks. Due to their loss of depth perception, they also suffer a -2 penalty to all combat rolls.

Paraplegic (6): The character has lost the use of his legs and requires a wheelchair (Cost: 2) to move around. Their Movement is equal to their POW as they push with their arms. Some wheelchairs are motorized, but seldom reach high speeds.

Phobia (3): The character is frightfully afraid of something (i.e. slithery snakes, towering heights, piercing dark). When faced with their phobia, they must make a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline (Fear) check or react in a hysterically scared fashion. They may fall to the crowd in a fetal position, lash out violently, or simply run away.

Poor Hygiene (1-5): The character doesn't take care of themselves or may have a glandular condition that causes poor hygiene. They often smell or secrete from their skin no matter how often they bathe. For each BP, they suffer a -1 penalty to CHM checks that involve looks, etiquette, or general presence. Trackers receive a +2 bonus to their Survival (Tracking) check to find them. Cannot be taken by Spectrals.

Poor Senses (2 or 5): For 2 BP, the character has one slightly dulled sense (sight, hearing, touch, or smell/taste) and suffer a -3 penalty to all Perception checks with that sense. This penalty can be negated with corrective assistance, like prescription glasses or a hearing aid. For 5 BP, they suffer a -7 penalty to their sense (hearing, smell/taste, or touch) that cannot be corrected. See the Blind Drawback for sight loss.

Scrawny (1-5): The character is smaller and weaker than average. They lose -3 Health per BP gained.

Shy (2): The character is shy around people or large crowds and suffers a -3 penalty to all Persuasion (Oratory) checks. This also applies to interactions with someone they may have feelings for or those in a higher station (Rank) than themselves.

Sickly (1-5): The character is thin and more susceptible to disease or infection than average. They suffer a -1 penalty to Fortitude checks and lose -1 Health per BP.

Skill Deficient (3): There is a skill that the character just cannot understand and it has caused issues in their life. They suffer a -4 penalty to all checks involving this skill and its skill level is capped at 4 levels (just enough to get rid of their penalty). This cannot be applied to Fighting or Weapon Style skills.

Slow Healer (4): The character's cells replenish at a slower pace and they regain less Health. This Drawback slows their healing to 2 (NL) per hour of rest and 1 (NL) per hour of light activity or 2 (L) per day of rest and 1 (L) per day or light activity. Taylari being with this Drawback.

Speech Impediment (2): Something stops the character from speaking correctly, including slurs, lisps, stutters, or indecipherable accents. They suffer a -4 penalty to rolls involving the spoken word, such as appealing to a group of preps, learning to speak a new language, or giving commands to an animal.

Unattractiveness (1-5): The character is just less attractive than others. They may have eyes too wide apart, patches of bald, a strangely-shaped nose, a uni-brow, or anything else imaginable. For each BP, they suffer a -2 penalty to CHM checks involving looks. Cannot be taken by Changelings and Spectrals must have Manifestation 2+ to take Unattractive. Cannot be taken with Disfigured.

Unlucky (3): Once per session, the GM can force the reroll of a Natural 20. If they roll another Natural 20, it is still a success, but is not a Critical Success. If they roll a Natural 1, the event should be disastrous, likely dealing damage to themselves or a friend.

Ward (3): The character has someone they must protect. This could be a child or weaker person that actually requires extra attention, like guarding the governor's daughter, defending their own child, or looking after a mentally-challenged sibling.

Weak Attribute (5): The character has a natural weakness in their fundamental abilities. They may lack their sense of self, physical power, or social graces. One of their Attributes cost double. So, level 1-8 costs two Attribute points and level 9-10 cost four Attribute points.

Weak-willed (1-5): They character is particularly susceptible to attacks on their mind and courage. They suffer

a -2 penalty to Discipline checks for resistance and has -1 Stamina point per BP gained.

Weak Stomach (2): The character becomes nauseous easily when faced with blood, body parts, or other gross or scary things. They must make a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check or they immediately vomit and have to leave the scene or continue to dry heave constantly. Even if their check succeeds, they suffer a -3 penalty to all rolls while around the stimulus.

Equipment

As more people strive for the entrepreneurial spirit, the number and variety of available items increases. Depending on story location, there may be a store that sells anything one would want, from watches to big & tall clothes to rare meats. This chapter provides more information on using Wealth (See the Wealth Gift on page 49), as well as the equipment that it can be used to buy.

Using Wealth

The Dynamic Gaming System (DGS) handles Wealth differently from some roleplaying games. Instead of keeping track of the character's pennies, purchasing every single item separately or keeping grocery lists of equipment, their Wealth score determines what they can "reasonably" purchase, own, or carry. For instance, Wealth 1 could reasonably allow them to own items like a knife, bed roll, or personal journal. They don't need to subtract anything from their Wealth score, as the DGS does not calculate each individual dollar. They can certainly record this on an equipment list as something they are carrying, but only if it applies to their concept. They need only have the appropriate Wealth score and state they would like to purchase the item. Most shop owners simply hand over the item in exchange for the money. There are times when ample Persuasion (Haggling) may be needed if the character does not have the Wealth score needed. They may try to find out the seller's weak spot, whether it be threats or a bribe for other services (i.e. protection or sexual favors).

Combined Wealth

Characters have the option of combining their Wealth scores for big buys. Three friends may decide to open up a cyber-doc shop and need the proper tools that are Cost: 4. If each of them had Wealth that added up to 4, they could purchase the item as a whole. This would, of course, leave them all broke until their next monthly allowance.

Credit

Some characters are horrible at spending money and may overextend themselves. They can purchase an item that is up to two higher than their present Wealth score with GM's approval, but suffer -1Wealth for the next three months of game time (or six months if the item cost Wealth 4+). This represents taking out a bank loan, applying for credit cards, or visiting a loan shark.

Item List

The items listed below are mostly tools that affect checks or rare items unique to Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. See Tools on page 37 for more information.

Agent-ID

Durability: 5, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** API-Issued

Description: A special voice-activated ID wallet. When showing identification, the user can speak a number (1-5) and the wallet shows one from five pre-selected identities, including name, weight, classifications. Their badge also changes to match the credentials, allowing the agent to appear as FBI, health inspector, or a police officer and have proof.

Blood Beer

Durability: 1, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** 2

Description: Taylari can survive without taking human lives. Some work in blood banks, others hit up butchers for leftovers, and others know about the underground vampire beverage: Blood Beer. It's not exactly cheap and is highly sought after. "This blood's for you" has become its unofficial motto. Blood Beer comes in a standard six-pack and Taylari regain 2 Health per can.

Camouflage Gear

Durability: N/A, **Size:** 2, **Cost:** 2

Description: Clothing specifically designed for stealth missions in jungles, forests, or other areas. They can be any color, but are usually shades of green for wooded areas, shades of brown for deserts, or completely white for snowy terrain. This suit provides a +3 bonus to Stealth checks in the correct environment.

Climbing Gear

Durability: 5 (AR 2/0), **Size:** 3, **Cost:** 3

Description: Climbing gear includes lengths of rope, hooks, harnesses, and even climbing grips to make even the steepest mountain easy to climb. This gear provides a +4 bonus to Athletics (Climb) checks.

Cyber-doc Equipment

Durability: 10 (AR 5/5), **Size:** 4, **Cost:** 4

Description: Certain tools are absolutely required for a cyber-doc to perform effectively, including specially-designed drills, wrenches, and other hardware for cybernetic parts, as well as medical equipment to ensure safety for the human anatomy.

Dampening Cuffs

Durability: 12 (AR 8/8), **Size:** 1, **Cost:** API-Issued

Description: A highly-used item use to transport adepts between API facilities. While wearing these cuffs,

API Agent Wealth & Equipment

Wealth reflects personal income that an agent can spend as they please, including personal savings, inheritance, or a side-business they may run. API does not expect agents to fund their own missions or buy their own equipment. There are acquisition forms to fill out and a number of special items can be obtained without using the agent's own money. This works on a mission-by-mission basis, where the agents return the equipment when their missions are complete.

they cannot cast magic. Any Mana created is immediately absorbed by the cuffs.

Demon Translator

Durability: 5, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** API-Issued

Description: Looking similar to a Bluetooth earpiece, this highly-advanced translator is loaded with hundreds of common demon languages. After hearing a demon speak, the earpiece translates their words into a language understandable by the API agent. **Note:** Does not work if the language is unknown on Earth.

Ectoplasmic Reorganizer

Durability: 4, **Size:** 2, **Cost:** API-Issued

Description: Spectrals are normally stuck with how they looked when they died. The Ectoplasmic Reorganizer, looking similar to a landmine that spreads light upward, has the power to reorganize a ghost's death particles. This item allows a spirit to change their appearance, but is used sparingly, as it is still experimental.

Faerie Foam Gun

Durability: 2, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** API-Issued

Description: This looks like a large water gun with purple liquid inside. When the liquid makes contact, it explodes into a patch of foam about 1 ft. in diameter. This weapon was designed to rid oneself of a faerie infestation, as the foam kills them instantly, but can easily be used on rats and other rodents as well.

First-Aid Kit

Durability: 4, **Size:** 3, **Cost:** 2-3

Description: Most Medicine checks are made in a lab or office where conditions are suited for stitching wounds or administering medication. A well-prepared medic has a first-aid kit along in case of emergencies (i.e. in their bag or car trunk). Having the right tools provides a +2 to +4 bonus to Medicine checks for emergency field medicine.

Gasmask

Durability: 6 (4/1), **Size:** 2, **Cost:** 2-3

Description: The gasmask filters airflow. If the air is polluted with hazards like teargas, poison gas, or a harmful stench, the wearer is not affected. If poison does happen to get through, the dosage is so small that the wearer receives a +5 bonus to resist.

Image Emitter

Durability: 8 (3/3), Size: 1, Cost: 4 or API-Issued

Description: This item resembles a wristwatch and makes the wearer appear as another person or species through holographic technology. It is a common tool for demon agents to appear human or for undercover humans posing as demons for their mission. While the device only changes their appearance, a person's rational mind makes them believe what they see (the other sense are another story). A human that shakes hands with a Loch in disguise still feels a leathery, webbed hand. The Image Emitter may be provided to Legal demons that look inhuman, so they may live "regular" lives on Earth. They can also rarely be found on the Black market for Illegal demons that have use for them. It is water-resistant, but not water-proof.

Lock Picks

Durability: 1, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** 0-4

Description: To use the Legerdemain Skill to pick locks, a character needs at least a simple lock picking kit. Crudely-made picks may give a -3 penalty, while master-class picks give a +5 bonus to their check.

Mace/Pepper Spray

Durability: 6, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** 2

Description: Mace and Pepper spray are tools for self-defense, but are not classified as weapons. Sprayed in the face, it temporarily and partially blinds the target, giving a -7 penalty to all sight-related and combat rolls, from disorientation and pain. Most opponents are subdued outright, needing no further fighting.

Make-up Kit

Durability: 4, **Size:** 2, **Cost:** 1-3

Description: This tool kit includes wigs, make-up, contacts, false eye-lashes, and other items to create a great disguise. Depending on the make-up quality, fully-stocked kits provide a +1 to +4 bonus to Deception (Disguise) checks.

Nightvision Goggles

Durability: 10, **Size:** 2, **Cost:** 3-5

Description: Nightvision goggles are important for night missions. It removes range penalties from darkness. Some are telescopic as well, providing an additional +2 bonus to ranged attacks. Due to its narrowed focus, the character is -3 to all close combat checks while wearing.

Scuba Gear

Durability: 12 (4/2), **Size:** 5, **Cost:** 2-4

Description: Scuba gear includes the oxygen/air tank, flippers, wet suit, and breathing apparatus. All together, it allows for undersea adventure. Characters must have Athletics 4+ to take advantage of this equipment.

Silencer
Durability: 6, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** 3

Description: A long cylinder, attached to a firearm to muffle (not entirely mute) the sound of firing. It does not otherwise affect the gun's performance. A character firing a silenced gun while hiding need not make additional Stealth checks to continue hiding.

Sonic Memory Scrambler
Durability: 10, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** API-Issued

Description: This item uses sonic technology and sound vibrations to lull a target into a hypnotic state, ready for hypnotic suggestion. Agent can then change their memory of recent events or plant urges for their next actions. No roll is needed under normal circumstances. However, the GM can decide to give the target a Tough (30) INS + Discipline check against this suggestion, leaving more powerful minds unchanged. It cannot be used in combat, as it is not conducive to resting their mind to accept suggestion. This standard-issued device is the size and shape of a #2 pencil, has a range of 50 ft, and can effect up to five people at one time. Agents wear issued ear plugs to negate any effects on themselves.

Example: *"This was not an attack from a multi-armed wendigo; it was just another fox trying to eat your chickens. You're going to buy a big dog this time to make sure that darn fox doesn't come back".*

Telescopic Sight
Durability: 4, **Size:** 1, **Cost:** 3

Description: When attached to a gun, this item provides 8x zoom capabilities and reduces penalties to Targeted strikes by 4. When combined with an Aim Action, a telescopic sight can be truly deadly. See Range Combat on page 70 for more information.

Toolkits
Durability: 12 (5/5), **Size:** 3, **Cost:** 2-5

Description: There are many toolkit types, from automotive toolkits to carpenter toolkits. Having the proper toolkit for the job adds a +3 to +5 bonus to Craft checks, depending on their quality (Cost).

Melee Weapon List

Ax (Small): Otherwise known as a hatchet or tomahawk. It's light weight and easily wielded with one hand. This weapon is great for cutting rope, throwing, and scalping.

Ax (Large): Akin to a fire ax and others around that size. It is usually wielded two-handed, but can be used with one hand at a -4 penalty to Strike and Parry.

Ax (Great): A larger weapon with a three-foot handle and a huge double-ax blade at the end. It must be wielded with two hands. Possible improvised weapons include a traffic sign at the end of a post.

Chain: To be a weapon, a chain needs to be at least ten feet long and two to three inches in width. The key is constantly swinging the chain between attacks to maintain momentum and control. Possible improvised weapons include really thick rope or lasso.

Chainsaw: A tool used to cut trees. There is no weapon style for a chainsaw, so it always counts as an Improvised weapon (See page 68). It inflicts damage normally, but also uses pseudo-Grapple rules, forcing the fighters to make opposed POW + Grappling checks. If the attacker wins, the chainsaw stays in place and does damage again. If the victim wins, they throw the chainsaw wielder off and have the opportunity to run or continue fighting. Damage dealt is Lethal, so it doesn't take much to invoke Bleeding and Shock checks. If the chainsaw wielder wins two or more times, it may cut through the victim or remove a limb. Chainsaws are nasty.

Club (Wood): A wooden club, like a baseball bat. Possible improvised weapons include a 2x4.

Club (Metal): Metal baseball bats and archaic maces fall under this category. The end of a mace may be a stone to crush opponents or even a spiked ball. Possible improvised weapons include metal pipes.

Knife: Knives are one of the deadliest weapons, due to its size and quickness. It is favored by silent killers. Improvised weapons include kitchen knives or a piece of ragged metal with duct tape for a handle.

Knuckles (Brass): A wrapping of brass over the fighter's fingers, making punches powerful. It does not require a Weapon Style to use. Possible improvised weapons include a palmed roll of quarters.

Knuckles (Claw): A specially-designed weapon, it is a blade with a horizontal handle instead of a normal hilt. It allows the user to throw deadlier hand attacks. They are not commonplace, usually special-ordered, and built to fit the user's hand.

Nunchaku: Weapons made from two wooden (or metal) handles attached by a chain in the middle. Wielded with a fast-moving barrage of movement, they are hard to control, but truly deadly in the right hands.

Sledgehammer: A large, two-handed hammer, called a war hammer in archaic times. It is heavy, making it difficult to wield and slow to strike. It delivers immense damage.

Spear: Very similar to a staff, a spear is a long weapon with a bladed edge at the end. It is very deadly when used properly

Staff: Also called a quarterstaff or bo. It's a length of wood that gives the fighter range against their opponent. It strikes hard, delivering many blows at once and is hard to break. Any long, sturdy cylindrical object can be used as an improvised staff.

Sword (Rapier): A thin, lightweight sword, often used in fencing style combat. Its real damage comes from stabbing, not slashing, and takes years to master.

Sword (Standard): The sword (or katana) used around the world. Blades are roughly longer than two feet long, but each different culture designs differently. Some have curves, while others have hooks or extra ridges. Master-crafted swords may have +5 Durability, but requires +1 Wealth to purchase.

Sword (Broad): Wielded by only the strongest warriors, these swords have blades and hilts twice as long as other swords. They must be wielded with two hands.

Whip: Four to eight feet long and gives optimal range in combat. It causes debilitating pain with each strike, invoking a cumulative -1 penalty to the target's combat checks for 1 Round.

Ranged Weapon List

Assault Rifle: Standard firearm for most modern day armies, largely replacing the traditional rifle. It is wielded using two hands and has capable of auto-fire. ***Example:*** *AK-47.*

Boomerang: Created as weapons before they were toys. With timing and quickness, a boomerang can easily win a decisive battle. And if it misses, it comes back.

Bow: Several bows exist, from those made from sticks and twine to composite bows made for optimal range. The character's POW behind the pull and their AGY for reloading are important.

Melee Weapon Values

Name	Speed	Stamina	Damage	Type	Size	Cost	Special
Ax (Small)	+2	+1	+2 (L)	Ax	2	1	N/A
Ax (Large)	+3	+2	+3 (L)	Ax	3	2	N/A
Ax (Great)	+4	+3	+4 (L)	Ax	4	3	N/A
Chain	+3	+1	+3 (NL)	Chain	2	N/A	Reach of 10 Feet
Chainsaw	+5	+3	+8 (L)	N/A	3	2	See Description
Club (Wood)	+2	+1	+2 (NL)	Club	2	N/A	
Club (Metal)	+2	+2	+3 (NL)	Club	2	2	
Knife	+1	+1	+0 (L)	Knife	1	1	
Knuckles (Brass)	+0	+0	+1 (NL)	N/A	1	1	
Knuckles (Claw)	+1	+0	+1 (L)	N/A	1	2	
Nunchaku	+2	+1	+2 (NL)	Chain	2	2	
Sledgehammer	+3	+3	+5 (NL)	Club	3	2	
Spear	+3	+1	+2 (L)	Staff	3	1	Reach of 10 Feet
Staff	+3	+1	+3 (NL)	Staff	3	1	Reach of 6 Feet
Sword (Rapier)	+0	+1	+1 (L)	Sword	2	2	
Sword (Standard)	+2	+1	+2 (L)	Sword	2	2	+5 Durability for Master-crafted
Sword (Broad)	+3	+2	+3 (L)	Sword	3	3	
Whip	+0	+1	+1 (NL)	Chain	2	1	Reach of 15 ft, Invokes Pain

Speed: Speed added to Actions taken with the weapon
Stamina: Stamina point cost added to Actions taken with the weapon
Damage: Value added to Base Damage dealt
Type: Weapon Style needed to avoid -4 penalty
Size: 1 – Can be hidden in Hand, **2** – Can be hidden in coat, **3+** - Cannot be hidden. Wielders suffer a -2 penalty to all combat rolls unless their POW is equal to or higher than twice the weapon's Size
Cost: Minimum Wealth needed to buy the weapon
Special: Additional effects from the weapon

Crossbow: A bow turned into a gun, able to shoot arrow-like projectiles called bolts. The crossbow can be very accurate, but it's slow to reload.

Javelin: This pointed throwing spear was first used by jungle dwellers to strike prey from yards away. A good throwing arm is optimal.

Machine Gun: Can be wielded with two hands or mounted. It fires dozens of bullets per second using auto-fire and is as deadly as they come. Designed to be used by a single solider, but may require carriers or assistants, depending on how much other equipment they have. ***Example:*** *MP40, M1919.*

Pistol (Light): Handgun that uses a clip for easy reloading. The light pistol is a small and covert. ***Example:*** *Glock 17.*

Pistol (Heavy): Like a light pistol, but is larger and capable of more damage. ***Example:*** *Colt M1911A1.*

Revolver (Light): Handgun that holds up to 6 bullets in a revolving cylinder. The light revolver is light, cheap and a common gun. ***Example:*** *Colt M1889.*

Revolver (Heavy): Like light revolver, only it uses higher caliber bullets, giving it more stopping power. Do you feel lucky, punk? ***Example:*** *Smith & Wesson 500.*

Rifle: The best gun for firing at a target at a distance. There is little this gun cannot hit with a telescopic scope (Page 54). The user suffers a -10 penalty to Strike if fired in close combat. ***Example:*** *M1903 Springfield.*

Shotgun: Especially designed to dealing a lot of damage to a wide area. It fires buckshot that sprays and hits

Ranged Weapon Values

Weapon Type	Speed	Stamina	Damage	Range	Payload	RS	Type	Size	Cost
Assault Rifle*	2	2	5 (L)	100/200/300	35	3	Firearm	3	3
Boomerang	3	1	+1 (NL)	20/40/60	N/A	N/A	Thrown	2	1
Bow	3	1	+3 (L)	25/50/100	N/A	11-AGY	Archery	2	2
Crossbow	5	3	8 (L)	50/100/200	1	10	Archery	2	2
Javelin	5	2	+3 (L)	30/55/80	N/A	N/A	Thrown	3	1
Machine Gun	2	3	6 (L)	50/100/150	100	8	Firearm	3	3
Pistol (Lt.)	2	0	4 (L)	20/40/60	12	3	Firearm	1	3
Pistol (Heavy)	2	1	8 (L)	25/50/75	8	3	Firearm	1	3
Revolver (Lt.)**	3	0	6 (L)	20/40/60	6	2/Bullet	Firearm	1	2
Revolver (Heavy)**	3	1	10 (L)	30/60/90	5	2/Bullet	Firearm	1	2
Rifle	5	1	20 (L)	200/400/600	8	5	Firearm	3	2
Shotgun	4	2	15 (L)	10/20/30	6	2/Shell	Firearm	2	2
Sling	4	1	+2 (NL)	15/30/50	N/A	6-AGY	Archery	1	N/A
Sling Shot	3	1	+2 (NL)	25/50/100	N/A	8-AGY	Archery	2	1
SMG (Small)*	1	2	4 (L)	15/30/50	40	4	Firearm	2	3
SMG (Large)*	1	3	6 (L)	20/40/80	60	4	Firearm	3	3

Speed: The Speed of firing the weapon
Stamina: The Stamina point cost for firing the weapon, automatically takes recoil and kickback into account.
Damage: Damage dealt by weapon. Only bows and thrown weapons add to Base damage.
Range: Short/Medium/Long range values in yards. Medium -4 penalty to Strike. Long -8 penalty to Strike.
Payload: Number of shots before the weapon needs a reload. N/A for bows and thrown weapons.
Reload speed (RS): Speed of reloading weapon to full Payload.
Type: Weapon Style needed to avoid -4 penalty
Size: 1 – Can be hidden in Hand, **2** – Can be hidden in coat, **3+** - Cannot be hidden. Wielders suffer a -2 penalty to all combat rolls unless their POW is equal to or higher than twice the Size of the weapon
Cost: Minimum Wealth needed to buy the weapon
*** Auto-fire capable - ** RS 2 Total w/Fast Reloader**

Ammo

For simplicity, buying ammo requires the same Wealth score required to buy the weapon. Availability is a whole other issue. See Tight Gun Controls on page 120.

the intended target, as well as others within five feet. If the end is sawed off, it spreads even wider. ***Example:*** *Remington 1100.*

Sling: By placing a stone in the clothe sling and spinning it, the fighter can launch it at just their target with great accuracy. Takes some practice.

Sling Shot: The evolution of the sling and the bow, used to fire small stones or marble-type ammo. Sling shots have farther range than slings.

SMG (Small): Small, hand-sized gun, capable of firing many bullets in seconds. It has much less kickback than larger versions. ***Example:*** *Uzi.*

SMG (Large): Like small SMG, but fires higher caliber bullets. Usually held with two hands, but can be wielded with one at a -4 penalty. ***Example:*** *CAR-15.*

Breaking Objects

When the opponent is not made of flesh, this generally falls under "Breaking object" rules. It may be a cyborg with machine parts, a killer robot, or a door that must be busted down. Objects have the following statistics:

Durability (Dur): The object's "Health". When the item's Durability is brought down to zero, it is broken, often utterly destroyed in the process.

Armor Rating (AR): Some objects have an Armor Rating (AR) that absorbs Non-Lethal or Lethal damage done. Their AR is based on the material used to create the object. See AR on page 74.

Size: Items at a Size 1 can be hidden in the hand. Generally, the larger the item, the more Durability it has.

Example: *Elgin sees a door that his target is hiding behind. With no tools, he has to try to knock it down by force. He performs a Strong Attack on the door inflicting 10 (NL). The door's AR absorbs 2 (NL), so he deals a total of 8 (NL). Wooden doors have 12 Durability, which means he'd need to hit it one more time to completely break it down.*

Armor

Name	AR	Hind.	Weight	Cost
Modern				
Thick clothing	1/0	0	2	0
Kevlar*	1/3	1	2	1
Flak Jacket*	2/3	2	4	2
Riot gear*	5/5	3	6	3
Archaic				
Leather	2/2	1	2	1
Chain mail	3/3	2	4	2
Scale mail	3/4	1	4	3
Full plate	4/5	4	6	4

Armor Rating (AR): Damage absorbed by the armor. First value is Non-Lethal (NL) absorbed, and the second is Lethal (L) absorbed.
*** denotes Bulletproof.** AR absorbs (L) from firearms, and then converts remaining damage to (NL).
Hindrance: Restriction of armor. Value is applied as a -1 penalty to all physical and combat rolls.
Weight: Weight of armor. POW must be equal to or higher, or the character suffers an additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
Cost: The Wealth required to buy the armor.

Name	Dur	Size
Baseball Bat	6 (AR 2/2)	2
Chain	5 (AR 10/10)	2-3
Chair (Wooden)	6 (AR 3/3)	4
Coffin	10 (AR 1/1)	7
Door (Metal)	25 (AR 12/12) per inch	6
Door (Wooden)	12 (AR 2/1)	5
Fence (Chain-link)	10 (AR 8/4)	6
Pistol	15 (AR 10/15)	1
Manhole Cover	20 (AR 12/10)	3
Rope	4 (AR 3/0)	2
Steel Bars	30 (AR 10/10) per inch	2
Stone Wall	15 (AR 8/8) per inch	Varies
Sword	20 (AR 6/6)	2
Window	10 (AR 3/3)	3 (Avg)
Window (Reinforced)	18 (AR 5/5)	3 (Avg)

Cybernetic Implants

Cybernetic implants are very powerful, even rivaling magic in some instances, but they bring their own set of drawbacks. First, the emotional ramifications of the character melding their flesh with metal can be quite traumatic for some cyborgs. See Cybernetics on page 133 for more information.

Second, purchasing implants requires a Wealth score equal to the BP cost of the implant, including Credit rules for characters that overextend themselves to afford more expensive implants. This signifies how expensive these implants really are. Upgrades are purchased at half the Wealth requirement & BP cost (rounded up).

Third, they need to be careful that they are purchasing authentic implants. Sometimes, they are receiving real, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. implants. Other times, they are getting jury-rigged or third-party (such as Endotech Industries) implants that could use faulty parts. For one less BP cost (to a minimum of BP 1), they can get these aftermarket parts, but also suffer one of the penalties below (GMs choice):

- A -3 penalty to all their rolls when using the implant
- Must roll 1d20 each day, with a roll of 1-4 meaning that the implant does not function for 24 hours
- Rusts easily, causing sickness and subtracting 3 Stamina points per hour the contamination lasts
- Any roll of a 1 when using the implant causes 5 (L) to the cyborg from internal glitches

Finally, cybernetic medical procedures require a very skilled practitioner, as the Difficulty for each transplant is typically Tough (30) or higher, depending on the conditions. A fully sterilized and fully stocked API facility may give up to a +5 bonus to the check, while a back alley cyber-doc may suffer a -5 penalty from any number of possible complications (i.e. lack of cleanliness or actual skill). A failed check may mean the subject loses their limb, gains a permanent disfigurement, or even dies, like many unlucky patients.

Damage dealt to a cyborg is still subtracted from their total Health, unless the implant is directly targeted.

Vehicles

Acceleration

For simplicity, vehicles in the DGS all accelerate at 10 MPH (15 ft.) per round. That's 1 MPH (1.5 ft.) per second. For a more cinematic effect, the GM may choose to increase, decrease, or simply ignore these numbers. This excludes bicycles that use the character's POW to move and scooters that accelerate half as fast as other vehicles.

Collisions & Damage

When vehicles collide with something (or someone), but is moving below its Cruising speed, it deals their Lethal AR value in Non-lethal damage. ***Example:*** *An SUV as AR 20/10. If it strikes a person moving below Cruising speed, they would take 10 (NL).*

If the vehicle is moving over their Cruising speed, but not within 20 MPH of their Top speed, they deal twice their Lethal AR value in Lethal damage. ***Example:*** *A compact car (with AR 15/9) traveling at 65 MPH would deal 18 (L) to anything it hit.*

If the vehicle is traveling within 20 MPH of their Top speed or higher, it inflicts three times their Lethal AR values in Lethal damage. ***Example:*** *A Mack truck (AR 30/20) moving at 90 MPH would deal 60 (L) to anything it hit.*

Running Vehicle Chases

It's actually recommended to be as loose with rules during a chase as possible. Use common sense regarding speed and drama. But it's all about the thrill and the characters, not the car.

Vehicle Values

Cruising Speed (CS): Speed in Miles per hour (MPH) and feet per round (10 sec). Above Cruising speed, characters get a -5 penalty to Vehicle Operation checks.

Top Speed (TS): The fastest speed the car can travel.

Maneuverability (Man): Bonuses or penalties to Vehicle Operation checks, based on handling.

Durability (Dur): Amount of damage it can take before breaking down. Also lists Armor Rating (AR).

Cost: The Wealth score needed to buy the vehicle.

Bicycle: CS 6 MPH (88), **TS** 15 MPH (221), **Acceleration:** 1/2 MPH (7) per level of POW, **Man:** +4, **Dur:** 20 (AR 4/2), **Cost:** 1

Scooter: CS 25: MPH (368), **TS**: 40 MPH (589), **Man:** +5, **Dur:** 30 (AR 4/3), **Cost:** 1

Motorcycle (Crotch rocket): CS: 80 (1178), **TS**: 210 (3092), **Man:** +10, **Dur:** 35 (AR 8/4), **Cost:** 2

Motorcycle (Muscle): CS: 60 (883), **TS**: 155 (2282), **Man:** +4, **Dur:** 42 (AR 10/7), **Cost:** 3

Compact Car: CS: 60 (883), **TS**: 120 (1767), **Man:** +5, **Dur:** 65 (AR 15/9), **Cost:** 3

SporTS Car: CSL 75 (1104), **TS**: 180 (2650), **Man:** +8, **Dur:** 60 (AR 10/8), **Cost:** 5

SUV: **CS**: 60 (883), **TS**: 155 (2282), **Man:** -4, **Dur:** 75 (AR 20/10), **Cost:** 4

Minivan: CS: 55 (810), **TS**: 150 (2208), **Man:** -8, **Dur:** 70 (AR 20/10), **Cost:** 3

Van: CS: 50 (736), **TS**: 140 (2061), **Man:** -10, **Dur:** 72 (AR 22/10), **Cost:** 3-4

Truck: CS: 65 (957), **TS**: 165 (2429), **Man:** -8, **Dur:** 80 (AR 25/15), **Cost:** 3-4

Mack Truck: CS: 45 (663), **TS**: 100 (1472), **Man:** -15, **Dur:** 100 (AR 30/20), **Cost:** 4

API Cyborgs

Cyborgs that work for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. have an advantage over other characters trying to finance their own implants. Agents have access to "free" implants, including free experimental upgrades and regular maintenance. In exchange, they serve API as an agent, using their implants to protect the Earth. API Cyborgs need only pay the BP cost for their implants, without a specific Wealth score requirement.

API cyborgs usually don't realize that their company-supplied implants contain tracking beacons and status readers. These allow the company to detect the location and condition of the implant at all times. Those hoping to dupe API and run off with implants quickly find that they have no place to hide.

Durability ratings are provided for each implant. Durability "N/A" is listed for parts housed in the body that cannot be directly targeted. Too much damage to where the implant is housed can still cause a malfunction. This list is not extensive, and the GM and players are encouraged to create new implants.

Armor Plating (2 BP)

Durability: 30 (10/10)

The skin and muscle are sliced and armor is inserted and bolted to the bone to protect the cyborg's body. This armor cannot be removed and gives Hindrance 1 for each piece.

- **Arm:** AR 5/5 to arm. Can Parry bullets at a -4 penalty.
- **Chest:** Provides AR 5/5 (Bulletproof).
- **Leg:** AR 5/5 to leg. +10 bonus against Sweep or Trip.

Armor Plating (Nanotech) (5 BP)

Durability: N/A

Intelligent nano-bots, designed specifically for protection, are injected under their skin. With a Summon Action (Speed 5, Stamina 2), the cyborg can secrete the nanotechnology through their pours to protect their body. **Bonuses:** AR 5/5 and +10 Health (Temporary). Due to the expensive price and the exclusivity of its design, only API cyborgs can possess this level of technology.

Audio Implants (3 BP)

Durability: 15 (8/8)

This implant replaces the cyborg's inner ear, often leaving them without ears at all. One upgrade is included upon purchase and the implant can be upgraded one additional time afterward.

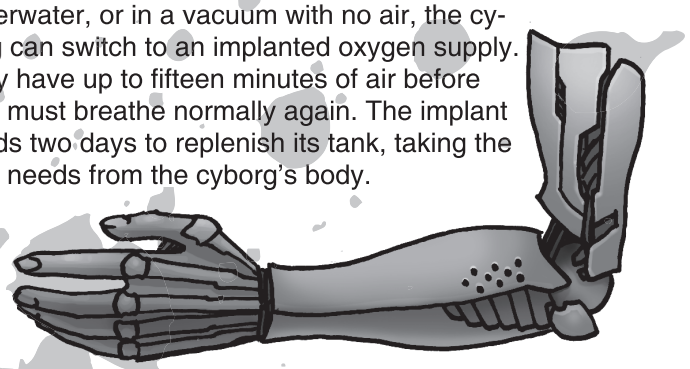
- **Audio Enhancer:** Increases their range of hearing, giving a +10 bonus to all Perception (Hearing) checks.
- **Decibel Adjuster:** They can hear all levels of the sound spectrum, from dog whistles to subliminal messages.
- **Radar Hearing:** They can pinpoint opponent positions by sound. They are now immune to Surprise attacks.
- **Radio Interceptor:** They can tap into any radio communication in the area. They could listen to cell phone calls, military airwaves, or their favorite music station at will. This can also be used to interrupt the signal and broadcast a different message.
- **Translator:** The implant is programmed with three languages and transmits translation to the brain. They receive a +5 bonus on Linguistic checks with their chosen languages.

Backups (3 BP)

Durability: N/A

They install backup resources into their body, usually by shifting or removing organs and using that space. There is only room for two backups in any body. No roll is required to activate the backup.

- **Backup Blood:** The Backup Blood container is housed inside of the cyborg's gut. They can use it to hold off the effects of Bleeding/Shock for three minutes. A Taylari can use this blood to instantly heal up to 15 Health. The implant needs two days to replenish its tank, taking the blood it needs from the cyborg's body.
- **Backup Heart:** The Backup Heart pumps along side their actual heart, aiding blood flow and adrenaline. Twice per day, they can apply a -2 Stamina point cost to any Action. They also get a +3 bonus against Death.
- **Backup Oxygen:** In areas with tainted air, underwater, or in a vacuum with no air, the cyborg can switch to an implanted oxygen supply. They have up to fifteen minutes of air before they must breathe normally again. The implant needs two days to replenish its tank, taking the air it needs from the cyborg's body.



Bionic Arm (3 BP)

Durability: 20 (10/10)

This implant replaces an arms with a bionic limb. Additional arms can be attached to their sides, each giving +1 Action per Round and +3 to Parry. Bionic arms can also be used to Parry any attack (including blades and firearms) without penalty. Each arm can have one upgrade.

- **Compartment:** A forearm compartment. Usually used to keep an extra dagger or small weapon.
- **Console:** A viewable screen that lays out system readings, their damage, or can run system diagnostics. Can be used to access the internet or watch TV as well.
- **Hand Missiles (Speed 7, Stamina 2, 10 (L)):** A mini-missile launcher stored in the forearm. The palm opens up to fire a missile barrage. Range 40/80/120, Payload 5, RS: 5. Ammo is stored in bicep.
- **Light:** Stored in the forearm, the powerful LED flashlight rises out and shines as far as 200 ft.

- **Machine Gun (Speed 4, Stamina 2, 6 (L)):** A gun stored in the forearm. The palm opens to fire bullets Range of 20/40/60, Payload 75, RS: 4, Auto-fire capable. Ammo is stored in bicep.
- **Retractable Blades (Speed +2, Stamina +1, +3 (L)):** Blades extend from the forearms over the hands. Weapon Style: Sword is still required to avoid the -4 penalty for wielding untrained. Requires no Action to draw out.
- **Strength Boost:** +10 lbs. per POW to Carrying weight, +4 to Grapple, +5 to all Lifting rolls, +1 to Base Damage, and -1 Stamina cost for Lifting.

Bionic Foot (3 BP)

Durability: 15 (8/8)

This implant replaces a foot with a bionic part or upgrades the foot of an existing bionic leg for additional abilities. Each foot includes one upgrade and cannot be further upgraded afterward.

- **Switchblade (Speed +1, Stamina +0, Damage +1 (L)):** Blades protract from foot, adding damage to kicks.
- **Rockets:** The soles open and release propulsion capable of flight up to 30 MPH. Fuel is in a condensed gel form, capable of up to 30 minutes of continuous use. All Actions while in flight are at a -5 penalty due to concentration needed. However, opponents suffer a -10 penalty to Strike the cyborg while in flight.
- **Stabilizers (Speed 2, Stamina 0):** Metal rods extend into the ground from the heel to hold the cyborg in place. One Stabilizer gives a +5 bonus against Trip, Sweep, Push, or other Actions that may knock them down of back. Two Stabilizers make them immune to these effects. Firearm kickback is lessened, reducing the Stamina cost for firearms by 1 (per Stabilizer). Activating and deactivating takes Speed 2, but do no cost an Action. Move Actions cannot be taken while using this.

Bionic Hand (3 BP)

Durability: 15 (8/8)

This implant replaces a hand with bionic parts or upgrades the hand on an existing bionic arm for extra abilities. **Note:** The hand cannot be upgraded if the Bionic Arm has upgrades that already use the hand. When purchased, it gives a +5 bonus to resist Disarm and one included upgrade. A hand can have one additional upgrade afterward.

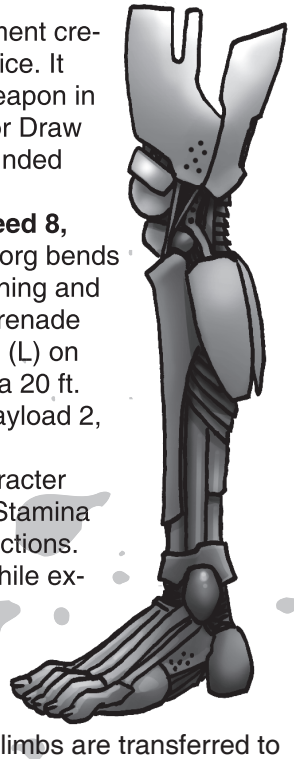
- **Camera:** The hand has a mini camera installed in one finger and can record up to 30 minutes with infrared capability and full stereo sound.
- **Claw (Speed +0, Stamina +0, +1 (L)):** Blades extend from the finger tips or knuckles, aiding in damage and slicing their opponent to shreds.
- **Detachable:** The hand can be detached and remote controlled to perform actions, appearing much like a large, metallic spider.
- **Flashlight:** A flashlight installed into the pointer finger that can shine as far as 100 ft.
- **Laser:** One finger has a small laser torch, capable of cutting through rope, thin metal, and other objects with ease. Deals 2 (L) directly to Durability, ignoring any AR.
- **Skeleton Key:** A lock pick extends from a finger, and gives a +10 bonus to Legerdemain (Pick lock) checks.

Bionic Leg (3 BP)

Durability: 20 (10/10)

The cyborg has one or both of their legs replaced with bionic limbs. Each leg replaced adds +4 Movement and +1 Damage to Rush Attacks. Each leg can be upgraded once.

- **Flexibility:** The leg is light, flexible metal with joints that can bend in any direction at will. No roll needed for contortion with the leg. It also provides a +10 bonus to Roll checks from a falling and they only take ¼ damage (instead of ½) when successful. Two flexible legs can negate damage up to 10 ft. per POW.
- **Holster:** A leg compartment created to hold a firearm of choice. It extends and provides the weapon in hand, reducing the Speed for Draw Weapon Actions by half (rounded down).
- **Grenade launcher (Speed 8, Stamina 4, 14 (L)):** The cyborg bends their leg, with the calf unlatching and swinging down to reveal a grenade launcher. One shot deals 14 (L) on impact and 7 (L) to those in a 20 ft. radius. Range 40/80/120, Payload 2, RS: N/A.
- **Speed Bonus:** The character gains +5 Movement and -1 Stamina cost for running and Move Actions. This makes them quicker, while expending less energy.



Bionic Torso (BP 4)

Durability: 25 (10/10)

The cyborg's insides and limbs are transferred to a metal torso with various tubes and pumps to keep everything working. **Bonuses:** +5 bonus against Poison, Drugs, or Diseases, +6 Health, +10 lbs. per POW to Carrying weight, and Armor 2/2. They can also purchase up to two upgrades afterward.

- **Compartment:** Storage compartment in their chest. The compartment can be sound proof and be fixed with shock absorbers to keep sensitive materials (such as combustibles) still, even if running a marathon.
- **Chest Guns (Speed 4, Stamina 2, 7 (L)):** The chest protectors open to reveal machine guns. Range of 20/40/60, Payload 100, RS: 2, Auto-fire capable.
- **Missile launchers (Speed 7, Stamina 3, 12 (L)):** Twin missile launchers rise out of their shoulders and fire at the same target. Ammunition stored in the chest. Range 40/80/120, Payload 5, RS: 5.

Melanie heard about this "special" doctor that could hook her up with all kinds of shit. She was really only into Vicodin and maybe weed or blow, but this guy supposedly had something very different. She wandered the cold, dark streets trying to find the doctor's place, eventually settling on a small, secluded alley, hidden by a cleverly-placed tarp. Inside, she saw worktables held up by books, dirt everywhere, and bits of machine parts everywhere.

Her instinct was to turn and leave, but her hunger for the drug held her in place. Then, a creepy, dirty man showed himself. He had been awaiting her arrival and removed his glasses to show off his own robotic eyes. He also knew what she was there for… an internal pump that could be used to inject drugs into the system with a thought. She became fascinated and the prospect took over her mind. He told her to lie on the table after grabbing his due payment from her bag and she only hoped that whatever he did wouldn't hurt too much. She was sorely disappointed.

He put a breathing apparatus on her face and instructed her to inhale deeply. But the gas didn't put her to sleep as she had hoped, it merely paralyzed her movement. Melanie felt every cut to her arms, her legs, her stomach and back. The incisions into her neck and her head were worst of all. She tried to scream, but couldn't move her lungs to produce more than a weak whimper. "No pain, no gain." The man said, seemingly gleeful over her agony that eventually forced her to pass out.

When she awoke, she was home and felt very different. Her pain hadn't left, but it was numbed in an instant, as soon as she thought she wanted it gone. She went from her bed to the mirror and crumbled when she saw the reflection of her naked body… covered in scars, gauze, and tubes. Was she this desperate for drugs? She realized that the answer was yes, as she released more painkillers through her tubes to get rid of her tears, of her anxiety over her new look, and eventually of her normal life.

- **Nanotech Regeneration Unit (Speed 6, Stamina Varies):** The torso releases nano-bots into the cyborg's blood stream, instantly healing 3 (NL) or 1 (L) per Stamina point spent (does not replenish for 24 hrs). The nano-bots do not repair damage to implants, only the cyborg's flesh parts.
- **Self-destruct:** A mechanism set to explode if they die, hopefully taking out their opponents in the process. The explosion also destroys the cyborg's parts, so they cannot be harvested by Scroungers. Inflicts 25 (L) to everything within a 50 ft. radius.

Data Chip (3 BP)

Durability: N/A

A chip loaded in the cyborg's brain to aid in Skill usage. Choose one Skill and the character receives a +5 bonus to checks for that Skill. They can only have a number of Data chips equal to half their IQ (rounded down)

Facial Implants (3 BP)

Durability: 12 (8/6)

Implants installed directly into the cyborg's face. They suffer a -1 penalty to appearance-related CHM rolls for each Facial implant.

- **Bloodhound:** Odor detection enhancers that give the ability to identify smells with an IQ + Perception check. Also gives a +5 bonus to track by smell.
- **Fangs:** Metallic fangs and new jaw are installed. They inflict +5 (L) with AP 5 upon a successful Bite Action and are able to bite through chains or bars easily.
- **Gas Filter:** A cybernetic apparatus over the cyborg's mouth that protects against air born poisons and ill-effects. For +1 BP cost, the filter can be encased in the chin and summoned at will.
- **Magic Sensor:** Receptors installed in the cyborg's temples that allow them to sense magical forces within a 300 ft. radius. It can be used to track adepts that have cast magic within one hour with a -4 penalty.

Follicle Implants (4 BP)

Durability: 15 (8/6)

Cybernetic hair follicles implanted in the scalp. There are two different types: Wired and Thick. Wired hair is thin and stringy, while Thick implants resemble dreadlocks. All are fiber-optic and can appear as any color. Cyborg's can only have one type and get one of the upgrades below. Cannot be upgraded after installation.

- **Monomolecular Wire (Wired):** A plucked strand becomes a thread of monomolecular wire, used to cut objects by severing their adjacent molecules. The wire can be up to 5 ft. in length, even if it styled shorter. If tightened and held against an item (living or dead), it cuts through with AP 8 and deals 5 (L). Cannot be used as a weapon, but can be used to Entangle (see page 72).
- **Microfilament Whip (Wired) (+0 Speed, +1 Stamina, +3 (L), AP 3):** Pulls a handful of hair from their scalp that weaves itself together to create a Whip (Draw Weapon, Speed 4). Requires Weapon Style: Chain to wield without -4 penalty.
- **Spikes (Wired) (Speed 4, Stamina 1, 4 (L), +2 Strike):** The hair shoots up into spikes, which can then be shot out of the cyborg's opponent.
- **Smoke (Black) (Thick) (Speed 6, Stamina 1):** The ends of the thick hair open and emit a thicket of black smoke, obscuring vision in a 15 ft. radius. Gives a -10 penalty to ranged attacks through the black smoke and blinds everyone caught within.
- **Smoke (Poison) (Thick) (Speed 6, Stamina 2):** Instead of blinding opponents, those caught inside must make a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check against Poison or suffer 5 (L) per Round they are within the smoke. The cyborg is not automatically immune to their own effect, needing either a gas mask, Anti-venom (Pump implant), or Gas Filter (Facial implant).
- **Tentacles (Thick):** The thick hair responds as

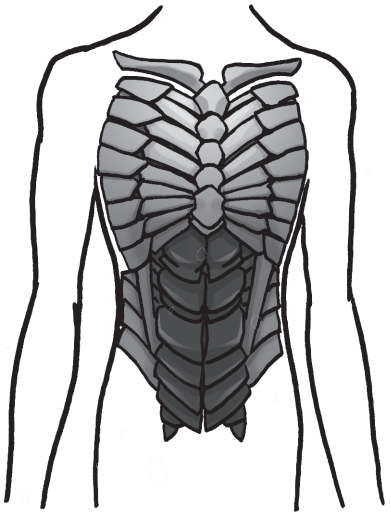
tentacles that move at the cyborg's will. They can Parry firearm attacks aimed at their head with a -5 penalty. They are prehensile with POW 2 and extend up to 3 ft.

Interface (3 BP)

Durability: N/A

This Implant allows the cyborg to connect to computers and use them more efficiently. They are half-machine after all. They may have up to two types:

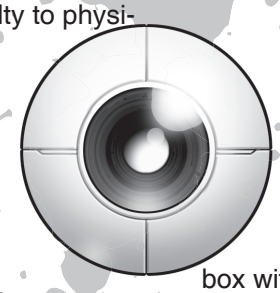
- **Built-in WLAN:** Accesses the internet at will through a satellite connection. Can be used to perform research, check movie ratings, or look up phone numbers in an instant. While they can access map web sites with this ability, this implant does not compare to the GPS implant. Gives a +5 bonus to research rolls, as they can cross-reference information in seconds.
- **GPS Navigation:** Wireless access to their global position that lets them map out distances and locations with ease. It takes seconds to perform a search that would take other computers minutes. Provides a +10 bonus to all Survival (Navigation) checks.
- **Memory Chip Interface:** Allows them to download memories to a disk to be shared. They can share fond memories, letting other feel the rush their past. Some become addicted to this experience. Other use memory chips to convey mission happenings. Memory chips are often found for Cost 2 on the black market.
- **Universal Data Jack:** Allows the cyborg to interface directly with any computer in existence, giving a +6 bonus to all Computers checks.



Nanotech Underlayer (4 BP)

Durability: N/A

A layer of nano-bots is implanted underneath the cyborg's skin. With a Summon Action (Speed 3, Stamina 1), the nano-bots harden the skin for extra protection. They receive the following bonuses: +6 Health (Temporary) and AR 3/3. They also suffer a -2 penalty to physical and combat rolls due to stiffness. It does not affect appearances, allowing the cyborg to be protected and live a somewhat normal life.



Optical Implants (3 BP)

Durability: 12 (8/6)

These implants replace the cyborg's organic eye. Each eye comes with one of the listed abilities and can be upgraded one additional time afterward.

- **360 degree Vision:** Digital sensor interfaces are installed into the brain, giving 360 degree vision. They gain a +10 bonus against Surprise attacks.
- **Hover eye:** The eye can hover up to eight feet above the ground, allowing it to scout. It is always wirelessly connected to the user's brain.
- **Infrared:** The eye has heat-vision, allowing the cyborg to see at night with no penalty and invisible beings that generate heat.
- **Laser Eye:** The eye has a built-in laser pointer that improves aim and gives a +4 bonus to Strike to ranged attacks.
- **Microscopic:** The eye can be used to view items closely, even at a cellular level.
- **Recording Eye:** The eye can digitally record up to one hour of video before needing to be downloaded and cleared to record again.
- **Telescopic:** This eye increases range of sight to triple the normal distance.
- **Third Eye:** A third eye is installed into the forehead, adding a +4 bonus to sight-based Perception rolls.

Pump (4 BP)

Durability: N/A

A pump is stored in the cyborg's torso, connected to a series of tubes hidden under the skin to resemble veins (Moderate (20) INS + Perception check to notice). By spending 3 Stamina points, chemicals are pumped directly into the cyborg's body for instant effects that last for one minute. A body can only hold one type of pump.

- **Adrenaline:** They are pumped full of speed. **Bonuses:** +4 bonus to all combat rolls, +1 Action per Round, and +5 bonus against Pain.
- **Anti-Venom:** Any poison that enters their system is immediately eradicated and they are then immune to other poisons for the duration. This gives a +5 bonus against supernatural poisons.
- **Pain Killers:** They ignore Pain penalties for the duration. Any spells or supernatural effects that cause pain are also cancelled out.
- **Pheromones:** Pumped through the blood and sweat glands, it emits a trace pheromone that sexually attracts others. They gain a +6 bonus to Persuasion (Seduction) checks.

Voice Modulator (3 BP)

Durability: N/A

This implant replaces the character's voice box with a cybernetic voice modulator. They can listen to a voice and instantly replicate its vocal tones and inflection by releasing small nano-bots from the ear to the vocal chords. This implant gives a +10 bonus to related rolls.

Chapter Two: Combat

It is inevitable that physical conflict will arise in any story at one point or another. It may not even be the characters' fault, but they'll still have to defend themselves. No matter what pacifists say, there are some confrontations that can only be solved with violence. Combat can also add a sense of drama and excitement to a game, and a great and elaborate fight can stand out in the players' memories for years to come.

It's the GM's responsibility to describe the scene (their battlefield) in as much detail as possible. If the fight takes place in a bar, are their posts? How near to the characters' table is the dart board? Is there a pool table? How many balls on the table? Are there any cues within reach? Does the bar have hanging lights or ones built into the ceilings? Any mirrors? Any and everything that changes in the immediate environment should be explained and described to all players so their characters can react accordingly. There are a lot of things that may come up in a fight, and having a good description of the scene gives the characters more ammunition to make it a great, interactive, and rewarding fight.

Players should also describe their actions in as much detail as possible. It's easy to say, "I do a Light attack on first guy, when a Full attack on the second guy" and roll the die. Instead, players should be encouraged to elaborate, like "I throw a quick jab to his jaw, then spin a roundhouse to his friend's gut." Being as descriptive as possible helps everyone stay in the game and connect more with the characters and their struggle. These tips can enrich any combat scenario you run using the Dynamic Gaming System (DGS).

Combat Tracking

GMs and Players have two ways to keep track of their Initiative in combat. First, they can use the provided Combat tracker sheet or the personal combat tracker on the 3-page Agent Information Form (both located at the back of the book). A marker is placed on the character's current Count and moved along the tracker as they take Actions and Reactions. The marker can be anything, from a coin to another die to a board game piece.

If uninterested in moving markers along the Combat tracker, a single 1d20 can be used to track Initiative. They can simply turn the 1d20 to the character's current Count (1-20). Make sure it is separate from the die used to make rolls and that no one bumps the table, both of which result in losing track of Initiative.

Continuous Initiative

While rolling Initiative for each Round helps to keep track of time and balance out the fighters' combat abilities, the GM may also decide to use a Continuous Initiative. When using this method, the fighters move along the Combat Tracker per normal, but any Actions that Overstep simply move to the beginning of the next Round, without rerolling Initiative. This can often speed up combat, but may require slightly more micro-management from the GM for game time and the correct number of Actions per Round.

Example: *On Count 20, Chris decides to Dodge an incoming attack. As Dodge has Speed 3, he would simply act again at Count 3 of the next Round instead of rerolling Initiative and taking an Overstep penalty.*

Speed

When entering an altercation, it can feel as if time itself slows to a standstill. This is very true for attempting to portray combat in a roleplaying game as well. The Dynamic Gaming System (DGS) breaks combat time up into the following increments:

Count:	1 Count is 0.5 seconds.
Round:	1 Round is 20 Counts (10 seconds)
Minute:	1 minute is 6 Rounds

The standard Round is 20 Counts, or 10 seconds, long. For the purposes of combat, time is actually split into half-second Counts, reflecting the quickness of actions. Any Action or Reaction taken has a Speed value (how many Counts it takes before the character can act again).

Example: *If Ted acts on Count 1 and performs an Action with Speed 3, he can act again on Count 4.*

Stamina

Stamina is the representation of a character's endurance, not only during a fight, but for any type of physical or mental exertion. This is calculated using Vigor (reflecting the physical strain needed) and Insight (reflecting the willpower to continue with strenuous activities). The exact calculation to determine your Stamina point total is: (Vigor + Insight) x 3. In battle, most Actions and Reactions require a certain number of Stamina points on the part of the character. The average person has 24 Stamina points (plus those gained from Skills and/or Gifts). During combat, they may spend those Stamina points to perform maneuvers, with no limit to how many they can spend per round. However, it's a good idea to plan out the Stamina usage each round, as to not tire yourself out too quickly.

Example: *The Full attack costs 1 Stamina point and Dodge costs 1 Stamina point. So, if a character with 24 Stamina points makes two Full attacks and Dodges two actions against them, they have spent 4 Stamina points and now have 20 left. If they perform one Full Attack and Dodge four times, they would spend 5 Stamina points. Or they could forget about Dodging entirely and just attack 3 times for 3 Stamina points. Of course, they are limited by the number of Actions per Round they possess.*

Stamina use also has a physical manifestation. When they have used half of their Stamina points, they being to sweat and slow down slightly and suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls. At one-fourth their Stamina points, they are visibly out of breath, showing signs that they need to rest soon and suffer a -4 penalty to all rolls. At one-eighth Stamina, they look like they will soon pass out and suffer a -6 penalty to all rolls.

1/2 Stamina	-2 penalty to all checks
1/4 Stamina	-4 penalty to all checks
1/8 Stamina	-6 penalty to all checks

Exhaustion

Stamina is spent through exertion of one's physical and mental faculties. Exhaustion is the rate at which you lose Stamina and depends on the scenario. For instance, you lose 2 Stamina points per Round if lifting your full weight capacity (See Carrying/Lifting on page 32). When the character's Stamina points are reduced to Zero, they are considered Exhausted and cannot do anything but rest.

Recovering Stamina

Each point of Stamina used is recovered at a rate of 1 point per minute of rest. If the character is reduced to less than half their Health, they recover 1 Stamina point every three minutes.

Combat Rounds

Initiative

At the beginning of each new Round, participants in combat roll 1d20, plus their Initiative Bonus (AGY + IQ). The winner is the character with the highest Initiative total and not only acts on Count 1 on the Combat Tracker, but also sets the reaction position of the other fighters for that Round. If two characters tie for the highest roll, they both act on Count 1. Other combatants compare their total to the highest and act at +1 Count for every 4 points they have less than the winner. No fighter will act later than Count 9, no matter their roll. After everyone rolls, the GM records everyone's starting Count and combat can begin. Initiative is re-rolled at the beginning of each Round.

Example: *Four fighters each roll Initiative. Elgin rolls 22, the highest out of the group. He will act before anyone else, on Count 1. Chris rolls 19 (within 21 and 18) and acts at +1 Count, on Count 2. Kat rolls 16 and Paul rolls 14. Because they are both within the same initiative value (within 17 and 14), they will both act at +2 Counts, on Count 3. If Paul had rolled a 13 instead, he would have acted at +3 Counts, on Count 4, falling just outside of the initiative needed to act on Count 3.*

Joining the Fight

When joining a battle that is ongoing, the character rolls Initiative as normal, but suffer a -1 penalty to their roll for each count that has already passed in that Round. Their starting position in that Round is determined by comparing their Initiative roll against the value of the highest initiative rolled for that round, as per normal. If they tie or roll higher than that initiative, they can take their first Action on the current Count. If they roll lower, then initiative is determined normally, +1 Count from the current Count for every 4 under the highest initiative. When joining battle in the middle of a Round, they may act later than Count 9.

Example: *Chris (Initiative 21) and Kat (Initiative 15) are fighting each other, and it is currently Chris's turn on Count 6. Before he announces his Action, Paul jumps into battle rolling 19 total. He does not tie or roll higher than 21, meaning he cannot act on the count he enters on, Count 6. However, his initiative roll is within four points of the highest, so he acts at +1 Count, on Count 7.*

Overstepping

If a character takes an Action or Reaction that has a Speed that exceeds the number of Counts remaining in the current Round, this is called Overstepping. For each Count the character goes over, they suffer -2 penalty to the next round's Initiative roll.

Leftover Actions

If a character has unused Actions at the end of the Round, each one provides a +2 bonus to their Initiative roll for the next Round. This does not apply for Assault Rounds, where the character receives free Actions.

Example: *On Count 18, Chris decides to throw one last Full Attack (Speed 4), making him Overstep by 2 Counts over the 20 Counts for the Round. However, he also saved one of his Actions this Round. When rolling Initiative for the next Round, he suffers a -2 penalty to this Initiative check (-4 penalty for Overstepping and +2 bonus for one unused Action).*

How to take an Actions/Reaction

Below are step-by-step instructions on how to proceed with Actions and Reactions.

Step 1	The attacker chooses their target and Action type, spend Stamina points, and moves along Combat tracker.
Step 2	The defender chooses their Reaction type, spends Stamina points, and moves along Combat tracker.
Step 3	The attacker rolls 1d20, with applicable Strike modifiers.
Step 4	The defender rolls 1d20, with applicable defensive modifiers.
Step 5	If the attacker rolls higher, the Action takes effect. Any damage is applied to the defender's Health.
Step 6	If the defender rolls higher, they succeed in avoiding the Action. If they tie, the success goes to the defender, including if they both roll a Natural 20.

Surprise Attacks

Fights are not always fair. Sometimes, a character may walk into a trap or be the target of a sucker punch from behind. To avoid being caught by surprise, they make a contested INS + Perception check against the attacker's AGY + Stealth check. A successful check against the surprise attacker means they avoid the initial attack and Initiative can then be rolled normally. A failed check means the victim automatically acts on Count 9 and cannot use a Reaction against the first attack toward them. Ties, as always, go to the defender.

Actions vs. Reactions

Each character has a certain number of Actions they can take in a single Round, starting off with 2 Actions per Round at character creation. They can gain additional Actions through Combat Skills or special abilities. So, for a character to plan out combat, they must factor in their Actions per Round, Stamina points allotted, and the Speed of each Action they take. This makes combat immersive and very strategic.

Combat Quick list

Actions

Name	Spd	Stam	Mod	Dmg
Attack-Light	2	0	+2 Strike	+1
Attack-Full	4	1		+3
Attack-Strong	6	2	-4 Strike	+5
Co-op Attack	+2	+1	-3 Strike	+25%
Disarm	4	1	-4 Strike	
Draw Weapon	1+Size	0		
Feint	3	0		
Grapple	4	2		
Hold Action	1	0		
Move–Normal	4/2/1	0		
Move–Sprint/Rush	5	2		
Push	3	1		
Stand	4	1		
Summon Inner Strength	6	0		
Sweep	3	1		
Touch	1	0	+2 Strike	
Use Skill	6	Varies		
Aim	3	0		
Auto-fire-Short	+1	+0		+25%
Auto-fire-Medium	+2	+1		+50%
Auto-fire-Long	+3	+2		+100%
Throw Weapon	4	1	-2 Strike per Size	

Reactions

Name	Spd	Stam	Mod
Dodge	3	1	
Entangle	3	1	-4 Parry
Parry	2	0	
Roll	1	0	+2 Roll
Take Hit	0	0	
Take Hit Strategically	0	1	-4 Roll

Action Values

Speed: Number of Counts it takes to perform the action.

Stamina: The cost in Stamina points for that action.

Modifiers: Any applicable bonuses or penalties.

Damage: Bonus and type (Lethal or Non-Lethal) to be added to Base damage. See Damage on page 75.

Reactions can be taken without detracting from the character's Actions per Round, even if they have a Stamina cost. These Reactions still cost them Speed, making them act later than they could have originally. A character can react to any Action that comes his or her way without penalty (unless otherwise specified).

