

HUNTER

THE VIGIL

SECOND EDITION

Kickstarter Manuscript
Compact & Conspiracy Preview #2



Loyalists of Thule & The Cheiron Group

Loyalists of Thule

The Indebted

Quote: *“Our debts can never be repaid, but we have no choice: we try or we die trying.”*

In the early 20th century, German occultists of the Thule Gesselshaft believed that the Aryan race, the inhabitants of Lost Thule, planted the roots of modern society. In time, the Thule Gesselshaft's belief that Germans were descended from a master race spread like a cancerous plague. Two of their members helped establish the German Workers' Party that led to the formation of the Nazi Party.

While many of Thule's early members were Nazi sympathizers, most left after Hitler severed ties with the group in 1920. The group slowly fell into decline and Loyalists studied privately until after World War II. Some Loyalists remained obsessed with finding the Aryan race and left Germany to explore hidden cities, sunken ruins, and ancient necropoli. Eventually the scattered members realized the truth: they were wrong. There was no such thing as a master race.

In the aftermath of WWII, disbanded members regrouped in Germany to discuss their next steps. Most were shocked to learn how the Thule Gesselshaft's beliefs had been weaponized by the Nazis to justify attempted genocide. Recognizing the role they played, hunters aided Allied forces by pointing out supernatural creatures, facilitating reparations, and identifying Nazi survivors they once knew.

Despite their earnestness, the once-revered professors, archaeologists, and philosophers of the Thule Gesselshaft were largely ignored or forgotten. The Allied forces were more interested in German technology and scientific discoveries than the occult. Devastated by the lukewarm reception, the Thule occultists spent the next decade forming the Loyalists of Thule. Their mission: Use their occult knowledge to save lives.

For many years, the Loyalists of Thule fed valuable intel to other hunters. The organization's founders, three former members of the Thule Gesselshaft, orchestrated assistance from Munich. The elusive founders met weekly to prioritize the Indebted's activities and spent hours arguing with a spiteful bitterness that grew into deep hatred. Despite their lack of camaraderie, the founders decided what information to act on, what data to share, and which secrets to keep.

Largely, the organization's secretive nature and tightly controlled modus operandi have remained static for over 50 years. Members are descended from one of the Indebted, recruited aggressively, or blackmailed into joining. Intel is doled out to members using antiquated equipment and World War II-era ciphers, and hunters are expected to carry out orders without question. Unfortunately, no one has met or talked to the Munich-based founders for a few years, and Loyalists who've done the math have realized the elders, *if they're still alive*, would be well over 100 years old. So who's issuing orders now? Some higher-ranking members are threatening to break protocol and fly to Munich to find out what's happening, but thus far the Loyalists have yet to do so.

Now, the Loyalists of Thule remain suspicious, if not worried, that their organization is compromised. Its members cannot deny the growing threat of fascism spreading across the world yet struggle to understand why supernatural activity is clearly on the rise. While the Loyalists are not naive enough to believe that real world atrocities should be blamed on the occult, every act of

fascism reminds them of their organization's dark past. Most Indebted believe that hate-filled atrocities caused by mortals are just as bad — if not worse — than the soulless creatures who prey on humankind and help where they can.

The Enemy

While the Loyalists of Thule are trained to defend themselves, they pride themselves on their intellectual prowess. Members are academics, investigators, reporters, antiquarians, auctioneers, bibliophiles, occultists, ritual magicians, archaeologists, and curators. As scholars, first and foremost, the Indebted seek to understand the true nature of monsters by identifying, monitoring, and studying them for the benefit of others.

As an organization, most of the Indebted understand the importance of studying the supernatural but are anxious they'll lose sight of the people they're trying to save. Members deal with this plight in different ways by adding charitable works to their day-to-day studies. Some volunteer in their communities to prevent hate crimes, bring transgressors to justice, and help victims; others study cold cases to track down serial killers and mortal predators; and a third group has started a mentorship program to replenish the organization's numbers with eager proteges and talented, college-aged intellectuals.

