

EXALTED



THE
AUTOCHTHONIANS™

“Have you found anything yet?”

“What is there to find? They’re just setting up the tap now. *Watch* your sector and shut the fuck up, *Wotch*.”

The troops squatted behind their portable shields. This was the very sort of operation that *Wotch* liked least — uncomfortably full of real danger. There were teams with chains ready. There were two Alchemicals in their glorious armor plate. There were men with crossbows so large they needed to be pushed on carts. It was a complement of gear that had taken three tram cars to transport here. And all of it was necessary. That was the problem.

“What a fucking mess,” *Wotch* mumbled.

He did not see *Excessively Righteous Blossom* arrive, so swift and silent was the rush of the Alchemicals advance, but he felt the Exalt’s hand on his shoulder a mere instant after he whispered. He turned, trying not to cringe away from the touch of power. He’d never been so close to one before. Never had one touch him.

The Exalt was only a little taller than a man, but his skin was gray and almost metallic. The metallic bulges of his Charms protruded here and there, and he was clad in glittering armor so thick that it seemed to *Wotch* it would take the entire squad to move the breast-and-back that guarded the Alchemical’s cage. At his hip hung the Barisage Device, a weapon whose keen functionality was depicted in countless propaganda images from the Elemental War, a war raging when *Wotch* was a lad. It was a sword of moonsilver, with a self-aiming deformative blade and a launcher for seven deadly missiles in its grip, darts deadly enough to fell even a large custodian. He had his hand on *Wotch*’s shoulder, and *Wotch* could feel the power inside the Exalt, thrumming like an lightning converter, ready to reach out and drive the world around it.

Excessively Righteous Blossom looked down on him, and while his face was not angry, there was no doubt in *Wotch*’s mind that he’d made a terrible error. One hand touched each side of his head. “The enemy is to the front, and it is listening to your whispers. It is one of the Maker’s flawless machines gone mad. It will learn your location from the noises you make. It will estimate your behavior from the demeanor your project. It will not act like a lazy and undisciplined Lumpen like some humans might. It’s a good thing we do not have to fear such behavior on this expedition, isn’t it, soldier?”

All that *Wotch* could think was to be thankful that the Exalt didn’t know his name, that he hadn’t dressed him down for the failures of his childhood, for his secret weaknesses. He could see them, *Wotch* was sure of it.

* * *

Excessively Righteous Blossom trudged to the command group. General Gortch looked up from the log book he was consulting. “Was that entirely necessary?”

Exalt though he was, *Excessively Righteous Blossom* was under the command of the unExalted General Gortch for this mission as a special-uses officer. Gortch thought that if the Exalt had the capability to reflect, which he clearly did not, it wouldn’t take him very long to understand why he never received the command he coveted.

“Should he be rewarded for his carping?”

“No, but he shouldn’t be terrified and mortified in front of his fellow troops either. He’s not one of those Theomachracy fanatics you’re used to commanding, *Blossom*.”

“I know very well he’s not one of my volunteers. Look at his lack of discipline, his poor condition.”

Gortch sighed. It was pointless to argue and impossible to decisively pull rank. *Blossom* was not getting a recommendation for command of any of

Gortch's wardens any time soon, that was certain. An awkward silence wrapped the command group until *Blossom* coughed and broke it.

"Do you think we'll find anything?"

"Maybe, but if we do, it won't be much. The Maker's sickness is spreading. Nutrients are flowing thinner than they used to. It's all being diverted for the war in the blight zones. The lack of Magical Materials has vexed us, and now, it seems like the dwindling of the food supplies has visited us too, as it did to Sova. I don't think we can tolerate an Ixut."

"You speak blasphemy!" The Exalt appeared ready to strike off Gortch's head, but the old commander showed no concern.

"I observe the world around me, *Blossom*. Do your paeans to the Great Maker bring food to our people? No, we are in the Reaches tapping flaccid conduits so we can fill a few tram cars with fuel. How long can a refinery work on a tram load of oil? A few minutes maybe? Will it even prime the system? The servants of the subgods report the constant battles to us. You yourself have fought in some. Can you say that you are confident the Maker grows stronger with every day?"

"Then, we must save him."

"And indeed we shall, *Blossom*. Now, as you say, eyes front and silence. There are more processes at work inside the Great Maker than even one of your elevated stature might guess."

* * *

Wiss, the leader of the Olgotary, the administrative arm of the government, was concerned as ever, her pinched face nodding. "How long do we have?"

The leader of the Conductors coughed. This was really his question to answer, and he didn't want to have to wait until Norsk got done expounding on the eternal health and industrial potency of the Great Maker. "Less than we've been telling the Populat. Critical resources are starting to dry up. The Exalted are receiving prophetic dreams of disaster from the subgods. Maybe we have a few years, maybe just a year."

Wiss shook his head. "We'll be wiped out by gremlins? I don't understand, do we need more troops?"

The Sodalt shook his head. "No, by the Maker himself, cleaning us out. Not that I think we'll be replaced efficiently, but we're falling behind schedule. We're alien, and he's desperate. We'll be cannibalized, and then, the refit will probably stall halfway through from lack of materials. At least, that's our estimate."

Norsk, the head of the Theomachracy in Yugash, looked pale. "And you are sure this is the case? I can't imagine that the Great Maker could be so weak!"

Snod cut him off, a little abruptly. He was a theologian, while Snod was a technician. Norsk might know the Will of the Maker, but Snod knew the Maker's Method from a lifetime of service. "Quite sure. The material has all been prepared for you to look over. See for yourselves." Snod gestured at the piles of documents he'd had handed out. "Materials extraction is at an all-time low. We're getting stillbirths due to lack of souls in the Ewer. Now, we're starting to see food shortages. The Maker needs outside resources. Lots of them."

The room was quiet, as it sunk in to each individual the realities of the situation and the desperate circumstances

"We don't really have any choice but to authorize Project Razor. It's not even about our survival. It's more than that. It's the fate of Autochthon himself. The Great Maker is in danger. Our world, our nations. When he dies, they will die with him. We have no choice but to find out what lies beyond the Maker's body."



Norsk blinked. "There may be grave consequences, General. War with the other nations. Grave shortages. Civil disorder among the Lumpen and the Populat. You can hardly expect them to take this news calmly. Even if we accept that this is necessary, how will we manage the consequences?"

"This is the news, Sodalt. It does not matter if individuals take it well or poorly. It is as it is. Our last expedition came back with little more than the initial cargo haulers full. I dare say that, if one could will or frighten nutrients from the Conduits, that *Excessively Righteous Blossom* would be the greatest Conductor the Maker has ever known, but there is nothing to be had. We will breach the Seal of Eight Divinities and we will enter the world of the Great Maker's origin in search of resources to sustain him. We have no choice."

Norsk, sputtered, "Nothing is settled! That is a matter for this debate!"

Snod felt the presence of the representatives of the other Sodalities behind him. They had agreed on their position in advance, and all of them were fully convinced of the seriousness of this situation. He looked at Wiss, who worked his fingers together unconsciously as he read from the Sodalities notes. The debate was over because there was nothing to debate. It would be best if it could be made unanimous, and in time, it would be, but Snod knew that Wiss would defer to their professional judgment. Njorsk could accede, or he could be left out of the developments until he came sheepishly trailing after. Snod would normally have let the man who made *Excessively Righteous Blossom* a real problem for the state of Yugash sit on the sidelines for as long as he liked. However, in this case, it was a matter that way beyond politics, at least as long as Norsk was willing to stop worshiping long enough to do what was necessary to save the Maker.

* * *

The antechamber to the intrusion bay was one that delighted Frundo greatly because it delighted the Great Maker greatly. This was the regimented, purposeful chaos that the Scholars of the Furnace Transcendent liked. This was building things! As a Scholar of the Furnace, Frundo felt he knew the Machine God intimately, in a way that others couldn't. How great, he felt, must be the Great Maker's delight that his worshipers might live within him and use his body to build? How gravely important it was that he return the favor of centuries of industry with this great undertaking that would protect and sustain the King of All Craftsmen.

What was terrible was that the people of the Machine God could only muster this in one place and only at the expense of starvation. Frundo could remember when these scenes occurred all across the Machine God, when every community and factory was pervaded with the constant hum of industry. The glories and feats of industry were on the wane. There was scarcity and poison, and it was clear the Maker could not survive.

But this would solve those problems. Frundo looked up at the vast scaffold that surrounded the head of Ot. The greatest challenge had been developing the understanding of the Great Master's situation, that he floated in a great empty void, that there was another world in an adjacent phase of reality he had departed and that the Seal of Eight Divinities was more a protective shell that the Maker had constructed to prevent others from intruding into his selfness than an actual barrier.

Given the increasing influence of the Void on the Maker's self, the Seal was not a particularly challenging barrier to surmount. Peering upward, the Scholar could see the tremendous framework of wires and finned jade Essence accumulators that surrounded the head of the mighty



Patropolis of Ot. Lissome Avid Engineer and her retinue where up there now, inspecting the details of the construction and making certain the pylons were properly aligned. In a few days, when the gateway was completed, the vast structure would be charged with lightning and Essence and the *Patropolis of Ot* would enter a world ancient beyond recorded history and filled with the gods who had driven the Great Maker into the Void and their supporters. What would await them there?

* * *

In the Far Southwest of Creation, there was a vast, dank swamp called the Silent Crescent. It was significant only for a murky heroic tragedy that unfolded there during the First Age. It was remembered by none and ruled by a savage Lunar named Ten Stripes who stopped there now and again to make marks and see that it was clear of rivals.

And in an otherwise inconsequential clearing deep in that fen, in a place that might have been a Demesne but that had never seemed to properly channel the eddies of geomantic power, the earth cracked, and Essence surged up from Elsewhere. Then, there was silence for the space of about half an hour, as the technicians realigned the inductance coils a world away. Then, the Essence strobes arced again, and the ground boiled, first from mere Essence flux melting the soil and then from magic that twisted the earth, the space and finally the very magical substratum that the space rested on as a gateway to Elsewhere surged open.

And then, at the moment of maximum flux, the vast metal and synthetic skin head of the *Patropolis of Ot*, an incarnate city with the power of a demigod, erupted from the soil with a cascade of earth, stones and Essence-twisted elemental substances that were no longer genuinely identifiable as anything other than sorcerous prodigies.

The vast eyes of the man-shaped mechanical city blinked, and there was a booming sound as the lids fluttered. Then, silence again, as the Alchemical's senses ran a thousand grinding tests on the world it found itself viewing. Slowly, the swamp worked itself back up into its nighttime roar of mating calls, death yelps and animals grunting for one another to keep off their patches of land.

Creation didn't know it yet, but there were guests. Like a new-flown termite queen, there was only the one now, but soon, there would be more, and their ambitions would be sized according to their massive appetites.



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Dogan

Cathak Agduru came downstairs in his silk-slipped feet, his bathrobe clenched around him and his daiklave looped loosely over his shoulder, to see what the night guards had found so compelling they awakened him. He already knew his agent in Gem, working name Starflower, was either at the back door or his most urgent messenger was, as his identifying bona fides had been presented. But Agduru, who was here in the Lap managing his family's networks part time to supplement his income as a spice trader and a general young dilettante, hadn't expected the agent at all. If anything, Agduru thought that perhaps Starflower was out of the game or neutralized. He'd missed several months worth of check ins now, but there had been no tidings from Gem for a few weeks, and so, the matter had seemed like it might be indicative of some more general problem.

Agduru was reflecting on that as he went through the kitchen to the back door. As he drew his daiklave with a feather-light flick of his wrist, the two potboys who'd been up scrubbing the cauldron and smoking hashish vanished from the room like a pair of terrified partridges.

The guard who had gotten Agduru looked at his fellow and at the scruffy figure on the doorstep. "This is the man, My Prince. The troops at the gate sent someone to fetch us to take charge of him when he showed up at the gate to the Imperial Quarter a few minutes ago."

Agduru nodded. It was Starflower himself.

"Prince of the Earth, I am humbled by your presence."

"Be humbled inside my house. I don't care if you're pregnant with the Empress' daughter, get inside."

There was an Exalt at the gate at all times and, thus, at least one pair of ears listening at his garden gate. Agduru shooed the guards outside with a command in the Cathak battle language. He looked around and saw the kitchen was empty.

The agent looked haggard. He'd clearly done little sleeping for a very long time, and what sleeping he had done looked like it had been done in a haystack or in the back of a mulecart.

"I'm traveling on your emergency jade, Prince, my apologies."

Agduru nodded. He assumed most of them spent it on opium or rock cocaine. It was good to see Starflower was honest. "You reported that the armies of Gem were hunting a man made of the Magical Materials after some kind of raid. This was Fair Folk activity, yes?"

"No, Prince. At least, I don't think so. After we dispatched the first army, another soon arrived. Much larger and with more of the magical men. They conquered the place easily, and killed Rankar's men, even his outcasts. They were definitely some kind of Exalted." He had once been a caster of pots and idols. Now, he was a broken man. He was rabby and furtive, and he looked like he might shriek.

Agduru nodded dimly. The fact that he was cramming for the budget review of the community street renovation project seemed very distant now. The man was gushing forth information in no particular fashion, trying to run through a speech he had doubtless rehearsed for months but forgetting many particulars in his excitement.

"They put the city to the sack. Oh, blood of the Dragons, they led the inhabitants away in coffles to serve as slaves and scoured the land clean of food. Even the grass got mowed down and carted off, and the dirt and the water were made filthy-foul with the soot from their machines. They're not the Fair Folk lord — more like the unfair ones. Their machines stink of burning oil and roar like angry beasts. They use arrow-casters of a type we have never seen before. And their Exalted are very powerful. Prince of Princes, you must rouse your people to battle. I do not know where this host of locusts comes from, but they are heading North, and they will soon require a lesson in your power."

"How soon?"

"Not long, Prince! Not long till the locust men are at your door."

Agduru listened to the shaking man. Clearly, he believed what he was saying. But first, it would be required that Agduru make sure the man wasn't a Fair Folk puppet or a sorcerous construct of a rival house. He leaned out the kitchen door and addressed the senior guard, "Our honored guest is to be watched, prevented from leaving and treated with the greatest respect."

Then, the Dragon-Blooded agent hustled upstairs, to operate his far-speaking miracle. He would need a trustworthy sorcerer, and fast.

INTRODUCTION

*The major men
That is different. They are characters beyond
Reality, composed thereof. They are
The fictive man created out of men.
They are men but artificial men.
—Wallace Stevens, “Paisant Chronicle”*

Like all the **Exalted** hardbacks, **Exalted: The Autochthonians** details one of **Exalted**'s subgenres. In this case, it is the Realm of Brass and Shadows, a living world-sized god known as Autochthon. A self-sustaining industrial process detailed in the adventure “Children of the Machine God” in the supplement **Time of Tumult**, Autochthon and his inhabitants have been the Fritz Lang and Orwellian apple of many-a fans' eye.

But the question was always how to present that material at a length that did it some degree of justice (it

was, after all, an entire world) but didn't have a destructive impact on the setting of the game. Cool as Autochthonia was, it was an entire mechanical world with industrial technology and Exalted machine-men. **Exalted** was founded on the principle of letting people choose the forward direction of the world for themselves. Suddenly informing everyone that they had a world full of electrified industrial revolution was not acceptable. Yet, the Autochthonians *were* cool, and the other guiding principle of the game is to do every cool thing possible.

So the compromise we offer is this book. Now that **Exalted: The Fair Folk** has been released and the last of the “core” rules have been put into print, we have some time to experiment with the game and its setting. This work is an attempt to make Alchemical Exalted and Autochthon a viable part of the **Exalted** setting without dictating in any way how much of it an individual Storyteller needs to use and how much of which of the stories contained within this book happen in your game.

This book is presented in the format of an adventure resource, with a great deal of setting material and mechanical detail prefacing three chapter-long adventures that each generally describe a different series that might arise from Autochthon making contact with Creation. Think of them as series seeds.

The setting material and the detailed rules on the Alchemical Exalted can be used in any fashion a Storyteller desires. Alchemicals might be player characters in an all-Alchemical game set in Autochthon without any contact with Creation, or they might be used as antagonists or Storyteller characters in a series set in Creation. What is important is that this book contains a full list of Charms for Alchemicals and enough material to set a game in Autochthonia.

In addition, the book also offers suggestions as to how the material might be employed. We wanted to include some material to help Storytellers use the Autochthonian setting, so we included adventures. Unfortunately for the writers, **Exalted** is a game about nation-ruling heroes leading armies of conquest and uncovering secrets of the ancient era. Any attempt to write adventures for a “typical” group of Exalts would be doomed to failure. Instead, they were charged with coming up with toolkits that would help a Storyteller run an interesting game with the reappearance of Autochthon as a central element, regardless of what collection of dangerous maniacs comprised the players’ group of characters and what their motivations might be. This book is the result.

Of the presented adventures, one is largely personal, occult and adventure oriented, one is political and strategy

oriented, and one is a “twister” that takes an unexpected turn on the Autochthonian material. All challenge the presuppositions of the setting in their own novel ways.

LEXICON

This book introduces a great deal of vocabulary and a large number of concepts to **Exalted**. While much of this is described in the text of the book, it is summarized here in the form of glossary so the Storytellers and players can refer easily to them when they come upon some unfamiliar term in the text. Readers familiar with the material in “Crusaders of the Machine God” will still probably want to make themselves familiar with this material as there are significant additions from that adventure.

Alchemical Exalted: The heroes of *Autochthonia*’s early days had their personalities captured in special *souls*, that they might rise again to serve their people in a future age. Through a promethean melding of alchemical components, the recorded selves of these ancient heroes are given life again in the gray flesh of the Alchemical Exalted in a process similar to the Exaltation of mortal heroes in Creation. When they grow old, the Alchemical Exalted become the cores of new Autochthonian facilities.

Autochthon: The Great Maker, the craftiest of the Primordials. Ugly and sickly, Autochthon was the butt of very many Primordial jokes just as he was the source of very many of their wonders. Eventually, he grew disaffected with his fellow Primordials and conspired with the gods to grant them the secret of making the Exalted. After the gods destroyed the Primordials, Autochthon sensed the Great Curse and attempted to evade the Curse and the eventual malice of the ruling Celestial Incarna by withdrawing into the void of Elsewhere and hibernating. Recently, the Great Maker has shown signs of dying in his sleep, and a crisis precipitated by dwindling resources of the Five Magical Materials has persuaded the nation of *Yugash* to break *the Seal of Eight Divinities* and make contact with Creation in hope of somehow replenishing the Great Maker.

Autochthonia: The human civilization inside the great maker. Composed of eight nations, the Autochthonians are descended from the mortals carried Elsewhere by Autochthon. They live in a regimented society, attempting to better the Great Maker and by their prayers and value to his life-processes prevent his defense systems from activating and destroying their nations as intruders in the Primordial’s self. Autochthonia is led by the *Tripartite* and the *Alchemical Exalted*, heroes whose construction is a secret passed into the safekeeping of the *Sodalities*.

Elixir of Rest: A euthanatic elixir administered to those too old to work. In *Autochthonia*, none may live who do not earn their living.

Glorious Luminors of the Brilliant Rapture, the: The Autochthonian *Sodality* in charge of the secrets of light and illumination. They are well-known for their

THIS IS NOT A COMPLETE GAME!

Despite its size, **Exalted: The Autochthonians** is not a complete game. It requires the **Exalted** core rulebook to play. The parts that are giant world-spanning adventures makes many assumptions about the Storyteller’s knowledge of the setting. Any and all other **Exalted** books are likely to be useful for using the material in this hard-back, particularly **Exalted: The Abyssals, Savant and Sorcerer** and the adventure collection **Time of Tumult**.

tendency to make their necessary job into a holier act than is entirely necessary. They are associated with orichalcum.

Illustrious Conductors of the Consecrated Veins, the: Those individuals responsible for managing the resource and waste disposal taps into the veins of the Great Maker and the storage and transport of the tapped products. One of the five *Sodalities*, and the one responsible for use of the Magical Material starmetal.

Lumpen: The social class of laborers below the *Populat*, the Lumpen are disgraced, nerve-stapled or socially undesirable. The Lumpen are Autochthonia's caste of habitual minor offenders and social malcontents. These individuals are tattooed around their soulgems to mark the reason for their degradation. Some are soul-flayed and have their souls removed, but only the worst offenders are so punished.

Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric, the: These technicians and maintenance engineers are responsible for the upkeep and repair of both *Autochthonia* and the denizens of the Great Maker. The Meticulous Surgeons administer the *Elixir of Rest*. They are the *Sodality* associated with the Magical Material moonsilver.

Olgotary: The administrators of Autochthonian civilization. These scientific bureaucrats are one of the three governing institutions of Autochthonian society, along with the *Sodalities* and the *Theomachracy*.

Pious Harvesters of the Hallowed Flesh, The: These individuals gather offal and trash for recycling and prepare the food that the Autochthonian masses flock to eat at the cafeterias. They are the *Sodality* associated with the Magical Material jade.

Populat: *Autochthonia*'s working class, these individuals are tasked with the manual efforts involved with propitiating the Machine God. The vast bulk of the Autochthonian population is part of the *Populat*.

Prolific Scholars of the Furnace Transcendent, the: These craftsmen and machinists manufacture the parts that make the Machine God function smoothly and the wonders that allow Autochthonian society to exist. The Prolific Scholars are one of the Five *Sodalities* and are associated with the Magical Material soulsteel.

Seal of Eight Divinities, the: A sealed magical portal to Creation, which leads into the Silent Crescent, a jungle region in the Southwest of Creation.

Sodalities: More properly known as the Five Magnificent Sodalities of Penultimate Truth and Intransigent Gospel, the Sodalities are five brotherhoods of skilled craftsmen, similar to guilds or trade unions, that provide *Autochthonia* with its skilled laborers, tradesmen and engineers. One of the three governing institutions of *Autochthonia*, along with the *Theomachracy* and the *Olgotary*, the Sodalities include the *Glorious Luminors of the Brilliant Rapture*, the *Illustrious Conductors of the Consecrated Veins*, the *Pious Harvesters of the Hallowed Flesh*, the

Prolific Scholars of the Furnace Transcendent and the *Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric*.

soulgem: All Autochthonians wear soulgems on their foreheads. The pattern of an Autochthonian's soulgem is indicative of her position and rank in *Autochthonia*'s rigid society. Obscuring the soulgem is legally permissible only to investigative officials of the Tripartite. It is believed that souls not harvested from their soulgems are lost forever, but this is not the case, and souls escape their soulgems after several weeks.

Theomachracy: The clerics of the Great Maker, the *Theomachracy* see to it that the people of *Autochthonia* are meeting the needs of the Machine God and are happy in their communities.

Tripartite: The combination of the *Theomachracy*, the *Sodalities* and the *Olgotary* that rules *Autochthonia* with the help of the *Alchemical Exalted*.

WHERE ARE THE EXALT STATS?

The primary purpose of this book was to put the *Alchemical Exalted*'s Charm set into print and to detail the Autochthonian setting. The adventures provided are to round out the material and set Storytellers on the road to making their own series that integrates the Autochthonian setting with *Exalted*. There was a limited amount of space, three world-spanning adventures and *Exalted* whose full descriptions would eat a thousand or more words per Exalt. Storytellers will need to detail *Exalted* opposition appropriate for their group. It was a deliberate decision to present three different visions of the appearance of the Great Maker in Creation, each with only a little detail. We're sorry if this offends any readers.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The first half of this book details the Great Maker, the vast industrial titan known as Autochthon. It describes the Primordial and features rules for *Alchemical Exalted*, the servo-industrial heroes of the human civilization that clings to a strange, regimented existence in the bowels of the Machine God. How Storytellers use this material is up to them. Alchemicals make great player characters in all *Alchemical* games or in games involving mixed *Celestial Exalt* types. They also make great antagonists with a distinctly different vibe, who can easily be redescribed as the biomechanical slave creations of the Yozis (or whatever) if the Storyteller doesn't want to use Autochthon.

The remaining half of the book is three adventures. Each of these details a kind of series that might result from Autochthon's arrival in Creation. These are meant to be

used, with a great deal of personalization, as a way to adapt the Alchemical setting and material to the Storyteller's campaign. In each case, the same basic story takes place: Yugash breaches the Seal of Eight Divinities and enters Creation in search of Magical Materials and souls. From there, each diverges to deal with different topics. They cannot all fit together, and each has its own vision of the invasion and of key characters that is not the same as that of the other adventures.

It is assumed that Storytellers will use this material as inspiration for their own series. None of the adventures are ready to run as published, but in exchange, all are very fluidly structured and easily adapted to a given series. The material is provided as a launching pad for developing your own Autochthonian saga. Change it as your needs dictate.

Regular readers will notice that the format of this book is somewhat different than normal, with an abbreviated setting and rules segment to make room for the adventures. The regular Chapter Two on the culture of the Alchemical Exalted is omitted, and Chapter Six is dedicated to a variety of Alchemical mechanics rather than any one element.

Chapter One: Autochthon and Autochthonia

This chapter describes the Machine God and the society of humans within him founded in the ancient past by the worshipers of the Great Maker.

Chapter Two: Character Creation and Traits

The chapter details rules for making Alchemical Exalted characters and also special Traits relevant to the Alchemicals or altered for use in Alchemical play.

Chapter Three: Charms

This chapter details the electro-mechanical Charms of the Alchemical Exalted.

Chapter Four: Miracles of the Machine God

This chapter details Alchemical Sorcery, various subdivinities of the Machine God, Autochthonian technology and other miraculous matters relating to existence inside the Great Maker.

Chapter Five: The Locust War

The first of the three adventures, The Locust War is the most conventional, detailing the military campaigns that result from the Alchemicals' emergence into Creation and the patchwork military and political response mounted by Creation's Exalted defenders.

Chapter Six: The Quest for the Great Source

In this story, Autochthonia's need for contact with Creation turns out to have been anticipated by the Great Maker all along, and characters must awaken the sleeping Primordial and set the world aright.

Chapter Seven: Engines of Extinction

This story details a continuity where the appearance of the Autochthonians in Creation is met by a resurgence

of the Great Contagion and the destruction of the human population of the Machine God. A race against time ensues as the forces of Creation attempt to stop the First and Forsaken Lion from conquering the Machine God's corpse and using its vast foundry interior to supplement his own necromantic technology.

THIS BOOK HAS A BIAS!

This book is written with the assumption that Autochthon is a powerful being and that his denizens can upset the course of Creation's history and conquer its nations. Yet, they are not without flaw or weakness, and the people of Autochthonia are humans and, thus, vulnerable to human frailties and failures. There will doubtless be cries of overpowering Autochthonian might. The Autochthonians are intentionally powerful. They are, after all, invading Creation. The material in this book makes it painfully clear that the Autochthonians are entirely fallible in their judgments. The Autochthonians are roughly equivalent to Lunars or Sidereals in power. Storytellers who wish to adjust the specifics are welcome to alter things for their game.

RESOURCES

Exalted: The Autochthonians owes a great deal to one primary source, Fritz Lang's incredible black-and-white silent film *Metropolis*. Where **Exalted: The Autochthonians** goes, Fritz Lang laid down the road, and no discussion of this book's sources can start without his work.

But seminal as it was, **Exalted: The Autochthonians** is not a slavish replication of Lang's work. For starters, many other things have been influenced by Lang's stylized vision of 1920s electric-arc and steam-line "technology," and we stole from them too. Especially influential are the technology of the anime and manga *Nausicaa and the Valley of the Wind* and the techno-magical stylings of computer roleplaying games such as *Final Fantasy*. For everything we stole from *Metropolis*, there was something boosted from the post-apocalyptic future setting of *Chrono Cross*.

Autochthon also owes a great deal to John Varley's excellent novels *Titan*, *Wizard* and *Demon*, about the adventures of an exploratory starship captain on a giant, organic and insane self-aware living space colony and how she saves the human race from Extinction. But **Autochthonians** is an omnivorous beast and everything from H.R. Giger's dark industrial fetishism to the Transformers and their machine-planet of Cybertron and from Robby the Robot to Commander Data went into the machine-man champions of the Great Maker. Where Alchemical Exalted are concerned, it's appropriate to steal from practically any source that depicts a heroic robot or artificial person.





“Look at it out there, Ives.”

Foreman Tringle gestured out of the observation windows on the worker’s aerie to indicate the miles of pipe bundles stretching off into the distance. This was one of the city’s two primary conduit bundles, bringing in a thousand kinds of chemicals for the Maker’s processes and evacuating a hundred kinds of hazard to the places where the Maker dealt with and stored such things. And tonight, Tringle and Ives were in charge.

She was in an expansive mood, Ives knew. That was good — work was better on the shifts when Tringle was in a good mood. Ives tried his best to smile placidly as he heard it for the 30th time.

“So many miles of pipes and conduits out there. Can you just stand here and look at it and not feel dizzy some times? Knowing that the whole mass of the Great Maker is all around us, a whole *existence* of his great industry? Sometimes, I feel like such a tiny speck.”

“Aye, Foreman.”

The conduits came out of the Lower 3 quadrant of Ot, and turned downward and then dropped several hundred yards and ran level and horizontal for many miles as the channel they ran through gradually narrowed down to the same width as its contents. Tringle and Ives’ little shack was on the “knee” of the bundle, where it turned its course decisively downward, and they were treated to the sight of the vast roll of conduits stretching off among the scattered facilities of the Reaches out into the distance. There was no light in the Maker. His minions made their own light, being divine, or else they needed none, but men needed light, and the conduit gleamed with great floodlamps that seemed like only glowing white pearls from up here. They ran like a line of buttons or indicator lamps right up until the thick, well-lit white boundary line several miles away that indicated where the Maker’s own forces took over.

Tringle nodded. “But specks though we may be, we are specks with a duty, a duty to watch over these 1,327 intakes for our brothers in the Illustrious Conductors of the Consecrated Veins. We’re the ones at the big valves, Ives. We’re the ones they count on to brake surges that will blow acid out of every industrial tap in Ot.”

Ives knew what that meant.

Tringle stood, her belt tinkling. “Ives, it’s time for us to go check the flow meters.”

Tringle led the way out into the moaning darkness, and Ives followed her.

It was certainly easier to stand Tringle when she got into these moods because of the fact that she was largely correct. Inside the hut, you could feel safe. You were a small person in a small space, and the difference between the scale of the human race and the scale of the Great Maker’s form wasn’t so obvious. Out here, on the access point walking between all the different individual hoses, it was painfully evident how the vast Autochthon was. So vast that men lived in symbiosis with him, aiding in the functions of his organs. They said that Ot maintained a single joint in the Master’s greater structure.

Ives would rather have avoided the walk along the windy catwalk, with its scents of oil smoke and its endless creaking. But while the indicators in the hut normally told the whole story, it was necessary to visually inspect the conduits and check their pressure-gauge readings against the reference numbers to make sure something hadn’t gone wrong with the linkage of the gauges in the hut. So, every shift, out they went. Specks though they might be, they were important specks. The Great Maker’s health depended on them. If he died, they died. If they faltered at their tasks, they would be cleansed as a rogue process.

And so, the two of them made their way along the catwalks in the diesel-scented darkness, crossbows in hand in case of attack by gremlins. The Alchemicals and the Maker usually did a good job of keeping such menaces remote, but Autochthon was sickened, and the Alchemicals were busy elsewhere, so great danger as well as well as terrible responsibility burdened Tringle and Ives at their lonely post, or so he had been informed by his direct superior.

“Tringle?”

“Yes, Ives?”

“Have you ever wondered what your soul did in your last life?”

“I often believe I was your mistreated subordinate, Ives. Now, read bank 1 already.”
And so it went.

CHAPTER ONE

AUTOCHTHON & AUTOCHTHONIA

Autochthonia has almost 5,000 years of written history as well as a few records that stretch back to the long-ago era before the Great Maker departed from Creation. While the workers of the Populat at best know an exceedingly sketchy and incomplete version of this history, all of the members of the Tripartite ruling class are at least passingly familiar with the basics of Autochthonian history. Any native of Autochthonia with Lore •• or higher will know almost all of the information contained in the following description.

THE DEPARTURE FROM CREATION

After Gaia and Cytherea fashioned Creation from the Wyld, they charged Autochthon with forging the gods who would serve them. Then, Gaia and the remainder of the Primordials withdrew to the Celestial City of Yu-Shan, where they could dwell in eternal luxury, leaving the gods to serve them and manage Creation. The only Primordial who remained in Creation was Autochthon, who traveled the world dispensing wonders and changing the landscape to suit both his whims and the desires of the other Primordials.

After he made the gods, Autochthon created a set of tools and accoutrements for each of them and then instructed the gods in their use. Then, he created the first of the Mountain Folk. During the first moments of Creation's existence, the Fair Folk who were within its boundaries were entombed in the newly existing jade. Autochthon discovered the jade they were locked within and used the chaos and possibilities nascent within it to forge beings who would later become his first and best servants. The Great Maker then charged these new servants with the responsibility of creating a multitude of lesser wonders.

Meanwhile, the other Primordials studied the Mountain Folk and eventually made crude copies that they called humanity. Although humanity was far weaker than any of Autochthon's creations, the Great Maker learned to love them and the raw potential that they represented, especially after he learned that they possessed the capacity to use his three most important creations: doctrine, faith and tools. He also studied their weak, short-lived bodies and constructed methods to allow them to tap into the endless wellsprings of Essence.

During the war between the gods and the Primordials, the Machine God felt more loyalty to his various creations than to the other Primordials who treated him as a lowly menial who only existed to create new weapons, armor and entertainments for them. His service was crucial for the gods' victory, as the gods were bound by an unbreakable geas preventing them from directly attacking the Primordials. To aid them, the Great Maker returned to his studies of humanity. He gave a means of imbuing mortals with divine power to the gods, so they could make an army of champions. The Celestines and the greatest souls of Gaia created this army of Exalted, but had no weapons to equip the vast host. Once again, Autochthon came to their aid. He called upon the Mountain Folk to present their stockpiled arsenals. Armed with these dire weapons and their own powers, the Exalted prevailed and slew or banished the Primordials.

The Great Maker was the only Primordial who worked with the gods and against his own kind. Even Gaia merely stood aside for Luna. Once the other Primordials were defeated, the Great Maker realized that his continuing presence in Creation would continually remind the gods of their betrayal and that it was only a matter of time before the gods and Exalts turned on him. His final proof of this coming betrayal came when the Exalts and the gods ordered him to place his loyal Mountain Folk under an unbreakable geas to forever restrict their ability to leave their underground realms.

The Exalts growing paranoia worried Autochthon, and he feared they had been the victim of a dire death-curse sent by his slain brethren, although he did not yet understand the full ramifications of the Great Curse. He was afraid to give voice to any of these fears, however.

Instead, he gathered his mortal followers from across Creation and asked them to help him ready himself for a journey into the depths of the Void, where they would all wait out the millennia until the power of the Great Curse had faded.

The Great Maker knew that life within the Void would be perilous and difficult and that, for him to be able to survive and for his followers to flourish, he needed a prodigious quantity of souls to sustain him. However, he also knew that he needed to make all of his plans in complete secrecy — if the Exalts or the gods learned of his planned departure, they would assume some form of treachery and might strike before he could leave. Therefore, he sent his eight most devout and capable followers, and gave them instructions on how to craft the mighty Ewer of Souls. Then, the Great Maker asked these followers to journey to the top of the Imperial Mountain, to the Well of Souls, and to fill the Ewer with a sufficient number of souls both to sustain Autochthon during his long hibernation in the lightless depths of the Void and to allow his followers to breed and flourish.

Creating the Ewer was an epic quest - the eight heroes journeyed to all four quarters of Creation to find the necessary materials and then constructed and filled the Ewer in complete secrecy. After they filled it with souls, the Great Maker was ready to depart. The geas he had been forced to place upon the mighty Mountain Folk meant that he could not take them with him. Without his loyal Mountain Folk to sustain him and tend to his needs, he turned to mortals for further assistance. He asked the same eight mortal followers to call every loyal mortal to him.

The histories told in the Eight Nations of Autochthonia all tell how tens of thousands of devoted mortals came from all corners of the globe to journey forth into the Void with their beloved Autochthon. The reality of the situation was considerably different. A few thousand mortals wished to depart with Autochthon. A few worshiped him, but most were desperate or wanted people who hoped to find a new life far from the threats and troubles that they wished to leave behind. In addition, at the moment of his departure, the Great Maker grabbed many tens of thousands of mortals from the nearby countryside and gathered them into his mechanical body. Suddenly torn from everything and everyone that they knew and loved, these captives eventually learned to adapt to live in Autochthonia.

Within a few months, society began to evolve within the interior of Autochthonia. The eight original heroes became the first rulers of Autochthonia, and their mortal followers became advisors who helped administer the vast mass of humanity who had unwillingly accompanied the Great Maker upon his journey. Almost no one alive now knows that almost every resident of Autochthonia is the descendent of someone who unwillingly accompanied Autochthon on his journey, since even the histories

written by the Tripartite for their own use neglect to mention that most of the original inhabitants of Autochthonia did not willingly accompany the Great Maker. Only those few scholars who are both interested and permitted to read the original records of the Departure know the truth. Only natives of Autochthonia with Lore •••• or higher will know the true story of why most mortals accompanied Autochthon on his journey.

THE EARLY DAYS

The first decades of human habitation inside the Great Maker were almost unimaginably difficult. For the first few years, Autochthonia had not yet fully entered hibernation — he was able to advise and send visions to the eight heroes and some of their closest allies. However, by the end of the second decade after the Departure, his consciousness had begun to fade. During the last decade that he was conscious, he instructed five of the most skilled craftspeople in Autochthonia in the arcane and difficult processes of creating the first Alchemical Exalted. He designed these beings so that they would become humanity's guides and protectors and act as his avatars and conscious regulatory systems while he slept. Once the first batch of Alchemical Exalted was successfully created, Autochthon finally allowed the last of his consciousness to slip away, and the modern era of Autochthonian history began.

These craftspeople manufactured the first soulgems when they created these first Alchemicals. They soon realized the value of these items and mastered the process of mass producing soulgems. After discussing this new technology with the priests and the eight leaders of the

cities, the rulers of Autochthonia ordered that soulgems be implanted in the foreheads of every one of Autochthonia's inhabitants. Although many members of the Populat were initially skeptical of this process, the idea that their souls would otherwise be lost forever helped this technology gain widespread acceptance. Within 30 years after the creation of the first soulgems, every inhabitant of Autochthonia possessed a soulgem, and today, none of them can imagine living without one.

By this time, the population of Autochthonia had grown to slightly more than 200,000, who all lived in eight nearby cities, each ruled by one of the original eight heroes. The leaders decided to settle in eight cities rather than one, so that a single disaster was unlikely to affect the entirety of the population. When disaster struck one of these cities (as often happened in these early years), the inhabitants of all the other cities were in a position to provide aid. At this time, each of these cities was barely worthy of the name, with only a few tens of thousands of inhabitants. Like now, all of these settlements were built inside of large cavities inside the Great Maker's body. However, in these early days, each of these cavities was still largely empty and the cities were low affairs where few buildings had more than three stories and none had more than five. These cities were very roughly built, being made from scrap and cast-off items saved from the vast recycling vats where worn-out machine parts were sent to be recycled.

In those days, the Autochthonians were expert scavengers but built little. The lives of the Populat were divided between working to keep the machinery inside Autochthonia within acceptable limits and scrounging for



various useful materials. Although the first technicians had learned how to tap conduits for food and water within a few days of the Departure, more durable materials had to be either salvaged from recycling vats or ripped from the fabric of Autochthon's living body.

The creation of the first Alchemical Exalted greatly improved the lives of the inhabitants of Autochthonia. Suddenly, parties of travelers or scavengers could safely venture into the Reaches if they were accompanied by one of the Alchemicals. Also, the Alchemical Exalted could easily determine what materials could be safely requisitioned for use within one of the mortal cities.

THE PARTING OF THE CITIES

For more than a century, the eight cities of Autochthonia prospered and grew. Within a few decades, the inhabitants learned to make use of the pneumatic trams and caused them to run between the cities, saving the inhabitants the time and difficulty of having to brave the dangers of the Reaches to travel from one city to another. Within 120 years after Autochthon departed from Creation, the population of these eight cities had grown to more than half a million, and life had settled down to the beginning of a routine. Then, the inscrutable processes of the Great Maker's vast body forever transformed both life and society within Autochthonia.

After more than a century of relative stasis, the eight cities began to move away from one another. In less than a decade, several of the cities were so far away that tram lines no longer connected them and the inhabitants had to instead travel through a series of intermediate cities to get from one to the other. This separation of the cities is referred to as the Parting and was an event that had a profound social and spiritual significance. Before the Parting of the cities, they were all relatively close to one another and had an easy time maintaining a common culture and a common religion. Now, even the closest were separated by long tram journeys, and the furthest took many months to travel from one to another. As a result, the religion and the other details of life in each of the eight cities now began to diverge. Although a combination of their early writings and the wisdom gained from the Alchemical Exalted provided some limits on the divergence of religion, the details of faith in each of the eight cities became increasingly different. Within a generation, disputes between priests in the various cities grew exceedingly heated and low-level warfare began to break out as accusations of widespread heresy became commonplace between the eight cities.

This religious warfare continued to worsen over the next two centuries, and eventually, both Estasia and Gulak were almost destroyed in intercity religious violence that erupted into full-scale warfare. At this point, the unknowable motions within the Great Maker's body began to bring the eight cities into increasingly close contact with one

another. The rulers of several cities feared that the religious conflicts would worsen as the cities got closer and might eventually endanger humanity's survival in Autochthonia. As the eight cities approached one another ever more closely, the leaders of Yugash, Gulak and Claslat worked together to assemble representatives from every city to a general conclave that was held in Claslat.

THE CONCLAVE

Prior to the Conclave, the peoples of Autochthonia had been divided into three groups, the despised Lumpen, the dutiful workers of the Populat and the elite ranks of the Elevated. The Elevated were equivalent to the modern Tripartite, but the divisions between the three branches had not yet been formalized. Instead, members of the Elevated choose to pursue professions such as priest or city planner or to join one of the Five Guilds' of mechanics, who later became the Sodalities. These choices were based solely upon an individual's desires and her ability to find a suitable mentor in the desired profession. During the Conclave, priests and officials from each of the eight cities debated politics and theology and attempted to find ways to cooperate and reduce the levels of violence and conflict. Although they discussed many options, the final answer was to create a specialized subcaste of priests known as the Theomachracy and a subcaste of politicians, planners, peacekeepers and judges known as the Olgotary. The remainder of the Elevated were transformed into the five branches of the Sodalities. This new and more rigid structure applied to all eight cities and helped to enforce a greater degree of religious and political uniformity. Before the institution of this new social order, all soulgems were the same. Now, the members of each of the different strata of society had soulgems of a different shape. Although there were still significant differences between the eight proto-nations, they were considerably more alike than they had been, and as a result, the degree of intercity hostility fell to something approximating its present moderate level.

A few decades later, the eight cities drifted apart again, but the structure of the Tripartite has remained stable until the present day and helped keep the nations of Autochthonia from becoming too different from one another. Since the formal creation of the Tripartite, the basic structure of life in Autochthonia has remained constant. The eight original cities have now grown into eight large nations, each of which is composed of as many as a dozen cities and towns. The population of Autochthonia has grown to more than 40 million people, the Sodalities have created a multitude of new devices, and the Autochthonians' politics and religion have both continued to evolve. However, the basic structure of society has remained unchanged, and the vast majority of the inhabitants live their lives just as their ancestors did for more than 4,500 years, toiling in devoted service to the needs of the Great Maker.

THE MODERN DAY

Within the past few decades, this seemingly endless cycle of toil has changed — new sources for the Five Magical Materials have become increasingly difficult to find, and more importantly, the Ewer of Souls is finally running dry. An increasing number of children are now stillborn because there are not enough souls to inhabit them all. As the Great Maker continues to devour the remaining souls in the Ewer, this problem is certain to grow worse, and some members of the Tripartite worry that, in a few centuries, Autochthon will have consumed the souls of everyone now living within him. These growing shortages have prompted the leaders of the nation of Yugash to take equally desperate measures — the breaching of the ancient Seal of Eight Divinities that originally cut Autochthon off from any contact with Creation. In the course of the adventures in this book, the Autochthonians begin sending out scouting and raiding parties in search of both souls and new sources of the Five Magical Materials.

PROCESSES OF THE GREAT MAKER

To the inhabitants of Creation, the entire interior of Autochthon is far more alien than the gilded streets of Yu-Shan or the dark expanses of the Underworld. Portions of it are home to the millions of mortals who inhabit Autochthonia, but even they find the wild regions between their Eight Nations to be exotic and deadly places.

DEMATERIALIZING IN AUTOCHTHON

Autochthonia is not a spirit realm. It is a physical world much like Creation. Characters can use the Materialize and Dematerialize Charms exactly like they can in Creation. Like in Creation, dematerializing allows characters to avoid opponents and to pass through any buildings or other structures created by the inhabitants of Autochthonia. However, Autochthon's body exists equally in both the material and immaterial world. Dematerialized characters cannot pass through the Great Maker's metal flesh, because it exists both in the material and the immaterial worlds. Autochthon is a being that is equally made of Essence and physical matter and so exists equally in both worlds. As a result, characters cannot pass through the walls, conduits or the various machinery that make up the interior of Autochthon's body. This limitation also serves to protect visitors, since many of these conduits carry raw Essence or Essence-laden fluids that are equally harmful to materialized and dematerialized beings.

INSIDE THE CITIES OF AUTOCHTHON

Each of the Eight Nations consists of a series of nearby, closely connected open pockets in the body of the Great Maker. These pockets range from a quarter of a mile in diameter to many dozens of miles in diameter. In all cases, the open spaces are spheres or ovoids, and in them, the mortal inhabitants of Autochthonia have built their cities and towns. A few conduits and similar parts of Autochthon run through these open spaces, but in dramatic contrast to the narrow and cramped corridors that make up most of the Great Maker's body, these spaces are mostly devoid of any structures that the inhabitants did not create. However, the mere fact that these cities are all human-made does not make them any less alien to outsiders. Although they are built on a human scale and are clearly designed for human habitation, they are also designed, built and inhabited by people who have been living in the bowels of the Machine God for many thousands of years. Like humans everywhere, their aesthetics and sense of design have been strongly influenced by their surroundings. Metal gears dozens of feet tall, pistons as large as full-grown whales and huge arcing bolts of electricity are all as natural and familiar to these people as trees, thunderstorms and rivers are to the inhabitants of Creation.

While these cities are far safer than the uninhabited Reaches inside Autochthon, they are both more and less dangerous than similar cities inside Creation. The risk of disease is effectively nonexistent for any Autochthonian other than the daring explorers who venture into Creation. In addition, the nutritive slurries do not rot or go bad — the only risk of food poisoning comes from poisons that can get into the nutrient feedstock if someone improperly taps a conduit. Since there are many safeguards and checks on all foodstuffs, these problems occur less than once a century and rarely result in anything more serious than mild stomach discomfort. Even the risk of infection is less in the relatively germ-free environment of Autochthonia. **Increase the difficulty of contracting an infection by 2, and reduce the difficulty of recovering from an infection by 1 (in both cases, to a minimum of 1) inside Autochthon.**

However, from the point of view of visitors from Creation, the cities of Autochthonia are hellish and deadly places. Dwellings and public walkways are often located no more than half a dozen yards from vast metal gears large enough to grind a person into paste and junction boxes emitting bolts of artificial lightning that often arc more than 20 yards. None of the inhabitants of these cities finds anything in the least bit disturbing or deadly about these arrangements. Prominently placed and brightly colored glyphs clearly mark safe and hazardous areas and detail the precise nature of the hazards. Also, the most dangerous hazards such as large, swiftly spinning gears are also marked with low railings. Anyone who is sufficiently careless,

HAZARD RATINGS

All creatures and natural hazards in this book are marked with a hazard rating. This rating indicates the sorts of characters that will be challenged by the hazard and should be used as a guide for Storytellers seeking to create difficult but survivable scenarios. The ratings are on the standard one to five dot scale. If the hazard is some form of creature or other opponent, this table is adjusted for one or two characters of the type listed below facing a single opponent or a Circle of four or five facing two to four of the same type of opponents. If the opponents outnumber the characters, increase their hazard level by one.

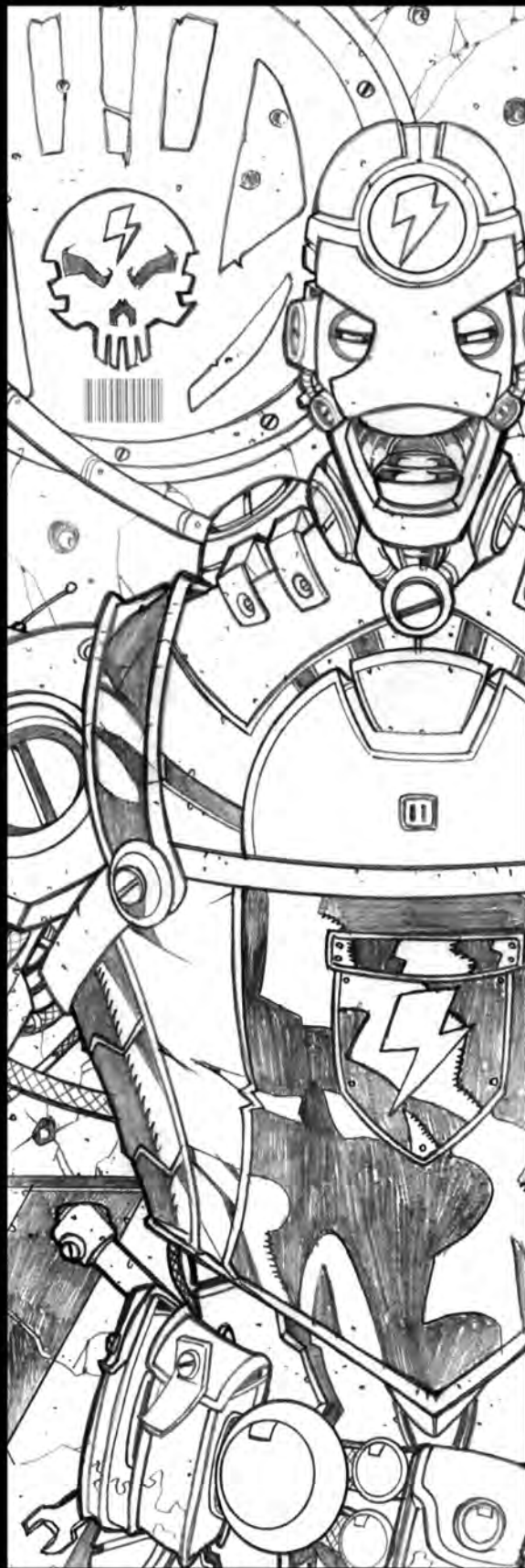
- This hazard would challenge a mortal. If it is a creature, it is dangerous but not deadly, like a wolf or a well-trained guard dog. If it is a trap or a natural hazard, it does 4-6L environmental damage. Typical examples include large gears, jets of low-temperature steam and exposure to ordinary toxins such as arsenic.
- This hazard would challenge a God-Blood or a powerful mortal thaumaturge. This could be a creature such as a lion or a shark. If it is a trap or a natural hazard, it does 8-12L environmental damage. Typical examples include jets of high-temperature steam, large electric arcs and exceptionally deadly toxins.
- The hazard would challenge a young Terrestrial Exalt. This could be a creature such as a lion dog or a mammoth. If it is a trap or a natural hazard, it does 14-20L environmental damage. Typical examples include small, high-pressure jets of cryogenic fluids such as liquid nitrogen or caustic acid and huge, high-pressure machines designed to crush or grind rubble into dust.
- This hazard would challenge a young Alchemical or Celestial Exalt or an experienced (150xp) Dragon-Blood. This could be a celestial lion, a storm serpent or a Second Circle demon. If it is a trap or a natural hazard, it does 21-28L environmental damage. Typical examples include vast arcs of electricity or raw Essence that are at least several yards in diameter, as well as machines that combine high pressure and high heat to process materials.
- The hazard would challenge an experienced Alchemical Exalt or a young Alchemical Assembly. This could be a powerful god or some similarly impressive being. If it is a trap or a natural hazard, it does 29L+ environmental damage. Typical examples include large quantities of cryogenic fluids such as liquid nitrogen as well as huge vats of boiling and exceptionally caustic acid.

Storytellers should also keep in mind that the level of the hazard level does not always need to match the adventurers in her game. Characters facing a hazard level that is one above their own rating (for example, a young Terrestrial Exalt facing a celestial lion) will have an exceedingly difficult challenge, and if the Storyteller does not provide some form of substantial assistance, several of the characters may die unless they are exceptional strategists or exceedingly lucky. Similarly, characters facing an opponent one level lower than they are (for example, a God-Blood facing a wolf) will have an easy but not completely trivial battle — just the sort of thing to allow the characters to show off their combat prowess with no real risk of life or limb unless they are seriously unlucky.

There is, however, little reason for Storytellers to run combats between characters and opponents two or more levels apart on the above table. In such a conflict, one side or the other will die a swift and miserable death unless their opponents allow them to surrender or flee.

LANGUAGE IN AUTOCHTHONIA

The Autochthonian language is closely related to Old Realm, and anyone who speaks Old Realm can easily communicate basic needs and concepts. Most of the members of the Tripartite also know a purer form of Old Realm, and they can all read and write that language — all of the oldest records are in Old Realm, including the early editions of the sacred Tome of the Great Maker, the holy book of the Autochthonian faith. Literacy among the Populat is far rarer, and the vast majority of writing made by the inhabitants of Autochthonia is in the form of simple pictographic glyphs that denote places, things and important concepts. These glyphs are used to indicate the proper way to operate complex machinery, to demarcate safe and unsafe areas and to indicate concepts such as “Do Not Enter,” “Washroom,” “Danger” or “Caution, Slippery When Wet.” In areas without light, similar concepts are indicated by a series of special chimes. Having Lore • indicates that an Autochthonian character is especially proficient at reading all of these glyphs and chime tones and that she can also write them, but only characters with Lore •• or higher can actually read or write Old Realm. Almost no members of the Populat have two or more dots in Lore.



foolish or suicidal can easily ignore the warning glyphs and step over the low railings, but the people of Autochthon see absolutely no reason to protect the foolish or the careless from their mistakes. However, these same people find the idea of hazards that are not clearly marked to be completely abhorrent and regard the fact that dangers such as ice or rain-slick streets in the cities of Creation are not marked as being slippery as both exceedingly dangerous and completely immoral.

The cities of Autochthon are designed to maximize efficiency and to deliberately encourage the inhabitants to be careful, obedient and productive workers. Placing clanking factories a few dozen yards away from the workers' apartments allows the workers to walk to work swiftly and easily, and putting up high railings and similar protective measures is viewed as criminally wasteful when well-marked warning glyphs accomplish the same goal.

DWELLINGS AND DAILY LIFE

Like humans everywhere else, in Autochthonia, how someone lives is closely related to his social class — important people live in large and comfortable private

URBAN DANGERS

While walking down the streets of any of the cities of Autochthon is at least as safe as walking the streets of Nexus or Chiaroscuro, attempting unusual forms of movement can be far more deadly. The densely packed nature of the buildings and the prevalence of hazards such as spinning gears and open flames means that a botched climbing or jumping attempt can be exceptionally lethal. Almost all falling damage in these cities is lethal: Characters land on either metal streets or similar hard surfaces, they smash into pylons, or they fall into huge machines. Also, characters who fall, jump or are pushed into any of the many well-marked hazards in these cities take additional damage from these hazards. Almost all of the dangers found outside and next to streets and dwellings are Hazard Rating •, although a few are Hazard Rating ••. Inside factories, Hazard Rating •• dangers are quite common, and some of the largest and most dangerous machines are Hazard Rating •••. Hazard ratings above ••• are never found inside functional cities. Broken or damaged machinery can have greater hazard ratings, but such devices are always repaired swiftly as long as the city is not lying in ruins. In abandoned or ruined cities, the lack of repairs raise most hazard ratings by one dot or, in the most extreme cases, by two.

suites, while the Lumpen and the lesser ranks of the Populat live wretched lives in cramped barracks. Hunger and malnutrition is almost nonexistent in Autochthonia because the nutrient paste is given freely to all workers, but privacy is reserved only for the elite, and most inhabitants of Autochthonia have far fewer personal possessions than all but the most impoverished residents of Creation.

BARRACKS LIFE

The majority of the inhabitants of Autochthonia live in large bunk rooms where the between two and four dozen members of a single work group all live together. These dwellings are exceedingly Spartan, and among the lowest-status members of the Populat, even a person's bunk may be used by someone else while she is at work. Most ordinary workers own nothing more than the clothes on their backs

and a small box of personal possessions that typically include medals given out for good performance, special tools, dice or other items used for entertainment and religious icons (gear and cross symbols being the most common).

Workers sleep, eat and work beside the members of their work group. This degree of closeness is thought to increase both loyalty and efficiency. In cases where members of the same work group come into conflict, workers can request transfers, but too many such requests can cause a worker to be labeled a troublemaker and greatly reduces her chances for promotion.

THE LIVES OF HIGH-STATUS WORKERS

The closest equivalent to the middle-class merchants, shopkeepers and tradespeople who make up such an important part of the various cities of Creation are the shift chiefs,

URBAN FEATURES

Whenever a character engages in acrobatics, chases, combat or similar endeavors, consult the following table to determine what unusual features are nearby. In all cases, these features are within 20 yards of the character. Reroll results of 8 or 9 if the character is not inside a factory.

URBAN UNUSUAL FEATURES TABLE

Roll	Feature	Resistance Difficulty	Resisted Effect	Interval
1	No unusual features	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Sharp projections (Hazard Rating ●)	N/A	treat as lethal falling damage	N/A
3	Sharp projections (Hazard Rating ●)	N/A	treat as lethal falling damage	N/A
4	Huge gears (Hazard Rating ●) +	2	2L	one turn
5	Narrow railings on the edge of steep precipices (Hazard Rating ●●)	N/A	treat as lethal falling damage	N/A
6	Huge rapidly spinning gears (Hazard Rating ●●) +	3	4L	one turn
7	Electric arcs (Hazard Rating ●●) ++	4	4L	one turn
8	Exceptionally powerful electric arcs (Hazard Rating ●●●) ++	5	6L	one turn
9	Huge presses (Hazard Rating ●●●) +++	5	7L	one turn
10	Roll twice on this table (reroll if this roll occurs again)			

+ **Huge gears** are normally between 3 and 20 yards in diameter and between six inches and two yards wide. The slow ones spin once every few seconds and can easily crush body parts, while the rapidly spinning ones spin up to several dozen times a second and can rend and flay a character exceptionally rapidly.

++ **Electric arcs** are bolts of artificial lightning that continuously jump between a large junction box and some receiver that is normally between 10 and 50 yards away. These arcs vary in power, with the most powerful and deadly only being found within factories.

+++ **Huge presses** are vast devices designed to either roll or stamp sheet metal into specific shapes or to crush rubble or other raw materials into fine powder. Each press typically crushes everything within a square or rectangle between 5 and 20 yards on a side. The presses normally open high enough for a tall man or a moderately powerful Alchemical Exalted to stand inside them and then slam shut within a single turn and remain shut for one turn. Presses repeatedly open and close and normally close between one and four turns after they begin to open.

TIME

The Autochthonians divide their time into 25-hour days composed of five five-hour-long shifts. The Autochthonians name each shift after one of the five elements — Earth Shift starts the day, followed by Wood, Fire and Water, and the day ends with Air Shift. The 12 1/2 minutes at the beginning and the end of each shift are designated as shift changes. Each 25-minute-long shift change allows for both transit and short breaks, so that workers have a few minutes to relax and eat, as well as time to move from one workstation to another. In this way, the Autochthonians make certain that their vast machines are never left unattended. In Autochthonia, the days, months and years are calculated in the same fashion as in the Old Realm, but here, the calendar dates from the creation of Autochthonia. The current year is 4878 DA (Dawn of Autochthonia).

supervisors and other leaders of the Populat. The supervisors and directors mostly live in two-person suites identical to those used by junior members of the Tripartite (see below). However, even the lesser members, such as the foremen and shift chiefs, have lives that are significantly better than those of the ordinary members of the Populat. They mostly live in small two-room apartments inhabited by between four and six people. Unlike the barracks rooms, which are freely open to all visitors, guests are expected to knock on the apartment door and may be refused admittance if the residents are busy or do not desire company.

THE LIVES OF THE TRIPARTITE

The members of the Olgotary, the Theomachracy and the Sodalities all live in private apartments. The most junior members live in two-person suites. One room consists of a small bedroom with two beds and two small closets, while the other room contains chairs and tables. Like most other inhabitants of Autochthonia, washing and dining facilities are shared with dozens of others. However, the vast majority of the members of the Tripartite only share the facilities with members of their own particular branch of the Tripartite. Initially, members of the Tripartite are randomly assigned roommates of roughly similar age. However, members in good standing can request to be moved to different rooms and many of the lower-ranking members of the Tripartite live with close friends or lovers.

The more senior and higher-ranking members of the Tripartite have the almost unheard of luxury of private dwellings. The smallest of these are identical to the quarters assigned to junior members, except that there is only

one bed in the bedroom. However, the highest-ranking individuals have apartments that would be the envy of anyone in Creation. The largest take up one or two entire floors of an apartment tower and contain half a dozen or more rooms. Unlike anyone else in Autochthonia, such important individuals also have one or two personal servants who act as maids and butlers for the high-ranking individual and whatever close friends or lovers she allows into her inner sanctum. All of the most important members of the Tripartite have their own washrooms and dine only with the other members of this elite.

The food for both the most powerful members of the Tripartite and the lowest member of the Lumpen all comes from the conduits of the Great Maker. However, instead of eating the mildly processed nutrient paste served in the huge cafeterias of the Populat, the dining rooms used by the higher-status members of the Tripartite often have private food technicians who use special alchemical techniques to provide the food with a range of flavors and textures. Junior members of the Harvesters often vie for these positions because of the opportunity it allows them to interact with important people and given them the chance to show off their expertise.

THE REACHES

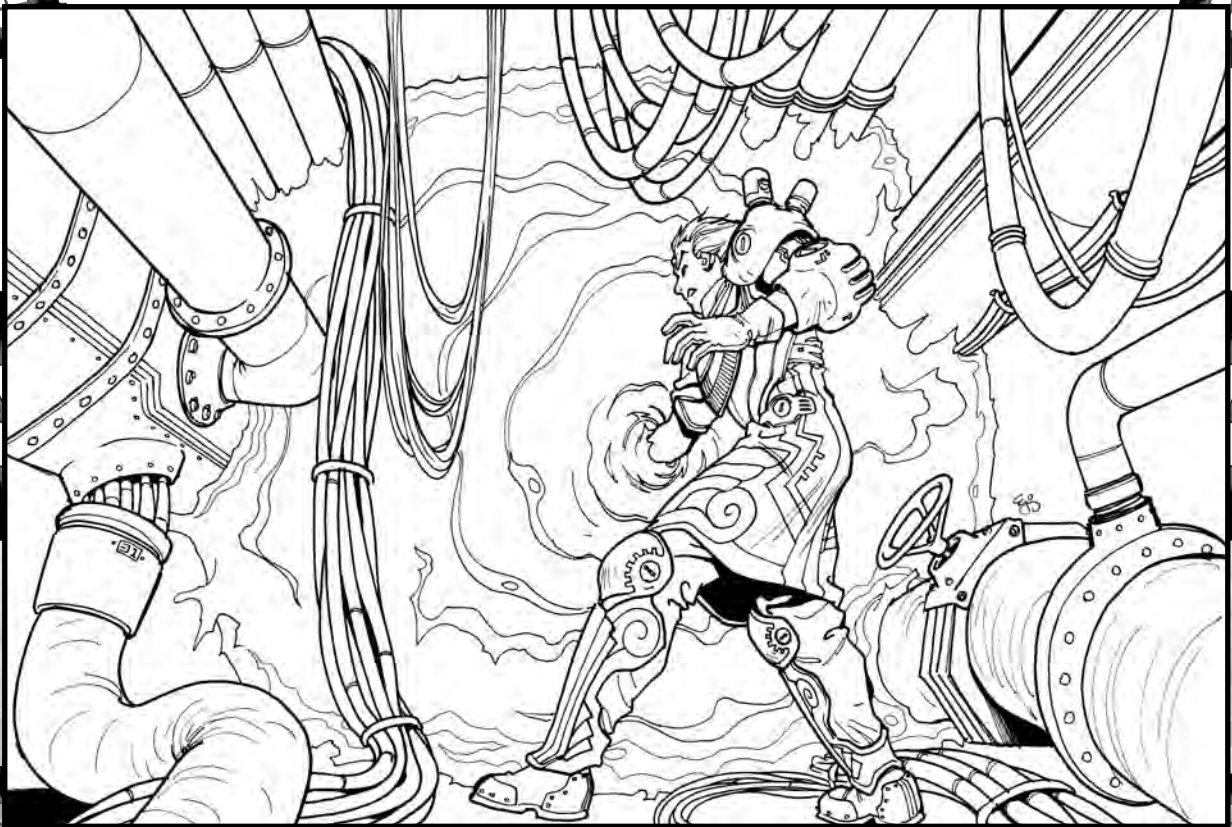
While the various cities are relatively safe, the seemingly endless Reaches that lie outside of the inhabited areas are far more deadly and are likely the most alien environment anyone from Creation has ever encountered. The physical experience is much like exploring a cave complex that runs for many thousands of miles. The corridors of the Reaches are dark, and they range in size from spaces too small for a child to squeeze through to huge cavern and tunnels that are many hundreds of yards wide. Like the caverns beneath Creation, the temperature can vary from freezing cold to almost lethally warm, and going from one cavern to another can involve squeezing through narrow spaces or climbing surfaces that were never designed for human hands or feet. However, the Reaches of Autochthonia are, in many ways, both more alien and deadlier than almost any ordinary cavern. Instead of relatively solid rock walls, most of these spaces are bounded by tightly clustered networks of tubes, conduits and gratings. And unlike rocky caverns, much of the Reaches lacks anything that can be considered a true floor. Travelers are often forced to walk on conduits, on rows of closely spaced pipes, on narrow catwalks or on narrow metal gratings. Many of the corridors and other spaces in the Reaches are widest at the middle or the top and often the easiest way to traverse a space is to climb up a wall and walk along a narrow path a dozen or more yards above the bottom. Also, other pipes, scaffoldings and similar random projections can partially block a path or lie near the floor to trip the careless and the unwary.

MINING

Although the residents of the cities of Autochthonia can normally find all of the raw materials they require inside the boundaries of their cities (usually by tapping conduits that traverse the city), sometimes, these resources are either insufficient or they become erratic. In such cases, a city's inhabitants must look outside the city for these resources. While trade with and requests for aid from other cities or nations are both widely used options, the first choice is always to seek conduits, recycling vats and other sources for raw materials in the nearby portions of the Reaches. As long as a conduit is located within three days' journey of the city, a member of the Sodalities can cause that conduit to carry the needed resources from their source into the city. However, to acquire these resources, one or two skilled Sodalts, accompanied by teams of Populat miners must travel into the Reaches and locate the necessary conduit. Even though the journeys are relatively short, these mining expeditions are fraught with danger, and the most harrowing have become widely told stories of heroism and terror.

THE FAR REACHES

Out on the edges of the explored portions of the Reaches are the regions known collectively as the Far Reaches. Since no one has ever compiled a map of any significant portion of the Great Maker's body, no one knows if the Far Reaches actually lie at the edges of its being. The two most common theories are that the Great Maker is sick or dying and that the Far Reaches are places where Autochthon's internal order has already broken down or that the Far Reaches are those portions of the Great Maker's body that are innately inimical to human life. In fact, both answers are correct: The Great Maker is ill, and some portions of its body have become battlegrounds where fix beetles and other loyal automata attempt to repair an internal landscape that has turned against the body in which it resides. The heart of these problems is the Elemental Pole of Smoke, though the blight zones (see below) are similarly dangerous. However, most of the Far Reaches are simply those regions where human life is difficult or impossible — including the Elemental Poles of Oil, Crystal, Lightning and Steam (see below). There are sections of the Great Maker's body that are filled with toxic and unbreathable gases (or occasionally vacuum) and places where the temperatures are hot enough to melt lead or cold enough to freeze powerful whiskey solid. In many of these areas, unprotected mortals and Exalts die



within a few minutes. In other portions of the Far Reaches, death is not instantaneous, but high levels of Essence-created radiations, ultra-powerful magnetic fields, low-level toxins in the air or zero gravity render that portion of the Far Reaches far more hazardous than the more habitable sections of the Reaches. Unprotected individuals in these spaces often die within a few hours or days.

The other characteristics of almost all portions of the Far Reaches are that the automata there are exceptionally aggressive. While some of the automata are damaged and attack every outsider that ventures nearby, most are simply not programmed with even the low-level acceptance of mortals or the automatic deference to Alchemical Exalted that the Great Maker instilled in the automata that inhabit the Reaches. The Great Maker neglected this programming because he never expected humans to venture into such deadly regions of his body.

The Far Reaches are almost invariably deadly to mortals and pose a lethal threat to even the powerful Alchemical Exalted, as neither sort of being was ever included in the acceptance protocols of the Far Reaches. In the Reaches, automata automatically defer to the Alchemical Exalted and generally leave mortals who are not causing damage alone because they have been directed to do so. In the Far Reaches, the automata are completely unfamiliar with both mortals and Alchemical Exalted and so regard both as unknown threats. Some automata retreat from such threats, but others immediately attempt to eliminate them.

Some portions of the Far Reaches are filled with water or other less pleasant liquids (see the “Conduit Tapping Table,” pp. 30-33 for possible examples). Roll one die to see the contents of the pool. On a 1-6, the pools consists of somewhat dirty but safe water. On a 7-9, roll the fluid on the nontoxic and mildly toxic fluid sub-table (see p. 32). And on a 10, roll on the highly toxic fluid sub-table (see p. 32). Even when the liquid is harmless, there is absolutely no way to know if it is safe to move through. Some of the water-filled areas are only a few yards wide and have easy entrances and exits on both sides. However, others extend for miles and are either dead ends or are filled with narrow conduits and other projections that can easily catch legs, feet or arms, so that the trapped character cannot be freed before they drown. The liquid filled portions of the Far Reaches are widely regarded as the most consistently deadly portions of Autochthon, and even the Alchemical Exalted exercise great caution when entering them. Although most of the liquids are nontoxic, almost every liquid (including the water) is largely or completely opaque, and so, anyone traveling through it that is not using Essence sight or some Charm that removes the need for vision is completely blind, even if they have powerful light sources.

Some automata are specifically designed to move and navigate through these liquids and lurk in these pools. Like

almost all other automata found in the Far Reaches, they are hostile to all visitors and attack without warning. The danger of attack while characters are holding their breath and likely blind makes almost all mortals and most Alchemical Exalted avoid these liquid-filled corridors unless there is no other option.

THE ELEMENTAL POLES OF AUTOCHTHON

Unlike the Creation of Gaia, Autochthon is not surrounded by the endless chaotic expanses of the Wyld. Instead, the Machine God sleeps in the non-space of Elsewhere. Beyond the static boundaries of Gaia’s Creation, infinite uncertainties exist. In contrast, literally and absolutely nothing lies beyond Autochthon’s boundaries, and so, the titan’s boundaries are necessarily more rigid. Geometrically, he is closest to a sphere, although that is a necessary oversimplification for the minds of those who cannot perceive his true complexity. Given that his world is, in fact, a three-dimensional realm of solid organocontinents grinding against one another in the expression of Primordial biology, this changes the fundamental structure of the world from that of Creation.

Unlike Creation, Autochthon does not have poles of pure elemental Essence at the edges of his existence. Instead, his skin of metal and adamant encloses the entirety of his being within a shell over a mile thick, inscribed from without and within with a multitude of immensely powerful wards against intrusions by entropy and chaos. The interior of this sphere is Autochthonia.

The Great Maker is not composed of the same elements as Creation, and so, both the composition and function of the world inside his body differs. In place of the basic air, wood, fire, water and earth, Autochthon uses the artificially created elements of steam, crystal, lightning, oil and metal. Autochthon also incorporates a sixth element of smoke, but this embodiment of pollution manifests Autochthon’s ailing health rather than a desired component of his being.

Just as the elements themselves differ, so too does the arrangement of poles. The upper fifth of this spherical world is a colossal hemispherical reservoir filled entirely with an ocean of oil. Squid-like custodians swim in schools, mixing the lubricants as they scout their lightless inky realm by echolocation and Essence sight. These creatures also maintain the wards of the ceiling, attaching their suckers to create hermetically sealed environments in which they can extrude welding torches without fear of explosion. Vast ovoid automata, miles long, consume and convert oil into refined chemicals that are sealed in anchor pods and dropped to the ocean floor. Blade-sleek gremlins prowl tainted currents like siaka, foraging out to attack the factory whales and batten themselves on the processed cargo. All around the containment bulwark’s periphery, factory-crustaceans feed and maintain the intake valves

and pumps that regulate the flow of oil pumping into the world below. These refinery-spirits also harvest released chemical pods as they find them, placing them into designated drop chutes. In the rest of Autochthonia, the oils serve the part of water as the predominant fluid, greasing mechanical parts and providing raw materials for many chemical components in the Primordial's mechanical physiology. Oil is Autochthon's lifeblood, and the vast pumps beneath the pole serve as his many hearts. Recycled oils work their way back upward through peristaltic veins after use, pumped through successive tiers of filtration until they arrive at the reservoir pole in purified form.

SURVIVAL IN THE ELEMENTAL POLE OF OIL

This oil is mildly poisonous if swallowed (Resistance difficulty 1, 1L if the roll succeeds, 2L if it fails, with a duration of four hours and a penalty of -2). Also, if ignited, it burns with the heat of a bonfire (see *Exalted*, p. 244). However, the most profound danger of this portion of the Autochthonian Reaches is the almost complete lack of breathable air. Conduits can sometimes be tapped for air, but this is a risky procedure since unknown conduits can yield almost anything. The only other sources of air are found in a few isolated pockets and a small number of maintenance and storage spaces fitted with double-doored air locks.

The bottom fifth of Autochthonia is a barren and blasted wasteland that forms the single largest open space inside the Great Maker's body. This openness is a sharp contrast to the immensely claustrophobic conditions that predominate in all of the rest of Autochthonia. However, this openness is far from inviting, as the Elemental Pole of Smoke is a dark and poisonous realm. A roiling bank of dense black fog, dozens of miles thick, rises to the ceiling, carefully sealed away from the rest of the Machine God by armored plates treated against the corrosive pollutants. The scuttling custodians who maintain this shielding perform a necessary but thankless duty. Their existence is short and brutal, as this acidic environment gradually destroys their bodies and ultimately sends their dying remains plummeting into the miles-deep heap of debris far below. The clouds of elemental smoke here are toxic and occasionally luminous when mobile Essence vortices condense into a malevolent glow. In other places, the harsh and relentless meteorological conditions become turbulent enough that intermittent lightning flashes and thunder add to the inescapable gloom. Great automaton dirigibles plated with soulsteel to protect against the corrosive pollution drift through the churning polychromatic clouds, their intake maws sucking in the foul air through purifica-

tion baffles. From time to time, these bloated automata dock with the colossal inverted spires that pierce down into or even through the smoke at irregular intervals. When docked, air-scrubber drones pump clean air into ventilation ducts, where it funnels back up through Autochthonia for the benefit of its biological denizens and the Primordial's own biomechanical subsystems. This complex system serves as Autochthon's lungs.

Far below the tempest-wracked smog, the floor is a vast scrap heap of twisted metal scorched and blasted by acid rain and incendiary hail. From time to time, shafts open in the longest hanging spires, dropping more detritus onto the industrial landfill. Precipitation from the chemical monsoons filters through the heap and pools below, gradually digesting the bottommost strata into a toxic smoldering slurry saturated with glittering flakes of metal. Veins of especially refractive jade alloys run back along the walls into Autochthonia above, pumping this morass into refinery-organs where catalysts extract raw ores. This endless expanse of debris is home to a few unlucky custodians who fell or were sucked into a waste collector's mouth and is also home to tribes of gremlins. A few fungal elementals breed in terrifying acid-proof colonies, their mindless growth and hunger kept in check only by the custodians' periodic use of fire. The assorted denizens make war upon one another incessantly for resources and Essence until thunder warns of encroaching storms. Then, all flee to their haphazard shelters of piled wreckage, gremlins heaping curses upon their distant tormentors while custodians pray to the recycling gods for deliverance. When the storms pass, the denizens heap new scrap to fill the smoking holes in anticipation of the next downpour.

SURVIVAL IN THE ELEMENTAL POLE OF SMOKE

This smoke is poisonous if inhaled (Resistance difficulty 2, 2L if the roll succeeds, 4L if it fails, with a duration of four hours and a penalty of -2). Fortunately, the smoke is mixed with breathable air and a character can keep from inhaling smoke by wearing a wet cloth over her nose and mouth. This smoke is also mildly corrosive, and every hour that a character allows this smoke to touch her unprotected skin, her player must make an additional Resistance roll (Resistance difficulty 1, 1B if the roll succeeds, 2L if it fails, with a duration of two hours and a penalty of -1). The toxic slurry at the bottom of the Pole of Smoke is exceedingly deadly, and falling into it is equivalent to immersion in an acid bath (see *Exalted*, p. 244).

The remaining three-fifths of Autochthonia forms a roughly toroidal cylinder, the solid husk and flesh of the Great Maker. Within this predominantly metal realm, continent-sized organs drift and clash according to the inscrutable principles of this realm's biotectonics. The vast majority of Autochthonia is unyieldingly cramped, a bizarre mix of subterranean and urban design. Moderate spaces and chasms exist only in the interstices between organs. Here, mortals build their cities and towns, which are connected by a multitude of lesser spaces carved by labyrinths of tubes, veins, tunnels, chutes and chimneys threading through and around the Machine God's organs. Much of this crowding and claustrophobia stems from Autochthon's own constraints — he crammed his infinite being into bounded space for his exodus. The entire toroidal bulk forms the Elemental Pole of Metal, the Essence-charged nature of which makes most surfaces impermeable to dematerialized beings.

SURVIVAL IN THE ELEMENTAL POLE OF METAL

The Pole of Metal is the portion of Autochthonia with which most mortals and Exalts have experience, and all eight of the mortal nations are found here. Although hostile automata and similar risks pose serious dangers for travelers, this region is the most benign of those inside the Great Maker's body, and merely walking through it is not usually deadly.

At the absolute heart of Autochthon, the metacrystalline Godhead contains the Primordial's Core, which the residents of Autochthonia imagine to be the Great Maker's own soulgem. This Core contains the processing function of the titan's ego. From the outside, this chamber is a vast sphere. However, the wide hyperbolic slope of a solid central pillar transforms the interior of the chamber into a torus. Affixed to the upper half of this pillar and woven outward to fill the top half of the continent-sized cathedral, the tapestry of Autochthon's Design incorporates a multidimensional fractaline complexity resembling Yu-Shan's Loom of Fate. Likewise, the gossamer spider web of starmetal cables and adamant nodes plays home to millions of design weavers, the up-graded pattern spiders weaving the Essence and future of the Machine God's realm in accordance with the dictates of the Core. Lightning arcs between the strands constantly and elaborately, a great sizzling storm of naked, incalculable thought. Far below, the Godhead itself is a forest of couplings, tubes and towers, every one leading through ducts, filaments, wires or some other apparatus to mechanisms through all of Autochthonia. Because the Core

trusts the Divine Ministers and their revered subroutines to fulfill their assorted autonomic functions, the slumbering Primordial makes infrequent use of these couplings. From time to time, however, Autochthon directs one spider or another to fall on a gleaming dragline from the web and plug its spindly legs into some architectural tree miles below. Once attached, the web-strand links the Tapestry with the machine, bridging the two in an awesome surge of Essence. The power of that vast thought races to its destination, displacing and superseding all other spirits in its path. The Godhead is the Elemental Pole of Crystal, but more than that, the chamber is the very brain and perfected ideal to which all else in Autochthonia is physically and metaphysically subsidiary.

SURVIVAL IN THE ELEMENTAL POLE OF CRYSTAL

The greatest danger upon entering the Pole of Crystal comes from the vast multitudes of destroyers that rush to defend the Great Maker from any intruders. Hordes of both destroyers and design weavers will defend this region with their lives. Anyone who survives these dangers must also contend with the vast arcs of thought lightning, (Resistance Difficulty: 4, Resisted Effect: 9L, Failed Effect: 20L, Interval: 30 minutes — see *Exalted*, p. 244, for further information).

Although the elements of oil, smoke, metal and crystal have their geographical poles aligned in a vertical axis, the poles of lightning and steam orient themselves through more complicated geometry. Unable to extend infinitely outward because of the limits of his own bounded and spherical form, Autochthon instead folded inward and placed the last two elemental poles deep within his body.

The Pole of Lightning exists within a cylindrical sanctum measuring a third the height of Autochthonia and a fifth the diameter. Bounded in semi-organic insulating ceramics tiled over indestructible crystal, the chamber boasts dynamos whose number and size stagger the imagination, alongside Essence capacitors affixed to the interior walls in stacked ringed tiers. Each tier rotates opposite from the one beneath, turned by an impossibly complex assemblage of Essence-driven engines and gears, all lubricated by oil pumped through veins inserted through scattered sanctum doorways. Lightning fills the space within the rumbling column, arcing from node to node in sparks that could span — or vaporize — whole cities. The largest of these arcs blazes brighter than the noonday sun by several orders of magnitude. As directed by the Divine Hierarchy, spikes of orichalcum extend from between the dynamos, conducting their power through portals into

batteries scattered in Autochthon's central mass. These batteries serve as relay nodes, transmitting their stored lightning through the starmetal nerve cabling threaded throughout the Machine God. Surges of this power feed the Tapestry of the Godhead and innumerable other components, as well as igniting oils to generate fire within factory forges and providing rapid communication between Autochthon's Primordial biology. The Elemental Pole of Lightning powers the Great Maker's biomechanical nervous system.

SURVIVAL IN THE ELEMENTAL POLE OF LIGHTNING

This is the most instantly deadly of the elemental poles, and every turn, anyone in this region will be struck by innumerable bolts of lightning (Resistance Difficulty: 5, Resisted Effect: 15L, Failed Effect: 30A, Interval: one turn — see *Exalted*, p. 244, for further information).

Autochthon's Pole of Steam exists in a sanctum realm the same overall dimensions as the Pole of Lightning. This colossal silo houses a sea of fresh water in its lowest expanses, kept boiling by the constant application of underwater lightning arcs. Unsurprisingly, nothing

biological can live in this scalding, high-pressure tank. Its only denizens are jellyfish-shaped custodians capable of rapidly adjusting their buoyancy to move through the shaft, tasked with upkeep of the cistern's mechanisms and scouting for impurities to devour. The entirety of the silo contains steam at pressures that would crush a behemoth or transform coal into diamond. Vents open in the walls allowing that pressure to feed through sanctum portals into arterial veins within Autochthonia. From there, the steam flows to all parts of the Machine God, providing driving force for pistons and wheels, as well as cleansing whole sectors with tempests of scouring steam.

Cooled by blue-jade filters, steam condenses into water, which serves a myriad of functions throughout the Machine God. In industry, water tempers freshly smelted metals and lubricates those components where oil proves dangerous or impractical. More importantly, water supports the ecosystem of truly biological life within Autochthonia. Some veins carry water near mortal settlements, diverting some of their pressure into the capillaries that carry nutrients and veins of organic waste. As part of this life-support system, globule cisterns staged at strategic intervals in the vein networks contain vast reefs of synthetic coral. These are the largest species of biocrystalline elementals in Autochthonia, created to process and filtrate their environment. In this role, they use some of the biomass to expand or repair themselves and excrete the remainder as nutrient pastes directly



into adjoining capillaries. Inorganic wastes flush away to factories capable of extracting the purified ores. The reefs take the bulk of their purified water and send it directly into the Pole of Steam via sanctum portals, where it joins with the other steam and reclaimed water to keep the sea at a roughly constant volume. Subsidiary elementals live inside the vein network itself like blood cells, where they diligently repair cracks and attempt to remove unforeseen contaminants that could poison fragile mortals.

SURVIVAL IN THE ELEMENTAL POLE OF STEAM

The steam here is exceptionally dangerous and causes horrific burns to anyone it touches (Resistance Difficulty: 5, Resisted Effect: 10L, Failed Effect: 25L, Interval: one turn — see *Exalted*, p. 244, for further information).

The worst portions of Autochthonia are the dread blight zones. These are tumors in the body of the Primordial, regions devoid of order or respirable Essence. Here, the much-feared Void reigns unchecked, and its monstrous gremlins organize themselves into packs and hives. Even in disobedience, these Sundered deities and mechanisms of Autochthon ironically express the patterns imprinted upon their very existence, establishing their hierarchies with a pecking order of strength and cunning. A handful of rogue Alchemicals suffering from Gremlin Syndrome live in the most remote blight zones, setting themselves up as god-kings over the tribes of corrupted gods. Gremlins and Void-tainted Exalted prey upon other spirits and gnaw at the bowels of their world, stealing the Essence they can no longer respire. In turn, the machines assemble more of their maddened kind to expand the blight zones. Loyal Alchemicals, custodians and the Divine Ministers alike make war upon these horrors, venturing into the fetid, rust-splotted dominions of eerie silence and machinery gone viciously awry.

Although the human inhabitants of Autochthonia are far more used to the Reaches' chaotic and complex landscape than outsiders, even they know that it is an exceptionally difficult and deadly space in which to venture. They view trips into it much like humans in Creation see ventures into the thickest and most pestilent jungles or treks across the mountainous glaciers of the Far North. As a result, no one enters even the safest portions of the Reaches without a good reason, and only the mad or the most desperate of the Lumpen flee into the Reaches to avoid punishment.

CONDUIT TAPPING TABLE

When traveling through the Reaches of Autochthonia, characters in need of food or water may be forced to attempt to tap into some of the multitude of conduits that snake through the corridors and open spaces in the body of the Great Maker. While many are relatively harmless, some can provide much-needed resources, while others are exceptionally deadly. Since there is usually no way to determine what is inside a specific conduit without tapping into it, Storytellers should use the following table to determine the affects of tapping into a conduit.

When the characters tap into a conduit, roll one die, and consult the following table. The only time this roll is not made is if someone has previously tapped this conduit. Each conduit carries only one type of fluid, and so, no additional roll needs to be made. However, the exact nature of the fluid need not be constant, and so, even if the characters tapped this same conduit a few hours before, the Storyteller should reroll the results on the appropriate sub-table (if any). Conduits that carry Essence or hot fluids always carry Essence or hot fluids, but the exact nature of the conduit's contents can vary according to the needs of the Great Maker.

TAPPING CONDUITS MAIN TABLE

Roll	Contents
1	pure water
2	nutrient slurry
3	nontoxic and mildly toxic fluids [1]
4	gasses [2]
5	highly toxic fluids [3]
6	hot fluids [4]
7	cryogenic fluids
8	steam
9	Essence
10	Essence

Nutrient slurry is a thick, gray, gritty and mostly tasteless liquid that is highly nutritious. Drinking two quarts of this liquid a day provides all of the food and water that a character requires to remain in good health. Unfortunately, this fluid is even less appetizing than the processed nutrient slurry that is used for food in the various Autochthonian cities. Players of characters who are not used to the food of Autochthonia who must subsist on nutrient slurry must make a successful Stamina + Endurance roll with a difficulty of 2 the first time the characters attempt to drink it. Anyone whose player fails immediately vomits. They automatically take one level of bashing damage and cannot eat anything for the next few hours. If the roll succeeds, the difficulty of this roll is reduced to 1. Characters who have been eating primarily nutrient slurry for three days and who have successfully eaten it at least once a day have adapted to this food and no longer need to make these rolls.

CONDUIT CONTENTS DAMAGE TABLE

Hazard	Difficulty	Resisted Effect	Failed Effect	Interval
low-temperature steam	3	2L	6L	one turn
high-temperature steam	5	6L	15L	one turn
acid	5	2L	8L	one turn
strong acid	5	4L	16L	one turn
hot fluids+	3	2L	5L	one turn
cryogenic fluids	5	2L	8L	one turn
raw Essence	4	6L	15L	one turn
refined Essence++	2	1B	3B	one minute
flammable fluids (burning)	3	2L	6L	one turn
liquid fire	4	2L	8L	one turn
flammable gases (burning)	2	2L	4L	one turn
flammable gases (explosion)	4	3L	8L	one turn*

+ This damage is in addition to any damage caused by the fluid's composition.

++ This damage only affects characters who cannot use Essence.

* Explosions only last a single turn.

Venom Type	Difficulty	Success	Failure	Duration/Penalty
smoke	1	1B	2B	two hours/-1
corrosive smoke	2	2L	4L	four hours/-2
nonpoisonous fluids#	2	1B	4B	one hour/-1 (ingested only)
poisonous fluids#	2	1L	4L	four hours/-2
moderately poisonous fluids	3	2L	6L	six hours/-4
extremely poisonous fluids	3	4L	8L	eight hours/-4

Halve both the damage and the difficulty of the Stamina roll if the character spits out the liquid as soon as she realizes that it is dangerous.

Cryogenic fluids are liquids that are so cold that they can freeze flesh by touch and can render non-magical metals and other materials as brittle as glass. Any metal, wood, stone or other material immersed in them temporarily reduces its soak, health levels to damage and health levels to destroy by 8 (to a minimum of 0). This reduction lasts for five minutes after the object is immersed or doused in the fluid, but any damage done while the object is thus weakened is permanent.

Steam is hot, high-pressure water vapor. Roll one die to determine if it is high- or low-temperature steam. On a 1-6, it is low-temperature steam, while on a 7-10, it is high-temperature steam. Low-temperature steam does not damage metal, leather or other inanimate materials. High-temperature steam is far more deadly and can damage any object except one made from one of the Five Magical Materials.

Essence-carrying conduits contain a substance that looks like a cross between water and electricity — it is a brightly glowing liquid that arcs toward all living beings and Essence users. It has an attack pool of eight dice and attempts to strike any target within five yards of the opening in the conduit. Attacks by Essence streams can-

not be parried without Charms that allow non-physical attacks to be parried, and the Essence stream can split to attack multiple opponents simultaneously with no reduction in either attack pool or damage. When a conduit carrying Essence is opened, roll one die. On a 1-6, it is raw Essence, while on a 7-9, it is refined Essence, and on a 10, it is the rare healing Essence. Refined and healing Essence are both exceptionally valuable. Unfortunately, they are not reliably available. Any conduit that carries Essence carries different types of Essence at different times. Just because a conduit contained healing Essence at one time does not mean that, the next time a character taps it, it won't spew a deadly stream of raw Essence. Fortunately, when an Essence stream changes, the Essence flow slows down over the course of a minute or two and ceases entirely for a minute, giving conduit-tappers time to protect themselves from potentially deadly Essence streams.

Refined Essence is not only far safer, but can even benefit Essence users. To an Essence user, being struck by a stream of refined Essence is the same as being inside and attuned to a level-5 Manse. The character immediately recovers 5 motes of Essence and also recovers an additional 20 motes per hour. Characters who cannot use Essence

suffer minor burns from exposure to refined Essence. Refined Essence also automatically refill all forms of Essence storage devices.

Healing Essence is both rare and greatly prized. It is always blue in color, and there is always much rejoicing whenever a conduit-tapper “taps blue.” After being struck by a stream of healing Essence, every Essence user, including all Exalts, heal seven times as fast as normal. However, this speeded healing is not cumulative with other forms of enhanced healing. Healing Essence also causes everyone it touches to heal from wounds, diseases and infections as easily as one of the Exalted. Mortals and others who do not use Essence also heal as fast as a normal Exalt. This healing only applies to diseases, infections or wounds that characters already possessed when they were struck by the beam of Essence.

[1] **Nontoxic and mildly toxic fluid** conduits generally contain vividly colored liquids that smell strongly. Antifreeze, alcohol, liquid dyes, oil, synthetic blood, liquid soap and kerosene are only some of the fluids found in such conduits. All of these fluids are between the freezing and boiling points of water and are harmless to touch. Some are simply inedible, but many are mildly poisonous if ingested. None are in the least bit appetizing. Whenever a character taps into a conduit containing such a liquid, roll one die and consult the following table. Non-poisonous and poisonous fluids only cause damage if they are ingested (see *Exalted*, p. 244).

SUB-TABLE 1: NONTOXIC AND MILDLY TOXIC FLUIDS

Roll	Contents
1	nonpoisonous and nonflammable
2	nonpoisonous and nonflammable
3	nonpoisonous and nonflammable
4	poisonous and nonflammable
5	poisonous and nonflammable
6	poisonous and nonflammable
7	nonpoisonous but flammable
8	nonpoisonous but flammable
9	nonpoisonous but flammable
10	poisonous and flammable

[2] **Gasses** are pumped through conduits so that they can supply otherwise airless regions of Autochthonia such as the Pole of Oil with breathable air and other portions with many useful gasses.

SUB-TABLE 2: GASSES

Roll	Contents
1	breathable air
2	breathable air
3	breathable air
4	smoke
5	smoke
6	smoke
7	corrosive smoke

8	corrosive smoke
9	flammable gases
10	flammable gasses

Breathable air may be stale or filled with odd chemical smells, but it is otherwise harmless.

Smoke is mildly toxic to breath and is unbreathable, but it is harmless in regions with sufficient amounts of breathable air.

Corrosive smoke is poisonous if inhaled.

Flammable gasses are exceptionally dangerous gasses such as methane, propane, gasoline vapor or hydrogen. If there is a spark or an open flame near a tapped conduit that is emitting flammable gasses, then it will produce a jet of flame. If flammable gasses are allowed accumulate in a space for more that five minutes before a flame or a spark ignites them, then they produce an explosion. After the explosion, the room the explosion was in is filled with smoke, and the air is no longer breathable.

[3] **Highly toxic fluids** are those that are exceptionally deadly, either because they are potent poisons or strong acids. Contact with any of these substances generally produces effects similar to exposure to environmental hazards (see *Exalted*, p. 244).

SUB-TABLE 3: HIGHLY TOXIC FLUIDS

Roll	Contents
1	moderate poison
2	moderate poison
3	acid
4	acid
5	contact poison
6	extremely lethal poison
7	extremely lethal poison
8	liquid fire
9	liquid fire
10	extremely lethal contact poison

Moderate poisons only cause damage if they are ingested or if they fall into open wounds.

Contact poison does the same damage as moderate poison, except that if it touches a character’s bare skin or is applied to a weapon that inflicts at least one level of lethal damage, it does the same damage.

Liquid fire is an exceptionally deadly fluid that bursts into flame the instant it contacts air. This liquid does not need to be ignited to burn.

[4] **Hot Fluids** are somewhat above the boiling point of water. In addition to the damage caused by the fluid itself, contact with a liquid that is hot causes burns. See tables 2 & 3 for explanations of nonpoisonous, poisonous and moderately poisonous fluids.

SUB-TABLE 4: HOT FLUIDS

Roll	Contents
1	nonpoisonous
2	nonpoisonous

- 3 poisonous
- 4 poisonous
- 5 poisonous
- 6 moderate poison
- 7 moderate poison
- 8 acid
- 9 acid
- 10 contact poison

THE TUNNEL PEOPLE

Like the jungles and glaciers of Creation, a few twisted and hearty individuals actually live in the Reaches. These criminals, renegades and exiles all live near the Elemental Pole of Metal, in the spaces between the various cities and nations of Autochthonia. The regions near the other elemental poles are far too deadly to support mortal life.

The conduits provide these wretches with food and water, and the luckiest dwell in some of the small open spaces that are mostly avoided by the servants of the Great Maker. Because it is such a harsh and deadly environment, only the truly desperate live out in the Reaches. The insane who flee there die rapidly, and so, the only communities are composed of exiles and members of the Lumpen who fear that they may soon be exiled or made into slaves. While some either attempt to go off on their own or are sufficiently antisocial that they are refused membership by even the small communities of exiles, the majority of exiles and others who flee from the cities congregate into small communities of between four and several dozen people. Unable to return to the safety of the cities, these people have learned to survive in the Reaches. A few of these communities have existed for several centuries and have passed down long stores of knowledge, but most are no more than a few decades old and are periodically mostly or completely destroyed by one of the many catastrophes to which all those dwelling in this deadly realm are prey.

Characters from the cities who wish help finding their way through the Reaches sometimes seek out these communities as a source of guides. Although such arrangements are always completely unofficial, most travelers know that the tunnel people are the best mortal guides in all of Autochthon because they have learned how to survive in the Reaches. Unfortunately, the tunnel people have no love for city dwellers, and obtaining their services can require large payments of tools, medicines and other valuable goods. Wise travelers take along an initial payment and then negotiate for a significantly larger fee at the end of the journey — otherwise, there is little reason for the tunnel people not to simply kill the travelers and take their payment.

In addition to occasionally acting as guides and sources of information, the other main interaction that the tunnel people have with city dwellers is raiding. They regularly



raid both the occasional caravans traveling through the Reaches and venture into the edges of cities to steal goods they cannot duplicate or do without. Also, in areas where conduits carrying nutrient paste are rare or where they frequently run dry, some groups of tunnel people resort to cannibalism and regularly lure travelers and exiles into their camps, only to devour them.

One of the most disturbing things about some of the tunnel people is that they no longer look fully human. In addition to occasional mutations caused by exposure to high levels of uncontrolled Essence and similar radiations, the fix bugs that inhabit the Reaches and seek out and repair or improve various devices occasionally also seek to improve the human residents of the Reaches. Since these automata are creatures of metal, jade and Essence and not

flesh and blood, these repairs and “improvements,” consist of various implants and similar additions. Although most individuals who possess such modifications are tunnel dwellers, some Sodalts and others who regularly explore or journey through the Reaches also have one or more of these modifications.

Tunnel dwellers who have several replacements or alterations are often accorded great status by their fellows, in part because many tunnel dwellers worship the automata and regard these alterations as signs of the Great Maker’s favor. However, there are also highly practical reasons to respect these strangely altered beings, as some of those with multiple artificial parts are no longer regarded as outsiders by the automata and even the aggressive defense automata leave these char-

MUTATED AND ALTERED TUNNEL DWELLERS AND REACHES TRAVELERS

Essence mutations: Treat the Essence-caused mutations that some of these individuals have the same as the Wyld mutations described in *Exalted*, pp. 280-281, and in more detail in *Exalted: The Lunars*, subject to the following modifications. Essence-caused mutations can include any of the mutations found in *Exalted: The Lunars*, pp. 212-222.

- Mutated beings are unable to leave the Reaches if their total mutation points exceeds Stamina + 6 rather than Willpower. The rest of the table on page 210-211 applies with the same substitution of Stamina for Willpower.
- Exalts, gods, Dragon Kings and demons are immune to all mutations, but other Essence users (including both God-Blooded and elementals) are not.
- Replace all references to the Wyld and its borders with the Reaches.
- If a character’s total mutation points exceeds his Stamina + 2, then various automata will treat the character as another automata, and he will, in fact, eventually wander off to join the other automata.

Alterations and implants: Mechanically, the alterations and implants that some automata install in the tunnel dwellers are treated exactly the same way — automata can install armor, tails, unusual eyes, claws and all manner of similar new or altered parts on humans. However, in all cases, these alterations look like mechanical or electronics grafts and implants. Replacement eyes are creations of crystal and brass or perhaps strange creations of jade or naturally liquid metal, while a tail could either be a multi-jointed creation of pistons and pipes or an elegant silvery creation of living metal. Also, badly injured tunnel dwellers sometimes sport mechanical replacement parts such as metal arms or legs that provide no physical advantages or hindrances, but are merely well-made but exotic prosthetics created by the automata

Implants and alterations can include any of the mutations found in *Exalted: The Lunars* pp. 212-219 except the following changes, which cannot be produced by implants: large, small, sturdy, berserker, disease carrier, huge, tiny, concealment, giant, miniscule, skin-changer or concealed form. Also, body of stone becomes body of metal, but uses the rules printed for body of stone. In addition, the following two implants are also quite common:

Essence Cannons (2 mutation points): The modified individual has had a pair of metal ports installed on her hands or wrists. When she spends 1 Willpower (or 2 motes of Essence for Essence users), she can fire bolts of deadly lightning-like Essence.

Name	Accuracy	Damage	Rate	Range	Motes
Essence Cannon	+1	9L	2	50	2 (or 1 WP)

Micro-tools (2 mutation points): The modified individual has had a series of complex implants installed in her hands or wrists. Her hands may now be complex mechanical constructs of metal and crystal, or the tools may sit on a metal band on her wrist that is seamlessly welded to her flesh. In either case, these tools reduce the difficulty of all rolls involving extremely fine manipulation, including performing surgery, picking locks or accomplishing any delicate crafts like jewelry making, by 2 (to a minimum of 1).

acters and their companions alone. Unfortunately, this protection is erratic at times. The most heavily modified tunnel dwellers sometimes seem able to communicate with the various forms of automata. However, in all cases, learning to communicate with automata is the first sign of a progressive madness that always results in the character going off to live with the automata. Such characters are never seen again, but there are legends that they are eventually fully transformed into automata. These legends are true, but this transformation completely strips a character of his humanity, and most die during this transformation.

NATIONS OF AUTOCHTHONIA

In the millennia since Autochthonia was first settled by mortals, the human population there has grown from a few tens of thousands of mostly involuntary transportees to many tens of millions of mortals living in eight powerful nations. Each of these nations is located in a different portion of the Reaches of Autochthonia, and the inhabitants of each nation devote themselves to the maintenance and upkeep of that portion of the Machine God's vast body. Each nation is a collection of cities and towns. The largest nation contains almost a dozen cities and several score towns, while the smallest holds two cities and less than a dozen towns. Unlike the nations of Creation, all of the inhabitants of the Eight Nations of Autochthonia live in these cities and towns — there are no rural hamlets or isolated farmsteads within Autochthon's body. In this constantly changing and often deadly environment, the only places that are safe to live are within one of the few large cavities where the various cities and towns are built. The settlements within each nation are all located relatively near one another, and in emergencies, groups of well-trained mortals can normally travel from one city to another through the Reaches. Such journeys rarely take longer than a few weeks, and the routes are almost always relatively well mapped.

In contrast, the various nations are located far from one another. Traveling between two of the more distant nations can take several months by pneumatic tram, largely because the long-distance tram stations located within a single nation are often located far from one another. As a result, travelers must spend weeks walking through a city or traveling between different cities within a nation to transfer from one long-distance tram to another. Traveling through the Reaches between even the closest nations is an epic journey best left to the Alchemical Exalted and takes a minimum of a month or two, while walking to one of the more distant nations takes between several two seasons and two years.

These travels are further complicated by the fact that the locations of the various nations are not stable. The location of entire nations can dramatically shift due

to Autochthon's complex and unknowable life processes. While two nations can remain next to one another for a decade or more, eventually, one or both of them will begin to move. The long-distance tram tubes that connect nations together provide the first sign of such motions. When two nations begin to move too far apart, the tram tubes begin to move and, a day later, disconnect themselves and retract until the mobile nation again comes sufficiently close to another nation. These movements can completely reshape the politics of nations as rival neighbors become so distant that they rarely interact and nations that have been isolated for a century or more can move close enough that they must now compete for vital resources. Because no one can predict or influence these movements, the shape of Autochthonian politics is, in many ways, beyond the ability of mortals to control or direct.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

All eight nations regularly trade with one another, exchanging scarce resources and, occasionally, surplus personnel through the tram tubes. This trade is generally the only interaction that distant nations have with one another, and in many cases, this trade is not direct. Instead, the two distant nations exchange goods through the other nations that lie in between. In contrast, relations between neighboring states can be far more complex and difficult. The most common causes for wars are trade disputes and religious conflicts. In general, one or both sides in the conflict believe that the other side is not dealing in good faith or that it is not allocating resources in a manner that is in Autochthon's best interests. Both sorts of disputes rarely escalate beyond raiding and skirmishes where one side attempts to loot the storehouses and factories of another or, occasionally, assassinate a particularly hated religious or political figure. In contrast, large-scale battles are quite rare and are usually caused by a desperate competition over vital resources. The largest such war occurred nine years ago when the nations of Yugash and Sova fought over Yugash's restrictions on its trade in the Five Magical Materials. When a lack of these Materials caused the total destruction of one of Sova's more remote cities, Sova invaded Yugash. Yugash repelled the invaders, but only at a high cost in resources and personnel.

THE EIGHT NATIONS OF AUTOCHTHONIA

Each of the Eight Nations is named after one of the eight heroes who helped prepare Autochthon for leaving Creation by helping to create the great Ewer and fill it with the souls that continue to support Autochthon in the dark Void outside of Creation.

CLASLAT

Claslat is the largest, the loudest and the most boisterous of the Eight Nations. With a population of almost seven million people, three exceptionally large cities, eight smaller cities and a multitude of towns, Claslat is widely regarded as the most cosmopolitan and exuberant of the Eight Nations. Although still exceedingly regimented and rigidly controlled compared to almost every society in Creation, many of the inhabitants of the other seven nations are startled and a bit overwhelmed when they visit one of the cities of Claslat. The most striking features about Claslat are its public art and advertising. All Claslat cities are painted in exceedingly garish colors, and they are also adorned with a multitude of signs and posters exhorting the citizens to right thought and behavior. In addition, Claslat is the only nation where there is any form of private commerce. The citizens of Claslat regularly trade goods and services that they produce. These activities are accepted so long as they in no way interfere with the citizens' duties. Some workers create jewelry from industrial scrap, while others sell their skills at storytelling, massage or sex. People regularly hawk their wares out of the street and decorate blank spaces of walls with graffiti advertising the goods or services they are offering. Claslat

has even evolved an informal system of money based on specially polished and shaped scraps of colored industrial glass called glots.

One of the primary reasons for the existence of both the small-scale commerce and the large numbers of public signs is that the cities of Claslat are larger than those of other nations. The members of the Olgotary who administer these metropoli have decided to reduce the pressure caused by overcrowding by giving the citizens a few more outlets for self-expression. Also, the goods sold by the Populat provide Claslat with a small amount of additional income to the nation, as visitors from other nations are often more than happy to partake of the various services offered here and will trade personal tools and similar goods for a supply of glots. The primary result of all of this activity is that the streets of Claslat are noisier and more crowded than elsewhere in Autochthonia.

ESTASIA

Although most of the nations of Autochthonia are relatively peaceful and prefer to devote their time and energies to keeping themselves safe from the many physical threats and challenges provided by their world, Estasia is an exception. Named after the most warlike of the eight heroes, it is the only nation with a large, permanent army.



Known as the Militate, this warrior class forms a large and pampered elite that has access to better food, larger quarters and more privileges than the Populat that supports it. Like everyone else in Autochthonia, the members of the Militate are bound to obey the Tripartite. However, they are also under the specific direction of the regulators, and some members of Estasia's Populat claim that the regulators who administer the Militate have considerably more loyalty to the Militate than to Estasia as a whole. Members of the Militate all have red, triangular soulgems.

The Militate forms a significant drain on Estasia's resources, and the only way that the nation can support this drain is through a mixture of warfare and launching risky but well-armed expeditions into the Reaches to gather vital resources. Although it is the sixth largest of the Eight Nations, with three cities and two million inhabitants, Estasia has the greatest military might of any nation in Autochthonia. To avoid becoming a pariah among its fellow nations, the army of Estasia rarely raids its neighbors. Instead, the Estasian military offers its services to other nations as a large mercenary force. If two nearby nations have a dispute, the Olgotary of Estasia offers the army's services to whichever side will offer it the best terms. In return for both payment and at least half of all plunder taken during raids, the army of Estasia will fight on behalf of one of the rivals. The members of the Militate are trained to strictly abide by the terms of their contracts, and so, nations that are either unable or unwilling to commit personnel and resources to combat regularly arrange for the army of Estasia to fight for them. These mercenary endeavors provide the majority of the additional income that Estasia requires to support its Militate.

However, the motions of the various nations occasionally cause such mercenary expeditions to become increasingly difficult to come by. At this point, the members of the Militate venture into the Reaches and gather what they can. Raids against neighboring nations form part of such efforts, but the majority of these expeditions consist of large teams of the Militate going out and stripping the nearby portions of the Reaches bare of any needed resources. These expeditions are sometimes extremely lucrative and always exceptionally dangerous, and in lean times, these ventures into the Reaches serve the dual purpose of thinning the ranks of the Militate and providing Estasia with the materials that it needs to survive.

In addition to being a vital part of the economy, warfare (and the Militate) also profoundly influences Estasia's society. Estasia is a rigidly military nation where courage and physical prowess are the highest virtues and warfare is considered to be the most glorious endeavor in which any mortal can take part. All members of the Populat are given at least rudimentary military training. In case of invasion (and on the rare occasions when the Militate faces significant opposition from an opponent),

the regulators in charge of the Militate call for volunteers from among the ranks of the Populat. Any who pass basic tests of military competence are assigned to front-line combat. Those who survive and distinguish themselves are often offered positions within the Militate as combat-support personnel. In preparation for such recruitment efforts, many members of the Populat engage in sparring and similar forms of martial training during their free time. This training means that, even if the Militate has been decimated by battles against overwhelming odds, actually invading Estasia is a task that none of the other seven nations would consider.

In Estasia, discipline is regarded as even more important than in the other nations of Autochthonia. Various other features of military life pervade Estasia's entire culture. The uniforms of the Populat are marked with insignia denoting rank, and exceptional members of the Populat are awarded medals for organization, efficiency and production just as the members of the Militate are awarded medals for heroism and exceptional success at various martial ventures. Similarly, warlike marching and working songs and similar chants are exceptionally common in this nation and help to reinforce the rough but extremely devoted camaraderie between workers that is one of the most distinctive features of life here.

All of the cities of Estasia have the feel of well-disciplined military camps. Like in the military, justice in Estasia is swift and unusual. Instead of using tattoos to mark social outcasts, citizens who violate minor regulations are flogged or ordered to perform particularly dangerous duties, and then, the stigma of their offense is removed. In contrast, Estasia exiles no one, anyone found guilty of a serious crime has one of two options: He can be made into a soul-broken slave, or he can "volunteer" for exceptionally dangerous missions in the Militate. While fewer than one in four survive these missions, those who do are considered to be absolved of all previous crimes. Any attempt to flee or to betray their comrades results in the convict being transformed into a slave.

CHARACTERS FROM ESTASIA

Although military training is less common in most of Autochthonia than in Creation, every member of the Populat in Estasia possesses at least three dots (total) in Archery, Brawl, Martial Arts, Melee or Thrown. The most common combinations are two dots in Melee and one in Archery or two dots in Archery and one in Melee. Members of the Militate have far better training, and all of them count as either infantry or as elite troops (see **Exalted**, p. 278). The only change from the listed statistics is that the members of the Militate use crossbows instead of self bows.

GULAK

Gulak is the second largest of the nations of Autochthonia, with a population of five million and eight moderately large cities. Gulak is well known for being the most religiously diverse of the Eight Nations. Instead of the religious conservatism that characterizes the small nation of Jarish, Gulak is the home to the Alchemical metropolis of Thutot, the largest and oldest of the Alchemical metropoli. Since this metropolis is considered to be the closest link to the semi-mythical Godhead in any of the Eight Nations, religious pilgrims and members of the Theomachry from the other nations of Autochthonia regularly visit Thutot in search of religious inspirations. Faced with a continual influx of unusually devout believers from each of the other seven nations, the Tripartite Assembly of Gulak decided that the best policy would be to welcome these visitors and to use them as a source of income for all of Gulak. Gulak charges other nations a fee based upon the number of pilgrims and members of the Theomachry that they send to Thutot.

Because the Theomachry encourages pilgrimages among both elderly members of the Populat and among members of the Tripartite who are in the midst of their training, all nearby nations pay this pilgrimage tax to Gulak. In return, Gulak opens its borders to pilgrims, and official pilgrims are fed and housed for free for the duration of their pilgrimage. As a result of this influx of pilgrims and the similar influx of members of the Theomachry who wish to consult or simply gaze upon and touch the metropolis, the citizens of Gulak come into contact with far more religious diversity than the inhabitants of most other nations. As long as the discussions stay within the limits prescribed by the Theomachry as a whole, the Theomachrats of Gulak permit large amounts of religious discussion among the Populat and the other members of the Tripartite. As a result, religion is one of the most widely discussed topics here. Minor differences of belief and practice are frequent cause for friendly rivalries or, occasionally, loud arguments. However, both the preceptors and the regulators make certain that any religious factiousness that leads to either violence or loss of productivity is swiftly punished. As a result, open prejudice against slightly differing beliefs, such as those found in other nations, is exceptionally rare, and citizens are free to practice and believe as they wish, so long as their beliefs are not outside the bounds of accepted canon. However, heresy is punished just as severely here as elsewhere and because of the unusual amount of religious freedom in Gulak, the local preceptors are exceptionally diligent at seeking out any beliefs that fall outside of the accepted canon of faith.

JARISH

Jarish is the smallest of the Eight Nations of Autochthonia and is, in most ways, the weakest. Its popu-

lation is only slightly over one million people, who live in either one of two major cities or the small surrounding towns. Although Jarish is the smallest and militarily weakest of the Eight Nations, it avoids attack by stronger nations because it is also widely seen as the most holy and pious of the Eight Nations. The populace of Jarish pays more attention to and spends more time performing the rituals devoted to the maintenance of Autochthon than in any of the other nations. Jarish is also the most conservative and backward of the Eight Nations — tool designs and architecture are similar to those found several centuries ago in any of the other seven states. This conservatism also applies to Jarish's religion and spirituality. Some of the oldest religious documents are found in the sacred library in Jast City, the capital of this small nation. Although members of the Theomachry elsewhere in Autochthon consider their particular beliefs to be the most highly evolved, the vast majority respect the staunch religious traditionalism and piety of the people of Jarish. Although the other nations handle trade disputes with Jarish normally, most members of the Theomachry consider religious disputes with Jarish to be in unacceptably poor taste and discourage members of the local Olgotary from declaring war upon Jarish. There are even rumors that the entire nation of Jarish is in some way blessed by Autochthon, a belief reinforced by the fact that Jarish has moved fewer times and over less distance than any of the other nations. As a result, few soldiers, including most Estasian mercenaries, will engage in anything more than minor raiding against anyone or anything within Jarish.

The people of Jarish are typically somewhat more formal and reserved than people in other nations, and while they express their emotions as openly as any other mortals, they rarely do so in a loud or spontaneous manner. Instead, they use highly formalized expressions of joy or sadness and have a general attitude that people should always remain in strict control of their feelings. Elsewhere in Autochthon, the phrase "peaceful as Jarish" is used to connote someplace that is unusually dull and hidebound.

KAMAK

Kamak is the second smallest but also the wealthiest of the Eight Nations. Kamak possesses an unusual abundance of all of the Five Magical Materials, which provides it with both wealth and significant amounts of power over all nearby nations. Because Kamak always has a surplus of the Five Magical Materials, it is able to provide invaluable aid to any nation that is currently having shortages of any of these vital resources.

This nation's wealth is occasionally a curse as well as a blessing, though, as it serves to attract a great many thieves, con artists and raiders to Kamak. However, this wealth also serves to protect Kamak from harm. In addition to regularly hiring mercenaries from Estasia when the need arises, the rulers of Kamak also either bribe potential

attackers or offer to pay other nations to help defend them. In addition, the threat that Kamak will not trade with a nation is often sufficient to cause that nation to avoid engaging in any hostilities with Kamak. While some nations have considered conquering Kamak, few are willing to try because of the opposition they would face from any other nearby nations. Kamak does its best to remain politically neutral in disputes between other nations and only withholds trading rights if it is directly threatened. As a result, the leaders of other nations fear that, if someone else conquered Kamak, the conqueror would horde the stores of the Five Magical Materials and might use these stockpiles to drastically alter the balance of power between the Eight Nations.

Kamak's wealth has a significant impact upon life in this nation. Although the differences are relatively small and might be overlooked by visitors from Creation, their greater wealth provides everyone within Kamak with a somewhat higher standard of living. Apartments are slightly larger and better furnished, and even the junior members of the Tripartite often have private rooms. As a result, many inhabitants of the other nations are jealous of the inhabitants of Kamak and consider them to be overly pampered and effete, and phrases such as "rich as a Kamak" or "lazy as a Kamak" are common among the more jealous and petty inhabitants of those nations.

However, the inhabitants of Kamak are, in general, far different from these negative stereotypes. They are relatively quiet and inclined to secrecy. Kamak is located in one of the cooler portions of Autochthonia, and when they are among strangers or in public, the inhabitants of Kamak frequently wrap themselves in large swathes of cloth that at least partially obscure their faces. This secrecy does little to endear them to the inhabitants of other nations — visitors from Kamak are treated as strange and exotic outsiders wherever they go. Even at home, the Kamak people are unusually restrained in the ways that they express their emotions. Even in the most heated arguments, raised voices are uncommon, and violence is even more frowned upon here than in most other nations.

The architecture of Kamak is similarly subdued. The exteriors of most buildings are even plainer and less adorned and colorful than in the other seven nations. However, these plain exteriors provide a sharp contrast to the interiors of private spaces. The apartments of the Kamaks are unusually brightly colored and highly decorated — a moderate portion of the nation's additional wealth goes into manufacturing items such as bright paints, attractively tooled doors, elaborate fittings and similar small domestic luxuries. Also, everyone but the members of the Lumpen and the lowest ranks of the Populat have a few personal luxuries, such as a suit of soft and attractive clothing that they wear indoors or a piece of jewelry that they only wear openly in their homes or in other private spaces.

Recently, even Kamak's abundant supply of Magical Materials has begun to decline slightly. Although this decline is not yet serious enough to cause any problems and there is no evidence that it is more than a temporary affair, it is a closely guarded secret. This secret is known only to the senior members of the local Tripartite, who fear that rumors of Kamak's declining fortunes could spark local panic and might destroy their nation's political power and thus render it vulnerable to attack by enemies who wish to horde these resources in case the decline continues. Anyone who discovers this decline will either be killed or (if this proves impossible) bribed into keeping silent.

NURAD

Nurad is the fifth largest nation and is currently in truly desperate straits. Its stores of the Five Magical Materials are almost exhausted, and the conduits containing nutrients that are in or near its cities have all begun to run dry. Nurad is the nation that is closest to one of the dreaded blight zones, and several of the leaders of the Sodalities in Nurad have begun to speculate that the blight zone is beginning to extend into Nurad itself. Currently, Nurad continues to survive by sending extensive expeditions into the Reaches to search for both nutrients and stores of the Five Magical Materials. However, even after these efforts and cutting rations to the bare minimum, reserve food stores are almost exhausted, necessary long-term maintenance is being put off, and recycling protocols for the Five Magical Materials remain exceptionally strict. Unless the situation improves, several of the cities within Nurad are predicted to fail within eight years. Nurad's Tripartite Assembly is currently considering options. Although Nurad has tram lines that connect it to Sova and Gulak, the distances to both nations are quite long, and Nurad has recently been moving away from Gulak. Fearing that eventuality, the Assembly has been asking Gulak for aid and is considering seeing if it can evacuate 10 to 20 percent of the population to Gulak to help relieve some of the worst shortages. Unless Yugash manages to acquire large stores of food and Magical Materials in Creation and finds a way to send some of its surplus to Nurad or someone discovers a way to reverse the nearby spreading blight zone, much of Nurad will begin to experience famines and serious equipment failures within six years.

SOVA

Sova is the third largest nation and, up until the past decade, was Yugash's primary rival for being the most progressive and expansionist of the Eight Nations. Today, it is an isolated and paranoid nation that has sacrificed both trade and progress in the name of national security. Nine years ago, Sova suffered one of the most terrible catastrophes that any Autochthonian nation can face. Because of a critical shortage of the Five Magical Materials, Autochthon swallowed

the outlying city of Ixut whole. The city was completely destroyed in less than six hours, and only a handful of the city's quarter million inhabitants survived. This event completely changed the character of Sova. Prior to this catastrophe, Sova was almost as focused on progress and expansion as Yugash. However, since this time, the nation has turned inward and become increasingly isolationist and paranoid. Ixut was destroyed largely because the tariffs that the neighboring nation of Yugash set on shipments of the Five Magical Materials were so high that Ixut could not afford to purchase the Materials that it so desperately needed. The destruction of Ixut set off the extremely bloody two-year-long Elemental War that resulted in Sova staging an abortive invasion of the Yugash city of Ot and attacks on the Yugash capital of Kadar. Only the fact that Yugash drifted far away from Sova put a stop to these hostilities.

Seven years after the war, feelings against Yugash remain high, and a substantial minority of Sova's population believes that the rulers of Yugash withheld the needed Magical Materials specifically so that Ixut would be destroyed. Although contact with Yugash is no longer possible, the destruction of Ixut significantly affected relations with the neighboring nation of Gulak. Previously, Sova and Gulak were allies, but relations have soured as most of Sova's Populat and Tripartite have begun to distrust all outsiders. Today, all visitors to Sova are carefully watched by regulators. Some of the younger members of the Olgotary have been reassigned to the regulators, and regulator teams regularly supplement their numbers with assistants recruited from the Populat. Many of the younger and more ambitious members of the Populat now hope to become regulator assistants. In addition to carefully monitoring the activities of any outsiders in Sova, the regulators have also stepped up their surveillance of their own populace, and many members of the Populat watch each other carefully for signs of potential treason, especially since there are substantial rewards for uncovering disloyalty or antigovernmental plots. Another consequence of this increased security is that trade with other nations has been significantly reduced. Today, the local Tripartite Assembly urges the people of Sova to conserve, to reduce all unnecessary expenditures and to send expeditions out into the Reaches as an alternative to trade. Foreign trade is now considered both unreliable and increasingly suspect. Both the destruction of Ixut and the increased security measures have severely impacted Sova's economy. The increased poverty and deprivation have only served to fuel the nation's growing xenophobia.

YUGASH

Yugash is the fourth largest of the Autochthonian nations, with approximately three million inhabitants living in four major cities. Before the Elemental War, Yugash was a relatively wealthy and powerful nation, but

the war combined with the previous acute shortage of the Five Magical Materials to reduce the nation to desperate straits. Although Yugash was doing well on the battlefield, the local Tripartite Assembly was overjoyed when Yugash drifted away from Sova and Gulak in the midst of the Elemental War. This separation ended the war and gave Yugash time to recover. Unfortunately, the nation's movement did not allow the inhabitants to uncover any new sources of the needed Magical Materials. Although nations are rarely out of contact with others for more than a few months, this separation has lasted for seven years, and the best calculations by the members of the leading local Sodalts indicate that Yugash will remain out of contact for another three to seven years. The rulers worry that, at the end of this time, if no new supplies of the Five Magical Materials are uncovered, their failure will be seen as both incompetence and a sign of Autochthon's disapproval and that Estasia or some consortium of the other nations will attempt to conquer Yugash. To avoid such a fate, the local Tripartite Assembly enacted a daring and desperate plan — it breached the Seal of Eight Divinities and has dispatched scouting teams to uncover sources of the Five Magical Materials in the alien world of Creation.

This plan is in keeping with Yugash's society — this nation is well known for being unusually progressive and adventurous. The local Tripartite actively encourages both a high birth rate and innovation. Both population growth and technological refinements are seen as keys to Yugash becoming increasingly powerful and important. Here, the birthbond provides special privileges, including housing in nurseries through a child's fifth year and both parents not being required to work more than two shifts as long as they spend the third with the child. However, in Yugash, neglecting children is grounds for exile or, in extreme cases, enslavement.

Members of the Populat who create useful innovations are rewarded with less crowded quarters and additional personal possessions. Consistent innovators are typically promoted, and if she is clever enough, someone born into the lowest class or worker can even become a supervisor or an assistant to one of the Sodalties (a position that effectively provides the individual with many of the privileges of the lowest-ranking Sodality members).

Unlike the complete disregard given to both gender and sexuality in most of the Eight Nations, homosexuality is widely regarded as improper in Yugash. Although there are no formal or official sanctions against homosexuality, many citizens of Yugash frown on homosexual relationships because it can slow population growth. However, there is absolutely no stigma against a married person taking a homosexual lover so long as no one avoids her duty to reproduce.

Yugash has the highest social mobility of any of the Eight Nations. This mobility encourages the citizens to

work hard, but it also produces significant despair among the less successful — rates of alcoholism and similar problems are relatively high in Yugash, as is suicide. However, suicide is seen as an affront to both Yugash and to Autochthon himself. Therefore, attempted suicides who survive are always enslaved.

The people of Yugash are typically somewhat boisterous and ambitious. The inhabitants of the most conservative nations, such as Jarish, often regard the citizens of Yugash as naïve dreamers, but many also realize that Yugash is a daring nation that should never be ignored. Now that Yugash is cut off from all of the other seven nations and opening a gateway to Creation, the sense of isolation and superiority that was already common among the more well off inhabitants of Yugash is spreading. Already, there is a popular heresy that the people of Yugash are both the saviors and the rightful rulers of all of Autochthonia. Although the local Tripartite officially discourages all heresies, it actively promotes this particular heresy in practice.

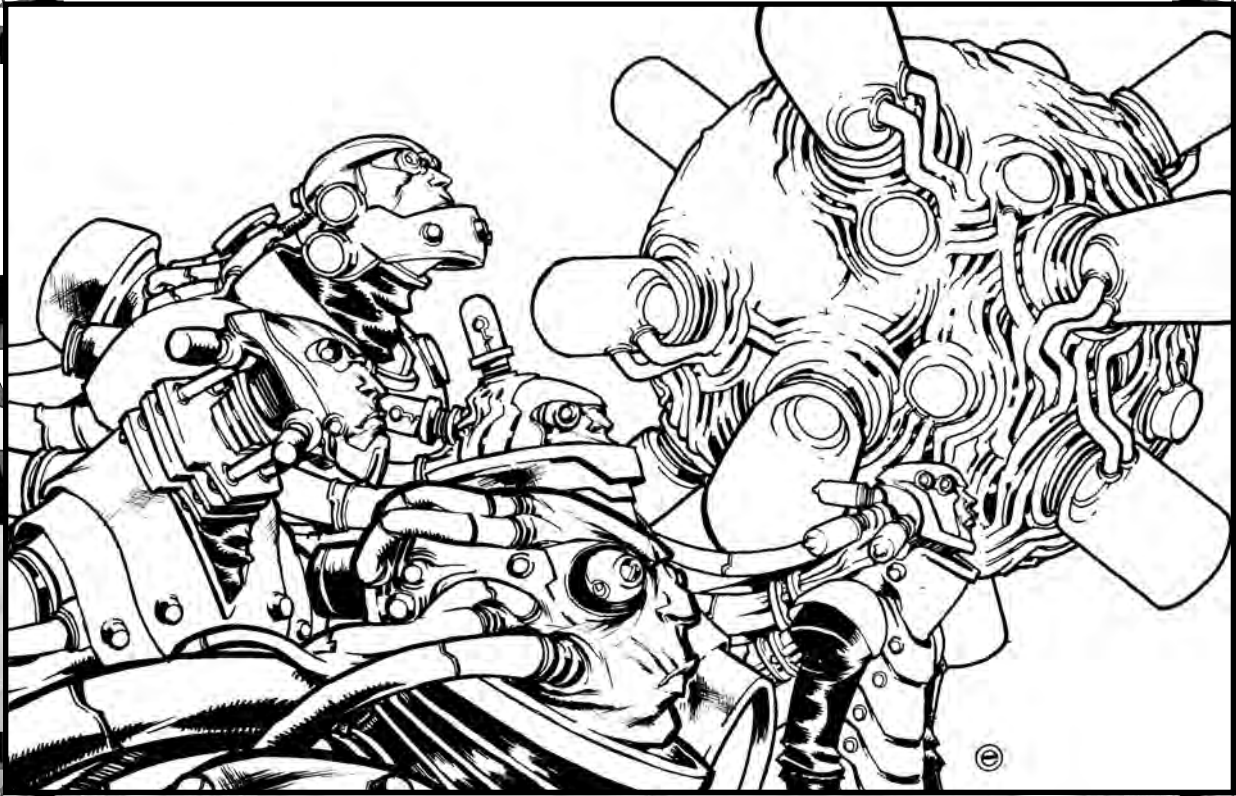
THE PEOPLE OF AUTOCHTHONIA

Like humans throughout Creation, the people of Autochthonia consist of a vast mass of poor menial workers ruled by a small wealthy and well-educated elite. However, the similarities end there. In Creation, at least three quarters of the population of every nation are farmers

who grow food for themselves and for the city dwellers and the elite. In Autochthonia, food is produced from nutrient slurries tapped from conduits, and the vast majority of the population works in enormous factories helping to maintain both their own cities and their beloved Great Maker.

While the rulers of Autochthonia consider their society to be a strict meritocracy, their definition of such a society is somewhat skewed by the fact that they use exotic instruments to read the lineage of the souls of each inhabitant during the procedure during which they implant the precious soulgems into the heads of every infant born in Autochthonia. There are only a limited number of souls in Autochthonia, and the records kept by the Tripartite keep track of the incarnations of each and every one. Individuals whose souls were previously born into the bodies of important and powerful people are considered to be inherently superior to the souls of the members of the Populat. Therefore, almost everyone bearing such an important soul is made a member of the Tripartite, generally in the same division as their previous incarnation. Similarly, individuals whose souls were previously members of the Populat are automatically assigned to this class.

Mobility within the various classes is possible — a menial level-puller can work her way up to become a supervisor — but anyone whose soul was previous a high-ranking member of the Populat is given extra consideration and training, and so, those with less distinguished souls have considerably more difficulty gaining the recognition and promotions necessary to achieve such positions.



SOULGEMS AND CASTE

The Luminors implant a soulgem in the forehead of each child born in Autochthonia within a week of the child's birth. The shape and color of the soulgem is determined by the caste of the individual, which is, in turn, determined by the calculations of the Luminors. Every child is assigned to a different caste and is forever more a member of the Populat or one of the Olgotary, the Theomachracy or the Sodalities. Within these various castes, an individual's position depends largely upon her own merit, and mobility within a caste is common. However, intercaste mobility is impossible because individuals both lack the correct souls and the correct shape of soulgem. Masquerading as a member of another caste is exceedingly difficult and involves disguising the shape of the character's soulgem with special soulgem caps. Unless done as part of an officially sanctioned investigation, deliberately disguising the shape of a soulgem is grounds for immediate exile or enslavement.

Caste	Soulgem Shape	Soulgem Color
Populat	Round and polished	Black onyx
Olgotary	Rectangular cut	Orange topaz
Theomachracy	Square cut	Blue sapphire
Sodalities	Diamond shaped	Purple amethyst

THE LUMPEN

The lowest social strata are the Lumpen, who are all outcasts, exiles or slaves. No one is born into the Lumpen — the only way to become a member of this despised caste is to commit a variety of offenses against either one's nation, neighbors or Autochthon himself. The least ostracized of the Lumpen are the social outcasts. These offenders can be identified by the three concentric circles that they all have tattooed around their soulgems, and the colors of the circles identify the nature of their offenses. Individuals are assigned to this variety of the Lumpen for a large number of minor offenses such as being overly selfish or desirous of privacy, consistently failing to meet production quotas or committing a variety of minor crimes such as espousing various minor heresies, petty vandalism or starting fights.

Social outcasts form a small oppressed underclass in most cities. Every member of the Populat who is in good standing is free to harass these individuals in a variety of minor ways, although serious harm or impairing their ability to work will result in the offender also joining the ranks of the Lumpen. Members of the Lumpen are typically shunned by most of the Populat and so have greatly reduced social opportunities. In addition to these unoffi-

cial penalties, these Lumpen are often assigned extra shifts and have their freedom restricted in a variety of ways, including losing the right to own personal belongings or to attend public gatherings.

More severe crimes such as serious heresy, rape, serious vandalism, murder, hoarding or advocating revolution or widespread violence in any form are all punished by exile. In addition, politicians who fall too far into disfavor are sometimes exiled. An exile's face is tattooed with a record of his crimes, and then, his soulgem is forcibly removed, leaving a ragged crater in the middle of his forehead. Exiles are forbidden from ever returning to the nation that cast them out, and doing so results in the exile being enslaved or, occasionally, killed. Although a few nations accept exiles from elsewhere, most enslave them. As a result, exiles are often forced to live short and desperate lives in the Reaches (see "The Tunnel People," pp. 33-35).

The lowest class of the Lumpen are slaves. Slavery is reserved for the worst offenders, people who commit serial murder or massive vandalism or who attempt to sabotage the Great Maker or actively foment open rebellion. All but a fragment of the victim's soul is torn from his body, leaving a human husk similar to those discarded after the Fair Folk have fed upon a victim. The worst of these criminals also have their noses and tongues removed, but their husks are incapable of noticing these mutilations. Slaves are little more than moderately bright, obedient and exceedingly docile animals who rarely speak and often emit a soft droning hum. Slaves perform the most dangerous and mindless tasks such as adjusting the taps on conduits carrying free Essence or dangerous chemicals. They live in special barracks far from the rest of the populace, who regard them with undisguised horror and disgust. Because of a combination of what has been done to them and the dangerous nature of their work, slaves rarely live more than five years. As a further mark of their status, all slaves wear tiny bells on their neck, wrists and ankles to announce their presence in lightless regions.

THE POPULAT

There are no farmers or herders in Autochthonia. Instead, the vast majority of inhabitants work in the bowels of the Eight Nations' many factories. These workers are members of the Populat, and they range from the lowliest menial who stands all day pulling a single level whenever the glowing dial in front of him rises too high to the supervisors and directors who control the operations of entire factories or administer the organization of all of the factories in a specific district of a city. Regardless of their status, the lives of the members of the Populat are all defined by their work. All members of the Populat work at least two shifts a day, and most are required to work three shifts a day at least three times a week. Some of the more

important and prestigious jobs require individuals to work three shifts every day.

The highest ranking members of the Populat are the directors. Regardless of its size, each city has only one director, who works closely with the local Tripartite Assembly. Directors work three shifts a day, while a sub-director works the remaining two shifts and summons the director in case of an emergency. Directors coordinate the actions of the supervisors, who each control a single sector of the city's industry such as food production, power distribution or waste disposal. Each supervisor controls all of the factories associated with their particular purpose – most cities have approximately eight supervisors, while the largest cities can have as many as 50. Underneath the supervisors are the foremen, who administer individual factories. Each factory has several foremen, so that one of them is always on duty. Underneath the foremen are the shift chiefs, who each direct a group of between 20 and 300 workers. Shift chiefs lead inspirational songs, investigate drops in production and harass lazy, disobedient or inefficient workers.

Beneath all of these levels of management are the working Populat, who spend their days laboring in the factories. Each works at a mindless but vital job, such as pulling a lever every time an indicator dial goes outside the safe and acceptable range or feeding sheet metal into a machine that stamps the metal into tools. The members of the Populat are taught from an early age that their work is vital for both the survival of their city and the health of Autochthonia and both of these claims are completely accurate. Every member of the Populat knows stories about deadly industrial accidents that occur when workers are too lazy or inattentive. Members of the Populat understand that diligence at work is necessary for their own survival and the survival of their comrades and loved ones. They are also taught that they are performing sacred work. The priests of the Theomachracy train the members of the Populat in basic meditation techniques so that they can perform their duties in a mindful trance where they avoid distracting thoughts and simply live in the moment, performing their assigned tasks to the best of their ability and devoting their minds to the contemplation of the glories of the Great Maker.

The weak, the disabled and the elderly work as aides, who perform the necessary but far less physically demanding support-related tasks of sorting and distributing clothing, tools and other supplies, as well as working in nurseries and putting up informational icons. There is no social stigma to working as an aide, but only individuals who are physically unable to perform more strenuous work are permitted to become aides. Being an aide is not regarded as easy work. It is simply seen as the appropriate sort of work for those not suited for more strenuous duties.

THE TRIPARTITE

Slightly more than 90 percent of the population labor in the factories, directed by the members of the Tripartite. The Tripartite consists of three branches: the Olgotary, which directly regulates the populace and production schedules; the Theomachracy, whose members are both priests and spiritual intermediaries between the populace and the many gods; and the Sodalities, which maintain the existing machines and also invent new procedures and refine existing techniques to increase efficiency and lessen the need for scarce resources. Assigned to these duties based upon the accomplishments of their souls' previous lives, the members of the Tripartite form the intellectual and social elite of Autochthonia, and every member of the Populat, from the lowliest worker to the directors of entire cities are expected to respect and defer to even the most junior members of the Tripartite.

THE TRIPARTITE ASSEMBLY

Each city is governed by a local Tripartite Assembly composed of an autocrat elected by the Olgotary, a celebrant chosen by the Theomachracy and a council of the five highest ranking Sodalts, each one representing one of the five Sodalities. The autocrat and the celebrant each have a single vote, and the Sodality Council also has a single vote, determined by a majority vote from among its five members. As a result, the Council often serves as a tiebreaker when the autocrat and the celebrant disagree. Bargaining and compromise can become quite fierce inside the Council. The Tripartite Assembly has the final authority over all local disputes between different factions of the Tripartite and decides all issues that affect the entire city.

Each national capital is also home to a National Tripartite Assembly. Chosen from among the numbers of the local Tripartite Assemblies, the three members of the National Tripartite Assembly have a similar degree of control over issues of national importance such as declarations of war, ratifying trade agreements between nations or authorizing the use of national resources to aid a city currently experiencing an emergency. The National Tripartite Assembly has the same structure as the local Assemblies. Membership on a national Tripartite Assembly is the highest office any member of the Tripartite can hold, and only the most highly experienced and wise members of the Tripartite ever achieve this august position. Except in the case of truly remarkable individuals, every member of a National Tripartite Assembly has served on one of the local Tripartite Assemblies for at least five years.

THE OLGOTARY

The members of the Olgotary have almost complete political and economic control of the Autochthonian people. They control production schedules and city planning as well as making and enforcing all secular laws, and

they judge all nonreligious crimes. Their word is law, and the highest-ranking members of a nation's Olgotary have the power to declare war or to make peace. The authority of the Olgotary is unquestioned except when it overlaps with the duties and responsibilities of either the Theomachy or the Sodalities. The Olgotary is divided into four branches: the plutarchs, the regulators, the adjudicators and the autocrats.

The Plutarchs: The plutarchs are the planners. They propose new laws, draw up the plans for new cities and designs for revising old ones. They are also responsible for creating the complex and demanding production schedules that allow the Populat to effectively serve the needs of both the Autochthonians and the Great Maker. The plutarchs are relatively conservative. Their doctrines teach that they are ultimately responsible for the lives of the populace and that their first duty is to make certain that life does not get worse. The plutarchs question all changes and innovations, and many of them are deeply attached to the status quo and seriously averse to risks or potentially problematic changes, even if these changes also offer ways to significantly improve efficiency or to solve existing problems. As a result, they can often be at odds with the more innovative members of the Five Sodalities.

Any member of the Tripartite who wishes to introduce a new innovation or technique into widespread use must convince the local plutarchs that this innovation is both safe and desirable. While they often consider the other branches of the Tripartite to be overly daring and careless, the plutarchs get along well with their own. Except in the case of radical disagreements about policy or serious personality conflicts, all plutarchs in a single city tend to work in harmony, and the plutarchs of differing cities in the same nation are far more inclined to either close cooperation or good-nature rivalry than open competition or any form of hostility. For formal occasions, plutarchs wear broad and highly ornate toga-like robes made of multiple overlapping layers of Autochthonian synthetic leather. These robes are all completely monochromatic except for embossed bands of gold on the hems of the highest-ranking plutarchs. Rank is indicated by the color of the robes, and from lowest rank to highest, the colors are red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. Violet-robed plutarchs are the senior directors of a single city, and plutarchs who wear violet robes with gold-embossed hems are the senior directors of capital cities.