Example: *Kim decides to punch with a Full attack. If she starts with 24 Stamina and begins on Count 1, she Spends 1 of her Actions per Round and spends 1 Stamina point. Speed 4 means that she cannot take another Action until Count 5. However, her opponent decides they want to return the attack. She then takes a Dodge Reaction (Speed 3), which costs her 1 Stamina point and moves her next action to Count 8.*

Types of Checks

There are many Combat checks, bonuses, and penalties to apply to the character's 1d20 checks. Below is a list of the basic bonuses:

- **Strike:** Roll to attack, touch, or otherwise come into contact with another character.
- **Dodge:** Roll used to sidestep, duck, or otherwise get out of the way of a Strike.
- **Parry:** Roll used when using your body or a weapon to block or deflect a Strike.
- **Roll:** Roll used to avoid taking full damage from a Non-Lethal attack or from falling from heights.
- **Grappling:** Roll used for grappling maneuvers.

Rolling a Natural 20

A Critical success (Natural 20) on an attack does +3 Damage and uses 2 less Stamina points. If the Action's original Stamina point cost was Zero, the character gains 1 Stamina point back with a rush of success. A Critical Success on a Reaction uses 2 less Stamina points. If the Reaction's original Stamina point cost was Zero, 2 points are drained from the attacker.

Rolling a Natural 1

A Critical failure (Natural 1) automatically fails, adds +1 Stamina point cost to the Action, and usually inflicts some sort of penalty, such as:

- The fighter suffers a -5 penalty to their next Reaction.
- They trip, causing 2 (NL) or their own Base damage (whichever is higher), ignoring AR. They must take a Stand action to get up.
- They may forget their combat strategy, making them lose one of their Actions for the Round or for the next.

- If they have a comrade within close quarters, their attack may accidentally strike their companion, also forcing them to sacrifice Speed for a Reaction. The attacker rolls again, this time against their comrade.

Acting on the Same Count

If two characters are acting on the same Count, they may choose to perform simultaneous Actions or React to the other. They cannot do both, but the choice is theirs to make. This means that the two may attack each other at the same time and neither of them can Dodge or Parry that incoming attack. This could also mean that combat continues as normal, with one character performing an Action and the other a Reaction.

The character with the lowest Initiative bonus value announces their action first. This gives the character with the highest Initiative bonus the advantage of knowing what the others acting on the same Count plan on doing. If two characters share the same Initiative bonus value, the one with the lower IQ announces first. Any character that announces an Action, but then changes their mind to a Reaction (usually to avoid an attack) suffers a -3 penalty to their check.

Close Combat

Below are Actions that can be performed in Close Combat. This includes fighting with punches and kicks, or any melee weapons. Combat can be simplified. First, pick which type of Attack to perform (Light, Full, or Strong), spend the Stamina points, roll 1d20, and add modifiers. However, by using other maneuvers to compliment the character's personal fighting style, your roleplaying group can enjoy a fully interactive and fulfilling combat experience.

Attack Example: *Paul has the following Attributes: POW 5 and AGY 5, which means no bonuses to Strike or to Damage. He slips a knife (Speed +1, Stamina +1, Damage +0 (L)) from his pocket and goes in for a Full attack (Speed 4, Stamina 1, +3 Damage). The total value for his slashing knife attack is Speed 5, Stamina 2, Damage 3 (L).*

Cooperative Attacks

If two characters decide to attack the same target in synchronization, the target still attempts a Reaction to each strike separately. If they time their Strikes just right, they can perform a Cooperative attack. This type of attack adds +2 Speed and +1 Stamina to their Action costs and gives a -3 penalty to Strike, as they exert extra time and effort into attacking in unison. However, they also deal +25% damage (rounded up). Both attackers must actually land their hit in order to receive any damage bonuses. If one hits, but the other doesn't, damage is applied normally.

Uncontested Attacks

When attempting an attack on someone who is not attempting to move (Take the Hit Reaction) or on someone that doesn't know the attack is coming, the fighter must still roll to Strike at a Simple (10) Difficulty. If they fail, they just misgauged their strike. **Note:** A Natural 20 or Natural 1 have the same effects (See page 66).

Knockouts

If a single successful strike hits the target for more than half of their total Health or more, they must make a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude against Unconsciousness. This is separate from the character falling unconscious after being reduced to 0 Health from Non-Lethal damage, which there is no check against. A failed check means they drop to the ground unconscious for 2 Counts per point of total damage done.

Pulled Strikes

Pulling one's punches is necessary in certain situations, such as facing a much weaker opponent without wanting to inflict full damage or if the character hopes to fool another into thinking they are weaker than they appear. They can make a reflexive Moderate (20) IQ + AGY check to voluntarily half any Non-lethal damage dealt or change any Lethal damage into Non-Lethal (for instance, hitting with the flat of their blade).

Melee Weapons

Using weapons in combat brings any fight to another level. In unarmed combat, one can get out a lot of frustration by beating opponents to a pulp. But bringing a weapon elevates the confrontation and means that one or both of the combatants may end the fight in death.

Melee weapons enhance the damage of a character's Light, Full, or Strong attack Actions. However, additional Speed and Stamina point costs are associated with each weapon's weight distribution, complexity, and handling. This may make attacks somewhat slower, but with a lot more behind them, such as extra damage or changing Non-lethal damage into Lethal damage. With use of Weapon Styles, weapons also become easier to use and give unique bonuses based on their type.

Weapon Use Example: *Carlton has POW 6 and wants to perform a Full attack (Speed 4, Stamina 1, +3 Damage) with a wooden bat (Speed +1, Stamina +1, Damage +2 (NL)). The new value for his attack is: Speed 5, Stamina 2, Damage 6 (NL) (+3 from Attack type, +2 from weapon damage, +1 from Base damage).*

Untrained Wielding

If characters attempt to use a weapon without training (they have no levels in the appropriate Weapon Style Skill), they suffer a -4 penalty to any rolls related to the weapon's use. This may not affect Dodge or Roll Reac-

tions, but certainly Strike and Parry and any other maneuver that uses the weapon, such as Disarm. The first level of the appropriate Weapon Style removes this penalty with using that weapon type.

Improvised Weapons

Combat is spontaneous in most cases. Characters may need to grab random items in their immediate area to fight or defend themselves. A nightshift worker on their way home from work may fight off a mugger with their umbrella, an office worker may join an office brawl wielding their trusty stapler, or bar patrons may crack bottles on a table and jump into a bar fight. Improvised weapons incur a -8 penalty when using them to Strike or Parry. This penalty may be reduced to -4, if the weapon falls under a Weapon Style the character possesses. The broken bottle, for example, may be considered similar to a knife, or a lead pipe may be considered close enough to a club, etc. Improvised weapons usually break if they deal more damage than its Durability.

Close Combat Actions

Attack - Light

(Speed 2, Stamina 0, +2 Strike, +1 Damage)

This is a short, quick, mild attack. Includes jabs, short kicks, elbows/knees, or slaps. This attack has the bonus of striking more often, but does less damage.

Attack - Full

(Speed 4, Stamina 1, +3 Damage)

This is an average attack. Includes straight punches, kicks, head-butts, or hard elbows/knees strike with full force behind them.

Attack - Strong

(Speed 6, Stamina 2, -4 Strike, +5 Damage)

These are power attacks for maximum damage. Includes double-knuckle punches, roundhouses, uppercuts, or leap kicks.

Cooperative Attack

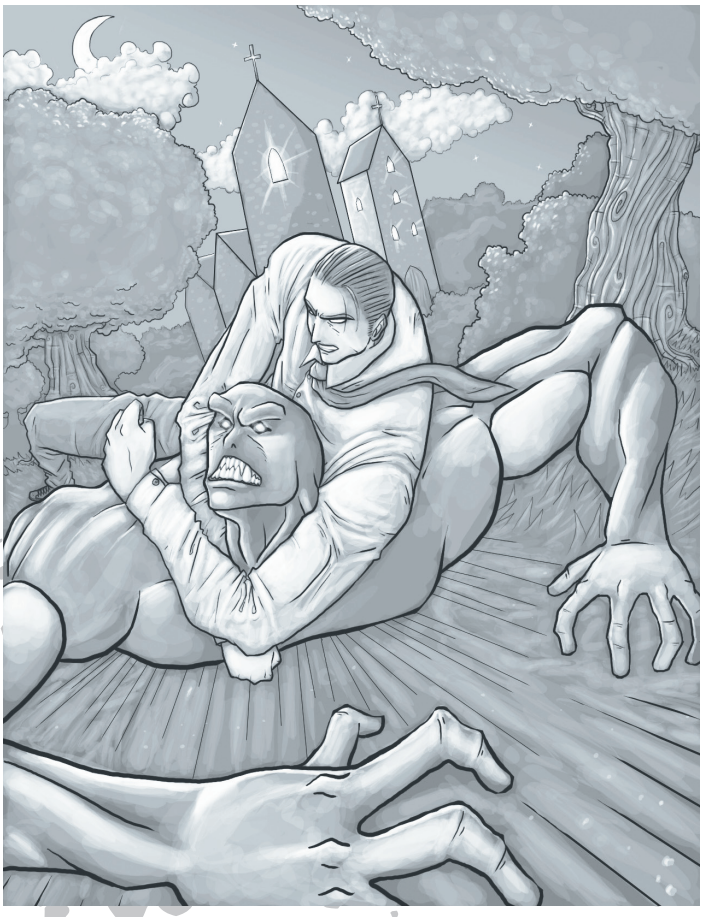
(Speed +2, Stamina +1, -5 Strike, +25% Damage)

Two or more characters decide to all attack at the same time (on the same Count), in the hopes of dealing more damage. All participants must land their strike to garner the damage bonus. Damage bonus is rounded up.

Disarm

(Speed 4, Stamina 1, -5 Strike)

Prerequisite: Level 3+ of non-ranged Weapon Style or certain spells from the Path of Telekinesis. The fighter attempts to use their weapon to disarm their opponent. On a successful Disarm strike, the weapon is flung away a number of feet away equal to the fighter's POW + the difference in their rolls. **Note:** Disarming without a weapon can only be attempted after Grappling or after a successful Entangle Reaction.



Example: *Paul has POW 5 and rolls 16 to Disarm. Pete rolls 13 to defend, which is a failure. Pete's weapon is flung 8 feet away (POW 5 + 3, the difference in their rolls).*

Draw Weapon

(Speed 1+Size, Stamina 0)

The character draws a weapon. The Speed is equal to 1+ the weapon's Size. For instance, drawing a Sword (Size 2) is Speed 3.

Feint

(Speed 3, Stamina 0)

The fighter fakes out their opponent into believing they are attacking from a different direction. The attacker makes a contested CHM + Deception check versus the target's INS + Perception or INS + Deception. If successful, the fighter's next attack gets a +4 bonus to Strike and +1 Damage. No effect if failed. If the opponent gets their next Action before the fighter's following attack, they suffer a -3 penalty to Strike.

Grapple

(Speed 4, Stamina 2)

The fighter attempts to engage in a grappling or wrestling match with the defender. The initial attempt plays out much like any other action, the fighter rolls to Strike with a

Grapple Action and the defender rolls to Dodge (Grapple cannot be Parried). While grappling, both fighters can attempt any number of clinches and maneuvers. Normal combat bonuses (like Strike or Dodge) no longer apply, as Grappling becomes only a test of strength. The attacker and defender contest their 1d20 + POW (plus any Grappling bonuses) checks. More complicated maneuvers may incur a penalty as well.

All Grappling Actions act as **(Speed 5, Stamina 1)**, while Grappling Reactions are **(Speed 3, Stamina 1)**. Stamina point cost is raised to 2 (instead of 1), if their opponent has three or more POW levels than they have.

Example: *Chris has POW 3 and Tony has POW 6. Chris's Stamina cost for each Action or Reaction would be Stamina 2 (Tony's Power is 3 higher). Tony's costs would only be Stamina 1.*

- **Attack:** A punch to the ribs, head-butting, or striking with a drawn weapon. The attack is within very close quarters. They can attempt a Light attack for +1 Damage or a Full attack for +3 Damage with a -4 penalty to Strike. Strong attackss cannot be done while Grappling.
- **Bite:** The fighter attempts to bite their opponent, inflicting +1 (NL) and forcing a Simple (10) INS + Discipline check again Pain giving their opponent a -3 penalty to their next maneuver. A Taylari's bite not only causes more damage, but they can paralyze their opponent and heal themselves (see page 29).
- **Break Grapple:** They attempt to break the grapple by overpowering their opponent. No damage.
- **Disarm:** The character pries a weapon from their opponent's hand. Trying to grab the weapon themselves requires a Draw Weapon Action (found below). The defender may attempt to grab it as well. No damage.
- **Draw Weapon:** They attempt to draw a weapon on their person, on their opponent's person, or nearby (such as grabbing a pencil from a nearby desk). The weapon cannot be larger than Size 1.
- **Knockback (-2 Grapple):** They forcibly shove their opponent backwards. The victim takes +1 (NL) and is pushed back twice the fighter's POW level in feet. This may require a Balance check to avoid extra damage depending on the environment. This maneuver breaks the grapple automatically.
- **Immobilize (-4 Grapple):** They attempt to constrict their opponent's actions, rendering them immobilized. If successful, the victim cannot perform any maneuvers, except for Break Grapple. Also, this leaves them open to attacks from others outside the grapple, as they can not use any type of defense. As the victim continually attempts their break, they roll against the attacker's original roll used to immobilize them. The attacker need not continually roll to keep their hold, but they can do nothing but keep their attention on immobilizing the victim. If they attempt anything else, they lose their grip and the victim is free to react.
- **Meat Shield (-4 Grapple):** They move their opponent into the way of oncoming melee or ranged attacks. Is used as a Reaction to an attack outside of the Grapple.
- **Render Prone:** Both fighters fall to the ground in a wrestling match. Both can attempt to Break Grapple to get free, but then need to take a Stand Action to get up. **Note:** Attacking an opponent with the High Ground provides a +4 bonus to Strike.
- **Strangle (-6 Grapple):** The attacker grabs the victim's neck, cutting off blood and air flow. This Action is handled the same as Immobilize (above), except that the victim also takes 3 (L) per Round in this state. Again, the attacker cannot perform any other actions while strangling the victim, but the victim's arms are usually free to act as they will, in most cases.
- **Trip (-2 Grapple):** Similar to Sweep, this Action trips the opponent to the ground. If successful, the victim falls to the ground in front of the attacker, giving them the High Ground. This maneuver also breaks the grapple.
- **Turn weapon:** If the target has a weapon drawn, the fighter may attempt to use it against them. This maneuver wrestles control of the weapon without disarming the opponent. They may then attempt to use an Attack maneuver at a -2 penalty to Strike.

Hold Action
(Speed 1, Stamina 0)

The character does nothing, holding their action until the next Count. Does not use any Actions per Round.

Move - Normal
(Speed 4/2/1, Stamina 0)

The character is able to walk or jog their full Movement in feet. Moving only half their Movement is Speed 2. For 1/4 Movement, it is Speed 1. If moving out of an active melee, the character gets a -10 penalty to all Reactions until their next action.

Move - Sprint/Rush
(Speed 5, Stamina 2)

The character moves at double their Movement. They cannot perform Reactions to any attacks until their next Action, but attackers suffer a -4 penalty to Strike due to their rate of movement. This is also an effective Action to use to retreat from combat entirely. If used to perform a Rush attack, their next melee weapon or unarmed attack gets +3 Strike and +2 Damage (not applicable to ranged attacks). A Rush attack can only be Dodged.

Push
(Speed 3, Stamina 1)

The fighter attempts to shove the target backwards a number of feet equal to their POW. The target makes a reflexive POW + Athletics check versus the attacker's roll and remains unmoved if successful. A Balance check may be required to avoid extra damage depending on the environment. Otherwise, no damage is dealt to the target.

Stand
(Speed 4, Stamina 1)
If on the ground, the character stands to their feet.

Summon Inner Strength
(Speed 6, Stamina 0)
The character can push themselves to limits farther than they could normally, summoning inner strength by sacrificing their physical health. The fighter can sacrifice 2 Health to replenish 1 Stamina point (to a maximum of 5 Stamina gained). This Action cannot raise their Stamina points higher than their maximum Stamina.

Sweep
(Speed 3, Stamina 1)
Prerequisite: Level 4+ of ANY Fighting Style. This is a non-damaging strike to the opponent's legs, forcing a Balance check with Difficulty equal to the attack roll. A failed Balance check means the target falls to the ground and must take a Stand Action to get back up.

Touch
(Speed 1, Stamina 0, +2 Strike)
The fighter reaches to touch their opponent, but deals no damage. This Action can be used for planting a bug or even for magical effects that require touch. If the target does not resist the touch, no roll need be made. Targeted strike penalties may apply if skin contact is needed, but not easily accessible.

Use Skill
(Speed 6, Stamina Varies)
When using Skills in combat, it is suggested that the GM be flexible with the Speed and Stamina needed to perform tasks. As combat is 90% reaction-time, it is assumed that average Skills have at least Speed 6, as they are actively working to avoid combat and focus. Stamina point cost may vary between skills, as skills (i.e. Knowledge wouldn't take any physical exertion, but Acrobatics would).

Ranged Combat

Instead of initiating a close-up fight, many resort to using guns, bows, or other weapons to attack from afar. Several character types use this combat method, from assassins to police officers to archers. Ranged combat works slightly different than Close Combat. Characters must still choose Actions and Reactions as per normal, but few Close Combat Actions work at long range.

Strikes with a ranged weapon work the same as in Close Combat with the character rolling 1d20, plus any modifiers to Strike. Targets of ranged attacks can use Dodge to get out of the way, but guns cannot be Dodged without supernatural or magical abilities, unless the shooter is with close combat range.

When using a ranged weapon, each has its own Speed and Stamina cost for usage. Each pull of the trigger Counts as one of the character's Actions per Round. That means one shot per Action for most guns, like pistols and rifles. However, this can mean a lot more for automatic weapons

Range
Each firearm and thrown weapon has a particular range that it is most effective when using. The Ranged Weapons chart list this information (See page 56), broken down into Short, Medium, and Long ranges. Characters suffer no penalty within Short range, a -4 penalty to Strike at Medium range, and a -8 penalty to Strike at Long range. Scopes can be used to extend this range even farther. Range for throwing melee weapons is calculated different and can be found below.

Firing into Close Combat
There are times when a character may need to fire into another's Close Combat. A friend may be in trouble and a gun may be the only way they can help or they may be too far away to help without breaking out guns. Firing into combat incurs a -3 penalty to Strike for each person in that close combat besides the target. A successful check means they hit their target. A failed check means that they missed their intended target and must roll again to see if they hit someone else. On a roll of 16-20, they hit another in the fray (GM's choice). However, if they roll a Critical Failure (Natural 1), they have shot their friend or comrade automatically.

Close Combat with a Ranged Weapon
Sometimes, characters are forced to use their gun or bow in close combat, even though it is designed for the opposite. Because their opponents are within Grappling and Striking range, they are also within Dodging range (even against firearms). Opponents may Dodge against strikes made with any ranged weapons while in Close Combat, but still cannot Parry for obvious reasons. If caught in a Grapple, a character's gun may also be used against them.

Concealment and Cover
Concealment is anything that can give characters a penalty to Strike their target at a range. It comes in many forms, from mist to pouring rain to darkness. Concealment doesn't apply in Close Combat, as fighters are only a short distance from each other during that period. Characters can incur up to a -6 penalty to Strike, depending on the amount of Concealment. A -2 penalty may apply if the target is slightly concealed (hiding behind a plant), a -4 penalty if mostly covered (hiding where at least half their body is concealed), or a -6 penalty if substantially covered (crouching behind a car or sticking only their head around a corner).

The cover takes all of the damage if the target is

completely behind cover. While archery/thrown weapons can be Dodged, bullets cannot. Instead, characters can take a Sprint Action to dive for Cover and avoid the shot. If hiding behind a wall, most bullets will have no effect. However, if they are hiding behind something breakable, the shots can bring down the item's Durability and render it useless.

Firing from behind cover is also much harder, because the character is trying to simultaneously fire and keep their cover. The penalty to Strike a character behind cover is also applied to their own Actions. If their opponent is under cover as well, the penalties are cumulative.

Example: *Paul is mostly covered (-4) and Carlton is slightly covered (-2), both are at a -6 to Strike each other.*

When You're Out of Ammo

Reloading a gun can be a pain, especially in the heat of battle. The Reload Speed for each weapon is listed on the Range Weapons Chart, page 56. In addition, if the character is attacked while they are reloading, they get a -3 penalty to their Reaction and are forced to make a Moderate (20) AGY + Legerdemain check. A failed check means they dropped their clip or bullets. Reloading does not use an Action for the Round.

If they run out of ammo and decide not to waste time reloading, they can opt to use their gun as a melee weapon. This counts as an Improvised weapon roll, as they are using the ranged weapon outside of its original intended purpose, but they also receive a Damage bonus equal to the size of the weapon. However, the weapon size can also give a penalty if the character does not have sufficient POW to wield it correctly. Otherwise, use normal Improvised weapons rules (See page 68).

Ranged Weapons

Unlike melee weapons that add to the already existing Light, Full, and Strong attacks, ranged weapons have their own Speed, Stamina, and Damage based upon its type. These values are determined based on the handling, kickback, and design of the ranged weapon. In addition, they have the Payload value, which determines how many shots can be taken before needing to reload, and Reload speed (RS), which indicates the number of Counts needed to reload a clip, cartridge, or single bullet. These factors are important when picking the right ranged weapon for characters of specific backgrounds, concepts, Wealth scores, and storylines.

Ranged Actions

Please note that the Actions **Move, Hold Action, Stand, Draw Weapon, and Skill Use** apply equally to ranged combat as they do to close combat.

Aim

(Speed 3, Stamina 0)

This Action gives a +3 bonus to Strike for each Action the character takes to Aim with a ranged weapon and can be used up to 3 times for a single attack. If attacked while attempting to Aim, the character has a -5 penalty to Reactions. They must also begin the Aiming process again to regain any Strike bonuses. Scopes (See page 54) can be attached for additional bonuses.

Auto-fire - Short Burst

(Speed +1, Stamina +0, +25% Damage)**

The character fires a burst of three bullets at a single target from their Auto-fire enabled firearm.

*Auto-fire - Medium Burst

(Speed +2, Stamina +1, +50% Damage)**

The character fires approximately ten bullets at up to three targets from their Auto-fire enabled firearm.

*Auto-fire - Long Burst

(Speed +3, Stamina +2, +100% Damage)

The character fires approximately twenty bullets from their Auto-fire enabled firearm and can target as many victims as they please.

*-3 cumulative penalty per target of Auto-fire.
**Damage percentages for Auto-fire are rounded up.

Auto-fire Example: *Dianna pulls out her Uzi (Small SMG) (Speed 1, Stamina 2, Damage 4 (L)). She decides to fire a Medium burst adding +2 Speed, +1 Stamina, and +50% Damage. This changes her Action value to: Speed 3, Stamina 3, Damage 6 (L). Then she chooses to fire at three separate targets, giving her a -3 cumulative penalty totaling a -9 penalty for each shot. Despite the negative to her Strike, Dianna now has the opportunity to deal 6 (L) to three separate targets, instead of 4 (L) to one, and still only used 1 Action.*

Throw Weapon

(Speed 4, Stamina 1, -2 Strike per Size)

The fighter hurls a melee weapon at their opponent. This is equal to a ranged Full attack, but also suffers a -2 penalty to Strike per Size of the weapon. So, throwing a sword (Size 2) would have a -4 penalty to Strike.

Range for Thrown weapons is listed on page 56. Range for other weapons is equal to the character's AGY + IQ in feet for Short range, double this value for Medium range, and triple this value for Long range. Short range has no penalty to Strike, but Medium range incurs a -4 penalty, and Long range a -8 penalty. An object designed to be aerodynamic, such as a football, can be thrown twice the normal throwing range.

When using a Targeting weapon, Damage is equal to Base Damage + Weapon damage, just like a close com-

bat melee weapon. When using a weapon not designed for throwing, a -1 penalty to Damage is applied at Short range, a -2 penalty at Medium range, and a -3 penalty at Long range. Knives are the exception to this rule and are treated like Targeting weapons.

Throw Example: *Carlton decides to throw his sword his retreating opponent's back.* ***Note:*** *this is not very honorable, but his character is a brute and doesn't really care. He has the following Attributes: POW 6, AGY 5, IQ 3, and is using a standard sword with the following stats: Speed +2, Stamina +1, Damage +2 (L), Size 2.*

So, because a Throw is equal to a Full attack, it begins with Speed 4, Stamina 1, +3 Damage. His range to hit is 8/16/24. His opponent is very fast and has already reached the Medium range. So, his Action is Speed 6, Stamina 2, Damage 5 (L) (3 from weapon, 4 from Base damage, -2 from Range) and is -8 to Strike (-4 from Size, -4 from Medium range).

Reactions

When someone tries to Strike a character, they have the option to perform a Reaction. Reactions work the same as Actions for Speed and Stamina costs, but do not require one of the character's Actions per Round. They can perform as many Reactions as they have Stamina points to spend. Note: No Reaction can be performed against a gun shot, unless the attacker is within close combat range. But they can attempt to Dodge arrows and other projectiles. Below is the list of Reactions:

Dodge

(Speed 3, Stamina 1)

The character sidesteps, ducks, jumps, dives, or otherwise moves out of the way of an incoming attack. There are some attacks that you just can't Parry.

Entangle

(Speed 3, Stamina 1, -4 Parry)

Prerequisite: Level 3+ of ANY Fighting Style or Level 2+ of Weapon Style: Chain. The fighter attempts to catch and trap their opponent's weapon or limb. They could use their hands to catch limbs, but for weapons they may need the use of a chain, jacket, folding chair, etc.). An Action is needed for their opponent to unentangle themselves, equal to a Draw Weapon Action. The fighter gets a +4 bonus to Strike to initiate a Grapple, while they have their opponent Entangled. A Disarm Action can also be attempted after succeeding in an Entangle Reaction.

Parry

(Speed 2, Stamina 0)

The character blocks the incoming attack, using either a weapon or their arms/legs. If parrying an unarmed attack with a bladed weapon, the defender also deals half their normal damage to the attacker. Also, unarmed characters may safely parry a bladed weapon at a -8 penalty. If their check fails, they take full damage.

Roll with Punch/Fall

(Speed 1, Stamina 0, +2 Roll)

Characters can reduce the amount of damage they receive from Non-lethal attacks or falling by Rolling with the damage. If successful, they take only half the normal damage. Roll doesn't work against bladed weapons, fire, lasers, bullets, or non-physical attacks.

Take Hit

(Speed 0, Stamina 0)

The character just stands there and takes whatever is coming at him, but does not lose their current Count position in Initiative. See "Uncontested Attacks" on page 67.

Take Hit Strategically

(Speed 0, Stamina 1, -4 Roll)

Prerequisite: Level 5+ of ANY Fighting Style. This Reaction is used by victims of a Targeted strike. The fighter decides to take the strike on their own terms. If the attacker wins, they strike just as they intended. If the defender wins, they take the hit and full damage, but without any additional side effects (See Targeted Strikes on page 74). This Reaction doesn't give penalties or bonuses to

either party, but if the attacker is aiming for the throat, the defender can at least move to make them miss any major arteries.

Other Modifiers

Description Bonuses

One of the most important things regarding combat in the DGS is scene description. "I hit him" is never as good as "I leap across the counter and go for a double-knuckle slam to the bastard's face!" At the GM's discretion, characters can receive up to a +5 bonus to a single roll based on how well it is described and fits into the current scene.

Assault Round

Some can fill with such rage that they lapse into an Assault Round on the target of their aggression. During this Round, the character gets the following bonuses: +2 Actions per Round, +4 to Strike, +1 Damage, and +4 free Stamina points for that Round only. However, they cannot perform Reactions or cast magic in that Round, purely interested in causing as much physical harm as possible to their target.

Sacrificed Actions

Characters may sacrifice one of their Actions per Round in order to receive a +5 bonus to a Reaction check. Only one Action can be sacrificed per check. This ability cannot be used during an Assault Round.

Multiple Opponents

In situations where a character is fighting multiple opponents, they must be smart about their Actions or they may find themselves in a world of hurt. At the beginning of each Round, a character can target one opponent and launch all their actions at them with no penalty, while still performing Reactions to any Actions toward them. If they choose to take an Action against more than one opponent, they receive a cumulative -2 penalty to Strike each time they change their target. This penalty is dropped at the end of the Round and does not carry over into the next.

Example: *Pete is up against three opponents. He decides to perform a Full attack on the first opponent, a Full attack on the second opponent, and then a Light attack on the third opponent. His first strike would be at a -0, since she has not switched targets yet. His second strike*

Modifier Chart

Armor Piercing:	The attack ignores a number of AR equal to your AP level.
Assault Round:	+2 Actions per Round, +4 Stamina points, +4 Strike, +1 Dmg, no Reactions or Magic
Blind-fighting:	Partial (-7 penalty), Full (-15 penalty).
Description Bonus	Gain up to a +5 bonus based on great scene description
Firing into Combat:	-3 penalty to Strike per target you do not want to hit
Ground (High and Low):	High ground gives a +4 bonus to combat rolls. Low ground gives a -4 penalty to Strike and Parry.
Improvised Weapons:	-8 penalty to checks with weapon. -4 penalty if it falls under a Weapon Style.
Knockout:	If character takes half their Health or more in damage from a single Non-Lethal attack, they must make a check vs. Unconsciousness.
Multiple Targets:	-2 cumulative penalty every time character changes targets in a single Round.
Off-hand:	Actions using off-hand suffer a -4 penalty.
Pulled Strike:	Moderate (20) IQ + AGY to half damage dealt, change Lethal damage to Non-lethal, or both.
Range:	Short -0 to Strike, Medium -4 to Strike, Long -8 to Strike
Sacrificed Action:	+5 bonus to any Reaction roll
Shock:	After taking half of their Health in Lethal damage, the character begins to bleed and must make a check vs. Shock.
Simultaneous actions:	Taking two Actions at one time. Speed value is the higher of the two Actions and Stamina cost the combined totals, plus one. Each roll gets a -10 penalty.
Surprised:	Automatically start at Count 9 and cannot use a Reaction for first Action.
Targeted strike:	An attempt to strike a certain part of the opponent's body. Torso (-3), Arm/Leg (-6), Head or hands/feet (-9), Small (eye, pressure point) (-12)
Untrained:	-4 penalty to combat rolls with weapon (the 1st level of a Weapon Style removes this penalty)

would be at -2, and his third strike would be at -2 (-4 penalty and +2 bonus to Strike for a Light attack).

Targeted Strikes

Sometimes characters want to Strike their opponents in particular parts of their body. Maybe they know their opponent has a bad knee, a wounded shoulder, or a blind spot. They may also be an assassin shooting from the rooftops and is being paid handsomely to shoot a poison tipped arrow through their target's heart specifically. Whatever the reason, a precise strike is achievable, but is always hard. They suffer a -3 penalty to Strike a certain part of the Torso, a -6 penalty to Strike an arm or leg or similar appendage, a -9 penalty to Strike the Head or hands/feet, and a -12 penalty to Strike an eye or a certain pressure point.

The exact result of a Targeted strike is left up to the GM. A strike to the hand that is holding a weapon may cause a POW + Athletics check to keep their grasp. A Strike to a part of the body without Armor would ignore any AR. A Non-Lethal strike to the head may be treated as Lethal or may invoke an immediate Knockout effect.

Armor Rating (AR)

A fighter's best defense comes from the armor they wear into battle. With the right armor, they can substantially extend the combat time before they are taken out or have to forfeit their match. However, armor also limits the range of motion a fighter would normally have without it, due to its weight and constriction. Still, it is very useful in avoiding a little thing called… death.

Armor is given an Armor Rating (AR) split up into two numbers, as shown on the Armor chart (Page 57), Non-lethal and Lethal protection.

Example: *A suit of Archaic Leather armor with an Absorb of 2/2, would subtract 2 damage from a Non-lethal attack (like a punch or kick), as well as 2 damage from Lethal attacks (like arrows or swords).*

Only armor that is designed to be bulletproof (Kevlar, Riot gear, etc.) can withstand the effect of firearms. When shot with a gun, "Bulletproof" armor absorbs the normal Lethal AR amount, and then converts the rest to Non-lethal damage. This non-lethal damage is not further absorbed by the Non-lethal AR. The GM should determine how many gun shots a single piece of armor can take before it needs to be replaced.

Example: *If Carlton is shot with a Heavy Pistol (Damage 8 (L)) while wearing his Kevlar (Absorb 1/3), 3 damage would be subtracted, then he would take 5 (NL) damage.*

Armor Piercing (AP)

Armor Piercing (AP) attacks ignore a certain level of AR that is offered by armor. If an attack is given an Armor Piercing value of 3, this means that it would ignore 3 points of AR. If the armor provides AR 4, then it still Absorbs 1 point of Damage. This is common with special bullet types, but is also a factor used by some melee weaponry or supernatural abilities.

Mounted Combat

When battling while riding a steed, the character makes Simple (10) AGY + Vehicle Operation (Horsemanship) checks to guide their horse. They can use the steed's Movement instead of their own, but moving any farther than 10 ft. uses one Action for the Round. While mounted, Actions cost one less Stamina point (to a minimum of 1), as the horse does a lot of the movement for the couple. If charging, the Action receives +2 Damage. Casting magic while riding a steed requires a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check to succeed.

If the steed is crippled or brought down, the character may make an AGY + Acrobatics check to avoid being thrown to the ground, losing 1 Action for the Round and needing to make a Stand Action.

Ground (High or Low)

When fighting on the same field, combatants are considered to be on equal ground. However, if the scenario changes to give one the advantage over the other, it changes the entire landscape of combat itself. If a character gains the High ground on their opponent, such as jumping onto a car roof, fighting up a hill, or fighting someone who is on their back, they receive a +4 bonus to all combat rolls. Likewise, a character that finds themselves having the Low ground suffer a -4 penalty to all combat rolls, except for Dodge and Roll.

Off-hand Actions

If a character is forced to make an Action with his or her off-hand, it is done so at a -4 penalty. This can happen for a variety of reasons. Their main hand may have been injured, severed, or even bound (like being handcuffed to another person or a radiator). This penalty is removed by taking the Ambidexterity Gift (See page 47).

Simultaneous Actions

Under normal rules, a character may take one Action for the cost of one of their Actions per Round. There are times, however, when one must be doing things simultaneously. They may be trying to decipher a code in their head while attacking their opponent, trying to operate a vehicle and fire a gun, or may just strike with a one-two combo. When attempting to take two actions for the price of one, each action suffers a -10 penalty. Taking the Ambidexterity Gift (See page 47) reduces the penalty for dual strikes and other things associated with using one's hands equally, but not for Actions like Skill Use, such as Knowledge or Stealth. The Speed value is equal to the higher of the two Actions and the Stamina cost is equal to the combined totals, plus one.

Blind-fighting

Sometimes fighters need to fight in the dark, without the benefit of bright lights. This may be the summoning of magical darkness, sand in their eye, or they may actually be blind. Either way, the character can still try to participate in battle. If completely blinded, they suffer a -15 penalty to all combat rolls. If partially blinded, they have only a -7 penalty to combat rolls. However, there are ways to augment these penalties and have a real chance of winning, despite their handicap.

The character may attempt to listen for their opponent. They can try to hear breathing, footsteps, cocking of a gun, or other types of noises an opponent might make. This requires a successful INS + Perception contested by their opponent's AGY + Stealth (Both counting as Skill Use Actions). If the character succeeds, they have at least an idea of the general area they heard the noise from and can try to attack at a -7 penalty to combat rolls (instead of the normal -15 penalty) until the opponent takes a Move Action.

If the character successfully enters into a Grappling match with their opponent, they no longer suffer any type of blindness penalties. At this point, it is very obvious where their opponent is in relation to themselves and the character has no problem attacking them.

Health & Damage

Types of Damage

Non-lethal (NL): This type of damage comes from blunt attacks, such as unarmed strikes, bats, or other bludgeoning weapons. If the character is brought to 0 Health from Non-lethal damage, they fall unconscious. There is no resistance to this effect, as the character's body simply gives up and needs time to rest. If they continue to take damage from a Non-lethal source, the Non-Lethal damage is converted to Lethal. This damage is recorded at the top of the damage box on the character sheet. Non-lethal damage is recovered at a rate of 4 points per hour of rest or 2 points per hour of light activity (cleaning, etc. no combat).

Lethal (L): This type of damage comes from attacks that wound more than just the surface, from bladed weapons to special martial arts techniques to guns to poisons and certain drugs that cause internal damage. Attacks to weak spots with a Non-lethal weapon, may also be treated as Lethal (See Targeted Strikes). After losing half or more Health from Lethal damage, they must make a check against Bleeding/Shock (See page 76). If they reach 0 Health from Lethal damage, the character must check against Death (See page 77). This damage is recorded on the bottom of the damage box on the character sheet. Lethal damage heals at a rate of 4 points per day of rest or 2 points per day of light activity (cleaning, etc. no combat).

Temporary Health: Some effects, like a Wolf Person's Half-Wolf form, grant the character with additional Health for a short time. When this additional Health dissipates, any lost Temporary Health is applied as Non-Lethal damage to the character.

Example: *Paul has 30 Health and is granted an additional 10 Health. He takes 6 (L) from a knife attack during a fight. After the battle is over, the Temporary Health leave him and the 6 (L) is applied as 6 (NL) to his original 30 Health, bringing him down to 24 Health.*

Depravation

It's a dire situation when a character is without food or water for extended periods. When this occurs, they slowly lose both Stamina and Health. They can go a 3 days just fine, but they lose 5 Stamina and 5 Non-Lethal Health for each additional day. If they start eating and drinking again, they regain Stamina at a rate of 4 per day and regain Health as normal.

If in a situation where they are unable to breathe (i.e. held underwater or locked in a room losing its oxygen content), the character may follow normal Holding Breath rules (See Attributes section). However, they can push beyond this, if needed. They can make a Moderate (20) VIG check to continue holding their breath for one more Round (10 seconds). Each check costs 2 additional Stamina points whether its successful or not. If the character fails a check or runs out of Stamina points, they instantly stop holding their breath.

Disease

A staggering number of different diseases and sicknesses exist in the world, from smallpox to malaria to HIV to herpes. Each has their own differing, yet very potent (often deadly) effect. Difficulties for resistance checks are based on the strength of the source versus the effects of the sickness (GM's decision). Sexual contact with a partner with full blown AIDS may have a Tough (30) VIG + Fortitude check against Disease to avoid catching the disease, while a kid who just has the flu would be a Simple (10) Difficulty. Checks are generally made when they are first exposed to the source. Additional checks at varying intervals are needed they have constant contact with the source.

Infection

If a character takes Lethal damage, they must get medical attention immediately after the fight or make a VIG + Fortitude check against Disease to stave off Infection. The Difficulty is based on how much damage the character has taken. If the roll fails, the character cannot heal any Lethal damage (Non-lethal heals normally) taken and takes an additional 2 (L) per day, until they seek

medical attention. If this period extends to three days, they also lose 3 Stamina points per day that they cannot regain until the infection is gone. If no medical services are available, the character has the option of amputating their limb or carving out the infected patch of muscle to get rid of the infection, stopping its spreading and allowing another check against Disease. Taking damage from an irregular weapon, such as a jagged knife or broken bottles, raises the Difficulty by 3. Immediate medical attention and disinfection (within 2 hours) removes the need for this check.

Simple (10): 25% or less Lethal damage
Moderate (20): 26% to 50% Lethal damage
Tough (30): 51% or more Lethal damage

Poison/Drugs

Plenty of drugs and poisons exist, from recreational drugs to sodium pentothal to cocaine to snake venom to Draino. Their adverse effects are resisted with a VIG + Fortitude check. However, if the character doesn't want to resist the effects of the drugs, then they can simply wave their check. There are a variety of effects that poisons and drugs and cause, each one increasing the potency (Difficulty). Poisons can be created by anyone with Medicine 5+.

The most basic effect of poison is to cause Lethal internal damage to the victim. Rotted food may require a Simple (10) check to avoid anywhere from 2(L) to 8 (L) (based on how bad it was). Drinking a cocktail of various plumbing liquids may be a Tough (30) check in order to avoid a second check against instant Death as well.

Drugs will usually have other effects, such as addictiveness (which may require INS + Discipline checks to avoid going for their next hit), hallucinations (which can give up to a -5 penalty to all rolls), or euphoria (that zaps the motivation to do anything but feel ecstasy). As a general rule, the way you take the poison or drug determines the Difficulty. So, the Difficulty could be Simple (10) for smoking, Moderate (20) for ingesting, and Tough (30) for taking intravenously, with additions based on possible side-effects like those listed above. However, if the drug or poison has been cut with other substances, it may also cause internal damage to the victim.

Antidotes

Some drug and poison effects can be counter-acted if an antidote is available. Antidotes eliminate the substance from the victim's body and often returns them to their normal state very quickly, sometimes in as little as 1 Round. Other circumstances may require up to a week for the antidote to take effect.

Antidotes can be created by anyone with Medicine 7+. It also requires an understanding of the drug they are eliminating, collecting the proper medicinal ingredients, and often a Moderate (20) Medicine check.

Falling

Falling from heights causes 5 (NL) for every 10 ft. before they hit the ground. Damage is negligible from less than 10 ft. When they land, they can make a Roll check with Difficulty 10 + 3 for every 10 ft. If the check is successful, they take half damage (rounded down) instead.

Bleeding/Shock

After losing half or more Health from Lethal damage, the character is considered to be wounded enough to bleed. The character must then make a VIG + Fortitude check against Shock at the beginning of each Round. A failed check means they fall to the ground and are unable to move.

As the character continues to bleed, they also take 3 (L) per Round until their wounds are bandaged (or cauderized) and the bleeding is stopped. This requires a Moderate (20) Medicine check for emergency field work. Depending on how chaotic combat is around the characters, the Difficulty of this roll may even be raised to Tough (30).

Pain Penalties

Fighting hurts. When a character takes more and more damage, their reaction time and combat skills begin to break down, giving them penalties to their checks.

When a character Health falls down to half, all their checks suffer a -4 penalty, a -8 penalty to all checks at 1/4 Health, and a -12 penalty to all checks at 1/8 Health. The character can attempt to push off the effects of Pain before an Action or Reaction by spending 1 Stamina point and rolling a reflexive check against Pain. Difficulty is Simple (10) for 1/2 Health, Moderate (20) for 1/4 Health, and Tough (30) for 1/8 Health. A failed check means the character still acts with a Pain penalty.

1/2 Health	-4 penalty to all checks
1/4 Health	-8 penalty to all checks
1/8 Health	-12 penalty to all checks

Scarring

While scarring is very prevalent after having an infection, some people scar naturally from even the slightest wounds. Others never scar, no matter how bad the damage to their body. The option to keep a scar is considered more a storytelling tool than a mechanic and can be implemented by the GM or the player themselves to enhance their concept or personal storyline. The player may want to keep a scar from a particularly momentous battle in the character's story or the GM may leave it as part of an significant storyline (perhaps in order to tell the difference between the character and an look-a-like imposter for the upcoming story).

Fire

Fire deals Lethal damage, there's no doubt about that. The devastation it can cause to homes and other belongings is nowhere near the damage it can do to someone's body. Damage for fire is based on how large the fire is versus how much of the character's skin is unprotected. If the character catches fire or receives fire damage from a continuous source, they will continue to take that same amount of damage every Round until the fire is extinguished.

Lighter	**1-2 (L)**
Torch	**4 (L)**
Camp fire	**8 (L)**
Bon fire	**14 (L)**
Flame-thrower	**20 (L)**

Electrocution

Electricity works the same as Fire, but also brings a shock to the human body that can Stun or even kill the victim. The damage inflicted is per Round of contact.

Wall Socket	**1-2 (L)**	**Simple (10) check against Unconsciousness (Knockout)**
Taser	**5 (L)**	**Moderate (20) check against Unconsciousness (Knockout).**
Power Line	**10-15 (L)**	**Tough (30) check against Unconsciousness (Knockout) or Death.**
Lightning	**20 (L)**	**Moderate (30) check against Death.**

Death

After being brought to 0 Health from Lethal damage, the character begins to die. The character rolls a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check against Death. If successful, the character falls unconscious, incapacitated, but not dead. If bleeding, they still require medical attention or they will continue to bleed.

If they continue to take damage, they must again make a Moderate (20) check with the amount of damage taken added to the difficulty. A failed check means the character dies. A Medicine check, using the same Difficulty standard, can be used to stabilize the victim, bandage their wounds, and bring them to a point where they can start healing. However, without the proper medical treatment, they will eventually die of internal bleeding. If the character reaches -10 Health, they are considered dead, with no additional chances to live.

Example: *Frank has taken Lethal damage, reducing him to 0 Health. He makes a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check and rolls 22 (success!). However, he was bleeding and takes 3 (L) at the start of the next Round. His check is now Difficulty 23 (20 + 3 points of damage less than zero). He makes it by rolling 24. The next round, his check is Difficulty 26. Frank rolls 25, meaning he dies. If he had rolled 26, he would have lived.*

Insanity

Some characters suffer from mental illness, be it schizophrenia (hearing voices), intense phobias (such as hemophobia or xenophobia), bipolar disorder (depression and mood swings), or even multiple personality disorder (having suppressed personalities take over their body). Players are encouraged to be creative when approaching this type of character concept, but not to take it too far. Insanities change the entire face of the story if their insanity becomes larger than the character themselves. That type of character is not only unplayable, but not enjoyable to play along side. If the character wishes to push off the effects of their Insanity when it creeps up on them, they can make an INS + Discipline check against Insanity. Difficulty is based on the strength of outside influence and stress levels of the character.

Sample Combat

Below is a sample of how combat works. It is fast-paced, fun, and brutal all at the same time. Just as with Antagonists (page 161), the information below already takes the fighters' Attributes into account. Enjoy!

Fighters

Chris

Statistics: Health 25, Stamina 24, Initiative +12, Movement 13, Actions per Round 2

Combat Bonuses: Strike +5, Dodge +7, Parry +6, Roll +6, Grapple +10, Damage +0

Elgin

Statistics: Health 30, Stamina 26, Initiative +10, Movement 10, Actions per Round 3

Combat Bonuses: Strike +7, Dodge +3, Parry +5, Roll +8, Grapple +13, Damage +1

Round 1

GM – The two of you decided on the place and the time. The bar that you both frequent is owned by a friend, Harry, and he agreed to host your fight a little after last call, when most of his patrons would be gone. You go down to his basement, where there is a fighting mat set up there, with some chairs around it, for the few who have been invited to watch. You two stretch and enter the ring.

Elgin – "Oh, you are so going down." I stare at him menacingly.

Chris – "Whatever"

The two fighters roll initiative. Chris rolls 20, for a total of 32 (20 + 12 Initiative) and Elgin rolls 6 for a total of 16 (6 + 10 Initiative). That means that Chris starts on Count 1, while Elgin starts on Count 5 (+1 Count for every 4 beneath).

GM – Chris has initiative. What's your Action?

Chris – I see that he's left an open spot, so I go in for a quick jab. I'll start with a Light attack (Speed 2, Stamina 0, +2 Strike, +1 Damage).

Elgin – I'll Take the Hit (does nothing).

Neither Chris nor Elgin subtracts any Stamina points. Chris rolls 12 to Strike for a total of 17 (12 + 5). Elgin does nothing and takes 1 (NL) (Base damage 0, +1 from Attack).

GM – Chris quick jabs Elgin, popping him in the nose, but it doesn't seem like it did much to him.

Chris – Then, I'll take my second action to slam him with a Strong attack (Speed 6, Stamina 2, -4 to Strike, +5 Damage). I duck down and come up with a five-knuckled uppercut.

Elgin – I definitely don't want that one to hit me. I'll attempt to Parry.

Chris subtracts 2 Stamina, Elgin subtracts none. Chris rolls 15 to Strike for a total of 16 (15 + 5 - 4). Elgin rolls 12 to Parry for a total of 17 (12 + 5). This means that Elgin successfully avoided damage. Chris has exhausted his 2 Actions for this Round and can only perform Reactions for the remainder.

Elgin – "My turn!" In a show that I'm more powerful, I shove him backward. Using a Push Action.

Chris – I'll attempt to Parry his push.

Elgin subtracts 1 Stamina point, Chris subtracts none. Elgin rolls 19 to Push for a total of 26 (19 + 7). Chris rolls 4 to Parry for a total of 10 (4 + 6). Chris must now make a reflexive POW + Athletics check to remain unmoved, Difficulty 26. Assuming he has a bonus of +7 (POW 4 and Athletics 3), he rolls a 14 for a total of 21. He failed, so he is pushed back 5 feet (Elgin has POW 5).

Elgin – Nice. Then, I'll rush him while he's off his balance for a nice bulldozing attack. I use a Move – Sprint/Rush Action.

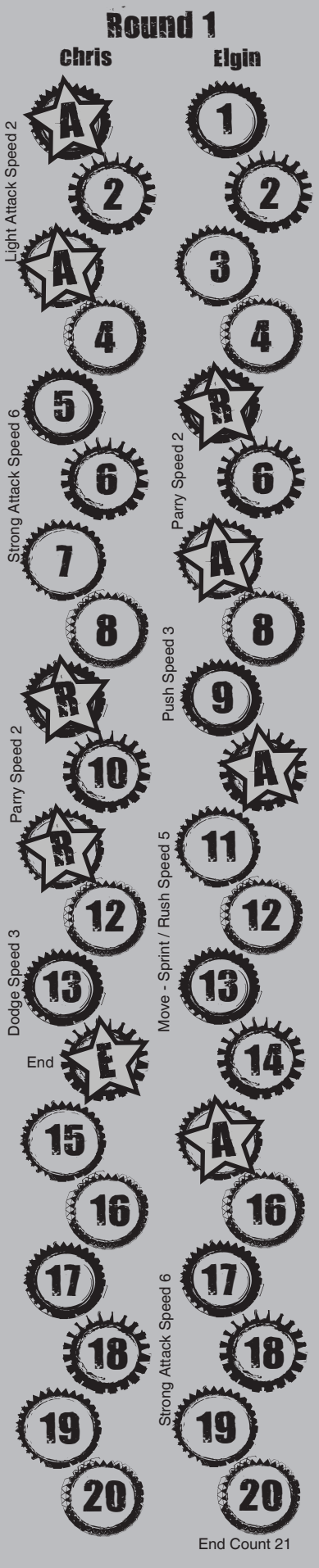
Elgin subtracts 2 Stamina points. There is no roll to make and Chris does not need to make a Reaction to this Action. The Rush Action adds +3 to Strike and +2 Damage to Elgin's following attack.

Elgin – Now that I have some momentum, I'll make a Strong Attack (Speed 6, Stamina 2, -4 to Strike, +5 Damage) at full speed.

Chris – Crap! I'm not getting hit by that, so I Dodge out of the way.

Elgin subtracts 2 Stamina points, Chris subtracts 1 Stamina point. Elgin rolls 13 to Strike for a total of 23 (13 + 7 + 3). Chris rolls a Natural 1 to Dodge for a total of 7 (1 + 6). Because of the Natural 1, the GM decides that Chris loses one of his Actions the following Round. Elgin's attack deals 8 (NL) (Base damage +1, +5 from Attack, +2 from Rush).

Elgin ends the Round on Count 21, which is an Overstep of 1. This gives him a -2 penalty to Initiative for Round 2.



At the end of Round 1, each fighter has the following:

Chris: Health 17 (25 – 8), Stamina 20 (24 – 4)
Elgin: Health 29 (30 – 1), Stamina 21 (26 – 5)

Round 2

At the beginning of Round 2, the fighters re-roll Initiative. Chris rolls 10 for a total of 22 (10 + 12). Elgin rolls 19 for a total of 27 (19 + 10 - 2). Elgin starts on Count 1 and Chris starts on Count 3 (if he had rolled a 23, he would have started on Count 2).

GM – The fight continues. Elgin has initiative, what's your Action? You've just plowed into him and you are nearing the edge of the ring.

Elgin – I'm going to try to deal out some more pain with a punch to the jaw. Full Attack (Speed 4, Stamina 1, Damage +3).

Chris – I'll Take the Hit.

Elgin subtracts 1 Stamina point, Chris subtracts none. Elgin rolls a Natural 1 to Strike, which means an auto-failure and the GM decides that Elgin's trip up gives him a -5 penalty to his next Reaction.

Chris – And there's my opening. I'm pissed so I declare an Assault Round and I'll start it off with a Full Attack (Speed 4, Stamina 1, Damage +3) to his gut.

Elgin – Oh crap! I'm trying to block it (Parry) by pushing his hands downward.

Declaring an Assault Round means that Chris receives +2 Actions (Bringing him to 3), +4 to Strike, +1 Damage, and +4 free Stamina points for the Round, but cannot use any Reactions (which is why he was going to take the first hit). Chris subtracts 1 Stamina point from his 4 free points for the Round, Elgin subtracts none. Chris rolls 11 to Strike for a total of 20 (11 + 5 + 4). Elgin rolls 10 to Parry for a total of 10 (10 + 5 – 5). Elgin takes 4 (NL) (+0 Base damage, +3 from Attack, +1 from Assault).

GM – Now you're both on Count 7, which means Simultaneous Actions. Because Chris has the higher Initiative bonus, Elgin has to proclaim his Action first.

Elgin – I'm going to attempt to Parry whatever attack he's launching at me. He's on a war path.

Chris – I go for a Strong Attack, leaping into the air to crash down on him with a leap kick. (Speed 6, Stamina 2, -4 to Strike, +5 Damage).

Elgin – Thought so.

Chris subtracts 2 points from his remaining 3 free points, Elgin subtracts none. Chris rolls a Natural 20 for a total of 29 (20 + 5 + 4). Elgin rolls 5 to Parry for a total of 10 (5 + 5). Chris's Critical success means he regains 2 Stamina points and deals +3 damage. Elgin takes 9 (NL) (+0 Base damage, +5 from attack, +3 from Natural 20, +1 from Assault)

GM – Both of you are showing your bruises now. Elgin you're up.

Elgin – I'm going to strike his legs and try a Sweep Action. Falling to the ground won't help him in his Assault Round.

Elgin subtracts 1 Stamina, Chris subtracts none. Elgin rolls 12 to Strike for a total of 19 (12 + 7), but Chris cannot React so it is assumed to be effective. Chris must now make a Balance check of Difficulty 9. Assuming he has a +6 bonus (AGY 4 + Acrobatics 2), he rolls 9 for a total of 15. He fails and trips to the ground.

GM – You have the High Ground, Elgin. What's your next Action?

Elgin – I'm going to kick him while he's down with a Full Attack (Speed 4, Stamina 1, Damage +3).

Chris – I'll get you for this! Haha.

High Ground gives Elgin a +4 to Strike and Chris a -4 to his Reaction. Elgin subtracts 1 Stamina point, Chris subtracts none. Elgin rolls 18 for a total of 29 (18 + 7 + 4). Chris cannot make a Reaction. Chris takes 4 (NL) (+1 Base damage, +3 from attack). Elgin now has no more Actions for the Round. Chris has one more.

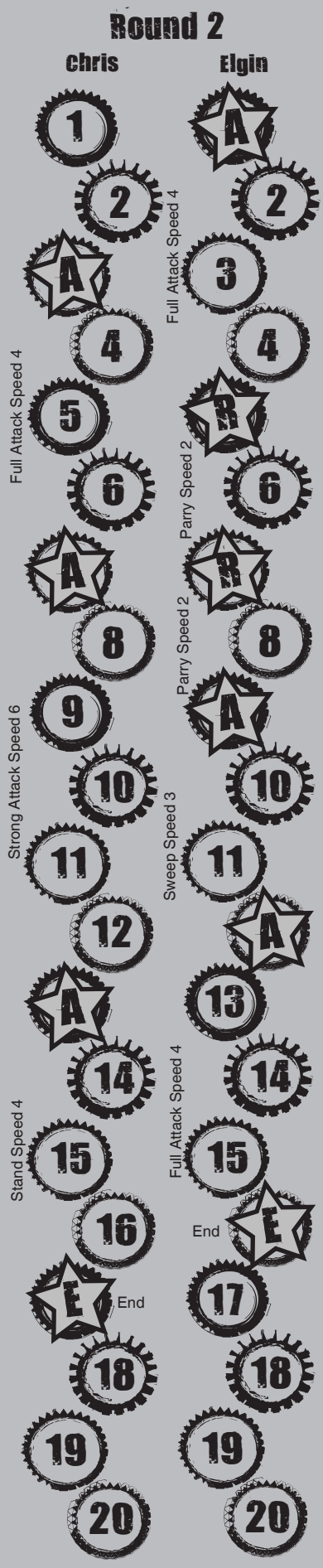
Chris – I use my last Action to spring to my feet (Stand).

Chris subtracts 1 Stamina point from his free Stamina. His last 2 free Stamina points are all discarded.

So each fighter will enter Round 3 with the following:

Chris: Health 13 (17 – 4), Stamina 20 (20 – 0)
Elgin: Health 16 (29 – 13), Stamina 19 (21 – 2)

***FYI:** Both Fighters are only 1 Health from gaining the -4 Pain penalty for being at 1/2 Health.*



Chapter Three: The World of Magic

"Adept" is the most commonly used designation for those with an affinity for casting magic. They are also sometimes called magi, hoodoos, witches, or sorcerers. Some demons are born with specialties in certain magical Paths or even magic that only their kind can master, such as a Burner's propensity for fire magic or a Taylari's ability to control blood. Adepts come from different schools of thought and practice, from witchcraft to necromancy to rune magic. Others may even believe their gifts are awakened psychic powers or gifts from their deity of choice.

Descendants of Ten

It is no coincidence that adepts are plentiful among humans. The Circle of Ten made sure to take on many students on their travels, hoping to arm humanity with enough power to fight against supernatural forces. Every direct descendant of the Circle of Ten has the gift of magic and has progressed to master one Path or another. Many believe the Board of Directors to be their own Order, as they share all their magical secrets with each other in order to one day possess every spell in existence. No one knows if they will ever succeed in their goal, as new spells are created by the dozen every year.

The reasons to practice magic also vary widely. Some begin their journey because it runs in their family and the belief that magic is their birthright. Others join secret schools of magic called Orders to develop camaraderie with others of similar magical interests. Some social rejects or lone-wolves may research magic by themselves, discovering new spells and cultivating their powers in the privacy of their own home.

Discoveries

Magic has existed for as long as humanity (and perhaps longer). Adepts learn to shape reality by either bending or breaking the existing rules of the universe. Many adepts question exactly how humans are able to do this and many have narrowed their answer to… the soul. Some beings have the ability to cast magic naturally, while others must forcibly open their soul to the universe and absorb its power.

Other more scientific minds from Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. experimented with magical occurrences and their effect on the world and adepts. In May 1982, they discovered that all supernatural abilities, from psychic phenomena to a magician's tricks to a demon's natural

powers, all come from the same source. The only difference between an adept that casts magic with deep prayer and an adept who speaks magic words to the elements, is their choice of focus. Psychics use their minds as a focus, while worshippers use a holy symbol, and a witch may use nature itself. This scientific discovery rocked the foundations of magical societies, as every Order held strong to their own personal beliefs of magic origins.

Life as an Adept

Adept lifestyles range widely, just as their origins. It is as common to have an adept that dresses in long robes, adorned with jewelry, and living a life of privilege as it is for another to live on the streets as a biker gang leader, dressed in the leather and chains to suit their rank. Some become hermits, practicing their magic in remote areas, away from civilization. These hermits often have magic that revolves around the wilderness, animals, or protection of their land. However, the pressures of sustaining a normal life when surrounded by magic can become too much for some. Hermits are often born out of growing so powerful that they separate themselves for everyone else's safety. Master adepts are often sought out for secrets of the supernatural and to learn unique spells. Some are willing to share and, of course, others are not. Others may join an Order, a secret society of magic (See page 85).

Some strike out on their own, even using magic to become psuedo-superheroes or masked vigilantes, getting a thrill from fighting for "the American way of life". Others may take a more villainous approach, no longer considering themselves human, having obviously evolved further than others thanks to their magical talents. This type of behavior is more tolerable in areas without strong Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. presence, as long as they do not break the cardinal rules of API. Often, these areas are deeply in need of additional protection for which API may not have the numbers. These vigilantes may even become sub-contractors with API backing, but without official API status (See page 122).

Some adepts acknowledge their magic, but try to live as normal people. One is just as likely to find an adept in a large and dusty library researching their spells as in the cubicle across from their own in their crap office job (perhaps doing magical research on the Internet). This is common among demons with natural magic, as they see spells being cast all their life and don't usually call attention to them. Humans, on the other hand, seldom take the discovery of magic so lightly. It alters their whole life, often for the better, but there is also a bad side to magic.

For most, magic becomes their primary focus. Once awakened, magic is in their soul, body, and heart and it cannot be turned away easily. Many even become addicted to its use. For instance, an interior decorator may give up a hands-on approach to brainstorming and instead use magic from the Path of Telepathy to steal great ideas from their competitors. A mechanic may stop building engines piece by piece and instead control will their tools to have them do all the work. Like most drugs, it starts off small and steadily grows into a larger part of their life. Even careless demons fall prey to this magical addiction, delving deeper and deeper into their birthright after their first taste.

The Gates of Magic

Think of the universe as a giant bull's-eye target where adepts are archers. They arm themselves with arrows of willpower and fire them at the target. The outer rim is the 1st Inner Circle. Few adepts gain the training and knowledge needed to strike further toward the bull's-eye. The next inward rim is the 2nd Inner Circle, very close to the center, but not quite. The bull's-eye itself is the true goal of any adept worth their mettle and gives a measure of control over the universe. It can also take one's whole life to achieve this level of mastery.

1st Inner Circle

An adept first learns powers within the 1st Inner Circle. These spells are comprised of fundamental magic that can be performed easily and without needing too much control. Some adepts spend years in training at this level before ever attempting to move beyond. Other adepts never progress past the 1st Circle, happy to stay safe in the use of simple magic.

2nd Inner Circle

When adepts move past 1st level child's play, they can progress to 2nd level magic. This magic further solidifies the adept's control over their environment and reality itself. While they cannot break universal laws, they can easily bend them to their will.

