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# TRINITY

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TRINITY



UNIVERSE

# THE HONORED DEAD



BY GEORGE ALEC EFFINGER

John Zsolt leaned against a chest-high cairn and tried to catch his breath. The air was so cold that it burned in his lungs. When he exhaled, moisture caught in his mustache and froze solid in a few seconds. He could see snow still unmelted on the mountain peaks surrounding him. The narrow pass was silent, but the blood hammering in his ears made Zsolt think of late-season avalanches, of lonely travelers swept down to their deaths by tons of falling snow and ice. He'd be no good to anyone then, he thought. There was no point in coming this far just to throw it all away with a single misplaced step. He leaned down with his hands on his knees.

"This is Switzerland now," Varya called. She was in a better mood than he was. She also didn't seem to be having any trouble breathing.

Zsolt looked up. "That mean anything special?" he asked.

She shrugged, and her blonde hair swung a little. "It's not Italy, so *that's* something. And nobody's caught you yet. That's even better. We're getting closer to Basel with every kilometer. I don't think there'll be any more long detours."

"Terrific," Zsolt said. He was still having trouble getting a good, deep breath. "How far now?"

"Want to see on the map?"

He raised one hand and waved it sideways a little. He was too worn out to say no.

She gave him one of her beautiful, brief smiles, the kind that had no friendliness in it at all. "Think of Switzerland lying on its side just over Italy, okay? We're down in the lower left-hand corner. Basel's about as far away as it can possibly be and still be in Switzerland, all the way on the northern border with France — what's *left* of France."

Zsolt wasn't going to let her goad him. "Stop trying to cheer me up," he said.

She laughed. Like her smile, it was empty. Her blue eyes got rounder. "Hey," she said with false innocence, "it's 2120, people don't hike anymore. This wasn't *my* idea. I wanted to fly or at least rent a skimmer. *You're* the one who thought somebody was trying to stop you. *You're* the one who wanted to hug the dirt all the way to Switzerland."

"That's not the way I remember it," Zsolt said. There was a long, low rumbling as tons of snow and rock fell from one of the glaciers into a crevasse. Zsolt had stopped paying attention to those sounds.

"All right with me." Varya shrugged and turned away. "Remember it however you want. What's your plan to get to Basel?"

Zsolt crossed the frozen ground between them. "I don't know," he said. "What's your 'invisible psionic guidebook' say?"

She turned to him again with another of her smiles. Zsolt shivered. "There's an old inn up ahead maybe half a kilometer. Been there for centuries. It's the place where St. Bernard dogs got their name."

Zsolt stared out over the pass, where the land fell away toward a river valley. "I'm trying to save somebody's life," he said. "I don't care about history."

"That's the Combe des Morts down there," she said, walking again, leading the way. "The Valley of the Dead Guys. So come on if you're coming." She didn't look back over her shoulder; she knew he'd follow.

In a moment, Zsolt saw that she was right — she was usually right. Two venerable stone buildings sagged in the saddle of the pass, looking unchanged since the monastery was founded twelve centuries before. Not even tire tracks or uplink dishes marred the timeworn stillness.

One building was evidently a church and the other must've been the inn Varya had known about. It was bigger than he'd imagined, with enough rooms for a couple of hundred travelers. Zsolt wondered about that. Who came through this way? Roman legions, maybe, shuffling past on the road to conquer some other province. Or Napoleon with his army. Nobody ever showed up here just to be *here*; if they stopped at all, it was only because it was the route to somewhere else and night was coming on — as night was falling now.



If Zsolt and Varya didn't stop and call it a day, they might get lost in the tangled, frozen mountain gorges. Then the monks would turn loose their well-trained St. Bernards, but if Zsolt wasn't found in time—

"Dreaming already, John?" Varya said with a mocking edge in her voice.

He shook his head to clear it, settled his pack more comfortably and walked briskly by her on the track. Sometimes he didn't like the tone she got, and sometimes he just wanted to finish what had to be done — without discussion. Going down into the valley was for tomorrow; not being captured was for tomorrow; finding his way to Basel was for tomorrow. What happened *after* he got to Basel, well, he'd think about that tomorrow, too. Right now, all he wanted was to meet a kind, hospitable innkeeper who spoke some language that Zsolt or Varya understood.

The older of the two buildings, the church, had a porch with a handbell. Zsolt glanced around, but no one was in sight. He climbed to the porch, hesitated, then raised the bell and rang it. Its clanging and echoing shattered the Swiss stillness until Zsolt was sorry he'd ever touched the thing.

The raucous noise produced a man from within. He was short, heavy and red-faced, and dressed in black clerical robes. He smiled at Zsolt and Varya. "*Grüetzi*," he said, welcoming them in Schwyzerdütsch, the Swiss-German dialect. He also greeted them in French and German.

"Ready for this guy?" Zsolt murmured.

"He'd be dead before he could touch you," she said.

"Try to be quicker. Some of those psyqs don't *need* to touch me."

"I'll just get rooms for us, all right? *And* I'll take care of the rest."

The friar beckoned to them, and they went with him into the ancient stone church. They followed a vaulted, dusty corridor around the inner sanctuary to a covered passageway. Zsolt could see that it led across the yard to the second building, the inn where the monks sheltered weary travelers.

As they walked along the cloister, the friar chattered in French, but slipped frequently into Schwyzerdütsch. Although Zsolt spoke French, the monk's dialect was difficult to understand. Zsolt heard the word *vendredi* and caught something about a *jour maigre*. "Why's Friday special?" he whispered. "What's he mean by *jour maigre*? If it's something that'll attract a crowd, we need to get out of here."

"Don't jump, magyar," Varya said. "He's just saying he's sorry, but Fridays are lean around here. No meat."

"Oh, okay. I got my own anyway."

Varya frowned at him. "Leave it in the pack, John. Respect the place."

"What difference is it to you what I eat?" Zsolt asked. "I didn't think churches were such a big deal to you."

Varya shook her head. "Churches aren't. Beliefs are. Maybe when you're my age you'll see the difference."

Zsolt estimated she was seven, maybe eight years older than he — enough to make her an authority whenever it served her purposes, but still young enough to make Zsolt do all the hard work. It wasn't only that Varya was somewhere between handsome and beautiful, and that she was as smart as any three random strangers combined; she was also simply better at manipulating people than Zsolt was. She was a great teacher, too, and he was taking careful notes.

The friar showed them to cold, quiet rooms on the second floor of the larger building. He'd come for them again in time for vespers, and there'd be a communal supper after prayers. Varya translated for Zsolt. The black-robed man turned away, and Varya went into her quarters, shutting the heavy oak door.

John Zsolt sat in his clean, somber cell and stared out of the iron-barred window toward the mountains to the north. The River Rhône was still invisible beyond them. Zsolt was glad to be alone, glad to have time to think over his plan.

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Brother Luce hung up green tags for Rooms 115 and 117. "They could be any two people in love wandering through the Alps in June," he said. "I suppose they're not Swiss or German, although I could be wrong about the woman. Her dialect is very good; you hardly notice an accent. He didn't say very much, but he looks like he doesn't need to. You can see she's got the mind for both of them. She's one of the Gifted; I'd bet tonight's pie on it."

Brother Enric was rinsing off vegetables brought up from Bourg-St.-Pierre. "Gifted," he said with a short, bitter laugh. "I *hate* that word. They invented it themselves, you know, so they wouldn't sound too special. My mama used to say, 'You'll see, dear, they're not really better than everybody else, they're just Gifted.' In school, the goddamn Gifted kids *always* thought they were better—every time."

"You'd rather I called them 'psions'?"

Brother Enric hmmped. "At least 'psion' doesn't make you feel like they're reminding you how inferior you are. That's probably why they use it, so we don't pay attention to what they're up to all the time."

"You're suspicious of everybody."

The cook shrugged. "I didn't like it on-stage. That's what I called it out there: *on-stage*. That's why I'm in here."

"I'm here to serve God," Brother Luce said simply.

"Sure you are," said Brother Enric. "I'll bet they're not in love."

"What? Who?"

"Your travelers." Brother Enric brought a heavy cleaver down on a handful of leeks. "I'll bet they're not in love."

"They probably haven't even noticed the climb."

"They've noticed, all right. You've watched too many vids. That's your problem. Old romantic vids. Those two visitors may be crazy in love, my friend, but their *knees* aren't. It's the knees that tell you you're walking up a mountain."

Brother Luce didn't say anything for a moment. He just looked up at the ceiling where he supposed God would be listening. The two monks had had this conversation before, and if God hadn't grown bored of it, Brother Luce surely had. "How many is that for tonight?" he asked at last.

"Twenty-two," said Brother Enric. "You're forgetting the four Chinese guests not sleeping at the hospice."

"Right. Twenty-two." Brother Luce turned over four more green tags in case the rest of the kitchen and housekeeping staff needed reminding. Then he piled all of Brother Enric's scraps on a tray to take to the compost pile. As he left the kitchen, he thought, "Why *couldn't* they be in love?" But he didn't say it aloud.

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The setting sun had vanished behind the peaks. The villages of the deep valleys were already sunken in twilight. For a few minutes longer, though, a radiance slanted down from the west, and the Alpine glow lingered in John Zsolt's chamber. The instant he became aware of it, it slipped away. He sat alone in the darkened room and watched as the stars trembled into the sky.

His mouth formed the words "Zsolt...Káposzta Kid...read." The minicomp on his belt projected a holographic index in the emptiness of the air. Zsolt glanced at it briefly. He still did not speak, only shaping the words "mail" with his lips, then "Pat." He chose the most recent entry.

His friend's image was there in the cheerless, cold room. "John!" Pat said with a grin. "How you doing? Thought I'd thank you for the games and the books. I'm not even sure you'll see this before you go. Maybe you already left for—"

"Pause," Zsolt murmured. He stood and went to the tall, narrow window. The church and the road back to the Italian frontier were behind him, on the other side of the inn. There was nothing to see now, just the dark mountaintops against the black sky and the brilliant stars.

Zsolt turned again and looked. In the middle of the room, Pat was caught in mid-gesture, in perfect humor and perfect health. Both were illusions. Zsolt had read this letter dozens of times, at least once each day since it arrived. Pat had waited to send it until after Zsolt went away to Europe.

It wasn't an accurate image of Pat. It was an avatar, a carefully designed reproduction from a time before Pat was stricken with D. It didn't look like Pat now and it didn't sound like Pat now. Even the gestures were edited in from old files. It had been months since John Zsolt had seen his friend's face light up with joy that way. Months since Pat was strong enough to go hiking, one of his favorite pastimes. Now, Zsolt knew, Pat's face was taut with strain, and he did little but pick restlessly at the raveled seams of his blankets.

"Play." Zsolt watched the system-animated avatar — Pat seemed active, eager, thriving — but Zsolt clearly remembered the last times they'd been together. Pat had already begun to deteriorate, and since then he'd have gotten worse, not better. In the letter, Pat avoided the subject of his illness, unable to tell even his most loyal and devoted friend how wretched he'd begun to feel. Zsolt turned away again from the false form and voice; he couldn't bear to watch anymore.

He listened to Pat's vacant chatter, but stared out of the cell's dreary rough-hewn window. He could make out familiar constellations: Orion and Taurus, each attended by more faint stars than Zsolt ever imagined in the skyroom of his home arcology. Pat's voice filled the stone chamber, grateful that Zsolt had stayed his friend even after Pat got sick, and how rare that was, and how lucky Pat felt — "really, magyar, I feel blessed *despite* coming down with D."

Zsolt wondered what Varya was doing in the room next door. Was she performing some secret psyq ritual, maybe "attuning herself to the subquantum resonances" to help them slip safely into Basel? The clears had more double-talk explanations than the pyramid-and-crystals crowd. But hell, he thought, whatever worked.

She'd revealed almost immediately that she was a clairsentient. He said that no one really used that word. Where Zsolt came from, young clairsentients wanted people to call them "Ductrans," from a Latin word meaning "to lead." Nobody called them "Ductrans," either. In everyday speech, the Æsculapian Order — the healers — were called "docs," and the clairsentients had become "clears." Clairsentients, especially Varya, loathed that slang, but they couldn't do anything about it because they were the Good Guys. Or so they said....

"Two last things." Pat's strong baritone voice broke into Zsolt's thoughts. "One big thing and a small one. The small thing first: Since you've been away, Dunyha's adopted me. I don't mind your cat curling up on my feet. She's kind of cute, really. I don't mind her settling down on my chest while I'm reading, either, except she's not a kitten anymore and she weighs a lot more than she thinks. She grooms my beard with her raspy little tongue. I *do* mind that she's been sleeping on my pillow — right on my hair. Last night she startled me awake, coughing up a furball on my forehead."

Pat was pretending to take the disease in stride, trying to be brave, but that was enough of an effort without unprovoked cat attacks. Zsolt smiled.

"The last thing." Zsolt always quit the letter at this uncommon, grim change in Pat's tone. But high in a mountain pass hidden in the Swiss Alps, at the hospice of Great St. Bernard, Zsolt listened to his friend's voice. Maybe the peaceful setting granted Zsolt the strength, but he turned to watch as Pat's idealized avatar spoke its last words.

"Don't forget me, John. All those years, all the ways life pulled us apart, we could always count on each other. Yes, I'm afraid of D, but I'm *more* afraid of being forgotten after I'm gone.

"John, you're sure you can find a miracle for me in Switzerland. Well, good, I'm glad it gives you something to work toward, something to focus your mind on. My own feeling is you won't find any help there. I'll stay home and hold out while D takes over my body. I may give in before you get back again, but that's not such a terrible tragedy. We knew it could happen anytime, John.

"I dreamed once that when I was born, God gave me a second calendar page — for the *last* day of my life. I've spent years trying to forget that image. You will have a last day too, John. If you're lucky, you'll have a friend as good as the one I have in you. Please let me ask this one last time: *Remember me, John.*"

The strong young avatar aimed Pat's trademark smile into Zsolt's eyes. The image flickered and went dark. The sunset had long since faded from the rocky slopes; there was no moon, and John Zsolt's small room now held nothing but deep and dismal shadows.

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Delemont's desktop was broad and empty, made of some sturdy material that mimicked white oak. Months ago, he'd cleared it of every bit of visible system hardware, which was now stripped down to its smallest components and hidden within the desktop itself. He'd packed a cardboard carton with his clock, lamp and hardcopy machine — all in matching white alabaster — a silver and blue souvenir mug from São Paolo, and even his family holos. He labeled the box "D Necro Sections" and tucked it high out of reach on a shelf in his office's walk-in closet.

The desk's frame was made of the same simulated oak. Delemont had designed it without slots or trays for pens, paperclips or other small office supplies. There were neither drawers nor compartments for notepads or hanging file-folders. There wasn't the smallest space to hide even the most miniature electronic audio or video recorder. As a desk, it was virtually useless. As an introduction to Delemont, the man, it was all you needed to know.

On the bare, flat desktop, in the far upper-right corner, two polished shafts of petrified wood rose up like weathered desert spires. Conspicuous on the uncluttered surface, the two shafts of stone confined between them three narrow books. Delemont had written two of the volumes, and a former colleague had written the third. That last book had been dedicated to Delemont out of professional regard, but the inscription page was as far as he'd ever read.

At the base of the taller column was a tiny sliver of rock, a chip that Delemont had noticed every hour of every day. Whenever Delemont felt any sort of dissatisfaction, he looked at the small bit of stone and knew there was some Asian philosophy in it. He didn't know what, specifically — he didn't *need* to know what. If anyone had asked him, Delemont would've replied serenely, "What does a waterfall *mean*?" Delemont was able to appear serene, and he was able to sound serene, but Delemont would never again know true serenity of mind. He'd chosen between the tranquillity he'd yearned for and an opportunity to wield vast power. As yet, he had no cause to regret his decision.

Delemont leaned forward and his white leather swivel-chair creaked. His lips formed the words "Delemont," then "33...Rütli...I3," "call," then "Chiavenna." He waited a few seconds until Stina Chiavenna answered her phone and her avatar appeared in the empty space of Delemont's desktop.

"I found them for you," said the Italian woman's avatar, chosen to look brisk and businesslike, smartly dressed in a steel-blue suit, her long black hair brushed smoothly back, with just a few stray strands to one side. The avatar, about ten inches high on Delemont's desk, looked comfortable in a chrome-steel recliner padded with black leather.

"We found them ourselves an hour before you did," said Delemont. He didn't bother to use an avatar. Chiavenna saw him just as he was: powerful, angry, and able to cause the woman a lot of trouble if Delemont didn't get a satisfactory explanation.



Chiavenna's avatar pursed her lips, a tiny signal of annoyance. "You're paying us—"

"Yes, Stina," said Delemont, "we're paying you, but we're not completely relying on you. We're following our own leads in case you don't deliver. And so far, you haven't delivered." Almost without realizing that he did it, Delemont reached out and moved the chunks of petrified wood to either side of the avatar. Chiavenna couldn't see them, of course, but her image now seemed trapped between the heavy rocks.

"Well, Mr. Delemont," Chiavenna said, "last night when you commissioned us, it was already pretty late. Of course, we put our best available team on it, but as of an hour ago—"

"At 7:15 this morning," Delemont said in his coldest voice, "John Zsolt made a quick stop in the church at Great St. Bernard, went to the first pillar on the left, and dropped a thick roll of Italian new euros in the poorbox. He and the woman caught a ride in a small truck down into Martigny. From there, they could've followed the Rhône east, but I'm guessing they're smarter than that. They wouldn't trap themselves on a boat, and they must know we're watching the airports, magtrain stations and bus terminals. They'll continue cross-country, on foot or hitching rides on small roads, and try to shake us in Montreux, Lausanne or Bern."

Chiavenna's avatar didn't say anything for a moment. "There's no proof they even know we're following them."

Delemont made an impatient sound. "You believe what you want," he said. "However, if you don't have results for me in twenty-four hours — and I mean the cryal — we won't be offering your outfit any further assignments."

Chiavenna cleared her voice. "I want to be sure about one thing: You don't care what happens to Zsolt or the woman?"

"I hear the...enthusiasm in your voice," said Delemont, "and frankly, it's offensive. The Æsculapian Order would rather save lives than waste them. Now and then, our goals result in misfortune for some people. We know it's unavoidable, but we still regret it. So to keep the bad luck to a minimum, there will be no more mistakes from now on. Zsolt's cryal could lead to a general panic. If that happens, we want to be in a position to manage it. That means we need more time to get ready."

"This cryal, whatever it contains," Chiavenna said in a faltering voice, "should I warn my agents?"

"Signorina Chiavenna, if you don't get the cryal from Zsolt, one of those regrettable misfortunes that I so deplore will find you within minutes. You won't have to worry about anything else."

Delemont broke the connection and cleared away the woman's avatar with a curt wave of his hand. He took a moment to position the two towers of petrified wood more precisely in the upper-right corner of his desktop. Then he sat back in his white leather chair and began some slow, relaxing breathing exercises.

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John Zsolt was in a warm room with the feel of summer afternoon lingering in the corners. He recognized it as the modular apartment of his friends Kaylee Sat-Chok and Tavo Brnek. That told Zsolt he was half a world away from the Valais region of Switzerland, as Kaylee and Tavo's place was slotted into one of the remaining Zaozhuang arcologies south of Beijing. It didn't occur to Zsolt to wonder how he came to be there.

From behind and above came the voices of Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong, watered silk and gravel, singing "Moonlight in Vermont." Zsolt noticed a strong, sweet fragrance of flowers — three perfect white gardenias floating in a silver bowl of water, resting on a white concert piano. Shafts of lowering sunbeams through narrow louvers painted the piano with tawny tiger stripes.

Zsolt turned toward a dark doorway and stopped. He wasn't walking through the modapt, but drifting through it as he might float in a dream or holosim. The room didn't seem quite real despite the specific sensory evidence: the muted jazz, the strong perfume of the gardenias, the blazing mist of dust motes in the sunlight. Zsolt felt relaxed and detached; not only was it a dream, it was *someone*

*else's* dream. Zsolt was a silent witness, watching but not touching, not *able* to touch. It was a peculiar experience, but not alarming.

He moved along the corridor again, toward the dark room. A woman's urgent whisper from the sunlit room overtook him: "I can't get him to eat, not even to try a swallow." It must've been Kaylee Sat-Chok. Zsolt remembered the uproar when she'd finally been released, and then she'd joined Tavo in Zaozhuang. They'd thrown a big party that lasted three days, and friends came from all over the world and the orbital and lunar cities. Zsolt had been at the party with a woman he'd known at the time. Janica? Belita? He couldn't even recall their faces.

Pat had been at the party, too, with one of his crazy money-making schemes, this one to develop a better OpNet frag-mapper. Pat was sure it would mean a fortune for them all. There hadn't been much time to talk at the party — all Pat was interested in was his wild new idea, and Zsolt was trying to keep track of Janica or whoever she was. He and Pat could talk another time, any other time — they'd been the best of friends since childhood and there were *always* parties....

Of course, at Kaylee and Tavo's celebration in China, no one — especially not Zsolt or Pat — had even heard of D. It would be at least another year before Pat noticed the first minor symptoms.

"Don't force him if he doesn't want it." Now it was Tavo's voice pulling Zsolt out of his memories. "You don't want to make him choke. He's so weak."

Zsolt knew that Tavo and Kaylee were really there, but evidently they couldn't see or hear him. That didn't particularly bother Zsolt, either. Tavo came up the hallway, and they passed through each other without sensation.

Zsolt entered the dimly lit room. On the northern and western walls were large, dark screens. They weren't windows, of course; not even Sat-Chok and Brnek's combined wealth could afford a modapt in the arcology's exterior wall, one with a view outside. These were projection panels that now showed a midnight scene, a synchronized sea scrolling up a clean, endless beach beneath program-perfect stars in the fairest of all night skies. If Pat had been able to lift his head from the pillows, he could've found the Pleides or followed the curve of Ursa Major around to the bright splinter of Arcturus.

Pat seemed too weak to fight his withered body free of the clean cotton sheets. Lately he'd been unable to manage his own cleanliness and grooming, and Kaylee had shaved Pat's head, which was now covered with scars and mottled bruises. To Zsolt, he looked like a silhouette in the dusky light, like a motionless feature of the landscape — not at all like the friend whom he challenged to hovercycle races and with whom he watched holos not so long ago. Pat's impossibly long, tapered fingers dangled loose, stirring slowly like the tendrils of a beautiful but blind sea creature. He lay open-mouthed, his breathing shallow and wheezing, the smooth and unlined face of his youth betrayed by gauntness, by sunken darkness where there shouldn't have been shadows at all.

"Maybe someday," Varya said, "with all my insights, I'll figure out how you can stand to eat cold leftover *gulyás* for breakfast." Her disapproval implied an intimacy that — had Zsolt been listening — he would've found ominous. She held a battered pie tin toward him, and a hunk of brown bread.

Zsolt's eyes widened. "What was that?" he said, gasping. "A hallucination?" His breath puffed away like the gray rainclouds that swirled low over the Swiss countryside.

"Here, take it. I'm not your serving-girl and I'm not going to stand around all day holding it, either. I hired you to get me safely to Basel, but I'm beginning to think I made a mistake. Hell, eat it if you want it. Otherwise, I'll leave it here for the next poor starving schlub of a traveler."

"I *mean* it," he said in an urgent voice, "what was it?" Zsolt stood against a damp, gritty rockfall, not far from the flat, stony spot where he'd slept. He'd already rolled and packed his sleeping bag, and he'd broken more wood for the breakfast fire. His jacket was cold and muddy, and his tough petrocotton jeans were damp.

Varya didn't turn around. She was kneeling by the campfire. "What was it like?"

"I was *right there* in the room with him, at Sat-Chok and Brnek's in China. I didn't even know he'd gone to stay with them. He looked barely alive, a hell of a lot worse than when I saw him last."



"They're searching for the cryal, John — the Æsculapians."

He turned and spat into a trickling brook that was so lovely, so Swiss, so picturesque that it absolutely *needed* something spat into it. "Yeh? Then you were right about what the docs said in that first clinic we went to. For all their talk about helping people, how much do they actually do?"

Varya stood and put a hand on his shoulder. "In that place in China just now, you could move through the rooms, right? But it was like no one could see you or hear you."

Zsolt stared. "It wasn't a dream — I've been awake for hours. And the *details* I noticed...."

"My first time, I was only seven or eight years old. It had something to do with my little sister's birthday. I saw her come into the dining room with this big old chocolate cake, and she caught her foot in a fold of the rug and fell on her face. She got chocolate cake all over her pretty birthday dress and on her face and in her hair. Then she started crying. So four months later, it's her actual birthday, okay? And in she comes with the chocolate cake, and I said something about her taking a dive into it and she dropped it again and fell. My mother figured it was my fault somehow because I knew it was going to happen, and I tripped her or something. She wailed on my ass for half an hour." Varya looked off into the distance, smiling. "I wish we had a better 'orientation program' and 'free introductory gifts,' but all I can say is welcome to the world of clairsentience, magyar."

Zsolt's jaws tensed. "*Couldn't* be," he said.

Varya was amused by his sheer revulsion. "I knew you were a latent from the first time we met. I agreed to some of your stranger decisions on this trip, just to make sure you didn't do something even more foolish. Like join one of the other orders, I mean. We need you, John."

Zsolt wasn't happy about any of this. "I'm *not* a psyq, okay?" he said furiously. "I had some kind of weird daydream, that's all. It doesn't prove I'm one of you."

"One of us." She squatted down, filled the coffeepot with clean water, and jammed it into a corner of the campfire.

"We'll see." Zsolt took the pie tin from her and looked into it. There was a thin reddish stew in it. "Varya," he said, "trust me. In one area, you're as empty as I am. This may be decent spaghetti sauce, but it's awful *gulyás*."

Varya shot him a venomous glance. "I got some nearly boiled potatoes here, pal. Tell me you're sorry — *fast* — and maybe I'll let you have one. That's the best deal you're going to get this morning."

Zsolt stopped listening to her. He played the vision in his mind again, and the strangeness of it made him shiver. He did remember a couple of things, though: Only days ago, when he'd last been in that room in China, the piano had been black, not white, and Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald had been singing "They Can't Take That Away From Me."

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When Crystina Chiavenna was fourteen, she spent two of the worst months of her life staying at her father's summer house on the Dalmatian coast. The major reason was simple enough: Her father's villa was only halfway up the hillside. She could act cold and dismissive toward the young men and women who resided below her, but all of the really interesting people lived farther up the dusty, rutted road near the ruined town of Karloska, and they passed their disdain from the hilltop all the way down to the stony plain, scorning Stina Chiavenna and anyone else who didn't count.

Yet, since most of them were there for the summer only, they all had to pretend to be friends or else be bored to death in exile. They held parties and arranged outings and practiced their social skills and torments, just as they'd learned them from their elders. One sultry day in August, after swimming nude in the magnificent marble pool at the Villa Sūska, their hostess, Marveille de Vos, had the staff serve a special round of drinks.

Marveille took a fluted glass of champagne and raised it. "This is for you, Stina, since you're going back to Rome tomorrow, lucky you. In the last few weeks, you've complimented me on my sapphire engagement ring thirteen times—"

"Fourteen," one of the young men corrected.

Marveille turned and gave him a quick, warm smile. "Stina, I just wanted to wish you all the luck in the world in dealing with the envy and covetousness that must be eating you up inside. Come on, sweetie, drink up! It's just a joke!"

Crystina Chiavenna's expression froze in place for a second, and then she laughed. She'd noticed that while everyone else's champagne was the normal color, hers was a pale sapphire blue. She lifted the flute, saluted Marveille de Vos, and gulped the sparkling wine. It was, of course, excellent. Then she laughed again and flung her glass to the ground, where it shattered and tinkled. There was just another bit of silence, and then all of the others drank their champagne, laughed, and broke their glasses on the marble flagstones, too.

One of the young men — not one of the very popular young men — came up to Stina. "I don't know many people who would've handled that with such good grace," he said. "You showed a lot of refinement."

Stina looked up at him and smiled. "Yes," she said. "Now, let's get back in the game." And she dived into the churning water of the ancient pool.

An hour or so later, when she decided it was a good time to leave, Stina said goodbye to everyone and gave Marveille de Vos a kiss on the cheek and thanked her for a lovely afternoon. Then she went into the bathhouse, collected her clothes, and used the toilet. When she stood up, she saw that whatever had been in the champagne had turned her urine a bright blue. She caught herself just as she uttered a quick exasperated sound. She took a couple of deep breaths and calmed down — after all, by dinner time tomorrow, she'd be in her own house in Rome, with her own friends and her own servants, and with decent luck, Marveille would get unexpectedly dead or pregnant before next summer.

That last idea was a happy thought as she dressed. She was just imagining the de Vos bitch at eight months as Stina came out of the bathhouse. There, in rows as if arranged for a holo snap, was Marveille and all of the others. Stina stopped short and gasped.

"The color does suit you, sweetie," said Marveille cheerfully. "Don't worry, it'll go away in a few days. I thought you could freeze some and have sapphire crystals bigger than I'll ever get!" And they all laughed.

Stina just stared, surprised to feel almost nothing. In fact, she didn't think her face was flushing at all. She looked at them for another heartbeat or two and then joined their amusement. "I really do have to run," she said. "I've got a ton of packing to do yet. *Ciao!*"

"Next summer, Stina!" someone called after her. She was already heading toward the main house, and didn't turn or say another word. She looked straight ahead until she got back to her own villa.

There is a proverb: Never stir the wrath of a patient man. More than a dozen years later, it was probable that Marveille de Vos had forgotten Stina Chiavenna entirely, but Chiavenna remembered *her*. Chiavenna knew where her old antagonist lived, how many marriages, divorces and children she'd had, what her income was and what she was addicted to.

If she hadn't taken her revenge yet, it wasn't because she'd forgiven Marveille de Vos. It was because it hadn't yet seemed like the perfect moment.

Chiavenna shook her head, focusing her concentration. Her two thugs had stopped their Concorso hauler crosswise, blocking the narrow road almost immediately after it turned sharply to the right. They waited in the rocks on either side, and were well-armed. Chiavenna sat in the black leather driver's seat of her hand-crafted Solano, parked on the road's shoulder twenty meters past the truck. She watched the red seconds tick away on the console. Zsolt and his bitch were on a Shendai hovercycle that they'd stolen, registration number W337I, racing toward her at 180 kilometers per hour, slower if Zsolt hadn't handled a bike before. While she waited, Chiavenna idly wondered just how protected Delemont, her client, actually was.

She heard a low, throaty growl behind her, like a giant mountain cat. A hovercycle engine, she thought. Just as she flicked her eyes to the rear-view mirror, she saw a single brilliant headlight blaze around the shoulder of rock, then tip or slide away abruptly, out of sight. Not even a high-performance hovercycle would have enough vertical lift to clear the Concorso. Zsolt would have to



lay the cheap Shendai down — his only chance of preventing disaster. Then Chiavenna heard the coarse bark of an autorifle and saw the glimmering reflection of laser fire in the car's rear-view as her men fired dozens of rounds from their weapons. The noise and light show was just for effect, and to keep Zsolt flat on the dirt. While her men were still shooting, Chiavenna slipped on her dark glasses, glanced at her reflection in the mirror, and got out of the car.

It was a pleasant night, with the promise of warmer weather on the smoke-scented breeze. Chiavenna heard her men barking orders — in German, she supposed — and checked her flechette pistol as she came around the Concorso. She saw Zsolt and the woman for the first time. They were both doing a very good job of being motionless. Dressed in durable petrocotton jeans and jackets, neither looked badly hurt, although the woman's right sleeve was ripped and there was blood. They were lucky Zsolt hadn't spilled their brains all over the Swiss countryside when he laid down the cycle. "Bones broken?" Chiavenna asked.

Nobody answered. One of the guys kicked Zsolt's shoulder.

"I don't fuckin' know yet," Zsolt said.

"Get up," Chiavenna said. "I just want the cryal."

"I don't—"

Chiavenna snapped off a shot that chipped the pavement beside his hand. "I'll save us all a little time here. I want the cryal. Don't play dumb. You don't get a chance to make deals. If you don't give it to me *now, goddamn it*, I'm going to kill her." She paused to let all of the emotion bleed from her voice. "You *know* I'll kill her. Get up."

Chiavenna watched Zsolt stand up slowly. He was good-looking enough, dark and with a mustache, although he was a little shorter than she expected. She watched as his large, intelligent, Hungarian eyes flicked down at the other woman, who met his gaze and smiled slightly. He looked back at Chiavenna, started to reach into his jacket and then stopped, raising his eyebrows. Chiavenna laughed out loud; it was the most amusing part of the day so far. Such an ancient vid moment — Chiavenna holding the flechette pistol on him, he asking with his expression for permission. She almost prayed that he did have a weapon in there, but she knew that wasn't where he'd carry it. "Give it to me," she said.

Zsolt's hand went into his jacket's inside pocket, and he brought out a cryonic vial of brushed metal, about the size of a walnut. He held it out on his palm. "I have a friend," he said. His voice was steady; there was no pleading in it, and Chiavenna was interested to hear what she thought was a touch of a threat. "He's dying. Getting this cryal to Basel is the only hope he has."

Chiavenna held her pistol on him and gestured for the tall thug — she'd never bothered learning their names — to take the cryal. "As far as I'm concerned, it's just money," she said in her flat voice.

Zsolt hesitated, glanced again at Chiavenna's weapon, then handed over the cryal. She took it from the tall guy, backed up a couple of steps, then turned and went to her car. As she murmured it into gear, she looked into the mirror again. The hired muscle could take their payment now: whatever the two on the hovercycle had been carrying in cash, plus the bike itself, as well as whatever Zsolt and the woman's bodies were worth in the nearest town with a chop shop.

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After Chiavenna's black Solano roared away, the night settled into the sounds of cricket-chirping along the road to Basel. The darker, heavier thug pointed his weapon at Zsolt and Varya and demanded something in a gruff, Baltic language that meant nothing to Zsolt. The tall guy translated: "He wants you to grasp your wrists behind your heads. He saw it in an American holovid somewhere."

Zsolt glanced down at Varya as he complied, but she seemed dazed and didn't respond. Then, for no reason that Zsolt could figure, the dark guy in the Ham Fighters cap yelled something at his colleague and sliced the tall one into two or three equally dead portions. Startled, Zsolt dropped his hands, waiting to see what would happen next. The dark guy picked up his former partner's gun and gestured with it, indicating that he wanted Zsolt to back off. That presented no problem to Zsolt; he would've walked clear to Cape Horn for a guy aiming a Voss laser carbine and a Banji autorifle at him.

Zsolt was ignored as the dark-haired goon walked slowly and somewhat stiffly across the few meters toward Varya. Each pebble he crunched, each piece of glass that snapped sounded like gunfire in the still Swiss night. "Fine," thought Zsolt, "what's happening here? Rape the good-looking woman before killing us and driving off with the admittedly piss-poor loot?" Zsolt remembered from his years fallen on hard times that Number One in the Street-Smarts Handbook cautioned: If you're interested in one of two hostages, kill the other goddamn motherfucker before anything else.

So the Ham Fighters fan had his eyes on Varya. He carried both weapons sloppily, pointed down, as if he'd completely forgotten Zsolt's existence — a possibility, since Zsolt didn't know what kind of unbalanced nuts that strange woman had hired. For all Zsolt new, these guys were a couple of extreme sociopaths. He didn't wait to find out. He made a flying tackle behind the guy's knees, dropping them both to the dirt and rubble.

The thug shook his head and spat a foreign phrase as Zsolt went for the weapons. Zsolt had just slapped a hand on the Banji carbine and rolled over to take aim when 90 kilos of Baltic thug slammed down on him. "Ham Fighter" shouted an endless stream of abuse, matched by a look of combined anger and fear. Zsolt didn't have time to bother with why the guy was freaking out this way, nor did he particularly care.

A heavy fist crashed into Zsolt's jaw, but did little more than piss him off even more. He pointed the autorifle at the hired hood. "Get off and hug the ground if you want to live," Zsolt said.

Terror came to the fore as the strongarm's eyes seemed to clear, then rage returned. "Nyet!" he cried, fumbling back for the Voss laser.

Zsolt let off a few rounds into the guy's chest, tumbling "Ham Fighter" back onto the road. "Too bad he couldn't follow directions."

"John," said Varya, "among the topics we'll no doubt talk about from here on in, please remind me that I don't want to know a damn thing about your ideas of right and wrong."

Zsolt grinned. "Right and wrong? What ideas? This guy was nuts." He saw Varya, apparently none the worse for wear aside from her scuffed arm, stretch and take in the midnight countryside. He shrugged, scrambled to his feet and set about cleaning up the mess.

Zsolt put his hands under the armpits of the psychotic thug and dragged the corpse out of the middle of the road. He stopped halfway, still bent over, and took a couple of deep breaths. Glancing up, he saw that Varya had already pulled the tall guy — or what was left of him — out of sight, into the rocks. Sometimes he wondered about the full extent of her strength and endurance.

"Need some help?" she called.

"Yeah," he grunted, "now's a nice time to think about that."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

He went on lugging the dead guy toward a dark, deep, final resting place off the road and down the side of the mountain. He tried to answer her with something clever, but he could only pant for breath.

"Take it easy," Varya said. "Just drop him right there. Forget about cleaning everything up. Nobody'll care about these two, trust me. What, you think a Legion patrol might come by at any minute?"

Zsolt put his right boot squarely in the small of the corpse's back, and when he shoved it over the edge, he imagined Varya, too, sailing off into the cool, quiet Swiss emptiness. He was glad they were getting near Basel. He'd had about half a liter too much of her already. He hadn't run into cryptic strangers and psychotic gunmen before he met her. And she was so goddamn Gifted she thought the forces of natural law got her permission every morning before the sun rose. He didn't care how attractive she was; he'd had to listen to her for too long. It wasn't so bad on the bike, but now he'd be trapped in the truck with her.

She looked at him without expression, her head tilted a little to one side. "We'll take the truck," she said.

"I know that, goddamn it," Zsolt muttered to himself.



"I'll drive," she said. Before he object, she held up the Concorso's keys on a ring with a wind-up, hopping plastic tongue attached to it. "In the first place, I know the way. I'm clear, remember?"

"*Morgás.*"

Varya laughed. "I can hear better than you think. A few seconds ago, it was 'I know that, goddamn it.' I missed one, though. That Hungarian word."

"Nothing," Zsolt grumbled, getting into the truck's passenger seat. "Just something my mother used to say."

"Your mother." Varya shook her head. She put the key in the switch, fastened her seat belt, but didn't speak to the engine. Instead, she turned to her companion. "Now, seriously," she said with an amused expression, "what are we forgetting?"

Zsolt tried to look innocent. Clairsentients couldn't read minds, he knew, but Varya still had an eerie knack for knowing what he was thinking. She probably knew he'd robbed the tall corpse, but that guy wasn't going to need his money again and Zsolt didn't think she cared about it. "We're forgetting something?"

Varya shook her head and jabbed him in the chest with a long, tapered forefinger. "You're forgetting something important, magyar — the other cryal."

He slammed the flat of his hand against the dashboard. "*Bassza meg!*" he shouted, irritated with himself. He stepped out into the cool night air again and slammed the car door behind him. He wondered how far they were from Basel after all, and he calmed down. He smelled the smoke and a floral sweetness in the air; he heard birds and insects, and realized how infrequently he paid attention to sensory details that didn't immediately affect his well-being. He'd pulled off the hovercycle's handlebar grip in moments and retrieved the second cryal from where he'd hidden it in the hollow tube.

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It was a slow Tuesday night, which would mean the early morning hours would be even quieter. But even so, Nurse Practitioner Elsje Pohl wasn't happy about going to work on what had been scheduled to be her evening off. It was a long drive — always longer getting there than getting home, for some reason — and nothing to look forward to all night but Ernst and his clumsy but effective fingers. Oh, and with a little luck, Old Testament Nurse would be called away, leaving Pohl with the keys to the meds locker. A shot of Sonneine and Pohl would tolerate *anything*.

Her electric Korean sedan hummed across the bridge over the Aare River. Directly in front of her loomed breathtaking views of the Hapsburg and Schwyzer Alps, neither of which Pohl had ever noticed. The road curved up into the mountains, through Schinznachdorf — a town no one in Switzerland knew anything about or cared to, as far as Pohl could determine — and then rumbled through an ancient tunnel under the Bötzing. At the highest point along the road, just before it dropped again toward the River Rhine and the city of Basel itself, was another of those dull, identical villages, but this one touted the site of a formerly impressive monastery and the impressive Montessor Clinic, the world headquarters of the Æsculapian Order. In the very mortal words of Elsje Pohl, "big *verfickte* deal."

She changed into her uniform and signed in at the emergency room's processing desk. "Please," she whispered, "no lunatics," but the first thing she saw in the waiting room was a customer in a vidlid. Nurse Practitioner Pohl wished the guy a devastating case of colitis that would tragically and *agonizingly* end his life before a doctor could actually get to examine him. Vidlids had been very popular fifteen years ago, a sad fact that in itself warranted a statement in the patient's chart without a word being said. The lids covered the skull like floppy plastic helmets, in bright horrible greens and pinks, but that wasn't the worst part about them. There were little platforms on the crown of a vidlid that played holo-chip slideshows, as many as the fool wanted to show off: his dog or baby doing something unspeakably mundane, a clip of a team of local clog-dancers taken just before their execution, the guy himself demonstrating the pathetic limits of what he believed to be a talent. Yet the holographic atrocities weren't the worst part — the vidlids had sound, *loud* sound. And between each vile, loathsome squib of "entertainment" were advertising holos, familiar ones that *everyone* hated, with—

"—must have told you about it."

Nurse Practitioner Pohl hadn't been paying attention. "Okay," she thought, "here we go." She took a deep breath. "Excuse me," she said to the customer — another guy, not the buffoon in the vidlid. To cover the fact that she hadn't been listening, she turned away briskly and went to a calendar posted at the other end of the processing station. She stared at it blurry-eyed for a moment, then came back to the newcomer with the dark mustache. "Sorry, sir," she muttered. "What was it again?"

Zsolt's expression didn't change. "The local clinic in China couldn't do much for my friend. They said we might only get help at the main clinic, in Basel. They promised they'd send you a file on it a couple of weeks ago. They must have told you about it."

"Which 'they,' sir," Pohl asked, "the doctors in China or the doctors in Basel?" She was just seeing how easily he got annoyed. She kind of liked the way he looked, but she wasn't in the market at the moment for another rotten temper on a four centimeter fuse.

There was a pause while Zsolt gathered strength and patience. "There should be a file from Zaozhuang. My name is John Zsolt."

Pohl looked up, glancing past Zsolt at his blonde friend. The woman filled out her shirt all right, but she looked old enough to have been this guy's history teacher. "I'll check on that right away," she said. "Spell that name for me, please." Zsolt did, and Pohl murmured each letter back at her desktop. "Do you have a tissue sample for us, Mr. Zsolt?"