While senior plutarchs always wear their official robes when going out in public, junior plutarchs periodically go out disguised as members of the Populat — these disguised plutarchs even wear special covers for their soulgems that make them appear to be ordinary Populat soulgems. Millennia ago, the plutarchs learned that the reports they received from directors and supervisors could be both self-serving and woefully inaccurate. To make certain that

they possess the best possible data upon which to make their plans, the plutarchs regularly send junior members of their organization into the factories and dining halls of the common people, dressed as ordinary members of the Populat. These low-ranking plutarchs spend several shifts working in a factory and spending off-duty time in one of the worker dormitories. During this time, they observe people around them, note any problems and report their findings to their superiors. These “undercover” plutarchs only reveal their identities to other members of the Tripartite and are provided with official papers that introduce them to their shift chiefs as workers who have just arrived from another city.

The plutarchs are organized in a completely hierarchical fashion, with the senior director of a city ultimately making all decisions that concern the entire city. However, a majority vote by the other plutarchs in that city can veto the decisions of the senior director. Such vetoes are exceptional matters and voting against the wishes of a senior director is tantamount to saying that the senior director needs to be replaced.

When they interact with other members of the Tripartite, plutarchs are inclined to be somewhat haughty, and most plutarchs consider the duties of the other members of the Tripartite less important than the crucial planning decisions for which the plutarchs are responsible. Interactions between plutarchs from differing nations are quite common but can be somewhat strained when they belong to neighboring nations, since all plutarchs focus primarily on improving the lot of their own nation. However, when facing any sort of threat that involves multiple nations or the health or safety of the Great Maker, plutarchs have little difficulty putting aside their differences and working together.

The Regulators: The regulators are Autochthonia's police force. They are an exceedingly clannish and insular organization, and their members are almost as concerned with protecting the lives and reputations of their fellow regulators as they are with enforcing the local laws. In some districts, regulators have a reputation for brutality, but most such stories are untrue, and while many regulators deal harshly with wrongdoers, few exceed the boundaries of their authority. However, this is not to say that most regulators are paragons of virtue who exist only to uphold the safety and security of the cities of Autochthonia. In addition to working diligently to uphold the local laws, regulators also very much look out for one another. The regulators have, by far, the most dangerous jobs of any branch of the Olgotary. In addition to individuals who commit crimes of passion, the dangerously insane and the occasional rogue members of the Tripartite who use violence and other illegal means to achieve their ends, the regulators are also (in every nation except Estasia) the first line of defense against foreign saboteurs or raiders. They

literally risk their lives for their cities, and because of this, most regulators resent the fact that the other portions of the Olgotary regard them as either useful menials or necessary thugs. This general lack of respect from the rest of the Olgotary further reinforces the clanishness of the regulators. Regulators do everything they can protect their own from both physical danger and the consequences of failure or negative efficiency reports. Regulators who exceed their duties, who deliberately harm innocents or who kill suspected criminals instead of arresting them are censured by their fellows and, in the most extreme cases, are turned over the adjudicators for punishment. However, most infractions are never reported to anyone outside of the regulators.

The primary reason for the regulators' strong sense of unity is that the rest of the Tripartite resent and dismiss them and much of the Populat fears and dislikes them. The regulators attempt to prevent crimes by keeping a careful eye on the people they are assigned to keep track of. The other members of the Tripartite greatly resent such scrutiny and consider the regulators little better than the Populat because of the extensive contact most regulators must have with the members of this class.

Also, when regulators prevent a crime, it is often completely invisible to anyone who is not a regulator, and when regulators fail to prevent a crime, all they can do is attempt to apprehend the person responsible. Therefore, many members of the Populat consider them to be nothing more than thugs and busybodies who come and catch criminals after crimes have been committed and people have been hurt. Because they have the power to arrest anyone from the highest plutarch to the lowliest lever-pulling member of the Lumpen, everyone who is not one of the regulators feels a degree of fear and distrust whenever they interact with a regulator.

Junior and mid-level regulators work in pairs and are assigned to patrol a specific sector. In the most densely populated portions of a city, a pair of regulators might be assigned to patrol a large apartment building holding 2,000 people, while in less populous regions, they are typically assigned to watch the equivalent of several city blocks. These regulators walk the streets and corridors of their assigned sector, keep an eye on all suspicious activities and investigate all reports of trouble. The best regulators take the time to get to know many of the people who live and work in their assigned region, and even regulators who hold the Populat in contempt know the names, faces and common activities of the more important or notable people in the sectors that they patrol. A few of the young but somewhat experienced regulators are assigned to monitor districts inhabited solely by members of the Tripartite. While conditions here are far more pleasant, the quiet resentment that some of the Populat express toward



their local regulators is far less problematic than the contempt and barely concealed loathing that the less polite members of the Tripartite express toward the regulators charged with patrolling their homes and workplaces.

Older and more skilled regulators are sometimes promoted from patrolling to investigative duties where they are called upon to help solve more difficult crimes. Instead of working a single area, these Investigators specialize in a certain type of crime and work to both prevent and solve those specific crimes. In nations having significant conflicts with their neighbors, large numbers of Investigators specialize in the prevention and detection of sabotage and other forms of treason or covert warfare. When they are attempting to solve a case, Investigators have complete authority over the type of case that they specialize in — they can order and direct both the junior regulators who patrol that district where the crime occurred and all members of the Populat and the Tripartite who are connected with the case.

The Adjudicators: Although the regulators are the most widely disliked members of the Olgotary, the adjudicators are the most feared members of the Tripartite. They are judge, jury and executioner for all crimes in Autochthonia and can pass sentence on everyone accused of a crime, regardless of the rank and station of the accused. Their decisions may not be appealed unless there is evidence of some form of corruption or misinformation, and their sentences are performed swiftly and without delay, so there is often little opportunity for any sort of appeal. In addition, adjudicators have the authority to veto laws that do not meet their exacting standard. They are taught that laws should be clear, concise and fair and return any new law that does not fulfill these criteria to the plutarchs for revision. However, vetoing laws is considered to be an exceedingly important decision that is never undertaken lightly. All of the adjudicators in a city must all vote on any vetoes, and a majority must agree before they can send the law back to the local plutarchs.

Although they are far less cliquish than the regulators, most adjudicators keep themselves somewhat apart from

the rest of the Tripartite because they view their responsibility to fairly administer justice as a sacred trust and many adjudicators fear that having too many close personal ties could limit their objectivity. Also, the plutarchs are among the most highly respected members of the Tripartite, and tensions between the plutarchs and the adjudicators can sometimes run quite high.

Adjudicators dress in artificial-leather togas similar to those worn by the plutarchs, but their robes are far more severe and understated, unlike the broad and exceedingly elaborate ones worn by the plutarchs. When they judge a case before the public, all adjudicators wear identical highly polished and stylized chrome masks. To reduce the possibility of both bribery and threats, no accused offender ever knows the name or face of the adjudicator who judges her case. The adjudicators keep careful records of which of them judges what case and will not hesitate to investigate an adjudicator if there is any hint of impropriety or unfairness, but they never release these records to anyone outside of their number. Even when judging one of the highest members of the Tripartite, all the accused will ever see is the shining silver mask of the nameless adjudicator, who is addressed only as “Your Honor” while on duty. When adjudicators assemble to vote on vetoing laws, they meet in closed sessions where they wear their masks, so all of these votes are similarly secret.

Like the plutarchs, adjudicators normally get along well with members of the Theomachracy. However, like the plutarchs, they often have problems with the various Sodalities. Some of the more radical plans by the Sodalities can be threats to public peace, health and safety, and so, many adjudicators keep a careful eye upon new projects. While the older and more conservative members of the Sodalities recognize the wisdom of having an external group put limits on their more extreme plans and experiments, many young members of the Sodalities resent the power the adjudicators have over their projects and see the adjudicators as narrow-minded busybodies.

The Autocrats: The highest-ranking members of the Olgotary are the autocrats. Autocrats are not a distinct caste

REGULATOR EQUIPMENT

While on duty, regulators wear long artificial-leather buff jackets over tight-fitting, dark-silk shirts and pantaloons. They have brass badges affixed to the left breast of their coat. They are all armed with a club that does bashing damage and a short sword, and each regulator carries a hand crossbow with both target and fowling bolts.

Hand Crossbow

This small crossbow is an easily concealable weapon made of fine steel. The entire bow is no longer than the length of a large man’s hand and is either worn strapped to the back of the user’s forearm or held in one hand. The target bolts for these hand crossbows are normally poisoned with a nonlethal venom equivalent to court poison (see *Exalted*, p. 243) that does bashing instead of lethal damage.

Name	Accuracy	Damage	Rate	Range	Resources
Hand Crossbow	+0	3L	2	75	•••

of the Olgotary. Instead, they are a high office to which any member of the Olgotary can aspire. Each city has a single autocrat, and each nation is lead by a grand autocrat. Autocrats are chosen by secret ballot by the members of the Olgotary from among their number. The grand autocrat is also chosen by secret ballot, but only autocrats can vote in this election. Autocrats have final authority to adjudicate disputes between the local members of the Olgotary, and they can also take complete command of a city during a crisis. They can only hold these dictatorial powers for the duration of a crisis, and within a month after the crisis has ended, the local Olgotary is obliged to hold another election as a way to swiftly remove autocrats who act in a selfish or incompetent manner during an emergency. Each autocrat also serves on the Tripartite Assembly as the representative for their city's Olgotary.

Grand autocrats have similar powers during emergencies that affect entire nations. In addition, they also have final authority over all matters of national importance. Only a grand autocrat can present his National Tripartite Assembly with a declaration of war. Decisions to wage all-out war must then be unanimously ratified by all members of the Assembly, while limited military actions such as raids need only be approved by a simple majority vote.

THE THEOMACHRACY

As in Creation, religious officials in Autochthonia have two separate responsibilities: They encourage the populace toward proper religious attitudes and behaviors, and they attempt to placate and bargain with the gods to insure that the gods act in accordance with the priests' needs and wishes. Since the inhabitants of Autochthonia are partially responsible for the safety and health of the Great Maker, making certain that the Populat maintains the proper level of devotion and diligence is even more important in Autochthonia than in Creation.

The Theomachracy's primary responsibility to insure that the other mortals who live within the Great Maker's body are devoutly orthodox in their beliefs. Because continual labor is necessary for both the health of the Great Maker and the survival of those who live within him, the Theomachrats work to inspire devotion and diligence in their fellows. Their scriptures states "Doubt begets apathy, apathy begets sloth, sloth begets chaos, and chaos begets death," which is a clear and direct statement of the realities of life in Autochthonia — if significant numbers of the Populat ever refused to perform their labors, their refusal would put the lives of everyone in Autochthonia at risk.

The Lectors: The Theomachrats who are charged with maintaining both morale and devotion are the lectors, who are the most loved and trusted members of the Theomachracy. The lectors do more than simply preach dry and dour sermons on the necessity of serving the Great Maker. They are also Autochthonia's historians, storytell-

ers, actors and musicians. They teach their lessons through humorous proverbs, clever parables and rousing hymns and regularly act out stories from the sacred Tome of the Great Maker. The most impressive of these shows have large casts, beautiful and elaborate costumes and complex sets that include elaborate mechanical and Essence-driven special effects such as brilliant lights, fireworks, simple automata and many other devices to amuse and amaze the audience.

Audiences are regularly excited by renditions of the daring exploits of the eight heroes who helped prepare the Great Maker to leave Creation by forging the sacred Ewer and journeying to the mystic Well of Souls to fill it. However, high adventure is only one of the many tools used by the lectors. They also tell ribaldly humorous tales of inept workers whose laziness and lack of devotion causes many amusing calamities, as well as overblown melodramas where dastardly anarchists and vile heretics attempt to corrupt innocent and well-meaning workers. Even their ordinary sermons are typically sprinkled with jokes, slightly pointed gossip about some of the more problematic members of the local community and rousing anecdotes about the dangers waiting in the Reaches or the curious customs of people in distant nations.

The lectors are also responsible for the most impressive and popular public spectacles in Autochthonia. On the first day of every season and for the entirety of Calibration, the sacred theater that lies in the heart of every large city puts on round-the-clock shows with fanciful costumes and truly amazing special effects. Regardless of what shifts they work, almost every member of the Populat attempts to find a way to watch at least one of these shows. In addition to reinforcing the most important religious teachings, these productions are also a significant source of civic pride, and lectors from different cities in the same nation often compete to see who can create the best and most incredible show.

To better serve and understand the populace, junior lectors are assigned to work in specific districts, where they get to know the lives and the particular tastes of the people for whom they perform and to whom they preach. All but the most humorless lectors are loved by the people they serve because the lectors provide much of the entertainment that brightens the lives of the Populat. Many lectors regularly organize sing-alongs, amateur plays, concerts and many similar endeavors where creative members of the Populat can both express their feelings and win the acclaim of their fellows. Naturally, most of the plays or songs performed have religious or spiritual themes, but this in no way detracts from the rowdy fun of large groups of people gathering together to drink and sing loud and somewhat raucous songs.

In addition to preaching and performing, most lectors also regularly talk to their parishioners. When someone feels hopeless, sad or simply dissatisfied with her life, she

can come to her lector and receive a mixture of sound advice and heartfelt comfort. In addition to improving morale, these talks also provide lectors with advance warning about potential heresies or other problems that might be brewing in their districts.

While many older and more experienced lectors spend their lives tending to and performing for the people of their districts, some with special talents are given other duties once they have proven themselves. The most creative are assigned to compose popular new plays and songs to keep the Populat attentive and entertained, while the most mechanically adept are assigned to the sacred theaters that put on the large seasonal performances. Here, these lectors labor ceaselessly to invent new mechanical effects to amaze and dazzle the audience. Both the songwriters and the creators of new special effects can become minor celebrities — members of the Populat regularly discuss what a popular lector's new creation will be like, and how one lector's work compares to the works of other acclaimed lectors.

The more scholarly and introverted lectors are assigned to work in the libraries found in every large city. Here, they catalog old records and write both religious and secular histories. Although they are the least well known of the lectors, their duties are equally vital because they provide the primary link between modern Autochthonia and its five millennia of history. They are especially important because ancient records often contain long-forgotten answers to modern problems, and only these scholars know how to easily locate these antique works.

Regardless of their duties, all lectors wear thick, voluminous robes with wide, padded shoulders. Most decorate their robes with a multitude of gear icons, which can be in the form of patches, embroidery, pendants, pins and many other forms of decoration. Some lectors use these decorations to make themselves look somewhat clownish and amusing, while others adorn themselves in a sufficiently elegant manner that they inspire respect and awe in those who see them.

The Preceptors: Just as lectors inspire joy and camaraderie, the preceptors typically inspire fear and distrust. Preceptors are the branch of the Theomachracy charged with uncovering and eliminating heresy. While all right-thinking citizens of Autochthonia agree that heresy is a deadly danger when living inside the body of a god, many of these same people are uncomfortable with the idea of someone carefully observing them, their friends and their loved ones for any sign of deviation from proper beliefs. The preceptors especially inspire distrust because they do much of their work undercover, disguised as members of the Populat. While disguised, they watch and listen to the conversations of those around them and make a special attempt to observe anyone that the local lector thinks might be a dissident.

Although few members of the Populat consider this fact, the relationship between local lectors and the preceptors is exceedingly close. Both are assigned to work in a specific sector or district of a city or town so that they can get to know the populace of that region exceedingly well. The preceptors work in this fashion so that they can more easily notice the small changes in behavior that signal the beginning of heretical thoughts. In addition, the local lector immediately reports any unorthodox or problematic beliefs that she observes to the local preceptor. In some cases, overly kind or naïve lectors only report the most obvious or troublesome heresies, but most lectors report all problems so that these difficulties can be dealt with before they become serious.

Regardless of whether a preceptor learns of the heresy through a report by the local lector or from some concerned citizen or if she overhears it while in disguise, the next step is identical. First, the preceptor disguises herself as a member of the Populat, watches the heretic and talks to the heretic's friends and acquaintances. Once she has obtained more information about both the heretic and the particular heresy, the preceptor and the lector discuss the problem. The local lector deals with minor heresies or heresies that the heretic shows no sign of attempting to spread. She talks with the heretic and attempts to convince him of the error of his ways. In most cases, personal attention by a loved and trusted figure such as the local lector is sufficient to resolve the problem. However, in more serious cases, the preceptor also talks with the person and uses a combination of threats and intimidation to make the heretic aware of the consequences of his actions. When combined with the caring concern expressed by the local lector, this tactic resolves almost all individual heresies. In the most serious cases or when a heretic attempts to spread his ideas, the preceptor apprehends the heretic and turns him over to the adjudicators for judgment. Punishments can range from becoming a social outcaste to exile or, in the most extreme cases, where the heretic is vigorously promoting ideas that would cause significant harm to the populace or the Great Maker, the heretic is enslaved.

Although almost all preceptors work among the Populat, their duties also bring them into contact with all branches of the Tripartite, and preceptors are charged with combating heresy among both the Populat and the elite. Although protocol prohibits preceptors from disguising themselves as members of another branch of the Tripartite, they often appear to be a servant or other minor functionary who is attentive and makes a habit of being within earshot of all discussions of religion. Almost all members of both the Olgotary and the Theomachracy see the value in rapidly eliminating heresies in all strata of society — especially among the elite who have far greater ability to spread their twisted teachings. In contrast, many of the younger, more hot-headed and experimental members of the Five Sodali-

ties distrust the preceptors and regard them as dangerous meddlers who stifle creativity and new ideas.

The wisest and most experienced preceptors are not assigned to specific districts. Instead, they are charged with keeping track of the more widespread heresies and working with the high-ranking lectors to help create sermons, songs and other ways of combating these specific heresies. Regardless of their rank, when they are not in disguise, preceptors wear simple uniforms consisting of an immaculately white shirt and pair of pants. Their uniforms have a severe, paramilitary cut similar to those worn by the regulators, except that the preceptors' uniforms are all spotlessly white and only adorned by a single interlocking gear icon worn over the preceptor's heart.

The Clerics: While the lectors and the preceptors keep track of the populace, the clerics handle both changes to overall doctrine and interactions with the various small gods who also dwell within the Great Maker's enormous body. Most clerics are administrators who spend their days dealing with the organizational details of running the Theomachracy. They make certain that every district has the appropriate number of lectors and preceptors in addition to periodically checking the efficiency and orthodoxy of these officials and investigating complaints by both members of the Populat and the Tripartite about suspicious or improper actions made by members of the Theomachracy.

In addition to managing personnel, clerics also manage the day-to-day workings of the Theomachracy, planning and organizing general schedules for the various daily assemblages and special festivals. The clerics of a single city or town work closely together to organize these activities, so that all the inhabitants are given similar sorts of religious instruction and so that the assemblages and festivals are sufficiently coordinated to enforce both orthodoxy and uniformity of belief among all the inhabitants of the settlement. However, local clerics must do more than make certain that all of the ceremonies held in different districts of a large city are identical. They also work with the local lectors to adjust the details of the ceremonies to fit the character and status of the inhabitants of each district. Sermons given to the lowest-level workers emphasize obedience and subservience to the common good far more than those directed to either higher-status members of the Populat such as shift chiefs or those spoken to members of the Tripartite.

This sort of coordination also goes on at a national level, but is far less exacting – the clerics work with the plutarchs to help the populace respond usefully to important national issues, but festivals and sermons are often quite different from one city to another. Between nations, the entire tone of most religious services can change — the only time that there is significant religious coordination between nations is when the clerics and the plutarchs attempt to foster a spirit of cooperation or competition

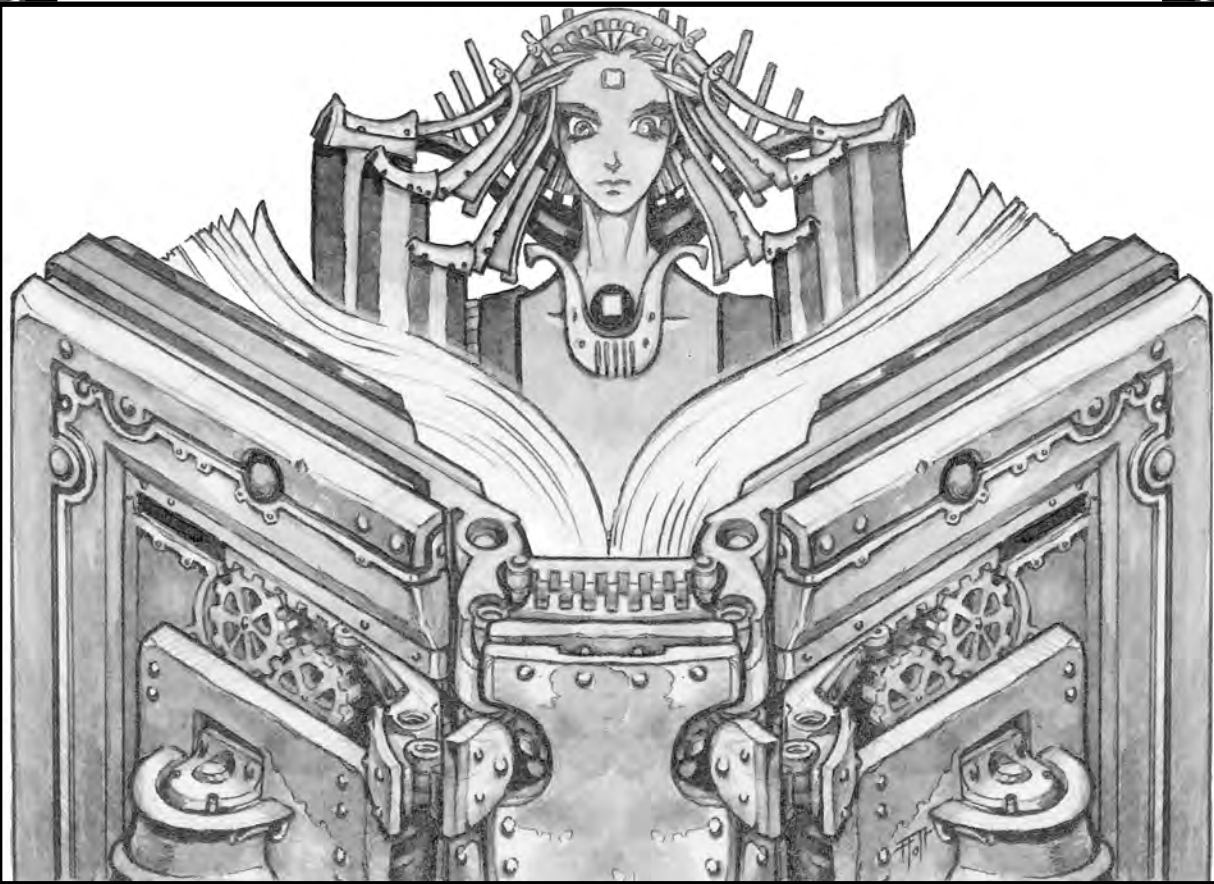
between two nations. On such occasions, sermons, festivals and religious performances mention the inhabitants of the other nation and cast them as devout people who would make useful allies or honorable rivals. When the plutarchs wish to increase hostilities with another nation, they ask the clerics to instead create sermons and performances that cast the inhabitants of the other nation as lazy heretics and dangerous unbelievers.

Because they are in charge of setting local and national religious policy, the clerics often work closely with the plutarchs. Although many plutarchs wish that the clerics acted as their obedient servants and simply carried out their directives, the reality of the situation is far more complex. The plutarchs and the clerics are each the most powerful group in their faction of the Tripartite, and both command approximately equal amounts of respect and power. As a result, the plutarchs must ask for the clerics' help, rather than give them orders — and in doing so, the plutarchs are occasionally forced to make compromises in their directives. The clerics have a significant amount of influence on the shape of national policy, which combines well with the fact that they are also in charge of revising and interpreting religious doctrine.

Just as the plutarchs set the overall national policies that are carried out by the regulators and the adjudicators, the clerics set national religious policy. They decide what portions of the Tome of the Great Maker to focus on and what portions will be largely ignored for the present. The lectors and the preceptors possess a moderate amount of discretion as to how they will implement the clerics' decisions, but the overall direction and policy of the Theomachracy is set by the clerics. Just as the clerics have some ability to influence the local and national policies of the plutarchs, the plutarchs have a similar degree of influence over the clerics, and the two groups are forced to closely cooperate when either group wishes to make significant changes to existing policies or practices.

Major changes in doctrine are quite rare and are always done on a national or (on rare occasions) international level, and such changes only occur when some severe problem arises that is not addressed by the current version of the accepted doctrine. Although no changes have yet been formalized, the growing scarcity of both souls and the Five Magical Materials are currently causing the clerics of seven of the Eight Nations (all except Yugash) to begin altering their doctrine to take these shortages into account and to try to encourage the populace to work even harder to minimize associated problems.

Meanwhile, in Yugash, the clerics will soon be hard at work modifying their doctrine to deal with renewed contact with Creation and are attempting to find ways to assimilate new souls and new mortals into their world and their society. Although no new beliefs have yet been formalized, clerics in Yugash are beginning to promote the



THE TOME OF THE GREAT MAKER

Like all official books used by the Tripartite, this ancient volume is written in the pure language of the Old Realm, and the first chapter was actually written by several of the eight original heroes shortly before the Great Maker departed from Creation. The remainder of the book is a combination of a general history of the early days after the Departure and specific and detailed guidelines about the proper worship of Autochthon. This book details both the proper mindset of worshipers and the actions that they need to take to promote both the health of the Great Maker and their own spiritual growth.

In addition, the Tome of the Great Maker contains a wealth of wisdom concerning everything from the details of how to safely tap conduits to the proper protocols for interacting with custodians. Unfortunately, most of these sections contain little more than scattered notes that are poorly organized and incomplete. Also, the entire book was written by mortals who only barely understood the powers of gods and other supernatural beings, making it even more confusing and disjointed.

The Tome of the Great Maker contains more than 5,000 densely written pages, and it contradicts itself in many places. The clerics charged with revising doctrine produce new editions of this book at least once a century. While most new copies have much of the obviously incorrect information found in the earliest editions removed, often these contradictions and mistakes have been replaced with new contradictions and mistakes caused by a mixture of incomplete knowledge and a lack of understanding of the archaic writing style of some of the earliest editions. Lectors and clerics attempting to solve a problem will often consult multiple editions of the Tome of the Great Maker and attempt to find the truth about the matter amidst the multiple different suggestions and recommendations found in the literally hundreds of different editions of this book. Although the Theomachracy vigorously maintains that every dutiful citizen in every nation perform the proper worship of Autochthon, the differences between the different editions of this book found in different nations seriously calls into question this idea of universal orthodoxy.

idea that mortals living in Creation are unenlightened people who will only achieve spiritual perfection by living inside the body of the Great Maker and learning his ways. The populace of Yugash now listen to their lectors preach about how only they can save the people of Creation and bring them into the light of understanding that can only come from the Great Maker. These sermons and performances encourage the Populat to both be more diligent in their efforts to take captives during expeditions into Creation and for them to help these captives adjust to their new life within Autochthon.

Most lectors work well with the clerics and are happy to transform the clerics' new directives into inspiring sermons and entertaining performances. Although many preceptors feel the same way about new definitions of orthodoxy created by the clerics, some preceptors resent the fact that clerics can change the definition of orthodoxy without having to clear these changes with the preceptors, who are the guardians of orthodoxy. Although there is no official necessity to do so, when making significant changes in doctrine that will affect the duties of the preceptors, clerics often discuss these changes with the senior preceptors to prevent both loud disputes and the far more common problem of some preceptors refusing to enforce new ideologies with which they disagree.

The final duty of the clerics is the one that is theirs alone and that few outside of the Theomachracy know much about — they offer prayers and offerings to the various small gods within Autochthon. These cleric-savants form a specially trained corps of occultists who often work closely with the Alchemical Exalted to help solve serious supernatural problems. Most of these clerics are skilled thaumaturges who excel at both summoning elementals and at warding locations to protect them from incursions by gremlins and other dangerous entities. In addition to calling up elementals of metal, steam, lightning, oil, smoke and crystal and to maintaining the wardings that protect all of the cities and towns inside the Great Maker, these cleric-savants also regularly communicate with the custodians and the many other small gods that also live within the Great Maker. Although clerics mostly only communicate with these spirits when these small gods are causing some problem that the clerics wish to resolve, cleric-savants occasionally ask the custodians and other small gods to perform minor favors in return for payment in jade and other precious materials. Cleric-savants might request that a small god lead a party of explorers to an Essence-filled conduit or help repair a section of a city badly damaged by some disaster. The Populat regards cleric-savants with superstitious awe, and a few see them as almost as powerful and impressive as the Alchemical Exalted.

While most cleric-savants work for individual cities, some work for an entire nation, and a small number are

assigned as aids to individual Alchemical Exalted. The cleric-savants are also the only branch of either the Olgotary or the Theomachracy who regularly work with the Sodalities on anything resembling good terms. Most members of the Sodalities consider the cleric-savants to be the only outsiders who come close to understanding their goals and mindset. Sometimes, other members of the Theomachracy will ask cleric-savants to act as intermediaries for particularly complex and vital negotiations with the Sodalities.

Clerics wear spare white robes superficially similar to those worn by adjudicators, except that clerics' robes lack the same severe cut. In addition, most clerics also wear a loose mandarin-style coat decorated with images of interlocking gears over their robes. Cleric-savants wear the same garb, but the gears on their coats are all embroidered in shining gold thread.

The Celebrants: Just as all of the members of the Olgotary in a city elect an autocrat to represent that city, the members of the Theomachracy in a city appoint a single celebrant to represent them. The local celebrants and the national high celebrant, who is the counterpart to the grand autocrat, are the most powerful and important members of the Theomachracy. However, while the members of the Olgotary elect their autocrats and grand autocrats by secret ballot, the Theomachracy selects prospective celebrants from among the highest ranking individuals in each of its three branches, and then, the leaders of the three branches subject the individual to a difficult and lengthy ordeal involving tests of knowledge, devotion, wisdom and faith. Only the most dedicated and devout individuals can become celebrants. The celebrants choose the high celebrant in a similar manner.

The high celebrants from different nations meet and work with their counterparts from other nations far more regularly than the different grand autocrats do. However, given the minor but persistent differences in the tone and focus of doctrine from one nation to another, disputes are common, and the Theomachrats of each nation are typically far more focused on looking out for the spiritual interests of their nation than on the spiritual interests of Autochthonia as a whole.

THE FIVE MAGNIFICENT SODALITIES OF PENULTIMATE TRUTH AND INTRANSIGENT GOSPEL (THE SODALITIES)

The third branch of the Tripartite is the most diverse. The Sodalities are simultaneously the most experimental and the most hidebound branch of the Tripartite. The Sodalities are responsible for inventing new techniques and technologies to maximize efficiency and solve problems, for maintaining the vital technologies that allow the cities of Autochthonia to survive and for creating the Alchemical Exalted. They perform these vital functions with an open-minded experimental zeal

combined with a highly conservative ritualism and an ingrained culture of obscurantism, paranoid secrecy and vicious infighting. The Sodalities are divided into five separate branches, and they must all work together to maintain the vital functions of the cities and towns and to create the Alchemical Exalted. However, each branch constantly claims to be the most important and the natural leader of the other four. Alliances between the different branches are few and fleeting.

When they work together, such as during the creation of soulgems or the Alchemical Exalted, the Sodalities can create truly amazing results. However, such cooperation is rare outside of these two vitally necessary areas. To make matters worse, the Sodalities' use of highly idiosyncratic religious terminology in their secret rituals constantly bring accusations of heresy from the Theomachracy, and the often-horrific punishments that the Sodalts inflict upon their own members for crimes that they refuse to reveal to outsiders angers the members of the Olgotary because it infringes upon their own duties. However, because the services they provide are vital to the survival of everyone and because they are so often the tie-breakers on the Tripartite Assemblies, both the Olgotary and the Theomachracy must accept the fact that Sodalities are, in practice, normally exempt from both civil and religious law.

The Sodalities run into further difficulties because they regularly work across national boundaries. The other two branches of the Tripartite both have strong national loyalties, but the Sodalities see themselves as transcending all other loyalties and affiliations. Although this sort of cooperation is essential for the proper maintenance of both the economy of souls and various sorts of vital technologies, it also regularly causes serious tensions between the Sodalities and the other members of the Tripartite. On rare occasions, the Sodalities have used their international influence to affect national policy, starting or preventing wars and shifting the balance of trade. However, the vast majority of the time, disagreements and infighting between and within each of the five branches prevent the Sodalities from having anything near this level of influence. Also, almost every member of the Sodalities is far more devoted to their own idiosyncratic goals than to acquiring any sort of large-scale political power and influence over nations or other organizations that have nothing directly to do with the Sodalities. Like the majority of scholars, savants and technicians in Creation, most members of the Sodalities care little for anything that does not concern their particular projects and interests and are happy to leave the complexities of politics, law and administration to others as long as their own endeavors remain largely outside the law.

Unlike the members of the Olgotary or the Theomachracy, the uniforms of the five Sodalities are all modeled upon the uniforms of the Populat. However, the Sodalts distinguish themselves by the way in which their

CRIMES AGAINST THE SODALITIES

Each of the five branches of the Sodalities has a series of special and increasingly horrific punishments for breaking their rules. Since even the rules themselves are sometimes kept secret from outsiders, all such offenses are handled within that particular branch of the Sodalities, with no input from the Olgotary or any of the other branches of the Sodalities. The specific crimes are widely varied and differ from one branch to the next, but the most general types of crimes are revealing Sodality secrets to outsiders, disobeying specific instructions from higher-ranking members, deliberately attacking another member or sabotaging another member's work or consistent and deliberate laziness and sloth. Punishments range from short-term loss of a specific physical capacity to temporary injuries that impair that same capacity to (in the most extreme cases) mutilations that permanently remove some or all of the capacity. The Olgotary regularly complains about such mutilations, some adjudicators claim it is barbaric, and most argue that mutilation wastes and reduces the capacities of potentially productive individuals. However, the Sodalities continue to have the right to judge and punish their members.

uniforms are decorated — they attach pins, badges, collar insignia, shoulder piping, brassards and medallions to standard-issue Populat uniforms to transform it into their specific garb. The members of the Sodalities regard this custom as far less wasteful than producing separate and highly elaborate uniforms such as those worn by the other members of the Tripartite.

THE GLORIOUS LUMINORS OF THE BRILLIANT RAPTURE (THE LUMINORS)

Until mortals began living inside the Great Maker, its vast body was bathed in eternal darkness. Humanity brought light to Autochthonia, and the Glorious Luminors are the creators and guardians of this light. They carefully guard the secrets of creating and dousing light. The populace regard the Luminors as the most pompous and self-important of the Sodalities because nearly everyone takes the brilliant lights found throughout every city and town for granted. However, whenever one of the rare blackouts occur and people are forced to deal with the endless and total darkness that is the natural state of their world, they utter prayers and make offerings to the Luminors, treating them as semidivine beings.

Workers used to having sufficient light for any task often overlook the vital nature of the Luminors' work, and



the Luminors do little to help their reputation — they speak of even the most mundane streetlights as containing the divine presence of Autochthon, performing lengthy and overly ostentatious rituals to honor these lights. Also, they are exceedingly jealous of all efforts to make light, and in cities where they hold much power, non-Luminors caught making light are exiled. The Luminors are also in charge of fire fighting, which is especially vital in the large, densely packed, warren-like cities of Autochthonia.

In addition, each of the Five Sodalities holds one piece of the knowledge necessary to create the Alchemical Exalted. The Luminors hold the secrets of the temperatures necessary to prime the broth in the Alchemical Vats and to catalyze the formation of the Exalt's living body.

The Luminors are also responsible for capturing souls and transferring them into soulgems. Luminor doctrine, as well as the doctrine recorded in the Tome of the Great Maker holds that any soul that escapes from its soulgem falls into the Void and is lost forever. This doctrine is a lie fabricated millennia ago by the first Luminors. In actuality, the Great Maker recycles all souls within it, regardless of whether they are in soulgems or not. Only the highest-ranking Luminors know that this belief is a lie, and they only pass this information down to their successors. If the truth about souls within Autochthonia ever got out, it would cause a significant backlash against the Luminors, and significant numbers of the Populat would begin to doubt the way in which souls and soulgems are dealt. These doubts could even cause the populace to begin question the hierarchy of souls that lies at the basis of Autochthonian society. This lie allows the Luminors to be in charge of the distribution of powerful souls, which is one of the Luminors' greatest sources of power.

Every Sodality also manages the harvesting and refining of one of the Five Magical Materials, and the Luminors are in charge of the harvesting and refining of orichalcum. To reflect this fact, Luminor insignia and decorations are all made of gold or (for the highest-ranking members) orichalcum. Their most common designs are pins and badges with flaming gears, gear-and-flame and gear-as-sunburst motifs.

Infractions against the rules of their Sodality are punished by temporary or, occasionally, permanent loss of sight. The most common punishments are carried out by affixing blinders or arc protectors to the offender's face for a few weeks or months. Permanent blinding of one or both eyes is rare and is always carried out by forcing an offender to stare at brilliant electrical arcs until his eyes fail.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS CONDUCTORS OF THE CONSECRATED VEINS (THE CONDUCTORS)

The Conductors manage the Great Maker's veins, otherwise known as the conduits. They patch weakening conduits, and they tap them for water, food paste, Essence,

air (in hostile regions), water and all of the other necessities and raw materials needed by the mortals who live within Autochthon. The Conductors are most well known for gathering and collecting the nutrient pastes that feed the populace. They also created the pneumatic tram network that permits safe and rapid transport within and between cities and their efforts to maintain the conduits are essential to keeping the Great Maker healthy. Like the Luminors, the populace rarely considers the necessities that the Conductors provide unless there is a famine or a shortage of other critical materials, but in such cases, everyone turns to the Conductors for aid. However, in most cafeterias, the Populat are taught to give thanks to both the Conductors who gathered the nutrients and to the Harvesters who prepared them for consumption. As a result, the Populat associates the Conductors with food and so generally regards them more highly than the Luminors.

The Conductors regularly travel out into the Reaches to conduct mining operations, since conduits regularly shift and dry up, continually seeking newer and richer conduits carrying everything from Essence to water. Parties of heroic Conductors setting out into the Reaches in search of either necessities to end a critical shortage or wealth to enrich the coffers of their city are traditional images that appear in many of the sacred and secular plays that entertain the Populat. These portrayals have caused much of the Populat assume that the Conductors are among the bravest and most heroic members of the Tripartite. What most of the Populat do not know is that the Conductors who venture into the Reaches are also likely to have significant contacts among the exiles who live there. Also, a substantial minority of Conductors have minor mutations produced by exposure to high levels of Essence or implants they were given by overly diligent custodians. During crucial shortages, if the Conductors cannot manage to find the necessary raw materials, they are sometimes vilified as being weak and traitorous both by the Populat and by other members of the Tripartite.

The Conductors are the Sodality responsible for affixing the soulgem to a nascent Alchemical Exalt's forehead. Their work is the final miraculous step that transforms a carefully constructed lump of clay into a living, sentient being. The Conductors are also the Sodality in charge of collecting and working starmetal, which is vitally necessary for strengthening valves in weakened conduits. Many of their ventures into the Reaches involve searching for this rarest of the Five Magical Materials. To reflect their connection to starmetal, the Conductors' insignia is made of either blued steel or starmetal, and it most often consists of gear motifs inside complex rosettes of fine wire.

Infractions against the rules of the Conductors are punished by depriving the offenders of their ability to manipulate the world. Special locking mittens are used for the most minor offenses, followed by fine cuts on fingers,

scalding or freezing the skin of the palms, breaking fingers and, in extreme cases, cutting off an offender's little finger or, for the most severe offenses, his entire hand.

THE PIOUS HARVESTERS OF THE HALLOWED FLESH (THE HARVESTERS)

The Harvesters dispose of useless junk and other waste and return it to the Great Maker's embrace. They serve Autochthonia by removing damaged components and recycling them. They also perform this same function within cities and towns — they gather trash, dead rats and corpses and recycle them. As a result, they are also responsible for removing soulgems from the foreheads of the dead and returning their souls to the Ewer.

Paradoxically, in addition to working with garbage, the Harvesters also prepare the nutrient paste gathered by the vein-tapping Conductors. They transform the thin gray paste and turgid broth into somewhat more palatable forms for the Populat, and their most skilled food preparers transform these raw materials into exotic and excellent food for the consumption of the highest members of the Tripartite. The Harvesters dispense their most basic foodstuffs through the brass-nozzled dispensers in the vast cafeterias of the Populat and serve the members of the Tripartite Assembly exquisite meals upon silver and jade plates.

The Populat generally ignores the Harvester's role as garbage collectors and, instead, focuses on the work they do in food processing. While everyone knows that the Conductors are responsible for actually acquiring the nutrient paste that is processed into food, the Harvesters are held to be responsible for how the food tastes. When the raw materials are of high quality and the processing works perfectly, the food is unusually good, and many members of the Populat openly praise the Harvesters. However, when the results are subnormal, many of the Populat grumble and blame the Harvesters for producing bad food.

Although they venture out into the Reaches considerably less often than the Conductors, the Harvesters' recycling efforts regularly extend to searching out ruined or irreparably damaged components in the uninhabited regions surrounding the cities of the Autochthonians. Harvesters who regularly venture into the Reaches typically know how to make signs that will attract the attention of nearby custodians, so that these servitors will help the Harvesters recycle useless components. The Harvesters also create the potent broth that fills the Vat in which the Alchemical Exalted are brewed. They alone know the secrets of producing the exotic chemical stew that helps to bring the base clay to life.

The Harvesters are responsible for collecting and working with jade. This abundant and refractory Magical Material is easily recycled, and the Harvesters obtain most

of their stocks from ruined devices. Jade is especially useful as a catalyst to various recycling processes, and so, the Harvesters have also adopted it as the Magical Material that they use on their insignia. Because it is relatively plentiful, the members of this Sodality regularly use multiple colors of jade to create colorful pins and broaches. Images of gears being used as circular saws and interlocking gears (which are often used to crush waste before it is recycled) are their predominant motifs.

Infractions against the rules of the Harvesters are punished by depriving the offender of the ability to speak. Punishments range from forbidding the person from speaking to fastening her jaws shut with silver wire. The most extreme offenses are punished with serious injuries caused by pouring tiny amounts of molten silver into the Harvester's mouth or, for the very worst offenses, removing the offender's tongue.

THE PROLIFIC SCHOLARS OF THE FURNACE TRANSCENDENT (THE SCHOLARS)

The Scholars are the largest of the Sodalities' five branches and are also the most obviously useful. They build, design and create almost everything used in Autochthonia and work closely with the plutarchs to transform their designs into blueprints and then into actual buildings and factories. The Scholars are in charge of operating and maintaining the many manufacturing facilities within the body of the Great Maker, as well as creating, operating and maintaining similar facilities within mortal cities. They work ceaselessly to keep both the mortal and divine factories on schedule, and they are constantly repairing broken gauges and switches and instructing Populat workers on how to make certain that indicators stay within acceptable parameters. The Scholars turn over anything they cannot repair to the Harvesters for recycling.

Among the many other items that they manufacture, the Scholars create both the soulgems and the sorcerous implants and Charms used by the Alchemical Exalted. These items are among the most complex devices that the Scholars are charged with making, and they guard the secrets of their manufacture especially carefully. The Scholars are also responsible for maintaining Autochthonia's stocks of soulsteel, and they use this material in manufacturing soulgems. On the back of every soulgem are soulsteel posts that extend into the possessor's skull. The possessor's soul flees down these posts and into the soulgem when the possessor dies. Soulsteel is also both refractory and relatively easy to roll into thin sheets and apply as coatings on other materials. Therefore, soulsteel is used to coat the working surfaces of many gears and hammers, rendering them far more durable and resistant to wear.

The Populat work alongside the Scholars more often than with the members of any other branch of the Sodality.



ties, both because the Scholars are the largest branch and because the Scholars work in the same factories as the Populat. As a result, most members of the Populat have great respect for the Scholars — they are the most consistently well regarded and praised of the five branches of the Sodalities. Whenever a shift chief puts in a request for a new type of tool or sends in a report that a particular piece of equipment needs repair, she delivers these reports to one of the Scholars who works in her factory. In some cases, close friendships evolve between higher-status members of the Populat and Scholars who work in the same factory.

Scholars venture out into the Reaches almost as often as Conductors, going there to repair the machines and factories used by the custodians. Scholars who venture into the Reaches possess a few special sigils that they scribe around their worksites, to let nearby custodians know that they are attempting to repair or perform maintenance on crucial pieces of equipment.

Scholars wear insignia made of black wrought iron or soulsteel-plated iron. These insignia are most often made in the form of gears and are usually rough and either still edged with flashing from the mold or visibly marked by a shaping hammer. These same gears also decorate their hammers and anvils. In addition, all Scholars wear the iron symbol of the God Furnace on a chain around their necks — they forge this symbol during their final initiation into the mysteries of this Sodality and quench it in their own blood.

Infractions against the rules of the Scholars are punished by depriving the offender of the ability to hear. Punishments range from stoppering the offender's ears for a specified length of time, to the mutilation or in extreme cases the complete removal of the offender's ears. For the most serious crimes, part or all of the offender's hearing is destroyed by inserting a hot poker into one or both of her ears.



THE METICULOUS SURGEONS OF THE BODY ELECTRIC (THE SURGEONS)

The Surgeons are the scouts and explorers of Autochthonia. They travel throughout both the cities and the Reaches of Autochthonia looking for malfunctions and other serious problems. When they discover such problems, the Surgeons investigate and then report them to either the Harvesters or the Scholars, depending upon whether the problem looks like it can be repaired. They also explore portions of the Great Maker's body that have recently opened or reopened and make reports of the status of these newly accessible areas of the Reaches. Since the Great Maker's body is in a constant state of movement and flux, new regions in the vicinity of every city become accessible at least once a year.

The Surgeons venture out into the Reaches even more often than the Conductors, and their difficult and

often dangerous scouting missions allow the Harvesters and the Scholars to minimize the time that they must spend trekking through the Reaches.

The Surgeons also live up to their name and are in charge of all medical matters pertaining to the mortal inhabitants of Autochthonia. They are the surgeons, healers, midwives, pharmacists and nurses for the entire mortal population. They create and prescribe all manner of drugs and operate to set broken limbs, to remove mangled ones and to attach complex prosthetics created by the Scholars. They also determine which individuals are too disabled or infirm to perform any useful work and administer the euphemistically named Elixir of Rest to such patients and then turn the corpses over to the Harvesters to be recycled.

Their medical duties make the Surgeons the most respected and sought after members of any of the branches of the Sodalities. Although their power over life and death intimidates many, most members of the Populat think of the Surgeons primarily as the source of healing medicines and the providers of relief from pain. Although members of the Populat understand when their fellows grumble and complain that a particular Surgeon gave someone the Elixir of Rest too soon, any slurs or insults against the Surgeons as a whole are greeted with great hostility, especially by those whose lives or loved ones the Surgeons have saved.

The Surgeons are also responsible for the distribution of drinking water to the populace and work closely with the Conductors to purify (when necessary) and distribute the water that they collect. Also, they use their precise and skilled surgical arts to create the physical forms of the Alchemical Exalted. The Surgeons surround the implants and devices provided by the Scholars with a matrix of clay, wax and grease that eventually becomes the living biological body of a newly created Exalt.

The Surgeons are in charge of collecting and working with moonsilver, in large part because moonsilver can be used to create surgical instruments that are both razor sharp and astoundingly flexible. Because of their association with moonsilver, the Surgeons craft their insignia from either silver or (for the higher-ranking members of this branch of the Sodalities) moonsilver. Their adornments typically use gear-and-caliper or gear-and-scalpel motifs or, occasionally, gear-and-waterdrop motifs, depending upon whether the individual Surgeon is assigned as a scout, a healer or a hydraulics technician.

Infractions against the rules of the Surgeons are punished by depriving an offender of his sense of smell. Punishments range from stopping up the offender's nose with putty to piecing his septum and attaching clamps that hold his nostrils shut to cutting the offender's nostrils or even completely removing his nose.



“Don’t go in there! You’ll die in seconds! That’s grade-5 live steam! It’ll boil you, even in a furnace suit!”

The rescue team milled uncertainly outside the door as the fog shot out around them, a humid geyser. Their instincts were to leap in, but the billowing white clouds and the sauna temperatures hid the pinhole leak of thousand-degree steam that was the origin of the hot, rolling fog. One brush with the leak, even with the air around it, would guarantee a fatal scalding.

If the victims had been trapped in the gangway, the matter would have been settled. They would have died almost instantly. The problem was that leak was merely a symptom, sprung fittings from the explosion in Turbine 11, and the dragon’s roar of the burning methane from the blow in the pumphouse feed main formed a bass backdrop for the shrill hiss of the escaping steam. The black gangs of the pumphouse were critical personnel, but if the rescue efforts didn’t meet with success soon, this disaster would only spread as the gas-fueled flame found root in the Maker’s flesh.

Stern Whip of Industry impacted the wall of the passageway with surprising force, his heavy body twirling through its meteoric trajectory and striking the horizontal corner of the passage. From him hung the streamers of his protective garment, spun around him by integrated weaver units. The thousands of tiny droplets on the panels shivered and leapt as the shock of his massive armored weight’s impact launched them from their rest, and they fell like rain around his feet as he landed with nary a slip on the ice-slick wet steel grating. As he snapped up from his landing crouch, the last long stands of protective fiber knitted around his jade-encrusted frame.

Piston-driven legs pumping, he slammed forward, toward the press of rescue workers, who scattered with cheers of appreciation. He brushed one, by accident, and sent her spinning away with a broken collarbone. There was no time for apologies, and everyone knew it. His arrival was too long delayed.

Heedless, *Stern Whip of Industry* flung himself into the misty white hell of the gangway. Echolocation gave him the corridor’s shape, and thermal overlays showed the deadly plumes of the gas. Projections showed a route through the debris and live steam, but he would still be exposed to the cutting power of the jets several times. Even the suit couldn’t protect him from that.


There was no choice, no deciding even. There was only attempting to keep his body out of the jets and minimizing the damage from what brushing contact he suffered. Men would have died in that corridor, as the pressurized steam severed their limbs and cauterized the wounds. Some had, and *Stern Whip of Industry* leapt over the bodies and the pink-tinged water around them as he rolled gracefully through the boiling spume.

Passing through with mere surface burns, *Stern Whip* cast about, quickly acquiring the emergency valve for the steam conduit. He leapt to it, and with the precision of a master Conductor, twirled the valve’s stop down, cutting off the steam. The rescue team rushed in, heedless of the fallen beneath their feet, trailing hoses of flame-retardant gel.

Stern Whip of Industry met them at the gangway and led their mad rush to the flames that billowed in a vast pillar from the blown methane line. Working far closer than a human team could dare, *Stern Whip* leapt to a high vantage point with the power of a hydraulic jack, hose trailing behind, and slathered the ropy flame retardant on the fire. The substance was unburnable, tacky and cured to an epoxy far harder than steel a few seconds after its exposure to flame. It was used to paint surfaces in industrial disasters, rendering them fireproof even as they blazed.

This was perhaps not its designed function, but *Stern Whip* knew that he must succeed. If this continued much longer, the Great Maker’s fire suppression systems would activate, smothering this entire city in unbreathable gas. Firing the suppressant down through the flames, he formed a free-standing grid of hardened epoxy directly over the blow, but below the level of the flames. He had nothing that could take the pressure of actually sealing the rupture, but by forcing the gas to flow through the epoxy grid, he could disrupt the towering plume of flame that was eating the plant alive.

And in his heart, he knew that he would succeed. He was the agent of the Populat and a servant of the Machine God. He was as formidable as any custodian, and failure was not an option. There was no place for entropy, only functionality.



CHAPTER TWO CHARACTER CREATION AND TRAITS

Although Autochthon created the designs for Alchemical Exalted as the prototypes for all Exaltation, he did not actually build any of these artificial champions until after his withdrawal from Creation. Thus, Alchemicals are at once the eldest of their kind and youngest, save for the deathknight mirrors of the Solars.

Built using ancient designs upgraded over millennia of mystical and technological refinement, Autochthon's champions do not resemble the heroes of Creation except

in roughest semblance. They are not born and cannot reproduce. Instead, savants construct Alchemical Exalted in Vat Complexes and grant them life through the insertion of mortal souls. While initially humanoid, Alchemicals do not breathe and only eat to synthesize Essence. Although they are neither undead nor true automata, their clammy flesh suggests otherwise and betrays their artificial nature. In place of innate magic, their Charms take the

form of artifacts physically integrated into their bodies. Curiously enough, Alchemicals represent a mirror of the Celestial Exalted. Instead of mortal bodies imbued with shards of magical power, the Chosen of Autochthon have magical bodies imbued with mortal souls.

In spite of the vast differences separating Alchemicals from other types of Exalted, they are not wholly dissimilar. Beneath the tracery of metal and crystal and synthetic flesh, they remain human beings with human souls. They have distinct personalities and foibles. They work, play, love and hate, just as their analogues in Creation. And so, perhaps surprisingly, the rules to create these technomagical prodigies as **Exalted** characters remain similar to those used for creating Solars. This chapter details these similarities and differences in full. Where different, these rules supersede and replace those provided in the earlier supplement **Time of Tumult**.

STEP ONE: CHARACTER CONCEPT

As always, this step remains the most important in defining and creating a character. Given that Alchemical Exalted are produced with modular parts as masterworks of industry and art, players may erroneously and dangerously assume that their character's personalities are similarly mass produced. This assumption misses the point. Alchemicals may be mechanical, but they are most assuredly *not* machines. Most are quite passionate, even excessively so by Autochthonian standards. They are eccentric and special, reincarnated heirs to the heroes of the past. A player should give thought to any notable deeds achieved by his character's soul in previous lives and the ways in which this fused lineage of memory and experience has molded the Exalt. Among Alchemicals, emotionless detachment is generally a sign of a problem, whether an overabundance of Clarity (see pp. 69-71) or outright madness. Either way, characters with severely antisocial tendencies will find themselves closely monitored by concerned associates and superiors.

CASTE

The Chosen of Autochthon divide themselves into castes based upon the Five Magical Materials. An Alchemical's caste is closer to a Terrestrial's aspect in that it reflects an innate facet of what she *is* rather than what she *does*. Her caste is decided long before her creation, based upon the Magical Material that predominates in her frame. Just as importantly, the Sodalities carefully select souls that resonate with the Material and power of the body, in order to strengthen the arcane link between spirit and flesh. Most souls follow a dynasty of like castes, changing only as they undergo sweeping changes to their personalities. Like a Dragon-Blood's aspect, an Alchemical's caste carries certain immutable predilections and powers that guide the character toward certain roles. For full information on the different castes, see pages 74-85.

NATURE

The precepts of Autochthonian society most closely resonate with the following Natures: Architect, Bureaucrat, Follower, Judge, Leader, Paragon, Savant and Visionary. Other Natures are less common, but the respective behaviors remain permissible to the degree that they do not act against the value of hierarchical organization. Those who openly parade a tendency toward Gallant, Hedonist or Thrillseeker skate at the edge of tolerance, while Rebels face polite derision at best and considerably worse if a preceptor ever sees evidence of such thought crimes.

Societal trends apply far less stringently to Alchemical Exalted, who traditionally display eccentric, even disturbing behavior that would never be tolerated in a mortal. The Chosen draw upon the full range of available Natures and use them in the same fashion as the core imperative of their personalities. Still, Alchemicals who deviate too much from expected norms risk the ire and censure of their peers.

STEP TWO: CHOOSING ATTRIBUTES

Like all characters, Alchemical Exalted begin with one free dot in each Attribute. However, they do *not* allocate a fixed number of dots between Physical, Social

PARAGONS OF INTEGRATION

Within Autochthonia, as elsewhere, the Paragon Nature encapsulates the society's core philosophy. For Paragons of Integration, the greater good matters above all else. They are not selfless drones ready to sacrifice themselves as Martyrs, nor will they blindly pledge themselves as Followers to another's orders. Yet, neither are they Leaders, to command without regard for the orders of rightful superiors, nor Bureaucrats who act within a single structure without seeking their greater place in all structures. They do not lose themselves in thought as Savants or neglect the present as Visionaries. Instead, Paragons of Integration know their place as meaningful components of the whole and value themselves and others exactly as much as necessary. Neither arrogant nor officiously self-effacing, they represent the delicate balance of all qualities that facilitate success and righteousness. Even more importantly, they are eminent cooperators, facilitating the unity of every organization they belong to through their steadfast reliability and unswerving devotion to virtue. Paragons of Integration would get along well with Paragons of the Celestial Bureaucracy, unsurprising given that Autochthon helped organize the hierarchy of gods in the dawn of Creation.



and Mental categories. Instead, their process is more complex. Each caste has three Attributes associated with it, as listed below.

Orichalcum: Strength, Charisma, Intelligence

Moonsilver: Dexterity, Appearance, Wits

Jade: Stamina, Charisma, Wits

Starmetal: Dexterity, Manipulation, Intelligence

Soulsteel: Stamina, Manipulation, Perception

Alchemicals consider their Caste Attributes primary, and receive nine (9) dots to distribute among them. None of these may have a rating lower than ••.

Next, the player selects three of the remaining six Attributes as Favored, allocating six (6) dots to this secondary category.

Finally, the Exalt receives four (4) dots to distribute among the last remaining Attributes.

STEP THREE: CHOOSING ABILITIES

Unlike all other types of Exalted, Alchemicals have neither Caste nor Favored Abilities. Instead, they receive 23 dots to distribute among all Abilities. While players do not have to spend these points according to specific requirements, the following suggestions provide guidance. Any character that does not meet these dot allocations will be an exception, either defective in training or, more likely, programmed for more specialized duties. Most Alchemicals have two or more (2+) dots in an attack Ability for their primary range of combat and one or more (1+) in the secondary range (i.e., Archery or Thrown for those who strike from range and either Brawl, Martial Arts or Melee for characters geared for close combat). At least one readily defensive capable Ability should have a rating of two or more (2+) dots (usually Dodge or Melee, though Brawl or Martial Arts could work). Most are quite strong and fit, as reflected by an Athletics of two or more (2+) dots. Outside of combat and other physical activity, virtually every Alchemical will have •+ each in a Craft of choice, Lore and Occult, and most will have notably higher ratings. As leaders and heroes, they often have three or more (3+) dots distributed among Performance, Presence and Socialize, and two or more (2+) dots in Bureaucracy. Prior to contact with Creation, the only languages known in the

LEGENDS OF THE SIXTH CASTE

Like all cultures, the people of Autochthonia have their legends. Many of these stories concern the Great Maker himself, positing uncounted theories on what the Primordial is doing or planning for the future. Other tales concern the existence of other worlds, most often the great unknown beyond the Seal of Eight Divinities. Finally, grim fables warn of the danger of the Void, incorporating subtle or blatant sermons on morality. One of the more intriguing elements of Autochthonian myth is that of the sixth caste, apocryphal Exalted built from adamant. Supposedly, these crystal heroes occasionally appear from nowhere, strike their enemies with devastating force and vanish just as quickly. In most accounts, these enigmatic figures strike down gremlins and those whose incompetence recklessly endangers the gods. They never appear in front of large numbers of witnesses or anyone important enough to conclusively validate the stories.

Neither the Olgotary nor the Alchemicals themselves know what to make of these sightings. The heroes could be garbled accounts of Moonsilver Caste agents using obfuscating Charms or perhaps gods who adopt the semblance of Alchemicals for their own inscrutable ends. Certainly, the Sodalities have no records of ever building a sixth caste, though some few wonder if a caste with such predilection for stealth might have somehow erased all trace of its existence. Of course, if the Adamant Caste is more than a rumor or a misunderstanding, then additional questions follow. Who are these Exalts? Where are their Vats? What is their purpose? To whom do they owe their allegiance?

For Storytellers interested in including the sixth caste as more than folklore, the following *may* be true. Any of these “facts” could be part of the group’s mystique, and Storytellers should liberally adjust to the tone of their games. The Caste Attributes for Adamant are Strength, Appearance and Perception, completing the pattern of every Attribute shared by two castes. Their anima power costs 5 motes and adds bonus dice equal their permanent Essence to all Stealth rolls or efforts to escape tracking for a scene. Adamant Caste Exalted serve the highest gods directly as eyes and hands. Their rare Vats remain hidden inside biomechanical factory-deities grown for that express purpose, cloaked from detection by powerful enchantments. Most concern themselves with matters beyond human notice, fighting against the forces of entropy and chaos that fester in uncharted and unknown regions of the Great Maker. A handful disguise themselves as ordinary mortals using Charms, monitoring their brethren to ensure that mortal civilization never threatens the clockwork hierarchy of the divine. As for their origins, the Divine Ministers built the earliest members of the Adamant Caste after the core of Autochthon sank into torpid contemplation. The secondary functions of the Primordial feared the Exalted might grow too powerful left unchecked and assembled agents of their own as a contingency plan, concealing the existence of their watchers behind a cloak of rumor. The Adamant Caste Exalted answer only to their own hierarchy and the Ministers themselves, silently observing at the lonely periphery of their cousins.

Machine God are Autochthonic (which lacks a written form), Old Realm and the varied syntaxes of clicks and whirs used by enclaves of custodians and gremlins in the Far Reaches (considered tribal tongues for their limited utility). Rare Abilities include Larceny, Ride (applying to exotic automaton or spirit steeds or for piloting the mechanized rickshaws used for local transport) and Sail (used to pilot larger vehicles and to guide pneumatic trams). Storytellers may impose an unfamiliarity penalty of two dice when Autochthonians attempt to ride living mounts or sail actual boats (and vice versa for natives of Creation handling Autochthonian conveyances). These penalties disappear after several weeks of practice.

STEP FOUR: ADVANTAGES

Alchemicals draw upon the backing of an entire civilization whose technology and infrastructure surpass any comparably-sized nation in Creation. As such, they

automatically receive Class ●●● (see p. 66), plus an additional 10 dots of Backgrounds to allocate. Some Backgrounds work differently for these characters, and they also have several entirely new Backgrounds from which to choose. See pages 65-69 for complete information. Only the Artifact Background may have a rating above 3 without spending bonus points.

Like all Exalted, the Chosen of Autochthon wield powers known as Charms. However, Alchemical Charms differ substantially from all others in that they take the form of surgically implanted artifacts. For full rules and details, see pages 88-91. A starting character receives four (4) General Charm Slots and four Dedicated Charm Slots, as well as eight (8) Charms to fill them. Additional Charm Slots cost 6 bonus points for General or 5 if Dedicated, and each Slot also comes with a Charm capable of fitting in that Slot for free. Characters may obtain Charms in excess of their available Slots through the Artifact or Vats Back-

ground. Keep in mind that most Alchemical Charms require a commitment of Personal Essence for as long as they are installed. Players should make sure that their characters have sufficient motes available for all Charms during Step Five of the character-creation process.

As sentient beings, Alchemical Exalted possess the same four Virtues as everyone else: Compassion, Conviction, Temperance and Valor. They receive one (1) free dot in each, plus five (5) dots to distribute among them. None may have a rating higher than 3 without spending bonus points. Although the Chosen of Autochthon did not actually exist during the Primordial War and, thus, bear no part of the Great Curse, they have their own moral struggles. Each of these synthetic Exalted must balance her humanity against her cold attunement to the Machine God, as represented by the Clarity Trait (see pp. 69-71). Compassion provides a bulwark against Clarity, which players should remember when deciding where to allocate Virtue points. Also keep in mind that Autochthonian civilization prizes stability, so anyone with a Virtue rated at one (1) dot will be viewed as eccentric and possibly insane.

STEP FIVE: FINISHING TOUCHES

An Alchemical's Willpower rating equals the sum of her two highest Virtues. Her permanent Essence begins at two (2) dots. Players may raise either Trait with bonus points, but Willpower cannot have a rating of 8 unless the character's two highest Virtues have a rating of 4+.

Alchemicals have a Personal Essence pool equal to three times their Essence rating, plus their permanent Willpower [(Essence x 3) + Willpower]. As usual, Personal Essence does not contribute to an Exalt's anima banner. Alchemicals also have a Peripheral Essence pool equal to five times their Essence rating, plus three times their permanent Willpower, plus twice their highest rated Virtue [(Essence x 5) + (Willpower x 3) + (highest Virtue x 2)]. Exalted may increase the size of this pool further with Charms. Peripheral Essence unleashes an Exalt's anima as described on page 75.

The Chosen of Autochthon have the usual seven (7) mortal health levels (one -0, two -1, two -2, one -4 and Incapacitated), plus a number of extra -2 levels equal to their permanent Essence. Charms may increase this total further.

Finally, Alchemicals receive 15 bonus points that players may spend at any time according to the table on page 64.

SPARK OF LIFE

Appropriately enough, the final touches in character creation define an Alchemical Exalt as an individual rather than a mechanical assemblage of Traits. Players should consider many of the same basic questions as for any other character. What does the character look like? Don't forget to take into account the physical appearance of installed Charms and a character's Essence rating, as well as her Appearance rating. Who are her friends? Enemies? Associates? Look to the Exalt's Backgrounds, Social Attributes and requisite Abilities to determine how peers and mortals might regard her. What distinctive quirks or atavisms has she inherited from previous incarnations of her soul or developed on her own? Remember that Autochthonians give their Exalted far greater leeway to deviate from social norms, provided they remain visibly dedicated to the basic precepts of the Great Maker. In addition to these basic questions, the unique circumstances and nature of the Alchemical Exalted raise additional queries:

- **Creation and Duty:** Every Exalt costs a fortune to create, and not even the wealthiest city can afford to build Alchemicals haphazardly. Why was your character built? Has she fulfilled her initial purpose and received new instructions, or is she still trying to complete her initial task? Do the officials of her city regard her as a successful and judicious investment of resources?

- **Memories:** What does the character remember of her past lives? To what extent is her personality formed by the experiences of her current life, as opposed to inherited facets or prior incarnations? What events in her current life have proved pivotal?

- **Clarity and Humanity:** To what extent does the character emotionally identify with mortals? To what extent does she think of herself as human, or does she even consider the question relevant? What balance of man and machine defines her soul?

- **Assembly:** Every Exalt belongs to an Assembly, the Alchemical counterpart of a Solar Circle. Assemblies provide the core social unit of shared responsibility and mutual accountability for Autochthon's Chosen. In most cases, the members of an Assembly are created concurrently in a single Batch at a Vats Complex, although casualties and transfers can adjust this organization. Players of Alchemical characters should decide how they regard their Assembly, and vice versa. Are they like a family, or do they bicker incessantly? Do they work and fight as a well-oiled machine, or do they have trouble organizing?

CHARACTER CREATION SUMMARY

CHARACTER CREATION PROCESS

• STEP ONE: CHARACTER CONCEPT

Choose concept, caste and Nature

• STEP TWO: SELECT ATTRIBUTES

Note Caste Attributes.

Select Favored Attributes (3); may not be the same as Caste Attributes.

Assign dots to Caste Attributes (9); none may have a rating less than 2.

Assign dots to Favored Attributes (6).

Assign dots to remaining Attributes (4).

• STEP THREE: SELECT ABILITIES

Choose Abilities (23); Alchemicals lack Caste or Favored Abilities. Pages 60-61 lists recommendations for this step.

• STEP FOUR: SELECT ADVANTAGES

Choose Backgrounds (Class 3, plus 10 others; only Artifact may be higher than 3 without bonus points). Note General Charm Slots (4; capable of holding any Charm). Note Dedicated Charm Slots (4; may only hold Caste or Favored Charms). Choose Charms (8; must fill every Slot with a permissible Charm). Choose Virtues (5; all Virtues begin at 1 and none may have a higher rating than 3 without bonus points).

• STEP FIVE: FINISHING TOUCHES

Record Essence (2), Willpower (sum of two highest Virtues; cannot have a rating of 8+ unless two Virtues have a rating of 4+), Personal Essence pool [(Essence x 3) + Willpower], Peripheral Essence pool [(Essence x 5) + (Willpower x 3) + (highest Virtue x 2) + any mote capacity obtained with Charms] and health levels (standard 7, plus one additional -2 per dot of Essence and any obtained with Charms).

• BONUS POINTS

Bonus points (15) may be spent at any time during character creation.

CASTES

• Orichalcum:

Brilliant and personable leaders and shining beacons of the Great Maker's holy inspiration. The Tripartite respects these Chosen as unsurpassed experts on matters of dogma and abstract policy.

Caste Attributes: Strength, Charisma, Intelligence

Caste Anima Power: May spend 5 motes to add their Essence to the damage of all attacks for a scene.

• Moonsilver:

The hidden spies, assassins, scouts and secret police of Autochthonian society, renowned for the quickness and flexibility of their minds and bodies alike.

Caste Attributes: Dexterity, Appearance, Wits

Caste Anima Power: May spend 5 motes to add (their Essence x 2) to base initiative for the scene.

• Jade:

The approachable middle management and frontline officers of the Great Maker, as well as the public face of Alchemical Exalted as a whole.

Caste Attributes: Stamina, Charisma, Wits

Caste Anima Power: May spend 5 motes to add their Essence to natural bashing and lethal soak for the scene.

• Starmetal:

Social engineers, motivational theorists, psychological operatives and subtle backroom plotters, charged with managing the various Autochthonian intelligence services and providing strategic counsel to agencies of the Tripartite.

Caste Attributes: Dexterity, Manipulation, Intelligence

Caste Anima Power: May spend 5 motes to add (their Essence ÷ 2, rounded up) to all attack, damage and base initiative rolls for the scene.

• Soulsteel:

The fearsome, all-seeing enforcers of law and dogma, tasked with hunting down and eliminating Autochthonian dissidents and gremlins.

Caste Attributes: Stamina, Manipulation, Perception

Caste Anima Power: May spend 5 motes to evoke an aura of terror, adding (their Essence ÷ 2, rounded up) to the difficulty of all attacks targeting them.

VIRTUES

• **Compassion** — Empathy and forgiveness, a bulwark against Clarity.

• **Conviction** — Emotional endurance.

• **Temperance** — Self-control and clear-headedness.

• **Valor** — Courage and bravery.

CHARACTER CREATION SUMMARY

BACKGROUNDS

- **Allies** — Aides and friends who help in tasks.
- **Artifact** — Magical weapons and tools.
- **Backing** — Rank in an organization of power and influence, typically a branch of the Tripartite. May also denote status in an exile colony or Voidbringer cult.
- **Class** — Your social standing, authority and standard of living in Autochthonia.
- **Contacts** — Information sources and friends in useful places.
- **Familiar** — Access to automaton or divine servitor-companions.
- **Followers** — Mortals who look to you for leadership. (Exile characters only.)
- **Manse** — A place of power and Essence in Creation. (Since Autochthonia has no Manses, this Background is restricted to stories set after the breaking of the Seal of Eight Divinities)
- **Resources** — Hoarded material goods. (Exile characters only.)
- **Vats** — Your access to additional Alchemical Charms and authority to schedule refits.

BONUS POINTS

Trait	Cost
Attribute	4 (3 for Caste or Favored Attributes)
Ability	2
Background	1 (2 if the Background is being raised above 3)
Specialty	1
Virtue	3
Willpower	2
Essence	10
Charm Slot	6 (5 if Dedicated); purchase includes one Charm
Martial Arts Charm	6 (requires installation of the Perfected Lotus Matrix Charm, p. 100)

EXPERIENCE COSTS

Trait Increase	Cost
Caste or Favored Attribute	(current rating x 4) - 1
New Charm Slot (General)	12*
New Charm Slot (Dedicated)	10**
New Martial Arts Charm	11***
New Man Machine Weaving Protocol	12
New God Machine Weaving Protocol	14
Upgrading a Charm Slot from Dedicated to General	2
New Charm	6****
Essence	(current rating x 9)

* Includes one free Charm for which the character meets all the requirements.

** Includes one free Charm for a Caste or Favored Attribute for which the character meets all the requirements.

*** Requires installation of the Perfected Lotus Matrix Charm (see p. 100)

**** Places the Charm on retainer at the Vats; does not include a Charm Slot to house the Charm.

AUTOCHTHONIAN MORTALS

As explained in the previous chapter, the regimented society of Autochthonia values the collective good and cooperative efforts over the achievements of any individuals. Alchemical Exalted stand above and partially outside this system, permitted an unusual degree of autonomy in order to fulfill their purpose as leaders and heroes. This does *not* mean that mortals have no place as the protagonists of a story set in Autochthonia. The mortal denizens of this realm live and dream and strive no less than their cousins in Creation. For all that they idealize order and efficiency, they are neither insects nor cogs. Players wishing to take the role of such characters may use the rules provided on page 103 of **Exalted**, as well as the additional options and Traits provided in Chapters One through Three of the **Exalted Players Guide**. Excepting Vats, Autochthonians use Alchemical Backgrounds.

Storytellers should note that Autochthonia has no God-Blooded who are not descended from divinities and that even these are rare. Only the most degenerate Autochthonians and defective/damaged spirits would even consider the idea of mating, and the progeny of such illegal unions face a lifetime of harassment and discrimination. Most God-Blooded become increasingly bitter and laconic as they mature and are forbidden from mating in order to end their aberrant bloodlines.

Thaumaturgy is both common and rare among citizens. Most workers with any degree of supervisory authority know a handful of weaker tricks to perform their jobs more efficiently. However, they do *not* understand the principles behind these rites, but instead carry out the magic like every other step in their daily routine. Conversely, savant-technicians trained extensively in the Arts and Sciences are quite uncommon, and all of these claim membership in the Theomachracy or the Sodalities. See Chapter Four for more information.

In addition to these rules, mortals born in Autochthonia exist in the designs of the Great Maker, lacking any connection to the Loom of Fate. They are not considered to be outside of fate for the purposes of Sidereal Charms, but their destiny cannot be deciphered through any form of astrology or divination Charms from spirits native to Creation, nor may they be the target of Sidereal astrological effects. Those who die in Autochthonia do not pass into Lethe or Oblivion or linger as ghosts under normal circumstances. Instead, their higher and lower souls remain fused into a single core of spiritual energy drawn inexorably toward the Radiant Amphora.

NEW AND MODIFIED TRAITS

Owing to the peculiarities of their design and world, the Chosen of Autochthon have a number of unique and modified Traits available to them. Players and Storytellers

should familiarize themselves with this section before designing Alchemical Exalted.

EXPANDED BACKGROUNDS

The technologically advanced and socialist society of Autochthonia imposes substantial changes to many existing Backgrounds. In addition, the denizens of the Realm of Brass and Shadow have access to several new Backgrounds listed below. Note that Allies and Contacts both function normally for Autochthonians as explained in **Exalted**. Mortals may not have Familiar, Manse or Vats, although they may purchase Artifact to obtain thaumaturgical talismans and magical devices that do not require Essence to operate. The Artifact Background for mortals is exactly the same as that available to Solar Exalted.

ARTIFACT

Built from Magical Materials and infused with life, the bodies and Charms of the Alchemical Exalted represent the most sophisticated and powerful artifacts in Autochthonia. Yet, the Chosen of the Machine Gods use far more artifacts than themselves in the defense of their nations and patron, freely drawing on the resources and unmatched technology of the Realm of Brass and Shadow. Consequently, Alchemicals receive three total dots of Artifacts for every dot of the Artifact Background purchased. Most of these devices will be constructed from the same Magical Material as the Exalt's caste, although this is not actually required. Moreover, Alchemicals may purchase a rating as high as ●●●● with their Background dots during character creation, even without spending bonus points. However, the fourth and fifth dot still cost two (2) dots each. Finally, Alchemicals can purchase additional Charms as artifacts with a rating equal to their minimum Essence (but cannot purchase Charms whose Trait minimums they do not meet). These Charms are kept on retainer at the Vats and do not increase the number of Charms Alchemicals may install in their bodies.

BACKING

With its rigid social strata and centralized authority, Autochthonia lacks any truly independent organizations. Thus, Backing represents membership and authority within a particular hierarchical branch of the Tripartite (and, therefore, requires Class ●●●+ as a prerequisite). Possibilities include any of the three Olgotary branches (plutarchs, regulators or adjudicators), any of the three Theomachracy branches (lectors, preceptors or clerics) or any of the Five Sodalities (Luminors, Conductors, Harvesters, Scholars or Surgeons). Characters who are autocrats, celebrants or councilors must have Backing ●●●● in some branch of the Olgotary, the Theomachracy or a Sodality, respectively. Backing in a specific exile colony is also possible for those wretches consigned to the brutal Reaches (i.e., no



Class rating), though such Backing is notably and understandably limited in scope. A few demented cultists and criminals have Backing in a Voidbringer sect or the black market, though such membership marks a character for death if the authorities ever find out.

CLASS

This Background denotes a character's rank in the social pecking order and his overall standard of living, subsuming Followers, Influence and Resources into a single Trait. Note that most of Autochthonia lacks any form of currency. Trade and barter exists, particularly on a larger scale between nations, but no fixed units of exchange govern these transactions. Hoarding is strongly discouraged, although sufficient social status permits considerably greater leniency. Alchemical Exalted automatically receive Class ●●● during character creation and may raise this Background even further with bonus points. The Chosen receive the same benefits and resource allocations as mortals for their Class rating, even if their specific responsibilities are not as far-reaching or innately managerial as their ratings would indicate.

Lumpen exiled to the Reaches for serious crimes against the state live entirely outside the auspices of this Background, as do rare children unlucky enough to born in an exile colony. Society turns a blind eye to these wretches and apports no resources toward them. They have no official right to property, nor can they depend on food and shelter like city dwellers. Any standing in an exile colony should be purchased as Backing, while caches of scavenged wealth or lackeys require a combination of Resources and Followers, as appropriate. Civilized Autochthonians may not have either of these latter Backgrounds and must generally restrict their Backing to official channels.

- x As a Lumpen outcast, you occupy the lowest social rung. You enjoy a tolerable standard of living equivalent to Resources ●, but you face derision and scorn, suffering a one-die penalty to Social pools when interacting with characters of a higher Class rating. Surface slaves kidnaped from Creation during the Locust Crusade also have this rating of Class.
- As a general laborer or aide of the Populat, you are considered a productive member of society, enjoying a standard of living equivalent to Resources ●●. Your dormitory home houses several dozen individuals, and you have no personal claim to any of that space. In the wake of a successful Locust Crusade, Creation-dwelling loyalists of the Outsider caste also share this Class rating, though they are forbidden from entering Autochthonia.
- You are a shift chief of the Populat, overseeing anywhere from 20 to 300 workers, with a Re-

sources ●●● standard of living. You live in an apartment with roughly a dozen of your peers.

•••

You are either a foreman of the Populat, responsible for overseeing an entire factory, or a junior member of the Tripartite (this should be accompanied by appropriate Backing of one to two dots). You live as if you had Resources ●●● with a dedicated staff of aides (ostensibly for professional use only), but your rank allows you to requisition goods and services valued at Resources ●●●●. Superiors may demand justification for these requisitions. Foremen live in suites housing six peers, while all members of the Tripartite and Alchemicals have small private domiciles befitting their importance. Your player receives an additional die to all Social rolls when you're interacting with Autochthonian characters of lower Class.

••••

You are a supervisor of the Populat, directing all factories belonging to a single industry within your city. Alternately, you are a veteran member of the Tripartite (this should be accompanied by appropriate Backing in the two- to three-dot range). You may have a standard of living at Resources ●●● or ●●●● depending on your sensibilities but can freely requisition goods and services as valuable as Resources ●●●●● if you are willing to risk the scrutiny and censorship of superiors. Your private residence/office complex is spacious and comfortable, roughly the size of a large townhouse in Creation. Your player receives an additional die to Social rolls when you're interacting with Autochthonian characters of lower Class.

•••••

You are director or sub-director of the Populat or a senior leader in the Tripartite (appropriate Backing at four or five dots). You live as befits your authority in a palatial residence, most likely living at Resources ●●●● or ●●●●● depending on your ego. Only the most egregious abuse of your station and its concomitant privileges invites censure. Your player receives two dice to Social rolls when you're interacting with Autochthonian characters of lower Class.

FAMILIAR

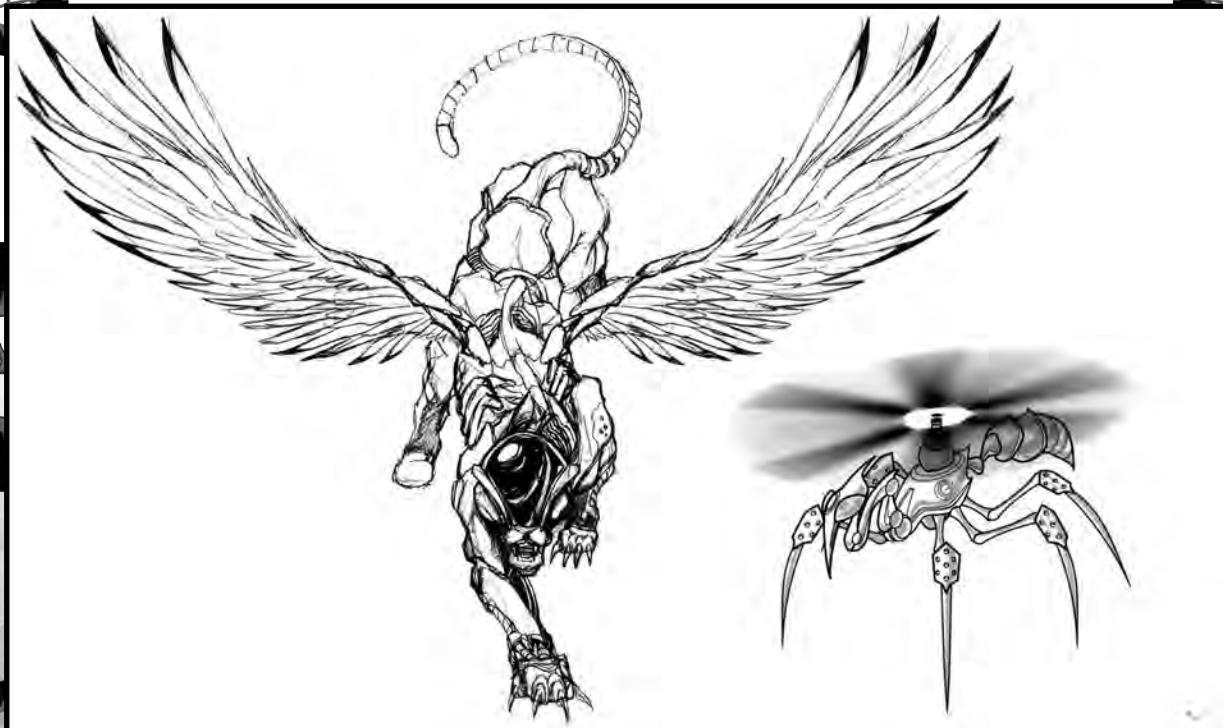
Autochthonia lacks conventional fauna like Creation, instead being populated by a menagerie of spirits, automata and similar entities. Human beings remain one of the only strictly biological forms of life dwelling inside the Machine God (the other being rats). Consequently, Alchemicals do not have familiars as other Exalted do. Instead, they forge bonds with the animate constructs of their artificial world (see pp. 167-168). In effect, an Exalt uses his station and hierarchical eminence to telepathi-

cally requisition the services of an entity whose properties he defines. The Autochthonian gods answer such a summons as promptly as possible, sending the creature skittering to its new master. If the familiar perishes in the course of its duties or the character dismisses it from service, the Exalt may immediately requisition another. Thus, a character's rating in this Background does not represent the power of a single Familiar, but rather, the maximum degree of authority the Exalt may exert in requisitioning a nonhuman servant. Any given familiar that an Alchemical summons may have a rating as high as the character's Background, but characters may only ever keep one familiar at a time. Note that a familiar requisition still functions in Creation (but not the Wyld, the Underworld or Malfeas). However, the creature must make its way to the nearest gateway connecting Autochthonia to Creation and then travel at its best speed to serve its master. Fortunately, all Autochthonian familiars also know the exact direction toward their master at all times.

- x You must make do with human retainers, or perhaps, you work alone.
- You may summon a small and mostly harmless servitor. It has one marginally useful function to offer, but the character can also sense its presence and share one of its senses whenever it is within (the character's Essence x 10) yards. The character must give verbal commands to control the creature, which it will exactly obey to the limits of its Intelligence rating of •, even if the commands are clearly suicidal. The familiar can communicate with buzzing clicks

and other patterned noises as its Intelligence permits, although this form of language remains incomprehensible to those who do not actually understand its alien syntax. When you requisition a familiar of this level inside Autochthonia, it arrives within an hour.

- Your familiar may be larger than level-one constructs and either moderately dangerous (roughly analogous to a trained guard dog) or smarter (Intelligence ••). It otherwise has all the properties and powers of a level-one construct. Such familiars arrive within three hours.
- At this level, your familiar may be as large as yourself or as small as an insect (for a spy drone). Most constructs of this power have Intelligence ••, although smarter versions have Intelligence ••• at the cost of other prowess. Servitors built for combat may be as deadly as great cats, dire wolves and other large predators, while those designed with more peaceful functions may have up to three distinct capabilities with immediate utility. One of these capabilities may include the ability to project and receive telepathic messages with its master when it is in range to share senses. The largest familiars of this level may be used as steeds. In all other ways, they resemble level-two creatures. These constructs arrive within a day of an Exalt's requisition.
- Your familiar may be up to twice your size and can defend you effectively and strategically



(Intelligence ••) if so commanded. Level-four servitors built exclusively for combat are armored nightmares of clockwork blades, chains and chemical ports spraying fire or acid at your enemies. Those intended for transport are extremely nimble and fast, providing optimum conveyance with unusual locomotion (such as the ability to race along walls or fly). Servitors built for peaceful tasks are masters of their appropriate craft(s), providing a range of auxiliary skills and special abilities. All familiars at this level may communicate with their masters telepathically, and most can speak and understand Autochthonic passably. In other ways, these familiars resemble level-three constructs. Servitors of this power arrive within a week of requisition, usually because they must be custom built for the character.

- The greatest familiars available to Alchemicals are Essence 3 mechanical gods in their own right, with an assortment of Charms and capabilities appropriate to their design. They often have several forms, with the largest on par with a yeddim. Such constructs are typically material in their default state, but all have the Dematerialize Charm. Those built for war can operate tools and weapons, fighting with superhuman and inhuman displays of skill and merciless brutality. Steeds have multiple modes of transit and may often open portals. Auxiliary servitors are perfect seneschals, capable of performing repairs on their master and managing all personal affairs brilliantly (Intelligence ••• and appropriate Abilities at ••••+). Such a god can maintain telepathic communication and share senses with its master as far as a mile away, and most can intuitively respond to his desires without any effort on his part to communicate them. These wonders of divine technology take up to a month to appear after Alchemicals requisitions them.

FOLLOWERS, INFLUENCE AND RESOURCES

These Backgrounds are subsumed into Class, as noted above. Exiles may have Followers or Resources within their colonies (according to the same rules as Solar Exalted), but Influence is not used within Autochthonia.

MANSE

Autochthonia contains no actual Manses, so Alchemical Exalted will not have access to geomantic Essence or Hearthstones unless they journey to Creation. Consequently, this Background is off limits in stories where the Seal of the Eight Divinities remains unbroken. Once the

Locust Crusade begins and Alchemicals begin foraging across Creation, they quickly discover the potential of geomancy as a power source and begin using and building Manses in conquered territory. Characters with access to a Manse purchase this Trait exactly like Solar Exalted.

VATS

As synthetic constructs of clay and Magical Materials, the Chosen of the Machine God begin their lives within the Vat foundries located at the heart of every major Autochthonian city. These sophisticated laboratory complexes incorporate advanced principles of geomancy and alchemy unknown in Creation, enabling the sorcerer-technicians of the Sodalities to build, repair and upgrade their Exalted champions. This Background represents an Alchemical's access to one of these complexes, denoting how many additional Charms he has on retainer beyond those installed in his body, as well as measuring how quickly he can requisition a refit. In recognized emergencies, a character can demand immediate repairs, but any abuse of this authority will result in censure and a loss of Vat privileges for a time. Additional Charms obtained with this Background are cumulative with any purchased as artifacts (see p. 65), but in neither case may the character purchase Charms for which he doesn't meet the minimum Trait requirements. As a privilege, higher levels of Vat access serve as an effective reward for services to the state. However, a high Vats rating can also indicate that a given Exalt's diverse responsibilities require frequent exchange of Charms. As a final consideration, younger Exalted have fewer Charm Slots than their superiors, and so, they may receive disproportionate Vats access to offset their limitations. Players and Storytellers should work together to determine the exact reason for an Alchemical's rating in this Background.

Alchemicals may also visit their city's Vats to accelerate healing and Essence recovery, physically attuning themselves to the Essence of their patron. For every hour spent plugged into a Vat in this fashion, the character regains (Essence x 5) motes and multiplies his healing rate by his permanent Essence. The Alchemical slumbers during this process and will not awaken on his own until he has recovered all Essence and health. He may be forcibly awakened prematurely, but this drains a point of Willpower and inflicts a level of unsoakable bashing damage from spiritual shock. This sort of repair is so minor than an Alchemical may obtain access for as much Vat slumber as needed, provided he gives hours of notice equal to (5 - his Vats rating).

- x You have no special access to your city's Vats and must submit a formal request for any minor refitting (Charms, Attributes) at least one month in advance. Major upgrades such as Essence require six month's notice.

- You have one additional Charm on retainer. You only need to give two week's notice for minor refits or two months for major upgrades.
- You have two extra Charms on retainer. Minor refits require a full week's notice, while major upgrades need a month.
- You have three extra Charms available. Refitting requires two days or two weeks of notice, as appropriate to the complexity.
- You have four extra Charms available. Refitting demands one day or one week's notice depending on severity.
- You have five extra Charms. Your requests for refits receive immediate priority, requiring no advance notice. Unless the Vats are all presently filled to maximum capacity, you will receive immediate attention.

BUILDING VATS

Alchemical Exalted abroad in Creation lack ready access to the Vat Complexes within Autochthonia. Since the Chosen of the Machine God require magical foundries to refit and upgrade their Attributes, Essence and Charms, they will almost certainly attempt to replicate or at least simulate a Vat Complex. Building one of these magical laboratories requires a level-4+ Manse and exotic ingredients costing Resources •••••. The technician directing the month-long construction process must have ••••• in both Lore and Occult and ••••• in Craft (Architecture). A Manse converted into a Vat Complex does not produce a Hearthstone or generate ambient Essence for attuned characters to respire. Any existing Hearthstone crumbles to dust. Every use of the Vats to upgrade an Alchemical costs Resources ••••• for Essence 3-5 or Resources ••••• for Essence 6+ and Resources ••••• for all other uses except accelerated healing/Essence recovery. Moreover, all repairs and upgrades take twice as long as usual. Access to a synthetic Vat has the same cost in Background dots as access to a Vat within Autochthonia, provided such a wondrous structure even exists at the time of character creation. The disadvantages of constant Resources upkeep and increased installation time for a Vat in Creation balance the advantage of a staging point within Creation. It is not possible to build new Alchemicals in Vats developed outside Autochthonia. Only if the Great Maker returns to Creation may his servants build Exalted there.

CLARITY

Autochthon's followers did not actually build any Alchemicals until after his exodus from Creation. As such, the Machine God's champions did not participate in the war against the other Primordials, nor did they receive any part of the Great Curse levied by the Malfeans. In place of Limit, Alchemical Exalted must contend with a Trait called Clarity. This Trait is not a curse in the strictest sense, but rather an integral design element of Autochthon's Chosen. Formed of metal and clay and infused with a living soul, these Exalted are not and never have been human. Instead, they span the delicate balance between mortal and machine, partaking of both aspects while wholly neither. Clarity measures this balance. At low levels, the character is effectively human with all the requisite warmth and empathy. As Clarity rises, Alchemicals feel the whir and clack of the Machine God echoing in their souls with growing detachment and cold logic. Those with high concentrations of Clarity lack feelings or mercy. They are all but automata in their unmatched ruthless efficiency.

Clarity may have both permanent and temporary ratings. Permanent Clarity represents an increasing mechanization of thoughts and Essence that Alchemicals only gain as a result of raising their Essence beyond 5 or installing certain powerful Charms. Temporary Clarity fluctuates wildly according to an Exalt's behavior, representing a variable and situational attunement to his patron's alien consciousness. The sum of a character's permanent and temporary Clarity cannot ever exceed 10 under any circumstances.

GAINING CLARITY

Alchemicals gain Clarity by embracing and indulging their mechanical side, most often to the exclusion of their humanity.

- **Inhuman Essence:** Gain one dot of permanent Clarity for every dot of Essence a character has above the fifth.

- **Suppressing Virtues:** Gain one point of temporary Clarity whenever the Exalt spends Willpower to act contrary to a Virtue rated at 3+. Alchemicals can suppress a Virtue without spending Willpower by tapping into their mechanical side, but this gives two points of Clarity instead of one.

- **Forsaking Humanity:** Gain one point of Clarity for every full week the Exalt goes without meaningful human contact, such as by venturing into the Far Reaches. Such contact must involve an overt demonstration of empathy or at least sustained and peaceful discourse over a full scene. Contact with other Alchemical Exalted does not prevent such increase.

• **Charms:** Certain Charms award temporary or even permanent Clarity when activated and/or installed. The specific gains are explained in the text of these Charms.

LOSING CLARITY

Unlike a Solar's Limit, Clarity does not "break" or reset when it reaches 10 points. Instead, temporary Clarity remains until discharged according to the means listed below. In contrast, permanent Clarity is a function of high Essence and certain powerful Charms. Alchemicals cannot lose permanent Clarity while the conditions that awarded these dots remain. However, removing these conditions (if possible) immediately removes the appropriate amount of permanent Clarity.

• **Human Contact:** At the end of every scene during which the Exalt meaningfully interacts with normal humans, roll his Compassion at standard difficulty (subject to the standard dice penalty imposed by Clarity; see below). If successful, the character loses one point of temporary Clarity. On a botch, the Exalt feels nothing for the mortals with whom he has interacted, and his deepened alienation actually imposes an additional point of Clarity. Characters may not lose more than one point of Clarity through human contact each day.

• **Embracing Virtue:** Whenever an Alchemical spends Willpower to channel a Virtue and the action succeeds, he loses a point of temporary Clarity.

EFFECTS OF CLARITY

As an Alchemical's Clarity rises, her capacity to empathize with human beings deteriorates. Conversely, her ability to understand and relate with the mechanical logic of Autochthonian gods and automata rises. She becomes more machine than human, with a mind and heart of metal. The following effects are based on a character's total Clarity (permanent + temporary):

- 0-2:** The Alchemical's personality shows no signs of emotional dissociation or alien thought patterns. She is as pleasant to behold and interact with as her Social Attributes and requisite Abilities allow.
- 3-4:** The Exalt grows colder and more callous, though not unduly so. Her mannerisms convey a sense of distraction and a faint disdain for mortals and mortal frailty. In general, she has less patience for people. Her player subtracts one die from all Social rolls except those pertaining to intimidation when interacting with most sentient and/or feeling beings. However, the character actually receives a bonus die to all social interactions (including intimidation) with Autochthonian deities, automata, Alchemicals with equal or greater Clarity and other similar entities. In addition to the social penalty and bonus im-

posed by this range of Clarity, the character's player loses one die from all Compassion rolls.

- 5-7:** By this stage, the Alchemical is notably inhuman. Her movements and speech become clipped and laconic, forgoing the perceived irrelevancies of courtesy for maximum efficiency. Humans are not even pitied any longer, because pity is correctly deemed a waste of cognitive function. So long as mortals perform their assigned duties, the Exalt largely ignores them, invariably failing to take their emotional needs into consideration without deliberate effort. Any dissent or error incurs exacting chastisement and reprisal from the Alchemical if permissible, or else she reports the matter to the defective mortal's superior. The Exalt can sometimes hear the thrum of gears and the distant crystalline hum of Autochthon's omnipresent consciousness performing his infinite autonomic calculations. At this stage of Clarity, the respective penalty or bonus to Compassion and Social rolls increases to two dice.
- 8-9:** Humanity is a distant memory, a regrettably imperfect phase in the Alchemical's emulation and expression of the Machine God. With great effort, she can simulate a measure of courtesy toward less enlightened minds to facilitate more expedient resolution of interaction. However, this simulation carries no real feeling. Autochthon's rumbling whispers echo constantly in the back of the character's mind, relaying an unending stream of metaconscious dialogue. With this range of Clarity, the penalties and bonuses to Compassion and Social rolls increase to three dice. Additionally, the character adds one die to any Mental Attribute or Temperance roll involving memory recall, analytical deduction or dispassionate self-control, as awarded by the Storyteller.
- 10:** The Alchemical is aloof and utterly alien. Her voice carries the occasional undertones of multilayered harmony as she speaks in synchrony with the tiered souls and purpose of Autochthon. Her eyes are glassy and empty of anything resembling mercy or warmth. By most human cultural standards, she is entirely amoral, though not malicious. Rather, she exists as an extension of her maker, performing tasks as appropriate to her function and capability. She retains complete free will and is not a drone, but instead, perceives and manifests her personality and Nature through the crystallized lens of her clarified vision. Logic is not her end, but the means to those ends she already seeks. Her social penalty/bonus rises to four dice, and she auto-

matically fails all Compassion rolls. Her player also adds two dice to appropriate cognitive and Temperance rolls as outlined for Clarity 8-9.

PLAYING AND STORYTELLING CLARITY

Players may be tempted to portray high-Clarity characters as emotionless robots dedicated to some abstract notion of pure logic. More problematic players may view high Clarity as an excuse to have characters act like remorseless monsters, engaging in wanton sprees of torture, baby killing and other debauchery because they lack any Compassion. Wrong. First of all, logic is a way of thinking, not an end unto itself. Like all characters, Alchemical Exalted have goals as expressed by their Nature and concept. These goals aren't rooted in pure logic and do not change with an accumulation of Clarity. Characters who want to build a better society or help people do not suddenly abandon these quests because they can't empathize. Instead, Clarity adjusts the way such characters seek to achieve their goals. The social architect stops taking the emotional needs of the population into account, treating people as cogs valued only for their productivity. People are still a valuable resource, however, and should not be damaged or squandered without cause. That would be inefficient, and Clarity *abhors* inefficiency. Likewise, a caregiver medic continues treating patients as her Clarity rises, applying the treatments that will best facilitate their recovery. If she deems a patient is beyond aid, she abruptly ends all treatment and administers euthanasia so his body and soulgem may be recycled. Her callous bedside manner leaves much to be desired, but she still wants to treat her patients.

Just as importantly, Clarity isn't sadism. Even as Compassion dwindles and ultimately vanishes, characters retain their free will and intelligence. A Clarity 10 Alchemical has no qualms about torturing someone, but neither does he enjoy the act of torture. If torture is the best means of extracting information, he will not hesitate to do so, but he *will* consider all the ramifications and alternatives. Perhaps the subject would prove more immediately pliable to positive reinforcement. Perhaps the subject is a high-ranking member of society whose outraged friends will certainly retaliate, presenting an extenuating circumstance worthy of deliberation. In short, Clarity isn't an excuse to break the game or revel in orgiastic ultraviolence, so much as an altered state of consciousness. If anything, high-Clarity characters are *less* prone to violence because they think before acting and perceive violence as a disruption of order. If they deem violence is necessary, they deploy the minimum level of force required by the situation. Any showy display of power is a calculated exercise intended to intimidate other witnesses and sap morale, thereby reducing the total effort required to end the conflict. Clarity should be scary and alien, but not vicious. Players and Storytellers should keep these guidelines firmly in mind when portraying Alchemical Exalted.

GREMLIN SYNDROME

For most Alchemicals, Clarity represents a simultaneous preeminence of logic and gradual disconnection from humanity. Accumulation inhibits empathy and human interaction, while simultaneously facilitating relations with automata and other mechanized beings. High-Clarity individuals are frighteningly detached but not malicious. From a mortal perspective, they are a curious blend of psychotic and autistic, filtering their perceptions and actions through an altered state of consciousness. For all this, they remain focused on synergy and harmony.

However, for a small but growing minority of Alchemicals, none of these redeeming qualities apply. In place of Clarity, these maddened aberrations manifest a Trait called Dissonance. Dissonance generally follows the same rules and imposes the same penalties to social interaction and Compassion as Clarity. However, Exalted with Dissonance receive no social bonuses except when dealing with gremlins or others who share their madness. Characters with Dissonance receive no bonuses to rolls for calculated thought and self-control. Instead, those with a rating of 10 add one die to the raw damage of all attacks from sheer brutality.

Unlike Clarity, Dissonance manifests itself through overt sociopathic tendencies. Where Clarity seeks and builds order, Dissonance tears down that order at every opportunity. Those afflicted with this so-called "Gremlin Syndrome" take cold satisfaction in bringing pain and suffering to others. They destroy institutions, ideas and morals as a matter of course, punctuating their viciousness with brief periods of lucidity as ratings drop from channeled Virtues. Such moments of calm only make the inevitable return to cruelty and violence more terrible. Autochthonian society correctly believes that Exalted with Gremlin Syndrome are tainted by the Void. Unfortunately, no one knows the exact cause or cure for the madness, so Exalted have regretfully taken to hunting down and executing peers who display this condition.

Gremlin Syndrome is an Alchemical-only Flaw worth 5 bonus points. Keep in mind that characters with this madness can and will evince monstrous behavior that should horrify any sane person. In general, this Flaw should remain with Storyteller characters intended as antagonists. Only very mature players should even consider taking the Flaw and then only for tragic characters who will almost certainly end up hunted down and destroyed. Autochthonians show *no* leniency toward their sociopaths, and neither should Storytellers.

RECYCLING OTHER EXALTED

The Deathlords crafted their Abyssal Exalted by ritually tainting Solar Essences. The templates for this blasphemy were the akuma, Exalted who gave themselves to be consumed and excreted by demon lords as princes among slaves. Infernal Exalted gain some of the properties and magic of demons as they become artificial souls of their masters. Those changed by Third Circle Demons belong to the Second Circle, while the rare Chosen devoured by one of the Yozis (such as Dukantha, see **Blood and Salt**, pp. 91-92) belong to the Third Circle. Akuma lack subsidiary souls and cannot be bound, as their demon halves are permanently bound to the tattered shreds of their Exalted halves.

As the inventor of Exaltation, Autochthon possesses even greater mastery of Exaltation. Although he cannot reverse an Infernal Exalt's conversion without killing her, he could certainly cleanse the necrotic taint of a willing Abyssal to turn her back into a Solar. Of course, a penitent deathknight would need to find the sleeping Primordial, somehow get his attention and then convince him to help. Properly played, this should be as difficult as finding redemption by other means (see **Exalted: The Abyssals**, pp. 116-117). Similarly, Autochthon remembers the original blueprints for the Lunar Exalted and could aid in restoring the lost castes. And while the Great Maker cannot break the Great Curse on his own, he is aware of it and could theoretically provide much needed help in devising a cure or treatment. Storytellers should keep in mind that the Exalted showed reprehensible ingratitude after the Primordial War, forcing the Machine God to impose the Great Geas on his Jadeborn on threat of genocide. Though the Great Curse played a role, that decision was primarily motivated by xenophobia. Autochthon has a long memory and will not help the Celestial Exalted unless he has a very good reason. Sufficiently heroic deeds can convince him that the Chosen of the Second Age have transcended their malfunctioning predecessors.

The Great Maker can also rebuild Exalted who pledge fealty to him, creating his own "akuma." Only the Divine Ministers know this is possible, and they must personally empower the process for it to succeed. They can also telepathically communicate with hybrids across all planes and distance and force them into a coma at any time with a thought. A prospective hybrid Exalt must willingly enter a tank of Essence broth in a Vat Complex and spend a point of Willpower (which cannot be coerced). While she floats a deep coma, technicians surgically replace her heart with an Essence reservoir like those in Alchemical Exalted (Artifact 5; must be individually crafted for the Exalt out of the appropriate Magical Material). Next, they insert a soulgem in her forehead, infusing her anima banner with Alchemical characteristics. Over a period of a month, wires grow from the reservoir through her nervous system, forming clusters at every chakra. When this transformation is complete, the Exalt awakens.

Alchemical hybrids still breathe, and their veins carry a pulse, though oil and Essence broth flow in lieu of blood. They retain all previous capabilities and Charms except those involving sorcery, necromancy and Sidereal arcane fate or astrology (they cannot access known spells or colleges, but remember them to teach others). These Exalted may have Alchemical General Charm Slots installed for the cost of non-Favored Charms + 3, and each comes with one Charm as normal (panoply Charms cost 8 experience points each). Such an Exalt can learn Alchemical weaving as an Alchemical at the same cost. Although she may purchase Charms of her former Exalted type, each costs 3 additional experience points. The factor to raise Essence also increases by 2, so (current rating x 8) becomes (current rating x 10). Purchasing the anima power for the Alchemical Caste she emulates (Solar to Orichalcum, etc.) costs 10 experience points and requires refit like an Alchemical Charm. The character is thereafter considered to be outside of fate, as her destiny now belongs to the Design of Autochthon. The Great Curse no longer has power over her, but she gains a Clarity track like an Alchemical. Even if Exalted somehow learn that they can join with Autochthon, players should remember that the Great Maker is an alien titan larger than space and time. He may be one of the most benevolent Primordials, but he is still a Primordial, and anyone who fuses with him irrevocably forfeits a large part of her humanity. Celestial Exalted also destine their shard to follow the soulgem, ensuring that anyone implanted with the special gem Exalts at maturity so she can be surgically retrofitted as a hybrid in each successive life. Only the destruction of the soulgem releases the Essence to the cycle of incarnation as it once was.

ALCHEMICAL PHYSIOLOGY AND POWERS

As synthetic humanoids, the Chosen of Autochthon differ in several notable ways from the Exalted of Creation. These variances provide a mixture of advantages and disadvantages as explained below. Unless noted to the contrary, Alchemicals have all the same powers and abilities as other Exalted.

Artificial Metabolism: Alchemicals do not breathe except to facilitate speech. They cannot drown and suffer no adverse effects from airborne toxins that must be inhaled. Furthermore, an Alchemical's claylike flesh is completely immune to non-magical disease or infection and boasts the usual Exalted resilience to supernatural maladies. While capable of sexual function and retaining outward signs of gender, all Alchemicals are sterile and cannot surpass this limitation by any means. As a final benefit, the Chosen of Autochthon do not need sustenance to live, but require a steady intake of organic matter to synthesize Essence and perform autonomic repairs. After a number of days of starvation equal to her Stamina, each successive day imposes a cumulative 1 mote penalty on the Exalt's hourly respiration rate of Essence. For less severe deprivation, the penalty accrues at a slower rate (usually 1 mote every three days). The Alchemical heals at the rate of a mortal until the mote penalty reaches 4, after which she cannot heal at all. A single day of proper eating restores the character's metabolic functions, but any missed days lead to automatic degeneration until the character has gone consecutive days of adequate intake equal to her Stamina. Alchemicals eat as much as mortals of their same overall height and build and dispose of waste in the usual manner.

Life and Death: Provided they eat properly, Alchemicals heal at the same rates as other types of Exalted. Broken Charms and punctured Essence reservoirs heal just as flesh, mending cracks and filling out crumpled metal without scars or blemish. Because of the vast quantities of Magical Materials built into their frames, unscrupulously sadistic individuals may plunder these Exalted through vivisection. However, if lethal or aggravated damage reduces an Alchemical below Incapacitated, his body immediately dissolves into a puddle of melted clay, crystal shards and broken metal. This process takes a number of turns equal to the deceased character's Essence rating. All Charms shatter into uselessness, leaving only raw materials for scavengers to pick over (easily worth Resources ●●●●●). Only the character's diamond soulgem remains pristine amidst the smoking morass.

Refitting, Essence and Evolution: Alchemicals emerge from their Vats as physical and mental adults, though they require a period of adjustment and education while they learn (or relearn) anything not remembered from prior incarnations of their souls. They do not show or experience any physical signs of aging and may theoretically live forever unless slain. In spite of this seemingly

static physiology, Alchemicals can grow and change with time — they just cannot do so on their own. Instead, these Exalted must go to a Vat Complex and have trained savants perform surgical modifications whenever they wish to improve their Attributes, raise Essence, add new Charm Slots and either install or remove Charms from existing Slots. They do not need Vats to improve or add other Traits. Only the highest reaches of Essence may be obtained without aid, and these require an Exalt to actually incorporate a Vat Complex into his body. Endowments and other such magic cannot invest an Alchemical with Essence or raise Attributes; any attempt to do so gives the Exalt another Endowment of the Storyteller's choosing.

The duration and complexity of refitting varies with the scope of the changes. The process of installing new Charm Slots and/or swapping Charms takes one week, regardless of how many Charms or Charm Slots the character adds or removes. Attributes require one week per dot added. For all these minor refits, the character remains unconscious for the full duration of the procedure, floating in a state of recuperative torpor in the womblike Vat. At least one thaumaturgical technician remains on hand at all times, monitoring and regulating the mechanized armatures that perform the actual surgeries, as well as adjusting the flow of Essence-charged chemicals to accelerate tissue growth.

The refitting process for improving an Alchemical's Essence requires far more labor and resources and differs in several key ways from lesser surgeries. For one thing, the procedure takes much longer — a number of months equal to the character's current Essence rating. Secondly, the Exalt actually remains dimly conscious for most of the change, although she experiences total sensory deprivation throughout and cannot communicate. Instead, her every thought and impulse turns inward, analyzing and refining the patterns of her soul. Most importantly, the physical changes involve substantial increase in the character's mass.

Alchemicals with Essence 2 to 3 fit within normal human ranges, generally six to seven feet tall. Barring the augmentation and modifications of their installed Charms, they appear to be human in their proportions, features and the overall consistency of their claylike flesh. Refits at this scale resemble lesser surgeries, divergent only in their intricacy and duration.

Exalted with Essence 4-5 are larger and considerably more imposing than those freshly emerged from the Vats, generally nine to twelve feet tall. Other than this size difference, their bodies remain fundamentally humanoid. In most cases, these characters have so many Charms installed that they are far more metal and crystal than flesh. Refits at this scale necessarily involve more dramatic alterations, as the Exalted are flayed of tissue and regenerated from their augmented skeleton outward.

The transition from Essence 5 to 6 marks a new stage in an Alchemical's development, as savants meticulously vivisect her to strip away any pretense of humanity and

human form. Only those who have lived for 100 years or more may successfully undergo this refit. After the requisite period of enlightenment and reflection in which the Exalt's soul basks in the Clarity of the Great Maker, savants carefully thread wires between her soulgem and disembodied Essence reservoir, drawing the two components into a single armored core. The technicians then insert this core into a new body constructed in the Vat Complex, giving her new life as a stylized humanoid resembling a warstrider or a scuttling, many-limbed wonder of alloys resembling a custodian. Regardless, the Exalt towers over 20 feet high. Most opt for inhuman physiques to match their inhuman minds, though even the strangest of these keep a great humanoid mask for communication. Depending on design, this mask may appear on the Exalt's face or chest, or it may remain hidden, extending from a compartment when needed.

Essence 7 marks a continuation and logical extension of the Essence 6 form, available only to those who have lived 250 years. The Exalt's core disengages and returns to its broth of Essence and alchemical reagents, while savants reinforce the dormant body with still greater mass and Essence conducting filaments. The end result may reach heights of 30 feet, its mask increasingly stylized to reflect the impassive dominance of Clarity within.

Very few Alchemicals attain Essence 8, as this threshold marks their transformation into the living core of a new Autochthonian city. Only those who have lived 500 years may successfully undergo this refit. Until and unless the need for a new colony arises, Essence 7 elders serve the Great Maker better with their mobility and already-considerable power. Those rare few destined to become cities sink into the electric thrum of Clarity and receive a vision guiding them to their new homes. Taking her retinue of followers on a dangerous pilgrimage, such an Exalt journeys to an uninhabited interstice between organ-continents. There, she uses powerful Charms to erect a chrysalis nest from the very substance of her god. From within this nest, the Exalt extends drilling tendrils to tap the veins and Essence clusters of the Great Maker, flooding her egg with nutrient and chemical solutions to become a new Vat Complex. Within this armored shell, her body disassembles and coalesces into a sessile core for her expanded Essence. During this grueling seven-month process, the Chosen remain entirely helpless and must be guarded from gremlins and other hazards by her allies and followers. These caretakers generally build a temporary settlement around the towering 100-foot-tall egg, waiting for the day when the shell unfurls like the petals of a flower to reveal the gleaming urban core within.

As central Vat Complexes, Essence 8 Alchemicals gain the ability to manufacture their own Charms using templates gleaned from their fusion with Autochthon. Using this municipal magic, each patropolis (male) or metropolis

(female) deploys a successive web of interconnected towers, factories and pneumatic trams into the infrastructure of an actual city. The Exalt's Essence and being diffuses through the whole settlement but remains concentrated at the core. Damage to outlying buildings or a blast that razes several blocks registers as discomfort and physical distress, but it does not actually threaten the Exalt's life. Only the unlikely destruction of the core itself can kill the Alchemical and terminate the utilities and life-support systems supporting the city's mortal inhabitants. All cities in Autochthonia bear an ancient Alchemical at their core, and most follow the usual pattern of densely packed industrial-residential complexes. A minority of elder Exalted grow according to more specialized blueprints, including research facilities, military strongholds or brutal rehabilitation colonies for captured exiles (amongst others). Apocryphal accounts of a burrowing gremlin city aside, all of the urban models are sessile or nearly so, slowly moving themselves within Autochthonia by manipulating biotectonic forces. It is unknown whether an elder Alchemical could take root and flourish in Creation, or whether the open spaces would allow a mobile fortress similar to the Mask of Winters' Juggernaut. An enterprising Essence 7 Exalt *might* be able to build a makeshift chrysalis by converting a powerful Manse to that purpose, but the Chosen would also need quantities of alchemical reagents and Magical Materials that would bankrupt several provinces of the Realm.

Only the oldest metropoli and patropoli ever reach Essence 9 (after a millennium of life), let alone climb to the maximum rating of 10 (at least 2,000 years after their creation). Those who strive for such extreme spiritual and physical development deliberately extend the refit time to several decades. Their prolonged meditations allow them to remain conscious and direct the necessary functions of their cities without interruption. After all, they have nothing but time. The capital cities of the Eight Nations long ago reached the pinnacle of their evolution, and now, these ancient heroes gradually expand their mass while resting in silent communion with the Clarity of Autochthon.

CASTES

As designed, Autochthonia is an orderly realm. The gods exist within their invisible hierarchy, tending the functions and flesh of the Great Maker. Likewise, mortals organize their society toward efficiency, dedicating labors and prayers to maintain their home and patron. Alchemical Exalted provide the interface between these two hierarchies, partaking of spiritual reality and magical power even as their souls remain human. Each of the five castes of Alchemicals has a broad primary function that applies in peace and war, determining their place in society. Within this archetype, they have immense freedom to interpret their specific purpose according to their skills, experience and interests.

Four of the Alchemical castes bear obvious and familiar connections to the Celestial and Terrestrial Exalted, which is unsurprising given that Autochthon modified these templates to create the blueprints of Solars, Lunars, Sidereals and Dragon-Blooded.

ANIMA EFFECT

Like all Exalted, Alchemicals can channel Essence through their animas to achieve simple magical effects. While this represents the least of their magic, the powers are also reflexive and do not interfere with the activation of Charms.

In addition to those powers unique to each caste, all Chosen of Autochthon may perform any of the following feats:

- Cause their anima banners to shine at any level of intensity greater than their present state. If an Alchemical evokes an iconic banner, the flare lasts a single turn only, after which the display recedes to the 11-15 Peripheral mote level for the remainder of the scene. For all displays short of iconic, the display remains as is for the remainder of the scene. Displaying any anima level costs 1 mote.

- Temporarily boost the rating of any Caste or Favored Attribute. This costs 3 motes per die, and the bonus lasts a number of turns equal to the Exalt's permanent Essence. Alchemicals cannot raise an Attribute to more than double its unmodified rating. Dice added by this anima power *do* count against the maximum bonus that Charms can add.

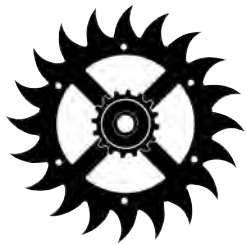
ALCHEMICAL ANIMA BANNERS

Except as otherwise noted, the following levels of display fade by one level every 20 minutes. An anima that fades over time is assumed to be at its highest numerical value, so any expenditure of Peripheral Essence in the intervening period will cause the anima to immediately flare back to its previous brilliance.

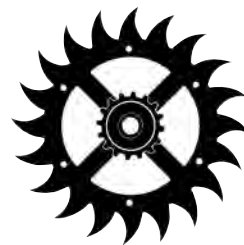
Peripheral Effect

Motes

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1-3 | Sparks of Essence crackle around the character's soulgem and across any Charms she has used in the scene. Anyone seeing the Exalt may make a reflexive Perception + Awareness roll at standard difficulty to notice the subtle discharge of power. The Alchemical can still use the Stealth Ability normally and may hide behind concealment/disguise Charms without fear of detection. This effect persists for as long as an hour after the character stops spending Peripheral Essence. |
| 4-7 | Arcs of Essence sizzle across the character's soulgem and Charms in a flickering corona, shining through any clothing or armor and unmistakably revealing him as one of the Alchemical Exalted. Charms and other magical effects that cloak the character's nature or presence automatically deactivate. Characters may still use the Stealth Ability to hide in natural cover at +2 difficulty. |
| 8-10 | A soft aura of light envelops the character's entire body in a color appropriate to his caste, while every Charm is ablaze with actinic power. The combined display provides the same illumination as a torch. In addition, luminous flakes or liquefied drops of the Exalt's Magical Material bleed from his skin and coalesce from his anima, leaving stains on anything he touches (such as glowing footprints wherever he walks). The trace quantities of the Material dim and evaporate to nothing in a number of turns equal to the Exalt's Essence rating and thus do not provide appreciable aid to tracking. Even so, stealth is impossible. |
| 11-15 | The character's Charms and aura radiate according to the 8-10 level of display, emitting a soft electrical hum. As with the previous level, she bleeds traces of her Magical Material on everything she touches, but these glowing flakes and droplets remain in existence for an hour. This effect allows her to retrace her steps with trivial ease (automatic success on appropriate rolls unless some other magic or effect has obscured the trail), but the discharge provides the same benefit to anyone attempting to follow her so long as he can see the trail. Note that this level of anima display will fade in 20 minutes unless the Exalt spends additional Essence, so a trail may break off abruptly and still continue to glow for some time. Characters following a trail must accomplish any tracking and navigation normally once the trail ends. |
| 16+ | The character's anima expands into an iconic display of industrial power. For some, this takes the form of an abstract mesh of gears and machinery in the color of their caste, while others apply their elemental associations (billowing clouds of smoke for Soulsteel, lightning streaking to every metallic surface within 10 yards for Orichalcum, etc.). The display affects all senses, so a plume of smoke carries a sulfurous reek and hisses as it escapes through the skin, while an image of gears booms with the unmistakable grinding of metal. This iconic display lasts a single turn only, after which the Exalt's anima fades to the preceding level. Any subsequent expenditure of Peripheral Essence causes the banner to resume its iconic splendor. |

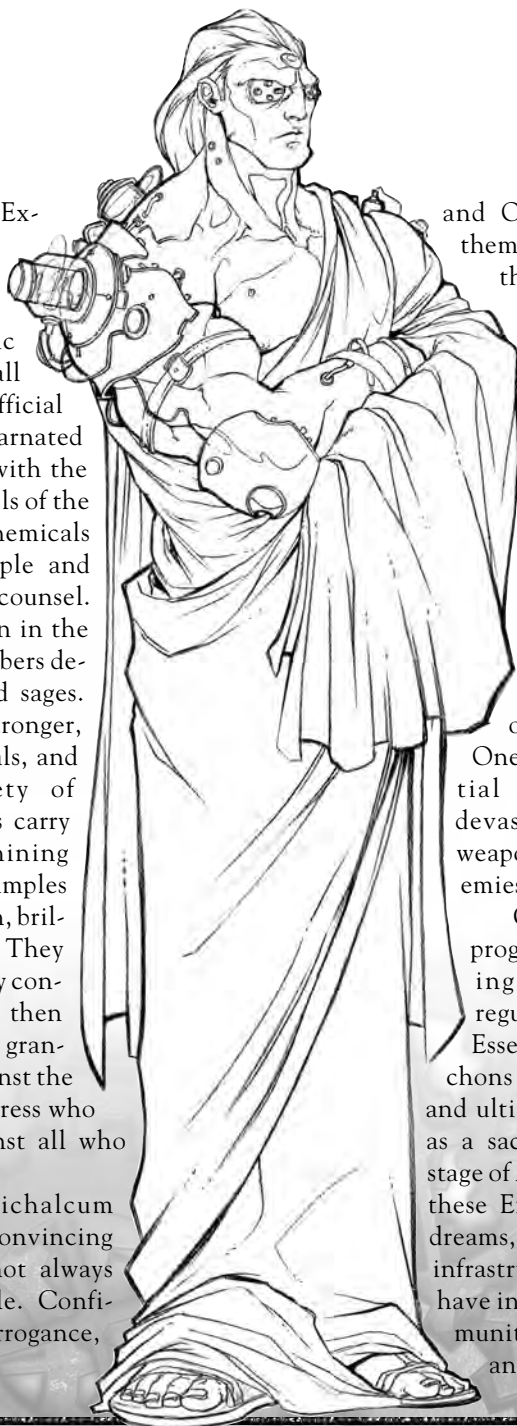


Orichalcum Caste



Unlike in Creation, the Exalted do not rule Autochthonia. Instead, the assorted branches of the Tripartite set the political, theological and economic policies that guide the lives of all citizens. The Chosen serve as official heroes of the state, the reincarnated champions of the past armed with the most powerful weapons and tools of the present. When and where Alchemicals preside, they do so by example and through the wisdom of their counsel. Nowhere is this more true than in the Orichalcum Caste, whose members define themselves as leaders and sages. The Archons are universally stronger, smarter and bolder than mortals, and in the meritocratic society of Autochthonia, such attributes carry tremendous weight. The Shining Ones stand as the brightest examples of the Great Maker's inspiration, brilliant in every sense of the word. They are the visionaries who can truly conceive of utopian grandeur and then rally civilization toward that grandeur. They are also torches against the darkness, the defenders of progress who wield fire and lightning against all who threaten their forward march.

Without exception, Orichalcum Caste Exalted are forceful, convincing and inspiring, but they are not always approachable or even likeable. Confidence easily blossoms into arrogance,



and Orichalcum Castes often find themselves at philosophical odds with their Exalted peers. Ironically, the superhuman extremes of Archon talent and vision set them apart from the tradition-bound hierarchy of Autochthonian society. The most brilliant among them often grow frustrated that no one else can keep up with their creative bursts, and so, these luminaries cloister themselves in their private laboratories or research institutes, emerging only to unveil some new wonder of technology or social theory. Other Shining Ones turn their talents toward martial pursuits, deploying their devastating Charms and invented weapons against gremlins and the enemies of their nation.

Given their penchant for progress and evolution, most Shining Ones modify themselves regularly and eagerly improve their Essence at every opportunity. Archons view their physical enlargement and ultimate transformation into cities as a sacred metamorphosis. The final stage of Alchemical development allows these Exalted to realize their utopian dreams, finally building the idealized infrastructures and communities they have invented for centuries. Such communities widely differ in their layout and protocols, pushing the edges of

acceptable dogma in the name of perfection. The inhabitants of these golden cities tend to be the most liberal Autochthonians, following the example of their patropoli. Some of the most alien and advanced Exalted transform themselves into research institutes where only the brightest minds gather in think tanks dedicated to solving particular issues of philosophy or science. A minority of Archons become fortresses, dedicating their potent resources to military research. The citizen-soldiers of these complexes test advanced weapon systems in raids against gremlin nests, baiting the Void-tainted monstrosities to follow them so that their cities can test their own upgraded defenses.

Caste Markings: The Charms of the Orichalcum Caste are constructed of highly burnished brass, gold and orichalcum. Windows of crystal and hardened glass reveal bubbling fluids, spinning gears and sliding pistons driving force and Essence to power the implanted artifacts. The animas of the Archons blaze with golden fire and actinic vortices of white lightning. Metal brought into this field of power often sparks and sizzles with traces of energy for minutes afterward.

Anima Effect: For a reflexive cost of 5 motes, members of the Orichalcum Caste may charge their bodies with golden lightning for a scene. Whenever they strike in close combat, this energy visibly surges at the point of contact. Similarly, all projectiles crackle with a destructive nimbus as they leave the Exalt's hand or weapon. This power adds the character's Essence to the damage of all attacks.

Caste Attributes: Orichalcum Castes are forceful beings in every respect: immensely strong, unquestionable and brilliant without measure. As such, their Caste Attributes are Strength, Charisma and Intelligence. Players and Storytellers should note that Archons with high Charisma are not necessarily likeable, so much as they are literally awesome. To question their authority or knowledge is simply unthinkable.

Associations: The color yellow, gold, orichalcum, the element of lightning, illumination, inspiration, leadership, excellence

Sobriquets: Shining Ones, Archons, Flames of Autochthon, Blessed of Noi

Concepts: Defender of the people, advisor to the Tripartite, cleric of the Great Maker, mad scientist



**YOUR STRATEGY IS INADEQUATE.
LET ME SHOW YOU.**



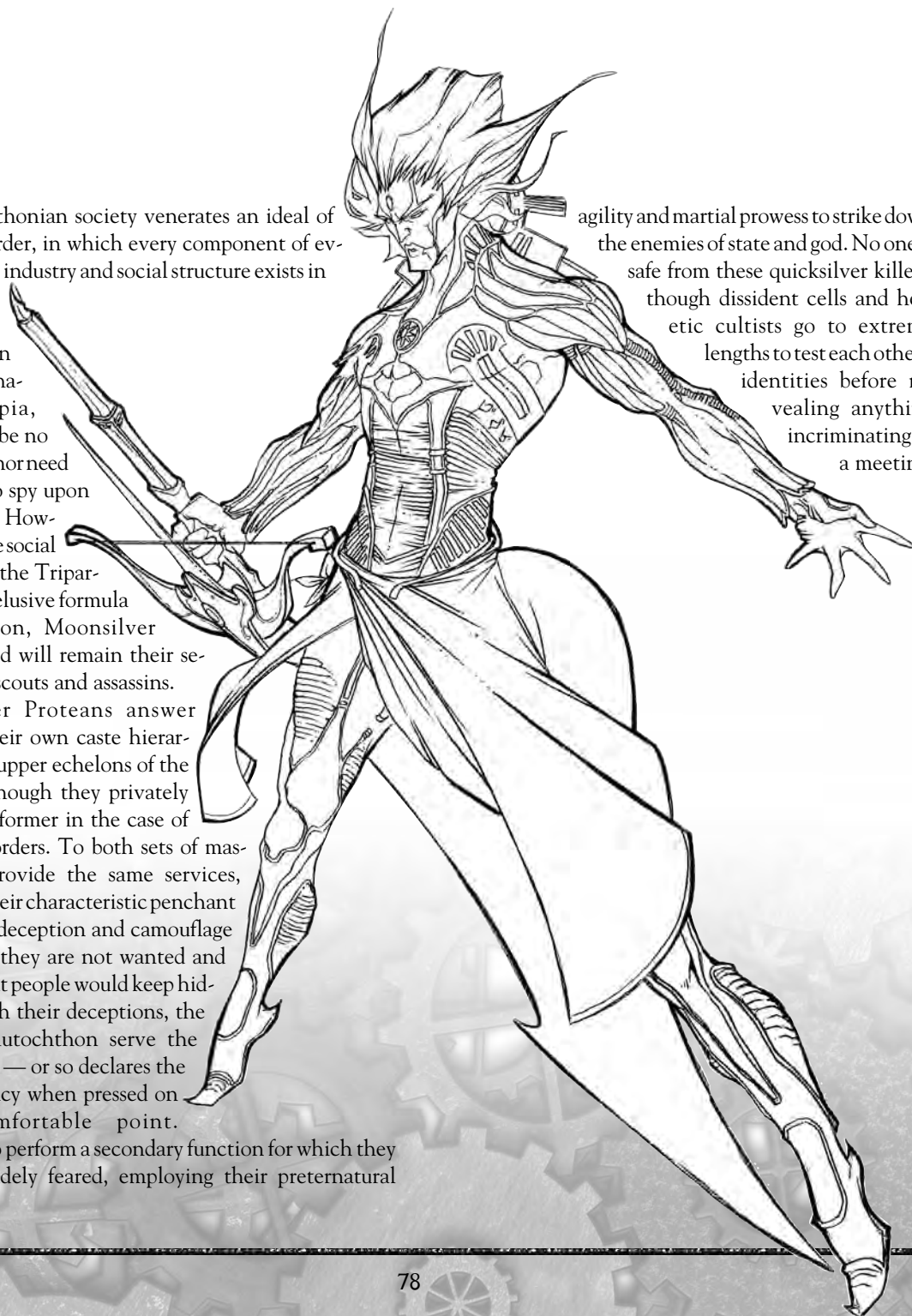
Moonsilver Caste



Autochthonian society venerates an ideal of clockwork order, in which every component of every machine, industry and social structure exists in perfect harmony with the rest. In such a mechanized utopia, there would be no need for lies, nor need for leaders to spy upon their people. However, until the social engineers of the Tripartite find the elusive formula for perfection, Moonsilver Caste Exalted will remain their secret agents, scouts and assassins.

Younger Proteans answer jointly to their own caste hierarchy and the upper echelons of the Tripartite, though they privately defer to the former in the case of conflicting orders. To both sets of masters, they provide the same services, exploiting their characteristic penchant for disguise, deception and camouflage to go where they are not wanted and discover what people would keep hidden. Through their deceptions, the Razors of Autochthon serve the greater truth — or so declares the Theomachy when pressed on the uncomfortable point. Proteans also perform a secondary function for which they are more widely feared, employing their preternatural

agility and martial prowess to strike down the enemies of state and god. No one is safe from these quicksilver killers, though dissident cells and heretic cultists go to extreme lengths to test each other's identities before revealing anything incriminating at a meeting.



Sometimes, these precautions actually delay discovery, but more often than not, the assassin is already in the room.

As Mirrorblades mature and grow in power, they reach a critical juncture in their careers. Developing beyond Essence 5 leaves them too large to serve as spies, saboteurs or covert killers. Many delay their transition for some time, until the game itself comes to bore them. Whenever they finally cross into the next phase of their development, they leave behind the task of spying on mortals and turn their attention toward threats beyond the cities. With their superior speed and stealth, coupled with the inherent toughness imparted by their massive bodies, these elders can execute lightning raids into gremlin nests and eliminate the queens or pack leaders before anyone knows they are there. A strike team of such killers provides one of the deadliest units fielded by any military, an advantage the generals of the Locust Crusade quickly seize upon once they begin sending sizable numbers of Exalted into Creation.

The oldest members of the Moonsilver Caste eventually settle down and usually evolve into hidden fortresses, using their potent municipal Charms to cloak entire settlements from prying eyes or simply disguise portions as something more innocuous. Other patropoli follow a more conventional layout, turning their mastery of aesthetics to maximize architectural geomancy. Regardless of their functions, these settlements are breathtakingly beautiful, with organic spires and flowing curves that almost appear to defy gravity.

Caste Markings: Moonsilver Charms display smooth, organic curves and look more like they were grown than forged. The overall mien of a Protean expresses

biomechanoid grace that is at once as beautiful as it is alien. Of course, given the caste's renowned skill at disguise and misdirection, few ever see a Mirrorblade in her true visage, and no one who thinks he has can ever really be sure. The animas of this caste seep and grow from under their skin, taking the form of dozens or even hundreds of undulating and intertwined tendrils of light. These living displays of power rhythmically flicker between pale silver and white.

Anima Effect: For a reflexive cost of 5 motes, a Moonsilver Caste may suffuse her being with the flowing grace of quicksilver. In this state, her quickened senses perceive the world moving in slow motion through a faint silver tint. In contrast, she perceives her own accelerated body moving at its normal pace. Observers only note the preternatural flexibility and deftness of the Exalt's movements, provided she gives them an opportunity to notice anything. This power adds (the character's Essence rating x 2) to her base initiative for the scene.

Caste Attributes: Moonsilver Caste Alchemicals are universally nimble and quick, favoring finesse over force as a way of life. Socially, they are mercurial and mirror-like, adapting themselves to the expectations and desires of those around them or simply avoiding notice altogether. Accordingly, their Caste Attributes are Dexterity, Appearance and Wits.

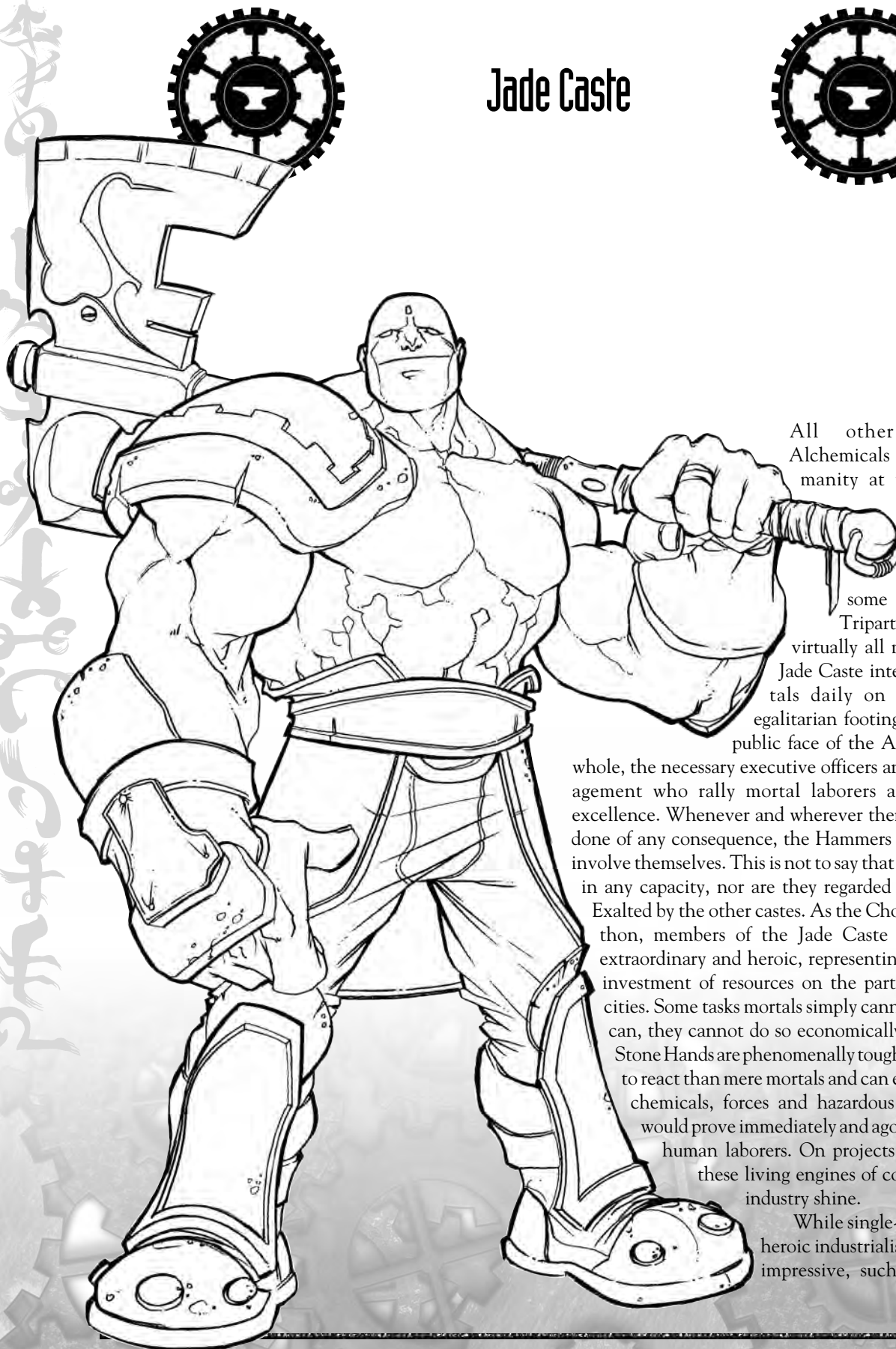
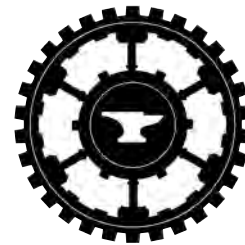
Associations: The color white, silver, moonsilver, the element of oil, innovation, secrets, guile

Sobriquets: Mirrorblades, Proteans, Razors of Autochthon, Blessed of Debok Moom

Concepts: Everyman spy, explorer of the Far Reaches, assassin, heretic finder

OF COURSE THE EXILES WON'T
NOTICE ME. TO THEM, I'M JUST
ANOTHER DIRTY FACE IN THE MOB.

Jade Caste



All other castes of Alchemicals deal with humanity at the periphery, some as distant or secret leaders, others as police and some as spies of the Tripartite. In contrast, virtually all members of the Jade Caste interact with mortals daily on a surprisingly egalitarian footing. They are the public face of the Alchemicals as a

whole, the necessary executive officers and middle management who rally mortal laborers and fighters to excellence. Whenever and wherever there is work to be done of any consequence, the Hammers of Autochthon involve themselves. This is not to say that they are menial in any capacity, nor are they regarded as second-class Exalted by the other castes. As the Chosen of Autochthon, members of the Jade Caste are inherently extraordinary and heroic, representing an incredible investment of resources on the part of their home cities. Some tasks mortals simply cannot do, or if they can, they cannot do so economically or safely. The Stone Hands are phenomenally tough and far quicker to react than mere mortals and can easily work with chemicals, forces and hazardous materials that would prove immediately and agonizingly fatal to human laborers. On projects of this nature, these living engines of construction and industry shine.

While single-handed feats of heroic industrialism are certainly impressive, such individualism

runs contrary to the Autochthonian ethos. This being the case, members of the Jade Caste focus more of their efforts on facilitating the success and power of the communities to which they belong. Their stirring speeches and tireless examples improve morale and productivity across the factories. At their best, they are pious and appropriately humble, neither unduly discounting nor overestimating their considerable value. In this conduct, they show the spiritual lesson that the parts do make the whole, and in their combination, the whole is greater than any parts. Many Executives claim membership in the Theomachracy, not as scriptural interpreters or theological savants like the Shining Ones, but as lecturers and paragons.

The durability of the Jade Castes aids them in battle as much as industry, enabling them to take tremendous punishment when faced with gremlins or some of the deadlier thaumaturgical weapons developed by Void cultists and exiles. They also use their Charms and civilian expertise for battlefield support, reengineering terrain, deploying prefabricated fortifications and operating powerful artifact war machines. Then, too, they also command units of mortals more effectively because of their ability to empathize and recognize human frailty. Jade Caste commanders seldom push troops beyond their limits unless absolutely necessary, and most ask nothing that they would not expect tenfold of themselves. As such, they tend to command some of the most loyal units, and instances of soldiers throwing themselves in the path of a gremlin's unseen acid spray to save their leaders from injury are more common than one might think.