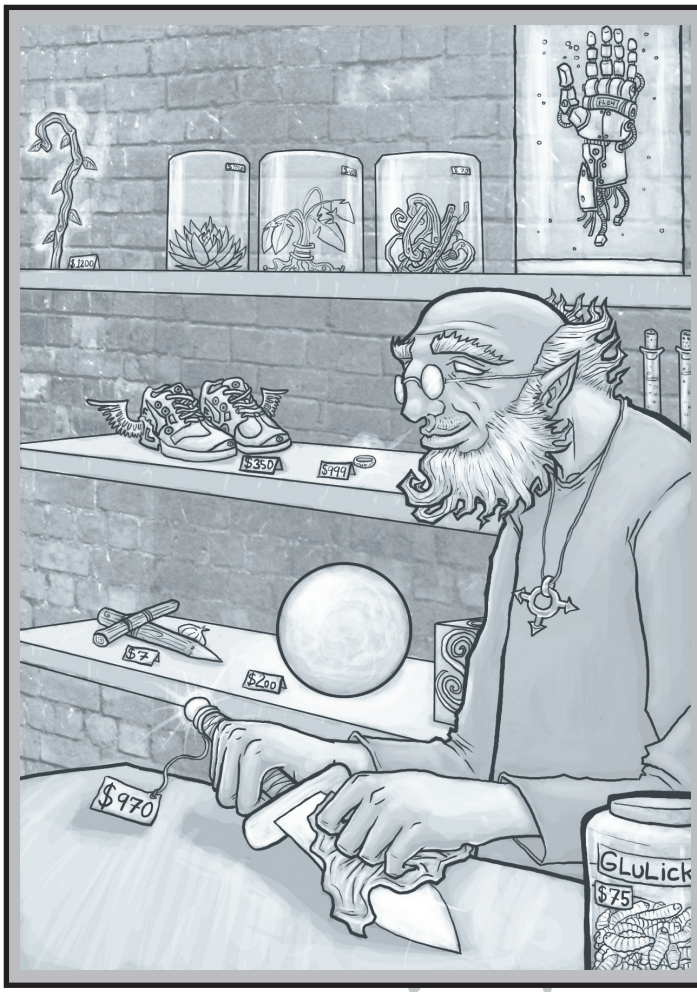
3rd Inner Circle

Spells from the 3rd Circle break the laws of reality, space, and time outright. Its rituals are the cause of many apocalyptic myths or legendary monster summonings. Most never achieve this level of control over the universal laws. Those that attempt 3rd level magic without proper control or training find themselves accidentally ported to hellish dimensions or blinked out of existence altogether.

White and Black Magic

Magic itself is neutral. Its reflection of good or evil magic only comes from the adept in question. Even a healing spell can have beneficial and malicious connotations. If used to bring a comrade back from near death, the applications are obviously good. However, if used to bring torture victims back to full health, only to torture them over and over again, the magic's application is obviously wicked.

After years of learning and casting magic and reaching the 2nd Circle, an adept's appearance twists to match the



Magic Shops

Many magic shops operate in the US. Of course, most are a complete and utter hoax, selling crystal balls carved from totally non-magical stones, arrowheads for false luck, and many books on using fake magic. To date, no adept has yet to publish a book with real magic within its pages, as this would be neither truly profitable nor wise to break the rules laid out by Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.

True magic shops do exist, but are quite limited on the types of items they may carry legally. API has record of many magical objects needed for large-scale destruction or epidemic rituals and obviously doesn't allow stores to carry these items under the rules of their store permits. Likewise, weapons or charms that are integral to harming legal demon races are prohibited from sale, especially those that work closely with Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. However, there is no way for the company to know of every use for every herb, stone, or other magical object.

Proprietors of magic shops should expect monthly or bi-monthly audits of their income and every item sold. API demands exact sales records be kept on who items are sold to, in case future problems arise. Some shops have a direct connection to API to run background checks on any potential buyers. Shops that do not oblige by API's rules are usually shut down quite quickly. They are seen as a hazard to those law-abiding citizens of Earth, due to the reckless sale of unauthorized magical goods. Despite these obstacles, most magic shops make a killing, especially if they are can sell magical mentorship services on the side.

use of their magic. Using their magic for good may garner a healthy glow about them. Some even develop an actual halo or may be giddy with happiness all of the time. Likewise, practicing black magic may give veiny or leathery skin. Some even age faster than they normally would.

Mana

Mana is the magical energy that exists in everyone and everything in the world. Mana goes by many names, from chi to life force to essence, but is widely known as Mana by most Orders. This power is stored in the body and soul, but very few ever learn how to focus and channel the power into actual manifestation. Even those that have mastered this process, quickly learn that it takes a large amount of physical and mental exertion for the simplest act of magic without years of practice.

A character that has learned to open their Inner Circles is then able to convert their Stamina points into Mana points when casting a spell. After opening the 1st Circle, they can convert Stamina to Mana on a one-for-one basis. The 2nd Circle allows conversion at a one-for-two basis, and the 3rd Circle allows conversion at a one-for-three basis. Casting a spell takes only a single Action per Round (unless otherwise stated), but spells with a Casting time of 1 min. or more can prove useless in quick and brutal combat. Unused converted Mana circles around the adept for one hour for use in future castings. After one hour, the Mana is absorbed into the surrounding environment.

Example: *Kat has opened her 2nd Gate and needs 6 Mana to cast a spell. She can spend 3 Stamina to do so (each Stamina point is converted into 2 Mana points).*

Stamina spent on casting magic is much more draining on the body and regained at a much slower rate of one point for every five minutes of rest. As per normal, this rate is tripled if the character is at half or less Health. Also, Stamina spent on casting cannot be regained during combat using Summon Inner Strength.

Hands, Mouth & Eyes

The hands, mouth, eyes rule is universal to most spells. It's simple really. Adepts must perform tricky hand movement, recite magic words, physically see their target, or any combination of the three. Few spells deviate from this rule, but every adept develops their own style. Unless the spell specifically requires one of the three (i.e. Anchor Spirit requires hands to draw the mystic symbol), then the player may choose which of the three their character prefers.

Casting Magic

The Casting time needed for a spell works just like Speed for other Actions. However, the effect takes place at the end of the Speed instead of the beginning. During the Casting time, the adept must concentrate on focusing his Mana for the desired effect and cannot take any other Actions. They can use Reactions normally (except for Entangle), but distracting their attention forces an INS + Discipline (Concentration) check. The Difficulties are Simple (10) for 1st level, Moderate (20) for 2nd level, and Tough (30) for 3rd level. It is more difficult to contain power that is shaping more of the universe. If the roll fails, the adept must start again.

Example: *Carlton starts on Count 1 and casts a spell with Casting time 5. Under normal circumstances, the spell effect would take place at Count 6. But Chris decides to attack him on Count 3. Carlton reacts with a Dodge (Speed 3) and succeeds. He then must make a Discipline check to keep his concentration and continue the spell. If he succeeds, the spell finishes at Count 9 (+3 Counts for the Dodge). If it fails, he must wait for the Recovery time before casting again.*

After the spell takes effect, the adept must rest for a period of time before they can take their next Action. This is call the Recovery time (listed as the second number in the spell descriptions). Some higher level spells are ritualistic and may take hours to perform and recover from, while others can easily be used in Counts. Casting times uses the same time increments as Duration (See page 84).

Example: *Chris starts on Count 3 and decides to cast Daze (Casting Time: 5 / 1). The effect of the spell will happen on Count 8, at which time Chris may then perform his next Action on Count 9.*

Touch and Striking Spells

Some spells shoot out a burst of energy or require the adept to touch their opponent. These are handled in a slightly different manner than the normal "Magic Resistance" system.

Touch: Casting a "Touch" ranged spell requires the adept to physically touch the target. This is easily done outside of combat. However, in combat, the adept must cast their spell and then make a separate Touch Action in order to apply the magic. A successful Parry of an unarmed attack will also suffice. The adept has two Rounds to successfully touch their target before the magic dissipates.

Striking: Spells like "Blast", "Telekinesis" or "Hemokinesis" that fire objects at opponents are first cast and then require a separate roll to Strike. The adept's bonuses from Fighting or Weapon Styles still apply to these spells. Upgrades can commonly be purchased to give additional bonuses to Strike.

Spell Materials in Combat

Some spells require items to sacrifice. Unless the adept enters battle with these material readied, they may need to get them from their pockets or bags quickly. This is equal to a Draw Weapon Action (Page 68), but instead of adding the Size to the Speed, add a value based on the location of the item. Pocket +2, Side bag +3, Backpack +4.

Resisting Magic

Most spells effect the adept's environment, or themselves. However, some spells can also be used against an opponent. Their target gets a chance to resist the magic, even if they don't wield magic themselves. This Magic Resistance is their inner Mana instinctually resisting any magical changes to their body. Characters receive half their INS level (rounded down) as a bonus to this check. The check difficulties are:

1st level spells	Difficulty 14
2nd level spells	Difficulty 18
3rd level spells	Difficulty 22

Choosing Spells

Adepts can freely choose spells from the Paths provided in this chapter. However, there are limits to how fast they can gain power. There are three Inner Circle levels for each Path, but an adept may not learn magic from more Paths then half their IQ (rounded down). The intensity of the magic is so strong, that focusing on too many different types of magic is just impossible. Most adepts are happy to specialize in a single Path. If needed for their concept, they can select the Path Access Gift for additional Path availability.

Example: *Dianna's has IQ 5 and wants to learn some magic. She can select spells from 2 different Paths of magic (half of 5 rounded down).*

Spells from a chosen Path must be purchased in order from 1st to 3rd level. This means that a character cannot purchase a 3rd level spell without first having purchased a 2nd level spell from the same Path. The 2nd level spell also cannot be purchased without learning a 1st level spell from the same Path. This represents the character's growing understanding of their chosen Path. The only exception to this rule is when learning magic from scrolls and tomes.

Learning New Spells

Learning spells can be quite a chore for aspiring adepts. New spells can be learned from a mentor, through intense personal research, or from ancient scrolls or

Spell Format

- **Mana:** Mana point cost to cast spell.
- **Casting Time:** Time it takes to cast and incurred recovery time. Values listed without description are in Counts. Rounds, minutes, hours, and other measurements are detailed specifically. Casting time is often negligible outside of combat and can be assumed to take only moments.
- **Duration:** Length of time the spell lasts, measured in minutes, hours, etc. They can also use the following:
  - *Rounds/Counts:* A Count is a 0.5 sec. increment. One Round is made up of 20 Counts, or 10 seconds.
  - *Instant:* The effect happens instantaneously. There is no lasting effect or concentration needed.
  - *Concentration:* The spell stays in effect occurs as long as the adept concentrates. While concentrating, their Movement is halved and they suffer a -4 penalty to all Reactions. Failed Reaction checks force a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline (Concentration) check to keep their concentration.
- **Range:** Distance or number of targets affected. Usually measured in feet or the following:
  - *Self:* Only the adept.
  - *Touch:* Affect only someone else by touch.
  - *X others by Touch:* Affects the adept and X number of other targets with the same casting.
  - *Line of Sight:* Affect a target that is clearly seen (no more than 25% cover), no matter their distance.
  - *Area:* Affects given area dimensions.
- **Resistance:** *Yes:* Target can avoid the effect with a successful Magic Resistance check. *No:* Cannot resist.
- **Effect:** The effect of the spell.
- **Sacrifice:** Spell component or penalty incurred to cast. If the sacrifice is an item, it is consumed after the effect takes place (unless otherwise stated).
- **Upgrades:** Optional extras purchased with BP.

*** - Denotes double cost for this upgrade.**

tomes. Some attempt to separate themselves to practice alone, only to find that a mentor is needed to attain the level of mastery they seek.

Adepts have a long tradition of gathering at secret locations to freely share magic with others. These organizations are called Orders. Here, an adept can pick up any number of spells for their repertoire from fellow Order members. However, while learning about potential spells takes only moments, memorizing and practicing the actual spell may require up to two weeks of training per spell level.

Some take it upon themselves to learn about magic alone. A young girl could searches her library for information on telekinesis, while another adept simply uses trial and error to hash out their Mana use. Solitary magic learning takes much longer than with a teacher; up to two months per spell level.

Other adepts record their spells on parchment to keep them in their library or give as a gift to fellow adepts. They can be bound in a book or rolled onto a scroll. Several expeditions into lost and unknown countries have been made to uncover lost tomes and knowledge that hopefully leads to undiscovered magic. A written spell takes up approximately two to three pages per spell level, leading to thick volumes or long scrolls. Any character, even non-adepts, can cast a spell by reading and enacting the spell, but the Casting time is automatically doubled. When the final words are spoken, their Mana is forcibly pulled from the caster and they lose two Stamina points per Mana point needed. Up to four casters can read the spell in unison to divide the Mana cost between them.

If an adept casts a written spell five times, they are then able to purchase the spell with XP to memorize and apply their lower Stamina-to-Mana cost per their current Inner Circle. These are powerful tools, as a character does not require access to a certain Path to learn spells from the text.

Upgrading Magic

The Dynamic Gaming System (DGS) provides a new experience where magic is concerned, allowing players to upgrade specific spell elements to better personalize them. These upgrades are not completely freeform, but can provide great opportunities for players to become more involved in their character's development. Upgrades for any spell costs 1 BP or 5 XP, but some powerful upgrades cost double.

Example: *Chris, Kat, and Carlton all purchase Daze (a 1st level spell on the Path of Neutralization. Chris spends 5 XP to upgrade the Effect from a -3 penalty to a -6 penalty. Kat keeps the -3 penalty, but increases her Duration by 1 Round. Carlton chooses to add Range to affect multiple targets. Each of them purchased the same spell, but customizes it to their personal liking and style.*

Upgrade Descriptions

- **Damage Bonus:** Adds Damage to harmful spells
- **Duration Bonus:** Extends spell duration
- **Effect Bonus:** Improves existing effects of the spell
- **Range Bonus:** Adds targets or extends area effect
- **Reduce Casting:** Reduces time needed to cast by 2 Counts (or time specified). Minimum is 4, unless otherwise specified
- **Reduce Recovery:** Reduces time needed to recover after casting by 2 Counts (or time specified). Minimum is 0, unless otherwise specified.
- **Reduce Penalty:** Reduces the spells penalty effects
- **Reduce Mana:** Reduces Mana cost for spell by 2 Mana. Minimum is 1 Mana, unless otherwise specified
- **Unique Upgrade:** Special upgrade designed specifically for the spell. Each is explained with the spell itself, often adding new uses

Orders

Orders are the lurking secret adept societies that congregate within the world of magic. Some adepts live their whole lives and never learn about their existence, as Orders are enigmatic and often highly selective about membership. Inductee practices and gathering sites are shared only within special circles, which learn secret hand shakes or wear special jewelry to prove membership.

Most Orders are loosely governed with a single leader making decisions for all. Some Orders may implement democracy within their ranks, while others leave their fates up to mystic divination. They typically meet one weekend a month, but members are encouraged to keep in contact during the downtime in between.

So, why join an Order? Orders are organizations for magi of like minds to gather and share ideas or new findings. They reveal new spells or brand new iterations of already known spells. Personalized magic is strongly encouraged within Orders, as they make themselves stronger by possessing magic that no other Order has. Members are treated as siblings, loved for their achievements and their flaws by their "brothers and sisters". In return for loyalty to the Order, the adept gains access to mentors that can help toward faster spell personalization, as well as learning Order-specific spells that are not shared with outsiders.

Why not join an Order? Some are simply ignorant of Orders, as most attempt to obfuscate their existence all together. However, Orders are viewed very similarly to gangs or cults. They are collectives of often younger adepts, coming together because they feel no one else understands them, and they carry out the goals of the Order first and their own second. Safety is often a matter of concern and only your "brothers and sisters" can protect the adept. Rivalries frequently erupt between competing Orders, which can mark members for death or worse.

Below are a few example Orders. Each has their own rules and gathering sites, and no two are completely alike. Even if two Orders specialize in the same Path of magic, they often interpret magic itself in different ways and create contrasting personalized versions. The GM is encouraged to use the descriptions below as inspiration for creating new and diverse Orders for their personal worlds.

Brotherhood of the Iron Skull: Privileged society of rich men, specializing in the Path of Death (p. 93)
Flower Children: Modern hippies, specializing in the Path of Elements (p. 97)
New Seekers: Meditation experts, specializing in the Path of Augmentation (p. 88)
Psychics of Seville: Towns of psychics, specializing in the Path of Telepathy (p. 114)
True Faith Ministries: Traveling evangelist carvan, specializing in the Path of Health (p. 103)
Wild Ones: Environmentalist coven, specializing in the Path of Animalia (p. 87)

Reading Upgrades

In a spell description with a +4 bonus to Strike, a possible Effect Bonus could read (+4 to Strike, Max: +20). This means the Upgrade could be purchased up to four times, bringing the bonus to a total of +20 to Strike. If the same Effect Bonus reads (+8 > +12 > +20), this means that the character may only upgrade three times to the exact values listed.

Paths of Magic

Animalia: Power over the animal kingdom
Augmentation: Magical enhancement of the body
Blood: Manipulation of a vampire's blood curse
Death: Creation and control of ghosts and zombies
Domination: Control of another's thoughts and actions
Elements: Power over elemental magic
Figments: Control of dreams and illusions
Fortune: Bending the rules of fate and divination
Health: Power over medical and cleansing magic
Mirrors: Strange power of reflections and light
Neutralization: Power of immobilization and negation
Portals: Creation of pathways and portals
Psychometry: Power of visions upon touching objects
Sickness: Magic of pestilence, hatred, and disease
Telekinesis: Movement of objects with only the mind
Telepathy: Communication with only the mind
Time: Control over the flow of time
Wares: Manipulation/ synchronization with machines

Path of Animalia

The Path of Animalia gives the adept power to communicate and control their animal brethren. These spells work just as easily on non-Earthly animals as well. While very powerful, the adept must be careful not to lose themselves to their animal side, lest they stop being human and instead become a beast. Sacrifices often include bloodletting or loss of mental faculties.

(1st) – Animal Dialect

Mana: 3
Casting Time: 4 / 2
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell allows the adept to communicate directly with an animal by creating an empathic connection between them. Upon purchase, the adept chooses one animal family they can communicate with: canines, felines, horses, ants, rats, or another that fits their concept. It can be useful for gathering information or for just having a casual conversation. The animal's intelligence has a large bearing on the information they can retrieve

and relay. While dogs or elephants are highly intelligent and could carry on a great conversation, dung beetles will hardly garner too much information. The exception to this is smaller insects that work together in a swarm or colony. Ants are not individually intelligent, but speak as a choir together, especially if their queen agrees to an audience. The GM is encouraged to give each animal a specific voice, reflecting flaws and gifts natural to their species, just like any other NPC. The animal is not forced to do obey the adept or even acknowledge the words, but they get a +10 bonus to any Beast Handling checks while speaking their tongue.

Sacrifice: They must be in physical contact with the animal when casting and then bite their own tongue.

Upgrades: Duration Bonus (12 hours > 1 day), Range Bonus (1 other by touch), Range Bonus (Animal within 10ft. away), Effect Bonus (+1 Animal type).

(1st) – Beast Senses

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 5 / 2
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: An adept with this spell can shift their senses to match an animal's. Whether it is an eagle's keen eye, the nightvision of a feline, or the danger sense of the cockroach, they gain a +5 bonus to checks associated with that sense, in addition to the effects listed below. One sense is available upon purchase, with others available through upgrades. An adept that can call upon several different senses can use them separately or together with a single casting.

- **Sight:** Enhanced sight allows the adept to see twice as far with more accuracy and in darkness as if it were day. Penalties to Targeted strikes are reduced by 2 and they receive no penalty for darkness (unless magical). Bright lights can them easily and the effects of Daze are twice as effective.
- **Hearing:** Enhanced hearing is beyond that of any human, allowing the adept to hear anything whispers across a room, screams from a mile away, and hear the breathing or footsteps of any would-be stalker. Their hearing bonus also applies to Survival (Tracking) checks when following even faint sounds and they get a +4 bonus to avoid surprise attacks. Loud sounds easily deafen them and the effects of Daze are twice as effective.
- **Smell/Taste:** The adept gains the ability to make Memorize checks for the scent of people, animals, or places, allowing them track or even identify people based completely on scent. Likewise, upon tasting any dish, they instantly have knowledge of ingredients used in its making with a successful IQ + Crafts (Cooking) check. Strong smells easily overwhelm them and the effects of Daze are twice as effective.
- **Touch:** Enhanced touch makes the adept sensitive to everything from the exact temperature to the shift of winds from a footstep to whispers. They get a +4 bonus to avoid surprise attacks and to all Reactions for the duration. They are very susceptible and responsive to acts of seduction (-5 penalty to resist), Pain penalties are doubled, and the effects of Daze are twice as effective.
- **Danger:** The adept can instantly sense impending danger in the immediate area up to ten minutes before. They sense the presence of others and if they are approaching. They are instinctually immune to surprise attacks and receive a +8 bonus to Initiative the first Round of combat. The danger they sense is not necessarily directed toward the adept themselves, which may lead them into other peoples' affairs. Some become overly paranoid, jumping at the slightest breeze.

Sacrifice: Side-effects are listed with each sense.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 hr, Max: 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (Touch), Effect Bonus (+1 Sense), Effect Bonus: Sight (Targeted strike penalties reduced by 2, Max: Reduced by 8), Effect Bonus: Hearing (Can detect deception by listening to heart rate), Effect Bonus: Smell/Taste (+5 to Memorize smells, Max: +20), Effect Bonus: Smell/Taste (+5 to Track smells, Max: +20), Effect Bonus: Touch (+3 to avoid surprise/to Reactions, Max: +10), Effect Bonus: Danger (+1 Round gets Initiative bonus, Max: 5 Rounds)

(2nd) – Beast Calling

Mana: 9
Casting Time: 8 / 4
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: 1 mile radius
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept sends his or her magic outward and searches for creatures they are linked to (dogs, cats, birds, etc.), calling up to five of them for aid. Animals within Range are compelled to come when called. The adept must still wait for them to arrive, as they are not magically teleported to their location, but also gain an empathic connection to them and their current location at all times. They immediately know if there were none within range. When the animals reach the adept, they can be given commands, but simple tasks only (i.e. "Attack", "Guard", etc.). If the adept knows the Animal Dialect spell, their instructions can be more complex.

Sacrifice: The adept bites their tongue hard enough to draw blood. This leaves them with a -2 penalty to social rolls that require speech for the spell's duration and about an hour afterward.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 5), Range Bonus (+2 miles, Max: 5 miles), Effect Bonus (+1 Animal type), Effect Bonus (Summon up to 10 > up to 20 > up to 50), Swarm (If used on insects, they can summon 10 for every 1 normally summoned)

(2nd) – Ride Senses

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 1 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 30 min.
Range: Self / 2 mile
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell allows the adept to achieve a type

The Wild Ones

Description: The Wild Ones are a small, but powerful coven of thirteen witches located in the Everglades of Florida. They started their spiritual careers as animal activists, attempting to find magic to stop infringement on natural lands by the opportunistic humans. In their quest, they found their future leader, Mayte. She had lived in the Everglades since she was a child, lost by her archeologist parents. She survived by finding innate magical power within and becoming a commanding witch in the arts of Animalia. The activists became her followers and learned her special magic, the power to give animals the minds and emotions of human beings.

The Wild Ones are named because collective lives beside their wild animal friends. They hope to acquire answers to stop the destruction of their homes. Each witch specializes in a certain type of Everglades animal, from snakes and alligators to manatees and dragonflies. They have kept the remaining wetlands safe from trespassers and opportunists, using their animal friends as spies or defenders. Some have even needed to kill intruders in their career, but they seldom take this drastic route to salvaging the wetlands. Two wrongs do not make a right, after all.

Joining: The Wild Ones keep their numbers at a strong thirteen and only replace a member if one dies (occurring only twice before). It is Mayte's wish to keep their numbers small and only fill their ranks with those that truly believe in their humanitarian efforts. After the death of one of their past members, her replacement was found to be a spy, there to steal their magic. They have a sense of xenophobia due to this situation.

Garb: Living in the jungle, the coven wears what is comfortable. This is usually as little as possible. The more "civilized" members kept loose, camouflage clothing. With mastery of animal magic, they can easily hide. All members of the coven know each other and can often tell each other by scent alone.

Order Bonus: The Wild Ones can purchase upgrades for spells from the Path of Animalism for half price (rounded up) and have access to Familiar.

(2nd) - Familiar

Mana: 18
Casting Time: 10 min. / 10 min.
Duration: Permanent
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: A staple for witches in legends, this spell gives an animal the intelligence, personality, and emotions equal to that of a human. It also gives them the gift of human speech. This spell can easily be cast on a pet (i.e. cat or dog), but others have alligators or even horses as familiars.

When the spell is cast, the animal begins with a child-like intelligence, but learns through time, including languages, empathy, and debate. The animal has all their normal statistics, but also starts with IQ 2. An adept starts with the ability to have one animal familiar at a time, but can obtain multiples through upgrades.

Sacrifice: Permanent sacrifice of -2 IQ, instilling the animal with a piece of their mind.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 2 min.), Reduce Recovery (-2 min, Min: 2 min.), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous familiar, Max: 5), Effect Bonus* (+1 starting IQ, Max: IQ 6)

of astral projection that attaches their spirit to an animal to use their senses. They experience everything from the animal's point of view. While not complete animal possession, the adept may dictate simple movements (i.e. turning to look in a certain direction, guiding through doors, or making noise) with a Simple (10) Beast Handling check. More complex direction may require a Moderate (20) check.

While riding the animal's senses, the adept's physical body lies dormant and without movement. If their body is harmed or the spirit extends farther than the range of the spell, the adept is snapped back into their body instantly. Such an ordeal is spiritually painful, giving them a -8 penalty to all rolls for 1 hr.

Sacrifice: After the spell ends, the adept loses one of his or her senses (GM's choice) for 1 hr.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Duration Bonus (1 hr. > 3 hrs. > 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (+2 miles, Max: 10 miles), Effect Bonus (+5 to Beast Handling rolls, Max: +15), Reduce Penalty (-4 penalty from rushing back into body, instead of -8), Ride the Human* (Can be used on a human target. Dictating actions is Tough (30))

(3rd) – Bestial Form

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 3 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 30 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept can shapeshift into their chosen animal type, acquiring all the animal's natural abilities. Taking a bird's form garners flight, a tiger form gains claws and additional balance, and a canine form gains heightened hearing and smell. They adopt the animal's physical traits (i.e. their size) and take the higher of any physical Attributes between them (i.e. an adept with POW 4 turns into a bear with higher POW. Their POW rises to that of the bear). They retain their mental faculties, but suffer a -5 penalty to using them while in animal form. This also grants the adept with the Animal Dialect spell effects, but they cannot speak in human tones (unless of course, they have transformed into a parrot).

Sacrifice: The adept becomes engrossed in their animal spirit, and this bestial nature crosses over into their human life. They suffer a -10 penalty to all mental or social checks (i.e. reasoning or empathy) for twice the duration they spent in their animal form.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Recovery (30 sec. > 0), Duration bonus (1 hr. > 6 hrs. > 12 hrs. > 1 day > 3 days > 1 week > 1 month), Effect bonus (+1 Animal type), Swarm (If animal is an insect, the adept turns into a swarm, instead of a single bug)

Path of Augmentation

The Path of Augmentation uses magic to change and enhance an adept's physical body, making them appear superhuman. When using these spells, their muscles appear to ripple almost too much and they look as though strung out on steroids. Common sacrifices are side-effects due to the strain of pushing their body beyond its natural limits.

(1st) – Hyper-Jump

Mana: 4
Casting Time: 2 / 6
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: Jumping is often the fastest way to get from here to there. This spell allows the adept to perform longer and quicker jumps. Their jumping distance is doubled and they receive a +5 bonus any Jump checks. This spell affects a single jump per casting.

Sacrifice: If jumping more than 25 ft. horizontally or 15 ft. vertically, the adept takes 3 (NL) upon landing from the strain on their legs.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (2 Rounds, Max: 6 Rounds), Effect Bonus (Jumping distance x3 > x4 > x5), Reduce Penalty (3 (NL) received at +5 ft, Max: 40 ft. horizontally/30 ft. vertically)

(1st) – Iron Fist

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 5 / 2
Duration: 1 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The Iron Fist spell enhances the adept's attacks, making them truly formidable in hand-to-hand combat. Every adept's spell appearance is unique. Some turn their hands into pure spiked iron, while others sprout thorns on their hands or go for traditional claws. No mat-

New Seekers

Description: This Order was originally founded in Malibu, CA at the height of the 80's health craze. Many adepts became obsessed with honing the power of their bodies, doing aerobics and lifting weights almost uncontrollably. This same craze led to the creation of many spells within today's Path of Augmentation, pushing the body beyond its natural limits. The Seekers wanted nothing but toned, muscular bodies, with rock hard biceps and washboard abs. Many rivalries sprung up within the Order, leading to fights, conflicts, and even a few deaths.

At their lowest point, the Order split in two. Some turned their focus from becoming heavily muscle-bound to attempting to bond their body and mind. They brought in different eastern philosophies to their belief structure. They learned the art of meditation and cultivated other spells that strengthened their mind, as well as their body. These adepts, calling themselves the New Seekers, hoped to gain enlightenment from this pursuit.

There are still chapters putting their bodies above their spiritual connections, bringing back old rivalries. The New and Old Seekers may bring internal conflict, but only the Old Seekers have spilled blood. The New Seekers do not believe in such things, but defend themselves by all means necessary. Many still hope to bring peaceful reconciliation between the two factions.

Joining: The New Seekers are highly focused on their bodies and minds. Prospective members need to be in top physical condition to even attempt membership and are subject to strenuous tests of strength and endurance to see if they are New Seeker material. Having proven to be a great physical specimen, the inductee can then enter the Order and gain the mental training needed to pursue true enlightenment.

Garb: New Seekers are not ashamed of their bodies and usually wear clothing to show off their perfect physiques, including muscle shirts or tight shorts. Members greet their brothers and sisters with the statement "We seek together", to which the other replies "We find together".

Order Bonus: Seekers can purchase upgrades for spells from the Path of Augmentation for half price (rounded up) and have access to Meditative Trance.

(2nd) – Meditative Trance

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 30 min. / 30 min.
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell places the Seeker into a state of calm, no matter the situation around them. They gain a +5 bonus to all Discipline (Concentration) checks and can exchange their Health for Stamina points at a one-for-one basis when using a Summon Inner Strength Action (instead of two-for-one). Due to the long Casting and Recovery times, this spell must often be prepared long before actual battle takes place or with no intention of combat at all. Outside of combat, their Health and Stamina are recovered at double the normal rate.

Sacrifice: While in a trance, the adept becomes more susceptible to spirit intrusion, suffering a -5 penalty to resist possession for the duration.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting (-10 min, Min: 10 min.), Reduce Recovery (-10 min, Min: 10 min.), Duration Bonus (+2 hr, Max: 5 hrs.), Effect Bonus (+5 Concentration bonus, Max: +20), Stamina Bonus* (Summon Inner Strength is one-for-two conversion)

ter the appearance, it adds +2 (L) to their unarmed strikes for the duration.

Sacrifice: Enough iron to fill the palm their palm.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 min, Max: 5 min.), Damage Bonus (+2 (L), Max: +10 (L))

(1st) – Nightvision

Mana: 4
Casting Time: 3 / 3
Duration: 20 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell augments the adept's eyes, allowing them to see in darkness of night as if it were day. Also, they are only rendered partially blind (-7 penalty) by magical darkness. Their eyes appear to shimmer in the night, much like cat eyes, giving them an eerie look.

Sacrifice: A cat's paw.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+20 min, Max: 1 hr.), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 5)

(1st) – Olympian Strength

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 4 / 3
Duration: 5 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: An adept with this spell can accomplish feats of strength beyond a normal person. This spell doubles the adept's carrying/lifting amounts and adds a +5 bonus to all Lifting checks. The adept also gains AP 4 when attempting to damage non-living objects.

Sacrifice: A stone three times larger than their hand.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 2), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (15 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Effect Bonus (+2 AP, Max: AP 10), Effect Bonus (Triple weight > Quadruple)

(2nd) – Hyper-Movement

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 4 / 1
Duration: 20 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell boosts the adept's Movement. They move in a blur of color, gaining a +5 bonus to Movement and a +2 bonus to all combat rolls. The adept does not receive any penalty for obstacles while in hyper-movement, as their mind stays just as alert. The Speed for all Actions and Reactions is also reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 1), but Stamina point costs remain the same. This reduction does not effect non-physical Actions, such as Summon Inner Strength or Skill Use.

Sacrifice: The strain on the adept's muscles gives them -2 POW for one day after the duration ends.

Upgrades: Reduce Recovery, Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Duration Bonus (+20 min., Max: 1 hr.), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed, Max: -3), Effect Bonus (+5 Movement, Max: +40), Effect Bonus (+2 bonus to combat rolls, Max: +10), Reduce Penalty (-1 POW, instead of -2 POW)

(2nd) – Like a Fish

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 2 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 30 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: With this spell, the adept replaces their lungs for gills to be able to breath either fresh or salt water without penalty. Slits appear on their neck and begin to filter as soon as they enter the water. They are also able dive far down to the crushing depths of the ocean without taking any damage. With webbed hands and feet, penalties to Movement while swimming (See page 35) are removed and there is also no need to spend Stamina to resist currents.

Sacrifice: Transitioning back to their lungs is not enjoyable. They must spend an hour in rest, while the water is slowly removed from their body with hacking coughs and vomiting. If they attempt to continue with activity during this period, they have a -8 penalty to all rolls and can become a liability.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (1 min. > 30 sec.), Duration Bonus (1 hr. > 2 hrs. > 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (+1 other, Max: 5), Perfect Swimmer (+50% Movement (rounded up) > Double Movement), Reduce Penalty (30 min, instead of 1 hr.), Reduce Penalty (-4 to checks, instead of -8)

(3rd) - Regeneration

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 10 / 5
Duration: 4 Rounds
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell pushes the adept's body to the limit, accelerating their healing rate so they regain Health in an inhumanly faster fashion, whether active or inactive. Their enemies simply watch as their wounds slowly close before their eyes. For the duration, they regain 5 (NL) or (L) at the beginning of each Round (every 10 seconds).

Sacrifice: The speedy replication of the body's cells requires the sacrifice of 2 permanent Health from their maximum per casting.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 8), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 Rounds, Max: 10 Rounds), Range Bonus* (1 other by Touch), Effect Bonus (+5 (NL)/+5 (L), Max: 20 (NL) or 20 (L))

Path of Blood (Taylari Only)

The Path of Blood is only available to inheritors of the vampire curse, the Taylari. Other adepts may attempt to replicate these effects to create similar spells, but always fail (with an adaptation that requires too much Mana to perform for anyone). The sacrifices required are usually

the vampire's own blood, meaning self-infliction of Lethal damage. This can be done with a dagger or by biting into one of their veins.

(1st) – Knowledge of Blood

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 1 min. / 0
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: With but a taste of the target's blood, the vampire gains an immediate understanding of their general personality, blood traits (illnesses or habits that may run in their family), and likes/dislikes. The vampire senses this information in the form of emotional impulses or spontaneous visions. Some stalk their victims and retrieve a blood sample before they strike, to ensure that the target is the type they want to drink from. Others even keep entire labs of blood samples, just in case.

Sacrifice: They must mix a small amount of their own blood with the sample they drink, inflicting 2 (L). Many spread their own blood on their lips just before drinking in order to mix.

Upgrades: Direct Drinking (Half Mana cost if drinking directly from the target, but gives Resistance), Deeper Knowledge (Target's true name > Recent history up to a week), Drives (Learn Passion), Gauge Strength (Sense the approximate Skill levels > Attribute levels), Track (Gets a sense of target's location, gaining a +5 bonus to Tracking checks for 1 hr.)

(1st) – Plasma Tentacles

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 8 / 2
Duration: 1 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The vampire creates whip-like tentacles from their cursed blood, by slitting their wrist and letting the blood pour out. Instead of collecting in a pool at their feet, the blood extends into a tentacle that is fully at the vampire's control. Tentacles are 5 ft. long with POW 1 (for purposes of lifting), and inflict 1 (L) with AP 2. They can make a Control Action (Speed 4, Stamina 2) to manipulate all created tentacles at one time. Attacks from the tentacles receive a +5 bonus to Strike and inflict 1 (L) (not changed by POW of tentacle).

Sacrifice: Bleeding inflicts 1 (L) per tentacle made.

Upgrades: Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (5 min. > 10 min. > 30 min.), Tentacle Strength (+1 POW, Max: adept's POW), Damage Bonus (+1 (L), Max: 5 (L)), Effect Bonus (+1 tentacle created, Max: 5), Increased Length (+5 ft, Max: 30 ft.), Quick Strikes (-1 Speed, Min: Speed 2), Effect Bonus (+5 to Strike, Max: +20), Effect Bonus (AP +2, Max: AP 10)

(2nd) – Blood Armory

Mana: 9
Casting Time: 5 / 4
Duration: 1 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The vampire can create weapons and armor by making their blood as hard as iron. Weapons are created by bleeding their wrist. The weapon starts with identical stats of the normal weapon type, but is lighter, faster and easier to wield (-1 Speed, -1 Stamina). Levels in the appropriate Weapon Skill are still required to avoid the -4 penalty for using a weapon untrained.

Gelatinous blood armor can also be secreted from the vampire's pores to cover them entirely, providing up to AR 4/4.

Sacrifice: Bleeding causes 1 (L) per weapon Size or per AR 2/2.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (Min: 1), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 min, Max: 5 min.), Damage Bonus (+1 Damage to weapon, Max: +5 to normal weapon damage), Raise Armor Max (+2/+2, Max: AR 10/10), Two-Handed Summoning (Summon two of the same weapon with a single casting. Sacrifice applies twice, but shares Casting time)

(2nd) – Mimicry

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 8 / 3
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: By tasting their target's blood, the vampire gains insight into their abilities. The vampire may choose one Skill from the target and gains access to half of their Skill levels (rounded down). For instance, if the target had Perception 6, the vampire now has Perception 3. If the vampire already possesses the Skill, the gained levels are simply stacked onto their own, but can never be raised higher than the target's level. If the vampire already has equal to or more Skill levels, the spell has no effect.

In combat, they gain access to one of the target's combat Techniques for the duration. Observant onlookers will see that the vampire performs the technique in exactly the same manner as the target, with no deviation from the target's personal style.

Sacrifice: They must mix their own blood with the sample they drink, inflicting 4 (L). Many spread their own blood on their lips just before drinking to mix.

Upgrades: Direct Drinking (Half Mana cost if drinking directly from the target, but gives Resistance), Reduce Casting, Duration Bonus (+2 hrs, Max: 5 hrs.), Effect Bonus (75% of Skill levels > 100 %), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous Skill or Technique copied, Max: 4),

(2nd) - Recreation

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 5 hrs. / 1 day
Duration: Permanent
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: Vampires use this spell to replace missing

limbs or organs, creating clones of them with blood. First, the vampire must kill another and bleed their body dry. This often means hanging the victim from the ceiling to bleed them out completely or spending hours drinking far beyond normal limits. Once done, the vampire uses that blood to form new parts. This spell does not recover any Health. It only replaces missing parts. The ordeal is truly grotesque to behold, forcing a Fear 25 check for anyone watching. This spell is also very exhausting, putting the vampire out of commission for longer than most spells.

Sacrifice: The limb or organ's essence was stolen from another, giving the vampire a -10 penalty to all checks with the limb or organ for 1 week.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 8), Reduce Casting (-2 hr, Min: 1 hr.), Reduce Recovery (12 hrs. > 6 hrs. > 3 hrs. > 1 hr.), Reduce Penalty (-5, instead of -10), Effect Bonus* (+1 simultaneous organ or limb created)

(3rd) – Hemokinesis

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 4 / 3
Duration: 5 mins.
Range: 30 ft.
Resistance: Varies

Effect: This spell teaches ultimate control over blood. With Hemokinesis, they can control their blood or that of another, their blood flow, and even organ placement to avoid being staked or otherwise impaled. The vampire makes a Control Action (Speed 5, Stamina 2) to do the following effects (the vampire learns one upon purchase and others through upgrades):

- **Blood Shaping:** They form elaborate shapes and constructs from blood. The blood they control becomes hard like iron and has Durability 15 (AR 6/6). The most feared constructs are blood cages used to capture victims or blood chains to bind them. They must succeed with a -5 penalty to Strike to catch the target and targets can only Dodge.
- **Clot:** They can cause another's blood to stop its flow and clot, causing pain and rigor mortis. Those effected take 5 (L) per Round and get a -4 penalty to all rolls for the duration. Requires a Resistance check.
- **Shrapnel:** The vampire flings or spits blood at the target, turning each blood into a long, flying blade that inflicts 4 (L). If creating more than one, each blood shard requires a separate Reaction. Uses Throwing range.
- **Withdraw:** They draw blood from a victim's open wound at a distance. This deals 4 (L) of blood that flies through the air into the vampire's mouth, recovering Health. Requires a Resistance check.

Sacrifice: Controlling blood at this level disrupts their mind, leading them along a path to their inner demon. They must resist the urge to go on a 1 hr. blood binge with a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check.

Upgrades: Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (10 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Effect Bonus (+1 Effect Type), Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > Line of sight), Range Bonus: Clot (+1 Targets, Max: 4), Effect Bonus: Clot (Additional -2 Penalty to resist Clot, Max: -20), Effect Bonus: Blood Shaping (+5 Durability, Max: 40), Effect Bonus: Blood shaping or Shrapnel (+4 to Strike, Max: +20), Effect Bonus: Shrapnel (+1 created, Max: 5), Damage Bonus: Withdraw or Shrapnel (+2 (L), Max: 10 (L))

(3rd) – Leech

Mana: 20 / 26
Casting Time: 1 min. / 1 hr.
Duration: Permanent
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: Vampires steal life force, draining the victim's bodies dry. However, those with spell can also steal (not simply mimic) their victim's Skill or Attribute levels by robbing fragments of their soul through their blood. They must drink directly from their target (requiring Grapple checks) and can steal 1 Skill level for 20 Mana or 1 Attribute level for 26 Mana. Much like the Mimicry spell, they cannot raise their Skill or Attribute higher than their victim's. The process is lengthy and painful for the vampire and victim, leaving both drained after the transfer, but it is permanent.

Sacrifice: They must mix their own blood with the sample they drink, inflicting 4 (L) per Skill level stolen or 6 (L) per Attribute level stolen. This damage cannot be regained for one lunar month.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 14 / 20), Reduce Casting (4 Rounds > 2 Rounds > 1 Round > 10 Counts),

Reduce Recovery (-20 min, Min: 20 min.), Effect Bonus* (+1 Skill level stolen, Max: 5), Effect Bonus* (+1 Attribute level stolen, Max: 4)

Path of Death

The Path of Death is the primarily tool for necromancers and other adepts that seek to manipulate and control spirits. Most become quick enemies of any Spectral that learns their name and should be careful how often they flaunt their power. Also, ghosts receive a -4 penalty to their Magic Resistance check against any Death spell, if the adept knows their name. Evolved spirits receive a +3 bonus to their Magic Resistance checks against these spells, as they are no longer simple ghosts.

(1st) – Commune

Mana: 4
Casting Time: 1 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell opens the adept to ghosts or spirits in their immediate area. The adept is able to see and communicate clearly with them, but the spirits are still intangible to the touch. This spell also allows a ghost or spirit to possess the adept's body more easily. Resisting possession during this spell suffers a -4 penalty. Spirits are choosy, so not all adepts are at risk.

Sacrifice: One 12-inch white candle.

Upgrades: Reduce Casting (30 sec, instead of 1 min.), Reduce Recovery (30 sec, instead of 1 min.), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 4), Translate (Can understand the ghost no matter the language they speak), Reduce Penalty (-2 penalty to resist possession > No penalty)

(1st) – Death Trance

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 1 min. / 5 min.
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell renders the adept's body dead for all intents and purposes, placing them into a Death Trance that stops their heartbeat and breathing. They are in a state of sleep and appear dead, but can still hear everything that happens around them, which has helped more than one adept avoid an undo autopsy (even though they feel no pain in this state). The Recovery time occurs after the trance has lapsed.

Sacrifice: A handful of spider's web. The adept also suffers a -2 penalty to all AGY rolls for the next day if they remain in this state for longer than 1 hr, due to the rigidness in their bones from being "dead",

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery (-2 min, Min: 1 min.), Range (Touch – must be willing), Duration Bonus (+2 hrs, Max: 6 hrs.), Old Corpse (The adept's skin becomes rigid and dirty, appearing as an older corpse)

(1st) – Merciful Death

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 5 / 4
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: Some adepts are faced with the difficult and controversial situation of euthanasia. This spell instantly and painlessly kills someone who solemnly wishes for death. There is no resistance, as the adept and target must simultaneously will the effect into existence. The adept commonly takes the target's final words before bidding them a merciful death. Some try to fulfill some sort of final wish as well, such as delivering a message to a loved one.

Sacrifice: Two coins placed on the target's eyelids.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Protected Spirit (The ghost of the target can never be summoned)

(1st) – Summon Ghost

Mana: 8 / 18
Casting Time: 5 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 30 min.
Range: 100 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell summons a ghost from the immediate area. Upon first learning this spell, one ghost can be summoned, though this spell does not give power over them or the ability to see/communicate with them. If the adept does not know the target ghost's name, any ghost within range is called. If they do know the ghost's true name, they can even be brought back from the Bright Lights by performing this ritual on their grave (for 18 Mana). Not every ghost likes to be summoned and may attempt to harm or possess the adept for revenge.

Sacrifice: One 12-inch black candle, which burns through during casting.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 4/14), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 1 min.), Reduce Recovery (30 sec, instead of 1 min.), Duration Bonus (1 hr. > 3 hrs. > 6 hrs. > 12 hrs. > 1 day), Range Bonus (300 ft. > 500 ft. > 1000 ft. > ½ mile > 1 mile), Effect Bonus (3 ghosts > 6 > 10)

(2nd) – Anchor Spirit

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 14 / 6
Duration: 3 hrs.
Range: 20 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell is used to keep a spirit or ghost in place (usually to use other spells on it or to coerce information). The adept draws a symbol on the ground and the ghost becomes trapped in the immediate area (50 ft. radius) if they fail their Magic Resistance. The same symbol can be used for multiple castings, as long as the spirit to affect is within 20 ft. The spirit cannot move outside

the circle for the spell's duration, which has a tendency to anger them. Anyone that steps inside the circle is fully susceptible to that anger.

Sacrifice: The adept begins to attract other spirits within 100 ft. for the duration. They are not necessarily violent, but they are not happy to drawn from their own agendas.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 8), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (6 hrs. > 12 hrs. > 1 day > 2 days > 5 days), Range Bonus (+1 simultaneous spirit, Max: 10), Range Bonus (40 ft. > 75 ft.), Reduce Area (-10 ft. radius, Min: 20 ft. radius), Protection (Caster cannot be adversely affected while in the circle)

(2nd) – Command the Dead

Mana: 14
Casting Time: 8 / 4
Duration: Concentration
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell allows the adept to command ghosts to do their bidding, from spying to possession to attacking an opponent. Their Control Action (Speed 6, Stamina 3) becomes the action of the ghosts they control. At first, the adept can control only one ghost, but can control more (through upgrades) with just a single Control Action. The ghost must perform any action the adept commands, short of destroying themselves. If they are commanded to hurt a loved one or perform a task that goes against their Passion, they get an additional Magic Resistance check. Controlled ghosts must also stay within range at all times or they snap out of the control.

Two adepts that know this spell can wrestle for control of the same spirit, at which time they make opposing INS + Discipline checks where the winner is the first to four successes. Each still requires a Control Action.

Brotherhood of the Iron Skull

Description: The Brotherhood was founded by rich, privileged, white men and handed down to several generations of their children. Their national leader is Baxter Heinz, but is far from the only living alumni. They have representation in just about every ivy league school in the United States and a few in Europe. They specialize in the Path of Death, bending ghosts to their will to hone their talents and sustain their fortunes.

Most of their ghostly victims were quite wealthy (some are even deceased friends and relatives) and they are forced to disclose important banking information and any dirt they have on others for future blackmailing. The Brotherhood is powerful and their enemies live just long enough to regret it (even moreso in death).

Each chapter has approximately ten to twelve members. Their small numbers help with keeping them secret, but they stick together out of fear and control primarily. The more powerful the chapter becomes, the quicker the dead comes back to bite them. Many in the Brotherhood of the Iron Skull are relentlessly haunted by powerful ghosts, hunted by evolved spirits, and even become targets of Spirit Eaters on occasion. All members are wealthy (or at least their parents are), so they can afford living as far from cemeteries as possible.

Joining: Most inductees are descendents of Order alumni, making their entry into the Brotherhood automatic (even if they refuse). This involves little more than a small animal sacrifice and an accompanying ritual in devotion to the Order. Other inductees must also summon a ghost as tribute to the chapter leader, which they retain in their Iron Skull. The ghost must also have information that can bring at least a small profit to the Order.

Garb: Members of the Brotherhood look like other wealthy elitists. They are often hated for the wealth alone (but usually deserve more based on their treatment of "lessers"). During summoning rituals, they dress in long black robes and adorn animal skulls on their heads. They all wear a ring crafted of bone, a sign of belonging to the Order.

Order Bonus: Members can purchase upgrades for spells from the Path of Death for half price (rounded up) and have access to Imbue the Iron Skull.

(3rd) – Imbue the Iron Skull

Mana: 22
Casting Time: 5 min. / 5 min.
Duration: 30 days
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: Masters of the Brotherhood of the Iron Skull imbue a carved iron skull with the power to absorb ghost's in the immediate area. The ghost is locked inside for the duration, in a pocket dimension of darkness. This spell can affect several ghosts within range at one time (but only two ghosts to start).

At any time, the adept can summon the ghosts from the iron skull with a Summon Action (Speed 4, Stamina 2) without the need to expend additional Mana to reassert control over the ghost. Command the Dead is assumed to be in effect as long as the ghost is connected to the iron skull.

All upgrades purchased for the Command Ghost spell apply here for the adept's Control Actions and Duration. Masters of the Brotherhood use this spell to control an army of ghosts with ease, combining their controlled ghosts from Command Ghost with those from this spell.

Sacrifice: A blood sacrifice worth 5 (L) from the adept, another person, or an animal, spilled over a finely crafted skull carved from pure iron. The preparation and creation of the skull must also be a masterpiece, needing either Wealth 5 to purchase or Crafts (Ironworking) 9+ to create it themselves.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (3 min. > 1 min.), Reduce Recovery (3 min. > 1 min.), Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft.), Effect Bonus (+2 ghost capacity, Max: 20), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed to Summon Action, Min: 2), Effect Bonus (-1 Stamina cost for Summon Action, Min: 0)

Sacrifice: The strain on the spirits to assert command over a soul leaves the adept drained. Any Stamina spent on this spell is recovered at half the normal rate (1 per 10 min. of rest)

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (+25 ft, Max: 150 ft.), Effect Bonus (+1 ghost, Max: 10 ghosts), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed to Control Action, Min: 3), Effect Bonus (-1 Stamina cost for Control Action, Min: 1)

(2nd) – Exorcism

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 1 min. / 3 min.
Duration: 1 day
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell is opposite to Summon Ghost, banishing a ghost from the area or forcing them out of any object or person possession. The effect is instantaneous, but the spell's Duration marks how long the spirit is banished from the area or how long the person is safe from repossession. Many adepts make a great living as a paranormal exorcist.

Sacrifice: This spell requires intricate hand signs, requiring a Tough (30) AGY + Legerdemain check to fully complete. If the check fails, the spirit is only momentarily banished, but can reenter immediately, disregarding the Duration.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting (30 sec, instead of 1 min.), Reduce Recovery (-1 min, Min: 1 min.), Duration Bonus (3 days > 1 week > 2 weeks > 1 month), Range Bonus (25 ft. > 50 ft. > 100 ft. > 200 ft. > 500 ft.), Reduce Penalty (Moderate (20) hand sign check > Simple (10))

(2nd) – Ghost Strike

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 6 / 4
Duration: 2 Rounds
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell allows the adept to strike and hurt a spirit's ectoplasmic body, either unarmed or with a melee weapon. This spell does not affect ranged weapons or firearms. The adept must still have someway of knowing the ghost's location, such as using Commune. Their body or weapon glows with blue ethereal energy to any onlookers.

Sacrifice: The adept becomes intangible, unable to touch any object or person for 1 hr. after using this spell.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 Rounds, Max: 6 Rounds), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 3), Damage Bonus (+1 Damage, Max: +5), Effect Bonus* (Can affect thrown weapons), Reduce Penalty (30 min. > 15 min. > 5 min. > No penalty)

(3rd) – Raise the Dead

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 10 / 6
Duration: Concentration
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell can force a currently controlled ghost (see Command the Dead) into a corpse, creating a zombie (See page 168). This spell uses the same rules as Control the Dead, but their Control Action is as follows: (Speed 6, Stamina 4). The spirit does not get a Magic Resistance check for being transferred into a zombie, as they are already under the adept's control. Zombies are slow by nature, but are very deadly in numbers.

Sacrifice: The strain of commanding both body and soul, drains the adept. Any Stamina spent on this spell is recovered three times slower than the normal rate (1 per 15 min. of rest)

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (8, instead of 10), Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (+25 ft, Max: 150 ft.), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous zombies, Max: 10 zombies), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed to Control Action, Min: 3), Effect Bonus (- 1 Stamina cost for Control Action, Min: 2)

Path of Domination

The Path of Domination teaches an adept how to completely dominate a victim's mind, from commanding their Actions to removing or editing memories. This heinous path is widely practiced, despite its usually wicked intent, and is a favorite for Illegal demons who wish to keep their presence hidden at all costs. Most spells in this path require the target to both hear and understand the caster words.

(1st) – Mind Shield

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 5 / 5
Duration: 20 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept fortifies their mind against intrusion from outside forces, providing a +3 bonus to their Magic Resistance rolls. This resistance bonus applies only to spells that intrude upon the adept's mind, like those from the Path of Telepathy, Path of Psychometry, and (of course) the Path of Domination.

Sacrifice: The adept's veins bulge out of their forehead, making an unsightly scene and giving a -1 penalty to CHM rolls for the duration.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+20 min, Max: 1 hr.), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 4), Effect Bonus (+3 bonus to Magic Resistance, Max: +15)

(1st) – Mind Trick

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 5 / 5
Duration: 1 min.
Range: 10 ft.

Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell is the simplest of Domination spells, but also very useful. It allows the adept to make a statement that the target immediately agrees with and believes. "I'm supposed to be here", "You don't want to sell drugs here", "I'm your friend", or "There are spiders in your hair" are just a few examples. The target must be able to hear the adept's voice and understand their language. This hypnotic suggestion fades at the end of the duration, usually leaving the target confused or hostile. In combat, the target gets a +6 bonus to their Magic Resistance. Also, if the target takes damage, they snap right out of the spell effects.

Sacrifice: A "joker" playing card.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 min, Max: 10 min.), Battle Trick (+4 to Magic Resistance in combat > +2 bonus > No bonus)

(2nd) – Alter Memories

Mana: 16
Casting Time: 5 min. / 1 min.
Duration: Permanent (See description)
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell allows the adept to alter another's memories. Vampires may use this to scramble their victim's memory after feeding, while more good-natured adepts may use it to remove traumatic memories from abuse victims. At first, they can affect very recent memories (within the last 30 min.), but with upgrades they can accomplish so much more. An IQ + Perception check is needed to find the particular memory to alter. Difficulty depends on the memory's depth.

Most simply shrug at the strangeness of their altered memories and move on with their lives. However, those that look further into their memories may eventually unlock them again. They receive one Magic Resistance roll per day of investigation and break the spell upon succeeding three times. After searching for answers for too long, most let their hunches go and apologize for their sudden and brief lapse into insanity. Cannot be cast during combat.

Sacrifice: The adept's nose bleeds and their vision blurs after casting, giving a -5 penalty to all rolls for 1 hr.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (3 min. > 1 min.), Effect Bonus (Affect memories within 2 hrs. > 10 hrs. > 1 day > 1 week > 1 month > 3 months > 6 months), Effect Bonus (+1 success to negate, Max: 10)

(2nd) – Command

Mana: 15
Casting Time: 10 / 5
Duration: 10 min.
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With this spell, the adept takes control of the target's mind, bending it to their will. They must be within range to hear and clearly understand the adept as they give commands, but is not restricted to any range afterward. At first, they can give simple orders that are easily followed, such as "Get down", "Fetch that", or "Guard me". With upgrades, the adept can attach conditions or additional steps to their commands, such as "Stay here and come get me if anyone approaches". The victim cannot be made to commit suicide. If they are commanded to hurt a loved one or perform a task that goes against their Passion, they get an additional Magic Resistance check. In combat, a single Control Action (Speed 6, Stamina 1) can be made to task out all their victims' movements if they are doing the same thing. Separate actions are required if they each have different tasks.

Sacrifice: The adept's veins bulge out of their forehead and neck, making an unsightly scene and giving a -3 penalty to CHM rolls for the duration.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 7), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (30 min. > 1 hr. > 3 hrs. > 6 hrs), Effect Bonus (+1 step/condition, Max: 5), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous target, Max: 5), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed to Control Action, Min: 3), Reduce Penalty (-1 penalty, instead of -3)

(3rd) – Blank Slate

Mana: 30
Casting Time: 1 day / 6 hrs.
Duration: Permanent
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell is an extreme version of Alter Memories, but removes the victim's memories instead. This includes their name, personality, and everything else about them. The process takes time, so the subject must be restrained or otherwise subdued for the duration (i.e. rope or the Enthrall spell). The adept induces a state of total amnesia, making the target a blank slate to mold. They are like a newborn, needing to be taught the ways of the world all over again.

Rebuilding their personality and feelings may take months or even years to complete and can only happen if they have freedom from any mental control. Powerful adepts have been known to use Blank Slate to create new, untainted students with no personal beliefs or past teachings to cloud their minds. Alter Memories can also be used to manufacture a past for some, giving them a basis for new personalities.

Sacrifice: They sacrifice 2 permanent INS levels.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 20), Reduce Casting (-3 hrs, Min: 12 hrs.), Reduce Recovery (-1 hr, Min: 2 hrs.), Steal* (Adept keeps the memories in their own mind)

(3rd) – Enthrall

Mana: 25
Casting Time: 1 hr. /10 min.
Duration: 1 month
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: After using either Command or Alter Memories on the same target three or more times, the adept can en-

act Enthrall to force them into further subservience. If the target fails their Magic Resistance, resisting the adept's commands becomes almost impossible and they suffer a -5 penalty against even mundane commands.

However, it also gives a +5 bonus to resist commands from any other source. This is how some adepts acquire servants that are unquestioning and obsessively loyal.

Sacrifice: The adept sacrifices 1 permanent INS level to assert their absolute control over another.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 15), Reduce Casting (30 min, instead of 1 hr.), Reduce Recovery (-2 min, Min: 2 min.), Duration Bonus (3 months > 6 months > 1 year > Permanent), Effect Bonus (-5 to resist, Max: -20), Effect Bonus (+5 to resist others, Max: +20)

Path of Elements

The Path of Elements gives adepts power over the six elements: earth, fire, wood, water, air, and metal. Each element must be taken as a separate Path. For instance, if a character has a 1st Circle spell for Fire, they can then select a 2nd Circle spell for Fire as well. However, they could not select a 2nd Circle spell for Air, until they also had a 1st Circle spell for Air. Common sacrifices are the need for intricate hand signs to cast.

(1st) – Control of Elements

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 8 / 5
Duration: 10 min.
Range: Varies
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell gives the adept control over their chosen element in their surroundings. **Note:** Summoned element must come from someplace else. If a character summons metal coins, someone may come looking for them. Please see additional ability descriptions below:

- **Air:** They can increase or decrease wind currents by 10 MPH or its temperature by ten degrees. This affects a 50 ft. radius area around the adept.
- **Earth:** They can produce five pounds of clay, rock, or sand at will. The adept can also command the earth to create tunnels, allowing for easy expeditions into buried areas or a possible getaway. The tunnels can be up to 5 ft. in diameter and are dug at a rate of 10 ft. per minute.
- **Fire:** They can spark a fire or extinguish one within their line of sight in an instant. The fire created or doused can be up to one sq. ft. In combat, it deals 2 (L) with a Control Action (Speed 3, Stamina 0). They can also increase or decrease the temperature of objects they touch by ten degrees.
- **Metal:** They can instantly sharpen and strengthen any blade, adding +1 (L) for the Duration. They can also produce five pounds of metal (most summon it in the form of coins) from within 1 mile. They can cause 1 sq. ft. of metal to rust, dealing 2 damage to the object (ignoring AR) or become clear of rust with a thought.
- **Water:** This spell allows the adept to increase or decrease water currents by 10 MPH or its temperature by ten degrees. The adept can also summon one gallon of drinkable water or can cleanse up to one gallon of stale or diseased water.
- **Wood:** They can instatly strengthen any wooden weapon, adding +1 (NL) for the Duration. The adept can increase the growth cycle of plant-life, bringing a flower to bloom in seconds. This spell even commands larger trees to bear fruit in minutes. This effect can also be used to wither a plant or shrivel the fruit on a tree.

Sacrifice: Spell casting requires intricate hand signs, requiring a Moderate (20) AGY + Legerdemain check for the spell to fully complete. The spell effects are halved (rounded down) if the check fails.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Temperature Bonus: Air, Fire, or Water (+10 degrees, Max: 100 degrees), Current Bonus: Air or Water (+20 MPH, Max: 150 MPH), Damage Bonus: Fire, Metal, or Wood (+1 Damage, Max: +4), Effect Bonus: Water (+1 gallon, Max: 10 gallons), Effect Bonus: Fire or Metal (5 sq. ft. doing 4 (L) > 10 sq. ft. doing 8 (L) > 25 sq. ft. doing 15 (L)), Effect Bonus: Earth or Metal (10 lbs. > 25 lbs. > 50 lbs. > 100 lbs.), Wider Digging : Earth (+5 ft, Max: 20 ft. diameter), Speed Digging: Earth (+10 ft, Max: 50 ft. per min.), Reduce Penalty (Simple (10) Hand sign check).

(1st) – Element Shield

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 5 / 3
Duration: 2 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell calls upon the elements for protection, charging their body with an invisible, magical armor with AR 5/5 against damage from their chosen element (including the Blast spell). Without upgrades, it does not protect any of the adept's equipment or clothing. In instances where the element doesn't cause direct damage, use the effects below:

- **Air:** The adept can resist even the harshest winds and can stand in a hurricane or tornado (up to 50 MPH winds) without being moved or harmed.
- **Earth:** Provides protections from earthen damage, such as falling rocks and avalanches. Also reduces damage from falls onto earth (like concrete).
- **Fire:** They can run into burning buildings and other fire stunts without worry.
- **Metal:** Provides protection against damage from any metallic weapons, including bullets.
- **Water:** The adept is immune to damage caused by the crushing properties of water, either those of tremendous tidal waves or caused by the depths of the sea. Also immune to "the Crushing" spell (see page 112).
- **Wood:** Provides protection against damage from any wooden weapon. Also protects from scrapes and scratches gained by traveling in the woods or forests.