While he took the second cryal from his jacket and put it on the counter between them, Pohl read the brief entry from the Zaozhuang clinic. At the end of the report was the code GOMER, which stood for "Get (This Person) Out of My Emergency Room!" Pohl said nothing. Her facial muscles didn't even twitch. She was a professional, and she'd seen that code hundreds of times before.

"If you'll take these forms and fill them out for us, please, Herr Zsolt," she said. "You're welcome to take a seat." She handed Zsolt a dpad with a light-pen clipped to it. As far as Elsje Pohl was concerned, that ended their business, unless she decided to get him away from the blonde with the big Zuckertorts. More likely, however, she'd never have to talk with him again, even if he rocketed through the intake forms and got them back to the processing desk within the hour.

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Dawn had finished giving the street beyond the double glass doors its special early morning look. Now it was just daytime out there, but it reminded Zsolt that they'd been sitting in the goddamn uncomfortable metal chairs for hours. There were hundreds of others waiting with them, too, but this was an emergency room, and even in the venerable Montessor Clinic, laser- and stab-wound patients got priority.

"If I'd known how long this was going to take," he said in a low voice, "I might've gotten a name of somebody to see here, made an appointment or something. Guess I wasn't thinking."

"You're tired, magyar," said Varya, who looked surprisingly fresh after a long hoverbike ride, an armed battle on the Swiss roadside, another drive toward Basel, and several hours of trying not to notice the variety show that was going on all around them in the clinic's reception area.

"Yeah," he said. "I'll be glad when we're done here. We'll go get something to eat, rent a cheap room and get some sleep. I'm not made out of high-impact banjyrene like you."

"My God, Montesor," she said.

"Huh?"

"This is the Montessor Clinic. 'My God, Montesor!' That's a quotation. Look it up." Varya stretched and rotated her neck, working out stiffness. "No, John, we're not made out of the same stuff, not at all, but we're not that different, either."

Zsolt grunted. "Here goes the loyal-magyar-as-psyq-superman speech again. This is where I came in. I'm going to look for a vending machine."

"What if they call your name—"



"While I'm away? You go with the doctor. You know as much about Pat as I do, and they have everything they need in the cryal. I wouldn't worry, though. I hear the average wait here is thirteen hours. We haven't been here seven. Settle in. You should've brought something to read."

Varya rolled her eyes. "I could always eavesdrop on the soap opera next to us — the little old guy and the toy teenage girl."

"She's a toy?"

Varya rolled her eyes again. "Get me something to drink, okay, something with bubbles in it."

Zsolt walked away, shaking his head. There were sick people in that room, and some of them beyond the help of even all the psions in the world.

A corridor took Zsolt to another corridor, and then a third hallway led to a lobby. A pleasant young man seated in a circle of glossy black obsidian was filled with regret that there were no vending machines in the Montessor Clinic. There was a cafeteria, but they could lose their chance if they were eating when their names were called. They could eat one at a time, though. Zsolt thanked the guy and headed back to the ER reception area. "They could eat one at a time." What a team they were turning into.

Zsolt used what little of his charm remained to talk a nurse out of a small bottle of sparkling spring water. He presented it to Varya like a small but hard-won trophy. "That's it," he said. "We eat afterward, or start gnawing on our neighbors."

Varya looked at the wizened old guy on the other side of her and shuddered. He was talking in a loud voice — to himself, to his teenage-girl toy, to Varya? "Sometimes you shouldn't say those funny things," she told Zsolt. "Sometimes they're not so funny. You should shut up until you can tell the difference." But then she leaned nearer and kissed his cheek. "Thanks for the water, magyar."

"Hey," he said and shrugged, at the moment the full extent of his eloquence. Her kiss startled him mightily.

Hours went by, and the racking coughs of the elderly woman behind Zsolt past, replaced by the throat-clogging stink of gangrene. Zsolt and Varya changed seats, but there wasn't a more pleasant section. It was like swapping steaming boulders in Hell.

Across the aisle to the left, where a young man sprawled on a gurney, huddling beneath a thin sheet for hours, Zsolt now saw Pat. Pat hadn't turned or moved since Zsolt's earlier vision of the room in Zaozhuang. His friend was still a twisted figure under his worn blanket.

Then Zsolt understood: This time, Pat was only an image on an Æon Trinity monitoring device. Two men and a woman in uniform watched and murmured into recording devices. Each uniform had a small patch: "Triton Division." What was Triton Division, he wondered. What did the Æon Trinity care about Pat in the first place? Zsolt shook his head, clearing away what *had* to have been a dream.

"What time is it?" he asked.

"Eleven A.M.," Varya said. "Almost lunchtime. We've been here nearly twelve hours."

"Should be soon, then."

"Should be soon." Neither looked confident.

"Okay," said Zsolt, "we've been through this whole thing, and we've waited here all night together. Tell me again why you're here."

She turned toward him and stared, her eyebrows raised. "Didn't the ad say I needed someone to get me safely to Basel?"

"Yeah."

"Didn't I say that I expected not to answer questions, especially that one?"

"Yeah."

"Well, hell, then, John."

"Well, hell yourself. You don't need *anybody* to get you safely anywhere. I'd be willing to bet you're the only reason *I'm* still alive."

Varya didn't answer that immediately. "You remember that ad, magyar? The one where I advertised for a gentleman-protector to get me to Switzerland, and that the pay was good and no funny stuff?"

Zsolt frowned. He didn't understand her point. "Yeah, 'course I remember it."

"Where was it? What newsflat? Chipzine? Where'd you see it?"

He thought back. It must've been at Kaylee and Tavo's flat in Zaozhuang. He and Varya had taken a suborbital from Beijing to Rome. "I don't remember which paper, Varya," he said. "I wasn't paying attention to stuff like that. I was thinking about how bad Pat was doing and everything."

"John, look at me." Her voice was even lower, and very dramatic. "There was no newsflat. There was no ad. I faked it."

"What the hell—"

"I'm a clairsentient, okay? I told you that right at the beginning. I didn't tell you that I'm one of the Mashriqi, the order's administrative council. Some people think we're not the best organized of the psi orders, but I promise you: We have our resources. More than you'll ever need, with any luck. I'd heard about you, did a little investigation, and saw that you have tremendous latent talents. I wanted you with us, with the ISRAns. I...I faked a 'zine ad transmission to bring you on board."

Zsolt's dark brows drew together. "*Gazember!*" he cried, not caring who might turn to look at him.

"Now, don't get mad, John. There are reasons, big reasons — wheels within wheels. It starts with Pat, of course, but there's so much more, and so little time—"

"Goddamn it, Varya! You think you're such a great schemer, but it all boils down to 'somebody's gotta carry the message through hostile country.' But *not me!*"

Varya took a deep breath and let it out. "We left from Beijing, went through customs there and again in Rome. Then we traveled north through Italy, across the border into Switzerland, staying on small roads — your style — till we got ourselves here. Right?"

"Damn right."

"Gave our IDs dozens of times, right?"

"Uh huh. What's the amazing surprise this time?"

Varya looked deeply into Zsolt's eyes. "Magyar, answer me. What's my full name? You must've heard it—"

Zsolt shook his head. "No, I've never heard it. Okay, so you've got magical Gifted psyq superhuman powers, but I never liked you people anyway. What makes this so special for you? It's important to me because I promised I'd do this for Pat. What are you getting out of it? A new car for recruiting me?"

She stood and stretched. Despite his indignant, irate feelings, it was good to watch Varya stretch. "John," she said, "we need to have a long talk when there's time."

"Sure," he said, "because I don't feel like talking now, okay? I'll be all right. I just don't want to say anything that'll spoil the seduction."

Varya smiled, tried to make herself more comfortable, and fell asleep almost immediately.

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After seventeen hours, Zsolt had had enough. From the new duty nurse — Nurse Practitioner Elsje Pohl had escaped to breakfast and sleep and peace a long while ago — he confirmed that no record existed at the Montessor Clinic of Pat's cryal; no record existed of Pat at all, or of John Zsolt, either. He thanked the nurse and left the building without waking Varya.

He proceeded to the main post office on Freie Strasse, where a package waited for him at General Delivery. It was the small parcel he'd addressed to himself and attached money to, and then dropped into the poorbox at Great St. Bernard. The monks had taken the money gratefully and sent the parcel on its way. Swinging his shoulders and feeling the stiff muscles in his back, Zsolt tore open the box and slid a third cryal into the palm of his hand. A quiet binging sound informed him at the same time that he had new email on his minicomp. He didn't feel like reading it now.

He drove back to the clinic's parking area, opened the back of the van, and unclipped the minicomp. The email was from Kaylee, dated two days ago. Pat had passed away. Tavo was appearing beyond Kaylee's shoulder. "Quit," Zsolt said in a husky voice. He'd play it all another time.



He reached into the back of the truck and retrieved the Banji autorifle and the laser carbine that had belonged briefly to Chiavenna's incompetent hoods. Carrying the weapons slung over his shoulders, he found his way to the ER reception area once more.

"Rise and shine, Varya," he said, kicking her foot gently. "We've got an appointment with Herr Doktor Zweidler."

Varya woke quickly, her eyes growing larger when she saw Zsolt's hardware. As she opened her mouth to speak, he tossed her the laser carbine. "Figure it out before you need to use it," he said. He didn't look back at her, knowing she'd follow. He headed straight for the reception desk.

"You need a stabbing or a gunshot wound to get some attention around here, huh?" he said. He let fly a few rounds into the front of the desk as the attendant dove for cover. "I hope that isn't just fiberboard, because I really don't want to hurt anybody."

The gunfire brought out a security guard from a back office. The man wore the white uniform of the Æsculapian Order's security staff, but he had the weathered features of a mercenary. That earned Zsolt's respect. The moment was spoiled a little when the Hungarian realized that the guard moved like a robot vacuum cleaner in some Saturday-morning holotoon. The guy's barrel chest, huge forearms, tiny head, and the way he moved smoothly over the floor made the guard seem more like a "hovergoon" than a human being.

"Drop," Zsolt shouted in German. The security guard ignored the command, spat something in a language from one of the Free Federated States east of the Ukraine, and grabbed at Zsolt's trigger hand. Zsolt ripped the weapon free again and smashed into the guard's skull. The security guard crumpled. "Stay close behind me, honey," he said over his shoulder. "The docs are bound to have some real security, psyqs or maybe even Legionnaires. You're all the backup I've got." He waited. Varya didn't answer.

Zsolt went cold at the silence, and turned quickly. Varya was right where she was supposed to be, covering him with the laser carbine. She gave him a long, slow, warm smile.

A grim-faced orderly came toward them, ignoring the weapons. "Dr. Zweidler wants to meet with you in his office back this way. He doesn't want any more confusion in the waiting area."

Zsolt had dismissed the sedated and sick occupying the waiting area. "Those poor bastards out there didn't notice anything," Zsolt presumed.

"That's the truth," Varya assured him.

"Follow me," said the orderly.

They walked down a narrow corridor that was decked out with luxurious marble-gray carpeting. Zsolt hoped he wouldn't get blood all over it. About halfway along, Varya glanced at a door they passed with the name "Delemont" on it.

The orderly opened an office at the end of the hall — a plain door without a nameplate on it — and went in, followed by Zsolt and Varya. "Dr. Zweidler," he said.



Zweidler looked up at the orderly and nodded. "You can leave us, Fritz," he said. They waited for the man to go out and shut the door behind him. Then Zweidler looked at his visitors, giving them a puzzled frown. He stood up and came around his desk. "Ach, weh, then this is our John Zsolt, all the way from Zaozhuang. How is China? It's been many years since I've visited there. But, of course, of all nations, China—"

There was a low throbbing sound, a low static screech, and the acrid smell of burnt hair. Zweidler raised a well-manicured hand to the smoking remains of a lock.

"Step back," Varya said.

Zsolt smiled at her, puzzled but determined not to show it. "You figured out the safety system on that two-handed flashlight."

"He was using vitakinesis to sedate you," she explained. "I thought I should break it up. If you shook hands with him, he'd have you counting backward from one hundred, and you'd wake up in a semi-private room with nice flowers and a visit from all the wrong people."

Zsolt nodded, but he didn't look at her. He'd heard the docs could do such things; it shouldn't surprise him that their proxy would try it on some wild-eyed assailant. "Why don't you sit back down, Dr. Zweidler. You know who I am. You know why I'm here. What's wrong with my friend? Why couldn't they tell us anything in the local clinics we tried?"

The old man shrugged. "So many questions. And you deserve answers. You know what are these aberrants?"

"Yeah, everybody does. Nasty mutant suckers raiding our colonies and cities."

Zweidler's eyes flicked from Zsolt to Varya and back again. "Also, then, the taint?"

Zsolt's expression turned thoughtful. He shook his head.

The old doctor spread his hands. "There could be some of these...aberrants on Earth here and there, alone or in groups. For what reasons that make sense? Our beautiful world *tainted*, you would say, by their very presence." He reached into a pocket of his white lab coat and brought out the second cryal, the one Zsolt had surrendered at the ER's reception desk. "Your friend...his illness—"

"Can you help him?"

Zweidler's eyes looked brighter, as if they'd filled with tears. He held up the cryal again. "His illness is of this aberrant taint. It is nothing natural, nothing anyone has ever seen before. It isn't a germ or a virus. Now, today, we are helpless."

The Hungarian closed his eyes and leaned back against the wall. "Then why in the name of God were you trying to stop us?"

"Stop you?" Zweidler asked.

"How the fucking hell do you think you got that cryal?"

Varya spoke up, her voice calm. "We were attacked on the road. All they wanted was the cryal. John was smart enough to have brought two, but your people here got that one, too. He trusted them, I suppose. For a cynic, he's too romantic for his own good."

Zweidler interrupted. "I don't understand. Yes, I knew Herr Zsolt was on his way, but I gave no orders to have you stopped, to have you *assaulted*. The entire world knows I would never permit that. My staff I've chosen carefully, one person at a time, and no one in this organization would allow such a thing, either. This whole idea is deeply disturbing."

Zsolt opened his eyes. "You got a tall thin woman working for you, wears dark glasses at night, lots of black leather, much too aware of her image for her own good?"

Zweidler looked helplessly to Varya. "New illnesses," he said in a tired voice. "No one is ready to hear about them yet, about how little we know of this taint. We must act responsibly. It would be so easy to cause panic, and that would certainly be disastrous, a deadly mistake. We must study and learn, and we must make the world ready to hear and understand our findings."

Varya let out a sigh. "You're saying there are brand-new diseases popping up all over the damn place because of the aberrants, because of the taint they spread, and so far you Æsculapians are still standing around with your thumbs up your asses wondering what you can do about them."



Zweidler shook his head. "We need you," he said softly. "People like Herr Zsolt, people with true latent talents. We're always looking for men and women who have the abilities to become new healers. Think of the gift you have, the great gift! I can see it shining from within you. Join us, Herr Zsolt. Maybe it will be you who heals your friend."

Zsolt's eyes widened slightly, and he looked from Zweidler to Varya. There was a moment of solemn silence, with just the rattle of the air conditioning audible in the room. "You almost had me," Zsolt said at last, "but you took it just a little too far. Pat died two days ago and you knew it; you and your Æon Trinity friends. I'm not going to let people — psyqs or neutrals — manipulate me anymore." He turned and left the office, missing whatever passed between the doctor and Varya.

Varya smiled when she caught up with him in the hallway. "You played old Doc Zweidler just right! You're learning, magyar!" She put her arms around his neck. He felt her breasts press against his chest, and smelled the clean sandalwood fragrance of her skin.

"I meant you, too," he told her. Zsolt's rage was gone, but the anger remained. He reached up and pulled away from her arms. "You wanted to get to Basel, well, there's probably a bus in front of the building that'll take you right downtown."

Zsolt didn't know what kind of response to expect, but Varya just laughed.

He shook his head and walked away, still carrying the Banji automatic. None of the clinic's staff stopped him from leaving, but he was too wrapped up in his own thoughts to realize it. Zsolt tried to remember where he'd left the truck. He wouldn't decide what to do next until it was plainly in front of him.

Later that night, Zsolt pulled the Concorso off the road and got out. He stared up at the cloudy, starless sky and felt a sudden chill. It wasn't the altitude or the wind. It was a cold feeling that had risen from deep within him. His minicomp sat on the damp earth beside him. Zsolt's eyes were closed, but he heard Pat's voice: "Please let me ask this one last time: *Remember me, John.*"

Somebody in China explained to him that there were only two things to do when certain diseases invaded the body. The first was to cut the disease out completely. The second was to strengthen the body so it could fight for itself. Zsolt knew that there were some diseases that couldn't be cut out, not completely. The world was sick — tainted — and the clears and the docs and all of the other psyq orders were supposed to be dedicated to strengthening the world's body.

Instead, they seemed more interested in vying with each other for status and recruits. Zsolt heard the stories of these saintly Gifted defending humanity, but he'd seen that they were all too human. He relied on them to help Pat, and they failed.

Still, just because the psyqs hadn't found a cure didn't mean there wasn't one. And just because Pat was dead didn't mean Zsolt would give up on his friend. Varya and Zweidler claimed Zsolt was a latent, that he could become a psion. As much as he hated and mistrusted them and their manipulations, Zsolt realized that becoming a psyq might be the best way to honor his friend's memory. He didn't trust the docs; they'd lied to him from the beginning. Although Varya stuck by him through this mess, she just wanted to recruit him, too. He knew little enough about the other orders besides what he'd seen on holovids and in chipzines — who knew if they were any better?

Zsolt couldn't deny the impact of the strange visions he'd had, though. They'd helped him, revealed things he wouldn't have learned otherwise. Just imagine if he could harness the full potential of clairsentience! If he became a psion, Zsolt might discover what the others couldn't — or wouldn't. He would no longer be a pawn.

This would be his memorial to Pat, the proof of his loyalty. "No," he whispered, "I won't forget."

Zsolt didn't even wait for morning. He got into the Concorso and turned it back toward the Montessor Clinic. Maybe he could find Varya, still looking for that bus into Basel.

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## Into the New Millennium

### A LOOK AT THE EVENTS THAT HAVE SHAPED THE WORLD OF THE 22ND CENTURY.

— Warren Shaw, *Retrospective* © 2120 OBC

*In looking to our past, we see our future.*

— Proxy Otha Herzog, ISRA

The past two decades of this new century have seen more change and progress than had occurred in the preceding 100 years. The tremendous strife humanity suffered in the 21st century — from the rise and fall of novas to global warfare to political upheaval, from economic collapse to social change, served to temper us. Now, in 2120, humans are hardy, dauntless creatures with opportunities that previous generations could scarcely have dreamed.

Humanity reaches ever further into space, establishing and expanding colonies and orbital stations in distant solar systems. Tremendous scientific breakthroughs abound, from interstellar jump ships to other wonders of technology. Alien beings walk among us, teaching us their strange ways, and learning ours. Most significant of all, science has discovered the key to understanding the universe — a fundamental level of reality labeled *psi*.

Noetic science, the study of this phenomenon, establishes that psi operates on a basic physical level more sublime than the quantum universe of quarks and tachyons. Referred to as the *subquantum universe*, this energy has revolutionized modern science and changed the way we understand reality. When compared to documented quantum forces — gravity, weak and strong nuclear forces, electromagnetic energy — subquantum energy may be the missing link to a true Grand Unification Theory. Noetic energy particles permeate all things, from asteroids to grass, from alien races to human beings. All things are said to be a part of the universe, and the universe is supposed to be part of all things. With the discovery of this “implicate order” of

subquantum energy, that interconnection is revealed at last.

Ironically, this key was locked away within humanity all along. Noetic force, the powers of the mind, are a reality, as expressed in those rare individuals known as *psions*. As if created by some benevolent hand, psions can perceive — and even manipulate — the essence of the universe. While scientists theorize upon the ebb and flow of universal particles, psions *see* them, *feel* them and *direct* them. This unique perspective makes psions our best tools for discovering the truth of reality.

Yet as we stand on the edge of discovery, we also teeter on the brink of destruction. Humanity’s greatest threat has returned. Unique humans endowed with staggering powers arose like demigods in the early 21st century. Their powers were gained through a genetic anomaly, a tumorous mutation labeled the Mazarin-Rashoud node. As the mutation grew, so did these aberrant humans’ powers... and with it came madness. By the mid-21st century, war erupted between aberrants and the rest of humanity — the former striving for conquest, the latter fighting for survival. The Aberrant War ended almost 60 years ago, when humanity took extreme measures to force the aberrants’ departure to places literally beyond the stars.

It was a grim victory, for the war left a legacy of devastation that plunged the peoples of Earth into decades of strife and horror. The post-war Crash was the darkest time in modern human history. Millions died in the war and millions more perished in the ensuing riots and chaos. Much of the world’s financial and ecological resources were drained. Half of Earth’s arable land was corrupt and infertile. Untold trillions of dollars

R E T R O S P E C T I V E



in damage were done to cities and nations around the world. The OpNet, the global computer network, was in ruins and a staggering amount of recorded information on history, culture and society was lost. Political and religious differences flared to fervent hatred. North America and Europe, the two regions hit hardest by the Aberrant War, were relegated to the status of second-class powers as China and Brazil, and later the newly formed United African Nations, took their first tentative steps to lead the world out of the darkness.

After three decades, Earth's nations finally started making headway in putting the worst of the strife behind them. Space was the new frontier, where anyone from an individual to an entire population could start anew. Governments and corporations leapt into the stars, creating orbital research stations and mining platforms. They were followed by hardy explorers and colonists eager for a second chance. Since the dawn of the second Space Age in 2024, humanity has conquered Luna; launched shining orbital cities around the inner planets; mined rich ores from Mercury, Jupiter's moons and from the asteroid belt; initiated terraforming on Mars; and even advanced beyond our solar system to new worlds.

As before in humanity's long history, we endured sacrifice and loss to rekindle the burning flame of hope. The 22nd century dawned with new possibilities for all.

But clouds darkened this new dawn. On January 28, 2104, the aberrants returned. Their attack on Research Outpost Vesta, beyond Saturn, came without warning. The viciousness of that assault was matched only by the horrific degree to which the aberrants had mutated. Forty years in the void had transformed them into bizarre things from a low-budget holovid. But these monsters are real.

Still, the hardships of the past 60 years give us strength against our resurgent enemies. The strides we have made to rebuild Earth civilization, restore what was destroyed in the first Aberrant War, and extend our reach into space make humans a force to be reckoned with.

And this time we have the psions — nothing less than the power of mind over matter — whose powers are the product of natural human evolution and controlled scientific process, not the random genetic mutation of aberrants. Psions have been humanity's greatest defenders, ever since they first appeared to combat an aberrant assault in 2106. While currently less than one percent of the eight billion human souls scattered across Earth and the near stars, these protectors are a powerful force.

Yet psions are far more than protectors against aberrant incursion. Without them, we would never have made first contact with an alien race, the *qin*. At once intriguingly similar and disturbingly different from us, *qin* have a civilization that rivals our own — though one based entirely on biotechnology. Aside from the countless mysteries that exist between our races, humans and *qin* share a fundamental curiosity about the universe.

No less mysterious than the *qin* but far more aggressive are the pseudo-reptilian race labeled *chromatics*. The creatures' raid in 2113 on the Karroo Mining Colony near the Crab Nebula was the first hint of their existence. We do not yet know the *chromatics*' motives, and we won't until we re-establish contact with our outposts lying vulnerable in the distant reaches of space.

The 22nd century is a singular time in human history. The danger of aberrants and *chromatics* and countless other threats is matched only by the potential presented by psions, interstellar jump ships and the myriad advances that occur each day. It is a time in which humanity must unite to drive back the threats that plague us so that we may discover the greater truths of the universe, once and for all — and our place within in.

R E T R O S P E C T I V E

## HOPE • SACRIFICE • UNITY

*In a universe of dangerous interplanetary travel, first contact with strange, alien races, the emergence among humanity of mysterious noetic powers, and the rediscovered menace of the aberrant horde that endangers all life, the Æon Trinity is a force for good, dedicated to the protection of Earth. In a time of great uncertainty and apprehension, Æon stands at the forefront of humanity, both protecting and leading the way into a bold future. We lead the way in hopes of unifying all people to face the destiny that lies before us.*

## THE ÆON TRINITY

Greetings, citizen. You have been contacted because you show qualities that are in great demand in the modern age. The Æon Trinity has been dedicated to the protection and service of humanity for the past 200 years, and it endures solely because of courageous and dedicated individuals like yourself.

It matters not whether you come from affluence or poverty; whether you received advanced schooling or were educated on the streets; whether you are one of the so-called “Gifted,” a psion, or possess “only” your native wit and cunning. At Æon, we value all life and see the worth in all individuals. Your background and abilities are useful to our organization — indeed, to all humanity — because they are unique to you. Æon exists to train and assist you in realizing your full potential, so that, in turn, you may aid humanity in the current turbulent times. Æon is a society that you can turn to and rely on in the hard and happy times ahead.

The Æon Trinity was founded in the 20th century and has worked with individuals and organizations ever since to help humanity fulfill its destiny. Now in the 22nd century, we counsel, represent and coordinate virtually every world and space government, organized religion, metacorporation and psi order. We do not dictate, we counsel. It is said that Æon is the right hand of the world’s decision makers, but we do not control any party or individual. We offer a wealth of expertise and information for a common goal: unity.

## Organization

Æon services humanity through three divisions, established at the organization’s inception. Although these branches’ duties and operating parameters have changed with time, they retain their original designations in honor of those who came before.

• **Neptune** is our administrative branch. It is the “face” of Æon, and interacts the most with governments, corporations, psi orders and all others who seek peace and prosperity for humankind.

• **Triton** is our research and investigation department. It is the “eyes” of Æon; its members plumb the mysteries of the universe, keep a vigilant watch for aberrant attacks and solve crimes committed against humanity.

• **Proteus** is our field insertion and operations department. It is the “hand” of Æon, consisting of special agents — “neutral” and psion alike — who actively protect Earth and its peoples.

As an ally of Æon, you may belong to one or more of these branches, and are thus one of the guardians of our age. The Trinity has members in countries throughout the world and across explored space. You are counseled with and deferred to in all matters of defense and the common good, from defending against the aberrant menace to receiving ambassadors of alien races, such as the qin. You are a power for change, a means to achieve unity and strength.

## History

The Æon Trinity is the catalyst that helps hold together the psi orders, the Earth and space governments, and even humans and aliens. But the Trinity did not always have this honorable and weighty role in the universe, or even among humanity. To understand Æon’s purpose and direction in modern times, you must look back to early 20th-century Chicago.

Æon’s founder, Maxwell Anderson Mercer — inventor, businessman and millionaire — established what was then called the Æon Society for Gentlemen. Mercer had a vision of the future. He understood that humanity’s development up to that era had taken a slow and gradual path, but with upcoming innovations in technology, introductions of social reforms and the blossoming of human potential, upstanding men and women, the brilliant and motivated, would be needed to lead humanity into the future. This society recognized the dawning of a new age, one of hope, to which it could give direction. And though the society was perhaps named in the naive spirit of an innocent time, the changes



that it anticipated would indeed come about, whether in a thousand or a handful of years.

Mercer's vision proved accurate when the first extranormal people emerged. These rising stars were new and vibrant, inspired to battle corruption and help those in need. They were the protectors of their era, and the Æon Society worked with them to improve the lot of 20th-century life. It was a new Golden Age of heroes and potential — of hope.

And yet, that hope was dashed. Something in the inherent being of Earth's heroes went awry. The abilities that marked the first champions of the Æon Society changed with those who followed. Powers grew greater than had ever been known before. The inventiveness and wisdom that founded the society were abandoned in favor of raw power as new individuals arose and frowned on Æon and its goals. These beings, first called novas and later labeled aberrants, wallowed in their own abilities and used them to satisfy their own desires, without a unifying vision of what was best for humanity.

Æon sought to offer these beings guidance, to reason with them and give them purpose, but we failed. We failed the novas, we failed humanity, and we failed ourselves. Perhaps it was hubris on our part, perhaps we did not understand the full scope of what novas could become. Regardless, the novas became drunk on their own power and their increasing capabilities soon outstripped

anyone's expectations — even sanity itself. In the end, the abusers lost control of themselves.

We are all familiar with the tragic Aberrant War, which resulted in the deaths of millions of humans and mere handfuls of aberrants. Yet from that horrible loss, good did arise. Æon recognized its next mission for the good of humanity: sacrifice. If the aberrants were to be stopped and humanity preserved, the society would have to give wholly of itself. Society members in China were instrumental in the development of arms sufficient to force the aberrants to stand down. Special agents who stood against the aberrants reasoned with their enemies, convincing them to seek alternatives to life on Earth, places where they could use their powers and fulfill their own destinies, not at the expense of beings less fortunate. To lead Earth's tormentors by example, many of Æon's agents left with them for other worlds via the strange warping ability that a handful of aberrants possessed. It was, indeed, a time of sacrifice for all.

In the years following the Aberrant War, the remaining members of the Æon Society — a group bound by the example set by those who sacrificed themselves for Earth's good — dedicated itself to rebuilding Earth society. The depredations of war had left many areas in ruins, and those lucky enough to survive struggled to start their lives again. The ongoing sacrifices of Æon's members went far in restoring the once-beautiful Earth. Records of our cultures and collective history were



ATTACK ON VESTA — CAMERA 14

## PROTEUS ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Chinese space program and aberrant resurgence  
**From:** Proxy Rebecca Bue Li, Ministry of Noetic Affairs  
**To:** Dana Boresheltov, Æon Trinity/Neptune Division  
**Encryption:** SPE  
**Transmission type:** textfile  
**Date:** 11:13:42 12.9.2105

Agent Boresheltov, first my thanks for your encouragement of the Chinese government to recognize my native Philippines and its significance in Chinese policy and necessity to the Chinese space program. Now that two Chinese outposts have been attacked, I will take the initiative in response to the apparent aberrant return.

As the Chinese posed the Ultimatum to rid the Earth of aberrants decades ago, so will we do again today. Our Ultimatum will be made with psions, and the Ministry shall lead the way. Ministry telepaths will make this declaration: Leave Earth alone once and for all, or be destroyed.

Chinese destroyer convoys are dispatched and prepared to stage strikes if the aberrant response is hostile. Events are set in motion. I trust you will communicate word to the other proxies... should we need them.

hope for new life. The defeated Earth needed time to heal its wounds. Space offered resources that humanity needed desperately, not only housing and opportunities for work on the many stations and colonies that were not damaged in the war, but resources that could not be plumbed from an overtaxed planet.

Æon's role in this second pioneering of space was one of assistance and support. In the closed communities of space, human rights and needs had to be protected. Justice had to be upheld. The mistakes and abuses of the past had to be remembered, if for nothing other than to say, "never again." Thus with Æon's help, humanity and Earth were made whole again.

It was then that humanity was invited to take its next bold step into the future. The proxies, humans with incredible powers bestowed by mysterious benefactors, emerged and contacted those people — now called psions — who would become their agents in the next

gathered and restored after the massive destruction of the OpNet. Two decades of research by Neptune and Triton divisions restored a global electronic library by piecing together paper texts and fragmented computer files. Urban centers blossomed as people were gathered together where resources and programs could be shared by all. Others preferred the isolation of rural existence, and were let go with society's blessing.

Space proved to be humanity's best

great age. The proxies' gifts awoke powers not seen among humans in two centuries. These powers were similar to those seen in the early 20th and early 21st century. Yet the powers were also new and unique, distinct from the quantum forces that novas wielded. Humanity had reached a new stage of development, it seemed, and Æon was there to give it direction. Æon brought the proxies together, pooled their resources, and helped introduce their orders to an awestruck world.

### The Modern Era

This perhaps is a third Golden Age, for it marks a new direction and purpose for humanity: to unite, to rally behind Earth's new heroes and form one people for the advancement of all.

The need for that unity is made all the more clear by scientific research into psi powers themselves. Noetic research suggests that these abilities tap into a previously unknown subquantum energy, a universe that unites all aspects of what we consider reality. Like gravity, noetics proves to be an undeniable force of nature, one that affects all things.

Here, then, is an opportunity to follow new leaders, to unite all countries, to bring together all organizations under the banner of the psions, their orders and Æon. No single part of the whole — psion, human, country, colony, order — would be above the rest. A new Golden Age, indeed.

And as if to confirm this need, as if to ratify this show of hands for unity, our old

## PROTEUS ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Chinese space program and aberrant resurgence  
**From:** Dana Boresheltov, Æon Trinity/Neptune Division  
**To:** Rebecca Bue Li, Ministry of Noetic Affairs  
**Encryption:** DSE  
**Transmission type:** textfile  
**Date:** 03:18:11 12.9.2105

Negative, Proxy Bue Li. I repeat, negative. The Chinese destroyer fleet will stand down. This was not part of the prepared arrangement. Æon Trinity has precise plans for the integration of the psion orders. You will not pre-empt those plans, nor stage any action against aberrant attacks without expressed commands from the Trinity. You are advised to remember the means by which your order was recognized by the Chinese government. Furthermore, as it is clear that you have used your abilities to integrate your order into the Chinese space program, I advise you to review the reasons why the Chinese fleet stood down after the aberrant War... and consider who helped them make that decision.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PSION

— Orgotek psion Carlos Peralta, recipient of Commendation for Valor, as interviewed by Dazyl Grenich, *Lifestyles* © 2120 MMI

Do I get scared? Sure, we all do. We have these powers, but we're just like everyone else — we have families, friends, pets. That's why we do it all. I want to protect my family, my country — my species! Psions use their powers to protect Earth and everyone in space. You would do the same if you had the chance, what with the aberrants attacking and everything you love at stake.

What will I do next? Orgotek had a big part in getting the jump ships created — we can finally go back into deep space after the teleporters disappeared and the aberrants cut us off from our colonies. I want to be a part of that. No one knows what's happened out there. They say that chromatics and some other alien race is still out there, doing who knows what.

ISRA wants to get to the qin homeworld to get the ambassadors stranded here back to their people, and to bring our ambassadors home.

Of course, there are the aberrants, too. I've only seen three, and came within reach of one.... It's a hard thing to do... but if I don't do it, who's going to protect my family — or yours?

enemies have returned. The aberrants are back and loom at the borders of known space, just as they promised when the last, spiteful one of them was shown the way to a better life on his own.

And new enemies have arisen as well. A violent race of aliens known so far only as chromatics has staged raids on our distant colonies and space outposts. What is this new menace and what is it capable of? We don't yet know, but rest assured that we will find out.

Now is indeed a time of unity, for humanity and for any alien allies whom we can rally to the cause. With your help, and the help of Æon, we will come together to face our common foe. With our combined strength, we will reunite with our colonies orphaned in deep space by aberrant attacks. We will travel to the worlds of our alien allies from whom the aberrants have severed us. The third age, the age of unity, is upon us. It is up to us — and you — to achieve it.

### SUBJECT: DAMN!

"The lady doth protest too much, methinks."

This kind of propaganda worries me, yeh? Sad part is, normal folks know so little about Æon that they don't know enough bad about the group to doubt its word. If I hacked into the OpNet routers tomorrow with proof that I was responsible for the greatest events of the past 20 years, I guarantee folks would flock to me — the desperate ones anyway. Now bring that out 200 years and imagine the following that the Æon Trinity could generate.

Do we want to make an issue, though? Æon isn't everything that it claims to be here, but it's not a bad thing, either. But, still — "Æon is the hope of the future?" I don't remember any Æon agents being around when that aberrant got the jump on my team and killed Valez. Æon was nowhere in sight when the jump ship orbital-manufacturing platform was blown into so much plasteel and biopaste.

As far as I can tell, Æon is little more than a PR firm for the psi orders and a few countries and colonies. It's no stronger than we are, and we're no stronger than it (and maybe we need each other as a result). I do know that the orders are out there in the light and taking the heat from the public when things go wrong, while Æon sits in the shadows and plays at calling the shots.

**From:** R. Linsey Marsden  
**To:** P. Archer  
**Encryption:** DSE  
**Transmission type:** textfile  
**Date:** 14:02:49 6.11.2119

## PSI AND PSI ORDERS

# PSI

Noetic powers have been relegated to the realms of myth and speculation for centuries. As civilization progressed into the modern age and technology came to dominate popular culture, such speculation was polarized between scientific skeptics and those who believed fully in powers of the mind.

People were enthralled by anyone proclaiming such fantastic abilities, as though there was a deep subconscious need to believe that things like telepathy were possible. A close-minded scientific community refused to acknowledge the existence of psi powers, debunking frauds whenever possible. Strange incidents and inexplicable demonstrations of power galvanized believers, but were deemed unreliable by “expert authorities” even in the 21st century. The rise of aberrant powers diverted psi research when inconclusive attempts were made to quantify the effects of the Mazarin-Rashoud node beyond an interaction with strong and weak nuclear forces.

In 2106, humanity confirmed the existence of psionic capabilities. The leaders of secret orders of psi-active individuals addressed a stunned populace in the aftermath of the historic Sydney spaceport raid. These so-called proxies elaborated on the displays of power that their followers had already made, and promised the world that the orders were committed to defending humanity against all aberrants.

Though we know the proxies and their followers had acted secretly since 2103, we cannot confirm why they withheld knowledge of their existence until the now-historic raid. After a closed UN address and with the Æon Trinity’s assistance, these “Gifted” began integrating themselves into human society.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF PSI

A psion may achieve harmony with the subquantum universe — or the implicate order, as it is also known — through training, meditation and by opening himself to the sublime power that exists throughout the universe. He senses the ebb and flow of energy through all things, and his own metaphysical place in the universe.

Noetics, the study of psionics, is but a fledgling science, but it has confirmed that psi connects everything; no action occurs independent of other forces. Just as

gravity exercises a pull, however infinitesimal, on all objects in the universe, so too does psi have a pervasive effect. Psions who grasp how the subquantum universe operates understand that all actions have innumerable reactions. An individual’s seemingly inconsequential behavior can have tremendous impact on the universe as a whole.

Understanding the connections between all things and the limitless ramifications to all actions is humbling. Indeed, some psions who have had such insights have left their orders and forsaken their powers altogether. Others have suffered mental illnesses, from mild cases of agoraphobia to severe cases of paranoia. Some have even suffered physical harm from sudden changes in the subquantum stratum. Vitakinesis users and noeticists are called upon with increasing frequency to combat conditions that can result when psions open themselves to the entirety of the universe.

The stresses of psionic attunement and the development of mental ailments, such as noetic psychosis (also called burnout), that result from psi powers have moved a small but vocal portion of the noetic community to urge caution in the creation of new psions. Scientists

### PROTEUS ARCHIVE

[ORGOTEK] PROXY ALEX CASSEL,  
PRIVATE ADDRESS TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL

— Excerpt: *textfile*, 21.9.2106

We’re not aberrants. We’re not a bunch of power-mad freaks hell-bent on world domination. We’re human, just like you. We’ve been given a wonderful gift, though — a new way of being human, if you will.

Our benefactors have done nothing less than unlock a potential that’s been buried deep in the human psyche for millennia — and for that, humanity should be grateful. We’ve revealed the secrets of psionic powers, and we’re here to share that knowledge with mankind. This isn’t some bizarre mutation like the aberrants had. These abilities are a natural result of human evolution.

Whoa! Hang on! I understand that, despite the Sydney vidcasts shown just a few hours ago, this may be hard to believe. That’s why we’re here, ladies and gentlemen. We’re here to prove what we can do, and that we’re on your side. Look, let’s try a little demonstration. You’ll get a kick out of this. I know I do.



## PSI AND PSI ORDERS

### Understanding Psi's True Nature

— ISRA Proxy Otha Herzog,  
Guest Address,  
the first Noetic Conference,  
Olympus, 9.10.2109

You look for a greater comprehension of the energy we know as psi, and of your place within it. Perhaps I can help you understand.

Think of us all as eddies in a river. Those without the gift of psi cannot see this river. To them, it is as nothing. They focus on the pebbles at the river's bottom, at the fish swimming against the invisible current, at the debris carried on the surface. Such things are reality to these people.

Those of us fortunate enough to emerge whole from the Prometheus chamber know that, while the pebbles, fish and debris are reality, they are sustained and unified by the water that surrounds them. As they are to the river, we are to the implicate order of energy. We see the water flowing at the same time that we are in the flow. Although we see ripples and whirlpools, and each is distinct and unique, they — and we — are all still part of the river.

However, there is a second concept that is equally important: Psi is not a gentle, contemplative state of being. It is a potent natural force, as subtle as gravity, as powerful as nuclear energy. A river may carry you calmly and serenely, then without warning plunge you into dangerous rapids and thundering falls. So it is with psi.

Psionic energy is not a tool to be used or a device to be manipulated. It is a force of nature that defies our control. We merely tap into it, drawing power from it when it will allow. Nature suffers us to exist. Nature could destroy us utterly if it wanted to. We must be careful not to overstep our bounds.

speculate that humanity might have stumbled across psi powers before it was prepared to control them, and that using psionics could cause far more harm than good.

To allay such fears, most orders allow the Æon Trinity to conduct psychological tests on latent and existing psions. It is hoped that such procedures will isolate potentially unstable Gifted so that they may be treated before they harm themselves or others.

### USING PSI

Psionic manipulation is equal parts instinct and training. New psions are taught certain standard effects, but having an innate feel for how to direct psi flow is vital to achieving the results desired.

Each psion describes attunement to the subquantum universe differently. Some relate it to sensing a body part; you don't have to see your leg to know it's there. Others equate it to trying to remember a word that's on the tip of your tongue. You know it's there, you just have to concentrate to conjure it up. Yet others describe their psi attunement as feeling utterly sure of something, a confidence that words cannot express.

The Gifted feel everything around them. Psions sense the resonance of all the people and objects they encounter. That energy isn't tangible, but it is there nonetheless. Using psi involves focusing on that resonance; the psion connects to the energy flow in and around others. He doesn't control this force as much as he allows it to permeate him, and his will channels it to affect the universe.

### NOETIC SCIENCE

Prior to the psions' emergence, a small but dedicated group of scientists was already investigating psi potential. Such research, then known as "psychotronics," bore a distinct stigma. The established scientific community's reluctance to embrace new methods and theories relegated psychotronics to the status of science's whipping boy.

Once psi was an indisputable, proven quantity, scientists were forced to change perspective. The result was the development of noetics, or the science of the psionic mind. This "new" scientific field was founded on equal parts quantum physics, spiritualism and psychotronics (although students of psychotronics claim it as the father of noetic science.)

**Mial Közs,**  
ISRA member,  
on channeling  
noetic energy

"It's better than sex!  
Well, just as good."

## PSI AND PSI ORDERS

Noetic study proved that psionic powers do not function exclusive of the laws of physics and nature. They simply operate on a level of which no one had previously been aware. Once their eyes were opened, so to speak, noeticists began looking for and finding correlations between quantum physics, genetic biology and psionic powers. The past decade has seen a redefinition of fundamental theories, and progress toward confirmation of a grand unified theory of forces.