The eldest members of the Jade Caste adopt the standard urban-industrial model of architecture that is the stereotypical Autochthonian city. They are the template from which all other models define themselves by deviation and specialization. Other schematics certainly

exist among the Stone Hands, but they remain in the narrow minority.

Caste Markings: Favoring an aesthetic of simple functionality over the baroque designs of other castes, Jade Charms are normally blocky and rough looking. The Hammers of Autochthon may be beautiful or homely and vary widely according to temperament and vocation, but most lie somewhere comfortably between. Although some Executives display a veritable kaleidoscope of colors, freely mixing the five colors of jade, most eschew such clashing excess in favor of one or two complementary hues. After all, an inability to embody simplicity and harmony in such a little respect indicates a spirit unsuited to deeper enlightenment. The animas of this caste express the predominant hues of jade used in their Charms and typically incorporate layers of intersecting polyhedrons in a geometric lattice.

Anima Effect: By reflexively spending 5 motes, members of the Jade Caste can fortify their flesh against injury. Skin and features harden as the wave of Essence passes, transmuting the character's claylike flesh into a sheath of flexible stone. This power adds a character's Essence to her natural bashing and lethal soak for the scene.

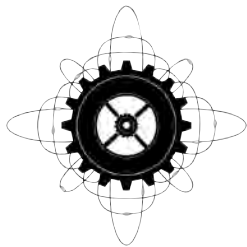
Caste Attributes: Built to endure the trials of industry and war, Jade Caste Alchemicals claim Stamina as a Caste Attribute. In their role as the most public Caste and the Alchemicals most likely to directly lead mortals, they cultivate Charisma. For the last, they must regularly adjust an abstract plan to circumvent unforeseen challenges, and so, they must often rely upon their Wits.

Associations: The color green, jade, the element of metal, truth, unity

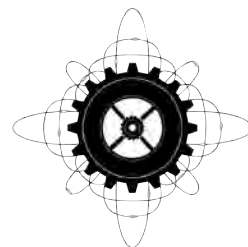
Sobriquets: Stone Hands, Executives, Hammers of Autochthon, Blessed of Runel

Concepts: Hero of the factory, voice of the Populart, guardian of morale, arbitrator

We must all work extra
shifts to meet our quota.
I will take ten.



Starmetal Caste

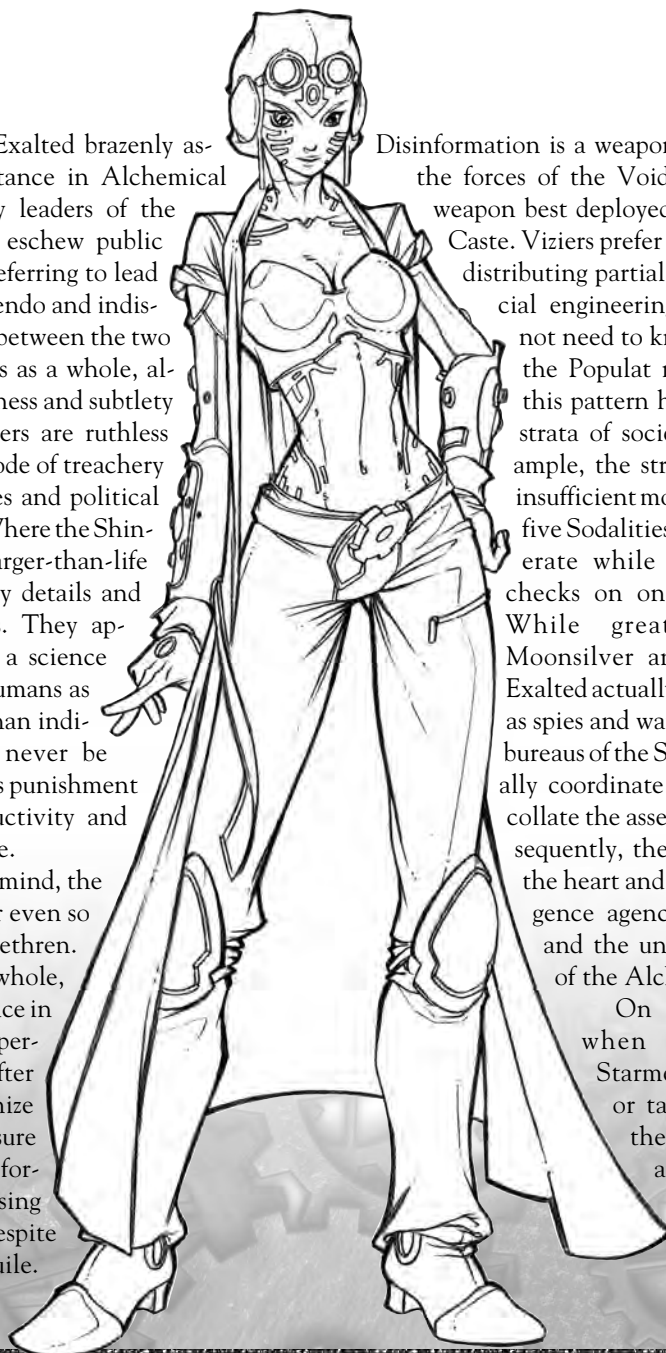


While Orichalcum Caste Exalted brazenly assume a “first among equals” stance in Alchemical society, they are not the only leaders of the Chosen. The Starmetal Caste eschew public shows of power on principle, preferring to lead from the shadows through innuendo and indispensable advice. The symbiosis between the two castes enriches the Alchemicals as a whole, allowing a perfect synergy of boldness and subtlety to shape every plan. The Viziers are ruthless pragmatists, steeped in every mode of treachery and guile by the intricate games and political maneuvering within the caste. Where the Shining Ones provide sweeping larger-than-life vision, the Plot Weavers supply details and nested layers of contingencies. They approach motivational theory as a science rather than an art, managing humans as resources and statistics rather than individuals. As resources should never be squandered, they apply judicious punishment and reward to maintain productivity and minimize depreciation of morale.

Keeping all of the above in mind, the Starmetal Caste are not cruel or even so inhuman as their Soulsteel brethren. Clarity has its uses, but on the whole, the Viziers hold emotional balance in higher regard. Human beings operate according to human needs, after all, and thus, the Viziers recognize the need to maintain some measure of empathy for the sake of their formulas. In a similar and surprising vein, Plot Weavers abhor lies despite their deserved reputation for guile.

Disinformation is a weapon to be used against the forces of the Void, and it is a useful weapon best deployed by the Moonsilver Caste. Viziers prefer to control the truth, distributing partial data as a tool of social engineering. The Lumpen do not need to know everything that the Populat needs to know, and this pattern holds true for higher strata of society as well. For example, the strict and deliberately insufficient monopolies held by the five Sodalities force them to cooperate while providing built-in checks on one another’s power. While greater numbers of Moonsilver and Soulsteel Caste Exalted actually gather information as spies and watchers, the disparate bureaus of the Starmetal Caste actually coordinate these missions and collate the assembled reports. Consequently, the Viziers are at once the heart and soul of every intelligence agency in Autochthonia and the undisputed spymasters of the Alchemicals.

On the rare occasions when members of the Starmetal Caste must fight or take physical action, they take a minimalist approach. They are literal clockwork killers in such instances, every



movement an intrinsic and deliberate part of a calculated kata. Efficiency makes them deadly, but they would much rather fall back and send Archons and Sentinels into the field. This is not cowardice, but a simple recognition that their caste is optimized for other functions. The rare exceptions to this policy are truly frightening, combining battle poise and martial programming with a detached tactical genius to overcome stronger and better-armed opponents.

The eldest members of this caste prefer to evolve into smaller, specialized complexes, typically oriented toward some form of magical research or information analysis. When they can tear themselves away from the rapturous data stream of Autochthon's Clarity enough to focus on the present, these metropolises employ intricate yet sweeping forms of social conditioning, the end result of which optimizes their citizens' efficiency so gently that no one even perceives the change.

Caste Markings: Since starmetal is the rarest of the Five Magical Materials, the Charms of this caste incorporate a delicate, minimalist aesthetic to their designs. Braided or tangled coils of starmetal wires outline conventional alloys in artful filigree whose loops and whorls are vaguely hypnotic to behold. Essence sparks occasionally leap between these filaments at random when the Exalt is deep in thought. The animas of this Caste are deep blue in hue and shot through with bursts of prismatic sparks like static.

Anima Effect: For a reflexive cost of 5 motes, a member of the Starmetal Caste can align his soul and

Essence with the Design of the Great Maker. In this transcendent state, the Exalt's player adds (the Exalt's Essence + 2, rounded up) to all attack, damage and base initiative rolls for the scene. During this time, a prismatic halo of colors trails slightly ahead of the Alchemical as a sort of reverse afterimage, highlighting the auspicious movements and attacks he will take. Those who behold the halo perceive the dim hand of inevitability, and yet, this perception avails them nothing. For all that their senses warn of danger, victims cannot recognize the Alchemical's impending movements until they actually occur. Only in painful retrospect do targets understand what they saw.

Caste Attributes: Balancing subtlety and cunning against the forthright genius of the Orichalcum Caste, members of the Starmetal Caste wield body and mind with scalpel-like precision and unmatched discipline. No other caste can match their use of intrigue and well-placed suggestions to guide all levels of society. When they must physically act, they do so without warning, a blur of perfectly calculated violence. As such, their Caste Attributes are Dexterity, Manipulation and Intelligence.

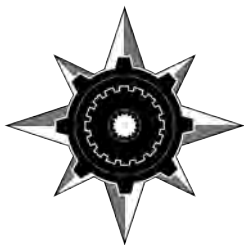
Associations: The color blue, steel, starmetal, the element of crystal, half-truths

Sobriquets: Plot Weavers, Viziers, Daggers of Autochthon, Blessed of Mog

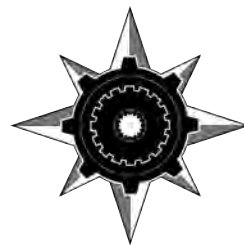
Concepts: Tactical advisor, data interpreter, pattern theorist, social prognosticator



DO NOT TROUBLE YOURSELF WITH THE DETAILS.
WE HAVE THE MATTER WELL IN HAND.

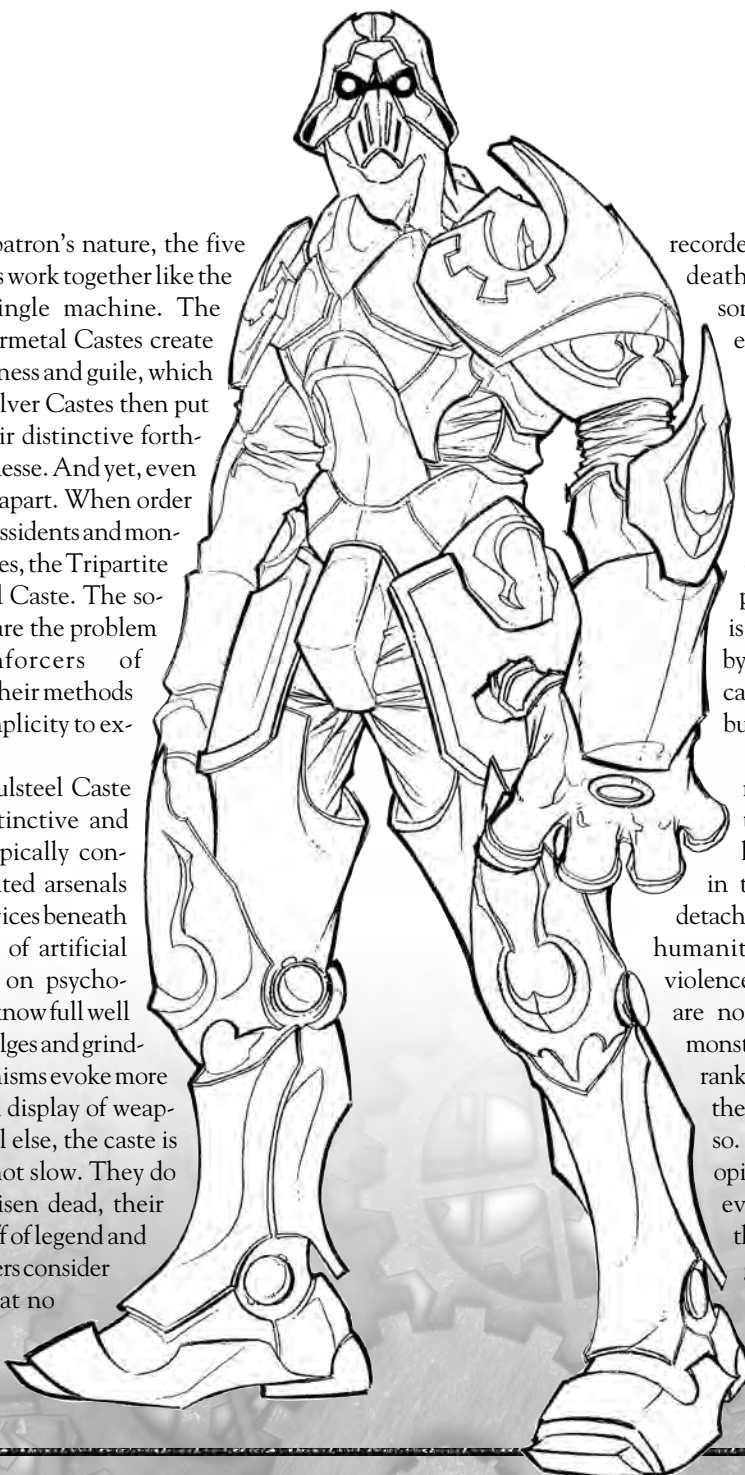


Soulsteel Caste



Befitting their patron's nature, the five castes of Alchemicals work together like the components of a single machine. The Orichalcum and Starmetal Castes create plans of varying boldness and guile, which the Jade and Moonsilver Castes then put into action with their distinctive forthrightness or subtle finesse. And yet, even the best of plans fall apart. When order breaks down, when dissidents and monsters threaten the cities, the Tripartite calls in the Soulsteel Caste. The so-called Grim Watch are the problem solvers and enforcers of Autochthonia, and their methods range from brutal simplicity to excruciating intricacy.

In the field, Soulsteel Caste Exalted dress in distinctive and unadorned black, typically concealing their implanted arsenals and interrogation devices beneath oil-dark buff jackets of artificial leather. As experts on psychological warfare, they know full well that the suggestive bulges and grinding of unseen mechanisms evoke more terror than any open display of weapons. In battle as in all else, the caste is relentless. They do not slow. They do not stop. Like the risen dead, their persistence is the stuff of legend and nightmare. Their elders consider it a point of pride that no quarry has ever escaped the caste in



recorded history except through death, though that truth is somewhat misleading. Not every hunt ends in victory, even with such hunters, and the caste certainly takes its share of casualties from gremlins and rogue Exalted. However, one or another Sentinel eventually succeeds where predecessors failed. Such is the fate of those hunted by the Soulsteel Caste. They can run, and they can hide, but they cannot escape.

Unsurprisingly, Sentinels are the most alien of the five castes and the most likely to cultivate Clarity in the name of professional detachment. Yet, for all their inhumanity and predilection for violence, Soulsteel Alchemicals are not raving psychopaths or monsters. They police their own ranks with as much fervor as they police others, if not more so. Those suspected of developing Gremlin Syndrome or even showing sympathy for the forces of the Void face grueling batteries of Charm-aided interrogations. Any deemed traitors or heretics suf-

fer horribly, as they are summarily vivisected for spare parts in front of the assembled members of their caste. Audience participation at such gruesome spectacles is expected and contributes to the overall horror of the occasion. These events are not celebrations, but sorrowful executions, in which it is hoped that the pain and fire will cleanse the tainted soul for another life and prevent others from succumbing to the temptations of chaos and entropy. The Sentinels know too well that they are the caste most like their enemies in their necessary violence; those who listen too closely to the whispers of the souls trapped in their Charms or allow their faint disdain for mortal frailty to fester into hatred do not have far to fall. Yet, only at the razor's edge of damnation can they understand the enemy, and only with such understanding can they obtain victory.

When they are not scrutinizing one another or engaging in active missions hunting gremlins or criminals, members of the Soulsteel Caste watch over Autochthonia. They observe citizens at work and at play, looking down from factory catwalks and striding as ghosts over the streets. Members of the Populat, and especially the Lumpen, dutifully avoid eye contact and go about their lives as best they can, inwardly praying that the Sentinels find no cause to notice them. For their part, the Sentinels know that their roaming presence discourages dissidence. Some watch less openly, equipped with Charms to extend the range and scope of their senses. Instead of physically patrolling, these gifted agents pry through walls and minds in search of enemies. When any members of the caste find problems, they try to report the matters to superiors so that the best solution may be decided upon. However, each Sentinel has the standing authority to deal with problems requiring an immediate resolution, since enforcement is the very reason the Soulsteel Caste exists. Unless a suspect's guilt is incontrovertible, even the most brutal members of the Grim Watch give their suspects an opportunity to surrender peacefully and face the justice of the Tripartite. On the other hand, resisting arrest is itself a crime, and resisting a Sentinel is very often a capital crime.

The eldest members of this caste typically evolve into industrial prison camps, serving as both jails and wardens for those consigned to live in the bleak settlements. Such communities also provide rehabilitation and education for the uncivilized descendents of exiled criminals, which the Eight Nations have taken to capturing in raids on the outlying colonies in recent years. Other patropoli restrain

their brutal inclinations, cultivating settlements of perfect order using omnipresent surveillance Charms to concurrently watch the entire population. Outwardly, these communities are pristine places, though the inescapable eye of their city invariably erodes morale.

Caste Markings: Given the caste's fondness for Clarity and the dehumanizing isolation imposed by their duties, few Sentinels show any restraint in modifying their bodies. Form follows function, and the frightening Charms of the Soulsteel Caste appear roughly hammered in black alloys with ugly, primitive lines. The artifacts are typically held together with crude-looking rivets and pins and are perpetually stained with soot and grease that bleeds from underneath. Sentinel animas appear as shadowy clouds of smoke streaked with black and blue lightning.

Anima Effect: By reflexively spending 5 motes, a member of this caste may stir the souls trapped in his frame. Outlines and faint imprints of distended faces and hands appear in every black-metal surface, their moans and whispers escaping in a hushed cacophony. The futile struggles of the tormented generate an aura of numbing dread for a scene, adding (the Exalt's Essence ÷ 2, rounded up) to the difficulty of all attacks targeting the Alchemical. Even automatons, walking dead and other beings that do not know fear still suffer this penalty, as the aura's Essence slows their attacks. Only living beings granted perfect immunity to fear by Charms or other magic can ignore the penalty.

Caste Attributes: As the enforcers and hunters of the Alchemical Exalted, members of the Soulsteel Caste are as tough as they are frightening. Nothing slows them down once they set their minds to a task, not pain and certainly not the impediments of mercy. They know how to make people do what they want them to do and what degree of force is required to extract compliance. Yet, the defining characteristic of these grim Exalted is their unceasing vigilance. Ever watchful for threats within and without, they stand poised to unleash their signature brutality on any who threaten their civilization. Their Caste Attributes are Stamina, Manipulation and Perception.

Associations: The color black, iron, soulsteel, the element of smoke, violence, callousness, enforcement

Sobriquets: Grim Watch, Sentinels, Scourges of Autochthon, Blessed of Ku

Concepts: Gremlin killer, problem solver, torture expert, motivator, dissident recycler

YOU ARE IN VIOLATION OF THOUGHT
CRIMES AGAINST STATE AND GOD.
SURRENDER NOW.



Г.В. Ойчук

The Vats were a clatter of work as the Exalted primed for their entry into Creation. Three new Batches had been run, more than had ever been run before. There was some grumbling about it among the Populat, of course. The Magical Materials rationing had already been severe before the Tripartite had undertaken to manufacture new heroes. With the demand for new Charms among the already-established Alchemical heroes, there was nothing for those outside the magic circle of the Alchemicals and their support processes. Even some key industries were cutting back on production, and their efforts were now concentrated just on keeping the factory-cathedrals functioning and the Great Maker appeased and his processes running smoothly.

But in the Vats, it was a boom time when every Sodality member who had ever wanted to work a shift in the place where the Alchemical Exalted were produced had their chance to display their talent and perhaps even meet one of their people's champions. It had been almost this busy during the war, but this activity had a different, more hardscrabble approach. Charms were being developed for notional conditions, to protect against imaginary dangers, and the costly gambles were adding up. Coils that took 100 worker-shifts to wind were burned out in seconds when experiments went awry.

Below, in the hustle of workers, labored *Lissome Avid Engineer*, polishing bits of metal and inspecting connections. Though she was an architect by training and an Exalt of low Essence, she was hardly unskilled at the trades and held senior degrees in the Prolific Scholars of the Furnace Transcendent. Most of her survival gear was of the most basic, mechanical sort, readily converted to military use. The shoulder-mounted grapnel launcher could fire a harpoon or a blunt projectile, and she had drawn up plans for explosive charges and signaling devices. Her survival suit would extrude a micro-fine cloth over her entire body to instantly protect her from toxins or vacuum. The same ports could then spray forth a brightly colored, quickly dissipating neurotoxin that was not only lethal both in air and underwater, but also useful as a marker dye, smoke beacon and could even be used to harvest organic creatures for protein reprocessing, if there were mobile organic organisms in the target space, as the Theomachrats suggested there would be.

Engineer pondered that. Would the world she was going to be made of meat? Countless tiny living things?

The imagination of a million tiny multi-legged creatures that formed the downward surfaces as she waded hip-deep through them tickled at *Lissome Avid Engineer* — and not pleasantly. She suspected she would use the poison gas then. Still, it was best not to worry about that, said the memory echoes of past heroism. Sleep when you have the chance, and make only the plans that will matter. The little spider in her head spun out its thread of plans, and she wove with what she needed.


Lissome Avid Engineer looked over the ready table where her gear lay spread for final cleaning and lubrication and then up at the Vats where the bodies of the new Alchemicals were quickening in their chemical stew. When they emerged, they would be her peers, and she would take their place in the Vats as the new Charms she had designed were implanted.

Selfishly, she regretted her decision to avoid increasing her Essence, even if it meant she would have forgone some of the knowledge and immediate power of her Charms. Essence was the final yardstick by which an Exalt's worth was judged, and she would ultimately be the same "rank" as these emerging Alchemicals in terms of their ability, especially if the exploration turned to warring or if war erupted on the homefront as a consequence of the campaign.

If *Lissome Avid Engineer* wanted to retain her status as the darling of Yugash's Tripartite, it was clear that she would have to prove her worth during the upcoming campaign. Conflict gave too many chances for advancement for her to do otherwise. She felt a twinge, as if she had been remiss in her duties even though she knew that there was little other choice, and the human ego in her warred with the cold logic of the machine. The pain, she well knew, was that the machine was generally right.



CHAPTER THREE CHARMS



Like the Exalted of Creation, the Chosen of Autochthon wield magic known as Charms. However, the Charms of the prototype Alchemicals are quite a bit different than those of later Exalted types. Celestial and Terrestrial Charms channel Essence through raw prowess or skill, enabling a particular magical feat that only manifests when it is actually used. In contrast, Alchemical Charms are actually a specialized form of Attribute-based artifact. Each has a physical structure constructed from a combina-

tion of brass, Magical Materials, hardened glass and exotic alloys. The devices are surgically implanted in an Alchemical's body during a refitting process at a Vat Complex, and once installed, most are visible to onlookers as obvious augmentations or replacements of the character's organs. In addition, most Alchemical Charms have an installation cost like the attunement required by most artifacts. An Exalt must commit this cost out of Personal Essence in order to have the Charm added to her body,

imposing an upper limit on the number of Charms an Alchemical may have installed at any given time. Fortunately, the installed nature of Alchemical Charms also carries a unique advantage: the Charms can also be surgically removed and replaced with other magic. Consequently, the Chosen of Autochthon are the most versatile of all Exalted, able to customize and optimize for any tasks if they have suitable time to prepare.

CHARM SLOTS AND PANOPLIES

Because Alchemical Charms are modular in design, these Exalted keep track of them differently. The maximum number of Charms an Exalt can have installed at any given time is determined by her Charm Slots. These ports come in two distinct varieties: General (capable of holding any Charm) and Dedicated (only able to hold Charms associated with an Alchemical's Favored or Caste Attributes). Starting characters receive four (4) Dedicated Charm Slots and four (4) General Charm Slots, as well as eight (8) Charms to place in them. Additional Charm Slots of either variety may be obtained with bonus points at character creation or during play with appropriate experience points and surgical refitting. Every new Charm Slot comes with a Charm of the player's choice (which must be able to fit in that Slot) at no additional cost. Alchemicals may also gain Charms above and beyond their available Slots by spending points on the Vats Background or purchasing Charms with the Artifact Background (see pp. 65 and 68-69 for details). Once play begins, additional Charms may be purchased without obtaining new Charm Slots for 6 experience points. The Charms an Alchemical has waiting on retainer at the Vats for her use are collectively referred to as a Panoply.

By going to her city's Vats, an Alchemical may have as many Charms removed as desired from her Charm Slots. She can replace these with Charms from her Panoply or leave some Slots unfilled (typically to conserve Personal Essence). She can also have any of her Dedicated Slots upgraded to General Slots for a cost of 2 experience points each. Refitting takes time (see p. 73).

SUBMODULES

A number of Alchemical Charms list a variety of additional upgrades available for a fixed experience cost. Known as submodules, these enhancements permanently improve the function of a single Charm for the character. Whenever the character has that Charm installed, she also has access to all the submodules that she has purchased for it. Most submodules require an hour of refitting at the Vats, although exceptions exist. Although most Alchemical Charms do not have example submodules listed, nothing prevents players and Storytellers from developing submodules for any Charms. Keep in mind

that submodules generally provide less benefit than a Charm and adjust the way a specific Charm works. If a proposed submodule is as powerful as a Charm, it should probably cost more experience than other submodules, or it should have a minimum Essence requirement notably higher than that of the Charm it expands, or it should be a new Charm in its own right. Use the submodules listed in this chapter as examples of the way these devices should work.

ARRAYS

Just as they do not obtain Charms in the same fashion, neither do Alchemicals build Combos like the Exalted of Creation. Instead, these Chosen group Charms into Arrays. An Array is like a Combo and has the same cost: 1 bonus point per Charm included, or a number of experience points equal to the sum of the minimum Attribute ratings of all Charms in the Array. However, unlike Combos, *any* Attribute-based Charm may be part of an Array (thus excluding supernatural martial arts). Once Charms are linked into such a pattern, the arrangement is permanent; if the character wants to place the same Charm in multiple Arrays or keep a copy separate from all Arrays, he must purchase the same Charm more than once. As a slight consolation, any submodules purchased for a Charm automatically apply to every copy purchased at no additional cost. Arrays confer the following benefits and limitations:

Reduced Installation Cost: The Charms in an Array do not have a separate installation cost. Instead, the Array as a whole has an installation cost equal to three-fourths of the cumulative installation costs of all component Charms (rounded up). As a downside to this, a character cannot partially install an Array. The entire Array of Charms must be installed as a single unit or removed and stored in his Panoply.

Integrated Combos: Alchemicals automatically have access to every possible Combo that could be constructed using the Charms in an Array. In general, a potential Combo is formed from any number of instant-duration Charms that could theoretically benefit the same action, regardless of what Attributes the Charms are based upon. As usual, reflexive Charms are the exception and do not need to benefit the same action. The Storyteller remains the final arbiter of what qualifies as a legal Combo. To activate an integrated Combo, an Exalt must spend 1 Willpower point upon activating the first Charm in the pattern and declare the Combo use as normal. Like all Combos, those used as part of an Array should have their own names and distinctive visual display that remain the same every time that particular sequence is deployed. Players should either plan the display in advance or (with Storyteller approval) use the description of a Combo as part of a stunt the first time it used.

ECLIPSES AND MOONSHADOWS

Through their anima powers, Eclipse and Moonshadow Caste Exalted can “learn” Alchemical Charms for a cost of 20 experience points each. Like an Alchemical, each such purchase requires appropriate surgical refitting at a Vat Complex. The character gains one General Charm Slot and a desired Charm to place in that Slot. Provided the character retains whatever graces allowed him access to the technological secrets of Autochthonia, he may obtain new Charms for his Panoply at a cost of 8 experience points as a less-costly alternative to having new Slots added. Neither caste may have Arrays built into themselves, although they can build valid Combos of Attribute and Ability Charms, provided that all non-reflexive Charms in the Combo benefit the same action. Obviously, a Combo that relies on an Alchemical Charm can only be used while that Charm is installed. Keep in mind that an Exalt with Charm Slots displays odd magitech implants in her flesh even if she has no Charms currently installed. Non-Alchemicals cannot learn weaving Charms. The Storyteller may also bar other Charms as desired for the sake of play balance or fairness.

DESIGNING NEW CHARMS

Given the Alchemical focus on versatility and maximized options, players will likely wish to design new Charms beyond those listed in this book. Storytellers can handle this in one of two ways. The first and simplest method is to decide that the invented Charm already exists. In this case, the character simply obtains the Charm as usual on his next refit or uses experience to snatch it for his Panoply. The second method is more involved. First, the character designs the artifact, devoting a number of weeks to the project equal to the minimum Attribute required by the Charm. Next, the design is formally submitted to the patropolis of the Exalt’s home city for consideration. If the design is valid, then the template for the Charm is added to the official records at the city’s Vats, available for any Exalt to obtain. A functional copy of the device may be obtained for normal experience costs a month after the template is added. Designs for new Charms are considered a valuable commodity traded between cities for favors, resources or other Charm templates. The net result is that most Charms become common knowledge across the Eight Nations within a year of being developed.

Designing a submodule follows the same process as engineering a new Charm, but it only requires a single week of planning, and the device becomes available for installation a week after the patropolis affirms the template.



LIMITATIONS AND EFFECT

Obviously, every Alchemical Charm has some sort of technological focus or rationale. Autochthon is the Machine God, after all, so his Chosen reflect this aspect in every facet of their being. They do not have universally effective perfect or persistent defenses, but employ a number of more specialized and limited variants of such effects that clever opponents can find ways around. In general, their Charms are Celestial-level. Alchemicals have one basic dice-adding Charm for each Attribute that cannot raise a pool by more bonus dice than the Attribute used. However, they also have a range of Charms that grant artificial specialties. These bonuses are considered specialties rather than Charm dice, so they provide cumulative effect within their narrow purview.

Note that Alchemical Charms are a part of a character's body, and called shots cannot disable these devices any more than called shots can take out another character's eyes or hands.

Charms requiring Essence 8+ are known as municipal Charms, so called because they operate on an urban scale. An entire factory or facet of basic infrastructure may actually be a Charm for these enormous beings.

PRESENTATION

The Charms in this chapter are structured slightly differently than those listed in **Exalted**. Assume that the entries mean the same information as for Solar Charms with the following exceptions:

Type: In addition to the Charm types used by other Exalted, Alchemicals have a category known as permanent. Like Ox-Body Technique, these Charms are always considered active so long as they are installed and therefore have no listed duration or activation cost. The listed cost is the installation cost.

Prerequisite Charms: These are the Charms an Alchemical must have installed in order to install the Charm. Chosen cannot add Charms to their Panoply unless they have all their prerequisites, either installed or stored in the characters' Panoplies.

GENERAL CHARMS

TRANSITORY AUGMENTATION OF (ATTRIBUTE)

Cost: 1 mote per die
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: Instant
Type: Reflexive
Minimum (Attribute): 1
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm is actually a set of nine Charms that must be purchased and installed separately, one for each Attribute. All perform the same general function, temporarily boosting the rating of their controlling Attributes. The Exalt may add one dot per mote spent for the purposes of a single action or event of instant duration but cannot add more dots than the Attribute's base rating. Furthermore, these Charms resonate with the Alchemical anima power. An Exalt with Transitory Augmentation of (Attribute) installed for a Caste or Favored Attribute reduces the cost to add bonus dice with her anima from the usual 3 motes per die to 2 motes.

SUSTAINED AUGMENTATION OF (ATTRIBUTE)

Cost: None
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: N/A
Type: Permanent
Minimum (Attribute): 2
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

One particular facet of the Alchemical's innate potential and raw capability has been mechanically reinforced. She may have metal pistons alongside her artificial muscles for Strength, ball-bearing joints and higher-function motor skills for Dexterity, flesh replaced with organic metal alloys for Stamina, hardwired protocols for Charisma or Manipulation, a literally sculpted physique for Appearance, integrated sensors for Perception or various forms of transcendent neural webs for Intelligence or Wits. This Charm is actually a set of nine Charms that must be installed separately, one for each Attribute. Whatever the specific

General Charms

TRANSITORY
AUGMENTATION OF
(ATTRIBUTE)

SUSTAINED
AUGMENTATION OF
(ATTRIBUTE)

configuration, the Exalt receives one additional dot to the Attribute (considered part of her natural rating). Furthermore, her maximum rating in that Attribute increases by one dot. Characters may not install any permutation of this Charm multiple times (i.e., no doubling the same Attribute) but may have as many different Attributes augmented with a copy of this Charm as desired.

CLOSE COMBAT CHARMS

TACTICAL ANALYSIS ENGRAMS

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Wits: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Wits

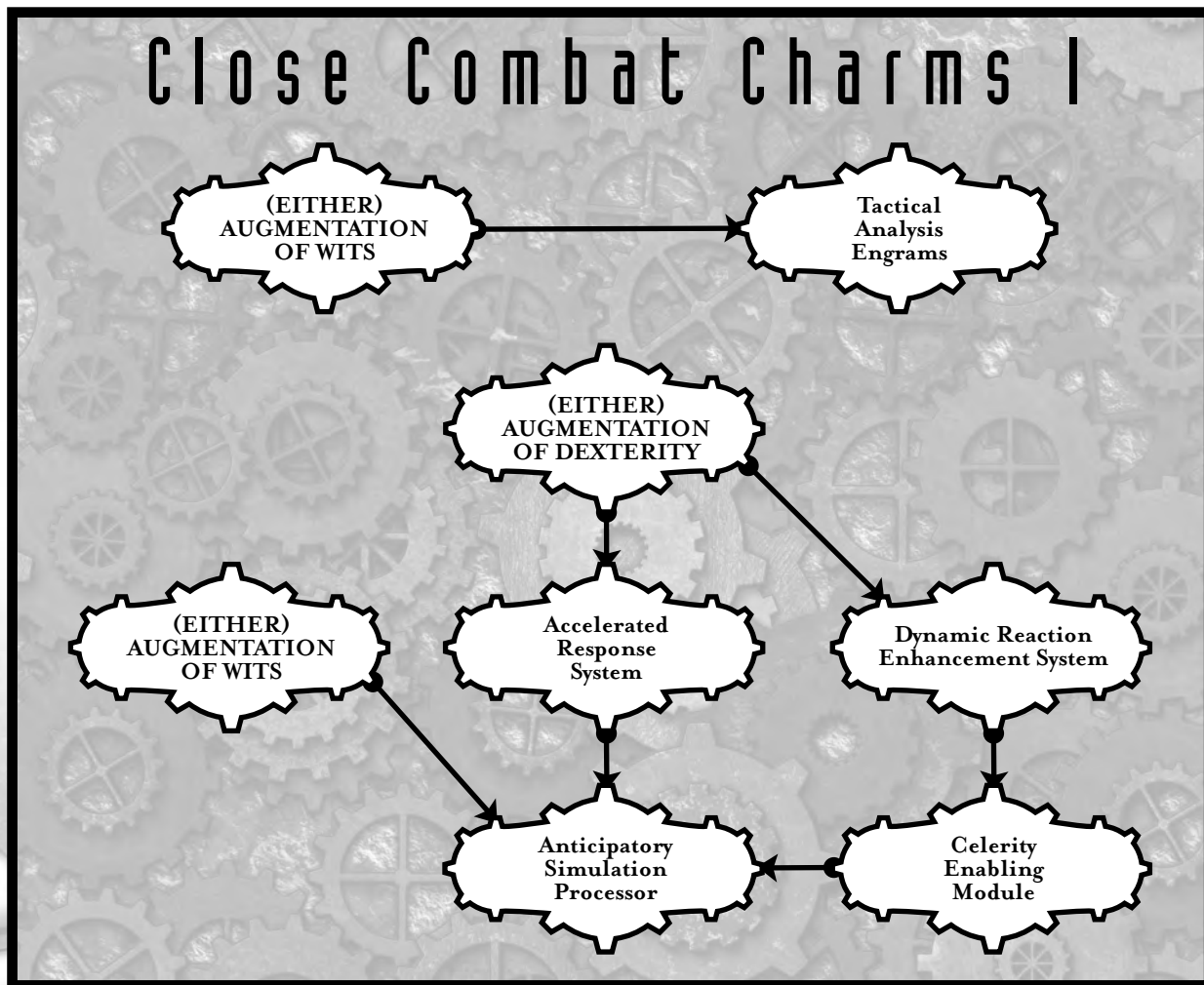
Externally, this Charm appears as a cluster of metallic nodules on both sides of the Alchemical's face, forming arcs centered at the temples. These nodules actually ex-

tend several inches into the Exalt's brain as crystal spikes wrapped in jagged extrusions of wire. Together, these devices store a vast array of strategic patterns, unit and combatant profiles and interpolative simulation engines that allow for intuitive conjecture on the capabilities of unknown opponents.

When activating this Charm, roll the Alchemical's Wits + Awareness (difficulty 2). Each success provides one of the following pieces of information as selected by the Exalt's player. This information is gleaned instantly and may inform actions or defenses that immediately follow.

- The target's rating in any one of the following Traits: any Physical Attribute, Wits, Archery, Athletics, Brawl, Dodge, Endurance, Martial Arts, Melee, Resistance or Thrown. Players may attempt to justify other Traits to Storytellers in extreme cases, particularly in cases where the target evinces overt combat powers not based on any of the above Traits. In these rare cases, the Exalt learns the rating of the associated Trait without actually learning what the Trait is.

- All the target's specialties in any one of the above listed Traits.



- The target's base initiative.
- The target's current wound penalty rating (if any).
- The core statistics of any one weapon or attack that the Alchemical has seen the target use; this does not reveal unusual powers of artifacts, only such traits as damage, accuracy, etc.
- The core statistics of any one object qualifying as armor/shield the target is wearing.
- The function of any one directly combative Alchemical Charm installed in the target that is outwardly visible or that the target has previously used in the scene. This can also determine the function of combative spirit Charms used in the Exalt's presence, provided these Charms are known in Autochthonia. The Storyteller remains final arbiter of what constitutes a combative Charm. Analyzing the observed combat Charms of other beings (Exalted, Fair Folk, etc.) is only possible after a thorough exposure to such fighting methods as determined by the Storyteller (generally a month of regular encounters) and costs 3 experience points for each type of being the Exalt wishes to familiarize herself with.

Each full minute spent observing the same target allows the Exalt to activate this Charm once without spending Essence.

ACCELERATED RESPONSE SYSTEM

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Dexterity: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity

This Charm has two possible permutations, which must be purchased and installed separately. The first version fits into the character's upper arms and shoulders, allowing her to parry any single attack directed against her using her full Dexterity + (Brawl, Martial Arts or Melee) pool on activation.

The second version fits into the hips and upper thighs and allows the Exalt to dodge one attack against her using her full pool of Dexterity + Dodge (+ Essence, if using Exalted Power Combat). She can dodge without giving ground, contorting and blurring away from the attack with superhuman agility.

Both forms of this Charm require that an Alchemical be aware of an attack in order to defend against it. Characters with both variants installed may use both against the same attack.

DYNAMIC REACTION ENHANCEMENT SYSTEM

Cost: 1 mote per +2 initiative

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Dexterity: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity

This Charm takes the form of a complex mechanical assembly in the Alchemical's spine. When activated prior to a character's initiative, the device slows her perception of the world for the turn, adding +2 initiative for every mote spent (to a maximum bonus of Dexterity x 2).

CELERITY ENABLING MODULE

Cost: 5 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant/One scene

Type: Extra Action/Reflexive

Minimum Dexterity: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Dynamic Reaction Enhancement System

Implants on the Alchemical's joints connect via wires to his Dynamic Reaction Enhancement System, linking the operation of his body with the accelerated functions of his central nervous system. This Charm has two modes of operation, but it cannot perform both functions simultaneously.

In its primary use as an instant-duration extra action-type Charm, the Celerity Enabling Module allows for brief bursts of superhuman speed, granting a number of extra actions equal to the Exalt's permanent Essence. These actions may be used for any physical task, and the character may use any of them to declare a full dodge or a full parry or to refresh either of these defensive pools to their maximum value.

In its secondary mode, this Charm attunes the Alchemical's reflexes to a specific threat rather than providing immediate general-purpose enhancement. This function is reflexive and has a duration of one scene. Upon activating the Celerity Enabling Module, the Exalt must select one target. For the remainder of the scene, he may dodge or parry every attack directed at him by the target using his full dice pool (with the type of defense selected on a per attack basis). He need not be aware of an attack to defend against it, and the Charm includes safeguards against inapplicable defense modes. For instance, the Charm automatically provides a parry against undodgeable attacks and a dodge against unparriable attacks. The Exalt may parry using Brawl, Martial Arts or Melee according to preference and available weapons and may parry lethal attacks unarmed without a stunt. If the Exalt wishes to select a new target or engage the primary mode for extra actions, he must reactivate the Charm at full cost. This immediately ends all defenses against the current target in order to perform the desired response.



ANTICIPATORY SIMULATION PROCESSOR

Cost: Varies

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Wits: 5

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Wits, Accelerated Response System, Celerity Enabling Module

This Charm connects the assorted components of its many prerequisites with a central cortex of tangled starmetal monofilaments buried in the center of the Exalt's brain. The design of the arcane mechanism allows the Alchemical's consciousness to accelerate and expand outside the flow of time, preemptively simulating the most likely events of the next several seconds. The Exalt's player may declare the use of this Charm at any point in a turn by spending 5 motes (this also awards the Alchemical 1 point of temporary Clarity). The rest of the turn proceeds as normal from this point on, but at any time before the end of the turn, the player may reflexively spend another 5 motes and 1 Willpower point to "rewind" the turn back to the initiative count when the Charm was first activated. In-game, the character is assumed to have simulated all of the played-out events since the initial activation of the Charm, so none of these events have actually happened yet outside of the Exalt's mind. Unless and until the Alchemical takes a different action than he did in the simulation, all events take place exactly as "predicted" by the earlier play of the turn. All rolls and actions are assumed to have the same results as before. Once the Alchemical deviates from the simulation, actual play begins again, and no character in the encounter is bound

by the earlier "predictions" of the Charm, except to the degree that actions have already been declared within the turn. Because the Anticipatory Simulation Processor relies on intuition and raw mental acumen rather than actual precognitive capabilities, beings outside of fate may be modeled to a point. This Charm may not be activated during encounters in which Primordials, Malfeans or unshaped raksha are present and have directly acted, as the transcendent and ultimately alien nature of these beings defies all attempts at simulation by lesser beings.

POLYMODAL JOINT BEARINGS

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Dexterity: 3

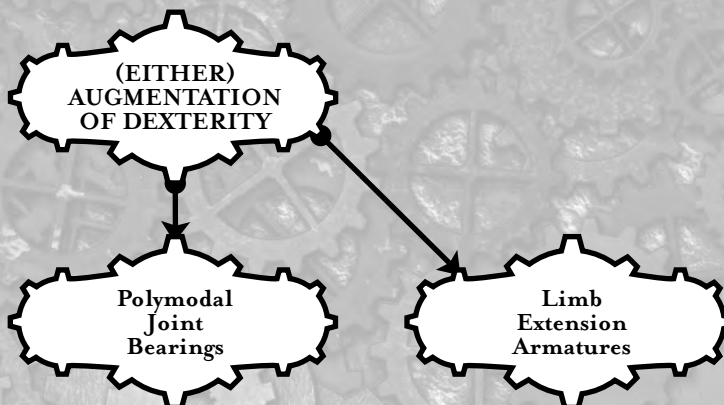
Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity

All of the Exalt's joints have been surgically enhanced with ball-bearing races and mechanical assemblies that grant superhuman flexibility. While this Charm is activated, the character's player adds three dice to rolls for the Exalt to escape from manacles or other bindings, to control/escape a clinch, to dodge using extreme contortion or to perform any other feat in which preternatural flexibility would prove immediately advantageous. Storytellers may deny or reduce the benefit in cases of dubious or indirect applicability. The bonus dice provided by this Charm are a form of artificial specialty cumulative with all other relevant specialties.

The *omnidextrous* submodule for this Charm costs 2 bonus points/6 experience points and requires Wits 3+.

Close Combat Charms II



Once installed, the Alchemical's superior flexibility and coordination enable him to ignore the usual penalty for offhand actions. In addition, the character can use his feet as hands for gripping tools or for performing feats of fine dexterity without penalty. The overall structure of a modified leg remains such that unarmed strikes using a foot-fist are still considered kicks.

LIMB EXTENSION ARMATURES

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimums Dexterity: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity

Depending on configuration and caste, the Alchemical features complex telescoping articulation in all limbs or moonsilver implants that actually stretch and warp. Regardless, this set of devices provides the same benefit when active. The Exalt's limbs can reach up to (her Essence rating x 2) additional yards if her permanent Essence is 2-5 or (Essence rating x 4) additional yards if her Essence is higher. A character may extend or retract limbs as a reflexive action at will. For every two yards of extra reach this Charm grants at maximum extension, the Exalt adds 1 to the speed modifier of all hand-to-hand combat attacks. She may also attack mounted targets without penalty. Outside of combat, the advantages of added reach are largely situational and subject to player imagination and Storyteller approval.

MULTI-LIMB FRAME

Cost: 1 mote/None

Installation Cost: None/1 mote

Duration: Indefinite/N/A

Type: Simple/Permanent

Minimum Dexterity: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity

The Exalt has additional limbs surgically fitted into skeletal hardpoints. In most cases, these appendages have a blatantly mechanical, insectoid design, with spindly metal bones, pneumatic joints and delicately articulated pincer digits. Other limbs replicate humanoid design more closely, including a "natural" covering of artificial muscle and skin. Most exotically, members of the Moonsilver Caste grow tendrils of hardened quicksilver that weave into flexible appendages.

Each installation of this Charm in simple-type configuration provides one or two extra limbs as desired, anchored as selected at the time of installation. Without

Essence, they remain paralyzed in a locked or folded position. When activated, the limbs come to life and may be used with all the utility of normal arms and hands. In addition, the character reduces multiple action penalties by one die for physical actions using any of his arms. Repeated installations stack for the purposes of penalty reduction, but characters cannot install this Charm more times than their Dexterity or Wits (whichever is lower). When not in use, extra limbs fold out of the way against the body but remain visible. A character with an Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier installed (see pp. 120-121) may opt to retract the appendages into hidden compartments even without activating that Charm.

Alternatively, Exalted may install this Charm as a permanent type with an installation cost of 1 mote. This configuration replaces the character's arms with overtly artificial limbs rather than granting extra appendages, but does not count against the maximum permitted installations as explained above. The effects of replacement prosthetics are exactly like the activated effects of the simple-type variant, cumulatively applying to reduce appropriate multiple-action penalties. In addition, the prosthetics add 1 to the damage of all hand-to-hand combat attacks using them (or using a weapon held by them).

Alchemicals with any installations of this Charm no longer apply an offhand penalty to use any of their limbs (including normal hands as well as appendages provided by Multi-Limb Frame or Hyperdextrous Tentacle Apparatus), provided they also have Sustained Augmentation of Wits (see pp. 91-92) installed.

HYPERDEXTRIOUS TENTACLE APPARATUS

Cost: 8 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

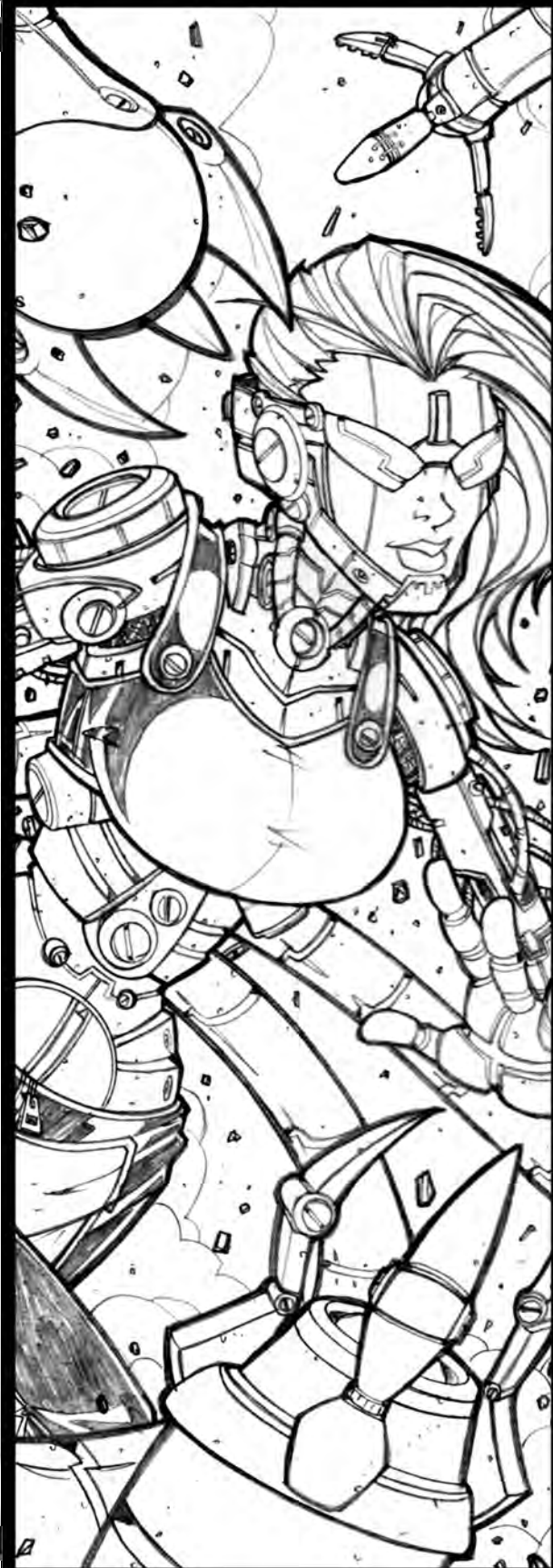
Minimum Dexterity: 5

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Strength, Sustained Augmentation of Wits, Multi-Limb Frame

The Alchemical has a pair of flexible metal tentacles emerging from her torso, each ending in articulated grasping claws and stretching a length of (her permanent Essence) yards or twice this reach for Exalted of Essence 6+. The Limb Extension Armatures Charm can increase this reach even further. In their un-activated state, these appendages may be used as arms/hands to perform any tasks the character could manage with her normal limbs, albeit with greater reach. The character must still concentrate on each tentacle to use it as she would her own arms but reduces multiple action penalties for the tentacles exactly as if they were appendages installed with





Multi-Limb Frame (penalty reduction is cumulative for all installations of the two Charms). As weapons, the tentacles have the following statistics when used for striking or parrying: speed $+(Essence \times 2)$, accuracy $+(Essence)$, damage $+(Dexterity)L$, defense $+(Essence)$. In Exalted Power Combat, rate equals Wits. Their length allows them to perform a sweep maneuver. Alternatively, one or more tentacles may be used to seize opponents in a clinch, using the standard clinch rules and the same weapon statistics as for striking, with the following exceptions: accuracy and defense $+(number\ of\ tentacles\ performing\ the\ grab)$. Assume rate 1 for Exalted Power Combat. This Charm may be installed a maximum number of times equal to the Exalt's Essence.

By spending 8 motes and 1 Willpower, an Alchemical can simultaneously empower all tentacles granted by every installation of this Charm. In this state, localized neural clusters give independent life to every appendage. The character may take multiple actions normally at standard (and possibly reduced) penalties. In addition, each tentacle can take its first action in every turn at the Alchemical's full dice pool. For every empowered tentacle gripping a victim in a clinch after the first, the Alchemical may carry out multiple constriction attempts every turn (see the *Exalted Players Guide*, p. 205).

The first installation of this Charm gives an Alchemical 1 point of permanent Clarity.

INTEGRATED ARSENAL UPGRADE

Cost: None

Installation Cost: None

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Dexterity: 3

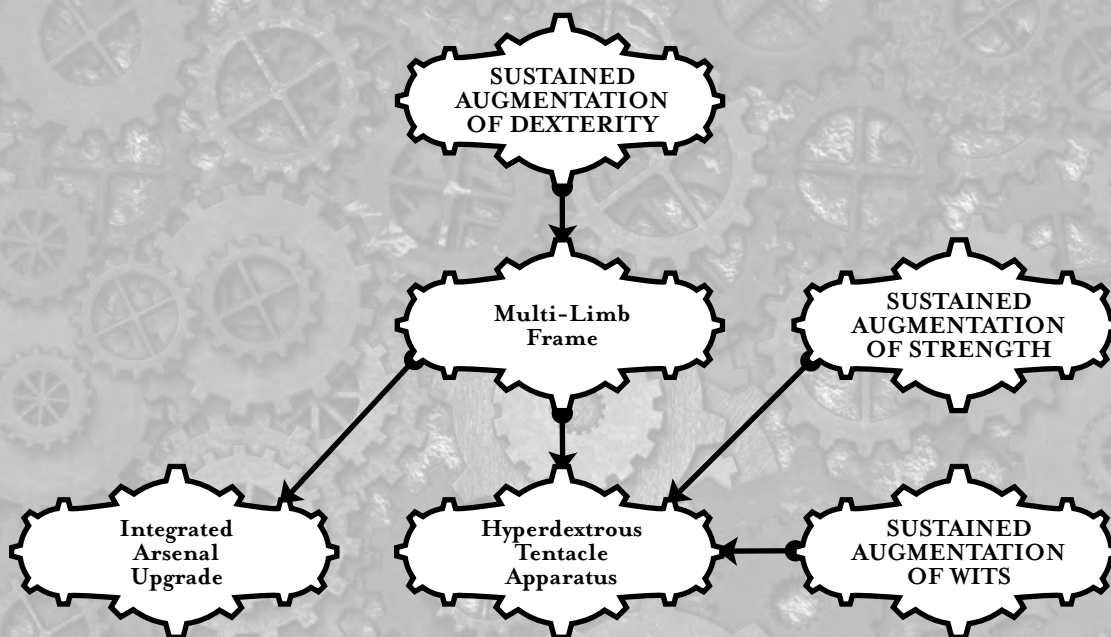
Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Multi-Limb Frame

The Exalt has an array of hand-to-hand combat weapons built directly into his body (two per installation of the Charm). Each of these weapons fits into one of the character's extra or replaced appendages provided by installations of Multi-Limb Frame. As a reflexive action, the Exalt may fold and retract as many of these weapons into compartments within their respective appendages as desired, while another reflexive action allows the reverse function, readying as much of the arsenal for immediate use as available limbs permit. Multiple weapons may be placed into a single arm if so desired, but the character can only have one weapon actually deployed per limb at a time.

Permutations of this Charm can take any form, from sword blades to lances to fighting chains and so on, but all weapons are normal (if nigh indestructible) versions of their type. Exotic weapons or tools with martial capabilities should use statistics approved by the Storyteller or the weapon type most closely analogous to the design

Close Combat Charms III



(e.g., a rapidly spinning drill bit might use the statistics of a knife but inflict piercing damage). In order to make a particular weapon exceptional, the Charm must receive an hour of upgrade at the Vats as a submodule (costing 1 bonus point or 2 experience points). Exceptional weapons may be refitted as perfect weapons for the same cost (see the *Exalted Players Guide*, p. 145). Two-handed weapons fold away into a single limb but often require two limbs to operate. Particularly mighty Alchemicals (i.e., those whose Strength is twice the required rating for the weapon in question or higher) may choose to wield such weapons without the aid of a supporting limb at -1 to accuracy and defense. As a final benefit, Exalted with this Charm cannot be disarmed of their built-in weapons, even with the aid of Charms or other magic. If an effect somehow destroys a weapon, it grows back over the course of a week.

(MATERIAL) SYNTHESIS WAVE EMITTER

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Strength: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory Augmentation of Strength

This Charm is actually six distinct Charms that must be purchased separately, one for each of the Five Magical Materials and one based on adamant. Alchemicals automatically consider the Charm associated with their caste as Favored, regardless of whether or not Strength is a Favored/Caste Attribute. In all six permutations, the device takes the form of a reactor assembly set in the Exalt's torso, with branching wires threaded through all limbs.

When activated in conjunction with a hand-to-hand combat attack, the device conducts and transmutes the Exalt's anima through the strike. The attacking weapon or limb glows and trails glittering dust of the appropriate material. For the Five Magical Materials, apply the respective Material bonus for melee weapons to the strike (see *Exalted*, p. 341, and the *Exalted Players Guide*, p. 209). The adamant version of this Charm makes bladed weapons extremely sharp or lends shattering force to blunt attacks, reducing the target's armored soak by 4 if the strike connects.

Exalted can use this Charm when striking with a magical weapon of the same Material, in which case the identical bonuses stack. Alchemicals with multiple versions of this Charm installed may choose to apply different bonuses to different attacks during the same turn but cannot stack multiple forms of the Charm onto the same attack without a Combo.

TRANSCENDENT MULTIMODAL WEAPON MATRIX

Cost: Varies

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Dexterity: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity, (Caste Material) Synthesis Wave Emitter

The Alchemical has a complex assembly of her caste's Magical Material fitted into one or more of her hands, allowing her to grow close-combat artifact weapons in her grip as desired. The device has a number of weapon templates equal to the number of times the Exalt installs the Charm, none of which can have an Artifact rating above 3. All weapons must be simple magical expansions of mundane weapons, such as daiklaves, goremauls and the like. Shock pikes, fire lances and other sophisticated melee/energy weapon variants are not permitted, nor are artifacts with secondary magical functions unrelated to close combat. Two-handed weapons follow the same usage rules as explained in Integrated Arsenal Upgrade (see pp. 96-97). Activating a weapon costs a number of motes equal to the standard attunement cost of the weapon. Artifacts grown with this Charm are always formed of the same Material as the Alchemical's caste, providing the appropriate Magical Material bonus.

Since weapons created with this Charm are actually extensions of the Exalt, she cannot be disarmed by mundane or magical means without amputation. Even in the case of such maiming injury, the severed weapon immediately shatters into fragments of its Magical Material (so this Charm cannot be used to mass produce artifacts through deliberate amputation). Unfortunately, the weapon's nature also prevents the Exalt from using the hand wielding it for any other task. Deactivating this Charm is a reflexive action, causing the weapon to fold away back into the Charm. If so desired, Alchemicals may purchase separate installations of this Charm, allowing different hands (or Multi-Limb Frame appendages) to grow different weapons simultaneously. Limbs can *only* grow the weapons whose templates are anchored in them. In order to change the arrangement, the Exalt must have the Charm removed and reinstalled.

ELECTRIFICATION ONSLAUGHT DYNAMO

Cost: Varies

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Strength: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory Augmentation of Strength

This Charm fits into the Alchemical's chest or back, with metallic conductor nodes riveted at chakra points along his body. When activated, the Charm electrifies as few or as many of these nodes as desired, which may be used in a variety of ways:

- The Exalt may release a deadly jolt in conjunction with a hand-to-hand combat strike that successfully hits a target. After resolving the normal damage of the blow, the victim additionally suffers 1L or 2B damage for every mote spent (to a maximum expenditure of the character's Strength rating). This shock is soaked separately from the attack that delivers it, but only the victim's natural soak applies.

- The Exalt may release a retaliatory jolt (using the same rules and damage as listed for the first use of the Charm) whenever an opponent successfully strikes him with a metallic weapon or unarmed attack — even if the attack does no damage. This jolt may also be activated if the Alchemical parries such an attack, using the blocking weapon or limb as the conductor, but the intermediary effect of the parry reduces the cap on Essence expenditure to half the Exalt's Strength, rounded up. Used in this manner, the shock is a form of counterattack that cannot be evaded without a perfect defense or responded to with another counterattack effect.

- The Alchemical may release a jolt against an opponent as noted above immediately after making a clinch roll. If the opponent's player wins the roll, this shock takes effect before her character has time to break the hold.

- The Exalt may deliver the aforementioned shock with any casual or nonviolent contact (such as a hand-shake), whether or not he initiated the touch.

CHEMICAL FOG GENERATOR

Cost: Varies

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Manipulation: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This bulky Charm fits snugly into the Alchemical's torso, with an assortment of vent tubes of varying sizes branching out to exhaust ports in the Exalt's skin and throat. When activated, the device churns out thick streamers of black smoke from as many of the vents as desired. The smoke billows into heavy clouds, rapidly filling a roughly spherical volume with a radius of (Essence) yards per mote spent. An Alchemical cannot spend more motes powering this Charm than her Manipulation rating per turn. If a character adds more smoke from a new point within an existing cloud or emits clouds while moving, the smoke assumes a more complicated geometry appropriate to the deployment. In the absence of wind and within an enclosed area, clouds

linger for approximately 20 minutes before dissipating. Enclosed areas with mild breeze drop the duration to 10 minutes. A heavy breeze clears the smoke from an enclosed area within five turns. In an open area, the duration is five minutes for still air, one minute in a light breeze and three turns with heavy wind.

The smoke created with this Charm has a broad range of uses. First, it obscures vision, imposing murky vision penalties out to 10 yards for those attempting to see through it and inflicting complete blindness beyond that distance. In dim lighting, the murky radius drops to three yards. People outside the cloud can only see into the smoke as far as its murky vision distance, with everything deeper in the smoke completely shrouded from view.

In addition to blocking sight, smoke released by this Charm induces coughing and choking. Any being requiring air to breathe suffers one unsoakable level of bashing damage for every minute spent breathing the toxic fumes, although characters can hold their breath to delay this damage (see *Exalted*, p. 243) or breathe through a filter (such as a wet scarf) to slow the damage interval to five minutes.

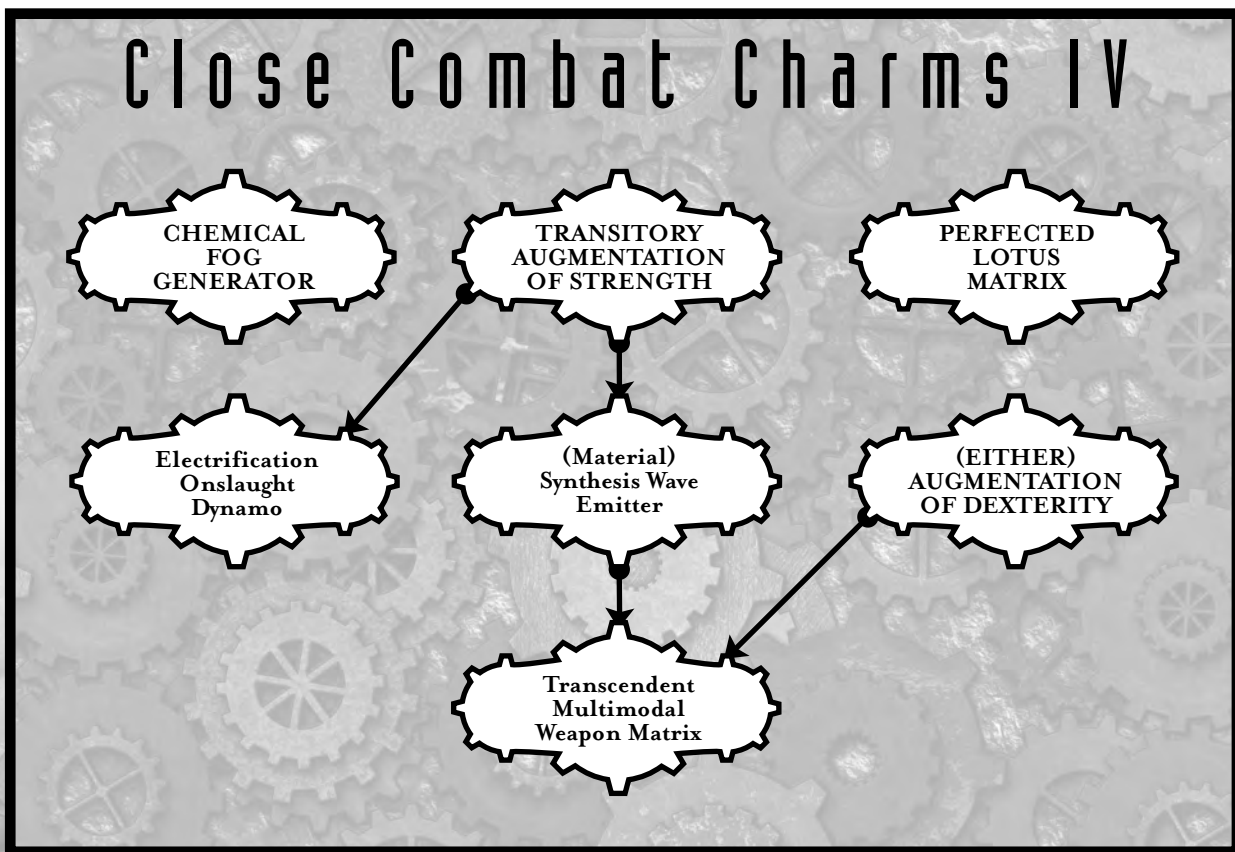
In addition to the base effects of smoke, Alchemicals may upgrade their Chemical Fog Generators with additional formulas as submodules, costing 2 bonus points or 6 experience points each. Players may design their own formulas of comparable power with Storyteller permis-

sion. Only one submodule may be deployed with each use of this Charm.

Knockout Gas: The purple-tinged fog induces unconsciousness. Roll Stamina + Resistance for any mortal who breathes the fumes (difficulty 2). Those whose rolls fail immediately pass out for 30 - (Stamina + Resistance) minutes. Exalted and other beings with superhuman constitutions reduce the difficulty of resistance to 1 and reduce the interval of exposure checks from turns to minutes. Every full turn or minute spent breathing the fumes requires a new resistance check. Breathing through a filter provides complete protection against the gas.

Tear Gas: Anyone who breathes the faintly yellowish smoke feels burning pain in his lungs and becomes dizzy. Exposure is handled as a poison with the following statistics (Difficulty: 2, Success: No Damage, Failure: 1B, Duration/Penalty: One Hour/-3). The interval of exposure is per turn, with damage accruing until the victim passes out. Note that the dice penalty is a one-time effect of the first failed resistance check; successive failures simply reset the duration of debilitation. Mortals receive a normal roll to resist tear gas. Breathing through a filter reduces the difficulty to resist exposure by 1.

Nerve Gas: Instead of its usual black, the bilious green smoke is a deadly toxin with the same statistics as arrow frog venom (see *Exalted*, p. 243). New exposure checks must be made after every five-minute period spent



breathing the gas. Mortals who breathe nerve gas convulse and die in a number of turns equal to their Stamina unless their players make a successful Stamina + Resistance roll at difficulty 6, in which case they suffer the effects of a failed roll for Exalted. Extras die automatically. Breathing through a filter reduces the difficulty to resist exposure by 2. Alchemicals must have Essence 3 to install this formula.

Soul Gas: This bloody-hued vapor induces soul-numbing horror. Roll the victim's Stamina + Resistance (difficulty 1 for Exalted and other magical beings, difficulty 4 for mortals). On a success, nothing happens. On a failure, they temporarily lose a dot from every Virtue except Compassion and must roll their new Valor rating (difficulty 2). If this roll succeeds, the victim suffers no other effects. On a failure, the victim flees the cloud at best possible speed and suffers a one-die penalty to all non-reflexive actions for the next hour as a result of paralyzing fear. After one hour, all effects of the smoke pass. New exposure checks must be made for every minute spent breathing the gas, but only for those who have managed to avoid succumbing to the effects. Breathing through a filter reduces the difficulty to resist exposure by 1. Alchemicals must have Essence 3 to install this formula.

PERFECTED LOTUS MATRIX

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 2 motes

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Martial Arts: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Perfected Lotus Matrix fits as a circular port on the base and rear of the Exalt's skull, with modular memory crystals set in a wheel around the circumference of the device. Because this Charm is not based on an Attribute, it is *never* considered Favored or Caste for any Alchemical character and must be placed in a General Charm Slot.

Once installed, this Charm enables an Alchemical to comprehend and learn Martial Arts Charms of the Terrestrial or Celestial level in the same manner as any other Celestial Exalted type. Such Charms cost 6 bonus points or 11 experience points each and do not require or use Charm Slots. Instead, these Charms are stored as submodule-like programs inside the memory crystals of the Perfected Lotus Matrix. Master sifus may even develop new styles as if they were Solar Exalted (see the **Exalted Players Guide**, p. 232). If an Alchemical removes her Perfected Lotus Matrix, she also loses access to all the Martial Arts Charms stored in it but regains full access to her combat arts upon replacing the Charm. Alchemical martial artists may also develop standard Combos of their Charms at the usual cost and difficulty, accessible whenever they have those Charms available. They cannot incorporate any of their Attribute-based Charms into such Combos.

ALCHEMICAL MARTIAL ARTISTS

The Vat Complexes of Autochthonia hold records of a wide array of Terrestrial and Celestial level styles, including many of the "animal styles" developed in Creation by the Exalted during the Primordial War and a range of techniques and katas developed by the Alchemicals for their own kind using advanced cognitive Charms. The following published styles or indistinguishable variants are available to Alchemical characters: Snake, Tiger, Mantis, Ebon Shadow, Celestial Monkey, Righteous Devil, Violet Bier of Sorrows, Five Dragon and Jade Mountain.

RANGED COMBAT CHARMS

AIM-CALIBRATING SENSORS

Cost: 1+ motes

Installation Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Perception: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm fits into the side of the Exalt's forehead as a slight metal bulge, with a taut wire running flush across the skin and reentering just before reaching the eye itself. When activated, the device systematically measures and provides compensating trajectories for range, wind, the target's cover (anything below 100 percent cover) or shield, low light or other suboptimal visual conditions and other similar factors. For every mote spent, the Alchemical may remove one die of environmental or situational penalties from a ranged attack roll. Every 2 motes cancel one point of difficulty increase or prevent an effect from subtracting a single success after the roll. This Charm does not overcome wound penalties or fear-based penalties, nor does it offset the penalty for taking multiple actions or remove any other penalties based on nonenvironmental factors. As always, the Storyteller remains the final arbiter on whether this Charm can offset a particular penalty.

PARAMAGNETIC TETHER BEAM

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

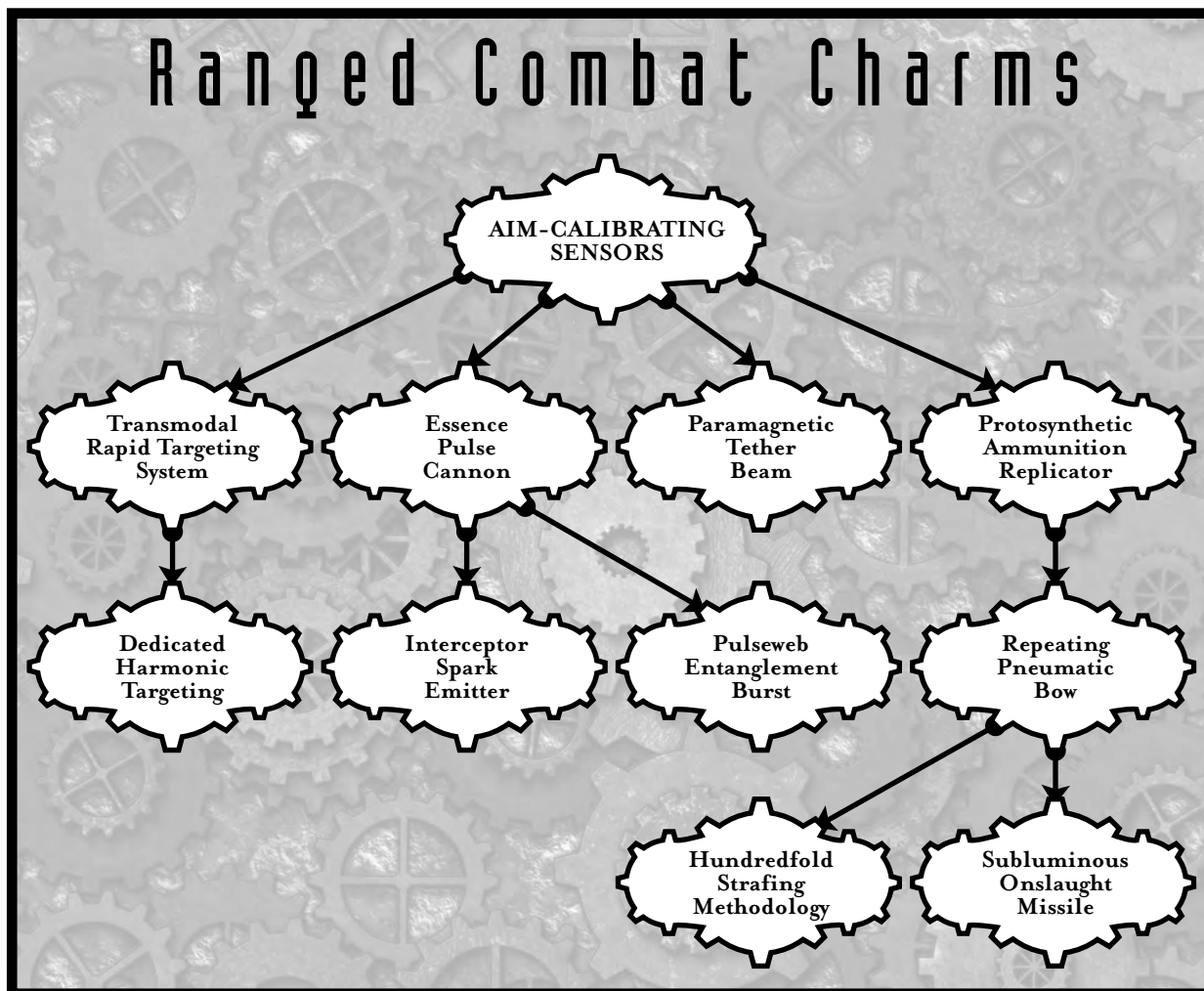
Type: Reflexive

Minimum Strength: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Aim-Calibrating Sensors

Ranged Combat Charms



Coils of Essence-conducting wire entwine the Exalt's fingers on both hands, just beneath the skin. When fueled with Essence, the Charm generates a shaped field of semi-palpable force visible as a faint distortion in the air. This force extends as a ray with a maximum range of (Strength x 10) yards, congealing over any object it strikes as directed by the Alchemical's stylized gestures. By design, this device serves a broad range of functions. A single activation provides a single beam that lingers as long as it is consciously used to manipulate its target. Activating a new beam deactivates any currently active.

The beam may be used to crudely manipulate objects with its telekinesis, substituting the character's Essence for both Dexterity and Strength. The Exalt still applies the finesse of any Abilities as appropriate. For example, feats of strength performed with the beam use Essence + Athletics to determine their effective maximum force. Grabbing a loose weapon or recalling a thrown projectile immediately to hand is a roll of Essence + (appropriate combat Ability), while yanking a weapon out of an opponent's grasp requires a disarm attack using Essence + (Brawl or Martial Arts) that cannot target attuned magical weapons

carried by their owners. Seizing an opponent's disarmed weapon requires an immediate second roll of Dexterity + (Brawl or Martial Arts), requiring a declaration of multiple actions and appropriate penalties. Other possible feats include hanging suspended by a tether beam and even "winching" up this intangible grapple line.

ESSENCE PULSE CANNON

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Strength: 4

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Aim-Calibrating Sensors

The Exalt has a bank of Essence capacitors and crystal-line lenses installed in a bulge beneath his skin, terminating in an actual cannon assembly of reinforced Magical Materials. Depending on the Alchemical's preference, the Charm's barrel may emerge from a forearm or pivot on a shoulder mount. Some Exalted even install discrete emitter gems in their palms or eyes, as noted below. In its dormant state, an



Essence Pulse Cannon is useless. When armed with Essence as an automatic action for 2 motes (much like readying or drawing any other sheathed weapon), a low electric hum sizzles from the device, and its emitter jewels glow with flickering power. This display interferes with stealth and disguise like an anima banner at the 4-7 mote range.

An active Essence Pulse Cannon is a magical weapon that uses Dexterity + Archery to fire. It has the following statistics: range of (Essence x 50) yards, accuracy of +1, rate of (Essence x the number of times this Charm is installed) and a damage of (2L for every mote spent powering the blast). Alchemicals cannot spend more motes on a single shot than their Strength + Essence. Each shot is considered a supplemental Charm use (augmenting the attack roll by providing an attack). The projectiles fired by this Charm are spheres of burning energy the color of the Alchemical's anima. They have no physical component but may be dodged or parried normally (although Storytellers may optionally require a stunt from mortals attempting to deflect these bolts with mundane weapons).

In addition to the base function of an Essence Pulse Cannon described above, Alchemicals may upgrade the weapon with submodules (some of which have minimum Essence requirements as noted). Each of the following costs 2 bonus points or 6 experience points. Characters may use as many or few of these submodules in conjunction

with every shot as desired, provided the upgrades are not expressly barred from combination with one another.

Discreet: With this submodule, the Essence Pulse Cannon is mounted in the eyes or palm, completely hidden from view. Any magical attempts to detect the Charm while it is not active are at +1 difficulty. Even when active, the weapon only betrays its presence like an anima at the 1-3 mote range.

Guidance Ray: This modification takes the form of a crystal nodule on the side of the cannon, and the character may reflexively activate or deactivate the device at any time for no cost. While active, the crystal constantly projects a thin ray of light aimed exactly where the Essence Pulse Cannon will fire. In addition to being fairly intimidating, this beam helps with aiming, increasing the cannon's accuracy by 3. Unfortunately, the ray also alerts targets to the exact path of incoming blasts (provided they can see the tracer), granting one bonus die to dodge or parry all attacks from the Charm.

Internal Battery: With this modification installed, the Essence Pulse Cannon gains its own reserve of 8 motes of Personal Essence that the Alchemical may draw upon for the sole purpose of firing the Charm. Restoring a single mote to the battery requires a simple action, and the Exalt must spend 2 motes from his Essence reservoir to do so. Characters cannot add more than one battery to the Charm.

Precision Beam: In place of the usual bolt, the Exalt may discharge the energy in a coruscating ray of light. This decreases the raw damage of the attack by two dice, but the ray is considered piercing. This upgrade may not be used in conjunction with the detonation or shockwave modifications.

Shockwave: By spreading the energy of a bolt across a wider area, the resulting pulse can hurl targets who are roughly human-sized or smaller backward. Determine damage normally, and apply the target's usual soak, but the projectile never inflicts more than one level of damage. Instead, the target is hurled back one yard for every die of the bolt's raw damage before soak. If she strikes a solid object before skidding to a halt across the ground, she suffers one die of damage for every yard further she would have traveled. This damage may be lethal if she strikes a wall of spikes or something similarly lethal. Regardless of how far they are driven back, victims suffer knockdown upon landing unless their players make a successful Dexterity + Athletics or Stamina + Resistance roll at difficulty 2.

Stunning Bolt: In place of lethal damage, the Alchemical may choose to fire an incapacitating pulse that inflicts no serious injury. This shot inflicts 3B for every mote spent. Furthermore, if the target is reduced to Incapacitated, all further damage is ignored without "spilling over" as lethal.

Detonation: When using this modification, the pulse only inflicts 1L per mote (or 2B per mote if used in conjunction with Stunning Bolt, above) to any target directly struck by its energy. However, the bolt also releases a spherical blast on impact. All other beings and objects within a one-yard radius of the explosion suffer the base damage of the attack (attack successes are *not* added). For each full yard that the torrent of plasma travels, it loses one die of damage until it fades entirely. If this modification is used in conjunction with shockwave, the explosion hurls those caught in the area of effect away from the center. This submodule requires Essence 3.

Essence Dampening Bolt: Blasts enhanced by this modification inflict no physical injuries, but instead cause magical beings to hemorrhage Essence. Apply the usual lethal damage roll for the attack plus a bonus equal to the Exalt's Essence, save that the target only receives a soak equal to her permanent Essence. For every level of "damage" inflicted, the target loses 1 mote of Essence. If the victim is Exalted or otherwise has an anima, every mote drained by this attack adds to her anima banner as if spent from her Peripheral Essence pool (and always drains from Peripheral Essence before tapping Personal Essence). This upgrade may not be used in conjunction with any of the following modifications: shockwave, stunning bolt, precision beam or pattern disruptor. This submodule requires Essence 3.

An alternate variant of this modification called *energy drain* is available to characters with a minimum Essence of 4. This upgrade follows the same rules except that the motes bled by the target fly in a visible arc of power

to the Exalt's cannon (where they are added to his own Essence pool). Energy Drain operates according to the same rules of interaction and mutual upgrade applicability as Essence dampening bolt.

Pattern Disruptor: Augmented with this modification, an Essence Pulse Cannon may fire a devastating sliver of blinding light that tears patterns of energy and matter into glittering motes of Essence. These blasts shriek as they consume the very air they traverse. In place of its usual damage, the attack inflicts 1A per mote spent. Any other bonuses to base damage (such as from the Orichalcum Caste anima power) are halved, rounded down. Anything killed or destroyed by this attack disintegrates as noted above. Spirits slain with a pattern disruptor are annihilated and do not reform. The upgrade also obliterates the souls of slain mortals and prevents them from rising as ghosts unless the victims are implanted with soulgems, in which case their souls transfer into the artifacts as normal while their bodies burn away. This upgrade cannot be used in conjunction with the detonation, shockwave or stunning bolt modifications. This submodule requires Essence 4.

Siege Devastator: This modification may be activated or deactivated reflexively, but requires a full turn to ready itself for operation or to fold away after the Exalt is done with it. During this time, the Essence Pulse Cannon unfolds and grows until it completely replaces one of the character's forearms and hands with an oversized version of the weapon. In addition to making one hand unusable for as long as the upgrade is deployed, the augmented cannon's rate drops to 1 and the bulky mechanism imposes a -2 mobility penalty cumulative with any armor. Furthermore, the constant hum, glowing crystals and sparking components make all forms of stealth impossible like an anima banner at the 8-10 mote range of display. In exchange for these drawbacks, the cannon increases its destructive power (adding one die to the base damage provided by each mote, regardless of applied modifications). Thus, without using other upgrades, the damage is 3L per mote. This submodule requires Essence 5.

INTERCEPTOR SPARK EMITTER

Cost: 2 motes or 3 motes

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Wits: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Essence Pulse Cannon

By upgrading an Essence Pulse Cannon with superior targeting protocols and faster strobe lenses, this Charm enables an Alchemical to shoot down other projectiles in flight. He need not have Essence Pulse Cannon active to use this Charm. In the Charm's first mode of operation, the character reflexively spends 2

motes to target and fire a small jolt of destructive energy at a single missile that approaches within (Essence x 50) yards. He must be aware of the attack in order to target it. Roll the Alchemical's Dexterity + Archery + Essence as a parry attempt, adding an extra die if the character has the guidance ray upgrade for his Essence Pulse Cannon and wishes to use it. If the projectile targets someone other than the Exalt, he may still attempt to shoot it down, but the difficulty of the parry increases by 3. On a completely successful parry, this Charm destroys physical missiles or dissipates energy-based attacks. The energy only deflects artifact projectiles, sending them clattering harmlessly to the ground. Other objects of extreme durability may also receive this protection at Storyteller discretion, but mortal weapons are generally heat-warped into uselessness. Interceptor Spark Emitter cannot shoot down objects notably larger than a javelin unless the Alchemical is Essence 6+, in which case the Charm suffers no size limitations on targets.

The secondary mode for this Charm costs 3 motes, as the Exalt stands and locks all senses on defense. This counts as a special type of full parry applied against all ranged attacks he perceives and wishes to block, so characters may only use this mode if they have not already acted in the turn. The Exalt parries every missile at his full pool of Dexterity + Archery + Essence, exactly as if using the first mode of this Charm (including the ability to defend others at +3 difficulty). However, the Alchemical cannot abort the defensive trance to protect against hand-to-hand attacks or do anything else.

PULSEWEB ENTANGLEMENT BURST

Cost: 6 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Strength: 5

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Essence Pulse Cannon

With this Charm installed, an Alchemical's Essence Pulse Cannon gains the option to fire compressed nets of Essence in place of its usual energy blasts. Nets are launched using the character's Dexterity + Archery and, by default, lack an accuracy bonus. An Exalt with the guidance ray submodule installed for his Essence Pulse Cannon may use that device to increase accuracy as described. An Alchemical may also use his Essence Pulse Cannon's internal battery to power this Charm if he has that upgrade installed and wishes to do so. No other modification for the cannon may be used. Nets have a range increment of (Essence x 20) yards. If a Pulseweb Entanglement Burst strikes an animate target, make an opposed roll of Strength + Essence for the Alchemical and the victim. If the Alchemical wins, the target is paralyzed for the rest of the

turn inside a glowing crystalline aura (treat as if held immobile in a clinch), and the motes spent on this Charm remain committed until the aura breaks. If the victim wins, the field shatters with no effect.

At the beginning of each new turn, make a new contested roll of Strength + Essence for both Alchemical and victim. This roll is reflexive and does not use the action of either character but continues regardless of whether either party is conscious. If the Alchemical wins, the victim remains held fast in the clinch and suffers one level of unsoakable bashing damage. Victims reduced to Incapacitated stop taking damage but remain held in place by the aura. If the target wins, the aura shatters, and she is free to act normally that turn (provided she is conscious). Alchemicals may voluntarily dissipate an active web at any time.

Nets created with Pulseweb Entanglement Burst do provide two small benefits to victims trapped within. The crystalline auras dampen any external force applied to them, reducing the raw damage of any attack against the victim by the Alchemical's Essence rating (this can reduce an attack to zero damage). In addition, the electrified field inflicts the Exalt's Essence in dice of piercing bashing damage to anyone making a hand-to-hand strike against the entrapped victim.

PROTOSYNTHETIC AMMUNITION REPLICATOR

Cost: 1 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Dexterity: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Aim-Calibrating Sensors

This Charm takes the form of a slight bulbous plate on the Exalt's inner forearm. When charged with Essence, a compartment near the wrist opens, extending a missile manufactured out of raw Essence. The matter composing these missiles is highly unstable, dissipating back into wisps of light after a number of turns equal to their creator's Essence. Until then, however, the missiles are quite solid and real and may be thrown or fired with typically deadly effect. With each activation of this Charm, an Exalt may choose whether to create any one of the following projectiles: arrow (may be target, frog crotch, fowling or broadhead), throwing dagger, throwing baton or chakram (interlocking blades unfold into a blade that loosely resembles a buzz saw). In the case of arrows, a slender tendril slides the projectile out of its factory quiver and automatically feeds or notches the shaft into a carried bow as appropriate (enabling instant firing). Alchemicals produce ammunition sized appropriately to their build, so Chosen of Essence 6+ generate missiles scaled for warstrider use.

REPEATING PNEUMATIC BOW

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Strength: 3

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator

When powered down, this Charm simply adds additional mass and girth to one of the Alchemical's forearms. Upon activation, panels split aside, and a heavy, tube-shaped mechanism folds out and extends its telescoping barrel just over his wrist. Tubes and wires connect this machine to the underlying supports and bulbous Essence capacitors housed inside the arm itself, carrying power and high-pressure steam. An activated Repeating Pneumatic Bow hisses from venting pressure valves and thrums ominously as it charges, making it extremely obvious to all onlookers that it is a highly dangerous magical weapon. This Charm has a base damage of Strength (as modified by its ammunition), accuracy equal to Essence, a range increment of (100 x Essence) yards and an unlimited rate. However, the character must generate all arrows using the internal clip of his Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator. Firing a Repeating Pneumatic Bow does not count as a Charm activation.

In addition to the base function of a Repeating Pneumatic Bow described above, Alchemicals may upgrade the weapon with submodules costing 2 bonus points or 6 experience points. Characters may simultaneously use as many of these augmentations as desired, provided they are not barred from interactions. Players may design additional upgrades of comparable power with Storyteller permission.

Guidance Ray: This integrated targeting beam duplicates the submodule of the same name for Essence Pulse Cannon (see pp. 101-103).

Internal Magazine: With this upgrade installed, the Repeating Pneumatic Bow has its own helical magazine, receiving and storing up to 6 arrows through successive activation of the Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator. As an added bonus, the magazine preserves its arrows in a stasis field so they won't disintegrate until the end of the turn in which they are fired. When firing the weapon, characters may choose to feed it directly from the replicator or the magazine.

SUBLUMINOUS ONSLAUGHT MISSILE

Cost: 10 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Strength: 5

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: Repeating Pneumatic Bow

This Charm upgrades an Alchemical's Repeating Pneumatic Bow, allowing the weapon to fire a needle-thin spike of crystallized Essence at incredible speeds. As usual, the accuracy equals Essence (and uses the Exalt's full Dexterity + Archery to hit). However, the range increment of the spike is one mile (whether the Exalt can even spot possible targets that far away is another matter altogether). Furthermore, the crystal's base damage is [Strength + (Essence x 2)]L, and it cannot be parried without a stunt or Charm. Not only does the attack inflict piercing damage, but if the missile successfully damages anything it hits, it loses one die of raw damage and continues flying in a straight line until it fails to inflict damage. Finally, a wave of displaced air and thunderous, concussive force follows the projectile, knocking victims of human size or smaller back by one foot for every die of damage the projectile inflicts after soak. If any such victims strike a solid surface rather than skidding to a halt across the ground, they suffer 1B damage for each yard further they would have otherwise traveled. This damage may be lethal if the shockwave blasts the victim into a sharp or otherwise deadly surface.

HUNDREDFOLD STRAFING METHODOLOGY

Cost: 8 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Extra Action

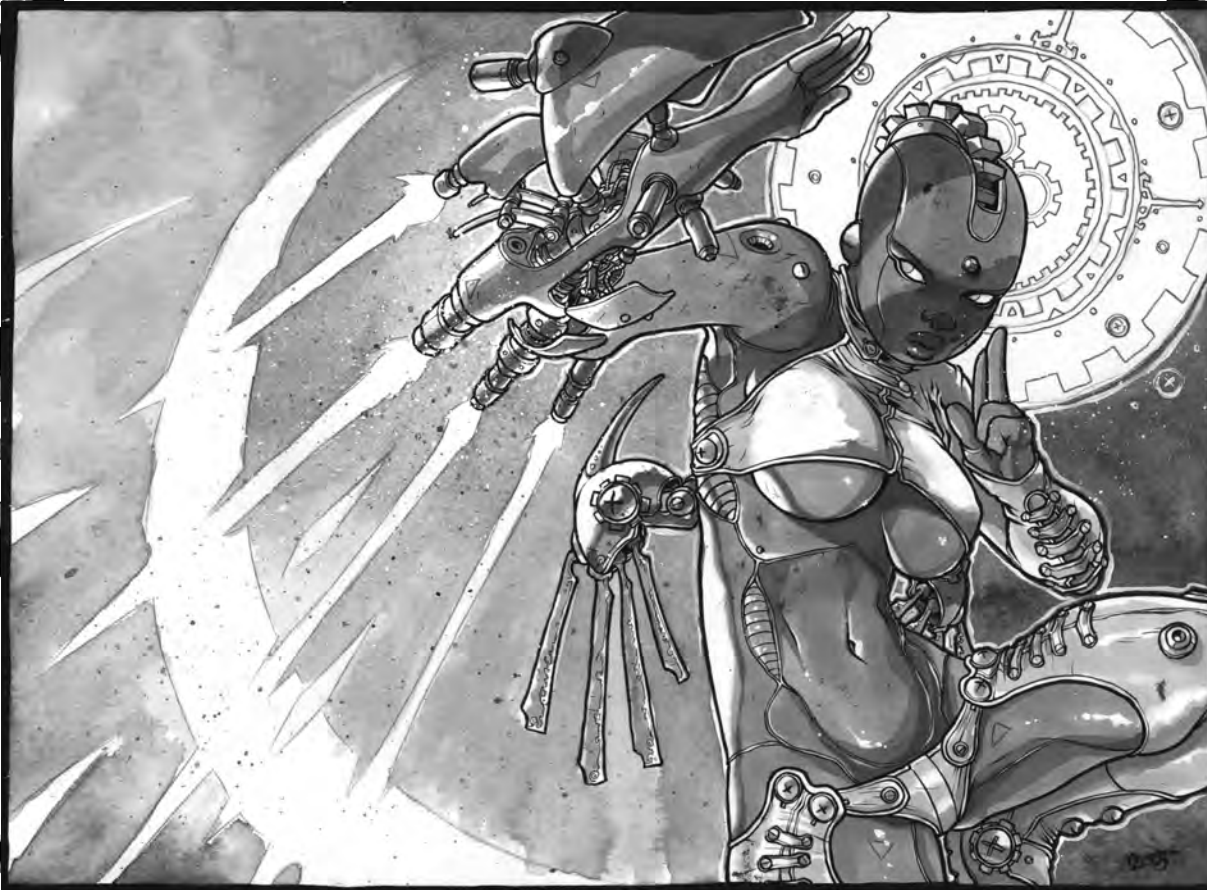
Minimum Dexterity: 5

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: Repeating Pneumatic Bow

This Charm upgrades an Alchemical's Repeating Pneumatic Bow, allowing the weapon to fire a spray of heavy darts across an arc instead of a single, larger projectile. Hundredfold Strafing Methodology generates its own projectiles and does not depend upon prior activation of Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator, but this Charm cannot be activated unless the Alchemical has already deployed his Repeating Pneumatic Bow.

When firing, the Exalt specifies the width of the arc to be covered by the strafe in terms of degrees (up to a maximum of 90°). The Alchemical begins firing in the starting direction, rapidly sweeping his arm to cover the arc. For the full length and duration of this swath, his Repeating Pneumatic Bow fires a constant stream of Essence darts that remain in existence until the end of the turn. Hundreds or even thousands of the barbed metal bolts cut through every possible target in the firing path, friend or foe. The Alchemical's player rolls Dexterity + Archery once and applies the results of this roll to all targets once. The darts have a range increment of 100 yards and inflict a base lethal damage of Essence. Out of combat, this Charm can generally cut down an entire patch of jungle, sawing through a copse of ancient trees in the blink of eye.



TRANSMODAL RAPID TARGETING SYSTEM

Cost: 3 motes per target

Installation Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

Type: Extra Action

Minimum Dexterity: 5

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Aim-Calibrating Sensors

This Charm takes the form of an advanced lattice of synthetic neural clusters and psychokinetic vector modulators painstakingly wired into an Alchemical's arms, spine and brain. Externally, this nerve-lattice appears as a set of geometric tattoos and filigree that glows when powered with Peripheral Essence. When activating this Charm, the Exalt may direct a single projectile to strike multiple targets in succession, or he may fire/throw a near-simultaneous volley of separate missiles.

In its first mode, this Charm surrounds a single projectile with a distinctive aura for a cost of 3 motes. The character fires or hurls the missile as normal at the first target. Depending on the nature of the projectile and the damage inflicted, it may slash the victim as it grazes past or punch entirely through her. Whether the attack hits or misses, the player then selects a new target

and rolls again with the character's full pool. After resolving this attack, the Exalt may pay another 3 motes to choose a new target, repeating this process as desired until the projectile has made a number of total attacks equal to (the Exalt's Essence + 1). No target may be struck more than once. At this point (or following any attack in the sequence), the Alchemical may opt to spend 1 mote to have the projectile return to his hand. Otherwise, the missile remains lodged in the final target. All targets in a cascade must be in range of the attack as traced from the Exalt, and range penalties accrue or remove at usual intervals if a projectile moves between range categories. For weapons such as firewands, which have a maximum range and no increments, every target must be within a radius of that distance from the Exalt. Obviously, instant effects such as the blast of a firewand cannot return to the character's hand.

If the retargeting mode of this Charm is used in a Combo with Essence Pulse Cannon, any upgrades aiding the shot stay consistent as the energy arcs from target to target. The Exalt need only pay the Essence to form the bolt once. If the detonation modification is used, the effect is ignored until the bolt attacks the final target, whereupon it explodes as described for the upgrade.

Firing a Repeating Pneumatic Bow with this mode of the Transmodal Rapid Targeting System requires a Combo with Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator as expected, but the cost of the latter need only be paid once. The retargeting function of this Charm cannot be placed in a Combo with Paramagnetic Tether Beam, Pulseweb Entanglement Burst, Subluminous Onslaught Missile or any other Charm that the Storyteller determines would not make logical sense.

The second mode of this Charm allows the character to release a number of different missiles with superhuman speed. This follows all the same rules and costs as for the first mode, save that the Exalt must have separate ammunition for each attack, cannot recall projectiles back to his hand and may attack the same target multiple times.

If an Alchemical places the volley mode of this Charm in a Combo with Essence Pulse Cannon, he must pay Essence to form each bolt separately but can change the selection of modifications used with each shot. Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator must likewise be activated for each shot in a Combo, whether feeding arrows to a Repeating Pneumatic Bow or used for any other reason. The volley mode of this Charm may be used in a Combo with any of the Charms explicitly banned from interacting with the retargeting mode.

DEDICATED HARMONIC TARGETING

Cost: 3 motes
Installation Cost: None
Duration: Instant
Type: Supplemental
Minimum Perception: 3
Minimum Essence: 3
Prerequisite Charms: Transmodal Rapid Targeting System

The Alchemical locks sensors onto a single target that he can currently perceive, noting the unique Essence signature of the pattern she wishes to destroy. Through the internal nodes of this Charm, she imprints an echo of that signature on a single projectile as she fires/throws it. The projectile shimmers and becomes translucent as it dematerializes, but the unique nature of this dematerialization prevents it from being able to touch anything at all (even incorporeal spirits). The projectile physically ignores all intervening cover (including shields) and other obstacles, removing such penalties. As part of this effect, the missile cannot hit an unintended bystander even on the worst botch. The projectile rematerializes as it is about to strike its intended target, so worn armor still applies its usual protection against the missile. If at the end of the turn the projectile has not struck its intended target, it either disintegrates (for most objects) or teleports back to its master's hand (if an artifact attuned to its owner's Essence). Missiles that strike their intended target remain

lodged accordingly and must be retrieved by other means. The Alchemical may use this Charm to launch a surprise attack through a wall at a target on the other side but must have some way of penetrating the barrier with her senses in order to perceive the victim.

MIGHT AND MOBILITY CHARMS

STRAIN RESISTANT CHASSIS MODIFICATION

Cost: None
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: N/A
Type: Permanent
Minimum Stamina: 2
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

Through the implantation of armored plates, reinforcing struts and redundant parts, the Alchemical is made more resistant to damage. When the Exalt takes this Charm, he may either add two -1 health levels or three -2 health levels. The choice must be declared when the Charm is installed and cannot be altered without reinstallation. Alchemicals may have this Charm installed as many times as their permanent Essence.

The larger frames of Essence 6-7 Alchemical Exalted can incorporate more extensive reinforcement, allowing a choice of three -1 or four -2 health levels per installation of the Charm. The central cores of Essence 8+ Alchemicals may sustain even more damage, either four -1 levels or five -2 levels per installation.

Eclipse and Moonshadow Caste Exalted may not install this Charm.

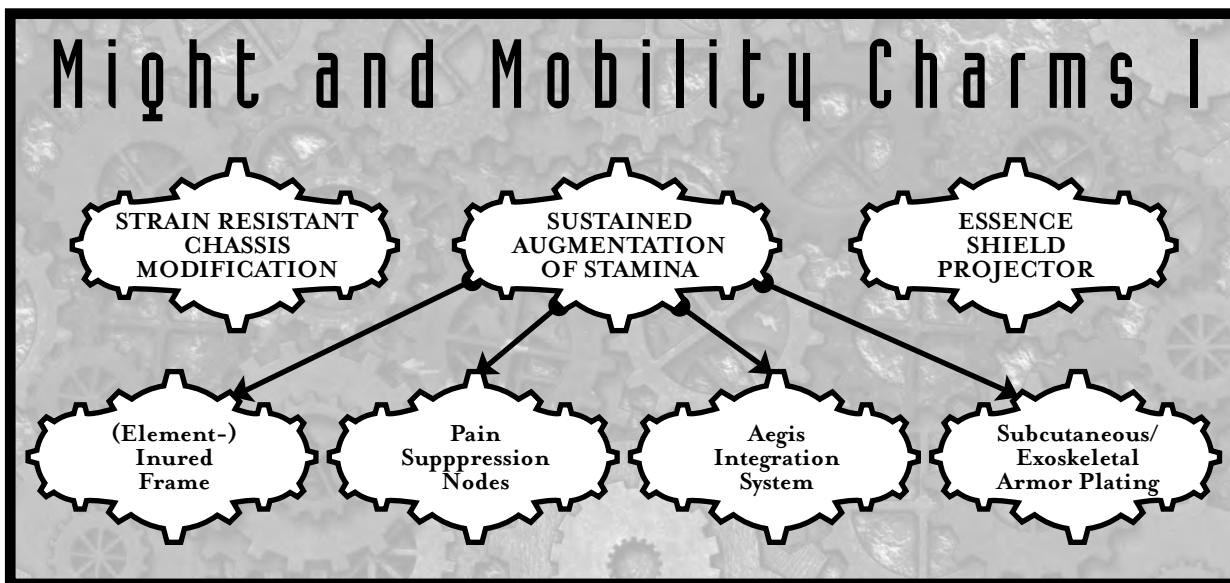
PAIN SUPPRESSION NODES

Cost: 1 mote
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: Indefinite
Type: Simple
Minimum Stamina: 3
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

The Exalt has crystalline amulets inserted into major nerve clusters, designed to regulate and mute pain signals as necessary. He remains fully aware of all injuries without suffering debilitation. When active, this Charm reduces all wound penalties by half the character's Stamina, rounded up. Alchemicals with Essence 6-7 may install a superior variant of this Charm that subtracts their Stamina from all wound penalties. Essence 8+ Alchemicals only need a single installation of Pain Suppression Nodes to become completely immune to all penalties from any physical pain or discomfort.



Might and Mobility Charms I



SUBCUTANEOUS/EXOSKELETAL ARMOR PLATING

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

Depending on the desired configuration, the Exalt either has a fully articulated mesh of dense plates inserted under his skin or a carapace riveted onto his flesh. In the former case, each installation of this Charm adds +2L/+3B to the character's natural soak, but this protection remains hidden from notice. External armor adds +3L/+4B per installation, but this soak counts as armor in every respect and is immediately obvious. Characters can wear other armor in conjunction with Exoskeletal Armor Plating installations, and the two forms of protection are cumulative, but Exalted must have all external armor custom-fitted to accommodate their added bulk. Alchemicals may install this Charm a maximum number of times equal to their Essence, regardless of which mode these installations take.

Exalted with Essence 6-7 may support heavier layers of protective plating than their younger and smaller counterparts, adding +3L/+4B per subcutaneous installation or +4L/+5B per exoskeletal installation. The bulkheads and reactor walls of Essence 8+ Alchemicals are more durable yet, affording a natural soak increase of +5L/+6B/+5A per installation. If using Exalted Power Combat, Essence 6+ versions of this Charm also provide a cumulative hardness of +1L/+2B for subdermal plates or +2L/+3B for external armor. Essence 8+ bulkheads have Hardness +3L/+4B/+2A per installation.

AEGIS INTEGRATION SYSTEM

Cost: 5 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Five minutes

Type: Simple

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

This Charm is built as a set of subdermal ports arranged beside every major joint. When activated by an Alchemical wearing armor, screws extend from every port, pushing against or directly connecting with the protective attire. This process takes 5 minutes to complete. When finished, the armor becomes as a second skin, reducing its mobility penalty and fatigue value by 3 each. In order to remove the armor, the Charm must be activated a second time, causing the screws to retract over another five-minute period.

ESSENCE SHIELD PROJECTOR

Cost: Varies

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

When charged with Essence, a crystal lattice arranged across the Alchemical's skin emits a barrier of pure force like a second skin. This glowing field negates all possibility of stealth, just like an anima banner display at the 8-10 mote range. The effect endures for one scene and has a soak of 1B/1L for every mote spent powering it. Protection afforded by this Charm is considered armor rather than

natural soak, but its flexible, semi-tangible form allows it to function cumulatively with any physical armor the Exalt wears (or has installed through Charms). Characters cannot spend more motes providing simultaneous protection with this Charm than their Stamina + Essence and must also spend 1 Willpower point the first time they raise the armor in a scene.

In its secondary mode of operation, this Charm can create a rounded disk of force centered over the back of the Alchemical's hand. Characters may conjure this disk at the same time they raise full body armor or as a separate activation. The effect acts as an actual physical shield, adding +1 to the difficulty of all attacks against the Exalt for every 2 motes spent, but the sum of all activations cannot add more than the Alchemical's Essence to the difficulty of attacks. Exalted must spend 1 Willpower point the first time they raise the shield disk in a scene.

(ELEMENT)-INURED FRAME

Cost: 5 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One day

Type: Simple

Minimum Stamina: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

The Exalt's body is highly optimized to endure one of the five natural elements native to the Machine God, with the specific benefits depending on the variation installed (each of which is a separate Charm). In most cases, the character becomes completely immune to certain hostile conditions, unless those conditions are brought about through magic (including magical weapons). Metal and crystal permutations provide other benefits as explained below. However, the Charm expressly defends against the magical extremes of Autochthonia's poles. Finally, all of these Charms have the side effect of projecting a bubble of stable reality out to a radius of two yards from the character. Within that zone, all beings and objects are immune to the ravages of the Wyld.

Crystal-Inured Frame: Any injurious contact with a crystal or stone object is converted to bashing damage before applying soak; any such attacks that have a raw damage less than the Exalt's natural bashing soak are ignored.

Lightning-Inured Frame: Fire, lightning and other raw discharges of energy.

Oil-Inured Frame: Acid and other chemicals.

Metal-Inured Frame: As crystal, but applied versus injurious contact with metal.

Steam-Inured Frame: Extremes of temperature or pressure.

INSECTILE LOCOMOTION UPGRADE

Costs: 2 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Dexterity: 3

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Dexterity

The Alchemical's humanoid legs have been surgically removed and replaced with a spider-like thorax, from which large metallic legs extend (Essence x 2 total number of legs). These must be activated if the character is to move, but remain powered as long as he commits the required Essence. If the Charm is later removed, the Exalt may have his organic legs restored through Vat grafting. Installing this Charm gives an Alchemical a point of permanent Clarity, and Insectile Locomotion Upgrade cannot be hidden with an Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier (see pp. 120-121).

Although frighteningly inhuman, the appendages provided by this Charm carry a number of advantages. First, the character's player adds one automatic success to all rolls involving climbing, maintaining balance or resisting any forms of knockback or knockdown. Second, the powerful limbs end in claws that can be used as weapons in conjunction with Brawl, Martial Arts or Melee (as desired), provided that the character keeps at least three legs on the ground at all times for support (speed +3, accuracy +1, damage +4L, defense +0). In Exalted Power Combat, the claws have rate 3. The claws have no fingers and cannot grasp anything but may be used to pin someone against the floor with a clinch (requiring the same rolls and concentration as any other clinch). Third, the legs are extremely strong, adding 2 to the Exalt's Strength + Athletics total for the purposes of feats of strength using the limbs. Fourth, the waist connecting the Charm to the character's upper torso can spin freely, allowing for abrupt changes in facing or pivoting to follow circling attackers. No rules govern this ability, although players may certainly exploit the feature for stunts. Finally, the Exalt increases his ground speed by an additional 25 percent of normal. Fortunately, the limbs granted by this Charm are very dexterous and able to swivel forward and rear, allowing the Exalt to scuttle through passageways as narrow as he normally could with a humanoid lower body.

ALLOYED REINFORCEMENT OF FLESH

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

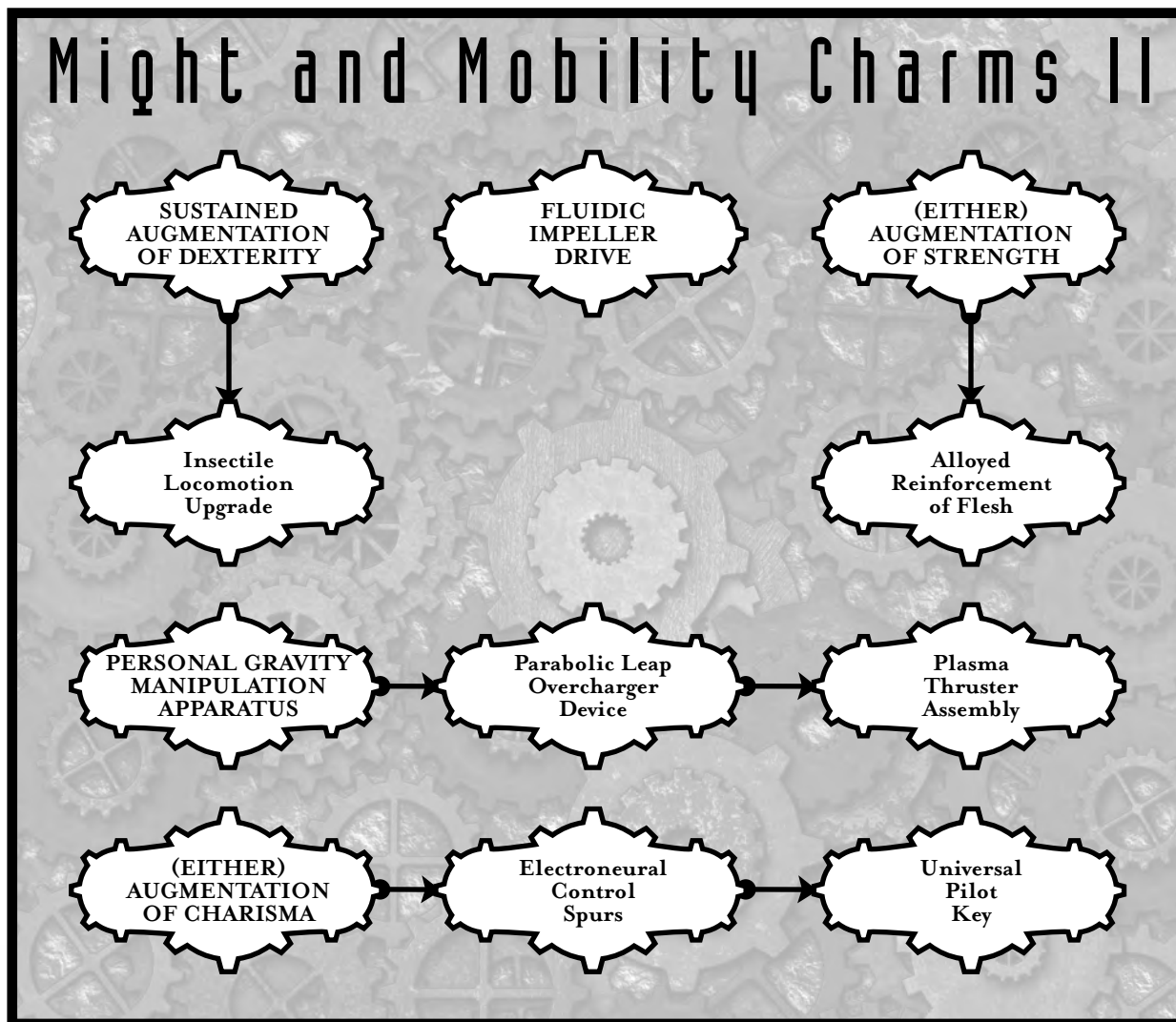
Minimum Strength: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained or Transitory Augmentation of Strength



Might and Mobility Charms II



The character's bones are plated in metal, with reinforcing wires threaded through every muscle for added power. This adds +1L/+1B to the character's natural soak. In addition, whenever the character uses an anima power or Charm to temporarily increase his Strength rating and performs a feat of strength, all bonus dice/dots are doubled.

PERSONAL GRAVITY MANIPULATION APPARATUS

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Strength: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm is housed as a set of reinforcing components and Essence capacitors in the lower legs. When activated, the device allows the Alchemical to twist gravity's pull on his body in one of two ways. Each mode of the

Charm must be activated separately if the two are to function concurrently.

In the primary mode, the Exalt control the orientation of "down" in relation to himself. This effect allows the character to walk or run along any slope as if it were flat ground, including walls and ceilings (but does not strengthen such surfaces in any way, so they must be capable of bearing his weight). The realignment of down only extends a number of feet equal to the Alchemical's Essence from the sole's of the character's feet. If he jumps too high or is pulled far enough away from a surface, his gravitational orientation shifts to the default configuration of the world around him (possibly resulting in falls and injury). Breaking contact does not end the Charm, however, so acrobatic Exalted can perform all manner of stunts, such as leaping from a wall and somersaulting to land safely on the ceiling.

The secondary function of this Charm allows the Alchemical to reduce his weight to as little as 15

percent of normal. The character's movement speed increases by half when he weighs between 50 and 75 percent of normal, and his speed doubles when he weighs 50 percent of normal or less. Obviously, a lightened Exalt will have difficulty running in certain circumstances, and Storytellers may require Dexterity + Athletics rolls when faced with a strong crosswind or other force. Apply the Charm's speed multiplier to any knockback distance or similar effect.

PARABOLIC LEAP OVERCHARGER DEVICE

Cost: 2 motes per turn or 1 mote

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Varies

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Strength: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Personal Gravity Manipulation Apparatus

Expanding the function and design of the Personal Gravity Manipulation Apparatus with components behind each knee, the Alchemical gains the ability to defy gravity more spectacularly. Depending on which mode the Exalt uses, she may levitate or leap great distances in a single bound.

In the first mode of operation, the character's anima trails from the base of her feet in a brilliant contrail that colors the air behind her. Each turn, she can move up to her Strength in yards vertically and as much as (Strength x 2) yards horizontally without regard for gravity. While in midair, she can perform any actions she could do normally and may adjust her trajectory at will, rising as high as her reserves of Essence allow. Levitation costs 2 motes per turn of effect and the character may purchase as many turns of effect as desired with every use of the Charm. If the duration runs out, the Exalt must immediately renew the effect, or she falls. Alchemicals with this Charm installed may safely descend from any height simply by activating the Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device immediately before impact.

The secondary mode of this Charm costs 1 mote and has an instant duration, but the character can only use the effect once per turn. The Exalt crouches and springs, momentarily dampening gravity in order to catapult himself extra distance. Such a leap can carry the Exalt up to (Strength x Essence) yards vertically and as much as five times that distance horizontally. The Exalt can attack in the same turn as he leaps but receives no special bonuses for doing so apart from the possible element of surprise. A common technique for Exalted wishing to levitate from substantial height is to leap with the secondary mode of the Charm and then activate the primary mode to begin hovering mid-jump.

PLASMA THRUSTER ASSEMBLY

Costs: 2 motes or 4 motes, 1 Willpower or 10 motes/hour

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant or one hour

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Strength: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device

The Exalt has a pair of heavily shielded nozzles mounted in the soles of his feet or in a retractable mechanism on his back. Regardless of their placement, the Charm has the same effect, propelling the Alchemical through the air at great speed on jets of glowing force.

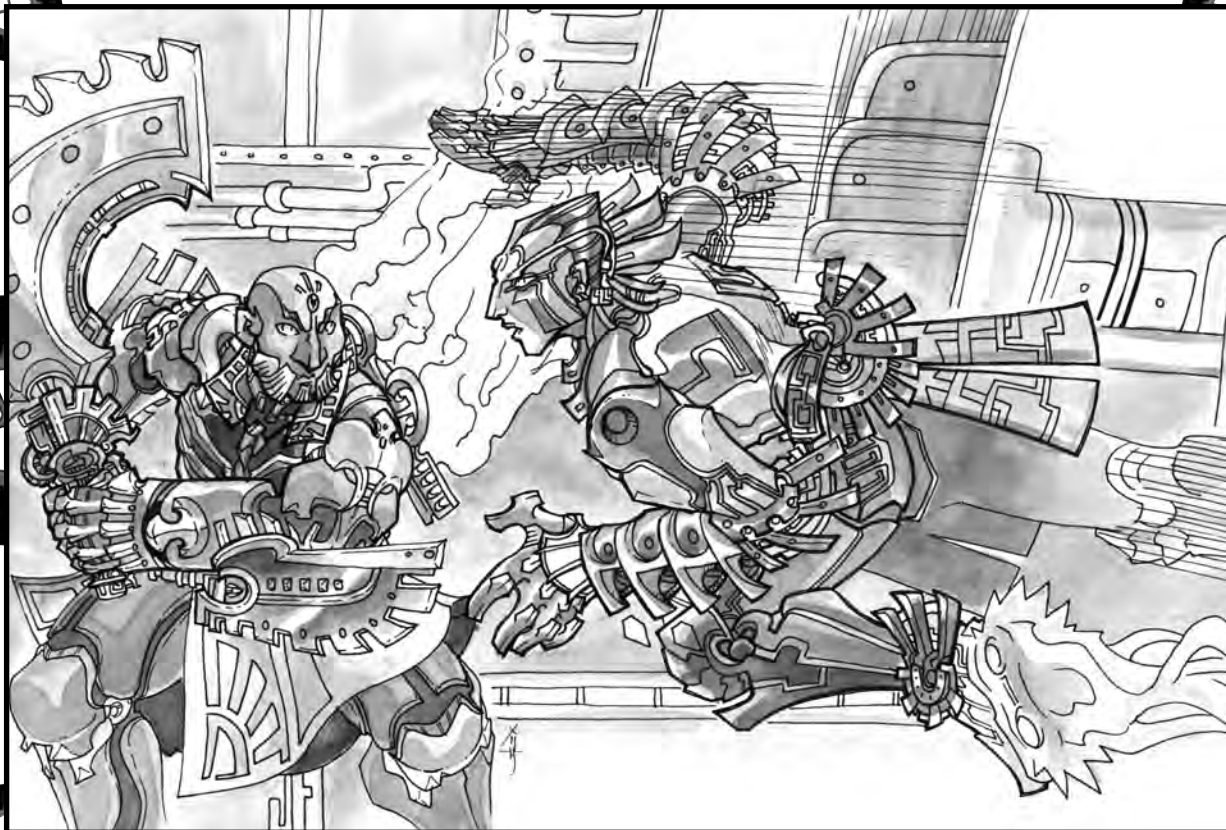
In its most basic use, the Plasma Thruster Assembly allows the Exalt to cover great distances in a single burst of acceleration costing 2 motes. The Alchemical may travel up to (Strength x 50) yards in a straight line as a single movement but cannot engage this burst more than once per turn.

As an alternative to mere motion, the Exalt may precisely aim a thruster burst so as to reach and strike an opponent up to (Strength x 30) yards away in hand-to-hand combat. This use of the Charm costs 4 motes and 1 point of Willpower, but the force of impact doubles the raw damage of a single Brawl, Martial Arts or Melee-based attack. If the attack hits (whether or not it inflicts damage), the victim also suffers immediate knockdown or knockback unless her player makes a successful reflexive Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 2).

The final use of this Charm facilitates long-distance travel, costing 10 motes per hour of flight. The character travels at speeds up to (Strength x 15) miles per hour and may slow to a speed as low as (Strength x 10) miles per hour. All maneuvers require a Dexterity + Athletics roll, with a difficulty set by the Storyteller based on the complexity of the task. A failure may or may not have catastrophic results depending on the obstacles that lie in the character's path, but a botch invariably leads to painful crash or stalls the Charm for an hour (inflicting at least 15L damage from impact or subsequent falling damage as appropriate). Characters must concentrate while flying and cannot fight or perform any other complex actions without automatically crashing.

Everything one yard beneath or behind the Exalt at the time he engages any mode of this Charm suffers 5L from the heat and force of the thrust, and this energy will set flammable objects afire. The Plasma Thruster Assembly works underwater but leaves a trail of steam bubbles and an intense pressure wake that can be heard and tracked for miles.





FLUIDIC IMPELLER DRIVE

Costs: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One day

Type: Simple

Minimum Strength: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm takes the form of retractable jet modules set in various points on the Alchemical's body. When powered, the device sucks ambient fluids through intake valves and pumps it out of thrust nozzles at high velocity to aid swimming. As long as this Charm is active, the Exalt has neutral buoyancy regardless of his actual weight or the density of the fluid around him. More importantly, he can swim at his normal running speed and can otherwise act without penalty when under water or other fluids up to the viscosity of heavy oil.

ELECTRONEURAL CONTROL SPURS

Cost: 6 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Charisma: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: *Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Charisma*

The Exalt has two pairs of retractable tendrils coiled in ports mounted in his forearms and inner calves. When activated, the most appropriate pair of these needle-tipped tentacles extend, plugging into any form of mount the character could direct with the Ride Ability.

Although living mounts are not found in Autochthonia, the technology of this Charm eerily integrates with beasts of Creation. When bonding with a living creature, the Electroneural Control Spurs penetrate the steed's flanks (inflicting one level of unsoakable bashing damage) and extend myriad threads into the creature's nervous system. Such an animal must be large enough to bear the Exalt and, if sentient, must consent to the effect or the threads cannot lock in place. This temporary fusion provides numerous advantages. First, the steed becomes far more tractable, reducing its control rating by the Exalt's Charisma. It will not and cannot throw the Exalt off, but it won't automatically follow every order with perfect obedience unless this Charm reduces the control rating to zero (in which case no rolls are necessary to control it under stressful conditions such as battle). Second, the bond of neural synergy heightens the level of coordination possible between mount and rider, so the Alchemical adds his permanent Essence to his Ride rating for the purpose of all rolls related the steed. This bonus also raises the cap on the use of other Abilities while

mounted. Third, the physical connection of the spurs makes the Alchemical virtually impossible to forcibly dismount. In general, no amount of damage or knockback pushes the Alchemical from the saddle if it does not also kill the steed. This connection can prove a liability if the steed is pushed into a roll or founders. In such cases, the Alchemical must terminate the Charm and rapidly withdraw the spurs, or else, he risks being crushed beneath the beast, dragged off a cliff or otherwise subject to whatever unpleasant fate is appropriate to the circumstance. Also, the Alchemical must end the Charm if he wishes to dismount for any reason.

If the Alchemical uses his Electroneural Control Spurs to link with an artificial mount, the effects change slightly. The spurs still plug in but do so through designated ports or by carefully sliding microfilaments through cracks and joints rather than damaging the object. Second, artificial steeds are generally fearless and placid, lacking a control rating. In the unusual case that the mount somehow has a control rating (such as from possession by a willful spirit), this rating decreases as noted above. The Alchemical still receives the bonus to his Ride rating from the link and may actually pilot the steed or vehicle through the spurs without operating any controls or exerting any of the normally required movements. Lastly, the physical connection provides the same strong tether as with a living mount, removing the need for straps or harnesses in the case of vehicles that normally require them for safe operation (such as warbirds and other small models of skycraft).

This Charm also facilitates a superior connection to warstriders for Exalted small enough to fit inside the colossal war machines (rather than fighting *as* warstriders like elder Alchemicals do). In this case, all four spurs extend into the armor, replacing the need for familiarization or conventional harnesses. This bonding allows the Exalt to strap in and attune with only a single turn of concentration rather than the usual five minutes. The cost of attunement also decreases by 5 motes. Most impressively, the Exalt reduces the mobility penalty and fatigue value of the armor by his Essence rating. For more information on warstriders and their operation, see **Savant and Sorcerer**.

UNIVERSAL PILOT KEY

Cost: 14 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Charisma: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Electroneural Control Spurs

With this Charm, the Alchemical's Electroneural Control Spurs receive a substantial increase in their degree and range of power. The Exalt can extend a single tendril and plug it into a larger vehicle or vessel (i.e., one that requires the Sail Ability to operate). This link allows him

to pilot and control the functions of the craft as if it were an extension of his own body. This Charm is of no use in piloting actual sailing vessels of the sort used in Creation during the Second Age, since these ships are purely and primitively mechanical, lacking any Essence-driven systems with which to bond.

If the Alchemical bonds with a First Age naval vessel, skycraft or other large vessel powered by Essence (such as the pneumatic trams that connect the nations of Autochthonia), his body falls into a nearly catatonic state. He can still perceive the world around him and can speak with difficulty, but more substantial movement is impossible without ending the Charm. For the duration of the attunement afforded by the Universal Pilot Key, the ship is his body. All systems respond to his telepathic control, allowing him to open or close doors, to switch glow panels on or off, to communicate through any speaker devices and to perform other basic feats automatically (to a maximum number of minor actions equal to his Wits rating per turn without devoting any dice actions to the task). If the vessel normally requires a commitment of Essence to pilot, that requirement decreases by 10 motes. The Alchemical can pilot the vessel with thought alone, his player adding the Exalt's Essence to all Sail rolls. Finally, the Exalt extends his senses throughout the ship and is able to see from any vantage point within or facing out of the hull. He can only see from one vantage point at a time, however, so he cannot monitor the interior without being blind to what lies ahead or vice versa.

Alchemicals cannot use this Charm to bond with vessels larger on their widest dimension than (their Charisma x 20) yards. In the case of particularly long pneumatic trains, the Exalt only needs to control the lead or rear car and relays extend the control to the rest of the train. Vessels bigger than this limit require a team of Alchemicals to operate, with one of the group designated the captain. Anyone in the crew can operate components of the ship or perform piloting tasks, but the captain retains primary interface and can reflexively veto any command from the other crewmates.

SOCIAL CHARMS

PATTERN FACILITATION MODULE

Cost: 8 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 motes

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

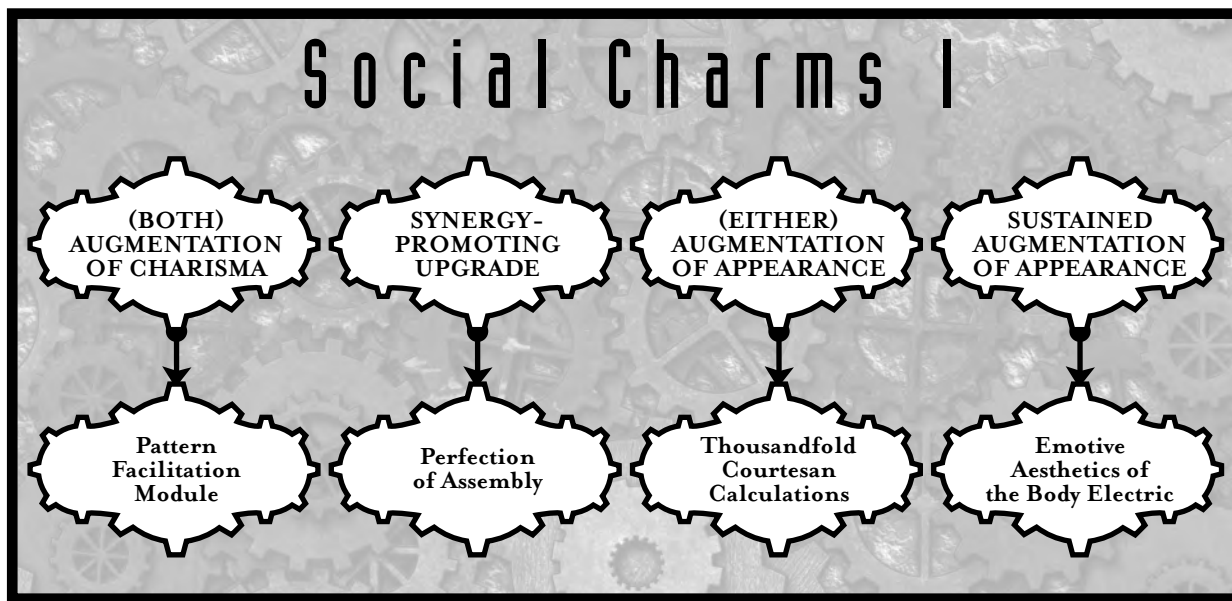
Minimum Charisma: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory and Sustained Augmentation of Charisma

The Alchemical has an artificial gland implanted into her brain, which appears as an almost imperceptible bulge on her skull. When activated, the cluster of

Social Charms I



preprogrammed synapses and probability distortion nodes releases a pulse of Essence that rapidly diffuses through the fabric of nearby reality. The Exalt must designate a policy that an existing organization is currently considering for implementation (even if most members are opposed to the agenda). At least one member of that organization must be in the Alchemical's presence when she activates the Pattern Facilitation Module (or she must be a member).

As a result of using this Charm, all members of the organization with a permanent Willpower less than the Exalt's Essence immediately come to favor the stated agenda and will vocally support the plan and seek to convince others to do the same. Those with a Willpower equal to or up to twice (the Exalt's Essence feel predisposed toward the policy but are still not entirely convinced. They could be swayed either way by evidence or arguments but are more likely to favor the policy than oppose it. Those with higher Willpower than this are not swayed in the slightest, but will at least consider the agenda on its merits rather than their own prejudices. Beings with Essence of 2+ are completely immune to this Charm. If a targeted organization has more valid targets among its membership than (the Exalt's Charisma x 20), the Charm affects up to that number of people, starting with those who have the lowest Willpower rating and working up.

Repeated use of the Charm on the same agenda and organization spreads the effect to reach more targets wherever the prior activation(s) left off. All enchantment wrought by this Charm last until the designated agenda is officially endorsed or rejected by the leadership of the organization or until the Exalt chooses to withdraw Essence committed to the effect. Note that organizations may endorse a plan only to reject it later if the agenda

proves ineffective or leads to problems for the group. For the purposes of this Charm, an organization may be as informal as a gathered mob or as tightly hierarchical as a local subbranch of the Tripartite, but the group must have some common identity in order for the effect to spread through them. By its nature, Pattern Facilitation Module works best when targeted to as specific a subset of a group as possible.

SYNERGY-PROMOTING UPGRADE

Cost: 1 mote per target
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: One turn
Type: Reflexive
Minimum Charisma: 2
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

The Exalt has a cluster of orichalcum threads tangled around a jade nodule in his chest, the entire mass of which adjoins his Essence reservoir. When activating the Charm, the Exalt must specify a single task that could be achieved by the end of the turn and pays 1 mote per target. He must be aware of targets in order to affect them and may target himself. The player of every target of the Charm who directly works toward that objective may add one die to one roll that furthers the task during the turn (as selected by the player of the character receiving the bonus). This die is considered a form of artificial specialty that follows the normal rules for specialties, including maximums. The Storyteller remains the final arbiter of whether a task is short and defined enough for this Charm to enchant and whether any roll sufficiently furthers the task to receive the bonus.

PERFECTION OF ASSEMBLY

Cost: 3 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimums Charisma: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Synergy-Promoting Upgrade

This Charm expands and focuses the Synergy-Promoting Upgrade, allowing the Alchemical to form a hive-mind Assembly with other Exalted. Forming a hive-mind requires that a minimum of two Alchemicals with this Charm activate it in each other's presence. Once the initial bond is formed, other Exalted can join the Assembly by activating the Charm, but all current members must be present and willing to accept the newcomer into their group. Characters may use this Charm repeatedly to join multiple assemblies, but cannot belong to more total hive clusters than their permanent Essence. No cluster may have more members than the highest Charisma + Essence of anyone in the group.

Members of an attuned Assembly receive a number of benefits. First, they are always aware of the direction and distance of their brethren. Second, an Exalt may gauge the physical well-being of an Assembly-mate at any time as a simple action, revealing the number of health levels she has remaining. Most importantly, members can communicate telepathically as a reflexive power when they are within (Essence x 10) yards of one another. If two members of the Assembly are not in range of one another but are in mutual range of a third member, they can relay thoughts through the middle person (both the relay and the final target hear these messages). Alchemicals may selectively broadcast thoughts to as few or as many Assembly-mates within range as desired. This telepathy is projective only and replaces the need for speech. The power does not in any way allow Exalted to read each other's minds. Wards that block scrying also block the power of an Assembly to locate, analyze or communicate with one another.

THOUSANDFOLD COURTESAN CALCULATIONS

Cost: 5 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Appearance: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Appearance

The Alchemical has a vast database of sexual techniques directly stored in the web of her subconscious, as well as intuitive knowledge of all chakra points and nerve clusters that produce sensual pleasure. By tapping into the suggestion of this lore and allowing the subconscious impression of focused sexual intent to infuse her body

language and inflection, the Exalt becomes an object of intense desire. All her player's seduction rolls for the scene add a number of automatic successes equal to (the Alchemical's Essence - the Essence of the target). Targets of equal or greater Essence are not unduly awed by the sensuousness of her presence.

In addition to facilitating seduction, this Charm aids in the actual act of consummation. Roll the Exalt's Appearance + Performance at standard difficulty, adding automatic successes as for seduction. If the number of successes exceeds the partner's Willpower, he is so awed by the experience that he becomes highly suggestible, adding the Exalt's Essence to the difficulty of all Social, Wits, Willpower or Virtue rolls made to oppose or resist the will of the Alchemical. For every full hour that passes, this difficulty increase cumulatively diminishes by one until it fades completely. More importantly, the experience is highly addictive for mortals. Roll the partner's Temperance (difficulty 2). On a failure, he will do anything that does not bring himself or a loved one to harm in order to obtain another intimate encounter. On a botch, he will do anything for the chance regardless of the cost to self or others. On a success, he retains composure and feels no addiction, although his wits remain addled for the next few hours.

If the number of successes on the Performance roll is greater than the target's Temperance, the difficulty increase begins at half the Exalt's Essence (rounded up) and decreases normally thereafter, and there is no chance of addiction. Successes less than or equaling the partner's Temperance rating achieve nothing but providing an intensely pleasurable experience.

EMOTIVE AESTHETICS OF THE BODY ELECTRIC

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 2 motes

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Appearance: 4

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Appearance

The Exalt's body and movements have received exacting calibration, enabling her to communicate intentions and have a profound impact on others without saying a word. She may apply Social rolls to others without speaking or obviously doing anything, provided the target of her roll can perceive her with one of his senses. She cannot communicate complex thoughts or conduct speech without words, so she cannot make an eloquent point on a specific matter. However, she may attempt to seduce or intimidate others, to attract attention to herself, to make new friends or to "poison the waters" against an adversary who is also present (by conveying overwhelming disdain or distaste for him). Her player makes the normal rolls for these feats but cannot roll more dice for the Social Attribute used than her



character's Appearance rating. Social feats facilitated by this Charm are extremely subtle, requiring a reflexive Perception + Socialize roll (difficulty of the Exalt's Essence) to notice and recognize. If an observer is the target of an emoted feat, his player should immediately make this roll. On a failure, the character does not realize that his feelings have been externally modified, let alone the source. Anyone else who is present when an Exalt uses her Emotive Aesthetics of the Body Electric must be directly and deliberately observing her at the time of the Social roll, or else his player does not get a Perception roll for the character to notice the effect.

EMPATHY SIMULATION ENGINE

Cost: 1 mote
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: One Scene
Type: Simple
Minimum Manipulation: 3
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

Though it has its uses, an abundance of Clarity admittedly makes normal social interactions with mortals difficult. This Charm mitigates that somewhat, taking the form of a riveted implant in the neck, from which a web of barbed tendrils emerges and stretches taught along the skin to reenter the skull at key anchor points. These tendrils are held in place by means of barbed hooks in the brain itself. Activating this Charm is extremely painful, though bearably so. For the rest of the scene, the character reduces his effective Clarity by his Manipulation rating for the purpose of determining Social penalties. However, he receives no opportunity for a Compassion roll to reduce Clarity for interacting with mortals during the scene. Once the duration passes, the false mien of empathy recedes, and the character's full Clarity penalties return. In addition, the Exalt gains a point of Clarity for simulating emotions instead of actually embracing the human condition.

TRANSCENDENT BRUTALITY PROGRAMMING

Cost: None
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: N/A
Type: Permanent
Minimum Manipulation: 4
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Empathy Simulation Engine

This Charm reverses the function of the Empathy Simulation Engine, drawing upon the cold detachment of Clarity to make the Exalt a figure of dread. The Alchemical adds a number of bonus dice equal to his (Clarity ÷ 2, rounded up) to all intimidation or interrogation-based Social rolls. This bonus is considered a form of specialty, cumulative with all other pertinent specialties. Characters temporarily forfeit the bonus awarded by this Charm

whenever they mask Clarity with their Empathy Simulation Engine. While this Charm is installed, Exalted gain a point of permanent Clarity.

CONCEPTUAL ENTROPY MODULE

Cost: 6 motes, 1 Willpower
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: Indefinite
Type: Simple
Minimum Manipulation: 3
Minimum Essence: 3
Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Manipulation

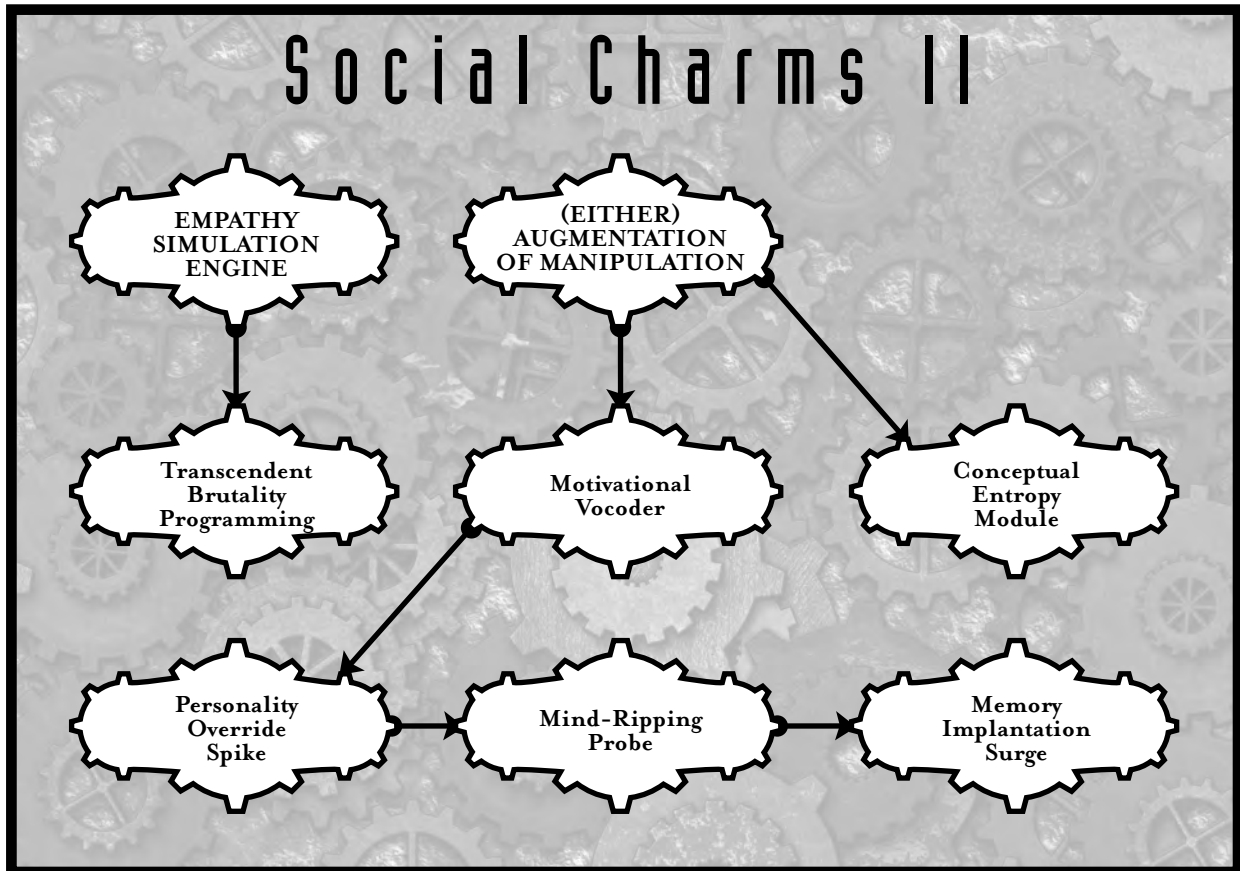
The Alchemical has a spiked gland of soulsteel and starmetal wires buried in his brain. When activated, this Charm generates effects similar to those produced by a Pattern Facilitation Module (see pp. 113-114). Use the rules for that Charm, with the following key differences. First, the character can only attack a plan under consideration by the organization and make it appear foolish, unwise, dangerous or otherwise undesirable. He cannot endorse an alternative or in any way promote a plan. Second, those who fall completely under the sway of this Charm (Willpower less than the Exalt's Essence) hate the targeted agenda with extreme prejudice and will use force or even outright violence to oppose that plan. Those with a Willpower equal to the Exalt's Essence or as high as (his Essence + 2) don't like the plan but may grudgingly be talked into it if given sufficient evidence to do so. Characters with higher Willpower find the plan distasteful and will favor viable alternatives but will not hesitate to pursue the agenda if it is clearly in their best interest to do so. If this Charm is used to oppose an agenda that is supported with an activation of Pattern Facilitation Module, the Exalt with the highest Essence wins, and the lesser effect is negated. In the case of a tie, the Charms cancel, and no adjustment of opinion occurs.