Ideally, the astute Loyalist passes the information they've learned (or have received) to the best equipped hunters. The Indebted have traditionally viewed themselves as supportive of other hunters in The Union and SWORN but actively seek contact with other groups. Despite their scholarly reputation, many Loyalists are training to become more physically capable in response to their recent findings. Of all the compacts, the Indebted have their finger on the pulse of supernatural activity, and they have proof that the creatures of the night are more aggressive than ever before.

Hunters

You are a data analyst who recently lost your wife in a car accident. At the funeral, you met the German side of her family, and noticed how they kept exchanging looks whenever a certain uncle tried to get your attention. You were grieving too much to deal with family drama, so you let him corner you and tell you the truth: Your wife was murdered by a poltergeist. After everyone else left, you read old letters and discovered your wife's other life and why she felt compelled to keep secrets from you. Your wife's uncle then asked you to honor her memory by joining them.

You are studying to be a naturalist at the Free University of Berlin. While reviewing the works of Elisabeth Schmid, the world-renowned author of the *Atlas of Animal Bones*, you found an odd folio filled with fantastic anatomical sketches of no known animal. You were tersely informed Schmid had an overactive imagination, but you couldn't let the academic's findings go. Eventually, you were approached by the head of your department who asked you to return the folio. You refused and told her you had a hunch the sketches were based on real bones. She quietly asked if you'd continue her work by studying live subjects in the field.

Your ability to skate that line between good and downright evil worked for years — until you were caught. You are a father of five who traded securities by day and sold fake mutual funds at night, bilking millions out of the elderly. Unfortunately, you hustled the wrong grandpa, and he came knocking on your office door with a pair of bodyguards and a dossier filled with proof of your illicit activities. You asked him what he wanted, and he gave you a choice: Serve "time" by

putting your skills to good use, or he'll hand over all the evidence he's collected — and more — to the feds. Now, you work for him.

Philosophies

The Loyalists of Thule study the supernatural by researching its denizens to death, both literally and figuratively. Most of the time, the Indebted agree how to hunt, capture, and kill monsters based on communications received from Munich. Beyond this, the Indebted tend to follow one of three approaches.

Many Loyalists are **Scholars** who feel the best way to save humanity is by quietly gathering intel, sharing valuable information, and forming better connections with well-armed hunters who can act on their findings. Scholars hold differing views on their personal stake in the fight but agree they have a job to do and will take orders from other Loyalists when needed.

Some academics, called the **Penitent**, refuse to sit on the sidelines. These hunters raid haunted tombs, track down mystical artifacts, and dig up mausoleums to “cleanse” the supernatural taint from ancient, hidden places. While the Penitent do work with other hunters, their methods are often dangerous and highly illegal. They believe that getting their hands dirty is the only way to atone for the sins of the past.

The **Advance** loudly proclaim they, of all the Loyalists, are “true” members of the organization. Not only do these hunters pledge to atone for *all* the Indebted's sins, they prefer to be the first hunters called to help. Other Loyalists worry their grand speeches will attract new members who want to join the Indebted for all the wrong reasons. Still, though members of the Advance lack humility, they are effective recruiters and spokespeople who shed the organization's veil of secrecy when Munich asks them to.

Status

Status within the Indebted is earned by repaying the organization's debt to humanity.

- You have to atone for past atrocities and understand the knowledge you gain will save lives. When risking Willpower on an Academics- or Occult-based roll, gain two Willpower instead of one regardless of your current rating.

- You have reached out to other Loyalists and formed a bond with an experienced member to whom you report. Gain a two-dot Mentor: Loyalist of Thule Merit.

- You were summoned to Munich and “spoke” to the founders hidden behind a screen. You've been given the names and addresses of three expert scholars in the occult. Pick three, one-dot Contacts who study a specific monster type such as vampire, werewolf, ghost, demon, etc.