Awareness of psi inevitably led to the discovery of an entire subquantum realm of corresponding fundamental particles, dubbed "psions" (a term later given to the individuals who manipulate the particles). Joining photons, gravitons, leptons and quarks, these psions proved to be the missing pieces of an elegant foundation for the universe. With the establishment of psi as a new, fifth force, gravity, electromagnetism and weak and strong nuclear forces formed a convincing model for the hypothetical Grand Unification Theory. Since its initial proposal 10 years ago, the theory of noetics has proved to be the key to understanding the universe and our place in it.

With theoretical research comes applied investigation and experimentation. Noeticists have confirmed that the latent capacity to manifest psi abilities can be sensed through use of certain psi powers, or by using biotechnological survey equipment. Indeed, beyond simply detecting psi potential, scans applied to a latent can sometimes discern the psi aptitude to which the subject is best suited. However, the specific genetic differences that separate latents from neutrals still escape noeticists' recognition and understanding.

Noetics also faces the challenge of understanding the biotech devices that psions use. "Bioware" is fascinating not only for its capacity to augment or duplicate psionic abilities, but for its apparent origin as knowledge gifted to humanity by our

benefactors. As hard technology is based on physics, biotechnology is rooted in noetics.

### BIOTECHNOLOGY

Biotechnology as we know it in the current era is a product of noetic development. The concepts behind the technology derive from the psionic ability to recognize and manipulate the subquantum energy flowing through all living things. By directing these energies, psions can transform living matter into technological tools. Gifted from the Norça and Orgotek, in particular, can modify and control biotech to a degree even other psions envy.

Such devices can be used unto themselves, but they are often combined with conventional hardtech. Biotech use is limited mostly to psions; the capability to use biotechnology beyond basic devices requires energy that only the Gifted possess and can control. Operating even basic psiware applications can exhaust the mind of a normal human. At present, trying to use advanced psiware has been known to drive normals insane or even kill them.

### "A Rose By Any Other Name"

— Warren Shaw,  
*Retrospective* © 2110 OBC

With the quantification of psi, it became possible to create a scientific classification for individuals possessed of the ability to utilize noetic energy. Noetic science labeled them *Homo sapiens mentis*, beings still indisputably human, but possessed of a genetic makeup modified from that of other humans.

Human vernacular has relegated "*mentis*" to scientific papers. Other labels, from the prosaic "Gifted" to the derogatory "psyq," are used. In the end, most people seem comfortable with "psion," despite its intended use as a term for elements of psi energy, not psi users.

Likewise, terminology used to refer to those without noetic abilities ranges from uninspired to rude. "Neutral" is currently in vogue, although psions have been known to call the rest of us "neuts," "norms," "blanks," "empties" and other names inappropriate to this broadcast. It's unfortunate that mankind feels it necessary to create such artificial labels, for in the end, aren't we all human?

### TRITON ARCHIVE

**Subject:** "Psion"  
**From:** Dr. Elena Subashi, PhD  
**To:** Dr. Cecil Walker, PhD  
**Security:** SPE  
**Transmission type:** textfile  
**Date:** 14:32:12 4.9.2107

Perhaps the most irritating thing about all this is that we coined the term "psion" to refer to "psi energy quanta." Leave it to the byte-hungry media to bastardize it into a term for individuals with psi capability. Well, I'll be damned if we're going to change the scientific term simply to avoid confusion among the unwashed masses.



## PSI AND PSI ORDERS

### A BIOTECH PRIMER

Biotech falls into two main categories: inert or “standard” biotech, and living “psiware” (also called “bioapps,” or biological appliances). All biotech originates from enormous cultures of undifferentiated living cells, called matrices. Matrix cells are processed by large organic computers (referred to, simply enough, as “matrix computers”), which stimulate the cells to grow along a programmed template. This growth results in either a structure with organic origins but functionally the same as a hardtech equivalent, or a quasi-living structure that continues to grow and renew itself.

Standard biotech is handled no differently from hardtech. The important distinction is that biotech is a product of life and organic growth; hardtech, in contrast, is a product of mechanical processes. Psiware requires special maintenance, regardless of whether it is an appliance, weapon, vehicle or other creation. The simplest bioapp may require nothing more than occasional cleaning, while intricate devices may require the removal of excess cells, oiling to maintain surface cells, comfortable bedding or periodic immersions in nutrient baths — “feeding,” as it were.

Living, self-renewing psiware used in toxic or highly radioactive environments (unprotected space, the colonies, or Bahrain) must be scanned regularly, either by a competent noetic technician or by psiware designed for such maintenance. Cellular mutations may develop that interfere with the devices’ functions if they are not treated immediately.

### FORMATTING PSIWARE

Each piece of psiware possesses its own noetic field. The bioapp resonates with a low-level aura related to its component materials. A psion manipulates this field to activate a device. Normal people can use bioapps with weak fields, as everyone resonates with at least some degree of noetic energy, even if it’s not enough to possess telekinesis or to read minds.

Psiware can be used at one of two levels: formatted or unformatted. Unformatted bioapps perform only limited functions. Normal people can use these devices without suffering burnout.

Formatting a bioapp is accomplished by injecting a small amount of a psion’s DNA into the device. Enzymes

### Macrotech versus Microtech

— Dr. Kieran Baxter, *The Technological Age*  
© 2110 Walkabout Press

Psions have developed only a few means by which to turn organic materials into technology, resulting in four basic cellular matrix templates: bacterial, plasmal, floral and faunal. Most biotech is created using floral and faunal matrices, as these are the best understood by noetic scientists. Early experiments with bacterial and plasmal matrices have been frozen for future study.

Most available biotech can be considered “macrotech” — large, obvious objects, like guns, powered armor, vehicles or medical scanners. In general, such macrotech is non- or minimally invasive to the user’s body. Macrotech is relatively easy to create and maintain.

Also contained within matrix computers’ organic memory banks are templates for bacterial and plasmal “microtech” — microscopic organisms; biological nanotech, if you will. Microtech can do things like form a thin layer over the skin to enhance electrokinesis emissions, perform microsurgery with vitakinesis guidance, or assist in cellular alteration via biokinesis.

Microtech research is hindered by concerns about the very nature of the technology. Devices of this sort can require invasive applications, and can give rise to unforeseen side effects and problems. In addition, once they’re introduced, how can they be removed?

contained in the central matrix break down the DNA, absorbing gene groups that are instrumental to psi activity and integrating into the psiware’s own DNA. This alters the device’s noetic field to resonate in sequence with the psion’s. This synergy creates a link between the psion and the bioapp, allowing him to operate it. Some devices can be formatted for use by multiple psions; each person simply introduces a DNA sample.

## THE PSI ORDERS

Everyone knows what the psi orders are... but ask for a detailed explanation and odds are you'll get a blank stare and a mumbled, "Well, they're the *orders*." At best, Joe Hologram — the average individual — can state that each order was established around a particular psi aptitude or path of noetic development (although he wouldn't use those words).

In other words, the orders have done an exceptional job of integrating themselves into the social and political landscape. Their existence is accepted by the majority of normal humans, and their activities are mythologized or rationalized thanks to the efforts of the Æon Trinity and an army of media wizards. Questioning the motives and actions of the orders is like questioning whether you really need oxygen. Both are considered essential for humanity's survival.

There were eight orders when they made their first public appearance in 2106 — after operating in secret for years — the Æsculapian Order, Chitra Bhanu, the Interplanetary School for Research and Advancement (ISRA), the Legions, the Ministry of Noetic Affairs, the Norça, Orgotek and Upeo wa Macho. Tragedy has whittled their ranks, however; one order has been exterminated and another vanished.

In 2109, the proxies stunned the psion community with the revelation that Chitra Bhanu — the order that researched the mysterious quantakinesis aptitude — was in league with the resurgent aberrants. The other seven orders united to exterminate their traitorous brethren. The operation was completed by the spring of 2110, yet rumors persist to present day that more than a few Chitra Bhanu (and perhaps even their proxy) escaped.

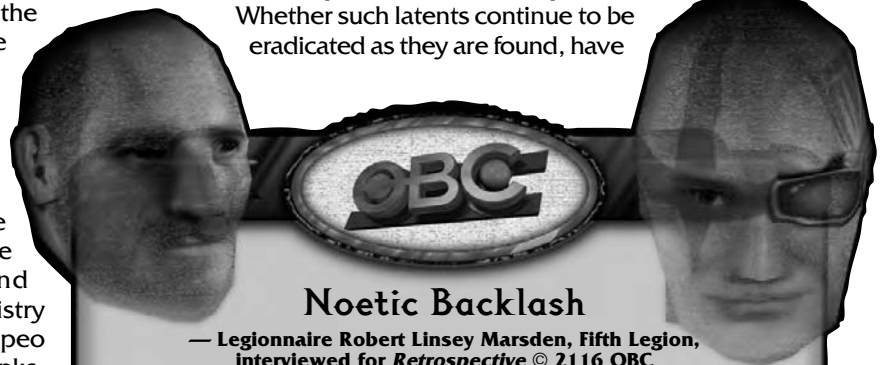
A second disaster struck the orders four years later, when, despite the valiant efforts of Orgotek strike teams, an aberrant attack brought the *Esperanza* orbital station crashing to Earth in the heart of Europe. Every psion (and a number of latents) felt the tremendous noetic shock wave that resulted from the impact and the millions of deaths that it caused. A backlash caused by the mass disappearance of the entire Upeo wa Macho — the order established around the rare aptitude of teleportation — thundered

through the subquantum stratum an instant later. Even today, many highly attuned psions still suffer noetic trauma resulting from those combined events.

It was long accepted that *Esperanza's* destruction (and that of a good deal of France) was a decoy that allowed aberrants time to strike at their real targets: the Upeo. Regardless of speculation, the fact remains that the teleporters vanished, and their absence crippled extrasolar expansion for half a decade.

It is interesting to note that, once each order was gone, no individuals were found with strong latency in either quantakinesis or teleportation.

Whether such latents continue to be eradicated as they are found, have



### Noetic Backlash

— Legionnaire Robert Linsey Marsden, Fifth Legion,  
interviewed for *Retrospective* © 2116 OBC

Psi energy is a tickle in your mind, 'cept it's not really your mind, if you get me. It's something more than that. Your mind and body all in one. Now, if somebody dies nearby or an explosion goes off, you feel it like a smack to the back of your head. Nothing to get twisted about, usually, but sometimes backlash can give you a nasty headache. Most times it's over in a flash — an instant of hell.

When something really rears up — the natural way of things gets fucked royally — you don't feel a tickle, you feel a knife stabbing straight through you. The day France was destroyed, the backlash was about as far from a headache as a solar flare is from a match.

I was in BT — basic training — outside Perth when the shit hit the rotor. From, what — twenty thousand miles away? — I felt it. Like my entire body was a single giant nerve ending being stomped on. It lasted just a few seconds, but it felt like forever. Afterward, I had the worst hangover of my life — without even the pleasure of having a single drop.

Know what the kicker was? I was just some newbie grunt. I'd barely started to understand the — what do ya call it? — "implicate order." The *Esperanza* backlash laid out our drill sergeant, an old Zen master. He was unconscious for two whole days, and that was just the start of his problems.

They say the better you get with psi, the more susceptible you are to that sort of thing. Sure as hell hope I never get as good as Sergeant Tobashi. He still can't move the right side of his body.



their own supremacy. It's just as plausible that the proxies are simply the most powerful psionic individuals the world has ever known.

Whatever the truth behind the proxies' powers, they lead their respective orders with varying degrees of control, and seem united in their dedication to drive off the aberrants.

The orders themselves are socio-political organizations, with autonomy over the creation, training and deployment of psions. Each order is responsible for locating

disappeared too, or are triggered to one of the remaining six aptitudes is unknown.

The Chitra Bhanu tragedy and the Upeo's vanishing injured the psi orders' public image, as has a recent scandal — the Huang-Marr conspiracy. In 2120, combined Æon and psi order investigations revealed that certain members of the Æsculapians and Orgotek were engaging in illicit research — implanting quantum-tainted biotechnology into involuntary psion subjects. The news was especially damning because the Huang-Marr project was no fringe experiment by an unbalanced handful. Clear evidence places authorization and funding of the covert tests at the feet of ranking individuals within the heart of the Æsculapian Order.

The orders have been aggressive and vocal in damning Huang-Marr. Still, when viewed in combination with the previous two events, there is no disguising that the orders are not perfect. Despite the crucial need humanity has for the Gifted, many throughout society — even psions — find it increasingly difficult to overlook the orders' failures and setbacks.

## FUNCTION

Each order was established and is still administered (or ruled, some say) by a single proxy — a psion with abilities far beyond those of even the most accomplished of his or her kind. Theories from reasonable to ridiculous abound regarding the powers of the proxies. The paranoid and conspiracy theorists claim that after the proxies underwent their own transformations, they diluted the processes used on their followers to ensure

humans with appropriate latent talents and convincing those humans to undergo the conversion process, known as the Prometheus Effect. This isn't usually a hard sell, as the media has done an exceptional job portraying psions as something that *everyone* should want to be. Psionic powers, wealth and the chance to save the universe — literally. Who *wouldn't* want to be one of the Gifted?

Methods used to seek out latents vary with the order, but typically involve search teams and testing centers. The majority of humanity has the same basic degree of resonance that flows through everything in the universe. Those with a stronger amount of psi who test as viable latents don't register an inclination for a certain aptitude; they simply show the potential to channel psi energy. A latent who exhibits a noticeable tendency for a specific aptitude is often routed to the appropriate order regardless of which group found him. Æon Trinity's Neptune Division also facilitates trade and transfer of latents among the orders, although the Ministry and Norça have not or do not participate in this program. The Ministry has only recently offered to exchange latents with aptitudes other than telepathy. Norça continue their solitary and secretive recruitment, exclusive of the other orders. Acceptance into an order varies, often requiring more than just possessing psi latency. Some pose rigorous entrance tests, some refuse to promote latents of certain backgrounds (whether cultural, religious or racial), while others welcome potential psions of any temperament or background.

The orders use the same kind of technology to transform latents into psions, though each can trigger

## PSI AND PSI ORDERS

only a certain aptitude. The process involves enclosing the latent in a “conversion tank,” referred to as a Prometheus chamber. Each order has its own chamber (kept in individual, secured locations). Someday humans may manifest active psi powers spontaneously, but until that time the Prometheus chambers are key to the birth of psions.

The different aptitudes allow psions to access and channel noetic energy in different ways. The order that takes the latent and puts him through its Prometheus Effect dictates the aptitude that the person manifests. Research indicates that psions may sometimes manifest rudimentary levels of aptitudes other than the ones in which they're triggered. Most noeticists state that, while primitive expressions of multiple aptitudes are possible, humans simply aren't equipped to manifest multiple aptitudes fully.

The orders' primary focus is defense against aberrants and other hostiles, but they also pursue secondary goals. For instance, all electrokinetics are trained in how to use their powers against aberrants, but the order that triggered them, Orgotek, also has a thriving business in biotech development. A number of normal humans assist in the orders' “mundane” pursuits. Though comprising a significant percentage of their respective orders and growing in number, the Gifted still make up a small portion of the human population.

Almost all psions, even those who work for the Æon Trinity in some capacity, remain associated with the orders that created them. The benefits are good, the company is amenable, backup is usually available when danger strikes. It is by no means uncommon for a psion to move on to another order once they have learned the parameters of their aptitude. Not all orders encourage this — Norça is the most extreme example, employing suspect efforts to recover agents who depart the order without the proxy's explicit blessing. It's most

### The Prometheus Effect: An Analytical Presentation

— Excerpt: The third Noetic Conference,  
Olympus, 6.10. 2111

The Prometheus Effect, labeled such by the Æsculapian Proxy Dr. Matthieu Zweidler, remains a mystery even to most psions. The actual mechanics of the process involve the latent imbibing biofluid, then being immersed in a gel-filled psiware tank. The subject falls into a fugue state while her body is infused with nano-organisms. A psion monitors the subject through a biolink and follows a very precise process to trigger the latent to a full psion.

In the orders' early days, proxies were involved personally in each latent's awakening. Most have passed on the responsibility to a few key underlings. From what we are told, only del Fuego, the Norça Proxy, still monitors his psions' transformations personally.

New psions describe their emergence from the fugue state, as their bodies rise dripping from the tanks, as being reborn. Powers are typically uncontrollable but weak for the first few days after being “triggered.” Control and strength derive from familiarity with and training in the psions' new abilities.



“P ROMETHEUS UNBOUND”>>> D AVE A.I. >>> COLLECTION OF DR. MATTHIEU ZWEIDLER



## PSI AND PSI ORDERS



common for psions to switch order allegiances for personal — or financial — reasons. The Æon Trinity has taken a direct hand in brokering these personnel exchanges, which seems to have eased relations between the orders in general.

While each order has a central base of operations where its influence is most apparent, they all maintain global — and interplanetary — operations. The Æsculapian Order, for example, is based near Basel, Switzerland, but has a secondary center of operations in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and numerous clinics in over 40 countries, on Luna, and on most human colonies.

### PSI ORDERS AND THE ÆON TRINITY

The Trinity has offered assistance and guidance to the psi orders since their very inception. While the majority of psions do not perform missions for Æon directly, virtually all interact with it on some level.

Psions become associated with Æon through a number of means. Although the orders understand that working together is important, they all have a tendency to perform independently of the others, and each considers its policies to be the best. Who can say what

the result of the *Esperanza* attack would have been had the orders been able to mount a unified defense?

Æon's most important function in the current time is coordinating the orders. The Trinity organizes most missions involving psions from multiple orders. Those who work well together are offered extended assignments. As long as the orders approve of such cooperative programs, the Trinity provides the majority of each psion's wages and benefits.

Solitary psions may find their way to Æon as well, either through freelance work or as parts of Triton Division's investigations. These individuals are offered positions in teams of like-minded psions. Even those free agents inclined to work with normals or to work solo are accommodated when it's feasible.

A fringe benefit that results from working with the Trinity is a sense of normalcy for the anything-but-normal psions. Æon is one of the few institutions that brings together not only psions of various orders, but also humans of all backgrounds. Many Gifted feel uncomfortable around neutrals, and while most orders strive to alleviate this separation anxiety, only Æon can provide psions with a cosmopolitan environment in which to work and live.

# THE ÆSCULAPIAN ORDER

## THE ÆSCULAPIAN ORDER [A/O]

—textfile conversion, Hiroko Foster, EMT, Æon Trinity/Triton Division

The mind has long been considered a powerful force for healing, but hard evidence has eluded those who have sought it. Almost 15 years ago, the proxies provided proof enough for even the most hardened skeptic. We psions triggered by the Æsculapian Order use the power of the mind to cure illnesses, to mend broken bones and to perform medical wonders that were previously believed the province of wizards, saints and miracle-workers.



ZWEIDLER PORTRAIT > MONTRESSOR CLINIC

Yet despite such amazing skills, Æsculapians are about as far removed from metaphysical mumbo jumbo as one can get. In fact, the docs I've worked with view their own abilities and potential with a cold, scientific eye. Point out to a vitakinetic the similarity between her techniques and the medieval "laying of hands" and you're likely to get a half-hour lecture about the perils of confusing religious quackery with the hard science of vitakinesis. Or you just might get a half-hour rant about how you're exactly right.

### HISTORY

Dr. Matthieu Zweidler, MD, fathered the Æsculapian Order. Zweidler was one of the world's finest neurosurgeons and was the head of the Montessor Clinic, an elite private hospital located in a converted monastery outside of Basel, Switzerland.

After his transformation into one of the original eight proxies, Zweidler used both his clinic and a network of affiliated hospitals, former employees and contacts to lay the groundwork for what would become the Æsculapian Order — or the A/O, as it's come to be called in less formal circumstances. Within a few months, Zweidler began a quiet process of identification, recruitment and triggering of vitakinetics.

Thanks to Zweidler's careful planning, the docs were already up and running when the proxies revealed themselves to the world. Those first-generation viks disguised their powers for at least three years; they were established physicians, known and accepted by the normal doctors and nurses whom they worked with. The first docs built a reputation as selfless, fearless angels of mercy.

### VITAKINESIS

This aptitude covers the use of noetic energy to heal — or to harm — the body and mind. The majority of development in vitakinesis involves its healing applications, as categorized under the iatrosis and mentatis modes. High-ranking Æsculapians maintain rigid control of all training in algesis, the application of vitakinesis to cause harm.

- **Algesis:** This mode is geared toward causing injury. It is considered a necessary evil in the battle against aberrants, but few vitakinetics practice its effects.

- **Iatrosis:** The psion applies his will to mend physical injuries, from minor cuts and scrapes to massive trauma and loss of limbs.

- **Mentatis:** The use of psi energy to remedy psychological derangements, healing the mind rather than the body.

Users are often called vitakinetics, VKs, viks, docs or rexs.

### MISSION FOCUS

As a vitakinetic, you heal body and mind. You mend and even regenerate damaged tissue or soothe psychological trauma, all by focusing your will. While your powers can be used to harm instead of heal, such actions are used only in the most dire of circumstances and in defense of others.

Your aptitude sees primary use in field work. You engage in research and in missions to contain subjects with genetic anomalies. You assist in the eradication of aberrants themselves. You enter into front-line combat and tend to your team members' wounds with both your medical training and your psi powers.

Your powers are essential to more than simply maintaining your teammates' health, though. You are the team's lifeline.

## ÆSCULAPIAN ORDER

### What's in a Name?

— Cori Heisler, *The Painful Truth*  
© 2119 MMI

Apparently Zweidler was a fan of the Classics. He dubbed his nascent order the “Æsculapians” after Æsculapius, a Roman physician and son of Jupiter who was supposedly skilled enough to bring the dead back to life.

Zweidler must never have looked up the details of Æsculapius’ *whole* story; Jupiter was none-too-pleased with his son’s activities and killed him with a thunderbolt from the heavens.

I don’t have to tell you that “Æsculapian” is a mouthful. It’s not surprising that nobody uses it (except Zweidler, of course). Everyone calls them “vitakinetics,” instead, after their aptitude. And if that doesn’t thrill you, there’s always slang — “VK” or “vik,” and that’s just for starters. The Æsculapians are essentially glorified doctors, right? Just a short hop from that to “docs.” And pop culture and we megameds being what we are, had to be clever and bastardize the traditional “Rx” into “rex.”

So the order’s official paperwork refers to “Æsculapians,” but ask anybody on the street who that refers to. As far as Joe Hologram is concerned, it’s “vitakinetic,” “vik,” “doc” or “rex.”

I don’t know why Zweidler gets so upset about all this. We still humor him with “Prometheus Effect,” don’t we? You ask me, there’s such a thing as too much education.

### TRITON ARCHIVE

— recovered email fragment from  
Dr. Matthieu Zweidler

[Haitian vitakinetics are] nothing more than a bunch of damned witch doctors using my money and equipment to paint themselves blue and cavort....

### ORGANIZATION

Today, vitakinetic clinics are located everywhere from Earth to the extrasolar colonies. The media is full of stories of heroic rexs who brave the dangers of catastrophes, epidemics and battlefields to treat the sick and injured. Indeed, as the order expands it absorbs, duplicates or simply makes obsolete many existing medical-relief organizations. Even the venerable International Red Cross has been almost subsumed by Æsculapians. It makes sense — viks are better equipped to handle emergencies. At least, that’s what the Æsculapian press packets say.

The order has a top-down structure with a few key departments, outlined briefly below.

#### ADMINISTRATION

**Director: Pierce Monahan**

This department handles the legal, financial and general administrative aspects of A/O.

#### CLINIC NETWORK

**Director: Dr. Gemma Fiosi**

Individual clinics operate independently on the day-to-day, but all matters of policy and procedure — from dispensing medication to testing and recruiting latents — are coordinated through this department.

#### ORGAN BANK

**Director: Dr. Ronald Stoltzfus**

Based in the Montessor Clinic, this department coordinates efforts to provide and/or manufacture organs needed throughout settled space.

#### RESEARCH

**Director: Dr. Karen Dietrich**

This department pursues scientific research — whether new surgical techniques, new drugs, or means of diagnosing, treating and curing disease.

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS

**Director: Delemont**

This “catch-all” department handles those affairs that do not fall automatically under the purview of another department. Beyond that, little is known of Special Projects, or of its director.

#### GEOGRAPHY

“Seasoned with Basel” has become slang among the docs’ field ops for describing idiotic policies that

## THE ÆSCULAPIAN ORDER

come straight from the top. Dr. Zweidler and his peers from the pre-proxy days dominate the Basel operation, but field healers now come increasingly from non-Western backgrounds.

Zweidler insists on strict documentation of all manifestations and uses of vitakinesis. The strongest adherents to the order's cult of scientific rationality are based in Basel. The clinic is the docs' administrative center, training facility and noetic research lab. The Montessor Clinic also maintains a massive organ bank, with satellite facilities at other major clinics. The banks' director, Roland Stoltzfus, claims that his people can rush an organ to anywhere in-system in less than 24 hours.

Much of the order's power is concentrated in Basel. That's why the clinic is guarded heavily by both psions and armed human agents. Ironically, these security forces seem to spend much of their time controlling the hordes of sick and infirm who drag themselves to Zweidler's doorstep in search of cures.

Beyond the order's hundreds of small clinics, posts and managed-care facilities, there are major A/O clinics in Olympus, Minnesota, Addis Ababa and Haiti. The Haitian city of Port-au-Prince is home to the "loyal opposition" to Zweidler's technocratic cadre. Shaman, faith healers, acupuncturists — docs with different ways of perceiving vitakinesis — congregate there, an ocean and a world view away from the order's often stifling administrators.

While Zweidler's rational soul loathes these docs' spiritual views, he still recruits powerful latents on principle, regardless of their beliefs. If Zweidler can't work with someone after the transformation, he simply ships her out. Zweidler is touchy about how closely his special talent mimics the effects of folklore and legend, and can't bear reminders of that "stigma."

Æsculapian clinics follow one of the two established paradigms of Switzerland or Haiti, depending on where a clinic director did her internship. There's a friendly — and sometimes not-so-friendly — rivalry as to which group is "right." Still, a doc can move from one clinic to another with a minimum of culture shock.

### TRAINING

Latents with the potential for vitakinesis are common, but Zweidler is particular about those he allows to undergo the Prometheus Effect. Simply registering latency isn't enough. Still, there have been quite a few docs over the years. I've heard that the Æsculapian is the third largest order after the Legions and Orgotek. There may be as many as 10,000 viks running around.

Each rex performs an internship of three to five years at one of the main clinics after being triggered. Upon graduation, the psion is considered a licensed medical technician. Membership in the order after this point isn't mandatory, but is expected, and the benefits that Zweidler provides are so attractive that almost no one ever leaves.

A/O clinics, no matter their locale or setup, follow a Basel organizational model. The paperwork and chain of command are the same in every clinic from Europe to Europa. The chief of staff (essentially, the ranking psion) manages the clinic, while neutics fill key administrative roles. The smallest clinics may have only a single doc, while the largest maintain as many as 100 fully trained viks at any time.

No matter their size, most clinics also have full medical staffs

of neutral doctors, nurses and technicians who outnumber the psions whom they work with. The latter are the "superstars" — and I've known a few who have vid-star attitudes — but no one can argue with their results. Psions fresh out of internships are attached to existing clinics, unless specially directed to research programs or the military. Only the largest clinics have the facilities to maintain more than a couple of trainees at a time.

### • CONFIDENTIAL •

#### ÆSCULAPIANS: INTERACTION WITH OTHER ORDERS

Æsculapians maintain cordial relations with Orgotek. The two study and develop biotech together (although despite strong professional ties, no love is lost between the two orders' proxies). The Legions are likewise looked upon favorably, since psychokinetics and vitakinetics support one another in combat. A number of docs have ventured to South America for extended research with the Norça. The purpose of such study is unknown by low-ranking VKs. While Æsculapians consult occasionally with Ministry psions on psi-related psychological problems, the two orders otherwise make a point to avoid each other. ISRA psions are given little more than a nod and a smirk by docs, since clairsentient powers are considered to have little use beyond patrolling for aberrants.

Of all the orders, the Æsculapians seem to have the most trouble with their own. The Basel adherents' rigid scientific mentality is increasingly at odds with the Haitian docs' "spiritual" attitude. This could become a concern if the psions allow their philosophical differences to affect their work.

## INTERPLANETARY SCHOOL FOR RESEARCH AND ADVANCEMENT [ISRA]

— **textfile conversion, Otha Herzog,**  
**ISRA Proxy**



• TRITON ARCHIVE •

### THE FATHER OF CLAIRENTIENCE

— **Analysis: Malcolm Severn, PhD, Æon**  
**Trinity/Triton Division, 24.4.2117**

The proxy who refers to himself as “the world’s most forgettable man” had no access to the political or financial resources that funded the other orders. Instead, Otha Herzog built his order out of a deep reverence for humanity and a dedication to the Baha’i philosophy, which proposes a unification of all faiths and the harmony of all people.

Formerly a naturalized citizen of Germany, but now “a citizen of the universe and a servant to no nation,” Herzog makes his residence in *Huruf al-Hayy*, a station which supposedly orbits the solar system’s outer reaches. Such a remote — and secret, for its coordinates have yet to be determined — location may seem odd, until one remembers distance matters little to the master of clairsentience. He emerges infrequently from *Huruf al-Hayy*, but even his simplest word has great weight among clairsentients (and a growing number of other psions).

Much of what you would like to learn about ISRA is impossible to comprehend if you are not clairsentient, but I will relate my knowledge as clearly as I may.

We clairsentients do not search for glory or power. We are servants of a greater power, of the energy that surrounds us all. We are your eyes, always watching, ever aware of the forces at work in the universe. It is not ISRA’s function to control these forces. Instead, we alert our Gifted brethren, and gather when those forces conspire to disrupt the living harmony of all things.

Aberrants are the great discordant note in this reality, and we direct ourselves most intently against them. Clairsentient psions are vigilant for the telltale disruptions that signify quantum energies at work, and are quick to call for aid to combat these monstrosities.

But do not assume that is all ISRA does. We aid humanity in whatever fashion we may. For some, this means venturing into space aboard marvelous craft. Others investigate mysteries, from historical analysis to rooting out criminals. There are also those who plumb the enigmas of psi itself, hoping to unlock the further potential that lies in our tremendous abilities.

You know me as a proxy, the leader of ISRA. I must correct you in this. I merely guide my siblings, giving them the wisdom of my experience when appropriate, much as I do with you now. They must follow individual paths. I simply hope my words are beneficial when my fellows take their steps.

• CONFIDENTIAL •

### CLAIRENTIENCE

A psion with this aptitude can extend his senses far beyond the human norm, can read the “auras” of people and objects to learn their histories, and can even catch glimpses of the future. Clairsentience effects are categorized under the psychometry, psychonavigation and telesthesia modes.

- **Psychometry:** These powers involve attuning to a subject’s aura, as the clairsentients call it, to learn of recent events and encounters.

- **Psychonavigation:** This mode enables the psion to find a subject by keying into its subquantum resonance.

- **Telesthesia:** The psion can project his senses through physical barriers and across vast distances by attuning himself to noetic energy wave-forms.

Users are often called clairsentients, clears, seers or eyes.

### MISSION FOCUS

As a clairsentient you perceive the universe with senses far greater and sharper than normal. You can see through walls and into the deepest reaches of space. Your comprehension of the physical world is unparalleled.

You are scouts and detectives. You pilot orbital craft and the incredible new jump ships. You scan the stars for signs of hostile incursions of all types, from aberrants to aliens to even human forces. You investigate disaster sites, crimes and mysteries, uncovering information with your powers of perception.

You are the eyes of your team, peering into the darkness to bring the truth to light.

## TRITON ARCHIVE

## THE MASHRIQI

— Analysis: Malcolm Severn, PhD, Æon Trinity/Triton Division, 24.4.2117

Herzog considers himself a parent rather than a leader — although his humility goes further; he refers to clairsentient psions as his “siblings.” He leaves most administration and the training of new psions to a group collectively known as the Mashriqi. While the Mashriqi have no official school status or defined social privileges, most ISRAns respect their opinions.

## AL ALIF (CRIMINAL PURSUIT)

**Mashriq: Abbas Kastami**

Those of this group focus on capturing all criminals — alive if possible, dead if necessary.

## DUCTRAN (“LOYAL OPPOSITION”)

**Mashriq: Varuni Venkatesan**

This group believes that ISRAns can — and should — take a more active role in current affairs.

## JOYCEAN ISRA (VISION ANALYSIS)

**Mashriq: Philip Vaughn Williams**

Members of this group analyze and catalog clairsentient visions.

## THE QADIYYA (INVESTIGATION)

Directed by no single Mashriq, this group’s umbrella covers the subtleties of mundane and noetic investigation techniques.

## THE SHARIFIYYA (LOBBYISTS)

**Mashriq: Princess Lila Faoud**

Led by the charismatic Saudi Arabian princess, this group coordinates many matters between ISRA and the political and economic elite.

demographic figures that we have show ISRA’s membership to follow a broad “universal human norm,” with members from, and in, all parts of human space.

LIVING LETTERS  
OF THE  
HOLOGRAPHIC  
TEXT

What structure exists for ISRA is styled after the simple, elegant models of monastic orders. All funds and property of the school — meeting areas, vehicles, equipment and the small number of facilities we are fortunate enough to have — are communal. Decisions are arrived at democratically, although weight is given to the wise and experienced among us. In ISRA, everyone has a voice.

Ours is not the largest order, nor is it the smallest. While those who manifest a low level of clairsentience are numerous, those with piercing insight number only a few thousand. The

I am often asked about my politics, and those of my siblings. Such things, much like hairstyles and musical tastes, are personal choices. Politics has no place in ISRA, though I understand governments’ perceived necessity in greater society. The school displays favoritism and antagonism toward no nation, corporation or other powerful group.

I am pleased that many of my siblings follow my example and renounce their national citizenship. Artificial bonds of political loyalty and patriotism are not the way of ISRA, for they cloud the purity of the visions we seek. Still, I think no less of those who maintain ties to home. They follow their own paths. They may have seen that the courses they must take lead them to serve their countries, or to even join the Æon Trinity.

It saddens me that ISRA’s policies have not endeared us to the more authoritarian national governments. I do not understand why members of Asian extraction cannot renounce their Chinese citizenship.

OBC

ISRA Methodology  
and Philosophy

— Warren Shaw, *Retrospective* © 2117 OBC

ISRAns are expected to turn over at least 80% of earnings from clairsentient work to the school. In return, ISRA ensures that all members have access to lodgings, board and a small living allowance for clothing and personal items. Members aren’t required to live simply, but many follow the more experienced members’ example.

Material goods aren’t an issue in ISRA. Yet, despite the Mashriqi’s best efforts, many young or less gifted ISRAns have become obsessed with boosting their power levels, citing a vague feeling that “something big is coming,” and that they need to “see more clearly.”

Supposedly, Herzog himself is subject to a sense of foreboding. The growing significance of messianic imagery within the Baha’i religious community and his own order is said to unsettle the proxy. He has withdrawn from the day-to-day running of ISRA, reportedly spending ever-greater periods of time in deep meditation.



Or why local statutes in some regions of the Federated States of America equate ISRA membership to treason. How is such a thing possible? We are all citizens of humanity. Such boundaries and limitations serve only to separate us from one another.

## VISION AND INSIGHT

Although I follow Baha'ism, as do many of my Mashriqi siblings, we do not reference it explicitly in the school's materials or training literature. ISRA does not make any claims about the truth or relative worth of any religion or philosophical system. Instead, the school practices a policy of enlightened tolerance, encouraging each clairsentient to find her own symbolic framework. Those elements of Baha'i (largely terminology and general ethics) included in ISRA's teachings are secularized.

Even so, much of the public believes that ISRA is an official conduit for Baha'ism. This makes it difficult for my siblings to deal with Israel-Judah, given that followers of Baha'i were expelled from their headquarters at Mount Carmel during the Temple Sealing. I have nothing but the greatest friendship for the Israelis. I am in debt to Jerusalem for encouraging the Baha'i — and my humble school — to look spaceward.

We ISRA's prefer to be away from the distractions of a gravity well when contemplating complex visions. This should address your curiosity regarding our tendency to work and live in orbital stations and other extraterrestrial locales. Our "isolation" is also due in large part to our involvement in jump-ship development. We are best suited of all the orders to pilot these incredible new vessels. Our past work with the Upeo wa Macho to locate teleportation destinations gave us invaluable training, and an affinity for sensing the depths of space.

## CONFIDENTIAL

### ISRA: INTERACTION WITH OTHER ORDERS

ISRA's get along well with almost everyone. Clairsentients are the first line of defense against danger — especially aberrants, since clears are often most attuned to detect the spatial disruptions of the creatures' "warp travel." Beyond that, the ISRA's don't have an agenda aside from using their abilities to improve the human condition. They don't force their viewpoints on others, and are disposed to lending assistance wherever possible.

However, the same powers that make clairsentients so useful also make them socially shunned. ISRA's have a tendency to show up unannounced, and to deliver cryptic messages about impending events. The fact that they're usually right doesn't alleviate their unsettling manner. Psions of other orders consider clairsentients with cautious optimism. ISRA's are very useful to have around, but whenever they appear, something is bound to happen.



# THE LEGIONS

## THE LEGIONS

— **textfile conversion, Robert Linsey Marsden, Aeon Trinity/Proteus Division**



Considering we psychokinetics are a fiercely independent lot, some wags marvel that enough of us PKs can stick together to make a single legion, let alone an entire order. How we do it isn't such a surprise. Take a bunch of folks with something in common — beating aberrant arse — and they'll stick together just fine.

'Course, things would've fallen apart by now if not for the General — who you'd call our proxy. General

Solveig Larssen is a holy terror disguised as a Scandinavian woman in her 50s (though, like all the proxies, she looks two decades younger). She's the shining example of psychokinetic achievement. It boggles the mind to see her in the trenches, using all three PK modes at once while us poor sods are trying to get our brains around one, yeh?

She's the only proxy I know who still goes into the field 'stead of hiding behind a desk. Be sure, the men — and women — in the Legions love her for it. General Larssen isn't just a great soldier, she's one of the most brilliant tacticians that ever lived. Alexander, Attila, Napoleon, Bradley, Osner... and Larssen. If you don't agree, I've got a few thousand friends who beg to differ.

The noeticists say latency in psychokinesis is the most common among all the aptitudes. Looking at the Legions, I'd say they're right. We're a damn big mob! Tens of thousands of screamin' psions getting up close and personal with aberrants — and at least double that amount in skilled neutral soldiers. It's a good thing were such a big mob, considering our attrition rate.

The General uses our numbers to best advantage by maintaining seven PK groups, each geared to a different kind of Legionnaire. She lets her commanders run their Legions how they will, but makes sure they remember who calls the shots (and if you have to ask, this interview is over). Sure, we have standard four-year tours, and a lot of Legionnaires muster out at the end of theirs, but General Larssen allows us to hook up with other organizations while we're still with the Legions.

I don't mean buddy up with some upstart country or paranoid metacorp. With a Legion post in almost every nation on Earth and every territory in settled space, we make sure the three Cs are in effect for all our troops — communication, coordination and confidence. Our loyalty is to the Legions before anyone else. That's why "Legions First," yeh?

## THE SEVEN LEGIONS

— **Analysis: Craig Bartholomew, Aeon Trinity/Proteus Division, 29.5.2108**

The Legions are a study in contradiction. Of all the orders, theirs is the most regimented, divided as it is into seven units ranging in size from a few hundred to tens of thousands. Within a strict military structure (supervised and maintained by Proxy Larssen), each Legion has its own system of rank, regulations, and style of command. This includes everything from a Legion's philosophy to means of financing endeavors.

While a field marshal leads the First, a commandant leads the Fifth, and a *shogun* leads the Seventh. The Legionnaires are a diverse lot, so much so that they resist all attempts to bind them into a single unit. One of the few limitations that Larssen imposed on this diversity of titles and command was a system of "tiers." This reference allows for an easier understanding of the relative levels of authority between, say, a *hatamoto* and a Lt. major.

At least, this tier system makes sense to the Legions. I've been studying it for weeks and still haven't figured it out.

## CONFIDENTIAL

## PSYCHOKINESIS

These powers involve molecular manipulation. A psychokinetic can create cold or heat or can move something by manipulating molecules. The three psychokinesis modes are cryokinesis, pyrokinesis and telekinesis.

- **Cryokinesis:** The psion uses cryo effects to slow down an object's molecular motion, simply cooling it or perhaps even freezing it solid.

- **Pyrokinesis:** These effects excite molecules to generate heat and to cause combustion.

- **Telekinesis:** The psion lifts objects and even himself by moving an entire molecular construct with focused psi energy.

Users are often called psychokinetics, PKs, psychers, Legionnaires or war dogs.

## MISSION FOCUS

Psychokinesis involves mind over matter. You create fire, generate ice and can even fly. Your abilities manipulate the subtle potential and raw power inherent to objects and the very air around you.

You defend innocents against aberrant threats. You patrol cities, colonies and space itself in search of any and all dangers to humanity. You act as police and militia, keeping the peace and confronting menaces.

You are a front-line assault trooper, and you guard terrestrial and stellar borders against threats of any kind.



## THE LEGIONS

### THE FIRST — THE HOME GUARD

**Commander: Field Marshall**

**Marilyn Jabe**

Ask anyone to describe a Legionnaire and he'll likely mention blue jackets and white berets and the Seven Legions' signature star-burst emblem — he'll describe a Guardsman, a soldier of the First. Scattered across the continent of Australia, the Legionnaire Home Guard is characterized by its blue and white uniforms,



and is adored by Australians in particular and by humanity in general.

The First is the home defense, honor guard and constabulary of the Legions. Guardsmen abroad act as military police for the other Legions.

The First is the most respected of the Legions, not that the rest of us are unwashed louts. It's simply the prettiest. Soldiers of the First appear in vidcast commercials, sponsoring everything from lager to lasers. Although they're happy to rake in what cash they can, the blue-and-whites are less mercenary than the rest of us war dogs. They don't take independent contract work, mainly carrying out assignments handed down by General Larssen.

### THE SECOND — FORTUNE'S KNIGHTS

**Commander: Brigadier General Garrett "Gar" Banion**

A new breed of warrior was born centuries ago: the soldier of fortune. We psychers distilled this decades-old pedigree into the Second Legion — the children of a hundred warrior cultures, also called Fortune's Knights.

The Second is the core of the Legions' mercenary crowd. When a country or metacorp wants to hire



Legionnaires — as shock troops, special forces or glorified security guards — it turns to the Mercenaries. Whether they're commandos or reserve flankers, troops of the Second serve with distinction... and at a hefty price, yeh?

Although the Mercs take money — cheerfully, even — they also demand some odd fees for difficult contracts. Favors can change hands rather than cash, especially when a client represents someone influential. Some of the Legion's most infamous stories were inspired by such payments. Truth be told, Fortune's Knights are as prone to tall tales as they are to soldiering — and they do both very well.