MOTIVATIONAL VOCODER

Cost: 10 motes, 1 Willpower
Installation Cost: 1mote
Duration: One day
Type: Simple
Minimum Manipulation: 3
Minimum Essence: 3
Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Manipulation

This Charm takes the form of a delicate half torc anchored by a rivet in the throat. With this device, the Exalt can give orders to a group and impel them to fulfil that task with greater efficiency. All targets must be present for the Alchemical to address when the Charm is activated, and targets cannot have a permanent Essence of 2+. Furthermore, the Exalt cannot affect more targets with a single activation of this Charm than (her Manipulation

Social Charms II



x 10). For the rest of the day, every target adds one bonus die to any action that directly furthers the assigned task. This bonus is considered a form of artificial specialty and is treated like other specialties. At the end of the day, each character who made use of the bonus loses 1 point of Willpower and adds 1 to the difficulty of his next Conviction roll to regain Willpower. Successive days spent under the influence of this Charm cumulatively increase the penalty to a maximum of the target's Conviction, at which point he cannot regain Willpower with rest. For every full day that the character goes without being enchanted by this Charm, the penalty decreases by one die. Targets reduced to zero temporary Willpower as a result of this Charm are listless and lose one die from all non-reflexive actions unless those actions are in immediate accordance with a Motivational Vocoder directive.

PERSONALITY OVERRIDE SPIKE

Costs: 8 motes, 1 Willpower
Installation Cost: 2 motes
Duration: Instant
Type: Reflexive
Minimum Manipulation: 5
Minimum Essence: 3
Prerequisite Charms: Motivational Vocoder

The Alchemical has a foot-long spike mounted in an arm or other appendage, which he can retract or extend as a reflexive action without activating the Charm. This probe is extremely sharp and slender and may be wielded as a stiletto (damage is piercing, but the spike otherwise uses the same statistics as a short sword). However, the primary purpose of the spike is not as a mere weapon, but as an instrument of mind control. If the Exalt pierces a sentient being of equal or lower permanent Essence and inflicts any levels damage, he may opt to spend 8 motes and 1 Willpower point to activate this Charm. Outside of combat, the needle may be inserted more carefully and need not inflict any damage if the victim does not resist. Once inserted, the spike releases hundreds of burrowing microfilaments that rapidly thread their way through nerve bundles to the spine and up into the brain. As these threads spread out and begin conducting electrical impulses, both the Alchemical and the victim lose conscious awareness of the world around them and remain paralyzed for the rest of the turn (and potentially longer as explained below). Neither character can take any conscious actions or take any automatic reflexive actions not permitted while locked in a clinch.

At the beginning of the next turn after successful injection, make an opposed roll of Essence + Willpower for



the Exalt and the victim. If the victim wins, both she and the Exalt awaken as the thwarted wires retract back into the spike. The victim instinctively pushes herself free, causing the spike to slide out of her wound. If the Exalt wins the contest, record the net successes. Repeat the contested roll at the beginning of each new turn until the victim wins or the Exalt cumulatively obtains three net successes. (If a victim offers no resistance, no contested roll is required.) If the Exalt conquers a victim's mind, each full turn spent maintaining the link allows him to inflict one of the following effects as a simple action. The Exalt can terminate the link and retract the probe at any time.

- The victim gains or loses a dot from a Virtue (maximum •••••, minimum •).
- The victim's Nature changes to whatever archetype the Exalt desires (usually Follower).
- The victim gains or loses a dot of permanent Willpower (maximum 8, minimum 0 for mortals, minimum 1 for magical beings). If permanent Willpower is reduced below a victim's current pool, any excess of the new rating is lost.
- The victim forgets a specific contiguous period of memory beginning and ending at points in time selected by the Exalt. The Alchemical does not know what is erased without other magic and cannot delete a period of memory greater than five years per turn.
- The victim suffers neural overload and remains unconscious for the rest of the scene (even after the spike withdraws) unless violently shaken awake.
- The victim dies as her brain shuts down (Essence 1 mortals and non-magical beings only).

In mortals, any Trait or memory loss or Nature change wrought by this Charm is permanent, at least to the degree that further experience point expenditure and major life circumstances do not subsequently change them. Any Traits that receive an increase lose one bonus dot per week. Victims reduced to 0 permanent Willpower are used as slaves in Autochthonia; these wretches are only capable of performing the most mindless tasks and cannot communicate or vocalize anything beyond a droning hum.

Exalted and other magical beings are far more resistant to mental change. They heal one dot of every single diminished Trait per day, followed by a restoration of their Nature after another day passes. Bonus dots likewise fade at the rate of one per day. Memories return more slowly and never completely without some form of magical restoration; remembering any deleted experience requires some form of prompting and a Willpower roll (difficulty 1-5 as selected by the Storyteller based on the subjective importance and emotional significance of the memory; powerful memories are easier to recall). Once the victim remembers a particular experience, she needs no prompting or roll to do so thereafter.

Forcibly separating an Alchemical from a victim while the two are linked through the spike abruptly terminates the connection (requiring a Strength + Athletics roll, difficulty 2). However, this is not always the best course of action, since the spike's filaments cause internal lacerations as they rip free and retract. The victim suffers three levels of lethal damage that can only be resisted with her natural soak.

MIND-RIPPING PROBE

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Manipulation: 5

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: Personality Override Spike

With this Charm installed, an Alchemical can use his Personality Override Spike as a conduit to read a victim's memories. He must first break the victim's will as described for that Charm. Once this is accomplished, he may perform either of the following feats as a simple action, just like any other mental modification:

- Ask any one question of the victim regarding his past experiences. The victim involuntarily answers by showing vignettes of the most pertinent memories. Specific queries will yield more specific results. The victim's player selects what scenes to play, but if she is too cryptic and vague in her response and the question is straightforward, the Storyteller may demand that she include more information in her response.

- Search for false or deleted memories. Roll the Alchemical's Wits + Awareness at standard difficulty. Ignore all successes above his own Essence rating. He finds all falsehoods and deletions created by beings whose permanent Essence was equal or less than the number of successes rolled at the time of the alteration. He does not know what the underlying truth actually is unless he reverses the procedure with Memory Implantation Surge (see below) and then studies the formerly damaged areas with the first use provided by this Charm.

MEMORY IMPLANTATION SURGE

Costs: None

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Manipulation: 5

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: Mind-Ripping Probe

This Charm augments the function of a Personality Override Spike, enabling the probe to insert false memories after breaking a victim's will. Adjusting memory is performed like any other mental modification as a simple action.

Roll the Alchemical's Manipulation + (Performance, Presence or Lore, whichever is highest) against a difficulty of the target's Essence. The number of successes determines the degree of memory modification that is possible. With one success, the Exalt may make superficial changes. For instance, "You went directly to the cafeteria after your shift on that day" (when in truth the subject first stopped by the bunks to look for her friends). With two successes, he can dictate gross changes that lack any finesse and may not mesh

with associative memory continuity. For example "You had an uneventful week" (when that was actually the week that the victim lost her best friend in an industrial accident). If confronted with contradictory evidence, the victim knows the memories must be false and can reconstruct what actually happened but still remembers the falsehoods as if she experienced them. With three successes, the Alchemical may perform one sweeping change that permeates throughout the victim's entire memory. Evidence can prove this memory to be false, but it always feels real. "You remember nothing of your mother." Four successes allow for a total rewrite of a segment of memory up to five years long, filled with as much detail as the Alchemical desires. Five successes can rewrite a victim's entire life down to the smallest detail with as much or as little change as desired.

Ordinary mortals do not naturally recover their original memories on their own but may have odd and confusing dreams of their true pasts if they are particularly strong-willed (Willpower 7+). Magical beings can challenge a memory they know to be false with a Willpower roll (difficulty of the Alchemical's Essence). On a botch, they once again believe that the false memory is true and require new convincing. If successful, the false memory shatters, and the truth resurfaces.

Memory Implantation Surge can also remove a programmed falsehood or erased segment of memory, provided the Alchemical knows that the area of recall is damaged. Such absolute certainty may be obtained through Mind-Ripping Probe or detective work and contradictory evidence. Once a damaged portion is fixed, the truth resurfaces and completely overrides the programmed replacement.

IDENTIFYING CHARMS

As implanted artifacts, Alchemical Charms are highly visible and often quite distinctive. Informed opponents can often guess at a particular Chosen's capabilities with a glance or, at the very least, make an educated guess. The system for identification is as follows: Roll the observer's Intelligence + Occult at a difficulty of the Charm's minimum Essence. One success reveals whether the device is offensive, defensive or neither. Three successes reveal a general idea of the Charm's primary function. Five successes reveal the exact workings of the Charm. Alchemicals automatically recognize any Charms they have previously installed in themselves without requiring a roll. Observers who are unfamiliar with Autochthonian technology (such as the vast majority of people in Creation) add 1 to the difficulty of the Occult roll until they have had sufficient encounters with Alchemicals to begin recognizing Charm designs.

STEALTH AND DISGUISE CHARMS

INTEGRATED ARTIFACT TRANSMOGRIFIER

Cost: 1 mote per Charm or 5 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Appearance: 1

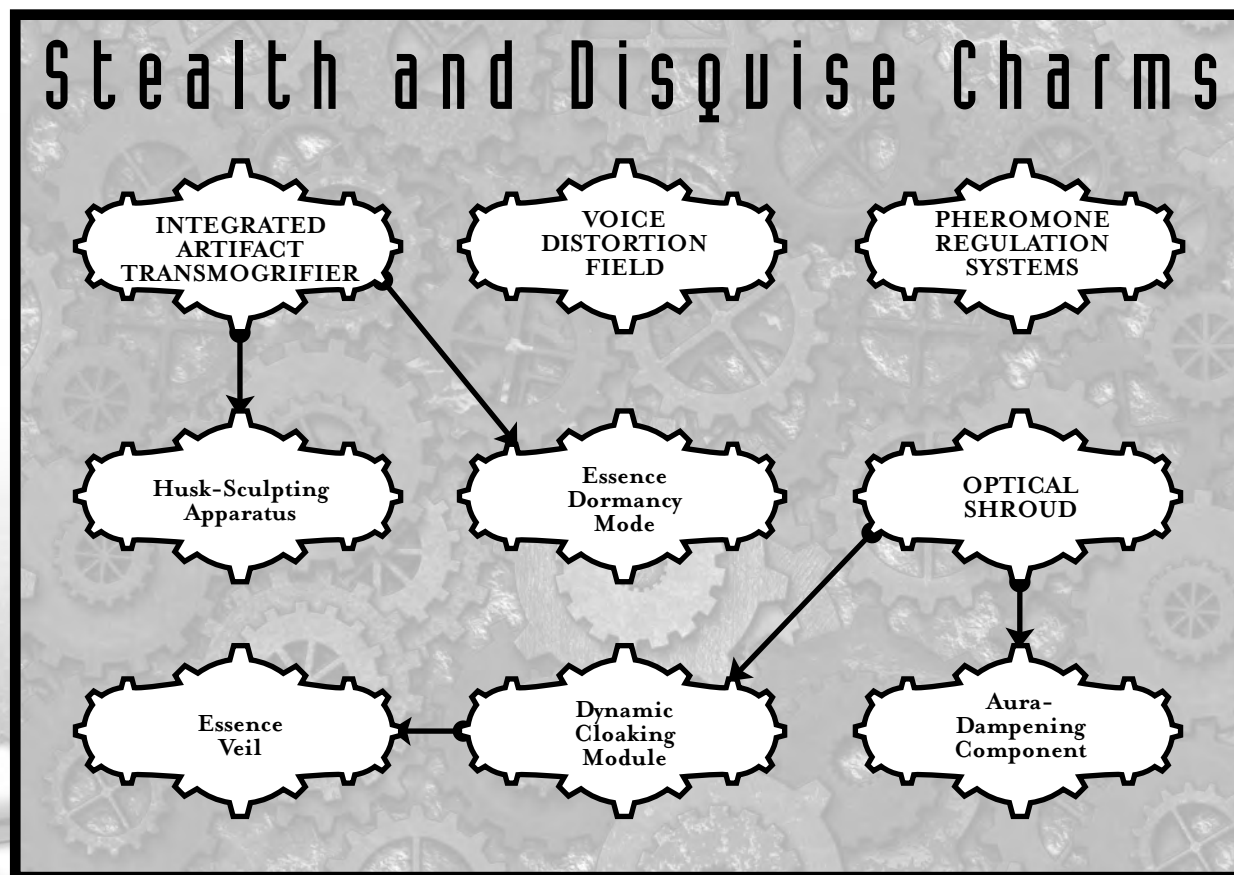
Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

As a complex system of artificial flesh patches and other mechanisms, the Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier betrays no outward signs of its presence. More importantly, the Charm physically conceals other visible Charms with its activation. Suppressed devices retract and compress under the Exalt's skin through compartment panels, while her claylike flesh morphs and spreads to cover the area previously occupied by the Charms. The entire transformation takes only moments, regardless of the number of Charms suppressed. The cost of activating the Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier is 1 mote per individual Charm or 5 motes to suppress as many Charms as desired. Normally, the act of suppressing a Charm automatically deactivates it if already in use. Only permanent-type Charms continue to function while hidden and then only if they could logically do so (Storyteller discretion). Hiding a Charm

freees any Essence committed as part of an activation cost but does not free the Essence required to install the device. Characters may activate hidden Charms normally and may reactivate any permanent-type Charms forced into dormancy as a reflexive action that does not count as a Charm activation. Activating a hidden Charm negates its concealment, causing the Charm to emerge and unfold to its usual configuration. This act also releases the Essence committed to hiding it. If a character hides multiple Charms using the 5 mote option, the activation of one Charm reveals *all* the Charms concurrently hidden (and ends the effects of the Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier). Hidden Charms cannot be detected with any form of Essence sight or other such magic unless the observer has a permanent Essence two or more dots higher than the Alchemical. Characters need not conceal Charms that lack a visible outward form unless they wish to hide them from Essence sight.

As a final benefit, Alchemicals with Essence 2-5 may use their Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier to appear fully human. Note that those with Essence 4-5 remain at their imposing stature, and a 12-foot-tall mortal is a giant and will attract considerable attention regardless of how human he looks. In Creation, such a character may be mistaken for a Wyld mutant. Alchemicals with Essence 6+ are simply too massive and too alien to hide their nature.



Appearing human requires Alchemical Exalts to suppress *all* outwardly visible Charms, at which time they may spend 1 Willpower point as a reflexive action to transform and vivify their flesh. A wave of power spreads outward from their soulgems and traces their bodies, adding warmth and mortal pigmentation to their skin. Even the most well-trained and keen-eyed observers perceive the Exalts as human. Only diagnostic magic or Essence sight can pierce the ruse. If cut, such an Exalt bleeds a fluid with the viscosity, color and other basic physical properties as blood (instead of the usual secretion of faintly luminous oil that Alchemicals normally release when injured). This semblance of mortality lasts a single day, after which the enchantment must be renewed with more Willpower. When adopting a mortal visage, Alchemicals may retract their soulgem if so desired (for instance, to pass themselves off as a native of Creation) or cause the artifact to appear as a soulgem associated with any tier of Autochthonian society. Using a suppressed Charm temporarily breaks the mortal guise until the Charm is retracted once more through the use of Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier. This Charm may be placed in a Combo despite its non-instant duration.

ESSENCE DORMANCY MODE

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Appearance: 2

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier

While an Alchemical may hide specific Charms from physical and magical detection using the Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier, that device cannot mask the Exalt's true nature from Essence sight and other such magic. This upgrade overcomes that limitation, allowing the Chosen to shield his Essence reservoir behind lead panels and coils of power-draining soulsteel. Upon activating Essence Dormancy Mode, the Exalt may lower his permanent Essence by as many dots as desired for as long as the Charm remains active (to a minimum rating of 1). This does *not* reduce the Exalt's size. Characters may not access or activate Charms with minimum Essence requirement higher than their dampened rating. The effects of active Charms temporarily shut down, but any Essence committed to sustain them remains committed for the usual duration. Even permanent-type Charms cease to provide their benefits. Only a prior activation of a disguise-based Charm (such as Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier or Voice Distortion Field, see p. 122), a Biofunction Inhibitor (see p. 130), a Biostasis Field Projector (see p. 134) and/or this Charm are exempt from this limitation, allowing a character to masquerade as human (or

a dead human through use of the two medical Charms). An Alchemical reduced to Essence 1 shuts down his Essence completely. He has no access to his Essence pools, but neither can he be detected by Charms or powers that detect latent magic. Likewise, his anima deactivates. A character may shut down this Charm by reflexively ending commitment; this immediately reactivates all Charms and powers. Doing so restores the Exalt's anima to whatever level it was when it turned off, after which the aura dissipates normally. This Charm may be placed in a Combo despite its non-instant duration.

HUSK-SCULPTING APPARATUS

Costs: 10 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Appearance: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier

This Charm takes the form of hundreds of tiny wire hooks linking pistons to key points under the Exalt's skin, as well as a bank of Essence-fueled pigment injectors. By activating this Charm, an Exalt may recalibrate his physical appearance. He cannot exactly duplicate anyone else, although he can approximate someone else's build and coloration sufficiently to add three dice to any mundane impersonation attempt (provided he has seen the person he wishes to emulate). More often, this Charm is used cosmetically to tailor a character's physique, though spies often use it in conjunction with Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier to give themselves a new look when infiltrating cells of heretics and dissidents. An altered visage may have a temporary Appearance as low as 0 or as high as the character's permanent rating. Those with Appearance 0 may be freakish or simply terrifying. If the latter, these characters' players add an extra two dice to all intimidation-based Social rolls. Note that Exalted always base their ability to meet the prerequisites of Charms on permanent Appearance rather than temporary. Characters with Essence 3+ may even use this Charm to swap their gender or to assume a hermaphroditic/genderless body. This feat is not quite as dramatic as it sounds given the irrevocable sterility of all Alchemicals, but it allows them to function sexually insofar as their chosen gender permits. Note that a genderless body is immune to seduction attempts, magical or otherwise. An Exalt's voice alters to fit current gender as appropriate, unless specifically selected otherwise.

This Charm can increase or decrease a character's height by as much as six inches, completely alter pigmentation and skin texture in full or partially (adding or removing tattoos or scars and imparting completely unnatural hues) and allows for drastic changes in body



composition and apparent musculature. Wounds may be faked and even made to bleed convincingly using the human disguise afforded by Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier. With each activation of this Charm, roll the Exalt's Appearance + Craft (Body) at standard difficulty. The number of successes determines the number of separate changes that may be made. The Storyteller remains the sole arbiter of what constitutes a separate change. Botching the roll shifts the character into an Appearance 0 horror for one day and prevents any reuse of the Charm during that time. Changes wrought by this Charm are permanent (at least until the Exalt alters himself again) and completely real. Therefore, magic that pierces illusions detects nothing.

Characters *cannot* use this Charm to change their fundamental shape and may not add or subtract limbs, disguise implanted Charms or otherwise deviate in any extreme ways from their humanoid template. Within these bounds, the range of possible cosmetic changes is subject only to player creativity and Storyteller permission.

Removing this Charm leaves all prior changes intact. The Exalt does not revert back to an earlier form.

VOICE DISTORTION FIELD

Cost: 1 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Varies

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Manipulation: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm takes the form of a chrome rivet in the Exalt's throat and a set of taut wires threaded through his voicebox. Upon activating this device, the Exalt may fine-tune or completely adjust the pitch and modulation of his voice. These changes offer a variety of uses. First, the Exalt may attempt to duplicate someone else's voice, provided he has heard her speak. This requires a Manipulation + Performance roll (difficulty 2 if the target is a regular associate; difficulty 4 if the Exalt has only heard the target's voice in passing). Changing to an empty, anonymous voice that lacks all human warmth or identifying intonation is also possible (and requires no roll). Success makes the Exalt's voice indistinguishable from the target's own for as long as he commits Essence to the Charm (though this voice is the only one to which he has access). Even close friends of the target will not be able to tell the difference. Similarly, with a successful Manipulation + Performance roll by his player, an Exalt can use this Charm to mimic any other sound he has heard, even if a human voice could not possibly duplicate the sound in question (difficulty 2 for sounds with which he is intimately familiar; difficulty 4 if he has only heard the sound once or twice). Replaying entire auditory memories (such as a conversation) requires two rolls: Wits + Awareness to remember the scene (at a difficulty of 1-5 assigned by

the Storyteller based on the memory's obscurity) and Manipulation + Performance (difficulty 2). Mimicry and playback costs 1 mote per sound cluster, although the same sounds can be played back repeatedly as many times as desired for this cost.

As an alternative to the above, an Exalt may spend 1 mote to layer his voice with subliminal tones that resonate with a particular emotion. Depending on preference, such modulation may be direct (a silky tone of seduction or a coldly synthetic tone that instills fear) or completely hidden beneath the normal range of hearing. Regardless, a character can only attune his voice to one emotion at a time. Whenever an Alchemical's player makes a Social Attribute roll for the character that involves voice and directly evokes the subliminal emotion (Storyteller discretion), the Exalt's player adds one extra die. This die is considered a form of artificial specialty that is cumulative with other pertinent specialties for purposes of maximum bonuses. No roll is required to set a tone, and the effect lasts as long as the Exalt commits Essence to the effect.

Finally, this Charm can increase the volume of a character's voice. This change costs 1 mote and lasts for a turn. During this time, he can be clearly heard out to (Manipulation x 100) yards. Those close to him find his voice uncomfortably and unnaturally loud but do not suffer any actual deafness apart from a slight ringing in their ears. This feature may be used in conjunction with other uses of the Charm, projecting subliminal tones or playing back recorded memories to a crowd.

PEROMONE REGULATION SYSTEMS

Cost: 1 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Charisma: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Exalt has a set of micro-pumps and artificial glands implanted beneath her skin. By activating this Charm, she can synthesize and exude a psychoactive biochemical fragrance designed to resonate with a particular emotion. This scent adds one die to all Social rolls based on the designated emotion (such as a seduction roll made for someone perspiring the essence of lust). This die counts as a type of artificial specialty cumulative with all other specialties. Targets must be within the Exalt's Charisma in yards for this bonus to apply. Only the most wary observers can detect the chemical perfume (Perception + Awareness, difficulty 6) without some form of superhuman sense.

As an alternative to projecting a specific pheromone cocktail, an Alchemical may also use this Charm to mask all scents. Tracking the character by smell with mundane means is impossible, and the difficulty to track her using supernatural means increases by her permanent Essence.

Obviously, Pheromone Regulation Systems can only produce one chemical at a time or mask scent, not both.

OPTICAL SHROUD

Cost: 2 motes
Installation Cost: 2 motes
Duration: Indefinite
Type: Reflexive
Minimum Appearance: 2
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

A lattice of sand-sized crystals studded through the Exalt's flesh gives her a slightly iridescent sheen when viewed under bright lighting. Charged with Essence, the lattice generates an illusion of camouflage. The Alchemical blurs and wavers momentarily, then vanishes from view. Only the slightest distortion in the air betrays her presence. Spotting this mirage requires a Perception + Awareness roll (standard difficulty if the observer saw the character disappear; difficulty 4 if the observer has reason to suspect someone is hiding invisibly or is actively alert; difficulty 5 otherwise). The concealment provided by this Charm remains as long as the Exalt stays still. Slight partial movements are acceptable, such as drawing a weapon, turning to look behind and so on, but the character cannot actually move from her location or make any quick movements (like most striking attacks) without shattering the illusion and ending the effects of the Charm. The player of anyone attacking or defending from the attacks of an invisible character subtracts two successes from his roll as normal, even if the Exalt's attack breaks the camouflage. This Charm provides no concealment from any form of direct Essence sight, although it does block the spirit Charm Measure the Wind and similar magic from pinpointing the Exalt's exact location. Such Charms only reveal that a source of Essence is somewhere nearby, an impression that may be masked if other visible Essence sources are present.

AURA-DAMPENING COMPONENT

Cost: None
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: N/A
Type: Permanent
Minimum Appearance: 2
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Optical Shroud

The cumulative demands of Charm installation costs severely restrict the Personal Essence available to most Alchemicals. This Charm expands upon the technology of the Optical Shroud, diverting Essence through white-jade baffles that dampen the resulting display. With the Aura-Dampening Component installed, characters may spend an additional mote when using any Transitory Augmentation of (Attribute) Charm, an anima power or a Charm used for disguise/concealment purposes. All Peripheral Essence spent

powering such an effect is considered Personal, preventing the expenditure from giving away the Exalt's nature.

DYNAMIC CLOAKING MODULE

Cost: 5 motes, 1 Willpower
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: One hour
Type: Simple
Minimum Appearance: 2
Minimum Essence: 3
Prerequisite Charms: Optical Shroud

The chief limitation of Optical Shroud is its susceptibility to disruption. The Dynamic Cloaking Module overcomes that limitation, generating a sophisticated adaptive camouflage that moves with the Exalt. With this Charm active, an Alchemical appears as a faint silhouette of distortions like heat waves. Noticing him requires a successful Perception + Awareness roll. The difficulty of this check depends on a number of factors. If the Exalt significantly moved earlier in the turn or on the last turn (i.e., changed locations or made any quick motions, such as most attacks), the difficulty is his permanent Essence. This is also the difficulty on the turn the character activates the Charm. If the Exalt spends a full turn nearly motionless, this difficulty increases by 2. Anyone attacking or defending from the attacks of an invisible character subtracts two successes from his roll as normal. Those attacking the invisible character with ranged weapons subtract the Exalt's Essence in successes from the roll, and opponents with normal human senses cannot even target invisible characters farther than 100 yards without an appropriate Charm or an *extremely* well-described stunt (three dice). This Charm provides no concealment from any form of direct Essence sight, although it does block the spirit Charm Measure the Wind and similar magic from pinpointing the Exalt's exact location. Such Charms only reveal that a source of Essence is somewhere nearby, an impression that may be masked if other visible Essence sources are present.

ESSENCE VEIL

Cost: None
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: N/A
Type: Permanent
Minimum Appearance: 2
Minimum Essence: 4
Prerequisite Charms: Dynamic Cloaking Module

With this enhancement installed, Alchemicals improve the function of their Optical Shroud and Dynamic Cloaking Module. When using either of these Charms, they are as difficult to spot with Essence sight and other forms of magical detection as they are by visual means. As an added benefit, the dampening field quiets all sounds with the Charms engaged, increasing the difficulty to notice an Exalt by auditory means by his Essence

SENSORY AND SPIRITUAL CHARMS

OPTICAL ENHANCEMENT

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 2 motes

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Perception: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

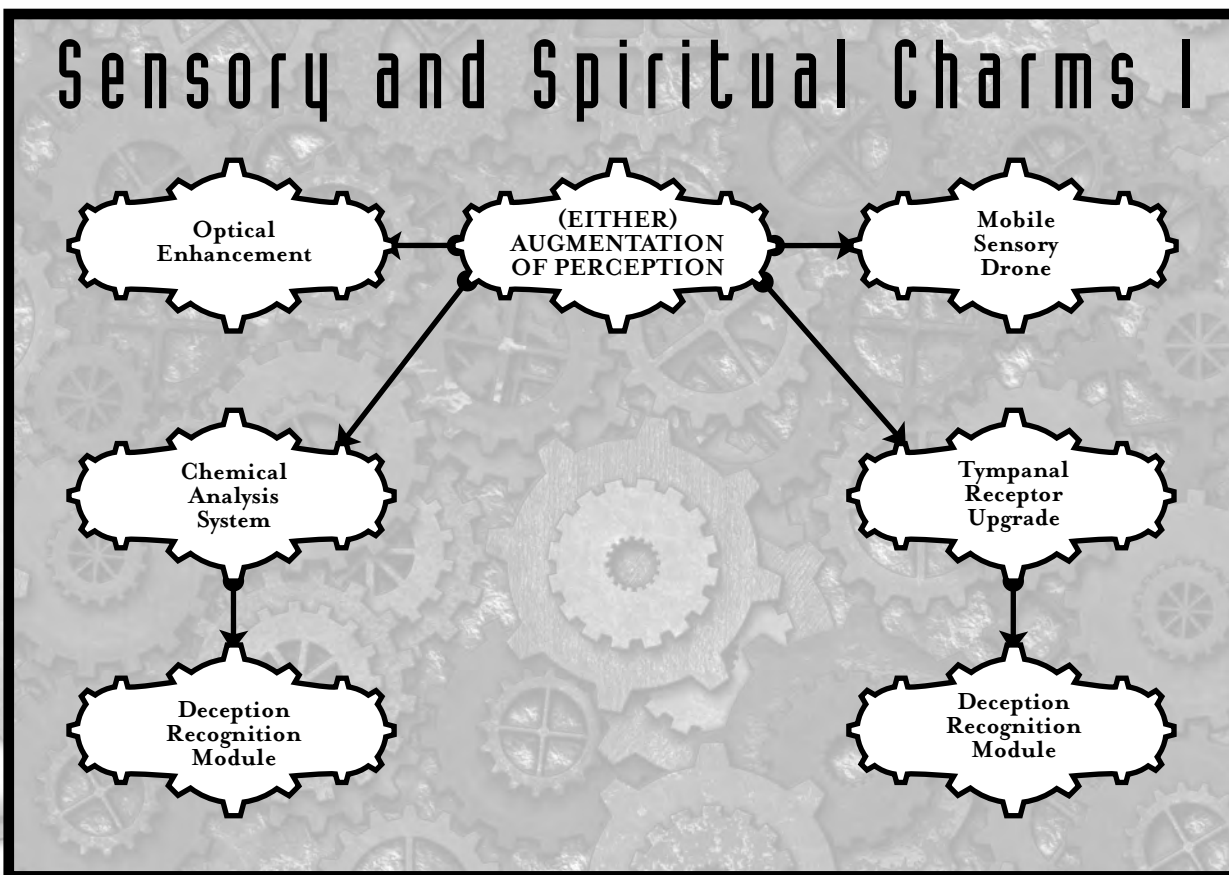
Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception

The Alchemical has a set of implants expanding his vision. Most of these devices actually fit into or outright replace one or both of the character's eyes, except where specifically noted otherwise. Purchase of this Charm awards two of the following modifications. Each additional modification costs 3 bonus points or 6 experience points and requires one hour of refit at the Vats. Players may design new modifications with Storyteller approval.

Flash Shutters: The Exalt's eyes have been treated with semiopaque lids that automatically deploy in response to visual overstimulation, blocking the effect. Characters with the thermal vision upgrade apply this resistance when exposed to close heat sources, negating the usual penalties imposed by such.

Light-Intensification Filters: The Alchemical's eyes have chrome-like plating embedded in the retinas, allowing her to see clearly in extreme low-light conditions. This submodule negates all penalties for anything less than absolute darkness, though intermittent obstructions (such as a forest of pipes or trees) will block open sight as normal. Unfortunately, the character's eyes are painfully sensitive to bright light, such as from open flames, Essence flares and sunlight. When exposed to bright conditions, the character suffers penalties equal to murky vision and will be distracted by the pain (add -1 to wound penalties). Alchemicals with flash shutters installed are immune to overstimulation effects from bright light but lose the added range and definition of their vision to probe areas of darkness while so exposed. Also note that the reflective green sheen of this upgrade may be spotted by sharp-eyed onlookers in dim lighting (rather than actual darkness). This requires a successful Perception + Awareness roll (difficulty 4, adjusted by any modifiers deemed appropriate by the Storyteller). Spotting the eyes spots the character, breaking mundane attempts at stealth, though any magical obfuscation hides the eyes completely.

Microscopic Lens: The Exalt's eyes have the ability to focus on small objects and magnify them in her field of vision. Each refocus requires a diceless action. The maximum power of magnification is times (Perception x 10). This upgrade is



primarily narrative in scope. Storytellers should endeavor to provide appropriate details on any scrutinized object appropriate to the magnification. Players may draw whatever conclusions they wish based on this information.

Telescopic Lens: With this upgrade installed, the Exalt can clearly focus his field of vision on distant objects at will or zoom out to pan and refocus. Each refocus requires a diceless action. The maximum magnification possible is a factor of (the character's Perception x 25). The Storyteller should narrate details as if all scrutinized objects were as many times closer as the factor used. This decreases the field of view accordingly, reducing peripheral vision by a like factor. Given the generally cramped nature of Autochthonia, Alchemicals seldom get the chance to use their lenses at full magnification. Exalted may not simultaneously use microscopic and telescopic lenses.

Ultraperipheral Awareness: The Exalt has a cluster of jeweled receptors set in an arc around his head. These gems do not appear as eyes. Not only can he see in a full 360 degrees around him at all times, but the implanted scanners are especially sensitive to motion. His player should make a reflexive Perception + Awareness roll at standard difficulty whenever the Exalt is ambushed or attacked from behind by an opponent his enhanced field of vision could conceivably see. Thus, invisible or hidden attackers do not prompt this check. If the roll is successful, the character may defend normally. Note that a character does not receive the usual benefit of a shield against a rear attack unless he has time to reposition or pivot. Of course, his rear-facing vision ensures that he will almost certainly see the attacker coming with plenty of time to turn and face him.

Thermal Vision: Lenses fitted in the character's eyes allow him to see heat in place of conventional light. Switching between normal and thermal vision is a reflexive action that does not count as a Charm activation, but does cost 3 motes. While using this mode, the Exalt cannot perceive or distinguish colors and surface detail, automatically failing any tasks that require such ability (such as reading). However, his vision does provide a number of compensatory benefits. With a successful Perception + Awareness roll at standard difficulty, he can gauge the temperature of an object. More importantly, he can navigate in darkness with a clear vision radius of (Perception x 10) yards and a murky vision radius of (Perception x 20) yards. He can spot flames against a cooler backdrop from a number of miles away equal to Essence, provided he actually has a direct line of sight. All heat sources appear to glow while viewed through thermal vision, so warm-blooded beings stand out against cooler backgrounds (adding one bonus die as an artificial specialty to notice or attack any thermally highlighted target). Whenever the Exalt is within (Essence) yards of an intense heat source with this Charm active, he suffers visibility penalties equal to murky vision and is rendered completely blind within two yards. Note

that Charms and effects that provide invisibility or visual camouflage operate normally to prevent detection with thermal vision unless the Storyteller rules otherwise based upon the stated context and scope of the effect. An Alchemical must have Essence 3 to install this submodule.

Mass-Penetrating Scan: By reflexively spending 3 motes (which counts as a Charm activation), the Exalt can selectively see through solid matter for a turn. In this state, the Exalt's field of vision narrows to a single tunnel a yard wide outside of which everything is blurred darkness. No visual feats involving peripheral awareness are possible. As he stares at an object, he can have that object (or a component thereof) fade and vanish from view, seeing what lies beyond or within as if the obstruction wasn't there. Since the character cannot know what lies on the other side of a barrier prior to using this enhancement and has such a narrow vision, he must pan across with his gaze to find anything of note. This requires a dice action of Perception + Awareness at standard difficulty. Note that the character's vision does not perceive details at range any better than usual unless he also has the telescopic lens upgrade. An Alchemical must have Essence 4 to install this submodule.

MOBILE SENSORY DRONE

Costs: 5 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Perception: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception

One of the Exalt's eyes has been removed and replaced with an orb that perfectly copies the appearance and function of the excised organ. When charged with Essence, however, the artificial eye painlessly detaches itself from its socket and extends eight flexible tendrils that it uses as legs. An obviously mechanical eye extends from the back of the socket to fill up the character's vacant eye socket so that the Alchemical's stereoscopic vision is not interrupted. The automaton has all the character's senses (including currently active enhancements from Charms), albeit reconfigured to the creature's bizarre anatomy. For example, it tastes with the tip of its tentacle-legs. More importantly, the drone is telepathically controlled by the character and transmits everything it perceives back to the Exalt's brain. Note that every action dictated to the drone requires an action from its controller, with multiple-action penalties cumulatively accrued for every action taken (either with the Exalt's own body or through the drone). Moreover, the experience of looking through a drone while simultaneously using normal senses induces vertigo (a one-die penalty to all non-reflexive actions unless the character is limiting senses to one input



feed at a time). A character may install this Charm more than once in order to have multiple drones. Those in excess of the Exalt's number of eyes are mounted elsewhere on the body and do not appear as eyes so much as spherical metal rivets. Installations after the first do not require an installation cost.

By default, a sensory drone has the following statistics and rules governing its operation:

- Dexterity equals the Alchemical's Dexterity + Essence.
- Perception and all Abilities equal the Exalt's own ratings. The automaton is small enough that opponents add 2 to the difficulty of all attacks targeting it, and it can fit through any opening at least an inch in diameter.

- Strength equals 1, and the creature cannot ever perform feats of strength with a rating higher than the Exalt's Essence (regardless of the drone's Athletics rating).

- Stamina, soak (L/B) and total number of health levels equal the character's Essence. For every health level of damage it suffers, the eye loses one dot of Perception. If it loses all health, it dissolves into shattered bits of metal and protoplasm. The drone also self-destructs in this manner if the commitment of Essence is withdrawn. The socket will manufacture a replacement drone in one day.

Placing the drone back in the eye socket ends the Charm and causes the orb to revert back into an eye.

- The automaton's tentacles end in needle-thin points. It can attack with these appendages, though not effectively (speed +0, accuracy +0, damage 1L, defense -2). In Exalted Power Combat, it has rate 3.

- The creature is twice as fast as the Exalt's running speed and can scuttle on any surface (walls, ceilings, etc.) like an insect.

- Wards that block scrying also block the creature from transmitting images or receiving commands. If it crosses into such an area, it will rapidly backtrack with single-minded dedication toward the last known location of its owner in order to reestablish contact. The drone cannot transmit or receive beyond a range of its creator's Essence in miles and will similarly retreat back inside that range if it moves too far, infallibly guided toward his current location at all times unless blocked

by a ward (in which case it orients on his last known location). Note that the connection between an Alchemical and a drone serves as an arcane link.

The following submodules cost 2 bonus points or 6 experience points.

Autonomous: As an alternative to controlling it directly, the Exalt can give the drone simple orders that it carries out on its own even when he is not paying attention to it. It has an Intelligence of 1, plus one dot in any Ability that the Exalt has. It does not have access to the character's Abilities when not directly controlled, but its statistics are otherwise the same. Unless ordered to do otherwise, it will flee if attacked.

Communication: The drone can receive and transmit the Alchemical's voice, although it speaks with noticeable distortion.

Hovering: As an alternative to scuttling, the drone can actually float or fly on currents of Essence at its usual running speed. While hovering, it can either retract its legs or let them hang loose to use as arms/fingers.

Injection Needle: The drone has a retractable needle in one of its limbs and an internal reservoir storing one dose of a drug. This enhancement requires that the Alchemical have the Charm Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus installed (see pp. 134-136), and the Exalt must activate it to fill the drone's tank. Injection of the stored drug is handled as per that Charm using the drone's Dexterity + the character's Medicine rating as the attack pool. The drug stored in the drone must be one of those whose template is stored in the Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus. A dose administered through a drone's injection needle may have a delay added to the base effect through the time release drug or triggered activation drug formulas.

Playback: The drone records everything it experiences in a memory crystal. When returned to its socket, the drone's memories are immediately added to the Alchemical's own mind.

Stealth: The drone is veiled by a sophisticated adaptive camouflage. Whenever it is still for a full turn, it receives the same benefits as those provided by the Optical Shroud Charm (see p. 123). If it moves at all, the protection vanishes, and it must spend a full turn motionless to reestablish concealment. A drone that is anchored to a surface or object with its tentacles remains invisible even if its perch moves, provided it does nothing but ride passively.

Flesh-Burrowing: This particularly gruesome enhancement allows the drone to surgically slice open a victim and dig in, drawing the wound closed behind it. This requires an attack roll of the drone's tentacles using a roll of Dexterity + the Alchemical's Medicine (difficulty 2). If the attack inflicts at least one level of damage, the drone slithers inside and inserts a tendril into the largest nerve cluster near the entry point (usually the spine on a mortal victim). From there on, the drone has none of its own senses, but instead, taps the senses of the person it is riding. The drone can extricate itself at any time using the same burrowing attack to exit. Otherwise, the automaton must be removed surgically (Dexterity + Medicine at difficulty 3; regardless of success or failure, the victim suffers one level of lethal damage). Despite this enhancement's name, it can be used to place a drone inside a larger automaton or other being that lacks flesh. An Alchemical must possess Essence 3 to install this submodule.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Costs: 1 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One hour

Type: Simple

Minimum Perception: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception

The Exalt has a coiled apparatus screwed out of sight into his nostrils and a small device that looks like a ball bearing in the center of his tongue. Using these devices, his sense of taste and smell extend to superhuman ranges and sensitivities. For the most part, this Charm is a matter of Storyteller narration. The character can be assumed to be aware of trace quantities of chemicals in the air, scenting the sour whiff of acid, the tang of iron, the taste of poison hidden in food or the musk of subtle pheromones when others sense nothing at all. In general, assume that the character's sensitivity is roughly (Perception x 10) times better than normal with regard to how far away he can detect something or in what concentrations. This is not an exact science by any stretch, and Storytellers should probably just assume that the character smells and tastes anything and everything he is exposed to unless there is a compelling reason to suggest otherwise.

TYMPANAL RECEPTOR UPGRADE

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One hour

Type: Simple

Minimum Perception: 3,

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception

This Charm fits into the character's ears as invasive cochlear implants covered in hundreds of flexible needles. When activated, the device vastly improves the range and sensitivity of the character's hearing. She can detect ultrasonic and subsonic vibrations and differentiate the slightest modulation of pitches. For the most part, this enhancement is a matter for sensory narration, controlled and used by the Storyteller when relating the scene. In addition, the character adds her permanent Essence to the dice pool of all Perception rolls based on sound (including most ambush checks). This bonus is considered an artificial specialty and may exceed +3, but it is not cumulative with any other applicable specialties. The character's hearing and spatial awareness is so keen in this state that he only suffers the penalty for low-light vision while blind, although he is no more able to see colors or perform other purely visual feats. The filters built into this Charm prevent a character from being deafened as a result of

heightened sensitivity but cannot counter effects that induce hyperstimulation.

DECEPTION RECOGNITION MODULE

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Perception: 4

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Chemical Analysis System or Tympanal Receptor Upgrade

This Charm takes the form of a paired set of metal nodules in front of each ear, just above the jawbone. Depending on configuration (and the prerequisite Charm selected to build upon), subdermal wires link the devices to the ears or across the cheeks to the nose. Based on design, the Exalt can either hear the telltale vibrations and distortions when a scrutinized target speaks a lie or else scent the biochemical signature produced by willful deception. In either case, roll the Alchemical's Perception + (Awareness or Investigation, whichever is higher) against a difficulty of the target's Essence. On a success, the Exalt knows whether the target believes that a particular statement is true or false. If a target speaks a deliberately deceptive half-truth (leaving out major details, such that any listener would almost certainly draw erroneous conclusions), the statement registers as false. If a statement contains multiple points and any are false, the entire statement registers as false.

Alchemicals with the microscopic lens upgrade for their Optical Enhancement Charm may also use this Charm to scrutinize written text for deception, rolling the dice pool described above against a difficulty of the author's Manipulation rating at the time the text was written. Characters may only scrutinize text written in languages they understand.

INTERPOLATIVE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

PROCESSOR

Cost: 4 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Wits: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory and Sustained Augmentation of Wits

The Exalt has a webbing of internal cables linking all his sensory organs to an artificial cognitive cluster embedded in the brain. By activating this Charm, the Alchemical gathers all sensory data and runs it through a logic filter to identify pertinent details. Roll the character's Wits + (Awareness or Investigation, whichever is higher) at stan-

dard difficulty. Each success reveals or recalls one detail about the environment that is most likely relative to a single line of query. Successes may also recall details and observations remembered from earlier scenes. This information is combined with speculative hints as to the connection between the various details.

For example, an Exalt at a murder scene could use this Charm with the intention of reconstructing the events of the crime. Successes on the activation roll might reveal the blood spatter on the wall, the position of the body and the exact nature of the wounds on the body (three successes). In addition to noticing these details and noting that they are most likely important, the Charm (i.e., the Storyteller) would provide hints such as "The victim was killed with a single blow to the neck from the front and never raised her arms to defend herself, suggesting that the killer was highly skilled or highly lucky. More importantly, the victim's lack of resistance implies she knew and trusted the perpetrator or perhaps that the attacker was invisible."

Storytellers should endeavor to provide a range of reasonable explanations and clues with each use of this Charm (including a mix of truths and plausible red herrings), but the clues alone should not answer the player's questions outright without further deduction outside the scope of the Interpolative Situational Analysis Processor. Note that this Charm deals with speculation and plausibility. Unless the player specifies that the character is brainstorming outlandish and off-the-wall theories and suggests a general direction of speculation, the Storyteller need only provide clues and ideas that the character would deem likely. If the actual answer is completely unexpected and hidden by misdirection and false evidence, this Charm may well provide false suppositions.

SOULGEM DETECTOR

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

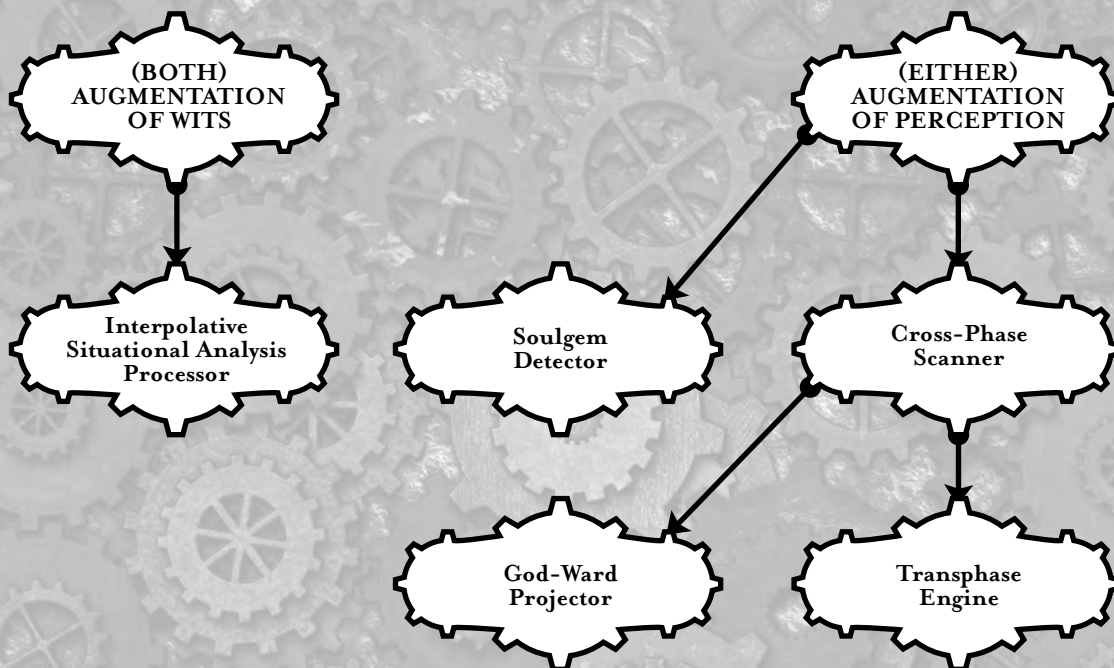
Minimum Perception: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception

This Charm is a small stud at the top of the Exalt's forehead, with subdermal wires threaded down through the prongs of her soulgem. When activated, the character becomes instantly aware of the location of every soulgem within (Perception x 10) yards. She can automatically determine whether any gem has a soul stored in it or not and whether the gem is set into a mortal, an Exalt or not currently implanted in anyone. She cannot evaluate all of this information concurrently for every gem in range, but must instead focus on a specific gem to gauge its Essence pattern as a diceless action. Capping a soulgem in lead

Sensory and Spiritual Charms II



makes it invisible to this Charm, but the procedure is highly illegal.

A number of more powerful variants of this Charm exist. One that requires Perception 3 and Essence 5 increases the range to (Perception x 100) yards. More powerfully still, a greater variant requiring Perception 6 and Essence 8 increases the range to (Perception) miles.

CROSS-PHASE SCANNER

Cost: 2 motes per sense

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Perception: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception

Receptor nodules in the Exalt's face attune his senses to immaterial energies. For every 2 motes spent, the character may perceive spirits, sanctum entrances and other incorporeal beings and effects as if they were solid with one sense. All such phenomena have a faint but distinctive tone, color or other distortion that identify them for what they are. The Exalt never mistakes immaterial for material, and vice versa.

TRANSPHASE ENGINE

Cost: 4 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Wits: 3

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Cross-Phase Scanner

This Charm takes the form of a starmetal sphere adjoining the Alchemical's Essence reservoir. When activated for cost of 4 motes, the mechanism spreads an aura of divine Essence through the character. She remains visible as a translucent phantom as he is shifted into an incorporeal state for a split second. This must be done in conjunction with a dice action of instant duration, whether an attack (in which case the character may strike a dematerialized being), a dodge (converting the evasion into a limited form of "perfect" defense against a material attack, provided the attack cannot affect dematerialized beings), a parry (against immaterial beings only and, therefore, of extremely limited utility), an athletics maneuver (phasing through a door, dropping through a floor, etc.) or anything else approved by the Storyteller. This Charm has integrated mass sensors as a safety mechanism, preventing it from engaging in the event

that the character would pass through a heavy obstruction (wall, floor, ceiling, etc.) and fail to fully cross the matter in the split-second interval. Consequently, a character who performs a running dash at a thick wall will find the experience embarrassing or outright painful.

GOD-WARD PROJECTOR

Cost: 30 mote, 2 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Charisma: 5

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Cross-Phase Scanner

This complex mechanism of spinning dynamos and crystals fits into the center of the Exalt's spine. When activated, the Charm emits a spherical shockwave of intangible glowing Essence that expands to a maximum radius of (the Alchemical's Charisma x 5) yards. At its desired width, the bubble crystallizes and fades from view, remaining visible to dematerialized beings as translucent energy that is completely impenetrable. In addition to barring passage (regardless of the spirit's power), the barrier also blocks spirits on the outside from using their Charms to affect anyone or anything on the inside unless those beings have a permanent Essence higher than the Alchemical's Charisma. Spirits inside the defined barrier when it hardens can use their magic and remain in the area normally. If they leave, they experience a slight tingle as they traverse the perimeter and may not reenter. Materialized spirits can cross into the sphere without any difficulty, as may any spirit possessing a host. The ward remains in existence and fixed in its location until the Alchemical dies or moves outside of it, at which time the field immediately collapses.

MEDICAL CHARMS

SUSTENANCE REPLICATION ENGINE

Cost: None/5 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Permanent/One minute

Type: Upgrade/Simple

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

A small reactor connects the Exalt's Essence reservoir and stomach, while a set of implanted recycling baffles optimizes her digestive function. The Alchemical no longer produces any form of waste matter and divides the amount of food required to remain healthy by his permanent Essence. Chosen of Autochthon with Essence 5+ no longer require nourishment at all, as their advanced systems can use this Charm to synthesize nutrients directly from Essence. Using total nutrient replacement costs 5

motes per day in upkeep to maintain, and failure to pay this cost or to consume the required biomass leads to eventual starvation and diminished Essence recovery as normal. The cost to forgo sustenance is not committed.

A secondary function of this Charm allows the Alchemical to bleed a nutrient paste from a vein port on his inner forearm. This unrefined gray goo is mercifully bland apart from its faint chalky aftertaste, but the barely edible substance actually contains a balanced set of nutrients and can sustain life in emergencies. Creating enough paste to feed one mortal for one meal requires 5 motes and one minute spent bleeding into a receptacle. Meals created with this Charm contain very little Essence and, thus, provide no benefit to Alchemicals.

BIOFUNCTION INHIBITOR

Costs: 5 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

Control valves affixed to the Alchemical's Essence reactor allow him to power down and enter regenerative torpor to conserve energy. All biological processes and Charms slow and cease operation over the course of a minute, until the Exalt appears dead. Obviously, anyone who knows about Alchemical biology can tell that the character is not actually deceased, since his flesh would rapidly dissolve into a smoking puddle. Close examination by a trained medical professional (Perception + Medicine roll, difficulty 4) will also detect the faint stirring of life functions. The Exalt remains entirely unaware of his surroundings in torpor and must specify the intended duration of slumber when activating the Charm. Prior to the intended wakeup, the Alchemical only awakens if an effect could have caused him damage (whether or not any actual levels of injury are applied after the damage roll).

Time spent comatose using this Charm is more restful than sleep by a factor of the Exalt's permanent Essence. Thus, an Essence 4 Alchemical can compress a full night's rest into two hours of torpor. Torpor also accelerates Willpower recovery, but the Exalt only receives a single Conviction roll in a given 25-hour period. Alchemicals do not respire Essence any faster than their usual sleeping rate while in torpor.

TOXICITY FILTRATION SUBSYSTEMS

Cost: 2 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

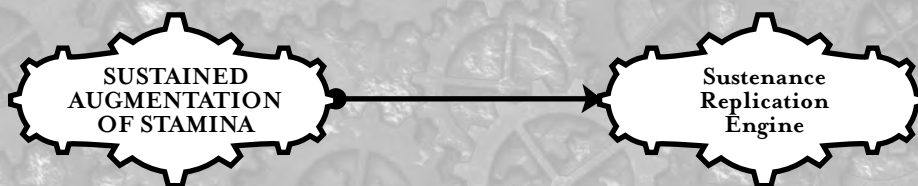
Duration: One hour

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Medical Charms I



Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Stamina

A complex chain of pumps and chemical filters process all sustenance the Exalt imbibes, while smaller filtering tendrils snake through every vein and major organ. When activated with Essence, the assemblage acts as a potent buffer against poison of every type. The Exalt adds her Essence in automatic successes to all applicable Stamina rolls and soak against toxins, as well as expunging all alcohol and other recreational drugs from her body. Furthermore, if the Alchemical's player rolls more than twice the required number of successes to reduce the severity of a poisoning, the chemical has no effect whatsoever. This Charm activates itself whenever the Exalt is exposed to a dangerous toxin, although conscious characters may deliberately suppress the effect if they so wish. Without deliberate suppression, these somewhat overeager defenses prevent the Alchemical from ever becoming drunk or high.

RESTORATIVE FUSION TRANSPONDER

Cost: 5 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Stamina: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Biofunction Inhibitor

This Charm takes the form of a glittering metal port inset a quarter of the way down the Exalt's spine. If the Alchemical activates this device while standing on a natural surface in Autochthonia, irregular cracks spread across the ground beneath the Exalt. A forest of cables and Primordial capillaries rises from these holes, weaving into a cocoon around the Exalt. When every limb is entangled, the thickest of these tendrils drives a gleaming metal spike into the socket of this Charm. The Exalt's eyes flutter and close in ecstasy as she passes out, but her body heals and regains Essence as if resting in a Vat Complex (see p. 68). Even characters suffering from starvation may respire Essence and heal inside a cocoon,

though only at their usual rates. The woven structures are quite durable (soak 10L/15B) and may suffer 10 levels of damage before they break and awaken the Exalt within. Unless damaged, cocoons remain until dismissed. Even unconscious, Exalted can track the progress of their recovery and may voluntarily order their cocoons to withdraw into the substance of the Great Maker at any time. After the last tendril withdraws, the cracks and fissures in the floor seal without a trace.

BODY-REWEAVING MATRIX

Cost: 12 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Stamina: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Restorative Fusion Transponder

Hidden compartments scattered across the Alchemical's body hide colonies of thumbnail-sized automatons shaped roughly like metallic spiders. When activated by an expenditure of 12 motes and 1 Willpower point, these compartments open, and the colonies awaken. Hundreds or even thousands of the tiny machines swarm out across the Exalt's body, clustering around any wounds they find. The automatons work quickly and tirelessly, spinning strands of unformed Essence that congeal into new matter. Where the spiders pass, they leave flesh and Charms restored to pristine condition.

With this Charm active, an Alchemical regenerates a number of bashing levels each turn equal to her permanent Essence. Lethal damage heals at the rate of one level per turn, while aggravated wounds mend at the rate of one level every 10 hours. Amputated or destroyed organs heal as aggravated damage, with entire limbs counting as three levels, partial limbs as two levels (e.g., forearm and hand or a leg from the knee down) and hands, eyes or a mouthful of teeth as a single level. Any Charms located in an amputated area also regrow, but only those installed as of the time of injury. Amputated Charms disintegrate as the Body-Reweaving Matrix replaces them.

DIAGNOSTIC SENSOR APPARATUS

Cost: 1 mote

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Until analysis completed

Type: Simple

Minimums Perception: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustained or Transitory Augmentation of Perception

This Charm comprises a set of delicate sensors installed in the pads of an Exalt's fingertips. In order to scan someone, she spends a mote and presents her splayed palm in the direction of a living target within yards equal to her Essence rating. The activated sensors emit a pulsing glow in time with the target's heartbeat (or Essence-flow rhythms if scanning an Alchemical, machine god or similar entity), requiring a single turn to gather information. The results of a scan remain indelibly stored in the Alchemical's memory for as long as she commits Essence to remember the information.

Interpreting a memorized scan requires an Intelligence + Medicine roll at standard difficulty, and the process takes five minutes. Each additional consecutive five-minute period spent analyzing allows a new roll, with the total number of successes pooling as an extended action. The total number of successes determines the detail of the diagnosis. A character knows everything at

her player's rolled number of successes and below. With one success, the Exalt only knows whether the target is alive or not, and if so, whether he is completely well or currently suffers from some sort of disease/infection. Two successes glean the number of ailments from which the target suffers. Three successes identify the physical location of all ailments (lungs, blood, infected wounds). Four successes determine the overall progression of all ailments and their names (if a disease is known in Autochthonian records), and the Exalt can also calculate the variables of recovery (i.e., revealing the statistics of all diseases as well as the target's Stamina, Endurance and Resistance ratings). Five successes allow for specific profiling of all diseases, including vectors, symptoms and knowing whether an ailment is magical in nature or not. Once an Exalt begins analyzing data and stops for any reason, the actual scan data fades along with the commitment of Essence. Thereafter, she only remembers the results of her diagnosis.

BIOSIGHT RETICLE

Cost: 6 motes, 1 Willpower

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One hour

Type: Simple

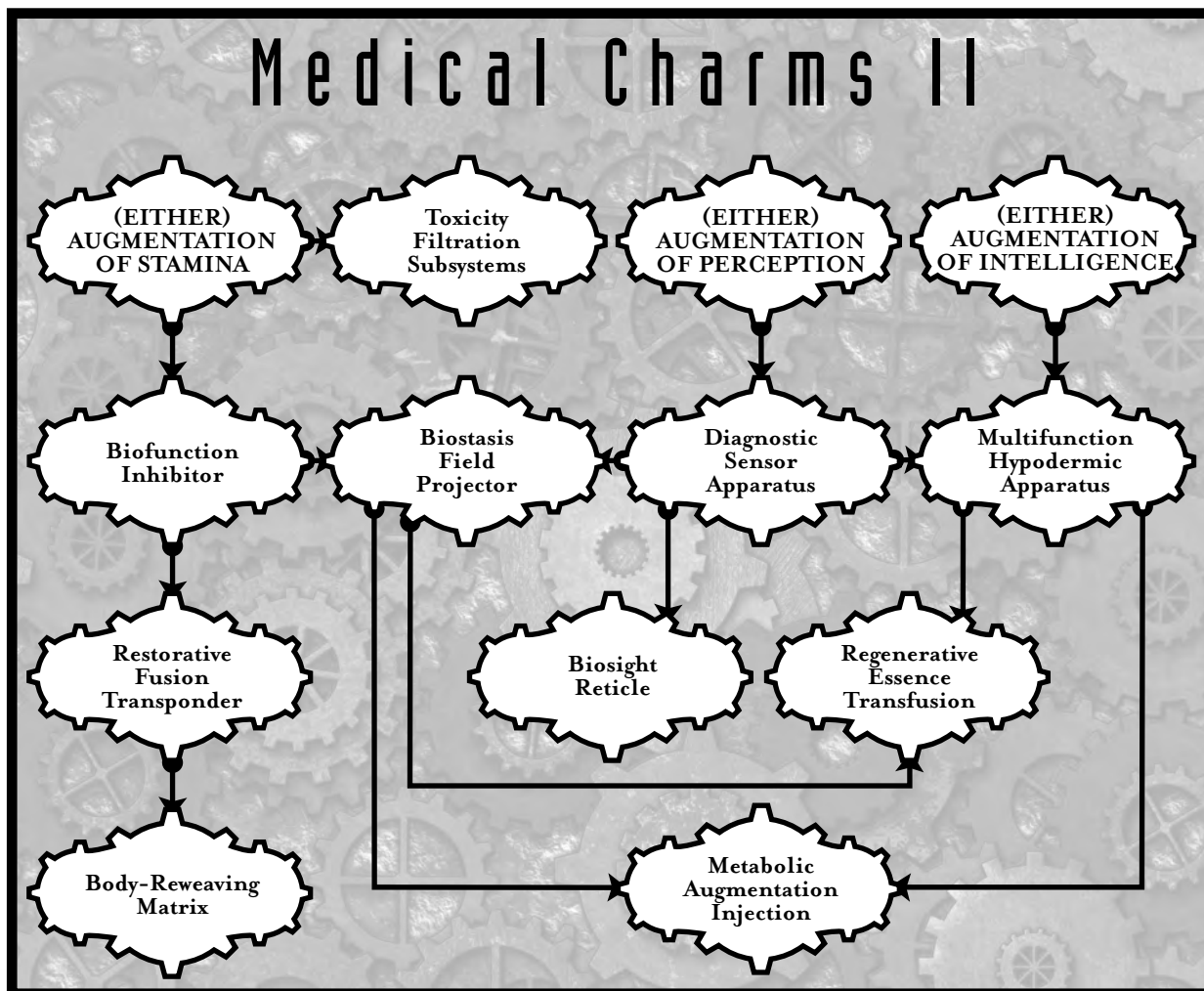
Minimum Perception: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Diagnostic Sensor Apparatus



Medical Charms II



This Charm takes the form of a pair of diagnostic lenses stored in compartments beside each eye. When activated with Essence, the translucent crystals slide over the Alchemical's eyes and flicker with moving geometric glyphs. The Exalt's vision changes, all colors dimming as if seen through a haze of smoke. In contrast, every source of living or animating Essence glows from within. The specific shade and brightness of each glow provides all manner of useful information. This Charm automatically filters out the persistent glow of the Great Maker's Essence in Autochthonia to a dull background flicker, in order not to overwhelm the presence of lesser beings. In Creation, Gaia's presence is not filtered, allowing the Alchemical to see Demesnes, Manses and dragon tracks.

First, the Exalt receives bonus dice to spot hidden beings with Perception rolls, adding each target's own permanent Essence to these checks. This magic also negates visual penalties for darkness, fog, smoke and other such conditions with regards to spotting or attacking animate targets and can even scan through obstructions (a cumulative yard or more of solid matter blocks the Exalt's vision).

Most impressively, a Biosight Reticle can even pierce the camouflage provided by Charms activated by a character of equal or lesser Essence, unless the magic cloaks Essence emanations or relies upon mental misdirection. If the Biosight Reticle has a chance of piercing the magic, make an opposed roll of (the Alchemical's Perception + Awareness + the target's Essence) against (the target's Dexterity + Stealth). If the Alchemical wins, she ignores the Charm and spots the target. If the target wins, his Charm functions normally, providing its usual concealment.

Once the Alchemical is aware of a particular being, she may then devote a simple action to study the pattern and color of light surrounding him. At the end of this turn, roll the Exalt's Perception + Medicine. Each success reveals one of the following pieces of information about the target as decided by the Chosen's player: current number of health levels, maximum number of health levels, current wound penalties (if any), current fatigue penalties (if any), permanent Essence, current Essence pool (Personal + Peripheral, if applicable), Stamina rating, Endurance rating, Resistance rating, physical location of all injuries

(if any), any pregnancy (yes/no), presence of parasites (yes/no), presence of disease (yes/no) or physical location of all infected wounds (if any). Multiple turns of scanning can reveal additional information, although a botch always yields erroneous results.

BIOSTASIS FIELD PROJECTOR

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One day or indefinite

Type: Simple or Reflexive

Minimum Intelligence: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Biofunction Inhibitor, Diagnostic Sensor Apparatus

A capacitor in the Exalt's palm emits a pulse of life-stabilizing Essence through contact with a patient's skin. This luminous energy courses through the target's flesh, causing him to briefly convulse as he falls unconscious. Within seconds, all vital signs fade and slow. To casual observation, the patient is dead, although trained medical personnel can detect his barely perceptible pulse with a Perception + Medicine roll (difficulty 4). Diagnostic Charms or Essence sight automatically sense the patient's muted life force. Because this Charm requires several seconds of touch to activate, it cannot be used in conjunction with an unarmed strike to incapacitate unwilling targets. However, this Charm may be activated in place of inflicting damage if the Alchemical wins control of a clinch. Patients may fight the coma-inducing pulse with a Stamina + Resistance roll (difficulty of the Exalt's Essence). Success allows him to shrug off the momentary numbing that seeps through his muscles. No roll is necessary if the patient does not resist. For most use, this Charm is simple and costs 3 motes.

While under the effects of this Charm, patients remain completely stabilized. Infections and poisons temporarily halt their spread, and all wounds cease bleeding. Mortally wounded characters do not deteriorate, but remain at Incapacitated. Stasis lasts a day or until the Alchemical withdraws the commitment of Essence, but the effect may be extended through reapplication of the Charm. "Unfreezing" a patient returns him to his exact condition at the time the Alchemical administered the Charm, though any new injuries sustained in the interim remain. Most often, this Charm is used as first aid for critically wounded patients, preserving them until medical specialists can arrive. Biostasis Field Projectors also see utility as anesthesia for surgery and for transporting criminals.

Alchemicals may use this Charm on themselves and may specify any duration, but they remain unconscious and unable to voluntarily end the Charm until the effect runs its designated course. Exalted may also use this Charm reflexively when they suffer lethal damage that would bring them below Incapacitated (and, thus, kill them). Activating this

emergency function costs 3 motes and a dot of Stamina that may be recovered with experience points and surgical refitting as normal. Through the miracle of this Charm, an Exalt remains alive at Incapacitated but falls into the usual deathlike coma for the specified duration of the Charm, which cannot be less than one hour. Further lethal damage may be ignored through reapplication of the Charm even while unconscious, until the Exalt drops to Stamina 1 or lacks sufficient Essence to power the device.

MULTIFUNCTION HYPODERMIC APPARATUS

Cost: 4 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Intelligence: 4

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Intelligence, Diagnostic Sensor Apparatus

A slender tentacle slides out of a compartment in the Alchemical's torso, tipped with a long hollow needle. The transparent tendril extends as far as two yards, nimbly targeting a patient's veins or vital clusters. After the needle slides in, quivers of peristaltic motion pump drugs into the patient's body from storage nodes inside the Alchemical. These nodes convert raw Essence into known drug templates, as explained below.

If the character tries to inject a drug into an unwilling patient, roll Dexterity + Medicine as an attack. No roll is necessary to inject a willing patient. Against soft targets (i.e., patients without a lethal soak), a successful attack automatically delivers the drug without inflicting damage. Against hard targets, the "damage" is 1L + attack successes and is considered piercing. If the needle successfully inflicts any levels of damage, no damage is recorded, but the drug is injected. Exalted may inject themselves internally if they so desired.

Players of patients injected with harmful drugs receive a reflexive Stamina + Resistance roll to lessen the effect (difficulty of the Exalt's Essence). Normally, beneficial drugs do not elicit this automatic immunity check, although certain characters with hyperactive immune systems (whether from Charms or mutations or some other effect) may automatically resist.

When an Alchemical first obtains this Charm, it comes equipped with any two of the following submodule formulas. Upgrading the device with additional submodules costs 4 experience points or 2 bonus points per formula, any of which may be downloaded in several minutes at a Vat Complex. Designing a new formula requires a roll of Intelligence + (Medicine or Lore) at difficulty 3, and new formulas should be of comparable power to those listed here. Adding this formula to the Charm also costs 4 experience points but requires no Vat access. Players must obtain

Storyteller permission before their characters can design new drugs. Effects are listed in terms of failure and success, based on the results of the patient's Resistance roll.

Paralytic Toxin: This compound numbs muscles and nerves. On a failure, the victim suffers levels of bashing damage equal to the Exalt's Intelligence + Medicine (soakable with natural soak only) and suffers a dice penalty to all actions equal to the Exalt's Essence for a number of hours equal to the Exalt's Intelligence. With success, this damage is reduced to the Exalt's Intelligence and the penalty is only -1 for hours equal to the Exalt's Essence. Victims whose Stamina exceeds the Exalt's Intelligence suffer no penalty.

Lethal Toxin: This neurotoxic or hemotoxic poison has the same rules and effects as for paralytic toxin, but the damage is lethal. Mortals (and other living beings of the same overall toughness and size or smaller) painfully die after convulsing for a number of turns equal to their Stamina.

Acid: A spurt of powerful acid sears through the victim's flesh from the inside out. The victim receives no Stamina + Resistance roll to lessen the effect, but instead, suffers 6L damage. Only natural soak applies to this damage. Victims who suffer three or more levels of damage from a single dose of injected acid are horribly scarred, permanently reducing Appearance by 1 dot (which may be fixed with cosmetic surgery and the appropriate number of experience points).

Antivenin: Administered to a poisoned individual, each dose of this drug cancels the effects of one poison currently in his system (starting with the most potent, as decided by the Storyteller). This automatically removes all penalties and other detrimental effects, even healing all damage if the poison was introduced to the patient's system earlier in the scene. One dose of antivenin may also cleanse all traces of alcohol or another drug from the patient's body. If administered to a patient injected with memory eraser serum within the past minute, the deleterious effects of the drug are prevented. Antivenin may be given to patients preemptively, in which case each dose lingers for an hour waiting to cancel a single poison the victim may be exposed to. Each such inoculation fades as it is used. Inoculations cannot prevent memory eraser serum from taking effect as it is injected.

Anesthetic: The patient feels soothing warmth spread through his body. He subtracts the Exalt's Essence from all wound penalties, but suppressed penalty dice return at the rate of one per hour. Repeated injections reset the penalty suppression rather than stacking cumulatively.

Immune Booster: This drug fortifies a patient's immune system, adding one die to all Stamina rolls made to avoid or overcome any form of disease. This bonus lasts for a number of days equal to the Exalt's Intelligence.

Antiseptic: By injecting this directly into the site of a wound, that wound is prevented from becoming infected, and any existing infection is nullified.

Healing Agent: This drug accelerates a patient's natural healing. Provided that he rests and takes no strenuous physical action for an hour following injection, he heals two levels of bashing damage.

Coagulant: The patient's blood thickens, and she immediately stops bleeding from all wounds.

Hallucinogen: The patient experiences synesthesia and other forms of sensory distortion, as well as an overwhelming feeling of pleasure. On a failure, the distortions are so intense that the patient suffers a dice penalty of (the Exalt's Intelligence + Essence) to all non-reflexive actions. Each full hour that passes diminishes this penalty by one die. The experience is also highly addictive, and the character's player must make a successful Temperance roll (difficulty 2) for the next month to pass up any chance to receive the drug. On a success, the penalty starts at the Exalt's Intelligence and decreases by one die per hour. The lesser experience is not addictive.

Stimulant: The patient is invigorated, reducing his current dice penalty from fatigue by the Exalt's Essence. The drug wears off after a number of hours equal to the Exalt's Intelligence. Regular doses of stimulants can keep a patient going indefinitely without sleep or rest, but not safely. For each dose taken after the first without a full night's rest, the patient suffers two levels of unsoakable bashing damage.

Time Release Drug: Once an Exalt adds this formula to her Charm, she may designate a specific time lapse when she injects any other drug. The augmented chemical remains inert in the patient's bloodstream until the specified time passes, at which time the patient's player makes the usual roll to resist (if appropriate), and the drug takes effect. The antivenin formula can cleanse any inert formula from a patient's system by specifying the formula to negate (which the Alchemical need not know or be certain is present in the patient's system), so inoculations do not preemptively negate an inert compound. This rule also applies to drugs rendered inert through triggered activation.

Memory Eraser: A specialized neurotoxin quickly spreads to the patient's brain, disrupting her ability to recall recent events. On a failure, the target passes out for a minute (awakening prematurely if he suffers any levels of damage, regardless of type). When he awakens, he does not remember any of the events of the past hour or scene (whichever is longer). On a success, the patient remains conscious, and his memories are simply scrambled. His player must make a reflexive Wits roll at standard difficulty for the character to remember each distinct event from the past half hour. This formula is so complicated that its template costs 6 experience points or 3 bonus points and requires the Exalt to have Essence 3+. Players may not



select memory eraser as one of the starting formulas obtained through installation of this Charm.

Triggered Activation Drug: Once an Exalt adds this formula to her Charm, she may add a sophisticated delay process when she injects any other drug by spending and committing 1 additional mote. The augmented chemical remains inert in the patient's bloodstream for one month, at which time the commitment fades and the drug takes effect. Any time prior, the Exalt may "disarm" or trigger the activation of a drug as a diceless action by withdrawing commitment. Once a delayed drug activates, the patient's player makes the usual roll to resist (if appropriate), and the results determine the effect as normal. This formula is so complicated that its template costs 6 experience points or 3 bonus points and requires the Exalt to have Essence 3+. Players may not select triggered activation drug as one of the starting formulas obtained through installation of the Charm.

REGENERATIVE ESSENCE TRANSFUSION

Cost: 10 motes or Varies

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Indefinite or instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Intelligence: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Biostasis Field Projector, Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus

The Alchemical may inject mortal patients with a powerful healing drug using her Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus. This process follows all the same rules for injection described in that Charm. The synthesized fluid that emerges from the needle glows the color of the Exalt's anima and glitters with microscopic flecks of her caste's Magical Material. Mortal patients infused with this miraculous drug heal and resist poison/disease as if they were Exalted. The transfusion retains its power for as long as the Exalt commits 10 motes to sustain its existence. This injection cannot increase the healing rate of beings who already regenerate at the speed of Exalted or better.

A secondary function of this Charm allows for a direct transfer of motes between the Exalt and a being with an Essence pool. After making a successful injection with her Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus, the Alchemical may spend 3 motes to activate a transfer. She may then donate up to (her Stamina + Essence) motes of Essence broth from her own reservoir to the patient. This donation visibly travels as a glowing liquid through the semitransparent tendril of the injector. Alternately, the Alchemical may siphon Essence as an attack, in which case, she spends 2 motes, and her player rolls Intelligence + Medicine (difficulty 1, if the target is willing, or the target's Essence, if he is unwilling). Each success drains 2 motes through the injection mechanism and pumps them into the Exalt's

own pool. Against Exalted victims, this Charm drains Peripheral Essence before reaching Personal.

METABOLIC AUGMENTATION INJECTION

Cost: Varies

Installation Cost: None

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Intelligence: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Biostasis Field Projector, Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus

Using her Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus, the Alchemical may inject living patients with a drug that dramatically enhances physical prowess. This process follows all the same rules for injection described in that Charm. The drug itself glows a pulsing, sickly green and burns as it sears through the blood. Resistance is not possible.

The exact effects of this Charm depend on the precise formula selected at the time of injection. For every 3 motes spent, the Alchemical may raise one of the patient's Physical Attributes, Appearance, Perception or Wits by one dot. Every dot of augmented Stamina also reduces a patient's wound penalties by one die, and awarding any extra Stamina also allows a target to soak damage as one of the Exalted, using half Stamina against lethal damage and healing at the speed of an Exalt. Furthermore, the Exalt can boost a patient's rating in the following Abilities at the cost of 1 mote per dot: Athletics, Awareness, Endurance or Resistance. No Attribute or Ability may be raised by more dots than (the Exalt's Essence rating - the patient's permanent Essence). Additionally, no Attribute may exceed its original rating by more than double, and no Ability may have a rating over 5 dots after augmentation. All bonuses last for as long as the Alchemical commits Essence to sustaining the drug. Patients carrying the drug for a week or more may mutate and retain changes even after the drug wears off. In other words, their players may pay experience points to raise an augmented Trait's natural rating up to its normal permitted maximum or the augmented rating, whichever is less. Raising a Trait through mutation bypasses the need for training time. Storytellers may optionally allow players to raise Traits using credited future experience, denying all experience awards until the deficit is paid. Alchemicals never mutate as a result of carrying this drug in their systems, although other Exalted may.

The drug created with this Charm is highly addictive to normal humans. Whenever a mortal character has an opportunity to receive reinjection within a month of bearing the serum, his player must roll Temperance (difficulty 2). On a failure, he will do anything that does not place himself or loved ones in immediate physical danger to obtain the drug. On a botch, he will do *anything* for another fix of power.

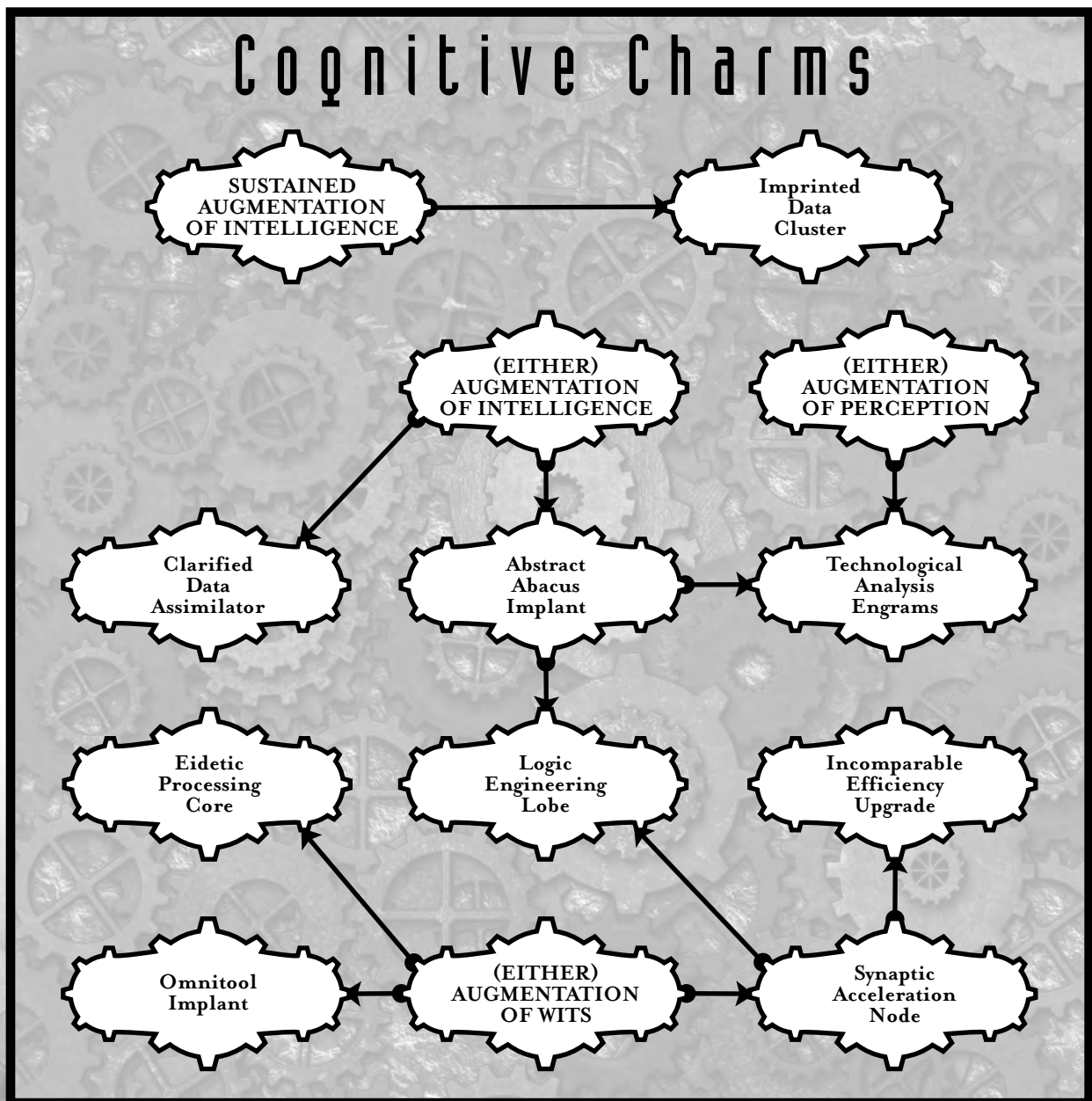
COGNITIVE CHARMS

IMPRINTED DATA CLUSTER

- Cost:** 1 mote per dot
- Installation Cost:** 2 motes
- Duration:** Indefinite
- Type:** Reflexive
- Minimum Intelligence:** 3
- Minimum Essence:** 2
- Prerequisite Charms:** Sustained Augmentation of Intelligence

The Alchemical has an ornate set of adamant polyhedral memory crystals implanted in the frontal lobe of her brain. A complicated network of neural wires connects

these nodes and links the entire assembly to the prongs of her soulgem. This Charm stores dedicated application of skills and knowledge rather than broad archetypes of proficiency. For every mote spent activating this Charm (which must be done while resting in a Vats Complex), the character downloads one single Ability specialty from databases in the facility and adds this Trait to her own capabilities. Specialties obtained with this Charm are considered natural specialties for the purposes of dice-boosting limits, and therefore, a character may not possess the same specialty more than three times for the same Ability and may never apply more than three natural specialty dice to the same roll. Unlike normal specialties obtained with experience points, characters *may* use this



Charm to store as many different specialties for the same Ability as desired. If an Exalt ever withdraws the mote committed to a particular specialty, that Trait immediately and irrevocably vanishes from her memory and must be downloaded anew with reapplication of this Charm at the Vats. Players may spend 3 experience points as an instantaneous reflexive action to release the commitment of Essence for one downloaded specialty and add it permanently to the Alchemical's capabilities.

CLARIFIED DATA ASSIMILATOR

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Intelligence: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Intelligence

Unlike most Alchemical Charms, the Clarified Data Assimilator lacks any outwardly visible components. Instead, the device takes the form of thousands of microscopic automata scuttling through the Exalt's entire nervous system. When powered with Essence, the creatures link their spindly legs in artificial neural chains that vastly upgrade the interconnectivity of thought and memory. As they combine, the automata resonate in perfect synchronicity with the psychic emanations of the Machine God.

With each activation, this Charm replaces the rating of any single Ability with the Exalt's total Clarity for the purposes of one roll. All pertinent specialties for the replaced Ability still apply and add dice as normal. The cost of this Charm is 3 motes by default. However, each subsequent activation adds a cumulative mote to the cost. This surcharge decreases at the rate of 1 mote for every full day that passes since the character last activated the Charm. Characters may not channel a Virtue to aid a roll augmented by this Charm.

Alchemicals gain 1 dot of permanent Clarity when they install this Charm and add 1 point of temporary Clarity whenever they use it.

ABSTRACT ABACUS IMPLANT

Cost: 2 mote per success/difficulty point

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Intelligence: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Intelligence

Artificial synapse webs installed in the Alchemical's brain allow her to perform logic-based cognitive tasks with

uncanny ease. The character's player may reduce the difficulty of a Mental Attribute roll by one for every 2 motes spent. Once the difficulty reaches 1, each additional 2 motes adds one automatic success to the roll (to a maximum number of successes added equal to the Exalt's permanent Essence). This Charm can only aid rolls based on logical or deductive reasoning, such as mathematical computation, navigation and cartography, solving enigmas and the like. The Storyteller remains the final arbiter as to whether a specific action falls under this Charm's purview. This Charm also acts as a perfect mental clock and timer at no cost.

Finally, this Charm may be used to unravel the enigma of languages through the *interpolative syntax emulator* submodule (2 bonus points or 4 experience points; requires Essence 3). After spending an hour studying a text written in an unfamiliar language or listening to someone speak the tongue or devoting a single turn to study a victim's linguistic knowledge with Mind Ripping Probe (see p. 119), the Exalt may immediately spend 3 motes and 3 experience points to learn that tongue (or 3 motes and 1 experience point for a tribal language). This does *not* increase the Alchemical's Linguistics rating, nor is any experience expenditure required to learn the writing for a known spoken language or vice versa.

TECHNOLOGICAL ANALYSIS ENGRAMS

Cost: 3 motes

Installation Cost: 1 motes

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Perception: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Perception, Abstract Abacus Implant

This Charm adds a metallic sub-lobe to the top of the Alchemical's brain, providing an intuitive database of mechanical and magical engineering principles. Using this device, the character may spend a turn analyzing any machine or artifact to discern its function. This process only requires visual scrutiny if most of the object's components are immediately visible. If the device is designed so that its operational parts remain hidden behind panels or an outer shell, the character must spend the turn holding it (or running his hands over its surface if it is too large or heavy to lift). At the end of the turn, roll the Alchemical's Perception + Lore. The difficulty is 1 or 2 for non-magical devices, with 2 reserved for the most complicated and strange machines. For artifacts, the difficulty is the rating of the device (difficulty 6 for N/A artifacts). With a single success, the character gains a general understanding of what the object is supposed to do. Two successes also reveal whether it is damaged or in need of maintenance and to what degree. Three successes provide a precise understanding of all capabilities and every pertinent detail regarding

the object's current condition. A failure provides no information, while a botch provides erroneous details supplied by the Storyteller. This Charm may be used repeatedly to study the same object, but the scans are not cumulative.

An Alchemical who obtains two or more successes studying an object adds one automatic success on his next roll to repair it during the scene. Alternately, the character may study the flaws of a device with the intent of demolishing it. This doubles the raw damage of his next attack against the item. A character can only have one automatic success or damage bonus "banked" at any given time, regardless of the number of times he uses this Charm.

OMNITOOL IMPLANT

Cost: 4 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: One hour

Type: Simple

Minimum Wits: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Wits

This Charm fits into all of an Alchemical's hands. Upon activation, the character can unfold and transform any of her fingers into tools. If she runs out of fingers or needs full use of her hands, she may opt to extend a tool on an articulated metal stalk from a wrist compartment. Regardless of how it appears, this Charm can create any form of tool imaginable, from simple hammers and screwdrivers to powered gadgets such as drills or welding torches. The character can generate any simple tool or anything required to use an Ability in which he has at least one dot. For example, chefs with Craft (Culinary) may extrude a vast array of cutlery and whisks, while those with Craft (First Age Weapons) manifest Essence calibration sensors and circuit welders, etc. Creating lockpicks requires dots of Larceny or Craft (Locksmithing).

Each activation of this Charm provides as many tools as needed for the rest of the scene, allowing the character to freely exchange gadgets as needed for her work. Storytellers should monitor all use of this Charm to prevent abuse, vetoing as necessary. An Omnitool Implant is designed to create tools for constructive or utilitarian purposes and to lend narrative flavor, not to provide an arsenal. Blunt tools may be used as crude clubs while sharp instruments make unwieldy daggers (-1 accuracy from usual), but this is the limit of the Charm's offensive power. Trained interrogators can do horrible things with their tools, but this requires time and a restrained victim, so even this macabre usage has no bearing on combat.

As a final benefit, tools grown by this Charm are of particularly high quality, adding one die to any roll involving their use. This bonus is considered an artificial specialty, cumulative with all other pertinent specialties.

If a character uses this Charm in a purely cosmetic manner without gaining any real benefit (i.e., lighting a pipe with a sparking fingertip or buffing fingernails with an extruded file), the Storyteller may allow the display even if the Alchemical has not spent Essence activating the Charm.

SYNAPTIC ACCELERATION NODE

Cost: 2 motes per hour

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Varies

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Wits: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Wits

Relay crystals implanted throughout the Exalt's nervous system vastly speed her thought processes. For a number of hours equal to the motes spent activating the Charm, the Alchemical multiplies her cognition rate by her permanent Essence. In practice, divide the time required to complete a Mental Attribute-based action by the character's Essence. In the case of extended actions, apply this modifier to the required interval of time between each roll. When performing a series of quick mental tasks (i.e., those with a required duration of one turn or less), the Exalt may spend each turn performing a number of these up to her Wits rating per turn, reducing the multiple-action penalty on each by her permanent Essence. This Charm is most often used for planning agendas or designing the blueprints for new devices.

INCOMPARABLE EFFICIENCY UPGRADE

Cost: 6 motes

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Wits: 5

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Synaptic Acceleration Node

From simply accelerating her mind, an Alchemical with this Charm may speed mind and body in unison for a specific utilitarian goal. Upon activating the Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade, the player declares a predominantly physical extended action with an estimated duration greater than one turn. This task can be almost anything not related to combat, from writing a letter to digging a ditch to crafting an artifact to reading a book. This Charm cannot be used to shorten the time necessary to learn an Ability or to advance Traits, since the act of learning still requires the usual period of reflection. An Alchemical who speed-reads through a training manual knows what the book says on the subject but cannot put any of the lessons to use without practice. The Storyteller remains the final arbiter of whether a task may be aided by this Charm. For as long as the Exalt commits



the required Essence and works at the task without any interruptions or breaks longer than five cumulative minutes per hour, he multiplies the speed at which he can perform the action by his permanent Essence. While under the effects of this Charm, a character's movements become clipped and mechanical, lacking any organic grace.

LOGIC ENGINEERING LOBE

Cost: 3 motes per difficulty point

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Wits: 5

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Abstract Abacus Implant, Synaptic Acceleration Node

This Charm allows an Alchemical to plan difficult actions in advance, devoting sub-clusters of his consciousness to compute likely outcomes and to determine solutions for anticipated problems. The player declares an action to the Storyteller that the Exalt intends to take on the following turn, and the Storyteller informs him of the most likely difficulty number of that roll (as best the Storyteller can determine given that she does not know what modifiers may end up applying). For every 3 motes spent, the Alchemical reduces the final difficulty of the task by 1. This Charm can only be activated once per turn.

On the turn after using this Charm, the character is not bound to follow his plan. If he does not do so, he wastes the Essence spent on the computation. If he carries through, the difficulty of the roll decreases according to the Essence spent. If the character spends more Essence to reduce the difficulty than is needed to obtain difficulty 1, the excess motes are wasted.

Storytellers should consider awarding stunt dice to players who actually declare their intentions in advance to incredulous opponents.

EIDETIC PROCESSING CORE

Cost: None

Installation Cost: 1 mote

Duration: N/A

Type: Permanent

Minimum Wits: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory or Sustained Augmentation of Wits

The Alchemical's brain houses a nest of microscopic automata spirits designed to scuttle through his synapses, cross-referencing and indexing stored memories. At any time, the Exalt can perfectly remember anything he ever experienced while he had an Eidetic Processing Core installed. Remembering memories from times when the Charm was



not installed requires a reflexive Wits + Awareness roll (difficulty 1). Only one roll can be made each turn to call upon the same memory. On a failure, the mind-wisps have difficulty locating the imperfectly filed memory. On a botch, a spirit accidentally moves the memory into another synaptic cluster, making it inaccessible for the rest of the scene. If this Charm is pitted against an effect that tampers with or erases memory, make an opposed roll of the Alchemical's Wits + Awareness against the aggressor's Manipulation + Performance. If the Alchemical wins, the Eidetic Processing Core discovers the truth. If the aggressor wins, the Charm glosses over the changes, reporting erased segments as blank patches and reporting false memories as real.

ESSENCE AND WEAVING CHARMS

AUXILIARY ESSENCE STORAGE UNIT

Cost: None
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: N/A
Type: Permanent
Minimum Stamina: 1
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm increases the storage capacity of an Alchemical's Essence reservoir, adding 10 additional motes of Peripheral Essence per installation. Exalted cannot have more copies of this Charm installed than their permanent Essence (or permanent Essence x 5 times for Alchemicals of Essence 8+). Auxiliary Essence Storage Unit cannot be placed in an Array.

MAN-MACHINE WEAVING ENGINE

Cost: 1 Willpower
Installation Cost: 1 mote
Duration: Instant
Type: Simple
Minimum Intelligence: 4
Minimum Essence: 4
Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm takes the form of an adamant ring implanted around an Alchemical's soulgem, inscribed with

hundreds of stylized Old Realm glyphs evenly spaced around the circumference. When activated by an expenditure of 1 Willpower point, the crystal rapidly spins in its socket, and a unique series of runes begin to light up. At this point, the character may spend the required Essence to initiate a single Man-Machine protocol of Alchemical weaving that she has learned. As the ring spins ever faster in the seconds it takes to shape the Essence (exactly as with Emerald Circle Sorcery), incandescent sparks jump from the Charm into the soulgem. When the protocol activates, the soulgem flashes with a brilliant display of power, and the magic takes effect.

Once an Alchemical installs this Charm, she gains 1 dot of permanent Clarity. Furthermore, she cannot ever remove the Man-Machine Weaving Engine and can never include this Charm as part of an Array. For full details on Alchemical weaving, see pages 145-159.

GOD-MACHINE WEAVING ENGINE

Cost: 2 Willpower
Installation Cost: 2 motes
Duration: Instant
Type: Simple
Minimum Intelligence: 6
Minimum Essence: 5

Prerequisite Charms: Auxiliary Essence Storage Unit, Man-Machine Weaving Engine

This Charm fits as a larger adamant ring concentrically surrounding the Man-Machine Weaving Engine, similarly marked with glyphs. When activated by an expenditure of 2 Willpower points, both crystal rings begin turning in opposite directions, with a brilliant storm of sparks jumping between them and arcing into the Exalt's soulgem. The Alchemical must designate a single God-Machine protocol of Alchemical weaving he knows and wishes to initiate, spending the Essence cost for that effect. After two turns of shaping the Essence (exactly as with Sapphire Circle Sorcery), the protocol takes effect with a bright display of Essence rivaling the noonday sun.

Once an Alchemical installs this Charm, she gains 1 dot of permanent Clarity. Furthermore, she cannot ever remove the God-Machine Weaving Engine and can never include this Charm as part of an Array. For full details on Alchemical weaving, see pages 145-159.

Essence and Weaving Charms





One could have argued to Custodian Unit OX-229 that its existence was a largely pointless exercise, an unquestioning period of servitude for an ailing master that would culminate only in its retirement and cannibalization to support undamaged units. OX-229 would then have used its blades, boring tools and hammers to smash the noisy intruder to a pulverized paste. OX-229 was not a philosopher.

OX-229's domain was Bearing Race 1 through 5,000. Of what, it did not know. Was it important? Obviously important enough that the Great Maker had appointed OX-229 to do its utmost to guard it. Redundancy was fine, but the needs of efficiency dictated that there be a minimal acceptable amount of redundancy in a system. The nature of complicated mechanisms was that they required efficiency. OX-229 could not have formulated that — it could barely recognize its self enough to report itself present during regular checkins. Yet, it understood the concept at a fundamental level, that whatever Unit OX-229 defended, it defended wholeheartedly.

Scuttling to the site of recent disruptive gremlin activity, Unit OX-229 found that the disruptions, far from having concluded, remained in full swing at its arrival. Seven gremlins of various sorts gleefully sawed and cut at the housing of Bearing Race 2,435 until Unit 229's steel crushing claws worked their hydraulic magic on the smallest target. And then, there were six.

OX-229 requested assistance as it crushed the tin parasite, then moved forward to engage its foes. They were a motley band, mostly service machinery and construction equipment gone rogue. OX-229 identified a crayfish-like welder, two medium cargo movers and a self-portable mill and drillpress. The other two had been twisted by the Void and the efforts of their fellow gremlins until they no longer possessed a discernable silhouette. Perhaps they had been manufactured in some defective factory in the Blight.

OX-229 didn't care about their point of origin. It only knew that they were the ones most likely to mount powerful weapons capable of damaging a custodian, as there was little call for such firepower among non-custodial laborers.

Thus, 229's next target was the larger of the two, and it set upon the strange gremlin with tearing claws and its terrible drills, crippling it instantly. That was when the target's partner fired on it with the pneumatic punch. Normally, the punch drove anchors or spikes into hardened steel. Now, the spikes made fine missiles, and OX-229's multi-legged form staggered, and its armor crumpled under the repeated hammerblows of the pneumatic launcher.


OX-229 scuttled right, pulling the spike-shooter's line of fire back across the cluster of gremlins. Two of the malfeasors, the welder and one of the loaders, crumpled to twisted springs and bent metal under the hammer of the spiker. OX-229 charged forward and hurled itself from the top of the crippled loader unit as the fastening spikes smashed the unfortunate gremlin down to its stubby knees.

Then, the OX model was on top of its spiker-armed foe, seeking out critical joints or exposed wire conduits with its snipping claws and fanning its burner in the gunner's sensor module. Two more spikes struck Custodian 229's armor, one severing a coolant line in a garish smoking green spray. Then, 229's superior close-in power triumphed, and the gun-armed gremlin crumpled under the custodian's weight.

The custodian drew itself up, several limbs hanging limp and glowing green coolant dripping from the severed line. The light loader/lifter prepared its brutal graspers. It had little crushing strength in its grippers, but its lifting strength was incredible for its size, and if it grasped with both arms and set them to moving in opposite directions, Custodian Unit OX-229 would need immediate replacement.

So, OX-229 and the loader faced one another, the custodian damaged yet still able to fight, the loader, an inferior but undamaged combatant. Whatever had led them there?

Who won? You are here, aren't you? OX-229's bearing races support the revolving platform this city rests upon. Those gremlins were attempting to destroy this entire city. It makes it seem important, doesn't it? Though you will never hear of, this drama happens every day in a thousand places across the Great Maker. This is the toil and travail of those who keep the systems operational. By this labor and this sacrifice, all are protected. When it is important to you or endangers you, you notice the enormity of small actions. But everything that happens to us has the potential to be like unto the Great Maker, for our society is like a custodian inside his form. That is why Autochthonians must always work together and follow orders. If we fail or flinch, our whole world may be destroyed. There is no alternative to orderliness.



CHAPTER FOUR

MIRACLES OF THE MACHINE GOD

The Realm of Brass and Shadow is, if it need be said, vast. Like all Primordials, Autochthon is larger than mortals can fully comprehend, easily the equal of Creation at its height in the First Age. Only a portion of that vastness is habitable by humans, however. The rest is simply too hostile, too polluted or too bizarre for human civilization to survive within. Still, even those relatively small crevices and cavities amenable to human habitation, those interstices between the Maker's organ-continent, are large enough to support a population in the millions. Certainly, the human population of

Autochthonia would be far larger today were it not for the fact that the Machine God is constantly shifting and folding in on itself. But every realm has its cataclysms.

Still, an entity this large — with so many toiling souls and so many spirits of innovation, inspiration and craft — cannot help but hold many wonders.

Though the crystalline genius of the Great Maker is, tragically, in eclipse, Autochthon still designs and weaves with a virtuosity matched by no other entity, and his Plan for his Chosen is woven into his very being — and even

into Creation itself, as it was Autochthon itself that refined the Loom of Fate and built the pattern spiders and set them spinning. Likewise, he saw to his own continuance by spawning the Divine Ministers and tasking them and their revered subroutines and machine spirit servitors with his preservation and well-being.

This chapter reveals the myriad miracles of the Maker, including the strange reality-weaving protocols wielded by the Alchemical Exalted and the alien machine spirits that swarm and toil in the Machine God's Far Reaches.

ALCHEMICAL PROTOCOLS

The Machine God gifted his Chosen with the power to enact powerful reality-altering protocols in the form of command-prayers to the spirits that weave the Maker's reality matrix. He imbued the Alchemical Exalted with the ability to transmit these command-prayers to his design weavers, those facets of his being that weave destiny in all of Autochthonia. Furthermore, he saw to it that his Chosen could also issue commands to the pattern spiders (which he created) working Creation's Loom of Fate (which he also created). This ability to shape destiny through these weaving protocols was among his greatest gifts to them.

The result of this gift is that the Alchemical Exalted have a form of sorcery all their own that bears little resemblance to that used by Creation's Exalted. A mixture of machine mysticism, pattern-manipulating prayers to the design weav-

ers (or pattern spiders, in Creation), direct thread pulling and some effects old enough to bear a resemblance to Creation's sorcery, Alchemical protocols are optimized for effects within the Machine God, but function flawlessly even in Creation. For the most part, these divine protocols don't shape Essence in the same ways or share many effects with any form of sorcery known beyond the boundaries of Autochthon, but they unquestionably remain on par with those better-known forms of magic. Some Sidereal Exalted might be shocked to see just how much control Alchemical protocols have over pattern spiders.

Being wholly discrete from Creation, Alchemical protocols are not arranged according to the same organizational principles as sorcery in Creation, and no initiation is necessary beyond installing the appropriate protocol Charm. There are no tales of Brigid or Hiesh, no concepts of the Celestial classification system and no question of the protocols' origins. Autochthon, the Primordial who *created* the pattern spiders and the protocols to command them, is the direct provider of this great gift, as he provides everything to those dwelling within him. They are a set of divine algorithms, exacting remote-control command-prayers that trigger a design weaver (or pattern spider) to spin reality in a specific predetermined way to grant the Alchemical the effect he desires.

The Great Maker also taught his children to build tools that reweave the pattern of reality more directly. Just as he built the pattern spiders that manage the Loom of Fate and the design weavers that shape the Design in his own



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Primordial Core, Autochthon likewise designed the Charms his Exalted use to pull the strands of fate using similar spiritual technology. Each protocol pulls the nearby strands of fate in a specific predetermined way to achieve the results of the spell as described below. While fates in Autochthonia and Creation are woven into separate Tapestries, both use the same system of foundation strands, so an Alchemical weaving a protocol in Creation does so just as he would inside Autochthon and gets the same results, much as a musician can play the same note on two different instruments and still produce the same tone. While the Maker's Chosen can effect Creation as well as Autochthon, Sidereal Exalted are not so lucky, as they have no authority to command fate in Autochthonia. Consequently, the Realm of Brass and Shadow and its native denizens are all counted as beyond fate with respect to Sidereal astrology and Charms.

This power is not without its costs. Once an Alchemical installs a protocol Charm, it cannot be removed. It isn't just socketed into the Exalt's body, it's socketed into his soul. Choosing to be a protocol weaver is a permanent decision.

Protocols occupy a strange middle ground between prayers and what might be thought of as programs. These prayer-weavings are installed in the Alchemical's protocol Charm and don't take up Charm Slots. Learning new protocols involves physically loading the appropriate sub-routines into the Alchemical's protocol Charm.

Autochthonians are familiar with two echelons of protocol authority. Effects that gifted mortal inventors, thaumaturges and Essence engineers could conceivably perform with the proper tools and machines (given time and appropriate resources) are covered by what are called Man-Machine Protocols. Those effects that are wholly beyond the capacities of even the greatest mortal engineers are called God-Machine Protocols. Most God-Machine Protocols fuse transcendent spirituality with highly advanced technology and design weaver assistance to achieve effects that alter reality itself in fundamental ways.

Both types of protocol weaving are beyond the capacity of Creation's Exalted. The Exalted mind does not function sufficiently like an Alchemical protocol module (or a design weaver's pattern-weaving hardware) to allow Creation's Chosen to duplicate those module's Essence-manipulating effects. Oddly, enlightened Mountain Folk who buy the Charms (at double the normal cost) and have them surgically implanted can also use Alchemical weaving.

And while some forms of Exalted magic have no effect on Alchemicals (or on Autochthonians at all), the Maker's Chosen do not have that limitation. Protocol weaving works in Creation because Autochthon built a back door into the programming of the pattern spiders that manage the Loom of Fate so that he and his Chosen would always be able to spin reality there. The only way to stop Alchemical protocols from working in Creation would be to destroy the pattern spiders or to isolate them from the Loom, in which case the Maidens would have to weave fate themselves. The

pattern spiders were forged using Primordial magnitude magic, and nothing less than that can alter them. Even if another Primordial *were* to tamper with them, no being other than Autochthon has the comprehension of those machine spirits' inner workings or specifications to modify them without destroying them utterly — and possibly whole sectors of the Tapestry along with them.

Alchemical Exalted usually rely on the design weavers (or the pattern spiders) to weave patterns for them, but it is possible to reweave patterns directly (thereby affecting even those outside of fate, such as the Deathlords or the Yozi), but doing so doubles the protocol's Essence cost. It's generally more efficient to use area of effect protocols or protocols that affect the Exalt directly rather than to spend the Essence to affect such beings directly.

WHAT WORKS WHERE

Due to the variety of approaches taken by different types of magic, not all types of magic work everywhere. The following is a summary of what works where.

- Sorcery and necromancy are Primordial methodologies of Essence manipulation hardwired into all reality. They work everywhere.

- Alchemical weaving also works everywhere, but using it to affect beings that are outside fate is much more difficult. Weaving in the Wyld is difficult and often doesn't work. One spell, on the other hand, works *only* in the Wyld and nowhere else. It does, however, have the consequence of alerting every Fair Folk for miles around of the weaver's presence.

- Sidereal astrology works everywhere, but can't target beings (or locales) that are outside fate. Autochthon designed a back door in the pattern spiders programming that allows his Chosen to affect Creation. He did not, however, make his design weavers susceptible to Sidereal blandishments. This means that Malfeas, Autochthonia and the Underworld (and beings originating in those places) are immune to all astrological effects. A Sidereal is part of Creation's Tapestry and may affect herself or use astrology to affect anyone also originating in Creation, but she can't tag a creature from Autochthonia with an Ascending or Descending effect any more than she could a Yozi or a Malfean.

- Sidereal prayers don't affect Autochthonia or any denizen thereof.

- Sidereal Charms work, but they are subject to the limits listed on page 129 of **Exalted: The Sidereals**.

- Prayer strips use the power of a sutra, a pattern of Essence, composed by the Primordials on Creation's Loom of Fate. Like astrology, they affect those beings originating in Creation, but no one else.

MAN-MACHINE PROTOCOLS

Similar in power to Terrestrial Circle Sorcery, Man-Machine Protocols are the most common form of pattern-weaving protocols among Autochthonia's Exalted. Even so, Creation's sorcerers would recognize only a handful of its effects. The protocol Charms built into the Alchemical Exalted produce magic that is mostly unknown in Creation, and many of its effects are clearly for use in Autochthonia.

Weaving a protocol is very similar to casting a spell. Man-Machine Protocols require the weaver to spend 1 point of Willpower to make initial contact with the design weavers in order to change fate.

Most spells have a minimum Clarity requirement. This represents the lowest degree of communion the Alchemical Weaver can have and still expect the design weavers to process his protocol.

AUTOMATON OVERRIDE PROTOCOL

Cost: 5 or 15 motes

Target: One nearby automaton, or all automata in a 30-foot radius.

Duration: One scene

Minimum Clarity: 3

Alchemical pattern weavers use this protocol to control animated creatures, soulless intelligences and minor machine spirits. These include golems, zombies and automata (such as smoke cobras, hounds of the five winds and the like) as well as items of advanced technology, such as First Age ships, skyships and weapons. This protocol may affect spirit machines, including most of the mechanical wildlife denizens of the Reaches (such as custodians) if their Essence rating is 2 or less. The Exalt weaving Automaton Override Protocol instantly takes control of the affected automata, directing them to do his bidding, whatever it may be. This includes stopping such creations from attacking or causing them to attack the Alchemical's enemies. The Alchemical weaver overrides any other programming the automaton might have, replacing it with her own.

The Exalt focuses her Essence, then speaks a short command phrase. A whorl of bright-green arcane symbols flow from her mouth or, in some cases, her soulgem and infuses the form of the target automata, suspending all prior commands and making her will the target's new purpose.

For 5 motes, the sorcerer takes control of a single automaton. By spending 15 motes, the sorcerer may take control of (Essence rating x 2) automata or technological devices in a 10-yard radius. Automaton Override Protocol may be countered by Emerald Countermagic, by Essence Draining Defense or by any Alchemical Exalt with a permanent Essence exceeding the weaver's by 2 or more.

This protocol has no effect on natural creatures, elementals or machine spirits with Essence ratings of 3 or higher.

Only the Alchemical invoking this protocol has override authority. Others trying to interact with the automata

are ignored or dealt with as the weaver sees fit. If the automaton was summoned by another Exalt *and* the other Exalt has a higher Essence than the Alchemical, make a contested Willpower roll for the pattern weaver and the other Exalt. If the other Exalt's player wins, he maintains control of the automaton. If the Alchemical's player wins, she wrests control of the automaton from its summoner. Note that the consequences of this can be particularly hazardous if the other is riding in the automaton when control is wrested away (as in the case of the summoned warstriders used by necromancers, for example).

BINDING FILAMENT SYSTEM

Cost: 10 motes

Target: One person

Duration: Indefinite

Minimum Clarity: 0

On completion of this protocol, the target is instantly wrapped in fine strands of silvery filament. The metallic threads are extraordinarily tough. Very strong individuals might be able to break out of these threads as a feat of strength requiring a Strength + Athletics total of 10, but doing so causes the strands to act as garrotes on the flesh, cutting the escapee to ribbons (inflicting levels of lethal damage equal to the weaver's Essence). This damage can be soaked.

For reasons unknown, some sorcerers know this protocol as Her Glistening Silvery Strands.

CRYSTAL LOTUS OF REPOSE

Minimum Clarity: 2

Except that the protective containment is made of crystal and strongly resembles a lotus flower, this protocol is identical to Sleep of Stony Safety (see **Savant and Sorcerer**, p. 117).

DOCILITY ASSURANCE FIELD

Cost: 25 motes

Target: One individual

Duration: One scene or one hour, whichever is longer

Minimum Clarity: 0

Upon invoking this protocol, the Exalt binds his target in a shifting mesh of luminous filaments. This web of light in no way impairs the target's mobility, but any time the target spends Essence, he suffers damage. The sorcerer determines the kind of damage inflicted at the protocol's weaving, either one level of bashing per mote of Essence spent by the target or one level of lethal damage for every 2 motes of Essence spent (in which case the expenditure of a single mote causes no damage). This damage can be soaked only with the target's Essence rating. This protocol in no way interferes with activities that don't require Essence expenditure, nor does it interfere with Essence the target has already committed. This spell cannot target beings of greater Essence than the weaver character's.

SPELLS THAT CROSSED OVER

The protocols of Autochthonia and the sorcery of Creation are not mutually exclusive. Some spells are remarkably similar to protocols, and a small few are identical. There is a reason for this similarity. Sorcery, the secret of manipulating Creation at its fundamental levels, was practiced by the Primordials and given to the Exalted by the Yozis before Autochthon's self-imposed exile to the void of Elsewhere. Some of the protocols currently known to Alchemical pattern weavers were being practiced even then. While a number of the old spells have been abandoned, less useful in Autochthonia than they were in Creation, others have been refined, and still others have stayed just as they were for millennia, used by Exalts on both sides of the Seal of Eight Divinities. In general, the spells that have survived as Autochthonian weaving protocols to the modern day are those that began with a technological focus or those that make use of components or spirits readily found within the Great Maker.

It's not possible to study sorcery spells and translate them into Alchemical protocols. Those spells that could be translated have been. However, it is possible to write entirely new protocols that nudge fate in certain specific ways, although the types of results must be in line with the kind of techno-spiritual effects the design weavers are accustomed to generating. Otherwise, writing new protocols is identical to developing new sorcery spells (see *Exalted*, p. 217).

DRIVING THE SHADOW MACHINE

Cost: 20 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: (Weaver's Essence rating x 4) hours

Minimum Clarity: 2

This protocol reconfigures physical reality to bring into being a floating pocket of roiling shadow, an incorporeal machine that feeds on Essence and ambient light — and in which the pattern weaver and his companions can ride. This machine, commonly called a tenebrapede, may carry 200 pounds of additional cargo or passengers per point of the weaver's permanent Essence rating.

The tenebrapede is perfectly silent and goes where the Alchemical wills it to go. All he need do is step into the roiling mass of shadows and assert his will. The view from within the tenebrapede is crystal clear in 180 degrees, but those trying to look in see only darkness.

The shadow vehicle flies at a rate of 200 miles per hour (nearly 600 yards per turn). If time runs out before the voyage is finished, the tenebrapede comes to a rest in the

nearest city or safe section of the Near Reaches, and the weaver and his companions have one minute to unload their possessions before the tenebrapede and anything left inside it fades back away into the shadows. For all its ephemeral nature, the tenebrapede is remarkably solid. It has 25 health levels and a soak of 25L/35B. The tenebrapede provides 90 percent hard cover to those who ride in it (see p. 229 in *Exalted*). In addition, the shadow machine's speed makes attacking its passengers exceedingly difficult. Only one attack can be made against the tenebrapede or its occupants unless it is matched in flight by the attackers. Attacking out of the chariot is similarly restricted.

The vehicle protects its occupants and cargo from all but the most extreme climatic conditions, though the environment of some of the elemental poles or the most inhospitable of the Far Reaches might be more than the shadow vehicle can counteract.

Aside from disappearing at the end of the protocol's duration, the tenebrapede lasts until it reaches its commanded destination, until it is commanded to land prematurely or until it is dispelled.

ELSEWHERE-EVOKING ASANA

Cost: 20 motes

Target: Area of effect

Duration: The longer of one hour or one scene

Minimum Clarity: 5

The weaver must assume a seated meditative posture to weave this effect, which allows her to manifest a small portion of the great Void to which the Machine God exiled himself. For many Alchemicals, this protocol is as much a spiritual exercise as anything, allowing a weaver to contemplate the ordeals suffered by the Great Maker over the course of his exile, but the protocol creates, as a byproduct, a powerful defense field around the weaver.

Once cast, the weaver is surrounded by a sphere of cold, airless, apotic void to a radius of (Essence rating x 5) feet. This void instantly snuffs all fire. Entities that need air suffocate (as per the rules on p. 243 of *Exalted*), and visibility is equal to heavy snow at night (see *Exalted*, p. 237). Moreover, the life-sapping cold of this field is extremely damaging, equal to standing in a bonfire (see *Exalted*, p. 244). Within the field, there is neither up nor down (i.e., no gravity). The players of those caught within must get three or more successes on a Dexterity + Athletics roll for their characters to propel themselves through this void. Once a character makes herself move, she continues floating in the direction she propelled herself until she exits the field, at which point she falls to the floor. Fewer successes than that indicates that the character cannot muster enough coordination to propel herself in any direction. Items entering this protocol's sphere of effect from without lose all momentum: An arrow fired into the sphere of effect is brought to a total inertial null the moment it breaches the void. Likewise, a lunging man

would find himself relieved of all momentum and would need to somehow propel himself to escape the field generated by this reality-weaving protocol.

The Alchemical pattern weaver, maintaining the asana, floats serenely at the center of the void, immune to all of the effects of Elsewhere-Evoking Prana except for the visibility penalties. The sorcerer can bring the protocol to a halt instantly by breaking the posture, but while she maintains the posture, she regains Essence as if she were meditating (since that's exactly what she's doing).

ENTROPY MANIPULATION PROTOCOL

Cost: 25 motes

Target: All automata within range

Duration: One scene

Minimum Clarity: 4

More than any other denizens of Autochthonia, Alchemical Exalted make forays into the gremlin-infested Far Reaches. This potent protocol allows a weaver to temporarily knock all nearby automata offline. When an Exalt weaves this protocol, all gremlins, golems, zombies and all other forms of automata within (Essence x 10) yards take the weaver's Essence in bashing damage and fall inert. At the beginning of the next scene, the affected automata will

resume functioning, but they may be confused about where they are and what they're doing. The automata may or may not return to what they were doing before the protocol took effect. While the Entropy Manipulation Protocol doesn't shut down warstriders or other forms of powered armor, it does deaden the armor's limbs somewhat if they're not shielded. The basic mobility penalty imposed by this protocol for Artifact ●●● armor is -2. Each additional dot of Artifact lessens the mobility penalty by 1. Artifact ●●●●● armor, therefore, is not affected by this weaving.

ESSENCE REALLOCATION PROTOCOL

Cost: 25 motes

Target: Special

Duration: Instant

Minimum Clarity: 0

Inefficiency is dangerous in a closed system, and the denizens of Autochthonia can be extraordinarily efficient with regard to what they reuse and how they reuse it. Like Emerald Countermagic, Essence Reallocation Protocol is a reflexive protocol that counters Terrestrial Circle Sorcery, but it also affects Man-Machine Protocols and Shadowlands Circle Necromancy. The protocol does this by absorbing all the Essence out of the cancelled spell and



channeling it into the Alchemical's Essence reservoir. If the absorbed Essence puts the weaver over his maximum rating, the Alchemical's metal Charms flare up and emit sparks for a moment as they shunt away the excess Essence.

LIGHTNING ELEMENTAL CONCATENATION

PROTOCOL

Minimum Clarity: 0

This Alchemical protocol is identical to the spell Lightning Spider, known by Creation's sorcerers. It is suspected that Autochthon himself may have given this spell to the sorcerers of the Exalted.

THE MAKER'S BASIC DEFENSE ARRAY

Cost: 20 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: 12 hours

Minimum Clarity: 3

Upon invoking this protocol, hundreds of small polished metal spheres surround the Exalt, rapidly whirling and flowing around her in a perfect defensive sphere. The sphere moves with the weaver, and it can change shape to accommodate tight passages or the like. The Maker's Basic Defense Array functions like armor in that it knocks aside blows aimed at the Alchemical. It has an effective hardness of 5 and adds 10L/10B to the character's soak.

When a physical attack comes at the weaver, the spheres flow swiftly to intercept the blow, knocking it aside with the loud report of hundreds of metal balls slamming into their target. The impact is tremendous. Every time a weapon that is *not* made of the Magical Materials takes this kind of battering, the Storyteller rolls one die to determine the damage the Defense Array inflicts on the weapon. Normal weapons shatter on any roll of 7 or less, while exceptional weapons shatter on a roll of 5 or less. Perfect weapons are immune to this damage. Even if the weapon sustains no damage, the player of the attacking character must make a Dexterity + Melee roll (difficulty 2) to prevent the impact of the metal spheres from knocking the weapon out of the character's grasp.

Characters making unarmed attack upon the sorcerer suffer 10 dice of bashing damage. This damage is soaked normally.

THE MAKER'S INSTANTANEOUS FORGE

Cost: 20 motes

Target: One conjured automaton

Duration: (Essence) weeks

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol can be a strange one for Alchemical Exalted to use as it's a weak and distantly related variant of the protocol that animates the Alchemicals themselves. By performing this protocol, the weaver creates a powerful automaton to serve her. Alchemical sorcerers don't need to build or create the shells of their golems. The shell

appears out of the ground upon weaving, a gift of the Machine God. The sorcerer's power is necessary mainly for binding a spirit into the vessel to animate it. Each shell is animated by an Autochthonian elemental assigned to the Chosen by the Divine Ministers. So long as the elemental is bound into its shell, it has no will of its own and performs the weaver's will as its own.

The automata summoned by this weaving vary in Traits and appearance based on the type of elemental bound into them. In addition, a golem will have two Charms unique to its type. These Charms cannot be learned by Exalts who would otherwise be able to learn Charms not native to their Exaltation.

An automaton of this type will serve its summoner for (summoner's Essence) weeks before merging once more with the substance of the Maker. A weaver can have as many of these automata serving him at one time as she has points of Essence.

ENGINE GOLEM (STEAM AUTOMATON)

Description: Engine golems are terrifying creations of spraying, hissing steam contained in a black metal exoskeleton. The iron chassis they animate are crude mechanisms of flywheels, clockworks, pistons and gears, but they're no less effective for their awkward appearance. They are not fast, and they don't move gracefully, but they are both strong and resilient.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Automaton; never fails Valor rolls, cannot make any others.

Abilities: Athletics 3 (Lift +2), Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Endurance 5, Medicine 3, Resistance 9, Stealth 1

Charms:

ILLNESS STERILIZING PROCEDURE

Cost: 10 motes

Duration: Instant

Steam is renowned throughout Autochthonia for its ability to cleanse individuals — and, in fact, whole expanses of the Reaches — of disease. By spraying a target with a gout of warm (but not scalding) steam, the Engine golem can purify a target's body, letting him more easily resist disease and infection. Once the engine golem has used this Charm on an individual, the target's player immediately rolls Stamina + Endurance with no penalties and two extra dice. If the roll succeeds (see *Exalted*, pp. 233-234, 250 and 319-321 for rules and difficulty), the target recovers from his disease or infection immediately. If not, the engine golem can use this Charm again.

SCALDING BLAST ATTACK

Cost: 2 motes per damage die

Duration: Instant

This crude Charm allows the engine golem to deliver a focused jet of scalding steam to an opponent. For every 2 motes of Essence spent, the golem inflicts a die of lethal damage that can only be soaked with Stamina.

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 6 Damage 6L Defense 6

Kick: Speed 2 Accuracy 5 Damage 8L Defense 5

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 6L/9B (Metal body, 4L/4B)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 36

Other Notes: None

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 7 Damage 6L Defense 8 Rate 5

Kick: Speed 2 Accuracy 7 Damage 9L Defense 3 Rate 3

Dodge: 8

GLASS GOLEM (CRYSTAL AUTOMATON)

Description: These golems are squat, smooth entities of thick, smoothly polished glass. They are entirely transparent and exceedingly hard to kill. They are often found as body servants to weavers. Typically transparent, some glass golems have been known to take on the deep colors of gems.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Automaton; never fails Valor rolls, cannot make any others.

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Presence 2, Stealth 5, Survival 2, Thrown 4

Charms:

POISON DETECTION METHOD

Cost: 3 motes

Duration: Instant

A glass golem can, with this Charm, detect poison, disease and venom by touch. Any portion of the glass golem that comes within a foot of such a harmful substance turns a noxious green color. Glass golems are often used by miners working in the Reaches to detect leaks of dangerous liquids or gasses from Autochthon's veins.

VISION-CLEARING PROTOCOL

Cost: 4 motes

Duration: Instant

This Charm nullifies all illusion and glamour-based magic in a 10-foot radius.

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 7 Damage 3B Defense 7

Shard: Speed 5 Accuracy 7 Damage 5L (Rate 3, Range 15)

Willpower: 2 **Soak:** 7B/7L (Crystalline body, 2B/5L)

Dodge Pool: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed

Essence: 2

Essence Pool: 36

Other Notes: None

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 8 Damage 3B Defense 9 Rate 5

Dodge: 8

MAGNET GOLEM (LIGHTNING AUTOMATON)

Description: Magnet golems are composed of ferrous sand or scrap iron held together by a powerful electrical field. Any item of iron or steel that comes within 10 feet of one (including steel armor or steel-tipped crossbow bolts) is strongly pulled toward the golem and requires a strength equal to the weaver's Essence to resist. Any arrow containing metal that comes within 10 feet of a magnet golem is instantly added to the golem's metallic mass. These automata serve their masters best as warriors and bodyguards.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Automaton; never fails Valor rolls, cannot make any others.

Abilities: Archery 5 (Levinbolt +2), Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Presence 2 (Intimidation +2), Resistance 5

Charms:

LEVINBOLT

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

The magnet golem can create and fling small lightning bolts at the weaver's enemies, using its Dexterity + Thrown score. Each crackling bolt has a base damage of 5L, a range of 50 yards and ignites easily flammable materials.

SHOCKING AURA

Cost: 5 motes

Duration: One scene

The golem generates a crackling field around itself that not only adds 2L/2B to its soak, but deals one lethal health level of damage to anything that touches it. This damage ignores all metal armor not made of Magical Materials.

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 6 Damage 5B Defense 6

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 5L/7B (Ferrous body, 4L/4B)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed

Essence: 2

Essence Pool: 36

Other Notes: Magnet golems prefer to attack with Levinbolts unless forced into hand-to-hand combat.

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 7 Damage 5B Defense 8 Rate 5

Dodge: 7

OIL GOLEM (OIL AUTOMATON)

Description: Oil golems are liquid entities that can be clear, amber or pure black, and they have incredible movement rates. They most often serve as messengers and scouts for their masters, or they may serve by lubricating the enormous factory-cathedrals of the Machine God.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Virtues: Automaton; never fails Valor rolls, cannot make any others.

Abilities: Athletics 2 (balance +3), Awareness 3, Dodge 5, Linguistics (Native: Machine, Old Realm) 1, Melee 5 (Slashing Sword +1), Stealth 5

Charms:

BURSTING RESERVOIR METHOD

Cost: 10 motes

Duration: One scene

For the entire scene, the golem may run at five times its normal movement rate (base movement of 17 yards per turn). The oil golem may take no other actions but movement and must move in the most direct manner as it can toward its goal.

RIDING THE VISCOUS TIDES

Cost: 5 motes

Duration: One scene

When an oil golem invokes this Charm, it becomes one with a body of oil. The golem may move freely through the oil, either swimming or walking along the bottom of a reservoir, and may perform any action that it could on land. The golem suffers no penalties to Perception rolls due to being submerged in oil. In addition, it gains three dice to its Stealth pool and two dice to its Dodge pool while so immersed.

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Slashing Sword: Speed 10 Accuracy 12 Damage 4L Defense 12

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 3L/5B (Fluid body, 2L/3B)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 36

Other Notes: Oil golems are commonly equipped with slashing swords and favor such weapons. The caster may choose to equip one with a different weapon, however, in which case its attacks should be adjusted accordingly.

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Slashing Sword: Speed 13 Accuracy 12 Damage 6L Defense 11 Rate 2

Dodge: 11

SMUDGE GOLEM (SMOKE AUTOMATON)

Description: Smudge golems are wispy airborne automata that possess excellent stealth and surveillance skills. They are dark gray and blend into shadows easily. These golems serve their masters best as spies.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Automaton; never fails Valor rolls, cannot make any others.

Abilities: Athletics 4 (Jump +2), Awareness 5, Dodge 4, Endurance 2, Stealth 6

Charms:

SHARED EXPERIENCE TECHNIQUE

Cost: 6 motes

Duration: One scene

A smudge golem may record everything it sees for one whole scene, so that it might report what it sees and hears back to its master with exact detail. The golem expends the required Essence and then spends the entire scene observing. If it takes any other actions besides watching, the experience being recorded ends, though everything up until that point may be shared with its summoner. To report its experiences, the golem must return to the Exalt, at which point the weaver inhales the golem and downloads its data internally before exhaling the golem again. The recorded sensory data transfers immediately, requiring only a turn for the Chosen to learn what the golem has observed.

UNERRING LOCATION OF THE MASTER

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

This simple Charm allows the smudge golem to locate its master instantly. The golem only needs to concentrate for a turn, and it will know in what direction the weaver lies and how far away.

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Punch: Speed 8 Accuracy 5 Damage 1B Defense 5 Rate 5

Kick: Speed 5 Accuracy 4 Damage 4B Defense 2 Rate 3

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 5L/7B (Insubstantial body, 4L/4B)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 36

Other Notes: None

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 8 Accuracy 6 Damage 1B Defense 7

Kick: Speed 5 Accuracy 6 Damage 3B Defense 4

Dodge: 11

STEEL GOLEM (METAL AUTOMATON)

Description: Steel golems are tall automata of polished steel. They are shaped like humans, but their faces are featureless and so polished as to be mirrored. They are the largest of the automata summoned by this protocol, being almost as broad at the shoulder as they are tall and weigh around 400 pounds. Steel golems serve their masters best as guardians.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 1, Stamina 6, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Automaton, never fails Valor rolls, cannot make any others.

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 5 (Clinch +1), Dodge 3, Endurance 2, Presence 3 (Intimidation +2), Resistance 5

Charms:

GRINDING METAL SHRIEK

Cost: 8 motes

Duration: Instant

The steel golem rubs its arms together to produce a shrill, stentorian screech that shatters the morale of anyone who hears it. The players of everyone within 50 yards of the golem must make an immediate Valor check, and if they fail, their characters are unable to do anything but tremble for a number of turns equal to the number of the successes on a reflexive Manipulation + Presence roll made by the Storyteller.

IMMOVABLE OBJECT STANCE

Cost: 3 motes

Duration: Special

With this Charm, a steel golem can turn itself into an immobile hulk and increase its weight and density disproportionate to its size. The golem stands still and spends its Essence, and then, the Storyteller makes a Stamina + Athletics roll. Each success increases the difficulty of a Strength + Athletics roll made to move the golem. While in the Immovable Object Stance, the golem can take no actions, except to invoke a reversion to animate form.

The golem also ignores damage that deals less than the number of successes on the Stamina + Athletics roll. While using this Charm, the golem is considered an object, and damage need not be rolled against it. A steel golem can remain in statue form indefinitely, until it chooses to spend another 3 motes of Essence to return to its animate form.

Base Initiative: 3

Attack:

Slam: Speed 3 Accuracy 6 Damage 6B Defense 1

Crush: Speed 3 Accuracy 7 Damage 6B Defense 2

Dodge Pool: 4 **Soak:** 10L/10B (Steel body, 7L/4B)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 36

Other Notes: None

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Slam: Speed 3 Accuracy 7 Damage 6B Defense 8 Rate 5

Crush: Speed 3 Accuracy 7 Damage 6B Defense 2 Rate 1

Dodge: 6

OPTIMIZED COMPONENT INTEGRATION PROTOCOL

Cost: 5 motes per target

Target: The weaver and all willing targets in a 10-foot radius

Duration: The longer of one hour or one scene

Minimum Clarity: 5

Upon invoking this protocol, the weaver and all participating individuals become models of perfect cooperation and interdependence, like the components of a well-oiled machine. They intuitively know what is needed to optimize the group's performance and achieve their shared goal. So long as they are working on one shared task (usually something that would require an extended action, such as building a device or opening a tunnel), all benefiting members gain one die to their dice pools for each additional member of the group up to a total of (Wits + Essence) individuals (i.e., if a group has five members, each member gains an additional four dice to her pools to accomplish that one task). This protocol ends if the group accomplishes its task before the time expires.

PHLOGISTON WEB

Cost: 15 motes

Target: Area of effect

Duration: (Essence) turns

Minimum Clarity: 0

Upon invoking this protocol, the weaver expels an enormous blazing red net of phlogiston — sticky solid fire — from his body, usually from his mouth or from the palm of his hand. The phlogiston web is enormous, covering an area of 100 square feet per point of permanent Essence, but the exact measurements are up to the sorcerer. An Exalt with an Essence rating of 4 could create a web 20 feet by 20 feet or 10 feet by 40 feet or whatever best suits his purposes.

The blazing net inflicts (the weaver's Essence rating) + 4 health levels in lethal damage every turn.

Cutting the net is possible only with a weapon made of the Magical Materials and requires four successes on a Strength + Melee roll. Using pure strength to break the strands of netting requires a Strength + Athletics roll, difficulty 5. Characters immune to fire take no damage from this protocol.

PLAGUE OF BRONZE SNAKES

Minimum Clarity: 0

Except that the snakes wriggle out of the body of the Alchemical sorcerer at the protocol's commencement, this is the same as the spell found on page 112 of *Savant and Sorcerer*.

PROBABILITY DEGRADATION MATRIX

Cost: 15 motes

Target: Enemies in a 10-yard radius

Duration: One hour or one scene, whichever is longer

Minimum Clarity: 5

An Alchemical enacting this protocol pulls all the slack from the strings of fate connected to her enemies, depriving them of grace and good fortune and making their every word and gesture an invitation to disaster. In effect, it turns fate itself against the weaver's enemies.

When the Alchemical weaves this design, her soulgem radiates an angry red glare that makes the eyes itch. Enemy familiars with a Familiar rating less than 3 flee the area of effect. The Storyteller must succeed on a simple Valor roll for any hostile spirit with permanent Essence of less than 2, or it will flee as well, overcome by a sense of dread. Such beings will flee at their full movement rates for two turns per point of the weaver's Essence and will not return until the protocol is complete.

This protocol has no effect on the Alchemical weaver's allies, but all those working *against* her, directly or covertly, are afflicted with extraordinary bad luck. For the duration of the protocol, the target number of all rolls for those afflicted increases by one, 10s count as only a single success, and every 1 rolled negates one success.

SONIC HAMMER VOCALIZATION

Cost: 12 motes

Target: Area of effect

Duration: (Essence) turns

Minimum Clarity: 0

The Alchemical opens his mouth, and a devastatingly shrill wail issues from his throat. The vibration caused by this attack shakes bone, rattles teeth and shatters glass. Hearing over the noise is impossible. Items of glass or crystal suffer 10 levels of bashing damage. In all other regards, this protocol is identical to the spell *Thunder Wolf's Howl* (see *Savant & Sorcerer*, p. 122).

SOUL ARCHIVING PROTOCOL

Cost: 10+ motes

Target: Ghost

Duration: Permanent

Minimum Clarity: 0

This ancient and classified protocol preserves the efficiency of Autochthon's soul recycling by capturing loose souls (i.e., ghosts) in a soulgem (see p. 186). It's rarely used, as soulgem recycling is so efficient in Autochthonia, but on those rare occasions when a soulgem has been left on its corpse for so long that the soul has escaped the soulgem (usually two weeks or more), this protocol corrects the oversight by recapturing the loose soul in its gem.

The weaver need only weave this protocol while holding out the soulgem. His player makes a contested

Willpower + Essence roll against the ghost. If the ghost's will is strong, the weaver can spend 5 motes of Essence per each additional die he wants to add to his dice pool.

Ghosts captured in this way remain safely in the soulgem and have no chance of escape until the death of their next incarnation.

This protocol controverts Luminor dogma, and its very existence is a carefully guarded secret given only to old and trusted Exalted. Learning this protocol requires Backing of at least 4 from the Luminors.

STATIC ESSENCE ABSORPTION PROTOCOL

Cost: 5 motes

Target: One item

Duration: Instant

Minimum Clarity: 2

One of many tasks assigned to the Chosen of the Machine God is the prevention of excessive Essence build-up in locales that are prone to it. This protocol channels Essence build-up into the Alchemical's tanks. It also pulls Essence charges from devices that have been charged through magical means. The sorcerer drains (Essence rating x 2) motes of Essence from one device that gathers or stores Essence (i.e., a Hearthstone or an Essence-containing gem) or from an item that has Essence committed to it (an attuned weapon). Any Essence stored in the drained item wends its way to the weaver as a glistening tendril and seeps into her Essence tanks. Hearthstones drained in this fashion stop working for (6 - Manse rating) hours. Essence-containing gems must be recharged, and weapons holding committed Essence must be reattuned before the wielder gets the benefits of attunement again. For the purposes of this protocol, Essence is Essence, and the source — Hearthstone, Essence committed to a necromancy or sorcery effect, etc. — is moot. This protocol cannot drain Essence from an Essence-user's Essence pools. That power is held too closely for this attack.

SUMMON AUTOCHTHONIAN ELEMENTAL

Cost: 10+ motes

Target: Elemental

Duration: Up to one month

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol is exactly like the Terrestrial Circle spell *Summon Elemental* (see *Exalted*, p. 219), but only the elementals common to Autochthonia — crystal, lightning, metal, oil, smoke and steam — may be summoned with it. For more information on Autochthonian elementals, see pages 173-178.

SUMMON MACHINE SPIRIT

Cost: 15+ motes

Target: One machine spirit

Duration: Instant

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol is very similar to Summon Elemental (see **Exalted**, p. 219), but instead of an elemental, it captures a machine spirit. As with summon elemental, the weaver can designate the machine spirit she wants based on any criteria she chooses, and the Willpower contest is the same. The machine spirits serving the Great Maker are often dedicated to their function in Autochthon and don't like multi-tasking. Consequently, many larger spirits are very likely to send subroutine spirits to serve in their stead, much in the way that greater elemental spirits are wont to do (see **Savant and Sorcerer**, p. 75).

THEOPLASTIC ENGINEERING PROTOCOL

Cost: 15 motes

Target: Terrain

Duration: One scene

Minimum Clarity: 0

The Machine God's techno-organic metal landscape is itself the environment surrounding all denizens

of Autochthonia, and the Alchemical Exalted are empowered to shape that landscape as necessary. Upon invoking this protocol, the Alchemical need only point his hands in the direction of the material he wishes to work and the local terrain flows to accommodate his will. Alchemicals use this protocol to seal off tunnels in the Reaches, to make room for expanding cities, to pull inaccessible veins and conduits closer to the surface (a service they perform frequently for the miners of the Illustrious Conductors of the Consecrated Veins) and to accomplish similar tasks. Given time, a group of Exalted pattern weavers working in concert could open up whole new open veins within the Maker (for putting in a new tram line, for example). One weaver can shift an area equal to 500 cubic feet of material per turn.

When used in Creation, this protocol can create trenches, mounds, dikes, berms, reservoirs or pits in soft earth or sculpt up to (the weaver's Essence rating x 100) square feet of stone. Repeated use can create tunnels,

bridges of stone or even small islands. It can

even pull veins of ore to the surface, so long as they were not located more than (Alchemical's Essence rating x 100) feet down (and the weaver has to know the vein is there in the first place).

This protocol could be used to immure an enemy, but it's slow (5 turns) and the target can struggle to free himself (Strength + Athletics, difficulty 2, +1 to difficulty for every turn the sorcerer shapes the ground around the target).

In theory, it might be possible to use this protocol to shape the tunnels of the Underworld's Labyrinth or the landscape of Malffeas as well (both being forms of Primordial flesh as well), but neither of those speculations has yet been tested.