The Cheiron Group

The Field Projects Division

Quote: *“Let me tell you about our benefits package. The perks are out of this world.”*

The European-based Cheiron Group (TCG) is one of the few organizations whose origins remain unclear. The name “Cheiron” was first used in 1905, but the Cheiron Group is far older and may have formed in antiquity. No one — not even its own members — is certain, because the organization has used many names including the Acheron Shipping & Trading Co., the House of Katz, the Helios Society for the Infirm, and the Octavian Apothecary. The one constant found throughout its history is the Cheiron Group’s logo — the head of a horned, bearded man wearing a laurel wreath superimposed on a caduceus. This symbol has been found engraved on a 15th-century Bavarian suit of armor, a third-century Roman centurion’s short sword, a 2,400-year-old Greek ship, on cuneiform tablets describing the location of Mardaman, and in the Temple of the Flayed Lord in Mexico.

Only the board of directors — whose identities have yet to be revealed — know the truth. In fact, only one director has ever been listed: founder Edward Barrett, who retired in 1921 and died in 1983. Portfolio managers who’ve paid attention to the company’s inner workings often wonder how TCG has managed to maintain a high profile, stable stock prices, and ever-increasing profitability for so long by avoiding the public eye. In fact, the Cheiron Group’s public face is far less enigmatic than its history. To the average citizen, TCG is a progressive, philanthropic corporation that globally distributes affordable drugs and treatments covering a wide range of ailments and diseases. Its growing list of partners manufactures prosthetics, radiation technology, and monitoring equipment — even pacemakers and artificial hearts.

Now, of course, the newly-appointed brand manager, Melanie Sweetwater, appears so often in the news and online some broadcasters have jokingly wondered if she’s been cloned. The Cheiron Group’s salaried employees can’t always explain how Sweetwater seems to be in three places at once, and why she reports solely to the board of directors. What they don’t realize is that Sweetwater’s appointment is tied to the corporation’s *true* interest: the supernatural. In recent months, Sweetwater has emerged in the field to oversee investigations, containment areas, experiments, and surgeries carried out in the Field Projects Division of TCG. Despite her presence, most TCG employees don’t know anything about her, because she has yet to act on her observations. Often, she’ll pop in and out of a scene without saying more than two words and never takes notes. The going theory is that Sweetwater is the first of several brand managers who’ll be assigned to different regions in the coming months.

On the books, the Field Projects Division (FPD) is the so-called experimental arm of TCG that deals with cutting-edge science — if you can call capturing, dissecting, and experimenting with monster parts science. In exchange for their service, FPD employees sign an ironclad contract to receive a hefty salary, full health benefits, and a pension. The legalese is hard to read, and agents often don’t realize what they’re signing up for. In addition to extensive surgery, implants, and body modifications, FPD employees also sign the rights away to their bodies before and after death. While their enhancements help them face down the supernatural, employees aren’t always happy with the terms of their deal.

Over the past decade, reports of “rogue agents” have skyrocketed, and it’s rumored more than a few new recruits have been forced to sign contracts simply because they knew a missing FPD

employee. Many fear what will happen if TCG decides to renegotiate their contracts, and assume Sweetwater is pooling data to making suggestions.

The Enemy

The Cheiron Group doesn't view the supernatural as a threat. They think of them as "assets" and their victims as "casualties." Most of the time, members speak in code using words like "potential asset" or "PA" to describe a monster they haven't captured yet, and agents as "field resources." Each agent is given the power to conduct their operation the way they see fit, provided they meet their PA quota. When a field resource has identified and captured a PA, they call in a Dedicated Pickup Team (DPT) to retrieve and remove it. Dedicated Pickup Teams are glorified security guards who'll only transport a PA if it is secured and neutralized; they won't assist in the field under any circumstance. Many agents learned how unhelpful the DPT is the hard way — because they didn't decode or read the handbook.