### THE THIRD — SUPPORT FORCE ONE

**Commander: Admiral Scott Henrickson**

The Third is the smallest of the Legions, made up primarily of non-PK psions and neuts. The Third provides support, such as transportation, logistics, latent testing and



## THE LEGIONS

the like. Most of its members are attached to the other six Legions. It's grown quite a bit in the last couple years, and gained a ranking commander only recently — and a neut, to boot. They're an odd mix, but the rest of the Legions couldn't get the job done without 'em.

### THE FOURTH — VENGEANCE

**Commander: Colonel Agrah Shahim**

Some say money is the spark that starts a war, but rage keeps it burning. The Aberrant War was fueled by so much rage that it's still smoldering almost 75 years later. That anger is the motivation of the Fourth.

The most scattered of the Legions, the Fourth is a dumping ground for fanatical PKs — sociopathic aberrant-haters. In a society filled to the brim with anti-aberrant sentiment, folks this extreme are pretty damn radical.



While the Avengers share a common bond in their hatred, they're the least unified of the Legions. Soldiers of the Fourth are the most likely to take individual assignments, and many work for little pay, accepting contracts that suit their needs for revenge, justice or atonement. They're also the most likely to barge in on you uninvited and accuse your wife of being an aberrant spy. There's rarely any middle ground with the Fourth. They even disturb the rest of us.

### THE FIFTH — THE AMERICAS

**Commander: Commandant Iago Salera**

I'm biased, but in my mind there's no Legion finer than the Fifth. The Americas are sorely in need of defense — from themselves as well as from aberrants. North America's full of civvies railing against the Federated States Military. Don't get me started on those glorified



policemen! South America's rife with all kind of political and social intrigue. You need a scorecard to know who your friends are on this half of the world, but everyone knows where the Fifth stands.

Legionnaires recruited from the Americas are stationed in the Western Hemisphere, and comprise the majority of the Fifth's troops. I've heard the brass is worried that we're more loyal to the West than to the Legions. I can only speak for myself: All that's important to me is a healthy hatred of aberrants, and the Americas are home to enough of that.

### THE SIXTH — EUROPE

**Commander: Gianetta Mossalo**

Europe is a wreck, a third-class continent. Its people are strong and hopeful, though, and it's the Sixth Legion's job to defend those folks. Second to the Americas, Europe



## THE LEGIONS

is where most Legion recruits come from. The Sixth has set up as many recruitment stations as it can afford. Considering that most of its funding comes from European donations, the Sixth is on a pretty tight budget. It tests every bloke who applies.

The European Legion concentrates on mobile squads rather than established bases. Sure, it has a few posts, like in London, Zurich-Geneva, Rome and Leningrad, but even Legionnaires stationed there spend much of their time on patrol — particularly along the French border-wastes.

### THE SEVENTH — PHOENIX SQUADRON

**Commander: Shogun Auji Toshio**

This is the newest Legion, established after the chromatic raid on Karroo back in 2113. Before that, Legionnaires patrolling space and set up on colonies and orbital stations operated independently. After a point, there was just too much going on in space to not have an established presence, yeh? So, we've got Phoenix Squadron: a collection of hot pilots and brave psions,



out there among the stars making sure nothing gets through to us.

Phoenix Squadron has posts on space stations and colonies. The Seventh maintains an HQ on Luna, the better to respond to any threats from the stars. They're a strong-willed, independent lot, I'll give 'em that. Next to the Fourth, soldiers of Phoenix Squadron are the Legions' most balls-to-the-wall outfit. Believe me, coming from another Legionnaire, that's saying something.

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### LEGIONS: INTERACTION WITH OTHER ORDERS

Legionnaires are direct and forthcoming. While their manner earns them respect and wins them affection among the general populace, some orders don't care for the Legions' blunt (and sometimes crude) style.

Æsculapians and Legionnaires get along, as vitakinesis complements psychokinesis well — although psychers consider docs subordinates rather than equals. ISRAn are treated with respect; Legionnaires recognize the need for clairsentient advance warnings.

The Legions and Orgotek are rivals. Electrokinetics are almost as combat-savvy as psychokinetics. This can lead to juvenile contests of one-upmanship, from physical contests to boasting.

The Legions don't get on well with Norça or the Ministry, due to those orders' veils of secrecy. Norça encourage Legionnaires' disdain, while Ministry agents seem insulted by such treatment.

# THE MINISTRY

## MINISTRY OF NOETIC AFFAIRS [MNA]

— **textfile conversion, Terrence Chu, Ministry Liaison to Æon Trinity**

The amoral, obsessively secretive Ministry telepath is a Western media creation. The Ministry isn't a society of cold-blooded "inquisitors" or "agents in black" like you often see on vidcasts.

Proxy Rebecca Bue Li set out to gather her order from the upper levels of the Philippine intelligentsia. She soon discovered that the Chinese secret service was attempting to infiltrate the new group, so Bue's telepaths studied the nonpsionic espionage agents in their midst. In time, infiltrators learned of the discovery; concluding that it was impossible to work against telepaths in a covert manner, the Chinese State Council offered Bue and her group full access to the resources of China if they would join forces with Beijing. As a gesture of good faith, the Philippines were adopted as a full partner in the Chinese space program.

For her part, Bue realized that the resources and diplomatic leverage of China would offer her almost unlimited opportunity to seek out latent telepaths on Earth, and aberrants throughout the solar system.

### NAME AND FUNCTION

The Ministry of Noetic Affairs is a cabinet-level division of the Chinese government with a variety of branches unto itself. As Psi Minister, Rebecca Bue sits on the Beijing State Council and has access to tremendous financial resources, equipment, information, political leverage and personnel. Individual Ministry agents work within

the Chinese federal budget and are required to justify unusual expenses to their superiors.

The Ministry's administrative headquarters is in Beijing, with adjunct academic facilities concentrated at the Shanghai Noetics Institute. However, many of the telepaths' training facilities and research staging areas (including the noetics institute at Quezon) are located in the Philippines, out of the main political arena. Peripheral administrative centers exist on Mars (dedicated to studying the effects of colony life) and Luna (the center of the Ministry's high-level diplomatic functions, including researching the qin).

Ministry offices are located throughout the Chinese sphere of influence. Order agents are scattered through the rest of human space, acting as diplomats, mediators and impartial observers. Every orbital ship that leaves a Chinese launch site carries at least one psi officer.

The Ministry's official function in the Chinese government is to ensure the smooth flow of information and authority within and among the various state bureaus and departments. Many operatives have specialized roles, acting as messengers, translators, coordinators and information gatherers.

It's been said that a good telepath is hard to find. That doesn't just apply to the active ones. Telepathy isn't as common as you might expect. The Ministry has not disclosed the exact number of telepaths at present, I can tell you that we are about as common as clairsentient.

### TELEPATHY

The powers of this aptitude are used to communicate regardless of language differences, or to take control of someone's very thoughts. Noetic science lists this aptitude's effects under the empathy, mindshare and psychbending modes.

- **Empathy:** The psion can perceive and even control another person's emotions.

- **Mindshare:** The effects of this mode allow for direct mind-to-mind contact that transcends all other forms of communication.

- **Psychbending:** The psion can assume control of another person's thoughts and memories through a concerted force of will.

Users are often called telepaths, TPs, teeps, tels, paths, Ministry agents or psi officers.

### MISSION FOCUS

Yours is the power to read the thoughts of others. You discover the truths behind the spoken lies. You act as an investigator, separating the guilty from the innocent.

You are ever vigilant for those who would act against us, and against humanity as a whole. You learn the plans of our enemies and thwart them before they are even carried out.

### Meditation

— from *Madame Bue's Little Book*

Thought is a net on which we hang. Thought is the ropes that make culture dance. Ride the symbol web. Translate. Control the flow of thought through the brain. Be the birds, flying from mind to mind. Concentrate.

## THE MINISTRY

CONFIDENTIAL

### THE TRUE STATE OF AFFAIRS

The Trinity has reason to believe that the Ministry is engaged in a secret power struggle with other factions of the Chinese government. It difficult to determine just what is going on — we speculate that the Ministry struggles against other factions of the Chinese espionage establishment for control of certain projects (or even China itself), or simply to prove its loyalty to the State Council.

This should not lead us to assume that Proxy Bue or the Ministry in general has “lost sight of humanity’s goal,” as many strident voices claim. After all, if Bue were to stray from that agenda, she and her order would follow the Chitra Bhanu into extinction.

attend high-level conferences and business negotiations as advisors and moderators, this office’s most important function is as an impartial forum for the mediation of international disputes. The recent peace in the Middle East is due in large part to the OS’ diplomatic successes and surveillance of global stress points.

The office translates documents and programs from all cultures into the universal language of thought. Nearly all foreign materials arriving in China pass through the OS for translation and correction before being distributed to the Chinese people.

The OS also studies alien races. As the unpleasant encounter with the Coalition shows, first contact situations can be inconclusive without telepathic assistance. The Ministry uses telepathy to achieve a comprehensive understanding of aliens.



THE NOETICS INSTITUTES

**Director Andrei Tarkovsky, a.k.a “Thrush”**

We are famous for having the best training and recruiting branches of all the orders. I offer our noetics institutes as the reasons why. Operating from high-tech campuses outside Shanghai and Quezon City, the Ministry

### FORM AND CONTENT

The Ministry is divided into separate divisions and offices, each of which performs specialized functions with and for the Chinese government and people.



THE MANDARIN  
(OFFICE OF SEMIOTICS)

**Senior Director John Bue Kar-Wai, a.k.a “Kestrel”**

Devoted to the exploitation of telepathy’s social benefits, the Office of Semiotics spearheads important advances in international relations, foreign diplomacy and domestic affairs. Although OS operatives

### Is Bue Sick?

— *Newsday* holobrief © 18.12.2119 GN

Proxy Rebecca Bue Li made a brief return to the public forum today by attending a dinner in honor of the Shanghai Noetics Institute’s graduating class. It was her first appearance in four months.

The normally radiant and youthful-looking Ms. Bue Li (better known in China as the Minister of Noetic Affairs) is no stranger to controversy, but her erratic behavior at the dinner aroused commentary. “She looks sick,” noted the Brazilian ambassador. “Gray as stone.”

Despite rumors that the proxy is suffering from an incurable strain of ovarian cancer, Ms. Bue Li’s personal physician said only that, “The minister is suffering from nothing more serious than a taxing bureaucratic schedule. She simply has not had much time for public functions.” He went on to note that Ms. Bue Li has had a persistent cold, common for the citizens of Beijing at this time of year, which was aggravated by the exhausting task of imprinting the new jump ships only a month ago.

searches for latent and nonaffiliated psi-active telepaths from across human space. Individuals are offered full access to the Ministry’s training facilities and financial resources, including instruction in all recognized aptitudes by psions from every order.

The institutes have the best noetic research facilities in settled space. Experimental programs at the Shanghai Institute study the alien races and attempt to isolate and eliminate the root causes of Aberrant Syndrome. Research at Quezon focuses on “pure psi” experimentation, with laboratory teams attempting to unlock the genetic factors that determine aptitude and even create new, artificial aptitudes.

## THE MINISTRY



THE AVIARY (OFFICE OF NOETIC SECURITY)

**Senior Director J.L.G., a.k.a “Kingfisher”**

The most clandestine of the Ministry divisions and the one that contributes most to our undeservedly bad reputation is the Office of Noetic Security. ONS is China's early warning system and psionic police force. We call this division “the Aviary,” where Madame Bue's “birds of the mind” go to roost. ONS psi officers have a thankless job: moving secretly among the people and monitoring surface thoughts for criminal and seditious urges and signs of Aberrant activity. Once wrongdoers are identified, the Aviary is empowered to bring them to court or to see that they receive psychiatric care. ONS also serves as the ethics committee for telepaths, monitoring our own people for abuses of power and other violations.

### DIPLOMACY AND TRANSLATION

As representatives of the Chinese government, Ministry agents are empowered to demand full cooperation from all Chinese citizens and institutions. In practice, the extent of cooperation varies depending on the political ramifications of the situation and the personal agendas involved.

Outside China, psi officers often find their national affiliation a mixed blessing. Ministry agents who want to operate effectively in a foreign country must exploit that country's relationship with China. Those nations that are not friendly with China (notably India, Brazil and the FSA) aren't very cooperative, often refusing to allow Chinese telepaths to operate freely within their borders.

It is entertaining to see that when such bans are imposed in holodramas, Ministry agents perform covert operations, literally becoming invisible to everyone but other telepaths. In the real world, most goals can be accomplished just as well — if not better — through diplomatic means.

• CONFIDENTIAL •

### THE MINISTRY: INTERACTION WITH OTHER ORDERS

The Ministry's agenda is difficult to determine. Though its members are often polite and forthcoming, they are skilled at keeping sensitive information secret.

Most orders have cool relations with the Ministry. Orgotek and the Ministry compete in noetic research, which has resulted a general rivalry between the two orders. ISRAAns afford the telepaths cautious friendship. The other orders deal with the Ministry curtly, and as briefly as possible. However, even such scant interaction is still quite discomforting to Legionnaires.

## THE NORÇA

The  
Greatest  
Honor

— *Newsday* interview, Proxy  
del Fuego © 1.11.2119 GN

"The other [orders]  
are incapable or unwilling  
to fulfill their obligation —  
to protect all that is Earth,  
whatever the cost. That is  
our honor."

their influential infrastructure with sheer presence and promise. Ending the *asesinos de la motos* and other signature gang-war violence almost overnight, we Norça won the respect of both the rich and the poor of South America. The former regard us as a dangerous but necessary asset to their countries' newfound global influence. The latter have their homespun "heroes" at last.

We are the South American equivalent of the Nihonjin Yakuza, the Italian Mafia and the Russian secret service. This analogy isn't entirely accurate, but it should give you an idea of our power and philosophy. We are the storybook Zorros, Three Musketeers and Robin Hoods of our culture, where talk among the masses turns man into myth and myth into legend. We are notorious internationally, and called "*los magicos*" at home. Norça "magicians" reap the rewards of Sudamerican success: power through obedience, respect and fear.

Biokinetics are few in number compared to psions of other orders. Biokinesis is a rare aptitude, but it is perhaps because *Pai de Norça* is careful about bestowing the gift that our numbers are small. The quantity matters not. We are Norça, and our will is strong. We are as many as we need to be.

We can be anyone, nearly anything, and can exist outside the human realm. We are never squeamish about merging with our surroundings. We are experts in surveillance, infiltration, criminal psychology, biotechnology and psi-adaptation.

The others rarely allow themselves to be seen or recognized for what they are (I, myself, seldom mind). We are racial chameleons who can become African or Nihonjin, or even members of the opposite sex. We are self-mutilators who carve machetes out of our own limbs, and who develop gills to breathe underwater.

## THE FAMILY

Norça are like any other extended South American family: tightknit and infinitely complex, with layer upon layer of secrets, sexual tensions, nepotism and unspoken demands for respect.

We are born of a patriarchal culture that espouses loyalty, panache, and "honor among thieves." We treat each other — even those who come from other cultures — like long-lost family or childhood friends. Though we come

## NOVA FÔRÇA DE NACIONALES [THE NEW NATIONAL FORCE]

— textfile conversion, Heironymous Dieda, Aeon Trinity/Proteus Division

I apologize for not providing the degree of detail you requested. The agreements I made with *Pai de Norça* upon becoming what I am prohibit sharing any more than this.

The *Nova Fôrça de Nacionales* was founded during Colombia's ascendancy. The "Norça" brought a halt to the petty terrorism and crime in Medellín, overtaking the drug lords and

CONFIDENTIAL

## BIOKINESIS

This aptitude gives the psion complete control of his body. He channels psionic energy to adapt, enhance and even restructure his own physiology. Noeticists divide biokinesis into the adaptation, psychomorphing and transmogrify modes.

• **Adaptation:** The psion uses this mode to protect himself against hostile environments (from being underwater for extended periods of time to being able to maneuver without danger in nonstandard gravity).

• **Psychomorphing:** The psion can manipulate his internal physiology, growing redundant organs and even subsuming biotech into himself.

• **Transmogrify:** This mode enables the psion to change the shape of his own body. Effects range from creating weapons from the psion's own skin and bones to assuming someone else's appearance.

Users are often called biokinetics, BKs, biks, bioshifters, shapeshifters, shifters or Norça.

## MISSION FOCUS

As a biokinetic, you possess utter control of your physical form. You can change the shape of your face, grow additional limbs, create patterns on your skin and even mend your own wounds.

You are spies and infiltrators. You venture into hostile territories and adapt yourself to their conditions, be it a frigid tundra or war-torn Europe. You take on whatever role necessary to discover the plots and schemes of enemies.

You are the ultimate Everyman, a spy beyond compare. You are essential to gaining access to areas that no one else can even approach.

Exhibit B,  
audio and  
holotape  
format

— MMI News cameraman  
Joe Selinne's momentary  
lapse of judgment  
that resulted in the  
ongoing civil trial of 2113:

"Unless you want me to  
carve a pair of these in you,  
turn the camera off. Now!"

CONFIDENTIAL

## NORÇA MANEUVERS

— Analysis: Craig Bartholomew,  
Æon Trinity/Proteus Division, 21.11.2118

Norça are known to have frequent clandestine meetings across settled space. We've confirmed meeting points in El Poblalo in Colombia, a nondescript warehouse in Cairo, the Russian underworld café on the coast of the Black Sea, and an Eclipse Media editing office in Yutu Yinchon.

There is no possible way to trace where all Norça influences reach or how deeply they run. The "Amazon Canopy" blankets known subsets of Russia, the FSA, the Middle East and the Turkish Empire. Suspected Norça infiltration has also been suggested in Australia, Mars and even Nihon. (Investigations show that Norça have an intense interest relating to anything Nihonjin, in fact.)

So skilled are Norça at keeping all elements of their operation secret that we can confirm only a few key leaders in addition to del Fuego.

## COVERT OPERATIONS

## Geneva Jerde

We have little in the way of hard facts as yet, but it is clear that order is interested in a wide variety of covert plans, from overthrowing warlords in Europe to infiltrating Nihon. Support of Mexican border resistance against the FSA is best-known — though still not confirmed to a level that allows the FSA to take public action.

## PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH AND MANUFACTURING

## Victor Trabaj

We have most knowledge of Norça involvement in legitimate — and illicit — drug research and manufacture. Trabaj appears frequently on media programs to promote the order, which has resulted in a surprising amount of good will toward an organization that operates so much in shadow.

## BIOSYSTEMS

## Daniel Keos, Director of Operations

This Colombian biotech firm enjoys full Norça funding. Unlike Orgotek, BioSystems makes little effort to break into the commercial market, instead manufacturing products exclusively for Norça use.

from different ancestry, Norça are cousins; whether psion or neutral, we are all part of a single family.

We are loyal to one another, and to *Pai de Norça* above all else. Never mistake the bickering and grandstanding of Norça

## THE NORÇA

CONFIDENTIAL

NORÇA: INTERACTION  
WITH OTHER ORDERS

The Norça have no cause for dispute with any of the other orders. They work closely with Æsculapians and Orgotek employees in a number of areas, and consider the Ministry to be a kindred spirit. However, the biokinetics refuse cooperation and assistance at almost every turn. Such isolation makes relations between Norça and other psions increasingly difficult, and sometimes counterproductive.

Biokinetics who desert the Norça without Proxy del Fuego's expressed consent are considered traitors to the order and to the South American people. Such rogues are hunted down without mercy and either executed publicly or returned to del Fuego's remote facilities (it's unknown what happens to them at that point). By contrast, those who leave with their proxy's blessing may venture anywhere unmolested by their Norça cousins, although they apparently may never return to the fold.

underlings as discontent; each has been hand-picked by del Fuego to join his exclusive ranks. We would give our lives to protect his power. The bonds among the Norça are stronger than any other ties, and even extend to those who have left the family amicably.

Norça power extends far beyond its drug-trade roots. Such enterprise — legal in much of South America but still outlawed throughout most of settled space — creates great revenue. However, it is a very small part of Norça. In fact, few psions take part in the business, leaving it to our normal cousins.

We are the New Force of South America, with control over indigenous terraforming and biotech projects. We act behind the scenes in foreign and off-world affairs, and slip in and out of international strongholds without a trace. We are far more effective than any of our competitors. Governments and metacorporations pay high prices to procure even a single service from a Norça. To have one on staff is the ultimate personal luxury, but one which must be kept secret.

Norça independents like myself are regarded with suspicion by our cousins, but are tolerated as long as we remain within the proxy's strict guidelines on nationalism and loyalty. The independent operator who lines his pockets with the wrong currency, or who steps outside the lines of propriety is disowned, hunted down by his own kind, and killed publicly... graphically. Bring shame upon Norça, and there is no mercy and no escape.

Perhaps now you understand why I can tell you no more.

# ORGOTEK

## ORGOTEK

— textfile conversion, Arthur Bengali, Æon Trinity/Neptune Division

The story of Alex Cassel's transformation from unassuming-yet-brilliant college student to powerful-yet-easygoing proxy and president of a multibillion-yuan metacorporation is well-documented, especially in the FSA. It helps that he describes his life in a vague but entertaining fashion in Orgotek's corporate profile.

Heir to a family fortune and social connections, Cassel laid the groundwork for his order during his college years. School friends were enlisted to help create World Enterprises, Inc., a holding company that would grow to become Orgotek, "The EK Company," in less than 20 years. Once his still small and very secret order was secure financially, Cassel explored his other gift: biotechnological formulae and processes. The information he had and the experiments he conducted on organic material turned Orgotek into a biotech empire, and initiated the biotech revolution.

### CORPORATE PROFILE

Orgotek, the industry leader in biotech manufacture and design, controls all funding and administration for the electrokinesis order. In turn, Alexander Cassel and members of his personal circle — that is, board of directors — has complete ownership of Orgotek. The company employs thousands of norms, but psions are the heart and soul in many ways. Orgotek ensures that their basic economic needs are met; in turn, it makes psions available to outside interests as (well-paid) consultants.

The Orgotek corporate headquarters is currently in the FSA's New York arcology. Word is that Cassel's becoming frustrated with the Big Apple's accelerating decay. He's taken steps to move the main offices to Orgotek's San Francisco regional headquarters. Other regional HQs include Montreal and Vancouver, with extranational headquarters in Bangkok, Cairo, Xianggang, Olympus, Rome, Sidney and Wanjing. Assorted Orgotek biofactories, auxiliary plants and branch offices are likewise scattered across the Earth and the permanent colonies, with a large number located in the FSA and Quebec.

The Prexy himself spends most of his time commuting among New York, San Francisco and the various Orgosoft Farms. In his absence, everyday corporate decisions are made by the board of directors, which is composed of Cassel's wife Ellayne and seven of the couple's closest private psions associates (not all of whom are electrokinetics).

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Orgotek's public relations team is second to none. It's been instrumental to making EKs respected and appreciated universally — except by the suits in the FSA, of course. Members of high-profile Operations teams in Europe and Australia are even treated like celebrities. Europeans, in particular, still honor the teks who died trying

CONFIDENTIAL

### ELECTROKINESIS

The psion channels electrical energy and even manipulates the electromagnetic spectrum with this aptitude (which is also referred to as EK). Electromanipulation, photokinesis and technokinesis are the three recognized EK modes.

- **Electromanipulation:** With the powers of this mode, the psion controls electrical impulses in organic beings.

- **Photokinesis:** This mode's effects are used to perceive and direct the flow of energy across the electromagnetic spectrum, whether to create holograms or generate lasers.

- **Technokinesis:** The psion taps into and controls energy flow through mechanical technology, from computers to spacecraft.

Users are often called electrokinetics, EKs, lightning bugs, zappers or teks.

### MISSION FOCUS

The electromagnetic spectrum is your plaything. You manipulate the flow of electricity in the human body, in biotech and in hardtech devices. You tune into broadcast transmissions and generate deadly lasers merely by concentrating.

You are a technical expert. You penetrate even the most heavily guarded OpNet nodes to gather information. You take control of opponents' weapons to give your teammates the edge in a firefight. You repair and manipulate equipment of any kind, human or alien, hard- or biotech.

## ORGOTEK

## Meet the Prexy Proxy

— Cori Heisler with Alex Cassel, *The Painful Truth* © 2119 MMI

*"He's just a guy, yeh?" his employees tell reporters. "Sure, he can call down lightning and talk to electrons and stuff, but otherwise, Alex Cassel's just a regular person."*

*That explains the unique allure of the Orgotek Prexy — a colloquialism derived from "proxy" and "president." Some are as handsome as Alex Cassel, but none are so accessible. Some are smarter, but none are so good at explaining the subquantum universe to the public. Some are richer, but few seem to enjoy it so openly — and so innocently — as Alex Cassel. Paradoxically, the CEO is a cultural icon largely because he seems so... real.*

*He's the boy next door, a blend of racial heritage, the last of an otherwise extinct species of All-Americans. A regular guy who calls up lightning.*

**PT:** The culture theorists call you the father of anima culture. How does that feel?

**AC:** I can't take credit for anima, but I love it! Anima is about the melting of borders and classifications. I think it's a fantastic idea that all the rigid assumptions of the last few centuries — things like countries, federal governments, the relationship between human beings and our tools — are really more pliable than people think. If biotech can melt a few distinctions, great!

**PT:** And your critics...?

**AC:** ...have a vested interest in enforcing the distinctions. They want to stay where they are forever: on top. It's an unnatural position and they know it, so they get desperate.

**PT:** Part of the anima aesthetic is combining archaic symbols with advanced tech. Is Orgotek riding this techno-primitive wave?

**AC:** I'm not sure that's useful. True, we built Orgosoft Farms on natural bio-galvanic vortices. But it's not because of "ley lines" or "dragon lines"; only because that's how the world happens to look when seen with what we call "spectrum sight." Once you see that, it's simple common sense to take advantage of those currents when situating a biotech plant.



to stop the *Esperanza* crash, and Australians admire Orgotek enthusiasm, which is considered akin to the energetic Legion spirit. Even the Nihonjin admire aspects of the EK philosophy (while deploring the *gaijin* lack of discipline).

On the other hand, despite being one of the most profitable corporations in the FSA, Orgotek is on extraordinarily poor terms with the North American military-corporate establishment. Cassel's concern with not only his employees' quality of life but also with the squalid conditions of the urban communities that surround Orgotek installations makes him an unwelcome figure in FSA corporate society. A tendency to take controversial political stands — such as on the EK airlift to the Pueblo Nation in 2115 and '16 — makes Orgotek even less popular with the FSA government.

Most Orgotek employees (especially those from the FSA) are bewildered by the way the American establishment treats them, but follow official corporate policy on the matter — that the FSA establishment is to be pitied rather than feared. Those psions who come to Orgotek from other parts of settled space often have less tolerance for such mistreatment, which can sometimes aggravate domestic relations.

Orgotek's security contracts are due for government review soon. I've heard that Cassel is planning to declare the company an extranational

## ORGOTEK

ONE WORLD,  
ONE MIND?

— Advertisement from *Global Watchdog*, 5.2118 (Baltimore, FSA)

They tell you that their biological technology is the best thing that humanity has ever created. No pollution, no energy waste, no mess, no fuss.

But did humans actually create the stuff?

They tell you it's "cutting edge," "the yeh thing" to let their biological technology form its parasitic bonds with your nervous system.

Think about it.

*Paid for by the Committee for Truth*

# ORGOTEK



## WORLD ENTERPRISES, INC.

### **President: Ellayne Cassel**

The first of Prexy Cassel's companies, WEI is the dual administrative and public relations arm of the Orgotek empire. WEI attracts ambitious and talented individuals — both normals and psions of all aptitudes — and coordinates Operations teams' activities. Corporate strategists investigate possible fields for Orgotek expansion, and spin doctors handle image control.



## ORGOSOFT FARMS

### **Director: Jennifer Lehoczky-Elliot**

When people talk about "Orgotek" — or "the Big O," as it's also known — they refer to the gigantic biotech plants and ideals of the original Orgosoft Farm. The main facility is located in northern New Mexico, and is where Cassel spliced the first biotech matrices. Contemporary biotech manufacturers follow in the Orgosoft image: earnest, enthusiastic and suffused with reverence for all forms of life.



## TEKNE GROUP

### **Director: Dr. Kevin Labak**

Tekne oversees the Orgotek hardware industry. Most psions in Tekne are technokinesis specialists. The stereotypical Tekne employee is a lovably uncommunicative person who prefers to relate to the outside world through tools. Indeed, Orgotek's dormitory environment allows the reclusive to live productive (if protected) lives interfaced with machinery. Tekne employees are also infamous for their acerbic wit and "good-natured" cynicism. It's not near as charming as they think, if you ask me.



## LUMEN, INC.

### **Director: Dr. Ashley Frost**

Orgotek's smallest division and the focus of photokinesis study, Lumen is a world leader in electromagnetic research, especially in the high end of the spectrum. These scientists and psions consider the fragmentary reports on chromatics "fascinating" rather than frightening, and are working on techniques for "jamming" or even "hacking into" linguistic structures in the chromatic brain. Other current research projects include holographic nanotech and "extra-satisfactory" computer intelligence.



## OPERATIONS

### **Director: Jeff "Jomo" Kenyatta**

While psions hired specifically for active duty serve the bulk of their time in Operations teams, all active Orgotek employees are required to perform at least two days of training and monitoring every month. The administration and research divisions could consider this a chore, but they actually look forward to their monthly tours (and the teks haven't complained, at least not vocally).

## ORGOTEK

corporation rather than submit to an order to disband the Orgotek private-security division. Meanwhile, federal and corporate propaganda campaigns against Cassel and his EK company continue.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Electrokinetics are common, in relative terms, second only to psychokinetics in number. Some claim this is because Cassel is willing to take almost any latent, no matter how borderline, but that sounds like more FSA propaganda. Sure, the various Orgotek divisions employ over 100,000 people, but only about 10% of them are EKs and psions who have come over from other orders.

The majority of Orgotek psions are tek natives of the FSA and Quebec. A substantial number are also Nihonjin; Orgotek is friendly with a number of the Psi Nihon enclaves. Corporate recruiting brings in prospective EK candidates from all over settled space.

After being triggered, new psions are given the choice to join the company on a contractual basis (the usual term between renewals is four years) — and no hard feelings if they choose not to join Orgotek.

Orgotek handles all education and training, both psi-specialized and professional, once a psion hires on. The company also assigns new operatives expense accounts good for room and board at any Orgotek residential buildings. Although psions aren't required to stay in employee residences, many consider the communal atmosphere one of the greatest rewards of belonging to the Orgotek "family."

## CONFIDENTIAL

ORGOTEK: INTERACTION  
WITH OTHER ORDERS

Orgotek and ISRA are vocal in urging the cooperation between orders. In recent years, Orgotek's aggressiveness has caused more inter-order friction than unity. Still, electrokinetics were instrumental to the advancement of biotech, primarily the new jump ships, so the other orders maintain polite political ties to ensure access to the craft.

ISRA and the Legions work with Orgotek in the field often, despite any personal differences. Additionally, the Ministry has engaged in noetic research with EK scientists, which has had productive results but has also led to clashes and competition. Otherwise, the orders seem content to leave Orgotek to its own devices.

# UPEO WA MACHO

## UPEO WA MACHO [THE HORIZON]

— textfile conversion, Deputy Director Giorgios Alekandros Gamamenos,  
Æon Trinity/Neptune Division

The Upeo wa Macho is the smallest of the existing psi orders.

The potential for humans to register teleportation latency is rare to begin with, and the Upeo Proxy Bolade Atwan doesn't allow every latent found to undergo the Prometheus Effect.

The order as a whole is comprised of more than just teleporters. When the Upeo left Earth in 2114, the order had perhaps 1000 total members. Of that number, less than half were psions. Of those psi-users, only half were teleporters; the remainder had come from the other orders.

It is notable that, despite such limited numbers, the Upeo wa Macho accomplished much during its time on Earth. The order's goals were to expand humanity's reach into space while maintaining peace, security and communication between established settlements. Still, the pursuit of this agenda has often appeared haphazard. Rather than order its members to perform tasks, the Upeo generally asked for volunteers. The only known exception to this is the order's exodus in 2114.

### PAST AND PRESENT

Given teleporters' capabilities, it is not surprising that the Upeo have been in demand ever since their emergence. Proxy Atwan's years on the Sokoto, Nigeria police force put her in good stead to create an organization that could respond effectively to such needs. And she trained her charges well. The jumpers took to the challenge of the void with a fervor matched only by that of Legionnaires in hot pursuit of an aberrant.

Then came August 17, 2114. In the space of a few hours, the *Esperanza* orbital station crashed into France and the Upeo wa Macho vanished from the solar system. The tragedy of *Esperanza's* fall was immediate and obvious to all. More subtle and far-reaching was the loss of the Upeo.

With the teleporters gone, humanity's grasp for the stars — our first tentative touch — was broken. Contact was lost with all extrasolar colonies, perhaps forever. But with ingenuity and perseverance, humanity restored that contact. Jump ships now span the stars, bringing home our stranded ambassadors to the qin, resupplying the embattled Karooans, and taking the chromatic fight to the aliens' homeworld.

### An Inspiration for the Future

— Excerpt: Upeo Proxy Bolade Atwan  
in her Universal Address 31.9.2106

"Upeo wa Macho" is not only a promise, it is an inevitable evolution. I chose to name my brothers and sisters after our African "horizon" because that is our inspiration. As all humanity strives to achieve new standards of greatness, so too do we, as humans reborn, aspire to fulfill our destiny.

We crave nothing less than to reach beyond something that was once so distant it was considered unknowable. Tomorrow, the unknowable may rest in the palm of our hands.

CONFIDENTIAL

### TELEPORTATION

The psion can influence the subquantum stratum to alter space or change the locations of objects or individuals.. Translocation, transmassion and warping are the three recognized teleportation modes.

- **Translocation:** The psion can move himself from place to place without traversing the intervening distance in the conventional sense.

- **Transmassion:** This mode's powers deal with moving other things instantly, whether objects or living beings.

- **Warping:** This mode focuses upon changing the nature of location itself, bending spacetime and even creating portals between spatial locations.

Users are often called teleporters, blinks, jumpers, sliders, upes or Upeo.

### MISSION FOCUS

For you, the only significant factors in travel are "here" and "there." It doesn't matter if "there" is in another city, on another continent or in another galaxy. You can go in a virtual instant to anywhere that you can see — and, as long as you retain a clear sense memory, you can return to anyplace you've ever been. You are the ultimate explorer and infiltrator.

## UPEO WA MACHO

Yet the question remained: “What happened to the Upeo?” Only now, with their return at last, can we start to glean the answer — and the initial evidence suggests that it is not a pleasant one.

Speculation abounded that aberrants had struck at the Upeo, who were forced to flee or were captured. It appears true that they fled from aggressors — but the aggressors were personnel from other psi orders, not aberrants. We do not yet know the full details and motivations that led to this circumstance, so we must content ourselves with fragments of fact and supposition. It appears that the Upeo discovered a colony of “untainted” aberrants. Proxy Atwan seemed persuaded that these “novas” (as they preferred to be called) could aid against the aberrant forces that assail us. The other proxies feared that she was being manipulated — or, worse still, was in league with aberrants as the Chitra Bhanu were. We believe that misunderstanding, prejudice, fear and assumption conspired to set the proxies against one another for perhaps the first time. Atwan fled, convinced that her fellow proxies meant to hold her prisoner. In turn, the proxies took her flight as evidence of complicity with aberrants.

Given the aptitude upon which the Upeo order was founded, the other orders — specifically, the Legions, Ministry and Orgotek — felt the need to move swiftly. Apparently, they wished to keep the teleporters planetside until the matter could be worked out. At the time, Atwan took the advancing orders’ advancing forces as a planned repeat of the Chitra Bhanu purge. She directed her followers to an isolated colony, Ruan’s World, known only to the order.

The orders — even those that did not take an active role in this affair — were so focused on the Upeo crisis that even Herzog himself overlooked the aberrant assault on *Esperanza* until it was too late.

Few among the orders ever knew the truth, and even now the proxies and principles of each group are making an effort to hold back details while they engage in deep discussion of the dual tragedy. They are evidently trying to come to terms with the past; it is our hope that they also speak of ways to ensure that such things never happen in the future.

### METHODS AND PRACTICES

A self-styled “coalition dedicated to the protection and expansion of humanity,” the Upeo is recognized as an interplanetary non-profit organization. Part trade association, part benevolent society, it applies the unique talents of its members — namely, the ability to teleport

— in the most beneficial and efficient fashion possible. In practical terms, this means space exploration and emergency action.

The Upeo are best known for plumbing deep space, generally in cooperation with the ISRA and a financial sponsor. In its early days, the Upeo wa Macho didn’t have the fiscal wherewithal to go it alone, so it collaborated with Brazil and the UAN to explore space, discovering viable colony sites like Averiguas and Karroo.

Once interstellar colonies were up and running, members of Upeo wa Macho capitalized on the lucrative trade in both information and material between the Sol system and the worlds beyond. Yet the psi order itself did not incorporate. The Upeo do not regard their abilities as a chance for personal opportunity and monetary gain, but rather as an opportunity for the entire human race. Incorporating would have allowed them to amass huge profits, but would have slowed down exploration and colonization.

Not all teleporters are interested in deep-space service. For that matter, not all of them are capable of interstellar jumps. Nonetheless, the power of teleportation gives these psions unique opportunities to serve humanity— whether to teleport emergency services anywhere in near space or working with local rescue services. Upeo are drawn to everywhere that lives are at stake and moments matter.

Their years-long departure was felt keenly, even after the jump ships came on line. While the *Leviathan* craft prove that we need not rely exclusively on the Upeo, the teleporters are no less essential to human exploration and defense. If nothing else, the jump ships are few in number and monstrously inefficient at stellar travel when compared to an Upeo transportal.

### INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

The order is organized largely like a trade union: Upeo associate by areas of responsibility, and the people working in these areas elect officers. In turn, these officers communicate concerns to the proxy and her inner circle and coordinate efforts to solve problems. The existing divisions that exist at present range from loyal followers of Atwan to a splinter group that holds her responsible for the *Esperanza* disaster.

#### LONG RIDERS

##### **Representative: Jennifer Shojiki**

This group began as a collective of messengers and light-cargo carriers between the colonies and Earth.



## UPEO WA MACHO

During the Upeo exile, the members used their travel routes and contacts to evolve into skilled intelligence gatherers. The Riders now operate mostly in secret, working through intermediaries and relaying important information.

### THE MONITORS

#### **Representative: Khaldun al-Masna**

Formed originally on search-and-rescue — Rescue Squad Zero (named for the amount of time it took to arrive) was perhaps the order's highest-profile group — the Monitors expanded their responsibilities during the exile. The group now handles both emergency relief and investigation. If there's a disaster, a Monitor tries to mitigate loss of life; if there's a crime, a Monitor tries to apprehend the criminal.

### KUPITA

#### **Representative: Gerard Portois**

This group is dedicated to exploring deep space. Its members work with clairsentients and telepaths to scan for promising star systems; when one is found, a Kupita member opens a transportal for exploration and survey ships to investigate.

### NGUZO

Actual teleporters form the minority of the order's members. A number of psions and even neutrals count themselves as members and provide key support to their teleporter compatriots. They have come to be called "nguzo," a Swahili word meaning "pillar." Not a distinct group in and of themselves — they take roles in the other Upeo divisions as best suits their abilities — nguzo are essential in every level of the order's efforts.

### THE STAR-CROSSED

#### **Representative: Rebecca Gould**

The majority of Upeo held such loyalty to their proxy that they remained devoted throughout the exile, even after hearing of the *Esperanza* tragedy. The Star-Crossed was born of those who still believe in the tenets upon which the Upeo was founded, but who cannot ignore the fact that Atwan's decision resulted — even unknowingly — in the death of millions. This splinter group has left the Upeo and offers its services to any governments, corporations, orders or private concerns that have humanitarian goals.

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### UPEO WA MACHO: INTERACTION WITH OTHER ORDERS

Matters are strained between the Upeo and every other order to some degree, as all sides begin the long process of coming to terms with past tragedies and present circumstances.

The Æsculapians, ISRA and Norça did not join in the attempt to apprehend the Upeo in 2114 (but only Herzog was vocal in disagreeing with the plan). This has created the greatest amount of friction with the Legions, Ministry and Orgotek, but the Upeo have not overlooked that the A/O and Norça didn't exactly spring to their defense. While teleporters will work with other orders when necessary, the lack of resolution of past events keeps them on guard. Only with ISRA personnel do the Upeo even come close to relaxing as they did before the exile.



## CHITRA BHANU

## CHITRA BHANU

Much remains unknown about this order, eradicated in the purge of 2109. Chitra Bhanu was established around the rare quantakinesis aptitude, which allowed the use of noetic energy to manipulate quantum force — the same quantum force that aberrants wield to devastating effect. The order studied these forces, ostensibly to discover a means to subvert or even negate aberrant powers. Instead, it appears that Chitra Bhanu was corrupted by its object of study in the same way that aberrants are corrupted by the taint of their powers.

Under the aegis of Chitra Bhanu, prominent Bombay psychologist S. K. Bhurano worked with Proxy Zweidler in the early days to lay the groundwork of modern noetic science and investigate the parameters of the subquantum universe. Chitra Bhanu is also known for its attempt to unify Shaivism, Vishnaivism and Zoroastrianism philosophically with contemporary noetic-quantum physics. The order also funded a number of clinics and research facilities for the treatment of Aberrant Syndrome and noetic dysfunction.

Rumors that Chitra Bhanu was “soft” on aberrants surfaced in 2107, when “rehabilitated” minor aberrants known from the war were sighted visiting the Bombay clinic. Over the next two years, stories of “insane” practices and “dangerous science” grew, along with the rumor that Bhurano had found a cure for Aberrant Syndrome.

Bhurano’s last public appearance was at the first Noetic Conference in 2109, at which she gave a lecture on the moral implications of the subquantum universe. Shortly thereafter, conclusive evidence gathered from multiple sources revealed that the Chitra Bhanu organization was in league with aberrants. Instead of working to find a defense against aberrants, Chitra Bhanu researched means to cloak aberrants’ quantum taint, to apply that radiation to human subjects and even to amplify aberrant powers still further.

New Delhi feared aberrant intervention on behalf of the Chitra Bhanu. Legions, the Office of Noetic Security, Orgotek Operations teams and squads of Norça were enlisted to enforce the declaration that Chitra Bhanu cease all current activity and submit to full investigation. The quantakinetics, including Bhurano, refused to surrender peaceably and were killed while resisting arrest. The order’s facility was destroyed after readings showed massive taint radiation and its Prometheus chamber was dismantled.

Unfortunately, Bhurano destroyed all data files before she was killed, and even Orgotek computer experts have proven unable to reconstruct more than fragments of information. The secrets of Chitra Bhanu appear to have died with the order.