VAT SURROGATE

REWEAVING TECHNIQUE

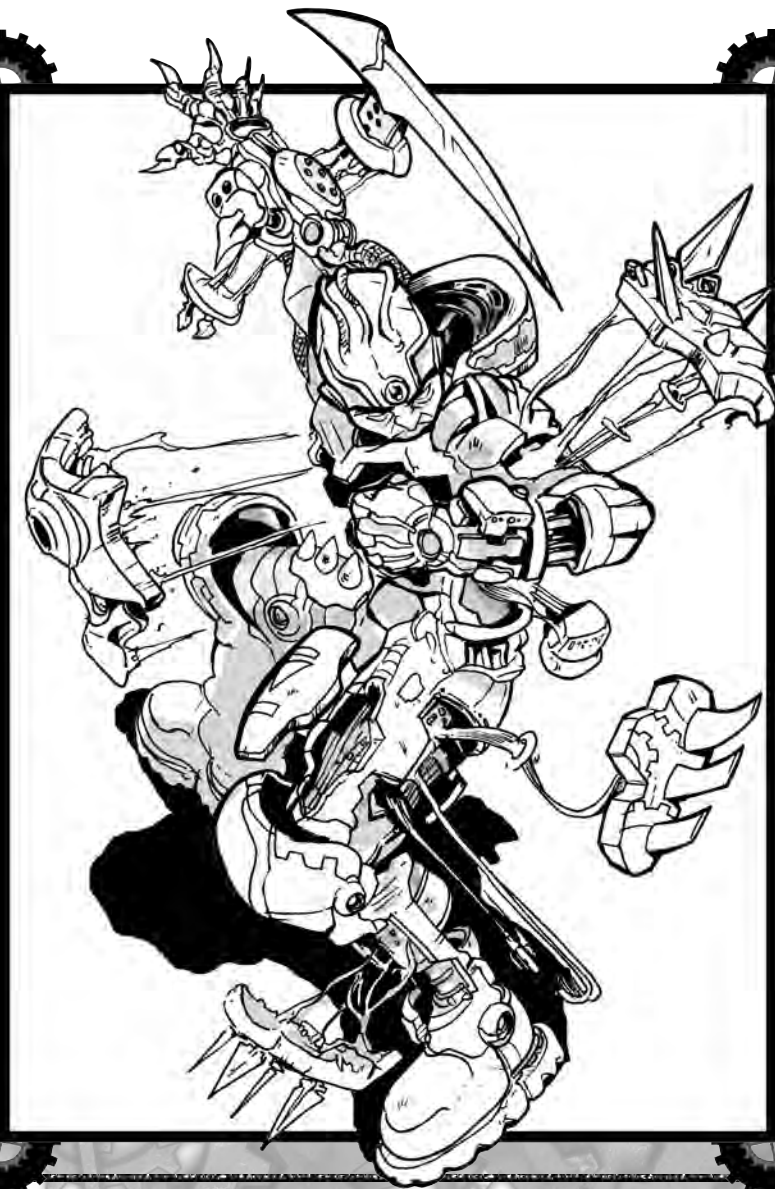
Cost: 10 motes

Target: One Alchemical Exalt

Duration: Instant

Minimum Clarity: 4

If the weaver has Charms on retainer at the Vats (as per the Vats Background, pp. 68-69), this protocol allows him to instantaneously swap one of his currently installed Charms for one of those stored, bypassing the need for downtime or visiting the Vats.



VISION TRANSMITTING PROTOCOL

Cost: 10 motes

Target: One creature

Duration: One message

Minimum Clarity: 0

Upon invoking this protocol, the sorcerer spits forth a fist-sized crystal dodecahedron. The crystal grows for a moment as the weaver finishes shaping the Essence. Once the crystal is fully grown, around the size of a human head, the weaver may speak a message into it. This protocol then functions exactly like the Terrestrial spell Infallible Messenger (see *Exalted*, p. 218), except the recipient can see the speaker's image in the crystal as well as hear him, and may even view events taking place in the background.

GOD-MACHINE PROTOCOLS

Advancing the blend of mysticism, technology and pattern manipulation in both power and scope, the extraordinarily powerful God-Machine Protocols belong solely to Autochthon and his most favored children.

AUSPICIOUS REFORMATTING MUDRA

Cost: (Rating affected x 10) motes

Target: One automaton

Duration: Permanent

Minimum Clarity: 6

With a quick series of deft hand gestures, the Alchemical fundamentally reweaves the pattern of an automaton or any type of machine, thereby assigning it a completely different destiny. If the weaver's Essence is greater than or equal to the automaton's, this effect is automatic. If the automaton's Essence is higher, the player makes a contested Essence roll against the machine spirit.

This powerful protocol might be used to mend or reactivate a broken machine spirit, or it might transform the automaton into something else entirely. A gremlin could be reformatted again as a custodian, for example or broken down into its inert component pieces entirely. A First Age warstrider could be transformed into a First Age airship. An Exalt using this protocol can reconfigure a machine spirit with up to half the weaver's Essence (rounded up) into a device with an Artifact rating equal to half the Alchemical's Essence (rounded up) or into an Autochthonian familiar with a rating equal to the Exalt's Essence rating. If the weaver is transforming one artifact into another of equal power, his player rolls Intelligence + Lore and must get (Artifact's rating) successes for the Exalt to accomplish his task.

At Essence 7, the weaver may reconfigure multiple patterns simultaneously for an additional 5 motes per added target. All targets must be within line of sight. Used in this manner the Auspicious Reformatting Mudra can only alter the programming and behavior of the automata

rather than rebuilding their entire physical forms, and no target can have a permanent Essence greater than 3.

DESTINY-OPTIMIZING MEDITATION

Cost: 20 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: (Essence) turns

Minimum Clarity: 6

The sorcerer communes with the Core of the Machine God, discerning the warp and the weft of the Great Maker's Plan for the future. In so doing, the weaver prognosticates the optimal path to achieving his goal (for the next few moments anyway) and, in a state of perfect mechanized grace, makes those steps come to pass. For the duration of the protocol, the weaver adds (Essence rating) successes to his every roll.

ESSENCE MATRIX INVERSION PROCEDURE

Cost: 10 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: One day

Minimum Clarity: 0

The weaver prepares this protocol up to one day in advance of when he thinks it may be needed. Perception + Investigation rolls (difficulty 4) may discern a slight mirage-like ripple in the light around the weaver, and anyone capable of seeing the flow of Essence will note that her body radiates foot-long quills of blue light. While protected with this protocol, the Essence flow matrix around the weaver becomes highly reflective. All incoming protocols, sorcery spells and necromancy effects — with the exception of Solar Circle Sorcery and Void Circle Necromancy — targeting the sorcerer or any area of effect that includes him are instantly turned back on the one who launched them. The effects of Essence weapons (e.g., implosion bows, Essence cannons and the like) are likewise reflected back at the attacking weapon.

EXECUTIVE FILATURE PROTOCOL

Cost: 5 motes + 1 mote per turn

Target: One individual

Duration: Varies

Minimum Clarity: 6

By grabbing hold of the strands that constitute a being's pattern, the Exalt begins unweaving that incarnation from the pattern entirely, unraveling her Trait by Trait. Perceiving and unweaving an individual's pattern is extremely difficult; the Alchemical can be no farther from the target than her Essence in feet. The weaver can do nothing else during this time, and if she is interrupted, the protocol terminates. Ending the process does not return Traits that have been unwoven, although the weaver can spend 5 motes per dot to weave them back in, provided no more than one day has passed and the target hasn't faded from existence. The first turn, the target is filled with a

wracking anxiety and panic as she feels her pattern being accessed and tampered with. After that, she loses one Attribute dot per turn, starting with her highest and working downward. Once all of the target's Attributes are reduced to 1, the target begins losing health levels, and as she does so, she grows increasingly transparent. When the final health level is removed, the target fades from the pattern entirely, and her soulgem clatters to the ground, all memory of this incarnation purged from it entirely. In Creation, the souls of those who have undergone filature fall instantly into Lethe.

In more barbaric times, this protocol was deliberately left unfinished to reduce a target to a pathetic wreck of humanity before exiling her to the Reaches. Denied the tools needed for survival, such individuals never lasted long.

Weavers typically need to obtain this protocol either from the Divine Ministers or from the design weavers themselves.

HOMUNCULAR DRONE DEPLOYMENT

Cost: 5 motes and one health level per drone (committed)

Target: Weaver

Duration: One scene

Minimum Clarity: 2

The weaver is able to separate his forearms from the rest of his body, deploying them as attack drones, or simply allowing him to attack a target who's out of reach. The weaver is down one health level per drone until the limbs return and fuse with the Exalt.

Launched attack drones are considered to have the sorcerer's Traits but gain the weaver's Essence in Brawl and retain all the benefits of using brawling aids (see *Exalted*, p. 328). These drones hover at twice the weaver's movement rate.

The Alchemical always knows the whereabouts of his drones. Each drone can take three health levels of damage. If a drone is destroyed, the character is permanently down one health level until he returns to the Vats to have the limb replaced or is treated with Charms capable of healing aggravated damage.

INCARNATION OF BESTIAL MALICE

Cost: 30 or 35 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: (Essence) hours

Minimum Clarity: 2

Maximum Clarity: 7

The weaver weaves a chrysalis of Essence around himself and undergoes a spectacular high-speed metamorphosis, transforming himself from a synthesized being to a living, breathing nightmare creature comparable to a Lunar's war form. This recombinant atavism form incorporates elements of beasts entirely unknown in Autochthonia, so the character can become a terrifying

chimera combining aspects of yeddim, tyrant lizard, stryx or any other animal the player wants to incorporate. Alternatively, the sorcerer may take a vegetative form instead, with bark, thorns, prehensile vines and branch-like appendages — or he may mix attributes of both. Since none of these creatures is known in Autochthonia (or at least not native), this form is among the most terrifying to the Maker's citizens. All of the monstrous forms created by this protocol are enormous, weighing a ton or more, and most are covered with a hard carapace, thorns or thick bony plates. This form is entirely living — the Alchemical's mechanical nature disappears, although some bulky Charms may appear as vestigial metallic studs on the bestial form.

Under the effects of this protocol, the Exalt's atavistic war form incorporates all manner of bestial weapons. The Alchemical may sprout enormous horns or porcupine quills, her hair may become hundreds of asps, and she may grow enormous chitinous barbs or talons from her fingertips. The player and Storyteller should design the sorcerer's war form beforehand and agree on its Traits. In general, they can be as effecting as normal Artifact •• weapons of the Magical Materials, sans the Material bonus.

Furthermore, the weaver gains an effective hardness of 10 and gains 10 additional soak against both bashing and lethal damage. Her Strength and Stamina both increase by two, even if this takes them above 5. All Brawl, Martial Arts and Melee attacks made with her claws gain +3 speed and +1 accuracy and do Strength + 6 lethal damage. Her hand-to-hand combat range increases dramatically, and she can affect opponents up to (Essence rating) yards away. The character does Strength + 8 lethal damage in a clinch.

This protocol isn't even vaguely compatible with armor or weapons, and such items are buried deep within the character's bulk for the duration of the effect. The weaver retains her normal movement rates and may grow gills to breathe underwater. For 5 additional motes, the Exalt also has wings and the musculature and knowledge necessary for flight. These wings may be those of a bird, a bat or a gigantic insect, but they allow the character to fly at three times her land speed.

INSTANTANEOUS TRANSFER PROTOCOL

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol is identical to Travel Without Distance (see *Exalted*, p. 221), except that the Alchemical simply sinks into the substance of the Great Maker, physically merging with the Machine God in one area and emerging the next instant from the ground at his destination.

MACHINE-SOUL ESSENCE BAFFLE

Cost: 30

Target: Area of Effect

Duration: Five shifts

Minimum Clarity: 2

The Alchemical pattern weaver assumes an asana sacred to the Divine Ministers in the exact center of an area he wants to make proof against sorcery or protocols. Once the proper posture is attained, he drones out a chant to attune the area around him to his own Essence flow to the exclusion of all others. Once the area is attuned, the sorcerer expands his soul out from the confines of his soulgem and fills the spherical space with the weight of his being. In all other respects, this is the equivalent of Mercury's Deliverance (see **Savant and Sorcerer**, p. 131).

THE MAKER'S ADVANCED DEFENSE ARRAY

Cost: 25 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: 12 hours

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol is like the Maker's Basic Defense Array, but instead of small metal spheres, the Exalt is surrounded by a spherical array of whirling, coruscating adamant shuriken. This protective sphere of smoothly arcing blades has an effective hardness of 10 and adds 20L/20B to the sorcerer's soak.

Attacking a pattern weaver protected by this effect is much more dangerous than attacking one protected by the Basic Defense Array. The Storyteller rolls a single die every time a weapon hits the defense array. Weapons *not* made out of Magical Materials shatter on a result of 1 to 9. Weapons made of the Magical Materials shatter only on a 1. Even if the weapon sustains no damage, the player of the attacking character must make a successful Dexterity + Melee roll (difficulty 3) to prevent the impact of the flying blades from knocking the weapon out of the attacker's hands.

Characters making unarmed Brawl or Martial Arts attacks upon the weaver suffer 10 dice of lethal damage. This damage may be soaked, but if an attacker takes more than two health levels of damage, the limb with which she was attacking is severed.

In bright light, the weaver of this protocol will be surrounded by a vivid storm of swirling rainbow-colored flecks, as the blades refract ambient light.

MASER PALM TECHNIQUE

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol is equivalent to the spell Blood of Boiling Oil (see **Exalted**, p. 220), except that the blood doesn't become oil, it simply boils and denatures in the target's veins.

PASSENGER HOSTING PROTOCOL

Cost: 15 motes per passenger

Target: The weaver and passenger(s)

Duration: One day

Minimum Clarity: 3

By interweaving the threads of his pattern with that of another, the Alchemical allows up to (half the weaver's

permanent Essence, rounded up) willing individuals to step into and occupy the same space he occupies. All parties are telepathically linked for the duration of the effect. While all passengers think independently, only the weaver can act. The passengers' Strength, Stamina, Soak and Resistance stack on top of the weaver's, but beyond that, there's no way of discerning that the sorcerer is more than one individual. All damage taken by the sorcerer is split evenly between the weaver and all passengers. If a spirit is to be made a passenger with this protocol, it must first Materialize. A sorcerer using Passenger Hosting Protocol cannot be possessed.

PATTERN SUSPENSION PROTOCOL

Minimum Clarity: 0

This protocol, known to both Alchemical protocol masters and design weavers, is the Alchemical version of Eternal Crystalline Encasement (see **Savant and Sorcerer**, p. 127). The particulars of the spell are the same, except that the Alchemical wraps the object whose pattern she wishes to suspend in fine crystalline filaments that she sprays from her fingertips. The weaving of this protocol involves wrapping the target object in a scintillating cocoon of spun diamond fiber. Once the cocoon is woven, the weaver spins a pearl of tightly woven strands of gemstuff, and it is this pearl that must touch the cocoon to end the protocol and resume pattern function.

RADIANT MATRIX TRANSMUTATION

Cost: 35 motes

Target: (Essence x 10)-foot radius

Duration: Permanent

Minimum Clarity: 6

The Alchemical invokes this protocol by assuming a divinely authorized asana. A wave of dynamic order radiates from where he sits at a rate of 10 feet per turn. Solids and liquids are transmuted to beautiful, faceted elemental crystal that coruscates in even the dimmest light. Objects caught in the range are transmuted as well, although items already made of crystal (Hearthstones or items made of adamant for example) are not affected in any way. Artifacts remain unchanged for (Artifact rating) turns before crystallizing, while a rating of N/A protects the object for 10 turns. Artifacts forged by the Maker himself, such as the Eye of Autochthon, are wholly immune to this protocol.

Creatures caught within the protocol's radius are also transmuted, usually from the feet up, and take the caster's Essence in aggravated damage each turn they're within the area of effect. Characters taken to Incapacitated with this effect become crystal statues of themselves. If Charms are used to heal the damage inflicted by this protocol, all the crystal must be cut away from the living flesh before Medicine Charms are applied or slivers of crystal will remain in the regenerated limbs.

This protocol empowers Autochthon in those areas where it is used, and weaving it in a blight zone heals the blight and allows Essence to flow through the area again. Likewise, this protocol reclaims any sectors of Autochthon that may have been turned into shadowlands.

TRANSCENDENT CONSCIOUSNESS PROTOCOL

Cost: 15 motes

Target: Weaver

Duration: One scene

Minimum Clarity: 4

The Alchemical's eyes blaze with a white light as she reallocates her perceptions, dramatically expanding all five of her senses to fill a sphere 60 yards in diameter. Within that area, she feels everything as if she were touching it with her hands, sees everything as though she were closely examining it and hears everything as though it were the only sound being made. Solid objects are no barrier to this protocol, so she can sense what is happening 30 yards beneath her or what is taking place on the other side of a wall. She can even sense what is flowing through the Maker's veins within the area of effect. This protocol grants the character processing capabilities as well as sensory capabilities, so she can instantly process all sensory data she receives. This protocol facilitates all manner of reconnaissance, eavesdropping and perimeter monitoring. The weaver cannot be surprised. If someone tries to sneak up on her using invisibility, she may not be able to see him, but she feels the weight he exerts on the floor, she feels him moving through the air, and she hears his heartbeat or smells the scent of sweat or oil. The character's player gains the Exalt's Essence rating as automatic successes on all Perception rolls within that 30-yard radius.

TRANSCENDENT PATTERN-WEAVING PROTOCOL

Cost: 20 motes

Target: Nearby Wyld areas

Duration: Permanent

Minimum Clarity: 10

Containing as they do a spark of Primordial power and a portion of the weaving ability of the design weavers, truly powerful Alchemical Exalted have the capacity to spin pattern out of the madness of the Wyld. Wherever the chaos of the Wyld dominates an area, an Alchemical weaver can grab the blowing filaments of gossamer, spin them into thread and weave order from it.

Invoking this protocol requires absolute understanding of the Machine God's ways, as the user is patching in whole new sectors of Tapestry. In preparation for invoking this protocol, the Alchemical would do well to spend many days in contemplation in the Far Reaches of the Maker, preferably near a crystalline node in the Machine God's neutral pathways or near one of the industrial

tabernacles of the Divine Ministers. Once the Exalt attains perfect Clarity, she may attempt this extraordinarily powerful protocol.

This protocol requires the weaver to step into the swirling chaos of the Wyld and execute a long prayer and a complex mudra. Every hour the sorcerer prays and works this protocol, she formats reality around her in a 20-yard radius, and she may only weave this protocol for as many hours as she has points of Stamina. Fair Folk caught in the area of effect take health levels of aggravated damage equal to the weaver's permanent Essence.

It is unlikely that the Exalt will be allowed to weave for that long, as this protocol causes an unpleasant strangling sensation in every member of the Fair Folk in a radius in miles equal to the weaver's Essence rating. In the Deep Wyld, that radius is doubled. Fae antagonized in such a way are unlikely to be friendly toward the weaver.

This weaving can bring about another effect as well, although no Alchemical is likely to stumble across the effect on his own: By weaving pattern directly from the substance of a Fair Folk noble (rather than catching him in the effect area of weaving pattern from the Wyld), the sorcerer can reformat a fae into one of the Mountain Folk. The player of a raksha noble directly targeted with this weaving must succeed in a contested Willpower + Essence roll against the weaver's player, or his character is transformed into one of the Jadeborn. The resulting Mountain Folk soul would resemble an energy pattern locked inside an egg of jade, totally torpid and lacking all memory, a blank slate waiting to be quickened to activity by the right Mountain Folk Charm (see Jade's Egg Hatched, **Exalted: The Fair Folk**, p. 271).

This protocol is an extraordinarily rare one, as there has been no need for it for millennia, but it exists in the keeping of the Divine Ministers and may yet linger somewhere in the Sodality's vaults.

AUTOCHTHONIAN THAUMATURGES

Thaumaturgy is less common in Autochthonia than it is in Creation, for a variety of reasons. Since the vast majority of Autochthonians are illiterate, thaumaturgy is most commonly passed on as an oral tradition. The simple system of pictograms used by Autochthonian society does not possess even a fraction of the clarity or subtlety of meaning necessary to convey the intricacies of thaumaturgical praxis, leaving the spoken word as the most common means of transmission, at least among the Populat. Rote memorization, however, is a more difficult approach to learning than reading — particularly given the time constraints most Autochthonians live under — and thaumaturgy is an unforgiving discipline, making it far too difficult for most Autochthonians to master. Only the literate few have the luxury of learning thaumaturgy from scrolls or books. Among members of the Tripartite, Thaumaturgy is moder-

ately common, although it's typically considered an odd occupational specialty of a small few.

Even among the elite of Autochthonia, however, thaumaturgy is but a truncated version of what it is in Creation. Many of the Arts are unknown entirely. Astrology, for example, is entirely unknown, as there are no stars within Autochthon (although there are thaumaturges who claim an ability to prophesy based on sounds heard through the Maker's veins). On the other hand, many Sciences practiced in Autochthonia have no equivalent in Creation.

Such magic is also seen as somewhat unsavory. The Theomachrats see it as a challenge to the primacy of Autochthon (or their own firm grip on society) and call the motives of its practitioners into question through whispered "concerns" whenever possible. The techniques of thaumaturgy are considered dangerous and potentially subversive, and only the members of the Sodalities have relatively unrestrained access to the occult materials necessary for learning mortal magic.

Most thaumaturges devote their lives to maintaining the factory-cathedrals of the Machine God. That is simply the way of Autochthonian life. If one somehow has the luxury of time to learn the Arts and Sciences, then one is subsequently obligated to give something back to society.

Underground practitioners of thaumaturgy, while even less common than practitioners among the Sodalities, are under no such obligation. Having learned thaumaturgy on their own, through rote memorization, they are free to practice the Arts and Sciences as they see fit. Such black-market thaumaturges are in great demand and have the opportunity to gain great status and even something that might pass as wealth through the practice of their magic.

SUMMONING

Summoning, on the whole, is much weaker in Autochthonia than in Creation, as it calls only beasts, mortals, spirits and a handful of bizarre Autochthonian elementals. And while beast summoning is possible, rats are the only animals besides humans inhabiting Autochthon. The rat population is far smaller in Autochthonian cities than it would be in one of Creation's cities of comparable size, kept down as it is by human predation. Rat summoning, then, is largely a lost art practiced mainly by exiled Lumpen hunters as a means of subsistence. The efficiency of soul recycling within Autochthon prevents

the presence of ghosts entirely. Spirits, both gods and elementals, can be called with thaumaturgy, but as detailed in the section on elementals and subgods below, that, too, is a little more complicated than it is in Creation.

ELEMENTALS

Autochthonian thaumaturges summon elementals of metal, steam, lightning, oil, smoke and crystal. With one exception, the elementals known in Creation are present in Autochthonia, but they are considered strange and a little alien — wood is wholly unknown, water is considered nothing but a (sometimes scarce) nutrient for drinking, open fires are horrific civic menaces, earth is just metal before proper processing and air is just smoke with less character. The elemental binding spells known by thaumaturges affect Autochthonian elementals, not those known in Creation. While a competent occultist could modify spells to get an elemental of the other types, most thaumaturges residing in the Maker would consider that a weakening of the spell. Were a thaumaturge from Autochthonia to summon elementals in Creation, her magic would still summon the elementals familiar to her, but they wouldn't be exactly the spirits she thought she knew, being Gaia's rendition of metal, steam, smoke, lightning or crystal rather than Autochthon's.

A thaumaturge from Creation summoning a "traditional" elemental would likewise find those spirits to be a little odd but not wholly different, with one exception: Wood does not exist in Autochthonia, and there are no wood elementals or even equivalents. A thaumaturge (or Exalt, for that matter) summoning a wood elemental would have the uncanny experience of nothing happening whatsoever. No wood elemental appears, but neither is his Essence spent. A determined summoner intent on getting a wood elemental might find herself with a spirit of bone or coral, which are more accurately organic variants of the more common crystal elemental, but the thaumaturge will likely be left confused.

In Autochthonia, the local elements have the following spiritual, conceptual and correspondences:

DEMONS

Demon summoning is absolutely unknown, as such a thing was not possible while Autochthon was Elsewhere. Now that the Seal of Eight Divinities is broken, it's

Element	Correspondence
Crystal	Enlightenment, serenity, knowledge, divination, inspiration (Scholars)
Lightning	Power, drive, authority, divine might, illumination, noble endeavors (Luminors)
Metal	War, strength, resolve, resilience, self-improvement, stubbornness (Conductors)
Oil	Diplomacy, cooperation, discovery, friendship, recreation (Harvesters)
Smoke	Ignorance, desolation, wickedness, inefficiency, laziness (Lumpen)
Steam	Health, atonement, domestic life, procreation (Surgeons)

theoretically possible, but there's no lore or history pertaining to it, and the idea doesn't even exist in the minds of Autochthonian thaumaturges. The very concept would be considered the ultimate heinous atrocity to all but the most resentful and nihilistic among the Lumpen. Summoning demons within Autochthon is nothing less than granting the Yozis direct access to the belly of their most hated sibling. Autochthon itself would feel any attempt to summon demons. Within Autochthonian society, even possessing the knowledge that would allow such a breach would be a capital offense.

WARDING

Commonly practiced in Autochthonia, warding is considered an important civic duty, as all cities must be warded against encroachment by gremlins and other automata from the Reaches and the Far Reaches. Cities that are poorly warded may find themselves infiltrated or besieged by amok automata or even by cults of Lumpen exiles.

EXORCISM

In the absence of ghosts and demons, exorcism is a far less crucial skill in Autochthonia than in Creation. Still, while it's uncommon for Autochthonians to be possessed by machine spirits, it does happen from time to time. Humans possessed by machine spirits occupy a position resembling holy madmen in Autochthonia, and they usually leave their city upon possession, to go work the will of the Divine Ministers in the Far Reaches. Exorcism, therefore, is extremely rare. Still, most large cities will have at least one (though no more than two or three) thaumaturge capable of driving out such possessing spirits.

ALCHEMY

Many alchemical formulae that are well known in Creation are unheard of and impossible to make in Autochthonia. There are others, however, that are brewed there that the denizens of Creation have never seen.

Among those alchemical preparations that are entirely unknown in Autochthonia are ghost flower, ice fern spores, rasp spider venom and hallucinogenic woad (see the *Exalted Players Guide*, p. 143).

Preparations unique to the Autochthonians are listed below.

SWEET SLEEP SURROGATE SYRUP

Alchemy: ••

Roll: Intelligence + Occult

Difficulty: 3

Minimum Backing: ••

Effects: Made from spirits distilled from various molds and fungi found in Autochthon, this formula is a cloyingly sweet syrup that grants all the benefits of a full night's sleep — including a feeling of being well rested and a Conviction roll to regain Willpower — in a 30-second nap. Most

Autochthonian cities will have stockpiles of this portion that they distribute in times of emergency to get more shifts out of the Populat laborers.

Even using this formula, workers must get one full night of true sleep every (Stamina x 2) nights, or they begin suffering from sleep deprivation.

Sweet sleep surrogate syrup has no effect on Essence recovery.

FRICITION BANISHING PREPARATION

Alchemy: •••

Roll: Intelligence + Occult

Difficulty: 4

Minimum Backing: •••

Effects: Distilled from a variety of mineral oils tapped from Autochthon's veins, the friction banishing preparation is among the most important substances in Autochthonia because it perfectly removes friction between two objects, silencing the harsh shriek of metal grinding against metal and facilitating the work of those powering the machines.

Poured on horizontal surfaces, it makes traction impossible. A single vial coats a 10 foot by 10 foot patch of floor and requires a successful Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 1) to spot. *Standing still* on such a patch requires a difficulty 4 Dexterity + Athletics roll. Walking across such a patch is difficulty 6. Moving or getting up without holding on to something is also difficulty 6.

Friction banishing preparation can be counteracted with a simple Alchemy •/Backing • neutralizing agent. Alternatively, it will degrade in the presence of air after about a week.

THE MAKER'S INERTIAL BILE

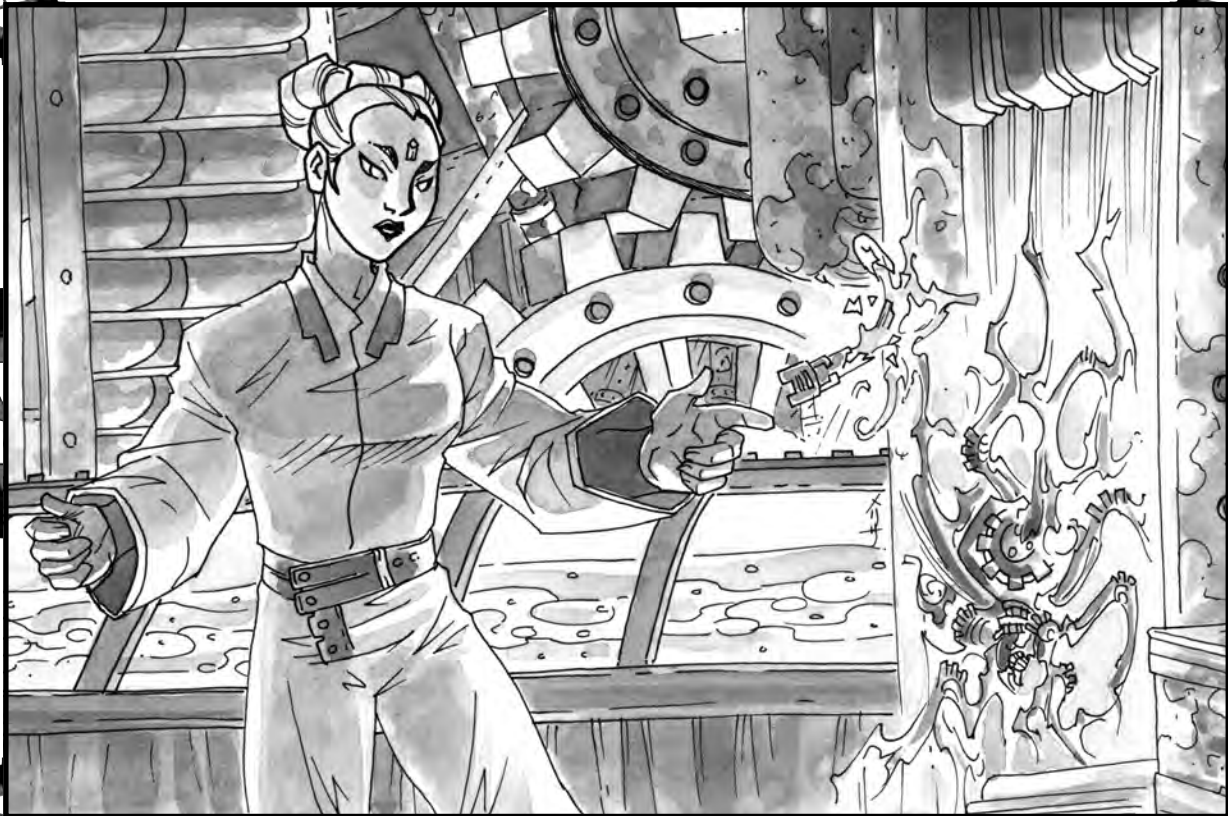
Alchemy: •••••

Roll: Intelligence + Occult

Difficulty: 8

Minimum Backing: •••••

Effects: This incredibly acrid pale-gray fluid is made from rare elements harvested from wild machine spirits found only in the Far Reaches. A single phial of this preparation, shattered against any device, will instantaneously stop a machine or automaton and exorcise any spirit or animating force from it. This affects gremlins, of course, but all other machines and automata as well, including zombies, golems, corpses possessed by nemissaries and automata summoned with protocols or spells (bone lions, bronze snakes, etc.). Important Tripartite officials keep a phial or two of inertial bile at hand for deactivating or exorcising runaway factory machines or dealing with marauding gremlins, but mere possession of this fluid by members of the Populat is a crime worthy of severe downward mobility or, more probably, exile.



ENCHANTMENT

Among the most practiced thaumaturgical paths, Autochthonians take great delight in practicing enchantment as a means of reinforcing the factory-cathedrals where they worship and support their Machine God. Members of the Tripartite also use enchantment for devising equipment to make their lives easier and their recreational time more fulfilling.

GEOMANCY

Within Autochthonia, geomancy could more accurately be thought of as “biogeomancy,” as such magic is used to study the flow of Essence, water, food and other

necessary substances through the veins of the Great Maker. This Science is used almost exclusively by the miners associated with the Illustrious Conductors.

THE MAKER’S BROOD

Autochthon is a being whom the word “vast” fits only as an understatement. A small fraction of the Great Maker is inhabited by the nations and cities of Autochthonia. Beyond and between the bounds of the cities function the Primordial’s strange autonomic subroutine spirits and plenipotentiary agents. These powerful and enigmatic spirits rarely interact with mortals, as mortals are classified as charges of the metropoli and patropoli in which they

OTHER SCIENCES

On the whole, Sciences are more popular than Arts among Autochthonian thaumaturges. Indeed, there are some complex Sciences common to Autochthonia that even the most skilled of Creation’s practitioners of thaumaturgy have never imagined, much less attempted.

Probablistics is a Science of blessing or cursing through the use of complex numerology.

Bioenhancement is a Science that focuses on augmenting the living (usually human) body, sometimes with mechanical components (with results sometimes resembling the gunzasha troops used by Lookshy) or prosthetics. Workers maimed in the factory-cathedrals of Autochthonia can often be brought back into the workforce through the use of these mechanical components.

Autochthonians study an array of other thaumaturgical Sciences as well, but these two are among the most common.

reside. For their part, mortals honor and worship the subgods of Autochthon, but they're much more comfortable doing so from a distance.

SUBGODS

Autochthonians are not monotheists. The Machine God, though the most powerful of their divinities by far, is not the only deity worshiped in Autochthonia. Like other Primordials, Autochthon is too grand, too spiritually dense to have a single soul, so he has eight in addition to his primal godhead. In formal parlance, the eight are referred to as the Eight Divinities or the Eight Divine Ministers, as each administers some portion of the Machine God's vast power. They are more colloquially called "subgods" to indicate their inferior status relative to Autochthon and to suggest that they are subroutines of his great overmind. In their own way, the eight subgods are the equals of Creation's most powerful gods, and the least of them is the equal of one of the Five Elemental Dragons. Each of these Divine Ministers is further broken down into myriad smaller conceptual subroutine daemons and regional district subgods that take care of important facilities and mechanisms inside the Great Maker.

The Eight Divine Ministers are reputed to preside over vast industrial tabernacle complexes in the Far Reaches, where gods, machine spirits, Alchemical Exalted and select holy men work together to design and assemble the spirits and custodians found throughout Autochthonia. To be picked to work so closely with the subgods is the

highest honor an Autochthonian can know, and those who return, usually after five or ten years, bring with them tales of the mechanical wonders that can best be described as "mind boggling."

Brief descriptions of the Eight Divinities and The Core follow.

RUNEL

Divine Minister of Order, Smooth Functioning, Productivity, Efficiency, Cities, Commerce, Life and Health

Runel represents Autochthon the nurturer, the facet of the Maker that provides, heals and blesses. Runel is she who wishes auspicious harmony upon all who act to support the pattern of production and continuance.

In a pantheon of mechanical gods, Runel is by far the most sympathetic to the plight of mortals and the most worshiped after Autochthon himself. Runel is invoked at births, promotions, launches of new construction projects and at the animation of new Batches of Alchemical Exalted. She is also the Divine Minister most associated with the element of Steam.

Her most devoted followers are among the Meticulous Surgeons of the Consecrated Veins, who pray to her for insight into the function of the human body and for knowledge of the locations of newly created (or reopened) expanses of the Reaches. In extreme cases, enormous civic rituals to Runel have resulted in the topography of Autochthon himself shifting to grant access to a large new sector containing a crucial water main or the like.



Mog

Domadamod

Noi



ESPINOQUE

RUNEL

HU

KEK'TUNGSSSHA

Divine Minister of Smelting, Craft, Tools, Industry, Mass Production, Fertility and Reproductive Sex

Known as “She Who Produces” or “the Mistress of Pistons,” Kek’Tungsssha, an enormous entity of crude black iron, is Autochthon’s urge to create and leave wondrous creations upon a changed world. As demonstrated by the Primordial’s behavior throughout history, this is a powerful component of Autochthon. Sometimes called “the Assembly Line Goddess,” or “Our Lady of Mass Production,” Kek’Tungsssha is the embodiment of fecundity, both mechanical and human. Cities with a great deal of heavy industry inevitably have temples to Kek’Tungsssha.

Kek’Tungsssha is the goddess of craftspeople as well as factories and factory managers. All those who wish to create useful devices pray to Kek’Tungsssha.

DEBOK MOOM

Divine Minister of War, War Machines, Violent Paradigm Shifts, Elemental Metal, Privacy and Wealth

Debok Moom is Autochthon’s urge to evolve via conflict. He represents the need to refine the Primordial’s creations toward perfection through violence. Debok Moom is the eternally unsatisfied perfectionist, the creator striving for increased perfection using war and its concomitant phenomena as a means of weeding out weak or

obsolescent designs. He is also the manifestation of Autochthon’s hatred of his fellow Primordials. Debok Moom tests the mettle of the Machine God’s creations, destroying that which is weak, clearing away that which is broken and fortifying that which is worthy. Many Alchemical Exalted pray to Debok Moom in hopes of being found worthy of his powerful blessings.

In the farthest of the Far Reaches, well removed from the Maker’s vulnerable organs, ducts or conduits, Debok Moom’s industrial tabernacle, a monolithic structure of brass and black iron, rises high above the charred and pitted desolation surrounding it. Destroyers, spirits of advanced weapons technology, and a terrifying array of war golems prowl this bleak landscape. Interminable machine wars unfold here as the war godspews forth larger and more devastating engines of destruction. Flying, walking, rolling, burrowing and swimming machines emerge from the red-lit fortress at the center of the testing grounds. On this hellish field of battle, even many First Age war machines would fall within a matter of hours.

Machine spirits of salvage and recycling constantly prowl the debris and clear away the wreckage of designs that proved unworthy, taking them away to be smelted down or otherwise recycled.

Certain battle-hardened Alchemical Exalted, those who have grown powerful but which don’t wish to become sessile, are known to serve Debok Moom as lieutenants and battlefield commanders.



DEBOH MOOM

HER'TUNGSSSHA

HADMEH

As the Great Maker's immune system, Deboh Moom often directs hunting parties of living war machines to annihilate hives of gremlins and cauterize portions of Autochthon that have grown unstable, corrupt or diseased.

NOI

Divine Minister of Curiosity, Research, Exploration, Innovation, Rebellion and Progress

Noi represents Autochthon's urge to tinker, to find new paths to innovation and creation. He presides over creation for the sake of sheer wonder and is therefore the deity of toys (as well as cleverly engineered practical jokes). He is the patron of children, rebels, rule-breakers and risk takers. Anyone who seeks a new and better way transmits prayers to Noi. "Without transgression," read the sutras of Noi, "there can be no growth, and without growth, there can be no progress." Noi is the patron of recreation, including recreational and homosexual sex (as opposed to reproductive sex, which is the province of Kek'Tungsssha). He is the deity most closely associated with the Elemental Pole of Oil, particularly its qualities of slipperiness, versatility and diplomacy, as well as its tendency to seep into places where it doesn't belong.

Noi is also the god of auspicious downtime, sabbaticals, recreation and rest.

Noi is, predictably, a controversial god. Various nations and cities have tried to outlaw his cult at various

times throughout history, but his cult is clever and irrepressible. The harder the iron fist of government squeezes, the more the cultists of Noi slip between its fingers. On those occasions when cities or nations have severely cracked down on the worship of Noi, they have been cursed with stagnation, malfunctions and plummeting productivity.

MOG

Divine Minister of Authority, Proper Functioning, Dogma, Righteousness Action and Just Punishment; Keeper of the Lightning and the Scourge of the Lumpen

Mog is the corrective urge that resists unwanted or destructive change. Mog sees to it that what needs to happen inside of Autochthon *does*. Tampering with Autochthon, interfering with his factories, compromising output, tapping his veins to excess or in any way interfering with the Machine God's divinely established and defended proper functioning—all these can bring down the divine wrath of Mog. Legends abound throughout Autochthonia of whole cities destroyed by vast armies of divine automata or unceasing lightning storms, purged because they took the blessings of Autochthon for granted and became nuisances to the Creator. While catastrophes of this magnitude are blamed primarily on the city's Alchemical parent, the metropolis or patropolis at every city's core, the burden of avoiding such a fate falls squarely on the shoulders of all citizens.

While not a popular god among the Populat, and hated almost uniformly by the Lumpen, Mog is a favored deity among the Tripartite, far in excess of his importance to Autochthon, because fear of Mog keeps the masses in line. The Theomachracy rarely lets a sermon go by without raising the specter of Mog's divine punishment as a spur to dutiful civic-mindedness.

ESPINOQUAE

The Omnipresent, Ministerial Subroutine of Surveillance, Light and Security

Espinoquae is the All-Seeing Eye of Mog, the sum of all luminance in Autochthonia and the Machine Spirit of Security. He knows what each and every human (and most spirits) are doing at all times. He watches through every crystal, every mirror and every glassy surface. He listens through every grate and every pneumatic tube.

While only a ministerial subroutine spirit of Mog, Espinoquae remains the favored deity of the Glorious Luminors of the Brilliant Rapture. Having fewer duties, Espinoquae can be more responsive to his cult, and he often performs boons for Luminors, including tipping them off with divine visions in the case of particularly repugnant crimes against society or Autochthon. Those who are less fond of Espinoquae refer to him as the God of Paranoia — but never out loud.

KADMEK

Divine Minister of Design, Architecture, Structural Integrity, Biogeomancy, Music, Art, Wisdom, Strategy and Prophecy

Kadmek is the Planning Urge and the Machine Spirit of Theory-Made-Manifest. He represents the union of order and beauty in all things. He represents the ability to look ahead, to set goals and achieve them and to put forth projects and connect sets of designs. He is Autochthon's forethought and intent.

Kadmek's cult is, of course, huge, officiating as he does over such a vast array of interconnected disciplines. Many of Kadmek's worshipers are members of the Prolific Scholars of the Furnace Transcendent, the Sodality responsible for designing, planning and building nearly everything in the cities of Autochthonia. When an Alchemical Exalt reaches Essence 8, it is Kadmek who assigns a site to the young city.

Surrounded by automaton trees that play heartrendingly beautiful flute music, Kadmek's industrial tabernacle is, by far, the most beautiful structure in Autochthon, and the perfectly harmonious flow of Essence through it generates an overpowering sense of serenity for

those who discover their way there (characters venturing there are considered to have Temperance and Compassion ratings of 5 and Valor and Conviction ratings of 1).

DOMADAMOD

Divine Minister of Reuse, Repair, Recycling and Cannibalism and Enlightened Guardian of the Eternal Cycle

Called "The Eternal" by his cultists, Domadamod represents the everlasting preservation of the machine and society, through whatever means necessary. He is the God of Maintenance, of Regulatory Stasis, of Survival, of Conservation and, by extension, the God of Noble Sacrifice. He exists that he might continue existing, maintaining the Design without changing it.

Domadamod is an impersonal god. He is concerned with generalities, not specifics. He is concerned with protecting life, but not *a* life. Populations matter to him; individuals, typically, do not. The majority of Domadamod's cult comes from the Pious Harvesters of Hallowed Flesh, who pray to their god for insights into the Great Cycle. By serving him with more zeal, they hope to make Autochthon a perfectly efficient closed system. Domadamod rewards the truly devoted with insights that help increase the efficiency of the recycling process. Those wishing to appease him may recycle any highly valued but frivolous object or one with great emotional significance as part of their devotions.

KU

Divine Minister of the Reaches and the Far Reaches, Smoke, Mystery, Seals, Thaumaturgy and Death

The darkest of Autochthon's godsouls, Ku embodies entropy, fear and loss. It is malfunction without correction, obsolescence without replacement, stagnation without innovation, breakage without repair and disease without recovery. It is the bogeyman invoked by parents wishing to terrify their children. Ku represents inefficiency and wasted opportunity. He is Autochthon's fear that he is dying as well as his fear of the Void in which he floats. The most recently constructed of all the godsouls, Ku is by far the closest to becoming a gremlin by its very nature. Though Ku is the Divine Minister with the most interaction with, and comprehension of gremlins, it is not itself a gremlin. It remains the loyal opposition and is likely a manifestation of Autochthon's ruminations on death spun off specifically to prevent that outcome.

More positively, Ku is the unknown and the urge to comprehend the unknowable, the gatekeeper and Divine Minister representing that portion of the machine that is and will always be incomprehensible to humanity. Ku is equal parts Jupiter and Saturn, the brooding uncertainty that afflicts every inventor. "Will my work perish?" asks the Creator, "Will I be forgotten?"

The Cult of Ku is small. He does not make himself known to his worshipers as often as the other Divine Ministers. Those who worship him are largely drawn from

those Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric who make extensive forays into the Reaches and Lumpen exiles who are forced to live outside the cities. Ku is known to be able to override gremlins and has done so for his worshippers.

THE CORE

The Mind of the Great Maker

Autochthon's divine centrality, the Core is the fabled Godhead itself located at the Elemental Pole of Crystal, the central matrix and the focal point of the Machine God, that sacred locus where the Maker acknowledges, "I am." In vast crystal caverns, leagues of starmetal neuron cables arranged in a finely spun web span the upper dome. Upon this web, design weavers, Autochthon's improved pattern spiders, scuttle and spin the transcendent Designs and intentions of the Great Maker between lightning bolts of pure cognition that could smelt Magical Materials. This god is the fundamental core of Autochthon himself, the central processor that thinks independently of the eight autonomic deities that regulate his sleeping universe-body and urges. It is ineffable, utterly beyond any name to truly capture. It is therefore called "The Core" or "The Heart" or "The Design" or simply called Autochthon, which is mostly accurate. Were the Machine God to die, the Core would be the last aspect to shut down after everything else had been reformatted into a gremlin.

MECHANICAL GODS

Spirits of place and natural phenomena are just as common within Autochthon as they are in Creation. Given "nature" inside Autochthon is mechanized, so are these spirit-devices. There exists within the Machine God a vast hierarchy of machine spirits, least gods of devices and mechanistic concepts. They embody and oversee the processes that pass for nature inside the Great Maker. Those not familiar with machine spirits and their functions within Autochthon may see little variety in the appearance of many of these mechanized gods, but denizens of Autochthonia, familiar with the subtleties of spirit machines, see every bit as much variety as denizens of Creation see in their world's spirits.

All machine gods in Autochthonia — save for the corrupted spirits called gremlins — answer to the will of the Great Maker. The Eight Divinities all have their own representatives, their agents and their drones. By far the most numerous of these are the custodians, mechanical spirits that maintain the Great Maker's natural processes out in the Reaches. There are other creatures inhabiting the Reaches, however. Some of these are creatures that opted to accompany Autochthon into exile. Some small number of the denizens of the Far Reaches can also be found in Creation. Abacasteri, furnace rhinos and the hounds of Autochthon, for example (see **Creatures of the Wyld**, pp. 52-53, 62-63 and 64-65, respectively) can all be

found in the Far Reaches with far greater frequency than in Creation. Here, however, they are more likely to serve the wishes of the Primordial than to exist with no higher purpose as they do within Gaia's Creation.

Others denizens of the Far Reaches are experimental autonomic systems invented long ago that still lurk and lumber, forgotten, in disused tunnels, left to evolve or degrade as they will. Some of these are easily the equivalent of Creation's behemoths, but made of metal, crystal and steam instead of flesh. Others are much smaller, hardly larger than a child's fist. All of these are dangerous to mortals and many can be lethal, even to Exalted. Autochthon is the Forger of Gods, and even the least of his creations is likely to have features and capabilities most elegantly described as *surprising*.

The machine gods listed below represent a miniscule sampling of the devices, creatures and spirits functioning in the passages of the Great Maker.

CUSTODIANS

In the Far Reaches of Autochthonia, the cities and human servants of the Great Maker are entirely absent. In these places, it is the custodians who tend to the needs of the great Autochthon. These machine spirits take a variety of forms, but few of them are optimized for combat.

Most custodians, however, *are* optimized for one function or another. In some cases, they may even have capabilities more commonly seen in the Alchemical Exalted. In addition to the tools and abilities listed below, custodians may have one Alchemical Charm for every dot of Essence above 1 (a custodian with an Essence of 3, for example, could have up to two Alchemical Charms).

Alpha Custodian

The most numerous custodians of the near Reaches, alphas are a cross between arachnids and octopods. The main head-body complex is round and contains the creature's workings. The legs, four articulated and four more whip- or tentacle-like, allow the spirit to move through the passageways of Autochthon either by walking or by hanging from outcroppings overhead and swinging to its next position. Either way, the creature's movements are smooth and undulant, almost hypnotic to the human eye. Those closest to cities are likely to understand human speech, and while they can also speak, the soft fluting tones they use can be difficult to understand (Intelligence + Linguistics, difficulty 1 to comprehend).

Small alpha custodians may have Essence 2 or 3, while larger models used farther out in the Reaches may attain Essence 6 or 7. Alphas perform a variety of tasks in the Reaches for the Divine Minister they serve. Some are sentinels in important or proprietary passageways, others serve as roaming guardians.

CUSTODIANS OF THE REACHES

Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg Slash: 9/9/5L (or special)	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Alpha Custodian	5/5/4	7	-0x2/-1x3/ -2x3/-4x2/I		10/12L/18B	Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 2, Resistance 3, Survival 5, Thrown 3
Crystal Fly	1/6/1	6	-1/-4/I	N/A	12/None	Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 6, Endurance 1, Investigation 6, Lore 2, Stealth 5, Survival 3
Fix Beetle	3/5/4	4	-0x2/-1x3/ -2x2/-4/I	Claw: 1/6/4L	7/10L/15B	Athletics 1, Awareness 4, Brawl 1, Bureaucracy 1, Craft 5 (+2 Repair), Dodge 2, Endurance 2, Presence 1, Resistance 4, Stealth 3, Survival 5

CRYSTAL FLY

Minor reconnaissance subroutine daemons of Espinoquae, crystal flies are, as their name suggests, tiny insect machine spirits constructed in the form of flies. They function as Autochthon's sensory organs and transmit everything they see and hear back to Espinoquae. An area playing host to important work (or a malfunction) may be inundated with crystal flies as Espinoquae monitors the situation. Being largely transparent, crystal flies are extremely difficult to see. Spotting one requires three successes on a Perception + Investigation roll in bright light, four in normal light and five if the light is low. Crystal flies have an Essence of 1.

FIX BEETLE

Minor servants of both Domadamod and Noi, these mechanical beetles range from two to five feet long and may have six, eight or ten legs or the same number of wheels covered by metal treads. They are rarely found anywhere but the Reaches and the Far Reaches, as thaumaturgical wards typically keep them from entering cities unless they're specifically commanded to do so by the Divine Ministers or their subroutines. These small gods of repair are programmed to fix or recycle anything left unattended for too long, although their concept of fixed may vary from that of most

humans. Unattended weapons, armor or other gear might be used to patch Autochthon's veins, sliced apart and welded back together in configurations of indiscernible purpose or taken away entirely. Magical Materials are particularly prized by these machine spirits.

Fix beetles ignore Alchemical Exalted, but they may attempt to "repair" other injured individuals they find or even "upgrade" uninjured individuals. Some of these "improvements" or repairs are unquestionably advantageous to their recipients. Others might be more problematic.

Fix beetles rarely exceed Essence 4.

DRONES

Lumpen exiles are not the only humans to wander the Reaches and the Far Reaches of Autochthonia. Highly devoted members of the Sodalities, those with a powerful streak of mysticism, may sometimes seek the ultimate communion with the Machine God through possession by a machine spirit. This spiritual fusion of human and machine spirit is powerful, but this power comes at the sacrifice of free will. Drones forego their own destinies to become extensions of the Divine Ministers, and by extension, of the Machine God himself. These holy seekers, deeply touched by the machine, wander the Reaches of Autochthon learning the paths of the Maker. Their piety sometimes leads

TERMINAL ASSEMBLIES

The legs and tentacles of the custodians (and many other machine spirits) end in a remarkably varied array of instruments that allow them to carry out the functions assigned them by Autochthon. The following catalogue lists some of the more common terminal assemblies, but it's not exhaustive.

Communion Assembly: Custodians need to commune with the Divine Ministers (and their ministerial subroutines) on a regular basis. A communion assembly allows a machine spirit to transmit and receive messages through the Autochthon's metal veins by simple vibrations. Gremlins cannot use this terminal assembly as they are deauthorized the moment they fall prey to a blight zone.

Cutting Disk: This spinning blade cuts through armor *at least* as easily as through the metal of Autochthon's conduit veins. Cutting through normal armor requires two successful attacks, at which point the armor offers no protection. This attack cannot destroy armor of the Five Magical Materials. In combat, cutting disks have the following stats: speed +0, accuracy +2, damage +3L, defense -1. A cutting disk's rate in Exalted Power Combat is 2.

Drill: The instrument of choice when tapping one of the Maker's veins, drills also make effective fighting tools, but only if the machine spirit's opponent is immobilized. Drills make inefficient combat weapons, but they have the following stats when so used: speed -5, accuracy +1, damage +1L, defense -2. If a target is immobilized, on the other hand, accuracy goes up to +5 and damage increases to +4 lethal. The drill's damage is piercing in Exalted Power Combat, and its rate is 1 (3 if the target is immobilized).

Essence Welder: By tightly focusing a band of Essence, the terminal assembly can melt small quantities of metal, just enough to fuse together two pieces of metal. Used against flesh, Essence welders inflict four lethal health levels of burn damage.

Flame Source: Many custodians have occasion to use fire, either in cleaning, in order to flame weld or for melting small amounts of lead or glass. At its smallest, such a flame is an inch of pure blue fire, but it can extend to a blazing lance of flame up to the spirit machine's Essence in yards. This flame inflicts (spirit's Essence x 3) health levels of lethal burn damage per turn.

Nozzle: Some custodians carry supplies of dispensable substances useful in making repairs. They extrude many of these through metal nozzles.

- Thick black lubricating grease is usually used on large joints throughout Autochthon, but expelled on the ground, it can make it difficult for a character to maintain his footing (Dexterity + Athletics, difficulty 2).
- Acid etches metal and glass, cleans away impurities and neutralizes strongly alkaline substances. Depending on the strength of the acid, it can inflict a wide range of damage. Most acids have no effect on the Magical Materials, but given the relatively common nature of these metals in Autochthonia, many machine spirits need to be able to affect them. Consequently, some machine spirits carry magical acids that can eat through jade and orichalcum as easily as through iron. Such acids inflict aggravated damage when they come in contact with skin.
- Water is useful for cooling overheated pipes or preventing saws from overheating when cutting through the thick metal of the Maker's major veins. It can also be a boon to those lost in the passageways of the Reaches.

Some nozzles can be two-way conduits, sucking up substances as easily as they dispense them. These vacuum nozzles can be used for sucking up liquid, dirt or metal filings left by drills or cutting disks.

Pincer: Used to pick up small objects, a pincers can be almost like a small metallic hand, a very basic claw or it might resemble the front limb of a scorpion. The worst can inflict up to one health level of lethal damage. Larger pincers may be used to get opponents in a clinch.

Syringe: Some custodians are more accustomed to dealing with humans than others. Others take samples or inject catalysts into key locations. Both types often have syringes built in to their limbs' terminal assemblies. These can be filled with an array of fluids, from poisons to alchemical formulations (see the **Exalted Players Guide**, pp. 139-142). Some of these fluids may be salutary, others may be harmful. Most industrial chemicals are at least as poisonous as court poison (see **Exalted**, p. 243) when injected. Targets much be clinched or must lack lethal soak for injection to take place.



them to work in the courts of the Divine Ministers, performing functions for the Great Maker that remain, to the rest of Autochthonian society, pure mystery.

Their city-bound fellows view these holy madmen with a mixture of reverence and fear. Were their devotion not so valuable, these crazy mystics might be persecuted, but drones, on those rare occasions when they unplug from their divine communion and return to society, are a great source of knowledge about the Great Maker and his vast Reaches.

Most drones make pilgrimages to the Reaches and the Far Reaches where they rarely deal with other humans. From time to time, though, a drone may enter a city as a representative of one Divine Minister or another to parlay with key members of the Tripartite, including Alchemicals.

After uncoupling from their machine spirit, former drones lose the powers invested in them by their possessing machine, but they almost always show a keen understanding of thaumaturgy they did not have prior to their possession.

Drones are Storyteller characters only. Their power is impressive, but for the duration of their possession, they are no longer individuals, but part of the mechanical overmind of the Great Maker. Exaltation precludes this kind of possession by machine spirits. Furthermore, drones are creatures of, by and for Autochthonia. Drones will not willingly leave the Great Maker for any reason, and should

CORPSE-FRAME PUPPETS

Fix beetles do not understand mortal death, and they have been known to assemble machine-animated frames into which they install the remains of the dead. The robotic frame animates the corpse in the same way a puppeteer animates a marionette, sometimes even to the extent of using small pulleys and wires to impart a semblance of facial expressions.

In Autochthonian cities, the dead are disposed of almost immediately, so rats and Lumpen outcasts are the usual subjects of these clumsy animation attempts. Most outcast camps are more than passingly familiar with the sight of these shambling devices wandering blindly through the Reaches. The outcasts destroy corpse-frame puppets on sight and scavenge any parts they can from the frames, but some of these bizarre artifacts wander the Reaches and even the Far Reaches until their bodies rot and all but the attached bones fall away.

one be forcibly taken out, the machine spirit will abandon its human host before the drone passes through the seal.



ALTERNATIVE MACHINE VIRTUES

The Virtues of machines are not the Virtues of humanity. Compassion, for example, is an empty set in the processors of the machine spirits. Machine spirits have a Virtue system that differs markedly from that of living creatures.

Players and Storytellers are welcome to stick with the established Virtue system for ease of play. However, those who want to get under the metallic skin of a machine just a bit more may find the following alternative Virtue system helpful.

Compassion becomes Reception. It represents the spirit's sensitivity to the transmissions of the Great Maker, his Divine Ministers and other machine spirits. It is also a measure of the strength and clarity of the signals the machine spirit receives from Autochthon and the Divine Ministers. A strong transmission helps machine spirits recover from damage by reasserting their proper functioning with repair protocols. It also allows machine spirits to monitor events taking place elsewhere in the vastness of the Maker. Machine spirits with a Reception of 2 or lower cannot operate outside of Autochthon.

Conviction becomes Transmission. This Virtue reflects both the strength of a machine spirit's programming and the efficiency with which it relays its programming to others. If Reception is the machine spirit's sensitivity to incoming signals, Transmission represents the strength of its outgoing signal. In some ways, Transmission also includes the lengths to which a machine will go to achieve its programmed objectives.

Temperance becomes Stability. This is the machine spirit's ability to defend and maintain its functions and system integrity. Temperance also reflects the machine spirit's ability to adjust and modify its programming with internal cybernetic feedback and regulatory systems.

Valor becomes Power. Power represents the machine spirit's capacity to achieve its programmed objectives, how much force it's authorized to project into the physical world and its dedication to achieving its programmed objectives. In most cases, Power also determines how much clearance a spirit has to access certain zones of the Maker.

DRONE POWERS

The synthesis of man and machine produces powerful agents for the Divine Ministers. While they have only a fraction of the versatility of the Exalted (of any type), they

are extraordinarily proficient at the things they can do. The powers below are those exhibited most frequently by drones, although this list is by no means exhaustive.

Frame Enhancement

Human flesh is often weak and fragile compared to metal and ceramic. Frame Enhancement rectifies some of this weakness of the flesh. The drone distributes (possessing spirit's permanent Essence) dots among his Physical Attributes. For reasons of basic structural integrity, no Attribute can exceed any other by more than three dots.

Integrity Reassertion Prana

Guarding the symmetry and integrity of the drone's host body is key to its possessing spirit's mission. A drone's body rapidly heals any imperfections (including wounds) to reach its optimally ordered state. The drone regains one health level per turn; open wounds quickly sprout tiny silk filaments that weave across the gash, intertwining into whole flesh and bone in seconds. This power can effectively regrow limbs or organs, but it can't resurrect its host from the dead.

Drones with this power are immune to mundane disease (although mystical ailments that can affect machine spirits can still affect drones). This particular form of regeneration also provides defense against other effects that forcibly change or interferes with a drone's physical integrity. Even the most outlandish transformation of the drone can be repaired within minutes. Such drones do not physically age from the time of their possession; they are effectively outside the cycle of growth and decay until their possessing spirits depart.

Lightning Field

As a self-defense technique, the drone can generate a sparking blue field of lightning around herself, shocking or even electrocuting anyone that touches her. For 10 motes of Essence, Lightning Field inflicts 10 levels of bashing damage that can only be soaked with Stamina. By increasing the Essence expenditure to 20 motes, she makes the damage lethal.

Pattern Optimization

Drones are frequently taken to the hostile environment of the Far Reaches to do the work of the Divine Ministers. Those with this ability are perfectly symmetrical, have no minor flaws (scars, freckles, wrinkles, etc.) and have no hair anywhere on their bodies. Add successes equal to their possessing spirits' Essence to all Resistance rolls. In dangerous situations, such a drone can spend 2 motes of Essence to gain additional +1L/+1B soak up to the Spirit's Stamina + Valor.

Soothing Subsonic Vocalization

By speaking in a soothing tone of pure, crystalline logic and channeling Essence to communicate both above and below the conscious range of human hearing, the drone can make her words seem self-evident. Spend 5 motes, and roll the possessing spirit's Manipulation + Presence. The target's player must roll more successes on a Willpower roll than the

drone achieved or accept as perfectly reasonable anything the drone says and behave accordingly.

The trance state evoked by this power ends instantly if the subject is harmed in any way.

Structural Repair

It is the lot of worker drones to repair machines as well as to maintain the structure of Autochthon. They are invested with the ability to reweave strands of an object's pattern. Under their ministrations, metal, glass and other components grow back like damaged tissue. For one scene, add a number of successes to all Craft rolls equal to the drone's possessing spirit's permanent Essence as metal, glass and synthetic substances become malleable at his touch. A drone performing Structural Repair on an Alchemical Exalt can repair one health level per turn of sculpting the Exalt's form. This power costs 10 motes.

MACHINE SPIRITS OF THE FAR REACHES

Away from the cities and habitations of humanity, the environment varies drastically. Machines are not so fragile as mortals and can survive much harsher conditions. Moreover, it's not just that the Far Reaches are accidentally more hostile to humanity. The Divine Ministers don't *want* mortals there. Consequently, all manner of lethal machines stalk those regions of Autochthon, some loyal to the Maker and his Divine Ministers, others actively antagonistic.

In truth, attempting to account for all of the creatures residing in the Far Reaches of Autochthon is a task similar in scope to accounting for all of the creatures prowling the Wyld or the oceans of Creation; that is to say, it's impossible in the space provided here. Three types of machine spirits found in the Far Reaches are detailed below. Design weavers are rare and found predominantly in the crystal caverns of the Core where they weave fate for the denizens of Autochthonia. Destroyers and gremlins, on the other hand, are two of the most common types of machine spirits, and can often be encountered en masse.

Design Weaver: Before the Great Maker took his own world online, he meditated upon everything he'd learned from crafting the Loom of Fate's pattern spiders and improved on the design. Whereas the originals were meant to be little more than scribes, Autochthon's design weavers are directly responsible for implementing the Maker's will. They are in constant telepathic communion with the Core and the Divine Ministers. They have no independent existence beyond acting as focused extensions of his will. Design weavers are lither and smarter (Intelligence 4) than their counterparts in Creation. Their beautiful carapaces incorporate adamant along with the Magical Materials, and their limbs are at once finer, stronger and sharper than those of the pattern spiders. Design weavers possess a perfect telepathy that lets them commune with the Core and converse with each other from miles away. When cooperating on a joint project,

design weavers gain one additional die to their pools for every two additional design weavers assisting in the endeavor. When several of these spirits cooperate, then, there's little they cannot do. Design weavers are rarely found outside of the Core.

Typical Charms include Cannibalize, Chrysalis of Preservation, Crystallize, Diagnostics, Foretell the Future, Hurry Home, Landscape Travel, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Ossify Pattern, Sense Domain, Shatter and Stillness, but they may have others.

Design weavers have Essence 5, Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 5 and Valor 5, giving them Essence pools of 113 motes.

Besides the Alchemical Exalted and the Divine Ministers, design weavers are the only other creatures capable of using Alchemical protocols, though they can only do so in concert and only when they're in the Core (which functions like an enormous Manse for them). Each design weaver taking part in a spell can contribute up to 5 motes of Essence. This Essence is channeled through the focal weaver spending the Willpower. In effect, this approach to protocols is Autochthon using the design weavers to focus his power on a scale more refined than cities.

Destroyer: Spiritual manifestations of powerful weapons, destroyers are the elite assassins and fighting forces of the Machine God. Theirs is the thunder that shakes all of Autochthonia. They *are* the technology of war and destruction, and they take as their own the forms of exquisitely crafted, artisan-forged walking machines of war. As such, they may be found using any combination of weapons from moonsilver whips and orichalcum daiklaves to dire lances and implosion bows (or stranger devices) on top of the deadly slashing attacks they make with their gleaming metal talons. These lethal spirits see the current war with the gremlins as a glorious time and a relished opportunity to cut loose with everything at their disposal. Destroyers are among the most varied spirits in Autochthon, taking shape as their weaponry, mission and Essence rating dictate. The smallest look like nothing more than augmented custodians, while the largest, the generals of the Divine Ministers, are veritable gods of war, resembling warstriders 20 yards tall.

In addition to the spirit Charms listed below, destroyers may have up to (Essence x 3) Alchemical Charms as well, making them extraordinarily lethal.

Typical spirit Charms include Camouflage, Cunning Thief, Details, Essence Bite, Form Match, Ignite, Imprecation, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Travel, Lend Authority, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Possession, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Shapechange, Stoke the Flame, Tiny Damnation, Tracking and Words of Power.

Most destroyers have Essence 3-8, Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, and Valor 5, giving them Essence pools between 87 and 137 motes.

MACHINE SPIRITS OF THE FAR REACHES

Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg Bite: 7/7/5L	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Design Weaver	4/8/8	9	-0x4/-1x4/ -2x6/-4x2/1		13/12L/15B	Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Dodge 5, Lore 5 (Autochthon +3), Occult 5, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Socialize 1, Stealth 3
Destroyer	8/8/8	9	-0x4/-1x6/ -2x6/-4/1	Claw: 11/13/8L	13/17L/20B	Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 1, Craft (Automata) 2 (Repair+2), Dodge 5, Endurance 4, Martial Arts 5, Occult 1, Presence 3, Resistance 4, Stealth 3-5, Survival 5
Gremlin	5/5/4	7	-0x2/-1x3/ -2x3/-4x2/1	Slash: 9/9/5L (or special)	10/12L/18B	Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 2, Resistance 3, Survival 5, Thrown 3

Gremlin: Those machine spirits who lose their connection to the Great Maker because of his degenerating functioning or for other, more deliberate reasons are called gremlins. These warped spirits have lost their sense of purpose, their awareness of their own function within the Machine God. They abandon all pretense of piety and put their faith in the Void that they actively seek to join, even though such a consummation would mean their annihilation.

In the blight zones, where the presence of the Great Maker and his Divine Ministers is least felt, hundreds of gremlins may congregate and actively work against the Machine God's well-being. In some cases, wayward Alchemical Exalted lead them in their heresy. The Divine Ministers, particularly Debok Moom and Mog, regularly lead crusades against these bastions of nihilistic spirits.

Stats for gremlins are similar to those for alpha custodians, but gremlins have been known to augment themselves to better fight against the Great Maker, so some may possess combat Abilities slightly superior to the average custodian.

AUTOCHTHON'S ELEMENTALS

The elementals residing in the Great Maker are not the elementals of Creation. They were created by Autoch-

thon, not by Gaia, and their great primal forebears were not destroyed by the Primordials as those of Creation were. Rather, they reside in their own vast domains in the Far Reaches of the Machine God.

If anything, the quirky elementals residing in Autochthon are more strongly identified with their elemental function and less social than their equivalents in Creation. This is by the Maker's design. Sociability inhibits elemental function. Therefore, when Autochthon forged the elementals inside himself, he took to heart lessons learned in Creation and made his elementals even more focused. The greatest Autochthonian elementals are still easily the superior of many gods, but lesser elementals are barely sentient and no more sociable than a wild elemental in Creation.

Autochthonian elementals are strange spirits of crystal, lightning, metal, oil, smoke and steam. They typically reside in the Reaches, performing the duties assigned them by the Great Maker, but they can be summoned — legally, if a city needs their presence, or illegally, if a thaumaturge has an overriding need for elemental assistance — to serve a human (or Exalted) master.

The more standard elementals known in Creation can also be found in Autochthonia, but unlike the Autochthonian elementals, they do not have their own elemental poles in the body of the Maker.



The following is a basic introduction to the nature and temperament of Autochthonian elementals, followed by some specific examples ranging from common spirits to unique elemental dragons.

LIGHTNING

The mercurial spirits of lightning take many forms depending on their power and rank in the elemental unions, but they are most often yellow, blue or purple arcs or fields of blazing sparks that make mortals' hair stand on end. Lightning elementals are extremely bright, and staring at one without dark lenses to protect the eyes will blind a character for (Stamina) turns.

SMOKE

Elementals of entropy, malice and malfunction, smoke elementals typically manifest as vaguely humanoid clouds of acrid black smoke or humans with pitch-black skin. Various types of smoke elementals have occasionally been known to haunt mortals who have committed some horrible act for which they feel deeply guilty. While unpopular, they remain loyal to Autochthon, and the Divine Ministers often send great elemental smoke dragons to make war on blight zones because they, of all the elementals, are the least prone to corruption in those places.

OIL

These elementals can be transparent, amber or dark black. They flow from surface to surface and can be difficult to see clearly. They are peacekeepers and diplomats throughout the Autochthonian spirit courts. At the Elemental Pole of Oil in Autochthonia's upper Reaches, oil elementals congregate in an enormous, highly social court system.

METAL

As a general rule, metal elementals of all types resemble large walking masses of metal. Certain types of metal elementals tend to favor certain shapes. Iron elementals prefer rough, hulking forms of black iron. Steel elementals favor forms that more closely resemble metallic automata though some prefer to look like crude aggregates of scrap metal held together with rivets, chains, bolts, gears and screws. These spirits often make a shrill screech of metal against metal when they move. Metal elementals are vain and almost always appear as gleaming, highly polished statues or devices of their metal. Metal elementals consider themselves spirits of advancement and progress. In the Far Reaches of Autochthon, there are large enough quantities of the Magical Materials that there are even



elementals of those rare metals, and they are immensely powerful and well allied.

Some sorcerers have mistaken metal elementals for automata. Some have even died for their mistake. Elementals are not automata, and the spells that affect automata do not affect elementals, and vice versa.

CRYSTAL

Representatives of order and Clarity, crystal elementals vary the most of any of Autochthon's elementals. Some resemble the pattern of frost on glass made three dimensional, while others resemble stained-glass sculptures or jigsaw caricatures of living creatures made up of countless jagged shards. Some are mirrors. Crystal is the closest analogue of wood in Autochthonia, and there are places where enormous crystal elementals stand like great transparent trees or sponges or glittering reefs of faceted coral.

Arc Tenders (Lightning): Largely transparent, with a tinge of violet, blue or gold to them, arc tenders are the spirits of orderly lightning discharge, floating between two poles of an arc. Each hand of an arc tender rests on one terminus of an electrical arc, usually the cathode and anode of some vast fulminating device. Arc tenders revel in the discharge of electricity, which is physically quite pleasurable for them. Common Charms among the arc

tenders include Affinity Element Control, Dematerialize, Essence Bite, Hoodwink, Host of Spirits, Inurement, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion and Stoke the Flame. Typical elemental powers include: Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain and Mobility.

Most have Essence 3, Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, and Valor 3, giving them an Essence pool of 66 motes, but the arc tenders found in the Far Reaches can get *much* larger, having Essence ratings of up to 8 for the truly vast, orichalcum-smelting arcs.

Hitting an arc tender with a metal weapon is akin to suicide. The attacker takes (elemental's Essence rating) health levels of damage (soakable only with Stamina) that turn and cannot move for (6 - Stamina) turns thereafter. Arc tenders can merge invisibly with metal (including all of the Magical Materials except jade and adamant) and travel through it at a rate of 50 yards per turn.

Cogwheel Dragon (Lesser Elemental Dragon of Metal: Brass): One of the crudest (yet most beautiful) of the lesser elemental dragons, cogwheel dragons are vast living structures of shining brass pistons, gear assemblies and polished shield plates with enormous crystal eyes. Their appearance suggests a combination of a metal dragon and a pattern spider. Cogwheel dragons are responsible for guarding key nodes in metal-rich regions of the Maker.

AUTOCHTHONIAN ELEMENTALS

Elemental	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg Shock:	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Arc Tender	2/7/3	4	-0x2/-1x2/ -2x2/-4/1	Shock: 9/12/5L	14/3L/5B	Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 1, Craft(Electrician) 1, Dodge 7, Endurance 2, Investigation 2, Lore 4 (Autochthon+2), Martial Arts 5, Occult 1, Presence 3 (Magnetic +2), Resistance 2, Socialize 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3
Cogwheel Dragon	6/4/7	7	-0x5/-1x7/ -2x5/-4x3/1	Slash: 5/10/14L	8/12L/15B	Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Bureaucracy 1, Craft 5 (Repairs +3), Dodge 4, Endurance 5, Lore 4 (Metallurgy +3), Occult 1, Resistance 5, Presence 5, Socialize 2, Stealth 1, Survival 5 (Autochthonia+1)
Gezlak	5/2/5	6	-0x3/-1x3/ -2x2/-4/1	Bash: 2/4/9L+2L	4/11L/13B	Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Bureaucracy 1, Dodge 2, Endurance 4, Resistance 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4
Lapidary	2/3/4	7	-0x2/-1x3/ -2x2/-4x2/1	Punch: 6/7/5L	6/12L/10B	Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 3, Endurance 4, Investigation 3, Lore 4 (Autochthonia+2), Martial Arts 4, Medicine 4, Occult 5, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Socialize 4, Stealth 5, Survival 3 (Autochthonia+1)

Charms commonly displayed by cogwheel dragons include Affinity Element Control, Benefaction, Cannibalize, Denial of the Forge's Yoke, Diagnostics, Essence Bite, Foretell the Future, Host of Spirits, Ignite, Inurement, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Natural Prognostication, Principle of Motion, Sabotage, Sense Domain, Stoic Endurance, Tiny Gift and Tracking. Most cogwheel dragons possess the Aegis, Coarse Skin, Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain, Mobility (via Autochthonian tram tubes and cog/track ways) and Rejuvenation elemental powers. Typical cogwheel dragons have Essence 5, Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 3 and Valor 5, giving them 101 motes.

Gezlak (Metal): These large lumbering creatures are crudely fashioned hollow iron automata, eight feet tall and vaguely humanoid (although they're built more like gorillas than humans), that serve as guardians in certain Autochthonian passages. When they are not needed, they attach themselves by their spines to conduits carrying molten metal and tap the veins, letting themselves be filled with the fire and the glory of the Maker. When doing this, they blend in with their surroundings quite effectively. Gezlak are largely undetectable in this state (Perception + Investigation, difficulty 4 to spot, or 3 in bright light) until they begin moving. They are initially slow to activate (one turn to free themselves and a second turn in which they attack last), but once they wrench themselves free of the veins they're nursing (an act accompanied by a shriek of grinding metal and a brief, bright splash of molten metal before the vein seals itself off) they're incredibly deadly, delivering dangerous burns with even the slightest contact.

A gezlak taking more than two lethal health levels of damage from a single hit sprays molten metal from its breach for a moment before the wound seals, inflicting four health levels of lethal burn damage to those within five feet of it.

The hot metal talons of a gezlak inflict Strength + 2 lethal damage (soaked normally) plus an additional two levels of lethal from the intense scorching heat that can only be soaked with Stamina.

Common Charms include Affinity Element Control, Call, Ignite, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess and Words of Power. Typical elemental powers include Aegis, Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain and Rejuvenation. Most have Essence 3, Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 2 and Valor 4, giving them an Essence pool of 72 motes.

Lapidary (Crystal): Elemental crystal spirits, lapidaries are formed entirely from polished faceted crystal. They are orderly beings and extremely hierarchical in their dealings with one another, but they display an

amazing sense of noblesse oblige when dealing with the human inhabitants of Autochthonia. In the Reaches, these elementals gather near large deposits or components of crystal. On rare occasions, lapidaries act as liaisons between the Great Maker's elemental courts and the mortals of Autochthonia, essentially functioning as the angelic messengers of the Machine God. Lapidaries are not repelled by the wards surrounding Autochthonian cities and may enter freely. Only the grandest religious festivals call for the presence of a lapidary, and an Autochthonian who sees more than three or four in a lifetime is either lucky or unusually long-lived. Lapidaries commonly possess Benefaction, Camouflage, Chrysalis of Preservation, Confusion, Crystallize, Diagnostics, Dreampeak, Element Touch, Hurry Home, Largess, Measure the Wind, Memory Mirror, Natural Prognostication, Ossify Pattern, Paralyze, Sense Domain, Stillness, Tiny Gift and Will-o-Wisp. Typical elemental powers include Aegis and Rejuvenation. Most lapidaries have Essence 4, Compassion 4, Conviction 3, Temperance 4 and Valor 2, giving them 87 motes.

SLACSTAG, THE SHOGUN OF CRYSTAL AND GLASS, LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF CRYSTAL

Description: In a vast distant cavern in the Far Reaches sleeps Slacstag, large as a city block and made of smooth polished glass. In its native form, the Shogun of Crystal and Glass is entirely transparent, except for three features: the molten pink glass of his smoothly flowing brain, his luminous amber eyes and the Manse-sized cardiform ruby in his chest. Once one discerns the demarcation of his perfectly transparent body, it becomes clear that Slacstag's features are decidedly feline. In his battle form, Slacstag appears as a vast dragon composed of crystal shards.

Slacstag participated in the Primordial War as a stealth recon device. His liquid silicon brain holds every memory he formed of that time and every memory he has formed since. Slacstag's undulating pink brain still records his experiences perfectly, and he can describe, in detail, the acrid smell in the air when the first Primordial, all of its component souls slain, entered its long descent into death or the look on the Unconquered Sun's face when the surviving Primordials undermined their own natures by swearing oaths to the gods.

The Shogun of Crystal and Glass is not violent and is unlikely to have anything to say to the characters (if he does speak, the most recent language he knows is Old Realm). Characters could, if they really felt like it, provoke Slacstag to violence, but they are unlikely to win.

Slacstag's claws are adamant and sharp enough to slice metal that's gently rested on the sharp tips. Additionally, he can exhale a great blast of shattered crystal that can shred even the hardest Exalt.

Nature: Savant

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 9, Stamina 8, Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4, Perception 9, Intelligence 7, Wits 8

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 4, Temperance 6, Valor 5

Abilities: Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 6, Linguistics 2, Lore 10, Melee 5, Occult 2, Performance 4, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Socialize 2

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Backing (Divine Ministers) 5, Cult 2, Influence 2

Suggested Charms: All available Charms

Elemental Powers: All elemental powers

Cost To Dematerialize: 105

Base Initiative: 17

Attack:

Batting Paw Attack: Speed 20 Accuracy 15 Damage 15A Defense 15*

Hiss of Spraying Crystal: Speed 15 Accuracy 14 Damage 25L**

* Slacstag may make two claw attacks every turn without splitting his dice pool.

** Slacstag may only use his elemental breath once every 10 turns.

Dodge Pool: 15 **Hardness:** 12 **Soak:** 25L/25B

Willpower: 9

Health Levels: -0x6/-1x16/-2x12/-4x4/Incap

Essence: 9 **Essence Pool:** 153

Other Notes: None

SPIRIT CHARMS

Certain Charms known to Autochthonian spirits are unknown to (or very rare among) Creation's spirits. The following spirit Charms are relatively common in Autochthonia, although the Great Maker has taught his small gods many more than just these.

CALL

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Conviction: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

The spirit may send out a call for the aid of like spirits. If other such spirits are within range (as determined by the Storyteller), they will arrive within (7 - Essence) turns.

CANNIBALIZE

Cost: 5 motes

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Compassion: 2

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: None

This useful Charm lets machine spirits nourish and repair themselves by feeding on other machine spirits.

By absorbing parts from a fallen comrade, an automaton can repair itself. The remains consumed must be of another machine spirit. Cannibalize heals two health levels per turn, up to a maximum of half of the destroyed spirit's total health levels. This Charm can be used offensively (and often is by gremlins), in which case the Storyteller makes a contested Valor (or Power) roll for the two spirits, with the attacking spirit draining one health level for every success above his target's. This attack only works only after the target has already taken four or more health levels of damage.

Alternatively, spirits may use this Charm to obtain motes of Essence instead. This is particularly useful in blight zones, where there is no Essence to respire. Spending 2 motes of Essence cannibalizes 5 motes from the target of this Charm (netting the cannibalizing spirit 3 motes). A spirit can jumpstart Cannibalize by spending 1 point of Willpower to absorb up to 10 motes of Essence from a fallen machine spirit.

CHRYSLIS OF PRESERVATION

Cost: 5 motes

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Compassion: 3

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: None

With this Charm, the spirit coats an object or automaton with a fine filament cocoon. The object so covered is placed in a state of perfect stasis until the spirit needs it again. While in this cocoon, the object takes no damage and is immune to fire, lightning, physical force and even the ravages of time. Until the item is removed from its static web, only the machine spirit that wove the cocoon can retrieve the object from the cocoon without using potent magic (e.g., Sapphire Countermagic). Spirits with Essence of 6 or more use a similar Charm on living creatures.

CRYSTALLIZE

Cost: 5 motes, 1 Willpower

Duration: Permanent

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Valor: 3

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: None

Possessed only by crystal elementals, this Charm allows a spirit to transform part of a creature's substance into pure crystal. The spirit must first touch its intended target. Once it succeeds and spends the Essence, roll the spirit's Essence rating. Each success inflicts one health level of aggravated damage by turning a portion of the target's form to pure crystal. Exalted can attempt to soak this damage with their Essence. If a target loses all of its

health levels to this form of attack, it becomes a crystal statue of itself and dies unless it can be healed of at least three health levels within 24 hours. Only magic that heals aggravated damage can treat these wounds.

DENIAL OF THE FORGE'S YOKE

Cost: 6 motes

Duration: Scene

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Temperance: 2

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: None

Weapons made of mortal metal won't hurt the spirit. Any damage such a weapon would have inflicted is ignored. This does not protect against weapons of the Magical Materials, but another version requiring a minimum Temperance of 3 and Essence of 6 does. That variant requires this Charm as a prerequisite.

DIAGNOSTICS

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Conviction: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

Spirits using this Charm may discern exactly what's wrong with a malfunctioning machine, automaton or machine spirit. The spirit's Essence is added to all Craft rolls to repair the machine.

INUREMENT

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: One day

Type: Simple

Minimum Compassion: 2

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: None

Spirits inside Autochthon often have to work in extraordinarily hostile conditions. This Charm makes them immune to all environmental damage, including damage caused by great pressure, acids, heat and extreme cold. Not even this Charm will protect a spirit from the most destructive environments inside Autochthon, but it does grant a solid basic level of protection against environmental damage (equivalent to three automatic successes on a Resistance roll).

OSSIFY PATTERN

Cost: 10 motes, 1 Willpower

Duration: (Essence) scenes

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Conviction: 4

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charms: None



This Charm saps the target's dynamism, putting him out of harmony with the flow of Essence. The spirit must successfully touch the target for this Charm to work. Once the spirit makes contact, the target gains no Essence while under the effects of this Charm, and all Essence costs are doubled. This Charm works differently on Fair Folk (excepting the Mountain Folk), in which case it causes (spirit's Essence rating) health levels of aggravated damage instead.

Only crystal elementals and design weavers can use this Charm.

SABOTAGE

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Valor: 3

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: None

Using this Charm impairs and weakens a machine, a machine spirit or an automaton with but a touch. It doesn't actually cause damage, but it makes the object easier to damage. Each usage of this Charm reduces the object's soak by 1L/1B. An item reduced to 0 in both categories becomes as fragile as thin crystal and shatters the next time it is hit.

Predictably, this Charm is especially popular with gremlins.

SHATTER

Cost: 15 motes

Duration: Instant

Type: Simple

Minimum Valor: 4

Minimum Essence: 5

Prerequisite Charms: None

The spirit opens its mouth and howls, inflicting (Essence x 2) dice in lethal damage to objects (or spirits) made of glass or crystal. Hearthstones and similar magical crystals and gems shatter after taking five health levels of damage.

AUTOCHTHONIAN TECHNOLOGY

Dwelling within the sleeping Machine God, Autochthonians enjoy a level of technological sophistication unheard of in Creation, comparable to the earliest days of the Dragon-Blooded Shogunate. The following tools and gadgets represent a small sampling of the items produced in the factories and forges of the Eight Nations but should provide players and Storytellers with inspiration in imagining other wonders. When designing artifacts and exotic goods, keep in mind that the technology of Autochthonia is still *magical technology* rather than the modern conveniences of the 21st century familiar to players. In some ways, items are more advanced than actual science can presently duplicate, as exemplified by

functional automata, energy weapons and the like. In other ways, the technology is more primitive. Essence can and does replace electricity as a power source for advanced artifacts, and most items of any mechanical intricacy use a mixture of clockwork gears and steam-driven pistons appropriate to the setting's steampunk genre. While many exotic and even explosive chemicals simmer in the cauldrons and vats of Autochthonian industrial factories, neither gunpowder nor any substitute exists in the Realm of Brass and Shadow. Within Autochthonia, the Alchemical Exalted personally define the limits of their society's technology, as their Charms represent the pinnacle of scientific achievement. A few of the artifacts and devices in this section mimic a single function of a Charm, though generally with less efficiency or versatility. Players and Storytellers may feel free to mine the Charms in this chapter for other such ideas.

Artifacts not stated as having association with a specific Magical Material may be attuned by any Essence user at standard cost. Many Autochthonian artifacts are intended for mortal use and have no commitment requirements.

ARTIFICIAL TEXTILES (RESOURCES • TO •••••)

Without access to organic materials for clothing, Autochthonians have developed a surprising range of artificial textiles through alchemy. The most common is synthetic "leather" produced using elemental oil tapped from the Great Maker's veins, which may be left black or dyed. When pressed into sheets and cooled, the material congeals into a slick, rubbery material used for aprons, armor, machine seals and countless other applications. Artificial silk is next most common, favored for its comfort and resistance to cutting.

Rarer textiles include a liquid-resistant fabric that stretches to almost twice its dimensions without tearing, a heavy material that absorbs surprising volumes of liquids and a tightly woven fiber used to create exceptional "chain" shirts and buff jackets.

FILTER MASK (RESOURCES ••)

These shallow cup-shaped masks fit snugly over the mouth and nose, sealed against the flesh with rubber trim and held in place with adjustable straps. With each breath, they filter air through several hundred layers of artificial cloth woven in variant patterns. The end result is that the masks block or mute the effects of toxic gasses and prevent the wearer from contracting all but the most virulent airborne diseases (three extra dice to resist breathed poisons and diseases; the filtration also allows mortal wearers to treat themselves as Exalted for any poisons they do breathe). Those unaccustomed to wearing filter masks find the experience vaguely claustrophobic, as if they can't draw full breaths. This perception is inaccurate but unsettling all the same. Each filter mask is good for about a month of regular use. Cleaning is accomplished through disassembly and

MACHINES IN THE MACHINE GOD

Autochthon's followers worship him as the supernal embodiment of innovation and evolution, particularly regarding tools and crafts. When scientists or artisans build something new in the Realm of Brass and Shadow, they often swear that their efforts are divinely inspired. There is truth in this. Though Autochthon sleeps, his psychic presence and Essence permeates the world he built of himself. That presence subtly affects the operation and development of technology in a two ways:

Efficiency: In most areas of Autochthonia, all mechanical and magical devices last 10 percent longer before breaking from normal wear and tear or needing maintenance. This does not increase the life span of power cells or fuel. For example, an artifact that needs servicing after 40 hours of operation before accruing penalties lasts 44 hours instead. Once this grace period has elapsed, penalties normally assessed every 10 hours take effect every 11. This efficiency bonus is not factored into the artifacts and devices listed in this chapter. When the Great Maker began his sojourn Elsewhere, his presence actually halved the effects of entropy. The deterioration of the Primordial's health has weakened the power of his aura, so that only the cathedral Core of his Godhead still benefits from the original effect. In the cancerous blight zones that fester in the Reaches, items function at normal or even reduced efficiency, as determined by the Storyteller. A few apocryphal horror stories speak of glowing cesspools whose light corrodes gears and pistons into rusting wreckage in a matter of seconds.

Inspiration: In comparatively healthy areas of Autochthonia, the Great Maker's presence acts as a quiet muse. All rolls made to create a new device add one extra die. This bonus does not apply if the technician builds an item by following a blueprint or by copying a working model. However, an inventor that sought to recreate a lost wonder of the past would receive Autochthon's grace, as would two scientists who independently conceived the same device without help from each other. In a team effort, only the project leader's player gains the bonus (the Storyteller determines who is the leader if players cannot agree). Inside the sacred Core of Autochthon, the bonus is an automatic success rather than a bonus die, as genius is an almost palpable force at the heart of the Great Maker. No bonus of any sort applies in blight zones.



through purification with industrial solvents. For each month of use after that, the bonus provided by the mask decreases by one die until the device becomes useless.

PHOTO-RESONANT GEL (RESOURCES •• PER GALLON)

In the field of alchemy and thaumaturgical chemistry, the Eight Nations of Autochthonia far exceed the technology of Creation. Only the most gifted artisans of the Mountain Folk produce analogous wonders in their hidden factory-citadels. Among the many thousands of compounds and formulas manufactured in the Realm of Brass and Shadow, photo-resonant gel is one of the simplest and most useful. Two main forms of the substance exist. The first is largely translucent, tinted with whatever color the alchemist selects at the time of its creation. When exposed to large concentrations of Essence (spirits, power capacitors, the reservoir tanks of Alchemicals, neural power cables of the Great Maker, etc.) within a five-yard radius, the gel glows the appropriate hue bright enough to read by within a yard and may be noticed almost as far away as a torch. The Charms Essence Dormancy Mode and Essence Veil (see pp. 121 and 123) can foil this detection, as can similar magic, so dissident cells cannot always rely on stolen badges to catch disguised spies and assassins. Autochthonians have many uses for the substance. Compressed and stored within a tempered crystal vial, the gel may be worn as a talisman or badge, alerting mortal bearers to the presence of dangerous Essence radiation or hidden spirits. The gel can also be mixed with paint and diluted, allowing for signs that light up when connected to small Essence-storing jewels or wires tapped into the Great Maker. Warning glyphs on the walls and doors of dangerous areas often have oscillating connections controlled by gears, constantly flashing on and off to attract attention. In dedicated null-mote zones (those containing gases that explode in the presence of concentrated Essence or similar hazards), amulets filled with photo-resonant gel provide warning flashes whenever someone brings a prohibited device near their boundaries. Many artifacts with limited Essence reserves have a single dot of the gel painted on, showing at a glance whether the device has any power remaining.

The second formula of this substance glows with deeper jewel tones rather than the muted pastels of the first variant. Instead of fluorescing in response to Essence, the gel stores light shined upon it and slowly releases this energy in a steady glow like foxfire. This light is fairly dim, roughly comparable to a candle rather than a torch. In settings where brightness is required, Autochthonians favor light spheres. However, many worker uniforms have functional accent strips of gel-treated artificial leather, providing a backup source of illumination in case a light sphere breaks. This light lasts three to five hours between

recharges, and all the chemical needs is exposure to a strong light source in order to reset the duration.

The Glorious Luminors of the Brilliant Rapture carefully hoard the formulas for photo-resonant gel, though the substance is common enough that they cannot hope to keep track of every drop produced by the factories. Unauthorized possession of the material is a crime, though not a serious one for small quantities except in the case of repeat offenders.

ARC PROTECTOR (ARTIFACT •)

Many things and places in the Machine God burn or glow so brightly that they would instantly and permanently blind any human who saw them. In answer, Luminor savants created these goggles faced with black crystal. Wearers can see in normal illumination and suffer no penalties or negative repercussions from staring at naked electrical arcs, open plasma furnaces and the like. The goggles provide no protection against magic that happens to have a visual component, such as the anima powers of the Sidereals. Furthermore, the goggles hamper vision in low-light conditions (imposing a dice penalty of one to three depending on how poor the illumination is). In the event that Autochthonians break the Seal of Eight Divinities, they issue arc protectors to everyone who goes to Creation as a precaution against the sun. Assume that any native of the Realm of Brass and Shadow must wear their eyes onto sunlight if they wish to go abroad without arc protectors, starting with the dim light near dawn and dusk and gradually increasing exposure and brightness over a week. Until they complete this weaning process, Autochthonian mortals suffer Awareness penalties for bright conditions (one die for indirect or weak sunlight up to three dice for cloudless sky at noon).

AUTOLABE (ARTIFACT • OR ••)

Autochthonia is a vast and complex world, especially in the Reaches. To aid in navigation through the maze of accessways and service tunnels, Autochthonian scientists devised this artifact. Just as a jade needle in a conventional compass points to the Elemental Pole of Earth in Creation, the gimbaled pointer in an autolabe points back to a fixed beacon. The beacon may be reset by leaving the autolabe in physical contact with a new beacon for 25 hours. Otherwise, the compass always points back to the same marker as when it was created. Most autolabes are attuned to a beacon at the center of the city in which they are constructed, but exploration models come as part of a set with a base unit to which all the autolabes are attuned. An even rarer variant interchanges beacons between two autolabes, allowing them to always point back to one another. Because Autochthonia is a fully three-dimensional world, an autolabe's pointer can orient in any direction with full freedom of movement inside its transparent spherical shell.

Some very sophisticated autolabes rated at Artifact •• have a secondary mode, memorizing every twist and turn of an individual's path if she pushes a button. Pressing the button again ends the memorization, and the compass needle thereafter guides the bearer back along the remembered path. If she deviates, it guides her back to the point at which she left the path so she might continue her return journey.

Most forms of autolabes are spheres approximately three inches in diameter, although lantern-sized variants containing a small light sphere to read the instrument by are also fairly common.

ESSENCE CAPACITOR (ARTIFACT • TO •••••)

These sophisticated devices take the form of elaborate polyhedral crystals an inch wide, fitted in a wire cage of alloys combining orichalcum and condensed Primordial Essence tapped from the largest veins of the Great Maker. Autochthonia lacks any Demesnes or Manses, so these jewels fill the same technological niche that Hearthstones serve in Creation and even share many of the same physical properties. First, the central jewels are virtually indestructible, requiring specialized tools or magic to shatter (see *Exalted*, p. 340). If broken for any reason (even correctly), they release a devastating pulse of energy that inflicts the capacitor's rating x 10L damage, minus 1L for every full yard away the victim is standing at the time of the blast. Deactivated capacitors (see below) only explode on a botch. By comparison, the wire lattice enveloping a capacitor is more fragile with its soak of 10L/10B. The device can suffer 10 health levels of damage before it ceases to function. Fixing a broken capacitor requires exotic materials that can only be produced in Autochthonia with a Resources value equal to the artifact's rating (or half the rating if the lattice is only partially damaged, rounded up). Furthermore, the technician must have Occult and Lore •• and a pertinent Craft (usually Jeweler) at •••.

A working Essence capacitor may be plugged into the sockets of large or advanced artifacts in order to supply constant power, exactly as a Hearthstone. They provide less benefit when used by Alchemicals or other magical beings for Essence replenishment. Such beings must commit 1 mote to the artifact in order to harmonize its power signature to their own and only receive the capacitor's rating in motes per hour (rather than twice its rating). Capacitors do not convey specific magical benefits as Hearthstones do, even if set into other artifacts.

The most notable difference between Hearthstones and Essence capacitors is that the former channel Essence from a self-replenishing locus of power, while the latter store and emit a focused current of ambient motes. While Hearthstones never run out of power, capacitors can only function for 25 hours before they automatically shut down for lack of motes. Any time prior, a capacitor can be turned off with a switch (this may require a secret combination code of several buttons for devices with which the Tripartite doesn't

want anyone tampering). A deactivated capacitor can be reactivated at any time, but recharges one hour of power for every two hours spent respiring Essence in Autochthonia (capacitors cannot recharge in blight zones). Although the Essence harmonics of Gaia and Autochthon are extremely similar (enough so that living Essence users can respire normally in both Creation and Autochthonia), enough divergence exists to interfere with the recharge cycle of capacitors. These artifacts must be specifically calibrated to respire in realms other than Autochthonia. This process costs nothing but requires a half hour of work from a technician qualified to repair the artifact (see above). Theoretically, Essence capacitors could be reconfigured to recharge in the tangled and poisoned Essence of Malfeas or the necrotic currents of the Underworld or even the chaotic surges of the Wyld, but sane Autochthonians would be extremely hesitant to power any of their devices with tainted energy for fear of lingering contamination.

For large artifacts that require continuous operation, Autochthonian savants have developed the tri-socket adapter (Resources •••). This device plugs into a single power socket and houses three Essence capacitors of the same level, automatically switching between them as each runs out of power. This arrangement ensures that recharge cycles align for uninterrupted power, provided that the jewels remain in an area where they can respire Essence.

FLAW SCANNER (ARTIFACT •)

This disc-shaped amulet of carved amethyst is approximately an inch wide and locked in a ring of orichalcum attached to a set of artificial-leather straps. The device is worn on one hand so that the jewel is centered against the middle of the palm. When activated for a scene by the expenditure of 1 Willpower point or 2 motes, the gem hums and projects a narrow cone of soft violet light. In this radiance, pale colors eerily fluoresce. More importantly, any cracks, flaws or points of unintended stress in objects appear highlighted in a bright purple-white aura. Up to a square yard may be visually scanned under the light each turn. While the primary benefits of this artifact are narrative in scope (quickly revealing information the user would not otherwise have access to without thorough diagnostic work), any Craft rolls made to repair detected flaws also add a one-die bonus so long as the technician studies the damage for a full minute under the light.

LIGHT AMPLIFICATION VISOR (ARTIFACT • OR ••)

These devices appear as goggles with a pair of narrow lenses or a single curved lens that extends across both of the wearer's eyes. Anyone wearing them constantly receives the benefits and drawbacks provided by the light-intensification filters submodule of the Optical Enhancement Charm (see p. 124). As a permanent alternative, some mortals have small versions of these lenses surgically implanted into their eyes, giving their irises and pupils a

distinctive metallic shine. The necessary surgery takes three hours to perform and requires an array of specialized medical and thaumaturgical tools. Roll the surgeon's Intelligence + Medicine (difficulty 5). Failure leaves the patient permanently blinded. Mortals with light-intensifying implants suffer none of the effects of overstimulation or receive the benefit of their superior vision while wearing arc protectors (the two artifacts effectively cancel out when used together).

Superior versions of this artifact rated at Artifact •• also exist, and these may be worn or implanted as normal. In addition to providing the above benefits, they can provide thermal vision when powered (1 Willpower point charges the lenses for two hours, while a mote charges the artifact for a single hour). The character's perception of heat is identical to that granted by the thermal vision submodule of the Optical Enhancement Charm.

Alchemicals cannot have these artifacts implanted, although other varieties of Exalted may.

LIGHT SPHERE (ARTIFACT •)

The Realm of Brass and Shadow is well named, as it's a sunless world where light is a rare and precious commodity. Large light sources typically use electrical arcs, burning gas flames or glowing crystals to furnish illumination. In the darkened tunnels and industrial caverns, Alchemicals use their animas to see, but mortals must generally make do with variants of this artifact. Formed of brass and tempered glass, these three-inch-wide globes contain a treated orichalcum catalyst and an adjoining socket for inserting coin-sized discs of low-quality jade. The catalyst causes the jade to sublime away in a slow incandescent display with the radiance of a torch, yet without heat or smoke. Such illumination is harsh and cold and makes skin appear sallow and sickly. Each disc of jade fuel is worth Resources • in Autochthonia or Yu-Shan (•• elsewhere) and produces light for a full week before being consumed by the reaction. Higher-quality discs exist that can fluoresce for a month (Resources •• everywhere), while a tiny handful of perfectly calibrated fuel coins last a full year (Resources ••• everywhere). The latter are usually fortuitous accidents of the factories and are not mass-produced. Toward the end of its life, fuel discs emits a fitful, flickering light, and the sphere can often be heard to hum or buzz. To conserve power, most light spheres have a switch that breaks or reestablishes the connection between jade and catalyst when pressed. Rarer models of these artifacts (also Artifact •) have a crystal skin that is opaque on the outside and mirrored on the inside, with an articulated iris shutter controlled by a lever. A second switch slides any of three colored glass filters across the iris, typically used for signaling purposes or to lure in/avoid gremlins attracted to certain colors. Some heretics and dissident cells within Autochthonia relay messages to one another using secret optical languages of flashing lights, not realizing how adept

sentinels are at cracking these primitive codes. Shutter-equipped models only produce light in one direction as a narrow cone out of their iris but triple the distance of illumination. All light spheres come with metal loops on top for hanging the globes from a cord, as well as a tripod for setting them down without rolling. Both of these features are retractable.

OMNIMODAL WARDROBE UNIT (ARTIFACT •)

Essence 2-5 Alchemical Exalted normally wear clothing as mortals do, albeit oversized for those of greater power and tailored to adjust for odd protrusions of Charms. Older Alchemicals often dispense with humanoid forms entirely, and even those who retain a semblance of their original shape cover themselves in integrated armor plating rather than anything resembling conventional clothing. Regardless, Exalted who still require attire often requisition one of these artifacts, effectively compressing an entire wardrobe into a single item.

By default, an omnimodal wardrobe unit appears as a basic citizen uniform of artificial silk, save that it is unusually light, glossy oil black in color and faintly iridescent under indirect lighting. Close examination reveals an extremely fine lattice of moonsilver wires woven directly into the material. Once an owner attunes to the garment (for a committed cost of 1 mote), she may direct it to change form with a thought. Each change is a reflexive action costing 1 mote, and the process is both unsettling and spectacular for those unused to it. The suit's entire substance systematically unravels, threads whipping around the wearer like an undulating aura. Simultaneously, hundreds of thumbnail-sized spider automata revealed by the unraveling come to life, scuttling without regard for gravity as they weave and transmute the proto-fibers into the new template. The entire process only takes a single turn. As an additional side effect, reweaving cleans and repairs any damage done to the suit, whether by tearing, burns or any other cause. Exalted may designate that a garment heal or clean itself for 1 mote without initiating a full change, in which case the spider drones skitter out of the damaged or soiled areas and restore the fiber back to spotless perfection.

An omnimodal wardrobe unit remembers every form it has previously assumed and shifts to those without any possibility of error. When the wearer commands the garment to take an unfamiliar shape, she must concentrate to remember clothing she has previously seen (represented by a Wits + Awareness roll) or design the pattern on the spot using Wits + Craft (Textiles). Both rolls are made at difficulty 2, with failure indicating the end result isn't quite what the wearer had in mind. Changing the suit into a new form is a simple action rather than reflexive. Omnimodal wardrobe units can change into any clothing type or combination from a single glove all the way to full outfits such as a trenchcoat, tunic, pants, boots, belt and hat, and forms can have any coloration, texture or appar-

ent material. In all forms, these items are unusually durable (+1L soak, not considered armor or natural soak and cumulative with armor), but they can only become clothes, not actual armor. The Storyteller should veto any attempts to circumvent this limitation.

PORTABLE NUTRIMENT RECYCLING ENGINE (ARTIFACT •)

Designed for battlefield or exploration use, this device normally appears as an odd assembly of pipes, wires and box-shaped compartments centered around a clockwork power cell and a foot wide intake chute on top. In all, the machine is approximately the size of a person and quite ungainly-looking, though the ultralight alloys used in its construction cause it to weigh a mere 30 pounds. Pressing a button causes the device to collapse and retract components until it is nothing more than a rectangular steel box with smoothly rounded edges and corners. In this travel mode, a portable nutriment recycling engine (often abbreviated as *ponre*) fits in a backpack and may be comfortably carried by a single person. The machine may be set on the ground and redeployed at any time, and transforming between modes takes one minute.

In its expanded mode, the *ponre*'s spring-driven mechanisms must be wound with a crank (five minutes of winding produces an hour of operation). Once activated, the device makes a distinctive slurping noise as spinning blades "chew" any organic material fed into the intake chute. Absorbed matter passes through a number of mercifully opaque veins and baffles, undergoing transmogrification and sterilization marked by undefinable pops and crunches. Every two pounds of organic substance takes one minute to process, ultimately resulting in a thumbnail-sized white pellet that drops into a catch basin. The pellets taste like chalk and have the consistency of dried mushrooms, but they cannot spoil and provide the same nourishment as a full meal. All toxins and diseases present in matter fed into the machine are removed long before the pellets emerge, so they are always completely safe unless magically contaminated. Ten of these pellets are a Resources •• item in Autochthonia and generally impossible to obtain elsewhere. Of course, given the imperishable nature of the pellets, hidden vaults in Creation may hold nutriment caches preserved from the beginning of the First Age or even earlier.

RESPIRATOR MODULE (ARTIFACT •)

These devices appear as more sophisticated models of filter masks, designed with a central nodule of blue jade surrounded by wires of mystical alloys. The artifacts may be used as filter masks without any cleaning or upkeep requirements. In addition, anyone wearing such a module can flip a switch with their tongue, causing the device to seal and synthesize air out of Essence. In this state, the user is completely protected against harmful airborne effects

and may travel underwater or through a vacuum without asphyxiating. Respirator modules require chips of crystallized thaumaturgical reagents to operate (Resources •• for a batch of 10; Resources ••• per batch to make outside of Autochthon). Each chip provides an hour of air, and the module vibrates when it is about to run out of power. Alternately, beings capable of channeling Essence may reflexively spend a mote to power the module for an hour.

COURIER DRONE (ARTIFACT ••)

Generally reminiscent of large metallic dragonflies about three inches long, these automata provide one of the most common means of delivering messages between Autochthonian cities. The drones can only carry a quarter-pound of weight in their spindly legs, but this is more than sufficient for bearing tiny brass scroll tubes or memory crystals. The automata navigate by Essence, able to track the emissions of metropoli across all of Autochthonia. Upon arrival, they follow the broadcasted neural signals of the ancient Alchemicals to a designated drop site. Because of this navigation system, they would be blind and confused outside the Realm of Brass and Shadow, though new models could be designed to orient using the dragon tracks of Gaia's pattern-woven souls. More importantly, the automata are highly nimble and capable of flying at a top speed of 300 miles per hour. These automata possess Intelligence 1, Perception 3 and Wits 3., and as automata, courier drones have no Virtues; they never fail Valor rolls and never succeed at any other Virtue checks. Courier drones generally travel through tram veins whenever possible, employing their small size to dodge around passing trains. Alternately, they can flit through grates into air ducts, although these passages are generally more dangerous and, therefore, are used only as a last resort.

A less common version of this device exists for exploration and military purposes (also Artifact ••). Instead of orienting on any city, these drones can only fly back and forth between two rings. The drones can infallibly track their target beacons in real time so long as they are on the same plane of reality, using the best possible means of reaching the current destination if both are within Autochthonia. Wards that block scrying also inhibit navigation if the destination beacon is brought into a warded area. In such cases, the drone finds a place to land and waits until it can sense the destination to resume its journey.

All courier drones respire living Essence through their wings in order to remain functional. If they pass inside an Autochthonian blight zone or a shadowland during the day, their top speed drops to 50 miles per hour. In the Underworld, they can fly at this reduced speed for one hour, after which their flight becomes erratic and they land, ceasing all function until they are exposed to living Essence for a full hour. Repairing a damaged drone takes an hour of work and costs Resources •• per health level. The technician must have an appropriate Craft (usually Clockworks) at ••••.

Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Courier Drone	1/10/1	10	-2/Squished	None	15/1L/1B	Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Dodge 5, Stealth 5

SOULGEM (ARTIFACT ••)

Every citizen of the Eight Nations receives one of these artifacts within a week of birth, by immutable and unanimous decree of the Tripartite. The procedure is agonizing but mercifully simple and swift to perform. A pair of needle-sharp soulsteel posts drive into the center of the infant's forehead, piercing the skull and outermost edge of her brain. The pain is so intense that it does not immediately register, and during this moment of surreal calm, the surgeon applies the actual soulgem and touches it with a living nerve of the Great Maker. An Essence jolt leaps from the wire, fusing gem and posts and patient together. This point is the one at which she finally realizes her agony and loudly screams before blacking out. The scream of soulgem implantation is a distinct sound, at once feral and mechanical. According to the inquisitors of the Soulsteel Caste, no other form of pain they have yet devised triggers the same response. Placing a soulgem in an older mortal is also possible, with the only difference being that the individual remembers the surgery in vague nightmares for the rest of her life. Adult implantation is only done in Autochthonia in the case of the capture of second-generation exiles bred in the Reaches. Alchemical retrieval teams regularly raid colonies of their children, bringing the captives back to civilization so they can become productive members of the Populat rather than living in the squalor faced by their criminal parents.

After the breaking of the Seal of Eight Divinities, the Sodalities experiments on captured mortals in a variety of ways, including numerous attempts at soulgem implantation. All of these initial experiments kill the patients, an unfortunate side effect of the souls belonging to the Tapestry of Creation rather than the Design of Autochthon. After hundreds of lethal failures, they finally perfect the process.

The function of a soulgem is very simple. When its bearer dies, the jewel absorbs her still-fused higher and lower soul and stores it until the spirit can be recycled. The Essence of a Celestial Exalt cannot be captured. Soulgems are as durable as Hearthstones, so even the worst industrial accidents cannot crack them or release their contents. Deliberately breaking one is a capital crime throughout all of Autochthonia. The Glorious Luminors of the Brilliant Rapture have more sophisticated artifacts and thaumaturgical rituals enabling them to extract souls from soulgems and feed them back into the Radiant Amphora.

Autochthon returns these souls with each new birth, still “tagged” with the Essence signature of the last soulgem used to house them. This allows savants to track the lineage of each soul through successive incarnations.

To a lesser extent, soulgems also serve as visible status symbols in Autochthonian society. Exiles have their gems forcibly removed, leaving a terrible scar in their foreheads — and condemning their souls to Oblivion upon death, at least according to Luminor doctrine. In actuality, Autochthon recycles all souls released within him, as the highest echelons of the Luminors well know. When the souls of former exiles incarnate anew, they are made Populat with a falsified soul genealogy number but secretly watched throughout their lives for signs of repeated dissidence. Only after three lifetimes of good behavior is their file closed. Outcasts have concentric rings tattooed around their gems, indicating their crimes, though the type of gem depends on their social caste prior to becoming outcasts. Members of the Populat have round, polished onyx soulgems. Those of the Olgotary have rectangular orange topaz jewels. Theomachrats bear square sapphire stones. Sodalts wear diamond-shaped amethyst gems.

Unlike those implanted in mortals, Alchemical soulgems are flawless, many-faceted diamonds. The souls in these stones are never returned to Autochthon after death, but instead wait until their gems are placed in new Alchemicals to live again. In extremely rare circumstances, the Luminors transfer a mortal hero's soul into a new Alchemical gem rather than feeding it to Autochthon. The process doesn't always work, and failure confuses the genealogy tags, so the Luminors are loathe to do this except when absolutely necessary. Should some horrible tragedy break an Alchemical soulgem, the soul returns to the Radiant Amphora and is reborn in an infant. On such occasions, the Luminors have instruments to detect the presence of the hero among the nurseries. Once they find the child, he is immediately implanted with a standard gem (if this has not already happened), and he is painlessly euthanized. The gem is taken to Sodality laboratories where technicians ritually transfer the Alchemical soul to a new diamond soulgem that becomes its home.

Players do not need to spend Background points for Autochthonian characters to have soulgems. It is automatically assumed that everyone has one.

INDUSTRIAL EXOSKELETON (ARTIFACT ●●●)

This humanoid frame of steel and magical alloys stands close to 12 feet tall and is covered in plates of armor over clanking clockwork machinery. Thick backward-bending legs end in articulated plate claws for maximum leverage and balance, while the surprisingly dexterous arms boast long, four-part vice pincers able to accommodate a broad range of grip configurations. Its blocky head is an empty cage faced with a shatterproof glass window. A human or Essence 2-3 Alchemical can climb into the exoskeleton and wait five minutes while the machine automatically coils a web of artificial leather straps around her body. At the conclusion of this process, a long needle enters the pilot's back and threads a wire filament up into her brain. While painful, this process does not actually inflict damage. Once fully plugged in, the pilot can commit 8 motes or 2 Willpower points (for beings unable to channel Essence) to make the exoskeleton an extension of her own body. This cost is in addition to the fact that the suit needs a two-dot Essence capacitor (see p. 183) installed in order to function at all.

When worn, an industrial exoskeleton provides the following advantages and disadvantages:

Augmented Strength: The suit adds 12 to the character's Strength rating for the purposes of lifting, breaking and other feats of strength, as well as damage from attacks powered by physical strength. The

joints can lock in place, allowing the exoskeleton to hold a lifted object indefinitely.

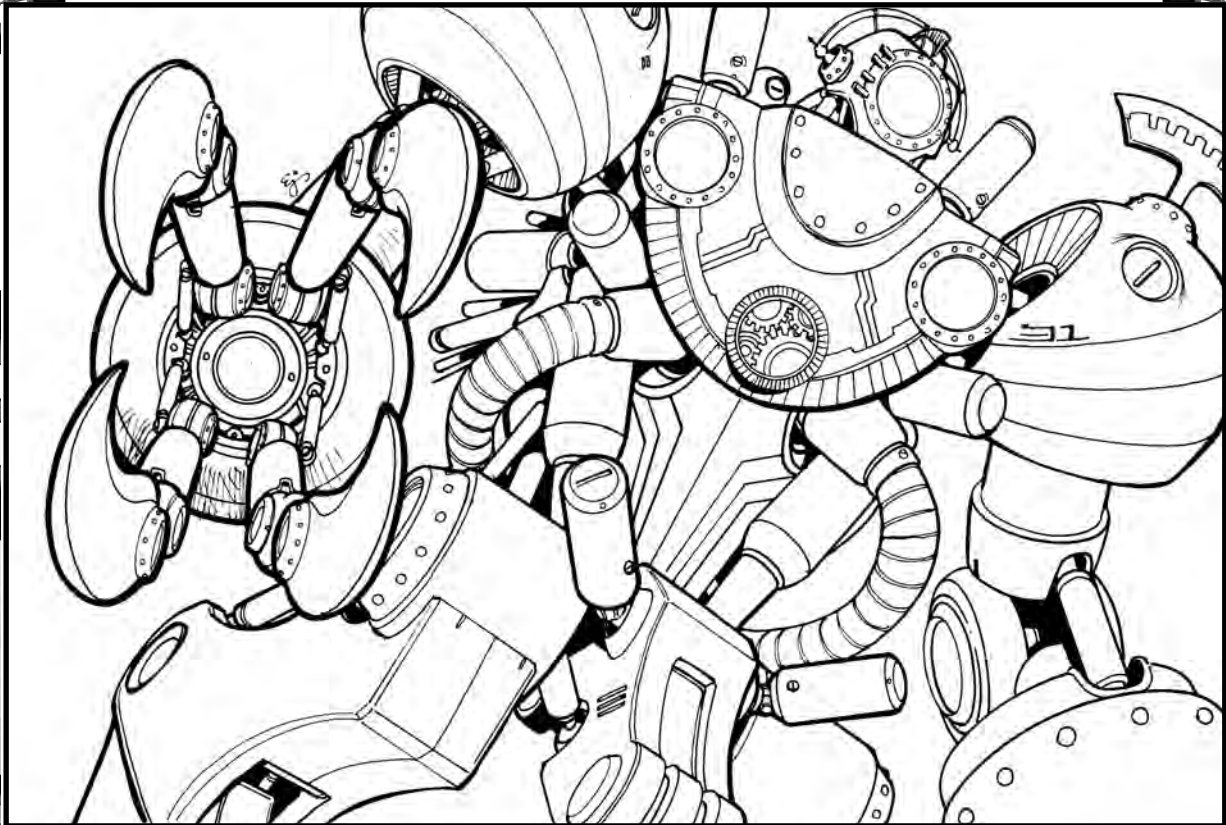
Protection: The exoskeleton counts as armor with a soak of 12L/12B (hardness 6L/6B), mobility penalty -8 and fatigue value 2. Models without armor plating also exist for low-hazard environments. These have soak 6L/6B (no hardness), mobility penalty -3 and fatigue value 1.

Slow: Heavily armored models of this suit halve the user's ground speed and cannot jump or climb. Lighter models reduce ground and climbing speed to 3/4 of normal and halve jumping distance. Neither model can tread water, and both variants sink like rocks if the pilot is foolish enough to try.

Upkeep: After 25 hours of use, the components of an exoskeleton require calibration and adjustment by a trained technician with Lore, Occult and a pertinent Craft focus at ●●●. For every five hours the machine is past due on maintenance, its Strength bonus cumulatively decreases by 1. Once the bonus drops to 0, the frame is paralyzed until it undergoes servicing. Maintenance takes an hour of work and requires specialized tools valued at Resources ●●●. With every fifth maintenance, certain delicate components and gears must be replaced as part of the upkeep, also costing Resources ●●● (●●●● in Creation outside of a large city).

WARFARE

Autochthonians make use of a broad range of weapons, spanning the gamut from primitive swords



and spears all the way to Essence cannons, implosion bows and lightning ballistae. Overall, the level of military technology is roughly comparable to that of the early Dragon-Blooded Shogunate or the Jadeborn in the Second Age, with the most advanced weapons taking the form of Alchemical Charms. Players with **Exalted: The Outcastes** or **Exalted: The Fair Folk** may consult the Lookshy chapter or the Mountain Folk chapter respectively for further examples of high-end tech, while many other supplements showcase examples of the lower end.

Most combat in Autochthonia is conducted in close or at least narrow quarters, so the military leaders of the Eight Nations place more emphasis on strategies and technology for controlling bottleneck access points and tunnel warfare than open-field battles. The order of battle does not even recognize legions, but instead, structures the military into much smaller and faster units supported by single low-Essence Alchemicals or medium-sized war machines. Larger war machines are surprisingly uncommon compared with Seventh Legion deployments, since high-Essence Exalted function in that capacity far more effectively than any powered armor or automata.

The standard issue for Autochthonian infantry is an exceptional reinforced buff jacket of alloyed steel plates and artificial leather. Beneath the armor, soldiers wear a skintight bodysuit of the same rubbery material, heavy boots, gloves and helmets, completely hiding every trace of their bodies. All helmets have filter masks or even respirator modules, although the latter are generally reserved for elite squads or issued for specific missions through toxic or airless zones. Externally opaque goggles shield the eyes, replaced with arc protectors or light-amplification visors for operations in high- and low-light conditions, respectively. All infantry carry shields and exceptional short swords with a smooth razor edge on the primary side and a serrated reverse edge doubling as a saw. Archers use crossbows without exception.

Elite units often make use of artifact weapons and armor designed for their use and quite often augment themselves with thaumaturgical implants and alchemical formulas. The most feared soldiers have half-soul amulets bolted directly into their flesh, transforming them into inhuman supersoldiers on par with Creation's gunzoshu warriors.

Alchemical Exalted invariably make use of artifact weapons and gear, although older Exalted eventually internalize their preferred arsenal and gadgets through the implantation of comparable Charms. Those of Essence 6-7 must generally use weapons sized for warstriders, although they can still use smaller items by means of dexterous tentacle appendages and the like. The favored armor of most Alchemical Exalted is an artifact buff jacket or reinforced buff jacket, typically worn over the implanted armor of Charms. Those on covert missions make due with their own

Charms or don enchanted fiber-weave shirts underneath their clothing. For battle against extremely large or deadly adversaries, Autochthon's Chosen may wear heavy armor or even varieties of power armor, but they prefer to leave such opponents to their elders whenever possible.

CROSSBOWS (RESOURCES •• OR •••, OR ARTIFACT ••)

These weapons have long been associated with the followers of the Machine God, ever since the Mountain Folk developed them in the primeval era before mankind. By the time that humans began using weapons, the Jadeborn had long since moved on to more advanced devices, such as Essence cannons, so the Conclave generously shared the designs for crossbows with the early mortal followers of Autochthon. After the Primordial left Creation and took these followers with him, the geased and weakened Mountain Folk turned once more to using crossbows because they could no longer maintain the glorious arsenals of the past. Much later, the Haslanti uncovered preserved copies of the weapons from the ruins of a city once belonging to the Great Maker's people. They have closely guarded the designs for these weapons, so crossbows remain extremely rare in Creation. In Autochthonia, matters are quite different. Conventional bows are all but unknown except in exile colonies and are viewed by military engineers as a quaint archaism. Even powerbows are viewed with similar disdain by Alchemicals, who prefer the Essence cannons and pneumatic bows of their own Charms or the deadly artifacts known as assault crossbows.

In all varieties, the main advantage of crossbows is that they do not depend on their user's Strength for power. With a little training, even the weakest conscripts or children may attack with the same devastating force as archers who have spent years building their muscles. Furthermore, the vast majority of arrows used by Autochthonians are armor-piercing bolts (considered target arrows), extremely useful against metal-skinned gremlins. Broadhead bolts are far less common, given how ineffective they are against automata and rogue machine gods. Most rare of all, Autochthonians occasionally employ a cruel form of bolt with a spring loaded tip that opens into a three-bladed claw as the projectile leaves the bow. These are useless against hard targets, but inflict horrible rending wounds against flesh (same rules as frog-crotch arrows). These so-called razor bolts are expensive and take more effort to produce, but they are sufficiently demoralizing that sentinels favor them for policing and most cities keep a supply on hand. Unfortunately, crossbows are slow to reload (maximum rate of 1) and suffer from poor range compared with conventional bows. Exceptional bows cannot improve their rate. Similarly, Archery Charms cannot overcome the rate limitation unless they are specifically developed for that purpose.

The four main types of crossbows used in Autochthon are personal weapons, rare wrist-mounted models favored by assassins (often loaded with poisoned darts), siege models intended for use against large targets and the aforementioned assault crossbows used by the Alchemicals. The last have an attunement cost of 5 motes and generally provide the same Magical Material bonuses as powerbows. Jade models do not add to rate, but instead, propel their arrows like flashing thunderbolts, gaining a speed of +2 and adding 30 yards to range.

FIBER-WEAVE BODYSUIT (ARTIFACT • OR ••)

This light armor uses high-quality fiber-weave material as the base, into which scientists thread a lattice of wires or embedded nodes of Magical Materials. The end result is an extremely supple and thin garment roughly equivalent to an enchanted chain shirt. Such armor requires a commitment of 3 motes and is intended for discreet or covert situations since it can be worn under normal clothes. Depending on design, fiber-weave bodysuits may just cover the torso or extend to limbs. The protection offered is generally the same regardless of the area covered, though Storytellers running a particularly gritty game may allow called shots against limbs to bypass an armored vest. In addition to their base statistics, suits of this armor type have the added power that lethal piercing attacks based on actual kinetic penetration do not halve the armor's soak unless the raw

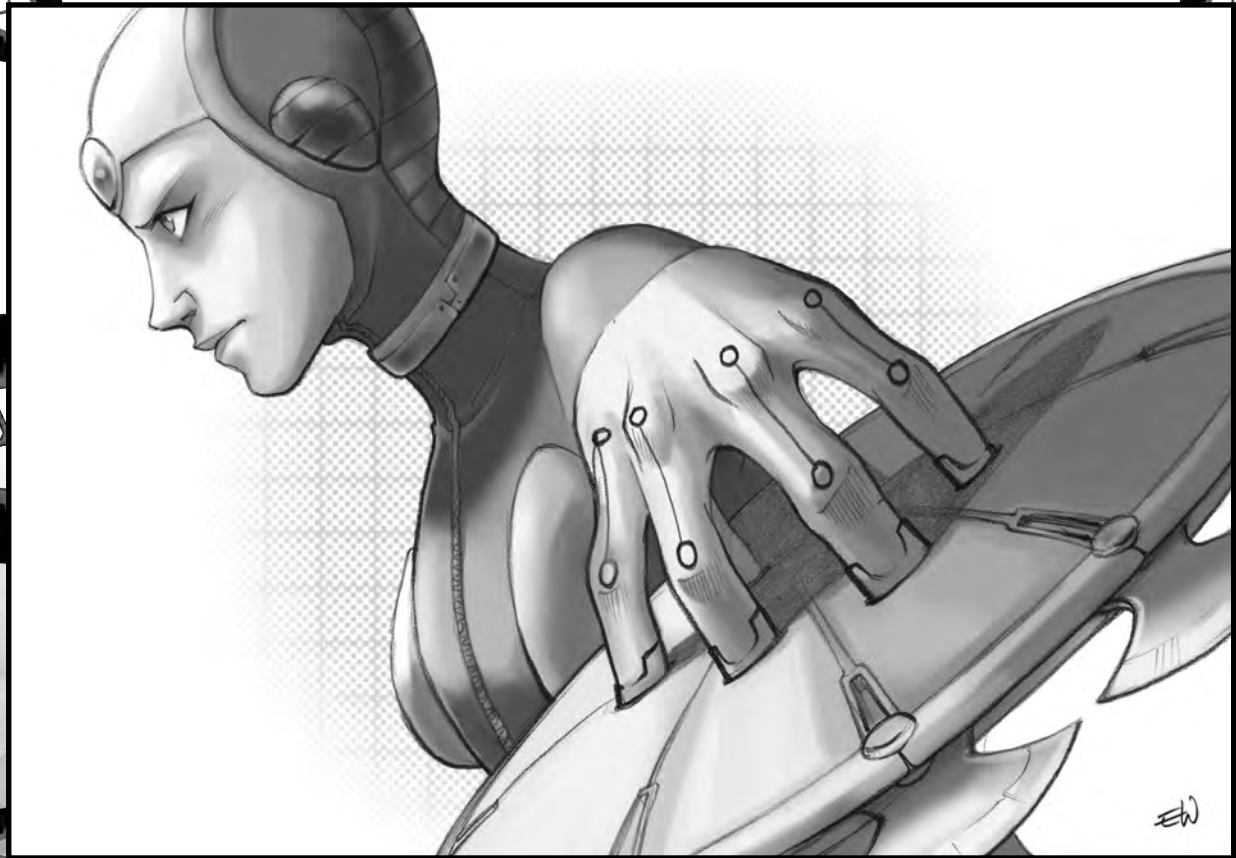
damage is at least twice the base lethal soak of the armor (before adding Magical Material bonuses). As with most enchanted armor, fiber-weave bodysuits benefit normally from their appropriate Magical Material. The benefit for armor made from tempered Autochthonian adamant is +3L soak and a -1 reduction of the mobility penalty.

Some Alchemicals prefer more advanced versions of this armor that also incorporate all the properties of an omnimodal wardrobe unit (see pp. 184-185) except that artifact's meager soak bonus. These bodysuits are considered Artifact •• but require the same attunement cost of 3 motes. With such a garment, an Alchemical is always protected by the armor regardless of what form his attire currently takes but cannot wear other armor over the toughened clothes.

GYROSCOPIC CHAKRAM (ARTIFACT •••)

The most widely used and feared thrown weapons of the Alchemical Exalt, these chakram appear as metal disks approximately six inches in diameter with five holes spread for gripping. Alchemicals normally carry these weapons strapped to the small of their backs or against the side of their thighs for easy access.

When hurled by its attuned owner (5 mote commitment), a gyroscopic chakram comes to life. Clockwork mechanisms deploy a ring of three-inch blades from the



edge that spin at high velocity. More impressively, the weapon banks and adjusts its path to follow its quarry.

If a gyroscopic chakram misses its intended target as a result of a dodge or parry, it swoops back for another attempt on the following turn. It always acts at initiative 20, using a pool of 10 dice to hit (its own accuracy is factored into that pool). It continues hunting the same target every turn until it hits or botches, in which case it strikes an unintended target like a wall or innocent bystander and remains lodged. Upon striking its intended target, the disk rips through or slices past as appropriate, flying in a smooth arc that brings it to its owner's hand at the end of the turn. The weapon also returns in this fashion if any attack roll fails for any other reason than the target dodging or parrying, including situations where the target moves outside the maximum possible range of 90 yards from the weapon. If the owner wishes to abort an attack, either to spare a hunted target or because he deems another target more immediately threatening, he may simply stretch out his hand as a reflexive action, and the disk breaks off its attack and returns at the end of the turn. When returning to its master, the weapon accelerates and can fly any distance. If the chakram becomes lodged as a result of a botch, it must be manually retrieved.

Additional powers of a gyroscopic chakram depend on the Magical Material used to make it. Alchemicals of the wrong caste double attunement as normal.

Orichalcum: Fitted with smooth golden razors, these weapons fly much faster than other models, adding 1 to the difficulty of the target's dodges or parries. In addition, the disks return instantly rather than at the end of the turn, allowing their owners to throw them again.

Moonsilver: As a reflexive action, an attuned owner may touch the disk and command that it change size, either folding to the diameter of a large coin for hidden carrying or returning to its original size for throwing. Furthermore, its protean scythe-like blades may stretch up to a foot long in flight, adding 1 to damage.

Jade: These gear-shaped blades follow the invisible paths of structural weakness in inanimate objects, adding 2 to damage against such objects. Furthermore, jade chakram are doggedly persistent at demolition tasks, striking inanimate targets again and again (even following successful attacks) until recalled or the target is completely sliced to rubble.

Starmetal: Attuned to the Design of the Great Maker, these delicate razors treat all botches on attack rolls as simple failures and add 1 to accuracy. They can miss, though rarely, but never strike an unintended target. Even if hostile magic redirects these weapons to a new quarry, they narrowly miss at the last possible moment and sail back to their owners' hands.

Soulsteel: These barbed sawblades shriek and moan in flight, hunting the Essence of animate prey. Until recalled, the weapons continue attacking such targets every turn unless they botch or successfully kill their quarry.

Adamant: Only rarely used by most Alchemicals because of their high attunement cost, these scalpel-sharp blades inflict piercing damage.

In addition to their use as ranged weapons, gyroscopic chakram may also be used in close-combat as saws. Used in this fashion, they receive the normal Magical Material bonuses for melee weapons. Adamant blades inflict piercing damage. Alchemicals have developed an entire Celestial-level martial art based on paired use of these weapons known as Thousand Wounds Gear Style. Practitioners are noted for their calculated efficiency at delivering killing or maiming slashes and for interposing their disks as shields to deflect attacks.

Warstrider-scaled versions of these weapons also exist, with a diameter of a yard and a commitment cost of 8 motes. The closest non-magical equivalent is a gear-shaped chakram with sharpened edges and similarly pentagonal finger holes that can be wielded with the statistics of a wind-fire wheel in close combat.

BEAM KLAVE (ARTIFACT ●●●●)

The signature melee weapons of the Alchemical Exalted, beam klaves appear as unassuming cylinders of reinforced alloys and Magical Materials tipped with a small crystal spike. Most are between 9 and 12 inches long. Once attuned for a commitment of 3 motes, they become light and nimble and may be wielded by their masters. This requires an additional commitment of 5 motes per scene, causing a blade of glowing Essence to extend from the jewel to an average length of three feet. Combining heat and pure force, these blades can set flammable objects alight with a touch and emit a flickering light comparable to a torch. The color of the blade depends on the Magical Material used in the artifact. Orichalcum blades are the golden-white of sunlight. Moonsilver carry the pale silver-blue of the moon. Jade have blades the color of the specific jade type used, though black jade yields a midnight blue. Starmetal are the most spectacular, crimson-hued at rest and smoothly arcing through the spectrum to deep violet as they slash. Soulsteel blades are the deep red-black of dried blood, with a contrail of shadows tracing their paths. Adamant blades are barely visible as pale-blue prisms of energy that refract and scatter all other light.

Active beam klaves have the same statistics and Magical Materials benefits as daiklaves (adamant models inflict piercing damage), with several additional powers. If one is used to parry a non-magical weapon, resolve the attack and parry normally in every respect. However, if the parry achieves any successes (even if these successes are not sufficient to completely deflect the attack), the parried weapon is destroyed by its contact with the heat and focused energy of the klave. Natural weapons such as fists, claws and feet may be severed from extras in this manner, but more important characters should only suffer two levels of lethal damage (that may be soaked normally) instead of automatic

amputation. If a non-magical weapon parries a beam klave and the defending character rolls at least one success, the weapon is similarly destroyed. Furthermore, all parry successes against it are halved (rounded down). If a beam klave successfully strikes a being wearing non-magical armor, the attack is resolved normally. However, the raw damage of the attack is permanently subtracted from the armor's bashing and lethal soak values (to a minimum of zero). If both soak values are reduced to zero, the armor is destroyed and provides no further protection. In the case of a partially successful parry, the beam klave usually destroys the blocking weapon and burns into the defender's armor with a single brutal slice. Against inanimate targets of roughly the user's size or smaller, soak is permanently reduced as with armor. If soak reaches zero, the object is appropriately charred and gashed, but not destroyed until it loses all health levels as normal. Against larger inanimate targets (such as

a wall), the soak reduction only applies to the small area attacked rather than the entire structure. Magical weapons suffer no damage from contact with a beam klave.

While standard beam klaves are the most common examples of energy blade technology used in Autochthonia, Alchemicals have also developed counterparts for all the basic bladed magical weapons. These cause the same effects on impact or when parrying non-magical weapons. Other forms of daiklave models are referred to by the same prefaces as beam klaves, so reaper beam klave, reaver, etc. Grimcleavers become beam axes. Dire lances convert to beam lances, and are considered javelins when they are not powered. Razor claw variants are known as beam talons and come in pairs. All of these weapons have an artifact rating •• higher than normal and an attunement cost of 3 motes. Activating them for a scene costs 5 motes (even for a grand beam klave). Warstrider-scaled beam klaves

THE SECRET OF SOULSTEEL

Savants in Creation and the Underworld alike would be very surprised to discover the existence of soulsteel in Autochthonia, let alone the frightening quantities of the black alloy found in the Realm of Brass and Shadow. Normally, the creation of soulsteel requires a gruesome fusion of mortals souls with ore extracted from the Labyrinth, producing an indestructible metal from spiritual matter tempered with the stuff of dead titans' nightmares. Without any connection to the Labyrinth, it would seem that Autochthon lacks certain necessary raw materials to produce the Magical Material. More importantly — and disturbingly — these materials, like the Underworld itself, did not even exist before the Primordial War and the dawn of the First Age. Yet, records and the memory of Autochthonian deities hold that the Primordial incorporated soulsteel into his inventions long before that time, and the substance contained in the Machine God is functionally indistinguishable from alloys produced in the Underworld.

The answer to this apparent paradox lies hidden in distant antiquity, remembered only by the Ministers themselves and preserved in the distorted mythology of the Mountain Folk. In the earliest days of the world, before the invention of mankind, a race of beings flourished and died upon some remote part of Creation. Once, they had a name and a language and a culture now all forgotten. The elegant spires of their cities stretched so high that the blazing fires of Ligier and the Unconquered Sun passed beside them. These people were cherished by the Great Maker in their time, an emaciated, feeble race utterly dependent upon its technology for survival and power. These beings' most notable features were their swollen triangular heads, their small, lipless mouths and the bulbous eyes that filled half their faces.

While the Dragon Kings flourished widely across the world, the Lintha ruled upon their distant continent and others lived whose survivors would crawl beneath the skin of the world as Darkbroods, Autochthon's people explored the limits of science and evolution. Such was their ambition that they sought to harness and bind the very power of their god with an artifact of unimaginable potency and did not see the folly in their plan until the great metal sphere of the Great Maker descended from the heavens and cast all their nation in his shadow. They could only stare in horror as a vast iris opened into a maw, from which a beam of Essence ravaged their cities into dust. By his power, they were unmade to the last, and the souls of all were drawn screaming into the belly of their god. Never before had souls been unmade in the Creation of Gaia and Cytherea, and the act mingled the millions of tortured souls with poisoned components of the Machine God. When the black ore cooled at last in his veins, it was a new substance that Autochthon found incalculably useful in his endless research.

Nothing of the lost race's technology or civilization has ever been discovered in the Ages of Man, though it is possible that some Darkbroods might secretly hoard wonders of the Nameless Ones. All that lingers of that doomed race are the alien faces and alien whispers that numbly stir in Autochthonian soulsteel. If members of the Soulsteel Caste are more prone to inhuman detachment than other Exalted, the Ministers say nothing, nor do they answer the prayers of perplexed mortals studying the fossilized spirits of the black ore or trying to decipher the babbled murmurs of their dead language. Such is the decree of Autochthon — and the price of hubris.

AUTOCHTHONIAN WEAPONS AND ARMOR

RANGED WEAPONS

Name	Accuracy	Damage	Rate	Range	Minimums	Resources/Artifact
Crossbow	+0	5L	1	125	Str 1	R••
Hand Crossbow	+0	3L	2	75	-	R•••
Siege Crossbow	+0	8L	1/10	250	-*	R•••
Assault Crossbow	+3	8L	1	250	Str 1	A••
Warstrider Crossbow	+0**	8L	1	250	Str 12	R••••
Warstrider Onslaught Crossbow	+2**	16L	1	450	Str 12	A•••
Gyroscopic Chakram	+1	+3L	3	30	Dex 3	A•••
Warstrider Gyroscopic Chakram	+1**	+7L	2	100	Str 12, Dex 3	A••••

* Emplacement weapon; too heavy and awkward to carry.

** Warstrider-sized weapons are too large for normal-sized characters to use effectively. See page 150 of *Savant and Sorcerer* for details.

HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS

Name	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Minimums	Artifact
Gyroscopic Chakram	+1	+1	+4L	+2	Str 1, Dex 3	•••
Warstrider Gyroscopic Chakram	+5	+1	+7L	+1	Str 12, Dex 3	••••
Beam Klave	+3	+2	+5L	+2	Str 2	••
Warstrider Beam Klave	+0	+1**	+12L	+1	Str 12	•••••

** Warstrider-scaled weapons are too large for normal-sized characters to use effectively. See page 150 of *Savant and Sorcerer* for details.

HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS (EXALTED POWER COMBAT)

Name	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate	Minimums	Artifact
Gyroscopic Chakram	+1	+1	+5L	+2	6	Str 1, Dex 3	•••
Warstrider Gyroscopic Chakram	+5	+1	+8L	+1	4	Str 12, Dex 3	••••
Beam Klave	+7	+3	+6L	+2	5	Str 2	••
Warstrider Beam Klave	+14	+1**	+12L	+1	4	Str 12	•••••

** Warstrider-scaled weapons are too large for normal-sized characters to use effectively. See page 150 of *Savant and Sorcerer* for details.

ARMOR

Name	Soak	Hardness	Mobility Penalty	Fatigue Value	Artifact
Fiber-Weave Bodysuit	5L/3B	-	-0	0	•
Armored Industrial Exoskeleton	12L/12B	6L/6B	-6	2	•••
Industrial Exoskeleton	6L/6B	-	-3	1	•••

also exist as Artifact •••••, requiring an attunement of 4 motes, plus the normal commitment cost for such a weapon in order to activate the energy blade for a scene.

TRANSPORTATION

Within the cities of Autochthonia, most travel is accomplished on foot. The only steeds in the Realm of Brass and Shadow are automatons or lesser machine gods, and most of these rare wonders serve as the requisitioned familiars of the Alchemical Exalted. However, the technologically advanced society of the Machine God has developed other, more exotic conveyances for personal or mass transit.