Most agents think the current edition of their field resource manual is a joke; it's an encrypted book of "first-person accounts" given to agents after their contract has been signed and delivered to HR. It has no TCG identifiers, never actually names the company, lists no authors, and has no ISBN or other book coding. The previous edition, a plain brown book that was billed to be a comprehensive guide, was far more official-looking than its successor. While that handbook contained a great deal of information, most of the data was either useless or severely outdated. Unfortunately, that bad intel led to "the incident" — an event so horrifying, management is forbidden to speak of it.

While recruits don't always feel prepared for field work, they have memorized three rules: Directives 53, 68, and 99. Directive 53, which refers to Safety Phrase 53 in an old EEC Council Directive (67/548/EEC), instructs companies to avoid public exposure to dangerous substances and to obtain special instructions before using them. Directive 68, on the other hand, states that field resources must ensure no member of the public believes a threat exists. Lastly, Directive 99 demands its field agents comport themselves as exemplary employees both on duty and off.

Most field resources don't have time to worry about the details, because they're too busy working to fulfill their quotas — which are often moving targets. Sometimes, field resources will work with the competition (e.g. other hunters), to bag and tag a PA, while others will intentionally mislead their peers. The competition is fierce, the requests are piling up, and bonuses are being paid...for now.

Hunters

You were a top salesman who was told your skills were wasted and then offered a top, commission-based position at the Cheiron Group. You jumped at the opportunity to work for them and believed in their politics. Now, you miss your phone and wish you could surrender the new ears you got after you signed up.

You trained as a special forces agent and toured all over the world. When you were finished, your country thanked you, but you couldn't find a job for someone with your talents. You started taking odd jobs and one of them landed you in jail. That's where the Cheiron Group found you. They paid your bail, gave you a lawyer, and you signed a contract. Now, you have new nightmares.

You worked in Human Resources. You liked your job. You loved crushing candidate's dreams and enjoyed watching your fellow employees squirm when you denied their raises. You thought no one was watching. Unfortunately, someone was. At first, you thought your boss was going to fire you. Then, you were offered a promotion to work with the Field Projects Division. You took the job. When you told your coworkers, one of them started laughing. The irony was lost on you then. It isn't now.

Field Projects Divisions

TCG is a global corporation with satellite offices in dozens of countries. In the Field Projects Division there are three sub-divisions to which field resources are assigned.

Most agents report to the **Retrieval Division**. Field resources take a file, hunt down a target, and neutralize them — or die trying. Then, they call in a DPT, which consists of two agents and a driver or pilot who'll transport their catch to a secure location.

The **Recruitment Division** agents focus on finding potential new hires. Often, these agents infiltrate the competition by feigning victimhood to watch other cells work. They also visit prisons, high schools, colleges, and mercenary units to broaden their search and replenish lost field resources.

Lastly, the **Field Research Division** represents FPD's information-gathering and retrieval arm. Agents masquerade as other hunters to spy on conspiracies who have access to supernatural powers or equipment. FRD spies infiltrate cells and lend assistance until it's time to disappear — often taking files, relics, elixirs, formulas, and anything else they can get their hands on.

Status

To earn status in the Field Projects Division, you must know when to use flattery, when to keep your mouth shut, and how to get results.

- You've been given an encrypted handbook and managed to break the code. Gain a free Skill Specialty reflecting your talent in Academics, Computers, or Investigation.
- You've allied with other agents and can call in backup when needed. Gain two dots in Allies (the Cheiron Group) representing hunters who'll lend a hand.
- You've earned several bonuses and well-deserved raises. Add three dots in the Resources Merit to spend how you see fit. Oh, and one more thing. Sweetwater is watching.

Thaumatechnology

Members of the Cheiron Group have convinced themselves they're being pragmatic, rather than terrifying, when they surgically replace a human's limb with a monster's. Sure, other conspiracies realize that, no matter their agenda, they must still protect the innocent. Unfortunately, the Cheiron Group's definition of what passes for innocent these days is sketchy at best. Viewing their hunters as sacrificial lambs to a greater cause, leaders are desperate to find answers by demanding each member be subjected to their experiments.