Sacrifice: At least 1 lb. or 1 ft. area of the element possessed by the adept.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 min, Max: 10 min.), Range

Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 4), Effect Bonus (AR +3/+3, Max: 20/20), Withstand Wind: Air (+20 MPH, Max: 150 MPH), Effect Bonus: Metal (Add Bulletproof effect), Garb Protection (Protects clothing and equipment too)

(1st) – Sense Element

Mana: 4
Casting Time: 5 / 2
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: 1 mile
Resistance: No

Effect: An adept with this spell can sense the location of their chosen element. The feeling pulls the adept closer, but doesn't provide visual of what they'll find when they arrive (i.e. anyone that might be using or also looking for the element). Also, see the following effects:

- **Air:** They can sense shifts in air density and temperature, and is able to predict weather changes with startling accuracy. The adept can provide a 24 hr. forecast without error.
- **Earth/Metal:** They can sense the presence of any buried or hidden items or animals living in the ground. Metal specifically looks for metal deposits in the earth or particular types of metal.
- **Fire:** The adept can sense if there is a fire burning within range. This includes anything from a camp fire to a flicker of a cigarette lighter. Can also sense electronic devices being powered on.
- **Water:** Also known as dowsing, they can sense the nearest water supply. They can also tell whether the water will be fresh or salt water.
- **Wood:** The adept senses for certain types of plant-life. This is especially useful if they need non-poisonous food sources or ingredients for herbal medicines.

Sacrifice: A compass or crafted divining rod.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 3 hrs.), Range Bonus (+2 miles, Max: 5 miles), Effect Bonus: Air (+1 day forecast, Max: 7 days)

Flower Children

Description: The Flower Children are an Order of elementalists that seek peace through communing with the elements. Following the Path of Elements, members are able to merge their spirit and their love for the Earth to bring about change. They stage protests against large corporations and environmental destruction and many regard them as hippies that are "stuck in the 60's".

The Order has chapters all over the United States and create communes outside of normal society that allow them to better live with nature. These collectives are at peace with nature and disregard the modern world. They enjoy planting and harvesting their own food, building their own homes with wood lent to them from their "tree-brothers", taking advantage of psychedelic herbs, and helping to discover alternate sources of energy. Each commune follows the same general structure, but they are usually not connected directly.

The Flower Children hold their seasonal meetings at these secret communes and they summon the elements without onlookers. They ensure that their "friends" know of their good intentions and make regular sacrifices, almost as if worshipping the elements. But no Flower Child will ever admit to worship.

Joining: Simple rituals are needed when joining the Flower Children. The inductee rids themselves of technological influences and material possessions, and accepts a natural life. Some still live in cities, but in city communes (usually a small apartment shared by at least five Flower Children). New members are known to get tattoos or a piercing that symbolize their newfound connection.

Garb: Flower Children view themselves as modern day hippies. They wear earth tones and natural colors, adorn themselves with creative makeup, wear jewelry made from the Earth, and speak in special lingo. They give the Peace sign (holding up two fingers) ad nauseam and repeat the phrase "Peace and love and bunnies and eggs". Other Flower Children will reply "Milk and honey, far out".

Order Bonus: Flower Children can purchase upgrades for spells from the Path of Elements for half price (rounded up) and have access to Elemental Defense.

(2nd) - Elemental Defense

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 6 / 5
Duration: 5 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: By becoming one with their element, the Flower Child earns its protection. If in danger, their chosen element (Earth, Metal, Wood, Air, Water, or Fire) will literally leap to their defense. A slab of concrete may uproot itself to stop a bullet, air might harden and make the bullet unable to pass, or fire may melt the bullet in mid-air. This protection gives the Flower Child with one free Parry Reaction each Round. The Parry itself has a +5 bonus (independent of the character's Parry bonus) and does not cost the adept any Speed or additional Stamina. The protection is self-acting, even protecting from surprise attacks. An ample amount of the element must be available to provide its protection. For instance, they could not gain protection from the Wood in an eight-story building made of glass and metal.

Sacrifice: Spell casting needs intricate hand signs, requiring a Tough (30) AGY + Legerdemain check for the spell to fully complete. If the check fails, the bonus to Parry and the Duration are halved (rounded down).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (10 min. > 20 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Range Bonus (Touch), Effect Bonus (+1 free Parry per Round, Max: 5), Effect Bonus (+3 Parry, Max: +20), Reduce Penalty (Moderate (20) hand sign check > Simple (10))

(2nd) – Blast
Mana: 9
Casting Time: 6 / 3
Duration: Instant
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell conjures an elemental torrent and launches it at the target, dealing 5 (L). Regardless of element type, Blast inflicts the same damage. While an air Blast is a surge of wind mixed with electricity from the adept's hands, an earth Blast may soften the ground and shoot penetrating mud. A metal Blast may conjure flying daggers from their finger tips, while a wood Blast may launch thorns from surrounding trees. The element need not be present, as it is magically summoned. The spell can be Dodged, but not Parried.

Sacrifice: Spell casting needs intricate hand signs, requiring a Tough (30) AGY + Legerdemain check for the spell to fully complete. If the check fails, damage is halved (rounded down).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > 200 ft.), Damage Bonus (+3 (L), Max: 20 (L)), Effect Bonus (+4 to Strike, Max: +20), Simul-blast* (Can fire at two targets with the same casting, splitting damage), Reduce Penalty (Moderate (20) hand sign check > Simple (10))

(2nd) – Shape Element
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 8 / 4
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Varies
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell allows the adept to shape their chosen element in many ways. For most effects, the Duration is how long the adept has to make their changes, but the modifications made are permanent. Also, see the following effects:

- **Air:** As air has no physical form to shape, the adept can instead shift the wind's direction at will. They may also change the wind's smell to induce nausea for anyone within 100 ft. (-3 penalty to all rolls). Victims can resist with a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check. The adept can also make the air a very pleasant smell or create additional oxygen where there was none before. As the wind is forever changing, the effects created are not permanent. Instead, changes last for the spell duration.
- **Earth:** This spell lets them shape 2 sq. ft. of even the hardest stone, like it was clay. In addition, if faced with a particularly steep climbing wall, they can create hand grips on the wall to lower the climbing Difficulty. They can also lift twice their normal carry/lifting weight in earth or stone without penalty.
- **Fire:** They can create shapes out of up to 2 sq. ft. of fire, making animal shapes or even people. This can be used to tell stories over the camp fire more elaborately or to control a forest fire. This power can also be used to make fire follow after their enemy, thin or spread (causing damage per normal).

- **Metal:** This effect allows them to shape a 2 sq. ft. of even the hardest metal, like it was clay. They can also repair any Durability lost to suits of metallic armor or mend pieces of metal together to form sculptures and jury-rigged repairs/weapons.
- **Water:** As water has no physical form to shape, the adept can instead affect its current at will. With this, they can cause immense tidal waves up to 10 ft. high or spiraling whirlpools that extend 30 ft. in diameter.
- **Wood:** They can shape trees and other plant-life to their liking, for aesthetic or functional (i.e. ladder) uses. They can also will the tree to produce wooden weapons for them to fight. With one Create Action (Speed 5, Stamina 0), the character can create three arrows.

Sacrifice: Spell casting needs intricate hand signs, requiring a Tough (30) AGY + Legerdemain check for the spell to fully complete. The spell effects are halved (rounded down) if the check fails.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 4), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Stench Bonus: Air (-3 to all rolls, Max: -15), Cloud Bonus: Air (+30 ft. radius, Max: 200 ft.), Arrows: Wood (+3 Arrows, Max: 15 arrows), Wooden Weapon: Wood (Shape 1 Staff or Club), Stone Lifting Bonus: Earth (Quadruple > Six times > Ten times), Lifting Duration Bonus: Earth (+1 hr, Max: 5 hrs.), Tidal Height: Water (+10 ft, Max: 100 ft.), Whirlpool Bonus: Water (+30 ft. diameter, Max: 150 ft. diameter), Effect Bonus: Earth,

Fire, or Metal (+2 sq. ft, Max: 10 sq. ft.), Reduce Penalty (Moderate (20) hand sign check > Simple (10))

(3rd) – Elemental Form

Mana: 24
Casting Time: 30 sec. / 1 hr.
Duration: 10 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept's body shapeshifts into their chosen element. Witnesses need to make a Fear 20 check. Bonuses are applied as below:

- **Air:** They turn into a billow of smoke or mist, allowing them to easily travel beneath doorways or through keyholes. They can also travel quickly by catching the wind current speed. In this form, they are immaterial and cannot be damaged by conventional means.
- **Earth:** They become a being made of the nearest earth nearby (i.e. concrete, brick, etc.). They gain +20 Health (temporary), Armor 3/3 (Bulletproof), and +3 Damage. However, all Actions and Reactions are performed at +2 Speed cost due of their increased weight.
- **Fire:** They become a being of flickering flame. In this form, their Movement is doubled, they receive +1 Action per Round, +2 Damage, and all Actions and Reactions are performed at -1 Speed cost. When they strike, their opponent may also catch fire. If they connect, the adept rolls 1d20 and their opponent catches fire on a roll of a Natural 18-20.
- **Metal:** They become a hulking, metallic being with sharpened fingers and steel skin. They get +20 Health (Temporary), Armor 5/5 (Bulletproof), and +2 Damage. All attacks are considered Lethal, but Actions and Reactions are performed at +1 Speed and +1 Stamina costs due to their immense weight.
- **Water:** They melt into a puddle of water capable of moving as a pool of rolling liquid at half Movement. This can allow them travel through pipelines or underneath doors, easy hiding, and they cannot be harmed by conventional means.
- **Wood:** They can choose to either take on the form of a large tree or become a being of wood with +10 Health (Temporary), a +5 bonus to Grappling checks from vines that grow out of their body, and +1 Damage. They also succeed automatically to resist any attempts to throw, push, or trip them, being stabilized by rooting their feet to the ground in an instant.

Sacrifice: The adept loses one of their senses for 1 hr. after the duration ends, related to the element in question. Sight (Fire), Touch (Wood), Hearing (Metal), Smell/Taste (Earth/Air/Water)

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (-10 sec, Min: 10 sec.), Reduce Recovery (-10 min, Min: 10 min.), Duration Bonus (20 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Extra Armor: Earth, Metal, or Wood (+2/+2, Max: 15/15), Extra Health: Earth, Metal, Fire, or Wood (+5 Health, Max: +40 Health), Flammable: Fire (Catch fire on 17-20 > 16-20 > 15-20), Damage Bonus: Earth, Fire, Metal, or Wood (+1 Base damage, Max: +10), Effect Bonus: Air (Move double the speed of wind), Effect Bonus: Water (Can move at normal Movement > Double Movement),

(3rd) – Elemental Travel

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 10 / 5
Duration: Instant or 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This powerful spell allows travel through their chosen element and use it as a means of transport, instead of a weapon. This differs for each element, explained below:

- **Air:** They turn into air (much like Elemental Form), but can travel as the fastest wind (starting at 50 MPH). **Note:** While traveling, their environment is effected by their strong winds, causing buildings to crumble, trees to fall, and catching careless people in their airstreams.
- **Earth:** They sink into the earth and travel through it normally, but with a speed boost going up to 30 MPH. Many use this to pass through mountains or stone doors with no problem.
- **Fire:** They are subsumed in a flame of any size, being instantly teleported to another fire within a 1 mile radius. For instance, they could actually disappear into a burning building and appear out the end of a cigar.
- **Metal:** They travel up to 30 MPH along electric wiring, pipes, or metallic buildings/structures.
- **Water:** They dive into a lake and instantly appear at the other side in a blink of an eye, traveling up to 1 mile instantly.
- **Wood:** There are two uses for wood travel. #1- They increase movement though a forest or jungle by phasing through plant-life as they move, avoiding the need to dodge or look for a path. #2- They instantly teleport from the bottom of a tree to the top (or vice versa) for half Mana cost (rounded up).

Sacrifice: The trip is slightly disorienting, giving them (and anyone brought with them) a -8 penalty to all rolls for 30 min. after the Duration. For Water, Fire, and Wood (#2) with an Instant Duration, the penalty lasts for 10 min.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus: Air, Earth, or Metal (+1 hr, Max: 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (+1 other by Touch, Max: 4), Effect Bonus: Air, Earth, or Metal (+20 MPH, Max: 250 MPH), Effect Bonus: Water or Fire (+1 mile distance, Max: 10 miles), Root System: Wood (Travel through root systems using rule for Water & Fire for 1 mile, Max: 5 miles), Reduce Penalty (-4 penalty > -2 penalty), Reduce Penalty (-10 min, Min: 10 min.)

Path of Figments

The Path of Figments teaches adepts to control dreams and illusions. Practitioners of this Path are often called Oneiromancers (or Dream Mages). This Path is powerful indeed, enough to extort any number of services. The downfall to this magic is that it seldom works in combat, needing precise timing and ritual to enact.

(1st) – Induce Sleep

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 1 min. / 10
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell sends the target to a restful, peaceful sleep. If they are an unwilling participant, they receive a +2 bonus to their Magic Resistance check. This spell cannot be performed in the heat of combat.

Sacrifice: The adept hums a low-toned tune for the duration of the casting. Many choose "Rock-a-bye-baby".

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (10 ft. > 25 ft. > 50 ft.), Range Bonus (+1 other, Max: 5), Forced Sleep (+1 bonus to Magic Resistance > No bonus)

(1st) – View Dreams

Mana: 8
Casting Time: 5 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: They can view a sleeper's dreams and find out their target's deepest secrets (through interpretation). Not everyone dreams the same, so the adept may see messages and emotions coded in symbolism (i.e. animals that symbolize good or bad aspects or weather symbolizing bad emotions), while other dreams are very vivid and direct manifestations of fears or recessed memories. An IQ + Perception check may be required based on the difficulty of the symbolism.

Sacrifice: A handful of white sand.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (-1 min, Min: 2 min.), Reduce Recovery (-10 sec, Min: 10 sec.), Range Bonus (10 ft. > 25 ft. > 50 ft), Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 5 hrs.)

(2nd) – Dream Walker

Mana: 14
Casting Time: 10 min. / 5 min.
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With this spell, the adept enter their target's dream as they sleep. Their spirit leaves their body defenseless and vulnerable and enters the target's deepest recesses. While in the dreamland, they can change the dream, forcing the target to dream whatever they choose. For each change they make, the target gets an additional Magic Resistance check. If the resistance succeeds, they cannot change that particular facet of their dream.

The target's mind may also fight back, as the figments in the dream notice the adept as foreign and may attack. Extended periods in someone else's dream is not a good thing, but the adept can leave the dream at any time. In combat, this requires an Exit Action (Speed 5, Stamina 0), with the adept leaving on the fifth Count. If they die in the target's mind, their body goes comatose indefinitely.

Sacrifice: When returning to their body, the adept feel dizzy, receiving a -4 penalty to all rolls for 1 hr.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 8), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 4 min.), Reduce Recovery (-1 min, Min: 2 min.), Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (10 ft. > 25 ft. > 50 ft), Strong Influence (-2 penalty to target's Magic Resistance for dream changes, Max: -10)

(2nd) – Illusions

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 12 / 6
Duration: 5 min.
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell can create illusions to fool their target's senses. The adept picks which senses they wish to manipulate upon purchasing the spell (sight, smell/taste, hearing), but cannot start with touch. Illusions based on sight can make the target see hallucinations of the adept's design, smell/taste can create odors, and hearing can make the target hear heavy breathing or someone speaking to them. Touch makes the target unable to pass through an illusionary wall or other concoction. If the target succeeds in their Magic Resistance, they do not sense the illusion at all. Those that fail their check believe in the illusion's existence, and cannot disbelieve it until the Duration ends.

Sacrifice: They move just a step behind their comrades, slowed by the use of their magic and suffer a penalty of -3 Movement and -3 Initiative for 30 min.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (10 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Range Duration (50ft. > 100 ft. > 200 ft.), Effect Bonus (+1 sense from sight, smell/taste, or hearing), Effect Bonus* (Touch), Reduce Penalty (-10 min, Min: 10 min.)

(3rd) – Day Dream Apparition

Mana: 18
Casting Time: 12 / 8
Duration: Concentration
Range: 20 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell lets the adept pull objects or figures from a target's dreams and make them reality. The target need not be sleeping for this effect, but it assumes that the adept has used View Dreams or Dream Walker on the target at least once.

- **People:** They conjure people from the target's dreams, like conjuringa figment of the target's dad. Because the figure is taken from their own minds, the father acts appropriately without prompts from the adept.

The apparition can be commanded to attack others with a Control Action (Speed 7, Stamina 3), dealing half the adept's INS (rounded down) in Non-lethal damage. This spell supports one figure to be drawn out at first. If more than one is summoned, they all act on the adept's single Control Action.

- **Items:** They pull items from the target's mind. The item appears ethereal and are very easily broken (half

Durability rounded down). They can be used normally, but with a -5 penalty to checks. For instance, dream tools would be harder to use to fix an engine.

- **Weapons:** Dream weapons appear as ethereal versions of themselves, but are lighter and used at -1 Speed and -1 Stamina. They also inflict -2 damage.

Sacrifice: Apparitions come from the target's mind and do not like being used against their progenitor. If they fail any Discipline (Concentration) check, the apparition turns their attention to the adept.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > 200 ft. > Line of sight), Damage Bonus: People or Weapon (+1 Damage, Max: +4), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous apparition, Max: 5), Effect Bonus: People (-1 Speed to Control Action, Min: 4), Effect Bonus: People (-1 Stamina cost for Control Action, Min: 1)

Path of Fortune

Affecting fate has always been a lofty goal for adepts, but they can get a taste of that power with the Path of Fortune. This path gives limited control of luck and divination abilities. This Path is a favorite among gamblers, con artists, or other adepts that simply want to "up their chances of success". Fate is very fickle though, and adepts should be careful how often they tempt its forces.

(1st) - Hex

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 4 / 2
Duration: Instant
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With this spell, they force fate to step in and affect a single act in a negative fashion, giving a -8 penalty to that check. The error will always appear to be an accident. If affecting an attack, the target will lose his footing suddenly and miss. If used on a jump check, the target will constantly question how they misgauged the gap. The spell does not ensure failure, just makes it more likely.

Sacrifice: A broken luck charm (crushed 4-leaf clover, ragged rabbit's foot, partially-melted double-sided coin or troll doll, etc.). The charm is always consumed.

Upgrades: Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (25ft. > 50 ft.), Effect Bonus (-2 penalty, Max: -20), Extend Critical Failure (Critical Failure on a Natural 1-2 > 1-3 > 1-4)

(1st) – Luck

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 5 / 1
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: With this spell, they will fate to step in and affect a single act's outcome in a positive manner, providing a +8 bonus to that check. The effect always looks like it was just luck that the character landed their strike against the 10-year martial arts veteran or just luckily found the exact piece of evidence needed to solve their case. The spell does not ensure success, just makes it more likely.

Sacrifice: A good luck charm (4-leaf clover, rabbit's foot, double-sided coin, troll doll, etc.). The charm is not consumed with a Critical Success check.

Upgrades: Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Effect Bonus (+2 bonus, Max: +20), Extend Critical Success (Critical Success on a Natural 19-20 > 18-20 > 17-20)

(2nd) – Divine

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 30 min. / 0
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: N/A
Resistance: No

Effect: By using a personal divination tool (i.e. tea leaves, runes, tarot cards, astrology, I-ching, or Ouija board), they can divine the best course of action to take in a given situation. This is by no means discerning the exact future. Instead, it's simply a guide that helps those that follow its advice. The adept asks a single question on behalf of another, casts this spell to divine the answer, and the tool provides a sign or course of action that they should take, interpreted by the adept.

If they follow the advice, they receive a +5 bonus to all rolls that directly aid in resolving the situation for the next hour. If they do not follow the adept's advice, the asker suffers a -5 penalty to all those rolls. The GM is the final arbiter of which rolls receive a bonus or penalty. Malicious adepts often provide wrong information purposefully, knowing that it will delay their target. Adepts cannot use this spell on themselves.

Sacrifice: The adept bleeds onto their tool to ready it for this spell, suffering 5 (L). However, the tool does not need to be used right away. It can be kept for later usage for up to one week, giving the adept time to heal before its actual use.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 10 hrs.), Effect Bonus (+3 bonus, Max: +20), Effect Bonus (-3 penalty, Max: -20), Storage (1 month > 3 months > 6 months > 1 year)

(3rd) – Fate

Mana: 25
Casting Time: 1 min. / 1 hr.
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept wills fate itself to step in and solve a situation outright. The effects can be outlandish or simple, depending on the circumstances. For instance, if they are trapped in a basement with a bomb, the universe may send a hero to save them. The universe could also make the bomb short out just in time or the explosion could cause an earthquake, making the basement collapse on top of the bomb to contain the blast.

Sacrifice: Permanent lost of -1 INS. The universe also balances itself with bad luck on someone close to the

adept. For instance, their father could lose his business or their sister may be diagnosed with a terminal disease.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 15), Range Bonus (Can effect someone else within 25 ft. > 50 ft. > 100 ft.), Protection (No loved ones die because of this spell)

Path of Health

Some adepts use their powers to heal others or attempt to keep the world healthy. The Path of Health teaches them how to purify their body, minds, environments, and give magical medical care. These spells take hard work to maintain and one wrong move could mean the adept takes damage they intended to heal.

(1st) – Cleanse

Mana: 4
Casting Time: 4 / 0
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: No.

Effect: They circle their body with magical energies that eliminate dirt and odor. It can be used to quickly compose oneself after a rough fight, to remove make up or stains on clothes, or to eliminate infectious bacteria to a wound (no Infection check needed). Removing odor also makes them untraceable by smell for 1 hr.

Just as they may cleanse the body, they may also clean their surroundings with Upgrades. When cast on a room, the spell eliminates dirt and dust or adjusts furniture and decorations to their original placement. Books fly onto shelves like birds and dust mites zapped away.

Sacrifice: A small flower or hand full of broom bristles, which burst into bubbles during casting.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Range Bonus (+1 other by touch or +1 Room, Max: 5), Style (Applies make-up and styles hair in addition to cleaning), Mend (Mends tears in clothes or dents in armor), Mend Room (Repair minor imperfections, like chipped paint, table scratches, etc.)

(1st) – Diagnosis

Mana: 8
Casting Time: 5 min. / 1 min.
Duration: Instant
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: By focusing their eyes on the subject, the adept takes a magical diagnosis of their body and mind. They instantly know of any sickness, drugs/poison, mental illnesses, or internal damage (bleeding/bruising) the subject has suffered. Only with a IQ + Medicine check will they know exactly how to handle the situation. Also, one adept's visuals are usually different than another's. Some see wounds in glowing purple or blue, while others have x-ray vision, seeing the subject's skeleton.

Sacrifice: Eye adjustments blur their vision for 10 min, suffering a -4 penalty to sight-related checks.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (-1 min, Min: 2 min.), Range Bonus (20 ft. > 50 ft.), Alert (Mental alert if subject is injured again or has a mental lapse in the next 24 hrs. > 1 week > 1 month)

(1st) – Heal Wound

Mana: 8
Casting Time: 3 min. / 1 min.
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch / Self
Resistance: No

Effect: By touching and concentrating on a wound, the adept can mend the subject's flesh, healing up to 8 (NL) or 2 (L) per casting. Onlookers see the wound knit itself back together slowly, as the adept applies their powers. The adept heals half as much Health is using this spell on themselves. They must be in contact with and concentrating on the subject for the entire Casting time. **Note:** This spell works on outward wounds and cannot be used to heal internal organs, cracked bones, etc.

Sacrifice: If physical contact is lost at any point or the adept loses their concentration while casting, the spell is not only ineffective, but the adept also takes the damage they were attempting to heal.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (-30 sec, Min: 1 min.), Effect Bonus (+8 (NL), Max: +40 (NL)), Effect Bonus (+2 (L), Max: 10 (L))

(2nd) – Purify Body

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 1 min. / 1 min.

True Faith Ministries

Description: True Faith Ministries is a Christian congregation founded by Minister William "Bob" Walters in 1935. He became a traveling evangelist at the age of thirty, "reborn" after recovering from an attack that left him forever changed into a vampire. The minister knows nothing of the Taylari, instead attributing his experiences to a test from God. He answered this by bringing his faith and his magic to the people, which led him to start a traveling ministry.

The ministry has made a prosperous living from traveling evangelical shows that parade both faith and magic in front of their audiences. These shows are based less on ritual and more on celebration, as crippled and saddened people are led onto stage to be cured by the power of God. They give people hope and faith in the lord, and then they pack up to move on to the next town.

They only have the single chapter, led by Bob, but the Order has acquired many followers along the way. They have even successfully converting a few to their faith after a show. They are growing more and more each day as they travel around the US, performing miracles.

Joining: Little else is needed to join the Faithful besides a deep love of God. Devotion to Bob himself is usually gained from witnessing one of his many miracles. The Order picks up new followers in one town and they travel to the next, each time acquiring more. Bob likes to have one-on-ones with each new inductee before they are official members, but only he and the newbie know what happens behind closed doors. Most are surprised that he still looks to be in his mid-forties, even though the Order was founded well over seventy years ago.

Garb: Followers wear uniforms based on their role in the traveling show. Some wear work clothes and put up the show tents. Others wear robes and perform in the roaring choir. Those under Bob's wing, learning his special spells, usually dress as he does in a nice suits and looking suave. Everyone carries holy symbols and display them proudly. All members show a mutual respect to one another, as encouraged by Bob.

Order Bonus: The True Faithful can purchase upgrades for spells from the Path of Health for half price (rounded up) and have access to Blessing's Miracle.

(2nd) – Blessing's Miracle

Mana: 14
Casting Time: 1 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 1 day
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell temporarily cures the target's minor and major afflictions, even those from birth. Usually performed during a True Faith Ministries show, it instantly cures blindness, deafness, or allow the crippled to walk, instantly fixing any broken limbs or deformations. Even diseases are healed for the Duration.

However, Blessing's Miracle is only temporary and the target will always return to their original state. By that time, the show has moved on, leading many to follow and rush to join the Order.

Sacrifice: Faith healing can be quite exhausting and the Stamina used to cast this spell takes twice as long to recover. Bob will often use this spell over and over until he can barely stand and the show must end.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Recovery (-20 sec, Min: 20 sec.), Duration Bonus (+1 day, Max: 7 days), Range Bonus (+1 other by Touch)

Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: Yes

Effect: An adept with this spell turns their magic inward. This spell allows them to immediately eliminate any mundane poisons/drugs in their body, from heroine to nicotine to aspirin. Minor ailments, such as common colds or the flu, are also affected without skipping a beat. The effects of supernatural poisons or diseases are halved, but cannot be completely destroyed.

Sacrifice: Five white rose petals.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (30 sec. > 10 > 5), Reduce Recovery (30 sec. > 0), Duration Bonus (Stops new poisons/drugs/diseases upon contact for +2 min, Max: 10 min.), Range Bonus (Touch), Effect Bonus* (Supernatural effects are completely destroyed)

(2nd) – Surgery

Mana: 18
Casting Time: 5 min. / 10 min.
Duration: Concentration
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: After using Diagnosis to determine internal damage, magical surgery can be an alternative to going under the literal knife. With this advanced Health spell, the adept can properly set and mend broken bones, seal punctured organs, and perform other techniques that heal 5 (L) each casting. If a severed limb is available and properly sterilized, it can also be set and mended back onto the subject's body. They cannot use this spell on themselves.

Sacrifice: If physical contact is lost at any point or the adept loses their concentration while casting, the spell is not only ineffective, but the adept also takes the amount of damage they were attempting to heal.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Recovery (-2 min, Min: 2 min.), Effect Bonus (+5 (L), Max: +30 (L))

(3rd) – Environment Cleansing

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 1 hr. / 1 hr.
Duration: Instant
Range: 1 mile Radius
Resistance: No

Effect: This spells can stop environmental hazards, such as toxic wastes or oil spills. The adept can blink any environment catastrophe out of existence. For instance,

if an oil tanker spills into a ditch, threatening the state's water supply, they simply dip their hand into the water to dissolve the contaminants. This can also be used to remove the Curse Land spell effect, with contested INS + Discipline (Concentration) checks where the winner is the first to four successes.

Sacrifice: They absorb the sickness into themselves, suffering a -10 penalty to all rolls for one week. This penalty cannot be removed with Purify Body.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (-20 min, Min: 20 min.), Reduce Recovery (-20 min, Min: 20 min.), Range Bonus (+2 miles, Max: 5 miles), Remove Curse Bonus (+5 to contest Cursed Land, Max: +10), Reduce Penalty (-5 penalty, instead of -10), Reduce Penalty (-2 days, Min: 1 day)

(3rd) – Purify Mind

Mana: 22
Casting Time: 30 min. / 1 hr.
Duration: Permanent
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: An adept of this level of mastery can purify just about anything, including another's mind. This spell removes traces of any mental illness (Insanity), including from trauma or drug use (i.e. phobias brought on by being faced with death, insanity from the loss of a loved one, etc.). The effects are permanent, but don't protect the target from gaining the same insanity again down the line, if their lifestyle doesn't change.

Sacrifice: They permanently sacrifice -1 IQ level.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Reduce Casting (20 min. > 10 min.), Reduce Penalty (-1 day, Min: 3 days)

Path of Mirrors

This elusive Path is an enigma for most Orders. Its traditions come from eras ago without the conveniences of modern technology and teach the duality of existence and use of mirrors. But the Path's actual history is clouded in mystery. Few adepts practice this Path, as it is difficult to master and mentors are few and very far between.

(1st) – Mirror Communication

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 6 / 0
Duration: 1 day
Range: N/A
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell magically links two mirrors, allowing users on one side to see viewers on the other side. This can be done with bathroom mirrors, dance studio wall mirrors, or even a small make-up compact. The adept inscribes small writings on each to later be infused with Mana to link them. This process takes hours, depending on the mirror's size. Smaller mirrors require a Moderate (20) AGY + Arts check due to the size of the sigil needed.

This enchants the mirrors, letting either mirror holder call upon the other for full communication (sight and sound) through the mirrors. This spell has proven less useful in the modern era of video conferencing cell phones, but it a favorite among antique lovers. There is no range limit for the two mirrors, but they cannot be used between dimension.

Sacrifice: The inscriptions are filled in with their blood, leaving their DNA evidence to be found.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Duration Bonus (+1 day, Max: 7 days), Effect Bonus (+1 Mirror, Max: 5), Effect Bonus (add smell to senses), One-Way (Can link two mirrors, but only one can view)

(1st) – Mirror Image

Mana: 8
Casting Time: 4 / 4
Duration: 5 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept creates an illusion of themselves. This copy is intangible (objects pass through it), but looks completely identical. This can disorient an opponent, as they must now choose which figure to attack. The GM should make a separate check to see if they hit the right copy (Difficulty 10 or more for 1 copy, and then +2 higher for each additional copy).

For further concealment, they may take a Swap Reaction (Speed 4, Stamina 2) to instantly swap positions with one of their copies within range. This is helpful for avoiding attacks, breaking a Grapple, or instantly appearing farther away. They cannot swap through obstacles (i.e. walls, doors, etc.), as that is the way of Portals, not Mirrors. They can create one copy to start that can move up to 10 ft. away.

Sacrifice: Must crack a mirror.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 2), Reduce Recovery, Effect Bonus (+1 copy, Max: 5), Effect Bonus (+20 ft. range away, Max: 50 ft.), Fast Swap (Speed 2 for Swap, Instead of 4), Steady Swap (Stamina 1, Instead of 2)

(2nd) – Capture

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 5 / 4
Duration: 2 min.
Range: 20 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept holds up a clean and unblemished mirror toward the target and casts the spell. If the target fails their Magic Resistance check, they are drawn into the mirror and are no longer on the physical plane. If the mirror is cracked or broken, the victim is immediately expelled and suffers a -3 penalty to all rolls for the next hour from the disorientating experience.

Sacrifice: They must bleed for 5 (L) onto the mirror.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 min, Max: 10 min.), Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > Line of sight), Range Bonus (+1 target, Max: 3), Effect Bonus (-3 penalty when freed, Max: -12), Reduce Penalty (-2 (L), Min: 1 (L))

(2nd) – Light Refraction
Mana: 10
Casting Time: 1 min. / 5
Duration: 5 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept with this spell refracts light in their environment off of themselves, becoming virtually invisible. They receive a +8 bonus to Stealth checks for the duration. Despite the name, they can also refract shadow with this spell (usable during the day or night). **Note:** This spell does not affect sound.

Sacrifice: Every step leaves a mirror-like, shiny footprint behind them after the duration ends.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Effect Bonus (+4 Stealth, Max: +20), Reduce Casting (-20 sec, Min: 20 sec.), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+5 min, Max: 30 minutes), Range (+1 other by Touch, Max: 4), Reduce Penalty (Footprints appear after Twice the duration > Triple > Quadruple)

(3rd) – Duality
Mana: 22
Casting Time: 10 / 10
Duration: 30 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: There are many theories and myths about the truth about a person's reflection. Adepts with this rare spell know that it is truly their Id, one's dark and aggressive side. By casting this spell, their two sides are split into two versions that stand side by side. They are not mere copies, both having substance and the ability to act, but they also split the character's abilities between them into physical and mental.

The Id has all of the physical abilities (i.e. combat bonuses). They get a +10 bonus to all POW, AGY, VIG, and combat rolls, as well as +5 Damage. The Id has the full amount of Health that the adept has normally.

The adept themselves retains their mental control, gaining a +10 bonus to all IQ, INS, and CHM-related checks, as well as keeping the ability the cast more spells. Magic Resistance Difficulties against the adept's spells are also raised by 2. They have half their normal Health.

Because the two are linked by spirit, they cannot move farther than 20 ft. from each other. If one is knocked unconscious or dies, they are instantly rejoined. Any damage the Id takes is ignored.

Sacrifice: After rejoining, the adept lapses into a coma for 1 day for every 30 minutes they were separated.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (1 hr. > 2 hrs. > 5 hrs. > 12 hrs. > 1 day), Range Bonus (Move apart up to 50 ft. > 100 ft. > 300 ft.), Mental Link (Sides can communicate telepathically), Id Bonus (+2 physical bonus, Max: +20), Adept Bonus (+2 mental bonus, Max: +20), Magic Bonus (Difficulty to Magic Resistance +2, Max: +10)

(3rd) – Mirror Travel
Mana: 20
Casting Time: 2 min. / 1 min.
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: Travel can be expensive, but much less so for a master of the Path of Mirrors. By inscribing their blood into two mirrors, a process that takes (10 minus IQ) days to finish, they use them as a portal to instantly travel between the two. There is no range limit to their travel, but both mirrors must be inscribed with the same sigil. This spell is cast each time they teleport through the mirror. Some adepts use this as a secret hideout entrance or for quick travel to separate bases.

Sacrifice: The mirror must be kept in order, which can be difficult depending on its obviousness and location. If the mirror is even slightly cracked, the adept arrives at their destination with 50% less Health (rounded down) than when they started.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Range Bonus (+1 other by Touch, Max: 5), Fortify Mirror (Mirror protected from damage for 1 day > 3 days > 1 week), Reduce Penalty (-25% Health, instead of -50%)

Path of Neutralization
The Path of Neutralization is a common Path, teaching the adept how to magically subdue or handicap their opponent. The spells contained include those that can paralyze an opponent's body or halt their ability to cast magic. This Path can be taxing on an adept's Stamina and often reduces the rate at which it returns as a sacrifice.

(1st) – Daze
Mana: 4
Casting Time: 5 / 2
Duration: 1 Round
Range: Line of Sight
Resistance: Yes

Effect: An adept with this spell disorient their victim's senses, giving them a -3 penalty to all their rolls for the duration. The victim sees a blurred world, as colors smear and voices are distorted. They can't tell if they are actually holding a weapon or wearing clothes, and the mixture of smells in the air is intensified. The victim receives a +4 bonus to their Magic Resistance check against any spells cast on them that require use any of their five senses for the duration, as Daze affects their ability to hear and understand the caster. However, this Magic Resistance Bonus is also applied for targets of their magic.

Sacrifice: A pair of cracked glasses, kaleidoscope, or 3D glasses.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting (3, instead of 5), Duration Bonus (+1 Round, Max: 4 Rounds), Range Bonus (+1 Target, Max: 5), Effect Bonus (-3 penalty, Max: -15)

(1st) – Disrupt
Mana: 10 / 15 / 20
Casting Time: 3 / 5
Duration: Instant
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell disrupts another's Mana flow, stopping their current casting without the chance for a Discipline (Concentration) check. Stopping a 1st level spell costs 10 Mana, halting a 2nd level spell costs 15 Mana, and stopping a 3rd level spell costs 20 Mana. However, the proper upgrades must be bought in order to affect the higher Inner Circles. This spells effect must take place within the target's Casting time to work.

Sacrifice: Stamina spent to cast this spell takes twice as long to regain (1 per 10 min. of rest).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (-2 / -2 / -2, Min: 2 / 7 / 12), Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (+20 ft, Max: 50 ft.), Effect Bonus (Affect 2nd level spells > 3rd level spells)

(2nd) – Cancel Sense
Mana: 10
Casting Time: 5 / 5
Duration: 1 min.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With this spell, they can affect a victim's senses, canceling out any one of them. They can focus their Mana and touch the victim to turn off the targeted sense. Canceling sight or hearing gives the appropriate penalty (See Gifts & Drawbacks on page 46). Shutting off smell/taste may stop a tracker using a hunting dog. Canceling touch can affects the target's pain sensors, removing Pain penalties, but also numbs them, giving a -4 penalty to all physical rolls.

Sacrifice: An animal part that matches the cancelled sense (i.e. dog's ear, lizard's eye, or pig's snout).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 min, Max: 5 min.), Range Bonus (10 ft. > 20 ft. > 50 ft.), Effect Bonus (+1 sense cancelled)

(2nd) – Paralyze
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 6 / 4
Duration: 1 min.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell paralyzes one of the target's limbs by touch, removing use of that limb for the duration. Loss of an arm gives a -4 penalty to Parry or Roll checks. The victim is also forced to drop anything in that hand. Loss a leg puts the victim at -4 to all Reactions and will no doubt drop them to one knee, giving the adept the High ground. Loss of both arms means that the victim cannot Parry. Loss of both legs means the victim automatically goes prone and can resort only to rolling on the ground to avoid getting hit.

Sacrifice: 2ft. length of rope.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 min, Max: 15 min.), Range Bonus (10 ft. > 25 ft.), Range Bonus (+1 Target, Max: 3), Effect Bonus (2 limbs > All limbs)

(3rd) – Neutralize Mana
Mana: 22
Casting Time: 10 / 1 min.
Duration: 1 min.
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This powerful spell cancels another adept's ability to convert Stamina to Mana. Try as they may, the target no longer wields the greatest power in the universe and this can turn the tide of any battle. If the target currently has excess Mana (See rules for casting magic), they can still use this Mana for spell casting.

Sacrifice: Stamina spent casting this spell does not return for 24 hrs.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Duration Bonus (5 min. > 10 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Range Bonus (+20 ft, Max: 50 ft.), Excess Zap (Cancels excess Mana)

(3rd) – Stasis
Mana: 22
Casting Time: 10 min. / 1 hr.
Duration: 1 day
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: At this level of power, the adept can stop an opponent and keep them held for extended periods. This spell places the target in a temporal stasis, where they cannot move and do not age. The victim stays completely unconscious and unaware of the world around them as well. If they suffer damage that exceeds 50% or more of their Health, they receive an additional Magic Resistance check per strike to their body to possibly break free from the stasis. Otherwise, they are stuck in this state for the complete duration, totally at the adept's mercy.

Sacrifice: A crystal ball at least the size of a fist and at least 5 lbs. Stamina spent casting this spell does not return for 24 hrs.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 2 min.), Duration Bonus (+1 day, Max: 7 days), Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > 200 ft. > Line of Sight), Silent Torture (Second chance to awake at 75% damage > No second chance)

Path of Portals
This Path focuses on an adept's ability to travel in the quickest possible way. It is great for pathfinders, adventurers, or those just in a hurry. The Path of Portals also contains magic to open new doorways, making journeys that much easier. Forcibly affecting the universal rules of space can take a toll on one's body, disorienting the caster or weakening their body as a common sacrifice.

(1st) – Find Pathway
Mana: 5

Casting Time: 5 / 2
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: 1 mile
Resistance: No

Effect: An adept with this spell never gets lost. In fact, Find Pathway aids them in finding their destinations in every way possible. They summon a magical pathway that leads to their destination, taking the quickest and most efficient routes. To the adept's eye, the pathway appears as a glowing line of magic that is easy to follow. If they change course, the path automatically adjusts to show the best route to take at every juncture. The destination must be within the range of the spell for the path to appear.

This spell does not create doorways or allow passing through walls. Instead, it leads the adept through alleyways, backdoors, and other paths, simply giving the best directions to cut down on travel. For long distance travel, this cuts 25% off of their total travel time. When the duration ends, the pathway disappears, but they can call upon the same pathway any number of times until they reach their destination.

If they attempt to create a pathway to an unknown location or one they have only heard of, they must make a Tough (30) IQ + Survival check to ensure that they are following the pathway correctly. No roll necessary for locations that they have visited at least once before.

Sacrifice: A compass (working or not)

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (2 hrs. > 5 hrs. > 10 hrs.), Range Bonus (5 miles > 10 miles > 25 miles > 50 miles), More Direct (Cuts 50% off travel time), Effect Bonus (Reduce unknown difficulty to Moderate (20) > Simple (10))

(1st) – Skeleton Key

Mana: 5
Casting Time: 4 / 2
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: A favorite for criminal adepts, this spell can instantly unlock openings, such as doors and windows. This works on any type of lock, including pad locks, key locks, or even can be used to crack safes (non-electrical). For more complex locking mechanisms, several castings may be needed to unravel the internal lock-upon-lock systems.

Sacrifice: Three paperclips.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Range (25 ft. > 50 ft.), Seal (Instantly lock an opening), Electrical Systems* (Can be used on electrical locks)

(2nd) – Create Passage

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 1 min. / 0
Duration: 1 min.
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: How do you proceed without an opening? You create one. By drawing a door, window, or other opening on a wall, the adept creates a magical doorway to pass through. The door can be draw with chalk or even paint. The passage will stay open for the duration after the adept has passed through, but they may choose to close it immediately. The wall/obstacle passed through may be up to 10 ft. thick.

Sacrifice: One chalk stick or a paint brush. Also, passing through the doorway is slightly disorienting, causing a -2 penalty to all rolls for 30 min.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 4), Duration Bonus (+2 min, Max: 5 min.), Effect Bonus (Effects 30 ft. thickness > 100 ft. > 250 ft. > 600 ft.), Reduce Penalty (No penalty for caster > No penalty for anyone)

(2nd) – Wards

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 20 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 1 day
Range: 20 ft. Radius
Resistance: Yes

Effect: By drawing a mystic circle on the ground (large enough for the adept and others they want protected) and standing in the center, they can ward off an area. This creates an invisible force field that extends in a 20 ft. radius around the initial circle. Those inside the circle during the casting are free to move inside and outside the ward without negative effects. Spirits & ghosts are totally

unable to pass through the ward and do not even receive a Magic Resistance check. However, those with physical form can try to break through by sheer force of will. If they succeed in their Magic Resistance check, they pass through, but also suffer a -5 penalty to all rolls while within the ward with a dizzy and drained dizzy

Sacrifice: The mystic circle is drawn in blood, forcing the adept to either sacrifice his own blood for 5 (L) or perform a bloodletting on another. Animal blood is common.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting (10 min. > 5 min. > 2 min.), Duration Bonus (+1 day, Max: 5 days), Range Bonus (50 ft. Radius > 100 ft. > 200 ft. > 500 ft.), Effect Bonus (-5 penalty, Max: -20), Cancel Magic (Only the adept's magic works within ward), Alert (Mental alert if anyone comes within 5 ft. of ward > 10 ft. > 20 ft. > 50 ft.), Strengthen Wall (-2 penalty to Magic Resistance check, Max: -6)

(3rd) – Dimensional Portal

Mana: 25 / 30
Casting Time: 10 min. / 1 hr.
Duration: Concentration
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: Instead of unlocking mundane doorways, the adept pierces the barrier between worlds. These portals have many different uses, from simple inter-dimensional travel to quick getaways that no one would dare pursue. Opening a portal to a specific dimension costs 30 Mana, while opting for a random (and potentially dangerous) portal costs 25 Mana. Even these costs can fluctuate based on the size and distance of the exact dimension (GM decides).

The portal stays under the adept's control as long as they concentrate. If traveling with others, their comrades must go through first, as the portal closes immediately after the adept steps through.

If they lose concentration for any reason, the portal lapses into chaos and becomes a vacuum that sucks items (and people) into itself for 2 minutes per INS level of the caster. Even items that are bolted down can be sucked through if the vacuum if open for long enough. POW + Athletics checks to avoid being sucked through increase by Difficulty 5 every three minutes (i.e. Simple (10) to start, Difficulty (15) at 3 min, Difficulty (20) at 6 min, etc.). Beings and creatures from the other side can also use this opportunity to force their way through to Earth. There's no telling what will come through if they were attempting a random portal.

They can regain control with a Tough (30) INS + Discipline (Concentration) check. If sucked through, they can also retry this roll when they arrive on the other side.

Two adepts can fight for control of a portal (i.e. perhaps one doesn't want the portal to open to the bowels of hell), with contested INS + Discipline (Concentration) checks where the winner is the first to four successes.

Sacrifice: Breaking through dimensional barriers breas down the adept's body. They lose Health equal to half (1/2) of their maximum in Non-Lethal damage. ***For Example:*** *Patrick has a maximum Health 50, but is only at Health 20 currently. Casting this spell would put him at -5 Health (losing -25 Health), knocking him out.*

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 15 / 20), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 4 min.), Reduce Recovery (-15 min, Min: 15 min.), Duelist (+3 bonus to contest another, Max: +15), Reduce Penalty* (Loses 1/4 Health > 1/8)

(3rd) - Summon Pathway

Mana: 24
Casting Time: 5 min. / 1 min.
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: 25 ft. Radius
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell manufactures a path to the adept's destination, even if there isn't one already. Unlike Find Pathway that simply finds the best way there, the adept literally "summons" a pathway that heads straight to their destination. A straight line is the fastest way to any location.

The spell creates a 25 ft. radius bubble of energy around them that changes the entire landscape as they travel. Roads appears where there were none before, trees and buildings move over or create openings in their center to allow passage, and magical bridges are extended up to 100 ft. over waterways. Even people and animals are moved to the side and are left unharmed (unless they actively jump into the path's direction). Magical buildings and locations cannot be affected by this spell. This includes monuments (i.e. pyramids, temples, churches) or holy ground (i.e. graveyards or land affected by Cursed Land (See page 110)). When the duration ends, the pathway disappears, but they can summon the same pathway several times until they reach their destination.

Sacrifice: This spell changes the environment so drastically that inhabitants often become riled and angry. Some may even follow the trail straight to the adept. This spell is also quite blatant and easily calls Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. to an adept's doorstep.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 10 hrs.), Range Bonus (50 ft. Radius > 100 ft.), Bridge Builder (Longer bridges 200 ft. > 500 ft. > 1000 ft. > ½ mile > 1 mile), Lone traveler (Range: Self, close pathways after the adept passes through)

Path of Psychometry

While one of the smallest Paths of magic, Psychometry is by no means the weakest. It gives the adept the profound sense of the past and future of objects they touch, which can be very helpful in any investigation. This Path appears lest frequently than the others and mentors of this Path are often in high demand. Seeing an object's visions also brings the adept's own past and future into question as a sacrifice.

(1st) – Flashes of Memories Past

Mana: 8
Casting Time: 1 Round / 1 min.
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell allows the adept to touch an object and receive visions of situations that involved the object within the last three days. These visions appear as one or more flashes of memories linked to the item, either of their previous owner or an act that it has performed. For instance, touching a knife used in a murder may produce flashes of blood, bleeding, or even the echo of screams in the adept's ear. They may also see actual flashes of the murderer's or the victim's face just as easily, sometimes even forcing a Fear check. The adept can even touch the ground to sense anyone that may have walked there. The exact details of the visions is up to the GM's discretion.

Sacrifice: Visions of the adept's past begin to show up for one day. These memories are rarely happy, leaning more toward hard or troubled times in the adept's life.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 4), Reduce Casting (10 Counts > 5), Reduce Recovery (-20 sec, Min: 20 sec.), Effect Bonus (1 week > 2 weeks > 1 month > 3 months > 6 months > 1 year)

(2nd) – Flashes of Future Events

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 10 min. / 1 min.
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: Just like the Flashes of Memories Past, this spell gives glimpses of the events of the object touched. However, these visions are those events yet to happen. Flashes of the future are much vaguer than past events that have already occurred, due to so many alternate possibilities. Fates seen in these visions are not absolutely destined to happen, but are "more than likely" without intervention. Again, the exact descriptions and amount of detail provided are up to the GM.

Sacrifice: Visions of the adept's future appear to them for the next day. They include possibly horrible fates or loves lost. Wise adepts become more aware, knowing that these visions are more than likely true.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 2 min.), Reduce Recovery (-20 sec, Min: 20 sec.), Effect Bonus (1 week > 2 weeks > 1 month > 3 months > 6 months > 1 year)

(3rd) – Alter/Instill Flashes

Mana: 18
Casting Time: 20 min. / 5 min.
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell defies others in the Path of Psychometry and is actually forbidden in most magical circles. An adept with this spell alters the flashes received from an object and can even instill false, make believe, or even warning visions.

- **Alter:** At first, they can alter a single vision aspect, such as obscuring a killer's face, removing the dread feeling from a murder weapon, canceling the crucial clue of a perfume smell, or removing the vision backgrounds that could give away locations.
- **Instill:** Implanting new visions takes great care and works slightly different, involving the complete removal of the objects original vision and adding a new one. An INS + Arts check may be required, depending on the detailed of their instilled vision. Once done, anyone (not just adepts with Psychometry) that touches the object can sense the vision, but the vision can only be seen once (the very next time the object is touched). This was used by ancient civilizations to warn tomb raiders of danger if they continued their excavation.

Sacrifice: The GM picks one of the adept's memories, and they remember it incorrectly. Their exact age could become hazy, they may forget their father's name, or even get lost trying to find their home. They may also confuse the identities of loved ones. This effect is permanent.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting (-2 min, Min: 10 min.), Reduce Recovery (3 min. > 1 min.), Effect Bonus (+1 detail altered, Max: 10), Effect Bonus (+1 Instilled vision viewing, Max: 10)

Path of Sickness

The Path of Sickness teaches adepts to channel forces of pestilence and hate through their bodies, manifesting despicable performances of magic. They can spoil food and water, rot the fragile body or mind, and even curse their environment. Practitioners of this Path are loathed around the world for their wicked magic. Sacrifices originate from their bodies filtering this tainted magic.

(1st) – Agony

Mana: 7
Casting Time: 5 / 1
Duration: 1 Round
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: This spell overloads the victim's nervous system with shocking pain. The victim suffers a -4 penalty to all Actions, and their Pain penalties are altered to -8 at 1/2 Health, -14 at 1/4 Health, and -20 at 1/8 (cumulative with the -4 penalty). Penalties from low Stamina are not affected. VIG + Fortitude checks against Pain cannot be made for the duration. Instead, a successful Magic Resistance check must be made with every Action or Reaction. A failed check cancels the act with the full loss of Stamina and Speed used and the victim racked with pain. Most victims simply lie still to avoid the intense agony.

Sacrifice: Spiked wrist band or collar.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 Round, Max: 6), Range Bonus (+10 ft, Max: 30 ft.), Effect Bonus (-4 penalty, Max: -20)

(1st) – Darkness
Mana: 6
Casting Time: 4 / 2
Duration: 1 min.
Range: 25 ft. / 10 sq. ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: By focusing dark inner powers, the adept creates magical darkness to obscure their enemies' sight. The cloud of inky blackness spreads in a 10 sq. ft. area that can be created up to 25 ft. away. Victims are effectively blind while in the darkness, unless they have magic or another means of countering the effects (See Blindfighting on page 75). **Note:** Even the caster is blind in the darkness.

Sacrifice: A handful of black ink

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (4, instead of 6), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 min., Max: 10 min.), Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft.), Area Bonus (+20 ft. area, Max: 50 ft.)

(1st) – Spoil
Mana: 3
Casting Time: 4 / 2
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: With a touch, they spoil any food and drink or wilt plant-life. Bread grows moldy and inedible, meats and fruits are infested with worms, water is contaminated by bacteria, and flowers wilt and die away. The adept can cast their spell on the target's container, if they do not want direct contact. For instance, if Spoil is used on a canteen, the water inside is affected without needing to stick their finger inside.

They can also use this spell to contaminate their own blood if they fear vampire attacks, giving the adept a -5 penalty to all rolls for 24 hrs. Any vampire that drinks their blood becomes sick, vomiting that blood out and losing the amount of Health they would have gained.

Sacrifice: Crushed cockroach (Live or dead).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 1), Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (All food on a table > All food in a room), Reduce Penalty (-3 instead of -5 > No penalty)

(2nd) – Disintegrating Touch
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 6 / 3
Duration: 3 Rounds
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell creates destructive power in the adept's hand. When cast, their hands secrete a magical poison similar to acid. By placing their hand on an item, the poison eats away its Armor Rating (AR), subtracting AR -1/-1 per Round of contact. If the touch reduces the AR to 0, the item disintegrates without needing to inflict addition damage.

In combat, this spell gives them Armor Piercing 2 (AP 2) for unarmed strikes, as their hands easily cut through mundane armor. Every three strikes to their target's armor, the AR is permanently reduced by -1/-1. This effect doesn't work on natural armor.

Sacrifice: They swallow shed snake skin. Anything he touches is affected by the Spoil spell for one day.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 Rounds, Max: 15), Effect Bonus (+1 AP, Max: AP 6), Render Armor (Reduces AR by -1/-1 after two strikes > on every strike)

(2nd) – Exaggerate Wound
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 6 / 2
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With a touch to the target's skin, the adept causes an already existing wound to rip, tear, and widen. The spell visuals are quite grotesque with flesh shredding and blood splattering. It inflicts 3 (L) or 6 (NL) and gives a -5 penalty to the victim's next Action or Reaction. This damage bypasses any physical armor, but is still absorbed by natural armor.

Sacrifice: Their body filters sick magic, weakening them and giving a -3 penalty to their next check as well.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Damage Bonus (+3 (L), Max: 20 (L)), Damage Bonus (+6 (NL), Max: 40 (NL)), Effect Bonus (-2 penalty to next Action/Reaction, Max: -15)

(3rd) – Cursed Land
Mana: 30
Casting Time: 1 hr. / 3 hrs.
Duration: 1 day
Range: ½ Mile Radius
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept harnesses the strongest evil magic and channel it into their environment, which takes on a noticeably evil feel. The trees darken and hang, the native birds call in an eerie tone, and lakes turn into murky swamps. An adept that knows multiple curses and restrictions may only apply up to five of each in a single casting of Cursed Land. If the victim makes their initial Magic Resistance check, they must also continuously check at regular intervals every five minutes (unless otherwise stated in curse effect).

Adepts with Cleanse Environment (See page 103) can attempt to remove the curse. However, this calls for contested INS + Discipline (Concentration) checks where the winner is the first to four successes.

Curse Effects
While the visuals are astounding, the curse's pure, corrupt power is highly feared. The adept places chosen curse effects on those that enter the area. They learn one effect upon purchase and can learn more with Upgrades.

- **Agony:** Pains shoot down the victim's spine with each step they take, suffering a -10 penalty to physical checks and a -5 penalty to mental checks. They must also make a Simple (10) check against Pain upon first enter-

ing or instantly fall to the ground unable to move in their complete agony. If their initial check succeeds, another check is made every minute they remain on the cursed land, with the Difficulty increasing by +2 each time.

- **Draining:** The victim's energy is slowly drained, stealing two Stamina points per minute they stay in the area. If they stay long enough, they will exhaust themselves and pass out. They cannot awake until removed from the cursed land.
- **Draining II:** Stamina points drained as a result of "Draining" are absorbed by the adept to be used at their leisure. They must be on the cursed land as well and the absorbed Stamina points cannot bring them over their maximum. Must know "Draining" to purchase.
- **Forgetful Mind:** The victim gradually loses their memory. First, they forget why they traveled to the cursed place, then how they got there, then where they came from, then who their companions are, then about their families, and then who they are. In general, a separate Magic Resistance check is made every five minutes that passes for each piece of information that leaves them. Characters with the Perfect Memory Gift See page 48) receive a +5 bonus to resist.
- **Friend to Foe:** The curse confuses the victim's mind, making them think that their friends are enemies and that their enemies are friends. If they arrived alone, they suffer severe paranoia, fearing their friends are around any corner to kill them.
- **Hallucinations:** The adept can change their victim's perception, making them see practically anything. They can effective make things invisible, change the landscape, and the victim absolutely cannot tell these changes are false. This includes making the land not appear cursed at all and inviting instead.
- **Sickness:** A sickness creeps into their body and attacks their vital systems. The victim suffers a -2 cumulative penalty to all checks each minute they spend in the area. After five minutes, they also suffer 5 (NL) per minute. Their skin gains a greenish hue and nasty boils. If not removed from the area, they will eventually die from the damage, as Non-Lethal soon converts to Lethal.
- **Sickness II:** Health lost from "Sickness" can be used to heal the adept's wounds. They must be on the cursed land as well and the absorbed Health cannot bring them over their maximum. Must know "Sickness" to purchase.
- **Ward:** An invisible wall keeps out targets, keeping them from stepping into the cursed area. They can forcibly push through the wall, but also take Lethal damage equal to 25% (rounded up) of their maximum Health. They also suffer a cumulative -2 penalty to all rolls each minute until they leave the area.

Restrictions

Curse effects do not apply to everyone that enters the cursed land. At the time of casting, the adept chooses the targets they wish to restrict. They specialize in restriction at first, but can gain more through Upgrades. The list below is not exhaustive, as they can apply any Restriction that is GM-approved.

- **Race:** Human, Tark, Faeries, Taylari.
- **Family Line:** Restricts members of a family
- **Religious affiliation:** Christians, Witches, Muslims
- **Gender:** Men, Women, Asexuals, Transvestites
- **Occupation:** Marines, API, Bakers, Engineers

Sacrifice: Conjuring the pure hate needed for this spell eats away at the adept's sanity. They acquire an insanity that lasts for half of the spell's duration. If they suffer the insanity for longer than a day, they must also make a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check to avoid gaining the insanity permanently (See page 77).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 14), Reduce Recovery (-1 hr, Min: 1 hr.), Duration Bonus (1 week > 1 month > 3 months > 6 months > 1 year), Range Bonus (+1/2 mile, Max: 3 miles), Effect Bonus (+1 Restriction), Effect Bonus* (+1 Curse type), Resistance Bonus (+5 to contest Cleanse Environment, Max: +10)

(3rd) – Rot Mind

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 1 min. / 3 min.
Duration: 1 day
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: At this level, the adept focuses the wicked power of pestilence to poison their victim's fragile mind. At purchase, the adept picks one Insanity type (Can gain more through Upgrades). More powerful uses of this spell corrupt a mind so that it rots from the inside out. When the duration ends, the victim must make an INS + Discipline check with Difficulty 20, +3 Difficulty for each mental illness after the first that they are currently suffering. A failed check means they retain one of them permanently.

Sacrifice: They manifest the same insanity that strikes their victim. Their skin rots, dealing 25% (NL) (rounded down). This Health heals back normally after the duration ends. All CHM checks suffer a -10 penalty from to their hideous form.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Duration Bonus (+1 day, Max: 7 days), Range Bonus (20 ft. > 50 ft. > Line of Sight), Effect Bonus (+1 insanity type), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous insanity, Max: 4), Reduce Penalty (-5 penalty > -3 penalty > No penalty), Like Minds (-4 Magic Resistance if gaining an Insanity the adept already has)

Path of Telekinesis

The Path of Telekinesis is a staple for adepts to learn early on in their careers. The Path contains spells that empower them to move objects, people, and even themselves, with only their mind. The true secret is the transfer of their physical power into their mental energies, reflected in the common sacrifice of physical attribute penalties.

(1st) – Slow Plummet

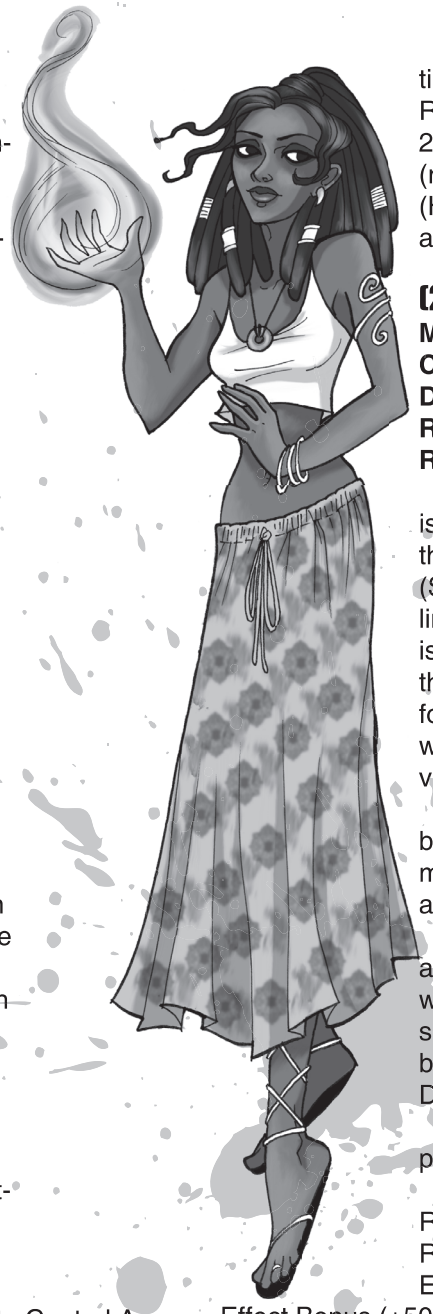
Mana: 6
Casting Time: 4 / 6
Duration: Instant
Range: Self

Resistance: No

Effect: The adept slows their descent using only their mind. Under normal circumstances, someone falling takes 5 (NL) per 10 ft. However, this spell allows the adept to ignore 20 ft. of their fall by slowing themselves by magically fighting gravity. This spell also adds +4 ft. to jump distance, as the adept glides on the air, or half as much to a vertical jump.

Sacrifice: Three feathers.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 4), Effect Bonus (Ignore +20 ft, Max: 100 ft.), Jump Bonus (+4 ft, Max: +20 ft.)



(1st) – Unseen Hand

Mana: 7
Casting Time: 6 / 4
Duration: Concentration
Range: 15 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: This is a limited form of Telekinetic Mastery, where only lighter items can be lifted. They can affect any number of items, as long as they do not weigh more than 10 lbs. in total. A single Control Action (Speed 4, Stamina 1) can be made to move any number of objects within their allowed weight, but their weak control is not enough to use weapons. Common uses include moving pens to transcribe memoirs, swiping keys from a sleeping police officer, or retrieving a disarmed weapon.