PNEUMATIC TRAMS

These tube-shaped subway trains provide the most common form of Autochthonian mass transit, propelled through enormous veins by a combination of suction ahead and pressure behind. Vertical arrangements of these trams serve as elevators, linking the stacked tiers of each city while simultaneously controlling access to higher-security facilities and impeding invaders in the unlikely event of siege. Lateral trams provide intracity transport within tiers, especially in larger metropoli where walking can prove inefficient. Substantially larger cargo trams

connect cities and nations in webs of arterial highways, accelerated to astonishing speed by paramagnetic conduits rather than mere suction through the airless tunnels. These trains usually lack any form of life-support as a precaution against dissident stowaways, restricting their use to the unbreathing Alchemicals. The fastest intracity trams can travel at a top speed of 50 miles per hour but seldom reach such velocity except in the longest tracks. Cargo trams may reach 200 miles per hour once they move into airtight highway tubes and engage their drives. Fixed-path trams require no particular skill or rolls to operate, though anyone unfamiliar with the controls and unable to read the basic instructions written in Autochthonic pictograms would need a successful Intelligence + Lore roll (difficulty 2) to figure out the mechanisms. Arterial highways often have many branching paths and require actual piloting in order to prevent spectacularly disastrous crashes. These vehicles are handled using the Sail Ability.

MECHANICAL RICKSHAWS, SKIMMERCRAFT AND AERIAL SKIFFS

High-status or infirm citizens do not need to walk long distances within cities, but may instead make use of Essence-driven clockwork vehicles. Most of these mechanical rickshaws are Artifact •• and designed to accommodate two adult-sized passengers strapped onto a wheeled bench. Essence-gathering sails of woven alloys and orichalcum wiring rise from the rear of the bench in a half dome canopy, leaving the front exposed for entry and visibility. A slender protrusion extends a yard behind, terminating in a bulbous engine assembly with a third wheel that provides propulsion. The rickshaws click and buzz like a large swarm of angry hornets when in operation, and many carry forward-mounted light spheres (see p. 184) for travel through darkened streets.

Mechanical rickshaws are driven using control levers mounted in the side of the bench. Any Autochthonian native with dots in the Ride Ability may be assumed to know how to operate such a device, but anyone else must first figure out the controls with careful experimentation and a successful Intelligence + Lore roll (difficulty 3). Smooth travel without obstacles or fancy maneuvers generally requires a single successful Wits + Ride roll (difficulty 1) be made at the beginning of the journey in order to reach the destination safely. During each turn of combat or when making maneuvers, new rolls must be made as standard actions. The difficulty ranges from 1-5 as assigned by the Storyteller, based on the difficulty of the maneuver or the overall obstructions presented by the terrain. Rickshaws can travel at a maximum speed of 30 miles per hour or 42 yards per turn, but they require generally level ground upon which to operate because of their wheels.

These vehicles have 10 health levels and a hardened soak of 6L/10B, ignoring all attacks whose raw damage is

less than their soak and considering aggravated damage as lethal. Of this, 1L/3B is considered armor for effects that differentiate (such as piercing attacks). The rickshaws are *not* considered inanimate objects for the purposes of Charms or other effects, and damage against them must be rolled rather than automatically applied. They give 25 percent cover to passengers from the front and 50 percent cover from all other directions. For every 10 hours of operation, they suffer one level of unsoakable bashing damage from internal wear. Repairing a level of lethal damage requires access to appropriate materials (costing Resources ••) and three hours of work from a sufficiently competent technician with Lore ••, Occult •• and Craft (Clockwork or some other pertinent Craft focus) •••. Bashing damage is less expensive and labor intensive to fix, requiring an hour of work and materials costing Resources •. Technicians of lesser competence can attempt repairs with an Intelligence + Craft roll (difficulty 1 + the total number of dots by which the character fails to meet any of the Ability requirements), but failure inflicts another unsoakable level of bashing damage is inflicted on the vehicle. A botch changes this damage to lethal. Once a rickshaw loses a third of its health levels (rounded up), it loses a quarter of its maximum speed, and all driving rolls are made at a one-die penalty. Once it has lost half of its health (rounded up), its maximum speed drops to half normal, and handling rolls are at -2. Once it has lost three-quarters of its health (rounded up), it drops to one quarter maximum speed, and driving is almost impossible (-4 penalty). Once it loses its last level due to bashing, it loses all power and rapidly slows to a stop (handling rolls at -4 are generally necessary to avoid crashing). If the vehicle loses all levels due to lethal damage, it either crashes, or its motor explodes in a fiery blast (a minimum of 10L damage inflicted to the hapless occupants in either case). Rickshaws require a two-dot Essence capacitor (see p. 183) set in their engines in order to move at all.

A less common rickshaw model (also Artifact ••) dispenses with wheels and replaces the narrow engine strut with a substantially larger drive bulb positioned flush against the rear of the bench. Three spindly legs emerge from each side of the bulb, allowing the vehicle to skitter like an insect. This allows it to traverse rougher terrain and even shallow liquids (up to a yard deep) at the same speed of the wheeled model. However, the greater complexity of the insectile locomotion reduces the wear damage interval from 10 hours of use to 8, forcing more frequent repairs. Otherwise, this model uses all the same rules as the standard rickshaw.

Even less common and more valuable are Autochthonian skimmercraft (Artifact •••), which appear as ovoid boats loosely resembling the hollowed carapace of a metal beetle. From stem to stern, they are

three yards long. Along the underside, four spindly landing struts on each side retract against the hull like ribs during operation. Up to three human-sized passengers can fit comfortably, with one serving as pilot. Alternately, two Essence 4-5 Alchemicals or mortals in heavy armor can use the craft. Skimmercraft provide total cover to passengers from attackers directly below, 25 percent from above and 50 percent on all sides. When activated, the vehicles rise to a maximum altitude of two yards above any predominantly horizontal solid or liquid surface and may hover or travel up to 60 miles per hour (84 yards per turn) using their paramagnetic drives. While powered, these engines emit a pulsing basso rumble and create a field of heavy visual distortion like heat waves directly beneath the vehicle. Skimmercraft are capable of maneuvers that seem to defy inertia, adding one die to all handling rolls. If they are placed in a situation where they are higher above the ground than their maximum altitude (such as from driving off a cliff), the vehicles softly descend at the rate of one yard per turn until they “land” two yards high. At maximum altitude, passengers are considered to be in a howdah for the purposes of attacking them. Unlike rickshaws, skimmercraft are slightly more durable, with 6L/12B soak (1L/5B armored) and 12 health levels. They also do not begin accruing damage from wear until 50 hours of

use from their last maintenance, after which they suffer a level of bashing damage and one additional level for every five hours of use following. Given their superior function and performance, they require a three-dot Essence capacitor set in their engines to operate. Otherwise, skimmercraft use the same rules as rickshaws.

The most powerful variant of the clockwork vehicle technology is the aerial skiff (Artifact ●●●●). Built along the same general lines as the skimmercraft, these vehicles are almost twice as long while only slightly wider, giving them a more delicate appearance belying their true durability (10L/15B soak, 3L/5B counts as armor, 15 health levels). Four “wings” like those of a dragonfly extend three yards from a drive bulb in the front of the craft. These devices do not actually provide lift, but instead, compensate for the skyship’s comparatively weak engine by modulating and refracting its paramagnetic field. The vehicles can carry up to five Essence 4-5 Alchemicals or mortals in heavy armor or eight mortal passengers comfortably. Up to 12 mortals can cram in if they are exceedingly friendly. Aerial skiffs can hover and may actually fly up to 80 miles per hour (112 yards per turn) without altitude restrictions. They only receive a 30-hour grace period of use after each maintenance before they begin accruing damage every five hours of flight. Repairing one of these magnificent flying craft requires more knowledge than



lesser vehicles: Lore ●●●, Occult ●●● and an appropriate Craft at ●●●●●. They also need a four-dot Essence capacitor in order to operate. Otherwise, these machines use the same rules as skimmercraft.

An exotic variant of the aerial skiff is the oil diver (Artifact ●●●●), a fully covered and sealed vessel protected against deep-sea pressure. These craft only hold enough air for a mortal to breath for an hour, with each additional passenger dividing this period accordingly. Alchemicals obviously have no such problems. The submarines are neutrally buoyant by default and can adjust their buoyancy with diverted sprays from their main engines. They use two Essence-driven impeller jets mounted on each side for propulsion, traveling up to 40 miles per hour (56 yards per turn) through liquids. Each has a single airlock hatch mounted dorsally that can accommodate a single person at a time. In the opaque ocean of the Elemental Pole of Oil, sight is completely useless, so crystal displays show an insubstantial map of the environment shaped out of solid light. This map is generated by interpretations of regular echolocation pulses (out to half a mile ahead or a quarter mile in all other directions). Running silent without the pulses drops the distance to 50 yards in all directions. Upkeep of the craft may be conducted using interior access panels, although external damage must be tended by swimming out and applying the necessary repairs. In all other ways, these submersibles duplicate the function of aerial skiffs.

Combat-oriented versions of the skimmercraft and aerial skiff both exist, with an Artifact rating and

Essence capacitor requirement increased by one. These vehicles add +2L/+2B armored soak, as well as one additional feature depending on the intended function of the design:

Reconnaissance units incorporate a cloaking device that mutes the noise of the engine and duplicates the effects of the Dynamic Cloaking Module Charm (see p. 123) when active, concealing the vehicle and its occupants. Every hour that the cloaking device remains active counts as an hour of use, so every hour spent flying or hovering with the camouflage on counts as two hours of operation.

Transport models are substantially larger, appearing as enormous swollen trilobites nine yards long. They add an extra +2L/+2B natural soak on top of the armor for being a combat model, an extra five health levels and provide full cover to all occupants. However, they only move at half the normal speed for their type and suffer a one-die penalty to handling for their ungainly construction (using the Sail Ability rather than Ride). Their rear-mounted cargo bays can hold 15 Essence 4-5 Alchemicals or heavily armored mortals, two warstriders or Essence 6-7 Alchemicals curled into the fetal position, 20 mortals in reasonable comfort or 30 mortals in unpleasantly cramped conditions. This is in addition to the usual passenger allotment for the craft type. The cargo bay can open to the rear like the petals of an articulated metal flower, either dropping a single access ramp or opening wide to release larger objects such as war machines.

EXALTED POWER COMBAT STATISTICS

Name	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate
Alpha Custodian Slash	12	9	6L	9	3
Arc Tender Shock	9	13	5L	13	5
Cogwheel Dragon Slash	8	8	10L	8	3
Design Weaver Bite	7	7	5L	7	3
Destroyer Claw	11	13	8L	13	3
Fix Beetle Claw	11	6	4L	4	4
Gezlak Bash	6	5	6L	5	2
Gremlin Slash	12	9	6L	9	3
Lapidary Punch	6	8	5L	9	5
Slacstag Batting Paw	18	16	15A	16	4



EW

The Alchemicals strode the palace grounds, the marble cracking beneath their wrathful tread, their crossbows snapping as they dispatched diehards. It was an ugly, mechanical crack. The heavy masonry of the fortress smothered the cries of the dying.

In his throne room, the Perfect of Paragon tried to control his trembling and his shallow sweat. This was an unexpected development—he had heard of the Autochthonians, known they were a terrible threat, but now, they were here. He looked up at the Satrap, who smiled grimly.

“It is at times of ultimate extremity like this that the Realm must remind its subject princes that they are ultimately responsible for their provinces,” he said in Old Realm. It was a favored saying of the Empress that had worked its way into the professional lingo of the Thousand Scales as the traditional admonishment when a satrap or other imperial official abandoned a potentate to his death. The Perfect knew that. He had been a student of the Empress as long as there had been an Empress to study. It was something he had always assumed he would hear eventually. He opened his mouth to observe that fact and noticed that the Dragon-Blooded was gone. Perhaps he had leapt away during an eyeblink. He certainly hadn’t dematerialized or attempted to evade the Perfect’s notice.

The black locust-men had come snorting across the desert on chariots without horses and shot down his desert skirmishers with their pneumatic bows. In their wake trailed a bare and poisoned land, for like army ants, they cleared away all life, all growing things, and left only sparse rock and polluted soil. They had laid waste to other places. Now, they had come here. Oh, well. At least his people were prepared to resist as best they were able. Though many would have found it ironic, the Perfect was proud they would not go easily into chains.

And rushing air where the Princes of the Earth once stood, reflected the Perfect sourly. Was this what he had made all those tributes payments for over seven centuries, for them to deacon out the pithy sentiments approved by the Empress for shafting allies without even sacrificing a legion?

“Fatima, prepare yourself for visitors. I believe this may be our last stand we are about to make.”

The Perfect’s Solar servant nodded, “Yes, my prince.”

The throne room door smashed from its hinges and landed on the parquet floor with a tremendous crash. The huge stiff-armed figure rolled across the door’s the splintered remains, followed by a half-dozen smaller gray-skinned machine men, most sparkling with aura discharges and all grasping powerful crossbows or rude, square-bladed daiklaves. Behind them came assault troops in heavy black armor.

Yet, looking at them, they were... human. The Paragon had been prepared for some demonic defiler, some horrible nemesis. These things had humans faces, human eyes, and their troops were merely men in armor. This was just another army.

The Perfect threw his staff of office at the head of *Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus* as the Solar grabbed him in her arms and whisked him away. Perhaps not the most well-considered move, but it wasn’t a moment that promoted good judgment.

The Alchemical snatched the scepter. He had heard much of it, and as expected, it looked like some sort of system-command key. Savages. He used the tip of his daiklave to split it into a few pieces.

The Paragon realized that this was the moment where he should throw himself bodily at the Alchemical and force them to kill him as they countered his presumably supernatural attack. Yet, he didn’t leap screaming onto the blade of the nearest Exalt or attempt to wrest the crossbow from the hands of one of the assault troops.

The fact was the Perfect wasn’t a particularly brave man. He was now also a man without the powerful supernatural artifact that had sustained his life and maintained his despotism for long centuries. He looked around for Fatima to tell her that she should make for the hills, but she was long gone, in what he was beginning to suspect was the natural way of Exalted.

The former Perfect of Paragon raised his hands in what he hoped was the universal gesture of surrender. In Old Realm, he said, “Say, don’t kill me yet. Maybe we could reach an accommodation. I could help you run things. I know all about the Dragon-Blooded, and I’ve governed this city for centuries.”

The Autochthonians looked at him and at each other, and the assault troops shambled forward and slapped him in irons. The Perfect nodded solemnly. If being a trained monkey was the last option open for him, then a trained monkey he would be. Better to be a trained monkey for the rest of your life than a hero for an Exalt’s heartbeat and then dead, reflected the humbled dictator.



CHAPTER FIVE THE LOCUST WAR

The great Autochthonian invasion begins in a forgotten corner of Creation, where none can hear the creeping tumult of doom. Emerging from the murky jungle bloated with victory, the adversary finds the world snared in an Age of Sorrows, mansions of opportunity to their eyes, ripe for exploitation. These masters of steam and pistons and gears spread out over the South like a plague, transforming the landscape into a grotesque mirror of their own steel and smoke clockwork empires. Unprepared and dumfounded by the invaders, Southern cities fall one by one, their riches seized, their resources depleted and their heroes left

for vermin. Finally, after disparaging the pleas of now-conquered Southern nations, the rest of the world can see the fires of the adversary approaching. Is it too late? Is there hope that the servants of the Machine God can be stopped?

So begins the Locust War, perhaps the last great war of the Age of Sorrows. When the conflict begins in the South, it is known as the Locust Crusade, so named for the barren landscape left behind by the encroaching invaders, city and countryside alike left bereft of life and resources.

This scenario extends and elaborates on Chapter Four of *Time of Tumult* (pp. 169-175), featuring new plot

points, characters and challenges in conjunction with the previously published material. Storytellers unfamiliar with that scenario need not be troubled. This section contains all of the pertinent raw data from **Time of Tumult** and more.

This scenario uses a wide lens, with little space devoted to flora, fauna or other incidental details unrelated to the plot. The focus here is on great conflicts, significant events and the machinations of powerful individuals and nations that the players' characters have the opportunity to influence, alter or prevent altogether.

Significant changes to the status quo result from the Locust War, regardless of where the action leads or who comes out on top. In the course of the scenario, Gem is destroyed, the Lap is taken and turned into a nightmare of industry and slavery and the Perfect of Paragon becomes a vassal of Autochthon. In time, the Realm itself comes under attack and must face the threat of its own destruction. Other parties seek to capitalize on the Autochthonian threat and strike in the confusion. A Deathlord's army marches across the South as his brother Deathlords and their Abyssals scramble for a way to stop him. Meanwhile, a desperate, nihilistic god releases a primordial horror on the world that endangers the whole of Creation, reshaping natural and political landscapes and bringing certain doom to an entire region. The final acts are left unwritten, though some suggestions for future adventures can be found at the end of the scenario.

While the players' characters are assumed to be the central focus of any **Exalted** series, the world is at work around them. The following acts are presented such that characters may enter the scenario at any act, and the events of each act occur as written unless characters intervene. Storytellers should emphasize that Creation is changing in very dangerous and disturbing ways that threaten all existence. Unless someone with the power and will to do something about it acts — and soon — the world will face certain disaster. It may be that the Locust War can be stopped before it begins, assuming the characters are in the Silent Crescent around the time the Autochthonians arrive and take appropriate actions. Alternatively, the characters may enter into the fray very late, as the Autochthonians clash with the armies of the Realm or the minion of the gods themselves.

CHARACTER REQUIREMENTS

"The Locust War" details a war that spans Creation and shakes the foundations of reality. Military campaigns blow across the South and West, and the march of armies is felt even on the Blessed Isle. Obviously, a certain class of adventures spring from the reactions of characters who are not directly involved in the conflict, but the assumption of this material is that the characters will participate in the military campaigns described in the text.

To participate in this story, characters should have access to the following abilities or resources:

- Access to fast travel. Characters will be aided immensely by the ability to travel quickly (in the 100 miles per hour area) to better traverse the vast distances between the fronts in the war. This is a major benefit for generals attempting to run armies in the field while still politicking in the capital and for characters who find themselves on the losing side of a major military engagement and must prudently escape disaster.

- Instant long-range communication abilities. Information is the lifeblood of strategy and campaigning. Characters really must be able to converse with recipients all across Creation in at least the limited method allowed by Infallible Messenger to have any chance of making a meaningful contribution to the war effort.

- Strong wilderness survival skills. Depending on their theatre of action, characters should have the ability to live in wastelands or on the open sea. They don't absolutely need it, but if they all die of thirst early on during a forced march, there won't be much a story left to tell.

- Optimization for war. This scenario is one involving massive battles, as the premier military forces of two worlds class in fierce combat, with Creation as the arena. There are battles with hundreds or even thousands of Exalted present. Characters in these scenarios who have any chance to get through them as combatants must be war-focused characters who are skilled at mass combat, not as single-opponent duelists. Powerful panoplies of battle-wonders are also important to characters playing through the Locust War.

- Strong unit leadership skills: An ability to serve as an effective leader, duelist, sorcerer or relay (see the Mail and Steel rules in the **Exalted Player's Guide** for details of these unit-leadership positions) is helpful. Characters might also be logisticians, doctors and chaplains, scouts, engineers or technicians, but some sort of ability to fit into and contribute to an army on the march will prove extremely useful.

- A folder of backup characters. The telling of the story should include one or more backup arcs and not focus entirely on one group of characters unless the Storyteller has a very precise outcome for certain events in mind. This story involves apocalyptic events, and part of what characterizes war is its capricious and arbitrary character. If characters who were thought to be sure heroes aren't killed off early and if unexpected heroes don't rise from the ranks, it won't really be like a war story, it will be a heroic escapade. Also, some tremendous firepower is thrown around at various points — a thousand-forged dragon appears at one point and is far from the most devastating opponent. Dramatic purpose aside, eventually, someone will miss a roll, and her character will die, and Storytellers should be prepared for this reality.

CHARACTER TYPES

This scenario eschews most timelines and individual plot hooks. Many of the outlined developments are of

variable length. Others last mere minutes but have consequences lasting years. In most cases, hooks are either redundant or obvious. That said, the following guidelines are provided to aid Storytellers in incorporating all of their players' characters in personal, dramatic ways.

Putting together a believable scenario that involves more than one Exalted type can be a frustrating task for Storytellers. Without some amount of dramatic design bringing opposed Exalts together, their fellowship may seem unlikely or forced. This scenario does not suffer from this difficulty. The world is on the cusp, and peoples and nations must ally for their survival. A character's origin and temperament matter little.

Autochthonians: This scenario is written so that characters may be on any side of the conflict, including that of the aggressors. Alchemical Exalted characters could act as ambassadors (and spies) to the Realm, assume command of Autochthonian armies, perform secret strikes against troublesome spirits or even side with Creation, betraying god and home.

Solars: As time moves forward and the Autochthonians claim more and more of the South as their own, the Solar Exalted find themselves less hunted and more sought out as guardians. The experience of playing a Solar character in this scenario is different than in other published **Exalted** scenarios. Now, history finally favors them again, and they are given the chance to be Creation's champions once more. Solar characters in this scenario should experience a strong draw toward the South, if not there already, and toward Red Alsan upon their arrival in the South.

Lunars: The Autochthonian invaders are no friends to the world. While this is perhaps enough to draw anyone's outrage, the Lunar Exalted are more offended by the cavalier destruction of the land and sea than any of their peers. While most see no great incentive in helping the civilized nations of Creation, the Lunar Exalted, or at least the No Moons of the Silver Pact, conclude almost immediately that their plans and those of the Autochthonians are not compatible. Some Lunars will avoid getting involved in the conflict until their homes are invaded, but many others hear the Pact's battle call and crowd into the fray. While they are disorganized, they are still mighty, and Lunar champions and raiders appear all through the South, operating on their own or marching with the armies of Creation's more organized defenders as scouts, duelists and combat sorcerers.

Abyssals: Some of the Deathlords take a particular interest in both the Autochthonians' soulgems and in the dangers and opportunities an Autochthonian occupation represents. The First and Forsaken Lion strikes out with his own twisted scheme, hoping to use the Autochthonians to further his ambitions in the Underworld, while three other Deathlords convene a new Stygian congress both to stymie the Forsaken Lion's efforts and to expand their own power. These events are significant because, for the first time, vast

armies of the dead led by the Deathlords themselves march beyond the shadowlands. The Deathlords marshal their armies against the Autochthonians, primarily to acquire soulgems and to prevent the invaders from settling in Creation (the last thing the Deathlords want is millions of new people in Creation). Opportunities for the Deathlords' involvement are presented in practically every act.

Sidereals: The Sidereal Exalted look upon the Autochthonian menace with bewildered eyes. Nothing in the stars predicts their coming, and as time goes on, the Sidereals' projections prove less and less accurate. Sidereals become involved in the Locust War out of curiosity first, then out of fear, for the gods themselves have seen Autochthon's sudden movements and turned away in fear, shutting the Celestial gates and locking the portals to Creation. Only Creation's gods remain to fight, and as the Sidereal Exalted well know, they will not last long against a force as mighty as the Autochthonians. In some places, the few Sidereal Exalts left in the world have taken command of terrestrial gods in an effort to unify Creation's defenses against the invaders. Sidereal detectives, generals, spies and diplomats all make good Sidereal character choices.

Dragon-Blooded: As the Autochthonian army marches toward the coast and the Realm's satrapies, defenders plead for aid from the Scarlet Empire, which at first does not believe the threat and turns away from the South, focusing its attention on domestic issues. By the time the world at large realizes that much of the Southwest has been conquered, it is too late to do anything about it. Any Dragon-Blooded character with a connection to the South can be easily accommodated in the scenario, as ample motivation exists — the destruction of cities and villages, the murder of citizens and the enslavement of all survivors, loss of tax revenues and trade deals.

The Realm has a tangible stake in understanding and eliminating the Autochthonian crusaders. Territorial holdings, occupying soldiers and diplomats and a fortune in revenues lie in the balance, not to mention that the enemy has given no indication that it will be satisfied with conquering the South. Dragon-Blooded with an interest in the welfare, politics or economics of the region, either working on behalf of their families or some faction of the Realm, will play a significant role in the series as it continues. Dragon-Blooded soldiers, explorers, sailors, spies and diplomats would all be appropriate. Add to this the Dynastic habit of war-tourism and the outrage many devoutly Immaculate Dragon-Blooded feel at the gross mistreatment of the land and its population by the Alchemicals. Between strategic and religious outrage, it is likely that a majority of the Scarlet Dynasty's membership will fight in the South officially or as irregular volunteers or zealots.

Mortals: Southwestern nations are fractious and have not come together to fight a common enemy since the Great Contagion. When the Locust War begins, the Southwest's military response is disorganized and futile. But for a few

holdout locations defended by powerful spirits or Exalts, the Autochthonians bring ruin to all resisters. Characters may be exiles, refugees, insane defenders of their homelands or soldiers in the armies that come to the South with no connection to the land or its people.

AUTOCHTHONIANS AT WAR

The Autochthonian army fights on foreign shores, in unfamiliar terrain, with the only portal home far away. Life during wartime is not pleasant, but it is a condition most accept for the good of Autochthon. Disease from malnutrition and unsanitary conditions — especially in the heat of the desert — claims more lives than actual combat.

Fighting wars against large armies on such a vast terrain is a new concept for the invaders, who hail from a place where wars are fought in close quarters. The Autochthonians encounter their first combatants in the jungle, where the guerilla-style tactics of the native warriors resemble those of the invaders to a certain degree. The Autochthonians' military sophistication and technological advantages over the relatively primitive enemies there ensure easy victories with few casualties. The invaders must reevaluate, and to a large degree reinvent, their war conventions as they move beyond the jungle and suffer catastrophic losses against hordes of enemies.

The Autochthonians' first new war strategies are impractical and awkward. They rely on severely overmatching their enemies' numbers, often outnumbering their enemies five- and six-fold. Suffering disproportionate losses to those of their enemies, a result that comes from the Autochthonians' inexperience in actual battlefield tactics, they slowly develop attack strategies that take advantage of their technological superiority. As more Alchemical Exalted come to aid the invaders' army, their strategies become sophisticated, combining new high-power, long-range tactics with elements of close-quarter battle tactics reimagined and applied to epic-scale conflicts.

Before the Autochthonians come to understand agriculture, maintaining a constant food supply, especially after stripping valuable lands during sieges, proves nearly impossible. After consuming a conquered land's resources and eking what little they can from the land and livestock, the armies must move on to secure food for their soldiers, leaving a garrison behind to manage the occupied territory and force the natives to provide for them. The Autochthonians raze desert cities that have no domestic source of food production apart from livestock and lead their citizens off in chains.

The Autochthonians use poisonous waste, in the form of gaseous blacktog, early in the war once its effects on human populations become evident. After many disastrous mishaps result in blighted, useless farmland and poisoned water sources, military leaders limit its use to battlefields remote from civilized regions.

SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY

As the war continues with no end in sight, Autochthonian soldiers collect war trophies and take foreign lovers. Either for the sake of fashion or through true sympathy, sitting garrisons begin wearing native clothing and sharing in native customs. Such practices are frowned upon by the Autochthonian elite, especially in Yugash, but little can be done to stop them. As time goes on, some Autochthonians take spouses from conquered villages.

Subjects begin to emulate their conquerors as mere occupation becomes the status quo. The Autochthonians queer methods of speech, their singular subjects of learning and their bizarre fashions all find expression in cities and other settlements where the Autochthonian occupation has lasted more than two years. After four years, men and women of Creation learn to operate complex Autochthonian machines and, in some cases, receive training in Autochthonian engineering. Occupied settlements themselves take on a loose approximation of the Autochthonian's home soon after the population has been quelled, with large industries put in place, factories built and large bureaucracies put in place to manage everything.

Many Autochthonian regimes enact forced conscription early on in their rule but find little success for years. As subjects grow more tolerant of living under Autochthonian rule, however, more and more native Southerners comprise the occupying armies. Within a few years of the invasion, it is common practice in most cities to have hundreds of squaddrons comprised entirely of native troops.

Less obvious is the effect of the occupation on cities back in Yugash. Small cities begin to feature trinket shops and delicatessens where Autochthonians bid on the latest shipments of curiosities and delicacies brought from Creation. Autochthonian metropoli boast such markets as well as fashions, libraries, temples, theater troupes, museums and even gods of Creation.

ELEMENTAL ESSENCE

Many First Age savants sought to understand and manipulate nature through close study of and experimentation on elementals, believing that finer secrets than even sorcery could be found in the minutia of Creation's fabrics. Cults of biodynamics arose; these attempted the combination of elementally aspected Essences to form artificial spirits called ersatzoi. Wiser savants knew that the ersatzoi cultist were fools, that the Essences they sought to unite were, by nature, insoluble with one another. The placement of the Elemental Poles in Creation was evidence enough for most scholars of the Age that unaligned elemental Essences naturally repelled each other. Despite prevailing wisdom, however, several ersatzoi cults managed to survive throughout the First Age. Every so often, cries of success would emerge from their hovels, resulting in

a host of pseudoscientific myths and believers enough to sustain the cult through the next generation.

Autochthonian savants discover early in the invasion that elementally aspected Essence can be extracted from elemental spirits and put to practical use, a process known and used in Autochthonia on the types of elementals existing there. Prohibited in most Autochthonian nations (including Yugash), and taboo in all, this process, called teratogenesis, is officially approved by the Tripartite for the purpose of generating power for the mission in Creation.

These researchers identify the five types of aspected Terrestrial Essence as mellifluous (water), aethera (air), phlogista (fire), loess (earth) and verda (wood). These Essences power specially constructed engines of various sizes and shapes for use in newly invented vehicles and weapons. One type of machine, called a substance convincer engine, purifies elementally aspected Essence for use by Alchemical Exalted, who can have portable versions of the machines installed on their persons as if they were Alchemical Charms. Even the smallest of these engines discharge a variety of blacktog as a by-product.

Autochthonian researchers have had limited success in mixing elemental Essences of different aspects, with most such attempts resulting in terrible explosions of elemental turbulence. Some seek to develop military applications from these experiments, but thus far, the effects are too unpredictable to be of any use. These savants have greater success in fusing the elementally aspected Essences with an aligned elemental Essence of Autochthon, resulting in teratogeni — sometimes wondrous, sometimes revolting biodynamic monstrosities.

The study of teratogenesis, once begun, proceeds slowly. In the first year of research, only a few useful specimens can be produced, with most lines of inquiry ending with either a dead (and toxic) aggregate of fibrous tissue and waste or the creation of uncontrollable, insensate beasts that must be destroyed. In the second year, savants in the newly conquered Paragon enjoy the best results, formulating three strains of teratogeni. Only in the fifth year of the invasion can Autochthonian savants produce certain creatures on a reliable basis without mishap.

While the ethical implications of using spirits as fuel — and, worse, as weapons — are not lost on many Autochthonians on the home front, once the practice is put in place, nothing short of physically shutting down the secret spirit ghettos and removing or killing their provosts will stop their continuance. The Tripartite disavows and officially criminalizes teratogenesis, but it has no real interest in stopping the practice, especially later in the Locust War, when Autochthonian forces depend on it.

BLACKTOG

Blacktog is a form of industrial waste generated when the processes of Autochthonian industry operate with resources from Creation, particularly when the Essence of elemental beings is used. This substance is very dangerous to all living things in Creation, especially elementals.

Autochthonian industrial methods work cleanly and efficiently in Autochthon partly because the workers use Autochthon's built-in waste-disposal systems. In Creation, where Autochthonians have no waste-management procedures, factory personnel favor the simplest solutions for waste disposal. Offal tubes carry blacktog-rich industrial runoff to rivers, swamps and other bodies of water, when these exist in the vicinity. Other discharge points include underground shafts, artificial waste-bogs and easily transportable barrels, which Yugash's military commanders use.

Although the two are very similar, the waste produced in Autochthonia is not blacktog and does not affect elementals adversely. Blacktog is produced in Creation because Autochthonian technology and the scientific principles behind it are foreign to Creation, the very makeup of which has become supremely disordered and chaotic in the wake of Autochthon's departure eons hence. When Autochthonians manipulate the fabric of Creation in factories, with machines or with protocols, blacktog *always* results, though only the constant operation of factories results in any significant quantity.

The average Autochthonian factory in Creation generates approximately 1,000 gallons of blacktog per day of operation. Its effects on living things are as follows:

If one 20-gallon barrel is poured into a body of water, blacktog immediately begins to consume all life within. Small creatures such as fish, shellfish and small waterborne mammals that cannot leave the body of water within one mile of the spill point in an ocean or lake, or three miles downstream from the spill point in a creek or river, die within one day.

Larger animals, non-elemental spirits and humans ingesting or otherwise poisoned with blacktog must resist difficulty 3 poison (Success 3L, Failure 8L, Duration/Penalty One Day/-5).

Elementals cannot bear even the smell of blacktog. Any elemental coming into contact with it must resist difficulty 4 poison (as above), treating all damage as aggravated. (Note: Elemental dragons are not so affected.)

WAR MACHINES AND NEW INVENTIONS

Warfare in Creation brings a new creative fervor to the lives of Autochthonian thinkers and inventors. Machines of all sorts, some not particularly useful for war, some of devastating importance in the battlefield, begin rolling off the assembly lines.

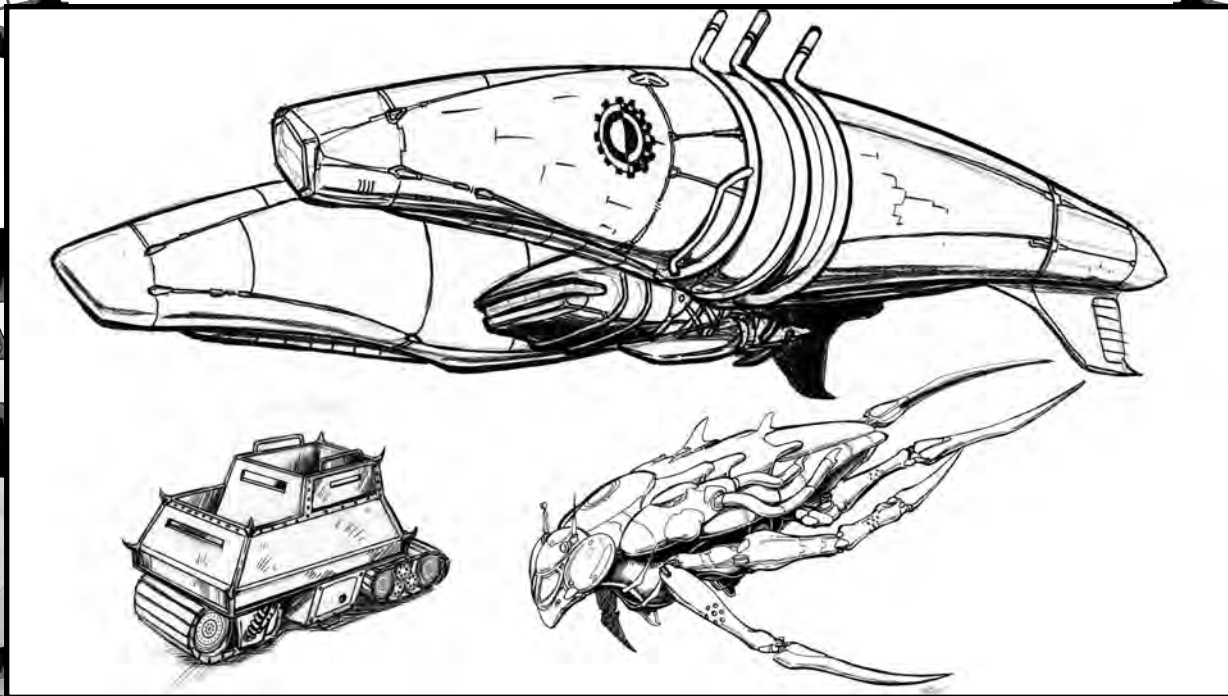
Amphibious water carriages are invented for the skirmishes with the tribes and pirates of the Violet Coast, though their use extends to other coastal battlefields as well, especially if the Autochthonians are able to attack the Realm. This craft is powered by steam and both loess and mellifluous Essence stored in exterior reservoirs. Although it can easily travel along the surface of the earth on its six insectoid legs that double as mechanized oars, the craft is most commonly used to travel underwater, which it can do at depths of up to 50 feet with a crew of 12. This vehicle is used primarily for sneak-attack missions under the cover of night, as its well-nigh silent engine and black finish render the craft nearly undetectable in the dark. Untrained pilots suffer a two-die penalty to dice pools involving Sail (on water) or Ride (on land) when trying to control these vehicles.

Clockwork mini-rigs are small, two-person vehicles that travel over the land on three rotating treads. A mini-rig's engine, though it is powered in part by loess, employs a variety of springs and cranks to maintain its desired speed (for loess, though powerful, does not generate much speed). A fully ratcheted clockwork mini-rig can run for 30 minutes at high speeds before its springs require retightening with special sprocket wrenches (which can be done from the rear of the vehicle in 20 minutes). This vehicle measures merely

six feet from front to rear and four feet high. Seated at the rear, and slightly more elevated than the pilot, the rider often controls the mounted pneumatic repeating crossbows with which the mini-rig is outfitted. The pilot controls the mini-rig with a variety of levers that determine direction and velocity. This vehicle is valued for its quickness on the battlefield. Though it is difficult to maneuver and has been known to roll over if not piloted carefully, the mini-rig is widely used in skirmishes throughout the Southern deserts. Untrained pilots suffer a two-die penalty to dice pools involving Ride when trying to control these vehicles.

Vitreous skyfreighters are constructed of reinforced lightweight volcanic glass and powered by aethera pumped up to the craft through woven hoses from heavy engines on the ground. Because these craft cannot travel farther than the length of their supply hoses (usually 750 to 1,000 feet), the Autochthonians use them primarily as portable lookout points and spycraft, though, at times, they have been used to drop dangerous objects and substances behind enemy lines. Generals and other military leaders also use skyfreighters to keep watch over battles as they happen from a high vantage point. In such instances, message tubes are also installed to allow two-way contact between the ships and the ground. The Autochthonians put this invention into use during the various Southern desert campaigns.

Substance convincer engines distill impure Essence, removing all incidental aspects (such as elemental) and even the tainted Essence of the Underworld, resulting in a clean energy source. Factories and other industrial complexes have large versions of these machines capable of converting whole creatures into purified Essence and other basic materials such as water, oil and waste



matter. A smaller version functions only upon elemental Essence and is primarily used by Alchemical Exalted to refuel themselves. Installed on an Alchemical's body like a Charm, a substance convincer engine can replace 15 Essence motes for every mote of permanent Essence absorbed. The Alchemical absorbs elemental Essence from a newly dead elemental corpse before it has a chance to disperse into the fabric of Creation.

THE BROKEN WAR MACHINE

The threat of a strange foreign army bringing death and pestilence can bring about a number of hackneyed and absurd defense strategies, the least effective of which tragically fail or are aborted in the heat of battle. As the kingdoms of Creation become more familiar with the threat, however, their tactics develop into effective systems.

As the Autochthonians invade the South, they develop into a fast and highly mobile fighting force. They are fighting a First Age war with weapons far more powerful than the steel ones of their enemies and using hit-and-run tactics that are practiced in Creation only by the Seventh Legion and some of the Realm's most elite fast-attack forces.

Attacking the Autochthonians with traditional armies is fruitless and doomed to fail. Even the notion of defending the Southern cities seems foolhardy after dozens of settlements and even the best-defended military strongholds fall. Armies disperse out of necessity and regroup in the desert as smaller multinational guerilla outfits that concentrate on obstructing the enemy's supply lines, destroying or stealing caches and ambushing outlying squadrons. Victory seems unlikely at best, and day by day, more of these holdout desert bands surrender or die fighting.

The armies of Red Alsan, a hidden First Age fortress deep in the desert, and the Realm begin to employ scorched-earth tactics when it becomes apparent that the Autochthonian armies depend on conquered lands for food and other resources. The tactic involves destroying all useful facilities and consumable resources in a given area in order to deny their use to the enemy. Over time, the other forces of Creation likewise remember more of their own First Age battle lore, and the matter is no longer so one-sided. However, even late in the war, the lack of control over the Realm's thousand-forged dragons and the imperial defense grid mean that the Autochthonians cannot simply be scourged from the face of the world, and victory instead requires protracted military campaigns.

PROLOGUE: THE LOCUST EMERGES

Far from civilization, under the cover of deep-black night and the torrent of tropical rains, a great blast sounds off like the rage of a thousand thunder spirits, and the world trembles as if struck by a god's wrath. Earth and trees, stones and sheets of rain pour down on the Font of Mourning.

Tribal seers wake in terror, believing that the frightful blare signifies some great cataclysm among the spirits.

The echoes of the eruption fade away into the night, leaving behind the immutable sizzle of rain and a faint alien light shimmers eerily in the air close to the heart of Calan's Loss. Snapped redwoods and the remnants of treetop bridges dangle from the remaining trees, limbless towers ancient enough to have kept a firm grip on the earth amidst the tumult. In the heart of the tangle, a great face silently sits, its open and alert golden gleaming eyes stare coldly into the darkness of the Font of Mourning, calmly turning its gaze this way and that.

The *Patropolis of Ot*, the living gateway from Autochthon to Creation, has come. The top of his massive head has burst through the ground near the center of Calan's Loss in the Southwest portion of the Font of Mourning.

EXPLORATION AND FIRST CONTACT

Several hatches on the crown of the *Patropolis of Ot's* 60-foot-high head open and disgorge a dozen men clad from head to foot in sealed black artificial leather jumpsuits and masks with respirator modules and light amplification visors. These men quickly rappel down to the ground on thin, high-tensile zip cords and, like insects, hastily go about setting up a perimeter. In the hours that follow, they secure a 10-square-mile area, laying strange mechanical contraptions in their wake designed to catch or kill trespassers. As they move through the area, they collect various examples of flora and fauna and send them back to Yugash for study. In the meantime, other men set up camp around *Ot's* head, swiftly moving light, portable, interlocking pieces of plastisteel down from the hatches and assembling small buildings and defensive fortifications.

For the next four months, the invaders meet and engage with treetop tribesmen, despondent ghosts, ravenous beastmen and their Lunar Exalted chieftain and one very curious Abyssal Exalted.

THE FONT OF MOURNING

When the Autochthonians emerge, they do not notice the watchful, tree-dwelling tribesmen of the Olafari peoples (treat as Wyld barbarians, see *Exalted*, pp. 281-282) for several days. A group of Autochthonian scouts discovers an Olafari rope bridge dangling from the treetops, perhaps torn loose by the *Ot's* violent arrival, still attached to a network of bridges amongst the trees. The natives living in the trees — wild, untamed men and women wearing animal bones interlaced with catgut and wielding long, heavy redwood spears studded with boar's teeth and topped with a strange crystalline-flecked stone — first attack, then beg for mercy when the foreign gods break their spears, kill their chieftains and cut down the remnants of their treetop dwellings. The Olafari queen, Golden Venna Boar-Rider, a Dragon-Blooded outcaste who once united the Olafari under her rule, offers

THE AUTOCHTHONIANS' GOALS

The leaders of the Autochthonian nation of Yugash cite six reasons for seeking to invade Creation, though many tangential goals will develop throughout the course of the war. These goals are, in descending order of importance:

The Five Magical Materials: While Autochthon himself suffers no lack of these Materials, the nations of Autochthonia must bargain with one another to obtain much-needed stocks for their own uses. Thus, they are used as bargaining tools in political and trade negotiations with one another. Yugash's stocks in all of the Five Magical Materials have slowly depleted over the past decade, making returning to the international community problematic if they can bring nothing to the bargaining table.

Slaves and Souls: The epidemic of stillborn births in Yugash has created dual crises. First, a labor crisis, in that Yugash's workforce dwindles by the day. Second, and more seriously, if Yugash cannot obtain a fresh influx of souls, the nation will face extinction. While these goals are not among the initial reasons for invading Creation, the Autochthonians seize the opportunity to infuse their workforce with slaves — and the Populat with “fresh blood” — when they learn that humans inhabit Creation, doubling their efforts zealously after learning that Creation's natives possess souls.

Food Supplies: Food production in Creation is much less troublesome than that within Autochthonia. An abrupt influx of new souls and slaves necessitates an adequate food supply. As such, the Autochthonians will at first take as war spoils any and all available foodstuffs from conquered lands. Because they do not understand food preservation, however, the invaders quickly realize that they must seek to control the production of crops and livestock in key locales. At first, military bastions are placed in charge of managing as well as protecting tracts of farmland, a strategy that leads to the loss of entire seasons of output, as well as bringing ruination to the land itself. Eventually, the Autochthonians force enslaved humans familiar with farming to manage their agricultural endeavors, sending entire harvests back across the Void to Yugash.

A Permanent Foothold in Creation: Creation's bounty appears limitless to the invading Autochthonians. It therefore seems not only wise to establish permanent colonies in Creation, but foolhardy not to do so. This decision is marked by three decrees from Grand Autocrat Kerok. First, that Yugash shall remain in Creation for all time, taking the Southwest as its own. Second, that no new conquest of Creation's lands shall be made unless provoked. And third, that non-Autochthonians wishing to enter Yugash as citizens will be granted a modicum of rights and henceforth be known as “outsiders.”

Mastery of the Elements: The natural laws of Creation operate on different principals from those in Autochthon, especially those closely involving the five elements. The Autochthonians desire to harness this inherent power. In doing so, they try to build even greater machines and possibly tap into the mysterious energy source the moves all of Creation, thus mastering the world. Early experiments on elemental spirits suggest that they embody an incredibly powerful resource, elementally aspected Essence.

The Sun: As word of Creation spreads throughout Yugash, new beliefs and philosophies emerge to explain the wonder and strangeness of these new lands. Some believe the whole of Creation is an evil illusion and that the slaves and new citizens from that place are nothing but disguised gremlins or the work of some other malignant being set on tearing Autochthon apart from the inside. Others see Creation as a blessing, a place ripe for exploitation that will allow Yugash to rise once again in prominence. A growing number, however, believe Creation is their salvation, the salvation of every nation in Autochthon. This belief is personified in the very sun itself, which the Luminors presume is the Well of Souls and the wellspring of all life. Hordes of sun-cultists swarm new centers of worship such as the Lap (which becomes, in time, the primary place of worship), erecting both symbolic scaffolds and great edifices reaching toward the sun in an effort to both attract its attention and claim the souls within.

truce to the Autochthonians but is led away in chains, brought as a trophy slave to Yugash.

Easy to rout and requiring little effort to capture, the Olafari are of minor concern to the invaders. The Font of Mourning holds greater perils that the Autochthonians cannot entirely understand in these early stages of occupation. Mad ghosts and Wyld-tainted spirits accost scouts daily, blocking their passage and occasionally killing some of their number. Exploring in the midst of a shadowland

presents dangers as well, with several contingents of scouts traversing a bit too far, a bit too late and finding themselves hopelessly lost in the Underworld.

Ten weeks after the Autochthonians' arrival, word reaches the First and Forsaken Lion that a new power rises in the Font of Mourning. Always watchful over the state of the South, the Deathlord dispatches his favored deathknight, Meticulous Owl, to investigate.

Even Meticulous Owl, who has seen the horrors of the Labyrinth and witnessed bloodbaths and butcheries innumerable, is taken aback by what he finds in the Font of Mourning. Now 12 weeks into their occupation, the Autochthonians have constructed a bizarre industrial panorama of several square miles, part miniature city, part ecological abattoir. No marsh dragons or other beasts can be found nearby, and even the dead and the Wyld-infected avoid the region as the Autochthonian engineers and taskmasters take to draining the swamp and constructing mobile factories, mills and mining skiffs. Industrial waste of a kind never seen in Creation, a dark gelatinous grime that the Autochthonians call blacktog, slops haphazardly through open-air aqueducts that spill the poison into nearby swamps and streams.

Meticulous Owl questions several outlying guards and roaming scouts, learning much about the Autochthonians' identity and origin, but he gets no clear answer when it comes to what the invaders want. For that information, his terrified captives say before he slits each of their throats, he must question the *Patropolis of Ot*.

Meticulous Owl makes his way stealthily through narrow avenues lined with massive, rolling factories and smokestacks. He soon stands before the massive Alchemical and speaks, but the Alchemical cannot hear him for the industrial din. He shouts, but still, no response. Meticulous Owl gets impatient, draws his soulsteel rapier and slashes *Ot's* chin, causing the Alchemical Exalt to wince and look downward. "Where did a soulless animal such as you get such a powerful trinket?" the Alchemical booms, his voice causing the very air around him to tremble.

"It is true," Meticulous Owl replies, "I am hideous. My ear, it dangles by a flap; my nose is gone. But you are mistaken about one thing, thou oddity." Black electricity seeps upward from Meticulous Owl's fingertips and splay outward, forming an image of host of skeletal raitons swarming round his body, his soul openly displayed to all.

A long discussion follows. Advice is given and a covenant sealed. Meticulous Owl graciously offers to act as ambassador and guide, assuring the Autochthonians that the things they seek in Creation can be easily had, given a sizable enough invasion force. In the days that follow, Meticulous Owl enjoys the esteem, if not the complete trust, of the invaders, as contingents of soldiers and segments of portable war machines emerge from the *Patropolis of Ot's* head.

THE MENACE OF TEN STRIPES

The Autochthonian regiments dispatched from the Silent Crescent to the North of the Font of Mourning meet with trouble from the start. Led by the Alchemical Exalted *Excessively Righteous Blossom*, a band of 1,500 soldiers marched into the perilous jungle heedless of both the nearly impassible terrain and the inhospitable natives. Guerrilla beastmen, invisible amongst the trees and more than a match for the night-blind invaders, quickly eliminate dozens of

Autochthonians before *Excessively Righteous Blossom* can slash and burn areas of the jungle in an effort to locate the attackers. Without the benefit of cover, the local tribes of beastmen either perish one by one under the Autochthonian onslaught or are led away in chains to Yugash.

One pack of tiger beastmen, led by the Lunar Exalted Ten Stripes, refuses to be taken alive and proves difficult to see, let alone kill. Striking at night, Ten Stripes and her loyal following slay many Autochthonian officers and destroy dozens of their vehicles before being discovered — and surrounded — by *Excessively Righteous Blossom* and his men. Ten Stripes calls out to *Blossom*, naming him a coward and challenging him to single combat. *Blossom* steps forward and accepts, stating the terms: If he should best her in combat, she will submit and be taken as a slave; if Ten Stripes should win, *Blossom* will take his men and leave the Crescent for all time.

Ten Stripes fights bravely and savagely, but *Excessively Righteous Blossom* ultimately brings his enemy low, slashing his moonsilver daiklave down upon her shoulder, nearly severing her arm. *Blossom* pushes Ten Stripes face into the dirt and, in front of her subjects, forces her to renounce her freedom and accept the life of a bondmaid of his house. In anguish, with blood and spit streaming from her fangs, she pledged herself to him, determined to remain true to her word. "I accept your pledge," *Blossom* said, "But I would not have one such as you fouling the air of my country, let alone my house." With these words, *Blossom* quickly draws his dagger and brings it across the defeated Lunar's throat. He then gazes out to the shocked natives, his anima ablaze, and cries, "Your champion lies dead and disgraced! Surrender now, you children of beasts, and you will be spared! Resist us, and you will surely perish along with the wretched saint at my feet!"

The natives, both beastman and human alike, hear his words, and with no further hesitation charge toward the unsuspecting Autochthonians — especially the miscalculating *Excessively Righteous Blossom* — wielding claw and club, furious at the abasement of Ten Stripes and howling with mortal fury. Several beastmen sweep up her body and disappear while the battle, which swiftly becomes a rout, rages on. The beastmen pour from the jungle to no end, driving *Blossom* to order a general retreat. With the natives hard on their heels, *Excessively Righteous Blossom* leads his troops South, toward the edge of the jungle, hoping the horde will not follow them beyond the jungle's confines — a reasonable assumption, for only a small number of savage men trickle out beyond the trees in pursuit, and these are easily done in with arrows from afar.

Uncertain of their position, the Autochthonian company wanders the hills at the foot of the great mountain range to the East, searching for a way around the Silent Crescent. Before discovering the Southern edge of the Crescent, *Blossom's* scouts report the discovery of a large

urban development hidden away in the mountains. *Blossom* orders his men to proceed homeward as quickly as possible, that he might acquire reinforcements and regain some esteem by leading an assault on this newly discovered city.

DEVELOPMENTS IN YUGASH

Before the conflict with Golden Venna Boar-Rider, nearly all Autochthonians doubt that the humans in Creation possess souls. All attempts to install soul gems in captured slaves end in the slaves' deaths, and the tribesmen's uncouth barbarity in dress and manner only underline the conclusion. The tides of thought on the matter turn subtly, however, when the slave Golden Venna Boar-Rider, responding to a cruel kick and an accusation of being a "jungle dog," breaks her chains in anger and denounces the mocking crowd with such furious passion that her skin appears to catch flame and radiate a shroud of smoke. Such does not appear to be the actions of a being without a soul, but most Autochthonians recognizing that this display does not seem possible for a mere animal do not speak their mind (though hereafter Golden Venna's new master deigns to treat her with more respect).

A minor crisis erupts when Meticulous Owl arrives in Yugash as the first envoy from Creation. While the Tripartite and most involved in the military or heavy industry care little for the ethical implications of a denizen of Creation possessing a soul, they have constituents and customers who do recognize the sensitivity of the matter. The Tripartite prohibits bringing new slaves into Yugash, but this new policy doesn't stop the enslavement of Creation's denizens, just from bringing them back to Autochthonia for the time being. Instead, slaves intended for use in future mining, industrial and farming projects in Creation are placed in fenced ghettos where they await the order to march. These ghettos are portable on 24-hour notice, with the slaves themselves doing the labor of dismantling the ramshackle structures and loading them onto transportation skiffs.

ACT I: THE LOCUST CRUSADE

The world at large remains unconcerned about the Autochthonian invasion, if they have heard word of it at all. But the Southwest trembles. In Gem, word travels fast that a great army — some say an army of terrifying machines — approaches, intending to enslave the city, as it has enslaved countless villages in the region of the Silent Crescent.

ASSAULT ON GEM

"I am the herald of Autochthonia, of Yugash," the envoy reads to the Despot's throne chamber. "Throw yourselves to the stones. Should you refuse, you will die. Should you resist, you will die. Should you aid our enemies, you will die. Do not pray to your gods for relief. Pray to us for mercy." The envoy did not enjoy a long life.

With a force of 4,000 conscripts, *Excessively Righteous Blossom* returns to Gem with conquest his intent. He sends

THE COURT OF THE ORDERLY FLAME

As an influential political body with bastions throughout the South, the Court of the Orderly Flame is in a position to assist in defending against the Autochthonians and is probably the best candidate in the region to broker treaties and trade arrangements with the invaders. Of course, most of these deals will be skewed in favor of the kingdoms of the South whenever possible.

Lusa Seragon's mansion remains undiscovered throughout the war and functions as a safe house for the Orderly Flame and its allies. Ulito Swan, Swan Dragon's God-Blooded daughter, maintains her underground headquarters below Chiaroscuro, an installation that functions as the central hub of the Orderly Flame's operations during the Locust War. Thanks in part to Ulito Swan's efforts, Chiaroscuro remains unconquered, though at the beginning of Act Two, the situation is grim, with the city's population hungry and the Autochthonians menacing it with poisonous ordinance daily.

an envoy with a written message to the Despot of Gem, granting the option of surrender. The envoy's head, minus its soulgem, is returned to *Blossom* in a bloody ox-hide sack. A written message tied around the sackcloth read, "Attack at your own peril, arrogant fool. I look forward to fetching a good price for your pretty baubles."

Aghast at the Despot's effrontery, *Blossom* declares war on Gem, but much like his experience in the Silent Crescent, he is unprepared for both the terrain and his enemy's tactics. After *Blossom* maneuvers his men into a valley in an attempted surprise attack, the Despot's soldiers release hails of arrows from unreachable locations among the cliffs. Without cover, it is a massacre. Those fleeing are incinerated by fiery *llamma-yu* that roll into the valley from the opposite side and cut down by ifrit soldiers who block their escape. Once again faced with failure, *Blossom* orders a retreat while he fends off the arrows from above and the swordsmen now emerging from crevices in the rock. Only 1,000 men escape. Several hundred wounded Autochthonians are taken prisoner and hung from the cliffs.

Upon returning to Yugash, *Excessively Righteous Blossom* faces up to his disgrace but is rescued from the contempt of the Tripartite by *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon*, a famed hero to the Populat and an unwaveringly nationalistic Alchemical Exalted. *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon* has been placed in command of General Exsirar's regiment, the largest Autochthonian force in Creation. He invites *Blossom* to accompany him as a valuable advisor on the forces at Gem, a role *Blossom* grudgingly accepts.



UNHESITATINGLY LOYAL WEAPON ATTACKS GEM

With information obtained from Meticulous Owl and *Excessively Righteous Blossom*, *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon* develops a strategy to attack Gem with a force of 30,000 troops, a number that the current defenses in Gem cannot hope to overcome. One year after *Blossom's* defeat, *Loyal Weapon's* troops march openly and in lockstep to the rhythm of clicks and mechanical groans issuing from the vehicles and siege automata bringing up the rear. At his side come General Exsitar, *Excessively Righteous Blossom*, five other Alchemicals (including two weavers: one master of the Man-Machine Protocols and one master of the God-Machine Protocols) and the Abyssal Meticulous Owl. Within weeks, they have Gem in their sights.

As the Autochthonian army approaches, a small force consisting of Gem's standing military, local conscripts and three dozen ifrit build five fortifications in the Western mountainside in the hopes of stopping the invaders short. The attempt fails, however, as Gem can only manage to rally of force of 4,000 soldiers. The

Despot of Gem offers to surrender, foreseeing certain doom should he resist, but a number of Gem's citizens goad a number of Autochthonian squadrons into attacking, sparking a battle that lasts less than an hour.

Less than 1,200 of the Despot's troops make it back within the walls of Gem and prepare for a siege that never comes. Instead, *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon* destroy the walls single-handedly, and his forces raze the city, killing the few resisters but sending most away in chains.

METICULOUS OWL'S JRE

Meticulous Owl counts on seeing such a bloodbath in Gem that a shadowland large enough to be of use to the First and Forsaken Lion will emerge. A shadowland in Gem would pave the way for an imminent invasion of the dead and give the Deathlord instant access to the vast stores of Essence located in the heart of the mountain. To achieve this end, Meticulous Owl has insinuated himself into the confidences of Yugash's elite and General Exsitar, who has come to rely on the Owl's comprehensive knowledge of the geography and politics of the South.

When most of Gem's citizens are enslaved rather than slaughtered, Meticulous Owl, though full of fury, imperturbably alters his plans. In the months to come, he persuades Exsitar that the ruins of Gem would make for a perfect permanent settlement for his people.

DEVELOPMENTS IN YUGASH

A movement, supported by the Luminors and several industrial concerns, is begun to send more

FURNACE RHINO FARMS

Following the successful assault on Gem, the Autochthonians soon discover herds of furnace rhinos in the area. Under close scrutiny, they find that the furnace rhinos' horns are valuable sources of the Five Magical Materials. Soon, they corral thousands of the animals and develop failed animal husbandry methods that, if they'd been continued, would have rendered the furnace rhinos extinct within one year.

Extracting and refining the Five Magical Materials from the furnace rhinos' horns is a subtle matter. The process is very slow at first, with only 300 rhino horns processed in the first month, yielding a modest quantity of the valuable Materials. As time goes on, the Autochthonians' techniques grow more sophisticated, topping out at 900 horns processed per month after one year.

Furnace rhino meat is very tough and almost flavorless. The Autochthonians invent machines that grind the meat into a paste, add salt and spices and cook molded sheets of the food, each of which are rolled and stored in airtight steel casks. The finished product has the consistency of a very thick, ulcerous scab. Distributed to soldiers and military support staff in Creation, this meat, called spattle, earns the rancor of the entire Autochthonian invasion force, who despise it to a man.

Alchemical Exalted to Creation to aid in its conquering. Many of the Alchemical Exalted themselves oppose the movement, wishing to remain close to Autochthon. Two notables, however, volunteer. *The Guileless Purgator*, a young Alchemical Exalted originally intended to assist the adjudicators (and eventually perhaps replace one of them), accepts orders to proceed to Gem once it is taken without complaint. It is his task to maintain order in Gem according to the precepts of Autochthonian law until the autocrats decide what is to be done with the city. In addition, in addition to Meticulous Owl's suggestion, *Lissome Avid Engineer* accompanies *The Guileless Purgator* to Gem to assess and calculate the expenses involved in making the city suitable for Autochthonians.

MACHINATIONS AT THE LAP

Please do not write again, Most Stalwart Letal. Despite your past imbecility, House Cathak trusts the Lap's Golden Triumvirate to use what resources are at hand to secure our interests. In any event, our regiments at home would most certainly consider an appointment under your sword to be an indignity to which I am not apt to subject them.

So reads a missive to Cathak Letal, the Lap's garrison commander, from his father. Letal has sent countless letters

begging for reinforcements to defend the Lap against the unknown enemy that surely approaches. One by one, haggard messengers have come, recounting the destruction of villages and even entire cities, all laid waste by an enigmatic enemy possessing potent war engines heretofore unheard of. The Triumvirate (legates representing their families and the Realm as a whole, currently consisting of Cathak Sijip, Ragara Aloru and Peleps Tuchet) has sent diplomats to meet with the Autochthonian general, but none have returned. The Triumvirate does not believe that the Lap will fall, even when faced with such an overwhelming force, proudly citing the support of three imperial houses and the backing of the Realm, comforts other lands conquered by the Autochthonians did not have. "Not even these foreign marauders," Sijip spouts, "would dare attack a place so closely aligned to Creation's greatest nation."

Letal first makes his case to the Triumvirate, begging it to requisition more soldiers. Receiving scorn and ridicule from the three triumvirs, he then sends desperate requests for aid directly to his father, Cathak Mashaj, a prominent member of the Deliberative. Mashaj has no troops to send and, due to certain of Letal's past military disgraces, little inclination to even make the effort. Mashaj does make mention of his son's predicament to his colleagues, but none seem willing to invest the Realm's (or their own) troops and riches to such an ill-defined exigency that, to their minds, is likely being exaggerated.

A tense stillness reigns over the Lap for weeks as, though the enemy remains leagues away to the South, clouds of noxious gasses besmirch the sky and blacktoggled rains fall weighty and caustic upon the city, driving all indoors and ravaging crops and livestock. As the clouds approach and the sky grows darker, many flee the city, heading north to the coast. Two of the three triumvirs, Cathak Sijip and Peleps Tuchet take their regiments northward as well, under the pretense of protecting the refugees. Sijip orders Letal to retreat as well, but he refuses, professing his desire to die in battle against overwhelming odds in lieu of returning to family and nation once again in disgrace.

Of Cathak's troops, only those who remain loyal to Letal (a paltry 143 troops moved by Letal's courage) remain in the Lap. House Ragara's own 5,000 troops remain at their posts as well and under Letal's command, as Ragara Aloru and Magnate Utono, Illustrious Liaison to Banoba of House Ragara, remain as well to protect the Great House's fortune.

Letal wastes no time in preparing for battle. All of the soldiers under his command, and several thousand conscripts, dig trenches and fortify walls around the clock. Letal has never been the most competent leader of men, and many still openly disrespect his command, but no one wants to die. Only a few hundred soldiers and conscripts steal away in the night as lookouts stationed at the top of the Last Supplicant's head spot the approaching horde of Autochthonians on the horizon.

Realizing the futility of defending the Lap against such an overwhelming force, Utono has meanwhile sent three Dragon-Blooded officers to parley with the enemy, offering to give up the Lap in exchange for the lives of its people. A deal is brokered, and Utono arranges to have the Ragara troops lay down their arms but does not inform Letal, who stands agape as the day of the attack arrives and Autochthonians stream into the city unmolested. The small band of Cathak soldiers loyal to him flee as Letal openly accuses Utono of cowardice and sedition. Upon hearing his claims, *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon* marks Letal for arrest, but the Dragon-Blood is able to escape in the confusion with a small number of his men.

The next day, Ragara Aloru is hung at the city's main gate. Though neither Utono nor the Autochthonians give any indication of the reason for the execution, many note the sudden southward departure of Utono's caravans with much of the Lap's harvest in tow.

THE GUILD RETREATS

Having lost fortunes in cash, drugs and slaves to the Autochthonian appropriation of Gem and other trade hubs throughout the South, the Guild's Directorate decides to cut its losses and temporarily halt all major operations throughout the Southwest until either the Autochthonians can be expelled from the region or agreeable contracts with them can be negotiated. The resolution devastates the South's economy. Lenders and markets fold up their tents, caravans march East, and the prices of all things — from food to real estate — rise steeply. Desert villages that depended on occasional visits from Guild emporium representatives are soon abandoned. Major metropolises see a sharp increase in crime, from larceny to murder. Industries that require a constant supply of slaves, such as heavy construction, falter, resulting in a sharp decrease in public works projects even in cities that have not been touched by the Autochthonians.

In time, other trade networks develop that serve most basic needs, though these cannot furnish such Guild staples as narcotics and slaves as well as the Guild itself. However, these local trade networks are more organic and local-friendly than that commercial juggernaut. If the Guild ever returns, the situation will not be a pleasant one.

Several opportunities exist as a result of the Guild's retreat. Caravans evacuating the region on short notice, as well as new traders venturing forth into the South, find themselves in need of protection. Trade arrangements and treaties need to be negotiated (or sabotaged). The vast treasure troves of Guildsmen, too large to be easily transported, need to be defended (or looted).

In most areas, the market is wide open for enterprising traders, especially for those willing to bargain with the Autochthonians before the Guild makes its move to do so. It is a volatile, delicate period for the South, where the fate of entire populations depends on a few brave opportunists.

The economy of the Southwest is essentially up for grabs, but only during a small window of opportunity.

GEM BECOMES NEW KADAR

The Guileless Purgator and *Lissome Avid Engineer* make much progress in refashioning the lava tubes of Gem for Autochthonians to live in. Visiting diplomats from Yugash profess delight at the results, while slaves forced to perform much of the labor see nothing but horror. Gem is rechristened New Kadar, and several thousand adventurous citizens of Yugash bring their families to this new frontier of war and mystery.

Meticulous Owl, having been dismissed by General Exsitar and sent back to Gem, has been observing the situation as a guest of the Autochthonians, who still do not suspect that he may have ulterior motives. For the most part, he is still well-respected and considered a particularly intelligent and knowledgeable individual. It is he who suggests expanding New Kadar to accommodate even more citizens.

Down, down, their slaves scoop and quarry, tunneling into ancient subterranean passages and massive gem-laden hollows. Thousands of slaves perish during the years of toil, while above, more and more call New Kadar home. In time, New Kadar becomes the foremost military outpost the Autochthonians have in Creation as well, with a population topping 250,000 people, all crammed into the maze of passages traversing miles underground that resemble, in many details, Autochthon itself. Here, however, the sounds of the Machine God are uncomfortably absent. Special automata, whose only purpose is to simulate such sounds, see some use, but the self-conscious ruse is not very convincing.

This is a period of quiet intrigue in New Kadar. Factions exist that oppose further expansion, resulting in sabotage and treachery. Rumors abound about the stranger Meticulous Owl, who comes and goes at will, issuing enigmatic pronouncements about the politics of the South as if he were tantalizing them with riddles. Some Autochthonians in New Kadar are susceptible to the Owl's message: that their work is on the side of righteousness, that Creation brims with such woe and tragedy that the Autochthonians must free them from bringing war to their shores, for only in death are men peaceable. Others despise Meticulous Owl, viewing his presence as a distraction from their mission, despite his so-called help. *Lissome Avid Engineer* is adamant about the expansion, becoming obsessed with the project to the exclusion of everything else.

The Guileless Purgator tries to stand aloof from these matters, content to focus on the general governance of New Kadar, but becomes embroiled in the controversy anyway by publicly criticizing *Avid Engineer's* zeal and suggesting that she recall herself to Autochthonia for an assessment. The two come to blows, and during the brief melee, they send shockwaves through the mountain, collapsing several caverns and killing hundreds. Though the battle abruptly ends, with public apologies all around, their conflict continues in subtler form.

the Autochthonian Advance



DEVELOPMENTS IN YUGASH

Tales of the barbarity and wickedness of Creation's natives, true or not, circulate around Yugash, such that the issue of making slaves of their citizens and bringing them to Yugash is not much of an issue anymore, and all slavery bans are lifted. As such, slaves pour into Yugash by the thousands. These are starved, haggard and diseased, and do not fetch much of a profit. Although each slave undergoes a thorough cleansing before being brought through the gate, certain diseases make their way into Yugash, quickly becoming a concern.

New Kadar is considered by most to be an unmitigated success. As a result, plans are put forth to transform much of the remaining mountain range into similar cities.

ACT II: THE SCARLET EMPIRE STRIKES

Altercations and threats in the Deliberative? Accusations of corruption? One house openly declaring war on another? No one thought it could happen. Everyone considered the Realm eternal, with or without the Scarlet Empress. But developments in the South have made plain many of the problems the Realm has been avoiding since the Scarlet Empress disappeared. The very fabric of the Realm is finally pulling apart at the seams during the time of the empire's greatest trial, and no one knows how to stop it.

One woman, it seems, has made it impossible to overlook the problems facing the Realm, a popular stateswoman new to the Deliberative named V'neef Halopi. With an uncanny gift for oratory and a frank and open personal style, she has risen quickly through the ranks of both her own Great House and government, settling on a Senatorial seat in the Deliberative's Greater Chamber as the proper place for her prodigious gifts. During her first month in office, she rails against the Autochthonian threat, calling attention to the effects their invasion has had upon the Great Houses and the Realm in general and ultimately achieving a fervent following among the populace and especially in other branches of the government. Given that her own house has suffered significantly less than others from the developments in the South, many have lauded her straightforward and unbiased public concern for the losses suffered by all houses. Some accuse Halopi of fence-straddling, of playing a game of cynical politics in which she hopes to gain unearned support, while others simply see her as a truly sympathetic-minded individual who has at heart what is best for the Realm.

HOUSE RAGARA UNDER ATTACK

Not content with eastward expansion, Autochthonian explorers, accompanied by sizable military contingents, have launched fleets of their stolen ships northward. Piloted and crewed by enslaved sailors (as the Autochthonians have not yet



mastered navigation), these fleets chart the watery region between the Realm and the South, taking time to explore (and subjugate) every island along the way.

One of these islands is inhabited by Ragara, who retreated there with his retinue years ago to escape his family. He is not happy to see the Autochthonians skulking about his property and killing his game and dispatches 200 men to deal with the trespassers. All 200 die in battle, and the invaders take the opportunity to raze the island and its inhabitants. Ragara escapes, barely, but his ship is lost at sea for weeks, finally running aground in the reefs to the west of the Blessed Isle where the ancient Dragon-Blood breathes his last.

The news is slow in coming to the Blessed Isle, but in time, word of the sad episode hits the Realm like a shockwave. House Ragara vows vengeance, and the family sets sail with 75 ships to hunt down the perpetrators. Within weeks, Captain Ragara Articracsent burns 40 of the Autochthonians' ships, including the men responsible for the initial assault.

The death of Ragara haunts the Realm for months, coloring the political dialogue and sending the first indication that the Realm itself is not necessarily safe anymore.

THE REALM TAKES THE OFFENSIVE

By the time the Realm begins to take the Autochthonian threat seriously, the Southwest is all but lost. Reports trickle in practically every day telling of yet another city taken by the marauders, indicating that it is only a matter of time before they set upon the Blessed Isle itself. Everyone knows that it is folly to wait for an attack, that the Realm must take the initiative, but no one in the Deliberative can decide on what action to take. By this point in the invasion, the Deliberative has amassed a significant amount of intelligence on the Autochthonians, though it has come hard-won, and all by means of individual spies. House Ragara, furious, moves forward on its own to fight the Autochthonians whenever and wherever it thinks that it can win. Ragara is set on attacking the Lap and reclaiming that Great House's financial interests there. House Cathak instead insists on attacking the Font of Mourning itself and destroying whatever gateway the Autochthonians are using to breach the Void. House Tepet advocates sending legions to defend cities yet to be taken but obviously in the invaders' path, such as Chiaroscuro and Yane, arguing that if the invaders are allowed to expand unchecked, the Realm will be outnumbered *and* surrounded.

After weeks of chaotic sessions, the Deliberative receives sobering news: Paragon has fallen. The Perfect of Paragon has joined with the enemy and betrayed the Realm. A Greater Chamber Senator

of House Ragara reads aloud a letter from the Perfect's representative, warning the Realm entire that it should beware lest the hordes of Paragon descend upon it. Any attack on the Lap or any other Autochthonian holding will be treated as an act of war against Paragon. Upon reading this missive, the Greater Chamber agrees: The Perfect must be insane. House Ragara has already begun to plan a major military operation with House Ledaal and House Peleps to "rescue" the Perfect and the Realm's valuable interests in Paragon.

PARAGON LIBERATED

The Locust Crusade invades Paragon on the pretext of freeing the Paragonians from their dominator, the Perfect. Attacking with an overwhelming array of men and machines and five Alchemical Exalted, the Autochthonian army cuts a swath from Paragon's city walls directly to the Perfect's palace, obliterating everything in between in a matter of minutes. The Perfect himself proves an elusive foe, with many powerful armed attendants, but the Alchemicals bring down each of these in turn. In the end, the *Alchemical Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus* shatters the Paragon's scepter with his reaver daiklave.

The Perfect, his power destroyed along with his scepter, now functions as nothing more than a mouthpiece for the Autochthonian occupiers, especially *Armipotent Colossus*, who has, in a poor effort to ingratiate himself culturally to the populace, declared himself caliph. Supremely humbled, the Perfect tries to keep the Paragonians calm, for their own sake, but his people are beginning to boil over with rage at the aggressors. Their minds and wills have been liberated from the Perfect, but their adoration of him has not. It is only a matter of time before an urban conflict begins.

House Peleps stages a naval assault on Paragon as bands of Ledaal soldiers approach from the South. While the Peleps armada fails to breach new defenses that they do not understand, the Ledaal forces successfully infiltrate the city and embed themselves in the population, distributing arms and providing tactical direction and training.

Within one month, a civil uprising occurs in Paragon. Thirty Ledaal Dragon-Blooded sorcerers signal the assault by surrounding and slaying one of the junior Alchemicals occupying the city in the Theater Square of Paragon. Furious, the Autochthonians counterattack in force and pursue the assailants beyond the walls of Paragon, into the awaiting ambush. As the city's Alchemical defenders catch up to their enemies and begin to strike them down, hundreds of Dragon-Blooded sorcerers and soldiers emerge from the dunes and descend upon the Alchemical forces. It is a massacre as the Dragon-Blooded, many vengeance-minded Ragara, tear the Alchemicals apart piece by piece.

The one Alchemical Exalted remaining in Paragon, *Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus*, attempts to suppress the uprising by collapsing the marketplace upon the most obvious insurrectionists and dispatching contingents of soldiers to search the streets, even the homes, of the city in search of embedded enemies. All the while, House Ledaal soldiers

wage a weeks-long lightning war against the occupation, mounting brief but overwhelming strikes against the Autochthonians, then fleeing into sewers and safe-houses. *Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus* realizes that he and his remaining troops are too unfamiliar with the city and cannot hope to regain control of the populace. The occupation nervously flees to the South to join with General Exsilar's forces, losing many hundred troops in the process. In the midst of the fighting, the Perfect is struck dead. His body is not discovered for days. In the aftermath, Ledaal Halduma installs himself as interim legate and begins rebuilding the city.

THE REALM REPELLED AT THE LAP

The Lap becomes the largest Autochthonian presence (especially after the destruction of New Kadar). Not only is it a significant military base, but it is also their main agricultural hub and religious center. As a result, the Lap is the best-protected city the Autochthonians have in Creation. A 30-foot-high, ten-foot-thick steel wall surrounds the city, even the coastal portion, with giant doors to allow ships to enter the docks. Two-hundred ships sail the causeways leading to the Lap, most of them seized as war spoils, but some are newly constructed designs of the Autochthonians' own. A walled military barracks can be found three miles to the south of the Lap, where 125,000 troops and hundreds of mechanized war machines are stationed. The city itself is defended by 10,000 further troops. The Lap holds 10 Alchemical Exalted, three of whom are weavers of the God-Machine Protocols and two of whom are weavers of the Man-Machine Protocols.

The Realm embarks on a major campaign to liberate the Lap, energized by its success in Paragon and unwilling to accept the loss of its most prized Southern satellite. New, better contracts with the Guild will be a foregone conclusion if the Realm takes pains to bring the Guild back to the South, and most of the Great Houses vie for participation. The Deliberative approves the requisition of 100,000 troops (including 1,000 Dragon-Blooded) and 500 warships, which set sail and land 50 miles west of the Lap after chasing off 20 outlying Autochthonian ships. Swelled with confidence, the troops marched on the city, only to be crushed entirely by the Alchemicals' protocols and their superior defense strategies. Three-fourths of the Realm's mortal forces die, with the rest being taken as slaves. None return to the Blessed Isle.

THE REALM INVESTIGATES THE FONT OF MOURNING

One of House Cathak's generals takes a force of 5,000 conscripts into the Font of Mourning, an area in which the Realm has never had a presence. The soldiers landing there have heard that the Font is a place of dread where the Wyld runs rampant, and this is the case north of the Font, but as they travel further south, they see the unexpected devastation. In the first year of their occupation of this place, the Autochthonians transformed the landscape into a place of

industry and waste. Now, the Southern Font resembles a strip-mined wasteland topped with hulking factories, scurrying automata and a blackened sky for miles around.

The Realm's soldiers wander the labyrinth of indistinguishable structures in search of some clue to the origins of the Autochthonians. After days of battling the quick, efficient automata, one squad encounters Ot, who silently alerts the powers in Yugash that intruders have discovered the gate to Autochthon. They take it upon themselves to scale Ot's head and descend into the portals. These legionnaires are never heard from again.

The next day, the site swarms with 1,000 Autochthonian troops who engage the Realm's forces using military vehicles kept stored in warehouses near Ot. Unprepared for the assault, the Realm's troops retreat. Just over 1,500 men make it out alive and eventually back to the Blessed Isle.

THE CITY OF RED ALSAN, THE ENCHASED CITY

Red for the blood of our fallen. And Alsan for our savior.

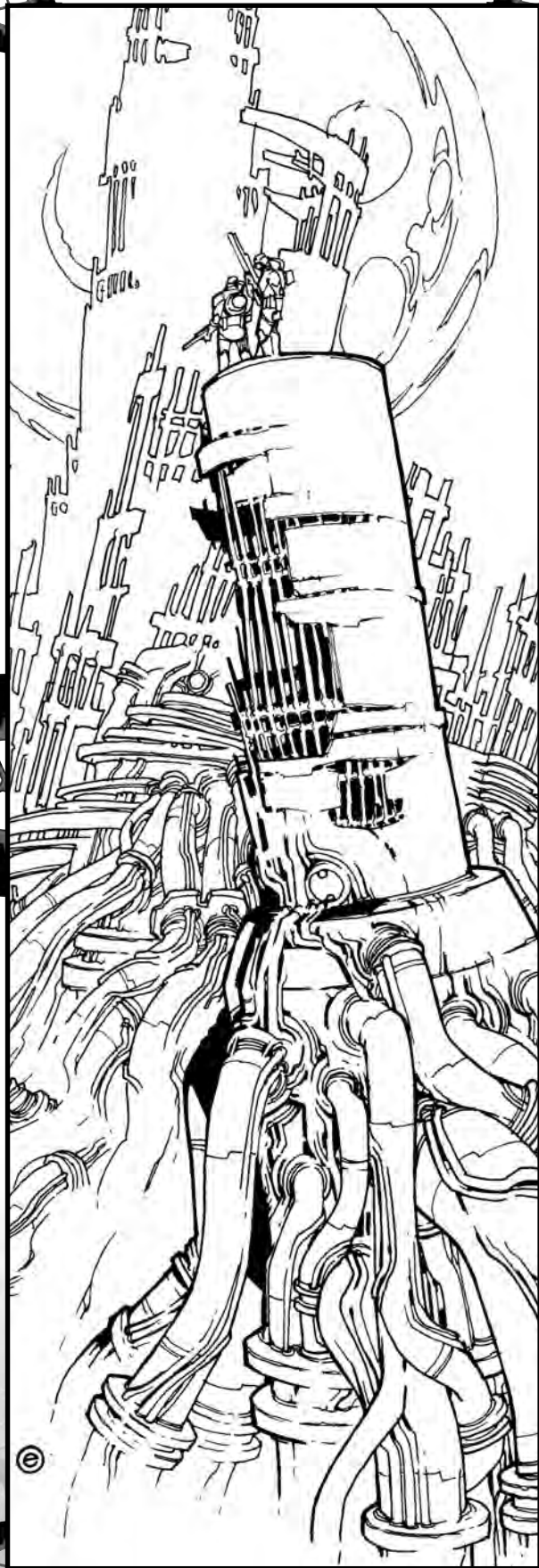
After years of carnage, the survivors of the Autochthonians' several military campaigns in the desert assemble into a force determined to rid the world of the invaders and their cursed machines. Organized by Alsan, a Lunar Exalt, and fueled by revenge, what was once a loose band of ragged wanderers is soon transformed into an army of liberation. Located at the site of a lost First Age fortification in the middle of the Southern desert, Red Alsan soon becomes a rallying point for anyone with a stake in fighting the Autochthonian invaders, regardless of who they are.

Red Alsan is also the gathering site for several Solar Exalted drawn to the desert to battle the Autochthonians. Notables such as Harmonious Jade, Faka Kun and Demetheus all journey there to join together against the common threat and find no need to hide their true nature from the displaced mortals, outcastes and spirits now calling Red Alsan home. Even a few disillusioned Dragon-Blooded of the Realm, such as Cathak Letal, come there hoping to find glory and honor, having lost faith in their homeland.

Red Alsan's walls are of reinforced granite, iron, tarnished silver and black jade etched with potent protective runes. The walls possess automatic defenses that, though not fully operational, still function to some extent when properly handled by savants who have studied First Age technology.

MASTERING GOVISOSHI, THE THOUSAND- FORGED DRAGON

Rosh the Triumphant, a prominent savant of the South present in Paragon when the Autochthonians arrived, inhabits a fragile sun-baked structure half covered in sand on the outskirts of Red Alsan. He has for these



past months been hard at work devising a plan to take command of the legendary thousand-forged dragon, Govisoshi (see *Creatures of the Wyld*, p. 126), a First Age artifact used as a prototype for the Five-Metal Shrike that he has devoted much of his life to researching.

Beneath Red Alsan, in one of the original, now ruined, structures, Rosh has discovered an object that he believes is the Radiance and Resonance Pharos, a device said to summon Govisoshi when properly activated. Unfortunately, while traversing the conduits beneath the sand in search of the Pharos, Rosh accidentally powered up the facility's automata guardians and was barely able to escape with his life. To add to the difficulties, the conduit through which he entered is now filled with tons of sand.

The prospect of even approaching the thousand-forged dragon is dangerous — more dangerous than the invaders Rosh wishes to use it against — and cannot be accomplished alone. Piloting Govisoshi requires at least three Solar Exalted, but more are desirable in case the machine's defenses get the best of someone.

Activating the Radiance and Resonance Pharos discharges vast pulses of polychromatic effluence into the sky, easily visible for leagues around, allowing the Autochthonians (or anyone else) to pinpoint the location of Red Alsan. In minutes, Govisoshi rises from the sand, battered and aged but still functioning.

Govisoshi is a boon to the defenders, but its presence drains Essence from the region (a rich Demesne) using Theft of Demesne, preventing others from accessing it. Powering Govisoshi with powerful Hearthstones can offset the effects for a time, but such items will certainly be difficult to come by.

ATTACK ON THE ENCHASED CITY

Once the Exalted activate the Resonance and Radiance Pharos, it is only a matter of days before the Autochthonians, led by *Excessively Righteous Blossom*, attack Red Alsan with a force of 25,000 soldiers and a full complement of advanced vehicles and weapons. *Blossom* also sends for reinforcements from General Exsilar who is managing a campaign against several holdout desert cities to the East. Red Alsan is at the heart of a series of badland military campaigns replete with disease and misery with no end in sight.

The Alchemicals' secret weapon in these campaigns are the horses of bronze, majestic automaton steeds that run faster than normal horses and cannot be harmed by weapons not made from one of the Five Magical Materials. The Exalted do manage to destroy most of the horses of bronze and kill two Alchemical Exalted before *Blossom* orders a retreat.

THE CURIOUS DISCOVERY UNDER NEW KADAR

The slaves and foremen who break through the rock into the dimly lit cavern cannot believe their eyes. Indeed, this is no mere cavern or tunnel. Light shines from hun-

dreds of feet down, and movement, like men creeping slowly along the cave floor, catches their eyes in the faint illumination. What is more, the walls and very floor below sparkle prismatically, even in the faint torchlight, like millions of luminous stars.

The Guileless Purgator and *Lissome Avid Engineer* declare the bed of gems beneath New Kadar to be the property of Yugash and dispatch miners, accompanied by 100 armed men, to the site to make an assessment and discourage the men or creatures living in the vicinity from interfering. These men never return.

Intent on getting to the bottom of the mystery, *Lissome Avid Engineer* and 30 of her best soldiers rappel into the cavern. At the bottom they find human bones, some with scraps of meat still attached, scattered across the jewel-encrusted floor. Then, they hear the battle howls of the beasts responsible for the remnants at their feet, and before anyone can react properly, dozens of man-shaped creatures rush from the shadows. "Blades...down..." 100 voices grunt intermittently. *Avid Engineer* refuses, and a furious battle commences. The enemy, hundreds of jokun, pour out of caverns to no end. In time, *Avid Engineer's* warriors all fall, and she is left alone to fend off the hordes.

Suddenly, the jokun break off their attack as a slow, disquieting breeze whispers through the cavern, murmuring, "Who?" This is the voice of Nrbaqwi, a potent gemlord. Unaware of the nature of this elemental spirit, *Lissome Avid Engineer* approaches the wide black pit from which the wind emerged and invites it to prove itself in single combat. The answer is six kri, the omen-avatars of the gemlord, who appear out of thin air and surround her.

Lissome Avid Engineer defeats the kri, then turns her attention back to Nrbaqwi, who's entire visible body — which *Avid Engineer* realizes is the floor of the entire cavern — glows iridescently. The gemlord launches Charm after Charm at her from various gems on its body, but the efforts are not enough to halt *Avid Engineer's* spell, which

ANOTHER POSSIBLE OUTCOME

Instead of destroying Nrbaqwi, *Lissome Avid Engineer* understands that she is standing on top of the largest hoard of compressed geomantic Essence (a substance called ryku) in existence. Opening up her Essence chambers, she summons all of the ryku — several tons — to feed her power source. She quickly grows in size and power as a result of this, but becomes permanently grafted to the mountain. Now much like the *Patropolis of Ot*, *Lissome Avid Engineer* becomes the new spirit-god of New Kadar, akin to a miniature Machine God in Creation, constantly growing as she is fed ryku, the face of the mountain itself taking the shape of her visage. Effectively, she is an Essence 10 Alchemical, but she could grow even larger.

cracks the gemlord's body at her feet and simultaneously shatters its millions of gems.

The earth trembles while, simultaneously, a cool black wind rushes up out of Nrbaqwi's mouth with a new voice, a voice of unalloyed evil, a voice thanking *Lissome Avid Engineer*. It is the last voice she hears before dying, millions of tons of stone and dirt crashing down on her as the city of Gem falls into the hollow of the dead gemlord. Her last thought is for her people, whom, she now understands, are doomed.

In seconds, the sky outside darkens, and the surrounding landscape is recast as a new, massive shadowland takes root in Creation. The mountains themselves fade and change shape as the Thousand, the First and Forsaken Lion's tremendous citadel, comes into view of the living. Meticulous Owl, standing several leagues away, feels the earth shake. A twisted smirk — the closest thing to smile his mangled features can manage — crawls across his face as he thinks, *Mission accomplished*.

TURBULENCE IN YUGASH

The news of the loss of New Kadar breaks the population of Yugash into two broad factions. One advocates a wholesale retreat from Creation, believing that the conquest begun so confidently has proven to be not as easy as they once thought. The other faction insists on redoubling Yugash's efforts, that creating a permanent foothold in Creation is necessary for Yugash's survival.

ACT III: DAYS OF THE DEAD, NIGHTS OF THE GODS

The Locust War, while primarily effecting Creation, also sends shockwaves through the lands of the dead and Yu-Shan. The lords of the dead react with curiosity and opportunism, the gods with uncertainty and confusion. All the while, the South continues its transformation into a place of eternal war and death.

THE DEAD WALK

For the first time since the Contagion, a congress of the Deathlords sits in Stygia. The Deathlords parade their retinues through the streets of Stygia, each displaying all the pomp their arrival demands. The occasion for this congress? The First and Forsaken Lion himself has led a massive army into the vulnerable South, swelling his army wherever he goes. Such an act can only be a precursor to an attack on Stygia, a goal that each of them knows lies close to his cold heart. As it stands, no single Deathlord can stand against the Lion, but together, they may be able to discourage his craving for conquest. The Mask of Winters, the Deathlord who called the congress, presents the case for a new compact.

Some Deathlords cannot be convinced. The Lover Clad in the Raiment of Tears has no desire to involve herself in any military struggle, let alone one involving other Deathlords and laughs as she leaves. She has kept

away from Stygia for so long that she sees little value in seeking to prevent the Lion from taking it. Likewise, a strangely taciturn Eye and Seven Despairs seems not at all susceptible to the idea of a joint venture, taking the first opportunity to exit back to Cold House.

Those that remain, the Silver Prince, Walker in Darkness and the Mask of Winters, proceed then to forge a new compact. Their goal: stop the Lion from bringing his army back to the Underworld. To do so, the Mask of Winters reveals his ultimate weapon, the Eye of Autochthon. The Silver Prince and Walker in Darkness recoil as the Mask of Winters unveils it, but the Mask of Winters laughs and explains, with all of the haughtiness and threatening tones one might expect, that he has mastered its power. His plan is twofold. First, he proposes to send the mightiest of each of their deathknights with the Eye to the site of Old Gem, now an enormous shadowland at the southern tip of the Thousand. These nine will use the Eye to diminish that shadowland to nihility. Second, the Mask of Winters suggests that the Deathlords take this opportunity to expand their respective kingdoms in Creation. While the Realm struggles with the Autochthonians, the armies of the Deathlords might well be guaranteed success.

A cadre of nine deathknights — three from each of the Deathlords — embarks from Stygia toward Thorns, where the Mask of Winters' ships await to carry them South. During their journey, the deathknights encounter three Alchemical assassins, dispatched from the Lap. Five of the deathknights fall before they take down the assassins, and the remaining four proceed South with the Eye of Autochthon. As they continue toward the Thousand, an alarming number of strange, skittering automata, Autochthonian seers and Alchemical mystics cross their path. Before long, the deathknights realize that the Eye of Autochthon itself is attracting the denizens of the Machine World and that they must redouble their efforts or else be overwhelmed before the quest can be completed.

The many conflicts in which the deathknights engage inadvertently also draw the attention of the First and Forsaken Lion's agents, who command a regiment of the dead to hunt down the interloping deathknights. As the deathknights come into sight of the Thousand's outpost among the living, a dark figure appears at the gate of the shadowland. Knowing that the First and Forsaken Lion is hundreds of miles to the North, the four approach without fear as the figure steps into the moonlight, a smallish, pale lady whose feet do not touch the earth. She is Princess Magnificent with Lips of Coral and Robes of Black Feathers. The deathknights live just long enough to know their folly as the Deathlord's servants emerge from the trees bearing modified Monstrances of Celestial Portion. Princess Magnificent takes the Eye of Autochthon and the deathknights' Essences back to her chambers in the Thousand where she awaits the return of the First and Forsaken Lion.

INCURSIONS INTO AUTOCHTHON

Two of the Mask of Winters' deathknights, dispatched weeks before the new congress was called, infiltrate Autochthon itself to learn the secrets of the Autochthonians'

soulgems. The Mask of Winters first learned of soulgems when his contacts in the Guild, for whom no object is unattainable for the right price, presented him with samples. He was unfortunately not able to unlock the soulgems' secrets. Now, it is up to his deathknights to bring back someone who can show him everything.

The First and Forsaken Lion has already infiltrated Autochthon diplomatically. Meticulous Owl, having brought the sad news of New Kadar's destruction back to Yugash, now serves as ambassador superior in Kadar and has the ear of many government functionaries, gently influencing the goings-on in Creation. Meticulous Owl has also extended an invitation to Kerok, that he might send representatives to Stygia so that his people might better understand and perhaps conquer death. Factions of the Tripartite already debate the issue, some proposing entire colonies in the Underworld. What is more, thanks to Meticulous Owl, the First and Forsaken Lion has already learned the secrets of soulgems.

The Mask of Winters' deathknights learn many secrets and plan their escape but are soon discovered and flee into the Far Reaches of Autochthon.

THE SILVER PRINCE GREETS THE REALM

"Have no fear," the Silver Prince says. "I am not here to collect the due of the dead. Not yet. Alas, I am come for a much less fulfilling purpose. I am come with a message for your Regent."

The Silver Prince, flanked by his fleet admiral Ebon Siaka in a First Age ship renamed the *Forlorn Shade* and the loyal Solar Exalted Moray Darktide at the wheel of the *Mailed Fist*, stands at the bow of his personal skiff, the *Gentleman of Mercy*, and removes his helmet. Behind sail 200 ships, all formidable and carrying about them a black, inviolable mist.

One hundred leagues outside the Lap, a very surprised squadron of a dozen ships of House Mnemon's revenge-seeking fleet, still hunting for Autochthonian ships, quickly tacks and raises a white flag. The Dragon-Blooded sailors stand agape but prepared as the mysterious armada approaches to within 300 yards. Even at such a distance, it is clear that the individual standing at the bow is someone of great power. And when he speaks with a voice clear and tempting, echoing metallicly in their mind, they are transfixed.

The Silver Prince proceeds to the Lap, where, as proof of his good intentions, his fleet savages hundreds of Autochthonian ships. He then sails to the East, making his way toward Thorns and the Mask of Winters' 750 warships.

THE FIRST AND FORSAKEN LION ASSAULTS THE LAP

The Legion Sanguinary, a dread procession in lockstep that consumes everything in its path, now numbers over 1,000,000 soldiers of the dead. Having mastered the secrets of soulgems, the First and Forsaken Lion has been able to claim the Autochthonian dead as his own as well. Three Autochthonian-held cities have already fallen to



his might, but the First and Forsaken Lion craves the souls — Autochthonian and Creation-born alike — of the largest metropolis in the South in order to make his legions unstoppable before he marches back to the Underworld.

The First and Forsaken Lion declares a siege, obliterating the fields on the Lap's frontier and surrounding the Autochthonian fort to the South of the city, while 50,000 of his soldiers set up camp outside the Lap itself. The Autochthonians respond by setting thousands of automata led by the enormous Soulsteel Caste *Miraculous Icon of the Talents* upon the dead soldiers. *Miraculous Icon of the Talents* cuts paths through the dead, reducing the number of attackers significantly. In the tumult he creates, most of the Autochthonian soldiers occupying the fort break through the First and Forsaken Lion's troop lines toward the Lap, routing and dispatch 10,000 more of the dead and giving the Lap much-needed reinforcements. The dead — including over 4,000 nemiaries occupying Autochthonian corpses — flow over the Lap's battle walls and infiltrate the city, only to be obliterated by Alchemical Sorcery.

The First and Forsaken Lion loses over 250,000 troops in a single day. The Autochthonians lose half of their number. As the sun sets, the earth-shaking battle sends a great crack though the Last Supplicant, who now manifests an expression of anger in place of the solace of centuries past. The great stone figure rises and with a single sweep of its hand sends 100,000 of the dead sailing off southward through the air. The fighting ends with the First and Forsaken Lion retreating his army, unsure of the nature of this new enemy and unwilling to risk any more of his hard-won troops.

As the dead retreat, the Last Supplicant tells the Autochthonians (sightless and thinking them the original inhabitants of this place) that they must offer prayers to him to ensure his protection. They accept and offer to build a temple upon his head in honor of the protection he has given them in the battle. The Luminors begin planning for a tower not to honor the Last Supplicant, however, but to reach the sun, or as they see it, the Well of Souls.

For as long as they hold the Lap, the Last Supplicant will protect the Autochthonians from powerful enemies, supposing that he notices them. His demand that the air of the Lap remain clean allows the inhabitants to focus on agricultural production, which the Lap is fit for anyway.

THE FIRST AND FORSAKEN LION BETRAYED

Trailing a massive army of the dead, the First and Forsaken Lion approaches to within a league of the Thousand. As he reaches for the bone key to the shadowland gate, he hears voices in the chill wind drifting out of the shadows, voices telling of vengeance and betrayal. Before the Deathlord can fit his key in the lock, the gate drifts open, revealing the lithe form of Princess Magnificent with Lips of Coral and Robes of Black Feathers. "Come in, my love," she says softly. These are the first words she has spoken to him in centuries. "I have gifts for you."

EFFECTS OF THE EYE ON THE DEAD

The shockwaves from the Eye of Autochthon obliterate the shadowland, but also diminish the dead, immediately destroying all such creatures with less than Essence 2, meaning that most of the army immediately ceases to exist. All other creatures function *as if* their Essence were halved until they can reach a shadowland. Princess Magnificent, expecting the Eye of Autochthon to grant her eternal Oblivion at last, is disappointed to find that, not only has she survived, but that the Eye has managed to severely weaken her as well. Until she can return to a shadowland, she has Willpower 7, an Essence of 8 and a maximum Essence pool of 120 motes, and her health is -0x4/-1x4/-2x6/-4x4/1 (immediately following the blast she has an Essence pool of 60 and is at half maximum health). Moreover, until she returns to a shadowland, she can be permanently destroyed (though, of course, she doesn't know it).

The First and Forsaken Lion steps into the shadowland and sees the four Monstrances of Celestial Portion, feels the unholy power emanating from them. Taken off guard by the Princess' words and presents, he only manages to mutter, "I am moved by your gifts, O Princess. You are incomparable."

"I know," Princess Magnificent says, stepping past him through the gate and into Creation. Without another word she activates the Eye of Autochthon, destroying the shadowland and stranding herself and the few remains of the Lion's army — now her army — in Creation. The Eye of Autochthon is gone.

DEATHLORDS AT THE IMPERIAL CITY

Fokuf, the Regent of the Realm, a man who, until recently, showed no interest in ruling the Realm or the day-to-day business of diplomacy, begins demonstrating a disturbing level of interest in both politics and the goings-on within the Great Houses themselves. He receives the Silver Prince's missive and brings it before the Deliberative, who are shocked at his very presence and appalled that he is actually presenting them with such a ridiculous notion as relinquishing territories, however small or insignificant, belonging to the Realm. Thereafter, the Regent appears in public much more often than before, making a great show of his somewhat oafish oratory skill and poking fun at his own mean and low upbringing and associations, which are in fact neither mean nor low. In a matter of weeks, he achieves a popularity that none — especially those who had him installed as Regent — ever thought he would command. Talk arises that Fokuf has been bewitched, a possibility that seems more and more likely as time wears on. Soon, several Senators develop plans for the Regent's removal.

The architects of these plans, however, never get the chance to carry them out. The Autochthonian menace approaches, armies require marshalling, plans for the very survival of the Realm demand attention. There is work to do. The Regent's flippancy has to wait.

The skies blacken as 1,300 black ships appear on the horizon. Five ships disengage and approach the docks of the Imperial City, the citizens of which are both aghast and engaged by the vast First Age craft flanked by four black vessels of dread. The waiting throngs part as seven silent figures descend from the ships and make their way across the docks as if the crowd did not exist. As they do so, a powerful feeling of reverence stuns the crowd into inaction, as if all of their lost ancestors stood before them in mute judgment. Many fall to their knees. Some, out of a fear of being found unworthy by their ancestors, silently pray for forgiveness. A few mortals, overcome by grief and sorrow, lunge at the black-clad figures, only to fall to the ground like stones, dead. Dragon-Blooded troops and sentries, unimpressed by the procession as mortals are, stand aside reluctantly, as were their orders, feeling a freezing chill as the ghastly retinue passes. Soon, the Deathlords and their retainers mount the stairs of the palace and, reaching the uppermost step, come face to face with the Regent of the Realm.

"The Locust Crusade of the South makes war with everyone," one of the figures says, though it is not clear which. "We will secure your precious Realm against them for a price."

Fokuf's aide affirms this statement with a nod. Indeed, scouts report that the invaders rapidly approach and that advance troops can be expected to arrive on the Blessed Isle's shores in mere weeks. The shadowy figures retire with the Regent to a private chamber to discuss terms, while five deathknights stand silently at the door.

A tumultuous tone reigns in the palace in that hour. Two of Creation's most nefarious beings have now set foot on the Realm's shores at the indulgence of the Regent himself. It is treachery, some cry. Others accuse him of sedition, of lunacy. Here is the Realm's guardian discussing its future behind closed doors with the sworn enemy of all that lives. When the three emerge, all present snap to silent attention as Fokuf makes a startling announcement:

"Because of the threat to all men, the Realm herself must adapt in order to survive. So, let the ships sail and word be spread to the poles of Creation. Let all peoples apprehend the significance of this day, the first day of Calibration, not only the day in which the Realm recalls her Wyld Hunt — for the Realm requires their services on our shores — but the very day that her war on the Anathema concludes. Indeed, we beg their aid in protecting the world from those who poison and lay waste to all things. And for their aid, we shall bestow them with rich rewards."

The members of the Deliberative who watch this oration in stunned silence wonder just who the Regent means by "we." They demand to know by what logic and

THE DEATHLORDS' DEAL WITH THE REALM

The secret terms of the Regent's agreement with the Deathlords are as follows:

The Mask of Winters, the Silver Prince and Walker in Darkness will trap and destroy the Autochthonian invasion force and guarantee the safety of the Imperial City and its Regent for the duration of the invaders' offensive. To effect this, the Deathlords are granted a limited license to enter the Realm's lands and undertake whatever measures prove necessary to achieve their mission.

In return, the Realm grants the following:

- The Realm grants the Silver Prince right and title to all land holdings West of the Blessed Isle.
- The Realm guarantees that Walker in Darkness shall suffer no interference from The Realm East and North and South of Nexus.
- The Realm grants the Mask of Winters right and title to all lands West of Nexus and East of the Blessed Isle.

In addition, the war of the Anathema must be halted. The Deathlords do little to explain this clause but are quite adamant about its importance to their plan and refuse to proceed without the Regent taking the measure. In their own minds, bringing the Anathema out of hiding will make it easier for the Deathlords to reclaim the lost Solar Essences that they still consider their own rightful property.

authority the Regent has risked the stability of the Realm. There are other, more acceptable allies against the Autochthonians, they cry. But all the Deliberative know, the bargain has been sworn to and sanctified by the leader they themselves placed in the seat at the Realm's head. Invalidating the contract would invite a doom much worse than the Autochthonians could deliver, to be sure. Thus, sullenly, these Senators return to their families, sending some of them North or East to await the end of the war in relative safety with distant cousins.

REACTIONS AND IGNORANCE IN YU-SHAN

The Five Maidens are far too engrossed in the Games of Divinity to notice many of the goings-on in the South of Creation. The Celestial Bureaucracy, on the other hand, has a dual perspective on the matter. Firstly, the number of official complaints, writs, injunctions and legal motions in the wake of the Autochthonian invasion has pushed an already inefficient administration into complete gridlock. Prayers and offerings are still being processed, so the situation has not resulted in a significant depletion of power, but it is clear that some action must be taken

soon. Therefore, hundreds of committees have met to discuss the situation and attempt to agree on an appropriate response, if any, but such a decision is a long way off.

Second, many senior officials in the Celestial Bureaucracy know who the Autochthonians are and, more importantly, who their god is. As the situation escalates and the South falls, these officials become more and more concerned about what the appearance of the Autochthonians might signify. Some suggest that the invaders might herald the return of Autochthon, which seems like a dangerous proposition, at least for Creation. They set precautions in motion, the most important of which is to teach the South's current censor, Wong Bongerok, how to release the Kukla upon the South, should the situation become hopeless.

After the eventual death of Wong Bongerok, Ryzala, the Shogun of the Department of Celestial Concerns, signs decrees closing, until further notice, all of the Celestial gateways in the South. Doing so strands many gods in Creation and leaves only a few official functionaries of the Bureaucracy to attempt to keep order. Two Sidereal Exalted, Dozima Wokish and Ulsim Pedawa, remain as well but cannot control the chaos and suffer for not being able to cast any auguries concerning the Autochthonians' fate.

THE GODS OF CREATION SCATTER

Elemental spirit courts throughout the South cease to convene for months due to attacks on their Demesnes. Even the Court of the Orderly Flame ceases to attend to the South's fires. As a result, many of the processes of nature fail throughout the South, kindling thousands of Wyld-tainted wastelands and causing weather conditions to go berserk. Local gods fight to keep their domains stable, battling the lightning, the inferno rains and the tumultuous earth itself.

As the invasion first moves beyond Gem and into the South proper, Wong Bongerok, the Celestial Censor of the South, dispatches his spies and soon discovers not only that the Lap has fallen, but that the entire region has been embroiled in a hopeless war while he reposed in Yu-Shan, heedless of the news. Returning to his citadel in Creation, Bongerok finds heralds and couriers bearing writs of protest and accusation from the little gods of the South, some years old, alleging thousands of injustices, trespassings, plunderings, devastations and executions performed by the Autochthonians. In view of the seeming epidemic of transgressions, Bongerok sets out toward the Lap, intending to make a great show of getting answers and exacting justice. He finds defeat. The Alchemicals there do not recognize his authority, and when he threatens them with punishment, the Alchemicals eject him from the city.

Three days later, Wong Bongerok returns with an army of fire elementals, but the Autochthonian army makes short work of them with blacktog-treated weapons. *Miraculous Icon of the Talents* and the nine other Alchemicals there defeat Bongerok on the field of battle, and the censor flees to the West, toward Mount Tsitato, an

ancient gift bestowed upon the dragons of fire by Gaia, an enormous volcano of blemishless red jade half-sunk beneath the waves and brimming with an aura of heat and power. Nearing death, he makes the preparations necessary to summon the Kukla and loose it upon the South.

INCURSIONS INTO YU-SHAN

Over a period of weeks, the Autochthonians launch a number of investigations into the Celestial gateways closest to the Lap (51 and 52). The gateways' guardians repel the invaders, but only after fierce fighting. As a result, these gateways are placed under tenfold guard.

Following their defeat, the Autochthonians build fortifications around the two gateways and station contingents of 3,000 conscripts at the site of each one. While they do not try to enter the gateways again, they remain fascinated with them and study them as much as possible without crossing passing beyond into Yu-Shan. Several Celestial sentries appear to warn them not to entice the wrath of the gods by desecrating their holy places of egress.

The Autochthonians answer by dispatching two of their finest, most potent Alchemicals, one to each of the gateways, where they force their way past the sentries and unleash dozens of small but lethal automata. The Alchemicals escape, and the automata are destroyed, but not before creating a panic within the Celestial Bureaucracy out of all proportion to the actual effect of the attacks.

THE END OF THE AGE

Whether anyone in Creation wants to admit it or not, the end of the Age is upon them. The Realm is decaying by the day, and the Solar Exalted, once hunted to the last, are now slowly creeping out from their places of hiding, testing the rumors spreading throughout the Threshold and growing bolder by the day. Perhaps out of fear, the gods in Yu-Shan seem to withdraw their interest in the world, stranding even their own Sidereal Exalted functionaries in the world below. One by one, the Celestial gateways close, and in time, only the most remote remain active.

As old gods die, new, strange gods rise, especially in Southern regions profoundly affected by the invasion. Old world spirits tend to either despise the coming of the Autochthonians or take great pains to alter their beings in order to please them, changing their very natures into concepts or purposes more in line with the Autochthonian way. New gods emerge where the old have fled that better reflect a world that, more and more, depends on orderly rituals of industry.

Wherever the Autochthonians go, elementals flee toward their proper elemental pole, such that the world begins to show signs of a new natural order heretofore unheard of. Some species of elemental die out, while those that remain become more homogeneous with each passing generation. Unique elementals such as the garda birds keep their shapes, but grow ill if they stray too far from their elemental pole.

Amidst these changes, the world takes its final turns toward the new Age.

AUTOCHTHONIANS BREACH THE REALM'S DEFENSES

War rages at sea for months, with both sides taking heavy casualties. The Realm's navies, aided by the Deathlords' forces, have heretofore prevented the Autochthonian ships and floating automata from landing on the Blessed Isle's shores. But the tides have turned. While the Realm has only so many ships and limited production options, the Autochthonian factories outside the Lap churn out vehicles and weapons daily. Easily outnumbered, many of the Realm's ships break ranks or are sunk, allowing the enemy to penetrate into the Blessed Isle itself.

The first wave of attack breaking onto the beachhead consists of jade automata, closely followed by amphibious war carriages and ships carrying 3,000 shock troops that dig trenches and build bulwarks against the squads of Dragon-Blooded warriors surging in their direction. With the spires of Arjuf in the distance, the first hours of battle proceed in favor of the Realm's defenders. But further fractures in the naval defenses allow the invaders to land in four other locations in the vicinity of Arjuf, delivering infantry and war machines to the fray and effectively surrounding the city. In the face of overwhelming odds, the forces within Arjuf signal a surrender.

ARJUF FALLS INTO DARKNESS

In the thick of the night, as soldiers rest and automata lurk along the perimeter around Arjuf, the armies of the dead creep toward the city, readying for a midnight assault. As they approach, the alarums in Arjuf and the surrounding camps go up, but it is already too late. The Mask of Winters' citadel, the Juggernaut, slithers up to their main camp and crushes a quarter of their number while his troops cut down those hurriedly standing to fight.

On the other side of Arjuf, Walker in Darkness' army descends upon the city walls, the Deathlord's sorcery destroying the ancient wall in seconds. Hungry ghosts and war ghosts pour into the city, slaying invaders and civilians alike, sparing none. Victims are slain by the thousands regardless of whether they stand or flee.

The Silver Prince's fleet, appearing out of the darkness, sinks half the Autochthonians' ships. Cut off from escape, the last of the invaders fall to the Mask of Winters' maggot cleanup crews.

Death follows death, and soon, a shadowland takes form, extending outward from the center of the city and encompassing an area of 400 square miles around Arjuf. Shocked and anxious, the Dragon-Blooded and mortal troops of the Realm flee back across the countryside toward Nishimo.

COUP D'ÉTAT IN THE IMPERIAL CITY

The Deliberative burns in outrage, cursing the Regent for his audacity and treason. "By inviting the most treacherous and dangerous masters of death," one says, "the

Betrayer Fokuf has served nothing but evil, having placed himself in the power of the infamously sinister Mask of Winters and others of his ilk."

A unanimous vote strips official power from the Regent, with the Deliberative itself claiming executive power of the Realm until a new Regent can be decided upon. Fokuf's arrest is commanded, and dozens of elite guards go off in search of him in his palace quarters. Meanwhile, having heard the Deliberative's decision through his spies, Fokuf and his loyal retinue, which includes two deathknights and one Solar Exalt, descends to the throne room and orders the royal guard to take as prisoners any of the Deliberative's elite guards entering the palace. He then summons his advisors and representatives from the Great Houses. When all have arrived, including many members of the Deliberative itself, Fokuf sits down on the throne and declares in a frightening voice not his own:

"The Scarlet Empress is gone. She has abandoned the Realm and left her to squalor in the hands of fools. Because of these fools' incompetence and infighting, the Realm very nearly fell, when she should have been mighty and united against the enemy. I find it unconscionable to allow such a state of affairs to endure. Thereby, as the Defender of the Realm, I hereby take the mantle and crown of Emperor, that the power of fools might be properly governed."

A great roar erupts from the throne room as some parties scurry out the door, some shout their objection and still other cheer in approval. Dozens of the Deliberative's elites try to force their way into the throne room, some fire arrows in Fokuf's direction as he retreats into the Empress' sanctum. In a day's time, armed forces march the streets, some loyal to the throne, some to the Deliberative, others to no one in particular. Minor battles rage on as the Emperor sits safe in the palace guarded by thousands of loyal guards and mercenaries. Walls and entire buildings fall, and brave warriors die in the name of freedom, of integrity, of honor or family or righteousness, some with love of country in their hearts, others concerned only with safeguarding their own interests, honorable or not.

As the days and weeks go by, as the Imperial City begins to burn and chaos is everywhere, Fokuf produces lists of Senators and other political enemies that he declares outlaws, making efforts to have them hunted down and killed. Backed by a growing force of mercenaries and pardoned Solar Exalted while most forces loyal to the Deliberative battle the Autochthonians overseas, Fokuf has little trouble taking control of the Imperial City amidst the chaos and executes dozens of his enemies every day, revising his list of the proscribed nearly every hour. Informers are everywhere, and even the powerful would rather leave than risk Fokuf's displeasure. Some wealthy families yield to the temptation to collaborate with the tyrant and grow richer by supplying more mercenaries and slaves to the palace.

Nearly one year into his rule, as the city relaxes into a tentative calm, Fokuf takes a few particular actions that may earn him some credit with future historians. First, the

Emperor takes three wives, one each from Houses Cathak, Ragara and, to the surprise of all, Nellens. His announcement comes on the cusp of the Calibration, nearly two years since he made his deal with the Deathlords that ultimately kept the Autochthonians from overtaking the Realm, a decision he still defends as prudent.

Second, Fokuf dispatches a flotilla of ships bearing messages to the Autochthonian magistrates in the Lap, inviting them to send ambassadors and representatives to live in the Imperial City as guests, that the two peoples might find some way of resolving their disagreements. Critics, believing that it must be some new artifice that will again bring strife to the city, receive the announcement with some concern. But the enterprise meets with a measure of success. The Autochthonians, eager to capitalize on the Realm's offer and use the ensuing peace to regroup and consolidate their forces, send dozens of ambassadors, including two Alchemical Exalted: *Fair-Spoken Rishi* and *The Bountiful Manumitter*.

Fokuf orders 10 block of the city (blocks formerly inhabited by enemy Senators) razed and has built in its place a grand chateau fit for visiting delegates from Autochthonia and their families. Called the House of the Machine, it is the greatest civil project since the Empress disappeared and is publicly declared a triumph by the mostly newly elected Deliberative.

THE WRATH OF THE GODS

Wounded and near death, Wong Bongerok arrived at Mount Tsitato months ago. He paid tribute to the guardians there, as is the ritual custom, sitting for weeks in prayer as his body healed and his strength grew. Once he had grown potent and healthy, he began the arduous process of summoning forth the Kukla, the Elemental Dragon of Earth imprisoned beneath Creation by the gods.

For seven months, he labors with the proper rituals and formal ceremonies summoning the Kukla's guardians (as some ceremonies can only be successfully performed during specific astronomical conditions). Slowly, the results become evident, as over the following days, the seven enigmatic guardians placed by the Unconquered Sun to watch over the Kukla appear with enormous keys that fit into locks on the side of the mountain. As their keys are turned, each of the guardians blooms black and white flames and disappears.

The ground shakes and spits fire, lava and haze. Wong Bongerok, having finished his last spell, opens up his wounds once more with a sharpened claw and lets his hot blood sanctify the last syllables of the incantation still floating in the air. In the next second, Wong Bongerok disappears, replaced by the greatest conflagration seen in Creation since the Usurpation. The skies turn gray as



molten rock and ash rain down for thousands of miles, an effect lasting several years. The colossal tidal waves produced by the Kukla's eruption out of the earth pound coastal areas throughout Creation. Some coastal cities without Terrestrial sorcerers or friendly associations with powerful water spirits suffer complete destruction as shores worldwide are pushed back from tens to hundreds of miles, altering Creation's geography forever.

THE KUKLA'S PATH OF DESTRUCTION

As directed by the spell that freed him, the Kukla proceeds to the South and lays waste first to the Font of Mourning, then proceeds throughout the rest of the South, leveling everything in his path. But the Kukla's rage at being imprisoned for so long knows no bounds, such that it will take heroic efforts to stop him from ravaging the whole of Creation. The creature's general path is as follows:

- **The Font of Mourning:** The Kukla moves as a speed of 100 miles per hour in the water from a spot near the Southwestern edge of Creation. The Font of Mourning is his primary target. When the Kukla arrives, he hammers, stomps and burns the entire peninsula, killing every living thing in the region. The *Patropolis of Ot* retreats back to Yugash in time and does not return for as long as the Kukla runs amok. The Autochthonians still extant in Creation find themselves stranded should they attempt to return home. When he is satisfied with the amount of mayhem he has caused, the Kukla slumbers for seven days.

- **The Lap:** The Kukla moves at 200 miles per hour on land toward the Lap, the second target designated for him. The Last Suppliant rises to meet the Kukla in battle, but even that enigmatic being has no hope against the creature. The Kukla crushes the Last Suppliant underfoot and destroys the hastily produced flood-wall Charms keeping the risen tides from drowning the city, with predictable results.

- **Paragon:** Wong Bongerok never found out about the liberation of Paragon and directed the Kukla to proceed there as well. Here, the Kukla meets some minor resistance in the form of 200 Dragon-Blooded and the Sidereal Exalted Dozima Wokish, who is among the few survivors. Dozima can foresee the Kukla's path and sends horsemen off throughout the Threshold to warn the targets. Paragon is destroyed.

- **Red Alsan:** While not directed to destroy Red Alsan, the Kukla can smell the blood and rage there from hundreds of miles away. Upon laying waste to Paragon, it turns south and rushes to Red Alsan's grim battlefields, where the fighting still continues. Chaos ensues as the earth begins to shake at the beast's approach, and the scene becomes one of panic and terror as the creature is sighted. Both the soldiers and the Exalted defending Red Alsan and piloting the thousand-forged dragon Govisoshi and the Autochthonians led by General Exsira and

Excessively Righteous Blossom join forces. The battle is not so hopeless as with other cities the Kukla has savaged, for those in Red Alsan are already in the midst of battle and have been living desperate lives for years, but they are still overcome, and there are very few survivors, one of whom is Cathak Letal. Govisoshi itself lies broken and crushed, the Exalted pilots within, dead. After Red Alsan is destroyed, the Kukla moves on to other battlegrounds in the vicinity.

- **The Blessed Isle:** Having fulfilled its mission and sated its rage on the Southern battlefields, the Kukla finds itself drawn to the Elemental Pole of Earth. It backtracks through the desert and trudges through the sea, emerging from the water on the shore of an island to the South of the

DEFEATING THE KUKLA

Several means of either destroying or imprisoning the Kukla exist. All of these solutions rely on more than raw power. For one, the Kukla is not stupid. Despite his rage, he does not possess a mere animal intelligence. Obvious strategies will certainly be guessed and thwarted. Only especially bright individuals armed with extraordinary weapons stand a chance.

- **Thousand-Forged Dragon:** Govisoshi can be repaired by skilled sorcerer-savants familiar with First Age technology. Minimum of Lore ●●●●● and Craft (First Age Weapons) ●●●●●● required.

- **The Eye of Autochthon:** This artifact is extant in the South somewhere. The last place it was known to be is the area of Old Gem, but there are no guarantees it is still there. It may very well have been returned to the Mask of Winters.

- **An Army of Exalted:** If over 100 Solar Exalted and potent (Essence 4+) Celestial Exalted can be summoned together to fight the Kukla, they may be able to kill it permanently.

- **Summoning the Kukla's Keepers:** Characters may learn the secrets of binding the Kukla and returning him to his prison. This may involve appealing to the gods (see below) or finding a lesser elemental dragon of Earth extant in Creation. Either way, the solution is slow going. If Exalted wish to banish the Kukla, three Terrestrial Circle spells, three Celestial Circle spells and months of rituals are required.

- **Appeal to the Gods:** The gods are far away and may not even be inclined to help. It will take many hours to travel to the nearest Celestial gateway, and then, getting past the guards may be difficult or impossible. This should be a last resort, and by the time the characters return, it may be too late.

Blessed Isle. The Kukla ignores the few inhabitants there but demolishes a wide strip of the island in the process of crossing it. An army consisting of both Autochthonians and Realm troops attempts to repel the dragon with elemental-bane machines as it steps up onto the Blessed Isle's shore, but it is no use, and the troops flee.

- **The Imperial City:** At long last, the wrath of the gods touches the heart of the Realm. Thousands of Dragon-Blooded and dozens of other Exalted of various types fight together with the remnants of the Autochthonians, who have come to the Blessed Isle out of desperation, unable to return to Autochthonia. Together, they fend the Kukla off, but the city is laid waste and a staggering number of casualties lay buried beneath the rubble.

- **The Threshold and Beyond:** The Kukla is seemingly unstoppable. Lookshy, Nexus, Great Forks and all the towns and villages in between suffer the beast's wrath. From here, he heads to the Northeast to be as far away from his prison as possible, a place he stays until years pass and the gods take the trouble to bind the Kukla once more. Until then, he returns to the Blessed Isle by the same path once per year during Calibration, drawn uncontrollably to the Pole of Earth.

POSSIBLE FUTURES

The Locust War scenario may go on forever without any side achieving ultimate victory. Such a state may represent a new status quo for a series or be a stage for ongoing shifts in the politics of Creation, where heretofore unknown or powerless parties suddenly have an opportunity to make their mark on the world. An ongoing, indefinite future such as this is the suggested path for Storytellers to take. However, no Storyteller can foresee the ingenious plans (or outrageous gaffes) of their players. Here are some suggestions for dealing with some of the more extreme potential outcomes of the scenario.

THE MACHINE SUPREME

The Bountiful Manumitter betrays the Emperor, tricking him into a new war with the Mask of Winters. As the Realm's military engages the Deathlord on multiple fronts, including a bold campaign in the Underworld that attempts to bring the fight to the gates of Stygia itself, the Autochthonian army takes the capitol, murders the Emperor and tears the newly rebuilt Imperial City to the ground. Having made a deal with several Solar Exalted, the Autochthonians reopen the Seal of Eight Divinities and bring Autochthon through the Void and into Creation itself. In the conflagration of Autochthon's emergence, Creation dies and falls into Oblivion, taking Malfeas with it. But the Malfeasans rage at the Machine God and swear a new pact to destroy the only world left. Soon, they invent ways to corrupt Alchemical Essences, and the cycle begins anew.

THE DEATH OF AUTOCHTHON AND THE FIRST AND FORSAKEN LION'S VENGEANCE

Following his defeat at the Lap and betrayal by Princess Magnificent (assuming the shadowland at Old Gem has been successfully diminished), the First and Forsaken Lion decides to move his kingdom to a place where even the Malfeasans cannot touch him — Autochthon itself. Here, he quickly takes control of the soulgem industry, which he requires for the Essence he can extract from souls. In time, the Deathlord also discovers methods of corrupting Alchemical Essences and produces Abyssal Exalted of immense size and power that are not beholden to the Malfeasans, but to him. After 10 years, he has transformed Yugash into a twisted clockwork kingdom of the dead under his rule, then seeks to conquer the other nations of Autochthonia and invade the Great Maker's Core. If he is successful and Autochthon himself dies, Autochthon arises in the Labyrinth as a new Malfean, but under the control of the First and Forsaken Lion, who then, out of vengeance, makes war on the other Malfeasans and attempts to take control of the other unsuspecting Deathlords.

APPENDIX: SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

THE BOUNTIFUL MANUMITTER

The Bountiful Manumitter is an ancient chancellor of Yugash's courts, well known for his fairness and good judgment. When the invitation arrived from the Realm, the *Manumitter* was just settling into his new seat as the Lap's chief justice. Although he would rather have stayed in the Lap, he earned dozens of nominations for the position of Envoy Prime to the Realm, an honor the *Manumitter* could not justifiably refuse. As Envoy Prime, he is responsible for all matters of relations with the Realm. The other Autochthonian ambassadors, including *Fair-Spoken Rishi*, answer to him.

The Bountiful Manumitter is reckoned to be over 1,000 years old, though even he does not know his exact age. He is an expert in torture and a sublime master of martial arts, with few peers in Autochthonia or Creation. A Starmetal Caste Alchemical Exalted, the *Manumitter* has an Essence of 6 and stands 30 feet tall. His Manse at the center of the House of the Machine towers 300 feet into the sky.

EXCESSIVELY RIGHTEOUS BLOSSOM, HONORARY LECTOR

Excessively Righteous Blossom is a brave but flawed Alchemical Exalted of the Moonsilver Caste. *Blossom* has been known to be overly idealistic to the point of folly — hence his name — and routinely goes to great rhetorical

lengths to defend his unrealistic points of view. Despite these flaws, *Excessively Righteous Blossom* is a lethal combatant and is always willing to face whatever dangers stand against him or his country. Unfortunately, he has no head for strategy.

Excessively Righteous Blossom has Essence 3 and stands seven feet tall, with a visage much like a human's. In battle, he fights with a barbed moonsilver daiklave fitted with a mechanical seven-shot assault crossbow in the guard, triggered by a switch on the pommel. This weapon is called the Barisage Device.

FAIR-SPOKEN RISHI

A master of oratory and rhetoric, *Fair-Spoken Rishi* is an old political horse with over 400 years of experience in the politics and laws of Yugash. In the wake of the invasion, *Rishi* turned to ethics, specializing in the treatment of extra-Autochthonian societies. While he never directly criticizes the government of Yugash, many infer pacifist leanings from *Rishi's* writings. When the opportunity to travel to Creation as an ambassador arises, *Fair-Spoken Rishi* uses his influence and connections to secure his own appointment, intent on learning more about the people of Creation and doing his part to promote peace.

Hundreds of years ago, *Fair-Spoken Rishi* was a celebrated soldier and war hero. If need be, he can access his military protocols and make for a formidable enemy. He never strikes first, however, unless a moral dilemma so demands. *Rishi*, an Orichalcum Caste Alchemical, has an Essence of 4 and stands 15 feet tall. Four spectral green eyes the size of a large human fist arranged in a diamond shape peer out curiously from a face marked by compassion and grief.

THE GUILLESS PURGATOR

Administrator par excellence, *The Guileless Purgator* has little time for frivolity. Blessed with perfect recall and a stellar education, the *Purgator* models himself after the great governors and executives of Yugash. A Jade Alchemical, the *Purgator* has no head for intrigue, but is instead a man of figures and highly detailed production strategies. He hates surprises and becomes agitated when events do not proceed exactly according to plan.

Unlike other loyal Alchemicals, he typically avoids combat if possible, but he is equipped with Charms enough to handle himself if necessary. He has an Essence of 3 and is the size of a tall man.

LISSOME AVID ENGINEER

Lissome Avid Engineer is the most famous architect and engineer in Yugash, having designed and built the abodes of politicians and famously successful businesspersons. She has willingly come to Creation to learn about the native building materials, but she also

comes for adventure. An Alchemical Exalted of the Starmetal Caste, *Lissome Avid Engineer* is a curious and daring individual, unafraid to fight or delve into the unknown.

Lissome Avid Engineer begins the scenario with Essence 2. If *Lissome Avid Engineer* survives the ordeal beneath New Kadar, she grows to Essence 16, her body enmeshed throughout the caverns and excavated tunnels of the mountain. Before her transformation, she carried a sleek starmetal pneumatic hammer called Singular Impetus Generation Sledge (Artifact ●●●, speed +2, accuracy +3, damage +8L, defense +1, Minimums: S ●●●).

MANY-PILLARED ARMIPOTENT COLOSSUS

A senior Jade Caste Alchemical, *Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus* never wanted to come to Paragon. He was very happy defending the Lap with the other noble Alchemicals, many of whom are his compatriots of many years. Instead, he was placed in charge of a cadre of youthful Alchemicals and sent to Paragon to oversee a terrified populace. Miserable, *Armipotent Colossus* does what is necessary to keep the machines running and prevent the Paragonians from disrupting production. When foreign soldiers arrive from the Realm and entrench themselves in the hostile population, distributing weapons and organizing them into urban-warfare units and the situation thereafter continues to go further and further south, *Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus* makes preparations for a hasty departure back to the Lap.

Many-Pillared Armipotent Colossus has Essence 7 and stands 18 feet in height and seven feet wide, rolling along on three wide green jade casters. His four arms, which appear like pillars when at rest, facing upward with his hands retracted, are all equipped with several spring-loaded jade blades (Artifact ●), and each finger is an assault crossbow that automatically generated bolts by expending 2 motes of Essence. His main blade, which fits into a slot on his shoulder, is a black jade reaver daiklave called the Vanquisher.

MIRACULOUS ICON OF THE TALENTS

Miraculous Icon of the Talents was constructed as a nationalistic symbol of Yugash's creative and martial superiority over all nations. He quickly proved himself much more. Not only has he inspired the Autochthonian troops in the direst of battles, but he has planned and executed many successful campaigns and fought on the battlefield alongside mere mortals. Always ready with an encouraging (if robotic) quip, *Miraculous Icon of the Talents'* manner is unswervingly confident and moralistic. Most other Alchemical Exalted consider his high-spiritedness dull, but no one argues on the battlefield, where he frequently offers last-minute advice to those he slays in Yugash's name. In combat, *Miraculous*

Icon of the Talents wields a 30-foot-long soulsteel daiklave called *Tower of Piety and Glory*. He has an Essence of 6 and stands 40 feet high.

UNHESITATINGLY LOYAL WEAPON

Constructed hundreds of years ago using now hermetic Alchemical secrets, *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon*, an Orichalcum Caste Alchemical Exalted, does not even consider herself alive, but merely a machine who's only purpose is to fight and kill. She was discovered and revived during the Elemental War but did not have the chance to distinguish herself before the fighting ended. Now, she is finally in her element. She has no moral sense, no compassion for her enemies. Her only desire is to worship the Machine God by fighting in his name.

Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon is Essence 4 and stands 20 feet high. She is armed with 12 pneumatic crossbows mounted on various parts of her body and an eight-foot orichalcum daiklave called the *Glaive of Module Fourteen*.

EXSIRAR, AUTOCHTHONIAN GENERAL

Exsitar is an old, partially blind, but undeniably capable general. He plans and leads over a dozen successful battles throughout the Silent Crescent during the first year of the Locust War, many resulting in almost no Autochthonian casualties. As a reward for his military mastery, he is placed in command of the desert operations East of Gem and granted *Meticulous Owl*, who offers his expertise once again, for the general's use as a counselor. Exsitar trusts *Meticulous Owl* at first, then grows to resent the latitude of authority the deathknight assumes, ultimately volunteering him to return to Gem for reinforcements when others might perhaps be more suited. As a result, Exsitar must lead his forces through the desert without a guide. After the Owl's dismissal, battles that might have ended within hours now take weeks or even months. A few seem to go on indefinitely.

METICULOUS OWL, DEATHKNIGHT

A Day Caste Abyssal Exalted, *Meticulous Owl* is the flawlessly loyal favorite of the First and Forsaken Lion. He has traveled extensively throughout the South and has been his master's sole envoy to Creation. Many have tried to bribe the Owl, to sway his devotion away from the Lion, but all such attempts have failed. In the matter of the Locust War, the First and Forsaken Lion leaves most matters to *Meticulous Owl*, who has proven to be a master manipulator. When the initial plan to create a shadowland in Gem fails, it is *Meticulous Owl* who levelheadedly alters the plan.

To the Autochthonians, *Meticulous Owl* seems at first to be a valuable tool and source of information. However, Owl slowly begins to move against the invaders in his own way and in his master's name, ultimately revealing his own treachery.

Despite his fearsome, twisted visage and hobbled, decaying body, *Meticulous Owl* can be both courtly and dangerous. He is armed with a small soulsteel knife and a dozen soulsteel shuriken. He wears a black jade deathmask on formal occasions.

GOLDEN VENNA BOAR-RIDER, OUTCASTE QUEEN

Golden Venna Boar-Rider is brought to Autochthonia as a slave and given to Collaw Vin Urt, a wealthy Yugash aristocrat who quickly discovers the outcaste's rebellious temperament and insatiable lust. Within a week of her purchase, she had destroyed delicate machinery and priceless works of art with her incessant and unpredictable raging and forced her favors on a dozen men, indiscriminate of their station. She spent weeks locked in a dark, sterile chamber as punishment but emerged even angrier and more prurient than before. She performed her work, but every night, her emotions were like a storm. Vin Urt tried to transfer her to some other worthy, but by that time, word had spread, and none would take her. Desperate, he took her to the Far Reaches, miles from the city and abandoned her, bound and gagged, to fend for herself. When he returned, he feigned ignorance and suggested that she had escaped.

She soon breaks her bonds and finds herself in the Far Reaches' chaotic morass of twisting tunnels and unbelievable geometric horrors. A part of her was terrified, but another felt strangely at peace, akin to the serenity she felt in the Wyld-tainted lands of the Font of Mourning. She makes do with makeshift weapons, eating from nutrient veins she manages to tap and defending herself against gremlins and worse.

While *Golden Venna Boar-Rider* cannot master this place, each day it gets easier. She has tried to escape, but cannot. She has cried out for vengeance in the night, but all she can hear are the echoes of her own voice and the clockwork sound of turning gears and hissing pistons. As weeks turn into years, this place becomes her home. The gremlins can sense her power and watch her, secretly at first, then openly, bringing her tidbits, handfuls of sticky oil, broken gears held aloft in triumph. She accepts these things and grants them kisses, shows them miracles.

Golden Venna Boar-Rider is no longer golden. She bathes in pools of black creosote and satisfies her lust on absconded pistons freed from the orderly patters of Autochthon. Her gremlins marvel at her unceasingly. She is the Queen of the Far Reaches. And she is waiting out there.

FOKUF, EMPEROR OF THE REALM

Fokuf is a very inconsistent and sometimes recklessly eccentric individual, one who has long hidden his desire for accolades and admiration. The harmless dichotomies he had been known for, such as his capricious tastes in wine and his indecisiveness on the matter of his own sexual orientation, become frightening exigencies now that the

context is much more dire, such as when he is deciding which political enemy to hang next. Physically, Fokuf is a tall man, with unnaturally blue eyes and a blemished complexion of white and pink.

Before declaring himself Emperor, Fokuf is very careful to seem as ridiculous and harmless as possible. Once he comes out of his shell, so to speak, he hides nothing, emerging as an inconstantly cruel despot just as likely to have a man beaten to death for no good reason as to pardon an inveterate political enemy. Fokuf also has an obsession with slavery and is always seeking to increase the number of slaves under his power. Some unlucky Senators and their sons unfortunately find themselves in the Emperor's collection.

CATHAK LETAL, GARRISON COMMANDER AT THE LAP

Pegged as a craven by his father and family, Letal was saddled with the most harmless and ignominious position that could be found for him: the guardianship of a frontier state firmly in the pocket of the Realm. Beset with horrible pay and no respect from those under his command, for years he maintained the barest minimum of effort, convinced that destiny had only misery and shame in store for him.

However, in the face of the Autochthonian invasion, Letal sees his chance to shine. He does everything in his power to rally his family and supporters to his aid, only to have his every effort upset at every opportunity. As he watches Autochthonian troops march into the Lap, he understands that his path does not lie with the Realm and flees into the desert, eventually making his way to Red Alsan.

Cathak Letal is an Air-aspected Dragon-Blood. His years away from the Blessed Isle have brought out a tolerant, cosmopolitan disposition that suits him well in Red Alsan, where he soon makes his mark as a brave, trustworthy and dedicated soldier. He recognizes that Red Alsan is his true place, that his prior failures were due to his unfitness to exist within the Realm, and vows in his heart not to return to the Realm or his family.

MAGNATE UTONO

Utono is a cool and calculating pragmatist. She does not wish to see the Lap fall into enemy hands, but sees no other choice but to remain when others have fled and surrender when others may fight. She harbors a genuine sorrow for having betrayed Letal, but in her mind, it could be no other way. She was certain that she could bargain the threat away, repelling the enemy from the Realm and gaining fame and promotion for herself along the way. What she could not have foreseen was how intractable the enemy is.

MNEMON ARTICRACENT, NAVAL CAPTAIN

Mnemon Articracent is a celebrated champion of his house and a Fire-aspected Dragon-Blood. He commands

the First Age warship *Antagonist*, a moniker that fits his temperament well. He is as famous for being ruthless as he is for being recklessly devoted to House Mnemon, often taking the side of fools simply for the sake of family loyalty.

Articracent views all non-Mnemon families and individuals as dogs and treats them as such, often to his own misfortune. He has insulted some of the most powerful Dragon-Blooded soldiers in the Realm, as well as some of the most irascible spirits and survived. For this his family considers him the luckiest man alive and continues to hold him in high regard.

GOVISOSHI, THOUSAND-FORGED DRAGON

One of the few fully functioning thousand-forged dragons still extant in Creation, Govisoshi once protected the Old Realm metropolis of Agat, now the site of Red Alsan. The thousand-forged dragons were clockwork monsters crafted by Solar Deliberative-aligned sorcerer-engineers from the Five Magical Materials during the First Age. Govisoshi has spent millennia inactive and buried in the sands under Agat. To recall Govisoshi from the sands, one must activate the Radiance and Resonance Pharos, a magical beacon powered by richly endowed Hearthstones that awakens the dragon's appetite for Essence. Once summoned, characters can control Govisoshi by uttering a unique encoded phrase ("hirashumishu"), known only by Rosh the Triumphant. Those issuing commands without prefacing them with the encoded phrase will be attacked 100 percent of the time.

THE LAST SUPPLICANT

The Last Suppliant is an ancient spirit carved by a long-retired lesser elemental dragon of earth. He has slumbered since the First Age and remains naïve regarding the events of the past 1,000 years, including the destruction of his face. He stands 1,500 feet in height and has the strength of mountains but dislikes making any physical efforts in favor of meditation. Practically speaking, he believes that the Autochthonians are the Lap's First Age residents and that very little time has passed. From now on, the Last Suppliant remains awake and sometimes answers prayers and questions made to him by those who make the perilous journey to the tower atop his head. If an enemy of significant power attacks the Lap again, the Last Suppliant may stand and assist, but not before removing the temple from his head as if it were a hat.

The Last Suppliant does not understand, nor has he any interest in, the details of human life. Therefore, some of the more inhumane and destructive aspects of Autochthonian society are met with a blithe unconcern if brought to his attention. He does dislike the copious amounts of blacktog-laden pollution pumping out of Autochthonian factories and bans their use within 20 miles of the city.

Name	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Govisoshi	25/14/24	10	-0x6/-1x10/ -2x15/-4x18/I	Bite: 26/19/44L, Claw: 28/22/39L, Godspear Conflagration: 16/16/48L*	0/36L/48B**	Athletics 5 (Flight +3), Awareness 5, Brawl 5 (Claw +3), Endurance 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; speaks all Old Realm military languages and codes) 1, Lore 1 (Theft of Demesne +3), Resistance 5

Govisoshi possesses the unique supernatural powers: Fearsome Mien (targets whose Valor + Essence are less than Govisoshi's Essence [7] suffer a two-die penalty to all dice pools during the combat. Cost: 5 motes), Theft of Demesne (Govisoshi's player rolls it's Intelligence + Lore. One success indicates that Govisoshi drains Essence from an unattended Demesne or Manse. See **Creatures of the Wyld**, p. 127 for greater detail. Cost: None), Flight of Fire (can fly as a vulture. Cost: 1 mote per hour) and Principal of Motion (as the spirit Charm — see **Exalted**, p. 292). As an automaton, Govisoshi cannot fail Valor rolls

* Rate 3, Range 1,000. Cost: 8 motes. Use Dexterity + Brawl to direct the attack. Damages dematerialized spirits. Causes aggravated damage to demons and Fair Folk. Attacks everything in area of effect (a cone-shaped area approximately 100 yards long, 30 yards wide and 10 yards high at its terminus).