# ABERRANTS

— Lectures of Professor Solomon Pringle, Æon Trinity/Proteus Division

I'm here to make you understand one thing and one thing only: aberrants are the single greatest menace known to humanity. They are most frightening because they were once us — human.

While everyone must know the depth of evil that aberrants represent, as an associate of Æon, you must be especially conscious of this. Sooner or later, you will come face to face — or what passes for it — with Earth's 60-year-old legacy: an aberrant returned from exile in the unknown reaches of space, hell-bent to destroy you, me and the whole human race.

I'm not pulling any punches. Others can hold your hands and pat you on the head. I'll tell you exactly what you're up against, because if you're going to die, you might as well know why. That's more than can be said for the people on Research Outpost Vesta.

You know the basics: Aberrants were the heroes of the 21st century. About 100 years ago, the majority were lauded like psions are today as the protectors and benefactors of humanity. The Æon Society of the time worked with these "novas" for the general good. Something went wrong in aberrant physiology, though. The source of their powers, a structure in the brain — called the Mazarin-Rashoud node after the pair who first discovered it — mutated. The vast majority abused their powers to ever greater extremes, that very abuse accelerating their rate of mutation until they finally went mad. Novas no longer, they had become aberrations. They were determined to rule the globe, eradicating humanity in the process. Devastation followed. Humanity's fight to survive against these things became the Aberrant War.

They showed no mercy. For every one aberrant killed, hundreds — thousands — of normal people, of soldiers and civilians, were murdered. The war went on for years because people had no choice but to defend themselves or die. The aberrant Mungu Kuwasha interfaced with and wiped out the global computer network simply because he *could*. We lost thousands of years of cultural, historical and social record because of a solitary maniac's prank. Worse still, other aberrants delighted in the prank and took to destroying physical repositories of learning. What was to be gained by such efforts? Nothing but the insane joy of devastation.

And that was the straw that broke the camel's back. Any hope of conventional resolution was seen to be folly. The Chinese government (with surreptitious assistance from our own Æon) handed down the Ultimatum in 2061: Aberrants must stop the insanity or everything — *everything* — would be nuked. A bold move, but the Chinese meant it.

Æon coordinated with those aberrants who retained some semblance of sanity — enough, at least, to realize that opposing the Ultimatum was folly — and so began the Exodus. Aberrants left Earth, supposedly for other planets and places that they could reach with their powers. The majority required no mechanical support to depart — no biosuits or jump ships for them!

The last we knew of the aberrants was an ultimatum of their own: "We'll be back." That was 60 years ago. It took them a while, but the aberrants kept their word.

## TRITON ARCHIVE

### "ALIEN" AUTOPSY

— Æon Trinity medplex, SubChicago arcology, 7.2.2104

Repeated tests verify that the "alien entity" does possess traces of human DNA. Clinical and objective interpretation and recording of findings are difficult under these circumstances.

"Alien" physiology denies biological connection to *Homo sapiens*. Epidermis is a translucent gray-pink. The frontal bone of the skull is distended severely. The exterior of joints and the spinal column sprout what appear to be short, prehensile tentacles. Limbs are gnarled and atrophied. Fingers and toes are elongated and flaccid, apparently to function more like tentacles than human digits.

Further, reports from the attack on Research Outpost Vesta identify other creatures consisting entirely of tentacle-like protrusions.

If this creature was once human, it is about as true to its evolutionary origins as *Homo sapiens* are to the primordial ooze from which we evolved.

**Addendum: Æsculapian Proxy  
Dr. Matthieu Zweidler to Æon Trinity**

This creature was once human, one of the aberrants returned, as we warned the Æon Council would be the case. The cause for the creature's apparent mutation is unknown to us as yet. More information will be forthcoming when it is available.

For now, one fear haunts me: If this was once an aberrant, how will we recognize them? The aberrants of the 21st century were ostensibly human and had the power to change matter and energy on an atomic level. If our current attackers still possess that power, they may be able to assume human appearance. If they cannot do so, why not? And if they can do so, are they among us already?

Their first new attack on the human race was at Research Outpost Vesta. I lost two Trinity colleagues that day, including my wife. I hate the aberrants with every fiber of my being. Don't think that this blinds me; rather, it does the reverse. I can face without flinching the full evil of these beings, and I give these lectures to make you see that evil as well.

Vesta was only the beginning. Strikes continued always on isolated stations and colonies, always using hit-and-run tactics. At first, we didn't know what was attacking. We had yet to encounter alien races in our explorations, it seemed that we had finally made first contact, and it was hostile. However, "alien" tissue gathered proved that these beings were, in fact, human. Apparently years of inbreeding, festering in exile and their insanity-made-manifest (a mutation now called Aberrant Syndrome or "taint") turned the aberrants into absolute monstrosities.

The majority of aberrant attacks focus on the orbital stations and colonies at the borders of settled human (and qin, as it turns out) space. Aberrants are becoming better organized, though, their assaults striking with greater frequency and further into our space — on the orbital stations, on Luna, on Earth itself.

The devastating attack just a few years ago on the space station *Esperanza* and the resulting deaths of millions of Europeans is undeniable and terrifying proof of how close that aberrants can get to us. As is their recent attack on our station orbiting Luna. How did the aberrants know we had a jump ship base there? How did they know to strike when the ship was about to start testing? And, perhaps the most frightening question of all, are the aberrants of old still alive and out for revenge?

Questions with no answers. That's why Æon needs you, why humanity needs you. Aberrants' powers seem to defy the laws of physics themselves. Just like a century past, aberrants can will something into existence on an atomic level. From what the noeticists say, while psions can't break physical laws, they can still bend them with strength of will alone. Singly, a psion is not as strong as most aberrants. But, together — and with the aid of other Æon associates — we have the strength of unity.

Æon is counting on you, but you can count on us, too. We are your lifeline. You can call upon Æon for backup, to seek information from our data banks, to get equipment that you absolutely need to carry on the fight. We have bases and agents across Earth, the moon and throughout known space.

We must carry the fight to the aberrants. Drive them from Earth — from the galaxy — once and for all.

## Aberrants Attack Olympus

— *Newsday* holobrief © 8.4.2119, GN

Reports are confirmed that the explosions that occurred today on Luna, near Olympus base, were the result of aberrant attack — the third in as many days. Military and Æon Trinity sources report that at least five aberrant beings attacked a military testing installation. Insiders claim the base housed one of the experimental new jump ships rumored to be in design for some months now.

The other two attacks were staged against separate, apparently unrelated targets: an Orgotek manufacture facility on Belt Outpost 17, and an ISRA training institution.

Most shocking about the attack is the appearance of the aberrant thought to be "the Colony," a contemporary of the aberrant Divis Mal. The infamous Divis Mal was the last aberrant to leave Earth at the end of the Aberrant War, after staging a horrific display of power before the United Nations.

Courtney Post, Æon Trinity representative, stated, "Increased aberrant attacks such as these indicate a growth in their power. We don't know at this time whether there is a connection between their targets, or if it is a sign of better organization. Rest assured, the Trinity will assist the orders in investigating the matter thoroughly."

Ms. Post did not confirm whether it was, indeed, the Colony returned. If it was, this reporter wonders if Divis Mal still lives — and, if so, how long can it be before he returns as well?



ABERRANT ATTACK >>> GN NEWS ARCHIVE



## The Titans Return

— Textfile excerpt: Paolo Herren, *Twilight of the Gods* © 2116 Sirius Press

Typhon. Briareus. Cronus. Ymir.

These are the gods, emblems of the ideas that raise humans above their animal roots and reflections of the fears that lower humans back into the slime. And yet even the gods sprang from the titans, the giants, the primordial monsters in the dark.

It's an old myth, really, an id kind of thing. Father sires son; son rebels against father; son supplants father — the Greeks even threw in a castration scene — son takes mother, son throws emasculated daddy in lightless dungeon, cue the wailing and gnashing of teeth. And the Old Ones, the Titans, the Jotun, the primordial, inchoate Things, they stay in Sheol or Niflheim or Tarterus, never — well, almost never — to trouble the New Order again.

On January 28, 2104, out in the dark beyond Saturn, our titans came home from Tarterus.

Every schoolchild learns the Speech of Divis Mal, right up there with the Lagos Manifesto. The world lost much of its history in the Aberrant War, but this we shall never forget. The archfiend itself, bullets atomizing around its too-perfect body, ionic hellfire blasting the secretary-general to a twitching skeleton as it spoke, culminating in that immortal line: "Your legacy is our future." It raised its fist, like some old newsreel Nazi or Nation of Islam leader, and let the secretary-general's bones collapse around its feet, a god casting dice for our destiny. And then, from all over the world, they rose into the sky like the aurora borealis, and were gone.

Only the old-timers remember the Aberrant Age. From what I hear — not that getting anything out of 'em's easy, 'cause even with Æsculapian science, they're getting a tad senile — it was an age as wondrous and terrifying and... well, golden... as any "once upon a time." I mean, you had the normal people like you and me, and among them walked gods.

Yeh; gods. I know what some of you are thinking: "Right, Herren. Aberrants were human beings just like the rest of us. They just had that little structure in their forebrain — that Mazarin-Rashoud node — that let them do...."

Anything.

Any damned thing they wanted.

Don't tell me that didn't turn you on as a kid. You may have looked at those old VRs of *T. Rex* or the great whites before we drove 'em extinct, seen those teeth like industrial grinders, and been scared. But you thought it was cool. You imagined your enemies shredded in the monsters' maw, and you thought, "I wish I was a predatory machine of doom, feared by all who dare to cross my path."



"YOUR LEGACY IS OUR FUTURE." >>> DIVIS MAL AT U.N. 2061

So you watched the footage. You interacted with aberrant sites on the local OpNet and you logged onto *New York 2020*. You and your friends ran around in the arcoss, screaming out atomic disruption noises, pretending you were The Blood Queen, Caestus Pax, Totentanz.

I know I did. I was Overkill. My friend was Maxx Mauler. Every weekend in Luna Park we bombarded each other with imaginary rays from the wrong side of the electromagnetic spectrum, and then, when the sun went down, we went home for dinner.

The scientists at Research Outpost Vesta aren't coming home for dinner.

After the aberrants left the planet, we... well, we forgot about 'em. Like that asteroid that can theoretically rain down on us like the wrath of God and smash us into sediment with the dinosaurs. Objectively, we know it's out there. Objectively, we know that planets do get hit by celestial bodies, and that if this happens, our time is over. In practical terms, we don't want to think about the possibility of bad things happening, so we ignore it.

The scientists at Research Outpost Vesta paid for this ignorance with their lives.

I wonder what went through those poor fools' minds when they picked up the perimeter alert and saw those things plowing through the void under their own power, without life-support suits? When they deployed the defenses and watched the things cut through 'em like paper? When they heard the creaking of metal, and realized the things were ripping the whole station apart like a house of cards?

Wonder if the poor fools ever figured out why it happened? Far as we can tell, it was all to deliver a message.

Vesta killed one of the things. Just one. They had to hit it with a heavy coilgun. Sure, their lasers and whatnot wounded a few, but didn't slow 'em down much. In the end, only one was dropped, and that required a damned antitank weapon.

And the rest of 'em, at that point, chose to leave. Scared? Or did they just feel they'd made their point?

That point being, I think, was "we're coming back, and here we are." There's going to be a war — a revolution. Or maybe an *evolution*. You know, looking at that footage of Research Outpost Vesta, I feel an awful lot like a Neanderthal right now.

You see, we don't know what happened to them out there in the dark. Because that bit of *Homo sapiens* DNA we recovered from the dead aberrant's carapace was the only thing about it that could pass for human.



VESTA ATTACK > CAMERA 14

Humans are wonderful, adaptive creatures. We have survived centuries of warfare, strife, famine, plague and pestilence, and emerged stronger from adversity. Among our most recent achievements, we have crawled from the surface of Mother Earth and have set foot among the stars. We have confirmed the existence of alien races. We have unlocked humanity's psionic potential. Our future stands before us, filled with potential.

However, overshadowing this promise is a threat greater than any ever faced in our long, tumultuous history: the return of aberrants. To truly understand this danger, we must look to our past. For, despite all our accomplishments, we are prone to repeating our mistakes.

Indeed, that is one of the primary reasons why the Æon Trinity was founded. The organization has helped steer humanity's course for two centuries, to stay on the high road during times of hardship and to help humanity arrive at its fateful destination.

Only by understanding the errors of the past and the events of the present can we hope to gain command of our future.

## Times Past

With the Æon Trinity's establishment two centuries ago, it was hoped that a handful of knowledgeable visionaries would lend their talents to benefiting humanity's future. The immediate results were not as rewarding as hoped; the social and political forces that led up to the Second World War, for example, were already in motion and impossible to stop. Still, Æon's subtle maneuverings and charities affected the conflict's course. As the decades passed, the organization grew in members, influence and wisdom, and offered guidance and wisdom to the world.

This isn't to say that Æon could unify humanity to withstand any adversity. If that were the case, the greatest tragedy of our race's history would never have come to pass — aberrants would never have grown into the menace they became. Still, with Æon's help, humanity did fend off that greatest of all threats.

Unthinkable as it may seem today, the early 21st century portrayed aberrants as wondrous beings. Aside from performing pyrotechnic displays and feats of strength, aberrants were responsible for societal advancements. The ubiquitous modern energy source known as hyper-fusion was developed in 2022 by Dr. Soguk Birlesme — a brilliant man later proven to be an aberrant. His revolutionary energy conversion process was a key component of the United States' first fusion-powered spacecraft, unveiled only two years later.

Indeed, hyper-fusion was the means to building viable intrasolar colonies. Various organizations

## Hyper-fusion

— Dr. Astra Schache, *Under the Microscope* © 2118 OBC

So-called hyper-fusion was invented in the early 21st century and revolutionized all aspects of power production and consumption. The ability to generate electricity sufficient to power a town, in a device no larger than a typical bathroom, was liberating to say the least.

The fusion process begins with the extraction of deuterium (heavy hydrogen, often called "deuce") from water, which is channeled into a Birlesme containment chamber where it is brought to temperatures exceeding one million degrees Celsius, and forced to fuse.

While efficiency has not approached theoretical limits, even a modest trickle of water contains enough energy to provide power to a medium-sized building. Compared to archaic sources of power such as fission and fossil fuels, hyper-fusion is extremely clean and relatively safe.

## The Destruction of the Information Superhighway

— Dr. Kieran Baxter,  
*The Technological Age* © 2110  
Walkabout Press

By the first decade of the 21st century, the so-called "Internet" had evolved into a complex and highly interactive optical network. The "OpNet" was a global communications web considered invulnerable to power fluctuations, electromagnetic pulses and other technological nightmares. Aside from its protective capacity, an optical network increased the information flow by orders of magnitude compared to that of the copper wiring used previously. It was a time of incredible liberation and exchange among global cultures.

Then, in 2061, one man flooded the entire OpNet with the prosaically termed "electro-optical pulse." Mungu Kuwasha used his powers to transmit data-destroying energy through the optical lines supposed to resist just such assaults. He literally hopped his pulse through the OpNet and into millions of

developed plans for orbital colonies at the Lagrange points and on Luna; the U.S. led the way, establishing Olympus Base near the Moon's south pole in 2031.

As more aberrants emerged, and their manifestations grew increasingly bizarre and frightening, they revealed a previously hidden malevolence (later termed Aberrant Syndrome). The overwhelming evidence we gained from the study of aberrant evolution proved that whenever this so-called taint grew in an aberrant, the being became insane — megalomaniacal and sociopathic. Aberrants took over organized crime, infiltrated military systems and manipulated religious cults — not to mention indulged in numerous indiscriminate acts of destruction and cruelty.

## The Aberrant War

Initial attempts to keep aberrants in check failed. Their powers enabled them to perform atrocities only to disappear again. Most could elude even the OMEN satellite system.

It's erroneous to think of aberrants as a single, unified group, even today (although their attacks seem to be growing larger, better organized and more strategic since the reappearance of "the Colony" in 2119). Decades ago, aberrants were a diverse minority, separated from one another by geographical location, social upbringing, religious philosophy and individual temperament. Aberrants were for the most part unified in only one thing: their devastating powers.

They had not yet developed the massive physical mutations that mark aberrants today. They were virtually impossible to find unless they called attention to themselves. Others were so powerful that they stood in plain sight and dared humans to challenge them.

One of the most notable was "Allah's Legion" — an aberrant-controlled religious group — which seized control of the African island Bahrain in 2046. Whether the group's leader, Abdul Masiq, truly believed in the group's religious tenets or simply used zealous aberrants to further his own agenda matters little. The group's actions motivated governments and corporations to organize defenses and plan unified retaliations against aberrants.

While it seems amazing that humanity waited so long to address the aberrant peril, remember that we were dealing with previously unknown circumstances. It took some time for our grandparents to understand the situation's severity.

The United Nations declared war on the aberrant population in 2049. It's difficult to understand what it was like to live in that era. While we can comprehend the travesties of war and man's inhumanity to man on an intellectual level, how do

computer systems, not only wiping clean average household computers, but even the most heavily protected government and corporate networks.

A single aberrant's maliciousness cast information technologies from near-instantaneous communications between almost everywhere on Earth and in orbit back to the isolated computer systems that are still in operation today. Decades' worth of historical, technological, scientific and cultural information was erased in an instant. Even half a century later, millions of information technicians have been able to recover only a fraction of the lost data. Communications technologies were thrown back a century.

And why did the aberrant do it? He simply wondered what would happen.

Fortunately, the Aeon Trinity has proven instrumental in restoring many histories and archives that were lost with the OpNet. The Trinity's 200-year legacy of observing and recording events has proved instrumental to our understanding of the past.

— Radio communication pirated from OMEN Low-Earth-Orbit Relay Station 2, Eau Claire, WI, 7.9.2061.

**OMEN LEO Relay 2:** ...seem to be holding position. Sir, if the Chinese were going to do something, wouldn't they have done it by now?

**NORAD:** You're not paid for commentary, Relay 2. Just keep your sensors on that—

**OMEN LEO Relay 2:** I'm picking up a spatial disturbance — it's approximately 500 yards off one of the Chinese fusion platforms! Redirecting orbital cameras....

**NORAD:** What do you see, Relay 2? Are they activating something?

**OMEN LEO Relay 2:** Visual should be online in a few seconds. The spatial reading has stabilized. Visuals directed toward target... now. Holy shit! There's someone outside the platform! It looks like he's wearing some sort of... armor. No! It's an aberrant!

**NORAD:** Repeat last transmission. Repeat.

**OMEN LEO Relay 2:** He's tearing into the platform's hull with his bare hands!

**NORAD:** Alert: all OMEN relay stations. Perform a long-range sweep for spatial disturbances.

we account for the sheer viciousness and randomness of some attacks? What was the point of attacking commercial airlines — acts that destroyed intercontinental air travel for decades? What did the aberrant clan known as "the Outsiders" gain by dumping *L-ribopropylmethionine* (RPM) into remote water supplies across the globe, dissolving the nervous systems of peasants and nomads far from any medical care? And was Wycoff's self-immolation and subsequent spread of taint radiation — what we now call the North American Blight — a result of him losing control of his powers, or some degenerate desire to leave his mark?

Similarly, we may never understand why an unnamed aberrant raised a tidal wave that flooded the Florida coast. Or why Geslav rendered 90% of the Russian nuclear reactors inert yet left the region's warheads armed. And even though the self-proclaimed "Space Brigade's" surprise takeover of Olympus in 2049 made excellent tactical sense — giving aberrants control of near orbit — the group seemed content to stay on Luna and simply observe the conflict on Earth.

Almost as tragic as the loss of millions of lives in those 12 years was the massive information loss. Satellites, transmitters, computer networks, even libraries and printing presses fell victim to aberrant (and human) attacks. We may never know of the worst, most horrible acts perpetrated in this time.

## The Ultimatum and the Exodus

While the rest of the world fought aberrants, China went comparatively unscathed. Its only participation in the war was to deny known aberrants entry into the country. What China did behind the scenes to avoid aberrant attacks is still unknown.

China devoted tremendous resources to developing space technologies. In 2053, China launched the *Xingyang Sujia*, the first interplanetary craft with a human crew, headed for Mars. China continued to set the standard for space development despite the United States' and Russia's attempts to catch up. By 2061, China had several hundred orbital craft, three orbital stations and seven huge (at that time) cruisers in space.

Then, upon the destruction of the OpNet, China put the Aberrant War to an end. In 2061, with more than 500 craft in orbit around the Earth and Luna — all armed with fusion warheads — China announced that it would launch a full-scale nuclear strike if the aberrants did not cease their attacks immediately. China had even established what was then known as a "deadman switch": The strike would take place automatically if periodic signals were not sent to stop it.

**OMEN LEO Relay 2:** Sir! I have a comm blackout to all OMEN satellites in LEO Alpha Prime! That's four satellites offline!

**NORAD:** Relays 1 and 4 report an EMP in LEO Alpha Prime, Relay 2. Looks like the Chinese lit up a platform.

**OMEN LEO Relay 2:** Oh, God!

**NORAD:** Keep it together, Relay 2. Everyone keep it together. The Chinese have the ball. Let's hope they decide to keep playing.

## The Ultimatum Broadcast

— GN, 7.9.2061

We have just received confirmation that the aberrant-controlled island-nation of Bahrain has been destroyed by a calculated nuclear strike. The attack came from a Chinese orbital craft, armed with an estimated six fusion warheads. Details are still unclear at this time, but it does appear that the entire island has been destroyed.

We expect a response from Chinese officials within the hour. In the interim, they have released a preliminary statement. It claims the Bahrain strike was in retaliation for an aberrant attack on a Chinese orbital platform. Further signs of aggression from aberrant or human forces will supposedly be met with a full-scale nuclear attack on the entire planet!

I'd like to take a moment to appeal to all aberrants and government forces watching this broadcast. It seems the Chinese government is fully committed to its ultimatum. I urge you, please find a peaceful resolution. Humanity's fate rests in your hands.



WYCOFF EXPLOSION > GN News Archive 2054

It appeared that China was willing to sacrifice the entire planet to end the war. The nation's leaders did not care how it was resolved; aberrants could surrender, face execution or even colonize and stay on Luna — China's proudest and most brilliant would be safe aboard the fleet. The aberrants spurned the options offered them. Instead, they left the solar system entirely. But even in that they didn't go quietly; it took a foolhardy aberrant to trigger a retaliatory strike on Bahrain to prove that China meant business.

It is assumed that the majority of aberrants followed those with a "warping" ability to small bases established previously on distant planets. While we may never know the aberrants' final destination, we shall never forget the declaration from Divis Mal, just prior to the Exodus. The being's appearance in the relocated United Nations was met with surprise and panic. The aberrant posed for the cameras to give its final statement to the people of Earth: "Your legacy is our future." With Divis Mal's declaration, the Aberrant War finally came to an end.

In the aftermath of these dramatic days, after 12 years of brutal conflict, one question remained: Why did China order its fleet to stand down after the aberrants departed? China was in a position to control Earth and all of near space, but chose not to proceed. What reasons did the Chinese government have to release us from its iron grip?

## The Crash

The Aberrant War's incredible toll was more than emotional or physical. The resources of entire regions were depleted, as demonstrated by the loss of much of the former United States'

## Microgravity

— Excerpt: *Let's Explore Space!*  
interactive holo ©  
2099 Alpha Software

### 36. Where would you find zero-gravity?

- a. In space
- b. In a vacuum chamber
- c. Nowhere
- d. Answers "a" and "b"

**Correct answer:** "c."

Since each object in the universe has at least some mass, everything exerts gravitational force to some degree, however slight. As a result, there is no true "zero-gravity."

The extremely weak gravity found on a space craft or other small extraterrestrial object is properly called "microgravity." However, the term "zero-g" is often used instead, and only the most particular individual is disturbed by its substitution.

agricultural regions, urban centers and financial wealth. Electronic networks were destroyed beyond repair. Information technologies were isolated and fragmented, and protected fiercely as a result.

Three additional pressures — the Urban Schism, the Communication Frequency Constriction (or Comm Crunch), and the Orbital Expansion — also weighed on human society.

### The Urban Schism

In the wake of the Aberrant War, survivors clustered in groups to create communities. They did so in part for safety in numbers, but also to gather strength to take the territories and resources of other survivors. This phenomenon occurred on a small scale as bandit gangs fought over ravaged turf, and on an international level as shattered countries squabbled over scraps of land.

The "Urban Schism" arose because of a division between the wealthy and poor that existed even before the world economy collapsed. Once it became possible for individuals and groups to own hyper-fusion energy sources — and these groups could remove themselves from the remains of society — the Schism progressed rapidly.

While it swept the globe to varying degrees, the Urban Schism occurred primarily in the Western Hemisphere. Groups moved out of North American and European cities and into remote areas, and eventually into orbit as land became prohibitively expensive. Australia was also an important influence on this mass emigration. The oft-forgotten continent reversed its previous isolationist policies and encouraged the dispossessed and destitute to start a new life "down under." The campaign worked marvelously. Australia's population swelled to twice its previous size in less than five years. Relocation to the Outback enclaves, as all middle-class communities have since become known, only slowed when other nations pursued intrasolar colonization (and Australia's own resources became strained).

The shift in populace changed the very society of the world's cities. The wealthy created energized arcologies. The poor, forgotten at the feet of the rich, eked out an existence as servants and maintained the metroplexes. Those unfortunate souls without the talent or luck for even that minimal level of subsistence scrabbled for survival in the husks of the once-thriving cities.

These social disparities exist even today, intensified by 60 years of cultural stratification. No single social class gives much thought to the others anymore, except as potential threats to its own safety.

### The Comm Crunch

With the loss of the OpNet as a means of unlimited, instantaneous communication, the world was forced to resort to old-style transmitted



## Transmissions in the 22nd Century

— Cori Heisler, *The Painful Truth* © 2119 MMI

S i n c e transmissions that don't travel via an optical cable or other physical conduit are taxed and monitored heavily, an unregistered broadcast is bound to catch a government's attention — and feel its wrath. Of course, this doesn't stop people from transmitting, whether via technological device or psi talent, without a license.

Doing so puts the offender at risk. Unauthorized transmissions can incur thousands of yuan in fines. More severe laws demand jail sentences of months or even years. Governments don't take kindly to those who poach one of their richest revenue sources.

communication systems. Human society went from free information exchange to limited transmission bands and jealously guarded secrets. Communications technologies eventually reached a hard limit; there just weren't enough radio frequencies to be had (or so governments claimed). Signal splitting and duplex amplifications could do only so much, and the proliferation of cellular phones and other link-users were in danger of overwhelming communications systems altogether.

Governments therefore imposed hard regulations and heavy taxes on cellular links, creating a reliable source of revenue for the financially strapped bureaucracies. (Even today, patching a call from São Paulo to Olympus costs a small fortune, and that's only if the frequency link can be rented.) These limitations also went a long way toward insuring that governments and the affluent maintained access to and controlled communications, while the rest of the population did without.

Today, people go uninformed beyond what those in control of communication systems choose to broadcast. Limitations on communications capabilities put transmitting on a late-20th century level. People also live in a state of fear lest too many systems be linked together and provide an opportunity for data and systems to be destroyed again. Access to the restored OpNet is limited even at the university and government levels. Only the media clones link through multiple networks, and even their transmissions are timed and monitored rigidly.

## Orbital Expansion

The most progressive movement in the wake of the Aberrant War was humanity's widespread departure from Earth. The development of gravocrystals in 2071 made it feasible for normal people to live and work in space.

Previously, small stations had to rely on short-shift rotations, and woe to the worker who stayed too long! Automated stations also proved ineffective without human intervention.

Once microgravity environments became safe for humans, companies started recruiting people to go off-planet. Considering the price of land on Earth at that time, not to mention the devastation of the European, Middle Eastern and North American landscapes, it's easy to understand how this lifestyle was tempting. Individuals bought into a colony or research organization and were shipped to the colonies where their new jobs and homes waited. Once colonies had sufficient populations, they were more or less self-sustaining, especially once their function — manufacturing, mining or research — got underway.

Attention diverted across the globe to the colonization of space was the catalyst for resolving wars and strife on Earth. Former squabbles and earthly interests seemed petty to nations capable

## Holograms

— Dr. Kieran Baxter, *The Technological Age* © 2110 Walkabout Press

Holograms project visible three-dimensional images, without need for a screen. Computers and most forms of entertainment use holograms as a standard output format. Projecting a hologram that is indistinguishable from reality, or that has frequencies outside of visible light is illegal. All holoprojectors are incapable of breaking these laws without skilled modification.

Simulated reality games, also called "holosims" or "sims," use holograms extensively. Licensed game arcades are permitted to use reality-grade projectors.

Most authorities have goggles that screen out most standard hologram projection frequencies.

of venturing into space for territory, resources, wealth and trade — commodities that wouldn't have to be fought for in the vastness of unclaimed space. Even small or unstable countries were able to join the space movement as they made alliances rather than declared wars, and joined their neighbors on orbital and deep-space ventures.

The development of pseudo-gravity marked a new direction for humanity after the devastation of the Aberrant War.

## The Aberrant Return and the Rise of Psions

There is no way to describe the collective dismay, horror and terror felt when aberrants returned in 2104. Most assumed that they wouldn't come back for several generations, if ever. Many hoped that Divis Mal's threat was empty. Yet less than 50 years after their Exodus, the aberrants are back.

There is hope, though. Many people admit that, as odd as the psions can seem, they have proven to be our best hope in this time of need, and the Æon Trinity has stood beside them since their emergence. Indeed, Æon recognized the instrumental place that the orders had in humanity's survival, and worked with the proxies to find them a home among the world's peoples.

The Legion was the first order to reveal itself to the world when psychokinetics drove aberrants from Sydney Spaceport. The Legionnaires have since proven to be stalwart warriors, but certainly not the only ones. Orgotek uses electrokinesis to explore the noetic science of biotechnology. The Æsculapian "docs" are always on hand to aid the injured and destitute. And of all the things that the clairsentients of ISRA can perceive, it is perhaps the very approach and proximity of aberrants themselves that makes these psions indispensable.

The psions' dedication to protect humanity from aberrant assault wins them favor among humans, even among the skeptical. The psions' possession of powers seemingly like those of the aberrants of old creates concern that a new destroyer walks the Earth. How long will it be before these psions turn on those whom they profess to defend? Valid fears, but ones that have been assuaged as psions integrate themselves among human friends, societies and countries and continue their relentless commitment to protect humanity for 16 years and counting.

CONFIDENTIAL

— Excerpt: audiofile; voice unidentified — 17.7.2119

I must admit to some curiosity, though. Could our early members have somehow been responsible for creating the proxies? Could previous Trinity members inspire so much hope for an era of human enlightenment that what the proxies have referred to as their "benefactors" came to investigate?

The proxies claim (and I wonder why we believe them) that they're helping us fight aberrants. But evidence — circumstantial, granted — suggests that the aberrants' return and the proxies' first appearance and efforts to establish the orders occurred at the same time.

Timing aside, what about the larger issue: Just what is this quantum "taint" that pushed aberrants over the edge years ago, and does it continue to affect humanity — or even the psions?



"LEGION TRIUMPHANT" > SYDNEY SPACEPORT LOBBY MURAL

## Career Day

— Jemma Kerlious,  
Grade 11, Maya  
Anjelou High School,  
San Francisco  
Arcology

I wonder if I might ask a few questions about *Esperanza*?

What we know seems so vague, even after this long. Ever since the Legion won against the aberrants at Sydney, other orders have appeared publicly. But how did the electrokinetics know the *Esperanza* attack was going to happen? Orgotek claims it heard an aberrant transmission, but that seems awfully simple.

I have to think there must have been some kind of advance warning. But if that's so, from who? ISRA? The Ministry? Why didn't

Yet despite all psion efforts, the most significant and tragic event to occur in recent history was the crash of the orbital station *Esperanza* in late 2114. Apparently, an Orgotek craft in near space intercepted some kind of aberrant transmission of an imminent attack on the European Commonwealth's shining post-war achievement: its very own space habitat in Earth orbit. Sadly, the psions' effort could not save the station.

During the attack, tremendous forces moved *Esperanza* from its stable L1 Lagrange point. Even the station's advanced stabilizing thrusters weren't enough to resist the aberrants' concerted power, and it tumbled toward Earth. Gravitational and re-entry stresses and the attack itself tore the *Esperanza* apart; it fell in pieces over the Atlantic and crashed to Earth over much of France and parts of Spain, as well as over various parts of Western Europe. Millions were killed instantly, and France remains a largely uninhabitable wasteland even years later.

In the wake of the tragedy, it was discovered that all members of the Upeo wa Macho psi order had disappeared. Like the *Esperanza* disaster, this loss had immeasurable impact. The teleporting psions had become humanity's means to deep space. Their efforts allowed colonies and stations to be established far from Earth, much farther than could be traveled by conventional means in any reasonable time frame. When the Upeo disappeared, so too did humanity's connection to its colonies.

they get more help to stop the attack? The other thing is to say that Orgotek is related to aberrants, but that's ridiculous. The electrokinetics have proven just as brave as the Legionnaires. Personally, I think they developed some kind of psiware that let them tap into a b e r r a n t communications. Don't suppose you could support that...?

And why did the Upeo wa Macho disappear? Why the *whole* order? Where did the teleporters go? Are they alive? How come they haven't come back?

CONFIDENTIAL

— Excerpt: audiofile; voice  
unidentified — 12.5.2106

In order for the orders to be integrated, we must sculpt an image for them based on society's needs. The psions must be perceived as everything that aberrants are not. We must work against that foil. The orders also have to prove their dedication in a visible forum. But, to accomplish any of our goals, the orders must present a unified whole. If they don't appear to be united, why would anyone rally around them?



CONFIDENTIAL

ESPERANZA CRASH &gt;&gt;&gt; ORGOTEK ARCHIVES

## REPERCUSSIONS OF THE ESPERANZA CRASH AND UPEO WA MACHO DISAPPEARANCE

**Æon Trinity Debriefing,  
Neptune Division**

Subject: Ministry agent Chen Li

I was a recent graduate of Shanghai when the space station crashed and the teleporters disappeared. If you are aware of how our powers work, you understand that our senses of our surroundings have limits. I can normally sense strong changes in noetic energy within a few miles. That is all.

When *Esperanza* crashed and the Upeo disappeared, even I felt something — half a world away! The deaths of so many people affected every psion at that time. A wave came over me, a terrible feeling of dread. I reported to duty immediately and found that I wasn't the only one — we all felt it, some more than I. My nose and ears bled for days. I knew some who went into comas.

They say that having these powers is a blessing. I am pleased to serve my country and my people, but there is a price to pay. Being in touch with the movement of things, with changes in energy — with life and death — can be... overwhelming. It is not always a pleasant world.

But even when handed a major setback like *Esperanza's* loss — and the European community's hope to reestablish itself in the galactic sphere — humans prove remarkably resourceful and ingenious. Æon Trinity and several orders, with assistance from various world governments and even the stranded qin, spent years modifying teleportation biotech and developing new psiware to interact with it. The resulting "jump ships" started testing in late 2119... and resulted in an accidental encounter with yet another alien race.

## Alien Contact

Perhaps by coincidence or due to some cosmic design, just as humanity struggled to comprehend the return of aberrants and the emergence of psions, we made first contact with an alien race — the qin — in 2107. The aliens were received with both fear and joy. Thus far, relations have proven friendly; in fact, both races have established embassies on each other's worlds. Unfortunately no one, not even the qin, could have anticipated the loss of communication with our respective embassies when the Upeo wa Macho, who made first contact possible, disappeared. We must be confident that our joint expedition back to the qin homeworld, Qinshui, will be successful in re-establishing contact. We can only hope the qin will understand that the abrupt termination of relations was due to aberrants, our mutual enemy, and was not an indication of disrespect on our part.

Initial contact with chromatrics was not cordial. We weren't even aware of their existence until they attacked the Karroo interstellar mining colony in 2113. Reasons for the attack are

## Psions: Messiahs or Menace?

— Carlos Viminez,  
*Journal* © 2112  
MMI

Disaster has not spared the psi orders. There were eight initially. Chitra Bhanu, the so-called "quantakinesis order," was said to have been particularly effective at searching out aberrants, but its members reportedly fell victim to Aberrant Syndrome — the taint.

Psion representatives claim that Chitra Bhanu sensitivity to aberrants made them vulnerable to the same derangement that afflicted aberrants in the early 21st century. We understand that the other orders — acting on direction from the proxies — eliminated all Chitra Bhanu psions. We have also been assured that spread of Aberrant Syndrome to other psions is impossible.

Of course, these assurances are only valid until more psions are infected by the taint. After the aberrant attack on Sydney, during which the orders made their first appearance, we were told that psions were not aberrants, not mutants, but humanity's ally. Yet here we are six years later and one order short. Who knows what might be next?

## Hope for the Future

— Kara McGowan,  
interviewed for  
*Retrospective* ©  
2120 OBC

I was what, seven, eight, when the Sydney raid happened? I was absolutely determined to grow up and become a psion. Why my sibs didn't destroy that holofile, I'll never know. I played it over and over.

I still go to the Legion recruitment center every year. I've registered neutral every time, but they say that even the lowest neutral can suddenly show latency.

It'll happen someday. I know it. When it does, I want to be one of the first to go back to the lost colonies. I want to hunt down aberrants. I want to stand up to Divis Mal, and wipe that holovid smirk off the Colony's face. I want to take the qin back to their home, and find out why the chromatics attacked us so long ago. I want to do it all!

unknown at present, even after recent jump ship forays revealed that the colonists have resisted continued attacks successfully thus far. The aliens' focus on Karroo suggests that the aliens lack interstellar travel of their own, but that leaves little conclusive about these mysterious beings.

Humanity's most recent alien contact has come as a result of initial experiments with the new jump ships. Details of first contact are virtually unknown, except that something went horribly wrong. Reports thus far have involved the names "Coalition," and, apparently in a derogatory fashion, "breeders."

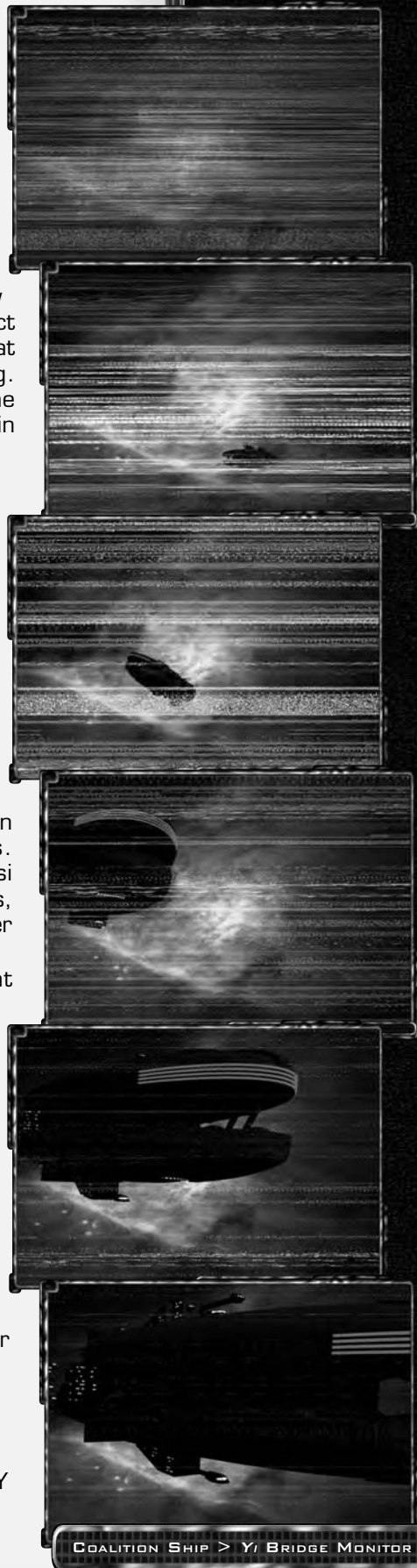
## The 22nd Century

Humans face a variety of challenges today. No longer confined to a single planet, we now dwell in a variety of places and under a variety of conditions. Humans have spread throughout near space, starting lives on Luna, Mars, Jupiter's moons, in the asteroid belt, and in a handful of deep-space colonies. We have also unleashed the power of the mind and explore true human potential through the psions. Knowledge discovered by the psi orders is used for *human* purposes, to comprehend our place in the order of the universe.

It was stated previously that humanity has a tendency to repeat its mistakes. But humans have another trait: We pull together. We join forces when threatened by outside forces. In spite of the problems and differences we face, we can take a long view and consider the consequences of our actions. Now is the time to gather our resources and prepare for the future as an entire race — unified — not merely as single nations, corporations, groups and individuals. Now more than ever, our goal is the unity of all.

ÆON TRINITY

HOPE • SACRIFICE • UNITY



COALITION SHIP > YI BRIDGE MONITOR

## 200-Year Timeline



**1921** — First public incidents of super-normal acts. Events continue sporadically over the next few decades, but their influence on culture and politics proves minimal.

**1923** — Maxwell Anderson Mercer establishes the Æon Society for Gentlemen.

**1998** — So-called “novas” appear in a variety of places and demonstrate incredible powers. Normal human society is amazed by the achievements and aghast at the actions of unusual individuals.

**2021** — A dramatic increase in super-normal events. Novas proliferate globally. Their activities, struggles and depredations increasingly endanger and harm normal humans.

**2022** — Dr. Soguk Birlesme invents viable hyperfusion.

**2024** — The United States unveils a versatile, fusion-powered orbital craft.

**2024–2032** — Various nations launch orbital defense satellites. By far, the most advanced is the United States’ Orbital Military Network (OMEN) defense system. It is used increasingly to monitor and, when necessary, counteract intensifying nova activities. The term “aberrant” sees increasing use when referring to “novas.”

**2031** — The United States establishes the Olympus Lunar base.

**2046** — The group Allah’s Legion seizes control of the African island Bahrain. The event initiates widespread conflict between humans and nova/aberrants.

**2049** — The United Nations declares war on nova/aberrants.

**2049** — Aberrants calling themselves the Space Brigade take over Olympus Base. This group destroys 75% of OMEN satellites. Olympus remains under their control until the war ends.

**2049–2061** — Various major cities (mostly in North America and Europe) suffer destruction at aberrant hands.

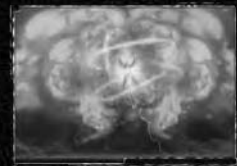
**2052** — Aberrants destroy Jerusalem.

**2053** — China launches *Xingyang Sujia*, the first manned interplanetary exploration craft. Its destination: Mars.

**2054** — Aberrant Calvert Wycoff explodes over the North American Great Plains in a flaming ball of radioactive plasma. The detonation is blamed for the devastating blight that follows, which destroys North America’s grain belt.