Sacrifice: A black glove.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (1 min. > 5 min. > 30 min.), Range Bonus (25 ft. > 50 ft. > 80 ft.), Effect Bonus (+10 lbs, Max: 50 lbs.), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed to Control Action, Min: 2), Effect Bonus (Stamina 0 for Control Action, instead of 1)

(2nd) – Levitation

Mana: 10
Casting Time: 5 / 8
Duration: Concentration
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: By focusing on their center of gravity, the adept conjures enough mental power to levitate 10 ft. above the ground. This can be used to reach heights or for passage over rocky terrain or rivers. Movement while levitating is at halved and can often be a fright to spectators that are unused to seeing people fly.

Sacrifice: They take a -1 POW level penalty per target they lift (i.e. -1 for themselves, -2 for themselves and one other, etc.) for 1 hr.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (1 min. > 5 min. > 30 min.), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 2), Effect Bonus (Full Movement > +50% (rounded down) > Double), Effect Bonus (Height +10 ft, Max: 50 ft.), Reduce Penalty (30 min. > 15 min. > 5 min.)

(2nd) – Telekinetic Mastery

Mana: 14
Casting Time: 8 / 6
Duration: Concentration
Range: 30 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: Like Unseen Hand, the adept is able to lift any number of items with their mind with a single Control Action (Speed 6, Stamina 2), but their weight limit starts at 50 lbs. Also, their mastery is now at a level that they can fight with their powers. Objects not normally meant for combat deal 1 Damage per 20 lbs. of weight behind it. Weapons use normal values with a Base damage of 1.

This spell can even be used to stop bullets and other ranged weapons in mid-air by performing a Control Action as a Reaction. No roll is needed.

Lifting a person is also easily done, as long as the adept can lift their entire weight. The target receives a Magic Resistance check with a +4 bonus to avoid being lifted. Can also be used to take a Disarm Action within range.

Sacrifice: They take a -2 POW level penalty for 1 hr.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 8), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > 200 ft.), Effect Bonus (+2 to Strike, Max: +10), Effect Bonus (+50 lbs, Max: 500 lbs.), Power Lifter (+2 bonus for lifted people > No bonus > -2 penalty), Disarmer (+5 to Disarm, Max: +20)

(3rd) – The Crushing

Mana: 22
Casting Time: 12 / 6
Duration: Instant
Range: 25 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept uses their telekinetic magic to crush their target with thousands of pounds of pressure, inflicting 12 (NL) from the crushing force around them. They are stunned from the effect and are unable to move (Action or Reaction) for 1 Round. If used on multiple targets, split damage between them evenly, but none are stunned.

Sacrifice: They take a -2 POW penalty for 1 day.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Reduce Casting (Min: 8), Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (+25 ft, Max: 100 ft.), Range Bonus (+1 Target, Max: 4), Damage Bo-

nus (+6 (NL), Max: 30 (NL)), Damage Bonus* (Lethal)

(3rd) – Flight
Mana: 18
Casting Time: 10 / 6
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: At the pinnacle of telekinetic power is the ability to lift oneself and move at extreme speeds. With this spell, the adept can fly speedily up to 10 MPH. They have no limit to how high they may fly, feeling complete freedom. Depending on their mentor and their version taught, they may manifest wings upon casting.

In combat, opponents suffer a -3 penalty to Strike the adept. Rush Actions done while flying gain an additional +2 to Strike and +3 Damage. Movement is also tripled.

Sacrifice: They take a -2 POW level penalty for 1 day.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 hr, Max: 10 hrs.), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch), Effect Bonus (+20 MPH, Max: 150 MPH), Reduce Penalty (12 hrs. > 6 hrs. > 3 hrs. > 1 hr.)

Path of Telepathy

The Path of Telepathy teaches an adept to connect their mind with others for communication or information gathering. Honorable and appalling methods abound, but few are happy to know their mind has been read without permission. Common sacrifices include migraines after using a large amount of mental energy.

(1st) – Dual Connection
Mana: 4
Casting Time: 3 / 3
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell links the adept's mind with one of their comrades, allowing them work as one toward common goals. If performing a job together (i.e. fixing a car or creating art), they both receive a +4 bonus to rolls on their portions of the job. If one is helping the other, than a successful Teamwork roll gives a +10 bonus to the project leader or double with a Critical Success.

In combat, the two fight in complete unison, responding to the other's movements and positions instinctually. They have no Strike penalty on Cooperative Attacks and get +2 to all other combat checks (including Initiative) when within 10 ft. of each other.

Sacrifice: If the two move out of range, they both get headaches and suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls.

Upgrades: Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (3 hrs. > 6 hrs. > 12 hr. > 1 day), Range Bonus (+20 ft, Max: 50 ft.), Effect Bonus (+5 Teamwork bonus, Max: +20), Effect Bonus (+2 combat bonus, Max: +10)

(1st) – Read Thoughts
Mana: 4
Casting Time: 6 / 4
Duration: Concentration
Range: 20 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept reads their target's mind, sensing surface thoughts and impressions. "Surface thoughts" quantifies the target's current feelings or thoughts at the forefront of their mind. An IQ + Perception check may be needed to weed through their surface thoughts, if looking for specific information or if they are stressed. Concentration is needed to keep their grasp on the target's mind.

Sacrifice: A magnifying glass.

Upgrades: Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > Line of Sight), Effect Bonus (Can read deep secrets > Suppressed memories)

(1st) – Tongues
Mana: 4
Casting Time: 4 / 3
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: 20 ft.
Resistance: No

Effect: By linking to the comprehension and language portion of another's brain, the adept instantly speaks, understands, and writes the language of anyone within range. This spell is often used by more diplomatic adepts when dealing with foreigners or unknown demon races.
Note: This spell only transmits the logistical usages and language translations, not cultural norms or phrase restrictions. This lack of cultural knowledge, gives a -3 penalty to CHM rolls when using a borrowed language.

Sacrifice: A pinch of sand on the adept's tongue.

Upgrades: Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (3 hrs. > 12 hrs. > 1 day), Range Bonus (50 ft. > 100 ft. > Line of Sight), Adaptation (Instantly adapts to cultural norms and restrictions. No penalty.)

(2nd) – Telepathic Aura
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 10 / 5
Duration: 10 min.
Range: 10 ft. radius
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept delivers empathic impressions into the minds of those around them, creating a feeling toward them in the targets' minds. Upon purchase, the adept learns one effect, but can purchase more with Upgrades. Only one type can be active at any time.

- **Fear:** They give impressions of their being merciless and deadly, filling their targets with fear and dread. Those that fail their Magic Resistance check must make a check against Fear 20. Scared people sometimes run, fleeing the scene. Sometimes they cringe, paralyzed by fear. Other times, they fight back even harder, using their fear as fuel to keep pushing themselves.
- **Friendship:** They place fond thoughts of themselves in the targets' minds, making them seem friendlier,

gaining a +10 bonus to applicable Persuasion checks. It can be used on a salesman to get a discount, on a witness for an investigator to garner more info, or on a mob to turn them to the adept's side. If they betray their "friend" within the duration, the target gets a +5 bonus to all attacks against them, their crushing hatred of the adept fueling their attacks.

- **Seduction:** They project mental images of themselves as being sexually attractive into the targets' minds. They become coveted by all within range, even those that would not normally be attracted, gaining a +10 bonus to seduce anyone affected.
- **Unseen:** They project mental images that obscure the memory of their face, as if they are not actually there. They become a face in the crowd, gaining a +5 bonus to all Stealth checks against those affected. If someone sees them, they have a hard time remembering the adept's features after they've left the scene, suffering a -10 penalty to Memorization checks.

Sacrifice: They cut themselves with a mirror shard for 3 (L).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 8), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (20 min. > 40 min. > 1 hr.), Range Bonus (25 ft. radius > 50 ft. > 100 ft.), Effect Bonus (+1 effect type), Effect Bonus: Fear (Fear 25 > Fear 30), Effect Bonus: Seduction, Unseen, or Friendship (+5 bonus, Max: +20)

(2nd) – Telepathic Communication

Mana: 9
Casting Time: 6 / 4
Duration: 10 min.
Range: 200 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: An adept with this spell can project and receive spoken and empathic messages with another. This allows full conversations of any length with no sentence length or word restriction. The intended target need not be seen

Psychics of Seville

Description: The Psychics of Seville started as just a small group of psychic adepts that soon erupted into a national phenomenon. The founder, Cynthia Blanchard, was a powerful adept, using her mind magic to genuinely help people. She gathered a small group of other psychics and began traveling the US with what was referred to as "psychic road shows". They found fake psychics and magicians in cities they visited that cheated customers, giving psychics a bad name.

Today, the Psychics of Seville have formed a special guild of sorts to protect themselves. Their similarities of being psychic unifies them, but they band together to stop the charlatans that constantly try to pass themselves off as true psychics. Nowadays, it is not uncommon for a false psychic to have mind wiped in retribution.

Most share no uniform lifestyle choices, but the Order has created "Psychic towns" that have become tourist attractions wherever they are. Over a dozen have sprung up, each one naming itself Seville. The largest Seville has about eighty people, including the psychics and their families. There is always a chief-psychic who acts as the leader, a mayor of sorts. Cynthia's Seville is located near her home town of Daytona, Florida.

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. leaves this Order alone for the most part. The towns are either of highly skeptical nature or actually wield immense power. Not even API wants an army of psychics after their agents.

Joining: The Psychics of Seville are very cliquish and are not quick to accept new residents to their towns. New positions may become available if previous members are banished, possibly disobeying the town's rules and directives. Sometimes, banished psychics go on start their own Seville after the effects of their Aura Branding (See below) wears off. Obviously, the inductee must also provide a show of their psychic ability to even qualify for spot in one of the psychic towns. Telepathy is a staple among their members and their minds are often read to prove membership and root out traitors. They'll know if you don't belong.

Garb: There is no uniform unless putting on a show. While a true psychic can just read their target's mind or use divination to get the right answers, it's often necessary to put on a corny hat "for the effect".

Order Bonus: The Psychics of Seville can purchase upgrades for spells from the Path of Telepathy for half price (rounded up) and have access to Aura Branding.

(2nd) – Aura Branding

Mana: 16
Casting Time: 10 / 5 min.
Duration: 2 weeks
Range: 10 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: Someone that has wronged a Psychic of Seville may have their auras branded (i.e. thief, murderer, cheats, etc.). This branding is a magical mark on the target's aura that reflects outward. Anyone that the target comes in contact with reacts to the branding, which gives them a -5 penalty to all CHM rolls. Not everyone reacts in the same manner. If branded as a thief, other thieves may still befriend the victim or they may shanked them for being a klepto. In either case, the target's presence is disconcerting and encourages ill feelings, leading many to simply abandon them all together. **Note:** They MUST actually be guilty of performing the wrong with which they are being branded.

Sacrifice: Branding can only be performed by someone who truly regarded the target as a friend or lover. Their sacrifice is that connection. This also keeps Aura Branding from being inappropriately used on stranges.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery (-1 min, Min: 1 min.), Duration Bonus (1 month > 3 months > 6 months > 1 year), Range Bonus (+20 ft, Max: 50 ft.), Effect Bonus (-3 penalty, Max: -20)

or touched, only within range, but unwilling participants do receive a Magic Resistance check if they do not want to hear the message.

Sacrifice: The adept and others affected suffer a -4 penalty to combat rolls in any Round they send messages, as their focus is shifted toward mental communication. Receiving messages does not give a penalty.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (30 min. > 1 hr.), Range Bonus (1 mile > 5 miles > 10 miles), Range Bonus (+1 simultaneous target, Max: 5), Reduce Penalty (-2 penalty, instead of -4)

(3rd) – Hive Mind

Mana: 25
Casting Time: 5 hr. / 12 hr.
Duration: 1 day
Range: Touch
Resistance: No

Effect: Similar to Dual Connection, this spell unites the minds of the adept and up to three others. They are thus connected to what the others are thinking, feeling, and saying with only a thought… anywhere in the world. They must all be touching when casting, but the range is unlimited afterward. Participants MUST be willing. Some adepts use this spell to keep constant contact with their family or squad members, being alerted the moment any one of them is placed in danger.

Sacrifice: After disconnecting from the Hive mind, all those involved must make a Moderate (20) IQ + Discipline check. A failed roll means that disconnecting from the constant connectivity leaves them feeling broken and alone and they suffer a -10 penalty to all rolls for one week as the feeling slowly fades.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 15), Reduce Casting (-2 hr, Min: 1 hr.), Reduce Recovery (-2 hrs, Min: 4 hrs.), Duration Bonus (3 days > 1 week > 2 weeks > 1 month > 2 months > 4 months), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 10), Reduce Penalty (-5, instead of -10)

(3rd) – Stolen Speech

Mana: 20
Casting Time: 1 min. / 5 min.
Duration: 1 day
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept removes the target's capability for conscious communication. A failed Magic Resistance check leaves them unable to convey thoughts through any means. They literally steal the target's ability to communicate. Speech is impossible. If writing, they forget their ABCs and even charades fails them. The adept can now speak, read, and write all the victim's languages (including accents). After the duration ends, the victim returns to normal, but the adept keeps the stolen knowledge permanently, providing access to that Linguistics family (See Skills). The adept may choose one family to retain if the victim knows several languages. They can only steal one victim's speech at a time, without upgrades.

Sacrifice: They sacrifice -1 permanent IQ, as the mind slightly degrades while information is forced into its core.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Recovery (3 min. > 1 min.), Duration Bonus (+2 days, Max: 7 days), Range Bonus (20 ft. > 50 ft. > 100 ft.), Effect Bonus* (+1 simultaneous victim, Max: 4)

Path of Time

This Path teaches adepts to manipulate the power of time itself. With this magic, they can speed their movement, freeze opponents in time, or coordinate spells with great precision. It is a truly deadly Path that is very straining on the character's ability to regain Stamina.

(1st) – Delay Spell

Mana: +6
Casting Time: +4 / +2
Duration: 2 Rounds
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: Magic is the explosion of the inner circles to create the desired effect. Delay Spell allows a spell to be cast and delayed for later use. Instead of it having its own Casting Time, this spell adds Casting Time +4 and Recovery time +2 for the effected spell. They can activate the spell at any time in the next 2 Rounds without any additional effort, allowing for synchronization of certain Actions.

Sacrifice: Stamina spent on this spell takes twice as long to regain (1 per 10 min. of rest).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (+4 > +2), Reduce Casting (+3 > +2), Reduce Recovery (+1 > 0), Duration Bonus (+2 Rounds, Max: 6)

(1st) – Time Consciousness

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 4 / 4
Duration: 5 min.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell raises the adept's awareness of time's movement. They instantly know the exact time of day and date (according to whatever calendar they use). Time appears to slow down slightly, making them immune to surprise attacks and giving a +5 bonus to Initiative for the duration.

Also, if Time Consciousness is active when others use Time spells, the adept can make a reflexive Magic Resistance check (with a +4 bonus) to stay in time with the caster and resist any adverse effects.

Sacrifice: They wind a clock's (usually a pocket watch) hands forward at least once. The watch breaks afterward and cannot be used again for the same effect. Masters of Time are often covered with multiple watches.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (10 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Effect Bonus (+4 to Initiative, Max: +25), Effect Bonus (+2 to resist Time effects, Max: +10)

(2nd) – Blink
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 8 / 2
Duration: 1 Round
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept gains a greater awareness of their place within time. Blink lets them speed up their place in time for ten seconds (1 Round). They see everyone stopped in time around them. To others, it appears that the adept has disappeared and reappeared in a different place in the blink of an eye. While in this state, the adept can quickly rearrange things in his environment or simply flee the area, but cannot cause damage to anything.

In combat, only the adept moves and their opponents start the next Round on the same Count they were frozen. Any Action taken that causes harm (or is even thought of) returns the adept to normal time and the target gets their full bonuses to avoid the strike.

Sacrifice: The time shift back to normal slows down their movement, making all Actions and Reactions at +2 Speed cost for 1 Round.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 Round, Max: 3), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 3)

(2nd) – Conditional Casting
Mana: +10
Casting Time: +6 / +4
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: Conditional Casting does more than delay a spell. Instead, the adept can place conditions to trigger their spells to activate. For instance, they can stipulate Wards (Page 107) to activate if a spirit enters their dwelling, Cancel Sense if an opponent attacks them, or Cleanse Area if their mom comes by for a surprise visit. The spell can be delayed for up to 1 hour at first. If the condition is not met within the duration, the Mana spent is wasted. This is great for those that carefully plan their battles or like pulling cleverly overt pranks. Instead of it having its own Casting Time, this spell adds Casting Time +6 and Recovery time +4 for the effected spell.

Sacrifice: Stamina spent to cast this spell takes three times longer to regain (1 per 15 min. of rest).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (+8 > +6), Reduce Casting (+5 > +4), Reduce Recovery (+3 > +2), Duration Bonus (5 hrs. > 12 hrs. > 1 day > +1 day, Max: 7 days)

(2nd) – Speed Phase
Mana: 12
Casting Time: 6 / 2
Duration: 1 Round
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: The adept speeds up the sphere of time around themsevles, shifting out of phase with other people. To the adept, others around them move much slower, while they appear to move much faster, even leaving a blur behind them. They gain a +5 bonus to all combat rolls and have no penalty when attacking multiple opponents. Also, the Speed for all Actions and Reactions is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 1), allowing more actions without penalty.

Sacrifice: Due to the speed of time's revolution around the adept, their body ages one week in just the short Duration of this spell.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 Round, Max: 6), Effect Bonus (+1 Attack per Round, Max: +4), Effect Bonus (+3 combat bonus, Max: +20), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed, Max: -4 (to a minimum of 1)), Reduce Penalty (-1 day aging, Min: 3 days)

(3rd) – Freeze Time
Mana: 26
Casting Time: 12 / 5
Duration: 1 Round
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell is similar to Blink, freezing time around the adept and all others in the effect. However, this spell removes any restrictions on affecting or harming the frozen. They can cause as much damage to property or their opponents as their time phase will allow. At this level, Time magic is not just a trick or way to escape, it is all-out reality manipulation and is very deadly.

Sacrifice: Due of the speed at which time fluctuates around the adept, their body ages 4 weeks in just the short Duration of this spell. The aging is so quick and disconcerting that their body aches and they suffer a -4 penalty to all physical rolls for 24 hrs.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 12), Reduce Casting (Min: 6), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+1 Round, Max: 6), Range Bonus (+1 other by touch, Max: 3), Reduce Penalty (-2 days, Min: 2 weeks)

(3rd) – Permanency
Mana: 30
Casting Time: x3
Duration: Permanent
Range: Self
Resistance: No

Effect: This spell is feared, as it allows an adept to make spell effects permanent by instilling the magic into an item. This is no small feat, even requiring the adept to give part of their own essence to seal the magic into permanent existence. Due to its potency, many mentors refuse to teach this spell or require trials for any student to prove their worth.

Permanency cannot affect spells that can be resisted and affects only 1st level spells to start. Instead of it having its own Casting Time, this spell triples the effected spell's Casting and Recovery times. This spell is often cast on items of clothing, so that the effect is active whenever it is worn or used. This includes shoes that give faster movement, lipstick that gives Seduction bonuses, and other inventive uses. The spell's effect and sacrifice cannot be deactivated and is always active.

Sacrifice: They permanently sacrifices -2 VIG (also

losing 6 Stamina points in the process).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 20), Reduce Casting* (x2, instead of x3), Effect Bonus* (2nd Circle spells > 3rd Circle spells)

Wares

The Path of Wares signifies an adept's attempt to meld their spirit with machines. They can outright control any machine, as well as causing it to crash or protect it from such occurrences. This Path was created by newer adepts, as generations come closer to and often obsessed with technology. If targeting cybernetic technology with this magic, the object resists control with a Difficulty (12) check. If targeting a cyborg, they also add their VIG to any Magic Resistance checks, making it very difficult to affect cybernetic parts.

(1st) – Crash

Mana: 6
Casting Time: 6 / 5
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With a touch, the adept bypasses any electronic object's armor protection (AR) and inflicts 5 Damage directly to the object's Durability. This will shut simple computer system down completely, but mainframes, robots, and cyborgs may be harder to effect. This can be used to disable someone's getaway car or crash an electronic safe lock. However, it fully damages the object while it disables. For instance, the car engine parts affected melt to each other becoming unfixable.

Sacrifice: Two D batteries.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana, Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (+20 ft, Max: 100 ft.), Effect Bonus (+3 Damage, Max: 20), Cyborg Master (+2 Difficulty to Cyborgs, Max: 20)

(1st) – Interface

Mana: 8
Casting Time: 8 / 6
Duration: 1 hr.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept literally melds their fingers into any machine, creating a direct connection that allows them to operate the machine as a trained professional. They receive a +10 bonus to any Skill checks to interface with the machine. This spell lets adepts hack the toughest computers or outrun even the most determined police officer in a chase. At first, the adept can only interface with one machine at a time.

Sacrifice: The adept must spend at least five minutes of interaction with the machine before casting. For instance, the average adept could easily hop into a car and interface easily (having driven before), but would have to spend five minutes to interface with a helicopter.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 2), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (+2 hrs, Max: 5 hrs.), Range Bonus (+1 simultaneous interface, Max: 3), Effect Bonus (+2 bonus to checks, Max: +20), Cyborg Master (+2 Difficulty to Cyborgs, Max: 20)

(2nd) – Machine Control

Mana: 12
Casting Time: 10 / 3
Duration: Concentration
Range: 50 ft.
Resistance: Yes

Effect: With this spell, the adept gains mental control over a machine, being able to operate and manipulate it from afar. The adept can make a single Control Action (Speed 6, Stamina 2) to direct the machines under their control. Using this unique spell, the adept can easily circumvent complex security systems, control powerful robotic contraptions, or even remote control a car to do their bidding.

Sacrifice: Their mind is easier to invade while concentrating on their machines, giving them a -5 penalty to resist mental manipulation from other spells.

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 6), Reduce Casting, Reduce Recovery, Range Bonus (100ft. > 150 ft. > 225 ft. > 300 ft.), Effect Bonus (+1 simultaneous control, Max: 3), Effect Bonus (-1 Speed to Control Action, Min: 3), Effect Bonus (-1 Stamina cost for Control Action, Min: 1), Cyborg Master (+2 Difficulty to Cyborgs, Max: 20)

(3rd) – Upgrade

Mana: 18
Casting Time: 8 / 4
Duration: 5 min.
Range: Touch
Resistance: Yes

Effect: The adept boosts the Durability and AR of any machine or other non-living object. This can be very useful when making a getaway in a car from opponents with guns. Onlookers see the car's metallic frame become thicker, developing armor plating and protecting the passengers much better. This gives +5 Durability and AR +2/+2 to the item.

On worn armor, it adds AR +1/+1 that cannot be bypassed by Armor Piercing attacks or the Crash spell. Also, this spell doesn't affect the Hindrance or Weight values. Even though this spell is beneficial, cybernetic or nano-tech parts will still instinctually resist the effects.

Sacrifice: The adept sacrifices their physical Health to enhance the object, infusing the object with their life force and inflicting 4 (L).

Upgrades: Reduce Mana (Min: 10), Reduce Recovery, Duration Bonus (10 min. > 30 min. > 1 hr.), Range Bonus (+20 ft, Max: 100 ft.), Effect Bonus* (Bulletproof), Effect Bonus (+5 Durability, Max: +30), Effect Bonus (AR +2/+2 to objects, Max: +10/+10), Effect Bonus (AR +2/+2 to armor, Max: +20/+20), Cyborg Master (+2 Difficulty to Cyborgs, Max: 20)

Chapter Four:
API Organization

"Hi. I'm Agent Parker with API, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc." the man in the black suit said with a broad smile. His jet pack smoldered as the old woman stood shocked in her doorway. Her cigarette fell out of her mouth and bounced off of her bunny slippers. She shifted her eyes behind the man, seeing his squad members fighting a two-storied, multi-tentacled, green beast. One had flames firing from their hands, one swung a bastard sword, and another blasted it with an array of bullets.

The woman was speechless for a long moment and then muttered, "Apoc-ca-calypse?" Her scared expression carried a lot of weight.

The agent gave an "awwww" look and laughed. "Oh don't worry. This isn't one of those… an apocalypse I mean. We handle minor catastrophes and petty armaged-dons, as well. Now, if you'd be a dear listen to this." She was about to respond, but immediately stopped in her tracks as Agent Parker pulled a pencil-like device from his pocket and waved it around her slightly hairy ear. A glaze came over her eyes as he then implanted her new thoughts, "There was no monster on your farm. This was all due to those damn coyotes. You'll want to go buy a very big dog when you wake up." And then she fell to the ground unconscious.

He turned back to his squad, running to his van and yelling, "OK, guys! Let's wrap this up!" Opening the back doors, he let out a ravenous wolf from the vehicle. It was much larger than other wolves and snarled as it exited, licking its chops. The tentacled beast recoiled in obvious fear of the wolf. Its tentacles grew suckers and it tried vigorously to pull itself away, giving the squad an opening to put the demon down for good with a few choice blows to the "what they guessed was" its head.

The monster melted into horrible pile of smelly goo and the wolf transformed into a scruffy looking man. He took a Cuban cigar from his pocket and smiled with a shit-eating grin. "I guess you all just needed my help. Can't handle anything by yourselves, can you?"

"Pups are good for some things. Especially with scar-ing giant slugs," Agent Parker replied, pointing back to the van. "And now I'm pretty sure you're done." The others began freezing and collecting the goo for further testing, ignoring the transgression between the squad leader and their resident troublemaker.

"Whatever, massa." The Wolf Person said as he casu-ally strolled back to the van, plopped himself down on the seat, and took a puff of his cigar as the van sped away. Then, they left the scene as if it was never there.

The World around Us

There was once a time when the supernatural world lived together with humanity, with humans usually at the receiving end of terror and death. Monsters lived in the dark forests and killed travelers, nomadic caravans, and anyone else that dared to enter their territory. Demons opened portals to Earth unchecked and unleashed destruction, from summoning giant lizards to destroy cities to kidnapping small children in the night. Ghosts and other spirits gained worshippers by granting wishes to the foolish and watched out for their descendents, making sure they always stayed plentiful. These same spirits haunted and cursed those they disliked, using now forgotten magic.

Throughout history, people have fought against these threats… even before Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. They were regular folk that bravely marched on demons and monsters that could easily destroy them. These groups were few and far between, as anything that could protect against ensuing supernatural forces was rare. But continued terrorizing and slaughter of humanity became meaningless to most demons over time, leading many to blend in and adapt to a human life. The lust to eat human flesh and cause destruction reduced as conformity became more and more regular. With the reduction in visible proof, humans also believed less in the existence of monsters under their bed, in the forest, or around the next corner. Their rational minds took over, leading them blindly into the modern day.

Today, humanity's rational mind has become the primary tool that helps Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. keep the supernatural world hidden. For humanity's safety, of course. The average person rationalizes the majority of supernatural instances, filing the events away in deep recesses of their brain to be easily compartmentalized and understood. A demon with sagging skin is a person with a rare and horrifyingly traumatic deformity. A woman wearing a trench coat and hat in one hundred degree weather must have an intense case of albinism and lost her umbrella. That woman's teeth are sharpened, because she just came from a sci-fi convention. The man speaking with a spirit on the sidewalk is just a silly-looking man on his Bluetooth headset.

API uses company-developed technology to continue their successful streak of keeping these misconceptions going and the existence of demons and magic is still mostly a secret today. Humanity as a whole is unready to know that magic truly exists. The company's goal of keeping the supernatural from the world at large is very important to avoid hysteria, chaos, and destruction on a worldwide level. Something of that magnitude would be its own apocalypse. Many doomsday cults and overzealous reporters have tried to expose the truth that rests under their noses, but Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. works hard to help them rationalize it all away and keep humanity in blissful ignorance.

While the general populace is kept in the dark, this rule doesn't apply to all humans. Despite API's best, memory-erasing efforts, some people are exposed to the supernatural world. Some become a demon's friend or lover, as they can often pass for human. Some cults know of supernatural realms, perhaps worshipping them in secret.

API Corporate Profile

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. was once known as the United Prospectors Corp (UPC), one of the first corporations in the world. They compared directly with the Dutch East India Company in the late 1600's for raw materials and trade opportunities. The originators were forward-thinking in their slow but steady acquisition of shares in other companies. Eventually, they held a small portion of almost every other major corporation, and then used their new revenue to fund outside ventures. They were first to follow the Brazilian gold rush in the 1690's and ran operations to protect staked claims and handle prospector squabbles during the California gold rush in the 1840's.

Entering the 1900's, UPC officially changed its name to API. The meaning of the new acronym was questioned by many. The CEO during this time, Simon Ilsley, made the following statement:

"The new acronym represents the company's true purpose and the values we hold to the highest accord. Those within our organization know the meaning and will follow its edicts with every business decision henceforth."

Reporters found that initials "A.P.I." were synonymous with those of the CEO's daughter, Annabelle Priscilla Ilsley. Most came to their own conclusions and left the question behind.

API continued the ambitions of UPC and spent their bountiful resources on purchasing stock in more modern corporations. Today, API has controlling interest in many well-known computer, overseas trade, mining, medical research, agriculture, and weapon manufacturing companies, making them one of the richest companies in the world. They have branches extended to very nearly every country, with approximately 120,000 employees worldwide (35,000 of which are directly employed at major company headquarters).

Any business the company conducts is performed under assumed names, front companies, or by using controlling interest in other companies to force profitable change. The API name is rarely used directly, preferring to stay mostly hidden from prying eyes. Most consumers care less about where items actually come from and more about their name brands anyway.

Tight Gun Control

In 2008, the United States of America elected their first woman president, Oriana Blanchart. Her crowning platform was the promise to change methods used to protect the country and its citizens. This included major reformations of the Second Amendment (The Right to Bear Arms) that caused heaps of controversy from gun activists. Tighter restrictions were placed on firearm ownership by average citizens, but reinforced weapons spending for the US military and police departments. Soldiers were dispatched around the country, forcibly taking illegal firearms into custody. Some of these encounters ended in gunfights and death, but caused no major backlash.

Police forces or military are permitted to carry firearms and are well-trained in using them. Private Citizens must go through painstaking assessments of both firearm skill and mental health before obtaining one legally. Superior black market connections can obtain one without spending up to four month's salary on a single handgun. Certain criminal organizations secretly manufacture weapons with private assembly lines. These crime families take advantage of the current legal climate to make large amounts of money, similar to condition during Prohibition in the 1920's.

API work within the confines of the law whenever possible. They outfit agents with firearms only if the situation absolutely calls for them and even help to rid communities of death profiteering on the part of criminal families.

Some are crime bosses that have access to demons in their ranks or are demons themselves. Others have taken regular day jobs, like being a cook in an out-of-the-way truck stop, without anyone being the wiser about their true origins.

Humble Beginnings

The foundations for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. were built long before there were corporations, shrewd economic takeovers, good health and dental coverage, or even actually companies. Humankind knew they weren't alone, forcing many to pay tribute to monsters and constantly fear for their family's lives. They didn't always know how to name these forces, but felt their presence nonetheless.

As the Black Plague swept across Europe in the 14th century, a special group was summoned to investigate the root cause of the heinous disease. Each member had their own agendas, background, and ethnicity. A few even originated from heathen countries, tracking their own peoples' symptoms to Europe. They aided in the investigation, but worked outside normal channels to avoid racist interference. No one knows how the group was originally assembled. The group found strange leads in their investigation that led to a secluded glen in deep forests. This glen, once beautiful and sparkling, had fallen to the Rat Queen and her thousands of rat minions. Her rats feasted on human corpses dragged from towns and cities in turmoil. The group fought, but could not defeat the diseased demon without help. They retreated, but soon found help from the Neibas, demons that consumed sickness. With mutual pacts of protection and clear negotiation with the investigators, the Neibas ensured the survival humanity. As for the Rat Queen, she was hunted down and harshly neutralized.

This was not the first interaction between man and demon by a long shot, but it was the first recorded event by the Circle of Ten, whose descendents would eventually found Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. After garnering critical information from the Neibas regarding demons and manipulating magic and hording the Rat Queen's gold coffers, the Circle of Ten said goodbye to the Neibas who sought their own goals. They quickly dispatched with the disease-ridden rats, thus halting the plague from spreading any further.

With newfound magic and knowledge, the Circle of Ten sought even more supernatural wisdom and power. Upon encountering new demon races, they acted quickly to make peaceful contact and ensure no harm came to humanity. Some of the first demons encountered were those given up in the Rat Queen interrogations (who were much less peaceful than the Circle hoped for). The group's numbers stayed intact through the dangers, thriving for many years while learning all they could, but they kept their numbers small and shared with few.

Outlooks change as one ages, and this urged the Circle of Ten to pass their knowledge to their families, ensuring loyalty and secrecy with oaths to their fam-

ily names. Thus, the Circle grew to larger numbers and became a family duty and honor to pass down. Unaging (or slower-aging) demons saw humanity's descendents visit to keep up with pacts made decades before. Some descendents respected the peaceful measures of their forefathers, while others spit at tradition and started short-lived wars on all of magic-kind. The Inquisition was an unpopular initiative from the Circle's most enthusiastic, but least trustworthy generation.

Becoming Today s API

The descendents of the Circle of Ten stayed close-knit, continuing their parents' business plan and amassed large amounts of money. With financial success, they created a shadow corporation to fund their primary objective of keeping the Earth safe from supernatural threats. With their existing contacts within the greater part of all the world's major companies, they gained access to global surveillance, military-grade weapons, and the world's personal and confidential records to aid in spotting potential threats. Moles and sleeper agents within all of the important government agencies (i.e. the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, etc.) provide firsthand information concerning impending danger and influence to make changes if needed.

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. spent decades perfecting their census of every human and demon in their domains, along with true names, exact addresses, and personal information (i.e. next of kin, home town, favorite ice cream flavor, etc.). Today, API can retrieve data on virtually anyone, provided they have left a paper trail somewhere on Earth. This process also helps the company track down demons (legal and illegal) that have live among humans.

The 1930's and the Great Depression marked a monumental event for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. A resident demon (or more specifically a Wolf Person) that seemed very courteous and always worked with the company suddenly turned renegade, seeking to end Earth. Using magic far beyond anything on record at the time, the demon wished to draw the moon that had driven him insane into the Earth itself. API called on support from their other branches and the supernatural community to stop this imminent threat. Through diligent cooperation, the moon was ultimately stopped. This event bolstered the enlistment rate of demons to API, but did little for the underlying relationship issues between the company and the demons that shared its world.

After the "Moon Catastrophe", as it became known, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. instituted the API Registration Act. Any supernatural or magical being had to immediately account for their powers and natural abilities. Many yielded to the Act, mostly those that had lived on Earth peacefully for years and that didn't want to piss off API. The primary goal was still to keep everyone safe, right? There were a slew of riots that caused deaths from rampant, angry demons that were upset at their sudden accountability. These beings were banished (deported) from Earth, but others are still locked away in API holding facilities to this day. Neither of these ends were pleasant alternatives to peace and resistance fell to the way side after a decade of almost daily skirmishes. These riots were easily masked by riots of the poor during the Great Depression.

Today, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. hires thousands of new employees from among humanity, demons and even spirits. They have become the ultimate supernatural police force to stop both minor magical occurrences and the destruction of the Earth as well. API has successfully stopped a recorded forty end-of-the-world scenarios. Hundreds more are thought to have been stopped by early intervention on the part of proactive API agents.

Ranks & Departments

Official channels within API are viewed by some as unnecessary red tape. Others believe in every rule the company puts in place and that following a precise chain of authority weeds out superfluous activity.

The highest rank within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is the Global CEO and head of the US branch, Annabelle Priscilla Ilsley. Public records state that she's nearly a century old, but API employees know her as their guardian spirit. Mrs. Ilsley passed from this world fifteen years ago, but continues to exist as a Spectral. Her "can-do" attitude and undying positivity keep the Board of Directors on her side even now. Like the other branch leaders, her family line descends from the Circle of Ten. Her ancestors were regarded for their leadership and the other families still look to the Ilsleys for courage and guidance.

Next is the Board of Directors, made up of the other descendents of the Circle of Ten. Some families spread plentifully, having many children, and thus have more leaders and representation on the board. Others have only a few. They process every major decision that impacts the company and choose actions in a wisely democratic arrangement. Currently, the primary board decision is the search for Mrs. Ilsley's three lost children. It seems that they are uninterested in running API and do not wish to be found since their mother's death. Until they are found, she plans to run Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. as a spirit. The Board of Directors has mixed reactions. Some accept it with delight, while others secretly fund missions to search for a new CEO. A small number of family heads believe another family line should take over as CEO of the US if her offspring refuse to cooperate, but this idea has been rejected many times.

Lower executives, lawyers, and pencil-pushers fill the ranks below the Board of Directors and are important in

the grand scheme of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. They are the backbone of any corporation, especially one like API that regularly requires courtroom defenses for their agents' actions. Most cases against API personnel do not even make it to trial, due to their lawyers performing their maximum due diligence. They are paid handsomely for their efforts, making them quick to squash any matter using shrewd tactics and even magic, if needed.

Elite Operatives are the next rank within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. These agents are clever, survivalist humans who work hard to keep the Earth safe and are the go-to agents for almost any situation. They hold ultimate authority over other agents under them. Elites believe that rank is very important for API's survival, as it reflects training and experience. If a leader isn't truly ready to claim authority, they may spell death for those in their command. Elites receive a lot of assistance from Research and Development (R&D), where equipment is created to keep agents safe on their missions.

Below the Elites are other agent types, from surveillance agents and magical research agents to Lochs and Wolf People. Like Elites, other agents (even demons) must give up their past lives and devote themselves to the company. Some demons have problems taking orders from human in suits, with a badge and an attitude and believe their natural abilities put them above humanity. In the end, they usually regret any actions taken when they meet specially-trained Elites. But most understand that every agent is a valued asset to the company.

The bottom of the totem pole is comprised by employees that do not even know API's true work. Some work for front companies to arrange and fund charity events, perform basic data entry, or create marketing campaigns. They remain in the dark and Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. tries their best to leave them to their mundane lives. Though, it isn't uncommon for them to offer promotions to a "real" position.

Sub-Contractors

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. would be foolish to believe that their resources could provide absolute security all over the world. They are constantly spreading their influence, but the fact remains that there are still areas with little to no agent coverage. This is a self-correcting issue, as more recruits selflessly enlist each month, but other interim fixes are in place as well.

The company regularly hires outside of official channels. Sub-contract offers extend to humans with newly discovered magic, vigilante demons, and others exposed to the supernatural that can prove useful or are strong-willed enough to resist memory wipes. These groups are provided with backing in the form of contacts, license to act as supernatural watchdogs and investigate leads, or even possibly given missions. They hold no real authority within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. and are immediately outranked if the company decides to step into a matter. Private investigation agencies specializing in paranormal activities and companies that promise true-to-life ghost busting have sprung up in areas outside of official API channels.

This method is occasionally used in areas with ample API coverage as well, allowing a few private supernatural agencies in high-population areas. Sub-contractors may be given smaller cases to handle, but quickly find out that API crushes larger investigations. Sub-contractors often have an easier enlistment into Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. ranks (if they choose to join), based on reports of their previous dealings.

Protecting the World Daily

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is well-known for saving the Earth from utter destruction on occasion. Not only did they halt the Black Plague from spreading and stop the "Moon Catastrophe", but also the thousands of other epidemics and threats to Earth's citizens since their founding. Incidents have arisen for which API was not adequately prepared, but the company has initiated procedures and protocols that assist with handling modern day-to-day dangers.

The company currently has headquarters in several countries and plans on extending their protection all over the world eventually. There are ten major (Founder) headquarters in the United States, Brazil, South Africa, Japan, India, Nigeria, England, Russia, Canada, and Mongolia, each directed by the chief descendant of a family from the Circle of Ten. They keep in constant communication to ensure maximum security between countries. Anything looking remotely suspicious is immediately on API's radar and alerted to the appropriate offices. Hundreds of agents work around the clock to locate possible threats, research connected legends or myths thoroughly, and handle each confrontation to the best of their abilities. Each API headquarters is responsible not only for protecting their country, but must also distribute squads throughout surrounding areas. For instance, the Japanese branch is accountable for occurrences in Korea and China, while the Nigerian branch manages to protect the northern, dogged countries of Africa.

API's primary objective is the preservation of humanity and protecting the Earth from supernatural perils. Petty skirmishes and country rivalries have no bearing on that primary goal, often leaving purely human conflicts to be resolved without the company's interference. Sexism and racism are not factors for decisions made by the Board of Directors. If an agent of Iraqi descent is best suited to save a family of white supremacists, they must do so without seeing color, no matter what reaction they face for

the deeds. Agents go through a phase of social deprogramming during training to hopefully remove prejudice from their processes. However, the American population as a whole still suffers this problem.

The main US headquarters is located in Coloma, California, the site of the Gold Rush in the 1800s. They have branched out in the last 20 years, placing a secondary headquarters in Tampa, Florida after the surge of Burners in the Southeast. From these points that sit at opposite ends of the country, API easily dispatches agents to destinations anywhere in North America, Latin America, or even northern regions of South America. While the Brazilian branch take strides to handle their own missions, the US offices have assisted them as backup on several occasions.

Each US state has up to two API cells, smaller facilities that agents utilize to organize missions, improve their skills through training, and keep communication with the main branches. This process has become even more efficient with the opening of the Florida office, helping to boost their supernatural caseload. Exact cell size and location vary according to the intensity of coverage needed, based on many levels of mystical research. Convergences of mystical energy, also called nexus points, lead to more supernatural beings, raising the threat level of the area, and need additional fortification. Nexus points can also be used to initiate dimensional portals by Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. and a few demon races as well. Smaller towns may have only a single squad to keep an eye on the area.

Cells receive data on actions needed and areas to concentrate their efforts. However, agents must be flexible and ready for hugely important missions at a moments notice. These can often send them to other states or countries depending on severity. Backup is very important in Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. Incidents that lead to innocent deaths and possible destruction are often the direct result of a lack of manpower or control over situations. Average API cells are manned by approximately forty to fifty agents that read old texts for prophecies, scan police and government radio frequencies for possible supernatural activity, and constantly examine changes in API registrations and census records. About thirty to forty field agents can be found throughout larger states at any given time, gathered into small groups referred to as squads. Squads are composed of up to five agents, but are often reduced for covert operations or expanded to deal with larger threats.

An agent's assigned city or neighborhood effectively becomes their home, until API decides that relocation is in order. They are acquainted with the citizens they protect, make their homes in the same locality, and get take-out from the same run-down Chinese food diners. They also feel the adverse effects of neighborhood crime, drugs, and unchecked supernatural activity. Most agents are encouraged to have a taste of a normal life, but to never forget their duty to uphold to the company. In the same light, protecting Earth is useless if they do not care.

API employees without knowledge of the company's true purpose do not require much training. They are allowed to live their lives and carry on as regular humans. However, API agents cannot simply be plucked from the street and given authority to save the world. Indeed, additional training is necessary to bring out their talents and give the company insight to the best use of the new agent's unique abilities.

Technology

API believes that continued technological advancement is humanity's greatest accomplishment. With exponential progress in the realms of medicine, computers, and robotics, humanity sheds the idea of staying captive to terrible monsters. Technology is humanity's ace in the hole and the key to keeping Earth safe.

The company funds hundreds of different research facilities that have made breakthroughs in genetic reorganizing, cloning expertise, and vaccines for a wide array of diseases. While a few major illnesses still escape their vaccines (i.e. HIV and Cancer), the company has already ended three other worldwide pandemics, one of which was brought to Earth by an illegal demon.

By instituting high security methods regarding the protection of virtual information and property, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has cultivated several server farms in the US. They have created and diffused thousands of computer viruses that even the best hacker outside of the company has never seen. Techy agents with minds for computers act as a constant source of new information help to stay ahead of the game. On top of security advances, API systems have a fully interactive user interface, including holographic touch screens and semi-intelligent computer systems that can outperform any other systems.

Stolen Technology

The company tries their best, but there is no way to keep all technological advances completely covered up for too long. Leaks have occurred from moles planted by rival organizations, rogue employees, or simply by mistake. Documented cases of diseases and antidotes being stolen, important security passwords being filtered to outside sources, and cybernetic parts being stolen and "cloned" (similar to cell phones) have become another obstacle. The culprits are never let off easily if found, paying for their treason in very interesting ways. Others get away, but they know that API is on the look-out for them.

API Worldwide

API has ten Founder Headquarters (HQs) where the members of the current Circle of Ten reside. Instead of being a closely knit group, traveling the countryside together, they control their individual pieces of the company and are chief decision makers for their country's HQs. Each branch has their own unique threats to face, distinctive demon allies, and specific methods of dealing with the supernatural.

Cape Town (South Africa)

Froyt Van Dousen was the Dutch representative for the Circle of Ten and his family line was part of the original settlers of Cape Town. Now, his current descendent, Michael Vanderzee controls their API HQ in an area cluttered with "cultural ghettos", producing both high crime rates and unemployment. Despite the modern appeal and ample tourist markets that exist for Cape Town, the discontent among its people and everyday chaos brings plenty of heinous demons to fight. This also makes it very difficult to enforce the API Registration Act in South Africa. They rely heavily on reinforcements from the London HQ for aid and they recruit to keep their appearance of control, which slips away slowly each day.

Coloma (US)

The US Founder HQ is run by Annabelle Priscilla Ilsley, a Spectral descendent of the Circle of Ten's Spanish representative, Beltran de Hermosilla. He was well-known for his great swordsmanship and was leader of the Circle of Ten, making his descendents very important to the tradition. California itself is overrun with Wolf People and experiences major threats from Native American demons, evil shaman, and Elemental spirits causing statewide tremors. Their coastline is also teeming with aquatic demons that kill and devour humans. The HQ has taken on additional responsibilities and scrutiny with the incursion of Chromatics in pursuit of Burner refugees.

Kyoto (Japan)

The Kato family line has remained strong from Kato Atsuyori, the Japanese member of the founding Circle of Ten, to his descendent, Jenny Kato, who stands as a strong-willed leader of the Japanese HQ. Tales tell that Atsuyori was hired as a caravan guard on the Silk Road before joining the prolific group and also possessed in-depth knowledge of mystic animism. Jenny is a cut-throat businesswoman with secret ties to Yakuza crime syndicates. Japanese agents fight against many threats from cannibalistic demons to angry ancestor spirits and even the occasional giant lizard. The country's supernatural communities were strongly shaped by magical echoes left by the twin bombs during WWII.

Lagos (Nigeria)

Fa'izu Oba (meaning victorious king) was a fierce, African warrior during the Black Plague. He became part of the Circle of Ten as their combat specialist, but stayed out of sight during their actual investigation. He is recorded as the one that dealt the killing blow to the Rat Queen and his legacy is upheld by his descendent, Babatunde Oba, a young militant believed to be his reincarnation. Babatunde has conflicts with the other API leaders, directly refusing to institute the API Registration Act or control any western-type corporation. Instead, his people make their own peace. This usually involves skulking the jungles and destroying supernatural beings outright. They are weary of any non-human and strike even the most peaceful demon dead on sight.

London (England)

England was home to Charles Nisbett, the Circle of Ten's top record keeper, which was integral to the founding of API. Jonathan Nisbett, his descendent, now runs the London HQ and uses his own expert record keeping to maintain API's numerous demon pacts for protection and service. London also houses stockpiles of magical objects and weapons that are confiscated. Other countries even send their mystical items to London for appraisal. Dozens of Orders hail from these lands and its rich history. They were the most vocal HQ to refuse the amnesty given to Burners, knowing the burden of keeping up with the consequences.

Montreal (Canada)

The Canadian HQ is headed by Gerard Robert, descendent of the original Circle of Ten's great French strategist, Guillot Robert. Far northern areas experience weeks of night, leading to heavy traffic from Taylari. Humanity rests easy, solidly protected in cities with API influence. However, the vast expanses of frozen tundra spell death for those crossing paths with the vampires or abominable snowmen. The Montreal HQ works closely with US agents to quickly and efficiently sort out situations along their borders, but they sadly lack real manpower to cover all of Canada.

Moscow (Russia)

Aleksandr Bortnikovo was the Circle of Ten's pathfinder and trap master for years, leaving his legacy in the capable hands of his progeny. Unfortunately, the last of his direct descendents was reported dead some thirty years ago. In the interim, the Russian Board of Directors ruled the HQ without the Circle of Ten's guidance. Five years ago, a young man from the Ukraine by the name of Vasily Baranova was discovered and found to be a bastard descendent of Aleksandr. Vasily has taken the mantle and attempts to reassert API's control over the area, but does so with a Board that constantly contradicts his choices. The worst threats are the recent rumors of a gruesome resurrection to be undertaken by an unknown doomsday cult. Just great.

Delhi (India)

API's Delhi HQs is run by Syed Sharaz Ali, descendent of the original Circle of Ten's Indian seer, Narasimha Gupta. Sharaz was proud to continue his ancestor's tradition, becoming quite the capable seer himself. The Delhi HQ deals with a plethora of would-be prophecies, as the possibility of birthing godlike avatars is quite prominent in their regions. Rumors abound of an incredible and dreadfully dark power on its way toward Earth in the near future, as foreseen by Sharaz. Their policy of allowing almost any "pure pf heart" demon to join their ranks has led others to believe this HQ to be a haven for Illegals. Their office was also responsible for many of API's medical patents.

Rio di Janeiro (Brazil)

Joam Oliveira was the Circle of Ten's famed Portugese negotiator. This family trait was passed down to his dscendent, Nisa Amando. She coordinates with both Amazonian tribes and powerful companies to come to amicable agreements for all sides. She uses her talents as a master greeter to new demons, as well as professional interrogator. The API Registration Act is more a formality for the Brazilian HQ, as heinous blood cults and roaming bands of ravenous Lochs are rarely open to negotiation. Their numbers are often spread thin, as South America is a large continent to cover.

Mongolia (Nomadic)

Chuluun Tuman (meaning 10,000 stones) was the Circle of Ten's finest investigator, able to catch clues that most overlooked. His descendent, Altantsetseg Tuman recently inherited the Mongolian API offices that fell into chaos over one hundred years ago. The API Registration Act has no place in Mongolia and the entire HQ is nomadic, constantly traveling through the lands and removing hostile supernatural threats. They regularly acquire new agents (human and demon), creating a caravan that uses primarily guerilla tactics to defeat their enemies. Their primary mode of communication is pay phones or the Path of Telepathy.

China & Australia

China and Australia have small, secret API HQs in their countries, primarily used to monitor activity. The forces of darkness and demon populations are so strong in these areas that API would require much larger numbers to break through and force change. It would also cost many lives (agents and innocents) and large amounts of resources to attempt. Covert operations prove to be successful in these countries, but only when the situation clearly calls for such action. Chinese operations are conducted by the Mongolia, Japan, and India HQs, while the other offices handle any rising issues in Australia.

Sibling Rivalry

The Circle of Ten tradition has been passed down from parent to child for nearly seven hundred years and is regarded with sincere honor. The first born descendents are integral to the company's success or failure. But the current Circle of Ten do not always get along and often come to blows over rivalries that existed centuries ago. Just like any family by blood or circumstance, they periodically enter into childish squabbles over company funding, man power, or recruitment procedures. These arguments take place via private video calls, holographic messages, or telepathy between the Circle members. Only after clear decisions have been made is an issue brought before that region's Board of Directors for a vote.

A recent point of contention was for additional resources given to the US to construct a second HQ in Florida. The London HQ challenged their unnecessary expansion and amnesty for the Burners. The European cells are under-funded and don't benefit from the US gold market and their leaders feel it was a misappropriation of usable assets. Needless to say, the Circle of Ten are not one big happy family.

Robotics has been a favorite topic for sci-fi books and TV shows, but API has brought most of these dreams to fruition. While robotics programming and design was in their infancy thirty years ago, today there is the existence of full-fledged robots. Perfected Artificial Intelligence (AI) has yet to be created, leaving these constructs as little more than errand-runners. The general public is still amazed with giga-pets and the existence of robots is kept in secrecy, until API can perfect their production and safety.

With medical and robotic advances, it was an eventuality that humanity would aspire to a new goal: cyborgs. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. created the first half-man half-machine roughly fifteen years ago and the results were disastrous. Holes in the implant designs and the necessary medical knowledge were underestimated, leading to the many deaths. Now, improvements to the process have been perfected and successful procedures have only a small percentage of failure. See page 58 or 133 for more information on cybernetics.

In addition to actual robots, API developed exo-skeleton suits, widely used by various agents in the 70s and 80s. The exo-skeleton program was abandoned when cybernetics proved to be a successful and less-expensive alternative. The mass amount of materials and man-hours needed to complete a single suit of robot armor were considered unworthy of the expense and against the company's goal of secrecy. Giant robot armor was less than inconspicuous. The very idea risks too many bystanders viewing something their minds are not ready to fully comprehend. Fully-integrated cybernetics at least lowers the chance of this occurring.

The API Registration Act

After the "Moon Catastrophe" of the Great Depression, the company put the API Registration Act into place. The Act quite simply states that all demons, monsters, and/or other beings that interact with the supernatural must be fully registered with API in order to do so legally. The company feels that constant record keeping and monitoring of the Earth is in everyone's best interests and vital for their protection. The initial resistance was quickly squelched.

Paperwork & Restrictions

Upon first entering the Earth dimension, discovering their abilities, or being created, all supernatural beings are required to register with the local Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. office. These offices are kept separate from the actual API cell, for safety measures. The demons stand in long lines of DMV proportions to eventually have their information taken and obtain a special ID card, called a Blue Card. In a brief but detailed interview, they must also state whether they plan on staying on Earth, just passing through, or are simply visiting. Those with visitor status are usually restricted to city zones where they have official business.

Particular licenses are needed for supernaturally-owned businesses on Earth, especially those of a magical nature. They must tolerate periodic visits by API agents, checking their merchandise and ensuring they don't carry items that can directly affect vulnerabilities of legal demons. This includes selling silver weapons without a permit or selling orbs of cold in areas heavily populated by Burners. Charms of protection against Illegal demons are regularly allowed.

Portals

API pays close attention to prophecies and nexus points, placing cells in areas most likely to enable dimensional travel. They've constructed special gates, resembling fountains or statues, in these areas to control the flow in and out of the Earth dimension. With agents and gates in place, API is capable of intercepting approximately 70% of all dimensional traffic. Scans for magical energy throughout their cities prove helpful in stopping portal openings or otherwise dangerous rituals.

As with everything, there are exceptions to the rule of portals. Powerful adepts can master the Path of Portals that lead to dimensional spells that can open a portal anywhere. Some demons can also open pinhole portals in order to skirt API's radar scans. This show that humanity's technology and magic still have room for growth. They attempt to acquire insight from some demons and scavenge what they can from the bodies of others.

Punishments

Violators of the API Registration Act are considered threats to Earth and have a varying degree of penalties they can incur depending on the individual offense and the mood of the investigating agent. Basic punishments include simple sanctions, forcing the guilty party to pay a fee. This is usually held for first timers, purely accidental magic incidents, or selling herbs they didn't know were banned. Most simply pay their fine and are left alone, but ignorance can only be claimed once.

Repeat offenders (even for minor offenses) are dealt with swiftly and often with little mercy, incurring a heavy fine along with harsher penalties. An adept that lets their magic fly freely in the open too often (breaking the fundamental edicts set forth by API) may be stripped of their spell books and magical components, tattoos, etc. They are also forbidden from performing magic. Just as easily, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. may also decide to send that adept to a supernatural guru to teach them better magic control. The mood and disposition of the investigating agent has bearing on how the situation is handled. Elite Operatives are effectively judge & jury in these cases, but other agents need approval on their decisions.

Two other options are available under the strictest and rarest of situations. First choice: the execution of the offender. The death penalty cannot be a rash decision and is not taken lightly, but is the only choice in some cases. Some enemies cannot be reasoned with or are such a large and direct threat to Earth's population that words must be discarded. Second choice: incarceration of the offender. API has many supernatural jails, designed to imprison and strip the being of any powers they may possess. Even spirits can be restricted in these high-tech and magical cells, created by the company's brightest minds and most powerful adepts.

Venturing Out

Humans are creative and forward-thinking beings, leading API to fund missions to other dimensions on occasion. They hope to gain insight into future technologies, alternative magic, possible resources for food and energy, and (most of all) new allies willing to stand by their side in times of danger. Unfortunately, many humans are rude and brash, looking simply for a fight or for "experience" with demon babes. Past actions of this type has led to a few skirmishes that API would have rather avoided, but the company holds their strong opinions that dimensional travel is necessary to the preservation of humanity and has not abandoned their missions outside of the Earth dimension.

Prophecy Follow-up

API is very thankful that their ancestors had the foresight to leave behind precautionary texts of things to come. This includes warnings of the End Times spoken of in the Bible, Nostradamus's journals, hundreds of cryptic, Latin texts found in monasteries, and ancient Chinese relics written on turtle shells. Prophecies are used to follow supernatural leads toward the company's primary goal. There is no way to recount every prophecy, but certain themes occur frequently. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. tries to cover up most prophecies and texts that are the basis of extremist cult beliefs or plots against the company.

Dates

Humanity has been fascinated with theories of an End of Times since the invention of time and calendars. Magical dates and their surrounding events differ greatly depending on culture and author's personality, but they usually spell the destruction of the world. The company's access to ancient tomes is almost limitless, as they fund excavations to unearth more every month. They hope to better defend the world by learning specific dates for when disorder is destined occur.

Nostradamus journalized several prophecies and his predictions are rarely wrong today, even down to specific dates. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. scours his texts for leads, cross-referencing them with current world events in hopes of pinpointing the next prediction come to life.

The Year 2000 (Y2K) scare threatened to shut down the globe's machinery and computers, but Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. saw it coming a mile away. Y2K was a very real threat, but the company used their best cyborgs to infiltrate internet systems and remotely correct errors, simultaneously avoiding disaster and testing the efficiency of new cybernetic interface implants. The turn of the century was an important milestone to doomsday cults and some of the worst demons, who also came out of hiding for this date. Y2K was a trying time for API, pushing them to their limit in a number of ways.

Children

Countless prophecies exist about the birth of "special" children. The Bible speaks of an Anti-Christ born from a wolf instead of a human woman, leading some to question the destiny of the Wolf People. This same prophecy's association with hell and the Burner's appearance lead others to make the same assumptions about Earth's new visitors. Hindu teachings state that some children are born as avatars of their gods and are beyond human. These avatars may grow to be virtuous people and great heroes to their people or an enemy to the world. Some are the next step in evolution, being born as mutants with new natural abilities, skills, or physical deformities that make them special.

Prophecies also speak of dangers to children that have an impact on the world. API attempts to save these children if possible. Certain births have been prophesized to lead to catastrophes (i.e. riots, natural disasters, the End Times), which may lead the company to stop the birth or destroy the child. This forces API to keep close tabs on birth records, running weekly reports on all hospitals to spot potential risks before they strike. API's adepts are attempting to create a spell to track every birth in an area to gain insight into births outside of hospitals as well.

Miracles

When someone believes to have witnessed a true miracle, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. sends agents to thoroughly investigate the matter. From statues crying streams of blood to evangelist faith healings to Jesus' shape in a bowl of cornflakes, each incident must be monitored and severely scrutinized. No miracle claim should be overlooked, because each one is either an opportunity to expose a fake, hardening the world's rational mind, or is a real sign that points toward mystical events that could destroy the company's vow of secrecy. Disproving miracles is a fragile mission for any agent. API's job is to prove that such things do not actually exist, but they must perform this duty in a way that doesn't strip humanity of their faith and belief entirely. Without faith and hope, humans are just empty shells.

Aliens

No aliens have invaded or visited Earth to date. Demons come from every direction, infesting Earth with often evil magic, but life has yet to be found on other planets in Earth's solar system. API keeps its eye on the stars to ensure that interstellar threats are not in the works. They have financed many space voyages, usually including API probes of their own design piggybacking on government satellites. API believes they can easily circumvent possible threats before they reach the government agencies, due to their current technology and the speed at which they are creating new ideas.

Time Travel

Adepts have learned to manipulate both time and portals, but none to the extent of achieving time travel. In the same regard, no technology has created such an effect either. Nonetheless, many prophecies speak of travelers from the future that warned of dangers or those that traveled forward to experience the present and affect the past. Time manipulation is believed to cause time ripples (paradox) that could wipe the world from existence, which is why API keeps a sharp eye on anyone claiming to be from another time. They are usually demons from either very advanced or archaic dimensions, but none have actually been from another time yet.

Unleashing

The worst prophecies are those that involve unleashing evil beings into the world. Some enemies throughout history have been so powerful that they could not be killed. Instead, they were sealed away, as many were either true immortals or just too powerful to kill with even the best technology of the time period. Even from their prisons, some are still able to call upon and coerce followers to free them. This type of situation is difficult for API agents to fight against. Defeating their loyal cultists, who are by all definitions innocents, simply leads the being to find new ones. They prefer tailing the cultists to their places of worship.

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has one of two options when facing an unleashing: strengthen the barriers that imprison them or allow the unleashing to occur in hopes that modern technology is enough to defeat the being. Recently, the US HQ has implemented rules to halt any unleashing, as they do not wish to upset the balance of the authority they currently hold. This rule is even in effect for beings destined for a benevolent life.

Other Prophecies

Supernatural investigations are the company's primary focus, but predictions need not be of a supernatural nature to be taken seriously. API aids in peaceful resolutions to complicated holy wars and centuries-old family rivalries, with the help of company seers. Even minor events, like the marriage of "soul-mates", stopping the murder of a witness against a crime family, or a demon birth are taken on with just as much seriousness, if connected to possible prophecies. The Board of Directors believes that these events may reveal leads to future events, even if their meanings are foggy in the present.

API Agents

"And those are your orders for the day. Follow them precisely and report any problems immediately," said Agent Parker to his new inductees. It was a thirty-minute briefing and he's seldom so curt, but impressions are everything.

Turning to leave the cramped room and his students to their duties, Agent Parker heard one of them speak up from the back. "And what if we don't wanna? You don't got anything to teach me and these missions are lame. I'm an adept and my magic can take on any demon any day." His cockiness even riled a few of the other newcomers and they looked to the Elite for a reaction.

Agent Parker swung around to the adept with penetrating eyes. "Would you like to put those words to the test?" He placed his clipboard on the shelf and leaned his cane against the wall. "Perhaps a wager…?"

The adept hesitated at first, but had backed himself into a corner. "Yeah! It'll only take a one spell. Let's say, if I win, I get to boss you around."

"That sounds fair. And when I win, no backtalk from you ever again," Agent Parker smirked.

"Fine! Argrotos Mome-," he started his magic words right as he was slapped hard in the face, with the Elite's handprint left behind. "Owwwww!" the adept cried out, even spitting blood from biting his cheek. He grimaced with anger and began again. "Argroto-Owwwww!" he felt a slap slam across his other cheek this time. He tried again and again, until the adept simply got "A-" out before being interrupted by a hard slap.