** Govisoshi ignores attacks doing less than 21L/21B and all armor-piercing effects.

EXALTED POWER COMBAT STATISTICS

Name	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate
Bronze Horse Bite	6	6	6L	4	2
Bronze Horse Kick	9	6	9Bp	6	2
Bronze Horse Phlogiston Breath	9	8	9L	-	1
Furnace Rhino Gore	9	6	18L	4	2
Furnace Rhino Trample	3	8	18L	p	1
Govisoshi Bite	30	20	44L	16	2
Govisoshi Claw	25	24	38L	22	4
Hungry Ghost Bite	6	7	3Lp	4	2
Hungry Ghost Claw	9	6	1L	6	3
Ifrit Sword	14	8	8L	7	2
Jokun Bite	6	10	9L	7	3
Jokun Hammer	10	8	12B	8	2
Jokun Sword	9	9	8L	6	3
Kri Bite	11	11	15L	11	2
Kri Kick	17	13	12L	13	3
Llama-Yu Firebite	12	14	8L	-	3
War Ghost Kick	1	5	6B	1	3
War Ghost Punch	4	5	3B	6	5

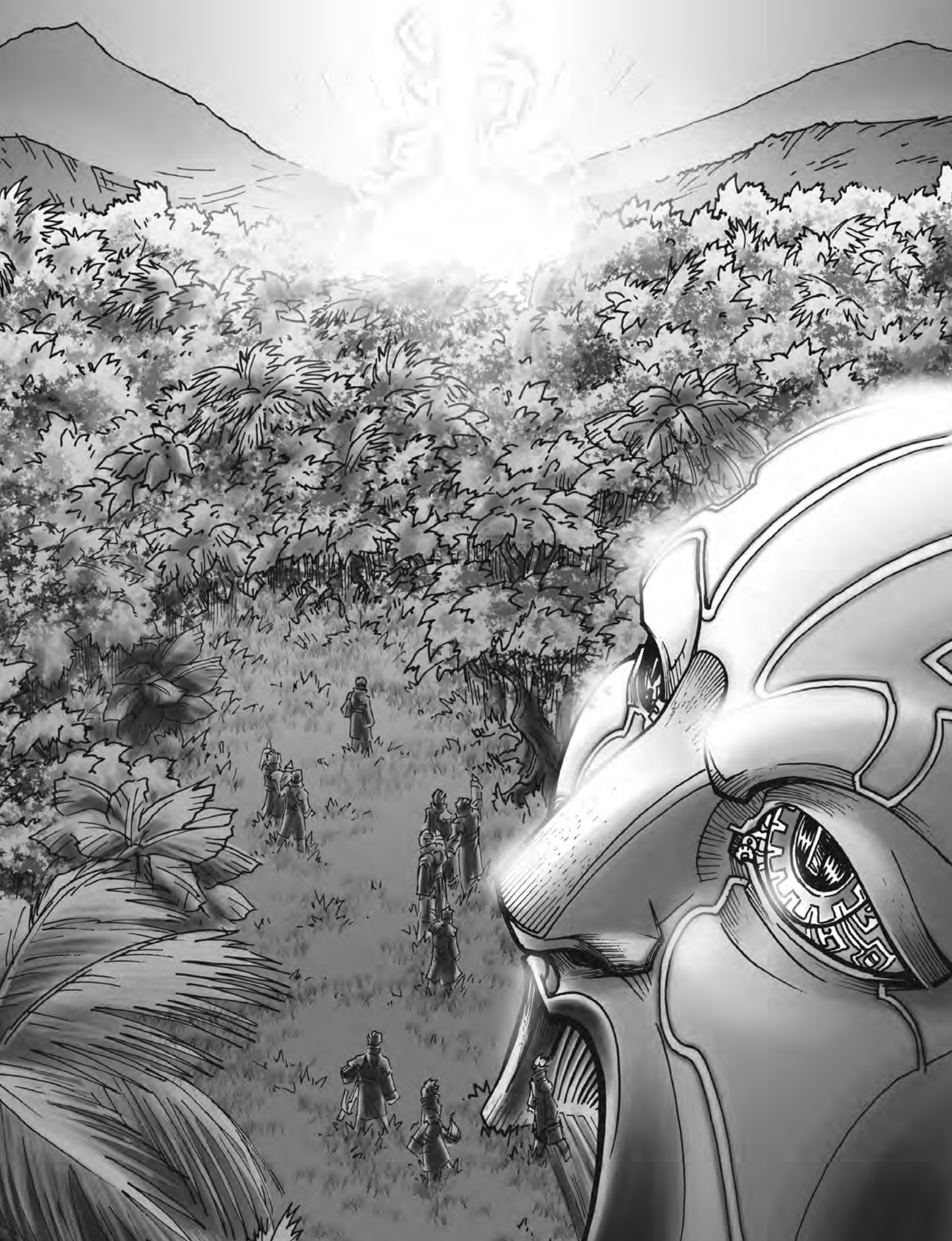
p The attack does piercing damage.

CREATURES OF THE LOCUST WAR

Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Furnace Rhino	10/3/8	5	-0x4/-1x3/ -2x2/-4/I	Gore: 6/6/18L, Trample: 3/8/12L	4/12L/20B*	Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Presence 2, Resistance 3
Horse of Bronze	5/4/7	3	-0x4/-1x4/ -2x5/-4x3/I	Bite: 8/6/5L, Kick: 6/6/9B, Phlogiston Breath: 9/8/9L	5/7L/8B**	Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Presence 2 (Intimidation +2)
Hungry Ghost Ifrit	4/3/3 4/3/4	5 8	-0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/I -0/-1x4/-2x4/-4/I	Claw: 6/6/1L, Bite: 0/5/3L Sword: 10/9/10L	5/1L/2B 7/3L/5B	Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Survival 3 Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 4, Endurance 3, Investigation 4, Linguistics (often includes Orderly Flame Cant) 5, Lore 2, Martial Arts 3, Melee 4, Presence 4, Ride 3, Socialize 3, Survival 2
Jokun	4/3/4	4	-0/-1x4/-2x4/-4/I	Bite: 7/10/9L (+difficulty 2 poison), Hammer: 9/12/13L, Sword: 13/15/12L	7/8L/12B	Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Endurance 4, Melee 4, Performance (Singing) 3, Presence 2, Resistance 3, Socialize 4
Kri	4/5/3	7	-0/-1x4/-2x5/ -4x2/I	Bite: 13/15/15L, Kick: 14/16/12L	9/6L/10B	Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 7, Endurance 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics 4, Lore 3, Martial Arts 6, Occult 2, Presence 4, Socialize 1, Stealth 4, Survival 4
Llama-Yu	4/2/4	4	-0x2/-1x5/ -2x4/-4x3/I	Firebite: 12/14/8L	5/10L/18B	Athletics 5, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Endurance 5, Survival 2
War Ghost	3/2/3	6	-0/-1x3/-2x3/-4/I	Punch: 4/4/3B, Kick: 1/3/5B, Axe: 4/3/8L, Knife: 7/4/4L, Pole Axe: 1/4/11L	4(1)/7L/10B	Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Endurance 2, Medicine 1, Melee 2 (Axe +1), Presence 1, Resistance 1, Socialize 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1

* Ignores attacks doing less than 6L/12B

** Damaged only by magical attacks or by weapons made of the Five Magical Materials.



Long ago, sensing strife and curses on the winds of Creation, Autochthon had withdrawn from the affairs of the world, retreating Elsewhere, that he might sail through the Ages toward a future less troubled by the strife sewn by his dying kin. And there, in the womb of the Void, the Great Maker had let the darkness of slumber overtake him. Many of the worshipers within him claimed he rested from his vast labors in the early stages of Creation. But while he was weary, the truth was that Autochthon slept to allay his listlessness. He was ever a maker and a doer. Thousands of years in the womb of Elsewhere would have driven him to distraction.

And so, the Maker slept, and thousands of years passed. Yet, Autochthon had never been the healthiest of the Primordials. His own vast industrial processes filled his structure with poisons. And so, as the Great Maker's fifth millennium of slumber came on, the situation, even in his depressed sleep mode, began to represent a toxic hazard. Deep within the Core, in the heart of the Great Maker, an awareness grew. It was dim as the Great Maker's self was asleep, a bare handful of monitor processes grinding onward in the dim recesses of the Core as the subgods managed the functions of his sleeping self.

But all across his vast being, systems were slowly failing. The monitoring processes noted that the Maker's Essence and soul reservoirs were nearly depleted, his body's recycling of the Magical Materials providing increasingly marginal results, and infiltration of aberration due to exposure to Elsewhere had grown. The Core could sleep no longer. It was time to breathe.


It was seen as possible that the Maker's systems could fail enough that connecting with Creation for regenerative symbiosis would be impossible. In order to accommodate it, mortal life had been introduced into the Maker's ecoindustrial complex. No force could master the primal yearning of life for existence. Even a Primordial could trust in mortals, that if there was a way for them to save themselves and reach Creation, they would do it. To see that they had the talent to achieve his release, the Great Maker provided them with the Alchemicals, his improvements on the original Exalted. And then, he laid down to slumber, knowing that if his resuscitative system failed, he would die in the peaceful darkness.

And just as the sleeping Maker had predicted, the humans within him were making preparations to reenter Creation. Soon, they would breach the Seal of Eight Divinities, and Autochthon would breathe again. It was time, time to awaken and return to see the full consequences of the actions taken at the end of the reign of the Primordials.

When the Seal was breached, and unknown to the Autochthonians, they were concealed from the eyes of gods and Exalts by backdoors the Maker had worked into the Loom of Fate. Someone from Creation might have seen it as a seal's breathing hole in the ice, others as a trapdoor spider's lair. Autochthon's superintendents were pleased. Creation was still there. Its absence was an anticipated contingency, but not a pleasant one. As much as the shallow, stodgy personalities of the gods who sprang from Autochthon's dreaming felt emotion, they were glad such things were no longer to be contemplated.

And yet, the readings were not at all what the monitor processes expected. There was no inrush of Essence, no replenishment of the Great Maker's depleted reservoirs of souls. There were only the carefully monitored exchanges of air between the worlds and then the forays of Yugash's scouts. In the distance, the Maker's beacon flared. Those in Creation called it his Eye, and they were close enough to correct, though perhaps "managing probe" would have been a better choice of terms.

This was the signal that the Maker's stay-behind charging aids had been damaged and were in need of recalibration, a complex task that could not be planned for, only left to those who would undertake it. The beacon resonated with the Maker's children, and as expected, they quickly set out to investigate the source of the pulling at their souls. Yet, the beacon resonated with the spirits of Creation's Exalted as well. All across Creation, attention turned to the Eye, and great powers dispatched their minions to investigate these matters whose inception had been concealed by Autochthon's deception campaign. The Great Maker might survive, but there would be no hiding from Creation now.



CHAPTER SIX

THE QUEST FOR THE GREAT SOURCE

Autochthon is dying. When he arrives in Creation after several millennia of self-imposed exile, his ancient processes are killing him, and he has run out of a vital ingredient to keep himself working and healthy: souls. “The Quest for the Great Source” is an adventure set in the first weeks of Autochthon’s return to Creation, when both the children of the Machine God and the people of Creation realize that the Primordial artificer is in need of rescuing, and fast. The only choice that characters have to

keep the Great Maker from sinking into Oblivion is to refresh his store of souls, which they must do by recreating the epic journey that the first Autochthonians undertook to fill the god’s Radiant Amphora of Celestial Accumulation, but the world has changed greatly since Autochthon left, and some things may not be possible anymore.

“The Quest for the Great Source” replaces the events in “Crusaders of the Machine God” found in **Time of Tumult**, presenting an alternative centered on tackling

Autochthon's drying stores of souls rather than Yugash's deficit of Magical Materials. This does not mean that both the Locust Crusade and the race to save Autochthon or harness his power cannot take place at the same time. Autochthonia is home to more than one hero, mortal and Exalted alike, and it is not unthinkable that a brave group of explorers would challenge Creation in search for answers while their fellows concentrated on cementing the foothold Yugash has inserted in the world and the expansion of its base of influence.

CHARACTER REQUIREMENTS

Autochthonians and Alchemical Exalted are the most likely protagonists of "The Quest for the Great Source," but nothing stops other characters from embarking on an adventure with the potential to change the face of Creation. The present chapter will describe the story's development focusing on characters being Autochthonians, but with options presented for other character types. "The Quest for the Great Source" is a great race for the answers and the resources necessary to revive the Machine God or, possibly, to harness his power. As such, several groups will express interest in competing. The players' characters are member of one such group, regardless of their affiliation and origin. They, like all the other groups, will have their chance to discover some very interesting truths about the world of **Exalted**, such as the existence of the Great Curse, the origin of souls in Creation and the very nature of Exaltation.

The adventure takes the characters from the deep desert of the South, where the Eye of Autochthon has awakened at the arrival of its creator, to other parts of Creation in search of the materials necessary to forge a connection between Autochthon and the Well of Souls, which will revitalize the dying Primordial with world-shaking consequences for mortals, Exalted and gods alike.

To participate in this story, characters should have access to the following abilities or resources:

- **Must speak Old Realm.** This language is the only common tongue that Autochthonians and Creation dwellers have. Autochthonians need it to interact with the inhabitants of Creation, and Creation dwellers need it to understand the mysteries that lie hidden in the corridors of Autochthonia.
- **Orientation.** The characters will be doing a lot of traveling in confusing environments. Either having a high Perception, Awareness and Survival or knowing Charms, spells and protocols to aid with travel and orientation will make the characters' mission that much simpler.
- **Wyld resistance.** It is recommended that characters have some means to protect themselves from the warping energies of the Wyld. They will spend a very short time immersed in such dangers, however.
- **Transportation.** The journey South and then to different locations requires a fast and reliable mode of

travel. A unique Autochthonian machine is provided at the middle of the adventure (it is there from the beginning for Autochthonians), but if characters have a faster and less notorious mode of transport, so much the better.

- **Expertise.** Characters will be interacting a lot with strange technology and forgotten magic, so it is recommended that they have from good to maximum scores in Craft (Architecture), Lore and Occult.
- **Artifacts.** One or more of the characters must possess an artifact made from the Magical Material appropriate for his Exalted type or Alchemical Caste and be prepared to lose it as payment to access part of the adventure's secrets. Dragon-Blooded must have a Hearthstone from a Manse of Level ••• or higher for this.

CHARACTER TYPES

The following are ways in which different sorts of Exalted may become involved in this adventure:

Alchemicals: The Alchemicals are the center of this adventure. They receive orders from the Tripartite to investigate and report back.

Solars: The chance to discover a powerful artifact and then the chance to clear their names and learn the truth behind Creation and their Exaltation can compel the characters to take action.

Lunars: Autochthon's arrival sends ripples through the Wyld, and the Lunars notice. Some powerful First Age moonbeasts will seek a way to master this power for themselves, while the elder No Moons of the Silver Pact will send young Exalts to investigate.

Sidereals: A whole world full of people not subject to the Loom of Fate greatly disturbs the higher echelons of the Bureau of Destiny. They *must* send someone to take a closer look and report back so that the Chosen of the Maidens can decide on what to do about it.

Terrestrials: Mnemon is the first to pay attention to the arrival of Autochthon, and the other Great Houses are trying to get ahead of her. Whoever brings such a powerful ally as a living and sane Primordial and his followers to his own side will have an easy way to the Scarlet Throne.

Abyssals: A new source of souls or a chance to break her chains of servitude will motivate an Abyssal to investigate further and do something with the answers she will receive.

Mortals: At first confused for First Age ruins revealing themselves, the arrival of Autochthon prompts mortal scavengers to risk untold dangers for fame, fortune and knowledge.

PROLOGUE: EMERGENCE

Autochthon returns to Creation after millennia of self-imposed exile. As one of two surviving Primordials, his arrival is bound to draw the attention of not few people. When the *Patropolis of Ot* breaks through the Seal of Eight Divinities, it triggers a series of repercussions that many of the most powerful beings in Creation cannot fail but notice.



“The Quest of the Great Source” begins with the awakening of the Eye of Autochthon, an ancient artifact of great power that triggers a series of subtler phenomena that few can detect and even fewer understand. As the signs are deciphered by the many interested parties, each will launch its own forces to unveil the secret of the dying Machine God. Their response will depend greatly on their motivations and their desire to help, enslave or destroy the Autochthonians.

THE HISTORY OF THE EYE

One of the most powerful artifacts in existence, the Eye of Autochthon is a tool created by the Great Maker for his own inscrutable purposes and left behind for unknown reasons. Mortals and Exalted have tried to use it with varied results (see the **Exalted Storyteller’s Companion**, p. 80). Six centuries ago, the sorcerer Bagrash Köl used the Eye to carve a magnificent city out of the Northern Wyld, only to fall to an unknown disaster that left his former subjects mad. Five centuries ago, the rebel Manosque Viridian shut down all the Realm’s defenses with the Eye with the intention of usurping the Empress, but three days before victory, he and the majority of his soldiers “fell into the sky.” Nearly two centuries ago, the mortal prophet Ikerre used the Eye to launch a crusade against the Fair Folk, though the only evidence the Dynast armies found of this was a crystallized army, but no sign of the Eye.

AWAKENING OF THE EYE

The Eye of Autochthon is an artifact of enigmatic magic and unknown potential, equally capable of granting great power before bringing total ruin to those who dared use it. None who have heard of it have an idea about its purpose or as to why its creator left it behind. The only information left behind describes its previous and disastrous uses.

When the *Patropolis of Ot* emerges through the Seal of Eight Divinities, the ripples of its arrival reach the Eye of Autochthon in its resting place, causing it to open for the first time since it was left behind. The activation of such a powerful artifact creates a column of multihued light that can be seen as far as Yane in the North and the Silent Crescent in the West, alerting many parties that something is happening.

The column of light appears to emanate about 500 miles south of Gateway 60 to Yu-Shan. Players of characters currently in the South can make a Perception + Awareness roll. The difficulty of the roll increases by 1 for every 300 miles away from its point of origin and characters gain two dice to the roll at night. The column lasts for five days

exactly after the arrival of the *Patropolis of Ot*, and on each day, it shines a different color corresponding to one of the Five Magical Materials. During each day, members of the corresponding Alchemical Caste as well as other Exalts attuned to the particular material feel an imprecise tugging in their hearts that allows their players to make the perception + Awareness roll every six hours even if the Exalts are not looking in the column's direction. Half-Caste children of the appropriate Exalted type also gain this benefit, but their players can only make the roll every 12 hours. Alchemicals feel the tug even if they are inside Autochthonia and even if they are in parts of the Machine God other than Yugash. Distance is meaningless for this effect. Abyssals get the feeling (but not Deathlords) even while in the Underworld, but their players suffer a two-die penalty to their rolls, and the distance from the column includes its corresponding distance in the realm of the dead. Sidereals can feel the tugging if they are in Yu-Shan or somehow hidden from fate by Charms (not if clothed in a resplendent destiny), but their players too are at a two-die penalty. The distance from the column to Yu-Shan is measured as if toward the Blessed Isle, but it is halved.

Day 1: The column of light is a swirling rainbow of pale tones of blue, yellow, red, violet and light green. Jade Caste Alchemicals and Dragon-Blooded feel the tugging.

Day 2: The column of light is a dark and ominous shade of blue. Soulsteel Caste Alchemicals and Abyssals feel the tugging.

Day 3: The column of light is a pure and bright swirl of white and blue. Moonsilver Caste Alchemicals and Lunars feel the tugging.

Day 4: The column of light is an orderly rainbow of deep tones of yellow, blue, red, green and violet. Starmetal Caste Alchemicals and Sidereals feel the tugging.

Day 5: The column of light is glorious pillar of golden light. Orichalcum Caste Alchemicals and Solars feel the tugging.

RIPPLES AND CONSEQUENCES

The awakening of the Eye of Autochthon in its Southern resting place echoes throughout Creation, triggering a series of subtle phenomena in all the realms: from the Reaches and cities of Autochthonia to the highest summits of Yu-Shan and the Loom of Fate.

THE SPIDERS' REBELLION

The Eye of Autochthon is a beacon that immediately attracts the attention of the pattern spiders. They are Autochthon's creatures and recognize his presence when the Essence disruption comes about in the Loom of Fate. But against all expectations, they hide this fact. Along with the reality-weaving protocols the Great Maker installed in the spiders, he added subroutines that kick in upon his emergence, ordering them to cloak his presence from the eyes of

the gods and the Sidereal Exalted. If a character scores more than four successes in a Perception + Lore roll while looking at the Loom of Fate in Yu-Shan, he can gain insight that the Machine God has returned to the world, and that is when the pattern spiders react, sensing the ripple this realization causes in the overall workings of the future. The player of any potential witness must defeat a pattern spider in an opposed Conviction + Essence roll to fix his gaze on Autochthon's presence in the Loom's weave. Failure means that the spiders reacted just in time, reweaving fate so that the character cannot make the connection and the character only gains the normal insight his successes warrant — that there is an occlusion in the Tapestry, its general location and large size, and so on.

When a character notices that the Tapestry now includes the presence of a very large force in Creation but is blocked by the pattern spiders or fails the Perception roll, he must then recognize it as what it is without insight. An Intelligence + Lore roll at difficulty 3 helps a witness to recognize that the Great Maker is back in Creation. The Sidereal Exalted are prone to fail to identify Autochthon because the Great Curse affects their judgment. They could not predict the return of the exiled Primordial, and therefore, it cannot possibly happen. Add Sidereal characters' permanent Essence to the Intelligence + Lore roll's difficulty to identify Autochthon.

THE DESERT BEASTS

After the column of light fades, a series of rumors starts to spread that could be of interest both to denizens of Creation as well as to the newly arrived Autochthonians. Over the course of days, scouts and raiders return telling stories of beasts made of glass and steel, with others going so far as to say that there is an entire city made of glass that emerged from the sand. Some people dare to speak of the return of the prophet Ikerre and the renewal of her crusade against the Wyld.

By this point, savants familiar with the story of Ikerre and the Eye of Autochthon should already be adding two and two together and start braving the treacherous Southern desert in search of the legendary artifact, hoping that it is ready to take on a new master. For Autochthonians the rumor is meaningless given that they do not know about the Eye, but the Sodalities discover several processes within Autochthon starting up that they were not aware of at the same time that all the Alchemicals detected the presence of a beacon from the day of their arrival (more of this in Act I). These phenomena are sufficiently strange to draw the attention of the Theomachy, and joint study will eventually yield the fact that the Great Maker is *calling* for something and that particular something must be found. Early explorers return with the rumors, and the Tripartite draws a relationship between them and the enigmatic processes and sends people to investigate.

Whether they have access to the rumors spreading amongst civilized people or not, Lunars who make their home near the South do notice something strange. Their tribesmen report about the glass beasts, but their forays into the Wyld also reveal that there is *something* that was not there before and that it is much different from any random Wyld-spawned thing.

MANSES TO THE GREAT MAKER

The Blessed Isle and some of the largest satrapies of the Realm are dotted with Manses designed and built by one Ledaal Chiska (see **Aspect Book: Earth**, pp. 95-96). She has unwittingly created a lifeline for Autochthon by misinterpreting the religious and historical texts at the Heptagram, believing the Dragon Pasiap and the Great Maker to be somehow related. She included icons of Autochthon in all the Manses she has built and diverted unused Essence to them. Without her knowledge, these Manses begin to siphon Essence from their Demesnes and redirect them to the emerging Machine God. This energy is not enough to restore the dying Primordial, but the Manses' owners and occupants can feel the strange behavior in their rightful property.

Exalts attuned to one of Chiska's Manses only recover motes of Essence at the rate of twice the Manse's rating per hour while they are in the Manse's grounds, and the Hearthstone's holder only regains the Manse's rating in motes per hour. Exalts affected by this severe reduction of their Manses' output will notice this happening with a successful difficulty 2 Perception + Occult roll at the end of the first day, gaining one bonus die to the roll for every following day. Players' characters notice this immediately without rolling. Repair and maintenance do not remedy this leak, to the utter confusion of the architects responsible.

Even if the leak is noticeable, tracing where the Essence is going is quite a different matter. Locating the icons responsible for the outflow requires a character with passing familiarity with Manse design (minimum Lore ••• and Occult ••••) and success on an extended Intelligence + Craft (Architecture) roll requiring 10 successes, with each roll representing a full hour of study. Once the icon is located, the character must track the Essence flow. Success at an Intelligence + Occult roll yields a general direction pointing toward the Southwest, but the trail disappears shortly thereafter.

DREAMS OF THE CELESTIALS

The Solars were amongst the great beneficiaries of Autochthon's teachings and, while not linked to him many of the reincarnated Essences retain vague recollections of his aid. Solar Exalted will have dreams related to the Great Maker's work during the first few nights after the *Patropolis of Ot* emerges. These dreams usually have to do with artifacts the Solars possessed and may have already found again. Solars with Craft (Any) •••• and Occult

THE MANSES AND THE PATROPOLIS OF OT

While no ordinary Autochthonian notices the influx of Essence, the Patropolis of Ot is the antenna through which the energy from the Terrestrial Manses flows to the Machine God, and he certainly feels a connection to some points in Creation. He informs the Yugash Sodalities about this phenomenon, which in turn, sparks an expedition to find and secure these Manses in order to turn their diversionary trickles of Essence into a direct conduction.

•••• will know that the dreams refer to the one who created the arts and crafts that were the basis for First Age wonders, but only a successful Intelligence + Lore roll, difficulty 4, will reveal the name of Autochthon. Each Exalt will give these dreams the importance that his personal experience dictates.

OTHER PORTENTS

The new activity from the Eye of Autochthon has attracted the attention of other powerful forces. The Fair Folk of the South suffered the Eye's activation as a boulder thrown into a puddle, with most of their strength shattered or crystallized into a definite form. The Fair Folk are of no consequence, but they have a powerful ally in the form of the First and Forsaken Lion. The Deathlord receives news that something is destroying his chances of creating a shadowland centered on Gem, something that emerged practically on his doorstep, and he has no way of knowing what it is. He charges Princess Magnificent with Lips of Coral and Robes of Black Feathers to investigate and to return with results quickly.

The Dowager of the Irreverent Vulgate in Unrent Veils also notices the irruption of Autochthon but in a wholly different manner. The omens that plague her citadel in the Mound of Forsaken Seeds take on more machinelike visages, something that confuses her greatly but, in time, enlightens her to the presence of a powerful artifact in the deep South after reports of the column of light reach her ears.

INVOLVING THE CHARACTERS

"The Quest for the Great Source" is an adventure designed with Autochthonian characters as the main protagonists, but any other character type can participate given the different starting points possible and the scope of the consequences, which may change the face of Creation and the Exalted forever.

Regardless of the characters' nature and affiliation, they have a chance to get involved in the race for the secrets of the Great Maker. The awakening of the Eye of Autochthon rocks Creation in ways that only few can

sense and identify, and the players' characters are amongst those who will.

The above signs and portents that announce Autochthon's arrival can be used by all Storytellers to justify sending characters of any type into this adventure.

Alchemicals: It is very easy to get Alchemical characters involved, they are the source of the events after all, and they do feel the presence of the Eye of Autochthon during the first days of their arrival. They will be ordered by the Tripartite of Yugash to travel into the Southern deserts. What they do with their discovery is what this adventure is all about.

Solars: The members of the Twilight Caste are the most likely to identify the signs in the Essence flow shifts in the South. Rumors of the glass beasts can spark the interest of monster hunters, although many can dismiss them as Fair Folk or Wyld beasts. The advantage Solars have is that, while they are not part of a central organization, they have a very wide variety of contacts that can sponsor them in the journey or notify them of the strange happenings. Solar characters can find out about the events in the South from trading liaisons, tribal followers, spirit allies, Sidereal mentors, mercenary employers, Realm informants, etc. Of course, the dreams of prior incarnations can also underscore the importance of the characters going South as soon as possible.

Lunars: The Beloved of Luna are in a slightly better position than the Solars when it comes to hearing about the emergence of the Eye. The Silver Pact can assign a group of young Lunars to investigate matters that do not seem too important at first, just tales about strange events in the Wyld. It is also quite possible that a Lunar Circle finds about this on its own thanks to its members' own contacts network, especially if they are prone to travel.

Abyssals: The most prominent Deathlords involved in the search for the Eye and its consequent quest for the Great Source are, as detailed above, the First and Forsaken Lion, Princess Magnificent with Lips of Coral and Robes of Black Feathers and the Dowager of the Irreverent Vulgate in Unrent Veils, with the Mask of Winters and possibly Walker in Darkness as peripheral players. Deathknights under the service of or somehow associated with these powerful figures have just as easy a task as Alchemicals for getting involved in the story. If the characters serve another Deathlord, even one of the Storyteller's own creation, they can get involved simply by assuming that their master's spies informed her of the others' activities. Independent and renegade Abyssals have the same methods available to them as their Solar counterparts.

Sidereals: The Chosen of the Maidens seat is on the first row of events, even if the pattern spiders are blocking the view. Sidereal characters can be in Yu-Shan to discover the phenomena on their own in the Loom of Fate or

can be the only ones available to deal with the problem at the moment, with all other Sidereals busy with their duties elsewhere. Sidereals have the advantage of having the ability to travel to any point in Creation with relative ease through the gates of Yu-Shan.

Dragon-Blooded: Like Abyssals, Terrestrials belong to a powerful organization with strong leaders and very capable sorcerers. Mnemon is the strongest player from the Realm, but House Ledaal can also read the signs and draw conclusions, and they both may send agents to look for the Eye, although some may not know the true nature of the column of light. Alternatively, owners of Manses built by Ledaal Chiska feel the tugging at their soul coming from the Eye, and the output of their Manses halves overnight. Only very dense Dynasts will not correlate the two. Bronze Faction Sidereals can also play a hand, collating the reports from the Manses, the South and the Loom of Fate and manipulating young Terrestrials to go in search of something they don't understand and may easily be coerced into delivering safely.

Heroic Mortals: A story of such epic magnitude will prove extremely difficult for mortals, but the rewards are so much greater for it. Like with any rumor, the events in the South attract their share of savants, treasure hunters and greedy merchants. The Guild can easily hire characters to join Stalwart Oak's expedition wherever they are located. In addition, brave Autochthonians can join their Alchemical heroes or venture out on their own by the Tripartite's orders.

Mixed Circles: A Circle composed of more than one type of character enjoys the benefit of having most or all the plot hooks available. If the group heeds more than one of them, conflicts of interest are bound to arise, which is not entirely a bad thing.

ACT I: JOURNEY TO THE SOUTH

The pieces are in play, and all the different factions take notice of the race, launching their agents to find whatever it is that is causing the disturbances in the South, some with an idea of what it is that they will find there.

AUTOCHTHONIA

Yugash exposes itself to Creation, following the reasons detailed in **Time of Tumult**. There is great unrest amongst the Tripartite about the incursion to find stores of the Five Magical Materials necessary for their nation's survival but are not yet beyond being extraordinarily cautious. The first explorer that emerges from Ot's head picks up samples and takes note of the surrounding environment, including the thin line of light beyond the mountain ranges. The members of the Sodalities take about one week analyzing the samples from Creation as well as the testimonials of their own technicians, explorers and Alchemicals before realizing that the light, which has

now faded, *must* be related to the reaction in Autochthon's internal mechanisms and to the pull the Alchemical castes felt during the days following their advent.

The Sodalts inform the Grand Autocrat of Yugash of their conclusions, and after a heated debate inside the Tripartite, they decide that they must send someone to travel as far as possible to reach the source of this column of light and bring it back for study.

The Five Sodalities form a committee that takes three more days to select the most appropriate members for an expedition, which is where the characters come in. Kerok, the Grand Autocrat, summons the selected personnel to his offices in Kadar and explains the Sodalts' findings using a brass projector. The room darkens, and Kerok begins flashing images on a wall, displaying expert sketches of the column of light and diagrams on how the Sodalities concluded that each color was a beacon calling for the members of each of the Alchemical castes. He also mentions the new processes activating inside the Machine God, although he must confess his ignorance as to their purpose. If asked further about this, he stresses the importance of this mission toward finding out why a piece of the outside world knew they were coming.

The characters are given access to all the equipment they may need, equivalent to Resources ••• (which does not stack with the characters' Resources Background).

They are also given a small task force led by two Sodalts, Takel from the Meticulous Surgeons and Yoraka from the Pious Harvesters, and one Theomachrat, Veyol from the lectors. They will be escorted by 10 common Populat soldiers (see the Appendix).

Since the Tripartite decided to send an expedition outside, the Sodalities refurbished a steamcar normally used to transport heavy replacement parts to accessible places. The steamcar is large enough to transport up to 20 passengers with no cargo.

CREATION

While the Autochthonians prepare to travel, the denizens of Creation do not stand idle. The column of light has sparked the curiosity of many, and a race begins to reach the source of the light and see what it means. Creation-dwelling characters have a chance to embark on the quest from various angles depending on their character type, as described earlier. There are at least five other groups besides the Autochthonians competing to uncover the mystery of the Eye, each of them serving a particular interest. The players' characters can substitute for any of these agents. Just remove mentions of the different Storyteller characters, and have the players' characters receive the instructions and the clues. The characters can also enter the story as independent actors in the greater play, following the plot hooks outlined above.

STEAMCAR, REFURBISHED (ARTIFACT N/A)

This curious vehicle is made of steel with red jade and orichalcum lines covering its surface and converging on a large box on its rear. It appears as a large platform surrounded by strong railing and studded with several rings to tie ropes and cables for securing cargo. The vehicle is suspended on eight short multi-segmented legs that can turn and rotate independently to adapt to the changing conditions of Autochthonian conduits and, luckily for the children of the Great Maker, to uneven terrain in Creation as well. The car operates by burning anything combustible in a small, rear-mounted, Essence-powered furnace that transmits the energy to the individual legs through the jade and orichalcum "circuitry." A driver sits in a chair on the front, surrounded by two levers that control the general direction of the vehicle (the legs have automated processes that permit the driver to worry only about generalities). The controller must have Craft (First Age Weapons) •• and Lore • to understand the controls, and he uses Dexterity + Ride to direct the vehicle. Non-Autochthonians suffer a two-die penalty due to the sheer exoticness of the controls. The vehicle is equipped with the necessary ports for Alchemicals to use the Electroneural Control Spurs and Universal Pilot Key Charms. It also comes with a built-in Portable Nutriment Recycling Engine to provide the brave explorers with food for their journey. The steamcar is very noisy, and its mechanical racket can be heard from around a mile away. It can travel at a speed of 80 miles per hour in clear terrain. In difficult terrain, it travels at 60 miles per hour, and 30 miles per hour in mountainous terrain.

The steamcar has 8L/15B soak, and it requires 8 health levels to damage it and 30 levels to destroy it. The vehicle needs maintenance to operate adequately in its long trip. Every 500 miles traveled require at least one hour's work of repair and adjustment (minimum Craft (Large Mechanism Repair) ••• and Lore •• for Autochthonians, Craft (First Age Weapons) ••••• and Lore ••••• for Creation dwellers). Failure to give maintenance every 500 miles reduces the vehicle's speed by 10 miles per hour, and when it reaches 30 miles per hour, the Storyteller rolls a die every hour. A result of 6 or more causes the vehicle to break down, and it must be repaired with a successful Intelligence + Craft (Large Mechanism Repair or First Age Weapons) roll at difficulty 3, which takes half a day and permanently reduces the vehicle's speed by 10 miles per hour. A full day of maintenance work restores the steamcar to its full speed, minus any damage accrued for one or more breakdowns.

PLAYING NON-ALCHEMICALS

If the Autochthonian characters are all heroic mortals or if the circle is composed of Creation dwellers, the Autochthonian party will include three Alchemicals: *Most Exquisite Steel Bearing*, *Magnanimous Presenter* and *Confirmation of the Seven Wonders*. These Exalts serve only as escorts for the characters and will suffer an untimely fate at the end of this act.

A Circle composed of more than one character type has greater chances to be drawn to the column of light, as each feels the tugging on different days and has access to different contact networks. Because of the several different possibilities presented by a Circle of Creation dwellers, the possible starting points for the adventure are described based on general location.

THE REALM

The main player in the Realm interested in the column of light is Mnemon. Like any other Dragon-Blooded, she felt the Eye's tugging during the first day of its opening, and she exhausted all her resources to discover what had happened that would affect her thus. Through her own sorcery, as well as by sending demons to the four directions, it takes her less than a week to learn about the column of light and the rumors about the glass beasts. Mnemon was alive when Ikerre met her end in the Southern deserts, and the Exalt received the report about the crystal statues that the prophet's ill-fated army turned into, and she was born only a century after House Manosque was annihilated by Viridian's folly. She *knows* that the Eye of Autochthon exists, and she is convinced that it is that very artifact that calls to all Exalts day after day. She does not suspect yet that the Eye opened because Autochthon has returned to Creation, but all she cares about for the moment is in acquiring the artifact. She dispatches a sorcerous message to Mnemon Acorla, one of her favorite nephews, who conveniently resides in the Varangian city of Talt, and she tasks him with finding the artifact that announced its presence days before. Part of her instructions include that whomever is sent is *not* to know she is looking for an artifact; Mnemon will send a demon to supervise the search and report to her.

Acorla gathers a sworn brotherhood of trusted Dragon-Blooded in his mansion. The Dragon-Blooded mercenaries are headed by Cathak Repore (see the Appendix), a man who did not want to wait for his family to give him status and is, instead, forging his own position. Repore assembles his team from other frustrated scions and outcasts in less than a day, starting the journey according to Acorla's instructions, as given to him by Mnemon. Repore carries

no mortal soldiers with him, as he wants to travel hard and cannot risk allowing mere humans to slow him down, but he is closely trailed by one of Mnemon's demon servants.

YU-SHAN

The evidence of something happening in Creation is confusing and contradictive. Since the majority of the Bronze Faction is either on the Blessed Isle or in Yu-Shan, many do not notice the column, while several members of the Gold Faction traveling in the South do. The fact that the column does not appear in the Loom of Fate only exacerbates the disagreements, miring the Sidereals for days until a young Exalt from the Gold Faction sees past the pattern spiders' cover-up of the ripples that Autochthon's arrival is already causing. They cannot see the Great Maker himself, but they see the effects his children are having on the denizens of Creation. In the space of a week, the eldest amongst the Sidereals are recalled to discuss the meaning of this. Chejop Kejak brings with him reports on the behavior of the Terrestrial Manses, and a joint committee soon discovers the icons to the Great Maker, sending alarms throughout the entire Bureau of Destiny. They make haste in organizing an expedition. The Sidereal envoy, Kayelen of the Blue Wind, is a Bronze Faction Chosen of Secrets, but the Bureau deems the situation important enough to pair her with Young Sorrow, a Gold Faction Chosen of Endings (see the Appendix). Both of them lead a small team of Immaculate monks through Yu-Shan and through Gateway 60, the point nearest the disturbance, but the Sidereals have already lost too much time with bickering, doubletalk and speculation, and they gain no significant advantage over other searchers for the Eye of Autochthon.

THE SOUTH

Ironically, it is mortals who give the column of light a greater importance than most of the Exalted. The first to launch expeditions are treasure hunters and scavenger lords looking to possess the many First Age items they may find, but they are ill-prepared to face the task, and none return. The news spread like wildfire amongst traders, nomads and common folk. Those Exalted currently operating in the South can connect the pull they felt to the great column of light they hear about, if it is not true that they witnessed it with their own eyes.

The legend of the Eye of Autochthon and the prophet Ikerre is famous, as it is only two centuries old, so any Southern character with Lore •• will recognize the signs. One of these people is the mortal savant Stalwart Oak, a small legend amongst scavenger lords, who has traveled the breadth and width of the Threshold in search of First Age knowledge, tangled with Exalted of all stripes and lived to tell the tale. Stalwart Oak was in the middle of negotiating a grant from the Guild in Chiaroscuro when

the pillar of light illuminated the night. The savant had no trouble convincing his Guild contact of the worthiness of such an expedition after that. His problem now lays in the rumors of glass monsters, so he may be amenable of hiring a couple of Exalted bodyguards, either Solars on the run or cash-stripped outcaste Dragon-Bloods.

The most dangerous of the searchers is Raksi, the First Age Lunar Queen of Fangs, who heard of the light and felt the pull of the Eye during its third day and intuited its significance. She sends a Circle of younger Lunars that had been visiting her territory, promising them aid in some goal of theirs in exchange for them working for her in investigating the phenomenon. Raksi dares not travel herself because she would be infringing on Tamuz' land — not because she fears a confrontation with the other ancient Lunar, but because her presence would alert him that there is something very important going on in his doorstep. For his part, Tamuz sees the light and is intrigued by it, but he sends a few of his barbarian followers to scout ahead before committing more resources.

Another major threat racing toward the waking Eye is the Abyssal Circle sent by the First and Forsaken Lion. He ordered Princess Magnificent to assemble the group to head for the site, but she has plans of her own. Both

Deathlords know that Autochthon, as a living and free Primordial, could very possibly free them from their hated servitude to their Malfean masters, either by his own power or by dying and joining the ranks of the Neverborn. Princess Magnificent sends Black Remembrance, a Day Caste, in command of two other deathknights and a special advisor: Manosque Khanan, the ghost of a Dynastic warrior who witnessed first-hand the terrible power of the Eye of Autochthon.

THE SOUTHERN DESERT

Surviving the scorching lands of the South requires preparation and skill, and not all of those who look for the Eye of Autochthon have the most adequate combination of either. The characters may start their journey from any point around the Southern reaches of Creation, depending on who they are and who sent them. Autochthonians must first cross the chain of volcanoes separating the Southwest from the South before reaching the desert itself, while Creation dwellers may have to cross other types of terrain, such as the sea that separates the Blessed Isle and the Scavenger Lands from the Southern kingdoms, the veldt in the Threshold or even shadowlands.

OTHER PARTS OF CREATION

Exalts and other parties can become alerted to the opening of the Eye of Autochthon, but most are too far away to have an effect on the story. For characters who are not in the South, the Storyteller can arrange things to move them southward. Some options to get characters without the means to find out or arrive at the site of the Eye's resting place involved include:

- A Gold Faction Sidereal does not agree with the Bureau of Destiny's decision and contacts a group of Solars on his own. Smuggling them through Yu-Shan from whatever part of the world they currently reside in is an adventure in itself, and one that is a race against time. Or he may organize his own Circle of Sidereals to undertake the task on his own.
- The Mask of Winters receives information leaked by Princess Magnificent and sends his own Abyssal servants (or dupes another group of Exalted), moving them through the Labyrinth to reach their destination faster, but they must sneak past the First and Forsaken Lion's forces.
- Members of House Ledaal are aware of Mnemon's ambitions, but they are quicker to mount an expedition that departs from the Blessed Isle or its whereabouts. The group uses sorcery and Sail Charms to speed its journey.
- Agents from another nation of Autochthonia are infiltrated in Yugash, and they manage to kill and supplant some of the members of the Tripartite's expedition.
- Through a system of flying messengers, the Silver Pact becomes aware of the events and commissions a young Lunar Circle to go and investigate. The Lunars all drink the heart's blood of birds or other flying creatures to speed up their journey.
- Non-Dragon-Bloods have somehow captured and inhabit one of the Manses built by Ledaal Chiska and find the icon to the Great Maker.
- The Wyld areas around Creation shudder and retreat suddenly when Autochthon arrives. Everyone who keeps track of such things notices this, and some may even gain enough information to pinpoint the disturbances' cause and come up with fast transportation that will allow them to venture South.
- The Eye of Autochthon may not be in the South at all. The Storyteller can move the location for this adventure to where it is more convenient for his players' characters to involve themselves.



MATTERS OF SURVIVAL

Once the characters reach the desert, matters of survival become more complicated. Survival in the desert encompasses tasks that go from protecting one's self from the blazing sun to keeping food and water supplies in good conditions.

Orientation: The most pressing concern for the characters is to know where they are going. The column of light that the Eye of Autochthon emitted lasts only for the first five days and then vanishes. Some explorers may not have seen the light at all. Using rumors and tales as a guide is a sure recipe for disaster, which means the characters must first secure some means of knowing where to go. The standard roll to find the way is Perception + Survival at difficulty 4. Each success ensures 100 miles of travel in the right direction, at which point the roll must be made again. The difficulty decreases by 1 for each successful roll to a minimum of 2, but increases by 1 for each failed roll to a maximum of 5.

Maps: Players of characters who witnessed the light can make an Intelligence + Survival or Intelligence + Lore roll for their characters to mark the approximate origin of the light on a map or navigation chart. This roll has the same difficulty as the original Perception + Awareness roll to notice the light in the first place. Alternatively, charac-

ters can encounter people who claim to have made a map themselves. Whether the map is genuine or not is left for the Storyteller to decide when roleplaying the sale. Vendors know how important this map is to scavengers and sell the map for a very high price (Resources ●●●). This may be a chance for characters to meet Stalwart Oak, as he is one of the lucky few to have made a map that is more or less accurate. Navigating the desert with a map adds three dice to players' rolls for their characters to find their way.

Guides: Rather than a map, the characters can find someone who saw the light and remembers where it is—and is also willing to go back. The most likely guides are members of the Delzahn tribes, which means the characters will need some heavy negotiation skills to get them to help. Representatives of the Realm can go directly to the Tri-Khan in Chiaroscuro and ask for a guide, which they will receive after dispensing a modest bribe of Resources ●●●●. Ordinary guides may charge as little as Resources ● or as high as Resources ●●●. Following a guide through the desert adds a number of dice to the orientation rolls equal to one plus the cost of the guide in Resources. Abyssals or other characters who secure the ghost of a survivor of Ikkerre's army may count him as a guide. Befriending a barbarian on the way (threatening and cajoling also work) will also provide characters with a guide, albeit a reluctant one. The undead and barbarian guides add three dice to orientation rolls.

Astrology: Perspicacious characters can look up to the stars and note a hole (requires a successful Perception + Lore roll at difficulty 2). This hole is caused by the ripples in the destinies of the land that Autochthon's arrival is causing, not precisely a location of the Machine God or his artifact itself, but astrologers can cross-reference the stars' position to find a pointer. The player of an astrologer who notices the patterns in the stars can use Intelligence + Occult rolls as orientation rolls, using any specialty in astrology he may have, but all difficulties increase by 1.

Beacon: The Autochthonians are at a loss when traveling through Creation. They have little chance to know that they have to get a map or a guide, and they do not know the stars. Autochthon foresaw this eventuality and installed a function in the Eye so that, when it finally opened, it would emit a beacon detectable only by the Alchemical Exalted. Once they cross the mountains from the *Patropolis of Ot* to the Southern desert, Alchemicals feel this beacon, which lowers the difficulty of the orientation rolls by the character's Essence. Autochthonian autolabes are able to pick up the beacon's signal, but they only reduce the difficulty of the roll by 1.

FOOD AND WATER

Eating and drinking are vital for surviving the hardships of the desert. Normally, a character can go without drinking for a number of days equal to his Stamina + Endurance rating, but in the harsh desert conditions, this is reduced to one third (minimum of 1). Equally, a character can go without food for a number of days equal to twice his Stamina + Endurance rating. When either of these limits is reached, the character's player must make a daily Stamina + Endurance roll for the condition, with failure inflicting one level of bashing damage that can only be removed by eating or drinking normally. Failure also imposes a one-die penalty to all dice rolls that accumulates with the penalties for fatigue and damage.

Dried goods are about the only foodstuffs that can resist the heat of the desert. Vegetables spoil in an average of three days, while meat lasts for about two to four days.

The Exalted possess many Charms to provide food and water for themselves or at least to help them locate some or dispense with them, such as the Solars' Food-Gathering Exercise, the Lunars' Food-Scenting Method and Wolf Endurance Method and the Dragon-Blooded's Ration-Enhancing Method.

HEAT

Heatstroke is a dangerous possibility for those who travel unprotected. Players must make a Stamina + Endurance roll for their characters for every two hours that they travel under the scorching sun, applying any armor's fatigue value. This roll has the same effects as enduring fatigue as described in *Exalted* (p. 241). Traveling by night prevents these rolls, as do Charms such as Solars' Hard-

ship-Surviving Mendicant Spirit and Dragon-Blooded's Hostile Environment Preparation Method.

TERRAIN AND TRAVEL

Walking on sand is tiring and slow. Characters on foot will normally cover 15 miles per day because of the shifting sands and the rhythm necessary for walking on sand, although Charms such as Trackless Region Navigation Charm will eliminate this difficulty. Other modes of ground travel are reduced to 75 percent of their normal speed, including the Autochthonian steamcar, unless it is fitted with pads to disperse the legs' weight. Riding animals bred for the purpose of traveling through the desert suffer no penalty to their movement.

CHALLENGES

In addition to the constant difficulties of traversing the desert, nature and man can still pose surprises for the characters. The Storyteller can spring one or more of these possible encounters and situations to drive the point home that this journey is *difficult*, but keep in mind that the goal of these hardships is not to kill off the characters right at the start of the story, but to put their travel into perspective with a couple of challenges. For numerous parties, such as the Autochthonians' expedition, the challenges can claim the lives of one or two extras to underscore the dangers involved in such a journey.

SANDSTORMS

Sandstorms pose a series of dangers to unwary travelers, depending on their severity. Being exposed to the wind and sand may cause damage from the abrasion as covered in *Exalted* (p. 244), although this damage varies according to how strong the storm is. Characters can sit out a sandstorm, which requires a Wits + Survival roll at the same difficulty as the storm's damage. Each success in this roll shields characters for five minutes, during which the characters take no damage. The danger of this approach is that a strong enough sandstorm can bury those that tried to sit it out without some form of protection, although this happens only for intense and severe storms. Characters can dig out with an extended Strength + Athletics roll, which requires them to score one success for every 10 minutes spent under an intense storm and per 5 minutes under a severe one.

Walking through a sandstorm presents additional problems in addition to potential damage: disorientation. Characters who do not tie themselves to one another run the risk of separating from their companions. For every interval that the characters move rather than just standing or sitting the storm out, each character's player makes a reflexive Perception + Survival or Perception + Awareness check with the same difficulty to resist damage. Simple success allows characters to stick together, while failure separates them for a while and raises the next Wits

Storm Strength	Difficulty	Resisted Effect	Failed Effect	Interval
Weak	1	0	1B	10 minutes
Moderate	1	0	1B	5 minutes
Intense	2	0	2B	1 minute
Severe	2	0	1L	1 minute

+ Survival or Perception + Awareness roll's difficulty by 2. If the difficulty ever becomes 6 or higher, a character is completely separated from her friends.

After a storm is over, the characters must make sure they keep walking in the right direction, surveying the trackless wastes for clues to direction. This eliminates any leftover successes from orientation rolls prior to the storm (see the previous section, "Matters of Survival").

SAND TRAPS

Where the sand shifts under the surface but the top layer is packed tight enough to maintain cohesion, a character can fall into a sand trap, breaking the surface and falling down on the air bubble, which proceeds to fill in quickly, threatening to bury the character alive. A character can avoid falling into a sand trap with a simple successful Dexterity + Athletics roll made by her player. Characters whose players fail slide down to the trap's bottom and sink knee deep in the sand while more sand begins to slide over them. To escape this grisly fate, a player must succeed at an extended Strength + Athletics roll at difficulty 2 for her character, accumulating from six to ten successes depending on the trap's depth (and the Storyteller's viciousness). Other characters can help the unfortunate victim by tossing ropes, either adding their Strength rating to the victim's dice pool or by making their own Strength + Athletics checks to pull the victim out with a feat of strength.

BARBARIANS

The South is the home of various barbarian tribes that can become very aggressive against invaders to their territory. Lunars do not have much to fear if they display their beastforms, which may send any raider running back from whence he came.

The Dune People: This tribe of albino anthropophagi stalk the burning sands during the night, remaining buried during the day to hide from the sun while breathing through hollowed-out human femurs. They hate outsiders with a passion and will attack anyone they encounter to harvest food, leather, water and bones from the corpses. A typical Dune People raiding party will consist of twice the number of people in a given group of explorers, but the Dune People are all considered extras. Use the Wyld barbarians template found in *Exalted* (pp. 281-282). A more complete description of the Dune People can be found in *Exalted: The Lunars* (pp. 42-44).

Tamuz' Horde: Descending from a clan of Dune People, this tribe is much more civilized than its man-eating relatives. These barbarians joined the tribe of the First Age Lunar Tamuz, who helped them outgrow their albinism (although the whole tribe still has predominantly white hair) and taught them that "other" does not always mean "enemy." An encounter with Tamuz' tribe will go much differently than one with the Dune People. The followers of Tamuz will observe the players' characters for a few days before deciding whether to make contact or attack. The obvious presence of a Lunar will automatically incline them to approach peacefully, although, in any case, they will send one of their numbers to warn Tamuz of the newcomers. They speak a dialect of Flametongue and extend the characters an invitation to meet their leader that, if refused, opens the characters to ambush at a later date. In the Autochthonian party, Veyol will lead the efforts to understand the natives.

THE GLASS BEASTS

The creatures that first sparked the rumors after the column of light appeared begin attacking explorers when they approach within 1,000 miles of the location of the Eye. Characters can expect ambushes every four of five days, at the Storyteller's discretion. However, as the characters get closer to the source, the number of attack increases as well as the number of beasts attacking, until the characters must remain on constant guard against them. Consult the table for the frequency of attacks and the number of attackers at each corresponding distance. As the Sidereal-sponsored expedition arrives at Gateway 60, they start right in the area of these attacks.

Distance	Frequency of Attacks	Number of Attackers
1,000 miles	1 per 4-5 days	1-2
800 miles	1 per 3-4 days	2-4
600 miles	1 per 2-3 days	3-6
400 miles	1 per 1-2 days	4-8
200 miles*	1-2 per day	9-12

* At this distance, the beasts are made of glass and steel.

Glass beasts are perfect replicas of animals found in Creation. They are twice as large as the species which they are imitating but made entirely of perfect glass, imposing a difficulty penalty of 1 to hand-to-hand attacks and of 2 to ranged attacks as their transparent bodies blend with the background. There is a chance that a glass beast will be between an attacker and the sun, in which case it will refract light, increasing the difficulty to attack by an additional 1.

MEETING TAMUZ

Tamuz is an ancient Lunar who has not lost any of his civility, and although he does want to bring the Realm down, he wants to do so while bringing as little suffering as possible. He will meet with any expedition that does not reject the invitation from his tribesfolk and behaves honorably. He will even allow it to leave.

Tamuz receives his guests in human form and treats them with hospitality and kindness, but the characters will never stop feeling that they are under scrutiny at all times. He will treat Autochthonians with great curiosity, more so if there is a Moonsilver Caste Alchemical amongst them. Tamuz asks for the purpose of the characters' journey and will detect any lie told in his presence, which offends him greatly and prompts him to imprison the characters until they tell him the truth. If the characters are honest, he will confirm the existence of the glass beasts that are attacking his people and reveal what he knows about the column of light as well as the pull he felt during the third day of its coming. If the Alchemicals in the Autochthonians' group do not make the connection, the Sodalts and the lector will do and provide the first inklings that the Exalted of Creation and the children of Autochthon are somehow related. Veyol will go so far as to posit that there could be Creation-dwelling Exalted that correspond to the other Alchemical castes. This is also a great chance for the Autochthonians to learn about the Celestines and to receive an account of what happened in Creation after Autochthon left.

Tamuz knows about the Great Maker, but the Lunar never realized Autochthon had taken his followers with him, nor that he could create Exalted of his own. Tamuz does not know that Autochthon gave the gods the secret of Exaltation nor the circumstances of the Primordial's self-imposed exile.

The Autochthonians must convince Tamuz that whatever it is that they seek does belong to Autochthon, in which case the ancient Lunar will let them go and even point them in the right direction if they've somehow become lost. Other character types must find their own arguments to avoid Tamuz to ask them to return whatever they found to him.

Abyssals will be attacked by Tamuz on sight, while Dragon-Blooded will receive a very cold welcome if they deigned to talk with the barbarians and will be walking on thin ice all the time. If the players are not playing the part of Mnemon's agents (see the Appendix), Cathak Repore and his men attack the barbarians and, a few days later, suffer the fury of Tamuz himself. Repore is left for dead and is the only survivor of his party, and he may encounter the players' characters later. Mnemon's demon also survives and reports back to Mnemon Acorla, who will contact another bonded circle of Terrestrials and keep his contact network on alert for news of travelers coming from the South with something unusual.



When destroyed, a glass beast shatters into a thousand shards that can damage everyone engaged in hand-to-hand combat against it. The glass shards deal 5L damage that can be soaked normally.

When the characters approach within 200 miles of the Eye of Autochthon, the beasts are made from glass with steel veins that Autochthonians will recognize as similar to the conduits inside the Great Maker. They behave just like their purely crystalline cousins, but they are more durable.

The glass shards and steel splinters collected from the beasts' remains are completely ordinary, although they appear as Hearthstones to magical senses such as Pulse of the Invisible, All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight and Cross-Phase Scanner. They hold a couple of motes of Essence at the most, which leak out within an hour. Essence-channelers can absorb these motes with a simple Wits + Occult roll. The remains of a single glass beast have an average of 3 motes per health level. These shards have a much more important function, so it will pay for characters to keep a few.

GLASS BEASTS

Glass (and glass-and-steel) beasts take the Attributes of any of the animals in **Exalted** (pp. 315-319) but are modified as explained below. The glass beasts do not imitate giant wolf spiders, mammoths, river dragons, siaka, strix, squids or yeddin.

Attributes: Strength +3, Dexterity +1, Stamina +3, Intelligence 2. Glass-and-steel beasts add 1 to all Physical Attributes.

Willpower: None; glass and glass-and-steel beasts are automatons.

Health Levels: -0 +2/-1 +2/-2 +3/-4 +4/Destroyed

Attack: Spd +0/Acc +2/Dmg +1L

Dodge/Soak: +0/+4L/-2B

Abilities: Stealth +2

GLASS BEAST SHARDS

The remains of glass beasts have special properties that tinkering characters can discover. These properties manifest as characters commit motes of Essence into them. The shards lose all of their properties one week after a beast's destruction.

1 mote: The shard's pointiest end *always* points toward the Eye of Autochthon.

3 motes: As above, plus the shard's holder always defeats Stealth rolls made for glass beasts.

5 motes: As above, plus the shard's holder instinctively knows when he has entered the Wyld.

8 motes: As above, plus the shard's holder gains three dice to all rolls to resist the Wyld's effects.

9+ motes: The shard shatters, and all motes are lost.

FINDING AN EXPERT

If the players' characters are not the heroic mortal group or have not hired the services of Stalwart Oak, they still have a chance to acquire his expert services. As Storyteller characters, the heroic mortals were no match for the increasing number of glass beasts attacking them, which killed them one by one until only the savant remained. The characters can find him just in time to save his life from the attack that eliminates the last of his party. He will happily join the characters if they will have him, convincing them of his value (which is quite considerable for an unExalted). He might have qualms with cooperating with Abyssals, however, and could find a way to escape them, possibly even by figuring out the controls of the Autochthonian steamcar.

THE BORDERMARCHES

By the time the characters get to within 400 miles of the Eye, they begin to skirt the Bordermarches of the Wyld. If they've figured out the power of the glass-beast shards, the characters will know they are in the shores of Creation while their makeshift compasses point them ever forward. The dangers of entering the Wyld are fully described in **Exalted: The Lunars**, but for the purposes of this adventure, consider the following.

After they enter the Bordermarches, make a Willpower + Essence roll at difficulty 2 for all characters for each month they remain in the Wyld. Dragon-Blooded characters add one die, Sidereal characters add two dice, Solars, Abyssals and Alchemicals add three dice and Lunars are immune and need not roll. Success grants a character temporary immunity to the Wyld's effects, failure induces one pox, and a botch induces one deficiency (if using **Exalted: The Lunars**) or one derangement (see **Exalted**, p. 281). Exalted characters have several ways to resist the Wyld's touch, such as the Solars' Integrity-Protecting Prana and the Dragon-Blooded's Chaos-Warding Prana.

During the time they travel through the Bordermarches, characters can encounter the same sort of hazards as in the desert in Creation with a few twists, such as sandstorms where the sand is gold dust, sand traps with teeth, etc. The glass beasts are present in this place too, but they appear to be immune to the Wyld's mutating touch. For characters versed or experienced in Wyld phenomena (Occult •• or greater, though Autochthonians have no frame of reference), the area will seem unusually stable, with only few occurrences of Wyld-mutated flora and fauna.

SAND CLOUDS

Floating lazily over the sky, these cream-colored clouds do not arise any suspicion except for their strange tint. The clouds are semi-intelligent, however, and start following any creatures they detect on the ground within one mile. Characters will be able to note the clouds

changing direction and picking up speed. When the clouds are over the characters, they start raining sand. Treat this phenomenon as a moderate sandstorm, but the burying effect is that of a severe sandstorm. If the characters do nothing but keep walking or sitting the sandy rain out, the clouds grow bored after half an hour and depart.

FIRE GEYSERS

Occasionally, the ground beneath a character will tremble and spew a sudden burst of flame. Detecting the rumble that precedes a gout of flame requires a successful Perception + Awareness roll, which will alert characters who have already experienced a fire geyser or been told about it, allowing them to step away from immediate danger without their players having to roll anything. A character who fails to notice the rumble and get out of the way suddenly finds himself bathed in fire. The geyser is an environmental hazard that deals 6L dice of damage, which can be soaked as normal. Characters can use reflexive Dodge Charms to avoid such blasts entirely.

THE CITY OF GLASS

After their players roll sufficient successes in their orientation rolls, the characters come within sight of the City of Glass. Though formed from the chaotic energies of the Wyld, the City is a bastion of stability and order. When Autochthon's return caused his Eye to open, it formed the city around it with the material available, hardening and compressing the sand into glass shapes of exquisite precision. As characters approach, they notice the light of the sun being captured and reflected by a thousand translucent spires that reach skyward. As they grow closer, the air becomes flooded by the chiming sound of glass fragments as portions of the structure incapable of supporting their own weight shatter and rain down in a vitreous drizzle.

Autochthonians will be surprised to see that the city resembles the style with which they build their cities. A central spire reminiscent of a major tramway and nutrient conduit nexus is surrounded by several rotating glass discs covered with smaller structures.

Entering the city presents no problem. There are no living beings around the characters to impede their entry or to give directions, so they must start exploring the bizarre city on their own. Once past the gates, the glass is not as transparent as it looked from outside. The light of the sun is absorbed by opaque and milky glass towers, which disperses it to create a soft and all-encompassing illumination. Even at night, the glass directs and intensifies the light from the stars and the moon, so that no part of the city is ever dark.

The structure and layout of the city will seem alien and stale to all Creation dwellers, but Autochthonians will find it a work of wonder, built like their own cities but with an attention to detail and artistry lacking even in the grand

capital of Kadar. The Autochthonian expedition must leave its steamcar behind as it won't fit through the city's gate, and it is here that those who had not yet removed their arc protectors dare to do so.

Thanks to their mechanical transport, the Autochthonians are the first to arrive, whether they are Storyteller characters or the group the players control. Players' characters of other types of Exalted will arrive second, regardless of them being Dragon-Blooded, Sideral, Lunar, Abyssal or a mixed group. The second Circle will find the steamcar parked outside the city, with two Populat soldiers standing guard, who sound an immediate alarm when the characters approach.

EXPLORING THE CITY

Walking on streets and walkways made of glass is not easy, and neither is navigating streets where all the walls are semitransparent. The ground is slippery, which is not so dangerous on wide flat surfaces but becomes an issue when walking on narrow ledges or climbing stairs. The Storyteller can ask players to make Dexterity + Athletics rolls for their characters with varying difficulties to avoid having them slip when walking sloped platforms, stairs and ladders. Charms such as Spider-Foot Style and Graceful Crane Stance negate the necessity to make such rolls.

Another danger is weight. Elevated walkways, ladders, unsupported flooring and other such surfaces would pose no problem were they made of normal steel or stone, but being made of glass, they do not support much weight. At random moments, the Storyteller may ask players to make Perception + Craft (Architecture) rolls at varying difficulties for their characters to determine whether a surface is safe to cross and how. Failure indicates that characters were not able to note the surface was unsafe. As a guideline, such surfaces should be able to sustain the weight of a number of persons of average weight equal to the difficulty of the Perception roll. If that number walks the surface at the same time, they hear a crack beneath them and have one turn to react, rolling initiative to see who acts first. If more people than the maximum limit walk through the span, they fall immediately and do not get this free turn to react. The Storyteller should not give players time to think their actions when this happens, although activating reflexive Charms is permitted.

Jumping to safety breaks the glass beneath and causes all characters who had not yet acted to fall. Players of characters who fall through must make a Wits + Athletics roll for their characters to somehow jump behind or ahead, but the characters suffer two unsoakable levels of lethal damage cutting themselves on the broken glass. Failing this roll hurls a character down to suffer normal falling damage in addition to the damage from broken glass, but he may crash through more than one span of flooring, requiring additional successful Wits + Athletics rolls to

avoid falling any more. Characters who activate Charms such as the Solars' Graceful Crane Stance or Feather-Foot Style or the Dragon-Blooded's Wind-Walking Technique do not count toward the limit of people walking on a breakable span, since they effectively weigh nothing.

Navigating the surface streets is easy, but as characters find the corridors and hatches leading downward, the walls' transparency and resonance confuses sight and sound. All Perception rolls have a +2 difficulty in most of the underground passages, with junctions being all the more confusing, with a +4 difficulty. Characters can literally see through walls up to a certain distance, but refraction and reflection make it impossible to distinguish fine detail. Eventually, the characters will find the entrance to the Crystal Maze, where the transparency of the walls as described above prevails. A particularly appropriate way to find the entrance to the maze is after accidentally falling through a couple of floors, either in combat or during normal exploration.

THE CRYSTAL MAZE

The Crystal Maze is a series of corridors and conduits that Autochthonians will find familiar, particularly Yoraka, whose job was to crawl through similar environments on a daily basis. The entrance to the maze is a vertical shaft with a ladder attached to one of its walls. Unlike the ladders in other parts of the city, these are laced and reinforced with veins of soulsteel. In fact, as the characters walk through the maze, they begin to see similar veins extending like tendrils, composed of one or more of the Five Magical Materials. The Autochthonians are enthusiastic about this discovery, believing they have found a gift from the Machine God in the form of fresh veins of their much-needed resources.

The corridors here are darkened as there are too many layers between them and the sky above, so artificial illumination is required, from lamps and arc torches to Caste Marks. The maze itself does not seem to have been built with humans in mind, but with giant rats. There are passages that open in the middle of walls about chest high, which characters can only crawl through, and others that end with chutes that characters must use to slide down, etc. Every 10 minutes, the characters' players must make a Perception + Awareness or Perception + Survival roll, applying the difficulties outlined above for the glass corridors. Characters must accumulate at least 20 successes in order to navigate the maze successfully. An Alchemical Exalt equipped with the Mobile Sensory Drone Charm can deploy it to aid in exploration, allowing that character's player to roll twice.

During the time between rolls, the Storyteller can roll randomly or choose one of the following obstacles for the characters to face (note that many of these challenges can be avoided or by-passed through Charms or other magical means):

PURSUIT

Whether the Autochthonians are controlled by the players or act as Storyteller characters, they are the first to arrive at the City of Glass, but that does not keep other Circles from stepping on their heels, nor should the players know instantly what their position is in this race. With the Autochthonian group, the Storyteller should infuse in the players a sense of foreboding. They know that this place is somehow rightfully theirs but that they have not secured it in the least. The first sign they have that someone else is after the same objective as they would be from the sentries at the city's gate, and from then on, they should feel that they have no time to lose. Whatever hides in the crystal bowels of the city, they must find it first.

Likewise, when playing a group of Creation dwellers, the players might feel frustrated that somebody else arrived at the city before them, but meeting the Autochthonian sentries should rattle their worldview. They have neither seen nor heard about the children of the Machine God, and the urgency of the race is aggravated by the mystery surrounding their competitors. The Creation dwellers not only worry because there is somebody else ahead of them, but also because they don't know *what* that somebody is.

With a successful Perception + Awareness roll, the Autochthonians hear their sentries' call, and from then on, they know somebody else is in the city, whatever it is that they want to do about it: Press on harder, or hunt down or confront and possibly deal with the newcomers. If the players' characters belong to one of the other groups, they can sneak up on the sentries with appropriate Stealth Charms or other means of passing undetected and then neutralize them.

The different groups can engage in pursuit and evasion with opposed rolls of Perception + Awareness against Dexterity + Stealth, although either or both parties can replace the Ability involved in the roll with Survival. The Autochthonians have the equivalent of the home-ground advantage since, even if it's all made of glass, the city follows the design philosophy of Autochthonian cities, adding two dice to their players' rolls. When two groups catch up with one another, the result depends greatly on their disposition. Autochthonians as Storyteller characters are trigger-happy when faced with the Exalts of Creation.

Roll	Challenge
1-2	Weak flooring. See “Exploring the City” above. Failure eliminates three accumulated successes on navigation.
3-4	Confusing junction. +1 difficulty to next Perception + Ability roll.
5-6	Tight crawlspace. Requires a successful Dexterity + Athletics roll at difficulty 2 to traverse. Failure eliminates three accumulated successes on navigation.
7	Vertical shaft (up or down). Requires a successful Strength + Athletics roll at difficulty 3. Failure eliminates two accumulated successes on navigation.
8	Slope. Dexterity + Athletics. Failure eliminates one accumulated success on navigation.
9	Chasm. (1d10 x 2) yards across and (1d10 x 5) yards deep.
10	Rich surface vein (roll 1d10): 1-5 jade, 6 soulsteel, 7-8 moonsilver, 9-10 orichalcum. 1d10 talents worth requiring 100 minutes per talent to extract with tools.

THE EYE OF AUTOCHTHON

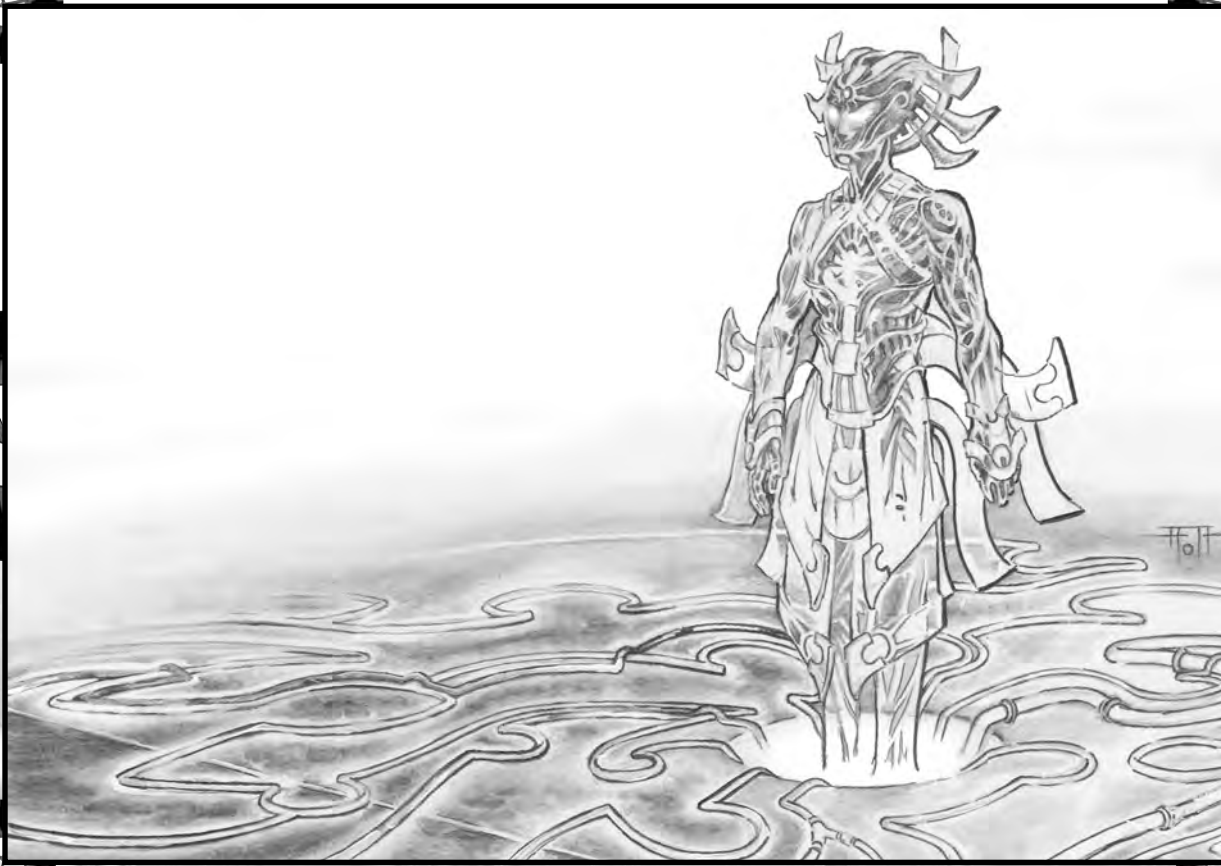
The more the characters walk, the tendrils of the Magical Materials grow thicker and richer, until the whole place is brimming with Essence. Essence-

channelers recover double the amount of Essence starting at the 15th accumulated success while navigating the maze. Exalted can try to attune to the veins of Magical Material corresponding to their type (or Alchemical caste) with a successful Wits + Essence roll made by their players, in which case they can follow the vein toward its source.

GUARDIAN OF SECRETS

All the veins of Magical Materials converge on a lonely figure standing at the center of a circular room. It is a humanoid of indistinct gender, whose clothes and flesh are all made of glass, but they are only layers through which its innards can be seen: superimposed webs and networks of the Five Magical Materials, pulsing as if alive. Creation dwellers with Craft ●●● and Occult ●●● know that there is something purposeful about the way the veins in the creature’s body are organized, while Autochthonians with Craft ●● and Occult ● instantly recognize them as miniature versions of the different tubes and conduits inside the Great Maker. If none of the characters in the Autochthonian party realize this, Yoraka is quick to comment about it.

Approaching the creature causes it to react, empty glass eye sockets lighting up with a bluish light of pure Essence. Its voice is raspy and high-pitched, sounding like the grinding of glass and the vibration of metal, and it speaks in a monotonous and stumbling cadence.



“Visitors. Expected. Confirm. Righteous. Entry.” As it speaks, the veins of Magical Materials start to glow under its glassy skin.

FOR AUTOCHTHONIANS

The guardian’s words are a question. It asks the characters to validate their right to be there, so close to the Eye of Autochthon. The glass sorcerer responds to any questions by saying “Question. Not. Expected. Confirm. Righteous. Entry.” When the characters introduce themselves by name, caste and origin (no particular order necessary), the sorcerer’s eyes glow a pure white, and it says, “Initiate. Soul. Observance. Method.”

The creature is suddenly enveloped in a multicolored light for a few seconds, during which time the animas and Caste Marks of all Exalted present manifest involuntarily. “Alchemical Exaltation. Acknowledged,” it says before its eyes again change color to a yellow hue. “Deliver. Key. Of. Passage.” It resumes by extending its hand.

With pursuers coming closer, the Autochthonians have no time to solve a riddle. The key that the sorcerer is asking for is another artifact supposed to be passed down by the faithful of the Machine God, but it has obviously been lost from Autochthonian history along with all records of the Eye’s existence. Should the characters ask what the key is, the glass sorcerer will answer, “Key. Of. Passage. Is. Shard. Soul. Of. Exalt. Proof. Of. Exaltation.”

A successful Intelligence + Lore roll at difficulty 5 reveals the answer: An Exalt invests a potion of his soul when committing motes toward the attunement of an

artifact. An Exalted can surrender one attuned artifact made from the Magical Material corresponding to his caste and put it in the glass sorcerer’s hands. An Alchemical Exalt can choose to surrender one of his installed Charms instead of an artifact. The artifact or Alchemical Charm crumbles to dust in the guardian’s hands, and the glass sorcerer’s eyes’ color changes to green.

“Welcome. Exalted.” The glass sorcerer says as it steps back, the room seals shut and the Eye of Autochthon descends from the ceiling.

FOR CREATION DWELLERS

After the Autochthonians enter the sorcerer’s chambers, the room closes to all. If the player-controlled characters are not in the Autochthonians’ group, they find their entry barred, but they can hear a low hum coming from beyond the wall that is cutting off their progress. Those able to see the flows of Essence notice that all the Magical Material veins are pulsing with power, directing it to the chamber beyond the wall. With the wall being made of glass like everything else in the city, the characters can distinguish vague shapes beyond it. Charms such as Barrier-Bypassing Senses (see **Castebook: Night**, p. 75) and Feeling the Dragon’s Bones (see **Exalted: The Dragon-Blooded**, p. 190) give Exalts a better sense of what is happening inside. The Storyteller should describe the events that transpire with the Autochthonians if an Exalt from Creation can spy inside.

The Autochthonians are speaking amongst themselves in their own language, making it hard for Creation

THE GLASS SORCERER

This creature is an extension of the will of the awakened Eye of Autochthon. As such, it can be considered an artifact of the utmost power. It is programmed to defend the Eye of Autochthon against those who should not get near it, but with the passing of millennia and the previous destructive owners the Eye had in its past, this programming has become flawed in minor ways.

The glass sorcerer possesses an internal pool of 50 motes of Essence that it can use to empower the following abilities: an Essence bolt attack (5 motes, see below for characteristics); Adamant Countermagic (15 motes); regenerate one health level as a reflexive action (5 motes); break Essence flows to interrupt the activation of Charms, spells or anima effects (reflexive action with a cost in motes equal to the spell/Charm/anima cost + 5); crystallize a target (turn to glass, 20 motes, and the effect can be avoided with a successful Stamina + Conviction roll — the effect wears off in a four hours). If attacked, the glass sorcerer will respond in kind and without mercy.

The real danger that this creature poses is that, if destroyed, it takes only five turns for another to form from the floor where the Magical Materials converge. The only way to keep it from reappearing is by smashing the glass over the Magical Material convergence (soak 6L/4B, 15 levels to destroy). The glass will self-repair in five minutes. Then, the next glass sorcerer will appear.

Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Will.	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Acc/Dmg	Dodge/Soak	Abilities
Glass Sorcerer	8/4/10	7	-0x4/-1x4/ -2x8/-4x6/I	Punch: 4/9/10B, Essence Bolt (10 yard range): 9/8/10L	6/8L/6B	Archery4, Brawl5, Dodge 2, Lore 3, Occult 4

dwellers to understand them (and only possible if they know Old Realm). A great orb is in the room's center, and a voice seems to be coming from it, but its words are obscured by a powerful magic that resists the powers of the Exalted. This may be the first time the Creation dwellers have seen an Alchemical Exalt, so the Storyteller should fully describe the alien appearance of the three Alchemicals that stand next to a group of black-clad mortals. An argument seems to break out amongst the Alchemicals, and the mortals step back in fear. Characters who can listen in with Charms or magic and who understand Old Realm will be able to distinguish the words "heresy" and "duty" repeated endlessly. Finally, one of the Alchemicals lunges for the great orb, and all hell breaks loose. The Creation dwellers are safe from the storm inside the Eye's room thanks to the glass wall they are standing behind, but even without magical aid, they can hear the screams as well as sounds of twisting metal. There is a powerful surge of Essence, and suddenly, everything is quiet. Unless they can actually see inside, the characters do not know what exactly transpired and will need to question any survivor for an account. Before the characters can begin investigating, the wall opens and allows the characters' entry.

The room is as described for the Autochthonians. The Eye is nowhere to be seen, and the glass sorcerer is in the middle of the room, but there are three black spots around him and an acrid smell invades the air. The rest of the Autochthonians lay sprawled around the room. Some have been transformed into glass statues themselves, while others have been stripped of all flesh. If the characters decide to check on the bodies that still look human, they will find that one of the unmasked males (Takil) is covering a female (Yoraka) with his crystallized body. The female is unconscious but alive, although closer examination reveals that parts of her flesh have been turned to brass (representing four levels of lethal damage). She is the only survivor.

If the characters take the time and effort to heal her or wake her up, the glass sorcerer stands impassive, not even acknowledging their presence. Yoraka is scared at first, blabbering something in Autochthonian that those who understand Old Realm can decipher as warnings not to get close to her. Characters trying to calm her eventually succeed, but she will not relate what happened in the room until she can fully trust them. Her tale is simple and better understood after the characters receive the revelations from the Eye of Autochthon: One of her group disagreed strongly with the others and tried to use the Eye for his own purposes, causing the ancient artifact to react violently, destroying everyone except for her.

Walking up to the glass sorcerer awakens it. It asks once again for the names of those present, expecting the same answer before proceeding with his evaluation. He correctly identifies the types of Exalted present as their animas and Caste Marks flare, which pierces disguises such

as the Abyssal Charm Solar Impersonation Style and Lunars' shapechanging Charms. He reacts differently to each type of Exalt. If Yoraka is awake, she can tell what the Alchemicals delivered as a "key of passage," which may clue the characters as to what is expected of them.

Dragon-Blooded: "Terrestrial Exaltation. Acknowledged. Present. Key. Of. Passage. Present. Proof. Of. Representation." If asked about the last part, the glass sorcerer answers "Proof. Of. Representation. Is. Delegation. Of. Power. Upon. Subordinates. Proof. Of. Authority. Over. Creation." This hints at the role the Dragon-Blooded served during the First Age as foot soldiers of the Celestials, which may not sit well with some characters. The proof of representation is a Hearthstone of any Manse of rating ••• or higher, which also crumbles in the hand of the guardian as well as any attuned jade artifact presented as the key of passage.

Lunars: "Celestial Exaltation. Luna. Acknowledged. Present. Key. Of. Passage. Present. Heart's Blood." The latter is pretty straightforward as one of the guardian's hands is cupped. If the Lunars ask for explanation, the creature will state in his monotonous voice that they must prove their ability to change shapes by providing a blood sample. "Sample. Insufficient," it will say until all the Lunars present have poured a few drops of their blood on the guardian's hand. The blood evaporates in the glass sorcerer's hand, and all the Lunars permanently lose one of the shapes in their "library" of creatures whose heart's blood they have tasted (players' choice). An attuned moonsilver artifact is required as the key of passage, which crumbles as well.

Sidereals: "Celestial Exaltation. The Five Maidens. Acknowledged. Present. Key. Of. Passage. Present. Writ. Of. Delegation." A successful Intelligence + Occult + Essence roll gives any Sidereal the answer to the last part. The writ of delegation is a prayer strip as required by the last Charms in the Sidereals' Charm trees, those that require the authorization — in essence, a delegation of power — from one of the Five Maidens. The prayer strip burns in the guardian's hand along with an attuned starmetal artifact presented as the key of passage.

Solars: "Celestial Exaltation. Unconquered Sun. Acknowledged. Present. Key. Of. Passage. Present. Will. Of. The. Deliberative." Yoraka cannot help characters with deciphering the last requisite. A successful Intelligence + Lore roll at difficulty 3 provides clues about the old Solar Deliberative, when the Solar Exalted were Creation's kings and leaders. "Will. Of. The. Deliberative. Is. Accordance. Between. Solar. Factions," the sorcerer replies when asked about this, and another clue is that its right hand is extended as if to shake another hand. An Eclipse Caste can activate his anima power while grasping the guardian's hand, or all Solars present can pour 5 motes of Essence minimum into the glass sorcerer's handshake. This, along with any attuned orichalcum artifact presented as the key of passage, grants

Solars their audience with the Eye of Autochthon after the artifact crumbles to dust.

Abyssals: “Celestial Exaltation. Unconquered Sun. Error. Essence Corrupted. Unconquered Sun. Revoked. Primordial Exaltation. Acknowledged. Access. Denied.” The only choice for an Abyssal Circle is to destroy the glass sorcerer if they wish to access the Eye of Autochthon. The only exception to this harsh welcome is that the single or few Abyssals in the company of other Celestial Exalted will be ordered to remain silent as the rest confer with the Eye.

Mortals: “Exaltation. Absent. Mortal. Spirit. Acknowledge. Present. Key. Of. Passage. Present. Test. Of. Artifice. And. Ingenuity.” Autochthon has a soft spot for mortals and introduced a method by which they could prove worthy of accessing the power of the awakened Eye. The key of passage in this case is any artifact, attuned or not, of any of the Five Magical Materials. The test of artifice and ingenuity prompts the guardian to ask. “Awaken. The. Following: A Scale of a Dragon. A Veil of Moonlight. A Tooth of the Dead. A Castoff Destiny. A Ray of Sunlight.” The glass guardian repeats the riddle when asked about its meaning and provides no help whatsoever. The riddle refers correspondingly to jade, moonsilver, soulsteel, starmetal and orichalcum. A successful Intelligence + Lore roll at difficulty 4 reveals that the glass sorcerer refers to shards of the corresponding Magical Materials, somehow fed with Essence. This requires both an Essence-channeler, such as a savant, who can spend his Essence willfully, and the use of the glass-beast shards, which store Essence, in combination with a sliver of each Magical Material (a simple Intelligence + Craft roll for each). A group of heroic mortals can use Stalwart Oak’s thaumaturgic prowess coupled with Yoraka’s knowledge of the Magical Materials to solve the riddle, but only after the players have tried everything or specifically ask the Storyteller characters for clues. Both the artifact and the imbued shards of glass and Magical Materials crumble to dust.

Mixed Circles: In a Circle with more than one type of character present, the glass sorcerer will only demand a single key of passage but will ask the secondary requisite for all Exalted present except Abyssals and mortals, who are skipped over by the presence of the purer and/or stronger animas in their group.

REVELATIONS: THE WELL OF SOULS

If the group correctly deciphers the requisites asked of them by the glass sorcerer, they are now confronted by one of the most powerful artifacts in Creation. The Eye of Autochthon is a jet-black sphere roughly four feet in diameter that is mounted on three sets of axes that allow it to spin freely in all directions, which is exactly what it does as it descends at the center of the room. The orb is pulsing with the light of a thousand tiny lights beneath its

glossy surface. Alchemical Exalted instinctively feel the presence of their creator, and even the proudest of them must bow. The mortals with them do not hesitate to sink to their knees and kowtow.

“Access. Confirmed.” A deep voice rocks the entire room once the globe settles down. Characters feel as if they are being observed, scrutinized and ruthlessly analyzed to their last drop of blood and fleck of skin. Players of characters with Conviction and Valor ratings lower than 3 must make a Willpower roll with a difficulty equal to 5 minus the highest rating of either Conviction or Valor. Failure indicates that a character is overwhelmed by the Eye, which is the proxy for a surviving Primordial, her player suffering a two-die penalty to all rolls for one hour after the interview with the Eye ends.

FOR AUTOCHTHONIANS

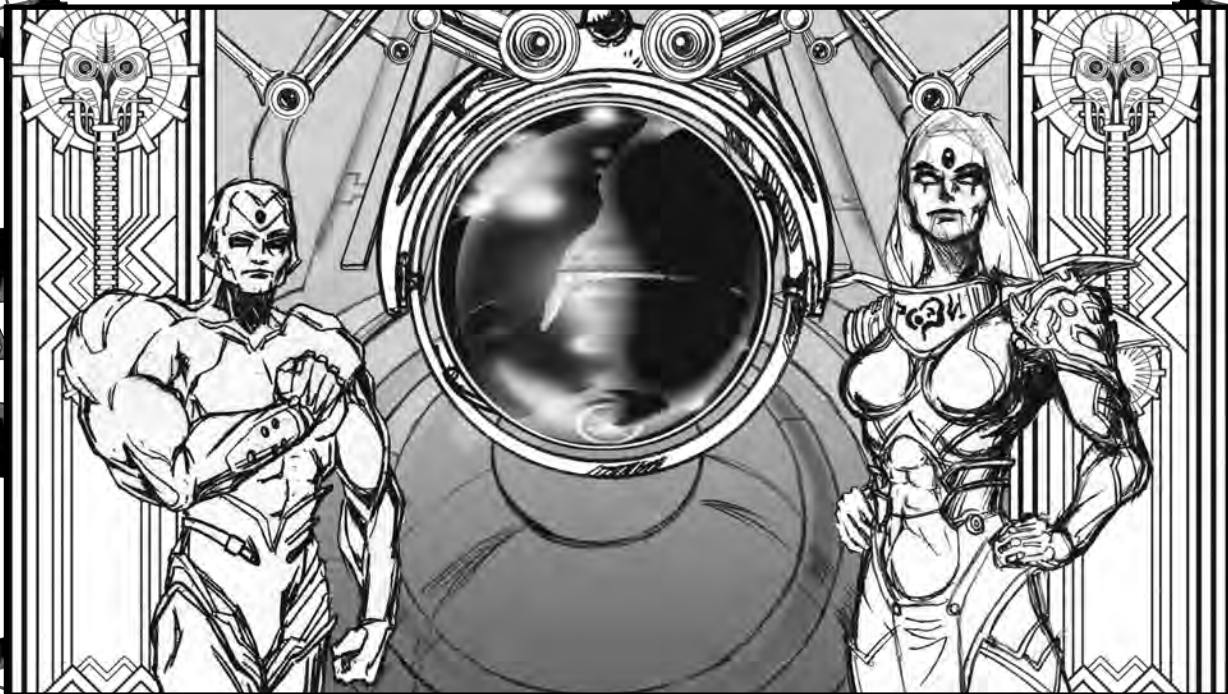
“Eternal Monitoring Method resumed.” The Eye speaks gravely, the lights within flickering and tracing lines as they move across its surface. Finally, it addresses the characters. “Condition critical. Seal breached. State your purpose.”

The Eye is not truly one of the Machine God’s organs, but a monitoring device that has allowed him to keep tabs on Creation, maintaining a constant vigil for the time he and his followers would return. The abuse it was subjected to by its previous owners prevented it from exercising its true functions of also keeping watch of the Primordial’s failing health. If interrogated, the Eye is truthful and very honest, even brutally so. It will first deny that its voice is the voice of the Great Maker. The Eye is simply an independent subsystem. It will ask the Autochthonians for confirmation about the state of the Eight Nations, the Seal of Eight Divinities, Autochthonian society and the plans of the Yugash Tripartite. It will not answer any of the character’s questions until it is done with its questions and follow-ups.

“All functions at critical,” it says gravely, its voice even less expressionless than that of the glass sorcerer (which is now melded with the wall). “Essence supply recovering, but soul-capacity depleted.” When the characters ask what that means or what they can do, the Eye responds. “Full entropic collapse imminent. Action: Locate Well of Souls.”

A map of Creation appears above the characters, showing a much larger world than the one that exists currently (although Autochthonians will not be aware of this). The map shrinks as the edges slowly eat away at the land toward its center, for the map is updating itself based on the Essence flows around it. “Well of Souls located. Tapestry discrepancy detected. Well of Souls inaccessible.”

The Eye will remain silent before questions about the Well of Souls. It will wait for the characters to speculate, answering questions only in terms of “yes” or “no” and limited by its knowledge. The discrepancy it is detecting is the Sidereals’ alteration of history to erase their presence. That action desynchronized the Eye with the weave of the



world so that it cannot locate the Well of Souls anymore. It will explain that the Amphora was never taken to the Well of Souls, but that Autochthon made it so that it connected to it by strands of the subtlest of Essences, so that it would receive new souls upon reemerging in Creation. Thanks to the Sidereals' tampering, that is no longer possible.

If none of the characters does, Veyol suggests that, if the Well of Souls is not accessible by normal means, they may be able to build a second Radiant Amphora of Celestial Accumulation that could retrace the steps of the first one, much like an advanced autolabe remembers the way back to its starting point. Arguments should ensue about the heresy of imitating the Eight Founders, if not initiated by the characters then instigated by either Takel or one of the Populat soldiers, who quickly shuts up if ordered to by any of his superiors.

At the mention of the Eight Founders, the Eye displays five points in the map of Creation floating above. "Yugash. Construction of Ewer." If the characters are not familiar with the legend of Yugash, either the Eye or Veyol recounts it (the lector tells a more entertaining story).

"When the Great Maker reunited his faithful followers," Veyol speaks, "he tasked the Eight to prepare the way for him. Yugash, Honored Be His Name, was tasked with finding the materials that the Great Maker would use to forge the Radiant Amphora, by which he would save the souls of mortals and carry them with him to safety. Yugash traveled far and wide, measuring, weighing, testing, his perfect artisan's eye discarding veins with the slightest impurity on them until he found five perfect ores: jade, moonsilver, soulsteel, starmetal and orichalcum. He brought

with him these perfect metals, and the Amphora was made and filled with souls for the Great Maker to thrive and nurture." When pressed for details, Veyol will confess his ignorance. That is all that the legend says. It does not speak on how the Eight Founders located the Well of Souls, how big the Amphora really was, nor where it currently rests. If the characters do not arrive at the conclusion, then one of the Sodalts (and Stalwart Oak if he is present) will remind them that a clueless search in Autochthonia's Reaches, followed by an equally ignorant quest in Creation for the Well of Souls, is a dangerous waste of time if Autochthon's health is so close to collapsing.

At some point in the discussion, someone should notice the five points sparkling on the map of Creation. When questioned about them, the Eye will answer. "Locks of Yugash found. Alchemical Manses marked. Manual recalibration required. Attunement keys required."

FOR CREATION DWELLERS

The Eye repeats the same initial procedures as for the Autochthonians and will reveal mostly the same information. If she is awake, Yoraka will fill in with some of the questions that her now dead companions posited as per the above scene. Yoraka will also relate how her late comrades got into a very heated argument about the heresy of the Eye's insinuations, which prompted the Alchemicals who were with her to try to force the Eye to give them other alternatives, but they failed in their attempt to control the device.

For other types of characters, the Eye or Yoraka will explain who Autochthon is in general terms, how it helped the gods overthrow the other Primordials and how it chose exile after the war was over. The Eye speaks with

clinical precision, and the Autochthonian woman with reverence. Neither knows that Autochthon is responsible for creating the gift of Exaltation that the gods used to uplift mortals to their service, nor about how Autochthon fled Creation for fear of the gods turning on him and definitely not about the Great Curse. The characters can question Yoraka further about the emergence of the *Patropolis of Ot*, although she will keep quiet about the needs of her people and her nation's vulnerabilities.

At the appropriate time, either the Eye or Yoraka will retell the legend of Yugash as it becomes obvious to her and the characters that doing nothing will condemn Autochthon to destruction, along with its entire population. The size of the shadowland such a tragedy would cause is enough to cause any Deathlord to seethe with envy.

Yoraka will plead with the characters to help her save her god and her people. They must return to Yugash and tell the Tripartite about the urgent state of affairs, or else, the Machine God is doomed. The Storyteller could ask for Lore rolls to point out to overly selfish characters the consequences of another Primordial going to the side of Oblivion, especially one as influential as Autochthon. Describe in detail the possible nightmare of mechanical undead and automated shadowlands. If that fails, the promise of untapped and undiscovered mines full of the Five Magical Materials should whet the appetite of the greedy and self-serving.

Politics and trade can also play part in the characters' decisions. After all, they would have the gratitude and possible admiration of an entire new world that has never tasted many of Creations' fruits. Not to mention that Yugash could become a strong ally in any political maneuvering, given the exotic technology it uses in peace *and* for war. A Solar can hatch plans of building his kingdom in the South just like the Bull of the North is doing on the other side of the world, using the Autochthonians' odd technology and its powerful Exalts to start a wave of conquests. A Dragon-Blood might contemplate the power that an alliance between her Great House and the nation of Yugash could bring her, possibly catapulting her house's chances to the Scarlet Throne if not through military force, then by increased economical and political might.

Abyssals' motivations are an entirely different thing, and something that depends completely on the nature of the characters. They might pretend to help Yoraka and Autochthon, using this chance to create another Malfean and possibly switching masters on the way. However, renegade deathknights may see this quest as a chance to redeem themselves and may ask a reborn and refreshed Autochthon for help in undoing their cursed Exaltations.

If the characters refuse to help Autochthonia, the adventure ends at this point. Yoraka will seek any chance to escape using her autolabe to retrace her steps flawlessly while the characters stumble their way back through the Crystal Maze. She boards her steamcar and flees back home

as fast as she can. She might find other allies on the way in the form of the other groups racing for the Eye, or she might reach Yugash to form another party of Alchemicals and heroic Autochthonians. Whatever the case, it is no longer the characters' concern when the world turns upside down due to the Machine God's salvation or doom.

THE LOCKS OF YUGASH

The Eye watches the exchanges between the characters as it relays its information. The characters may have passed their validation tests, but the placement of the Locks of Yugash are not something it will share with anyone who is not committed to recalibrating the Amphora to the Well of Souls. The problem is that it does not discern motives, so even Abyssals who show proper commitment but with ultimately self-serving goals will meet its approval.

The Eye explains the meaning of the Locks to the group, whether they are Autochthonians or other character types. The Locks are Alchemical Manses, the only ones in Creation, which Yugash built on the sites where he found the perfect materials for the Amphora. The Amphora is linked to these sites and, from there, to the Well of Souls. The Sidereals' alteration skewed this fragile calibration, and they must be changed to their new settings. At no point does the Eye reveal where or what the Well of Souls is. If questioned directly, he answers that it is not relevant. The important thing is to recalibrate the Locks.

In order to complete this task, the characters must obtain the attunement keys, five items of power corresponding to each of the Magical Materials that Yugash took with him after he himself attuned the Locks to the Well of Souls. Non-Autochthonians have no way to know what this means, and Yoraka does not recollect at this moment.

FOR AUTOCHTHONIANS

The Autochthonians' players are allowed an Intelligence + Occult roll. A single success reveals that the calibration keys might be something akin to soulgems. If the Autochthonians encountered Stalwart Oak and accepted his company, he will voice his opinion that the keys are most probably Hearthstones, explaining at length the manner in which they are created. Armed with either hypothesis, players of Autochthonian characters can make an Intelligence + Lore roll at difficulty 2. Success yields a frightening conclusion: Yugash would only place items of such power and importance where they could be guarded by one of Autochthon's Chosen, the *Metropolis of Kadar*, center of the nation he founded. The ancient Alchemical at the center of Yugash's capital must have the attunement keys somewhere in her massive body.

Cries of "heresy!" are exchanged between Takel, Veyol and perhaps some of the Alchemical characters. Veyol posits that removing any part from *Kadar's* body is tantamount to sacrilege and that the Eye must be some agent of the Void for suggesting such a thing. He will not budge his

position and will hurl himself against the artifact. He tries to use the Eye but fails horribly, activating a process not unlike those that doomed Ikerre. Arcs of purple lightning shoot from the orb. Players must make a successful Athletics + Dodge roll at difficulty 3 for their characters to avoid the arcs. Characters with Essence 1 hit by one of the arcs are turned to glass. Characters with Essence 2 or higher suffer 8L levels of damage, soaked normally and reduced by one for every success in the Dodge roll. Veyol crystallizes in seconds, and his body shatters in a thousand shards. If no one does anything, Takel will jump over to cover Yoraka and will be turned to glass as well.

After the automatic attack ends, the Eye speaks as if nothing has happened. “Locks of Yugash recalibration mandatory.” After that, it begins to ascend into the ceiling and disappears.

The map of Creation remains, and the points marking the Locks of Yugash respond to autolabes. Barring actions from the characters toward memorizing or registering the points, Yoraka will scavenge the tools from her fallen companions to mark the locations of each of them, as well as collect their soulgems. When she is done, the room’s door opens, letting the characters go.

FOR CREATION DWELLERS

Groups of other character types receive the same information about the keys of attunement, but knowing nothing of the legends and history of Autochthonia, the difficulty for the Intelligence + Occult roll is 4. Success leads characters to speculate that, given that the Locks of Yugash are Manses, the attunement keys could be Hearthstones. If they take the time to explain the nature of Manses and Demesnes to Yoraka, she stores the information away, although she does not make the connection yet. She will insist that the characters accompany her back to Yugash, where elders of the Sodalities can help them decipher the enigma.

Once it gives its final warning, the Eye ascends into the ceiling and disappears once more. Characters have the chance to record the location of the Locks of Yugash in any way they deem appropriate. If they lack the means, Yoraka will use autolabes as above. She will also collect the soulgems from mortals and Alchemicals alike, which may spark questions from the characters that she will answer in the most general of terms.

VISITORS

When the characters arrive, they found another of the groups racing for the Eye. The Storyteller decides which group it is that reached the chamber after the characters. If the characters faced another group in the City of Glass and did not defeat them utterly, it’s most likely that it’s this same group with replenished energies. The outcome of this encounter depends completely on the motivations and purposes of the individuals involved. The Abyssals will most certainly attack, Solars will pause to find out what is going on and

measure up their opponents (unless they are Abyssals), Lunars will be hostile but not outright violent, and the Sidereals will be stunned and more likely to talk than attack, but they are on a mission and will not allow anyone to interfere.

After delivering its message, the Eye will remain until the end of the day. Other groups that arrive on that same day after the characters have a chance to find out the same information after passing the same validation tests. At the day’s end, the Eye vanishes from the South, gone to another location where it can keep performing its duty of monitoring the happenings of Creation.

THE CITY’S FATE

Without the Eye of Autochthon to sustain it, the City of Glass crumbles to sand during the following week, including its veins of Magical Materials. The glass beasts cease their attacks and depredations, and the area returns to the Wyld from which the Eye built it in the space of a week. People arriving while this is happening still find evidence the previous groups left behind in the form of corpses, area damage and forgotten or discarded equipment. An extended Perception + Investigation roll requiring 10 accumulated successes reveals that at least one group left the area and that whatever it was that rested in the center of the fading zone of stability was able to *create* veins of Magical Materials, even the extremely rare starmetal. This should prompt any latecomers to redouble their efforts to find the group that escaped.

ACT II: THE WORKS OF YUGASH

Now that the characters know what must be done to replenish Autochthon’s energies, they must make a two-step journey: They must discover what the attunement keys are and retrieve them, taking them to the Locks of Yugash that the Eye of Autochthon revealed for them. Unlike the first part of the adventure, where objectives were pretty much set, the characters can go about their business in several ways, whether they are a group of Autochthonians or Creation dwellers.

OBSTACLES ON THE WAY

The journey’s hardships have not ended because the characters have reached the City of Glass and returned. Along the way, the characters will be hounded by the various interests that failed to reach the Eye or arrived hours after the characters left but still managed to receive the Eye’s information. The different knowledge that the groups can piece together points them toward different points of Creation to lay in wait to ambush the players’ characters. The Abyssals will haunt the Southwest, where the First and Forsaken Lion knows that something has

appeared; Sidereals will be around any of the Alchemical Manses as they try to locate them by their distinctive — if hidden — mark on the Tapestry; Dragon-Blooded will roam around the Threshold as their information network notifies them of the characters' movements; and Solars and Lunars may appear anywhere, guided by dreams and magic, or may simply be in close pursuit of the characters.

The Storyteller can spring such an encounter at any time, which need not be a combat. The characters can spy one of their competitors in a city alley and decide to accelerate their movements, alliances can be struck, etc. The idea of these sightings and meetings is to instill the feeling in the players that they have little chance to pause in their search, for there are others looking for the same thing, and there is no prize for the second place.

During any violent confrontation, Exalted characters should be aware at all times that they may have mortal companions at a severe disadvantage fighting against Exalted combatants. Protecting Yoraka and/or Stalwart Oak will become a priority if only because of the help they give the characters toward the quest's completion.

RETURN TO AUTOCHTHONIA

Going back to Yugash plays very differently for an Autochthonian Assembly than for a Circle of Creation dwellers. Even if the latter have Yoraka to speak for them, she is not a high-ranking member of her Sodality, and her ability to protect the characters from the fear and ignorance of her fellows is limited. It is up to the characters to present themselves as sympathetic to the Autochthonian cause and to convince the paranoid officers of Yugash that they can be trusted.

FOR AUTOCHTHONIANS

The authorities of Ot receive the characters with anxiety and haste. They are alarmed that so many of the group has been lost and do not hesitate to put them on an express tram to Kadar, where they will speak with the Yugashite leaders. The travel occurs in an almost dreamlike haze as the characters are hardly allowed any rest. Characters used to the hustle and crowdedness of tram-traveling feel slightly uncomfortable that they have a car all for themselves. Their only company is a group of Sodalts and Theomachrats who question and examine them tirelessly for signs of bodily and mental infection, which they take more seriously if Stalwart Oak or another Creation dweller is with them. The characters are advised to keep silent about what the Eye of Autochthon revealed because their fellows will *not* react well and will annotate in their reports the possibility of spiritual contamination, which will undermine their dealings with the Yugashite leaders.

The tram arrives at Kadar with as much secrecy as the Tripartite can manage. A group of soldiers take the characters to see Grand Autocrat Kerok and the rest of

the Tripartite, where they have the chance to relay their discoveries.

The news about the attunement keys are not well received. The Theomachracy is righteously offended at the insinuation that they should take something from *Kadar's* body in order to pursue the ranting of a foreign object. Olgotary members fear Kerok's opinion and remain quiet until the leader voices his judgment, while the different Sodalities bicker on useless facts such as the construction method of the purported Eye of Autochthon.

Storytellers should make it evident to the characters that if they want to get something done, they will have to take the initiative.

Kerok will be the only one to entertain the notion of finding these attunement keys, but he is torn because of the effects it may have on the city and the fact that they only have the word of a strange artifact that, even if its claims of being the Great Maker's creation are true, had lain dormant for years, cut off from the Machine God and abused by Creation dwellers.

In the end, the discussion stalls, and the characters are sent away to get some rest under close guard before another round of questioning and debate. This will continue for days if the characters just sit back and watch the proceedings. They will not be allowed to leave their assigned quarters under polite, but forceful terms.

Characters with contacts amongst the Sodalities will receive visits from them. The Sodalts are curious about the Eye of Autochthon and want to learn more without the Olgotary and the Theomachracy interrupting. They are more focused on technical matters, but as they speak with the characters, they become convinced of the urgency of doing something. *Anything*. If the characters lack such contacts, it will be Yoraka's mentor who visits them, a man by the name of Uderek.

Just as the characters start planning to do something to break the routine of pointless debate that is miring the Tripartite, their contacts amongst the Sodalities reveal that they may have found the attunement keys, but mere mortals will not be able to take them. They will help the characters escape and take the attunement keys so the characters can then go out and find the Locks of Yugash.

FOR CREATION DWELLERS

If the characters arrived in their own mode of transport, it will be taken inside if it can fit through the gate. Otherwise, it will remain outside under close watch by a detachment of 12 Populat soldiers.

The reception that Exalted of Creation receive is more guarded and cautious, but after Yoraka's explanation, the people of Ot will receive them well, if somewhat warily. They are dismayed by the loss of their Alchemical heroes and reverently receive the collected soulgems from Yoraka. The characters will spend one day in quarantine as Sodalts scurry around them, making sure they

are not carrying anything strange that could damage the Autochthonian way of life. They will ask to take custody of any magical weapons and artifacts, but can be convinced to leave the characters' equipment be with a successful difficulty 2 Manipulation + Socialize or Charisma + Socialize roll.

Events unfold much like they would if the characters were Autochthonians, but the Grand Autocrat is much more skeptic and inclined to disbelieve the characters, as they have not proven their intentions. The characters will be escorted outside while most of the debate goes on, being asked in more than once to clarify one inane question or another. Yoraka will remain inside and is looking increasingly weary and exasperated with each new interrogation. At the end of the day, guards carry the characters to secured quarters. The endless debate continues, with Yoraka visiting the characters to keep them updated on the situation. It will be her who contacts the characters about finding the possible keys of attunement without the Tripartite's authorization. Those who have come to understand the conditioned and conformist ways of Autochthonians should appreciate the huge effort even thinking about this is costing the young Sodalt.

SIDEREALS IN AUTOCHTHONIA

Sidereal characters face a crippling weakness while traveling in the bowels of the Machine God. They are walking outside the influence of fate and moving amongst persons living outside the Maidens' power. As such, many of their Charms simply do not work, nor can they assume resplendent destinies or practice Sidereal astrology. Treat Autochthonians as creatures outside of fate like Deathlords and demons for the purpose of the being targeted by Sidereal Charms. Charms that reduce a dice pool's target number cost double the normal motes of Essence. The Storyteller may decide that other Charms have a difficulty of 2 through 4 if the effects directly target an object's or being's fate.

ESCAPE

It is obvious that the Tripartite is deadlocked on the issue of the keys of attunement. The news coming from Ot reveals that the different expeditions are bearing fruit and that the Autochthonians are getting ready to move forward, conquering everything in their path while neglecting the Machine God's spiritual needs. The characters will have to escape their imprisonment.

Dealing with the detachment of four guards should be no problem, but the way in which the characters go about it will color the reaction of the authorities. Duping the guards by guile or magic is the cleanest and best way to do things

and will garner a favorable reaction and a more helpful attitude from the Sodalts helping the characters in their objectives. Killing the guards in gruesome fashion will cause the characters' helpers to question the wisdom of aiding such savages and may even prompt them to betray the characters once they acquire the attunement keys.

The characters' allies will give them directions to where they think the attunement keys can be found: following a route that takes the characters through service ducts toward the body of *Kadar* herself, there to find a series of throbbing pipes connecting her to the city and to the Great Maker himself, until they find a junction box that just might have what they are looking for. Neither Yoraka nor any of the Sodalts will go with them, for they will be preparing the characters' escape from the city. If the characters are non-Autochthonians, Yoraka will give them an autolabe attuned to the boarding station where she will be waiting for them.

Yoraka is wracked by doubts, which should echo in Autochthonian characters. They will be fighting against a lifetime of indoctrination where conformity and obedience are the desired and accepted attitudes. Yet, if they do not rebel, their god, along with their entire world, is doomed.

STEALING THE KEYS OF KADAR

Their allies' instructions guide the characters through a maze of claustrophobic and lightless conduits. Non-Autochthonians may have trouble navigating the convoluted corridors, whose walls are lined with tubes and conduits that hiss, clank and make all other sorts of unknown and alarming sounds. Such characters are in the most alien of environments, in the innards of a living Primordial whose defining concept is machinery and craftsmanship.

Because they are using back roads, the route takes the characters through very tight squeezes and narrow ledges. The Storyteller can ask for Dexterity + Athletics rolls to manage such obstacles, defining the difficulty from 1 to 4. The same Charms that helped the characters cope with the difficulties of the City of Glass will help them here, for the Eye created a close facsimile to the layout and disposition of Autochthon's bowels.

Alchemicals will know when they have reached *Kadar*, the ancient Exalt who became the anchor for the metropolis, but other characters will not know the significance of the smooth and curving surface they find after a final crawl through a ventilation duct. They hear a rhythmic sound, like a great hammer striking the largest of gongs in existence. There is a sucking sound after each beat, and the characters realize that it sounds like a heartbeat.

They have reached *Kadar's* chest. The ancient Alchemical detects their presence immediately. She heard the Tripartite's indecision, and she is eager to do something because she feels it is the right thing to do, connected as she is to the Great Maker. She is compelled to follow the dictates of the nation's governing body at the same time,

however, so her mental processes reached the decision to wait and see what the characters would do.

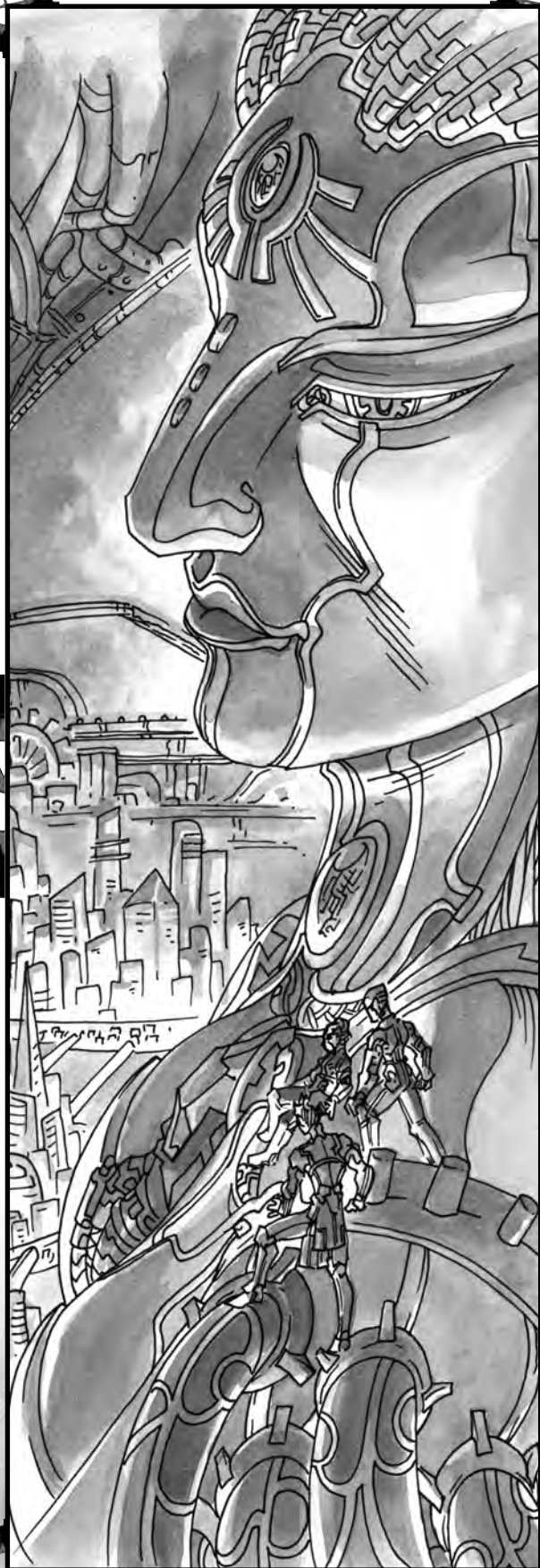
The characters face a sloping surface that is difficulty 3 to climb with a Strength or Dexterity + Athletics roll. This is one of *Kadar's* arms. If a player fails her roll, her character slides down the slope and begins to gain speed. The player can make three Strength + Athletics rolls for the character to try and steady herself, with each roll's difficulty being 1 higher. A simple success means the character stops her slide and must climb from even further down. If all the rolls fail, all is not lost, for *Kadar's* hand will move and cup to receive the character, who only receives 3B levels of damage, soaked normally.

The view from the slope's top is staggering: To the right, the six rings that make up the city are visible from what is in reality the ancient Alchemical's shoulder, and to the left, her massive face stares at the complexities that her power is administering. The players' characters will get the uneasy feeling that she is watching them. The characters must walk the way to *Kadar's* neck and circle to her back, which is plugged with conduits and tubes that lose themselves in the rest of Yugash and the Reaches. The characters must somehow squeeze between the tubes, which are twice a man's height in diameter and pulse with whatever fluid or energy is moving through them. The tubes are made from a thick but elastic material, and some are very hot to the touch, while others are freezing. The space between the tubes is wider than the gaps between the tubes and the surrounding walls that cover the inside of the Alchemical's neck. Even then, anyone squeezing through must do so by touching at least one of the tubes, most likely the bottommost one. An Exalt armed with Spider-Foot Style or another equivalent Charm can crawl on one of the other tubes.

THE KEYS OF ATTUNEMENT

The tube corridor extends for 30 yards, and human-sized characters cannot run or sprint while crawling forward. A Lunar may transform into animals at the small end of the size allowed by the Finding the Spirit's Shape Charm or into any allowed by the Humble Mouse Shape Charm and avoid these effects, as she will then be small enough to easily fit in the variable space between the tubes. The Storyteller rolls a die every turn a character spends crawling through, and if the result is 6 or higher, his player must make a Dexterity + Athletics roll, difficulty 3 (normal difficulty for characters smaller than human). Failure deals 1L level of unsoakable damage from extreme heat, cold or simply because a sharp shudder made the tubes slam against each other, smashing whomever was between them.

At the end of the shuddering gauntlet, the space between the tubes widens so that characters that made it through can stand up safe from the shaking conduits. The characters find a closed square lid about five feet per side



that requires a successful Intelligence + Craft (Architecture) roll at normal difficulty or a successful Dexterity + Larceny roll at difficulty 2 to open (non-Autochthonians add 2 to each difficulty due to the lid mechanism's alien technology), although Charms such as Lock-Opening Touch or Lock-Weathering Touch do the trick quite nicely. The space beyond is only two feet deep and ends in a flat surface crisscrossed by veins of the Five Magical Materials arranged in patterns that only an Autochthonian can recognize as circuitry. At the center stand five jewels embedded in corresponding settings made of jade, soulsteel, moonsilver, orichalcum and starmetal, arranged in a pentagonal pattern.

Just when a character is about to touch or to try to remove one of the jewels, all present hear a loud but gentle voice echoing in the space they just crawled through. "Do not," it says. The voice is clearly feminine and is invested with centuries of wisdom. "*Yugash did not intend for these to be removed wantonly. You must remove them in the proper order: Start with the setting for the stars and proceed to the next by skipping its clockwise adjacent. But beware... these keys help me channel the power of the Great Maker. Without them, the flows of energy and matter will grow harder to control, and I may have to shut some of them down temporarily as I adjust. During this time, the Reaches will encroach upon the city, and I will not be able to stop them.*" Autochthonians and those Creation dwellers paying attention to their hosts should realize that the voice is that of *Kadar* herself. If the characters ask her to elaborate, she answers, "*You must hurry. Find the Locks of Yugash. Once the Great Maker is healthy, it will be easier to protect the city. Come back as fast as you can. I have a couple of months at the most before the city's processes run out of control.*"

Characters can remove the keys starting with the jewel with the starmetal setting and then moving clockwise to form a star pattern. Once in the character's hands, the keys definitely look like Hearthstones, with the Magical Material settings extending toward their backs like an extended version of a soulgem's own setting. A character of the corresponding Alchemical Caste or the Creation Exalted type that can attune to such metal can hold an attunement key or carry it with him and reduce all commitment costs of artifacts by half.

ESCAPING AUTOCHTHONIA

True to *Kadar's* word, once the last attunement key is removed, the corridor shudders. Characters who remained outside see the lights in the city flicker uncontrollably as the ancient Alchemical tries to control her city's works without the artifacts' help. Characters must hurry back the way they came to meet up with *Yoraka* and the rest of her Sodalt allies, who are visibly alarmed at the general and random power failures that are happening all around them.

Escaping through the streets of *Kadar* is extremely easy, as the population is thrown into chaos. Characters

are able to see some of the consequences of the city's control issues firsthand, some of them with potentially fatal consequences, such as doors that slide shut and trap people underneath, gas mains that burst open due to pressure and poison the air in whole sections and elevators and trams that stop or accelerate beyond control. Random occurrences may delay characters who give in to their Compassion as they help people avoid the worst of the consequences of the control failures.

Eventually, the characters reach the service tram tube the Sodalts secured for them, and they board a single car. *Yoraka* goes with them, although she is clearly afraid. She asks the characters if they know what is going on, and she feels terribly guilty when the characters tell her about the attunement keys and *Kadar's* message.

The tram car will shudder and stop a couple of times, but *Yoraka* uncovers a lid on the floor where Essence-channelers can feed a battery of motes of any kind of Essence to provide the tram with additional juice. Once they leave the vicinities of *Kadar*, the tram's speed stabilizes, and the characters can resume their journey in relative peace, but with the fate of *Kadar's* loss of control weighing on their consciences.

Escaping *Ot* is relatively easy. The characters arrive at a storage terminal, and given that the car is unscheduled, there are no people present to receive it. The authorities of *Ot* have not yet heard of the state of emergency in *Yugash*, and security is relaxed, focusing on keeping intruders from Creation out rather than keeping Autochthonian citizens in. They reason that no Autochthonian would want to leave unless ordered to do so, and they are right in this assumption.

Yoraka advises that the characters find and steal the steamcar that transported them to and from the City of Glass, which they will find in a storeroom built next to the Seal for the express purpose of keeping at hand the vehicles and equipment to be used in forays into Creation. Characters can stock themselves with weapons, armor, general equipment and food from the crates, loading them onto the steamcar. Stealth is necessary in these tasks, for armed soldiers are not too far away and are attracted by any noise they hear, most notably the startup noise of the multi-legged vehicle.

When the characters try to burst through the patrols, they come under heavy crossbow fire (targeting characters randomly with four attacks per turn). Successful ranged attacks against guards' dodge pools eliminate one of these attacks until the characters only suffer one attack per two turns. The player of whomever is controlling the steamcar must make a Dexterity + Ride check once per turn for her character to maneuver the vehicle through the narrow corridors (take into consideration the difficulties for non-Autochthonians using the steamcar's strange controls). Accumulating 15 successes gets the group through the Seal of Eight Divinities and back to Creation.

THE ALCHEMICAL MANSES

Yoraka stole the autolabes that she used to mark the location of the Locks of Yugash, so the characters have a surefire method of locating them. If the characters have a faster way of transport than the steamcar, they can use it instead, either stealing it from the storeroom or defeating the soldiers who are watching over it if it was kept outside. In any case, it is time to head for the first of the Locks of Yugash.

This part of the adventure is the most flexible. The Storyteller is free to put the Locks of Yugash in any location, for through the Machine God's masterful craftsmanship, Yugash cloaked them from both mundane and magical detection. Each of the Locks is a small structure made entirely from the Magical Material it represents and caps an ore vein of that Material that could be mined to produce all sorts of equipment for years. The Autochthonian design has rendered these Manses proof to the Sidereals' detection, and even small gods that stumble upon them recognize them simply as pitiful shrines and forget about them. Only Fair Folk have a chance to remember the location of one of the Locks, since the sites are as poisonous to them as the Deep Wyld is to creatures of Creation and they avoid them like the plague. Only a character in possession of the corresponding attunement key can approach a Lock of Yugash without forgetting his direction or purpose. He may lead others, but they will be extremely confused until they reach the center of the site proper.

Throughout the journey's course, the characters may continue encountering the rest of their competitors as explained at the beginning of this chapter — even more so if the characters are sacrificing stealth for speed. The Storyteller can choose the opponents matching them based on the corresponding Manse the characters are heading toward — Dragon-Blooded for the Jade Manse, Abyssals for the Soulsteel Manse and so forth. Another criterion for selecting enemies is the characters' past dealings. For example, they could have managed to convince the Sidereal envoys that they are a Threat to All Creation, and so, the Chosen of the Maidens become their most ardent pursuers, appearing more than once and arranging things to make their journeys more difficult until they are finally defeated.

The default method of travel is the Autochthonian steamcar, which can traverse the Threshold in the space of six to eight months without crossing the Inland Sea (compared to the Sidereal Charm Riding the Dragon, which can manage this feat *in a single day*). The Storyteller can rule that Sidereal Sail Charms can affect the steamcar's travel if most of the passengers are Creation dwellers, for those Charms affect the characters' destinies, not the steamcar's.

APPROACHING THE LOCKS

Although finding the Locks is easy thanks to Yoraka's autolabes, getting close is a wholly different matter. In

addition to the encounters with the other groups, the characters also face some sort of challenge or situation somehow echoing the Manse's nature. The Locks cap the Manses' energies, but in the centuries that passed since their construction, the pressure has weakened them and has allowed stray Essence to escape and influence the lands surrounding them.

The challenges are different for each of the Locks and described under the description of each. Characters are free to ignore the challenges, but those who complete them will find the recalibration of the Locks much easier, as their actions harmonize the Material-aspected flows of Essence.

DEFENDERS OF THE LOCKS

Yugash knew that the enchantments woven around the Locks might not be enough to deter potential intruders, and he did not know how long Autochthon would remain in exile, so he added an additional layer of defense, following the Great Maker's designs.

Each of the Locks bears some similarity to the City of Glass in that each's influence created a number of automations that roam its periphery, attacking all intruders. The guardians around each Lock are not made of glass, however, but made from the natural animals of the area implanted with the Magical Material corresponding to the Alchemical Manse. The Lock creates these defenders from the veins of the Magical Material underneath it, and the characters will know they are getting closer as the creatures begin attacking them.

These alchemical beasts are more dangerous than their glass counterparts created by the Eye in the South, as they are smarter and equipped with mechanomagic enhancements, much like the Alchemical Exalted are. Alchemical beasts resemble normal animals in shape, but the resemblance ends there. They are made from mechanical parts constructed from the Lock's Magical Material and run on sheer Essence. They also have many odd protrusions that represent the Alchemical Charms with which they are equipped.

Alchemical beasts attack everyone approaching the Lock's site, but they add 2 to the difficulty to attack the bearer of the corresponding attunement key. Yugash installed a password protocol so that the bearer of a key could deactivate the beasts, but he never wrote it down, and it was lost to the Ages.

RECALIBRATING THE LOCKS

The goal of the five-fold journey is to recalibrate the Locks of Yugash so that they can once again connect the Radiant Amphora of Celestial Accumulation inside Autochthon with the Well of Souls that lies somewhere in Creation or in Heaven. The process is similar for all the Locks.

At the center of a structure, there is a pedestal about waist high with a keyhole on top of it. A character need

only insert the appropriate attunement key and turn it once, triggering an effect that differs in each of the Locks of Yugash and that may be dangerous for people present except the key's turner, who receives five dice he can add to resist the recalibration effect.

Recalibration takes one hour to complete, and the key requires a constant flow of energy, which it drains from the character holding it. The Hearthstone embedded in the key will consume 1 mote from the holding character's Essence every two minutes. If no motes remain or given the absence of an Essence Pool, the key will drain 1 point of Willpower and, barring that, it will consume one health level. The character cannot resist this drain, but he can switch positions with another person with a successful Dexterity +

Occult roll from the players of both parties. If the key is at any moment cut off from its source of energy, the recalibration process will stop, and the effects will vanish, so that the procedure must be started from scratch once more.

During the entire process, the Lock is no longer hidden from mundane or magical view, so the characters are not safe from close pursuers, alchemical beasts or the attention of the gods and spirits, who realize there is a huge shift in the tangle of fate. The pattern spiders once again try to hide this phenomenon, but given the strength of the effect, the Intelligence + Lore roll the player of a witness in the Loom of Fate must make for her character to notice is performed at the normal difficulty.

ALCHEMICAL BEASTS

Alchemical beasts take the base Attributes of any of the animals in **Exalted** (pp. 316-317). Use the beasts most appropriate to the region in which they appear, and modify them according to the Lock that creates them.

GENERAL ATTRIBUTES:

- All alchemical beasts can emulate the caste anima powers of the Alchemical castes they resemble with the same Essence cost.
- All alchemical beasts have five Alchemical Charms, chosen regardless of requisites from the following list: Chemical Fog Generator (one type of gas only), Electrification Onslaught Dynamo, (Element)-Inured Frame, Essence Pulse Cannon (two submodules count as a Charm choice), Essence Shield Projector, Exoskeletal Armor Plating, Hyperdextrous Tentacle Apparatus, Integrated Arsenal Upgrade, Limb Extension Armatures, Optical Shroud, Paramagnetic Tether Beam, Plasma Thruster Assembly, Pulseweb Entanglement Burst. These Charms are integral components of the creatures and cannot be removed.
- Alchemical beasts have a permanent Essence rating of 2 and an Essence pool of 30 motes. They are creatures of magic, and their attacks are considered magical attacks.
- Alchemical beasts are automatons and have no Willpower. They are immune to all magic that would affect a target's mind, including the intimidating effects of the anima caste power of Dawn Solars and Dusk Abyssals.
- Use the beast's highest attack and defense pools for installed combat Charms that require an Attribute + Ability combination, such as the Essence Pulse Cannon, which uses the beast's attack pool instead of Dexterity + Archery.

- All have Intelligence 3 but are largely combat drones intent on defense.

- In addition, apply one of the following templates to the statistics of the creatures. Add these onto the creature's normal "black-box" beast statistics. The beasts chosen might be predators if the Storyteller wants frightening combat powers or oddities such as combative glass-and-metal farm animals or tiny insects now with grossly inflated stats.

Orichalcum Beasts

Attributes: Strength +4 Dexterity +3 Stamina +3
Health Levels: -0 + 3/-1 + 3/-2 + 4/-4 + 5/Destroyed
Attack: Spd +4/Acc +4/Dmg +4L
Dodge/Soak: +4/+3L/+6B

Moonsilver Beasts

Attributes: Strength +3 Dexterity +4 Stamina +2
Health Levels: -0 + 2/-1 + 4/-2 + 4/-4 + 5/Destroyed
Attack: Spd +4/Acc +6/Dmg +3L
Dodge/Soak: +4/+2L/+4B

Jade Beasts

Attributes: Strength +3 Dexterity +2 Stamina +4
Health Levels: -0 + 3/-1 + 3/-2 + 4/-4 + 4/Destroyed
Attack: Spd +5/Acc +3/Dmg +3L
Dodge/Soak: +2/+4L/+8B

Starmetal Beasts

Attributes: Strength +2 Dexterity +3 Stamina +3
Health Levels: -0 + 2/-1 + 2/-2 + 5/-4 + 5/Destroyed
Attack: Spd +5/Acc +2/Dmg +4L
Dodge/Soak: +3/+3L/+6B

Soulsteel Beasts

Attributes: Strength +4 Dexterity +2 Stamina +4
Health Levels: -0 + 3/-1 + 3/-2 + 4/-4 + 5/Destroyed
Attack: Spd +2/Acc +3/Dmg +4L (drains 2 motes of Essence on a successful attack)
Dodge/Soak: +2/+4L/+8B

The character holding the key knows when the Lock is correctly calibrated, and he can thereafter remove the key and take it with him. The present Lock is recalibrated, and it is time to move on to the next one.

Below are the descriptions of each of the five Alchemical Manses, their recommended locations, the challenges the approach presents to the characters and other obstacles can face to reach them under the Storyteller's judgment.

THE JADE MANSE

Recommended Location: Approximately 100 miles south of Lookshy.

Challenge: The way to the Lock is barred by natural phenomena grown strange and somewhat unnatural. People near the site classify the phenomenon as an isolated Wyld zone, but any magical means used to perceive the Wyld discount this possibility almost immediately. In truth, the nearby Lock's vein of jade is resonating with the elements and causing them to bend and twist out of shape. On their way to the Lock, the characters encounter impossibly deep ravines that they must jump, are pelted with hail and sudden storms, are impeded by thick undergrowth and are surprised by flash fires.

Simply surviving these natural elemental hazards is enough to harmonize the Manse's energies. Autochthon delights in the way mortals could master their environment, and the characters' act of imposing their will upon the different environmental dangers will align the Essence of the Alchemical Manse of Jade.

Each particular hazard can be avoided with a variety of rolls depending on what the Storyteller wants to throw at the characters, but the most common roll will be Dexterity + Survival, Strength + Athletics or a combination of those Attributes and Abilities. The difficulty of the rolls ranges from 2 to 4, and the damage caused goes from 4B to 8B and 3L to 6L. See Chapter Six in *Exalted* (p. 266) for more options of environmental effects.

Surviving the way to the Lock without using magic or Charms to bypass the threats harmonizes the Essence flow and reduces the recalibration effect's damage to 1L per minute.

Obstacles: Mnemon's agents, Lookshy patrols, outcaste bandits, renegade wood spirits, jade beasts.

Description: The Lock of Yugash corresponding to jade is almost indistinguishable from its surroundings. Five pillars are arranged in a circle about 120 feet in diameter. Each pillar is a roughly sculpted column about five or six feet thick, each of a different color and carved with rough lines that form strange patterns. The space inside the pillar's circle is soft grass of the purest green, with a 10-foot-diameter white-jade platform at its center, from which the Lock's pedestal arises.

Recalibration Effect: Once the recalibration process starts, the circle inside the pillars begins writhing with

elemental energy. Strong winds blow, sudden tongues of flame burst from the ground, a localized hailstorm begins, the blades of grass shoot up with murderous speed, and the ground opens and closes. This is similar to the Dragon-Blooded's anima flux effect, where everyone must soak 2L level of damage every minute. Jade Caste Alchemicals and Dragon-Blooded are immune to this effect.

THE MOONSILVER MANSE

Recommended Location: Approximately 100 miles southwest of Larjyn.

Challenge: There is a small settlement on the way to the Lock, built by people who somehow managed to elude the attention of the moonsilver beasts roaming the land around the Alchemical Manse. When the characters visit the village, they note that there is something not right with the inhabitants. A successful Perception + Socialize or Perception + Medicine roll will reveal that most if not all of the people are insane. They all have some form of derangement, with the elders having at least three. What all the settlers have in common is a deep-seated paranoia about the woods around the village. They will engage in many irrational behaviors (often obsessive/compulsive ones at that) in a mix of superstition, real magic and madness.

Every night, the villagers lock themselves in. If the characters spend the night enjoying the village's hospitality, they will hear many strange noises outside, like claws scratching at the walls of the wooden homes. The villagers pretend they can't hear it, but it's obvious they are terrified. The characters can go outside, but they will see nothing but deep claw marks in the outer walls of every home. The marks will disappear at dawn, leaving the houses looking as if nothing had happened.

The characters are free to leave, but they will miss the chance to harmonize the Manse's Essence flow. Staying to ask around, they will discover that there is one person that has no derangements at all. He is a painter and a poet, and he claims with all truthfulness that he hears no noises at night and is well aware of his neighbors' insanity, claiming they are inspirational to his work. The only thing that sets his home apart from the others is that every sundown he recites a poem at the moon.

The answer to the attacks is as simple as convincing the villagers to each perform some act of creativity or spontaneity when the moon rises in the sky. The resonance of the changing nature of inspiration will resonate with the moonsilver vein under the Lock and stabilize the Manse's energy.

The villagers will keep their derangements, but at least they will not live in fear anymore, as they are now at one with the mutating resonance of moonsilver. The consequence of the harmonization upon the recalibration effect is that the duration of a derangement due to a failed Willpower roll is reduced to one minute.

Obstacles: Raksi's agents, wild animals, packs of Fair Folk, moonsilver beasts.

Description: Arriving at the Lock corresponding to moonsilver causes all characters to feel a certain sense of exhilaration. Similar to the other sites, this Lock is surrounded by a ring of five moonsilver pillars twisting gracefully upon themselves. Each pillar ranges from five to ten feet in diameter and, from its base, a line of moonsilver flows in a circular pattern into a grand spiral built on soft grass toward a small central moonsilver dais, where the Lock's pedestal stands with an air of defiance.

Recalibration Effect: Starting the recalibration process causes one of the five pillars to glow with blinding light for a few seconds, after which its adjacent pillar glows in turn and so forth. The light illuminates each pillar with increasing speed until there is a strange strobe effect and the spiraling lines on the ground join in. The players of all the characters inside the pillars must make a Willpower roll every five minutes or suffer from a random derangement for five minutes exactly, until they make their next Willpower roll. Moonsilver Caste Alchemicals and Lunar Exalted are immune to this effect.

THE ORICHALCUM MANSE

Recommended Location: Approximately 100 miles south of Crystal.

Challenge: As the characters approach the Orichalcum Manse, they notice that the terrain begins to change. The road begins crooking in senseless zigzags, trees begin growing askew, and everything, even the horizon, looks somewhat off. They will come up to an encampment where they can hear discordant music and a raised voice.

If the characters go to the encampment, they will find a small group of mercenaries and refugees. They claim to come from different battlefields, reunited by a charismatic leader who found them and gave them hope. From where they stand, the characters can hear a loud and clear female voice spouting a motivational speech. A successful Intelligence + Lore roll opposed against the speaker's Manipulation + Socialize roll (an eight-die pool) will reveal several flaws in her arguments.

She is speaking about the fundamental rights of the assembled to a happy life... in abject servitude to her whims. She also speaks about the flaws of the world outside and how much better it is to flee from the world while taking its riches. Sometimes, the arguments are outright contradictory, such as when she speaks of eating carrion to remain healthy or building a great pyramid in the fashion of the First Age, only upside down to avoid the wrath of the gods.

Charms such as the Sidereals' Tell-Tale Symphony, the Lunars' Spirit-Scenting Technique, the Alchemicals' Cross-Phase Scanner, the Solars' Spirit-Detecting Glance or the Dragon-Blooded's Spirit-Detecting Mirror Technique will reveal that the speaker is, in reality, a small god. Attracted by the aggrandizing resonance of the Orichalcum Manse, the spirit is clearly in the grip of delusions of

grandeur, and she directs whoever listens to worship her, for she has been appointed by the Celestines to rectify the state of Creation.

No one will pay attention to the characters and no one looks remotely tired of listening to the spirit's ramblings. The only way to get the spirit's attention is to speak up. She will thereafter try to convert the characters to her cult and will seek to engage in a debate. The only way to get out of the situation is to say yes to everything and quietly slip away when everybody's attention is once more focused on her or to engage in true debate with her.

The debate is conducted as a series of opposed rolls. The Storyteller only rolls the spirit's Manipulation + Socialize, but characters can argue with any other appropriate roll, such as Intelligence + Lore (when addressing factual knowledge), Charisma + Socialize (when appealing to the audience) or even Wits + Socialize (when making a witty remark). The characters' players' rolls start at difficulty 3 due to the spirit's sway on the audience, but every time the characters defeat her, the difficulty is reduced by 1. Once the difficulty is normal, each success reduces the spirit's dice pool by one until she has no dice left. At that moment, the thrall she has on the people breaks, and everybody realizes the follies she has been spouting.

The spirit was polluting the Essence flow by introducing imperfection with her idiotic speeches and misguided views, and the Essence responded by twisting the landscape. Disbanding her assembly restores the perfect balance that orichalcum represents and harmonizes the Manse's Essence flow. After this, the recalibration effect of the Orichalcum Lock is diminished so that characters whose players fail their Willpower rolls only reduce their highest Virtue by 1 for the whole effect.

Obstacles: The Solar Circle, proud bandits, zealous spirits, orichalcum beasts.

Description: The Orichalcum Manse is the most beautiful. There is an outer ring of solid orichalcum encrusted on smooth purple glass one foot wide, upon which five stately columns of the same metal stand, each of them carved with horizontal lines connecting to each other. From each pillar, a line of orichalcum runs straight toward a central orichalcum ring, inside of which stands the Lock's pedestal.

Recalibration Effect: When a character turns the attunement key, the entire structure begins glowing with a golden aura. Characters inside the circle and even up to five yards outside must cover their eyes or be blinded by the light, suffering a two-die penalty to all their dice pools. Even standing with their eyes closed can cause characters whose players fail a Willpower roll at difficulty 2 to feel overwhelmed by the experience, reducing all of their highest Virtues by 1 every 15 minutes to a minimum of 1. Characters recover from all of these effects the next time the sun sets. Orichalcum Caste Alchemicals and Solar Exalted are immune to this effect.

THE SOULSTEEL MANSE

Recommended Location: The Black Chase shadowland, north of Sijan.

Challenge: This Lock is located smack in the middle of a shadowland, and some would say that is challenge enough. However, the Soulsteel Manse acts upon the landscape in the same manner as the ones of the other Magical Materials. Soulsteel is not a Material that can be found pure. Rather, it is made from ores found in the Labyrinth alloyed with the souls of the dead. No sane ghost will approach the site of the Lock as the ores beneath it constantly suck higher and lower souls of the dead into it.

Whatever route they take, the characters will stumble upon the site of a massacre and a battle still raging. Both the soldiers and ordinary people fighting are dying in gruesome ways. Players must roll Compassion for their characters at this sight. Each success drains 1 point of temporary Willpower. The group can avoid the site of the battle if they wish, but if they stop to investigate, they have the chance to harmonize the Manse's Essence flow.