Thaumatechnology is the literal bleeding edge of science. Hunters who work for the Cheiron Group have barely understood supernatural flesh, fur, teeth, or scales grafted onto their bodies. Some hunters benefit from the edge these surgeries provide, while others go mad before their bodies and minds have had time to process that thing attached to their arm. While the Cheiron Group tells its members to hunt and harvest supernatural monsters, their thaumatechnologists actively try to reverse engineer them through body modification. Hey, it's a living.

Hunters who leave the Cheiron Group face a world of hurt, because no one asks to leave the conspiracy. Members who do leave are forced to spend time in a hospital the organization owns and operates. After a period of trials, to test the efficacy of the hunter's thaumatechnology modifications, doctors perform extensive surgeries to remove the implants, which result in fatality more often than not. Hunters who go on the run instead become targets; their Endowments are too expensive and the research too precious to just let it walk away.

Surgical Installment

Getting a new Endowment from the conspiracy is an act of bureaucracy that can take a great deal of time and patience. Typically, a hunter files a requisition naming her preferred Thaumatechnology Endowment, her request goes to human resources, who sifts through her file and reviews her hunter status at that time. Weeks later, the hunter arrives at a hospital where a Cheiron doctor performs the surgery in a sterile operating theater with bleeding-edge medical equipment and a host of shadowy onlookers from the Thaumatechnology Division watching carefully from the viewing gallery.

Installed implants are sometimes mechanical and sometimes biological, but always inhuman. The Cheiron Group has instituted an artificial limit to the number of implants a hunter may have. The maximum is her Stamina + Size. Doctors will refuse to perform a new surgery unless it is to remove an implant if a hunter has her maximum allotment. Hunters with more obvious implants begin to look inhuman after a while, and Cheiron doctors claim that more than their limit in implants makes the person completely inhuman. This doesn't account for the subtler replacements, but the Cheiron Group is firm in its insistence.

The surgery takes time, and if not done with precision could lead to a slow, painful recovery. When gaining a new Thaumatechnology Endowment (or having one removed for that matter), the player must roll for her character to resist becoming overtaken by the monstrous nature of the implant. This is both a pain issue and one of becoming the monster inside. Better-connected hunters get more skilled surgeons, leading to better results all together. Changing out one implant for another takes a single surgery.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Stamina + Resolve

Action: Extended. Each roll represents one hour of surgery and the player must gain successes equal to 10 – the character’s Status (Cheiron Group) rating.

Roll Results

Success: The hunter resists the implant’s nature. If she has enough successes the surgery is completed satisfactorily.

Exceptional Success: The hunter resists the implant’s nature and makes things easier for the surgeon. Choose one of the following effects.

- The hunter gains the Steadfast Condition when the surgery is completed.
- Reduce the time between rolls by half.
- Heal a point of lethal damage.

Failure: The hunter fails to resist the implant’s nature but does not become monstrous. The surgery does not end, but she takes one point of lethal damage.

Dramatic Failure: The hunter cannot resist the monstrous effects of the implant. Not only does the surgery fail, but the hunter suffers a point of aggravated damage and gains an appropriate Persistent Condition (such as Amnesia, Crippled, Fugue, or Soulless). The hunter can resolve the Condition by undergoing another surgery to remove the corrupted implant.

Devil’s Eyes

No one is entirely sure from which monster the Devil’s Eyes were extracted — or if the muckety-mucks *do* know but won’t tell anyone. This pair of oversized, glistening orbs has vibrantly yellow irises and vertical black slits for pupils. When grafted onto a human patient, they quickly change and take on the appearance of the subject’s natural eyes. A computer chip moderates and translates the nerve impulses of the eye for the human brain — early tests resulted in messy side effects without this filter in place.

The filter is programmable, and with specific movements of the eye the subject can increase and decrease the degree to which the eye’s visual input is moderated, in effect granting her superhuman visual acuity.