Parker looked mostly bored, even sighing at the pathetic display this "bad-ass" adept was showing. "Are you going to back up your words or what?" he said. He then noticed the adept begin forming hand signs to cast what looked like an elemental spell. The agent quickly grabbed the adept's hands and twisted the wrists in a single movement. The boy leapt with pain, shaking out his now-ridged wrists.

He stayed determined not to be made a fool and stared deeply at Agent Parker, casting a spell with his eyes. The Elite took a coin from his pocket and flicked it at the adept's forehead, knocking him out cold and leaving the red imprint of George Washington.

Agent Parker approached the adept, made sure he was ok, and then turned to the rest of his inductees. "Above all else, remember that overconfidence can hurt and disobedience can kill. I am not a demon, a monster, or anything other than me. I'm just a man. But if you know you're enemy, that's all you'll ever truly need."

Induction

Despite all of their faults and historical atrocities, Earth belongs to humanity. Anything that happens to Earth directly affects its people, no matter how big or small. Humans also make up roughly 90% of all Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. employees worldwide, as it is their planet and dimension to protect. Most new employees aspire to eventually become full-fledged field operatives or high-ranked scholars, using their skills to further humanity's legacy and future goals.

The company accepts all manner of demon and magical beings into their ranks, but Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has primarily human agents. These humans are often given authority over non-humans in their squad to represent humanity as strong and authoritative. They lead 98% of all missions and are the back bone of API, fortifying its values with their willingness to give up everything for the company's objectives. Seldom are non-humans given leadership of squads, regardless of their rank or ability.

How exactly does one become an agent? API is highly selective when choosing who wears this esteemed mantle. Initially chosen candidates contend for the title and have no guarantee of actually making it into their ranks. Prospective agents need the recommendation of an established agent. Field operatives are always watching out for potential agents during their mission duties. Only the best are invited to become agents, while others are left to be simple employees or backups.

Most are literally found on the streets. They may have been police officers that never let their culprit escape or a great criminal, crafty enough to elude any persistent officer. Clever con artists that can dupe an API agent may be just right for a candidate, just as easily as a neighborhood vigilante with a vendetta on dealers. Of course, every agent looks for different qualities in an inductee.

Demons are easily candidates. Their previous cooperation with the API Registration Act helps agents gauge their commitment to the company's ideals. A Loch that's a repeat offender for trespassing into restricted zones or a Wolf Person who repeatedly shows themselves to humans may not be eligible to enlist without a strong reference from a highly-respected Elite operative.

Potential inductees are given tests of their instincts, critical thinking skills, and physical prowess. The actual outcome isn't that important in the grand scheme. Whether the candidate keeps their composure under pressure is the biggest factor. They perform these trials without actually knowing that they are being watched and evaluated. A police officer may be given leads to a supernatural culprit to see how they handle information and if they catch the criminal. A con artist may need to use their charm on a notorious criminal, with a high chance of their own death if they fail. Other trials may include hiring demons to attack the inductee to test their fighting prowess or framing the initiate for murder, while also giving clues to prove their innocence. If successful in their test, they are approached and offered a position within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. If they refuse the invitation, their mind and the prior events are wiped away.

Training

Each regional HQ has distinct methodologies regarding agent training regimens. Mongolian facilities may train their agents in the chill of almost year-round winter, while Indian bases train in blistering heat of expansive deserts. In Brazil, sweltering jungles are home to countless training operatives, while South African agents train on the mean streets of the region.

US training is akin to that of the armed forces. They are separated from society, housed in barracks, and trained on special API training facilities, hidden in remote locations. Daily routines involve intense physical exercise and weapon familiarity training. Elite operatives teach initiates the ropes and drive them to grow stronger and

Elites

Elites are API's best human agents. These veterans in the fight against the End of Times have trained in major exercises and learned several fighting styles. These particular humans also gain the eye of higher-ups and receive more specialized training. Through centuries of compiling data on non-humans, API educates Elites on taking out supernatural enemies. They learn about an adept's vulnerable spots (mouth, hands & eye), the sensitivity of a Burner's tail, and using garlic and silver weapons to their fullest extent. With this instruction, Elite operatives can conduct missions without needing magic, cybernetics, or abilities other than their combat training.

Requirements:

Standard Skills: Acrobatics 4, Athletics 4, Discipline 4, Fortitude 4, Knowledge (Demonology) 5, Perception 5, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Combat Skills: 6+ Levels any Combat skills

Gifts: Rank (API) 3+, Good Reputation 1+

Fighting Style: Elite

This is specific training in battling supernatural threats, from adept to demon. It teaches from API's compiled mystical records and borrows from major Hard and Soft martial art schools. Also, the character gains one Elite Technique at levels 4, 7, and 10.

Level 1:	+1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative
Level 2:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 3:	+3 Stamina, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 4:	+5 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 5:	+1 Action per Round, +3 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Initiative
Level 6:	+5 Health, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll, +1 Grapple
Level 7:	+3 Stamina, +1 Strike, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Initiative
Level 8:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Damage, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Roll, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 9:	+3 Stamina, +5 Health, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +1 Parry, +1 Roll, +1 Initiative, +1 Grapple
Level 10:	+1 Action per Round, +1 Strike, +1 Dodge, +2 Parry, +1 Roll, +2 Initiative, +1 Grapple

Elite Techniques

Adept Combo

(Speed 10, Stamina 4, -8 Strike)

The Elite launches a three-part combo to incapacitate adepts. The first strike target's the jaw to render their mouth useless for spoken spells, the second scratches the eyes to eliminate their sight casting (with partial Blindness penalty), and the third grabs and twists their wrists to make hand sign magic more difficult. Elites roll once for all three strategic attacks, but the target must perform three separate Reactions to avoid them. They may Dodge at no penalty, Parry with -4 penalty, or simply Take the Hit. No other Reactions are possible, due to the swiftness of the technique. Strikes that connect deal the Elite's Base damage and stop the adept from using that type of casting (spoken, hand-signs, or sight). This technique can be taken up to two additional times, each reducing the penalty to Strike by three.

Expert

The Elite gains a +3 bonus to all combat rolls (including Initiative and Grapple) and +2 Damage when fighting a particular non-human race. They learn the anatomy and magical properties of their target race. This allows for the group to have Vampire hunter or a Loch poacher in the squad. Their Initiative bonus applies even if only one enemy out of a group is of their target race. This technique can be taken several times for one large cumulative bonus or several bonuses to different non-human races.

Focused Strikes

The fighter has honed their skills through intense training to strike specific parts of their opponent's body with ease. Penalties for Targeted strikes are reduced by 3. This technique can be taken up to two additional times with cumulative effects.

Ground Fighter

The fighter can battle as easily on their knees or back than they can on their feet. They suffer no Low Ground penalties and their opponent loses any High Ground bonus they would have received as well.

Jaw Breaker

(Speed 6, Stamina 2, +2 Damage, -6 Strike)

Elites quickly take out an enemy's natural weapons. This attack is primarily used to fight vampires or others with their mouths as major weapons. If successful, they render the target's jaw useless and broken. This technique can be taken up to two additional times, each reducing the penalty to Strike by two and giving another +1 Damage.

Mana Leak

(Speed 7, Stamina 3, -5 Strike)

Requires Focused Strikes. Adept's have weak spots and pressure points that affect their flow of Mana. If successful, no damage is dealt, but the adept's Stamina point cost for their next spell is doubled. This technique cannot be performed with a weapon. This technique can be taken a second time, tripling the Stamina cost.

Under-Strike

(Speed 4, Stamina 2, -5 Strike, +5 Damage)

This defensive maneuver can be used against supernatural enemies that target the Elite with a Strong Attack. By lowering their center of gravity, they deliver a deadly attack from below, using their being's momentum.

Whirlwind Assault

The fighter is well-versed in multi-opponent combat and only suffers a -1 cumulative penalty for striking different targets (instead of -2). This technique can be taken a second time to remove the penalty entirely.

push farther. The concept of team is paramount, often removing their sense of individuality so they think of their team first. “Boot camp” lasts approximately six months and the agents are ready for just about anything when they graduate.

Cutting Ties

The toughest aspect of becoming an agent isn’t the near-torturous training or necessary mental adjustments to stay alive in the field. Instead, it’s their essential transformation of leaving their old identity behind to take on their newfound duties. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. mandates that agents cut their ties to the person they once were, burn all the bridges to their old lives, and make the job their livelihood. Afterward, they create a new identity for themselves. The reason for this is two-fold.

First, agents are expected to concentrate on their tasks and think of nothing other than their team’s success, while attempting to avoid squad casualties or innocent deaths. Agents distracted by their most recent domestic squabble are of no use to the company. API cannot accept anything less than 100% of the agent’s attention, because the fate of Earth itself hangs in the balance.

Secondly, complete separation ensures protection for the agent’s loved ones. They are required to perform routine checks for Blue cards, shake down demon communities, and make a name for themselves as an authority figure. If they keep their families too close, that same name could lead to more innocent deaths and an emotionally jaded agent. The company removes this variable by separating agents from their old lives.

The exact procedures used depend on the individual agent. They can request to simply fake their death, alerting family and friends of their death in a car accident or similar tragedy. While this may seem cruel, it allows their kin to experience the full cycle of loss and lets them move on more rapidly. This creates a more complete separation from their old life and is the preferred method. Another technique is the full expunging of the agent’s identity from the minds of anyone in their old lives. If previously a loner or hermit, this technique is easy for API to pull off. However, agents with large families and circles of friends have next to no chance of having this request approved. It requires too many man-hours to track down so many people on the agent’s contact list.

Once their ties are cut, their finger prints and retinal signatures are removed to solidify their physical transformation. They are also provided with daily (and mandatory) medication to eliminate DNA identifiers in their blood and other bodily fluids, which includes sterilization to prevent the production of more ties. When the process is done, they are a clean slate. They are given a new name that will eventually become something to fear to criminals and Illegal demons.

Despite the company’s expectations for the agent to devote their lives to duty entirely, no agent truly forgets their past. Some were devoted parents or may long to embrace their husband or wife. For demons with limited population (i.e. the Burners), their absence leaves a gap in their social infrastructure. Obviously, loners by nature (i.e. Changelings) find that life as an agent suits them just fine.

Most are given a semblance of a new life without ever actually having one. They have an apartment and their own personalized wardrobe, meet their neighbors (wheth-

Partners & Squads

API likes to mix things up at times. Agents are assigned a partner after training to conduct their duties in two-man teams. Non-human agents are usually paired with a human partner to ensure humanity’s representation in all matters. Partnerships are switched out every four to six months, teaching equality and tolerance through working with a variety of races. Rare occasions arise where certain partnerships are left together due to their ability to work with each other well. Some non-humans are even teamed together at times, but their unions are often short-lived. Elites can choose any partner they want from any race or skill level.

Pairs are sometimes not enough to handle extreme situations. This forces the assembling of squads. Squad numbers range from four to seven members. Each squad member is chosen for their individual skills (i.e. demolitions expert or translator) and may or may not include partners. If the mission criteria are fulfilled, the squad may stay together and be stationed to aid other cells with their abilities.

Adepts & Magic

The Board of Directors personally control magical forces and acknowledge that API would be ignoring a valuable resource by not taking advantage of magic. As a major cause of many disturbances on Earth, all agents receive cursory training of magic theory, but not necessarily its actual use. Adepts are important to Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. and magic is the tool of choice when mundane methods won’t solve a predicament. Adepts are often drawn to the company to learn more about their gifts, the supernatural world, and loads of new spells (of course). They can climb in rank easily if they share the right secrets with the right people. The Board of Directors have all mastered several Paths of magic, but are always looking for adepts with new Paths or personalized spells to learn and trade. See the World of Magic chapter on page 80 for more information.

er this is truly a good or bad thing), and may even collect a few acquaintances from time to time. But they wear many different hats as an API agent, from researcher to negotiator to policeman to hunter. This doesn't lend itself to keeping close ties with anyone outside their squad. In short, they wake up, they get dressed, they get to work protecting Earth from impending doom on a daily basis, and they collect a paycheck. They give up their past lives by choice and receive the thrill of excitement, danger, and a strong sense of duty in return.

Attire

An agent dress code is in place to maintain a certain level of professionalism and respect. The standard uniform is a black suit, white shirt, black tie, black shoes, and black sunglasses. Variations on this traditional outfit are accepted, as long as it doesn't detract from its intended purpose. The dress code gives civilians the impression that the agent is important and allows them to pass as federal employees with ease. If expecting combat, agents can also wear API-issued protective gear. Demons with large bodies or those that need special breathing apparatuses may be issued specially-designed uniforms to accommodate them, as well.

Responsibilities

Agents are cornerstones to the powerful corporation and have duties they are required to perform. They are responsible for their duties and the lives of those they bring along. These tagalongs are often demons that can aid in their investigation or the occasional Watcher that follows them to record history in the making (See page 132).

Established agents (especially Elites) are responsible for training new inductees. Some are great at teaching magic, tricks of the trade, or how best to handle social interaction. Others share field knowledge while facing down demonic savagery day in and day out. "Learn by doing," they say. Newcomers are trained in self-defense if they are ever expected to enter the field. Veteran Elites are the only ones qualified to train new Elites.

The next important task is the validation of supernatural beings. Periodic visits to the homes of registered demons are often needed, whether they dwell in suburban paradises, caves on a cliff-side, or under a bridge. This ensures that demons get to know local API agents and to guarantee they are not sheltering illegal or wanted demons. The demon's relatives may be visiting from another

dimension, but unauthorized entry to Earth is considered illegal until approved by API directly. Only the ignorant can pass without registering officially, usually brining punishment to their Earth relative that "should have known better." Well-trained agents can easily tell the difference between ignorance and stupidity. Agents usually take shifts for this duty, so it's not an every day chore.

Registration matters also take place outside of routine inspections. Agents may find newly-developed adepts with no knowledge of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc, during an investigation in a magical disturbance. Agents have the authority to request registration papers (Blue card) from any demon, monster, or magic-user they meet at any time. Without appropriate paperwork, the offender risks containment or interrogation at the nearest API cell. Agents also have the option of giving a warning and hope that the offender will carry their Blue card next time. This can show an agent's sympathetic side and their understanding that special circumstances do arise from time to time.

Agents also undertake missions for the company, including possible cult activity, random dog attacks, serial murders, or links to the old ones. Missions are crafted from days of reconnaissance or can be a gut reaction. The agents are trusted to investigate situations and report their findings. The Board of Directors has mandated that the majority of missions be led by a human, usually Elite, instead of a demon who "may not have humanity's central prosperity in mind". Demons are often concerned with their own racial matters or join Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. to cause destruction with a badge. Wolf People are known best for this stereotype and is an old-fashioned thought that still rings true with many squads. Today, more demons have risen to lead their own squads or are given missions to complete alone or with a small team. Successful missions earn the full respect given human agents.

As a system of checks and balances, some agents are tasked with observing their co-workers' mission progress and reporting their findings to headquarters. Other duties include checking and verifying read-outs, handling disagreements between employees, and keeping things running smoothly. Elites often take this job by default, having already proven themselves a cut above the rest. Somewhere in the mix is an API party planner to keep spirits up and organize periodic celebrations and events.

Research Agents

Research agents come from an array of backgrounds, but were all hired for the knowledge they possess and its usefulness to the company. Some are trained in medical science and actively for cures to modern diseases. Some are archeologists that dig up the past in search of answers to help find a better tomorrow. Some are journalists that chronicle events and follow hard-hitting, real topics to reveal answers to the existence of humanity. Some are simple, knowledgeable librarians that keep their collections safe from harm to share their information with API. Others are computer geniuses, always on the cutting edge of technology.

Their lust for knowledge makes researchers a commodity. Other agents are trained in methods to take down threats or deal with demons on a grand scale, but research agents check into every aspect of an encounter before acting. Most squads are assembled with at least one research agent, who often needs protecting.

The Watchers

Another secret organization lurks in the shadows alongside API, the Watchers. The group has forever watched humanity's every movement and major historical events. They are scholars and book-keepers gathered together to collect volumes of history for every race in existence. While Watchers are focused on recording this dimensions events, Earth is far from the only world they have observed. They have access to magnitudes of data on races that exist in thousands of dimensions, even worlds that are entirely extinct. It is believed that they horde this significant information away to share with survivors of an apocalypse, in the case that API does not succeed in their goals. They already have enough that humanity could live on well after its demise in their volumes. They have yet to actually share their records with any that might ask. Their volumes are kept within their own ranks, transcribed in a secret language known only to their numbers.

Active recruitment is not a Watcher practice. Their exact methods remain shrouded in mystery, just as they themselves hide among the growing number of humans. They are careful not to attract too much attention to themselves when documenting and are disallowed from acting in the events of the world, similar to documentarians.

Against popular opinion, the Watcher tradition was not invented on Earth. Most are demon in nature, from all manner of backgrounds and cultures. They do have a small number of humans that have proven themselves and a large number of longer-lived demons, such as the Taylari or Lochs.

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. knows of the Watchers and has taken an officially-neutral stance to their presence. As long as the group does not interfere with the company's ongoing objectives, they are of no essential consequence. Secretly, the Board of Directors hopes to one day get their hands on and covet the Watchers' texts, but all missions to infiltrate their ranks have resulted in missing agents.

Going Bad

Agents are given a lot of power in their superior training and ultimate authority on Earth. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. would love to have a perfect track record where agents never abuse this power, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Some don't take that responsibility seriously or, more scarily, they take it too seriously.

Their special training and API status make them prone to developing large egos. This can later turn into full-blown narcissism or megalomania. Abuse of lower-ranked agents and harassment of demon co-workers are signs that there may be a problem. This can carry over into everyday duties, as the agent harasses or pick fights with random demons on the street, even if they weren't breaking laws. Most demons obey API's laws without argument, only to be brought up on false charges, extorted, or murdered in "self-defense".

This behavior isn't tolerated by API when proven to be true. Unfortunately, the company backs their agents before believing possibly fraudulent claims from others, as many charges have been brought by liars and thieves. The word of an Elite outweighs most others. Demons or even squad-members that gain an Elite's ire may only have the option of moving or asking API to be re-stationed in this case.

Agents that go rogue are dangerous. They have enough knowledge of the supernatural and API's internal workings that they can hide successfully just about anywhere and often without fear of being found at all. They have enough contacts to obtain information to keep them hidden, like safe house locations or invisibility spells. Their face is recognizable to local demons from their days as an agent, which may lead to the hunter becoming the hunted without API backing.

Cybernetics

Humanity has finally honed their creative gifts and developed a power on par with magic: cybernetics. Every country's scientists, from India to China to the US, have attempted to merge the human body with the power of machines. Technically, the very first cyborg was the patient to have the first pacemaker installed in their chest, but secret advancements in bionic, nano, and cybernetic technology within API have surpassed this accomplishment. Cyborgs take full advantage of innovations and delve headfirst into a dangerous world that few ever choose. More powerful implants often bring a stronger feeling that the cyborg is less than human.

Some volunteers for cybernetic transplants color their worldview with a Darwinist standpoint, merging with machines as a step toward the eventuality of this phase in human evolution. Others are thoroughly unstable and see their weak, human skin as a disease in need of the purity of machines. API ensures all subjects are psychologically evaluated before the procedure, but other institutions are not so thorough.

Even though cybernetics were created and developed by humans, demons can utilize a full range of implants. Implants are not affected by natural abilities they may possess. For instance, implants cannot shapeshift with a Changeling's form. Demons also suffer from the same shift in ideology and can lose their identities in the process, struggling just as much with what it means to rely on human technology and forsake the lessons of their kind. Many wonder about their place in the world with defiled bodies.

Implant procedures are still pseudo-experimental. This means that the majority of candidates come from verified sources, like agent volunteers. Many don't survive the surgery, but the success ratio grows with each new cyborg that does. As agents' lives are very important to the company, the most experimental surgeries are performed on those without a real choice. Accident victims left with a mangled body may become the test subject for the latest round of limb and organ replacements. When "newborn" cyborgs awaken from what they expected to be their death, they now have a heavy debt to repay for their new life. Indentured servitude has become commonplace in cybernetic underworlds. Surgeries are difficult and expensive, even under the best of conditions, and cyber docs expect to be well-compensated.

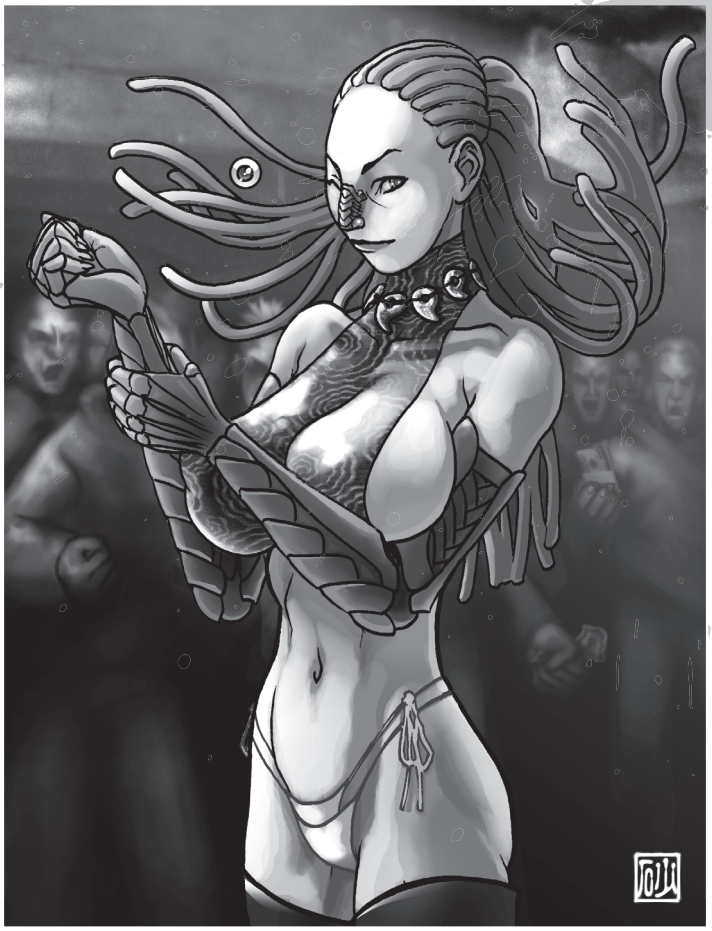
Many cyborgs find few long-term benefits to having metal in their body. They provide power and additional abilities, but can also corrode, rust, and become damaged if not properly maintained. This includes monthly, expensive "tune-ups", internal cleanings, or daily hormones needed to keep implant from being rejected entirely. Metallic parts generally set off metal detectors, making travel harder. Scientists acknowledge that cybernetics field is in its infancy currently and hope to expand to using ceramics and polymers in the future to hopefully lessen adverse effects. In short, today's cyborgs are test subjects for future innovations.

Cyber Docs and Scroungers

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. doesn't offer cybernetic services to those that "seek" implants. These people are often volatile or "too willing for their own good" to be trusted with such power. API scientists spend days to weeks in their laboratories, drawing blueprints for progressively newer implants, while medical agents continue to find ways to raise surgery success rates by even a single percent. Magic has made its way into this equation, using spells from the Path of Health during surgery in hopes of sustaining the patient's vitals. This addition holds a stiff penalty to the adept if the procedure fails and some have died from the magical backlash of a failed surgery.

Those without direct access to API visit cyber docs. Part street doctor and part loan shark, cyber docs are simultaneously a cyborg's best friend and worst enemy. Cybernetic procedures are not available or generally known to those outside certain circles. Real cyber docs spend years developing the right skill set and contacts, while practicing constantly to hone their talents. They know enough to set up shop in areas without trouble from local authorities or API agents and hire muscle to guard against threats. There are only one or two verifiable cyber docs that actually know what they are doing in any given city. There are also twenty others who "think" they are cyber docs, performing shoddy work and giving cybernetics a horrible reputation of unreliability.

Cyber docs simply wait for their business to arrive. They don't need to actively seek out customers, as prospective clients always have a way doing the footwork themselves. Cybernetic implants are truly coveted and curious folk find a way to get what they want, no matter the consequences. Some cyber docs are honest, maybe even cutting their new clients a break or providing credit with no strings attached. These cyber docs make a plentiful living on the back end, providing pricy repair, upgrades, and maintenance. Such fair business practices among cyber docs are surely not the norm. The majority of cyber docs offer their clients small amounts of credit, with seemingly simple terms. However, the client usually loses their ability to pay and the cyber docs have to implement ways to ensure repayment.



Cyborgs are given grace periods, before payment is even requested. Some clients actually make their payments on time, usually with exorbitant interest, and complete their business. Those unable to repay must deal with Scroungers, hired muscle for cyber docs. Scroungers break bones, smash skulls, and hurt family members of the indebted if payments are not made. They know never to harm the merchandise itself. Ongoing debt and failure to repay carry a "repossession clause" for the implant, leaving no choice but for the Scroungers to extract the implant and return it to their employer. This typically leaves the client for dead, bleeding in a dumpster or dark alley with holes in their body.

Rouge Scroungers occasionally pop up without cyber doc employment. They resemble street gangs and take it upon themselves to "harvest" implants to sell to local cyber docs. A cyber doc may buy back an arm they just installed the week before for a fraction of the price. Both Scroungers and cyber docs make a profit in the end. Basic serial numbers can track these transactions, but cyber docs rarely argue with cheap pricing, as they work outside of serial number regulation in the first place.

Remote Controlled

Malicious cyber docs leave nothing to chance and have discovered ways to ensure they get the most out of their investment. By installing remote control receptors, drugging mechanisms, or mind-control data chips, some cyber docs create obedient slaves from their patients. Some become unwilling surgery assistants, helping the cyber doc perform this heinous act on others. Some are turned into loyal Scroungers and bodyguards. Others are kept as erotic slaves, forced into acts they would never do without being controlled.

Breaking mind control isn't usually possible, but that doesn't stop patients from trying. The only true option is the death of the cyber doc in control. But, even after this, the existing protocols are often still in place, requiring another cyber doc (and usually a hefty fee) to remove the programming and give them their freedom. The cyborg assistant may become a cyber doc themselves, while others may join the Scroungers by choice, or become streetwalkers, still urged by old programming.

Fight Clubs

Underground fight clubs are in need of new combatants and champions, which cyber docs supply for a considerable price. A cybernetic fighter can make a killing (in more ways than one) in the ring, taking on some of the best fighters in the city. If they are slaves, their winnings go the house and they simply fight until they die or triumph in enough fights to earn their freedom. Some never leave, even after breaking their control, as the money, fame, and crowd adoration is often too great to give up.

Chapter Five:
Demonology

What is a demon? In the world of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc, demons are any non-human race. The worst of them are referred to as monsters, abominations, and even pests. The best of them are accepted, but regularly reminded of how truly inhuman they are.

Most demons are dimensional travelers from strange and beautiful worlds. Some visit Earth to acquire knowledge to bring it back to their people. They may also be on peaceful missions to meet and share their knowledge with humanity. Others even visit to scout for demon militaries ready to attack. The vast majority are evading a threat of some kind, trying to hide in this dimension, or they need something that only humans can provide. Whether originally based on paranoia or cynicism, this theory proves correct more often than not.

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is always tracks down portals to meet new demons coming to Earth. If they come in peace, API returns the sentiment to which many diplomatic demons can attest. On occasion, these demons seek amnesty, but the company is careful about adding permanent residents and the potential problems. They bring original cultures and languages that do not always mesh with humanity's goals laid out by API. Unpredictable or potentially hostile races are not necessarily allowed safe passage on Earth and with good reason.

Other demons are humans that have become something other than human. They are tainted or cursed, possibly with viruses, magic, or genes from other dimensions and have no claim to the human title. Most grow up alongside humanity, with some knowing what they are from birth and others learning when they are "ready". These beings create any number of outcomes, from animal people to mutants to vampires. Even cyborgs have been added to this list of demons, as they are no longer fully human in their hope to become machines.

Trench Coat Rule

As long as the majority of a demon's body and face is covered with clothing and a hat, a normal person's rational mind will remove any suspicions from their mind. Of course, the Trench Coat Rule no longer applies if the demon launches into monstrous battle or casts very impressive magic in front of witnesses.

The tradition of wearing a trench coat and fedora started in the 1920's and has surprisingly continued to this day. Its sheer coverage and inconspicuous brown tones tend to fend off casual observers. Full-hooded robes, farmer overalls with a cowboy hat, and other outfits that cover at least 90% of their body and face also take advantage of this rule. However, wearing flashy or particularly remarkable clothing can cancel this effect.

Legality

Under the API Registration Act, demons that visit or reside on Earth are required to disclose their information to the company or face strict consequences. But what does it really mean to be a Legal demon?

Being legal means no need to be in fear. Legal demons are regarded as residents of Earth, just like humans, and are given freedom to live their lives in peace. API even helps them obtain occupations that utilize special gifts to make money. The company turns the occasional blind eye to unpleasant aspects of demon behavior or culture, if they prove useful enough. For instance, Lochs and Taylari kill humans for the sake of their own survival, but it is actually illegal for hunters to pursue force against them under API's protection. Instead, the company launches their own investigations to distinguish whether the demon acted in maliciousness or survival. Some receive a trial similar to human court systems, but with less red tape. If found guilty, they are banished from Earth or worse, which makes few demons risk such behavior if they want to keep their registration status. Either way, Legal demons can rest as easy humans that the company is there to protect them.

Giving certain demons amnesty (individual or entire races) also means accepting their enemies. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has given amnesty to many demons in the past, but put a hold on new cases due to population overload and issues with lack of man power. The Burners' case was the last to pass approval by the Circle of Ten and they brought constant Chromatic threats to Earth's doorstep. Not another occurrence the company wishes to duplicate until all current loose ends are tied up.

API holds the right to request things in return for allowing demons to stay on Earth. A certain number of the demon population, usually pre-established upon signing amnesty papers, is required to serve the company for a short time. They lend their abilities to investigations and help to keep the dimension safe from outside intruders. There are always loop holes in this voluntary "draft to service", but most are happy to give up their time and experience to keep their families safe. Being a part of API's efforts brings honor to their people. Races with superior numbers and performance within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. can also ask for special favors or occasionally garner preferential treatment.

Burners

Little Joey Tazin's 8th birthday party was going well. He and his friends from school ran around his large back yard and had a ball. They played on high-flying swings and bounced on the giant trampoline for hours. It was like most parties at that age.

The proud mom and dad, Sally and Sam, watched their son play, laugh, and enjoy himself. They'd only moved to town a short while before and Joey had already made so many great friends. It was a proud sight to behold for a parent. Sam then motioned to Sally with a smile and they rushed inside to grab the firefighter-themed birthday cake and brought it out. It was like most parties.

"Happy Birthday!" Sam yelled for his son, as everyone else broke instantly into the traditional birthday song sung at most parties. They crowded around the birthday boy, smiling at each other in the fun being had by all. Joey's cake was laid out, with candles numbering up to eight, one lit right after the other, just like other birthday cakes.

The boy blew his candles out and the guests cheered with glee. Then he reached into the cake with his slightly sharpened nails and pulled out a cooked glulick larvae, looking like a red worm about two feet long. Joey raised the creature to his mouth and crunched down hard through its carapace. He smiled widely and chewed with blue sludge dribbling from the side of his mouth.

Sally and Sam beamed with amusement, while the other kids' parents were slightly freaked. They had to remind themselves that the Tazin family was a bit on the eccentric side. One of the little girls reached out and took a bit of the worm sludge on the tip of her finger from Joey's cheek. Her face brightened upon tasting it too. "It's like candy," she shrieked and all the kids cheered as they shared the special Cauloni birthday delicacy.

So, in the end, it was like most parties. Well, most Burner parties anyway.

Homeworld

The Cauloni (better known as Burners) take their name from their homeworld, Cauloni, a truly interesting dimen-

sion. Elders speak of the dimension as if it were a dream, but it has become more of a nightmare for too many of their kind.

Upon entering Caulon, the first noticeable difference from Earth is the intense temperatures, reaching up to 400 degrees Fahrenheit in some regions. Visitors learn why when they see four suns in a red sky. Each sun is named after a legendary Cauloni hero, as a sign of respect and honor. Legends tell that another Cauloni will rise to be their next hero and guide their people toward a better world. When done, this leader too will become a Caulon sun and join the other great leaders, earning a place in their peoples' hearts. A Burner's "inner fire" keeps them safe from the extreme climates, while their lightweight bodies and long tails assist with balance, which makes scaling mountains quite simple. The largest cities are in the center of sprawling deserts that take weeks to traverse. Structures are created from sturdy stone with an archaic style (by human standards).

Caulon's landscape is primarily scorching desert, with towering dunes, mountainous cliff-sides, and various volcanoes. With geological and mathematical knowledge, visitors can easily predict a volcano's daily eruption schedule. The beasts and plant-life have adapted over centuries to sustain their growth in the abrasive habitat, but there is no water in sight. Burners require only food to live. The most plentiful, predatory creature in Caulon are Glulicks, giant sand worms that travel underground, popping up only to devour their prey. Glulick larvae are a succulent delicacy for special occasions and celebrations, but fully-grown Glulicks are monsters that no traveler wants to encounter. They drill beneath victims for miles, making little sound before they burst from the sand and strike. The largest of them stretches up to 18 feet in length (See page 166).

Chromatics Descend

Complete enslavement of their entire race didn't happen instantaneously. The Cauloni fended off a single machine demon over two thousand years ago. With their natural fire magic, they easily extinguished the lone threat, melting its metal frame into nothing and then returned to their lives. The next generation, having only heard tales from their parents about metal beings, were less than ready then two machines descended upon their city the second time.

Each generation that passed faced an exponentially greater threat every fifty years. With the Cauloni's short lifespan, they passed their lessons down from parent to child, but the same warrior never battled the machines more than once. With each attack worse than the one before, the time came when they could no longer fend off the machines. Even with vastly superior numbers, the unaging machine demons, the Chromatics, had the advantage from centuries of compiled data on their conflicts. The invaders bested anything the Cauloni threw at them and employed appropriate countermeasures against their fighting styles and natural weapons.

The Chromatics quickly programmed the Cauloni language into the databanks to communicate their domination of the world. Then the portals opened and and army of machines arrived to solidify this statement. There were about five Chromatics for every Cauloni, each with large weapons, impenetrable defenses, and holding all the cards. They put enslavement protocols into place that lasted for over four hundred years. Cauloni men were work slaves primarily, mining mountains to obtain raw minerals. Others took apart their stone cities and constructed intricate monuments of Chromatic design. The reason behind these structures is lost to mystery. Women were kept in perpetual states of pregnancy, as genocide was not their intention.

If they proved no worth in mining, could not reproduce, and failed to be any further use, the Cauloni could be dissected to give the machines even more knowledge of their anatomy. Through the aforementioned dissections, the Chromatics learned how to use their slaves as a source of fuel. Their bodies pumped a magical "inner fire" that could be filtered into usable energy to sustain mechanical systems. Fathers and mothers, children and grandchildren, no one was safe from the Chromatics' drive to conquer. It became routine that if they were not forced into hard labor, they were stored in suspended animation for later use as living batteries. There was no mercy, as the machines were void of emotions. They only knew to usurp. They only knew to slaughter. They only knew to destroy.

Why did they take over?

The Chromatics' end game is a raging debate for demonologist. Some believe they are on a constant quest for fuel. Some believe they are totally autonomous, simply traveling, conquering, and building with no actual goals. Without emotions, they wouldn't care who or what they crush in the process. Most theorize that the Burners were simply the most recent victims in a long line of possible dimensions that have been conquered.

Others believe that the machines are hive-minded with a single ruler giving orders. During their enslavement, the Burners were instructed to mine for precious stones and create towering monuments of strange configuration. The Chromatics may use these structures to communicate with others in their hive or their leader directly or it may just be another symbol of dominance. The truth may never be known.

The Fifth Sun

Septimos still lives today, as if through sheer will. His spirit is stronger in his late-fifties than it was when leading his people to safety. Many believe that he will continue to live until the Cauloni return to their homeworld once more. This is when he will take his place among the other noble leaders of their people and rise into the sky as their Fifth Sun. Septimos smiles and scoffs at the idea, claiming to "be only one man".

The "Fifth Sun" teaches his hard-learned magic secrets to other Burners, especially the magic of Portals. He believes they need to one day return to Caulon. They have yet to perfect the spell to allow them uninterrupted passage, but vow to never end their research and experimentation.

API is weary of Septimos and his activities. The Fifth Sun has amassed a formidable following that seeks to return to Caulon and reclaim it, with its own leaders and hierarchies. These Burners are often rowdy and rebellious, causing more problems than finding solutions. The company aids in their research of the exact portal coordinates for Caulon in hopes of helping them return. This effort is not only for the Burners, but also due to fear over what happens if Septimos dies on Earth… and becomes another sun.

The Escape

Over four hundred years of torment means about eight generations of loss. Few Cauloni alive today remembers life before the Chromatics. Newborns were kept in heat labs, raised with no education and given only enough food to survive. Females were nothing more than nursemaids, bred only to obey and churn out more children. Males were thrown to the mines to make them strong or stored in stasis to until they grew large enough to fuel their captors. Their traditions and culture were all smashed under their oppressors' strength, save for the few carefully guarded secrets.

Then a strong man among them named Septimos decided to take charge. He had learned the few remaining stories of his people and dreamed of returning to a time before the death that surrounded them. He secretly watched the Chromatics, keeping an eye on their portals in and out of Caulon. His primitive people had never used Portal magic, but he practiced the necessary hand signs tirelessly and repeated the incantations for years, building power and control in hopes of replicating the portal effect and saving his people.

Nearly a decade of practice passed before Septimos finally called upon his Mana to open a swirling portal in the city's center. Many brave Cauloni died protecting Septimos as he struggled to hold the portal open. Hundreds of them abandoned their homeworld before Septimos was forced to close the portal and leap through himself. However, Septimos' portal was kaleidoscopic and opened to numerous dimensions all at once. Many Chromatics entered the portal as well, but never made it out of the other side. The same rang true for dozens of now-lost Cauloni.

They came through the ruptured portal and arrived on a beach. They were amazed by the cold liquid in every direction and a single sun. Some were also startled by the cool breeze, bristling trees, patches of grass, and the freaky language spoken by the half-naked beings that stared at them in wonder or fright. However, it wasn't long before a group of humans arrived with a universal translator, some in black suits and others in hazmat preparations. The first words they heard were "Hello, I'm Agent Parker. Welcome to Earth."

The Arrival & Today

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. kept the Cauloni quarantined for nearly a year after their arrival. At which time, the Board of Directors settled their arguments and debates regarding the new demons' place on Earth. They still regretted previously-legalized races that seemed to be very helpful at first, but ended up more trouble than they were worth. Some argued that the Cauloni should be required to aid in the US energy crisis, but this meant that API would drain the race no different than the Chromatics. Others argued on the grounds of overpopulation and moved that they should be sent immediately to another world to recover. There were no hard feelings, but the Board looked to Earth first. It was the kindness of Annabelle Priscilla Ilsley, along with the backing of the Circle of Ten that ruled the Cauloni be given amnesty.

Twenty years have passed since coming from a primitive world and knowing nothing of machines other than Chromatics. With so much of Earth's technology around them, including their introduction to cybernetics, the sight of machines kept many reclusive and scared for their lives. However, this was not the case for their children.

With their people's culture lost to the horrors of slavery, newer generations are raised in the US and have taken on Earth cultures vehemently. Some say almost too much. They adopt human names and were the first generation to gladly accept the moniker of Burner. Unlike their parents, they are obsessed with technology, especially after learning they can power it themselves. Burner teenagers are no different in dress or attitude from human teenagers in America and they are exceedingly happy to reside on Earth.

Burners easily raised their population to the thousands in the last twenty years. When once they were only a hundred, they have combined their strong libido and urge to repopulate the species. They are happy that their children, boys and girls, are given equal opportunity and freedom to pursue their dreams on Earth. This is something their parents never had.

Changelings

Rachel ran along the busy street with her blonde hair blown in the wind and pushed her way through the crowd. She knew the "man" was after her and was growing ever closer. Looking back, she realized she didn't have sufficient cover and the man still followed her unphased by the dozens of people in his way. She shivered as she heard blood-curdling screams from behind her. He killed anyone between them and was not far from Rachel, based on the proximity of the cry. The girl ducked down an alley, watching others run for their lives and crying for the cops in their attempt to escape this man.

She reflected on what just occurred. She had been picking pockets for weeks, but this was the first foray to turn into a bloodbath. She apparently chose the wrong mark tonight. Now the man was murdering people trying to get to her. She saw his teeth… she should have known better. And now, she had to hide.

Then the man rounded the corner seeking Rachel's head. His long coat was drenched in blood that extended into tendrils and his hands glowed with a strange energy. He crept through the alley slowly and kicked a trashcan, startling a black cat that bolted away. He blasted the cat with magical flame and turned it into a pile of ashes. "Come out here! No one steals from me! Never!"

He kept his back to the wall to avoid any sneak attack, but was instead stabbed in the neck. Stumbling backward, he pulled out the "weapon" to see that it was #2 pencil. As blood sprayed from his neck, he turned to see a 2-Dimenstional Rachel peel herself from the wall and become normal again. The ravenous man fell into a pool of his own blood and died. The girl turned and ran, hearing the approach of S.W.A.T. teams.

Rachel ran with all her might, letting go of her assumed form. Her light skin returned to dark, blonde-hair to dreads, and her blue-eyes back to brown. Running in her house, she found her mother and cried in her lap. Rachel had never used her abilities like that and had never dreamed of killing anyone. Her mother guessed Rachel was simply upset about that night's "cheerleader tryouts".

With tears still steaming down her face, the door bell rang. At such a late hour, Rachel shuddered with fear. Her mother went to answer, leaving Rachel weeping on the couch. Seconds later, a tall man in a black suit and sunglasses walked in with her mother. "Rachel Moore? I'm Agent Parker. We need to have a word."

Lost Homeworld

It is believed that Changelings have existed side-by-side with humans for all of history. Demon experts hypothesize that if humans evolved from salamanders, then Changelings may have followed the chameleon on their evolutionary track. Their true appearance sports silver skin and large, black eyes, making some believe they may be "aliens" from another planet. This theory lacks any actual evidence.

The truth is that no one knows their real origin, let alone the Changelings themselves. Yes, even they are clueless about their possible homeworld. They call Earth their home and have done so forever, but they cannot truly call humanity their brothers. Changelings walk the same streets and ride beside them in their cars, but they never feel like one of them. They are observers of life in the only dimension they have to call home.

The Changeling Tradition

Few Changelings know this today, but their kind lived on the outskirts of human society for thousands of years.

Changelings and Fairies

The origin of this phenomenon is unknown, but Fairies always congregate in areas inhabited by Changelings. The pests infest their homes and create general havoc for neighbors. Some Changelings become nomadic due to this occurrence. Of course, API facilities have precautions against such infestation, which is another reason to find comfort within the company. See page 166 for information on Fairies.

Changelings and Cybernetics

Changelings can utilize cybernetics of all types and often love the versatility of the additional abilities they provide. However, becoming a cyborg brings with it two crucial drawbacks.

Many Changelings naturally suffer from self-esteem issues. Changeling cyborgs have the highest suicide rate of any race that can use cybernetics. Questioning their very existence on top of existing mental issues makes them the least experimented demons.

If able to conquer their inborn issues, their overriding physical aspect usually deters them. Cybernetics are not true body parts and do not change form when using their shapeshifting abilities. This renders disguises and some espionage missions impossible.

They were near-animalistic in their nature, with only a small semblance of true cognizance. Those with a closer proximity to humans grew more intelligent and aware than the others, but also lost their ability to take the form of animals. This realization urged them to find ways of coexisting with humans. They found that shapeshifting abilities only went so far without the cultural knowledge needed to pull off their charade. Some were executed as doppelgangers, when they couldn't pull off their guise and were finally unmasked.

Then one devious Changeling had an idea to coexist with humanity by swapping their child for a human's. While initially thought crazy, it did made perfect sense in the end and showed how logical they had become. Their children would have the opportunity to live as a human, becoming more like them and learning their cultures. Over generations, this would enable them to coexist without fear of reprisal. It became known as the Changeling Tradition and continues today as an important part of their development.

Many feel the need to heavily scrutinize their human targets first, often sneaking into their homes to see exactly how they live. Others "conveniently" bump into their targets, befriend them, and get to know the human's child as well. When their child is born, the Changeling slips into their target's home under the cover of a full moon and swaps the children. They mold their child's flesh in a painful ritual, but is silent as not to alert the household. The Changeling Tradition must take place within three months of birth or crafting their flesh becomes impossible.

The methods of dealing with the swapped human child have been largely debated for generations, as each acquired the same morals and thinking as humans. Some follow the old, solid traditions to devour the infant whole. This method leaves no trace of theft and is a great reward for a job well done. Today's Changelings typically leave the children to orphanages or families that cannot have children of their own. Some even raise the human child themselves. Elders believe that leaving the child alive can only lead to trouble in the end.

As a Human

A Changeling's parents don't return for years to come. Their human family provides them with vital knowledge of human society, like cultural celebrations, showing emotions, or hiding family secrets. To their host family, they are their child, but they never feel like a member of the family or their community, no matter how hard they try.

As small children, many are diagnosed as autistic or developmentally challenged with social disorders. Most become wallflowers to watch humans in action and avoid taking part in activities. They often don't speak until six or seven years old and their parents display surprise when their child speaks at more advanced levels afterward. Passing this initial observant stage, the Changeling enters a testing mode of their environment. They quickly learn their parents' weak spots, whether a crookedly cute smile or bringing them a drink at just the right moment. They are master manipulators even at this age. Others become sociopaths in their adolescent years and are forced to fake the emotions they portray. Even though they can exploit others' perceptions, they rarely gain happiness from doing so. They do this for experimentation, but this behavior usually doesn't last long into maturity. To relax, they find a secluded place to be alone and only feel truly comfortable in isolation.

Reaching their teens, most join humans in the same rebellion against authority figures and soul searching in an effort to find out who they really are. However, Changelings struggle to define themselves in isolation. They often run away from home, having never felt like part of their family. Those swapped into very loving fami-

The Forgotten

Some Changelings are never tapped by their parents and never have their human shell broken. Their parents may die prematurely or may be on API missions that required long-distance travel. In these cases, the parent usually leaves the duty to another, closely-trusted Changeling. Then again, even they can't be held 100% accountable.

With no way to undo the molding rituals done to their body, most never become full Changelings. They are called the Forgotten, those that are forced to live their days as miserable humans. Others with exceptionally strong wills can break the spells on them on rare occasions, sometimes even before their teens. They are then forced to train on their own, until their parent one day visits them.

lies may not run away, but may withdraw from "special" family gatherings, such as birthdays or reunions.

Around puberty, their Changeling parents return to teach them of their demon heritage. Few know how the child will respond. Some are ecstatic from knowing they weren't crazy and accept the truth without hesitation. Others rail against the Changeling Tradition that left them in their confused state and damn their "so-called" parents. If they choose, their parent breaks the magic that holds their human form and allows them access to their shape-shifting birthright. Their basic training typically takes a week or so, and then their parent usually leaves immediately after. Some are allowed to travel with their parents for a short while is an apprentice-type arrangement, but they will always part ways before long.

Born Alone and Die Alone

Changelings are loners by nature and many theorize about the origin of their self-inflicted loneliness. Most pass down the story of a beautiful girl whose heart was crushed by a Changeling long ago. This Changeling was raised in wealthy noble family and he used his family's money and connections to obtain any mistress he desired. The girl didn't fancy him, which made her his prey. He did everything he could think of to win her affections. He sent jewelry and lovely sonnets written by his scribes. He hired the city's children to perform a dance in the square and when that didn't work. He even professed his undying love on his knee. No matter what he did though, she did not give into his attempts.

The Changeling learned great manipulation in his time as a human. Figuring that his advances would never work, he took the form of a poor, handsome stable-boy and charmed his ways to the girl to lay with her, his only true goal. After their pleasurable night, he proved that he always got what he desired by revealing himself. In her disgust, the girl (who was also an impressive adept) cursed all Changelings with eternal loneliness. Even if they find true love, they desire only isolation. No one knows if this it's true, but the tale is passed down to teach an important moral as well… always show caution when revealing your true form.

The inability to share their true self with another is only one road block. Their strange and unrelenting urge to be alone is often a hard cross to bear. No matter how close they grow to another (whether demon, spirit, or human), they never truly connect on anything other than an artificial level. Most try hard to feel something, even faking emotions, but it never works. If the target of their rare affections is convinced, they know they'll end up leaving one day. Some say they get used to it, but the truth is that few ever do.

When two Changelings meet, they may travel together for a short while, but it rarely lasts long. Their urge to disconnect weighs heavily on their souls, until they are alone and then crave companionship again. This never-ending cycle can only be genuinely understood by another Changeling, which can turn these brief meetings into passionate on-again off-again relationships. The pair may meet every year or two for the span of a few months of companionship and then separate for each of them to have their solitude. Many children are born from these unions and they are the closest thing to marriage that Changelings can understand or bear.

Upon death, Changelings also prefer to be alone over having false friends or unfamiliar family surround them in their final moments. They slowly lose their human shell, reverting to their true form and almost melt until they are just a pile of bones. The whole process takes about a day. Luckily, their skeleton resembles human anatomy, so no information on demons is given away by their remains.

Lochs

The small fishing boat was out at the same spot for the fifth time that week. "Captain Jonah? Why we keep coming out this way? We've not got a bite this week and we make no money this way," the older first mate asked, watching the overly calm waters.

"Trust me, Jeb. There's a big one here, I can feel it." The captain of the two-man ship said, climbing down from captain's chair on the top level.

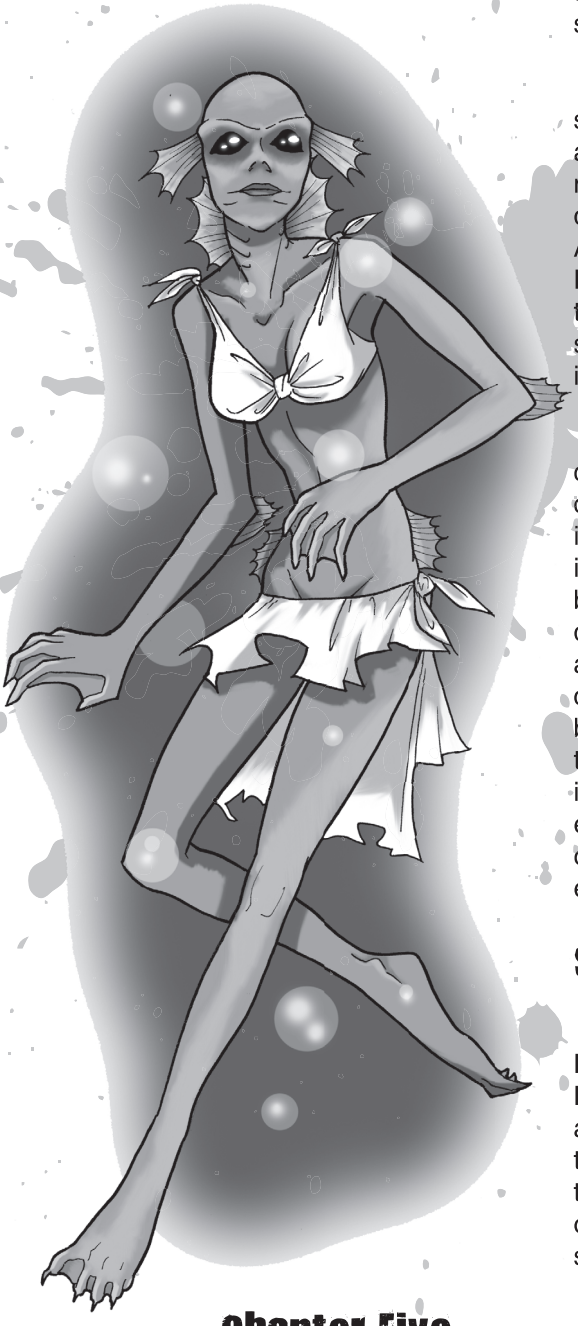
"Where goes your mind, captain?" Jeb said, as the surrounding waters suddenly bubbled and let loose torrents of water shooting thirty feet into the air. The mist cleared and a shark monster twice as large as the boat appeared… and it spoke. "Jonah… you've come at last, you coward," it gurgled through the water. Jeb was too frightened to move.

The captain smiled. "I'm here all right! You've been a thorn in API's side too long and here I come to take you out!" Then Jonah's true form burst out of his sea clothes. His long mustache elongated into long catfish whiskers, his skin turned scaly, and his hands webbed. The captain was now a large fish person and he leapt into the monster's mouth. Jeb yelped.

The shark creature crunched and swallowed, readying its pallet for Jeb as its next course. Then, the monster violently coughed, spraying blood all over, and the captain was suddenly back on deck and covered in shark's blood. He pulled a pencil-like contraption from his pocket, turned it on, and then…

"Jeb! What are you doing just standing there?" the fisherman heard, snapping out of some sort of dream. He could have sworn that there was a colossal fish fight before his eyes. "Get back to work… we can't afford to be in waters with no fish!"

"Ri-right, Captain. I don't know where goes my mind," Jeb said moseying back to his duties, never knowing the truth behind what had actually occurred.



Homeworld

Domainya is homeworld to the Sedrone (nicknamed Lochs by humanity) and has been studied for years by Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. There is a mushy, but solid-enough ground at ones feet, fleshed with healthy soil and strange plant-life. The entire world is otherwise composed of only water. No matter how far in any direction the scientists have traveled, they have yet to find an end to the liquid in this world. With humanity's advances in deep-sea technology, they have sent tracking probes in every direction to test the immense size of the dimension. Thirty years have passed since and the probes have yet to come in contact with each other. Probes sent upward, hoping to find surface, have also reached nothing resembling horizon. Some probes report contact with horrible sea monsters, and others have been destroyed. Non-Loch visitors or other non-aquatic beings require special suits and breathing apparatuses to survive.

Domainya has no horizon, no sun, and no moon. The landscapes are lit only by the world's green moss and glowing crystals or the dangerous demon angler fish. Aquatic races can see normally in Domainya, but others need additional light sources or API's special suits in order to see even ten feet in front of themselves.

Sedrone cities and towns are constructed in the natural rock and coral of their landscapes. They are incredibly ornate and take astoundingly aesthetic twisted forms. The buildings tell a story of nobility and decadence, with precious jewels and enchanted crystals are encased into the walls everywhere befitting royalty. But the most notable scenery in Sedrone territory is the blood red water that stretches for miles. The story of how this occurred is integral to the Lochs' existence today.

Sedrone Rule

Hundreds of years ago, the Lochs ruled empires in Domainya. Like most civilizations, they started as villages, grew into towns, and then to sprawling cities. Due to their large size, the Sedrone took other cities by force with brute strength and ambition, almost end-

How exactly do they... you know?

Lochs began as oviparous beings, laying several eggs for later fertilization like other sea-dwelling species. As their race evolved into larger, more powerful beings, they began laying a single egg produced by the female. As laid eggs are more prone to threats and require more protection, they later evolved to housing the child inside the parent's body as it developed. They developed reproductive organs similar to a human's and intercourse became their primary fertilization method. Both males and females gained the ability to carry the child after consummation. The male fertilizes the egg inside the female and can either leave it there for the female to protect or draw it into their own body to store.

Human males rarely survive the pain of Loch eggs burrowing through their genitalia, most going into shock. Human females are genetically built to carry young, giving them a higher chance of producing a full term birth after five months of gestation. Still, none have made it through childbirth alive. Half-Lochs have shown to possess qualities from both Lochs and Humans. The oldest child from such a union is currently four years old, but no one can truly know their power until they fully develop.

lessly adding to their territory. Several aquatic races lived in Domainya with the Sedrone, but they fell one by one to the awesome carnage. They quelled every rebellion and created many orphans in their wartimes, but a sense of relative peace eventually came to the kingdom.

The Sedrone were not what would be considered fair or compassionate rulers. On the contrary, they were quite cruel and they made it a mission to spread that cruelty through the kingdom. They often forced subjects to erect statues in their honor and eat plankton, while the rulers feasted on rare meats like kings and queens. They never actually enslaved their lessers, but kept them in check through intimidation and fear. They terrorized them with constant threats of being the next on the chopping block for their frequent, random, and public beheadings. Some even fed the beheaded to the townspeople in sick blood rituals. They were drunk with mad and unopposed power.

Then, approximately one hundred years ago, the races they held under foot started a rebellion. Strikes were held, stopping the flow of commerce and making the Sedrone wealth worthless. Riots broke out, destroying the statues and other ornamentations of excess. The rulers leapt into action, using their claws and raw power to squash the rebels, but no amount of bloodshed stopped the rising number of rioters. The rebellion was planned quite well. Filled with pride, this fact didn't stop the Sedrone's attacks. With even the murmur of rebellion, they swooped in to the slaughter.

The Contagion

After a decade of rebellion, their stalemate began to sour. The people were angry and confused. They rebelled to take back control of their lives from their greedy rulers. That same rebellion now caused too much death. Their only chance of survival was to hit the Sedrone with an attack that they could not recover from or prevent by swinging their mighty claw.

Domainya's technology, while completely different from Earth's, was very advanced. It involved alchemy and herbal remedies, combining mixtures of plant-life, animal parts, and Mana into powerful concoctions and potions. The rebel leader (whose name is lost to history) served the Sedrone as a doctor and learned their physiology well. With preparation that lasted years, they readied their final strike, letting loose a Sedrone-specific viral infection. This deadly bio-weapon was called the Contagion. Their cries rippled through the dimension, as the vast majority of the Sedrone were wiped out in an instant. Those not killed by the virus found that pregnant Sedrone lost their children and the rest were sterilized, unable to breed to produce more of their kind.

The rebellion finally dealt their killing blow and victory was at hand, or so they thought. The Contagion and the death of so many angered the Sedrone, turning them into unstoppable juggernauts of destruction. The campaign that followed can be described as nothing less than a bloodbath. So much so… that it stained the territory's water red for eternity. Some escaped to remote parts of Domainya, but the majority were massacred.

Earth Mission

They tried unsuccessfully for years to reverse the despair the Contagion caused. It became more apparent with each attempt that they would never find the answer in Domainya, where they were surrounded by their past debaucheries and the blood-stained waters. Their best seers and adepts of the Path of Portals worked together to open a doorway to another dimension that would hold the key to their survival.

That fateful portal led them to Earth, arriving in the Amazonian jungles of South America. First interactions with humans did not go well, ending with human parts in piles or in the Sedrones' stomachs. The human death toll made others cautious of traveling through the jungle. It also led the way for others for further investigation into the matter. After their conflicts grew too large and numerous, the proud demons secluded themselves from the hairy beasts that spoke in a weird tongue.

They soon spread their numbers throughout Earth, from the United States and Europe (most notably). In the US, they were seen a few times before becoming national

urban legends or mythical phenomenon. Dubbed “creatures from the black lagoon”, this only urged more people to seek them out. In Europe, they were found in the bottom of lakes and bogs, being named Loch ness monsters (or Nessies). “Lochs” is the moniker that stuck.

There was no getting away from humanity. Their groups conceded and took one of two actions. Some Amazonian collectives became monsters and slayed any human they saw. They continue to be hermits to this day and seek help from no one. Wiser Lochs chose to connect with humans instead. They met with agents from Apocalypse Prevention, Inc, learned the human tongue, and tried to create suitable living arrangements on Earth, where they were destined to find a cure.

The Ailment and the Cure

The Lochs initially fell short on the mission to find a cure to the Contagion, but made their intentions clear in all dealings with API and humanity as a whole. API’s best minds assembled on their behalf, creating many possible panacea, herbal potions, or mystical therapies to administer, but could not make a dent in the potent Contagion.

About eleven years ago, a human girl was brought into API’s offices… pregnant with a Loch’s child. The girl had been raped five months prior and was ready to burst (quite literally). The child gestated too quickly for her body and was born with such force that she did not survive, dying violently during childbirth. Unfortunately, so did the child, but this event brought hope. They learned that mating with humans was possible and praised their seers that were right to bring them to Earth.

No way has been found to help the human “host” survive the mating. API’s top scientists have experimented with possible procedures to create a Loch/Human child in lab environments, but have all failed. It must be created through the physical act of procreation. Surgery to remove the child is difficult as the fetus is firmly attached through a carapace inside the body. Chances of a Loch/Human bonding is less than two percent. Alas, most are stillborn, even under the best of circumstances.

Since this discovery, there have been five documented Loch/human births. Three were born from human females, one from a human male, and one from a Loch female. Loch males have yet to give birth to a live child on Earth. Due to their incredibly long lifespan, the Lochs look forward to slowly but surely repopulating their race with API’s help.

Blending In

The Lochs have become an Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. staple since their advantageous agreement. The Lochs ensure that the company has muscle for their squads and work to protect Earth’s waterways. In return, API turns a blind eye to the repercussions of any unsightly birthing processes. Lochs are still presumed to keep their activities covert to prevent a situation that the company cannot overlook.

As large, horrific beings, they cannot obtain normal jobs to earn wages like human-looking demons. Many work the docks or perform late-night manual labor duties, but always in positions with little to no supervision. Most interviews are done over the phone. Those not happy with the meager wages provided by nine-to-fives tend to look to API for assistance, hoping to get hold of an Image Emitter (See page 53). This invention also helps in the scope of love and sex, allowing them to blend in and coerce potential human mates. This gains much less attention than forcing the act of mating on them. Some feel guilt over lying to the humans they grow to love, but agree that the future of their race takes precedence over these emotions.

Other Lochs forget about “blending in” and retreat to the ocean, where they have begun constructing undersea towns for their kind. However, the constant pollution found in Earth’s water makes this an unbearable choice for some, forcing survival on the land anyway.

Spectrals

Peter’s eye opened ever so slowly, bringing his blurry vision to focus. He stared up at a lamppost and felt a faint, yet ever-present migraine coming on. He sat up and checked his surroundings and saw his car slammed into that same lamppost. Someone was behind the wheel and they were not moving.

“Help! Someone’s hurt in my car and…!” he started to yell, but stopped suddenly. No one else drove his car. It would only ever turn over for him. He inched his way forward. He had to see with his own eyes. Reaching the car, he leaned over to see the driver and saw himself. He attempted to push himself away from the car in terror. Instead, his body fell through it, having no substance. He screamed again and crab crawled away from his car and the bloodied body in his newly upholstered seats. His wife would have killed him…

Then he heard crackling energy, as a doorway made of light grew larger and larger before his eyes. It beckoned to him to enter, calling with the voices of his father, his mother, and his other deceased relatives. An ectoplasmic tear dropped from his eye, but he wiped it away and walked toward the light. At his third step, he saw another person running quickly, much faster than he, toward the same portal. No matter how fast he attempted to run to catch up, he was a clumsy man by nature and was unable to reach the portal first. Worn out, he huffed and puffed,

Where Do Demons Go?