**2055** — The United States invades Canada (with Quebec’s assistance). Ostensibly, this is done to claim Canada’s marginally healthier farmlands, but it boils down to U.S. need for Canada’s resources (geographic and financial) in the ongoing war.

**2061** — The aberrant Mungu Kuwasha destroys the OpNet, setting back communications technology 100 years.



**2061** — China makes its “Earth Strike Ultimatum.” Aberrants leave Earth with the threat of returning. The war ends. The Chinese fleet stands down.

**2061–2070** — The Crash. Millions are dead. Half of the world’s arable lands are infertile. The world’s financial and ecological resources are drained. The world economy collapses. Conflict erupts between nations. The Comm Crunch hits. The Urban Schism occurs. Orbital expansion is attempted to revitalize the world.

**2067** — China reconfigures its economy on a platinum standard. Other nations follow. This is a significant step toward revitalizing the world economy. International commerce changes from a dollar to a yuan base.

**2071** — The “pseudo-graviton” is developed; gravcrystal grids make artificial gravity possible on spacecraft and in other microgravity environments. The discovery heralds an end to global strife; warfare diminishes and nations become culturally and technologically progressive.

**2103** — Eight humans are bestowed noetic powers. These proxies learn about the impending return of aberrants and set about developing orders of psi-using individuals who shall defend humanity against aberrants and other hostiles.

**2104** — Aberrants attack intrasolar colonies.

**2106** — The Legions reveal the existence of psions when members fight off aberrants in Sydney. The orders and psions are met with mixed feelings. The orders begin extensive public-relations programs.

**2106–2120** — The psi orders integrate themselves into human society and assist or become involved in the development of technology, commerce, travel, exploration, medicine and even entertainment.

**2107** — First contact with aliens, who are named “qin.” A Chinese deep-space explorer encounters an alien patrol craft in the qins’ home system. Though initial interactions are cautions, things go well.

**2108** — The qin establish an embassy on Luna. Humans establish one on Qinshui, the qin homeworld.

**2109** — Evidence emerges that the Chitra Bhanu are in league with aberrants. Forces from the other orders unite to bring the Chitra Bhanu under control; its members resist and the order is destroyed.

**2113** — First contact with the alien chromatrics, who stage a raid on an African mining colony.

**2114** — Aberrants attack the *Esperanza* orbital station. Forces respond, but are unable to prevent the station from crashing to Earth, destroying France. Afterward, the teleporters are discovered to have vanished.

**2119** — The orders create viable biotech jump ships that interface with clairsentients, making interstellar travel possible without the Upeo wa Macho. First contact occurs with the Coalition after one of the first test jumps of the new ships.

**2120** — Expeditions venture to the interstellar colonies and to contact the chromatrics and Coalition. Deep-space probes continue to search for aberrants.

**2121** — The Upeo return.



# 22ND-CENTURY EARTH

The dawn of psionic capacity and the birth of noetic science are the greatest human events of the 22nd century. Psi is the fifth universal force and the final piece of the true Grand Unification Theory, providing the key to humanity's understanding of the universe itself.

The secrets of the universe are at our fingertips. All we need to do to grasp them is understand noetic energy. This is why psions are so important. Even aberrants and hostile alien races, while deadly menaces to humans, are insignificant compared to the universe itself. By understanding all Creation, we understand even our enemies. And then, are they truly enemies at all?

## Our Tragic Flaw

Despite the fact that humanity stands on the brink of discovering absolute truths, that psions wield the most important elemental force in the universe, normal humans have yet to understand the big picture. Humanity in the 22nd century has, as throughout history, an amazing tendency to create divisions, to segment itself with artificial boundaries. We define ourselves by religion, cultural heritage and national boundaries. We split over differences that we

can control, such as affiliations, academic standing, gender preferences and even employers. But we also create groups based on differences beyond our control, such as skin color and place of birth. They're "not us."

Yet in spite of cultural differences and long-standing political conflicts, humans still unite against external threats. Old conflicts are set aside; disagreements are tabled until the outsider is vanquished. Aberrants are the ultimate "them," the epitomé of everything that is not human. In the face of the aberrant threat, humanity's ability to set its own differences aside may be the one thing that can save the Earth. Although aberrant raids began erratically, the beings seem to be organizing, hitting strategic targets, and striking in ever-increasing force. If humanity and the psions cannot pull together, we may not survive this twisted Second Coming.

All nations, corporations, industries, orders and individuals in the human race therefore have something in common. Despite their differences, they all must confront their own destruction and find the common ground to face it together. Distant and disparate societies in the 22nd century thus become one society: that of frail but resolute humanity.

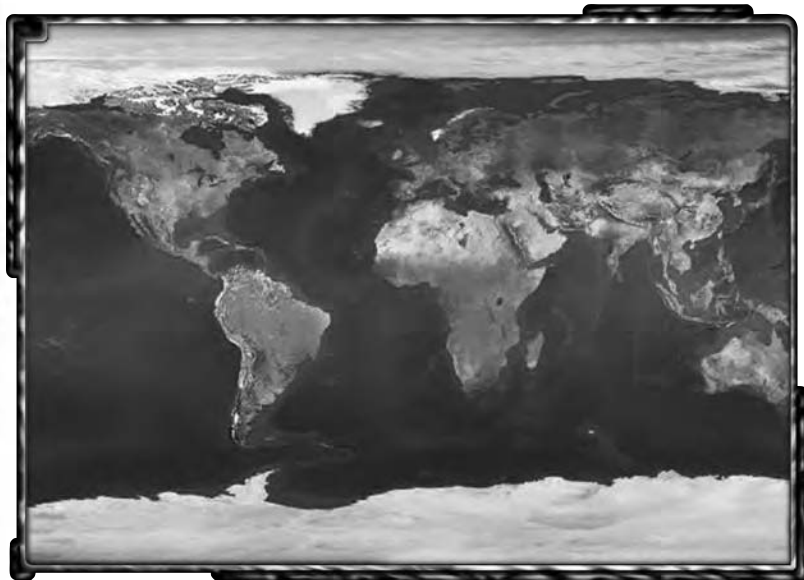
## 22nd-Century Warfare

— Gregor Muros, *World at War*  
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With the progression of technology and society, warfare has come full circle. Centuries ago, conflict involved a handful of combatants on either side, slugging it out up close and personal. With technological innovations and growing populations came larger wars involving bigger weapons of mass destruction. Then the Aberrant War showed humanity how much it had come to rely on bombs and missiles. Since conflict was against small groups of isolated aberrants, using large-scale weaponry caused more destruction and damage to the side using it than to the intended target.

That conflict and the resulting Crash impressed strongly upon 22nd-century society the value of natural resources and even of man-made developments on Earth and in space. Mankind couldn't afford to allow rampant destruction while defending or attacking locales, especially given all the money and manpower spent building them up in the first place.

As a result, most warfare is again on a personal level, involving a squad composed of a dozen soldiers or a battalion of a few hundred. Heavy artillery, missile strikes and the like are held in reserve, used only if absolutely necessary. It's the same whether the conflict is between a Canadian resistance squad and FSM troops, or between a psion team and aberrants. A small sampling of courageous men and women armed with personal weaponry decide the fate of thousands, even millions.





## The Æon Trinity

Æon is one of the most influential organizations in settled space, even if not the largest or most visible. Its primary goal is to chart the course of humanity's future, to ensure that humans achieve their full potential. These are lofty, ephemeral goals, but ones that Æon pursues on a real-world, realistic level. The organization's leaders remain fixed on the achievements they pursue, and follow their vision at every turn. Meanwhile, their underlings, even down to the "lowliest" clerk, facilitate the leaders' needs and orders, no matter how clear-cut or how enigmatic.

The Æon Trinity is led by the Æon Council, which consists of the three leaders of Æon's branches, Neptune (administrative), Triton (research and development) and Proteus (operations). These directors work together to preserve the vision that Maxwell Mercer, founder of Æon, had 200 years ago, and work to ensure that humanity fulfills its destiny.

Beneath these figures are thousands of administrators and regional directors who oversee the Trinity's day-to-day operations. Æon is comprised of hundreds of thousands of agents who are each assigned to one of the three divisions. The three branches have a place wherever the Trinity is located, for no one part can function fully without the others. Proteus cannot stage missions without the orders of Neptune, but neither Neptune nor Proteus can act

without the intelligence of Triton, while Triton must rely on the other two divisions for support when investigating.

Æon has headquarters and outposts scattered across the world and throughout known space. Such offices and facilities draw no more attention than simple businesses do. Yet these are the places where neutrals and psions work together to coordinate services and to defend humanity and the Earth itself, even if only in the regional jurisdiction of a single office.

A regional Trinity branch administers to the sick and homeless, operates support and education programs, provides economic aid to the destitute, provides backup to police and military forces, performs medical research, investigates potential weaknesses in aberrants, searches for signs of Aberrant Syndrome, coordinates psion efforts, maintains relations between the orders, investigates the mysteries of the subquantum universe, and, most recently, coordinates the orders' manufacture and launch of interstellar jump ships. The Trinity enacts humanitarian programs across the spectrum.

To the normal civilian, Æon Trinity is an everyday term, but one that is little understood.

- Most people consider it a goodwill and human - aid organization that has existed longer than anyone can remember. Æon simply is, and does good work like any other government agency is supposed to.

The majority of Æon office and outpost members are neutrals, but psions represent a significant minority. Psion attendants are either assigned to support the Trinity by their respective orders, or belong to no particular order and offer their services to Æon as a whole.

In return, psions can call upon the services of an Æon outpost anywhere on Earth or Luna, or in space. Psions can receive room and board. They can seek medical aid, requisition information or transportation, and establish communications with the Trinity, their orders or any other human organization. They can also use Æon outposts to meet with other psions and to stage operations. Psions can even use Trinity facilities to establish relations with alien races such as the qin.

Of course, Æon has its demands of psions, too; it's a symbiotic relationship. Æon seeks to meet countless goals that normal humans and hard technology simply cannot accomplish. Psions and their biotech help Æon achieve these goals. Thus Æon is at the service of psions, to help in the war they fight, but psions and the orders are beholden to Æon for the support, reinforcement and coordination that it supplies, and also because of influence that the Trinity has over certain proxies and key psions.

Æon's ultimate goal in all this is the unification of humanity in anticipation of what the future holds. The Trinity purports that, according to the vision that inspired the group centuries ago, humanity will fall divided before dangers that we have yet to face. In order to achieve the unity we need to survive, individuals will be

expected to — will have to — lay their personal goals aside.

## Structure and Support

The Trinity's involvement is defined by the organization's three divisions. Directors in Neptune detail the missions themselves, explain Æon objectives, debrief operatives and authorize use of or access to ships, gear, resources, data and classified information. Intelligence agents in Triton give operatives the knowledge and equipment they need to carry out their missions: coordinates of space destinations, data files, current whereabouts of individuals, details on political situations and general background on people and corporations. Proteus agents stand side by side with operatives, whether on the front lines of space or in defense of Earth. Proteus agents man ships, jump out to the fringes of known space, hunt criminals, counter terrorism, police space ports and stations, and act as couriers.

For the most part, Trinity assignments are coordinated

with the psi orders to ensure that all agencies are aware of what the others do, and to avoid conflict. However, not all groups have the same priorities, and rivalries between the orders and with Æon itself can lead to dissension over orders given and actions taken. For the poor operative, this can mean conflicting priorities and confused loyalties.

The Æon Trinity's involvement in affairs from an interstellar to an individual level cannot be denied. This is apparent with such things as the psi orders, aberrants and alien races. Yet the Trinity still pays close attention to the events taking place in countries across the globe, on orbital stations and colonies throughout near space, and in outposts beyond the fringes of our solar system. Humanity's progress through the millennia has accelerated dramatically in the past few centuries. It is Æon's goal to assist in the continued development of every government, culture and individual in the present time and into the future.

## Psions and Æon

Psions typically have obligations to two organizations: their orders and Æon Trinity. The orders created the psions, but the Æon Trinity is the catalyst that allows the orders to work together.

The degree to which a psion has allegiance to an order and to Æon depends on the individual. Some psions are true to their proxies and take orders from no other. Some psions have abandoned the orders and work for nations, corporations or the Trinity itself. Most psions find themselves subject to both order and Trinity in varying amounts. No matter where a psion's loyalties lie, he will encounter the Æon Trinity sooner or later.

A psion will know a number of Æon members and perhaps have regular relations with several. The Trinity has even been known to assign liaisons to particular psions. The Gifted don't necessarily work with the Æon Trinity on every mission that they undertake, but they are bound to encounter Trinity members almost anywhere they go, no matter whose orders they follow, even if they are independent agents. It is therefore difficult for a psion to do anything or go anywhere without Æon learning of it — which can be good or bad, depending on the psion's objectives.

# AFRICA



A continent of many nations, Africa was once crippled by colonization and war. In the 22nd century, African countries have found their power in solidarity. Africa has achieved a sense of “diversity unified in purpose” that far surpasses old ideals of the American melting pot or of the European commonwealth of nations. In Africa, technology melds with tradition, creating advanced interstellar markets against a backdrop of tribal culture. Africa is a flawless grav-crystal wrapped in tanned leathers and sinew cord: a thing both powerful and pure.

During the Crash, Africa’s plentiful resources were trapped in capitalistic and nationalistic struggles; infighting denied resources and stability to all. To become strong in both economy and spirit, African leaders realized that they had to rediscover the continent’s roots and re-establish the old ways. The United African Nations (UAN) reinstated the intertribal forum and instilled the belief that Africa’s hope rested in the hand of every African. Under the UAN’s banner, Africa soared into space commerce and jump ship technology, and presently sets world standards in multicultural affairs. The continent was also home to the Upeo wa Macho, and kept vigil over the order’s base until the teleporters returned.

The UAN is a strong rope woven in shades of brown: from the fair Creole islanders of Cape Verde to the midnight-blue-black of the liberated Senegalese. Pride, tradition and prosperity have breathed new life into an old world once

ravished by white *uitlanders*. The ancestral lands have been reclaimed by the Bararzaa Kila Kabila Mzee — the Elder Council of Tribal Peoples, commonly called the “B’razaa” — and transformed into a futuristic nirvana by the young warrior classes. The governmental seat embodied in the Nyerere Kusanyiko, in the historic “Conscience of Black Africa” of Tanzania, hosts not only the tribal elects, but also the best and brightest minds of the international political arena. Joining them are visiting dignitaries, public speakers, and Earth-bound spokespeople from offworld colonies and orbital stations.

However, Africa’s consolidation efforts, which began in the late 2070s, are not without dissent. The Northern Islamic Fundamentalist movements of Algeria and Egypt exploded into rioting and guerrilla warfare that continue sporadically to the present. Hordes of Berbers and Sunni overtook the fisheries and drug-export channels of Morocco, effectively holding the country hostage until the military intervened. Today, North Africa is a world stage for political protests, self-proclaimed prophets of Kush and Islamic radical movements, and the

- target of a host of
- bombing and
- assassination
- attempts from
- neighboring dissidents
- and ever-present Global
- White Supremacists. Although
- the UAN is single-minded in its
- purpose, its policies are not
- practiced throughout the
- continent. This internal strife is the
- greatest threat to the UAN’s future
- prosperity.

## Space Development

One of the Consolidation’s most successful ventures is the training facility built on the contested Ogadeu desert, between Somalia and Ethiopia. The Axum Institute is a nexus for many Africans aspiring to futures in astrotechnology and orbital careers. Named after the first East African Empire, Axum features the first micro-g simulation course on Earth, an exchange program to the underwater Pearl City in the Caribbean, and a qualifying internship program on UAN’s orbital station *Mujukuu*. The crew of the *Luthuli Moja*, the first UAN space colony transport, consisted of 14 Axum graduates.

## The UAN Mission Statement and Consolidation Credo

— engraved plaque outside the Nyerere Kusanyiko, the UAN’s governmental seat, in Tanzania

We, the appointed representatives of the United African Nations, will strive for the benefit of Africa — our People, our Land and in the Spirit of our ancestral vision. We will be both teacher to and student of our Africa, we will be both our own People and a unified People of our Africa, and Africa will achieve awe with one foot planted firmly on our home soil and the other stepping toward the outstretched horizon.

## Ports

Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta spaceport shines as the first and still largest commercial extrasolar transport launch site on Earth. Only the Olympus spaceport on Luna surpasses the African port's traffic volume. Over 50 major transports travel daily to and from Jomo Kenyatta to the near space orbital stations and Lunar colonies, and connect with flights for Mars and beyond. "Hopper" ships piggyback on the *Mujukuu* orbital station for rendezvous with the station's scientists and UAN defense crews.

Nigeria houses the Upeo wa Macho spaceport, the only other African port of Jomo's class. Home to the first teleportation jump station, teleporters themselves direct most of the Upeo port's traffic. Africa lost much of its competitive edge in space commerce in the years of the Upeo exile. Police and Legion squads routinely cleared away squatter camps of relatives, tourists and benign youth cults that cluster around the closed station prior to the teleporters' return. With the station inhabited again, the Upeo have resumed day-to-day control, but the Legions are denied access. All of Africa celebrates Proxy Bolade Atwan's birthday.

ISRA also operates a launch station near the Nigerian border, with sister launch sites in Mali, Chad, Egypt and Zambia, for use by the nomadic clairsentients.

## Commerce

Mining and interstellar colonization comprise Africa's primary spacefaring goals. China's shift in 2067 from a gold- to a platinum-based economy, a move followed by the rest of the interstellar community, raised Africa to a new level of wealth due to the continent's sizable platinum reserves. African miners' dedication to the trade has been rivaled only by their quality. The Nooitgeadact mine still functioned even under siege by Aberrant Pauly Natal and his cult of

followers in 2052. The ransom attempt was staged to fund the aberrants' fanatical quest for the Seventh Seal. The miners resolved the 11-day standoff in a brief but bloody revolt.

African mining operations and space colonies make up the majority of UAN investments. The one exception is *Mafaa-3*, the scientific research station off of Jupiter's Io. The terawatt lasers mounted on Ioan Lagrange points have been modified since *Mafaa-3*'s original inception as an exploratory mining station. Now the arrays focus outward into space, studied primarily as a means of developing near-light-speed travel. The arrays also make a formidable defense system.

The enterprising UAN uses the arrays recently to propel solar sail ships to pinpoint destinations in settled space. These laser sailing jaunts, the final leg home on luxury space cruises, looks to be a commercial success.

Along with tremendous benefits, success in space has cost Africa. Africans grieve for the crews, scientists, colonists and miners lost during expansion to the stars. The most painful loss was the chromatic attack on the Karroo Mining Colony. UAN citizens raise black flags embroidered with stylized renderings of the aliens as iridescent, fin-backed reptiles in remembrance of the massacre.

## Middle East

According to the latest round of ISRA's scans, the levels of taint remaining in the bombed-out deserts of the Arabian Peninsula are even higher than thought previously. The Damascus region, Abu Dhabi and the corridor from Mecca to Bahrain are generally considered environmentally "unsalvageable."

Old news for the Middle East, which bore the longest and most painful brunt of the Aberrant War. Not only did the war ruin OPEC's attempt to rebuild itself in the wake of the oil crash, but the aberrants'

## The Vocoder

— Dr. Keiran Baxter, *The Technological Age* © 2110 Walkabout Press

Africa's Consolidation resulted in a small device that changed the world. Unification was hampered by Africans' inability to communicate easily. The "vocoder," or vocal translator, was an invention born of necessity, created by the Nihonjin upon demand of would-be UAN leaders. The vocoder cannot breach the cultural differences that exist in Africa (and with humanity in general), but it does allow for a clearer exchange of ideas than was ever possible before. The standard vocoder's ability to store and translate up to five languages brought mutual understanding to entire nations.

Vocoders are available today in a wide variety of styles from standard, small-business and localized models to advanced "ear clip" add-ons for the international commerce and orbital station markets. High-end models can translate 10 to 20 foreign languages into the listener's native speech. Africa has acquired the license to produce all vocoders in exchange for resources paid to Nihon.



destruction of Jerusalem provoked a wave of sectarian wars and social upheaval. By the time the religious tumult and infighting died down only Israel-Judah, Oman, Persia and the Turkic Federation remained viable as nation-states. And while these countries have sustained themselves into the new century, they have yet to be a force in modern society.



Decades of chemical, nuclear and aberrant warfare reduced much of the Middle East to a mass of balkanized tribal states and localized pockets of power. These quasi-national groups are monitored constantly by the UAN, the Chinese orbital surveillance network, the orders and Æon for signs of resurgent violence. As a disproportionate amount of taint seems to remain in the toxic wastes, monitoring forces are especially careful to check for signs of aberrant mutation. Various patrols make routine sweeps, searching for new and old aberrants since both seem drawn to this region.

The Israel-Judah bloc, the only major political power in the Middle East, remains isolationist. As Israel continues to integrate the post-2061 territories into a single economy, the hermit nation insists that it desires to be "left to go its own way." Meanwhile evidence suggests that the rebuilt Jerusalem has stepped up its already intensive psi research program, possibly putting it on par with the programs of Shanghai and Medellín.

Other rumors (as yet unsubstantiated) indicate that Israel may be working on some sort of divergent biotech with military

- applications. Orgotek
- psions who patrol the Middle East have
- reported simultaneous changes in the
- subquantum universe toward both life and death, as if neither and both occur,
- or that they are in a state of flux. The psions are baffled by this new sensation, and further
- investigation is pending.

- Despite (or perhaps because of) the horror of the last century, many sects based on Sufi or Ba'hai doctrines stress the value of the universal human spirit, beyond national or religious boundaries. This is visible in the recent wave of Arabic literature available in the world marketplace. Millions of people, especially in Russia, Turkey and the Indonesian city-states, are finding comfort and inspiration in these hyper-contemporary works, the first large body of literature to incorporate the psi experience into text.



## Muzzein Bang: The Next Sound of Anima?

— Excerpt: *floatparty*, 5.2118

Get ready for the next big thing. Just when you thought the post-anima future was safe, here comes Muzzein bang, the demon love child of Marrakesh bang, anima culture and... ISRA?

"It's great stuff," says bangboy Adrienne-Hong Shari, perennial fixture of the Jakarta anima scene. "They've taken the hypnotic parts of Marrakesh and thrown a ghost spin on the media. You get a ziggled Muzzein divina plugged into the mix station, a psion who can really sing down shekh and call the numbers at the same time, and it's better than religion."

*floatparty's* own Trampolina agrees: "As the Old Man will tell you, Muzzein had to happen. The Anima Continuum wanted it that way. It's a symcause of all the anima transforms that are hitting humanity now. Biotech and island politics and the Collapse and the psi uncoding — all that demanded Muzzein, yeh?"

The "Old Man" himself, intersolar citizen Otha Herzog, could not be reached for interview. He sent *floatparty* a prepared statement in which he offered his hope that Muzzein would continue expanding the noetic awareness of the young. Since most Muzzein divinas are faithful ISRAns, he shouldn't have to worry. Mr. Herzog also wanted to let Ms. Shari know that he considers Muzzein to not be "better than," but just as good as religion in its own way, although he rarely has time to listen to it himself.



# ASIA



Welcome to the Asian Century. The ancient civilizations of Asia are putting new technologies to use throughout human space, fueling a dramatic synthesis of new culture and a rich sense of opportunity and expansionism. Not only have the Asian powers paved the Pacific and transformed the world economy, they are now terraforming Mars and colonizing the outer reaches of the solar system — and beyond. In particular, China, having conquered space, turns inward to conquer the intricacies of the noetic universe, and the mysteries of human consciousness. Asia is on the move.

The problem facing Asia is an ancient one: overpopulation. China has overextended itself, growing too quickly for resources to compensate. The enormous demands of the Asian population tax modern land and water agricultural methods.

Just as ominously, social structures and cultural norms that safeguarded Asian civilization for thousands of years are now breaking down faster than new traditions can be proposed. Nihon, in particular, has suffered irreparable cultural damage.

## Zhongguo (China)

While other nations challenge China's claims to cultural superiority, it's difficult to dispute the popular belief that China is the focal point of the 22nd century. Since tipping their hand with the 2061 Ultimatum,

- the Chinese have been the dominant power not only in Asia, but in space.

## The Great Leap Upward

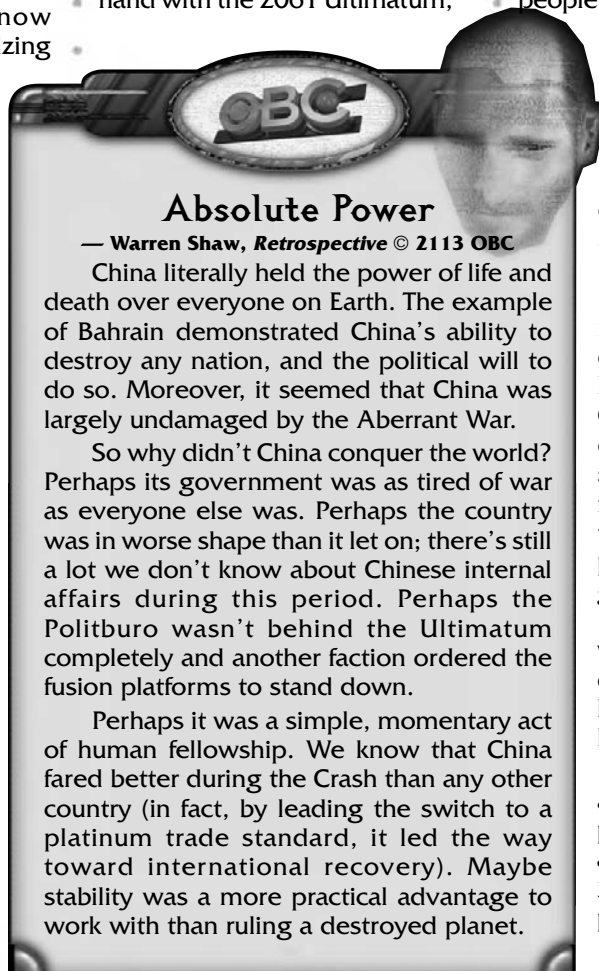
- The best way to explore the political character of China today is to examine how the country achieved orbital ascendancy. When the state council ordered the move into space exploration, it diverted enormous national reserves from education and domestic development. The Chinese people went without medicines, safety measures, agricultural machinery and, eventually, even indoor heating. Public resources (like vehicles and communications systems) were confiscated and sold to other nations to provide additional funds. Despite Beijing's claims to the contrary, an estimated 14 million people died from disease, hunger and accidents as a direct result of the Great Leap.

It was an unpleasant chapter in Chinese history, but it was successful. Yet even today, Beijing works to maintain the appearance that China is orderly and prosperous, even if the people must suffer at times. Witness the burnout of the Yunnan fusion dome. Outsiders can only speculate at the full scope of the tragedy. The dome is still absent from official Ministry of Energy reports today.

## The Autonomous Regions

The Chinese sphere of influence includes most of eastern Asia. Beijing allows each local government outside of China proper a surprising amount of self-government. The locals set their own social agendas freely, as long as Beijing remains their primary trading partner and political patron. As the slogan goes, there is "One China," but "Many Systems" in Asia today, where internal borders are vague deliberately but diversity is (at least officially) considered beneficial.

The Philippines and Korea are special cases. Made full partner in all Chinese technology and commercial space efforts in 2104, the Philippines owes its privileged status within the



## Absolute Power

— Warren Shaw, *Retrospective* © 2113 OBC

China literally held the power of life and death over everyone on Earth. The example of Bahrain demonstrated China's ability to destroy any nation, and the political will to do so. Moreover, it seemed that China was largely undamaged by the Aberrant War.

So why didn't China conquer the world? Perhaps its government was as tired of war as everyone else was. Perhaps the country was in worse shape than it let on; there's still a lot we don't know about Chinese internal affairs during this period. Perhaps the Politburo wasn't behind the Ultimatum completely and another faction ordered the fusion platforms to stand down.

Perhaps it was a simple, momentary act of human fellowship. We know that China fared better during the Crash than any other country (in fact, by leading the switch to a platinum trade standard, it led the way toward international recovery). Maybe stability was a more practical advantage to work with than ruling a destroyed planet.



## Welcome to Xianggang!

— Cori Heisler,  
*The Painful Truth* © 2117 MMI

In the century since it was an independent colony known as Hong Kong, Xianggang has become Asia's commercial gateway to the stars, the heart of Chinese mercantile, corporate and passenger spaceflight. Ulanbator's vast industrial shipyards may be larger, and Shanghai may still handle most of China's domestic shipping and hardtech trade with Nihon, but Xianggang is Orbital City.

Look out Jomo station; Xianggang is on your tail.

Chinese sphere to the machinations of Minister Bue, telepath proxy and Chinese Minister of Noetic Affairs. The psi institute at Quezon is the headquarters of China's fledgling biotech research program, as well as a premier training facility for psions from all orders.

Korea, once an independent state (or even two), is now a semiautonomous arm of Chinese civilization proper. The highlands of Pyongyang are home to the Asian deep-space industry, and to China's computer research factories. Despite rumors of "silicon sweatshops" and armed guards in laboratories, Korea appears to enjoy its position as the hardtech wizard behind Chinese power. Competition with Nihon keeps the Koreans working hard, perhaps harder than any other people on Earth.

Psions outside the Ministry who have trained in Asia, and potent psions abroad, have made allegations that Korea's unusually high death rate is a direct result of inhumane work conditions. Minister Bue and Korean leaders deny any such abuse. If the Korean people were overtaxed, they posit, surely Ministry telepaths would sense it.

## Society and Culture

Confidence and national pride are proof of the Chinese people's subtle conviction that China's ascendancy is the logical result of their being the most

pragmatic and sensible people on Earth. Events of centuries past have taught the Chinese that foreigners have strengths, and the wise learn what foreign cultures do well and adopt those techniques (though not the foreigners) for Chinese purposes.

Although ancient art forms and customs are still practiced, the Chinese find global trends fascinating, especially in noetic research. This may be due in part because a psi order is an official branch of the Chinese government, with telepaths and other affiliated Gifted interacting with everyday citizens. Chinese noetic research is world-famous, and the Ministry-run Shanghai Noetics Institute, has a vigorous outreach program, testing most urban children for psi potential at an early age.

However, people's increasing awareness of international events and customs cause the Chinese government stress. Beijing faces numerous insurgent movements, particularly in the Autonomous Regions. All but those in Xinjiang and Taiwan (and occasionally Xizang) are minor, but keeping them from the world's attention requires substantial military and propaganda resources. More serious resistance factions in China include hard-line anti-psi groups, the Young Marxians and other Mao Restoration societies, and the radical "individualist" Anima Music Society centered in Manchurian universities. The Ministry of Noetic Affairs handles these difficult cases.

## Nihon (Japan)

When the Japanese islands reopened in 2103, after sequestering themselves since before the Aberrant War, those privileged foreigners allowed to visit Nihon described it as "a futuristic wonderland." Now that the Quarantine is a dim memory, old assumptions of this important but reclusive nation must be re-evaluated.

Nihon, as Japan is now known, is the undisputed world leader in technological research. Hardtech is integrated into all aspects of local culture and is the foundation of the nation's economy. The state trades licenses to inventions (such as the UAN vocoder and the gill-breather apparatus vital to activity in undersea cities) in exchange for diplomatic favors or credit in biomass and heavy metals. Other, more complicated patents are manufactured by the Nihonjin themselves and sold to an eager world that (by and large) can no longer keep up with the technologies involved.

## The Fortress Islands — Behind the Electronic Curtain

Most consider the hardtech playground of the 22nd century to be "futuristic," but it is debatable

## Telepaths Win Fight for Catholics in China

— *Newsday* holobrief ©  
21.11.2113 GN

In an announcement that marks the end of decades of official persecution of Christianity in China, the Chinese State Council stated it will lift the special restrictions imposed on Roman Catholics in Asia. This announcement apparently came after a protracted power struggle between Rebecca Bue Li, Minister of Noetic Affairs, and certain elements of the conservative wing of the Chinese government.

A child of the Catholic Philippines, Ms. Bue Li remains sympathetic to Catholic issues worldwide, despite having left the Church. She was one of the first women to petition for Jesuit training after the 2084 Vatican Conference, but did not complete the regimen.



whether the Home Islands' vast artificial urban sprawl represents the future of humanity. Hiding behind protective screens, Nihon was perhaps the only major nation to suffer less damage from the Aberrant War than China did. But there are those who claim that this security has become Nihon's doom.

Hardtech, rigid angles, sharp edges — this is the Nihon of the 2120s. Having stared so long into the mirror of their own culture, isolated from the world, the Nihonjin are now trapped by the stifling demands of living on overdeveloped islands. They are no longer comfortable in the outside world and appear to withdraw ever further into their own artificial dominion. An estimated 28% of Nihonjin suffer from neurotic disorders, especially Ant Farm and Total Allergy Syndromes. Domestic violence,

random homicide and irrational terrorism are at epidemic proportions among the Nihonjin urban classes.

## The Triumph of Artifice

Considering their almost symbiotic relationship with biotech, the qin view hard technology with an almost childlike wonder. The aliens call the Home Islands the most "elegant" regions built by humans, an ultimate triumph of hardtech over nature. Parts of Nihon are even more artificial than an orbital environment. During the Quarantine, much of the Honshu landmass was sifted for raw materials and then reconstructed. Polymer plastic songbirds sing and orchids bloom. Massive environmental generators create artificial weather within the polymer and plasteel arcologies. The Nihonjin recreate their environment continually to suit their unique tastes.

Natural childbirth has tighter regulations (and is less common) than the manufacture of "artificial life." An important minority of autonomous robots and SI (satisfactory intelligence) simulacra exists in work places. Quick to stress that they do not consider computer simulacra "alive," Nihonjin nonetheless



### Nihonjin Emperor Hospitalized

— **Newsflash** © 2.11.2116  
Genman Enterprises

Kazuhiro, Emperor of Nihon and a lifelong sufferer of Total Allergy Syndrome, fell ill today during a ceremonial visit from Australian diplomats. When the medical resources of the imperial palace failed to improve the emperor's condition, he was rushed to the emergency ward of a Tokyo hospital.

The incident apparently arose from a misunderstanding on the part of the Australian party. Failing to follow the Imperial Household's strict medical protocols, a member of the foreign delegation arrived with trace amounts of cologne on his person. This substance, ordinarily undetectable, triggered the emperor's attack. In her formal apology, the Australian ambassador requested that the Household not blame itself for the grievous error.

### TRITON ARCHIVE

## The "Quarantine Broadcast"

— broadcast continuously over  
Radio Japan, 7.5.2047–31.12.2047

It is with great regret that the Japanese people must inform the community of nations that the Home Islands are closed to all unnecessary traffic for an indeterminate duration, effective at 10 A.M. GMT on 8 May, 2047. This decision is motivated by a desire to fortify Japan's sovereign borders against the growing epidemic of worldwide terrorism and should not be considered an attack on any national government or its policies.

Trade will continue as normal. All terrestrial and orbital cargos bound for Japan will now be routed through the Okinawa facility for inspection and eventual transport to the Home Islands.

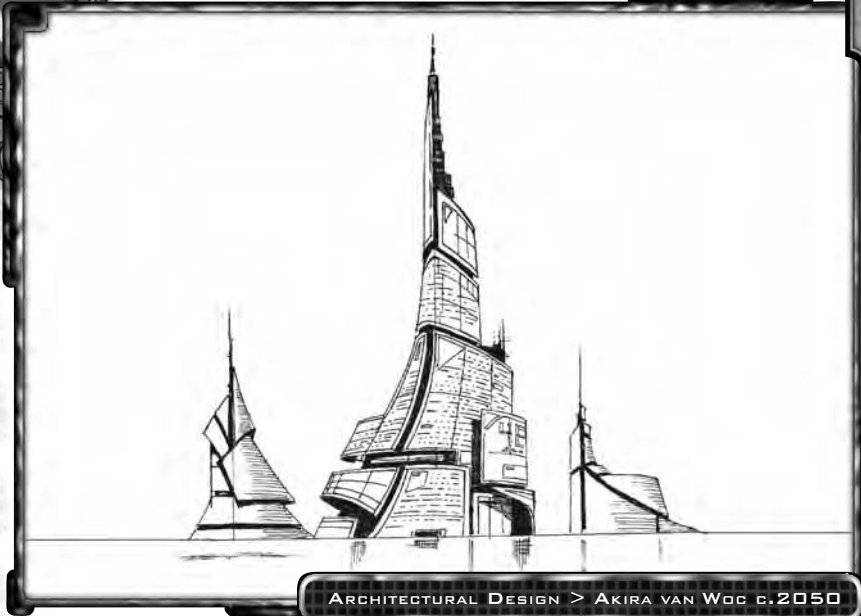
Those with diplomatic business in Japan should address their concerns with Japan's arm in the global sphere, the lower chamber of the United Nations. *Aum Soto.*

have a disturbing tendency to treat SIs like pets or children.

Just as SI "dolls" and interactive computer agents mimic humanity in



ART ©2120 KOSTBAAR



Nihon, so do humans aspire to artifice. Industry emphasizes loyalty to the corporate “cybermentality,” with employees serving as mobile nodes and expressions of that mentality. Corporations are often given form by programmers — SI cybershinto flourishes, with growing numbers of semiautonomous personae infesting computer systems like ancestral spirits haunting a family shrine. Nihonjin society is an eerie reflection of the modern computer network — not surprising, since Nihon was instrumental in developing the OpNet’s current configuration.

The Nihonjin establishment has very little interest in psi or its potential applications. Noetics are used in Nihon as simply another resource. Those Nihonjin citizens who possess strong latency are often alienated and join underground subcultures or emigrate to one of the various Psi Nihon expatriate communities located throughout human space. Nihonjin society integrates biotech even less, used only when absolutely necessary.

## Nihonjin Law

It is a capital offense to introduce biotechnology of any sort to the Home Islands or their holdings without adhering to immunization procedures demanded by the Nihon government. Nihonjin dedication to hardtech has led to stringent legislation on the importation and use of biotech. And yet this almost paranoid opposition to bioapps suggests a more compelling reason for Nihonjin resistance.

Nihon enforces its laws to the fullest, as was proven in 2109 when three psions, including a member of the Ministry, entered Nihon air space with biotech and were apprehended, incarcerated, their bioapps confiscated and their trials scheduled in a matter of hours. Only delicate political negotiation spared the psions’ lives. Their bioapps were never returned.

## Island Politics

The foreign strategy of the zaibatsu (the sole arm of Nihonjin government) is simple, but has become as rarefied and complex as the rest of Nihonjin society. Essentially, Nihon has no allegiances and no enemies. The nation maintains a respectful distance from all world powers. Its neutrality is a tool used as skillfully as any hardtech device. Even the Trinity has trouble piercing the “electronic curtain” surrounding Nihon. As long as primary sources of raw materials remain secure and the world ignores the Home Islands, the Nihonjin will continue ignoring the world from a protected position. They see their role in world politics, if any, as that of mediators, intercessors and, strangely, curators of those aspects of other cultures that they find interesting.

## OpNet in the 22nd Century

— Dr. Kieran Baxter, *The Technological Age* © 2110 Walkabout Press

Information systems in the 22nd century are a marvel of paranoid design. Kuwasha’s pulse in 2061 caused a devastating loss of information; when the OpNet was reconfigured in the following years, a conscious decision was made to develop nodes that were completely isolated from one another.

This trend has continued into the current century, led mainly by Nihon — despite naysayers’ claims that governments are being overly paranoid. The aberrants’ return has justified the paranoia, however, as there have already been a half-dozen aberrant attempts to duplicate Kuwasha’s pulse. Due to regimented node configurations, none of these electronic attacks has caused more than minor data loss and inconvenience.

Optic links exist at each node, but are kept locked down except for strictly regulated transmissions. The link sites are watched closely by SI computer systems, human technicians and electrokinetic monitors, and gigantic screening programs cycle continuously as well. These people and terabytes are set to cause a router shutdown on a nanosecond’s notice. Since Kuwasha’s pulse overwhelmed normal electronic safeguards, this shutdown is physical. Small charges are set to destroy a link site rather than allow another potential tragedy. Link sites are modular and replaced easily (if at significant expense).

## The Floating Gardens

Other than its hardtech supremacy (including rumors of devices that outshine easily even the most advanced gear on the market today) and elegant diplomatic strategy, Nihon’s only

— Excerpt: *Anima Asia* © 2118,  
Walkabout Press

Southeast Asia is a world leader in integrating biotech and psi-influenced cultural developments into its society. Orgotek's influence is apparent in the great Anima Cities of Bangkok and Funan. The metropolises are biotech wonderlands, and host a number of qin dignitaries who consider the cities homes away from home.

These regions are centers of so-called "anima society." "Anima" refers to the "spirit-within-all-things" philosophy that pervades much of youth culture today. Anima society concerns itself with discovering natural and organic elements in the surrounding world. The trend allows for any degree of extrapolation. Anima is commonly a means to understand the human condition more clearly, but many apply it to developing new musical and fashion styles, or to integrating biotech into everyday life — and some even use it to relate to hard technology in ways never considered before.

Anima culture's most dedicated adherents are teens and young adults. This generation's fresh perspective finds new ways of merging psi and science, and biotech and hardtech, that escape even the most astute adults.

real resource is its orbital presence. Nihonjin space is a small but almost entirely roboticized network of manufacturing outposts and mining installations devoted to the location, processing and transport of mineral resources. The Home Islands cannot afford to waste anything. Nihonjin orbital refineries are incredibly efficient, using increasingly sensitive sorting arrays to extract as many precious raw substances as possible for home consumption.

The Nihonjin themselves do not to take well to extraterrestrial lifestyles. With the exception of the colony at Olympus (established well before the Quarantine), a few manned research stations, Psi Nihon and other émigré groups, few Nihonjin ever leave Earth orbit.

## India

Considered the third most important power in Asia behind China and Nihon, the Indian League boasts both the world's largest and most vital population base and a fierce dedication to global diplomacy and mediation not seen since the Swiss of previous centuries.

As the starting point of many so-called New Religions spreading through settled space, India is an arbiter for global morality and ethics. Bombay hosts the annual World Ethics Conferences, New Delhi handles mediation for Middle Eastern and Central Asian disputes, and a number of human rights associations are based in the subcontinent. India is also the birthplace of anima culture.

## The Russian Federation

Russia is a land trying desperately to make up for missed opportunities. With a wealth of resources and millions of able bodies from Petrograd into the Chinese Co-Development Zone, by all rights Russia should be shoulder-to-shoulder with China, Brazil and the UAN. A selfish and short-sighted Russian government held the great nation back in the 21st century, and Russia hasn't caught up yet.

When Borsov assumed the presidency in 2050, Russia's space exploration showed marked but still minor progress. Russia's long-term extraterrestrial efforts looked promising, but Borsov and his staff saw greater political glory in directing their efforts against aberrants.