Costs: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Duration: One scene

The hunter gains an overlay over his normal vision into Twilight. She can see ephemeral entities, though she cannot interact with them. She also gains a chance to see things that would otherwise be invisible, such as a vampire using a power to make itself invisible, or an Ascending One using Amun’s Water, provoking a Clash of Wills.

If the hunter has the Unseen Sense Merit (p. XX), she can forgo gaining the Spooked Condition to pinpoint where the source of her feeling is coming from.

Backlash: Seeing into Twilight draws the attention of ephemeral entities nearby, who might be overly interested in the hunter who is looking at them.

New Field Project Division: P.R. Retrieval

Tucked away in a small arm of Cheiron Limited, the parent company of the Cheiron Group, is a new office that has the words “P.R. Retrieval” stamped on the door. Members working in Recruitment whisper about this secretive arm of the conspiracy and wonder why they’ve been kept in the dark about its day-to-day operations. Certain veterans in Field Research and Retrieval are cheering the new division on, because they know *exactly* what P. R. Retrieval’s purpose is: to catch and capture rogue Cheiron agents who’ve attempted to leave the conspiracy’s ranks.

The initials “P. R.” stand for the Pruth River in Romania, a suspected location where a rogue cell of Cheiron agents has recently been spotted. The cell, which kept its augmentations before going on the run, uses a coded messaging system that creates anagrams of its messages. While a few veteran Field Research agents have spied on the cell, it may take weeks — if not months — to decode their schemes. In the meantime, Cheiron Group members are encouraged to be on alert and report any suspicious activity to their local Retrieval contacts.

Hand of Glory

The Cheiron Group’s new-and-improved version of the Hand of Glory represents the latest in hand-reattachment technology. Enhanced with post-biological materials engineering, the conspiracy can “all-but guarantee” a patient’s body won’t reject the augmentation. In layman’s terms, a dead hand is grafted onto a living subject’s stump, and functions from that point forward as a perfectly ordinary hand. Though occult tradition demands the Hand of Glory be “manufactured” from a thief’s left hand, the Cheiron Group doesn’t appear to follow folklore. Many hunters wear a glove on their replaced appendage to cover its wrinkled and discolored appearance with makeup. The hand is curiously resistant to fire, and the fingers may be lit like the wicks of candles —when they do, they burn with a mesmerizing, resilient flame.

The specifics of the Hand of Glory’s manufacture aren’t important for test subjects, but are rumored to involve a hanged corpse, pickling the relevant limb in disgusting and bizarre reagents, and letting it sit under the light of a new moon for several hours. Subjects are repeatedly warned to only douse the flames in cow’s milk — other substances will not work. Some members suspect the Cheiron Group stole the formula to create a Hand of Glory from the Ascending Ones.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Action: Contested

Duration: One scene (see below)

Roll Results

Success: Anyone who can see the hand is fascinated by its light. They gain the Immobilized Tilt as long as they can see the flames. Additionally, this fascination effect fills their mind, occupying it to the detriment of all else. Those affected by the flame’s light forget anything that happened while under its spell. They do not remember the hunter using the hand, nor the hand itself.

When the victim can no longer see the flames, she regains her ability to move and remember within a minute. An attack or threat of attack immediately breaks the spell's effects. While active, the hunter suffers a -2 penalty to rolls that require manual dexterity. The flames on the hand are not enough to deal damage or set anything other than paper or small items aflame.

Exceptional Success: Attacks against the victim no longer immediately break the spell. Instead, the victim must roll Resolve to break the spell when attacked or threatened.

Failure: The hand does not catch flame, and the power fizzles.

Dramatic Failure: The hunter is mesmerized by his own hand and suffers from the Immobilized Tilt until the flames are doused or he can no longer see the flame.

Backlash: The Hand of Glory periodically takes small actions of its own without the user's consent or knowledge. The Storyteller may impose a -2 penalty to rolls for one scene each day due to the hand's antics.