Spectrals are created when a human dies, but many ponder what happens when demons die on Earth. The obvious answer is: they become a Spectral too, right? Then they see that Spectrals are 99% human. Not only is Earth humanity's homeworld, but they also have no cursed blood to taint their ghostly presence.

Other races that die on Earth may become ghosts for a short moment, but then simply vanish. Some believe that the demons return to their own "heaven" or "afterlife", while others believe that they fade from existence from being so far from their homeworld. The latter comes from the opinions of prejudiced humans and purist demons. It makes most demons even more cautious to avoid death while on Earth.

Spectrals have originated from Wolf People, Changelings, and Burners born on Earth. The half-Loch children born on Earth are expected to become Spectrals as well. But most find API scientists are pretty morbid for wanting these children to be born, only to witness their death for science.

even though no real air passed through his lungs, and watched the doorway (his doorway) close in an instant when the other man entered.

Peter cried out in frustration and then another loud cry sounded in the area, but it was more of a hunting call. That other man wasn't running just to get to the portal... there was something after him. Peter ran away, hoping to never see what could make the dead so scared. He hoped to escape whatever horror was out there and headed to the only place that he felt safe… the glen where he met his wife.

Death

Spectrals are dead spirits that continue to exist anyway. The term "Spectral" was created by Apocalypse Prevention, Inc to reinforce the new abilities they now have to offer and not to remind a ghost of their actual death. Of course, terms like "ghost" or "dead guy" still slip out here and there, bringing back bad memories. If others treat them normally, some forget they're dead at all.

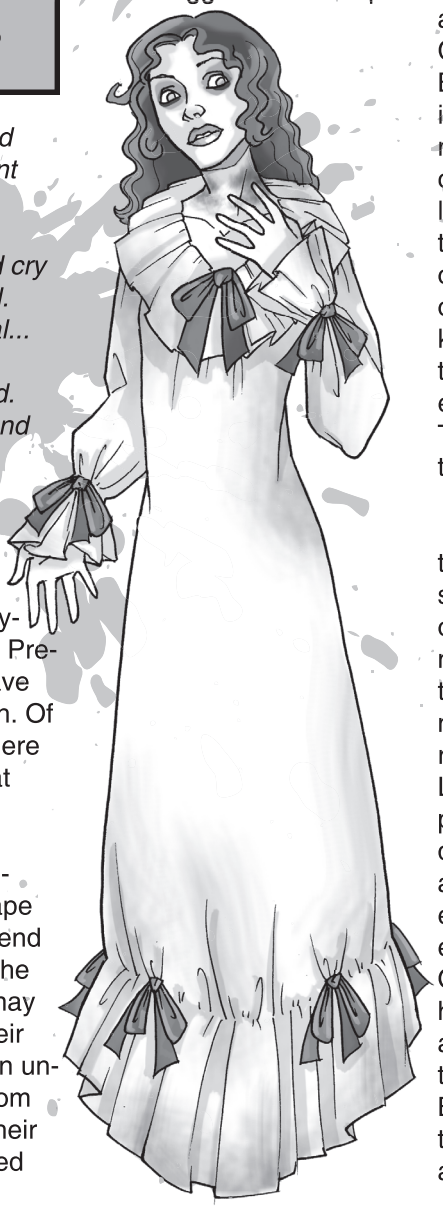
They never end up in their current state under beneficial circumstances and the surrounding events shape their attitudes and Passions. A murder victim may spend their time tracking down their murderer, especially if the culprit was never brought to justice. Suicide victims may become introspective and attempt to shed light on their reasoning. Others die of natural causes, falling into an unending sleep of perfect comfort, just to be dragged from the Bright Lights to serve a necromancer or to fulfill their "duty" to API. The company can't honestly be expected let their best employees get away so easily. "Death is like quitting. You don't want to be a quitter, do you?"

The Bright Lights

There is no Spectral homeworld other than Earth. They were, after all, humans that have now become ghosts, immaterial and dead. But the Bright Lights beckon to them to enter its mysterious portal.

When a person dies, they have what some have described as an "out of body experience". They stand beside their dead body. A bright white portal of luminescence opens before them and beckons the ghost to enter. Most do. Not entering the portal, either by choice, by accident, or by a necromancer's command renders it useless. They are stuck to wander the Earth forever.

The Bright Lights may not appear to ghosts that died by suicide or to those that lived utterly despicable lives. This suggests that the portals are selective about who's allowed to enter. Judeo-Christian believers feel the Bright Lights confirm their idea of suicide as a sin. Karmic believers feel that it may only allow those that have lived worthwhile lives. Others theorize that everlasting life or reincarnation lies on the other side, but no one truly knows. Any spirit that enters the Bright Lights is gone forever, never heard of again. The portal also isn't visible to the living.



Spectrals constantly feel the draw of Bright Lights, sensing any new portals that open nearby (appox. one mile radius). They are urged to rush toward the portal, no matter the cost, but most resist because the Bright Lights only admit one ghost per opening. Even at an accident causing multiple deaths, a separate portal opens for each ghost and they all know exactly which portal is theirs. Outside ghosts could (and have on occasion) rush to another's portal and essentially steal their pass to the Bright Lights. This condemns the newer ghost to Earth and cheats them out of their

afterlife existence. Some condemn this loophole to death and refuse to cheat another out of their intended fate.

Threats to the Dead

Most Spectrals believe they are invincible from being immaterial and unaging, but they have several threats to their existence. No matter how benign their activities or how much good they attempt, there is always someone trying to use or get rid of them. Why? People are scared of ghosts and few things motivate someone to action more effectively than fear.

A Spectral's first threats are exorcists. Their power can instantly banish ghosts, even if the area was their home first. This frustrates and infuriates Spectrals, hurting feelings and urging them to hate that leads to poltergeist activities and possibly evolving into Conceptuals of malicious intentions. Necromancers are also detested by Spectrals worldwide. These adepts are masters of death and seek to make Spectrals into unwilling slaves. Certain spells can command ghosts to do just about anything with a word. This same magic lets necromancers and exorcists harm or destroy a Spectral's ectoplasmic body with mundane weapons.

Large-scale hauntings call attention to them, which brings adepts, Spirit Eaters, and even Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. to their doorstep. So, they attempt to stay as secretive as possible, unless they truly believe themselves safe. They must also be careful who they trust when revealing themselves.

Spirit Evolution

In their first years, Spectrals are pushed to continue on by force of will and by pursuing their Passions. They may seek revenge, become a guardian angel for the children they left behind, or even build small ghost collectives that adhere to an honor code for the dead. Eventually, the people that wronged them in life will die (either by their hands or naturally), their children will grow up and no longer truly need protection, and other ghosts will choose to follow their own paths. When the Spectral loses their true purpose, they must search their soul and consider their spiritual identities. This decision results in their spiritual evolution or their fading away from existence all together.

Every spirit that exists on Earth is the result of an evolved Spectral. This includes elementals, angels, demons, and all other spiritual types. This phenomenon is unknown to all but the best adepts or Taylari who have lived long enough to watch the process take place. The evolution leads them down a new path to more power and greater purpose.

Conceptuals

Description: Becoming a Conceptual, the Spectral clings to an idea that describes their new purpose. A born serial killer may become a Murder spirit, another that devoted their time in art studios may become a Muse spirit, and another that exists only for revenge may become a Vengeance spirit. Their ectoplasmic appearance is heavily influenced by the path they choose, much like magic on an adept's body. Those with a moral and virtuous concept may glow brightly or take angelic forms. Vile Conceptuals appear as nothing short of demonic spirits, carrying a black aura and horribly evil intent.

Gift – Inspiration: Conceptuals gain access to the Inspire Spectral skill.

Weakness – Ban: They are held at bay by strong displays of emotions or actions that contradict their concept. For instance, a Health spirit couldn't enter a crack house, a place where so many destroy themselves. They would not be banned by someone who smoked. Likewise, a Despair spirit could not attend a birthday party full of joy and cake. They would not be affected by someone telling a joke. This ban extends at least one hundred feet, but could be farther based on the strength of the emotion. They can make a Moderate (20) INS + Discipline check to ignore the Ban, but also take 3 (L) per minute in their opposite concept's presence.

Elementals

Description: Elementals in history have existed in all manner of legend and myth. This path usually involves the protection of a particular area that is special to the ghost. A Spectral may have met their end there and now it is theirs to haunt or protect for all time. Another may have died in a biking accident, falling from a cliff while attempting a tricky maneuver. Now they may devote their time to stop others from making the same mistakes by reinforcing the cliff with their powers. When an Elemental manifests, they appear to be made entirely of their chosen element, resembling adepts with the Elemental Form spell (See page 99).

Gift – Possess Element: Elementals gain access to the Possess Element Spectral skill.

Weakness – Element Link: Elementals carry a heavy connection to their chosen area. Their bond is so intense

Loops

This strange phenomenon leaves a Spectral in a state of perpetually performing the same action or thought over and over again. For instance, they may hunt down their murderer for centuries. Every decade or so, they forget that their culprit is already dead or behind bars. They follow all the clues again, tracking down a person that fits the description, but is far from the real offender. Others wake up each day and don't even realize they are dead, having to relive that profound realization repeatedly. API's Ectoplasmic Reorganizer (Page 53) can be used to slowly break a ghost of this behavior, but it takes a few treatments to take full effect.

that damage done to the area causes direct damage to the spirit's ectoplasmic body. An Elemental linked to a special forest is injured with each tree that is cut down, during forest fires, or if its soil is corrupted. They would not lose Health if a name is carved into a tree or someone chops a small amount for fire wood, but few let the small offenses pass lightly. Damage inflicted can be anywhere from 3 (L) to 20 (L), reflecting damage done to the area.

Spirit Eaters

Description: Spirit Eaters are cannibalistic spirits bent on destruction and hunger. They have gone through intense trauma or never really adjusted to not sleeping. Their souls are rotted with negative emotions like hate, vengefulness, and loss. They routinely hunger for the taste of ectoplasm and hunt down ghosts to devour. This makes them a very dangerous threat to all spirits. Crash scenes usually have one or two stalking the area, attacking new ghosts before they can enter the Bright Lights. Spirit Eaters resemble the darker side of Conceptuals, but their eyes glow blood red. **Note:** This evolution is not suggested for players due to their animalistic worldview and their single-minded, unending thirst for the "flesh" of other spirits.

Gift – Devour: Spirit Eaters gain access to the Devour Spectral skill.

Weakness – Holy Ban: They cannot tread on holy or purified grounds or environments affected by either the Curse Land or Cleanse Environment spells. They also cannot affect targets that follow the Deity Passion. Many believe Spirit Eaters to be the true embodiment of evil from the bowels of hell (if such a place exists).

Special Spectral Skills

In addition to the Spectral skills found on page 41, evolution provides additional abilities for Spectrals: Devour, Inspire, and Possess Element. Unless otherwise specified, these skills cost three Stamina points per use with a duration chosen by the GM.

Devour

This devastating Spirit Eater Skill lets them literally eat another's soul. They must Grapple their victim to use this power, widening their maws, and biting down. If their victim is much larger, then a Grapple is unneeded and they can make a Bite attack Action (equal to a Full attack). A POW + Devour check is used to activate the Skill. When they land their next strike, their target permanently loses 1 Health for every two levels of Devour the Spirit Eater possesses, making this a truly deadly ability. Each Skill activation is good for one attack before needing to be activated again.

If they use Stir, they can use Devour on the living. Instead of permanent Health loss, they take Lethal damage from the attack and suffer a -1 penalty to any Magic Resistance checks for 1 day per point of damage inflicted, as their attack rends the victim's soul.

Possible Specialties: None.

Moderate (20): Activate Devour for one attack or 1 Round (whichever comes first).

Inspire

Some evolve to become muses or embodiments of certain ideals. Conceptuals can then Inspire the living to action, based upon their embodied concept. An Artistic spirit may inspire another to the perfect painting, a Vengeance spirit may push their target to hurt those that have wronged them, and a Lust spirit may inspire a call to a former lover. If used during battle, the effect takes place after the target's fight for self-survival, not during. Checks are made using CHM + Inspire against the target's INS + Discipline.

Possible Specialties: Specialties exist within each concept and should be discussed with the GM.

Simple (10): A slight urge that can be ignored if the target is busy with other things

Moderate (20): A stronger inspiration that may make them stop what they are doing

Tough (30): An intense craving to follow their urges and stop whatever they are currently doing

Possess Element

Elementals use the Possess Element Skill to control their chosen element through physical possession. Higher levels allow the Elemental to spread their essence further and control more of their element. Checks are made with VIG + Possess Element. Some Elementals take on multiple aspects and this Skill must be purchased separately for each.

- **Air:** They can adjust air currents by 10 MPH per level or change the surrounding air's aroma to any type (nauseous or sweet) for 50 ft. per level. Nauseous air gives a -1 penalty to others for every two levels. They can also make a Push Action from up to 10 ft. away per level without using Stir.
- **Earth:** They can reinforce stone, providing AR +2/+2 per level or weaken it, causing 3 (L) per level to its durability (ignoring AR). They can also command stones to leap to another's defense, Parrying for a comrade at a +4 bonus (replaces their normal Parry bonus) up to 10 ft. away per level.
- **Fire:** They can spark fire or extinguish one within their line of sight. The size of the fire can be up to 10 sq. ft. per level. In combat, they can inflict 1 (L) per level to their opponents with a Fire Action (Speed 5, Stamina 3, +2 Strike). They can also increase or decrease an object's temperature they touch (requires use of Stir) by ten degrees per level.
- **Metal:** Their unarmed attacks inflict +1 (L) per level (requires use of Stir). The Elemental can also possess and reinforce metal, giving it AR +2/+2 per level or weaken it, causing 3 (L) per level to its Durability (ignoring AR). Cyborgs get an INS + Fortitude resistance check and cybernetic parts get a flat +5 bonuses to a contested check.

- **Water:** They can adjust water currents by 10 MPH per level. They can also change the consistency of water enough to attempt a Grapple to drag victims underwater or fighting in water without the use of Stir. They can increase or decrease the environment's (approximately 250 ft. radius) humidity by 10% per level.
- **Wood:** They can control the movements and shapes of one tree or bush for every 2 levels. Attacks done through trees, such as a branch swipe, are performed at a -3 penalty and cause +1 (L) for every 3 they rolled higher than their opponent. The shaping of trees or vines can be used to initiate a Grapple. Their opponent suffers a -5 penalty to their attempt Break Grapple.

Possible Specialties: Specialties exist within each element and should be discussed with the GM.

Simple (10): Make one change to their chosen element

Moderate (20): Make two changes

Tough (30): Make three or more changes

Taylari

Carter sat in the dim light of the approaching dawn and hung his head. His usual nonchalant grin gave way to a sorrowful expression instead. "A penny for your thoughts," he said with an unfelt chuckle. He turned to the hideous monster beside him that wore a familiar human-like face.

"GRRRRRRR"

"Yeah. I feel the same way. This isn't easy, you know." He wiped his eye, which he obviously "had something in" and shifted his gaze away. He couldn't continue to look at the vicious beast before him. "I had to be the one to do this, you know? There was no one else. I couldn't let someone else…"

"GRRRRRRR"

Carter flinched at that growl and winced, holding his side. The monster had slashed him there during their arduous fight only a few hours ago. It saw a moment of weakness in the young vampire and lunged forward again, but was unable to move its limbs thanks to the Carter's magic cast on the beast during the same battle. "No." He said in a dour tone. "We won't be having any of that in our final…"

"GRRR-GRRR-GRRRR"

"The sun's almost up. We'll watch it together." Carter sat sill and watched the orange sky as the monster scrambled to leave. And as the sun rose, its light revealed itself to the two vampires on the hill, one living and one dead. Carter felt slightly uncomfortable warmth on his skin, but the dead vampire smoldered and went ablaze, burning down to a pile of dust.

The Bite

Unlike the euphoric or sensual experience frequently found in vampire myths, a Taylari's bite is anything but pleasurable. When they sink their teeth in their victim's flesh, a sharp pain takes over their body so intense that some become paralyzed. Those aroused by pain or with a high pain threshold may be less affected. Elders teach that victims should be restrained or otherwise held down while they feed to minimize mess.

Carter hung his head again, letting his hair fall over his eyes as he sobbed into his arm. He clicked his communicator. "Agent Carter reporting. The hostile DV has been eliminated," he said turning his gaze back to the ashes.

"I'm sorry it came to this. I love you, dad."

As the Elders Tell It

Taylari origins begin with a single woman. Their history has been passed from one vampire to another throughout time, speaking of the one named Taylares. She was queen of an expansive territory and ruled without need of a king for most of her life. Her power was absolute and her subjects obeyed her will, because her kindness was beyond imagination. Her beauty was even more so. She had skin of bronze and hair as black as night, which attracted the most interesting suitors.

As she aged, she knew the time would come where she would need companionship, but no subject was able to court the beautiful queen, despite their attempts. Her warriors lacked academic talents to intrigue her and her scribes struggled to even hold a blade. Court magicians proved that her love couldn't be won by simple tricks. Then, her beauty attracted the eye of the immortal gods themselves, most namely the God of Night. She became instantly infatuated with the god with a cape of stars and laid with him as her first. They loved each other for many years, ruling her queendom side by side.

Over time, they grew apart and their personalities no longer matched in all accounts. The God of Night was too liberal with his power over her subjects and got off on the adoration of her people. He put many of her once-suitors to death and used her army to wage wars on a whim. Taylares became angered and banished the God of Night from her bed and her court.

With their union over, her magnificence again brought suitors to her castle. In mixture of deep sorrow and furious anger, she would not lay with another. She divested herself of this feeling when the God of Death arrived. He fascinated the young queen with all things macabre and, after many meetings, she eventually opened her bed to him and accepted him as her new king.

The God of Night's green eyes burned with rage and he cursed Taylares and her queendom for eternity. They would only feel health and vitality in the sweet embrace of night. During the day, they would feel sickened and unable to perform even common tasks. They would suffer this torture for hundreds of years and would pass it on to their children. The final words of this fateful curse were: *"And when your time comes to lay with death, you will find no peace. You will lose yourself and become a monster dies without the night's luminescence".*

And, in that moment, the first vampires were created. Taylares and the God of Death bore children who were the most powerful of their kind. The God of Death taught them how to hold death at bay by drinking blood from animals and people. The children then taught these lessons to their subjects and discovered the curse could be transmitted via blood rituals. The God of Night's curse spread throughout the entire world, until the Taylari existed on every corner of the dimension.

The Taylari conquered nations with their cravings for blood at the command of the queen's children. Despite desperate attempts to hold on to morality, they had become less than human. Soon, humanity grew wise to their weaknesses to sunlight, garlic, and fire and retaliated. Thus, they were forced to become quiet, secluded hunters in the night.

The Born

The Taylari were born from a joining of the God of Death and their young queen who was very much alive. Many call them "living vampires", because they are fully living beings that carry the essence of death within. The very idea of a vampire giving birth strikes most as a mystery and slaps pop culture in the face. Legends speak of "dhampyr" (half-vampires) that can exist in the sun, and this is how the Taylari seem to be remembered most. But, a child born from the mating of vampire and human blood only creates another Taylari with their curse fully intact. This is humanity's rational mind at work again.

Born Taylari also take on traits from their Vampire Family. Like most families, each has their good and bad sides, and this is even truer for the Taylari. It brings them social advantages in vampire society, as they are considered to be "pure-blooded" and the only true Taylari, but also great responsibility. Family leaders are expected (and rightly so) to lead vampire-kind, keep squabbles to a minimum, and maximize their world influence. In modern times, they purchase and expand blood banks in every country and work hard to obscure real vampire facts by introducing ridiculous notions of crosses and holy water. Once per month, family leaders of the city assemble to decide any new rules or dole out any punishments to Taylari guilty of breaking their rules. Their power structure also decides territory boundaries, who has the right to kill, who has the right to breed, and who continues their existence. Taylari have self-policing procedures and Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. often consults directly with this council for helpful tips on Taylari prophecies.

Their children grow up around blood, wake up to dead bodies, and learn to appreciate the calmness of night's eclipse over a victim's screams. They are seldom well-adjusted members of society, as their upbringing frequently produces sociopaths. But, the vast majority of born Taylari end up in the foster care or adoption system. They only discover their true origins during puberty when they subconsciously make themselves a smoothie from raw meat and blood… and like it. Even growing up on the streets, these Taylari have a better chance of holding to their morality. However, a humanistic morality is often viewed as a weakness by Vampire Families and can win a Taylari many enemies.

The Mark

Born Taylari have a special birthmark of their Vampire Family crest. It is commonly confused for a simple, but ornate tattoo, but it is a mark of respect and a connection to their roots. The crest can appear anywhere on their body and be any size.

Prophecies tell of a Taylari child born with the mark of the crescent moon. This child is destined to be an agent of the God of Night, truly unaging and immortal, and will bring death for all Taylari. Elders in Africa have witnessed only one child with such a mark over the past three hundred years and it was immediately destroyed. They believe that they are safe as long as they keep a vigilant eye out for the mark, but the future may prove differently.

Cleansings

The tradition of Cleansing is used to clear created vampires from born territories. Every created Taylari in the area is killed by born assassins. This keeps Vampire Families in control and is needed when the created start to outnumber the born. When this occurs, they become a flame that threatens to burn down the hierarchy of vampire society and it must be extinguished. The Cleansing is a long and exhaustive process, which is the reason for laws against creating too many others. Some meticulous cities have never had to enact this ancient tradition, but larger cities execute a Cleansing once every fifty years or so.

The Created

The children of Taylares discovered ways to twist their blood to create more of their kind and build immense armies. Today, the right to create another Taylari is strictly monitored by the council and those that create too

many or too often are usually put to death. This is one of many laws created by Vampire Families to keep themselves in power.

Created Taylari were not born with their curse, but were made by exchanging blood with a vampire and then brought to the brink of death. When the ritual is over, they are bestowed near-immortality and a curse. Created Taylari do not receive gifts or weakness from their creator's Vampire Family. Any human can be turned into a living vampire, but vastly older or younger targets rarely survive the process of being so close to death.

They are at the bottom in the hierarchy of vampire society. Many ignore politics entirely and seek their own road. But few escape their link to their creators. They often serve Vampire Families as bodyguards, loyal servants, or passionate lovers. Some are even created with these specific purposes in mind. If they fail to prove their usefulness, they may be exterminated all together. Areas with weak Vampire Family representation (i.e. smaller communities or those outside of their interests) are known to have created Taylari in charge. But larger, more populated cities are always run by born Taylari.

Most are allowed to pursue their own goals as long as they do not directly affect the Vampire Families. They are often watched by the born to ensure they do not break any creation laws. The Taylari, more so than other demons, are known to self-police and only involve API in dire cases. However, this does not stop the company from launching their own investigations into Taylari-related cases, which often causes rivalries between born and created groups.

Thralls

As vampires, Taylari are bound to accumulate groupies, humans that would steal, lie, or even murder to become a part of vampire society. These mortals are called Thralls and have been a nightly occurrence throughout history. They even gather into cults to worship their "masters" so they can one day "ascend" to their level. Thralls come from all walks of life, from police officers to doctors to shopkeepers, but they feel their life is incomplete or may just have a death obsession.

Thralls are useful as bodyguards while a Taylari sleeps and can act as eyes and ears (read: spies) to the human world. Some use their Thralls for blood, companionship,

sexual prowess, or even as common henchman. Thralls belonging to born Taylari are marked as property with the Vampire Family crest. Killing these Thralls usually means bringing the wrath of the vampire council. Even API avoids dispatching of Thralls if it can be helped.

Vampire Families

History says that Taylares, the first vampire, had several children by the God of Death. Each one carried with them a different gift that they also passed to their cursed progeny. These gifts also come with negative aberrations to their curse. Taylari sharing the same aberration became Vampire Families. Many exist, spanning the globe and the imagination. Information on four major Vampire Families that rule large amounts of territory in the United States is listed below.

The Beguilers

Description: The Beguilers are descendant of Larik the Silver-tongued, said to be first born to Taylares. They naturally deceive everyone they encounter, even if the situation does not call for such action. This uncanny ability to lie easily leads them to the head of vampire councils. They are responsible for creating many of the established vampire laws (and their loopholes). Also, if there are connections to be had, they acquire them quickly. Other Taylari don't fully comprehend why they distrust the Beguilers and yet overwhelmingly follow their lead. They may never truly know why.

Gift – Silver Tongue: Beguilers receive a +4 bonus to Deception checks and three free levels of the Connections Gift (Page 47) during character creation.

Weakness - Liars: They find it difficult to be truthful. At any time (not more than twice for one encounter), the GM can call for a Moderate (20) IQ + Discipline check to keep a secret or reveal even a half-truth. Difficulty can be modified based on the danger posed to the Beguiler if they lie.

The Sol

Description: The Sol are descendent from Jul the Wanderer. In many ways, they are the most fortunate of the Taylari, as their connection to life is strong. Their blood shirks the effects of sunlight and daytime. They do not feel drawn to the night like other Taylari, making it easier to live directly with humanity. Some believe their mother's influence protected them from this facet of the God of Night's curse.

Gift – Sun Resistance: The Sol suffer no penalty in sunlight or during daylight hours.

Weakness – Addicted to Life: Their souls are flushed with life and they feel an urge to experience it all. These characters acquire the Addiction Drawback (Page 49) automatically during character creation. This addiction is often for blood (they drink more than they need), but others turn to drugs or even an addiction to pain. The addiction should be one that reflects their craving to feel alive.

The Macabre

Description: The Macabre are descendant from Bavi the Strange, truly the God of Death's most loved child. Their gift allow them to see and communicate with spirits with no more effort than a breath. No training is required, as all Macabre gain this gift at birth. Most use it as a gateway to great wisdom, as the dead have much to share. Trading secrets is the Macabre's specialty, using their "friends" as very capable spies. They are often very quiet, speaking only when the need arises and they are viewed as very strange folk.

Gift – Death Sight: Macabre can see and speak with ghosts and spirits, without the need of spells or a check. It is always active and cannot be turned off.

Weakness - Weak Willed: They are more susceptible to possession from ghosts, spirits, or adepts with certain spells. They suffer a -10 penalty to any rolls to resist this type of Action.

The Raveners

Description: The Raveners are descendent from Vil the Wretched and show their curse in body and soul. When they come of age, they permanently take on their Face of Death and become hideous creatures. This forces their family to lurk in the shadows, unable to live with humanity. They often take on roles of family enforcers, with their talents of silent kills. Those that have wronged the Taylari have much to fear from the Raveners.

Gift – Vicious Maw: Instead of simple fangs, the Raveners sprout a grotesque maw with rows of teeth that inflict +6 (L) with a Bite Action (instead of +3 (L)), thus increasing their healing rate from draining a victim. Their Face of Death is also increased to Fear 19.

Weakness – Hideous Form: They always show their Face of Death and start with the Disfigured Drawback automatically (Page 50). Their appearance causes them to be confused with Taylari Mortus at times.

The Afterdeath

The last words of the God of Night's curse regarded those that "lay with death". This referred to the literal love between Taylares and the God of Death, but also gave foresight into what follows a Taylari's death. Upon dying, a Taylari does not in fact fully expire. Three days later, they rise from their grave (or whatever state they were left) to a new existence… that of a ferocious, vile beast. These beings are called the Taylari Mortus (or dead vampires) and are devoid of humanity or sentient thought. They seek only to cause pain and slaughter innocents. Like the Raveners, they always wear the Face of Death. Vampire society deals with these monsters as quickly as possible, as they bring undo attention to their population by killing masses of people in their wake.

In addition to the above, Taylari Mortus have two major differences that separate them from the Taylari: they do not age (at all) and they die in the sun. Taylari scholars

theorize that the God of Night created pacts with the God of Day to kill those that "lay with death". See page 168 for more information.

Wolf People

The slob laughed out loud with his friends and walked over to the woman at the bar. "Can I buy you drink to something?" he asked, obviously drunk. He drooled slightly and leaned heavily on the bar to keep from falling.

"Not interested," she scoffed, tucking blonde hair behind her slightly pointed ear. She didn't turn to acknowledge his presence, of course. That's common "dealing with drunken people" etiquette.

"Hey you! I sai- said, I'm gonna buy you drink," he responded, hiccupping almost uncontrollably. He leaned in closer for a sloppy kiss and his drink spilled all over her leather jacket.

She leapt quickly to her feet. "Eww. I said not interested buddy," she replied, grabbing his shirt and pushing him back. The drunkard tripped backward over a barstool and flat on his ass.

His friends came to his aid and surrounded her… eyeing with intent to do full drunken harm. She sighed and threw her leather jacket to the side. She was dressed in horribly ripped jeans and a meshed shirt, her beautiful face lacking even a lick of fear. She grinned with enjoyment. This was a biker bar, after all, and they were about to have the first brawl of the night. It was almost mandatory in the Rusty Nail.

They lunged at her but weren't ready for what befell them. In a whirlwind of fluid strikes, she sent each of them flying in a different direction, putting them down for the count one by one. It was so quick that most of the bar's patrons never even saw it happen. When the dust cleared, she stood untouched with blood on her hands. Precise marks through her attackers' clothes revealed the scratches of a beast's claws ripping through their flesh.

"Seems like you're new to these parts," she said, smiling to the bartender, as her half-beast form changed back to her beautiful human shape. "Name's Trina… I own this place, so I get free drinks. And, by the way, your asses are outta here for the night. Feel free to come back if you have the aching for another ass-kicking though."

Myth & Legend

There are too many theories for the origin of the Wolf People. All of them have been proven wrong at some point and they are usually ignored since they have no basis in reality. There are still a few that hold these ideas to heart, so it's important for every Wolf Person to know about these crazy speculations.

Legends and folklore exist in almost every culture about magic men or shaman that wear the skin of wolves (and other animals) for intricate shapeshifting ceremonies. They dance around fire, chant, and then "poof" they're a wolf. But seeing as the Wolf People are born with their gifts, this just doesn't register. But their ancestors may have been mystics trapped in their magic by the Animal Mind. If that's the case… poor bastards.

Another myth is that one becomes a Wolf Person from a bite or scratch from one. If this were true, everyone would be a Wolf Person. They certainly get into their fair share of scrapes and even their intimate encounters are described as violent. It's common in these myths that the "changed" go out during the full moon to hunt down and kill the "first" werewolf. Taking the head werewolf down's supposed to free all others from the curse… as if it's some sort of virus that can be instantly cured. If this is true, then perhaps the Wolf People's great, great, great, great, great, great, great, grandparents are out their somewhere.

Of course, there are also the sickos that think Wolf People are descendent from mating between humans and wolves. The very idea that Wolf People came from bestiality is blasphemous and sickening. No matter how much the Animal Mind takes over, they don't feel sexual urges of any kind about wolves. They are considered demons, but they are at least THAT human.

Growing up Wolf

Most Wolf People don't really care about ancestral origins. They live in the moment. They act on their impulses, live by instinct and rarely think about consequences to their actions. They think its brave to rush into action without care for their well-being, but others call it reckless. The Wolf People are filled with some of the most courageous adventurers, influential scientists, and valiant heroes, but also some of the worst crime lords, schoolyard bullies, and despicable villains. Like anyone else, their present is shaped by their past upbringing.

Ferals can be born from unions where one or both parents are Wolf People. With two, their odds of taking on blood traits are doubled, but not all their offspring inherit the gift. Families stick together through thick and thin, as pack mentality urges them toward companionship with others of their kind. The parents then decide how to raise their children. A wolf child that grows up with imposed limits, rules (i.e. curfew), and lots of love usually goes on to be a great member of society. This course creates more docile Wolf People… but the wild spirit inside cannot be subdued entirely. Still, being "normal" is rarely a bad thing and conformity is a road to keeping the Animal Mind at bay.

The Beast People

Other Beast People exist in the world, but rarely with the Wolf People, as each breed keeps to certain areas as their territory. The Animal Mind is alive in all Beast People, from the Feline People of Africa, the Dragon People of China, or the Bear People of deep Russia. When they do cross paths, their Animal Minds can cause epic battles of fur and fury.

Hundreds are abandoned for their own protection or orphaned by the death of their parents at the hands of terrifying monsters, a random brawl, or thrill-seeking. They become one of the millions of homeless in the US, surviving by their wits and strength. Many befriend strays for camaraderie, but lack of human contact can devolve their rational mind quickly.

Some end up in orphanages or in foster care. Their bad attitudes and tendency to cause damage often shuffle them between different foster homes and halfway houses where they are either abused or ignored to simply collect a government check. Rarely are they provided with a stable enough home life to sustain their dogged fight against the Animal Mind. Most Wolf People know that only a normal, human-like home life staves off the Animal Mind. Most are not even introduced to the idea of a Wolf Person until their first change or the first change of a sibling. They may question their parents' occasionally strange behavior and family secrets, but what kid doesn't?

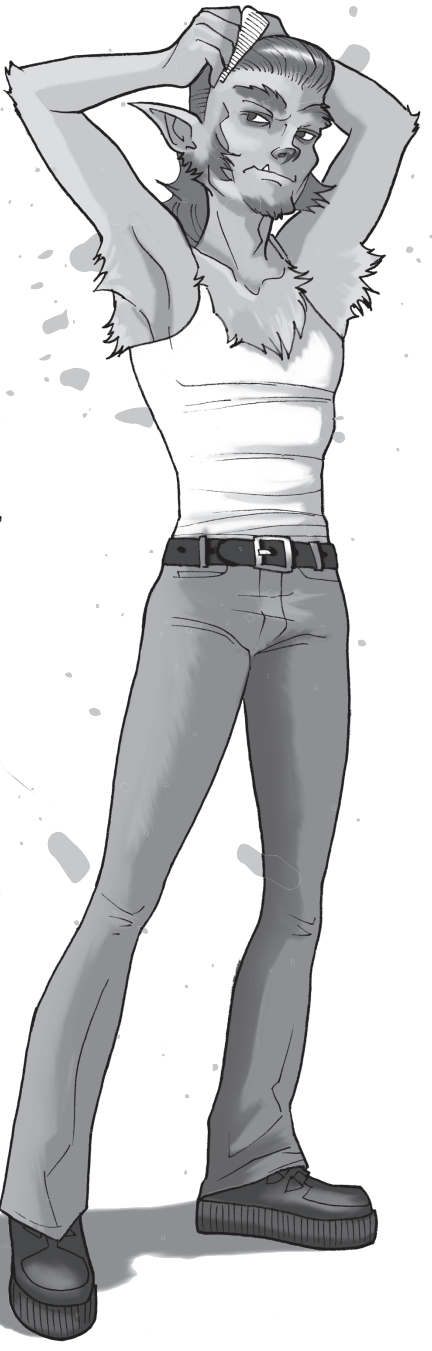
The Changing

Their first change occurs around puberty, as the beast inside tries to wrestle control while their body is in a state of transition. Before the physical change is complete, most experience a drastic and noticeable change in their personality. Even the most laid back kid becomes a risk taker or becomes aggressive. They may finally stand up to bullies that terrorized them or gain the courage to ask their childhood crush out on a date. With such confidence and animal magnetism, they can't help but say yes. Others become prone to horrible tempers and urges to destroy things.

Wolf People are plagued by strange nightmares filled with hatred and death, depicting the hunting and murder of enemies or others that crossed them in the past. In truth, however, these "dreams" are not just nightmares. When their rational mind is asleep, their Animal Mind takes over and acts upon their darkest desires while sleepwalking. In an unconscious state, untrained and unpracticed Wolf People have little chance of holding back their Animal Minds. They can experience dreams for weeks or months, depending on their individual. Many think they are psychic, as they visit the funerals of people they saw die in their dreams. Others contemplate suicide or run away, believing themselves a curse on those around them.

Luckily, if their parents are present, they can easily distinguish signs of a first change and help them before things get out of hand. This usually includes blame and arguments, such as "Why have you lied to me all my life?" followed by "Because we didn't know if you would even be like us. We're sorry." But these family interventions are better than the alternatives of a newly changed Wolf Person taking to the streets without proper supervision or training. Too many reported attacks from rabid dogs and people start to wonder… and Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. starts to crack down. Many families and individuals chain themselves up during the full moon, to avoid going berserk and bringing attention to themselves.

The Animal Mind



Inside every Wolf Person's consciousness and soul lies the Animal Mind. It is the core of their bestial nature that can take control at times. The Animal Mind is a mass of cravings for violence and destruction and makes it hard for Wolf People to keep their humanity. It urges them to take unnecessary risks outside of their comfort zone, aggressively claim large amounts of territory, and gives them volatile tempers.

Their Animal Mind is also what drives them to action. Without it, they would be no better than lazy humans, neutered to work office jobs and watch movies for exhilaration. Instead, Wolf People choose to feel the danger, pain, and excitement that come with their gifts.

During full moons, the Animal Mind cannot be ignored. There is something about the moon's energy that drives Wolf People to lose all control and pursue their deepest desires with intense urgency. Some believe it

is a curse from the same god who had a hard-on for the Taylari. Self-incarceration has proven to be the only real remedy for this lunacy.

If the Animal Mind goes unchecked for too long, they become entirely bestial, losing all human awareness. These Wolf People often take on their Wolf form indefinitely, running into the woods to become permanent residents. They join wolf packs and their greater strength allows them to become pack leader quickly. They may live happily in this state, but few Wolf People wish for such a fate. They can be snapped back into a semblance of their former self with a strong showing of support of love from their families and plenty of therapy. For a considerable fee, API offers to locate and rehabilitate Wolf People lost to their Animal Mind.

API Reputations

The Wolf People have a dark past and bad reputation within Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. The awful truth is that it's not totally undeserved. Of course, a Wolf Person was responsible for the "Moon Catastrophe", but their kind has also been the most unruly and chaotic of all demons that serve the company. They have been linked to hundreds of internal investigations of leaks, brutality, insubordination, and intimidation. As much as API attempts to deflect blame from those who stay the straight and narrow, these illusions all fall when the full moon arrives.

The most recent events speak of Rufus, a Wolf Person who grew up in the inner cities of New York and joined API some fifteen years ago… for all the right reasons. He sought to avenge his sister's death at the hands of a Burner with a sadistic streak. Sadly, investigations drew no leads and ran into dead ends at every turn. In a rage, Rufus began his own serial killing streak, murdering one Burner, then another, and then another. He hoped one would fit the profile. He was very good at his job and was able to conceal his activities. He stalked and killed almost forty Burners before he got sloppy and left evidence at a scene, his Animal Mind taking over and ruining his best-laid strategies.

The general consensus in the company is that Wolf People are not to be fully trusted. This has lead to many prominent Wolf People being demoted to lesser tasks. Newer Ferals are either refused for service or put through interrogations to discover the amount of control they have over their Animal Mind.

This situation works out great for Lochs, who now serve as replacement muscle for squads. Previously unavailable positions opened and helped to bolster their numbers. Many Wolf People resent the Lochs' opportunism, leading to petty rivalries and fights. Others just don't care enough.

The Unknown

Anyone that lives in API's world knows about the hidden underworld on Earth. But no one can ever say that they know about everything in existence. The company may have intelligence on Burners, Wolf People, and even Taylari, but the marching orders of your average mission are "A portal's opened. Ensure that nothing comes out to destroy Earth." Agents never know what they stand to face when they embark on a mission and new demon races are discovered every month.

Mission reports tell of horrible monsters, dinosaur-looking demons, or creatures with an incalculable number of tentacles. More powerful squads are sent out to these sites to ensure safety. They bring advanced translators, top negotiators, and veteran Elites that attempt every course of communication before hostility becomes their solution. This exchange may end in blood, but it may also end with a new ally for the fight to protect Earth. Some beings are seen only once and their visit is recorded in the archives for later research. Others (threats and allies) are regular travelers through to world and this book has yet to scratch the surface.

Chapter Six:
Telling Stories for API

Themes

Many themes can be found in Apocalypse Prevention, Inc, but the core theme is “Discovery”. It’s the discovery of a world of magic, filled with demons and all manner of unknown creatures. After the initial shock, one moves on to discover that some creatures and monsters exist to destroy Earth. Missions to discover ways to stop the world’s end soon follow, which leads to new discoveries in fields of personalized magic or technology.

Conversely, the other underlying theme of this game is “Secrecy”. API has the mission of revealing everything in the world to ensure safety, but they must also hide the truth from the mass population at the risk of rampant confusion and fear. They hide their actions and identities, because covering up the truth is just a facet of being an agent for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. The company is not alone in secrecy. Illegals live in hiding and magical Orders keep wondrous powers from any outsideers.

Mood

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is an “Action, horror, with a twist of humor.” This can easily misinterpreted, so brief explanations have been provided below for “Action”, “Horror” and “Humor.”

Action

API is a fast-paced, action RPG that lets the players fully customize their characters. There is not story without action, but physical action is not the only implementation. Action occurs as a result of Conflict. If the characters are driving, action and conflict can be created if they spot a tail, if they race another car, or if there are obstacles in the road. If faced with a safe to crack, action can be created with a race against the clock or police trying to break down the door they are hiding behind. Things should always be happening to the characters and they should be at the center of major events. It is their game after all.

Horror

The world is filled with many dreaded things, both known and unknown. Around every corner lurks "something" that could potentially harm or kill. The company takes on the horrors that surround us everyday and agents know they may not make it back in one piece. Every story should have a sense of the unknown and hidden threats, even if the threat is seemingly familiar.

Horror is created from fear and the unknown. Horror is a slow progression of events that lead to Terror, like compiling clues, each one worse the previous. It may also come from seeing your comrade's head ripped off or the sight of an inhuman creature. Terror is the utter shock of newly discovered knowledge. For instance, a character that's suspicious of their boss' underhanded dealings may check into it and fill with terror when they learn that the extra money is made by selling babies to cannibals. The thought is horrifying, but it is sheer terror in reality.

An element of horror and terror should exist in any good API story. Also, moderation is important, as horror's impact can dull over time if used too often.

Humor

Even the worst situation has a hint of humor. Many ideas and concepts in this book have slightly humorous tones, like Lochs that attempt to seduce humans, an Order of hippies using "Far Out" as code words, or very large Tark trying to "sneak around" on Earth. Agents may become a bit too sarcastic for their own good, seeing too many strange things in their day. They begin to laugh at the horror, until they find that looks can be deceiving.

But remember that there is only a "twist of humor" and it should never be used alone. It must be combined with Action and Horror, as previously mentioned. No matter how ridiculous it may appear, some demons are still capable of killing entire squads or impregnating them with devouring maggots. Through play and experimentation, groups will find their own balance of humor that's right for them. It should never turn into a slapstick game where death and Earth's annihilation are no longer dangers.

Assembling the Squad

The company isn't in the habit of haphazardly assembling groups of loose-cannon agents. They take each agent's weaknesses, special gifts, and personalities into account to create a squad that hopefully works well together. A well-built squad should work off of each others' talents to accomplish their missions together.

The GM and players should work closely to hammer out their concepts and ensure the characters mesh. With the commitment required from agents, they must have something to bring to the company and their squad and they are given missions that reflect their specializations. Each agent has their own backgrounds and personality, but the team is what's most important to higher-ups. API won't set their agents up for failure.

Note: In no way does this discourage characters from squad rivalries or downright hating other members. The company doesn't care if you like your squad-mates, as long as it doesn't interfere with your mission success.

Below are some examples of different squad types created to fill certain niches:

Battle Squads

These squads are composed of characters that like to bring the smack down on threats to Earth. They usually have at least one Wolf Person or Loch in their midst, being Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.'s heaviest muscle. Battle Squads are on the front lines and are sent to take out enemies, while the other less-confrontational squads clean up the mess they leave behind or perform reconnaissance to make their job easier.

Scout Squads

Scout Squads specialize in field reconnaissance. They have agents that excel in battle strategy, cartography, shadowing possible demonic threats, and stealthy breaking and entry. Scout Squads often have assassination agents as well. Covertness is required to keep a low profile for API and maintain peace in supernatural communities. These squads keep that possible, even acting as clean-up squads for more overt missions.

Undercover Squads

These squads have the singular goal of acting as moles inside underground societies to gain insider information and report back to API. They could check into an

Dating in the Workplace (Romance)

While Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. officially frowns upon such actions in official "Workplace Harassment" orientations, the inevitability of "feelings" between squad members does exist. But adding romance to a story can be tricky. First, check whether or not romance is a story element that your players are interested in exploring. If they are, it certainly fits API's mood nicely.

"Action" stories often involve love interests. It could come from affections of a damsel in distress, a heroic agent stealing their squad member's eye, or a female warrior in search a "real man". "Horror" stories lead people to get much closer much faster through necessity, feelings springing up where none were before. Even if the character is not necessarily handsome, beautiful, or heroic, "Humor" is a driving force of many love stories. Similar senses of humor bring people together and the character may just have a certain hilarity that "turns on" the other.

Order's shady business dealings, inspect a local crime boss's ties to invading forces, or check up on the Fifth Sun's life signs. Changelings usually find themselves placed into Undercover Squads almost by default.

Misfit Squads

API has, on occasion, thrown together misfits from other squads into a single group. An Elite is given command of these agents with 100% discretion with how to lead them (i.e. how much violence or mentoring is dealt out). Most Misfit Squads are completely reformed and ready to resume normal duties after this type of experience. Others have been killed in action (possibly friendly fire) or have to be taught "lessons" by their Elite leader.

Research Squads

As boring as it may seem to some, specific Research Squads are a necessity in modern days. Examples include squads that experiment with disease control, groups that research new spells to add to their extensive arcane libraries, or teams of computer techs that create innovative software. Research Squads have basic field training and are sent to investigate crime scenes with their special talents.

Note: As API is primarily a human organization, there should be some human representation in every squad (unless there are extenuating circumstances). If players only want to play demon races, the GM should create a human NPC to go along with the squad.

Crafting Stories

Putting all the story elements together can often be difficult, no matter how seasoned the GM. After reading this book, you'll find that there are a number of story ideas or plot hooks available. This often makes it difficult to know where to start. Players handle their character concepts and personalities, and now you have to create a setting, which should emphasize certain moods or themes that are important to your game. Below are a few ideas that may assist with any type of story. Also see Adventure Hooks (page 160).

Setting

- **Cityscape:** Most events happen in the characters' cities. Do they live in a rural, urban, or suburban area? When not out stopping worldwide threats, what is there to do? Are there night clubs, bars, or country clubs? Is there an extended nightlife scene? How is the city laid out? Is the population high or are there acres of unpopulated land between homes? Selecting an already existing city and changing it slightly is an easy way to choose, but GMs can find a greater sense of creativity by constructing new cities to explore.

- **Headquarters:** Next, detail the agents' personal headquarters, their API cell. This is where they work, receive missions, and interact with other agents. Most are "stationed" in certain areas to help with ongoing, local supernatural threats or to investigate new threats. How large is the headquarters? How many other agents work there? Where do the characters' daily routines fit into that equation? What is the HQ's front, an arcade with a special backdoor, library with a secret bookcase, or massive office building?

Personalities

- **City Folk:** Now that their city has been established, the characters need a great bunch of personalities to interact with. Who are the areas important local figures? Any important stores in town? Are the characters on good terms with the owner? Are these city folk human or demons? How do they view API? Do they know the characters are agents? Important NPCs can be drawn easily from character backstories, but character-neutral NPCs are also needed so that everyone knows someone. The Allies, Connections, Followers, and Reputation Gifts can also assist with creating core NPCs.

- **Other API Agents:** Are the character in a small area that can be covered by a single squad? Small areas often have only a few attendants at the cell, as they are generally less threatened areas. Since API work is often "boring", many agents are too encompassed in their private lives in small area, which can leave them open to attack. These provide less mission-based play and more time to delve into the agents as people first and a badge second.

Or, is it a sprawling metropolis, needing dozens of agents to ensure proper security levels? Large areas often have several Elites on-site to ensure the HQ stays alert and well-trained. This means more hard-ass leaders and overworked or stressed employees (including the characters). These provide more exciting missions and a larger cast of friends and enemies.

In either case, there should always be important agents to meet: the hardened commander, the supply handler with a strange sense of humor, the R&D techs who always ask the characters to test "new projects", or even the overly-pessimistic communications agent. It is good to define these basic roles within the branch, as they will color much of the working environment.

Playing Outside of API

Many crazy things take place before agents are even sent to investigate, leading some groups to tell stories outside of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. By design, API agents cannot be everywhere at all times. This would create a state of martial law, which is not the company's intention.

Playing a game outside the official channels is very possible and can be very fun. A character's Passion can bring them into several situations, not the least of which is interaction with the supernatural world. Below are a few story ideas that hopefully help with creating great stories.

Note: Most characters can fly under API's radar for only so long before the company acts on the event. They often warn the characters to stay out of API business, give harsher punishments (i.e. banishment or house arrest), mistake their identities, or extend invitations to join API. The company is not ashamed to admit that some of their best recruits were those that broke the rules in the first place. They only needed to be properly trained.

Sub-Contractors

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has a history of sub-contracting surveillance of less-threatened areas when they lack proper manpower. Some are hired on without actually knowing what they're watching over, with explicit instructions not to go too deep. Others may be demons that want to help their community, but don't want to join API directly. They are given a regular stipend, with possible bonuses based on filed reports and outcomes. Of course, they are expected to immediately report any larger threats.

Private Investigators

Some professions provide strange and unique experiences. Private investigators are often called to follow cheating spouses, check backgrounds, or track down people. What happens if the cheating spouse is having an affair with a fish person? Or if the background check for the red-skinned fellow doesn't check out? Or if they track their target to a cult that prays to a disease-eating demon? Too many make the wrong choices. Will the characters?

Underground

Magic and demons exist within criminal families and organizations at an astounding rate. Some even rival the power of certain API cells and are quick to capitalize on that fact. Most demons have taken a liking to Earth money and capitalism. The "family business" can be anything from money laundering to slavery to gambling. Characters can play in an underground game to see the darker aspects of the world. API may show up as inspectors to check IDs and ensure everyone's legality, but little else. And, of course, everyone's Blue card says they're legal, so there shouldn't be a problem. Some are even extended offers from API to turn on their families, which creates great tension.

Demonic Culture

Some demons on Earth join API, but others have no urges to follow the company's rules or lose the life they've built. These parents, siblings, and cousins are happy to live within their demonic societies, creating areas akin to China Towns. Some Taylari prefer the political games of Vampire Families, some Burners seek tutelage from the Fifth Sun and his followers that work toward a new Caulon, and roaming Lochs leave blood trails with chips on their shoulders and claws to rend. The individual races have a lot to offer for potential storylines, as described in the Chapter Five: Demonology (page 135).

Illegal Demons

The players may decide to play as Illegals. This could be existing races working on the "wrong side" of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. and the Registration Act, actual illegal demon races (i.e. Carriers), or are perhaps brand new races (See Random Demon Generator on page 169) fresh from a dimensional portal. They could be peaceful

or actively be plotting the world's destruction. In this type of scenario, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. would be the players' enemy.

Monster Hunters

Any group of friends, be they human, demon, or a mixture, can awake one day and decide that they've had enough. They look around and see the magic, demons, and conspiracies and want to put an end to them all. In this type of game, the characters become monster hunters, track down their own leads, and attempt to beat API at their own game. This is, of course, at their own risk.

GM Advice

The Game Master (GM) is the core of any gaming group. They create stories through which the characters adventure and grow through. The GM also directs actions and conversations when interacting with Non-Player Characters (NPCs). Here are a few suggestions for running a successful game.

1. Have Fun!

As the GM, it is your privilege (not your job) to craft a story that you and your players will all enjoy. Any game should be played with the intent of having fun above all else. The moment that creating the story and setting becomes a chore, or that your players stop having fun, is the moment that your game will falter. If this feeling strikes, take a break (perhaps go for a food run) and regain your bearings. Everyone will have more fun if the GM is focused and having fun as well. Bottom line: having fun is what it's all about.

Even a totally intricate story, full of twists, turns, and mystery needs to take a backseat if the players are not having fun. The players may be in the mood for a fight or for a moment of character interaction. The story could be focusing too much on plot and not enough on the agents themselves. As the GM, it's helpful to be able to change course on the fly. This is a learned skill, so don't feel bad if you're not great at it to start. If you need a moment, just call for a 15-minute break. Your players will understand.

2. The Characters Are the Story

No matter how tempting it is to create the coolest NPCs with badass abilities or mysterious origins, only the player's characters matter in the end. They are the story. The game must be shaped by the characters' decisions. If they traverse worlds, save innocents, or conquer grand monsters, the world and people around them should change to reflect these choices. After all, the characters are provided XP for personal change. Their world should change accordingly. No player wants a game where nothing they do actually "matters". It is perfectly fine to have events happening in the background, but they should only come into play as much as they affect the characters.

3. Don't Control Everything

Some GMs become aggressive dictators over games. This is actively discouraged when playing API. Yes, GM generally stands for "Game Master", a title worthy of someone who creates a world. But try thinking about it as the "Game Motivator" or "Game Mentor" instead. These terms are actually more correct. It's your job to direct the action, plots, and stories, but players have the real control of the game's direction. The GM controls the world, but you do not control the characters. When reaching a point where players have choices, ALWAYS ask them their characters' response.

4. Involve Passions, Involve Everyone

All players deserve to take the spotlight during the story at one point of another. At times, one may have more at stake in the current plot point than another, but the other characters wouldn't be there if they didn't also have a reason. This is when a character's Passion comes into play. The Passion is their true nature and reflects their motivations. The best way to incorporate characters into a story is to use their Passion to link them. When you do this, every character cares about the outcome.

For instance, there are a multitude of reasons (outside of being assigned by API) that a character may be motivated to search for a kidnapped person. One character with the Community Passion may see the victim as important to their neighborhood cause. One with the Power Passion may want to gain a favor from the victim by saving them. Another with the Love Passion may be in love with them or may have been asked by the victim's spouse to seek them out.

5. Be Descriptive, Not Definitive

One of the GM's roles is to filter descriptive information in the best way to create a mood for the scene. Describe the environment and NPCs they encounter, but be sure to leave out "exacts" and avoid being too "definitive". Compare these two descriptions of the same scene:

"You walk into a dirty bathroom and see a Burner taking a piss."

Or

"You enter the gas station men's room and notice a crack in the large mirror. Most of the sinks and urinals are "Out of Order". The lights flicker as no one's changed the bulbs for months probably. There's a man using the only working urinal. His hair is short, revealing slightly pointed ears. His skin is kind of reddish in the dim light."

Several elements are missing from the first example. It doesn't evoke emotion and imagery and the NPC is defined much too quickly. The second description uses ques like "pointed ears" and "reddish skin", which may make the characters "assume" it is a Burner. The GM then has the option to introduce a Burner, a new demon, a human

in a Burner disguise, or someone with a bad sunburn and their "dad's ears". Being descriptive keeps the mystery and makes things more interesting.

Adventure Hooks

This book includes several concepts, storylines, backgrounds, and ways to get a game going. Some are missions given by API. Others explore a characters' personal life or delve into demon culture and what it means for Earth. Below are a few quick and dirty adventure hooks to help start a story:

Rookie Missions

(Starting characters)

- **Routine Check:** The agents are sent to check for possible API Registration Act infractions. Reports state that a family of demons may be hiding an illegal relative from a recent portal. After investigation, they are indeed housing an illegal and they do not respond peacefully.

- **Escorts:** An infamous member of demon society (or leader of an Order) needs an escort across states lines. He is a pain and doesn't care about or support API, but knows he's important enough to protect. When passing through hostile areas, he doesn't hide himself and leans on the agents' protection. When "heckled" by his "fans", they yell "oh yeah! I bet you won't say that these agents' faces!" The rest is up to the characters. Do they fail their mission and leave the pain to fend for himself or do they defend the wretch no matter the cost?

Experienced Missions

(Characters with 30+ XP)

- **Tech Arsonist:** The characters are tasked with tracking down a supernatural arsonist that is burning down buildings and killing people. Rumors say it's a rogue Burners that believe technology to be evil and homes, factories, or clubs are all targets. It could just as easily be the plans of a pyrokinetic adept that wants to blame it on Burners. Smart investigation is needed to bring the correct culprit to justice.

- **Black Market:** A black market has popped up in the city and deals in cybernetics and supernatural items of unknown origin without proper licenses. The characters are sent undercover to find out as much as they can about the proprietors and the items they're selling. Black markets are ample ground for cybernetic pit-fighting, slavery, scroungers, and magic items with cruel side-effects. Do they have what it takes to bring down such a place?

Hero Missions

(Characters with 50+ XP)

- **Beasts of War:** The shit hits the fan when villains release giant beasts into the chaotic city streets. The characters are called to deal with the immediate threat and to track down responsible parties, find out their end game, and bring peace to the city. This may involve questioning witnesses and then removing their memories and intense combat with the beasts.

- **First Contact:** A surge of energy on the API cell's sensors confirms that a portal has opened nearby. The characters are sent to meet these new demons. Are they peaceful? Are they here to wreak havoc? How the characters handle this first contact can play a large part of this decision.

Experience Points (XP)

Characters are not static beings. Some say that "you learn something new everyday" and this applies to characters as well. A librarian may finally learn to throw a punch and gain a level in Fighting Style: Basic or a brute may learn the power of saying "Thank you" and raise their Charm (CHM) Attribute. Growth is reflected by Experience Points (XP) earned in a variety the ways (examples listed below). **Note:** The GM is the SOLE decision-maker on who gets what amount of XP.

After a Gaming Session

After a successful gaming session, it is customary to award XP to the players that have accomplished goals and played their characters well. The XP examples below do not apply to all sessions, making the average XP gained per session between 1 XP to 5 XP, depending on the length and quality of the session in question.

1 point – Showing up to Play: Every player that shows up to play should receive 1 XP just for joining in the game and contributing to its occurring in the first place.

1 point - Passions: If the player used their character's Passion in an interesting way that affected the session, they should receive this point. See Passions on page 9 for more information.

1 point – Spotlight: If there was one character that took charge of their situation or was an effective leader during that session, they receive this point. It's a good idea for the roleplaying group vote on this point.

1 point – Memorable Moment: If a character does something that makes the group say something like "That's so awesome!", "Man, dude, what, no, really?" or make the GM speechless from how cool or clever it was, they receive this point. This point shouldn't be given every session or it loses its flavor.

1 point – Morale of the Story: If the character has learned something from the session, it is important to award XP for growing. Ask each player "So, what did you learn, if anything?" It could be something like "My character learned that they should not pick fights with Wolf People" or "My character will never press another button without reading an instruction manual first".

Downtime

Downtime is time between stories where the characters are not assigned to an active mission. When one story ends, Downtime gives the characters time to relax, pursue personal matters, or even train for the next story or mission. Players spend the majority of their XP during Downtime, but it is not uncommon to do so in the middle of a story if the situation warrants the expenditure. The player must still justify raising their Skills or Attributes through their character's ongoing progression.

After a Story

At the end of a major storyline that spans several sessions, the characters should have solved some great puzzle, defeated a powerful enemy, or successfully pulled off their assigned mission. They should receive additional XP for a "job well done". This bonus XP should be based on how successful the character's were, how much danger they were in, how efficiently they executed their plans, and the outcome. GMs are encouraged to give anywhere from 1-5 additional XP. Any more often leads to the characters advancing too quickly.

Spending Experience Points (XP)

When the player feels that they want to improve their character's abilities, they spend accumulated XP from previous sessions. This expenditure needs to be justified to the GM and make sense for the concept and current story. It doesn't make sense to raise the Persuasion Skill after spending two months in isolation. Please refer to the chart below, as well as the following explanation on raising aspects of a character.

1 Attribute Point	10 XP
1 Skill Point	5 XP
1 Bonus Point	5 XP

Raising Attributes & Skills

Attributes are the character's abilities that determine their intuitive chance of success without training. Skills, on the other hand, reflect a character's training and are more specific. Raising an Attribute is more expensive, but can be raised without training. Skills require actual training. The player can purchase 1 Skill point for 5 XP or 1 Attribute point for 10 XP. **Note:** You are purchasing the "Points", not the "Levels" themselves. Level 1-8 still requires one point and Level 9-10 requires two points. This scale applies to both Attributes and Skills. Also, some demons have increased or decreased cost for some Attributes or Skills.

Gaining Bonus Points (BP)

Players may purchase BP in order to obtain certain Gifts. Examples of suitable Gifts after character creation are mostly social, as they are more likely to be gained through good roleplaying. Physical Gifts would include Wrestling or Body Building if the character spent time (Game or Downtime) working to change their bodies. In the end, the GM has the final say on conditions for purchasing any Gift.

Drawbacks can also be "Bought off" by purchasing BP equal to their rating, removing the penalty. For instance, if they started the game with Bad Reputation (1), but worked hard to make a better name for themselves, they should be allowed to buy 1 BP for 5 XP and get rid of their social stigma. Again, this requires GM approval.

Antagonists

This section details a number of monsters, villains, and enemies to pit characters against. These write-ups are purposefully generic, allowing the GM to use them as a basis to create in-depth antagonists for their story. The write-ups are separated by type: Animals, Humans, and Supernatural. Three playable Illegal demon races are also included!

Note: For simplicity, Skills and bonuses listed for antagonists should be applied with or without a weapon and includes any bonuses granted by Attributes. Specialties are listed in parenthesis, giving a +2 bonus for that function. So, a Police officer gets a blanket +8 to Strike whether they fight with their nightstick or fire their pistol. With Perception (Investigation) +10, they have a +10 bonus to Perception checks, but a +12 bonus is using the Investigation Specialty.

Animals

Characters do not always face human opponents, but while animals are deadly, they rarely attack out of hatred or emotional triggers. Animals as antagonists may attack to protect their young or their territory. Wise characters can often avoid gaining a predator's ire in the first place with successful Survival checks to avoid animal tracks and Beast Handling checks to spot breeding ample areas.

Also, instead of using normal Combat rules, animals only have access to the Actions listed and Summon Inner Strength (See page 70). The listed animals are combat worthy for a starting character. **Note:** While small birds or even housecats can be used in combat, their role is more one of distraction than outright damage.

Birds

Description: Birds come in all shapes, colors, and sizes, from small blue jays to large eagles and vultures. The larger they are, the more dangerous, but single birds rarely have the power to really damage a live opponent. Instead, they are great for scouting or pecking at and distracting targets. Flocks are truly deadly.

Statistics of Note: Health 14, Stamina 15, Initiative +10, Movement 35, Actions per Round 1, Survival +5

Combat: Pecking Distract (Speed 8, Stamina 2, +4 Strike, 1 (L)): They peck and claw at the target's face. The victim suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls for the next Round as they recompose themselves. Dodge +8.

Bears

Description: No matter their color or species, bears are very deadly and most fighters don't survive a mauling. They stand up to 10 ft. tall and are very quick despite their size. Bears appear in almost any terrain and that is even truer if magic is introduced. There are also spells that allow some to turn into these vicious beasts.