The characters may stop and tend to the wounded. A successful Perception + Medicine roll will reveal that the people lying wounded have a blackish sheen to their bodies, and a further successful Perception + Occult roll

will reveal their nature as ghostly shells bonded to something in the landscape. The wounded eventually rise and fight again, mindlessly recreating their battle. A second successful Perception + Occult roll at difficulty 4 reveals that administering a killing blow to the wounded will send them back to wherever they came from. The soldiers will stop reenacting their battle, and the scene will eventually fade away. By doing so, the characters are sending the souls to bond with the soulsteel vein underneath the Lock.

Taking an entire day to banish the restless souls harmonizes the Manse's Essence flow and reduces the frequency of Valor rolls from the recalibration effect to every 10 minutes.

Obstacles: Deathknights of the Mask of Winters, Walker in Darkness or the Dowager of the Irreverent Vulgate in Unrent Veils, packs of hungry ghosts, a band of heroic ghosts, soulsteel beasts.

Description: The Soulsteel Lock reflects the attunement it has with death, as if Autochthon had foreseen the emergence of the Abyssal Exalted. Five perfectly round pillars about eight feet in diameter ring a soulsteel platform nearly 100 feet in diameter. From each pillar, a line of similar structures forms toward a central dais where the pedestal is built. The inner pillars are each one foot narrower than the last and a few degrees more slanted toward the center, as



if they were the closing jaws of some unthinkable monster. All the pillars, as well as the platform itself, are carved with scraggly lines that form maddening spirals, each line studded with rows of silvery rivets.

Recalibration Effect: Turning the key causes the lines in the platform to start glowing with a sinister radiance, and they begin to exude an aura of fear. As time passes, a sinister moaning grows in volume and intensity until it becomes a frightful screeching of gears and apparently human voices. The players of all the characters on the platform must make a successful Valor roll every five minutes for their characters, or they lose 1 point of temporary Willpower. Failing three Valor rolls in a row or losing the last point of Willpower causes the character to suffer from an irrational fear, and he must flee the place in a random direction using the fastest means possible. Soulsteel Caste Alchemicals and Abyssal Exalted are immune to this effect.

THE STARMETAL MANSE

Recommended Location: About 100 miles southeast from Yane.

Challenge: The characters come upon an abandoned shrine. There are no signs of anyone living within miles, but the shrine is in perfect state, and there are plenty of offerings in the form of food, jade clippings, prayer strips and candles. There is no sign that would indicate to what god or spirit the shrine is devoted, however.

Under careful scrutiny (a successful Perception + Awareness roll at difficulty 3), the rocks upon which the shrine is built are seen to be covered by shiny dust that sparkles a silvery white. There is no need to roll if the characters are using Charms such as the Alchemicals' microscopic lens submodule of Optical Enhancement, the Dragon-Blooded's Feeling the Dragon's Bones, the Sidereals' Marvelous Inclusion of Details or the Lunars' Heightened (Sense) Method, the Solars' Keen (Sense) Technique or the Abyssals' Superior (Sense) Focus, the latter three focusing on sight or touch, whichever is appropriate for the character's actions.

Upon noticing the dust, characters with either Craft (Metal) or Lore at ••• or higher *and* Occult •••• can identify it as inert starmetal, resting in a state that is all but useless as a Magical Material. Charms for magical senses will note that there is a lot of Essence pent up in the shrine. Also, characters who are adept as geomancers or have a way to track Essence flows will notice that the anonymous shrine is diverting a lot of Essence, clogging the natural flows as the vein of starmetal grew into the shrine, shaped by the Starmetal Lock's resonance.

Sidereals with Lore •• know that starmetal is made from the hardened form of small gods sentenced to death in Yu-Shan, some of them by the Sidereals' own manipulations, but players of other characters must successfully roll Intelligence + Occult at difficulty 6 to be aware of the

true origin of starmetal. If no characters suggest destroying the shrine, either Stalwart Oak or Yoraka will.

The shrine has a soak of 7L/10B, 10 health levels to damage (which has no effect) and 30 levels to destroy. Once the shrine is destroyed, the area's Essence flow normalizes. After doing this, the recalibration effect of the Lock is lessened. Characters who have their luck changed return to normal at the sunset of the next day.

Obstacles: The Sidereal envoys, supreme bad luck and disastrous incidents, starmetal beasts.

Description: The Lock of Yugash corresponding to starmetal is a series of five concentric circles with five pillars around the outermost ring. The entire area is almost 120 feet in diameter and rests on a platform of marble with veins the colors of the Five Maidens. The circles and the pillars are made with pure starmetal and have orderly and crossing lines carved on their surface. Resting on each circle's circumference and in line with one of the pillars, a starmetal sphere reaching up to a grown human's hip sits unmoving and unmovable.

Recalibration Effect: Once the recalibration process starts, the spheres in the concentric circles begin to rotate around the pedestal. Players of characters inside the circle must roll Dexterity + Dodge against five automatic successes from the spheres. The spheres deal 6B dice of damage on impact. Besides this particular effect, characters whose players fail a Conviction + Essence roll made every five minutes have their luck changed. Roll a die: On a result from 1 to 5, apply that result as a reduction to the character's target numbers (normally always 7); on a result from 6 to 10, subtract 5 from the result, and apply it as an increase to the character's target numbers. Target numbers cannot be higher than 10 nor lower than 4. Each time the player fails his Conviction + Essence roll, he applies the die result to his current target number, even if it was altered by a previous roll. The character's player must use the final number that came up when the recalibration ends, and the character keeps it for a full week afterward. Starmetal Caste Alchemicals and Sidereal Exalted are immune to this effect.

RECALIBRATION COMPLETE: THE REVIVAL OF AUTOCHTHON

When the last attunement key turns, the five Locks of Yugash reconnect the slumbering and moribund Primordial to the Well of Souls. Everyone in Creation feels a pang in their soul, a feeling that something grand just happened.

The restart of the vast mechanism of Autochthon's replenishment has several consequences, which the characters begin to see immediately.

Regardless of their location, when the characters recalibrate the final Lock, the Eye of Autochthon returns. It appears without any pomp or ceremony, just resting

outside the Lock's area and appearing exactly as it did when the characters last saw it.

"Recalibration complete." It speaks again. "Well of Souls accessed. Initiating soul transference. Status: In progress."

THE RAIN OF STARS

After the Eye finishes its short message, the characters should notice that the stars are shining unusually bright. If it is day, the stars are visible to the naked eye. A successful Perception + Occult roll reveals that stars are blinking out! The process grows steadily more noticeable as time passes. Moments later, brilliant lines of energy begin falling from the sky into the Locks' area. From the sights on the horizon, characters can only surmise that the same is happening at the other Locks.

All Sidereals and other characters with Lore ●●● and Occult ●●● realize that the firmament is being depleted of its stars, many of them flowing into the Locks and to Autochthon. Thousands of destinies are being torn from Creation into the hungry Amphora of the Machine God, disappearing from the Loom of Fate and being absorbed into the Design of Autochthon. The Well of Souls is the sky itself!

All Sidereal astrology effects and resplendent destinies degrade at the rate of one effect point per minute, starting with scope and finishing with any numerical bonus or penalty. In effect, the Loom of Fate is rebooting and coping with the loss of souls, and all designs imprinted on it by the Sidereals are muted over during the upheaval until destiny is free of their meddling... for now.

In Yu-Shan, all the gods are drawn from the Games of Divinity to look at the phenomenon, and all the bureaus are in an uproar. The Bureau of Humanity sees names disappear from its records in a flash of light and smoke. The Loom of Fate trembles as the pattern spiders neglect their duty for a moment of celebration.

Thousands of people are being robbed of their chance to reincarnate in Creation, their souls reassigned to be reborn in Autochthonia (as the Eye explains if questioned). Those people will not die until their preordained time is up, but when they do, their souls will end up in Autochthon's Amphora.

This effect extends even to the Underworld, where the stars of the dead begin to wink out and flow into the Soulsteel Manse. Thousands of ghosts achieve Lethe instantly and disappear on the spot, their higher souls finally knowing peace. Even corrupted souls, such as those of nemissaries possessing bodies in Creation, have a final epiphany before leaving the Underworld forever, saved from their final destiny in the Abyss. The Deathlords see many of their servants vanish without warning, and the Malfeans stir fitfully in their sleep as they feel their brother reawaken.

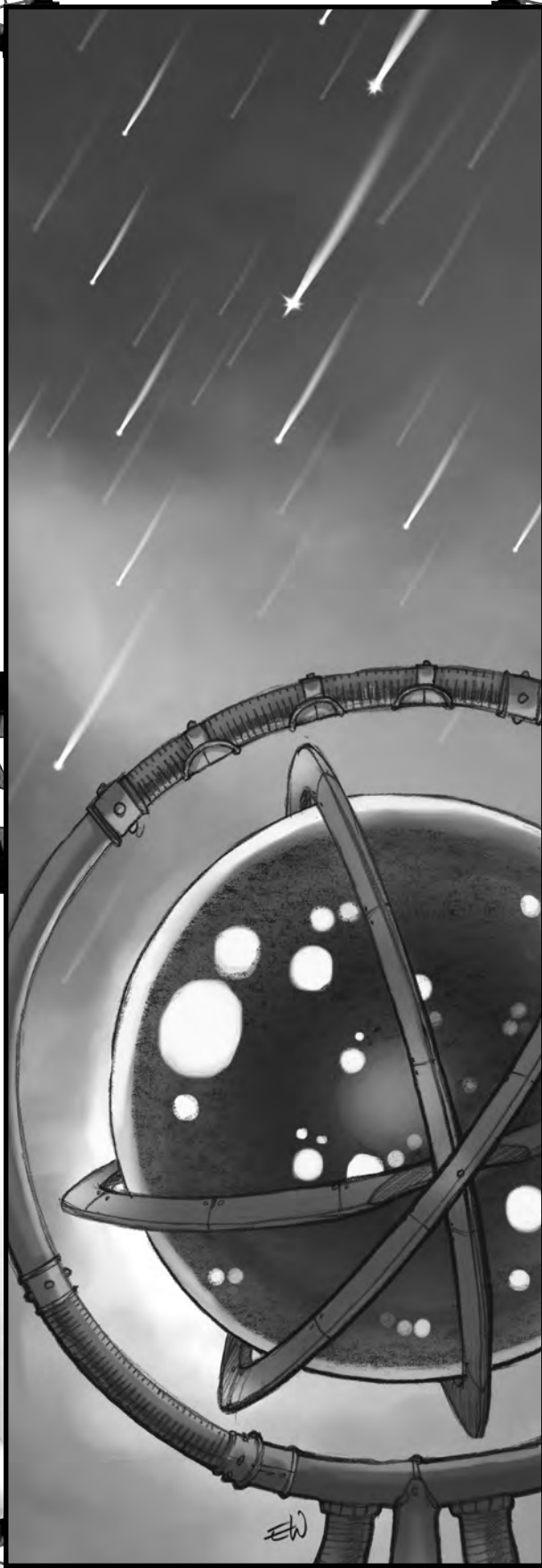
ALTERNATE OBJECTIVES

Characters can have different plans other than reviving Autochthon, such as loyal Abyssals' goal to destroy him and turn him into a Malfean or Mnemon's idea to harness his power. These are the alternate outcomes possible when finding each of the Locks.

Killing Autochthon: When finding the Locks, character can take this chance to sabotage the process simply by destroying the Locks instead of recalibrating them. The pedestal is the most important element of each Lock, and each has a soak of 10L/15B and requires 30 levels to destroy. Weapons made from the corresponding Magical Material ignore 5 soak. Yugash did not contemplate sabotage when building the Locks, but he did foresee damage due to natural disasters, so the pedestals have a self-repair enchantment that draws material from the veins of Magical Material beneath the lock and they regenerate one health level per day. The Locks are linked with each other to maintain the enchantment, and thus, it is necessary to destroy all of them before they finish regenerating in order to shatter Yugash's mechanism forever.

After the destruction of the last Lock, the Primordial is doomed. In the space of a few months, all his internal processes begin to terminate without possibility of repair. Autochthonians must evacuate, or when the last process ends, they all die with their god. The Seal of Eight Divinities shatters, and the Labyrinth welcomes the newest Malfean.

Stealing Autochthon's Power: Before the characters turn the last key, the patron responsible for their mission appears (Mnemon, Raksi, the Dowager of the Irreverent Vulgate, Chejop Kejak, etc.). He or she demands the keys from the characters and takes them with him or her. *Kadar* continues to deteriorate in the meanwhile, while the patron in question studies the keys and replaces the Hearstones with ones attuned to an existing Manse on his or her property. If the characters remain loyal, the patron will task them to repeat the recalibration process. When the last key turns, the Locks tap into Autochthon's very Essence so that, although he revives, his power can be tapped from the five Manses linked to the keys. The Machine God is not subservient, but he cannot work against the person attuned to the Manses and all his creations work much better for her or him.



In the middle of the chaos of images and sensations, the Eye of Autochthon pauses and speaks to the characters once more. “Process finished. Amphora status: full. Energy levels: full.” If Yoraka is still with the Circle, she falls to her knees.

The Eye will begin to emit a low hum, and its once dry and monotone voice changes into a low and thundering tone, echoing vast mechanical processes and sounding like the turning of a thousand cogs.

“I Return.”

ACT III: THE END OF THE SECOND AGE

The Eye of Autochthon hovers above the ground, and all characters can feel the change it underwent. Far from being a simple automaton carrying the last commands of its creator, the artifact is now the Great Maker’s mouthpiece. The characters now speak directly to Autochthon.

The Machine God greets his Chosen and recognizes the Exalted of Creation, seeing the corruption of the Great Curse upon them. “It Was Not Yet Time.” He speaks. “The Curse Is Not Undone.” If there are Abyssals present, the Eye glows red for a moment. “I See *They* Acquired Raw Material.”

Characters can speak and ask what they want, but the Primordial remains silent and answers only when it pleases him, giving several answers at once. He is patience personified and will respond ponderously but honestly. Autochthon was present when the Primordials were defeated. He knows all the secrets of Exaltation and everything there is to know of the First Age prior to his departure. When the characters exhaust their questioning, he will address them again.

“There Are Many Things To Do, Procedures To Complete.” The voice thunders across the landscape. The surface of the Eye of Autochthon begins breaking up, panels sliding apparently without rhyme or reason, but the protracting and retracting parts begin to take the shape of a humanoid creature until the Great Maker finishes forming a humanoid avatar: a pure version of an Alchemical Exalted 15 feet in size and made of adamant, with veins of the Five Magical Materials and raw energy coursing through his frame. “Yu-Shan. I Must Go To Yu-Shan.”

At the avatar’s command the air around the characters is suddenly surrounded by dozens of pattern spiders and design weavers. The magical constructs tear open a hole in the Tapestry, and the Great Maker’s avatar steps through. It will suffer the company of none save Alchemical Exalted, and they must still react quickly, as the hole seals fast behind the avatar.

Autochthon goes to confer with the gods. If the characters manage to accompany his avatar, they will

arrive in Yu-Shan at the feet of the Loom of Fate. Their passing will be flanked by the pattern spiders and design weavers, which keep away all other spirits, gods and Exalts who dare stand in Autochthon's paths.

The characters are ill-prepared for such an encounter, but Autochthon reassures them that the gods are prohibited from harming him and that their own negligence impedes them from gathering the armies of Exalted who brought down the Primordials in their name during the First Age.

This scene is mostly exposition on the part of the Storyteller, who should go into detail about the expressions in the face of the assembled gods. Eventually, the assemblage will arrive at the Jade Pleasure Dome, where not even the Alchemical escorts will be allowed inside.

AFTERMATH OF THE AWAKENING

Whether the characters are waiting in Yu-Shan or in Creation where they opened the last Lock, Autochthon's avatar returns for them in the same impressive manner as it left. Once they are all reunited, the humanoid avatar transforms again into its Eye configuration, floating in front of the characters.

"You Have My Gratitude," the Machine God says. "We Have Work To Do Yet. No Sleep. Should Never Have Gone To Sleep."

The Eye calls for Autochthon's children to join it, mortal and Exalted alike. Upon touching its surface they disappear, transported back to Autochthonia.

This is the end of the adventure. The characters found the Well of Souls and revived the Machine God, and now, they have to deal with the consequences. Looking up to the sky, they find it emptier than when they last looked at it, but they know that, like Autochthon said, there is much work to be done, and the characters will be likely to find themselves at the center of things in the rapidly changing world.

THE FATE OF AUTOCHTHONIA

Autochthonia remains as a parallel world to Creation. If the characters were Autochthonians, they are received as great heroes, all offences forgotten and put aside. With their patron's resuscitation and his willingness to be part of the affairs of gods and men restored, the Autochthonians are in for a new era as well. Alchemical Exalted, with their more independent souls will lead the change of Autochthonian society as it interacts with the kingdoms of Creation, joining the fight against the Deathlords and the Yozis' servants, competing with the crumbling Realm and possibly ushering its downfall and leaving their indelible mark upon the dawn of a Third Age of Man.

THE TERRESTRIAL MANSES

Those Manses built by Ledaal Chiska in honor of the Great Maker remain anchored to him and, upon his

awakening, siphon all the Essence they produce from him rather than just the trickle their designer intended. They are thereafter unusable to any but Alchemical Exalted and become tethers that keep the Machine God appraised of the goings on of Creation. The Eight Nations will dispatch forces to secure these Manses as well as the Locks of Yugash, claiming them as holy sites for their people. There will be a brief war with the Realm over the ownership of these sites, but the Autochthonians have a distinct advantage in that their god is truly with them.

THE ADVANCE OF CHAOS

The fringes of Creation shudder and heave. As Essence is sucked in great quantity from the heart of the Realm's defense grid and souls are abandoning Creation in great numbers, the Fair Folk feel the world weakening and take this opportunity to mount an improvised assault. The forces of the Wyld increase their harassing tactics, stepping up their raids on the outskirts of the world, although they wisely avoid the Southwest, where Autochthon's power increases by the second.

AND THE DEAD SHALL RISE

Alarmed by this state of affairs, several Deathlords marshal their forces through the shadowlands under their control. Over several weeks, the First and Forsaken Lion sends large forces from the Thousand to try and spread westward, but they begin to clash with the armies of the Machine God, who also want to secure the lands to appropriate their resources. While this happens, Princess Magnificent feels the world changing and escapes, hoping to gain an audience with the awakened Primordial. She will seek Autochthonian forces, preferably Alchemicals, to plead her case and be allowed to swear her fealty to Autochthon.

The insights into the Deathlords that the Princess brings will allow the Autochthonians to mount a more effective assault against their forces.

Further east, the Mask of Winters fortifies himself inside Juggernaut and tries to establish diplomatic relations with Autochthonia after a month of watching their forces check the armies of the Lion, although it is unlikely that he will abandon his position as a Deathlord.

THE GEARS OF CHANGE

Everyone in Autochthonia feels a renewed sense of purpose. Decaying systems begin regenerating on their own, all the patropoli and metropoli wake up at once, singing the praises of the Great Maker. *Kadar* regains control of her processes, and *Ot* informs the Tripartite that their god is speaking to him for the first time in Ages.

Communication conduits begin to open in Yugash connecting to the rest of the Nations, and the Seal of the Eight Divinities shatters, creating openings to Creation in all Autochthonian cities.

OTHER CONSEQUENCES

The world that Autochthon's return creates has many possibilities of further adventures:

The Mortal Exalted: Realizing the irresponsibility of the Celestial Hierarchy toward their Exalted, Autochthon liberates the process of Exaltation. He sacrifices some of the souls and energy he collected and crafts them into unaligned Exalted Essences, to roam free and find brave and worthy souls to attach themselves to and Exalt. They are Chosen of No One and will in time come to be known as the Heroic Exalted, heroes that obey no god and have no false claims of leadership.

The New Face of Creation: Her loneliness as the only Primordial left relieved, Gaia takes a closer hand at administering her body, the Earth, inviting Autochthon to help her. Areas of Creation change to take on a more mechanical appearance, and great clockwork towers arise like mountains. Maintaining this rate of progress devours huge amounts of Essence, and the power of magic diminishes as a result, but the natural levels of Essence in plants, animals and other products of the Elemental Dragons increases commensurately.

The Abyssal Curse: Armed with the knowledge of creating Exalted, Lytek finds a cure for the Abyssal aberration, but he needs brave heroes to capture and subjugate Abyssals to return them to their rightful place. Eventually, he might find a cure for the Great Curse. Freed from their madness and obsessions, the Exalted of Creation can begin healing the world's wounds and start a true renaissance.

Long Live the Revolution: The strict caste system in Autochthonia stresses under the weight of cultural exchange as well as controlled migration. There will be a time where the Tripartite accepts that change has come and is inevitable, and heroes can lead the people to demand more freedoms and much-welcomed reforms.

A World of Tyranny: Not all outcomes must be good. Perhaps Autochthon feels that Gaia has neglected her duties as the Primordial of Creation and, in an unexpected move, supplants Gaia and imprisons her in a great cage of his making. The whole of Creation will become a mirror of Autochthonia if Exalted and heroic mortals alike do nothing in the brewing war between the Children of the Machine God and the forces of Creation.

APPENDIX: PLAYERS IN THE RACE

YORAKA

Description: A young and energetic Sodalt from the Pious Harvesters of the Hallowed Flesh, Yoraka is equipped with the standard outfit for Autochthonian explorers but has her jade pins proudly displayed on her buff jacket. When she finally gets the confidence to remove her goggles and mask, she reveals herself as a nondescript young woman in her mid-20s with short black hair combed

back and held either by the goggles or a plain piece of cloth. The intensity of her gaze and speech gives her a rather attractive look, and she has a small but athletic build.

Roleplaying Tips: You are very excited to be joining the expedition. Not only do you get to travel with the heroes of your people, but you are actually doing something important for them. You were selected because of your hobby of climbing up the longest conduits and squeezing through the tightest passages just for entertainment, which also helped you to locate damaged parts and equipment. You are tasked with the mission of analyzing whatever the expedition may find. It is your responsibility to determine what is worth taking back to Yugash, and how.

Nature: Explorer

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 2

Abilities: Archery 2, Athletics 4 (Climbing 2), Awareness 3 (Sharp-Sighted 1), Bureaucracy 2, Crafts 4, Dodge 2, Endurance 2, Investigation 1, Linguistics 1 (Native: Autochthonian, Old Realm), Medicine 3, Presence 1, Stealth 1, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Artifact 3 (Autolabe, Light Sphere, Light Amplification Visor), Backing 3, Contacts 1, Mentor 1, Resources 2

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Punch: Speed 6 Accuracy 3 Damage 3B Defense 3

Kick: Speed 3 Accuracy 2 Damage 5B Defense 2

Crossbow: Speed 6 Accuracy 5 Damage 5L (Rate 1, Range 125)

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 3L/8B (Buff jacket, 3L/4B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 1

Other Notes: None

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 6 Accuracy 4 Damage 3B Defense 5 Rate 5

Kick: Speed 3 Accuracy 4 Damage 5B Defense 1 Rate 3

Dodge Pool: 6

STALWART OAK

Description: Despite his grizzled appearance and being in his late 40s, Stalwart Oak still has the physique and endurance of a man half his age. His clothes are well-worn and very utilitarian, a collection of garments from all around Creation to bear witness of the extent of his travels. He speaks in a gruff yet very enthusiastic voice, and his mannerisms are hectic and animated.

Roleplaying Tips: You were your parents' worst nightmare, always climbing the next tree and finding that book you were not supposed to find. Your thirst for knowledge can

only be equaled by your reckless courage, which has led you to deal with Exalted of all stripes and come away unscathed and to learn Things Man Was Not Meant To Know.

Nature: Thrillseeker

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Endurance 1, Larceny 2, Linguistics (Native: Riverspeak; Flametongue, Forest-Tongue, Old Realm, Skytongue) 4, Lore 4 (First Age +1), Occult 5, Presence 2, Socialize 1, Survival 3.

Backgrounds: Backing (Guild) 2, Contacts 4, Knowledge 4*, Resources 3

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 5 Damage 2B Defense 5

Kick: Speed 2 Accuracy 4 Damage 4B Defense 4

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak** 3L/8B (Buff jacket, 3L/4B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2* **Essence Pool:** 21

Other Notes: Essence Awareness*, Essence Mastery*, Essence Recovery* (has access to his Essence pool and recovers motes at half the rate of an Exalt). Arts* (Summoning, Warding, Astrology), Geomancy 2*, Rituals* (Art of the Thrice-Warded Gateway, Warding of Undue Influence)

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 6 Damage 2B Defense 7 Rate 5

Kick: Speed 2 Accuracy 6 Damage 5B Defense 2 Rate 3

Dodge Pool: 7

*See the *Exalted Players Guide*

OTHER CHARACTERS

AUTOCHTHONIANS

Takel: An experienced member of the Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric, Takel is a man in his early 40s with close-cropped auburn hair. He has a large scar on the right side of his face from a close escape when he was beginning his career. The monotony of his black buff jacket is only broken by the numerous moonsilver pins on its neck, shoulders and chest. Takel has seen many good men and women die in the vagaries of Autochthon's functions, which has steeled his resolve to fix any problem before it has time to become a disaster. It was a great honor to be chosen for the exploratory expedition, and Takel intends to protect the lives of his companions to the cost of his own. Takel is quiet but not withdrawn. He simply chooses the moment to

express his views. His task is to help Yoraka examine whatever they find and to establish its worth.

Veyol: A middle-aged man with clear gray eyes and short black hair, Veyol grows a thin beard to frame his hard but handsome features, which are hidden behind a filter mask and arc protectors until the others deem it safe to remove them. Veyol's voice is smooth and strong, and he treats everyone with polite interest. He is not sure if he was sent on this mission because the Theomachracy trusted him or because his political enemies wanted to get rid of him. He was certainly an adequate choice given his unusual interest in charting the social process of adaptation in the national idiosyncrasies of Autochthonia, and his knowledge of history is amongst the best, but he cannot help but think that some of his views were not welcomed in Yugash. As a lector, he chooses to retell the histories he knows with a certain critical vein.

THE POPULAT SOLDIERS

The Autochthonians send a group of 10 veterans from the Elemental Wars. Use the statistics for Elite Troops in *Exalted* (p. 278), but their combat information changes. They are all equipped with straight swords (more appropriate for fighting in close quarters) and crossbows. Five soldiers carry target shields, and all wear reinforced buff jackets in addition to their filter masks, helmets and arc protectors. The soldiers are treated as extras.

Attack:

Straight Sword (instead of Chopping Sword): Speed 6 Accuracy 7 Damage 6L Defense 7

Crossbow (instead of Self Bow): Speed 6 Accuracy 5 Damage 5L (Rate 1, Range 125)

Soak: 5L/10B (Reinforced buff jacket, 5L/6B, -2 mobility penalty, — +1 difficulty to be hit and -3 mobility penalty with shield)

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 6 Accuracy 7 Damage 3B Defense 8 Rate 5

Kick: Speed 3 Accuracy 7 Damage 6B Defense 3 Rate 3

Straight Sword: Speed 10 Accuracy 9 Damage 6L Defense 7 Rate 3

Dodge Pool: 6/4 (3)

THE DRAGON-BLOODED

Mnemon Acorla: While not amongst the top in Mnemon's list of favorites, Acorla has learned to make himself useful to his Great House by managing a lot of dirty businesses in the South. With the appearance of a balding man in his late 40s, Acorla acts the part of a perfect Earth-aspected gentleman, treating even people he dislikes with respect and courtesy... all while aiming daggers at their backs. Mnemon Acorla has all the Socialize and Presence Charms as well as many from the Awareness and Larceny trees.

Cathak Repore: As a Fire Aspect, Repore is a typical redhead with tanned skin, his face adorned by a bushy goatee tied in twin thin braids going down from his mustache. He wears heavy armor easily and has a sneer on his face at all time. He plays with his beard's braids when he is thinking seriously and speaks in a clear and passionate voice. Tired of his family's cutthroat ways, Repore renounced his familial duties (not that he was missed) and now makes his life as a mercenary, supposedly working in the Realm's interests but preferring to make a quick bag of jade. He has worked with Acorla several times and knows that he is merely a broker, but Repore has the good sense never to ask who his clients ultimately are. Cathak Repore has most of the Melee and Thrown Charms, plus many from the Athletics, Dodge, Endurance and Ride trees.

MERCENARIES

Repore's mercenary outfit consists of a variety of Terrestrials that mix other disgruntled Dynasts as well as outcasts. Since Repore is the one that will be doing most of the talking (when he deigns to talk, that is), it is not as important to know every detail about the rest of his Dragon-Blooded mercenaries. Assume the following average Attributes, altering them to fit the Storyteller's needs.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Archery 3, Brawl or Martial Arts 3, Dodge 3, Endurance 2, Melee 4, Resistance 2, Ride 2, Thrown 3

Charms: A combination of Archery, Brawl, Martial Arts, Melee, Thrown and Endurance Charms. All have Ox-Body Technique taken twice.

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Punch: Speed 6 Accuracy 6 Damage 4B Defense 6

Kick: Speed 3 Accuracy 5 Damage 6B Defense 5

Jade Goremaul: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 10L Defense 8

Poleaxe: Speed 3 Accuracy 6 Damage 12L Defense 7

Short Jade Daiklave: Speed 12 Accuracy 9 Damage 9L Defense 8

Self Bow: Speed 6 Accuracy 6 Damage 6L (Rate 2, Range 150)

Dodge Pool: 6/5 **Soak:** 11L/12B (Reinforced jade breastplate, 10L/9B, -1 mobility penalty)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2

Personal Essence: 9 **Peripheral Essence:** 21 (12)

Committed Essence: 9

Other Notes: None

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 6 Accuracy 7 Damage 4B Defense 8 Rate 5

Kick: Speed 3 Accuracy 7 Damage 7B Defense 3 Rate 3
Jade Goremaul: Speed 16 Accuracy 8 Damage 10L Defense 8 Rate 4

Poleaxe: Speed 11 Accuracy 6 Damage 10L Defense 7 Rate 2
Short Jade Daiklave: Speed 12 Accuracy 11 Damage 8L Defense 8 Rate 6

Dodge Pool: 8/7

THE SOLAR CIRCLE

For Solar opponents, assume a Perfect Circle (a Dawn, a Zenith, a Twilight, a Night and an Eclipse). Keep players from overwhelming the Solars by making sure each has the fight combination of Charms to match the characters. If you are playing another Exalt type, try to emphasize the overwhelming power of the Solars.

Thrush: The Dawn of the Circle is a light-hearted swordsman who prefers to follow the lead of others. He is not dumb, but simply prefers not to think too much. He has Charms from all of the Melee trees and practices Snake Style martial arts.

Merinithia: A Zenith aristocrat who dresses in fine gowns and robes, she is soft spoken and knowledgeable and is the group's sorceress, specializing in magic to sway opinions and captivate minds. Aside from the Occult and Lore Charms at her disposal, she has many from the Presence and Socialize trees.

Fall of Leaves: He is a Haltan adventurer who is an expert in the First Age, at least as much of an expert as anyone from the Threshold could be. While not much good in a fight, he is an expert healer with most of the Medicine Charms to compliment his encyclopedic knowledge of physic. He complements his medical knowledge with Occult and Lore Charms, plus many from the Athletics and Perception trees. Twilight Caste.

Frightful Silence: An martial artist assassin formerly working for the Guild, he fights with thrown weapons and preferably from behind. He is taciturn and prefers to let others to do the talking. He practices Ebon Shadow Style martial arts and has most of the Thrown, Stealth and Larceny Charms. Night Caste.

Little Crane: Nobody would believe that this teenage girl would be the Circle's leader. She's a canny negotiator and very knowledgeable about the black market and criminal elements. She deceives people with a sweet smile and practices a surprisingly brutal fighting art, Tiger Style martial arts, with Dodge Charms acting as her defense. Otherwise, she is stacked with Larceny, Perception, Presence, Sail, Socialize and Stealth Charms. Little Crane is an Eclipse Caste.

THE LUNAR CIRCLE

Even more unpredictable than the Solars, the Lunar Circle can have a very wide array of capabilities.

Narrakosi: A Full Moon Caste with the ram as his totem, Narrakosi is a hairy brute of a man from the North. His Tell is the white body hair that covers his chest in all his forms. He fights bare-handed and is a cunning combatant of few words. Most of his Charms have Strength or Stamina as a prerequisite.

White Ghost Wind: A petite Full Moon with the snow hawk as her totem, she has a strange crest of black-pointed white hair as a Tell. White Ghost Wind is an accomplished martial artist who practices her own style. A little addle-brained, she fights for the pure fun of it, but she surprises many with the tricks she is able to pull. She draws her collection of Charms from those requiring Dexterity and Perception.

Gravedigger: A lean No Moon with the ferret as a totem animal, he moves quickly and is a perfect spy and an accomplished sorcerer, although his specialties lie with dealing with the dead and their mysteries. He fights with throwing knives and runs when threatened with hand-to-hand combat. He does not know the Deadly Beastman Transformation Charm, but has an impressive library of forms he can change into, including many humanoids. Many of his Charms have Charisma, Manipulation and Intelligence as prerequisites.

Muskati: A Half Moon negotiator with golden eyes in all her forms, her totem is the cat. She moves sinuously and enticingly, and half of the times, she prefers to negotiate through seduction. She is her Circle's face in civilized lands, as she used to be a harlot and knows the ways of the streets. She has mastered most Charms that have Manipulation, Charisma, Wits and Endurance as prerequisites.

IMMACULATE PERSECUTORS

Kayelen of the Blue Wind: The Maiden of Secrets chose Kayelen because she would come to love gossip in the halls of her home in Lookshy. As a member of the Bronze Faction, this young woman would prefer to maintain the status quo and will not hesitate to do anything in her power to see that affairs do not change. She is conniving and calculating and is amongst the highest ranking members of the Colleges of the House of Secrets. She has all the Archery, Bureaucracy, Investigation, Presence and Socialize Charms, as well as a smattering of the Awareness, Linguistics and Ride trees.

Young Sorrow: This baby-faced killer is somewhat of an anomaly. A Chosen of Endings, he truly believes in his Maiden's role and actually sees nothing wrong with Autochthon's return if it will mark the end of one Age and the beginning of the next. He likes change but likes to be in control of that change. He is an accomplished martial artist, having mastered all the techniques in the Violet Bier of Sorrows and just starting on the Charcoal March of Spiders. In addition, he has all the Charms from the Awareness, Stealth, Larceny and Medicine trees and a few from the Athletics, Dodge and Survival trees.

The Immaculate Monks: The two Sidereals are leading a contingent of eight Immaculate monks. Although the two Sidereals will prefer not to fight, they are quite willing to allow the monks to do so. Use the same information as for the Dragon-Blooded mercenaries above, but give the monks eight Charms in the various Immaculate Martial Arts Charm trees.

GUILD EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Stalwart Oak leads the expedition soldiers, which number a dozen and use the template for mortal soldiers in *Exalted* (p. 277).

DEATH'S ENVOYS

Black Remembrance: A Day Caste deathknight who likes to lead despite his desire to remain in the background, he has mastered many Charms in order to influence the minds of others surreptitiously and is a master impersonator, able to sneak into almost anywhere by pretending he is someone else than who he is. He fights with poisoned darts and double poisoned short swords. He has most of the Melee Charms dealing with parrying and distance attacks, as well as the Thrown, Archery and Larceny Charms. He possesses many of the Athletics and Dodge Charms as well.

Whisper of the Forsaken Title: A Moonshadow Caste, she used to be a black market dealer in Gethamane, pushing others to scout the ruins for her. She competes with Black Remembrance for leadership of their Circle, and she is often thrust to the front, being the leadership's "face." She has many Endurance and Ride Charms, but most of her talent comes from the Bureaucracy, Larceny, Linguistics, Lore, Stealth and Socialize trees.

Crusader of Forbidden Causes: This Midnight Caste Abyssal is a true nightmare on the battlefield, his whole body covered by soulsteel armor and wielding a huge artifact scythe. He is outspoken and a true follower of the First and Forsaken Lion. He wishes nothing else but to expand his lords' dominion and sees his companions petty bickering as unworthy of their master. He has all the offensive Melee Charms and half of the defensive ones, plus many Endurance, Presence, Resistance, Survival and Abyssal Martial Arts Charms.

Manosque Khanan: The late brother of Viridian, this ghost experienced first hand the powers of the Eye of Autochthon and resents the Realm for his fate. He cannot tell much about the Eye in its present state, but he knows that it requires tests from any who would wield its powers. Use the information for war ghosts (*Exalted* p. 301), but increase his Abilities by 1, three Attributes by 2 and three other Attributes by 1.

The Caravan of the Dead: Black Remembrance was given command of six war ghosts (*Exalted* p. 301), six zombies (*Exalted* p. 299) and two nemissaries (*Exalted* p. 301).



Faces pale, shadows crisp and leaping in the sharp, brilliant glare of the light spheres, the repair team made its way down the stairwell to the primary hearth of Smelter 2. In better times, this area would have been alive with a clangor of industrial activity. Now, it was empty and filled with a silence foreign to Autochthon, where there were no tombs. The plague had hit Industrial Zone B hard. Only Smelter 2 had been in operation, using the smelter crews from the plants at both industrial zones to run one shift and two skeleton crews. Now, even they were gone.

Chief Preceptor Lorg led the team of five into the darkness of the primary hearth. That the furnace jets had failed at all was a bad enough sign. With his processes untended, how long until the wrath of the Great Master was visited on his worker-worshippers? That a preceptor had been sent to supervise the reconstruction was a sign of just how bad things had gotten. It had taken Lorg's direct intervention to stop the near-riot on the work floor seven stories above after one of the volunteers tending the jets in the primary hearth had "seen something" and the whole hearth crew had come scrambling up the steps.

The jet had coughed out before the crew was halfway up the steps, which was record time even for a plasma plume left untended, enough that the shift boss had insisted on sending an armed crew to investigate and relight it. To demonstrate his leadership, Lorg was in command.

His subordinates were two experienced wardens, a 17-year-old trainee from the Conductors and two Populat volunteers. This is what you got when everyone died — what was left.

Thune and Vord were good wardens, regular members of the shop's watch, and Lorg counted on them to watch for threats. He also, frankly, didn't think there were any to watch for.

The civilian volunteers were Korlag, a sparkman foreman with his nozzle-cleaner clutched in his hands as a weapon and the stolid demeanor of a model laborer. Whatever might be below the furnace room, it was less dangerous than the molten pig iron he faced every day, and Smelter 2 was Ot's last operational unit. He would do whatever was required to return to his post and serve the Great Maker.


The other volunteer was an old woman dressed in assault trooper's armor and forge boots who clutched a leather-trimming knife in her hand and chanted prayers constantly under her breath. Lorg wanted to shout at her, but he expected she would dissolve into tears if he did. She was the one who had "seen something," and Lorg thought that, if there wasn't something downstairs to merit her shaking, he was going to have her publicly disciplined, plague or not.

The primary hearth was a long jet nozzle with thousands of openings that pumped burnable gasses and accelerants from the Great Maker's veins into the combustion hearth up above. The hundreds of nozzles guaranteed a clean and efficient mix of fuel. One clot or occlusion in the flame could cause the combustion to flash down from the hearth above and kill everyone in the room. Yet, the fuel flowed from the Great Maker's veins smoothly, and so, the nozzle-tending was boring but potentially dangerous work.

Lorg and his party emerged from the stairwell and marched over to the nozzle, the Conductor and the sparkman leading the way. Lorg hung back with the wardens to keep watch for unmarked hazards, the old crone wheezing along behind him. "It was just up here," she croaked out so softly Lorg wondered how he had heard her. Ahead of him, the boy cried out and the foreman exclaimed, "Great Maker, it's full of bones!"

Lorg's eyes snapped toward the pair and the nemissary in the old woman's body stepped up behind him, smoothly slit his throat and launched an attack at the first startled warden with the preceptor's own sword. From a nearby nozzle came the sounds of screams and whirring as the butcher drone did its work in darkness. The old hag whispered to the beetle-corpse messenger in her mouth, "Target secured. Liquidated their leadership figures, and downed their industrial works. I'm going to fade into an abandoned area and pick off targets of opportunity until the gate is open far enough for the invasion to proceed. I don't foresee any problems maintaining control on this side of the portal — it would require only a dragon to take this city."

The scout spit out the metal and chitin beetle, and it winged its way into the darkness, to where passages and maintenance tunnels other than those of Autochthon waited to conduct it back to the communications centers of the Thousand. Then the scout scuttled up the wall of the stairwell and disappeared into the darkness to lurk and murder.



CHAPTER SEVEN ENGINES OF EXTINCTION

For all its drawbacks, isolation has its advantages. For nearly five millennia, Autochthonia has been set apart from Creation, but now, with the breaking of the Seal of Eight Divinities, the forces of Autochthonia are free to enter Creation as they will.

And vice versa.

In this scenario, Ot's decisive action sets the stage not for victory, but for annihilation, and it is not the armies of Creation that cut short the Locust Crusade.

Nor is it the sorcerers, the gods or even the Exalted of Creation who route the would-be invaders. In this scenario, the Locust Crusade is cut short by the horror of disease. By breaking the Seal, the Autochthonians expose themselves to the Great Contagion.

Unbeknownst even to the inhabitants of Creation, the Great Contagion still lingers all around them, but those whose forebears lived through it are wholly and utterly immune. Those who were never exposed, however, are ripe for infection.

In this scenario, the Great Contagion turns Autochthonia's rapacious lunge for resources into a last desperate act for those residing in the Machine God. The players' characters have two opportunities to prevent the Primordial's death and the resulting cataclysm. Early in the adventure, they can prevent the worst outcome by finding or developing a cure for the Great Contagion to save the Autochthonians. Failing that, they may still attempt to save the Maker himself. If they fail at both, the Primordial's illness destroys the Machine God, plunging him into the Underworld and transforming vast portions of Creation into one large shadowland.

The Malfears crave this outcome above all others, of course, and they're quite willing to hasten their brother's demise by any means necessary. In pursuit of this goal, they deploy their greatest general, the First and Forsaken Lion, to expedite the demise of Autochthon and to turn the Maker's wealth of technological riches to his (i.e., their) own ends. The Deathlord will happily murder any who attempt to intervene on the Maker's behalf, and there are few who can withstand his wrath.

If the characters have any concerns about aiding a Primordial, however, they should think through the consequences of doing otherwise.

CHARACTER REQUIREMENTS

This adventure makes extraordinary demands of even experienced Exalted characters. They must find a cure for a disease created by the most powerful necromancy known in Creation, they must save the life of a world/entity/god *the size of Creation*, and they must repel an attack by one of the most powerful generals ever to assail Creation.

Just being Exalted won't be enough to get the characters through this adventure successfully. They'll need a variety of Abilities, a knack for teamwork and at least one sorcerer with access to Solar Circle Sorcery. Combat Abilities are crucial, of course, as the characters will be engaging an enemy with overwhelming numerical superiority and a few Exalted of his own. The characters are likely to find themselves fighting swarms of the First and Forsaken Lion's soldiers, and not just extras, either. Characters without a persistent defense will burn through their Essence pool far too quickly, and characters without a perfect defense will crumple within a few turns of meeting the Lion.

While combat Abilities are important, so are things such as Bureaucracy, Linguistics and Socialize (for dealing diplomatically with the Autochthonians and possibly the Mountain Folk). Lore is a crucial Ability in this adventure, as it will likely provide the characters with information they can use on topics ranging from Autochthon's history to the Mountain Folk to the function of some of the devices found inside Autochthonia.

Additional recommendations follow:

- Characters in this adventure will be expected to traverse vast distances on a tight schedule. They must have

BACKGROUND: THE GREAT CONTAGION

The Great Contagion is more than just a disease. It is a plague engineered by the Deathlords to wipe life from the face of Creation (see *Exalted*, p. 11, and *Exalted: The Abyssals*, pp. 39-40, 77 and 101).

It nearly worked. Killing nine out of every ten people, the Great Contagion laid waste to the populace of the world. Civilization itself broke down as the ordered society of the Shogunate foundered under the burden of unchecked pestilence. Trade broke down as whole caravans perished. Troves of knowledge were lost as most of the world's scholars died. And when the armies succumbed, the Fair Folk took their opportunity to swarm in, unmaking vast swaths of Creation.

Were it not for the good fortune and good timing of the woman who would become the Scarlet Empress activating the Realm's First Age defenses, all of Creation would have been lost to the Wyld.

The mass die-off came to an end not because of a cure or a miracle from the gods, but because everyone who was susceptible had already died. The Great Contagion never went away. It lingered in puddles, fetid bogs and stale air. It lurked in consecrated caverns and desecrated tombs. It was carried far and wide by flies and mosquitoes, but it had run its course and could do no more harm to the survivors. The survivors were immune, as were their children and everyone since born into Creation. This immunity was one of the Second Age's few blessings.

The denizens of Autochthonia aren't so lucky. This is their first exposure to the Great Contagion, and they've never seen pestilence on this level.

Autochthonian medicine has no more chance to affect the Contagion than the folk medicines of the Second Age. Some wards may be able to slow the Contagion's advance, or even weaken it as it enters their areas of effect, but such thaumaturgy is rare and found only in the largest cities.

For them, things will only get worse. And then, for 90 percent of them, it will end.

some form of fast transportation that goes at least 50 miles per hour and preferably 100 or more.

- The characters may well find themselves in combat with a Deathlord. They must be able to absorb or avoid attacks of 50L damage or more, be able to handle Essence-draining attacks from a powerful soulsteel weapon and advanced Abyssal Charms and be able to effectively damage a being with 26L soak at the bare minimum, and their players must have a firm understanding of Exalted battle tactics because their enemy most certainly does.



- Characters will need some way to heal quickly. During portions of this adventure the characters will be going from combat to combat, and given the scarcity of time, they won't have the luxury of healing at the natural rate.

- The First and Forsaken Lion is perhaps the most accomplished tactical necromancer in Creation. At least one character must have Adamant Countermagic or, better yet, Obsidian Countermagic to counter his spells.

- Without a way of regaining Essence quickly (Hearthstones, Essence-Gathering Temper), the Circle will likely run out of Essence before it even fights its way through the Lion's guards.

- At least one character must have an Intelligence + Medicine pool of 10 or higher in order to even attempt to develop a cure for the Great Contagion.

- If the characters are going to get an early start on this adventure (i.e., in time to have a chance to mitigate the effect of the Great Contagion upon Autochthonia), they'll need some way to sense the opening of the Seal of Eight Divinities. Characters with connections in the Bureau of Destiny might be alerted by gods, but any elemental or demon might also be able to give the characters insights into the unusual events taking place in the Southwest. Once the death toll from the Great Contagion begins building, Abyssal Exalted will be able to feel the concentration of death energy as a nigh-tangible pull toward the gateway to Ot.

CHARACTER TYPES

All types of Exalted can find themselves involved in this story in one way or another. The outcome of Autochthon's appearance, the subsequent plague and the attack by the First and Forsaken Lion are too crucial to every single denizen of Creation for the Exalted *not* to get involved. The following are ways that different types of Exalted may become involved in this adventure:

Alchemicals: The Alchemical Exalted will have their hands full in this adventure. A driving sense of urgency and desperation will propel them as much as anything. The event they're facing is a cataclysm of unfathomable proportions. First their mortal charges begin dying, and later on, those deaths hasten the death of their Primordial deity. Their world and everything they've ever known hangs in the balance. Not only is it on the edge of annihilation, but it's on the edge of utter desecration as well by the forces of a powerful Deathlord intent on turning their deity's illness to his own gain. This grave danger is likely to be enough to get the Alchemicals to cooperate with just about any other type of Exalted, with the possible exception of deathknights.

Solars: Solar Exalted are likely to be among the most enthusiastic characters in this adventure once

they learn what's at stake (after all, saving the world is the lot of the Solar hero), and they are more likely to have the power necessary to pull it off. Some of the Chosen of the Unconquered Sun may want to take on this enormous undertaking as a means of learning more about Autochthonia — or even in hopes of making a name for themselves *in* Autochthonia. Still, it's possible that some Solars may also have the most ambivalence about some of the tasks required of them by this endeavor. Historically, it has been the task of Solars to kill Primordials, not save them. Still, the alternative is nigh unthinkable, and the Unconquered Sun is hardly about to tell his Chosen not to prevent the Machine God's death.

Lunars: Lunars initially have very strong reasons for investigating Autochthonia. The death of the powerful Lunar Ten Stripes opens a broad swath of territory to encroachment by younger members of Luna's Beloved. Alternatively, characters might be drawn to the area to avenge her death. If word reaches the outside world of bizarre invaders taking slaves and animals, Lunars may be curious enough to investigate the situation. The sudden appearance of the gateway to Autochthonia and the Alchemical Exalted should prove enough enticement to explore further, and by the time they've gotten some idea of what's going on, they should also realize just how high the cost of inaction would be, particularly if some No Moon loremaster among their number remembers tales of the Primordial Maker.

Sidereals: While they are the most likely to know at once what Autochthon is, the Chosen of the Maidens may have the most difficult time committing themselves to this endeavor. This stems in part from a disturbing sense of helplessness. Sidereals are used to having great insights into the nature of the world and its events. In this case, however, everything is opaque to them. Autochthon and everything inside of him lies outside of fate. So, too, do the plans of the First and Forsaken Lion hidden from them. The Maidens' Chosen are likely to feel themselves in a blind alley where *anything* can happen and they wouldn't be prepared for it. What they *can* discern is that the death of a world as vast as Autochthon will create a shadowland of unfathomable proportions, blending Creation and the Underworld still more. That alone should be more than enough to get even members of the Gold and Bronze Factions to work together.

Terrestrials: Once the nature of the situation becomes clear (thanks, in all likelihood, to the guiding hand of the Sidereals), every Great House in the Realm will want to be the first to lay claim to the strange artifacts found within Autochthonia. Likewise, the Terrestrial Exalted of Lookshy would be happy to incorporate Autochthonian technology into their waning stocks of First Age weaponry. While Lookshy is farther away than the Realm and not at all likely to stumble across the head

of Ot by accident, it may well still monitor a First Age defense perimeter of some sort alerting it of a Primordial breach (the Realm most certainly has such a system in place as well, but it's inside the Imperial Manse and currently unattended).

Either way, once the Terrestrials are deployed to Autochthonia (making it through with strangely little resistance), they should realize the potential cataclysm that could result from the Great Maker's demise.

Abyssals: Once the Seal of Eight Divinities is broken, Abyssal Exalted have the advantage of an early warning network where Autochthonia is concerned. They (or their Deathlord masters) are certainly alerted to the unfolding cataclysm inside Autochthonia long before any of the other Exalted, as they sense the vast and rising tide of death washing through the Machine God's metal and crystal innards. This puts them in a position to tip off other Exalted if they're so inclined, although doing so risks drawing down the wrath of their Malfean masters.

Abyssal Exalted can be brought into this adventure through a couple of different means. On one hand, they might be working for one of the First and Forsaken Lion's rivals in an attempt to stop him from reaping this unprecedented windfall of technology and souls. While this rival Deathlord might be perfectly happy to see Autochthon fall into the Underworld, he or she cannot stomach the idea of such an event swelling the fortunes of the Lion so dramatically. The rivalries among most of the Deathlords are strong enough that none will want to see such a rich harvest fall to the one of their number who is already among the most powerful. Sabotaging the Lion's efforts in Autochthonia, by whatever means necessary, including saving the Primordial, is not outside the realm of possibility.

Alternatively, a Circle of deathknights might well side *with* the First and Forsaken Lion in exchange for power, glory and Malfean recognition. This will be the most unusual and least complex sort of tale to tell, as it basically focuses on penetrating Autochthonia, destroying the factories, fighting the Alchemical Exalted and swarming through the Far Reaches in a crusade to bring death to the Primordial and his champions as quickly as possible. While that's not excessively complex, it is more challenging than it may sound. The Maker may be comatose, but his eight Divine Ministers most assuredly are not, and they command forces the likes of which even the First and Forsaken Lion has never seen and cannot imagine. A great deal of such a story would likely focus on the dénouement after the Primordial's death, including the resolution of newly established power imbalances and the rewards enjoyed by the conqueror.

Mortals: There is not much space in this scenario for mortals unless the action provides the context for some unrelated adventure on their scale. Determined though they might be, heroic mortals are unlikely to either cure the Great Contagion or defeat the armies of the damned

ghost of history's greatest general. However, the circumstances can provide a compelling backdrop for many stories not directly related to the tale. Also, the distraction of the Deathlords with Autochthonia may allow the kingdoms of the dead to wrest some degree of independence from the Deathlords and begin to mount a campaign of resistance. Thus, while heroic mortals may not have much place in this adventure, the gates are open major peripheral involvement by the heroic dead.

ACT I: THE PLAGUE

In this scenario, the Locust Crusade never makes it past its first year. The intrepid explorers of the first wave begin falling ill mere weeks after their tentative initial forays into Creation. Within four weeks, the first of the dead, their skin a mottled, livid green, are disposed of by representatives of the Pious Harvesters of Hallowed Flesh.

The other diseases of Creation also make their way into the Realm of Brass and Shadow, but they are easily contained by Autochthonian medicine. The Great Contagion quickly shows itself to be something altogether different and more terrifying. The Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric are just as baffled by the Great Contagion as the physicians of Creation's Shogunate Period were nearly 800 years earlier.

The Great Contagion is lethal beyond any epidemic Autochthonia has ever experienced. With a 90 percent

mortality rate, it afflicts Lumpen, Populat and Tripartite equally, with no mercy for the privileged, the educated or the working poor. Only the Alchemical Exalted, made as they are of metal, crystal and clay, possess any immunity to the disease.

The physicians of Autochthonia treat the sick with their strongest medicines, but the sick die anyway, always with the same ghastly green shade to their skin. The Meticulous Surgeons realize within days of the first deaths that they have no answers and no hope to offer the people. Not even the city's father, Ot himself, has any counsel to offer. If they are to serve their function, they must learn more. And so the representatives of the Meticulous Surgeons board the pneumatic trams and travel to other nations to consult with their best doctors (and, perhaps, to escape the mounting death toll). In so doing, they take the taint of disease into the trams, into the Reaches and into the other nations of Autochthonia, spreading the Great Contagion in their wake and inadvertently seeing to it that the first to die are the very physicians who, given time, might have produced a cure.

Exacerbating the situation is the fact that the Great Contagion has a relatively long incubation period, which helps it spread far and wide without ever giving warning to its victims. Those infected are contagious within 24 hours of exposure, but it's not until three to four weeks later that they show any symptoms — and by then, they've pulled the levers at the factory, had intimate encounters with lovers and ridden the pneumatic tram enough times to



infect a large fraction of the city's — indeed, the nation's — population. The Contagion is a malicious affliction in this regard, but in that way, it resembles its creators.

The very air of Ot and its Near Reaches becomes tainted with the Contagion, and the great pneumatic trams push it through the great tubes into the Reaches and toward other cities.

While the Autochthonians fancy themselves well adapted to their world, the smoke and vapors of the great factory-cathedrals and furnaces render them relatively sickly and unusually susceptible to the Great Contagion compared to the last population that struggled against it. Those who succumb do so quickly once the symptoms begin. They do not realize that they should be grateful for this.

Unlike the way the Great Contagion played out in Creation, vermin are not initially a major vector of transmission in Autochthonia. The rat population is kept low by the predation of Lumpen exiles, and only a fraction of new infections can be attributed to them. That said, rats *are* one of the few routes of transmission for those exiled to the Reaches, who would otherwise be protected by their distance from Ot. Furthermore, Autochthonia initially has no flying insects of its own to spread the disease. Regrettably, none of their security procedures keep out the local insect life. Mosquitoes from the Font of Mourning easily pass into Ot and into the depths of the factories, where they lay eggs in the thousands of small warm puddles of condensed factory steam.

The Alchemical Exalted are concerned, but not for their own well-being. None of the Alchemicals taking part in the first explorations of Creation are affected, and so, they come to the conclusion that they are as immune to the Great Contagion as they are to all other diseases. This is not entirely accurate. The animated crystal, clay and metal of Alchemical Exalted bodies is inhospitable and even actively hostile to the Great Contagion, but the Contagion is not just a disease, it is a necromantic curse, and under the right conditions, it can afflict even the Chosen of Autochthon. On the rare occasion that an Alchemical Exalt does succumb to the Great Contagion (which happens if and only if a player botches the pertinent Stamina + Resistance roll), he doesn't die, but instead, develops the Gremlin Syndrome Flaw (see p. 71).

The same degree of immunity is not shared by those who tend the sacred Vats, however. As those great thaumaturgical scientists succumb, the Alchemicals are increasingly left to their own devices and forced to attend to their own upkeep and maintenance on top of all the other duties delegated to them in this time of crisis. Waiting times for upgrades grow longer by the day, even for those with the Vats Background (see pp. 68-69) until such routine activities are put off indefinitely, one more casualty of the Contagion.

The death toll begins to mount. The initial casualties were a matter of concern, of course, but the wave of terror

that follows in the wake of the hundreds — and then thousands — who fall in the subsequent weeks is staggering. The living initially flock to the factory-cathedrals of Autochthon in an attempt to appease their comatose deity. They pray harder, work harder, partake in civic cleansing rituals that blast gouts of steam into areas tainted by the disease — but all in vain. Soon, significant fractions of Ot's population are dead, and with the mounting burden of death, the city begins suffering another, darker fate.

With 10 percent of the populace dead, the workers strain to keep the factories going. Populat workers who were already working double shifts back to back now have to work three or even four consecutive shifts. The Starmetal Caste Alchemicals do what they can to optimize morale, but to no effect. The pneumatic trams cease to work as the rest of Yugash valves off the veins leading to Ot in a tardy attempt at a quarantine. The self-righteous isolation of the Sovites is vindicated. Rumors abound: The Machine God is punishing his denizens for breaching the seal, for panicking, for losing faith; the Void cultists summoned this plague to bring annihilation to all; Yugash is being warred upon by another nation using weapons of disease. Only the police state invoked by the Alchemical Exalted prevents riots and looting. Soulgems are still religiously recycled.

With 25 percent of the populace dead, riots break out spurred by fear and frustration despite the police state imposed by the Exalted. Many among the Populat, torn between piety and self-preservation, stay home for fear of workplace exposure to the Contagion. Factories run on skeleton crews. The Alchemical Exalted summon machine spirits from the Reaches to take up the slack of the dying human populace. Treading dangerously close to certain automation heresies warned of by the Theomachracy, the Chosen of the Machine God conduct the largest mass summoning of elementals since the Elemental Wars in an attempt to keep the factory-cathedrals up and running. The near perfect soul recycling of the Great Maker grows yet more challenged as enormous numbers of citizens die in a short period of time. Soulgems are no longer recycled immediately, and some aren't recycled at all. The sharp energies of death begin ripping through the Design woven by the Maker. During certain periods of the day, the hardest hit sectors of Ot begin functioning as shadowlands. Valves into previously unknown areas of the city open up into murky passageways. Those who wander into these new tunnels, mistakenly believing them to be the Maker's paths to safety, are never heard from again.

By the time half of Ot's population is dead, all non-urgent factories have been taken offline. Some workers flee into the Reaches in hopes of avoiding the Contagion, while others keep working to the bitter end, fearful that the Great Maker will not allow them to reincarnate if they betray him now. Civilization and the luxuries it offered are forgotten, now and forever things of the past to those unfortunate

enough to survive. Only those factories critical to the Great Maker's existence are kept functioning at full power, often by Alchemicals working 25-hour shifts or by summoned elementals or machine spirits. All that matters is keeping the factories going. Society degenerates to such a degree that the living no longer bother with the proper storage, cataloging or recycling of the soulgems of the dead. The gems are pried from the mottled green brows of the dead and tossed unceremoniously in a pile in hopes that they might someday be needed again. With bodies left unattended and soulgems going unrecycled, the spirits of the dead begin exiting their soulgems. They do not succumb to the lure of the Radiant Amphora of Souls. Instead, they begin patrolling the areas surrounding their unattended remains. For the first time, Autochthonia experiences ghosts. More of the inexplicable and frightening black portals begin opening, and they stay open for longer before closing and fading away. Large portions of the city become shadowlands, with dark passages leading directly into the Labyrinth during the rest phase of the daily cycle. Violent monstrosities emerge from these Labyrinth passages, wreaking havoc on the already devastated populace. The Alchemical Exalted are forced to intervene time and again as horrible nightmarish creatures victimize the already suffering populace of Ot. These monstrosities begin as small, easily vanquished grotesques and grow steadily larger, stronger and more lethal, as through the tunnels themselves were testing the Maker's Chosen — or studying their strengths and weaknesses. Eventually, one of these creatures destroys an overconfident young Starmetal Alchemical in front of a horrified crowd. A Perfect Assembly of Alchemicals arrives almost immediately and obliterates the creature, but a nigh-palpable despair surges through the city. One of the Chosen has fallen.

Once 75 percent of the populace has died, only a handful of the most important factories continue to function, staffed almost entirely by Alchemicals and their summoned spirits. Even some factory-cathedrals once held to be critical to the Maker's health are taken offline, causing systemic disruptions throughout the Machine God's veins and conduits for miles in all directions. Local systems — ventilation and food and water supplies among others — begin going down as key facilities go unstaffed for too long. Sanitation degrades rapidly as waste removal systems break down and bodies pile up. All wards around the city are taken down to allow in the representatives of the Divine Ministers, who replace the city's human workers, nearly to a man. The stench of death fills the claustrophobic city as nobody bothers to handle the green corpses of the Contagion dead or recycle their soulgems anymore. Not only does the city suffer from ghostly visitations, but hungry ghosts rise from the unrecycled bodies to stalk the living. The entire city is a nightmare of haunted tunnels and terrible creatures surging in from the Labyrinth. Alchemical Exalted find themselves constantly fighting nightmare creatures from

the Labyrinth as part of this new world they're functioning in. The tide turns against the living, against civilization, against Autochthon himself.

Shortly after the city reaches this point, the nemissary troops of the First and Forsaken Lion begin surging out of the Labyrinth tunnels. They take no prisoners, preferring to kill anything living and then to possess the fresh corpses. In those areas where they are met by gremlins, the Lion has collaborators willing to teach him the technology of Autochthonia and to help him navigate through the Primordial's world.

Beyond Ot, the other cities of Yugash and the other nations of Autochthonia suffer the same inescapable fate, just later by weeks, months or even years. The sickness comes. The people die. The factories close. The Labyrinth passages bloom like cankers, and the Great Maker slips closer to death.

CURING THE GREAT CONTAGION

The apocalyptic progression above need not unfold the way it's described. The Exalted are powerful champions for any cause they back, and not even the Great Contagion is beyond their capability to cure. Had any of the Unconquered Sun's Chosen remained when the Great Contagion hit Creation, things may have turned out much differently.

The first step toward saving the Primordial Autochthon is saving those who reside within him. They are the

ANOTHER OPTION

The Great Contagion need not run its full course for things to get interesting in Autochthonia. It's possible that the technology of the Maker's cult is up to the challenge of curing or at least mitigating the Great Contagion — but only after shadowlands have begun to appear in Ot and a handful of other cities.

In this type of game, the Autochthonians are under siege from the Deathlord but not yet easy prey. Shadowlands still form in Autochthonia and link to the passages of the Labyrinth, but not so many as to make defense impossible. The protection and revivification of the Great Maker, though more difficult, remains firmly in the hands of Autochthonia's citizens.

This alternative is most appealing if the characters are Alchemicals, obviously, but if the Storyteller is inclined to run this sort of series, it might be best to wait until the Alchemicals have had a chance to reach a high Essence rating. No beginning or even moderately experienced Assembly of Alchemicals stands a chance against the invading forces of the First and Forsaken Lion.

workers and priests whose labor-prayers nourish him and maintain his vast systems. The Autochthonians' inability to tend the Great Maker's factory-cathedrals dramatically hastens the coming of the Primordial's death. By finding a cure for the Great Contagion, and keeping the factories running thereby, the characters buy themselves time and stave off the Primordial's demise for months if not years or decades. In finding a cure, the characters reduce the death toll of the plague throughout Autochthonia, keep the Maker's factory-cathedrals running, reduce the size and number of shadowlands that open up inside Autochthonia and, consequently, limit the number and size of portals through which the Deathlord's forces can gain access.

This is not just curing a *case* of the Great Contagion (which is simpler), but rather, formulating a means of stopping the disease's spread through an entire population. There are at least two ways of going about this: medicine-brewing and sorcery.

A character may attempt to devise a cure using basic symptom-treating medicine that she concocts. Arriving at such a formula is grueling work and requires an immense amount of trial and error. With no particular advantages, this process will require 20 successes on an extended Intelligence + Medicine roll to accomplish, with one roll being made for each full week spent researching, and that's if the character has Intelligence, Medicine and Survival (for the knowledge of medicinal plants) all at ••••• or higher. If the sum of these three Traits isn't 15 or higher, add two to the requisite number of successes for every dot short of that number (e.g., if the character's Intelligence + Medicine + Survival = 12, she'll need to accrue 26 successes to formulate a cure). If the character has cadavers of the Contagion dead to experiment on, the number of successes decreases by four. If the character has access to a bio-thaumaturgical laboratory, this number drops by two. (Such laboratories are not uncommon in Autochthonia's mid- to large-sized cities, but all require Backing by a Sodality just to enter and Backing of ••• or higher to use.) If the character knows the Charm Contagion-Curing Touch, the difficulty also drops by 2. No mortal medicine will be of use against the Great Contagion. Any compound derived will need to incorporate Essence or alchemy of some sort, even if only through an artifact processing the formula into an elixir.

Once the character has garnered the requisite number of successes, she is capable of creating a cure for the Great Contagion that reduces to 2 the difficulty of the Stamina + Resistance roll to recover from the illness.

The other means of devising a cure requires the use of Solar Circle Sorcery.

If a character has access to a great library of sorcerous materials from the First Age, he might be able to cull from it the secrets of such a spell, used by the Sun Kings of old to protect their kingdoms from pestilence. Such a spell

could conceivably be found in the ruins of Rathess or the tombs of Nexus, or the Dragon Kings might remember the existence of such a thing and point the character in the right direction.

Alternatively, if the character is particularly innovative (and a visit to Noi, the Divine Minister of Innovation might help here), he might be able to formulate such a spell totally *de novo*. The rules for developing spells can be found on page 217 of **Exalted**.

The problem with either of these approaches, however, is that visiting old libraries and performing magical research is, above all, *time consuming*, and time is the one thing in short supply as the Primordial drifts ever closer to death.

Following are two examples of the kinds of spells the character might stumble on through research or create through his own diligent labors.

Resplendent Pestilence Guardian (80 motes): Upon casting this spell, the caster summons up a winged spirit of health armed with a blazing sword. The spirit is made of golden light and travels through one entire nation at extreme speed killing every god of a single selected disease type that it encounters, *including* the large hideous spirits of the Great Contagion. Such a spirit can cleanse a 100-mile radius area in a day and always moves toward the greatest concentration of infected victims. Such is the magic of the spell that the death of the disease spirits also cures every victim of the disease within that area. Cleansing all of Autochthonia with this spell would require casting it eight different times, once in each nation.

Declamation of Contagious Well-Being (40 motes): The sorcerer casts this spell and then voices a long paean on the blessings of good health. For so long as the caster continues singing, the healthy infect the ill with wellness, beginning with all healthy persons in a 30-yard radius and traveling outward at 20 miles per hour with the advancing wave of health. The sick are healed of one disease they wish to be rid of and cannot again acquire that disease through any means. Wellness is the natural state of existence and, consequently, has no incubation period. The healthy need only touch or breath on the sick to imbue them with well-being. Obviously, the sorcerer is going to want to sing for as long as possible, even foregoing sleep to continue doing so. So long as the caster can stay awake (see **Exalted**, p. 241) and sing uninterrupted, he can continue this benediction.

ACT II: THE LION'S ASSAULT

If the Great Contagion had swept through the Realm of Brass and Shadow before the breaking of the Seal of Eight Divinities, it would have been a tragedy of nigh-incomprehensible proportions. The Machine God and all those inside him would have expired in the Void, and the Maker's dream would have ended there in resounding silence.

With these events coming to pass after the Great Seal is broken, however (the only way they *could* have

unfolded, in fact), the consequences are much, much worse. With the way to Creation opened up, the concentration of death energy that follows in the wake of the Contagion makes the expanses of Autochthonia light up to the senses of the Deathlords like a cascading bonfire. Blight zones begin serving as beacons to the necrotic energies of the Labyrinth. Portions of the spiritual landscape collapse in upon themselves, and vast tracts of the Great Maker suddenly become riddled with shadowlands like tumors. Once that happens, portions of the Labyrinth suddenly lead directly into Autochthonia's shadowlands. These paths are still new, and the connecting tunnels open up in an Underworld backwater, but as word spreads of a world entirely unfamiliar with ghosts, it becomes an oddity, an attraction, and news quickly reaches the local Deathlord.

The First and Forsaken Lion, the eldest of the Deathlords, knows of Autochthon. When the Lion was born into the First Age, the Primordial had only recently taken his leave of Creation. The Deathlord's terrible, swift armies are suddenly capable of entering the Great Maker through strange Labyrinth portals to Autochthonia. The Labyrinth is, in essence, the necrotic flesh of Primordials, and as portions of the Machine God undergo necrosis, they too become part of the Labyrinth.

Even as the human population of Autochthonia despairs, the First and Forsaken Lion rejoices. Once the bizarre valve-passages open up from the Labyrinth into Autochthonia, it's only a matter of days before the Lion sends in a respectable portion of the Legion Sanguinary.

The Lion's army of ghosts uses the blight zones-cum-shadowlands as staging areas, as they can't materialize anywhere else in Autochthonia. Neither can they respire Essence outside of such places, and the living, while useful sources of Essence, aren't particularly plentiful once the Great Contagion has run its course.

This makes the few nascent shadowlands crucial to the First and Forsaken Lion, but without expanding them, he is unable to make effective use of the vast portion of his army. To expand the shadowlands, the Lion has his ghosts perform systematic demolitions and desecrations of Autochthon's factories and organs at the edges of the blight zones. These are not random acts, but applied military-engineering operations intended to taint the geomantic flow within Autochthon and spread the Primordial's disease. The more territory the Lion claims, the sicker the Maker becomes.

The task of the Lion's forces in Autochthon is to wipe out all living survivors and sabotage any facility, node, city or organ that looks important. The idea here is to bring about the death of the Primordial as quickly as possible. If the Great Maker should somehow awaken or otherwise focus on the Lion (an event not outside the realm of possibility) it would make the Deathlord's job much more difficult, if not impossible.

Strike teams of nemissaries and other elite ghosts led by Abyssal Exalted hunt down key machine gods and subroutine spirits. Gremlins prove themselves very useful to the Lion as "hounds." The Abyssals use these corrupt custodians to sniff out key machine spirits, and once a god



is found, the ghosts corner it and force it to materialize, at which point the Abyssal strikes.

Furthermore, the Lion will turn the thousands of Contagion dead into hordes of walking dead. These zombies will destroy automata and gather more corpses for reanimation, beginning a terrible downward spiral for the denizens of Autochthonia.

The initial skirmishes between the Alchemicals and the Deathlord's troops prove enlightening to both sides. The Chosen of Autochthon see what they're up against as the dead rise to fight again, sometimes more effective *after* death than before it. For his part, the Lion gets a taste of the technology he craves, making him covet this conquest all the more.

Based on these initial conflicts, the Deathlord realizes that, with the knowledge and power he gains by plundering Autochthonia, he will gain the ability to build and field war machines the likes of which Creation has never seen. The war machines of the First Age may have been

impressive, but the Lion sees the potential to build something much, much bigger.

As the Lion learns how things work in Autochthonia, he will strive to corrupt a city with Gremlin Syndrome and turn it into a concentration camp.

Once a full city has been converted to an enormous necromantic factory complex, the First and Forsaken Lion will make rapid strides in his conquest. Necrosurgery factories will churn out walking war machines of all types, ready for necromantic animation. These factories will make use of Autochthonian thaumaturgy and metal implantation techniques to create bladed, armored monstrosities that conventional necrosurgeons either can't do or can only do slowly. Just as the artisan-blacksmith made way for the assembly line, so do necrosurgeons make way for industrial necromancy and its relentless production of metal, flesh and bone monstrosities. The war machines will be carted into warehouses, where catwalks allow necromancers to target and raise them as undead hordes.

INTO THE LABYRINTH

Key to the Lion's assault on Autochthonia are the dank portals that open into Autochthonia when the death gradient becomes too steep and the Design of reality shreds beneath the pressure.

The Labyrinth is made of the necrotic substance of the dreaming, eternally dying Malfeans, and as such, it is not too removed from the current nature of Autochthon's own vast being, especially in his gremlin-infested blight zones. When portions of the Primordial become shadowlands, the black sphincter valves open easily into the shifting, convoluted passageways of the Underworld's Labyrinth.

Once the shadowlands begin opening up in the wake of the Great Contagion, they open up throughout the Realm of Brass and Shadow. The passages leading to Autochthonia become obvious, as they are terraformed into industrial horror zones by their proximity to the Machine God. The Lion can't keep track of them all, and it would not be especially difficult for another Deathlord to make forays into Autochthon as well. That said, characters willing to brave the hazards of the Underworld and the Labyrinth might find the portals just as useful.

The Labyrinth warps not just space, but time as well. It's entirely possible, even likely, that the portions of the Labyrinth that open into Autochthonia are the dark industrial nightmare realm of Autochthon as he might exist millennia hence as a Malfean, the exact same place, but chronologically removed. In this bleak world, entropy and desolation form the very foundation of the world. Ruined artifacts and devastated urban cores make up vast portions of the geography. The characters could stumble upon the nightmare relics of their own dusty remains and shattered weapons and know the setting of their own demise. The closer the Primordial approaches his own death, the more defined that industrial nightmare will become, until it finally comes to pass and Autochthon is dead, turned inside out, falling to land inside himself.

Gremlin hives, as places where Autochthon is already diseased, turn easily into shadowlands. The gremlins residing there will worship the Lion as the bringer of the Void the moment they sense his Essence. They will willingly provide technical and navigational assistance. Mortal Void cultists will cluster by the entrance in devout prayer until the Contagion kills them, at which point they will eagerly join the Legion Sanguinary as expendable ghosts.

The Labyrinth passageways that lead to Autochthonia are distant, removed from everything. They will not attract attention immediately. When they do, however, they make the First and Forsaken Lion's assault child's play. By sculpting the substance of the Labyrinth, the Lion can render the portals in Autochthon a 10-minute walk from the mighty gates of his citadel. And when his fresh and eager troops surge through the passage and swarm the plague-weakened Autochthonians, only one outcome will be possible.

For more on navigating the Labyrinth, see **Exalted: The Abyssals**, pp. 70-73.

In time, the Deathlord will reach a state of peak efficiency: The gremlin city will be a combination of slaughterhouse and necro-forge. Human prisoners, most weakened and sick, will be chained to conveyor belts. As they reach the kill point, their manacles pop free just as three blade clamps close on their bodies like claws. One rips away the hungry ghost and drops it into a holding pen for soulforging; one rips away the ghost, to be placed in a line for indoctrination and conversion; and the last clamp takes the flesh and drops it onto another conveyor where machines hack it apart and join it with other corpses to form the jigsaw armatures of spine chains or other war machines, which then drop into resurrection pits for preservation.

And with every expedited death, the Deathlord's empire grows.

THE FIRST AND FORSAKEN LION

The eldest, and arguably the most powerful, of the Deathlords is making a personal crusade of his invasion of the Machine God. The Contagion-wracked cities of Autochthonia are the first significant shadowlands to open up near the Thousand, and they represent a windfall of unprecedented and incalculable proportions. The First and Forsaken Lion is determined to make himself the lord of Autochthonia, and his vast army and mastery of First Age military science is easily sufficient to bring about that end. If the characters don't intervene, that's exactly how the Lion's conquest will play out.

Consequently, if the characters are intent on stopping the Lion, they will very likely earn the enmity of the Deathlord and find themselves going toe to toe with a Deathlord and his minions. If the characters have gone up against the Mask of Winters, they may think they have some idea of what to expect. By and large, they would be wrong. The Mask of Winters, in the Lion's estimation, is a one-trick pony, a stripling who got lucky. The Lion, on the other hand, was a general in the First Age, and not only has he forgotten *nothing* of the waging of war, he has spent most of the last millennium honing the tactics he intends to use against the living. For more on the background of the First and Forsaken Lion, see **Exalted: The Abyssals**, pages 85-89.

The First and Forsaken Lion is a force of unnature. Anyone short of a Celestine or a Primordial fetich going toe-to-toe with him will likely last precisely as long as her perfect defenses hold, after which the Deathlord will murder her horribly and make a zombie of her bloodied corpse. Characters who boldly or foolishly taunt the Lion might earn another few seconds of life as he makes a particularly gruesome example of them.

The lethality of the Lion is difficult to overstate. Mortals who dare to strike him fall to dust. Upon successfully striking a target with Varan's Ruin, the impact blasts apart any extra within 10 yards. He even knows a Charm that rips away the souls of those Exalted he has slain and

sinks them directly into his soulsteel armor, adding another layer of folded torment alloy (and another +1 lethal soak).

The First and Forsaken Lion is a shrewd commander of both ghosts and the walking dead. The Deathlord knows better than to make a target of himself, and he goes nowhere without his personal entourage, hand-picked from the Legion Sanguinary. Many of these are highly skilled nemissaries wearing augmented artifact bodies (see **The Book of Bone and Ebony**, pp. 87-91). At least one ghost has been moliated to look like the Lion as well, providing the dark general with a convenient decoy, should he need one.

For some concept of what the players are going up against, it helps to look at the formula for determining Essence in Deathlords. Personal Essence equals [(Essence x 5) + (Willpower x 2) + (highest Virtue x 2)]. Peripheral Essence equals [(Essence x 15) + (Willpower x 3) + (sum of Virtues x 3)].

One of the few advantages characters will have when confronting the Lion's forces is the fact that many of his artifacts and undead war machines are too large for the cramped quarters of Autochthonia. His high-speed airships, in particular, cannot be deployed there, slowing down his progress considerably. While he's free to make ample use of the Legion Sanguinary, many of his larger war engines, including his warstriders, remain back at the Thousand, unusable except in the rare open space. If the First and Forsaken Lion finds himself forced into combat with larger Alchemical Exalted with any frequency, he will eagerly don the Insidious Ebon Xoanon and bring the combat directly to the Chosen of the Machine God with a combination of necromancy, sorcery, Charms and sheer brute force.

Worse, the Lion has a number of corrupted Exalted Essences that he's been waiting to put to use. Only two Abyssal Exalted serve him at the onset of his invasion (one of whom figures prominently in the invasion, the other of whom is ruling the Thousand in his liege's stead). As soon as he has the opportunity, the Deathlord intends to transform a number of Autochthonian citizens into deathknights. While they won't be particularly powerful at first, they will be his informants and guides and, along with the turncoat Soulsteel Caste Alchemicals, the backbone of his presence in the Realm of Brass and Shadow.

THE FIRST AND FORSAKEN LION

Concept: The Underworld's greatest general

Nature: Bravo

Former Caste: Dawn

ATTRIBUTES

Strength 15, Dexterity 8, Stamina 12, Charisma 6, Manipulation 8, Appearance 0, Perception 6, Intelligence 7, Wits 8

VIRTUES

Compassion 2, Conviction 6, Temperance 3, Valor 5

ABILITIES

Archery 5, Athletics 9 (Breaking Things +3), Awareness 6 (Detecting Ambushes +3), Brawl 9 (Excessive Cruelty +2, Grappling +1), Bureaucracy 7 (Military Hierarchies +3), Craft (First Age Weapons) 8, Craft (Necrosurgery) 8 (War Machines +3), Craft (Soulforging) 5, Craft (War) 10 (Undead Units +3), Dodge 6, Endurance 10, Investigation 5 (Interrogation +3), Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Flametongue, High Holy Speech, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue) 5, Lore 8 (First Age Technology +2), Martial Arts 5, Medicine 4 (Torture +3), Melee 10 (Daiklaves +3), Occult 7 (Secrets of the Void +2), Perception 6 (Oration +3), Presence 10 (Commanding Troops +2, Intimidation +1), Resistance 9, Ride 5 (Simhatta +1, Skyships +2), Sail 5 (Skyships +3), Socialize 5, Survival 5 (Labyrinth +3), Thrown 4

BACKGROUNDS

Virtually infinite Artifact, Resources and Abyssal Command; Cult 5, Influence 5+, Liege (He Who Holds in Thrall) 5, Manse/Underworld Manse 5+, Savant 5, Spies 5, Whispers 5

The Lion has three level-5 Abyssal Hearthstones on him at all times, though outside of the Underworld and shadowlands, they are simply dead stones and provide him no benefit.

ARCANOI

The First and Forsaken Lion may be assumed to have any and every Arcanoi for which he meets the necessary Virtue requirements, provided they are useful to him. This includes the Death in Life Path (see the **Exalted Players Guide**, pp. 84-85), which his permanently materialized state allows him to use. Like all Deathlords, he cannot sire progeny of any kind. In general, the Deathlord seldom employs Arcanoi, since his Charms are considerably more efficient and powerful. He can form Combos of Arcanoi and Ability-based Charms.

CHARMS

The First and Forsaken Lion has every printed Abyssal Charm for which his Abilities qualify him and many, many others of comparable power. Storytellers may also assign him any thematically appropriate Solar Charm that does not already have an Abyssal equivalent, changing the cosmetic effects as necessary to give it an Abyssal flavor. The Lion's high-Essence Charms are too numerous to list, but include such sample effects as a scene-length Presence-based aura that instantly slays any non-magical being who dares strike him in close combat (10 motes), a supplemental Melee Charm that make any opponent's defense short of a perfect effect inapplicable (5 motes), a supplemental Melee Charm that kills every extra within a radius of 10 yards from where he strikes (6 motes), a scene-length Resistance Charm that grants perfect im-

munity to all non-magical sources of injury (5 motes) and other equivalently heinous powers. The Deathlord has a full range of Combos at his disposal, all designed according to his twisted aesthetics of transcendent brutality and the art of slaughter.

Storytellers should remember that the First and Forsaken Lion was born shortly after the war against the Primordials and rose to prominence through millennia of experience as one of the greatest generals of the Solar Deliberative. In death, he was the first of the Deathlords and has received the personal investiture and tutelage of the Malfeans ever since.

Outside of personal combat, no one living or dead currently has a better grasp of battlefield strategy or tactical magic. In short, he is not invincible, but as close to it as he and the Malfeans could make him. He is best opposed indirectly, such as by the thwarting of his plans or the sabotage of his war infrastructure, rather than in direct confrontation where he has focused his prowess. If battle is unavoidable, wise players will find ways to exploit his hubris and incite him into making mistakes or wasting Essence on showy displays of force, using group tactics even as the Dragon-Blooded did long ago when they slew him.

SPELLS

Like all Deathlords, the Lion is a sorcerer of the Celestial Circle and a necromancer of the Void Circle. He also has comprehensive *knowledge* of Solar Circle Sorcery spells learned before his death and corruption that he can no longer access. He favors necromancy over sorcery, but he may be assumed to have any spell the Storyteller deems appropriate or useful. The Lion makes the greatest use of spells that enhance himself or his army or create armies of the undead rather than those that cause direct devastation. He would rather stride through his enemies personally, hearing their screams as they fall before his blade and feeling the earth shake beneath the synchronized footfalls of his horde. While other Deathlords may wield deeper and more terrible mastery of the occult arts, none use them with the Lion's tactical brilliance.

OTHER POWERS

Like all Deathlords, the First and Forsaken Lion has the innate powers of Mutable Form, Eyes of Oblivion, Command of the Dead and Feed on the Dead (see **Exalted: The Abyssals**, p. 84). He cannot currently use Mutable Form or perform any full body alterations on himself due to the armor fused onto his corpus by He Who Holds in Thrall. As the prime vessel of Malfean Essence and power, the Deathlord heals damage and recovers Willpower as an Abyssal Exalt. Moreover, he is virtually beyond destruction. If thrown into the Mouth of Oblivion, he will cease to exist, and it is possible (if the tales of Great Forks' gods may be believed) that he might also have a secret weakness that can undo or destroy him permanently. Any lesser

demise merely causes his body to disintegrate and reform over the course of a year in the Labyrinthine temple-tomb of his master. If a magical effect that permanently destroys spirits brings about his demise, the period of recovery extends to a decade. Even after he returns from the edge of Oblivion, his master may not allow him to return to the Underworld immediately, especially given the unforgiving wrath of He Who Holds in Thrall. Apart from the Lion's accursed and inescapable prison of armor, his personal effects do not follow him when he dissipates into death.

Finally, the Deathlord's countenance is so horrid that any non-magical mortal who looks beneath his armored cowl goes instantly and irrevocably insane, while untainted ghosts must immediately resist as if exposed to the Whispers of Oblivion.

For more on the First and Forsaken Lion's background, see **Exalted: The Abyssals**, pages 85-89.

His weapon, Varan's Ruin, is an Artifact 5 grand daiklave that costs 10 motes to attune. It's written up in **Exalted: The Abyssals**, page 86.

Base Initiative: 16

Attack:

Punch: Speed 16 Accuracy 17 Damage 15B Defense 17
Kick: Speed 13 Accuracy 16 Damage 17B, Defense 16
Orichalcum and Soulsteel Grand Daiklave (Varan's Ruin): Speed 14 Accuracy 25 Damage 26L Defense 22

Dodge Pool: 14

Soak: 26L/42B/15A (Malfean carapace, 20L/30B/15A; no mobility penalty or fatigue value; hardness of 10L/15B, ignores all attacks whose raw damage does not exceed these values; by its nature, this armor is considered part of the Deathlord and counts as natural soak for all effects; adds natural +5 bonus to Strength and +2 to Stamina, already incorporated into his listed stats; requires 10 motes to attune and cannot be removed; inhibits all forms of full body shapechanging)

Willpower: 10 **Health Levels:** -0x36/Incap*

* The Lion has Charms that completely and permanently negate all wound penalties.

Essence: 10

Personal Essence: 82 **Peripheral Essence:** 228(203)

Committed Essence: 25

Other Notes: While the First and Forsaken Lion counts as a creature of darkness for effects targeting those entities, he can also resist such effects as an Abyssal when applicable. For rules on resisting the Zenith Anima power (for example), see **The Book of Ebony and Bone**, p. 85.

EXALTED POWER COMBAT

Attack:

Punch: Speed 16 Accuracy 18 Damage 15B Defense 19
Rate 5

Kick: Speed 13 Accuracy 18 Damage 18B Defense 14
Rate 3

Orichalcum and Soulsteel Grand Daiklave (Varan's Ruin): Speed 26 Accuracy 25 Damage 27L Defense 21
Rate 4

THE LION'S FORCES

Even if the First and Forsaken Lion was a one-man juggernaut invading Autochthonia, the forces of the Machine God would be hard pressed to defeat him. He is *not* alone, however. The Legion Sanguinary comprises three quarters of a million highly trained troops, mostly war ghosts.

In his attack on Autochthonia, however, the Lion is pulling out all the stops. He can't use most of his war engines due to the tight confines of the Realm of Brass and Shadow, but he's more than capable of using ghosts and the walking dead. In fact, he takes a great deal of pleasure in doing so, as the inhabitants of Autochthon have never seen the dead rise to fight, and the sight terrifies them.

ZOMBIES

Between the Contagion dead and the casualties of war, the Lion has an effectively endless source of corpses with which to work. At the beginning of the campaign, he sticks primarily with standard zombies, but as he spends more time in Autochthonia, he begins modifying more zombies to upgrade their lethality. If zombies had any capability to channel Essence, the Lion would eagerly outfit them with biothaumaturgical implants. Failing that, he's willing to enhance them with spikes, salvaged Charms from dead Alchemicals (that don't work, but make them more frightening) or anything else that he feels grants him a potential strategic edge.

In the long run, the Lion has plans to turn at least some of the Vats of the Alchemicals into resurrection pits (see **The Book of Bone and Ebony**, pp. 82-83) as a means of maintaining and expanding his army through appropriation of the enemy's strengths.

GHOSTS

Autochthonia has always observed a strict soul recycling program made possible through the use of soulgems and the Radiant Amphora. With the breakdown induced by the Great Contagion, however, that system has fallen apart, and ghosts have taken to escaping the soulgems in which they were imprisoned.

NEMISSARIES

Zombies cannot channel Essence and cannot, therefore, benefit from the most interesting elements of Autochthonian science, biothaumaturgical implants. Nemissaries, on the other hand, are ghosts and have no problem channeling Essence through a range of different devices. By preparing a force of technologically augmented war bodies especially for possession by his nemissary troops, the First and Forsaken Lion hopes to field a force of highly versatile troops that can possess a range of technomantically

SOULGEM TECHNOLOGY

Among the Autochthonian discoveries most relished by the First and Forsaken Lion is the theory and use of soulgems. The concept of a soul receptacle that can just be installed in vessels as needed interests him a great deal. For him, it's a means of capturing the souls of mortals for use in trade and war.

He's already begun experimenting with the interaction of nemissaries and soulgems in a quest to create an amulet that turns a mortal into a nemissary the moment she dies by trapping the ghost in the physical shell.

Another research project he has planned will determine whether the release of souls from a soulgem replicates the release of necrotic energy emitted by the dying. If that energy *could* be bound into a soulgem, the Deathlord might be able to plug several hundred soulgems into a single central explosive device. When such a device goes off, the soulgems will give up their payload, and the effect will release a pulse of death energy as though all of those individuals had died at once in that exact place, instantly creating a large shadowland and granting access to the dead anywhere it was needed.

His campaign in Autochthonia is still in its earliest stages, but the First and Forsaken Lion is already brainstorming a whole new generation of death technology.

enhanced bodies depending on their current objective. For samples of the implants available to the Lion, see the "Technology and Necrotech" sections below.

One of the Lion's chief disappointments in his war on Autochthonia is his discovery that the bodies of the Alchemical Exalted, whether dead or alive, cannot be possessed by nemissaries. The strange clay flesh of the Machine God's Chosen does not bear enough similarity to real tissue to make it susceptible to ghostly possession (or to necromancy either, for that matter).

TECHNOLOGY

One of the key reasons for the Lion's assault on Autochthonia is that he wants the technology found there. The First and Forsaken Lion knows of Autochthon from the First Age. The Deathlord remembers the Great Maker's tools, his devices, and most of all, he remembers the Primordial's weapons. The Lion has a good idea of just what he might obtain with this conquest. He's ahead of the other Deathlords on that account. If they knew exactly what a treasure trove Autochthon is likely to be, they'd be attempting to negotiate with the Lion for access rights.

Among other ways he intends to profit from conquering Autochthonia, the Lion is keenly aware of the opportunities for meshing technology and the bodies of the dead. After the Contagion, Autochthonia will be a source of both. While he is already capable of deploying zombies and nemissary war bodies that have been augmented with metal, Charms and thaumaturgy, the Lion's conquest of Autochthonia will allow him to deploy nemissaries enhanced with far more advanced implants.

Autochthonian technological thaumaturgy allows for the replacement of limbs with a range of artificial devices, including any of those commonly seen in custodians and similar machine spirits. A hand can be replaced with a drill or a syringe, for example. See the "Terminal Assemblies" sidebar on page 169 of Chapter Four for a list of potential replacement limbs.

The First and Foremost Lion is also looking forward to outfitting his undead army with all manner of technological gear. With only a little tampering, most technological devices can be altered to run on ghostly Essence, giving his nemissaries a pronounced advantage on any field of battle. For examples, see the section on gear, starting on page 180.

Mortals in Autochthonia have an entire thaumaturgical Science dedicated to body augmentation (see "Autochthonian Thaumaturges," pp. 159-162). The following devices are typical examples of the sorts of augmentations made possible with Autochthonian thaumaturgy.

Targeting Lens: Metal bands fit around the wearer's skull and affix this red jewel over one of the wearer's eyes. The targeting lens requires 3 motes of committed Essence to use. While active, the targeting lens adds two successes to all attempts to hit a target and one success to all Perception rolls.

Magical Materials Detector: Requiring 1 mote of committed Essence to attune, this device is built into the wearer's ear and makes a soft ticking sound when the wearer is within 10 feet of any Magical Material, including adamant. These are typically used by Sodality members whose job it is to tap the veins of the Machine God.

Darksight Eye Plating: A thin lens of glass that fits over the eyeball, darksight eye plating requires 2 motes of Essence to attune and grants the wearer the ability to see through darkness and even fog as if it were bright light and counteracting any vision penalties.

Stunpalm: The heel of the palm is covered with thin metal plates. When the wearer strikes a target with her exposed palm, it channels electricity through the plating, inflicting two levels of bashing damage on top of any damage done by the strike. Targets that take this damage are stunned for (8 - [Stamina + Resistance]) turns.

NECROTECHNOLOGY

In addition to the above modifications, which amount to little more than a strategic redeployment of existing Autochthonian thaumatech, the Deathlord is eager to



merge his prodigious technological Lore and advanced knowledge of necromancy to create monstrous hybrid devices for his nemissaries and any mortal followers he may gain. In this way, he's capable of creating implant-weapons that would be impossible using either discipline by itself.

Hungry Beacon: This augmentation places a dye-secreting sac under the skin of the wearer's palm. To mark her target, the character must make a successful Brawl or Martial Arts attack, during which her blow marks the target with a black stain that attracts projectiles. All Archery and Thrown attacks on a target marked with this beacon gain four dice with which to hit the target.

Vital Pump: This array of barbed soulsteel rods is held together by thin bands of metal. The device takes the place of the wearer's forearm and costs 5 motes to attune. The vital pump inflicts damage as per tiger claws (see *Exalted*, p. 327, or the *Exalted Players Guide*, p. 210). On any damaging hit, however, the device makes a soft whirring noise and drains the target of another health level. This damage cannot be soaked, and the health level thus stolen is added to the attacker's health level total. The process of being drained in this way is extremely painful, and so long as the pump is embedded in the target, she is considered to have a -4 wound penalty, regardless of how injured she actually is.

Pyre-Flame Exhaler: This device resembles a fly's proboscis and extends a few inches beyond the wearer's lips. The wearer inserts this bulky soulsteel appliance into his mouth and keeps it in place by biting down. Once he has committed 5 motes of Essence to it, he breathes out green pyre flame on every exhalation. Normal respiration

produces only small flickering flames, but deliberate attacks create dangerous sprays of flame. Treat this as a speed +2, accuracy +1, damage 3L, range 5, rate 1/2 weapon.

Fly-Eye Arrays: These large soulsteel and crystal arrays look like fist-sized compound eyes attached to sharp, barbed soulsteel stalks. The wearer installs these by jamming them into his own ocular orbits, destroying the eyes if there are any. After attuning the fly-eye arrays with 5 motes of Essence, the wearer's vision extends 360 degrees around him, preventing surprise, *and* allows him to see in pitch blackness. Lastly, the fly-eye arrays add 5 to the wearer's initiative. If the wearer removes the arrays, he is blind until such time as he is capable, through whatever means, of replacing his eyes.

Exsanguinating Tongue: A hollow articulated soulsteel tube in the shape of a barbed metal tongue, this implant sits in the back of the wearer's throat until used and does not interfere with speech, although it does make swallowing difficult. It takes 5 motes of Essence to attune the exsanguinating tongue. When its wearer wants to use this implant on a target, she flicks it out like the tongue of a frog, skewering her target. If the tongue hits, it embeds itself in the target's flesh and drains two health levels of blood each turn. If the wearer is also an Essence-wielder, the exsanguinating tongue will also steal a number of motes equal to the wearer's Essence rating. This device is ideal if the wearer gains Essence from blood, but otherwise, it's little more than a novelty weapon.

The exsanguinating tongue has the following stats: speed +2, accuracy +1, damage +1, rate 1. It has a range of

three feet. Ripping the tongue out before its wearer has finished feeding inflicts five health levels of lethal damage on the target. Ripping the tongue from its wearer's throat requires five successes on a Strength + Athletics roll.

WAR MACHINES

While the passageways of the Labyrinth bend to the Deathlord's will, the passages of the Machine God do not. Deployment of the Lion's necromantic war machines (as described in Chapter Four of **The Book of Bone and Ebony**) in the cramped quarters of Autochthonia is nigh impossible. Therefore, he leaves most of his toys at home. The exceptions to this policy are the spine chains that the Lion makes at the end of every significant battle.

THE LION'S PROGRESS

The characters have few advantages over the First and Forsaken Lion, but one of these advantages is the Deathlord's unfamiliarity with Autochthonia, its topography and the common modes of travel. While he will have no difficulty conquering Ot — including killing the actual Alchemical Exalted at the city's core after a long interrogation period using large soulsteel torture implements — he *may* have trouble advancing beyond his first conquest. The shadowlands only open up as quickly as the mounting death toll can open them. If the Contagion is cured or even slowed, his ability to progress through the Machine God will be drastically impaired.

The pneumatic trams have ceased working, and the Alchemical Exalted responsible for their function have retracted the tracks and, in many cases, entirely closed off the veins in which the trams had been running. The Great Contagion was effectively kept out of some cities by establishing a hasty quarantine. Those cities won't open up to the Lion at all. If he wants to subdue them, he'll need to traverse the three-dimensional maze of the Machine God's topology to get there through the Far Reaches. Such communities could serve as bastions and rallying points for those loyal to the Maker.

While the Deathlord can make use of the Labyrinth tunnels at any point, the characters can take that option as well, traveling quickly from one compromised section of Autochthonia to another via the Labyrinth. While it's a dangerous way to go when most of the Legion Sanguinary is engaged in exploring the Realm of Brass and Shadow, it's a far faster method than trekking through the Maker's Far Reaches.

THE SOULSTEEL FIFTH COLUMN

While rare, the peculiar effects of the Great Contagion on the few Alchemical Exalted who succumb open another opportunity for the First and Forsaken Lion to garner allies and wage war upon Autochthonia. Most Alchemicals only contract the Great Contagion if their players botch the Resistance roll. Because the disease is

necromantic, it incubates and resonates with implanted soulsteel Charms, in turn weakening the immunity of any Templar exposed to the plague. Consequently, members of the Soulsteel Caste sicken if they fail the Resistance roll, and other modifiers (such as imprisonment in a soulsteel sarcophagus) may apply dice penalties to the roll.

Once Templars catch the Great Contagion, they find themselves feeling giddy and strangely empowered by the spiritual change brought about by the shadowlands. They may suddenly feel the movement of the souls in their soulsteel components as a pleasurable frisson. During those same periods, they feel their connection with the Maker grow weak, his transmission waning until it's nearly inaudible. After a number of days equal to their Essences, they develop Gremlin Syndrome and become lost to the Void. The First and Forsaken Lion himself bargains with the most powerful of these converted Templars, offering them power in exchange for fealty. The Lion eagerly experiments on those who *do* refuse his offer to learn the weaknesses in the Alchemical design, but he's more interested in gaining new agents than in destroying enemies. Once he uncovers the connection between the Contagion and the change in personality, he sets up concentration camps where captured Templars may be "processed" through heavy exposure to the plague and entrusts the management of these camps to the Soulsteel Caste Exalted already under his command. The Deathlord offers powerful new Charms made of the highest caliber Labyrinthine soulsteel, as well as key leadership positions in the Legion Sanguinary, so his temptations certainly appeal to new gremlins. As a result of the Deathlord's efforts, nearly half of the Soulsteel Caste Exalted face imprisonment and infection, and most of these join his forces.

For days or weeks, the Void-twisted turncoats undermine their deity's well being and murder their Alchemical brethren. After the destruction of a number of trusting Alchemicals of other castes, even loyal Soulsteel Alchemicals are scrutinized extensively to discern where their loyalties lie.

The prison cities presided over by Soulsteel Alchemical Exalted are particularly frightening. When such a creature goes rogue, it has the ability to destroy large numbers of its inhabitants with a few well-planned acts. Such a thing would normally be prevented by the Clarity of being plugged into the Maker, but with Clarity replaced with Dissonance, cities of soulsteel have no reason not to resent and destroy those inhabiting them. Worst of all are the prison cities who actually become concentration camps, facilitating the infection and conversion of captured Templars.

Though it's small consolation to those fighting them, turncoat Soulsteel Alchemicals are deauthorized to use Alchemical weaving. The design weavers no longer give them any command over the Design of Autochthonia.

PRODUCTION SUGGESTIONS: STAGING EVENTS

Autochthon's departure from Creation was not unforeseen. The Machine God's prognostication systems foresaw this, and he was prepared for such an eventuality. Those same systems also anticipated his illness, a consequence of nearly 5,000 years of imperfect recycling and the accrued toxins. Well before he departed Creation, Autochthon knew he could not remain in isolation forever, and thus, when his mortal inhabitants opted to break the Seal of Eight Divinities, the Divine Ministers did not interfere. All of this the Great Maker foresaw.

What he did not anticipate was the Great Contagion, the rise to power of his dead siblings and the creation of the Deathlords and their Abyssal Exalted.

WHAT CHARACTERS CAN DO

Characters can enter the fray at nearly any stage of the adventure. If the characters somehow took note of the first tentative raids conducted by the Locust Crusaders, and if they then noticed or heard of the quick end to these raids, they might be inclined to investigate. Abyssal and Alchemical Exalted will have a very good sense of what's happening inside Autochthonia. Those Circles that don't have Alchemical or Abyssal members will need to get their information another way, perhaps by making a tentative foray through the gateway of Ot, no doubt confronting desperate Alchemical guards — probably of the Orichalcum Caste — in the process.

WAKING THE MACHINE

None of the Exalted have ever had to save a Primordial before. It's not the kind of thing that anyone has written about or even contemplated in millennia (if ever). The Exalted were charged with destroying the Primordials, not resuscitating them. Even in the Second Age, with the threat of vast shadowlands falling across the face of Creation, some Exalted, Solars in particular, may find themselves hesitant to bring an entity of such raw power into the power dynamic of the Second Age.

The Machine God himself is helpless to take actions against his attackers in his current state. His component souls, the Divine Ministers, make war on the invading forces of the Deathlord, but only Debok Moom is really capable of going up against the Lion's forces without fear of quick defeat, and he's probably the single most distant of the Divine Ministers from the population centers of Autochthonia.

THE EYE OF AUTOCHTHON

Long ago, one of the Maker's more powerful artifacts was lost in the wilds of Creation. The so-called "Eye of Autochthon" is probably not an actual organ of the Pri-

mordial, but it is certainly an artifact into which the Machine God invested a vast quantity of his own power. The Essence-smoothing powers it has manifested thus far are parlor tricks compared to what it's capable of, but no mortals and few Exalted have the slightest concept of where to begin to unlock the Eye's power.

Taken into Autochthonia, on the other hand, the Eye reveals its true power.

First of all, the presence of the Eye heals wounds, tumors and flaws in the Maker in a mile radius. This includes purging any blight zones or shadowlands that may have formed in that area.

Secondly, if the Eye is taken into Autochthon's Core — itself an undertaking equivalent to trekking from Gem to Crystal and back again — the Maker's design weavers will take it into the Machine God's uttermost penetralia, where it will wake him from his slumber and grant him the power to expunge his disease.

The challenge in bringing the Eye of Autochthon into Autochthonia, of course, is finding it. Sorcerers, gods, Exalted and myriad other beings have been searching for the Eye since its last disappearance long ago. The characters will need a remarkable amount of either luck or skill to find the Eye, more still to enter Ot and yet more to make the journey through the Maker's Far Reaches. Such a thing would likely require many, many gaming sessions to accomplish, but it would certainly give the characters a chance to test their might against a wide range of perils.

Alchemical Exalted would have an easier time inside Autochthon, but without knowing the ways of Creation, finding the Eye would be nigh impossible. A mixed circle of Alchemicals and Creation's Exalted would have the least difficulty accomplishing this, but given enough talent, either type could follow through on such a mission.

THE FIVE-METAL VAULT

The Great Maker may have anticipated his current plight (or something like it) long before entering his self-imposed exile. As a contingency plan, he may have secreted away an emergency reactivation device in a hidden bunker that would infuse him with Essence and bring him back from an illness or repair any damage he incurred while Elsewhere. The exact nature of this Primordial restorative is left up to the Storyteller: It could be anything from an encrypted sutra to a complex musical instrument that sounds an Essence-charged chord to an enormous crystalline Essence-battery. The bunker itself could be anywhere in Creation — beneath the snows of the Far North, on the ocean's floor or in a cavern deep below the Mountain Folk city of Urvar. The crucial point, however, is that the bunker is accessible only through a vault sealed with a powerful lock of the Five Magical Materials. The vault is immune to tampering, and only a Circle containing one Exalt whose type can naturally attune to each of the Five Magical Materials can open it. There may, for example, be

a circular room containing five alcoves of the appropriate magical metals, and each Exalt type must go to his appropriate alcove before the floor opens to reveal the bunker's interior. Alternatively, the vault could take the shape of a hall with five metal doors or a giant mechanized framework on which the five Exalts have to correctly place themselves to complete an Essence-circuit.

Obviously, this arrangement was carefully thought out because, at the time of the Maker's departure, the Abyssal Exalted were not yet extant, and the Machine God clearly intended that only his own Chosen should unlock the vault and bring him the device. In the modern era, however, this oddlock can be opened by a perfect Assembly of Alchemicals, by a Circle containing one of each of Creation's Exalted types or by a combination of the above.

Once the Circle *does* bring forth the device, the next step is getting it to the gateway into Ot. Once the Malfeans realize what the characters intend, they'll do anything in their power to keep the mission from reaching completion.

RETURNING THE FIRST

It might be possible to "jump start" the Great Maker by sparking him with a jolt of his own Essence. Given that a Primordial is the infinite perfection of dominion that is greater than the sum of its components, the Divine Ministers, being only component souls, are not capable of this

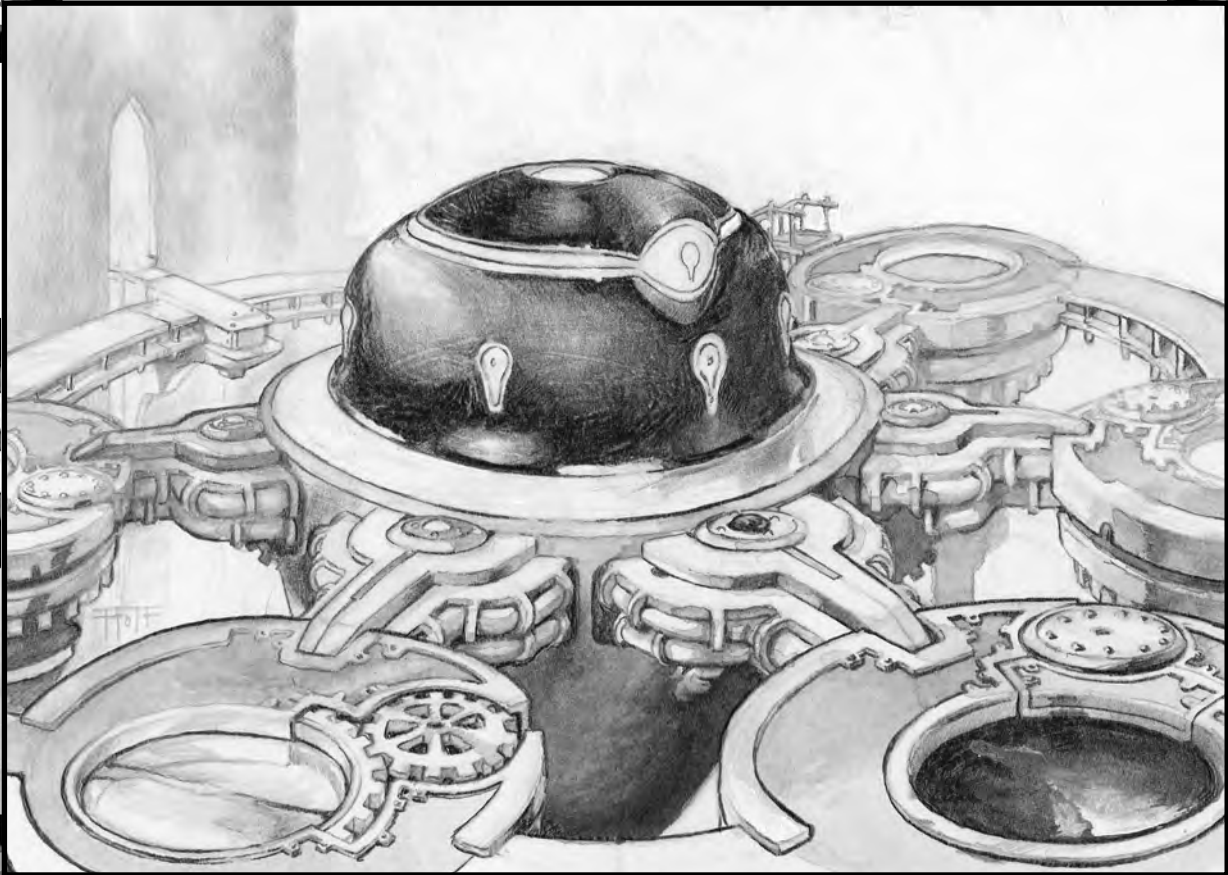
act. The only creature in Creation with a powerful enough spark of the Maker's own energy is the First, more often called the Clay Man, the behemoth after which the Mountain Folk (and later humanity) were patterned (for more information, see **Exalted: The Fair Folk**, p. 216, in or read his entry from **Creatures of the Wyld** at <<http://www.white-wolf.com/Download/Creature.pdf>>).

If the First could be convinced to return to the Machine God and give back the spark his Maker gave him eons ago, it might be enough to rouse Autochthon to full wakefulness in time for him to repel the Deathlord's invasion force.

Convincing the behemoth to give up his own existence may not be as challenging as it seems given the horrors that he has suffered, but the players will still need to be extraordinarily persuasive to convince the ancient and suspicious creature. For a surprise twist, the First's sacrifice actually incorporates his spirit into the Great Maker as a new component deity.

TRANSMISSION FROM THE PRAYER WELL

In a similar vein, the Machine God's first children — and those potentially most capable of treating the Maker's affliction — are the Mountain Folk. With the opening of the Seal of Eight Divinities, the prayers of the Mountain Folk can get through to their god once more.



There is a problem, however.

Millennia ago, after Autochthon took himself Elsewhere, White Shale, the Enlightened mother of the Mountain Folk, knowing that her Primordial deity had gone where prayers would not reach him, built a prayer collector that gathered, refined and stored all prayers made to the Maker. Instead of being lost, the prayers of generations of Mountain Folk were preserved in a perfect crystal lattice in the heart of Urvar.

By the current era, the amount of Essence accumulated in the prayer well is easily enough to spark the Machine God into full awareness and furious activity. The only problem is getting the Mountain Folk to use a device that they don't even know exists. White Shale told no one in Urvar about the prayer well, lest they tamper with it before its time. Instead, she informed a few trustworthy earth elementals who helped her build it and made sure that the device would inform others if and when the Great Maker returned.

The prayer well, located deep in the core of the Mountain Folk city, is unknown, even to the Mountain Folk themselves. Day after day, it collects the combined prayers of the Jadeborn and stores them. The prayer well itself senses Autochthon's return as well as his precise whereabouts, but before it can transmit its vast mass of concentrated prayers, the Mountain Folk themselves must give the command.

The challenge to the characters in this case is twofold. First, they must discover the existence of the prayer collector. If they're in the Realm, this might be facilitated by interaction with the Mountain Folk themselves or with savants of their number who've heard old legends. If they're in the Scavenger Lands, the characters may encounter the Clay Man, the First (and most powerful) of the Jadeborn, who will know of the prayer well's existence as he knows all the secrets of his people. Characters with the ability to summon or communicate with earth elementals (who deal with the Mountain Folk on a regular basis) will stand a good chance of discovering the device's existence, but others are at a pronounced disadvantage.

If they do discover the existence of the prayer collector, the characters must then convince the Mountain Folk to use it (probably after explaining how they knew about the device when the Jadeborn themselves did not). In all likelihood, this will require the characters to address a full Conclave of Mountain Folk, introduce them to the existence of the prayer well and then convince them to authorize the transmission.

Enlightened Mountain Folk are intelligent enough to realize that such an act can't help but catch the attention of their god, but they may fear the consequences of such an act. Without knowing the Maker's mind, forwarding the refined prayer to Autochthon could be dangerous. After all, the last time they saw the Machine God, he imposed

the Great Geas on their entire race. What if he now chooses to limit them even more severely upon waking?

The Storyteller will want to make this an enormous roleplaying challenge. The use of a single Charm will not suffice to persuade a group of Enlightened Jadeborn to follow the orders of the much-loathed (and envied) Exalted, particularly when it regards a matter of importance to their religion and their way of life. The Mountain Folk, even the Enlightened among them, have a penchant for stubbornness. They are disinclined to change their ways or act outside of habit — even for something as grave as this. If the allure of slipping the Great Geas isn't enough to motivate the Mountain Folk to activate the prayer collector, the characters will have to convince the Jadeborn that there's more at stake than just rousing their deity from his long sleep. Should the Machine God fall into the Underworld, the future of Gaia and, indeed, all of Creation would be at risk.

Should the characters effectively make their case, the Mountain Folk will find the prayer well with little difficulty. It's not so much hidden as disguised as an altar to the Great Maker — and it's doing something, flashing a light perhaps, to alert the Jadeborn of their deity's return.

Activating the prayer collector causes it to broadcast thousands of years of purified, concentrated prayers to the Machine God. The Uber-prayer transmission surges from the top of the Imperial Mountain, blasting away the top of the mountain like a volcanic eruption. The transmission arcs through the sky and shoots into the gateway of Ot.

Under normal circumstances, the Divine Ministers intercept prayers to the Maker, feeding themselves and preventing the Core's slumber from being disturbed, but in this case, the transmission is far too concentrated (and given the ferocity of the First and Forsaken Lion's attacks, they are likely to be otherwise engaged). They let the prayer blast pass into the Core, the seat of the Maker's awareness.

The pulse of pious Essence hits the sleeping Machine God like a surge of adrenaline, simultaneously waking him and filling his mind with a million million pleas from his favored children. With that, the mind of the Machine God launches countless simultaneous processes. His awareness extends into every inch of his being, and a million automaton soldiers and mechanized engines of destruction spring from his veins, intent on the ruin of the invading Deathlord.

Those on the surface of Creation soon notice a new sphere in the sky, a metallic gray orb hanging low over the world. As it passes over the Imperial Mountain, the Great Maker reaches out and frees his children from the Geas that binds them, releasing them from their artificially induced limitations.

REPLACING THE AUTOCHTHONIANS

If the characters need to replace the Autochthonians, the Maker's first and favored children would be the ideal replacements.

Such a transfusion of workers would necessitate four preliminary steps:

- The Mountain Folk would need to learn of the Maker's plight.
- The Great Geas would need to be lifted from the Jadeborn. The Machine God himself could do this if sufficiently roused from his comatose state (by the Divine Ministers, perhaps), or it might be possible through the effects of Alchemical weaving.
- The Mountain Folk would need to decamp from the Imperial Mountain en masse and make their way to the gateway into Ot.
- The Jadeborn would need to be purged of their inherent affinity for the element of Earth and their primal connection to Gaia if they intended to move permanently into the Machine God. This would be the most difficult aspect of this scenario, as Autochthon himself may not immediately know how to surmount their potent elemental affinity (after all, if he *did* know how to go about doing that, he would have taken the Mountain Folk into exile with him in the first place).

Even if these conditions are met, orchestrating this kind of movement in the Second Age is almost impossible. Convincing the Realm to forego one of its most lucrative tributaries would be a challenge of immense scale. A mass emigration from beneath the Imperial Mountain to the Font of Mourning would be an enormous undertaking. And once the Mountain Folk were in Autochthonia, dispersing them to the other affected cities (in light of the discontinued tram service) would be immensely challenging. And all this would be going on while the Lion's necrotech hordes are clashing with myrmidon legions led by the Alchemical Exalted, adding to the difficulty.

THE MACHINE REACTIVATED

If the characters not only prevent Autochthon from dying, but restore his health, the face of Creation will still change, but probably for the better. Storytellers would need to give a great deal of thought to such a direction because it would transform the game radically.

Autochthon is entirely outside of fate, so the Celestines will not notice the effects of his return immediately, and even when they do, they will find that they're not in any position to do much about it. With their Exalted in disarray and fighting each other, there's little the Celestines can do, at least initially, to forge their Chosen into a fighting force capable of challenging a Primordial — and that's assuming the gods can pull themselves out of the stupor induced by the Games of Divinity long enough to be concerned. In all probability, unless Autochthon does something blatantly hostile toward the Celestines, they're unlikely to find the strength of will necessary to draw themselves from the Jade Pleasure Dome.

The Great Maker's first act will be to lift the Great Geas from his first children, the Mountain Folk. They will

WHY DID THE AUTOCHTHONIANS DIE WHILE THE MOUNTAIN FOLK LIVED?

First, ask yourself if it's really important to the story that you're telling that the virtually unknown dwarfs under the Imperial Mountain escaped the Great Contagion while the theoretical invaders of Creation might not in a certain alternate history. It can be necessary to work around it, but mostly, you can just ignore this issue.

Obviously, in this story, the Contagion lingers, for whatever reason, as it is the center of the plot. Perhaps, in this Creation, it slew the majority of the Mountain Folk, and they were immune to it when the next generation were cut from their jade eggs by the survivors, or perhaps they were all immune, and their lives simply went on when the Contagion struck.

Perhaps the Contagion is directly linked to the Great Curse and waxes mighty when the Great Maker finally gets back into range of his peers' death curse. Perhaps the Contagion is the corrupted mice of the sun, and the Lion has held them back and sets them on Autochthon himself. Perhaps the Contagion is a vastly powerful sorcerous effect the only affects a given world once ever, but that lingering and will spread between worlds.

regain their standing as a race of truly enlightened geniuses, 10 million strong.

Technology of the sort common in the First Age will make a resurgence. Mountain Folk, Exalted and mortals alike will find themselves inspired to create bigger and grander technologies.

Humanity will diminish in importance. Only the Exalted would be regarded as peers by the freed Mountain Folk. Humans, weak and flawed as they are, would likely devolve into a semibarbaric, agrarian people left marveling at the floating cities and hand-forged wonders of the Jadeborn, eventually following the Dragon Kings into obsolescence. And if they cannot unite again as they did in the First Age, not even the Exalted will hold their superiority for long.

After nearly five millennia, the Machine God may even have solved his greatest problem: how to return to his perfect isolation with his true children. As they are now, the Mountain Folk are deeply connected to Gaia and the element of earth. If he can attune them to himself — by fusing their souls into Alchemical bodies, for example — the Great Maker might have solved all of his problems and discovered a way to turn himself from a dystopic realm to the ultimate model of urban order,

manned with 10 million Exalted, just in time to put the Seal back in place and remove himself to Elsewhere to begin his next phase of evolution.

THE DEATH OF A PRIMORDIAL

If nothing can be done for the population of Autochthonia and if the First and Forsaken Lion's predations are successful, Autochthon will die. Certainly, if the characters don't intervene, this outcome is the default one. Once shadowlands open up within Autochthon, the First and Forsaken Lion will be all but unstoppable as he launches his vast armies on a massive concerted assault on the Machine God.

Even in his weakened state, the Great Maker will not be an easy target. While Autochthon himself is largely comatose, his component souls, the Divine Ministers, fight in his stead, and the weapons they bring to bear against the Deathlord are truly terrifying.

The conflicts between the Divine Ministers and the Deathlord could, themselves, be fodder for an ongoing series.

EFFECTS IN AUTOCHTHONIA

There is no overstating the effect Autochthon's death would have on the few remaining living denizens of Autochthonia. The entirety of the Machine God would fall into, and become part of, the Labyrinth. Custodians would all become gremlins, or worse than gremlins, as the corrupting influence of the Labyrinth poured in.

All of Autochthonia would become a shadowland. For half of every day, the vast network of tunnels would connect directly to the Labyrinth. Those in Creation might notice a lull in ghostly activity, as the dead march on Autochthonia. The Mask of Winters, once pleased with his lot, may find himself feeling cheated as the First and Forsaken Lion reaps a trove of technological wonders and sets himself up as the lord of the entire mechanized realm.

EFFECTS IN CREATION

Should it come to pass that Autochthon dies, the consequences for Creation will be staggering. The last Primordial to fall into the death-that-is-not-death met his end over five millennia ago, and the gods and their Exalted were there to clean up the mess, and the Malfeans *still* broke fate and the cycle of reincarnation.

If Autochthon dies, the gods and their Exalted are in no position to clean things up this time around.

With the Machine God's plunge into the Underworld, a shadowland would erupt from the Font of Mourning and surge outward like an expanding bruise, creeping out to cover a vast expanse of Creation. This shadowland would be vaguely circular, extending 3,000 miles from the gateway into Autochthon, with only small isolated pockets free of death-taint. The miasma would

completely subsume the area from Bluehaven to Chiaroscuro and cover the southwest quarter of the Blessed Isle itself, encompassing Arjuf but stopping just short of Lord's Crossing. Shadowlands as distant as Tzatli grow up to twice their previous size, expanding like untreated tumors. The entirety of the Thousand would be in a shadowland, and the First and Forsaken Lion would go from having no shadowlands under his control to having nothing *but* shadowlands.

The Lion's military prowess would be necessary at that point just to fend off the other Deathlords. It's entirely probable that the Lion would bargain with the Malfean formerly known as Autochthon to solidify his position and gain an ally against his own Malfean master, He Who Holds in Thrall.

Whether Autochthon would be amenable to such a plan from the one who brought about his transition or enraged by the Deathlord's effrontery is anyone's guess.

IMPROVISATION OPTIONS

If the First and Foremost Lion triumphs and the great Machine God dies despite the characters' best efforts, that hardly needs to be the end of a series. On the contrary, an apocalypse of such magnitude might be exactly the event that ushers in the Third Age of Man, an Age of Shadows grimmer than the Age of Sorrows. Heroes would be all the more indispensable in such a world, and the characters would no doubt feel themselves under a great deal of pressure to atone for their failure.

AFTER THE FALL

The face of Creation grows much, much darker if the Maker succumbs. All of Creation will be faced with a crisis, the entirety of the Southwest in particular. For those who like a strong apocalyptic (or post-apocalyptic) feel to their games, this change might be a challenging development. The characters certainly have their work cut out for them.

On the Blessed Isle, where the Immaculate Order previously has expunged all shadowlands, ghosts and deathknights find themselves within striking distance of key targets. The agents of death find themselves gaining access to whole new populations. Heretical ancestor cults are likely to pop up and grow in power in the space of mere months as ghosts begin lingering and inflicting their will on the living. The effects in the Realm might not be all bad: The Dragon-Blooded will suddenly have an indisputable enemy to rally against, and political games are likely to be pushed aside — at least initially. The Immaculate Order will begin vast public works projects to push back the edges of the shadowlands. The Bronze Faction of Sidereals will find itself with a much more pressing agenda than the elimination of the Solars as the Blessed Isle itself becomes the next ripe plum in the path of the Deathlords and their Abyssal servants.

For its part, Lookshy might take this opportunity to strike at the distracted Realm in an attempt to unify the civilized world again. Alternatively, it might decide that more death is the last thing Creation needs at a time when shadowlands are spontaneously expanding of their own accord, and it may even offer an olive branch of sorts in the form of sorcerers, soldiers or equipment with which to repel the aggressive dead.

In Bluehaven, the entire social structure will be forced to change as the dead Lintha suddenly have an enormous advantage over the living and the Silver Prince no longer has a monopoly on the undead seas.

In An-Teng, the Pale Mistress finds herself suddenly in a position of vastly increased influence and power as the entropy and death she embodies surges across the land, but as a loyal agent of Luna, she revels in vexing the Deathlords and their servants at every turn. In the highlands lies the single largest expanse of land untouched by the shadowlands. Aggressively protected by the Golden Lord, the highlands become a refugee camp of sorts, the sole holdout of normal existence for thousands of miles.

The cities of Gem, the Lap, Paragon and Chiaroscuro all find themselves in the unenviable position of having to incorporate the dead into their daily lives.

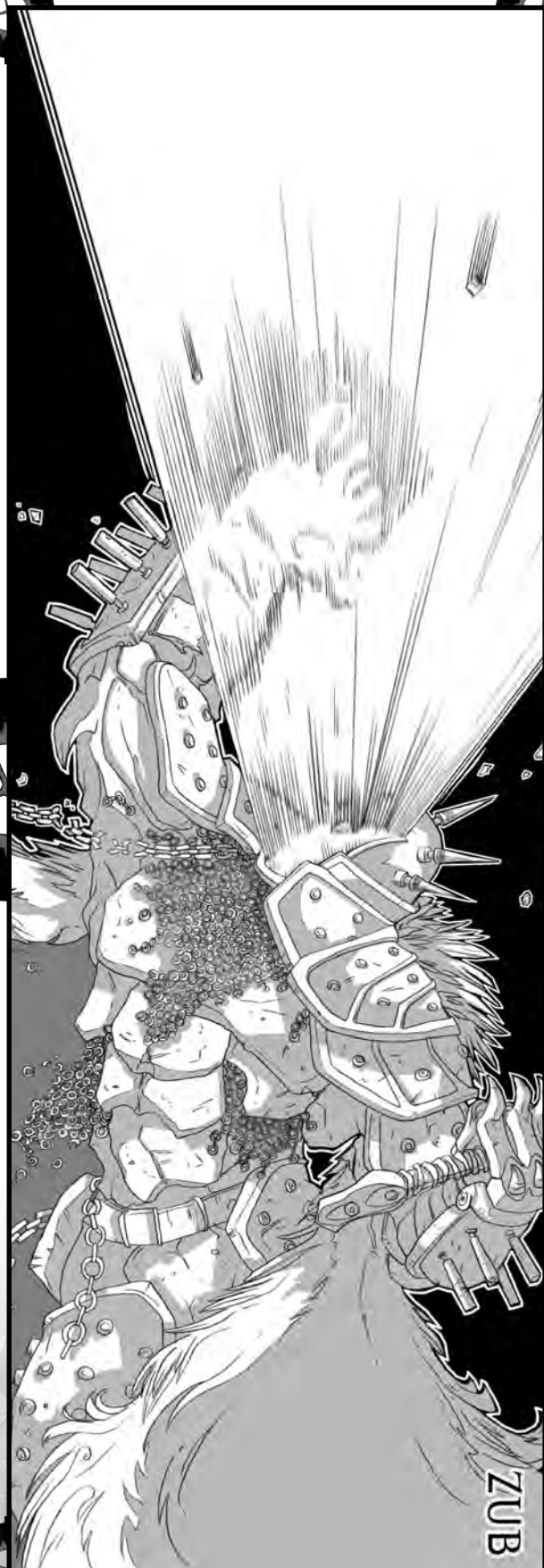
Making the situation worse, the First and Forsaken Lion will begin launching attacks of his technologically enhanced nemiaries from Fallen Ot, increasing his power and control of the area even more.

Within Autochthon's corpse, now a firmly anchored annex to the Labyrinth, the Lion will begin his exploration of his new realm and its technologies while conducting a mop-up campaign to wipe out the last bastions of Alchemicals and rebellious machine spirits. If any of the Divine Ministers have somehow escaped the death of the Primordial, they may harbor fugitives and holdouts, protecting them from the ubiquitous gremlins and calculating their next, and probably final, move.

RISE OF THE ONCEBORN

For an unexpected twist, the First and Forsaken Lion might actually double-cross his Neverborn masters, seizing upon the conquest of Autochthonia for his own power rather than the glory of Oblivion. Long ago, the Deathlord rebelled and failed. He Who Holds in Thrall punished the Lion harshly for his insolence, entombing him forever within the prison of his own armor. The Deathlord learned from that debacle and showed proper submission thereafter, but he never gave up on his ambitions. He simply waited and watched for an opportunity, which finally comes with the invasion of the Machine God.

Autochthon invented the process of Exaltation, and only he knows how to fashion new Exalted Essences.



The First and Forsaken Lion plans to steal this knowledge, personally ripping the secrets from the Primordial's dying Core as he drinks the Essence of the Great Maker. Armed with the power and technique to make his own deathknights, the Deathlord will begin raising a legion of new Abyssal Exalted and Soulsteel Templars bound directly to his soul. By siphoning the Essence of these assembled champions in a great necromantic ritual, the First and Forsaken Lion will do the impossible: transforming himself into a Malfean and shattering free of his accursed armor. With his human experience as a leader and his stolen Primordial power, the Lion will have no difficulty bringing the other Deathlords beneath his banner or casting those who refuse into the Well of Oblivion and nonexistence. From there, he can marshal the assembled forces of the Underworld to conquer Creation. Unlike some of the other Deathlords, the ascended Lion has no interest in unmaking Creation and would rather rule the shadow-blighted world as its eternal emperor.

The ascension of the First and Forsaken Lion is a powerful story hook. Characters can discover and oppose the plot or even aid him in exchange for becoming the right hands of the Onceborn. If he succeeds, Autochthon still becomes a Malfean with all the effects described, but he remains torpid and insignificant compared with the new threat. Characters could lead an army against this dread god or perhaps seek out the broken and maddened wreckage of Autochthon for the secret of the Lion's undoing.

GAMES RENOUNCED

To the degree that shadowlands are a kind of cancer on Primordials, Gaia will find that she is in a great deal of pain following the Autochthon's fall into death. Even the allure of the Games of Divinity will begin to pale in the face of the pain of her corruption, and she will withdraw, forced to find out what has happened while she wasn't paying attention. As the gods' last remaining Primordial ally, her pain and rage will motivate the Celestines as nothing thus far has. They will be forced to attend to Creation and take an active role or watch it fall to Oblivion.

In this kind of game, the Exalted may find the gods pushing them to resume their former roles as the champions of Creation. While it will almost inevitably lead to a better world for mortals, the Chosen may find that they preferred making their own decisions during the gods' absence and begin resenting the divine interference.

And thereby hang a myriad of tales.

CLOSING THE SEAL

One option for characters who have not prevented the Primordial's death is to restore the Seal of Eight Divinities, sending the dead Maker and those now inside him, back to the Void.

This requires Celestial Sorcery-level Essence channeling at the very least, and the Chosen of Autochthon may not like the idea of sending their (dead) god back into the Void if they aren't entirely convinced that there is no other alternative.

If it can be done, however, not only would it reverse the effects of the Primordial's death on the face of Creation, but it might result in a net decrease in the Void's power if one of the most powerful of the Deathlords is banished to the depths of Elsewhere along with much of his army and the dead Primordial.

THE FATE OF THE MAKER

Despite the expectations of the Deathlords (and possibly their masters), Autochthon may or may not join the Malfeans in their crusade against Creation, anymore than he joined the Primordials in their war against the gods. The Great Maker does not hold the grudge against Creation that those dead Primordials did, and his dreams are filled with machines and the urge to create more than bitterness. Autochthon, therefore, may not seek Creation's demise as the other Malfeans do.

Consequently, it's entirely possible that Autochthon becomes an adversary of the Malfeans. If they expect that he will forget the destruction they inflicted on his creations, the disdain they had for his tools and the bitterness that caused him to side with the gods he forged just because he's dead, they're quite mistaken. He sided against them once, and he may do so again.

Were such a thing to happen, Autochthon's rage against the First and Forsaken Lion — the Deathlord who broke him — would be beyond imagining, and the Realm of Brass and Shadow would become malevolent beyond all imagining to him and all other pawns of his dead siblings.

Alternatively, the Maker might appropriate the First and Forsaken Lion, stealing him away from He Who Holds in Thrall. By offering him the keys to the bonds his Malfean master has placed him in and offering him the tools with which he could take his revenge, the dead Maker could create a potent pawn to wield against the other Malfeans and their Deathlords.

Particularly if he is brought to full consciousness (through whatever means) before his Core falls into the Labyrinth, the Great Maker may be much more cognizant of his deeds post-mortem than the bitter Malfeans he is expected to join. The other Malfeans have had five millennia to slide toward Oblivion. While the Machine God may or may not follow them in their nihilistic descent, his last processes running are still likely to center on building over destroying. Even if he does eventually opt to join the slumbering Malfeans in their bitter attack on Creation, his fundamentally creative nature will take time to decay.

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NAME: _____ NATURE: _____
 PLAYER: _____ CASTE: _____
 CONCEPT: _____ ANIMA: _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH _____ ●○○○○ CHARISMA _____ ●○○○○ PERCEPTION _____ ●○○○○
 DEXTERITY _____ ●○○○○ MANIPULATION _____ ●○○○○ INTELLIGENCE _____ ●○○○○
 STAMINA _____ ●○○○○ APPEARANCE _____ ●○○○○ WITS _____ ●○○○○

ABILITIES

WARFARE

ARCHERY _____ ○○○○○
 ATHLETICS _____ ○○○○○
 AWARENESS _____ ○○○○○
 BRAWL _____ ○○○○○
 DODGE _____ ○○○○○
 ENDURANCE _____ ○○○○○
 MARTIAL ARTS _____ ○○○○○
 MELEE _____ ○○○○○
 RESISTANCE _____ ○○○○○
 THROWN _____ ○○○○○

LABOR

CRAFT _____ ○○○○○
 LARCENY _____ ○○○○○
 LINGUISTICS _____ ○○○○○
 PERFORMANCE _____ ○○○○○
 PRESENCE _____ ○○○○○
 RIDE _____ ○○○○○
 SAIL _____ ○○○○○
 SOCIALIZE _____ ○○○○○
 STEALTH _____ ○○○○○
 SURVIVAL _____ ○○○○○

LEARNING

BUREAUCRACY _____ ○○○○○
 INVESTIGATION _____ ○○○○○
 LORE _____ ○○○○○
 MEDICINE _____ ○○○○○
 OCCULT _____ ○○○○○

SPECIALTIES

_____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○

ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUNDS

_____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○

CHARMS

Name	Cost	Name	Cost
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

WEAPONS

WILLPOWER

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

VIRTUES

COMPASSION ●○○○○ □□□□	TEMPERANCE ●○○○○ □□□□
CONVICTION ●○○○○ □□□□	VALOR ●○○○○ □□□□

CLARITY/DISSONANCE

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

ESSENCE

● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
 PERSONAL _____ | _____
 PERIPHERAL _____ | _____
 COMMITTED _____

HEALTH

SOAK
 B _____ L _____ A _____

ANIMA

-0	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
-1	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
-2	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
INCAPACITATED	<input type="checkbox"/>

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AUTOCHTHON

The pole of lightning powers the Great Maker's biomechanical nervous system

nothing biological can live in the scalding pole of steam

pattern spiders weave the Essence and future of the Machine God's Realm in accordance with the dictates of the Core

the godhead is at the pole of crystal

ringed tiers of essence capacitors line the interior walls of the pole of lightning

underwater lightning arcs keep the water at a constant boil

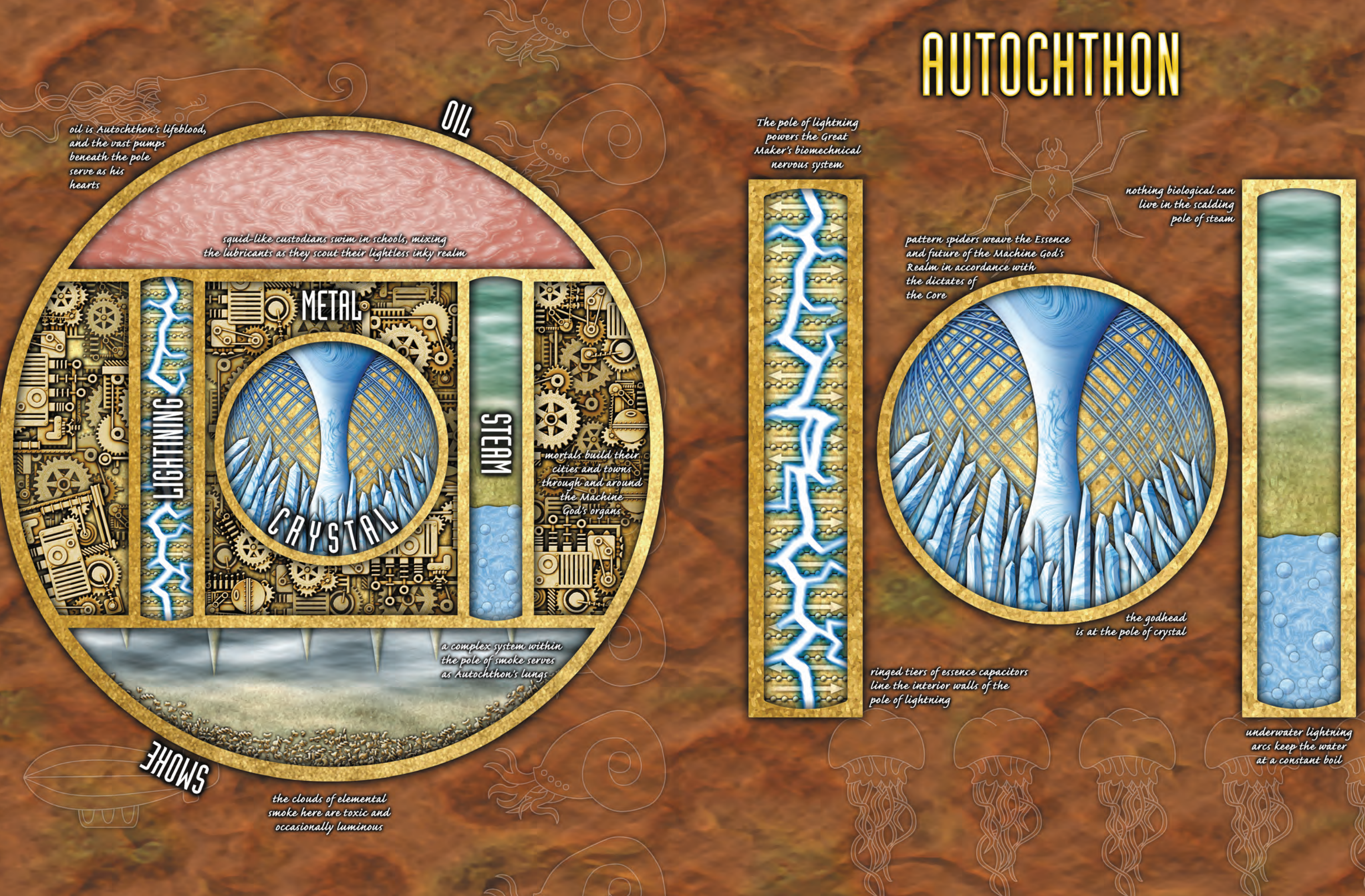
oil is Autochthon's lifeblood, and the vast pumps beneath the pole serve as his hearts

squid-like custodians swim in schools, mixing the lubricants as they scout their lightless inky realm

mortals build their cities and towns through and around the Machine God's organs

a complex system within the pole of smoke serves as Autochthon's lungs

the clouds of elemental smoke here are toxic and occasionally luminous





Before there was a World of Darkness, there was the Great Maker.

The Eight Nations rule the known reaches of Autochthonia, their mechanical prayers comforting the Machine God in his slumber.

For millennia, the Tripartite have ruled the Eight Nations through prudent planning and strict discipline.

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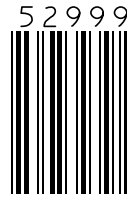
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