Russia became one of the strongest anti-aberrant aggressors. Ironically, the nation wasn't a hot spot of aberrant activity until Borsov threw down the gauntlet. Russia weathered the Aberrant War better than Europe or North America, but came through it strained and battered nonetheless. Russia's Crash involved deposing Borsov and working toward space development once more. Unfortunately, the Russian economy was in a shambles, restricting feasible

## "Slow Dance Kiev"

— *Ilya and the Tarkovskis* © 2119  
Stahu Entertainment

Do you have a knife?  
Do you have a gun?

Do you have rope,  
or razor?

In the continental winter  
of these slow eleven hours,

we return  
to building  
in wood.



development of any kind. The government looked for options, and found them in the nation's natural resources.

Even with the destruction caused by the Chernobyl dome's partial collapse, the vast Russian steppe is the largest agricultural zone ever cultivated. Russia's grain buys her friends, notably India and the orbital stations. Russia also holds the second-largest platinum deposits on Earth. Such wealth inspires North and South American political relations, as well.

Russia doesn't have the resources and equipment currently to develop the agricultural lands and platinum mines to their optimum potential. The Co-Development Zone, Russia's lease of her

eastern territory to China, gives Russia the necessary technology and China a significant amount of grain and mineral resources.

The Russian people are not all sanguine about renting out Siberia to a foreign power. Rebel factions and mercenary groups harass the mines and transport routes, redirecting shipments meant for China. Russian soldiers refuse to take up arms against their own, so Chinese military and Russian-hired Legionnaires struggle with the outlaws.

Already exploited by its eastern allies, Russia is cautious of binding its fate to that of Europe. Despite repeated overtures from

the Swiss, plans for a "Euro-Russian Commonwealth" have stalled, repeatedly rejected as "inappropriate" by the mercenary boyars of Moskva, Petrograd and Kiev. Russia has observers in Zurich-Geneva, but discussions so far has been inconclusive.

Political experts and economic gurus agree that Russia could be a major player on the world stage. The venerable nation must first quell its internal squabbling, choose a single direction and move forward with resolve.

# AUSTRALIA



The United States of America are united no longer. Europe is an economic wreck best characterized by the smoking crater that dominates the French landscape. Asia is a troubled land ruled by China's iron fist. South America's governments bow to the wishes of crime. Where is the common man to go to escape these titanic forces? Where is there room for the common man to realize his dreams?

Australia.

In the wake of global changes, Australia has stepped into those places vacated by the superpowers

of yesteryear. Let China and Brazil have all the power. Let America and Europe scramble to regain their bygone glory. Australia will take in all the souls who are squeezed out by such power plays. Australia took a gamble after the Aberrant War, reversing a formerly isolationist stance to market itself aggressively to the world. The gamble paid off; the land down under is known as both the last refuge of the middle class and as the entertainment empire of the 22nd century.

## The New Melting Pot

When the Aberrant War broke out, fate spared Australia. The continent wasn't enough of a player in the war to interest many aberrants. Australia was neither a superpower nor a nation with any particular military might.

The war came and went, leaving Australia largely untouched. With the middle class of the world bereft of a home, Australia presented itself as the land of opportunity. Anywhere from 50 to 500 settlers would combine their funds and purchase a small fusion reactor. Once energy was on hand, all that remained was effort — and the dispossessed had that in surplus. Before long, new communities dotted the Outback.

## New Paris — The First Settlement

— Warren Shaw,  
*Retrospective* © 2116 OBC

Now a national monument, New Paris was the first of Australia's settlements. Settled by French fleeing the chaos of wartime Europe, it was to be a shining example of the power of hope and of the strength of ambition. New Paris was built in 13 days and served as a tribute to the human spirit for 17 more.

Exactly one month after construction of New Paris began, things went wrong. The settlers had bought a second-hand reactor, one with a microscopic crack in the core. The reactor explosion killed 60% of the town's population instantly. Bandits, raiders and wild animals descended upon the settlement in the days that followed. New Paris was no more.

To settlers, New Paris is a two-fold reminder. The human spirit is a powerful thing. The Outback is tougher.





## The Media

Publicity attracted Australia's population of expatriates, and publicity keeps them there. Sydney and Melbourne are the new global entertainment capitals, and network satellites transmit a dreamland of images across the Outback. Many new settlements invest in satellite dishes even before buying fusion reactors.

The world's five media giants are all based in Australia. They vie for ratings and netlinks with the same intensity as nations struggle for political supremacy.

## Australia Today

Although the megameds possess enormous influence, they have not subsumed government. The media corporations are content with "control of the population through entertainment." They leave policy- and decision-making to the government —

as long as the appropriate respect is paid to the media, of course.

Australia's ruling body is its Parliament — a consistency that pro-Australian publicists are quick to point out. Australia's current Prime Minister is Luis Trenton, formerly a colonel in the Australian Air Force. He is well-loved by the public for his military background and forthright manner. His participation in anti-aberrant raids adds considerably to his image. In fact, Australia — already rabidly anti-aberrant — has become virtually xenophobic during Trenton's terms.

Despite the open arms policy of the past 60 years, a number of Australians fear and resent outsiders. These groups seek self-sufficiency and even self-government. Outback settlements that have provided

for themselves for years, from sustenance to protection to local decision-making, now seek official autonomous status. It would seem that settlements intend to isolate themselves even from the rest of the continent. The Australian Parliament has yet to respond to these requests, but the clamor grows, and settlers become restless as their voices continue to go unheard.

Criticism of Parliament also arises over the ongoing Aborigine plight, which has been intensified by the continent's population increase. Like the national "melting pot" that preceded it, Australia faces the problems of cultural suffocation that come with multicultural infusion, particularly for its indigenous peoples and minorities.

# EUROPE



After nearly a century of devastation and reconstruction, Europe remains a continent of ruined cities and fragmented nations. Although reforming the European Commonwealth is a step toward restoring the continent, the root of Europe's problems is not political but cultural. Despite Zurich-Geneva's best efforts in leading the EC into a new era, European nations have trouble accepting that they are no longer the world center of culture and commerce. The remnants of old nations bicker for concessions in the EC, while the young turn away from tradition entirely in favor of new ways of life.

Ironically, these new ways are often the oldest. Religion has filled the void created by the collapse of national power. With the loss of French rationalism, the European mind turns increasingly to mysticism and the continent's ritual heritage. An indeterminate number of cults and agrarian-socialist splinter groups have sprung up. This new mysticism is accompanied by a flood of stories about psi "saints" and "angelic visitations."

The French would have found the irony amusing. The Dark Ages have returned to Europe in an era anticipated otherwise as the most hopeful for humanity. Modern Europeans dwell in a ruined urban forest, a world haunted by ghosts and angels. The youth of Europe

look above the forest, to the stars, while the superpowers' orbital stations loom bright in the firmament. The Urban Schism continues in Europe, with thousands of European slummers retreating to small villages.

Yet dark as it is on the European continent, a spark of perseverance still flickers. Despite every setback these nations have suffered in the past century, the people's will remains strong. Many Europeans have relocated to Australia or Luna, but an inordinate amount remain in their homelands, trying to rebuild their once-great cultures. Many leap at the chance to undertake space expeditions for foreign corporations or governments, not only to help heal the European economy but to prove to the rest of the world that Europeans are still vital to shaping human progress.

Politically, the European continent comprises a mass of local interests held together by the sheer stubbornness and limited resources of the European people, particularly the Swiss. After Zurich-Geneva, the Barcelona, London, Hamburg, Bruxe, Milan, Copenhagen, Ljubjana and Budapest metroplexes dominate the major remaining arcological regions. Rome, as center of the newly revitalized Catholic order, has demanded special status. This

## TRITON ARCHIVE

### *Vigilentiam Contra Apostatio*

— Excerpt: Pope Benedict XVIII's 2118 pronouncement

It is also grievous that our brothers and sisters in Brazil have fallen so far into complacency while the practice of heretical modes of fortune-telling, conjuration of spirits and voluntary spirit possession continue growing in their midst. We have sent members of the Society of Jesus to Brazil to inform those taken in by this "Candomblist Heresy" that this is an unacceptable adulteration of the teaching of our lord Jesus Christ. If the Umbandists care to claim scientific merit for their practices, then let them do so under the guidelines established in *De Naturis Vibus Mentis* and claim no more "supernatural" or "spiritist" provenance for their efficacy.

If, however, they refuse to do so (or cannot), then they must either desist their practices or endure separation from God and the body of the Church. The Society of Jesus will decide.

For those elsewhere, and particularly to the children of Europe, whose kingdoms have been cast down by the work of aberrants, I ask that you pray often and honestly before giving yourself over to the lust for "miracles." Before you follow a living saint, allow the scientists to ascertain that the stigmata are in fact miraculous proofs of God and not simply manifestations of the natural powers of the mind. While it is proper to offer veneration unto saints, adulation of the noetically gifted is a sin of idolatry.

fact irritates the Swiss, who consider the Vatican a rival in an already exhausted continent.

Each of the surviving great cities has its own character and its own strategy for regaining prominence on the world stage. For some this means seeking alliances with the new superpowers. To others this means experimenting with social metamorphosis or gambling on new technologies. For most, however, survival simply means that Europeans are forced to rely on their natural talents



and energy, and will rise or fall as a result.

Indeed, each arcology proclaims its unique cultural and historic heritage eagerly, in hopes of bringing desperately needed tourist yuan into local economies. Nostalgia, one of Europe's few remaining commodities, brings with it a jealous protection of remaining art and architecture.

Europe has a difficult road ahead. The continent may never recover completely from the devastation it faced in the last century. Pockets of lush countryside struggle to flourish amid sprawling urban decay. Even the most advanced European arcologies are outdated compared to the gleaming African or Chinese metroplexes. The crumbling ruins of places like Paris, Berlin, the Netherlands and Stockholm serve as stark reminders of the tremendous losses Europe suffered. But if the European spirit is any indication, these once great nations will rise again.



## France: Five Years After

— *London Circle* © 19.9.2119 Rafat, Inc.

**FRENCH PERMANENT REFUGEE ZONE** — Mourners from as far away as Titan came to Tours today to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the *Esperanza* disaster.

In a holotaped statement, Otha Herzog offered his prayers and sympathy on behalf of ISRA for the survivors of France and the people of Europe. "The tragedy of *Esperanza* affects us all profoundly. In time, the true meaning of the disaster will become known and the bereaved may gain some comfort from the martyrdom of the dead. For now, ISRA joins in the mourning, both for the lost French spirit and for the great paralysis visited upon the larger European community."

The orbital station *Esperanza*, launched by the EC in 2112, was recognized as Europe's last hope for establishing a space presence. The aberrant attack on the station two years later forced it back to Earth, where it disintegrated and rained over western Europe. Hundreds of pieces of debris detonated the French power grid and hit in destructive shock waves as far away as Genoa, Sardinia and Algiers. An estimated 11 million people were killed outright by the power grid explosions; deaths due to radiation poisoning and other complications may eventually raise the final toll to twice that.

Without the continued support of the orders, it is unlikely that France will ever recover as a habitable center. As a Permanent Refugee Zone, France is co-administered by the EC and the Æsculapian Order.

# NORTH AMERICA

NORTH

CENTRAL

GREAT LAKES

QUEBEC

WEST

SAN FRANCISCO

SOUTHWEST

CHICAGO

HASTINGS

NEW YORK

EAST

ARCOLOGIES



TEXMEX

SOUTH

The once-proud United States of America, which include Canada and portions of Mexico in the 22nd century, has become a loose confederation since the Aberrant War. The old United States' economic might was one of the biggest obstacles to aberrant victory, whose strategies, disorganized though they were, hinged on destroying the superpower.

Although aberrants seemed to have no specific geographic tendencies, in the early 21st century the majority flocked to North America (often referred to as "Nordamerica" in the 22nd century). The United States was a primary target for their aggression when the war broke out. The impact of such horrendous circumstances cannot be described adequately. Yet, as severe as the war's effects were

on the United States, two key events proved to be the nation's ultimate downfall.

## The Blight

Calvert Wycoff was raised a fundamentalist Christian. After erupting as an aberrant, he gathered a circle of followers called the Prophets of Jehovah. From an armed camp in Hastings, Nebraska, they preached the "word of God" as spoken through "His new Son," Wycoff.

The Prophets blared their apocalyptic message across local OpNet, radio and television frequencies, foretelling the destruction of the world, the death of this "Gomorra nation at the hands of the Son," and his triumphant return a century afterward, "leading the very hosts of Heaven." Citing egregious violations of FCC regulations as well as suspected weapons violations, the FBI moved into the Prophets' compound only a few weeks later.

Minutes into the raid, Wycoff exploded literally in a blaze of glory that swept the heart of North America for 125 miles in every direction. The burst itself was recorded as some sort of "dirty plasma" energy. Reports asserted that another wave of unidentified energy washed over roughly another 600 miles. However, since the secondary effect caused no immediate

PROTEUS ARCHIVE

**Re:** The Prophets of Jehovah  
**From:** S. Helbig, FBI Director  
**To:** C. Barnett, Omaha Office  
**Date:** 23:31 2 NOV 2054

Having spoken to my superiors over the last several hours, we have approved a raid on the Hastings compound. You are hereby authorized to use any means necessary to bring Wycoff into custody, as of 00:00 3 NOV 2054.

Good luck, Collin.

death or property damage, it was disregarded.

The instantaneous deaths of those in the blast zone, and the loss of hundreds of millions of American dollars in resources shocked the world. However, the long-term effects of the Hastings explosion didn't become apparent until months afterward. Despite calls for an investigation into the government's role in the disaster, the FBI insisted that its field agents acted independently when they raided the Prophets' compound.

By early 2055 it was obvious that the Hastings blast had a more sinister effect — pervasive taint radiation that became known as the blight. Crops wouldn't grow in ground exposed to Wycoff's strange secondary wave. Even worse, major strains of contemporary high-yield soy and wheat would not germinate in any North American soil. Questions remain even today: Was this some secret plot of Wycoff's? Was it the work of other aberrants who channeled his death throes? Was it simply an unforeseen side effect of his death? Whatever the answers, the blight's effects were horrific. Fear and starvation swept the land as the nation scrambled to replenish its depleted food reserves. Meanwhile, other aberrants continued laying waste to urban centers and the countryside.

Only paranoia seemed to grow in this new climate. Americans became suspicious of each other; splinter groups, however harmless, were soon the targets of vid exposés. Ordinary neighbors accused one another of harboring Aberrants. The freedom of religion clauses in the Bill of Rights were suspended temporarily by a cult-obsessed president.

## The Dustbowl Returns

— Henry Jasper, Iowa pork farmer, interviewed for *Global News: Investigative Reports*  
© 23.5.2056 GN

To do your work, you need a full stomach. For a full stomach, you need a plate of meat. For a plate of meat, you need a pig. All the damned pigs are dead, and even if they weren't, we've got nothing to feed them!



## The Rise of the Military-Corporate Complex

The United States was in poor condition. Most of its urban centers suffered severe damage from aberrant attacks, and millions of civilians were dead. The country's resources were stretched to the breaking point; losing a massive amount of grain reserves to the blight (not to mention the inability to grow more) rocked what was left of the nation's stability. The only things acting in the military's favor in the ongoing war were the few OMEN fusion "deathsats" that hadn't been destroyed in the aberrant "Space Brigade's" raid on Olympus Base, and the sheer size of the armed forces.

Without a strong federal government, and without the support of state governments that already struggled to feed and provide for civilians, the U.S. military declared independence from all political bodies. The armed forces assumed control of American defenses and declared authority to

c o m m a n d e e r whatever funds and resources it needed to continue the fight against aberrants. Politicians were outraged, but the American people supported the uprising after the military proved that it could seize food reserves and distribute them among civilians — and fulfill the military's own needs.

The armed forces drew up unofficial boundaries, creating military m a n a g e m e n t districts that each e n c o m p a s s e d several states. Regional forces cooperated with each other and shared resources whenever possible, but otherwise acted independently, in defiance of shrill political protest.



The new military establishment moved on Canada and Mexico as one of its first actions. The United States hoped to take control of the bordering nations' marginally healthier resources. While the United

States' military hardware had mixed results against aberrants, it was quite effective against the country's neighbors. These invasions would have been even more challenging had Quebec not assisted the United States' thrust into Canada. The North American Police Action instigated revolts, revolutions and coups across the continent that endured for decades after the war itself.

After five years and incalculable devastation to the continent, a taxed United States military consolidated with a few private corporations to maintain control and fund the ongoing war effort. The

formerly blurred divisions of the nation were now made absolute. This new "military-corporate complex" redirected funding on all government levels to rebuild the country's offensive and defensive capabilities. Legal and moral considerations aside, not even this boost allowed the military to contend with aberrants fully. If not for China's Ultimatum, it is difficult to say what dark fate would have befallen North America.

## The Federated States of America

The new Federated States of America was still crippled severely by a lack of agricultural resources in the war's aftermath, and other nations were too preoccupied with their own restoration to provide assistance. Americans are nothing if not resourceful, however. While major wheat and soy strains were dead, experiments proved that other strains could be used. Continued lunar development yielded viable mineral resources and the millions of Nordamerican homeless and destitute made prime colonization fodder for Luna, Mars and the asteroid belt. The once great nation struggled gamely through the waning years of the 21st century to recover its position of global supremacy.

Considering the FSA's current state, this effort will be difficult to say the least. The Federated States



### One Nation Under God

— Askani Sere, *The New World*  
© 2093 Walkabout Press

Lest you think the nation has devolved into some pathetic post-apocalyptic cliché, let me tell you something: The federal government still exists! That surprises a lot of Americans these days. True, it's mostly all collapsed now; it serves as little more than a puppet for the metanationals. Only one remnant retains any real power: the military. The Federated States Military provides most levels of law enforcement, from county sheriff to coast guard. The FSM is ever-present — on contract, of course. Don't let a fed hear you use the word "extortion," unless you'd like to be pressed into garrison duty in Omaha.

still retains a certain coherence; its citizens are all Americans, at least officially. Yet a deep mistrust exists among the great metroplexes of the East and West Coasts and the "Outback" lands across what remains of North America.

Massive arcologies rule Nordamerican coastlines: from Boston to Atlanta in the east, and from Vancouver to San Diego in the west. These metroplexes loom, brooding like concrete and orbital steel giants. Aircraft and spaceships frequent the skies over the cities; the lights never go out and the commercials never stop broadcasting.

The great metanational corporations, in league with the restructured Federated States Military, still rule the land in all but name. There's no reason for the corporations to dirty their hands with the work of governing. They leave that to the skeletal federal government. The military-

corporate complexes own the great arcologies in which the masters of the metroplexes dwell, and, by extrapolation, control the very nation. No one owns — or cares to own — the crumbling shanty wastelands surrounding those shining arcologies.

Great Lakes District, South District, Tex-Mex District, these are the North American breadbaskets of the 22nd century. Cities like Pittsburgh and Denver have seen a resurgence in trade since the war. Farming remains unsafe; the threat of attack looms for many rurals. The blight displaced a lot of those whom it didn't starve to death; thousands escaped to the FSA's many orbital colonies, or emigrated to Australia. Some of those who remained and survived now roam the land like migrant tribes, crossing the central wasteland to trade for supplies or to scavenge abandoned cities. Rumor has it that rare groups of these rurals patrol the wastelands to aid travelers in danger.

The corporations and the FSM work hand in glove on both coasts. Military production contracts go to the corporations with the largest military presence in "their" cities; the corporations round up cheap labor in the slums around the arcologies or,

if they get desperate, from among the rurals. Such acts are overlooked by the federal government.

## Quebec

When the FSA invaded Canada, Quebec backed the effort. The province's alliance with the Federated States was key to the northern conflict. As a reward, Quebec was allowed to remain independent of the FSA.

### PROTEUS ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Continued FSM Negotiations

**From:** Assistant Director R. DuBois, Department of Foreign Affairs, Montreal

**To:** Deputy Director J. Cartier, DFA, Quebec Orbital

**Encryption:** DSE

**Transmission type:** textfile (translation from the French)

**Date:** 13:41:33 16.10.2119

I spoke with General Johnson again this morning. Jacques, this situation is impossible. The treaty your people negotiated in 2055 — before my time, remember — guaranteed our sovereignty after the invasion of the western provinces, did it not?

So why are General Johnson and her aides citing provisions of the treaty that I have never seen before, and insisting that they retain the right to an airbase outside of Rouyn? Are there provisions to the treaty that I'm not cleared for? If so, why the hell do you people have me coordinating the negotiations?

Please contact me at once.

### CONFIDENTIAL

## Analysis: Post-War Recovery Update 2096: The FSA

While the country gives the impression of a land on the rebound, statistics and evidence give our economists fits. There's more work to be had in the fertile lands than there are reliable farm workers. Heavy industry is seeing its fourth consecutive rise in output. And yet the FSA's official GNP continues to slide; the dollar buys less each year, and thousands starve in the ring-towns of the arcologies. If production is so high, where is the food and money going? Our contacts in the metanational corporations indicate that a fair amount of resources go to the corps and the FSM — but not enough to account for this discrepancy. North America should be in much better financial shape than is evident. So again, the question must be asked: Where is it all going?





## Mexico

Mexico City is a smoking hole in the ground. A quake hit in 2043 (an act claimed by at least a dozen aberrants), and a schism among aberrant factions not long afterward did millions of yuan more in damages. At least one million people died during this time; the rest fled for rural lands. The national government collapsed not long afterward, owing to a combination of incredible official corruption and crushing national debt. When the United States moved down from the north, it met with little organized resistance.

Much of Mexico is considered contested; the north along the Rio Grande has been merged with Texas, and the Gulf Coast is petitioning for FSA membership. Southern and central Mexico are a battleground between FSM troops, so-called freedom fighters, and Brazilian-financed mercenaries. Apparently the FSM seeks to secure as much arable land as possible. The resistance claims to fight for an independent Mexico. The mercenaries' goals are unknown.

### PROTEUS ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Border Resistance

**From:** Colonel Theodore Whitman, FSM Tactical Analysis Division

**To:** Brigadier General Samson Fourke, FSM Central Command

**Encryption:** DSE

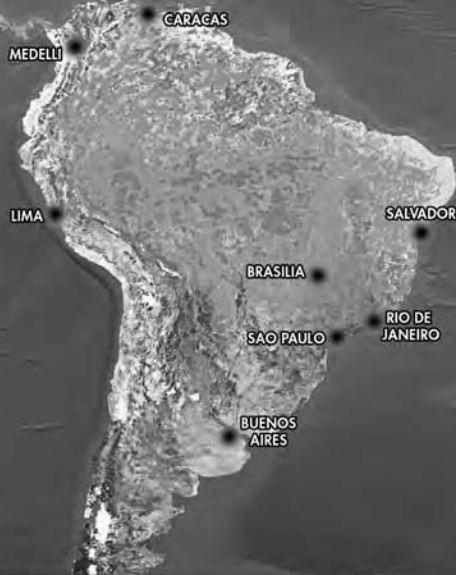
**Transmission type:** holofile [enclosed textfiles]

**Date:** 20:07:56 4.2.2120

Regarding the continued resistance that our great nation faces to the north and south: I have studied the enclosed field reports, and I must admit some consternation. While the Canadian resistance movement offers little direct threat to our nation's stability, it is frustrating that such poorly-equipped rabble can resist our military forays. Even when we find their hideouts, the Canucks scatter like cockroaches when you turn on the lights. I don't know how they can keep going, considering that they have no resources or support.

This leads me to the so-called "Mexican freedom fighters." Unlike their northern counterparts, these rebels are well-funded and -organized. We know that they receive munitions and mercenary support from South America, and our commanders note suspected Norça involvement as well. Due to the recent setbacks that we have suffered in the southern border conflict, I recommend we deploy two divisions of vacuum assault and reconnaissance gear immediately.

# SOUTH AMERICA



Not even the Spanish *conquistadors* with their visions of El Dorado could have predicted the fortune to be had in the South America of the 22nd century. When America's fertile farmland was decimated by Calvert Wycoff's dramatic suicide, South America closed its continental borders and its governments exiled most foreigners in a great exodus. Only minimal international trade and communication was maintained. The "Necessary Wall" spawned discontent with governments' policies, but martial law silenced all dissension.

When South America re-established economic contact in 2073, it opened like an oyster with pearls of agricultural produce, bulk natural resources and surplus

power. As foreign money flooded into the continent, tourist havens on the verge of ruin blossomed like never before, desolate city-states began construction of the most lavish spaceports on Earth, and new megalopolises became centers for international business and pleasure. South America — or "Sudamerica," as it is also called in current times — came into its own with fine tailored suits *no estilo Brazilian*, hand-rolled cigars, and a white-toothed smile that gleamed like orbital steel.

## Natural Wealth

Nature is power in the 22nd century. South America delights in being the leading

- nation on the commodities market. Brazil has its finger on the pulse of the UAN, China and Nihon, while tightening its grip on the FSA, Russia and Italy, and saving special "trade tariffs" for Portugal and Spain, its former masters.

Yet Sudamerica struggled with second-class international status well into the 21st century. The Aberrant War did not enable the continent to join the rest of the world as much as the war brought other countries down to South America's level. However, the war's foreign catastrophies made South America's natural resources a vital commodity, even something worth fighting over.

Furthermore, before the aberrants left Earth, *Bandeirante*-led "hunters" swarmed the South American jungles, purging those aberrants who hid from radar and satellite scans, and making the fertile lands safe. These turns of events redefined the world's concept of progress, began the "environmentally anxious" era, and made South America a green gem to be coveted.

South America has made its natural resources an industry unto themselves. Farmlands in Bolivia and the Mapuche Nation, formerly Chile, are allowed to be overrun by rain forests. Brazil has instituted Indigenous Environmental Replication Projects (IER) to enhance the tropical ecosystem. Even terraforming projects are underway to turn more land into rain forest. The Brazilians expect to recreate entire ecosystems with existing square kilometers as templates. Combined with the latest discoveries in biotechnology, these efforts will still not see results for decades.

a new look

for a

new world



## Mourning Is Over

— Dazyl Grenich, *Lifestyles*  
© 6.1.2120 MMI

Fashion designer and Dutch émigré Kostbaar declared today that mourning is over. Five years is enough, he says, so no more black, no more *faux* French berets. It's time for fashion to move forward again, in the new, bright, Brazilian monofiber fabrics and clever body-shaping cuts that are all the rage in *haute couture* this season. Kostbaar says his new look hits the ramps in Rio this spring. See the holos here first!

ART ©2120 KOSTBAAR

Agricultural industry is not the only motivation for South America's reforms. The Aberrant War, the Crash, depression and poverty took their toll on humanity. Worldwide demand for medicinal and recreational drugs is at an all-time high.

Drug trade flourishes again as millions of neutrals are inspired to unlock potential noetic latency through whatever means possible, drugs being the most likely route. South America's legalization of the drug trade transformed druglords into businessmen, cartels into metanationals.

Norça are involved in both legitimate pharmaceutical ventures and illicit drug trade and development. There are even rumors that Proxy del Fuego condones the testing of drugs that induce perception of the subquantum universe. What the order might have planned for such research is unknown, and details are sketchy as to how extreme and humane this testing may be.

## Space Development

The space race has had little appeal for South America. The continent focused instead on the global Motherland — home. The South American orbital station *Orgulho de Cêu* was built more as a symbol of wealth and power than out of any true need. Today it serves as a scientific laboratory for biochemical and genetic engineering. Colombian research crews are busy analyzing sample compounds from Venus and Europa. They hope to splice these orbital strains onto existing

Sudamerican agro-genetic chains, further advancing South American biotechnology.

## Politics

The “official” South American governments can best be described as decentralized. Discounting the *indigena* nations, old rivalries and new prosperity has created a winner-takes-all attitude among the arcologies.

Brazil remains the superpower in the public arena, although the growing influence of Candomble (the largest African-Brazilian cult in South America) makes Papal State supporters increasingly uncomfortable. Columbia and Brazil vie for control behind the scenes, with no one group firmly in control. Medellin druglords and officials have devoted masses in the FSA, among the youth of Russia, in the Balkans and in the Turk Federation. Colombian and Brazilian coastal cartels are in league with other organized crime families in Italy, Israel and in the Russian intelligence agency.

However, many concede that the Norça most likely control it all, including determining access to, and flow of, the latest Sudamerican discoveries in biochemical and genetics research throughout the UAN and China. In any case, South American politics pander to vain and vengeful demands, and no deal is signed without someone getting a cut.

## Brazil

Brazil is the Western Hemisphere's center for environmental biotechnology, biosphere stabilization and biochemical research. The country consists of five arcology districts: the Pantanal, including the mines of Minas Gerais; the Mato Grosso; Rio de Janeiro; São Paulo; and Salvador. Over 90 million poor live in a squalid buffer zone between these glorious arcologies, and these destitute must contend with the rain forests that still hold secrets from modern science.

There is a place for everyone in Brazil, and each region has its own stereotypical flavor. The *Cariocas* of Rio are hedonistic, frivolous and irresponsible pleasure-lovers. The *Paulistas* of São Paulo are upwardly mobile, materialistic, neurotic workaholics. The *Mineiros* of Minas Gerais are thrifty, clever businesspeople with an extremely religious nature. The quiet, unassuming *Nordistas* of the northern regions lead gentle and simple lives in their neo-ecoculture.

The Pantanal was the source of biotemplates in Norças' first foray into ecological recovery. The feral and dangerous beauty of the region is preserved because of its unique biochemistry... and because Norça insist on it.

Minas Gerais traffics coveted bacterial templates and black-market biotechnology. Biosamples are gathered by incursion units of every stripe and inclination. These teams are easy to recognize: three to five heavily armed guards, at least one *mestizo* or native scout, and perhaps a handful of serious-looking strangers whose *burros* and small terrarovers are packed with handling equipment and cryotubes. These agro-techs plunge into the deltas, hoping to emerge with enough base material to boost the depleted ecology of any nation willing to pay the price.

## Candomble

What was once a dance in honor of the gods is now the largest African-Brazilian religious cult in South America, and the governing power of the pious in Brazil. The Pai or Mae de Santo chant and weave their prayers in solemn, entrancing tones while wearing soft white. They throw *buzios* to interpret their fortunes or futures, or to explore their past lives with the gods. The shells splay all-knowing patterns in the swept dirt of a floor. Jogo dos Buzios is a serious force of power and only the foolhardy would

### TRITON ARCHIVE

#### *Addiction and Promotion, The Institutionalized Highs of São Paulo*

— Excerpt: Maria-Theresa San Dlos'  
University of Pharmacology Thesis, 2116

You won't find anything illicit on the streets of São Paulo. The walkways are clean, the roads are well-kept, and everyone is either going to or returning from work. No one dallies. Now in the business meetings, well, that's another story... Apoderado's the only place I've worked where no one leaves the office or the gym without a guaranteed smile on his face, and it's not from the overtime pay!

## The Power of Candomble

— Excerpt: *Wakina Sisi* holomag  
© 2119 Genman Enterprises

*"I quoted a proverb. They were overcome with laughter at these words."*

This was 79-year-old Āy Nika's simple defense against the accusation that she used her position of Mai de Santos to bring evil *idΣn* (magic) against the two youths who tried to rob her. The young men fell ill of a rare wasting disease — the only two cases recorded in Brazil since 1822 — within three days of the incident. The families of the men have brought suit against Āy Nika and her congregation. Her defense counsel is financed by individual donations that, at last count, total 370 million new yuan.

laugh at the telling, or insult the Spirit Parent who gives it.

## Colombia

The Colombian Supreme Court's legalization of personal drugs in the mid-1990s transformed illicit drug trade into big business. Colombia is the undisputed system leader in drug trade, with the nation's

capital, Medellín, the most advanced pharmaceutical center in settled space. Experiments performed with a wide array of drugs on hundreds of willing human subjects advanced medicinal science exponentially. The city's research teams at the University of Pharmacology are now decades ahead of their Chinese competitors. Medellín's poorest quarters house hundreds of test subjects who are the "dreamers" in the cast-off "Den of Dreams."

## Republica Argentina

Argentina is all business. Such business is primarily in guerrilla warfare and "dirty wars" among North and South American political factions, religious cults and special interest groups. Argentina is busiest in its own backyard, due to the fascist regime that divides the nation into the very rich and very, very poor.

In contrast to its crooked and criminal politics, Argentina is the stage for Sudamerican theatrics. Carnival's feverish ecstasy of color and motion, the multilingual bartertown *centros'* loud and frenzied haggling, and the aggressive tourism trade bring a gritty glamour to Argentina.

## Venezuela

Venezuela struggled during the 21st century, subjected to harsh aberrant attacks that culminated in germ warfare. The country was shunned thereafter, and gained the nickname *El Capybara*, after the infested rodents that lived in its nearby jungle. Venezuela didn't shed its reputation until Norça helped establish underwater cities off its coast. These small realms spread into the Caribbean, contained within translucent bubbles of enforced orbital polymers, lie suspended between ocean bottom and island stalk.

A variety of occupations are available here: oceanic biology, deep-sea tourism, intermediary grav training for space flight, and on-site security. Oceanic patrols are the first line of defense for local land and water cities, and keep vigilant watch for aberrant lifeforms that might roam the watery depths.

## Peru

Most of Peru went the way of Chile and Bolivia after the Aberrant War: back to ancestral traditions. Peru's government and trade capital, Lima, sprawls under a thick shroud of mist. The port city trades in one of the richest commodities known to man: information. When information is relayed to western South American, it comes through Lima, but without the expenses demanded in Brazil or Colombia. No holotransmissions or coded flat texts here, only quiet hearsay traded person-to-person from aquatic ship captains to foreign datathieves.



## Danger in Paradise

— Excerpt: *Travel South America: 2115* © 2115 Stahu Entertainment

Fair warning to all entrepreneurs: The Colombian *juntas* have every intention of keeping the wealth of Colombia *inside* Colombia. Armed militiamen are everyday fixtures and have no qualms about shooting suspected traffickers of appropriated merchandise. Although South American law forbids unnecessary violence without proof of criminal intent, such actions are classified as in "national defense." If you are one of the truly unlucky, you may be beaten, drugged and released in squalid Communa Noroccidental to find your own way out or, even worse, you may be discovered by Norça and never heard from again.

# SPACE

Humanity has wondered at the stars since before the dawn of history. Initial forays into orbit began in the 20th century. But those successes were only stepping stones to the strides of the 21st century, when humanity created new energy sources, developed new technologies and finally walked among the solar system's planets. It's impossible to guess at the progress that we would have made in our solar system and beyond had the Aberrant War not erupted. Most of Earth's space program shuddered to a halt due to aberrant depredations.

And yet as history has proven, adversity inspires humanity. The Chinese people performed Herculean feats in launching numerous space craft and weapons platforms during the war. Not only did China's successes in space put an end to the fighting, it rid Earth of the aberrant threat, if only for a short while. However, China's achievements also marked the dawn of a new space age, a beginning of a new dream to walk among the stars.

And the humans of the 22nd century do exactly that. Earth is no longer our only home. People reside in near orbit, throughout our solar system, and in the vast reaches of space.

Scientific discoveries have allowed these achievements, but the evolution of human's noetic potential has made the colonization of space possible. The rise of the orders, the discovery of the subquantum energy that resonates throughout the universe, and the invention of biotechnology has led to developments in space exploration never dreamed of before. We have touched alien soil and become the friends of alien races. The psions have made our spacefaring dreams reality.

The loss of the Upeo turned dream to nightmare, as extrasolar colonies were stranded without support from or even means to communicate with Earth. The Æon Trinity coordinated efforts between the remaining psi orders and qin allies trapped in human space to create new, "living" ships capable of returning to deep space. These jump ships came on line in late 2119 and began reconnecting with our starflung people. The recent return of the Upeo wa Macho will accelerate communication and trade between our solar system and the

extrasolar colonies. Still, the continued use of jump ships ensures that we will never again be cut off from one another, no matter how far we range in space.

## The Æon Trinity and the Orders

Almost all of the orders have some presence in space, whether public or not. The Æon Trinity also has extraterrestrial facilities, which are accessible to neutrals and psions alike.

Æsculapians' activities in space are perhaps the most public and widely recognized of all the orders'. The docs operate clinics in all lunar sectors, in every colony and on every publicly held orbital station. They provide

medical attention to colonists, from tending to injuries, curing illnesses, providing psychological treatment and stress therapy, to trying to eliminate the sale of black-market organs and controlling drug trade (both legal and illicit). The A/O is needed most in Luna's Downside, where workers and the indigent suffer frequent "accidents," and overdose regularly on the drugs they turn to in hopes of a brighter existence.

The low-gravity environment in space also allows Æsculapians to conduct medical research, particularly on new medications that cannot be manufactured on Earth. Luna's A/O clinics are a major source of medical treatment and noetic healing throughout colonized space.



## Life on the Fringe

— Stephanie Chan, *The Final Frontier* © 2118 GN

In many ways, life in extraterrestrial colonies, stations and bases can be compared to that on any new frontier, in any era of human history. Eking out a living in an unknown environment demands resilience, a rugged physique and cooperation. But the worlds that space explorers struggle to conquer go beyond the hair-trigger life of Tombstone or the dangers of staking a claim. Justice in space is swift and harsh. When you run out of food, there's nowhere to forage. When things go bad, there's no way to pick up and start elsewhere. And when your enemies come, there's no place to hide.

A harsh environment creates harsh people, but tolerance, grace and subtlety are in greater demand in space than anywhere else. Is it worthwhile to get angry over a game of cards, or a work schedule, or even a mate? Killing is easy — anyone can do it and get away with it on the frontier — so why look for trouble? Forgive and live.

In space, you depend on the competence of those around you. Highly screened and trained crews are the dream of every supervisor; a single screw up could kill everyone. Since life-support environments are at a premium, limiting privacy off Earth, a little personal space can be worth killing for. But whether people are miners, terraformers or researchers, living space is minimal compared to the vastness of space, and everyone better get along or *someone's* going to die!

The complexity of life follows the complexity of technology, and those who live in space are entirely dependent on their technology. Pioneering in the 22nd century is no return to "the simple life," unless you mean that it's simply *harder*.



## The Milky Way on ¥20 a Day

— *Travelogue special issue* © 2119 Rafat, Inc.

In wealthy arcologies and on orbital-station decks, most consumer goods are paid for simply by identifying yourself to the cashier (who may be a computer agent in some stores). Voiceprint and thumbprint are scanned, checked against your bank records, and the cost is deducted from your account.

In less affluent areas on Earth and in most of the inner colonies, old-fashioned hard currency and credit cards still hold sway. This is due in large part to the exorbitant fees and effort involved in accessing approved OpNet financial nodes. Most colonies also have multinational presences — Olympus alone has over a dozen major national outposts. Add to these issues a number of petty fees and concerns, and most businesses find it easier to rely on tried-and-true hard currency, trade and sometimes even barter. Apparently the Belt is a purely barter-system economy; all the credit in the universe won't even buy you a drink.

Setting up a bank account doesn't change much whether you're in Zurich-Geneva or in a Lunar colony spur. You simply present yourself at a branch office. They take a voiceprint and retinal scan and check them against the databases they have access to. As long as you prove to be who you say you are, you can open an account, transfer funds or do whatever your heart desires. The usual interest rate is 3% if you're in the black, 20% if you're in the red. Banks that offer "more privacy" (meaning they aren't as concerned about your identity) are available, but their interest rates are high, and their fees are exorbitant.

ISRA Proxy Otha Herzog lives on *Huruf al-Hayy*, a space station hidden far from human habitation and his psions, while most ISRANs call the Moon their home. What better place than Luna, they reason, is there to look out across the stars and protect the Earth? The order is not a major factor in lunar events for the most part, though its influence has increased recently due to the clears' involvement in the jump-ship program. Clairsentients are key to operating jump ships, and Luna is the staging area for humanity's return to deep space.

The Legions are the orders' contribution to security in space. As Luna is the hub of the human universe, so too is it the hub of Legion activities beyond Earth. Perhaps the best known is Phoenix Squadron. Legionnaires also provide security for the various sectors of Olympus itself, dealing with unruly colonists and protecting

the base from foreign incursions. More than one rowdy miner has suffered abuse at the hands (and powers) of psychokinetics bored with their "chicken roost" duties. The Legions maintain several military barracks and ship-launch sites on Luna.

The Ministry maintains telepaths on all publicly held orbital stations and colonies. It also staffs liaisons to Chinese delegates to the lunar-based new United Nations. The high Chinese population in the stars also demands telepath presence simply to ensure respect for the earthly Chinese government's doctrines, and to protect China's interests in space. The Ministry's space outpost is located in Yutu YinchOn on Luna, but doesn't stand out against the backdrop of diplomatic and business institutions that pervade the sector.

Norça maintain no official bases or operatives in space.

Biokinetics have been spotted (or evidence of their passing has been found) in Olympus, in the Belt and on a number of orbital stations, though. Norça activities in space have almost always been limited to the lower levels of stations and fringes of colonies, with the psions disappearing as quickly as they have appeared. Officially, Norça agents claim that their activities in space involve acting against threats that the other orders overlook, but the order refuses to elaborate.

Orgotek maintains research centers throughout settled space, which are operated by both neutral and psion agents. These facilities are located on every major orbital station in the solar system and in the colonies on Luna and Mars. Tests are conducted on biotech and psi powers to gauge their capacities in low-gravity environments, and to expand noetic science.

Hundreds of psions and Orgotek employees were killed when the orbital jump-ship launch platform destroyed in the 2119 aberrant attack. The program was thought grievously delayed until Orgotek Proxy Alex Cassel revealed a second such site on Luna, created, maintained and kept secret exclusively by Orgotek all along.

The Æon Trinity operates a variety of extraterrestrial outposts. Some are public facilities on Luna or orbital stations that can be located by anyone. Public offices provide services ranging from information libraries to medical clinics to social programs (the last two of which are most prevalent in the safer regions in Luna's Downside). Psions are posted to these public facilities occasionally, but mostly for appearances sake or as penalty for abuses of power or breaches of conduct.

Private outposts are the center of Æon Trinity action in space. Æon maintains a variety of chapters on Luna that coordinate numerous activities throughout human-occupied territories. Housing for psion and neutral space explorers, noetic science experimental labs, weapons-testing sites, aberrant surveys and space patrols fall under this purview. The Trinity's space personnel are also instrumental to the jump-ship program, and was primarily responsible for building the orbital station that was destroyed in the 2119 aberrant attack. Those tests continue even now in the "second" launch site, recently revealed to the Trinity by Orgotek.

# LUNA



|                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Sun                         | Sol           |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2            |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 0.012         |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 2,160         |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 0.17          |
| Atmosphere                  | none          |
| Indigenous life             | none          |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 696.5         |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 221,457 miles |
| Primary satellites          | none          |

In the early 21st century, the United States space program turned its attention to Earth's closest neighbor, Luna. Astronomers searched for an appropriate site for a lunar base. They settled on a small crater near the south pole, which contained a frozen lake called Galatea. Sheltered in the shadow of the high walls of the selenic scar, the lake was protected from the sun's blazing heat, making it an invaluable resource in lunar development.