Statistics of Note: Health 40, Stamina 25, Initiative +12, Movement 10, AR 2/1, Actions per Round 3, Intimidation +10, Survival +10

Combat: Claw Swipe (Speed 4, Stamina 2, +6 Strike, 8 (L)): the bear swipes downward with his claw, Hard Bite (Speed 6, Stamina 4, +4 Strike, 12 (L)): A lunging bite attack (not requiring a Grapple), Parry +6, Does not Dodge, but can Entangle with Hard Bite instead of using a Reaction.

Cats (Large)

Description: The term "Large cat" refers to lions, tigers, pumas, and other great cats. They usually live in jungles or plains and can be found in zoos in major cities. Characters should watch out for their ability to hunt and take down their without ever seeing them.

Statistics of Note: Health 32, Stamina 26, Initiative +12, Movement 22, Actions per Round 3, Intimidation +12, Stealth +12, Survival (Tracking) +8

Combat: Claw Swipe (Speed 3, Stamina 2, +5 Strike, 6 (L): They launch their heavy claws at their victim and tear them to shreds, Parry +7, Roll +10

Dogs/Wolves

Description: Dogs and wolves work the same mechanically. Wolves are wilder and attack more often based on territory, while domesticated dogs may be commanded by their master to attack or guard on their behalf. While wolves can be found usually only in snowy or wooded areas, dogs can be found just about anywhere in the world, including urban environments.

Statistics of Note: Health 21, Stamina 30, Initiative +14, Movement 18, Actions per Round 4, Athletics +5, Intimidation +6, Stealth +6, Survival (Tracking) +10

Combat: Hard Bite (Speed 5, Stamina 3, +6 Strike, 7 (L)): A lunging bite attack, not requiring a Grapple beforehand. Combatants make contested POW rolls to get the animal to let go (dog/wolf gets +5), Dodge +8, Roll +4

Horses

Description: There are many types of horses, from stock and draft horses to racing horses and saddle horses for spoiled rich girls. As domesticated animals, they are often found in farm or racing areas. Wild horses can occasionally be found in wooded areas and are a welcome challenge for veteran riders to break.

Statistics of Note: Health 30, Stamina 32, Initiative +8, Movement 25 (Top speed 48 MPH), Actions per Round 2, Athletics (Jumps) +11

Combat: Back Kick (Speed 5, Stamina 3, +4 Strike, 12 (NL)): The horse throws their legs backward to kick a target that is behind them, Trample (Speed 6, Stamina 4, +5 Strike, 8 (NL)): the horse simply steps on the opponent (can be combined with Sprint/Rush Action). Dodge +4 (or the rider's may use their Dodge or Parry if they choose)

Humans

From mass murderers to sociopaths to terrorists, humans are often the worst enemies that Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. ever faces. They are self destructive creatures by nature and have been at the source of the largest catastrophes stopped in recent decades.

Average People

Description: With billions of people on Earth, most don't fall within a neatly described category. Librarians, store clerks, janitors, EMT, ravers, homeless people, and cultists all quanlify as average people. GMs are encouraged to change the equipment that they carry based on their role. An EMT would carry medical tools, while a mechanic may have the tools of their trade.

Motivations: Everyone has their own motivations. The average person just wants to exist peacefully, without needing to fight for what they want. Most are motivated by money or love or a way to either without work.

Statistics of Note: Health 20, Stamina 22, Initiative +8, Movement 8, Skill of Choice +8, Magic Resistance +2

Combat: The average person does not carry a weapon or have much martial training, but may carry pepper spray. Few have training in firearms or thrown weapons. **Bonuses:** +2 to all Combat rolls, Grapple +5

Adepts

Description: Knowing even a single spell makes one an adept, so the power level of this antagonist can vary

Size

When size becomes a factor in battle, GMs can compare the combatants to the following chart for assistance for modifiers. It's harder to swat a fly than with hitting the side of a barn.

Modifiers to Strike

Size 1:	-12 Teeny (Wasp)
Size 2:	-8 Tiny (Rodent)
Size 3:	-4 Small (Dog/Cat)
Size 4:	0 Normal (Person)
Size 5:	+4 Large (Horse)
Size 6:	+8 Huge (Elephant)
Size 7:	+12 Immense (House)

drastically. Housewives, thugs, line cooks, and even small children can become adepts. Some belong to Orders (See page 85) and know unique spells, so one never knows what to expect.

Motivations: Some crave an excuse to use magic, while others only pull their magic out in extreme circumstances. They often have an intense curiosity and hunger for new spell knowledge.

Statistics of Note: Health 27, Stamina 32, Initiative +12, Movement 9, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +5, Discipline (Concentration) +8, Perception +10

Combat: Adepts are not exactly combat masters, but can defend themselves long enough to cast their magic effectively. Through greater physical training, they are able to boost their body's resistance to the draining effects of casting. **Bonuses:** +4 to all combat rolls, Grapple +6, Damage +1

Powers: Depending on their power level, they can have anywhere from one to four spells from various Paths, as well as Upgrades. Apprentice adepts may follow only one Path, while mid-grade adepts follow up to three, and masters up to five different paths.

Weaknesses: They often exhaust themselves early by spending Stamina to cast their spells.

API Agents

Description: Agents work in many circles and there are instances where characters may need to go against the company to survive. An agent may have gone rogue, using their training and gadgets against the characters. They may be demons that are being tracked by the agent. Or the agent is encountered while undercover and has to fight to ensure his cover is not blown. They are deadly antagonists, so use them sparingly.

Motivations: Most agents are focused on their current mission and will fight or coerce their way through anything to accomplish their task. They also have to keep the peace and the secrecy, meaning the characters may not remember their fight with an agent when it's all done.

Statistics of Note: Health 35, Stamina 32, Initiative +13, Movement 10, AR 3/2 (Bulletproof), Actions per Round 4, Athletics +8, Acrobatics +8, Discipline +10, Fortitude +8, Knowledge (Demonology) +10, Persuasion (Negotiation) +10, Magic Resistance +4

Combat: Agents are fully versed in combat and may carry a pistol (light or heavy) or a specially-designed gun for their current demon target. **Bonuses:** Strike +10, Dodge +9, Parry +10, Roll +9, Grapple +13, Damage +5, Targeted strike penalties are reduced by 4, RS -3

Powers: They often have just the right equipment to handle their assignment, as well as possible magic or cybernetics that suit the situation. Elite agents also choose one demon race to have a +5 bonus to all combat rolls against.

Mental Patients

Description: Whether they are bi-polar, self-destructive, or schizophrenic, they have a mental illness that weakens their ability to function on a normal level. But they are not weakened physically.

Motivations: Only the mental patient knows what fuels their actions. If they live in an institution, their motivation could be to escape. Those on the outside may become violent if they skip their medicine and often seek out certain victims that match their psychosis. Some are normal people who just snap one day and develop compulsions for violence.

Statistics of Note: Health 18, Stamina 20, Initiative +5, Movement 9, Actions per Round 2, Magic Resistance +0 (+6 against spells on their mind)

Combat: Mental patients do not have physical training, per se, but they possess a strange strength that can only come from not really caring about hurting themselves. Their strength can often seem inhuman if trying to restrain them. They may carry a knife or other easily hidden weapon and are good at throwing with accuracy. This is often their best way to create diversions or start a fight from afar. **Bonuses:** Strike +5, Dodge +0, Parry +2, Roll +4, Grapple +9 (+12 to Grapple to resist), Damage +1 (Damage +2 to Thrown weapons)

Monster Hunters

Description: Many think they are able to take on the supernatural without Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. This is rarely true, but Monster hunters are at least partially trained in common monster myths to give it a try. They have a way of showing up to "assist" API in their work at the worst of times and trigger chaos by bungling even the best laid plans (i.e. ruining a protection ritual right before the monsters attack).

Motivations: They really do mean well, but aren't educated enough to make any "real" difference. They may try to rid their corner or neighborhood of a crack-dealing demon, just to land in an even bigger web if their target answers to a more powerful demon.

Statistics of Note: Health 26, Stamina 26, Initiative +11, Movement 9, AR 2/1, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +2, Acrobatics +5, Beast Handling +7, Survival +9

Combat: Monster hunters have hand-crafted weapons or fight with easily found tools. Large garden shovels are

Fodder

The Fodder rule creates scenes where heroes take out battalions of minions and still have enough steam to defeat their real enemies. When characters are put up against minions or a large number of lesser opponents, combat can become tedious if you attempt to flesh out each of these opponents or make them a real match for the characters. Instead, the GM is encouraged to treat these opponents as easily disposable "Fodder" and give them the following stats: Health 8, Initiative +5, and +2 to all other Combat rolls. **Note:** There is no need to track a Fodder's Stamina points, as they should be put down long before ever coming close using it all.

often weapons of choice. Some may carry around an antique revolver or a throwing pitchfork. **Bonuses:** Strike +6, Dodge +3, Parry +4, Roll +5, Grapple +7, Damage +1

Powers: Monster hunters rarely have only one type of attack strategy, bringing their crystal ball, cybernetic hand, and MK-47 to the same fight. At the GM's discretion, they can also have one 1st level spell, one cybernetic implant, or one weapon that they are very proficient with (additional +5 bonus to Strike and Parry).

Weaknesses: Their lack of experience makes them overconfident and they often run headfirst into dangers they have no business messing with.

Police Officers

Description: While some are guilty of police brutality or precinct corruption, most police officers exist to serve the people. They try to bring peace to unrest and solve arguments between neighbors. They usually wear a uniform, with bars that signify current rank. Some are muscular from working out and improving hand-to-hand techniques. Others have a beer gut and focus on firearm use or driving to compensate for physical shortcomings. These stats can also be used for FBI agents and other figures of authority.

Motivations: Police officers may enter a scene to investigate disturbances or in an effort to help someone in trouble. They can have their own vendettas, especially if circumstances led another officer to be hurt in the line of duty. They can become obstacles for API, but most officers respond well to loudly barked orders as if the character is of higher rank. Make sure the performance is good, as police officers are well-versed at poking holes in someone's exterior.

Statistics of Note: Health 34, Stamina 35, Initiative +15, AR 2/3 (Bulletproof), Movement 12, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +3, Intimidation (Interrogation) +8, Perception (Investigation) +10

Combat: Police officers are trained to incapacitate their opponent for further questioning. They aim away from vital organs and only shoot to kill when absolutely necessary. Standard issue is a Pistol (Light) and a nightstick (Club). **Bonuses:** Strike +8, Dodge +6, Parry +5, Roll +7, Grapple +11 (+14 to Immobilize), Damage +2, RS -2, +6 to Strike from Aim Action (instead of +3).

Thugs

Description: The term "Thug" refers to muscled antagonists, usually acting on behalf of a much smarter leader. They are bouncers, gang members, body guards, or a crime boss's right hand. They excel in both strength and physical prowess, making them formidable enemies in close combat.

Motivations: A thug's motivation is to do damage. They break bones at their boss' whim, and love to feel more powerful than others. Money is a big motivator for thugs, due to the amount of health care needed to keep up their type of occupation. Others strive for respect through intimidation.

Statistics of Note: Health 30, Stamina 38, Initiative +12, AR 2/0, Movement 10, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +2, Intimidation (Physical threats) +10, Legerdemain +6

Combat: Thugs are best in close combat, carrying brass knuckles, a knife, or a baseball bat. Most have at least some training in firing a gun. Most learn handguns, but the lucky or connected ones can get their hands on more powerful firearms. **Bonuses:** Strike +9, Parry +7, Dodge +5, Roll +10, Grapple +10, Damage +3, RS -1

Supernatural

Sometimes, the charactersc cross paths with demons. Other times, monsters are summoned or created to cause chaos and destruction. Either way, inhuman forces are dangerous foes tp go up against.

Burners

Description: These fire demons have been on Earth for 20 years and caused quite the stir. While they rarely play the part of "villain", they do have freedom fighters within their population that battle anyone that gets in their way. Also, Burner youths are just as rambunctious as humans and can be easily riled to fight.

Motivations: Freedom fighters take on missions to accumulate the right resources to better prepare themselves to return home. Others just want to fight for the same reason humans do… to show superiority or command respect. A well placed adjective about one's mother is sometimes all it takes.

Statistics of Note: Health 25, Stamina 30, Initiative +16, Movement 14, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Discipline +7, Legerdemain +10

Combat: Burners are quick and lithe, making them great fighters. **Bonuses:** Strike +6, Parry +6, Dodge +8, Roll +8, Grapple +8, Damage +1

Powers: They can fuel electrical machines or their fists at will, adding +1 (L) per 2 Stamina points for one minute. Most also have at least one spell from the Path of Elements (Fire) or Path of Portals.

Weaknesses: Double damage from Cold.

Changelings

Description: Changelings can be anyone at anytime, making them great antagonists. They are masters of assassination and appearing where once there was nothing. There is no single way to describe a Changeling and most have never seen one in their true form.

Motivations: Changelings are known for being mercenaries and are often paid to do a job, be it cat burglary, private investigation, or cold murder. They fight only when they know they can win.

Statistics of Note: Health 27, Stamina 26, Initiative +13, Movement 12, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +2, Stealth +14

Combat: Changelings carry equipment based on their current job. The majority prefers firearms to close combat, carrying a rifle or other ranged weapon. **Bonuses:** Strike +6, Parry +8, Dodge +6, Roll +6, Grapple +7, Damage +1, RS -2, +4 from Aim Action (instead of +3)

Powers: For 4 Stamina points, the Changeling can turn into any other humanoid. Some can even turn into non-living objects or become totally 2D. If they pursue magic, they often follow the Paths of Neutralization or Telepathy to give them an advantage over their opponents.

Chromatic Drones

Description: Drones are the first Chromatics sent to new worlds to evaluate defensive capabilities. Just as the machines did with the Burners, newly designed drones are adapted to the previous drone's feedback. Each upgrade also alters their appearance, so they do not all look alike. Some have large claws and multiple legs, while others hover and sport ray guns.

Motivations: Drones are here to destroy and to fight. They then transmit their feedback to their home dimension. API has yet to discover how their transmissions cross dimensional boundaries. They do not show emotion and are very calculated in every action.

Statistics of Note: Health 62, Stamina 45, Initiative +14, AR 6/5 (Bulletproof), Movement 20, Actions per Round 5, Magic Resistance +8, Perception +16, Immune to Poison/drugs, Knockouts, Bleeding, and most other things that affect humanoids.

Combat: Drones are very tough and it can take a large squad to defeat. Luckily, they are usually solitary antagonists. They have a variety of ranged weapons from bullets to shrapnel and their close combat attacks are always Lethal. **Bonuses:** Strike +12, Parry +10, Dodge +10, Roll +15, Grapple +14, Damage +6 (L)

Powers: Drones have the equilavent of six to eight cybernetic implants (Page 58). They also have secret magic from the Path of Portals that allows them to traverse dimensions without sacrificing their Health.

Weaknesses: There may be only a single chink in their armor at any given time that changes during each encounter and adaptation. Once the characters find their weakness, their attacks ignore AR on Targeted strikes.

Cyborgs

Description: A cyborg has integrated their body with machine technology. They may have a bionic arm, leg, hand, or other implant. Each has their own combination and usage to give them an advantage and can make very interesting antagonists. Most try to hide their gifts until they really need them.

Motivations: Cyborgs have normal motivations, defined by their Passion. They may also be driven to steal other cyborg's implants to later have them installed themselves. The world of cybernetics is cut-throat. Some may be under orders or indebted to cyber docs that make them perform deplorable acts. Others are psychos with upgrades.

Statistics of Note: Health 33, Stamina 28, Initiative +13, Movement 11, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Fortitude +10

Combat: Fighting styles for each cyborg differs based on their current implants. Bionic legs means constant moving and kicking, while bionic arms means powerfully strong punches. **Bonuses:** Strike +9, Parry +6, Dodge +6, Roll +12, Grapple +10, Damage +3, RS -2.

Powers: Cyborgs can have anywhere from one to four cybernetic implants that can be utilitarian or weapons.

Weaknesses: While damaging a cybernetic implant can be difficult, removing their significant advantage is the key to defeating any cyborg.

Faeries

Description: None standing taller than a pencil, faeries (or fairies) are supernatural pests and an utter pain. Some appear as beautiful and tiny butterfly-winged beings, landing on someone's finger just to bite it and leave hallucinogens in their bloodstream. Others are gremlins, living inside human-crafted items, waiting to cause back luck. They exist in every dimension with incalculable species, but most have the same disposition. There is really no limit to fairy appearances, as they even have the ability to temporarily change their shape at will (but they cannot grow larger).

Motivations: Faeries are only motivated by their own amusement. In the grand scheme, their job is the cause bad luck and annoyance to every being that crosses their path. They may tie a character's shoe laces together, misplace things, or cut belt loops. As soon as their actions cease to be fun, they move on to other, more annoying activities.

Statistics of Note: Health 12, Stamina 15, Initiative +15, Movement 12, Actions per Round 2, Magic Resistance +5

Combat: Their size makes it very easy to strike larger foes, but they are capable of doing only small amounts of damage. They usually attempt to bite their opponent to drug and incapacitate them or simply run away. Some craft miniature bows that deal no actual damage, based on their size. licking their arrows before shooting forces a check against their bite (described below). **Bonuses:** Strike +10, Parry +5, Dodge +10, Roll +15, Grapple -2, Damage -4

Powers: A fairy's bite injects a hallucinogen in the victim's bloodstream. They must make a Tough (30) VIG + Fortitude (Poison) check to avoid a -6 penalty to all rolls for a number of minutes equal to the value by which they missed their check. If successful, they still suffer a -2 penalty for two minutes, as it is a magic poison. If shot from a mini-bow, they only need a Moderate (20) check.

Weaknesses: They cannot cross piles or lines of salt and don't mess with people that wear their clothes inside-out, because they are busy laughing hysterically.

Gargoyles

Description: Gargoyles are demonic statues that spring to life at night. Many believe they prey on helpless victims during full moons and they are famous for hanging on Victorian and gothic architecture. Gargoyles turn to stone in sun light. They are not limited to full moons and are actually non-threatening in most cases.

Motivations: Gargoyles are attracted to shining bobbles or expensive jewelry. They will defend themselves if attacked, but are usually only trying to swipe an earring or necklace when others think they are being vicious. They also fight amongst each other for fun or for territory (i.e. the best buildings to perch on). They are favored minions of powerful adepts or elder Taylari.

Statistics of Note: Health 50, Stamina 25, Initiative +10, Movement 11 (40 flying), AR 4/4, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Fortitude +12, Survival +10, Immune to poisons/drugs

Combat: Gargoyles have flying as their biggest advantage, as they perform swoop attacks with swiftness and gravity. Some may also possess claws and fangs for Lethal attacks. **Bonuses:** Strike +11, Parry +2, Dodge +3, Roll +7, Grapple +12, Damage +4 (L)

Powers: They immune to all darkness, even magic.

Weaknesses: Sunlight turns them to stone.

Glulick Worms

Description: Glulick worms used to only exist in Caulon, but are now in mid-west deserts, brought through the same kaleidoscopic portals as the Burners. These giant worms can grow up to 18-feet long and drill underground with their powerful maws, only to erupt from the ground to eat people. Their natural armor plating protects them from many attacks, but it is susceptible to water-based damage.

Motivations: Glulick worms are beasts and only come out to eat in most cases. They also attack if their larvae are being stolen... a Burner delicacy.

Statistics of Note: Health 78, Stamina 50, Initiative +11, Movement 14 (7 through sand), AR 6/5, Actions per Round 2, Magic Resistance +3

Combat: They are large, behemoth worms. They have no strategy but to kill. They parry with their natural armor. **Bonuses:** Strike +8, Parry +3, Dodge +5, Roll +4, Damage +6, Immune to fire damage.

Powers: Spew (Speed 8, Stamina 6, 10 (L)): The worm spews lava from its maw. They fire at their target, but the lava also hits everything within a 10-foot area of the target. Must be Dodged.

Weaknesses: Water and Cold inflict double damage.

Lochs

Description: Lochs are large, fish demons. Some work with API, but others that are rabid with power and violence. Lochs are known for killing wandering humans by the dozen in the Amazon, but these hostile Lochs frequent other countries as well.

Motivations: Lochs are opportunistic and may attack to take something they want. They are survivalists and will even kill and rape women in hopes of repopulating their species. Some are nihilistic and revel in the killing anyone that crosses their path.

Statistics of Note: Health 50, Stamina 30, Initiative +10, Movement 12, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +2 Athletics +13, Fortitude +10

Combat: Lochs are powerhouses, especially in water. This is seldom through training. Instead, they possess natural brute strength and use it to rip their opponent apart. **Bonuses:** Strike +7, Parry +5, Dodge +4, Roll +8, Grapple +11, Damage +5 (L)

Powers: They get a +3 bonus to all checks while in water and favor spells from the Path of Augmentation or Elements (Water).

Spectrals (Ghosts)

Description: Ghosts are immaterial and invisible and are the favored minion of necromancers. Most retain their human look, but are marred by the signs of their deaths (i.e. bullets wounds, strangle marks, etc.). Some Spectrals evolve into spirits, becoming Conceptuals or Elementals and taking on different aspects.

Motivations: Spectrals are driven by their Passion above all else. The most common are those that fight to protect living loved ones. Some may also choose the characters as guinea pigs for mastering their Spectral skills. Others are simply pawns of a controlling necromancer. Most ghosts are happy to be left alone to their own personal goals.

Statistics of Note: Health 24, Stamina 27, Initiative +12, Movement 12, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Spectral skill of choice +10, Spectral skill of choice +5

Combat: They require the Stir skill to pick up and wield material items. Many get cocky and believe they cannot be hurt, simply because they are already dead. One encounter with a necromancer proves them wrong. **Bonuses:** Strike +5, Parry +4, Dodge +5, Roll +6, Grapple +8, Damage +1

Powers: Spectral Skills on page 41. Elemental and Conceptual Spectrals have special Skills on page 147.

Spirit Eaters

Description: A figment of one's deepest fear on many levels, Spirit Eaters are evil incarnate. They hunt down spirits (and sometimes the living) to devour them. All Spirit Eaters were once sane ghosts that went crazy and became cannibalistic. Their appearance is traditionally demonic, with red glowing eyes and scary visages.

Motivations: Spirit Eaters have lost all emotion and reason… they only hunger.

Statistics of Note: Health 45, Stamina 37, Initiative +17, Movement 18, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +4, Devour +10, Spectral skill of choice +10, Spectral skill of choice +5

Combat: Spirit Eaters close in and devour. They care little for their own Health and simply attack with the hopes of eating another soul. **Bonuses:** Strike +10, Parry +8, Dodge +10, Roll +12, Grapple +14, Damage +4

Powers: Spectral skills on page 41, as well as "Devour" on page 147. Devour can be used on spirits or the living, making them deadly for anyone to fight.

Taylari

Description: Taylari are living vampires that drink blood and lurk in darkness. They often attempt to live normal lives, incorporated into human culture like other demons. They also have two faces: their human face and their Face of Death, where they appear as a monster and drink blood to sustain their existence.

Motivations: They are territorial and like to keep a firm grasp on what's theirs. If slighted, they attack their target's reputation, family, or career before actually attacking them directly. They are self-policing, so characters may only gain a Taylari antagonist if they slighted one directly.

Statistics of Note: Health 43, Stamina 34, Initiative +14, Movement 11, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +3, Discipline +8, Fortitude +9, Survival (Tracking) +8 (+10 by blood), Stealth +12

Combat: Taylari detest fighting fair. When they are forced to, they specialize in Grappling and drink their victim's blood. **Bonuses:** Strike +9, Parry +4, Dodge +6, Roll +4, Grapple +14, Damage +2 (+5 from Bite)

Powers: They regain Health equal to the damage dealt from a Bite Action. They can also use magic from the Path of Blood. Some also belong to Vampire Families (Page 151).

Weaknesses: Sunlight, Fire, and Garlic, as described on page 29.

Taylari Mortus

Description: Taylari Mortus are dead vampires and are creatures born when a Taylari passes into the afterdeath. They wear the Face of Death and are completely animalistic beasts that sprint between victims in search of more blood. They sleep during the day, as sunlight is their one true weakness.

Motivations: Taylari Mortus are bestial and seek only their next victim. Squads may need to track it or may cross paths with it and need to defend themselves. Running into a Taylari Mortus usually means meeting the Taylari chasing it as well.

Statistics of Note: Health 56, Stamina 40,

Initiative +18, Movement 16, AR 4/2, Actions per Round 5, Magic Resistance +4, Fortitude +9, Intimidation +12, Survival (Tracking) +10 (+15 by blood)

Combat: Taylari Mortus do not use weapons and fight only with their Face of Death and their boosted strength and speed. **Bonuses:** Strike +14, Parry +9, Dodge +10, Roll +10, Grapple +18, Damage +5 (+8 from Bite)

Powers: Taylari Mortus retain spells from the Path of Blood from before their death and spend half the normal Mana cost (rounded down) to cast, because their blood has evolved to the final stage of the curse. They also regain Health for all damage dealt through a Bite Action.

Weaknesses: As per the Taylari, including: Sunlight causes 10 (L) per round that ignores any AR and cannot be recovered by drinking blood. Sunlight can kill them, unlike their living counterparts.

Wolf People

Description: A Wolf Person looks scruffy and can also take a Half-Wolf form, boosting their strength, speed, and body hair ratio. Their clothing ranges from private business owner to street thug. Anyone can be born as a Wolf Person if they have the right parents.

Motivations: They like to push other peoples' buttons so they can justify smashing a face or two and get off without penalty. During a full moon, they go out on pleasure sprees of blood, sex, and death, meaning they may need to be put down. Getting on their bad side is very easy to do.

Statistics of Note: Health 36, Stamina 33, Initiative +13, Movement 13, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +2, Athletics +8, Acrobatics +7, Fortitude +9, Survival (Tracking) +10

Combat: Wolf People love battle and fight with their fists or claws. They like to use bats and knifes if they don't plan on going furry. **Bonuses:** Strike +9, Parry +6, Dodge +5, Roll +7, Grapple +11, Damage +4

Powers: Their biggest asset is turning into their Half-Wolf or Wolf form at will (bonuses found on page 30-31). Most know at least one spell from the Path of Animalia.

Weaknesses: They are easier to anger than most.

Zombies

Description: The walking dead are ghosts or spirits that have possessed corpses (usually by force). They are shambling, decaying monsters, already dead and without pain or exhaustion. This particular type of zombie is wonderful for running a group of humans through a survival game.

Motivations: A zombie's motivation is that of their creator. They simply perform as commanded and then return to their afterlife after the fact. Ghosts that bring themselves back stereotypically crave to feast on brains.

Statistics of Note: Health 40, Stamina 30, Initiative +2, Movement 4, Actions per Round 2, Magic Resistance +0, Does not suffer from Pain penalties and any magic from the Path of Neutralization

Combat: Zombie Actions work differently than normal. They can only perform a Full attack, Grapple (then Bite), or Parry. No other combat maneuvers and no ranged combat. **Bonuses:** Strike +3, Parry +3, Grapple +10, Damage +5, No Dodge

Powers: If a zombie Bites their victim, their curse is transferred. The victim makes a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check each minute for four minutes. If any of them fail, their skin turns black and decayed and they will wake up after their next sleep as a zombie themselves. Bite victims have been known to fight to stay awake for as long as they can. Some beg their squad to kill them in their sleep. Taylari and Burners are immune to this effect.

Weaknesses: They take double damage from fire. Shots to the head deal triple damage.

Random Demon Maker

Countless demon races exist in undiscovered dimensions and there is no way to accurately depict them all in one book. While other races will be fully detailed in future API sourcebooks, we have provided example Gifts and Drawbacks to use to randomly create demons of your own. We hope this is helpful tool for GMs that frequently use demons in their story or for players that want to play something out of the ordinary. At character creation, roll twice on the following table. Some attributes are good, while others are limitations, as not all demons have a leg up on humanity. Enjoy!

1- Nothing Much: Mostly human in appearance, but may have different color skin, pointed ears, or forehead ridge.
2- Extra Eyes: They have a third eye or multiple insect-like eyes and receive a +4 bonus to Perception checks.
3- Extra Arm: +1 Action per Round and +3 to Parry.
4- First time on Earth: They know nothing of Earth or humanity. Read: They are Illegal.
5- Tail: Prehensile and approximately 3 ft. long, with POW equal to ½ the demon's own POW.
6- Weak Attribute: As per Weak Attribute Drawback (Page 51).
7- Fangs: They deal +4 (L) with a Bite.
8- Free Path: As per Path Access Gift for Path of choice.
9- Airborne: Has wings or can hover at Movement or three times faster if sprinting (instead of double).
10- Vulnerability: Takes double damage from one source (i.e. fire, cold, poison, etc.).
11- Aquatic: Can breathe above and below water and can move normally in water.
12- Quick Wit: +5 to Initiative and +1 to all combat rolls.
13- Small: They stand at only up to 3 ft. at adulthood. Carrying weight is 20 lbs. per level.
14- Unusual appetite: Could be yogurt or human hearts.
15- Hulking body: +10 Health, +4 to Lifting rolls, +10 lbs. to Carrying weight.
16- Poison: They secrete poison from their hands that deals +3 (L) on top of Base damage. Opponent takes only +1 (L) with a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude check against Poison.
17- Free Magic: They get one free spell and one free upgrade from a particular Path of magic.
18- Spiked: +2 (L) to all unarmed attacks.
19- Unique: Like the Burners' "inner fire" or an Oracles' foresight, they have a unique ability to their race.
20- Roll two more times.

Carriers

Other Names: Sickos, Wretched, Neibas
Stereotypes: Dirty, Caring, Genocidal

Origins

These demons are called the Neibas in their native tongue, but have the moniker "Carriers" for their unusual diet. They literally eat disease and sickness from other creatures. Their fingers reach inside and pull the malady out, appearing as long strands of green and purple magic, and slurp it up like spaghetti. The imagery is sickening to watch, but is very normal to their kind.

Their home world is filled with illnesses that run rampant and exist as prey to devour. In other dimensions, the Neibas are wise advisors and caring healers, eating ailments from the suffering. However, they pose too high a threat to be allowed to roam free on Earth. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has listed the Carriers as Illegal and it's doubtful that status will ever change, no matter how peaceful their intentions. The company has record of the Neibas's aid to the Circle of Ten in the past, but feels they are too dangerous in today's times.

Lifestyle

In their dimension, Carriers feast like kings on a plethora of alien bugs and bacteria to eat, but they are travelers by nature. Some are altruistic, moving between dimensions to help diseased cultures. Most come to Earth looking for new opportunities or new cuisine. Diseases like AIDS or herpes are foreign to their people, but have become a delicacy. Their appearance is not at all human, so they often pick up an Image Emitter (See page 53) or similar charm on the black market before coming to Earth. Dietary needs lead come to healthcare professions like hospital attendants, paramedics, or even street doctors. Unsurprisingly, their patients almost always kick their ailment.

Other Carriers are more malicious than their altruistic kin. Neibas culture raises certain children as warriors, teaching them the glories of battle above all other facets of life. Most Carriers left these archaic teachings behind long ago, but these collectives occasionally spring up to destroy worlds they visit. They often arrive in new dimensions and call out for the residents' best warriors to battle to the death. Others lurk in shadows, watching the world's inhabitants until they see an opportunity to strike a critical blow. This method is use to measure how long it takes for their targets to catch on to their plans.

Legal Status

Many currently live under API's radar, no matter what the company tells their people. The majority are peaceful, but others scheme for the end of Earth. In either case, Carriers are illegal for one single reason. Upon their death, a Carrier releases a mixture of all their digested diseases (both demonic and earthly) that has the possibility of causing pandemics. Some of the worst recorded plagues and incurable diseases have been the result of a Carrier corpse. When found, most are promptly deported from Earth, while others have been incarcerated and interrogated for more information on their true intentions. API currently houses two completely quarantined Carriers in their facilities, just in case of a Carrier death where their special disease needs to be disposed of.

Appearance (Fear 15)

Carriers are tall, lithe beings with long limbs and skin as black as oil (with texture to match). Their hair is stringy, white, and worn long for cultural reasons. They also have long faces with wide, toothy grins, making them quite creepy-looking. Their appearance can easily startle, so they usually stick to shadows when traveling. Carriers have an average lifespan of 145 years of age.

Gift – Eat Disease

Carriers can literally eat the sickness from a person, curing any disease or ailment (whether physical or mental). More resilient diseases, like cancer or HIV, still require weeks to recover from their residual symptoms, but patients are free and clear after the process. They are immune to the effects of any diseases (natural or supernatural) themselves. This ability does not heal any damage taken already.

Gift - Sick Breath

(Speed 6, Stamina 5, 6 (L))

Within 24 hrs of eating, they can spew a cloud of diseased gas from their mouth that stretches 20 ft. in range

Carrier Antagonist

Statistics of Note: Health 23, Stamina 30, Initiative +9, AR 2/2, Movement 11, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +3, Discipline +7, Fortitude +8, Legerdemain +7, Medicine +10, Stealth +10

Combat: Carriers are great at both close and ranged combat. **Bonuses:** Strike +8, Parry +7, Dodge +7, Roll +8, Grapple +10 (+16 to Break Grapple), Damage +2, RS -1, Simultaneous action penalties reduced by 2.

and 10 ft. in width. Targets can only attempt to Dodge this attack. If they fail, the victim must make a Tough (30) VIG + Fortitude check against Disease or contract a supernatural disease (GM's choice of symptoms) and suffer a -4 penalty to all rolls until the sickness subsides (possibly never). This Gift's effects are not cumulative and victims can only be affected once at any given time.

Gift – Path of Sickness

As per the Path Access Gift for Path of Sickness.

Drawback – Craving

They crave sickness at least once a day, but they eat constantly if they have the chance. No matter how acute or subtle, they can sense any sicknesses nearby and must make an INS + Discipline check to resist rushing to feast if they have not eaten in the last 24 hours. Difficulty is based on the gravity of the ailment, as sicker victims are more alluring.

Drawback – Temperatures

Carriers are vulnerable to extreme temperatures (either hot or cold), taking double damage from either fire or cold.

Nanou

Race: Carrier
Passion: Questions
Age: 48

Background: Nanou grew up in a nomadic Neibas family that followed the ancient teachings of their people, the way of the warrior. They leapt from dimension to dimension, conquering each one and leaving only suffering in their wake. But Nanou was not a warrior at heart. Surely, she was trained to wield a weapon and challenged every day in a battle for her life, but her heart was not in the sheer brutality her family enjoyed so much. Every time she raised her hand or weapon to an enemy, her heart broke. When she was of age, she quickly left her family to travel alone and seek a new place in life. And this led her to Earth where she lived on the streets for years, hiding from API and avoiding combat whenever possible.

She eventually found her calling after meeting a child who was dying in an alley from untreated cancer. She relieved the small human's suffering and became fascinated with idea of suffering itself, especially a person's reaction when it no longer holds them. She worked diligently for year and got a job working in the terminal ward of the local hospital (with a nifty Image Emitter to hide her true form, page 53). There, she seeks to understand suffering itself and why it exists.

Personality: Despite her dread appearance, Nanou has gentle eyes and a smooth disposition. She keeps calm in almost all cases, but is only truly happy when helping someone in pain. She helps those that she feels have something to live for, but too many miracle comebacks could lead API right to her.

Appearance: She's long and lanky, with black skin and large, sharp teeth in her true form. Her human image is of Rhonda Smith, a black woman, most often found in hospital scrubs.

Secrets: She knows of many other Illegals on Earth, but never gives up a brother to API.

Statistics: Health 28, Stamina 35, Initiative +11, AR 2/2, Movement 11, Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +3, Discipline +7, Fortitude +10, Medicine +14, Stealth +8, Arts +9

Combat: Nanou was trained in the ways of a warrior, but hasn't used her skills for a long time. **Bonuses:** Strike +7, Parry +10, Dodge +10, Roll +10, Grapple +9 (+15 to Break Grapple), Damage +3, Simultaneous action penalties reduced by 4.

Special Abilities: Aside from Eat Disease, Nanou has opened his 1st Inner Circle and learned the Diagnosis spell (Path of Health, page 102).

Implementation: Nanou can act as an enemy, with the characters being sent to search for the illegal in the local hospital. Few agents look past the "illegal" title. He could also be a fine contact, lending her healing expertise to a group in severe need.

Oracles

Other Names: Seers, Three-eyes, Kalasu
Stereotypes: Wise, Honest, Bad Luck

Origins

Oracles are known as Kalasu in their native tongue. They are human-looking demons from a dimension of swirling light and floating cities. They are most known for their powers to view the future with their third eye. This ability has led their peaceful society, as they can solve most conflicts by looking upon the situation and viewing several different outcomes. For instance, they can view an argument and know that they will lose, so they concede and leave the victor to their spoils.

With little reason to enter into conflicts, they began looking outward. Oracles are blessed with prophetic dreams and they are urged to follow to their conclusion as fate's right hands. These visions do not always involve the Oracle themselves, so they hop dimensions in search of their dream sources, often bringing them to Earth.

The powers of fate that encircle Oracles are also not always kind. They are deemed Illegal for the high number of "unlucky" events that surround them. Some even lead to death, dismemberment, or natural disasters.

Lifestyle

Very few Oracles actually call Earth their home. Most arrive just in time to witness a dreamed event and others just passing through on their way to do the same. They receive visions in their sleep that urge them to follow. Some are direct, seeking out the subject of the dream and confronting them. This method can either hasten or slow their dreams event. Altruistic Oracles may tell their subject how to avoid the outcome, while the more malicious actively trick them into triggering the event prematurely. Almost every decision is based on their dreams, leading some to learn dream magic (Path of Figments) in order to understand them fully. From this research, many have concluded that their visions may be instructions from a higher power.

The few that do reside on Earth have become very good at hiding out, keeping to themselves, and existing in peace. They may make a living with their abilities as fortune tellers or therapists, but most are nomadic (their best survival mechanism). If their bad luck causes one accidental death, it may alert the cops. Two brings detectives to check for possible connections. More than that and Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. could get involved, which does not bode well for Oracles.

Legal Status

While not inherently evil, Oracles infect any area they inhabit with bad luck, causing more car accidents, trips down flights of stairs, and, even worse, natural disasters. They cannot control this, so it's become something to which they pay very little attention. Most Oracles are not friends of Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. and reject their attempts to keep an iron grasp on Earth. In the past, they have been tracked down, tortured, and forced to give visions to the company. They believe API is hypocritical in their attempts to remove Oracles, while simultaneously needing their foresight. Rumors say that API actually holds these demons in specially-designed facilities with heavily-enforced luck magic.

Appearance

While they appear human, they have distinctly different eyes. Namely, the additional, vertically third eye in their forehead. All three of their eyes are completely black, with no cornea. Some say that you can see all of creation by gazing into them. Their race has pale skin, dark black hair, and fine features. They can conceal their origins easily with sunglasses or a headband. Oracles have an average lifespan of 95 years of age.

Gift – Future Sight

By looking upon a person, place, thing, or situation with their third eye, they can accurately discern the immediate outcome. To sense long term effects as well, they can make a Tough (30) INS + Perception check to activate and a Moderate (20) IQ + Knowledge check to decipher the vision's meaning. This provides a +2 bonus to all combat checks.

Gift – Path of Fortune

As per the Path Access Gift for Path of Fortune.

Oracle Antagonist

Statistics of Note: Health 20, Stamina 22, Initiative +12, Movement 8, Actions per Round 2, Magic Resistance +5, Perception +13, Discipline +10

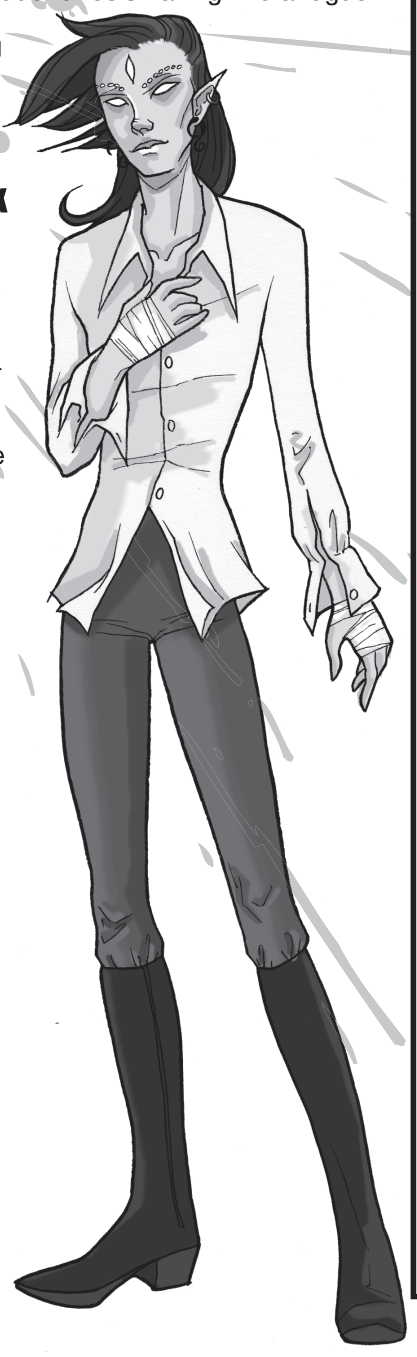
Combat: Oracles detest violence in all fashions and come from a pacifist culture. They have no particular training in combat and dislike handling weapons. They often use their Future Sight to find the best exit strategy when combat rears its head. **Bonuses:** +2 bonus to all Combat rolls and Grapple +7.

Drawback – Blackouts

They have poor constitution, making them prone to sudden blackouts. As per Weak Attribute Drawback for VIG. Also, at least once per day, the Oracle must make a Moderate (20) VIG + Fortitude to resist falling into a fugue state. Some allow themselves to black out, hoping visions are not far behind, but they seldom occur at particularly helpful times.

Drawback – Bad Luck

All checks performed in an Oracle's presence suffer a cumulative -2 penalty per day they have been around them or in the area where they inhabit. This penalty does not affect the Oracle themselves and the outcomes seem like pure accidents to the untrained.



Santiago

Race: Oracle
Passion: Rebellion
Age: 18

Background: Santiago is one of the few Oracles born on Earth. He has the strong belief that he has as much right to stay as anyone else, even if his race is considered "Illegal". He made the decision to live in the open a long time ago. He lives like any human and doesn't fear repercussions from API. All agents that have tried to arrest him have ended up dead. This is all part of his rebellion against the company.

In recent years, he has made a game of luring API agents to his location, isolating squad members, and viciously murdering them. It brings him a strange joy to collect their Agent IDs (Page 53) as his prize. His bad name has spread throughout the supernatural community, but other demons born on Earth are often called to his banner. API knows Santiago is trouble for them and may cause riots and rebellions in the near future.

Personality: There's no mistaking his attitude. He doesn't possess the demure disposition of other Oracles and dislikes authority figures. He treats others as his equal, but doesn't take too kindly when others don't treat him in the same regard.

Appearance: Santiago made sure to tan his naturally pale skin in order to blend in better. Now he resembles a young Latino male. He wears an innocent expression, which often gets him out of trouble.

Secrets: He has his neighborhood mapped out and knows all its ins and outs. He's made deals with local businesses, gangs, and busybodies to provide information on goings-on. Essentially, anything that happens in his town, he knows about.

Statistics: Health 30, Stamina 30, Initiative +18, Movement 11, Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +4, Perception +12, Discipline +10, Stealth +13, Legerdemain +12, Performance (Innocent) +9

Combat: Santiago is a stealthy fighter, not prone to fighting fair. He uses Future Sight to know enemy positions before they even know. All his fighting skills are self-taught and he wields knives more often than other weapons. **Bonuses:** Strike +7, Parry +7, Dodge +8, Roll +5, Grapple +10, Damage +4

Special Abilities: Future Sight, Home Turf Gift

Implementation: Santiago can make a wonderful antagonist for any squad, especially if they are working for or with API. As a contact, he can give information on goings-on in his town, as long as it doesn't put him or his territory in danger. The characters could also ally with him and be drawn into his rebellion against API and their oppressive practices.

Tark

Other Names: Elephant Men, Knappers, Juggernauts
Stereotypes: Unstoppable, Perverts, Retarded

Origins

Tark are elephant-sized demons with intellect to match. They are immensely strong and very quick to anger. Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. has gathered very little information on Tark, as their giants' communication skills are rather lacking. From their intelligence, these demons are products of genetic experiments. They are created as soldiers and to a lesser extent… pets.

Their creator is known only as Grem, but API has little else on this being. For one reason or another, Grem sends Tark to infiltrate Earth and kidnap human infants and toddlers. Tark have cravings for gobbling up children, so they aren't all brought to Grem in one piece. API scientists theorize that the children are experimented on and genetically altered to become more Tark. For this reason, Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. is determined to fight for every child in danger from these demons. If they don't, it may return and add to the threat.

Lifestyle

In their home world, Tark live in undying devotion and worship to Grem. They live in tribes and have tribal rivalries where they showboat their genetically-instilled battle instincts. Grem be call upon them at any moment and they respond with the obedience also bred into them. They may receive a treat (i.e. baby meat) and a pat on the head for their submission, like rewarding a dog. The greatest and most prized Tark receive special ornate armor that not only protects them from harm, but gives shows their master's favoritism. Other Tark respect and listen to these favored armor-bearers.

Due to their size, Tark seldom like highly-populated areas, unless their plan is to cause panic and harm to as many people as possible. This grand strategy is often used to draw API agents to one Tark while another attempts kidnapping in a different area. If faced with an API squad, they won't retreat.

Legal Status

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. does not know Grem's origins or whether he or she is human or demon. Tark invasion into our dimension is considered a declaration of war. In recent years, the company has begun specialized Elite training against Tark and the development of Tark-specific weaponry to help combat Grem's increasing numbers.

Appearance (Fear 20)

Tark are unique-looking demons. They stand between 15 and 20 ft. tall and their leathery skin is mustard yellow and covered in disgusting boils. Adding to their hideousness, Tark also have long, gnarled ears and two sharp rows of shark-like teeth. Some are equipped with ornate suits of armor, which only enhances their powerful and menacing appearance. They are asexual, as it is believed that they are created, not born. Tark have an average lifespan of 50 years of age.

Gift – Hulking Body

Tark have no unique "powers", but are insanely tough and powerful. They receive the following **Bonuses:** 75 lbs. per POW Carrying weight, +10 to Lifting checks, +25 Health, +6 to Fortitude checks, Natural Armor 3/3, +5 Grapple, +5 Stamina points, and +4 to Base Damage. However, all their Actions require +2 Speed and normal sized opponents receive a bonus to Strike against them (See Size on page 162).

Gift – Boils

Their body is covered in large, grotesque pustules. If the Tark takes 8 (L) or more, their boils rupture and spray acidic puss. Opponents in close combat with the Tark must make a Difficulty (12) Dodge check or take 4 (L) with AP 3.

Gift – Armor-Bearer (Optional–3 BP)

The Tark is favored by Grem and has been gifted with special armor (AR 4/3), Hindrance 2. They also receive a +5 bonus to all Persuasion checks to command other Tark.

Drawback – Idiots

Tark are simpleminded beings and it is difficult for them to advance in intellectual or insightful challenges. As per Weak Attributes, for both INS and IQ.

Tark Antagonist

Statistics of Note: Health 70, Stamina 56, Initiative +5, Movement 5, AR 3/3 (with armor, AR 7/6), Actions per Round 3, Magic Resistance +4, Fortitude +16,

Combat: Their size makes them slower, but strikes that land cause massive damage. The only type of ranged combat that Tark use is Throw Weapon (Range 15/30/45). Tark are very hard to take down without an entire squad. **Bonuses:** Strike +6, Parry +5, Dodge +3, Roll +10, Grapple +19, Damage +10

Drawbacks – The Bells

For some reason, the chime of church bells drives Tark batty. The sound must be real and cannot be recorded. If they hear the bells, they must make a Tough (30) INS + Discipline check or flee the scene immediately, no matter what kind of combat or situation currently happening.

Rom

Race: Tark
Passion: Warrior
Age: 10

Background: Rom has lived a glorious ten years in zealous service to the great Grem. She led her tribe against their enemies victoriously and has been blessed with several successful missions to Earth and the theft of thirty one human children for her master. She quickly became a favorite and an Armor-Bearer.

But a recent Earth attack gone sour led to Rom's soldiers dead when they were caught in the crossfire of a battle between API and Chromatics. She narrowly escaped with her life and her contraption used to travel dimensions was destroyed.

She is stuck on Earth. She tries to stay in unpopulated areas, but sneaks out every so often to cause havoc, try to find other Tark on their way off this planet, or forage for food. She's staked out a small territory that she guards to the death.

Personality: Rom is inquisitive and slightly more intelligent than most Tark. But she is still quick to anger, so her patience wears thin if she has to wait too long for her answers. If characters get to speak with her directly, she is straightforward with her questions and her answers, expecting the same in return.

Appearance: Like all Tark, Rom is asexual in appearance, but her eyes betray that she may have been female at one point (before the change). Her voice is deep and growly, with no way to tell male or female. She is an Armor-Bearer and wears it with pride anywhere she goes.

Secrets: API has yet to really capture a Tark, but she would be a plentiful catch if they did. She knows about future plans to attack Earth and knows the truth about what happens in Grem's experiments.

Statistics: Health 80, Stamina 50, Initiative +8, Movement 18, AR 3/3 (with armor, AR 7/6), Actions per Round 4, Magic Resistance +3, Fortitude +16, Survival +15

Combat: She charges head first into battle in most cases and won't retreat if she sees even the slightest chance of winning. **Bonuses:** Strike +8, Parry +7, Dodge +5, Roll +15, Grapple +18, Damage +9

Special Abilities: She is an Armor-Bearer

Implementation: An impressive enemy, she looks to fight like all Tark and can prove a challenge for any squad. If characters are able to befriend her, they had better be able to help her quickly. She lacks patience and her attention span is fleeting.

Basic Game Terms

1d20: One twenty-sided die.

Action: In combat, any task the character instigates. This can be anything from throwing a punch to picking a lock.

Armor Rating (AR): The amount of protection that armor and some magical effects provide. The first number represents Non-Lethal damage absorbed and the second number represents Lethal damage absorbed. See page 74.

Attributes: Numerical values that represent the base abilities of a character, without training. See page 32.

Bonus Points (BP): Points spent to purchase Gifts or extra Attribute and Skill points. See page 46.

Character: Fictional roles created by players that exist in the setting and world created by the GM.

Check: A check is where the character rolls 1d20 and attempts to meet or beat the Difficulty. Players usually roll Attribute + Skill + 1d20.

Concept: A short description for a character, such as "wandering monk" or "sinister madame". See page 8.

Count: In combat, it's used to track the speed of an Action or Reaction. Denotes 0.5 seconds of time. See page 64.

Critical Failure: When the player rolls 1 on 1d20, this means an automatic failure and usually in a huge way. See page 36.

Critical Success: When the player rolls 20 on 1d20, this means an automatic success for Standard skills. In combat, it has varying effects. See page 36.

Damage: Points subtracted from Health, bringing the character closer to death or unconsciousness. See page 75.

Difficulty: The target number needed to achieve a task. Roll 1d20 + applicable Attribute, Skill, and modifiers. If total is higher than the Difficulty, the task is successful.

Drawback: Negative characteristics that can be applied to a character in exchange for Bonus Points. See page 46.

Durability: Health for inanimate objects. See page 57.

Duration: How long an effect (i.e. a spell) lasts.

Experience Points (XP): Represents growth of characters and can be spent to raise existing abilities or learn new ones. See page 160.

Game Master (GM): The GM is the member of the roleplaying group that creates and controls the world that the characters interact within. GM Advice, page 159.

Gift: Positive characters that can be applied to a character for the cost of Bonus Points. See Page 46.

Harmony: When two skills can be used to accomplish a task together. See page 37.

Health: The numerical value of the character's ability to take damage before dying. If Health drops to zero by Non-lethal damage, the character is knocked out. If Health drops to zero by Lethal damage, the character is close to Death. See page 77.

Initiative: In combat, used to gauge when a character acts first within a round. See page 65.

Legendary: A target Difficulty 40. Players must roll equal to or higher than 40 with an Attribute + Skill + 1d20 check.

Lethal: Damage from swords, fire, bullets, and other sources that can kill you quickly. See page 75.

Mana: For magic, it is the cost of casting a spell. Stamina is converted into Mana at a rate deteremined by the character's opened Inner Circles. See page 82.

Moderate: A target Difficulty 20. Players must roll equal to or higher than 20 with an Attribute + Skill + 1d20 check.

Movement: A Sub-Attribute that gauges the character's running speed. See page 34.

Natural 1: Rolling a 1 on 1d20. See Critical Failure.

Natural: 20: Rolling a 20 on 1d20. See Critical Success.

Non-Lethal: Damage from punches, blunt weapons, falling, or other sources that can knock you out quickly or kill you slowly. See page 75.

Non-player Character (NPC): An NPC is a character controlled by the GM (i.e. any character not controlled by a player).

Passion: A character's motivation to act. Chosen during character creation. See page 9.

Player: You are the player, the one who assumes the role of the character.

Race: A character's race denotes their appearance, culture, and heritage. See page 18 and 170 for playable races.

Range: The effective distance for firing a gun, throwing a weapon/object, or casting a spell.

Reaction: In combat, any task the character takes in response to an Action against them.

Round: In combat, 1 Round is 10 seconds (20 Counts). Initiative is rolled at the beginning of each Round. See page 64.

Session: When your roleplaying group sits down to play.

Simple: A target Difficulty 10. Players must roll equal to or higher than 10 with an Attribute + Skill + 1d20 check.

Skills: Numerical values that represent a character's learned abilities. See page 35.

Speed: The number of Counts an Action of Reaction requires. See page 64.

Squad: The group of characters

Stamina: The numerical value of the character's mental and physical endurance before collapsing. If Stamina drops to zero, the character can do nothing but rest. See page 64.

Story: A story that characters go through with a beginning, middle, and end. At the end of each story arch, players should be awarded bonus XP.

Teamwork: When two characters work together on one task. See page 36.

Tie: Whenever two players (or a player and the GM) roll the same number total on a contested roll. Defnders always win ties.

Tough: A target Difficulty 30. Players must roll equal to or higher than 30 with an Attribute + Skill + 1d20 check.

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"I am not a demon, a monster, or anything other than me. I'm just a man. But if you know you're enemy, that's all you'll ever truly need."

-Agent Julius Parker

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc.

Name:_____ Race:_____ Passion:_____ Player:_____

Concept:_____ Gender/Age:_____ Height:_____ Weight:_____

Personality/Description:_____

_____

XP

HEALTH

1/2 -4
1/4 -8
1/8 -12

DAMAGE

Non-Lethal
Lethal

STAMINA

1/2 -2
1/4 -4
1/8 -6

Attributes

POW (Power)
AGY (Agility)
VIG (Vigor)
IQ (Intellect)
INS (Insight)
CHM (Charm)

Sub-Attributes

Base Damage _____
Carry / Lift _____/_____
AGY Combat Mod _____
Extra Actions per Round _____
Max Hold Breath _____
Memorize/Recall check _____
Magic Resistance _____
First Impression check _____

Skills

	Lvls	+/-	Total
_____	_____	_____	_____
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Gifts

	BP		BP
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_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Drawbacks

	BP		BP
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_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Combat Actions & Reactions

Attack-Light (Spd 2, Stam 0, +2 Strike, +1 Dmg)
Attack-Full (Spd 4, Stam 1, +3 Dmg)
Attack-Strong (Spd 6, Stam 2, -4 Strike, +5 Dmg)
Co-op (Spd +2, Stam +1, -3 Strike, +25% Dmg)
Disarm (Spd 4, Stam 1, -4 Strike)
Draw Weapon (Spd 1+Size, Stam 0)
Feint (Spd 3, Stam 0)
Grapple (Spd 4, Stam 2)
Hold Action (Spd 1, Stam 0)
Move–Normal (Spd 4/2/1, Stam 0)
Move–Sprint/Rush (Spd 5, Stam 2)
Push (Spd 3, Stam 1)
Stand (Spd 4, Stam 1)
Summon Inner Strength (Spd 6, Stam 0)
Sweep (Spd 3, Stam 1)
Touch (Spd 1, Stam 0, +2 Strike)
Use Skill (Spd 6, Stam Varies)
Aim (Spd 3, Stam 0)
Auto-fire-Short (Spd +1, Stam +0, +25% Dmg**)
Auto-fire-Medium (Spd +2, Stam +1, +50% Dmg**)
Auto-fire-Long (Spd +3, Stam +2, +100% Dmg)
Throw Weapon (Spd 4, Stam 1, -2 Strike per Size)
Dodge (Spd 3, Stam 1)
Entangle (Spd 3, Stam 1, -4 Parry)
Parry (Spd 2, Stam 0)
Roll (Spd 1, Stam 0, +2 Roll)
Take Hit (Spd 0, Stam 0)
Take Hit Strategy (Spd 0, Stam 1, -4 Roll)

Combat Bonuses

+_____ to Strike
+_____ to Parry
+_____ to Dodge
+_____ to Roll
+_____ to Grapple

Movement _____
Initiative Bonus +_____
Actions per Round _____
Base Damage _____
Armor Rating (AR) _____
Throw Range____/____/_____
Reload Modifier _____
Aim Modifer_____

Weapon:_____Dmg +_____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Weapon:_____Dmg +_____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Other Abilities/Notes

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Agent Information Form - Page 1

Name:_____ Race:_____ Passion:_____ Player:_____

Concept:_____ Gender/Age:_____ Height:_____ Weight:_____

Personality/Description:_____

XP

HEALTH

1/2 -4

1/4 -8

1/8 -12

DAMAGE

Non-Lethal

Lethal

STAMINA

1/2 -2

1/4 -4

1/8 -6

Attributes

POW (Power)

AGY (Agility)

VIG (Vigor)

IQ (Intellect)

INS (Insight)

CHM (Charm)

Sub-Attributes

Base Damage _____

Carry / Lift _____/_____

AGY Combat Mod _____

Extra Actions per Round _____

Max Hold Breath _____

Memorize/Recall check _____

Magic Resistance _____

First Impression check _____

Skills

	Lvls	+/-	Total
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Friends/Contacts

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Enemies

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Gears and Tools

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Gifts

	BP		BP
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Drawbacks

	BP		BP
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Other Abilities/Notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Agent Information Form - Page 2

Combat Tracker

Combat Bonuses

+_____ to Strike +_____ to Parry +_____ to Dodge

+_____ to Roll +_____ to Grapple

Initiative Bonus +_____ Actions per Round _____

Movement _____ Base Damage _____

Armor Rating (AR) _____ Throw Range____/____/____

Reload Modifier _____ Aim Modifer _____

Fighting Styles

Basic____ Brawler____ Elite____ Hard____ Soft____

Techniques

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Weapon Styles

Ax____ Chain____Club____ Knife____

Ranged____ Staff____ Sword____

Weapon:_____Dmg +_____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Weapon:_____Dmg +_____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Weapon:_____Dmg +_____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Weapon:_____Dmg +_____
Spd +____ Stam +____ Strike +___ Parry +____
Size____ Range___/___/___ Payload____ RS____
Actions per Round ____ Other _____

Combat Actions

Attack-Light
(Spd 2, Stam 0, +2 Strike, +1 Dmg)
Attack-Full
(Spd 4, Stam 1, +3 Dmg)
Attack-Strong
(Spd 6, Stam 2, -4 Strike, +5 Dmg)
Co-operative Attack
(Spd +2, Stam +1, -3 Strike, +25% Dmg)
Disarm
(Spd 4, Stam 1, -4 Strike)
Draw Weapon
(Spd 1+Size, Stam 0)
Feint
(Spd 3, Stam 0)
Grapple
(Spd 4, Stam 2)
Hold Action
(Spd 1, Stam 0)
Move–Normal
(Spd 4/2/1, Stam 0)
Move–Sprint/Rush
(Spd 5, Stam 2)
Push
(Spd 3, Stam 1)
Stand
(Spd 4, Stam 1)
Summon Inner Strength
(Spd 6, Stam 0)
Sweep
(Spd 3, Stam 1)
Touch
(Spd 1, Stam 0, +2 Strike)
Use Skill
(Spd 6, Stam Varies)
Aim
(Spd 3, Stam 0)
Auto-fire-Short Burst
(Spd +1, Stam +0, +25% Dmg**)
Auto-fire-Medium Burst
(Spd +2, Stam +1, +50% Dmg**)
Auto-fire-Long Burst
(Spd +3, Stam +2, +100% Dmg)
Throw Weapon
(Spd 4, Stam 1, -2 Strike per Size)

Combat REActions

Dodge
(Spd 3, Stam 1)
Entangle
(Spd 3, Stam 1, -4 Parry)
Parry
(Spd 2, Stam 0)
Roll
(Spd 1, Stam 0, +2 Roll)
Take Hit
(Spd 0, Stam 0)
Take Hit Strategically
(Spd 0, Stam 1, -4 Roll)

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Agent Information Form - Page 3

Spell Book

Magic Bonuses

Magic Reistance Bonus _____
Max # of Paths _____
Inner Circle Unlocked _____
Order (if any) _____
Path Specialty _____

Mana Conversion

1st Circle = 1 Stam per 1 Mana
2nd Circle = 1 Stam per 2 Mana
3rd Circle = 1 Stam per 3 Mana

Magic Resistance Checks

1st level spells – Difficulty 14
2nd level spells – Difficulty 18
3rd level spells – Difficulty 22

Name:_____
Level:_____ **Path:**_____
Mana:_____ **Casting Time:**_____/_____
Duration:_____ **Range:**_____
Resistance:____
Effect: _____
_____
Sacrifice:_____
Upgrades:_____

Name:_____
Level:_____ **Path:**_____
Mana:_____ **Casting Time:**_____/_____
Duration:_____ **Range:**_____
Resistance:____
Effect: _____
_____
Sacrifice:_____
Upgrades:_____

Name:_____
Level:_____ **Path:**_____
Mana:_____ **Casting Time:**_____/_____
Duration:_____ **Range:**_____
Resistance:____
Effect: _____
_____
Sacrifice:_____
Upgrades:_____

Name:_____
Level:_____ **Path:**_____
Mana:_____ **Casting Time:**_____/_____
Duration:_____ **Range:**_____
Resistance:____
Effect: _____
_____
Sacrifice:_____
Upgrades:_____

Name:_____
Level:_____ **Path:**_____
Mana:_____ **Casting Time:**_____/_____
Duration:_____ **Range:**_____
Resistance:____
Effect: _____
_____
Sacrifice:_____
Upgrades:_____

Name:_____
Level:_____ **Path:**_____
Mana:_____ **Casting Time:**_____/_____
Duration:_____ **Range:**_____
Resistance:____
Effect: _____
_____
Sacrifice:_____
Upgrades:_____

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DGS Combat Tracking Sheet

Character 1	Character 2	Character 1	Character 4	Character 5	Character 6	Character 7
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20

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