Personal Defense Swarm

Unlike other implants, this device doesn't replace a vital organ or limb. Instead, a small, flexible, silicon sac is implanted just above the wrist. Inside are tiny metal beads that, when injected with a special solution, come swarming out of the sac in the user's defense. Even the scientists who made the swarm aren't sure where they came from. One night, a box full of tiny mechanized creatures was dropped on their desk. After playing with them for some time, they figured out that vampire blood activated them.

Cheiron didn't question its mysterious benefactor, and doesn't really care where they came from. Whatever they were before the Cheiron scientists got ahold of them, they were certainly not living creatures on their own.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Duration: One scene

The user summons a small swarm of insect-like creatures that defends the hunter. The swarm cannot be directed, but it won't fly more than 10 yards away from its host. It attacks anyone it perceives as aggressive toward the user. The swarm can make simple actions, mainly to attack with 4 dice, with a weapon rating of 1L. The swarm has a Defense rating of 4 and can take up to 4 damage (of any kind) before it stops functioning. Otherwise, it does not go away unless the user recalls it by cutting open his arm. If he does not recall it before the end of the scene, the swarm deactivates and falls to the ground.

Backlash: Activation of this power is particularly painful. The user suffers one lethal damage each time he uses the swarm. Recalling them causes the user to suffer an additional one lethal damage. If he doesn't recall them before the end of the scene, he needs to collect each creature for later reinsertion.

Regenerative Nodule

This wad of meat and scar tissue may not be much to look at, but it's a medical miracle. When attached to a patient's circulatory system — a surgical feat in and of itself, considering the thing

heals over almost instantaneously — it vastly augments the subject's natural healing capabilities. Wounds that would require a lengthy hospital stay vanish in days.

When physically triggered by the subject, the nodule kicks into overdrive, hyper-saturating the bloodstream with, well, whatever the nodule contains, causing the subject's wounds to knit themselves closed while someone watches. If there's a downside, it's the metabolic cost — early test subjects died of dehydration in less than an hour.

Users are advised to gorge themselves — constantly — when employing the nodule to quickly heal their bodies of serious or deadly wounds. Otherwise, they may rapidly starve to death before they realize they're hungry.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

By simply pressing the nodule, the hunter can initiate quick healing. Aggravated damage heals at a rate of one every two days, lethal damage heals at a rate of one every 15 minutes, and bashing damage heals at a rate of one per turn. While the Regenerative Nodule is in use, the user ignores wound penalties.

The user may trigger the Regenerative Nodule as a reflexive action before they fall unconscious from damage.

Backlash: The Regenerative Nodule can only be used once per story. Every bashing damage healed counts as a day without food; every lethal damage counts as a day without food or water. The Regenerative Nodule does *not* heal damage caused by this deprivation. If the user doesn't eat, they suffer a -3 penalty to all actions until they do.

Sonic Resonance Attenuator

This tiny implant goes just behind the ear, a small bump barely noticeable to anyone who isn't looking for it. The device is derived from something the Cheiron Group doctors call "special pets" because they pull a great deal of implants from whatever the monster is. They claim it is a reverse engineer of their hearing apparatus, but most hunters just assume they are getting a monster's cochlear bone implanted directly into their skulls. They aren't wrong.

The device enhances hearing, but not just by a little bit. It somehow drowns out all background noise and lets the hunter listen in on the one thing she wants to hear, no matter how unlikely it is she would normally hear it.

Costs: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy

Action: Instant

Duration: One scene (see below)

Roll Results

Success: The hunter concentrates on something she wants to hear within 10 yards per success, and everything else but that thing fades out of her awareness while it comes into sharp relief. She doesn't have to see it, but she must know it is there. For example, she could concentrate on a

conversation going on behind a closed door down the hallway, but she couldn't try to listen in on a conversation she has no idea is happening, even if it's in the same room. She could listen in to the other side of a phone conversation though, knowing the person she is watching is surely talking to someone else.

Exceptional Success: The hunter can pick up on conversations she doesn't know are happening.

Failure: The hunter fails to narrow down the conversation to which she wants to listen.

Dramatic Failure: The hunter focuses on a conversation but cannot tune out everything else. The feedback is painful, causing one lethal damage.

Backlash: The dampening of sound is not without consequence. The hunter gains a -2 penalty to react to situations in her own vicinity, and is always surprised unless she can see an attack coming.

Time Attenuator

Time moves on, marching ever forward without fail. Except some monsters seem timeless, or even in some cases separate from time. They interact in a way that defies all logic or physics, and yet it exists. And of course, Thaumatechnology researchers are fascinated by these abilities. And while many of them are impossible to capture, collect, or even recreate, someone clever has come up with the Time Attenuator. This small device goes at the base of the hippocampus in a relatively easy surgical procedure that inserts it via the nose.

The user can use the attenuator to slow down how time affects her body — just for herself, and only for a short amount of time. Her body stops bleeding, bones do not break, and skin does not burn as time refuses to pass.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Medicine

Action: Instant

Duration: One scene

Roll Results

Success: The user's body resists the effects of time for the rest of the scene. Anything that would worsen with time, such as bleeding out, diseases, or poisons and toxins, stops affecting her. She does not suffer from new Tilts or Conditions while this is active.

Exceptional Success: The hunter does not suffer the ill effects of Persistent Conditions while the Time Attenuator is active.

Failure: The hunter's body functions in normal time.

Dramatic Failure: The hunter not only fails to slow time but speeds up the process for a vital organ, dealing one aggravated damage.

Backlash: While the attenuator is active, the hunter cannot heal normally, nor can she benefit from medical care or Endowments to heal wounds. Her body resists the changes being applied to her.

The Twitcher

Cheiron Group scientists are adept at thinking outside of the box — it's a basic job requirement for them, considering what they work with. Take the Twitcher, for example: only Cheiron Group professionals would ever have the inspiration, much less the skill, to take a strange stick-insect-like creature and implant it in the base of a human's spine. The little pink symbiote makes itself right at home, tapping the user's senses and sipping on cerebrospinal fluid.

Whenever the host is threatened, the Twitcher drives the host's nervous system to hyperactive levels, leading to reaction and reflex times that verge on superhuman. Unfortunately, the creature doesn't seem to understand that dreams aren't normal sensory stimuli, and tends to react to REM sleep as though it is violence — most hosts report a significant increase in night terrors, anxiety, and paranoia compared to their pre-implantation norm.

Cost: None (see below)

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Duration: Indefinite (see below)

The hunter receives a +3 bonus to all Initiative rolls, which is always in effect. As a reflexive action, the hunter may spend 1 Willpower to use the higher of her Dexterity or Wits to determine Defense, rather than *lower*, even when surprised for the turn.

Backlash: The Twitcher causes the hunter to suffer from terrible nightmares. If she uses her inhuman reflexes, that night she has night terrors that leave her feeling unrested. She suffers a -2 penalty to Mental actions until she gets a good night's sleep.

Tools of the Trade

Not every job requires a lot of firepower and a little flash; the Cheiron Group values subtlety — at least in the Silent Acquisitions Division. In cases where a mystical flaming hand might be overkill, the Cheiron Group offers the Tools of the Trade when stealth and finesse are required. These weapons are claws or fangs surgically removed from monsters, reconditioned, and then grafted to a host's living tissue. Special care has been taken to ensure the augmentations are easily overlooked when not in use.

With physical therapy and exercise to work the affected muscles, the relevant grafts are fully retractable, allowing the patient to live a normal life — and bring an unexpected “weapon” into areas or fights where it might otherwise be impractical or impossible.

Costs: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

The user's unarmed and bite attacks act as weapons with a rating of 1L. While not in use, the Tools of the Trade are undetectable without close medical examination. The hunter can spend a Willpower after a successful bite attack to inflict the Immobilized Tilt on her victim.