The U.S. began Earth-side construction of the base, Olympus (also called the Mount), in 2015, but it took NASA architects, astronauts and administration 15 years to launch the first lunar construction mission.

## TRITON ARCHIVE

### Short-burst Laser Transmission, received by Denver Communications

**From:** Olympus, Moon 18 Mar 2060.

**To:** The relatives of S.O. Miller, ID#OL0000208

I regret to inform you that your niece, Selene Miller, passed on during childbirth 15 Mar 2060, due to complications arising from what our doctors identify as LAO (see attachment). Despite the extreme measures taken by our staff, she was beyond our ability to save. Her child, a boy, is not yet named by the father. Please accept my condolences on the passing of this intrepid woman.

Sincerely,

Dave Henderson, Commander,  
Space Brigade

Olympus was christened on 18 March, 2031, and ushered in a new age of space exploration and research.

Lunar mining was central to Olympus' funding for its first decade. In time, expansions on the base demanded that mining and water-processing facilities be enlarged as well. The station's landing plain was also turned into a full-fledged space "dock," catering to a steady stream of traffic to and from Earth as new inhabitants arrived and itinerants returned home. Families were even created on the base, and the U.S. government finally began to refer to Olympus as a "colony" rather than a "project."

Olympus wasn't the world's only lunar project. In 2045, Britain unveiled its own base, Camelot, located on the shore of Galatea to the south of Olympus. Russia also announced its Yeltsingrad base, just across Luna's shadow line. Yeltsingrad, located on a small crater-lake, was never intended to be anything more than a mining operation, while Camelot was a shining monument to technology.

When tensions between humans and aberrants rose back on Earth, all three lunar bases were left woefully understaffed and undersupplied. Olympus doled out resources and aid

whenever possible. Yeltsingrad suffered considerably because of its distance from Olympus; additionally, the limited funding available resulted in a rudimentary facility.

When lunar inhabitants got word of the United Nations' declaration of war against aberrants in 2049, most were relieved that they were isolated on the Moon, and spared the conflict. They worried about their friends and families back home, and shuddered sympathetically each time they received news of another aberrant atrocity.

Only a few months later, the war came to them.

## The Aberrant Takeover

Aberrants stormed Olympus without warning. A horde of mutants appeared using a rare "warp" ability and demanded

## A Famous Person I Admire

— Amani Pandarapandi, age 8,  
Chandi School for Girls,  
Calcutta, India,  
interviewed for *Lifestyles*  
© 2118 MMI

I admire Selene Olympia Miller most of anyone in the world. She was the very first baby born on the Moon. Her first name is for a moon goddess of Greece, and her middle name is for the base named Olympus. She was born on 16 June, 2034, and there were lots of media stories about how much she weighed and how much hair she had. When she was 15, she helped a bunch of people when the Space Brigade came to the Moon and took it over. Because she played in the tunnels, she knew all the hiding places, and they all went with her, even the grown-ups. And because she knew how to hide really good, they all stayed safe, even though bad people were blowing up things on Earth.

surrender. They herded the population into the control center for an introduction to the ridiculously named but militarily precise "Space Brigade." The takeover resulted in 12 casualties and about 17 billion dollars in damage. Most of the deaths occurred in short melees, though some resulted from misunderstandings. After Olympus was secure, a small group of invaders detached to disable the British base, and returned with all remaining Camelot personnel.

After destroying many of the OMEN "deathsats," the aberrants repaired and augmented Olympus' weapons systems, as well as its solar, hydroponics, water-processing and manufacturing complexes. The Space Brigade declared Olympus a neutral territory — the base was a retreat for humans and aberrants alike who could reach the place. Residents were never allowed to leave, however. Key Space Brigade members transported mined ores and scavenged technologies to purchase necessary supplies from Earth's black markets. Residents lived comfortably, if not amiably, together. A number of the human crew even departed willingly with the aberrants in 2061.

The years under aberrant rule doomed Olympus residents. Crewmembers' muscles weakened and bones thinned due to Luna's low gravity. Returning to Earth meant undergoing considerable physiological stress or even death. Even remaining on the Moon did not guarantee long life, as the residents suffered accelerated skeletal breakdown from loss of calcium. Their expected life spans were reduced drastically and they became prone to skeletal stresses. This condition came to be known as Lunar (later Low-gravity) Aggravated Osteoporosis, or LAO.

In an effort to offset these afflictions, foster programs were developed for the children of lunar gravity families (known as "elgees"). The children were raised in the full gravity of Earth by families

("fulgees"), and visited their biological families at intervals. Elgee children learned to accept the pity of fulgee adults, and to contend with the jeers of their fulgee peers.

## Lunar Expansion and Beyond

Not long after the aberrant Exodus, China established a base adjoining Olympus in keeping with a diplomatic

## Pseudo-gravity

— Dr. Kleran Baxter, *The Technological Age* © 2110 Walkabout Press

The relationship between a given mass and the gravitational force it exerts on other bodies is well-known. Scientists also agree that matter and energy are the same for the purposes of discussing gravitational effects. Stars lose mass as a result of the tremendous energies that they radiate, and even electrons have minuscule but mathematically determinable amounts of mass.

In 2071, gravity researchers developed a process by which energy can be converted into mass to create a kind of artificial gravity. Orbital-manufactured crystals (dubbed "gravcrystals") manifest artificial mass when fed a significant amount of energy. A gravcrystal absorbs energy, then radiates gravity equivalent to a more massive object. The gravcrystal does not actually possess an increased mass; rather, it generates the *effect* of higher gravity over short distances.

A pseudo-graviton generating grid — a 3-foot-square panel 3 inches deep — has sockets into which are fitted individual crystals (each constructed to a regulation 1/2 inch x 2 inch oblong). Plugged into a strong power generator (such as a ship's fusion engine), the grid creates a resonance among gravcrystals to generate a localized hemispherical gravitational field of up to 1g projected over roughly 6 feet at full strength. The mass field's wave-form collapses beyond that point, not unlike a soap bubble when blown too large.

A ship with a grid system operating at full resonance, and that enters a gravity well (such as that of Earth or Luna), undergoes increased gravity within the craft. A grid system has gravity compensators, or "g-comps," that regulate degree of resonance to maintain a comfortable Earth-normal 1g.

Despite what one sees on holodramas, spacecraft, orbital stations and low-gravity colonies are not blanketed with pseudo-gravity generators. Grids are precise systems that require specialized care; strong power fluctuations or system malfunctions can short them out easily. Grids are also very expensive to manufacture and maintain, and require a significant amount of energy to operate.

There are a number of circumstances under which a low- or no-gravity environment is preferable to pseudo-gravity. Yellow-and-black-striped markers indicate most "no-gravity zones." These areas utilize weak local gravity to ease cargo and high-speed transport. Construction workers on extraterrestrial sites use a few portable pseudo-gravity grids (hooked into a central generator) where a gravity source is desired; otherwise their work is facilitated by operating in low gravity. New sports and entertainment media based on low gravity have also developed.

In the decades since it was first introduced, pseudo-gravity has revolutionized space development. Yet we cannot forget the dangers inherent to space, as well as to mixing pseudo- and low-gravity environments. A space liner that suffers a massive grid short, or an inattentive worker who steers a loaded cargo pod into a full-gravity zone, could lead to calamity.

agreement. China based its station design on practical cubical modules with auto-sealing bulkheads, ending the romantic age of domes in favor of stackable, customizable, mobile, space-saving facilities. Yutu Yinchon was composed of cluster groups, each with its own cold-fusion generator, water conduits, solar lines, food production and storage.

Following the U.S.–Chinese example, multinational construction efforts became increasingly common on Luna. Nihon spearheaded the creation of a solar-energy system to supplement the hyper-fusion reactors, for use by all Moon bases. The lunar population cooperated to complete the Yeltsingrad Corridor, a conduit that ran power and life-support lines to the isolated Russian facility. And in the greatest collective effort of all, the lunar colonies created Tiamat, a monstrous water-processing facility in the center of Galatea. Tiamat finally made all the lunar bases a joined, closed system.

Yet, as much as Tiamat revolutionized life on Luna, nothing changed the evolving culture of the Mount as much as the development of grav-crystals did in 2071. Earth's   
 s c r o u n g i n g   
 populace no   
 longer

had to worry about the major deterrent to lunar colonization: LAO. Even though 21st-century orbital transportation was expensive, Luna's population exploded. Hydroponic farming complexes sprawled out from the urban center, tended by colonist serfs who worked for corporate and governmental barons. Mining consortiums ventured over and into the selenic crust, achieving limited independence from the lunar arcology. Olympus itself sprouted soaring towers and blocky high-rises inhabited by the affluent and iconoclastic. The rich used their tremendous wealth to urge engineers to design well-shielded yet stunning above-ground structures.

Various countries tried to snatch up some of the Mount's glory by constructing orbital stations at Earth's Lagrange points. Still, Olympus remained the jewel in North America's tarnished and lopsided crown. The focal point for trade, colonization and success, the base acquired a romanticized reputation comparable to that of 19th-century North America. People sold themselves into virtual slavery to governments and metacorporations just to have the chance to start over, away from the post-war crowds, filth and toxic remains.

In fact, as mining and research operations spread

## A New Dream

— Stephanie Chan,  
The Final Frontier © 2118 GN

Luna is a mix of humanity's greatest triumphs and darkest secrets. Whatever you may be looking for or running from, you're sure to find a place on the Moon. It's a land of opportunity, where anyone can make a fortune — or lose it all. It's a symbol of humanity's future, the realization of a centuries-old dream to venture into the stars.

across the solar system, Olympus became increasingly important as a source of supplies, construction materials, communication relays and crews. While orbital stations were ideal for docking, resupplying and mission launches, they lacked the vast resources and defenses of the Mount. The lunar colony was better prepared to handle emergencies, general ship maintenance and to house ships' crews, provisions and payloads.

Luna firma truly became home away from home.

## Welcome to Olympus

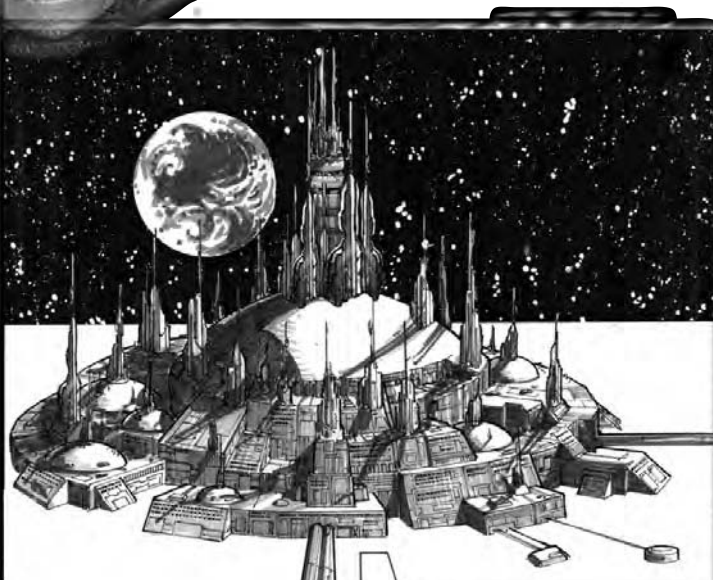
Luna is recognized as the hub of the solar system. While much of the Earth has been restored since the war, most of the one billion souls who left it for the stars have little desire to return — and fully half of that number make their new home on the cramped quarters of the Moon. Many miners, scientists, businessmen and colonists (the majority of them North American or European) left ravaged homes to build something new. From a vantage point on Luna, Earth is but a beautiful gem in the sky.

Olympus has grown into a nation-

## Life on Luna — Upscale

— Dazyl Grenich,  
Lifestyles © 2120 MMI

We're in Crêpesculé des Dietés, the finest restaurant on all of Luna... although it's surrounded by 10 other restaurants that make the same claim. We're in Yutu Yinchon's highest towers, overlooking the spaceport and its rat race. You'd be hard pressed to find a more ostentatious display of wealth on the Moon — except, perhaps, for the Olympean Towers. Local wags claim that the Towers gleam like that because they're made of pure platinum. While that's an exaggeration, money was no object in the creation of that paradise for the affluent.



"DOMED SECTORS" > © 2120 D AZYLART

state for the 22nd century, home to almost every aspect of space society — from the intrasolar negotiations of the new United Nations to the shadowy conferences of the black market. Corporations use Olympus as a base for trade and finance. The media uses it as the backdrop to everything from news shows to comedies to adventure programs. Even independent mining and trade operations shop their wares in the Mount's numerous markets (from "legal" to "don't ask").

The rich buy their way into the Olympean Towers' luxurious apartments, while brilliant minds flock to Ukiyoshi's technological mecca. Various regions of the Mount have acquired certain reputations: Ukiyoshi's lakeside districts are "corporate towns" consisting of modest apartments for intrasolar travelers on furlough. Yutu Yinchon's markets, night life and spacedock make it the perfect place for space travelers and Olympus residents to mingle and exchange gossip, money and contracts. Oxford University's lunar campus in Camelot has transformed the dilapidated Grail into the heart of academia for the new century.

The vast majority of lunar visitors and spacers frequent the Yutu Yinchon District. The region runs the gamut from upscale restaurants, bars and resorts to grimy, dangerous dives. The wealthy display themselves in the cultural nucleus of Bire Lubuto, paying enormous prices for tickets to Chinese and Russian

operas, ballet, kabuki and other cultural performances.

Lejanas

hosts many middle-class families. One of the Mount's biggest tourist attractions, it caters to the numerous youths housed in the region's gleaming high-rises. Luna Park is the family resort of the solar system, in much the way that Disneyland was for the United States in the 20th century.

Entertainment is central to many areas of the Mount. Most blue-collar diversions are Downside, a rough-and-tumble lakeside region that adjoins the

## Mezzanine

— Dazyl Grenich,  
Lifestyles © 2120 MMI

Here's a *darling* little pub for the university set. It oozes with pre-war sentiment. The wood decor is perfect for carving lovesick declarations or political dogma — often one and the same for this crowd! The entire sec is like this, brimming with pizza jinks and skating rinks, and things kids love to do with their folks' credit. Trust Oxford Camelot to *try* starting a distinguished tradition and fail miserably once all the North American academics arrive.

student haunts of lunar Oxford, the corporate sectors and the Corridor. Downside bars, pool halls and bath houses are all equipped with advanced security systems to keep watch for the slightest hint of violence from workers unwinding from their high-stress jobs. A contingent of the psychokinetic order's Second Legion is on permanent retainer here, and deals courteously and efficiently with any problems that arise.

## The Underworld

Luna's poor filter quickly down to Olympus' low levels. Only the wealthy can live high above the Moon's surface, basking in natural light and enjoying premier water and power supplies, protected from

the dangers of cosmic radiation and vacuum by mylex and advanced engineering systems. The Moon's oldest structures are now covered by new construction, and are supplied essentials by their original hydro- and life-support systems. Since water is so scarce in space, it's never purged entirely at this level; most of it has been recycled millions of times — and tastes like it. The power supply often drops to minimal levels due to almost constant system malfunctions. Air vents back up frequently, vomiting noxious fumes and sending residents scurrying for oxygen masks.

The twisting corridors and dimly lit rooms of the underground sectors are considered the "Underworld" in many senses of the word. No wise lunar resident walks here unarmed or unguarded. Negotiations that take place here are shady at best, though they may determine the fates of individuals, countries or entire worlds. From the depths of Hera, through the Corridor and into the heart of Yeltsingrad (also known as the Pit), the most despicable, feared and terrified prowl the forgotten sectors in pursuit of dark agendas.

The victims of LAO make their homes here as well, forgotten and disregarded by those who dwell in the higher levels. Although pariahs to Upside, these elgees command respect and even fear from the Underworld's fulgee residents. The low-gravity

## Law of the Wild

— Anonymous ice miner,  
interviewed for  
The Final Frontier © 2118 GN

Look, I can give you all the advice in the galaxy, but it all boils down to two things.

The first is: The farther up you go in Olympus, the tighter the security. You can walk around the Pit with a dozen lasers strapped to you, but try that in Yutu Yinchon and you'll get thrown in the big faster than you can spit.

The second is: It's not guns that make people dangerous.

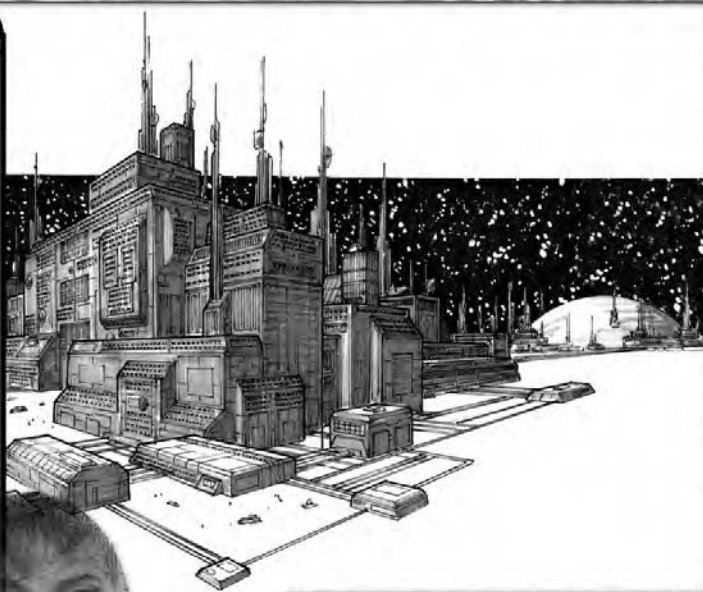
## Downside

— Dazyl Grenich,  
Lifestyles © 2120 MMI

We're a few levels down, now, in Downside — down *levels*, down *scale*, down *class*. This is the turf of blue-collar corp slaves on leave from sweaty spectra scans on Mars or Mercury. This is the Brass Knuckles — no, wait, that's down the strip. This is a *little* classier than that, but then, so is Ayvana Gar, that bastion of fashion sense (but that's another story altogether).

This is O'Flaherty's Pub, one of the busiest corp-service stations Downside. It's *big*, it's *hot* and it's full of loud, flashtemp miners. Notice the discreet holocameras in every corner — not a moment of privacy, but at least it keeps you from being crushed flat by a twitchy grunt with a chip on his shoulder. Legionnaires appear in the wink of an LED to lead boisterous laborers away with a kind word about docked R&R pay.

Migrant workers, stranded and disillusioned immigrants, and hard-luck cases of every variety struggle to make livings and to raise families in the Underworld's depths. Most do it without any legal pretenses. Those who want to survive align themselves with the local powers that be. The Pit is dominated by a heavy-handed dictatrix known simply as "the President." Having established herself some time ago in Yeltsingrad's command center, her clan possesses nearly supreme control of the region's life-support systems, power and limited security monitors.

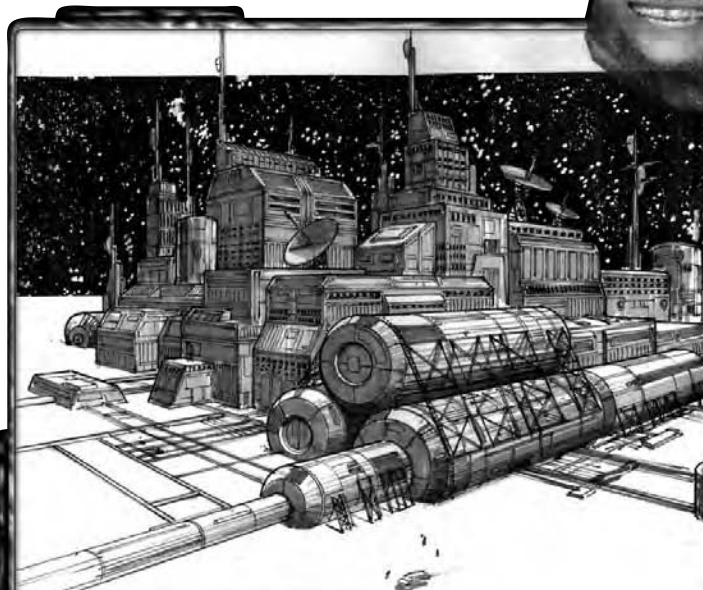


"OLD TOWN" > © 2120 D AZYLART

dweller  
wield  
influence  
and  
information  
much  
desired by  
others, and  
have eked  
out a small  
but  
significant  
power base  
deep in the  
Pit.

The Underworld, a broad and expanding area under Olympus proper, first divided along national lines. Subsequent reorganizations, murders and further realignments have made the region's political makeup even more chaotic than those above the surface. Illegal drugs, mercenaries, killers, black-market organs, sex and weapons are just a few of the commodities available here.

The Corridor isn't prime territory like the Pit and the Underworld are. Those sectors' principal powers leave the Corridor to less-organized bullies. This leftover region is squabbled over by a number of angry gangs, which have varying levels of power.



"YELTSINGRAD" > © 2120 D AZYLART

## Lunar Business

The Mount is the center of all spaceborne commerce. Luna is the place for any company with an interest in stellar exploration or expansion. Every player in the space game has a major base of operations, if not corporate headquarters, on Luna. The most prosperous do business from splendid edifices that soar above the colony-state's commoners, and have architecture that's impossible to achieve on Earth.

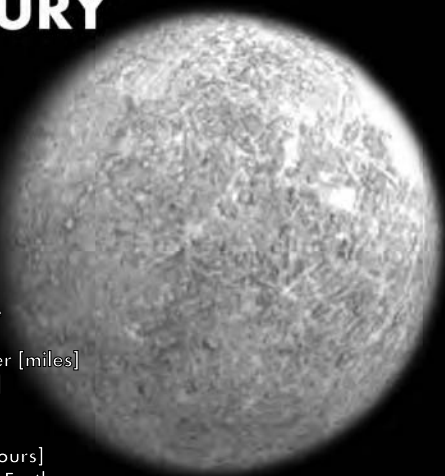
## The Pit

— Dazyl Grenich,  
Lifestyles © 2120 MMI

Let's keep it quiet, kids; we're in a tough sec now. It's the infamous Pit, home of black *market*, black*mail* and way too much black *light*. The most dangerous twinks in the system live and breathe and eat and — well, this is a family show, so I won't go *there* — down here. Far under anything that could be considered civilized, this place smells worse than a broken-down trashpactor. The water's brown, and I wouldn't drink anything but the bar's highest-proof vodka — and that just to kill the biobugs that must infest the place.

Names you see scrawled only in graffiti up above are in neon here: Ekiwundu, Bear Under Glass, The Undertaker, Braza Verde, Jive. I don't dare take you inside these places for fear that this would be my farewell broadcast! The whole Pit is like this, except for the poor elgee secs — and they're worse. Take it from me: Stay Upside no matter *how* exotic the Underworld seems.

# MERCURY



|                             |         |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Sun                         | Sol     |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2      |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 0.006   |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 3,031   |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 0.38    |
| Atmosphere                  | none    |
| Indigenous life             | none    |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 1,416   |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 0.54 AU |
| Primary satellites          | none    |

## Mercury

Mercury is a moon-sized planet that has become known as the "hell of the universe." Its faces, exposed to or sheltered from the sun, are contrasts in abuse: excruciatingly hot or deathly cold. The planet supports no life and has no water, but does possess an abundance of metals, silicates and other exploitable minerals. This opportunity for industry was the inspiration for the Mercury Mining Consortium.

Several company exploratory missions mapped the surface of the planet and performed extensive spectroanalysis. Although Mercury has several veins of "luxury metals," such as gold and platinum, the planet's real wealth lies in rare metals — tungsten and molybdenum — used in ship-steel manufacture and other heavy industries.

MMC teams have been dropped to Mercury's desolate surface. Though not hospitable,

- the dark side proves less detrimental to both worker and machine life spans than the sunward does. Mining teams
- rotate on 25-day shifts, and find respite on a sparsely furnished orbital station (officially designated *MMC Orbital Station 1*, but known as "Purgatory" among its tenants).
- Miner culture is tight and cliquish. Managers must maintain close relations with workers, prying into personal lives, addictions, debts and bad habits. Even a small error could kill an entire team on the harsh Mercurian surface. If someone has a conflict with another worker, no effort is spared to resolve it.
- If it cannot be resolved, one of those involved is transferred immediately.

As compensation for this brutal lifestyle, a Mercury miner receives excellent pay — and the death benefits are simply astonishing.

The breakthrough of olaminium, a new space-age element, has MMC worried about the future profitability of its operation. Investors are pressuring the corporation to do anything necessary to be competitive with the revolutionary space-industry material. Rumor has it that MMC agents are currently searching for flaws in olaminium, in an effort to discredit the substance and its UAN manufacturer.

## Venus

Although commonly considered Earth's sister planet, and even once thought to be habitable, Venus has such an inhospitable environment that colonization has thus far proved impossible. The planet's dense, poisonous atmosphere is such an effective "greenhouse" that its surface is hotter than Mercury's. Any water that Venus might have once held has been vaporized. Violent winds also rip at clouds in the atmosphere's upper layers.

Venus underwent extensive volcanic activity in the past; much of its surface was formed by lava flows. Modern volcanic activity is minimal. The planet has an incredibly slow retrograde rotation — a Venusian day lasts 243 Earth days.

# VENUS



|                             |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Sun                         | Sol            |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2             |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 0.82           |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 7,520          |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 0.88           |
| Atmosphere                  | carbon dioxide |
| Indigenous life             | none           |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 5,832          |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 0.27 AU        |
| Primary satellites          | none           |

Offworld Enterprises, Ltd., established *Perelandra Orbital Station* around Venus, both to study the planet's surface and as a private spacedock. Despite Venus' harsh conditions, OE investors hope that the planet's relative geological similarity to Earth will yield rare minerals. OE is advancing the development of exploratory work vehicles to test that theory, and sends probes into

Venus' deadly atmosphere. If the project succeeds, OE will reap tremendous profits, not only from mineral mining, but through sales of advanced exploratory craft. *Perelandra Station* is already one of the private sector's primary manufacturers of orbital vessels.

Although a number of Earth governments purchase ships and parts from Offworld Enterprises,

many of those same governments are suspicious of OE. The company is suspected of trying to form a "corporate state" in orbit around Venus, not dissimilar to the FSA's military-corporate establishment on Earth. Orgotek assigns patrols to Venus on a regular basis — to ensure that aberrants cannot use Venus as a base, of course.

## Orbital Stations

— Stephanie Chan,  
The Final Frontier © 2119 GN

Humanity's most prosperous cities don't even touch the ground. Enormous wealth goes into operating orbital stations, or "OSs," but the business that pervades these artificial floating meccas makes them more than worthwhile to the countries that maintain them. Gravcrystal manufacturing provides many space stations with the majority of their income. In fact, crystals made it possible to expand stations from their original status as factories into centers of commerce and recreation.

Earth's wealthy pay exorbitant prices for entry to these offworld playgrounds. Much as jetting to Paris in the 20th century or vacationing in Brazil in the 21st century was considered romantic and cosmopolitan, a visit to a majestic orbital city is considered the height of modern sophistication.

A thousand miles above Earth or Luna, one can romp in the *Lulong* zero-g sports center, view bioengineered animals and survivors of nearly extinct species in the *Orgulho de Céu* Terrarium, or take in the cultural feast that is the *Mujukuu* Center for the Arts.

Despite the *Esperanza* crash, orbital stations retain their image as glittering "castles in the air." Their freshly constituted and conditioned air is easy to breathe. Their corridors are spotless (maintained by maintenance serfs). Their chambers are breathtaking marvels of design (created by the brightest architectural minds of the day). Orbital stations are dreams given shape, and their residents pay tremendous amounts to live those dreams. OSs, as the playgrounds of the elite, have no slums — no visible ones, anyway. A ticket *down* the gravity well is much less expensive than a ticket *up*, and serves as the best way to get rid of the troublesome and unsightly.

## EARTH

Sun  
Sun's spectral type  
Mass [Earth = 1]  
Equatorial diameter [miles]  
Gravity [Earth = 1]  
Atmosphere  
Indigenous life  
Rotation period [hours]  
Closest distance to Earth  
Primary satellites

Sol  
G2  
1  
7,926  
1  
nitrogen  
human  
24  
n/a  
Luna

## Earth

Luna is the Earth's shining gem in the stars, but the planet has gained a number of artificial satellites in addition to the Moon. Most large corporations maintain offices in at least one of the three major Earth OSs, which orbit at Earth's Lagrange (or "L") points. Indeed, it seems that in order for one to succeed on Earth, one has to get off it.

*Lulong Station*, in the L5 point, houses the MultiNational Stock Exchange, where brokers make enough money to visit Earth every weekend. UAN's *Mujukuu* shares *Lulong Station's* Lagrange point. The St. Petersburg Modern Freeform Ballet

Troupe creates and holds microgravity performances at the *Mujukuu* Center for the Arts, and plays to packed houses despite the expensive seats. Opposite the Earth in the L4 point spins *Orgulho de Céu*, where Marquez Laboratories, in conjunction with Norça, performs groundbreaking research in modern medicine, biotech and bioengineering. Marquez holds some of the most lucrative patents in the biosciences.

China has confirmed rumors of a long-anticipated, fourth orbital station. Named *Fengming Station* — "Phoenix Song" — it is intended to be a celebration of China's continued ascendance in space, a glorious tribute to the everlasting Chinese empire. The station will be located at the L1 Lagrange point that *Esperanza* occupied previously, and is reportedly named in memory of the fallen station.

# MARS

|                             |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Sun                         | Sol            |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2             |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 0.11           |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 4,221          |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 0.38           |
| Atmosphere                  | carbon dioxide |
| Indigenous life             | algae          |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 25             |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 0.38 AU        |
| Primary satellites          | Phobos, Deimos |

## Press Release, 18.7.2119

### Current Status of the Mars Terraforming Project — Orgotek

Using state-of-the-art bio- and hardtech methods, we have made monumental changes to Mars' ecology. Yet we still have a long way to go before the planet can be considered "completely terraformed."

The process used prior to the introduction of biotechnology would have taken at least 1,000 years to complete. Our incredible breakthroughs in biotechnology, combined with those of the Qin, have reduced that time immensely — to less than 75 years! Unfortunately, unforeseen complications presented by the native life have increased the task's already significant challenge. It remains to be seen how much of an impact the Martian organisms will have.

| Atmospheric Qualities | Mars [2109] | Mars [2119]  |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Carbon Dioxide        | 95%         | 86%          |
| Nitrogen              | 3.1%        | 7%           |
| Argon                 | 1.5%        | 1.5%         |
| Oxygen                | negligible  | 1.3%         |
| Water                 | negligible  | 2.4%         |
| Average Air Pressure  | 7 millibars | 50 millibars |

As you can see, we have introduced significant changes, particularly in atmospheric pressure. Although the proportional changes may seem small, more than 100,000 tons of oxygen have been incorporated into Mars' atmosphere. We hope that the planet's ecology will soon support and continue this transformation on its own. However, the changes made have caused the native flora to evolve at an astounding and unpredictable rate. The microorganism population has grown by two orders of magnitude, competing with the organisms introduced by the project.

We are working on several ways to curb this impact, and are confident that the project will prosper despite this setback. We have every confidence in our scientists and technology.

## Mars

The Red Planet was the obvious choice for humanity's first extraplanetary efforts. Its proximity to Earth, frozen water supplies, moderate temperatures, and Earthlike rotation and gravity promised to make Mars a colonization dream.

The first manned Mars mission, China's *Xingyang Sujia*, resulted in a permanent installation. However, the base itself was automated and remained so for many years. Manned stations and mining facilities followed, but full-scale colonization began only after the development of gravity crystals.

Three colonies exist on Mars currently. Despite other nations' presence, China remains the power

on Mars, with over half a million Chinese colonists living in cubic clusters in Wanjing, "The City of Rocklike Fortitude." It is located on the Tharsis Bulge, just outside Olympus Mons' immense shadow, in hopes that the location would yield fertile soil due to past volcanic activity. South America's Rio de Martio, built in and around Mars' distinctive canals, was intended to take advantage of the comparatively thick atmosphere in the planet's low regions. Like Rio de Martio, Akabenje Colony takes advantage of low altitudes. This African station is located in scattered meteor craters within the greater Gusev crater. The fault lines that created the canals continue their tectonic activity today, causing problems for settlers.

Martian governments have worked since the early 2090s to make the planet even more hospitable. Initial efforts involved firing ice asteroids into the atmosphere to increase oxygen levels and provide moisture. Augmented water content and limited greenhouse effect (a calculated result of dust clouds raised by the asteroids' impacts) were the beginning of what was sure to be a centuries-long terraforming process. The process was made even more difficult by the nations' constant bickering over territorial rights.

### — Newsworld's "Notable Quotables" 3.8.2111

"It's hard not to anthropomorphize the little bastards when it seems like they go to every effort to sabotage your work."

— Mars Terraforming Project microecology research leader Dr. Alvin Jost, on the organization's "declaration of war" against native Martian microorganisms

In 2109, Orgotek proposed to the Chinese, Brazilian and African governments that the order could accelerate Mars' terraforming with advanced biotech. Using human and qin biotechnology, Orgotek initiated this enormous task with an army of engineered microbiological organisms and gigantic terrestrial and orbital biostructures. The procedure was designed to thicken Mars' atmosphere by introducing an ozone layer and seeding the planet with oxygen-producing organisms. The goal: to eliminate the need for sealed colonization environments.

Orgotek neglected to account for native Martian life. Mars' microecology,

discovered in the late 20th century, was considered an irrelevant factor in the terraforming process. While Chinese scientists opposed Orgotek's plan, citing the unknown potential of the planet's ecology, the order dismissed the concerns. Much to the Orgotek's chagrin, the microorganisms proved a bigger problem than anyone could have guessed.

## Mars and Aberrant Attacks

Mars became a target for aberrant attacks shortly after the abominations returned in 2104. The raids were quick and uncoordinated, consisting largely

of strikes against terraforming equipment and the occasional outpost. The emergence of psions slowed the rate of attacks somewhat, but did not stop them entirely.

However, as aberrant attacks seem to have become larger and better organized in the past year, raids staged on Mars have diminished — none have occurred in the past 13 months. Æon Trinity agents coincide the reduction with the arrival of Norça agents, stationed on the Red Planet to assist in the control of native Martian microorganisms through use of South American terraforming techniques.

## The Asteroid Belt

The Nihonjin developed a research station in 2080 for use strictly in the asteroid belt. The *Fuyoushi's* crew found a stable solar orbit among the tumbling rocks and ran exploratory spectra on the region. Nihon decided within a few years that returns from mining the asteroid belt weren't worth the finances required to operate the station.

A small group of interplanetary entrepreneurs purchased *Fuyoushi*. These people were from different walks of life, countries, religions and cultures, but shared a vision for Belt life. Small groups and individuals bought outdated ships, loaded them with the most up-to-date spectral analysis equipment they could afford, and rocketed into the Belt to find their fortune on some platinum-rich asteroid.

Misfits, outlaws and victims of poverty and overcrowding flocked to the Belt, searching for the dream claim that would turn their lives around. All those people needed a place to make repairs, to restock provisions and to kick back. *Fuyoushi*, or Absolute Zero as it became known, is just such a place.

Though the "floating diner in space" has been a science fiction joke for centuries, that is just what Absolute Zero has become. It contains a few bars, a few "greasy-spoon" restaurants, a "general store" that supplies basic

# THE ASTEROID BELT



|                             |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Sun                         | Sol                |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2                 |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | n/a                |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | n/a                |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | n/a                |
| Atmosphere                  | n/a                |
| Indigenous life             | none               |
| Rotation period [hours]     | n/a                |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 1.7 AU             |
| Primary satellites          | numerous asteroids |

"ABSOLUTE ZERO" > © 2120 D AZYLART

necessities, several flophouses, three competing brothels and an enormous docking space for its free market. A sort-of "poor man's Olympus," the free market handles almost all intersolar trade beyond Luna's sphere of influence. Crews dock, trade, enjoy the local scene and depart. The station's main clientele are orbital miners. Absolute Zero is a second home for many of them.

Located far from any organized law, *Fuyoushi* is a genuine frontier. Corpses get flushed out of airlocks and barroom brawls result in dozens of people being admitted to medical facilities. Law enforcement officers routinely stalk criminals here. And yet Absolute Zero is the best place — outside Luna — to hear gossip, rumors and news about the spaceways.

# JUPITER

|                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Sun                         | Sol                            |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2                             |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 317.9                          |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 88,732                         |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 2.6                            |
| Atmosphere                  | hydrogen                       |
| Indigenous life             | none                           |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 10                             |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 3.95 AU                        |
| Primary satellites          | Callisto, Europa, Ganymede, Io |

## Jupiter

The second-largest body in the solar system next to the sun, Jupiter is a treasure trove for scientists, but holds little interest for the economically minded. Various corporate and government concerns target the Jovian moons for development.

## Europa

Norça, working in tandem with the Brazilian government, laid claim to Europa as a likely source of undiscovered extraterrestrial life in our solar system. Given the difficulties that Orgotek has run into on Mars, the biokinesis order is proceeding cautiously, with the intent of studying rather than eradicating possible native life on Jupiter's small moon.

Europa consists mainly of water, with a miles-thick ice shell over a liquid ocean. The moon's center is hot like Earth's core, which maintains the liquid water under the ice. Dark streaks crisscrossing the ice surface are caused by exploding geysers of warm water. Officially, Europa is mined for its water reserves, which supposedly help fund various Norça research projects.

The biokinetics postulate that life forms exist in Europa's oceans, surviving on thermosynthesis rather than photosynthesis — that is, an entire ecosystem thriving on heat instead of light. Like bizarre tube worms or bacteria that live

near heat vents on Earth's ocean floor, any fauna on Europa is believed to have evolved without plants to feed on.

Although theories regarding this extraterrestrial life fascinate scientists, the problems of researching the hypothesis are enormous. The task involves drilling through a several-mile-thick ice crust and exploring Europa's vast oceans in a properly equipped vessel, all without knowing the underwater geography or conditions. Yet Norça pursue this research with great fervor.

The order suppresses all information on the project. Whether the shifters have found anything, and why they're being close-mouthed to begin with, is unknown.

## Ganymede

Ganymede is the largest of Jupiter's moons. Surveys of the satellite indicated that its silicate mantle was prime for gemstone and potential mineral mining. However, the moon also proved tectonically sound, a stable body conducive to colonization. The UAN claimed Ganymede's mining rights in 2089, and the Kirente mining station expanded into a true colony 19 years ago. (The oldest "native" Ganymedan is 16.) Kirente's original population of 1,000 has grown through births and emigration to a healthy 8,000 individuals, and the colony still

## Water Mining

— Warren Shaw,  
*Retrospective* © 2119 OBC

Water is in high demand throughout human space for a number of applications. Deuterium is extracted from it for hyper-fusion reactors, oxygen is drawn from it for life-support systems, and moisture is condensed from it for Mars' terraforming. Water also serves less glamorous but no less important duties in flushing sewer systems and acting as a coolant.

The multi-billion yuan industry supplies ice to lunar mining stations, colonies and various orbital stations. Even though most ships and stations recycle their water continuously, the fluid can be recirculated a finite amount before it must be replaced, and fresh volumes are always desirable.

The two largest water-mining companies are ICE, the International Consortium for Ecomining, which operates on Europa and is reportedly under Norça control; and ABI, Amalgamated Business Interests, which is active on Tethys. Jupiter's Callisto was the first celestial water mining site, but Europa is currently the largest and most lucrative operation followed by Saturn's Tethys.

Small operations and entrepreneurs occupy the lower ranks of the industry. They use single ships or small fleets, independently contracted mining teams and even illegal mining sites to make their fortunes.

accepts residents. Although the base's main income comes from mining, specialists in other professions (especially medicine) are encouraged to apply for citizenship.

Kirente supplements its mineral mining with some water excavation, to escape the stellar water market's high prices. Minerals are still the focus, though; several valuable veins of gemstones, metals and more prosaic but no less valuable minerals draw in a great

deal more money than any of the original colonists would have thought possible.

## Io

Caught in a close orbit around Jupiter's monstrous demistellar mass, Io generates trillions of watts of power simply by traveling its preordained course. The UAN claimed the volcanic moon to take advantage of this resource, then spent several years debating its possible uses. A station could not be established on its surface — liquid sulfur lakes, an unstable surface and molten rock made for stunning visuals but undesirable habitation. Furthermore, the Jovian magnetosphere made life outside a heavily shielded spacecraft very short.

The UAN finally constructed an orbital station at one of Io's Lagrange points. The *Mafaa-3* station produces enough energy to power most of human space, including all of Earth. The UAN used the allure of this incredible power to recruit renowned physicists and chemists to take part in an incredible project: increasing the number of elements on the periodic table. *Mafaa-3*'s cheap and plentiful power allowed the UAN to push the limits of known science, and to confirm a long-standing theory: stable and nonradioactive elements could indeed be found at key points on the periodic table. The *Mafaa-3* research team already created the first new element, olaminium, and the station gears up to produce this ultradense element on a commercial scale.

## Olatinium

A new development in armor, shielding and weapons manufacture has

revolutionized space travel and colonization. Olatinium, a stable, ultradense metal, has replaced depleted uranium as the premiere component of military and space technology. At present, the UAN markets this new element and its alloys through Tangent Technologies. The substance is restricted, available in small amounts and at exorbitant prices.

Materials made of olaminium are virtually impenetrable by radiation, and can withstand impacts from heavy weapons and space debris better than orbital steel or titanium. Money pours into the UAN from military agencies across settled space to reserve supplies of the element itself, of olaminium steel and of olaminium-titanium alloy.

The slow production promises to be worth the wait. Initial tests of olaminium on *Mafaa-3* indicate that ships and space stations will be better protected against radiation than ever before, improving the safety of life in space. Bulkheads need not be as thick as they are currently nor do they need to be covered in layers of rock, allowing for new designs in spacefaring vehicles and stations. Even space suits may be made impervious to radiation or accidental puncture when lined with olaminium or one of its associated compounds.

Governments and corporations bidding on olaminium resources agree, at least publicly, that initial supplies should be devoted to psion efforts to protect against aberrants and to return to extrasolar colonies.

The UAN also built a terawatt laser in 2113 — designated "*Tooci*," Lugandan for torch — which also accesses Io's tremendous energy. Tests to apply the laser array as a means of near-light-speed travel were stepped up dramatically after the Upeo wa Macho disappeared.

A ship supplied with large solar sails can ride the laser, accelerating toward its destination at incredible speeds. Granted, this is a one-way boost, but the UAN

feels the need to develop a method of long distance travel not dependent entirely on psions.

*Tooci* also serves as a formidable defense system for Io, and the UAN is close to completing a second terawatt array.

## TRITON ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Element 114  
**From:** A. Olatinia  
**To:** HMP Research Team  
**Encryption:** SPE  
**Transmission type:** holofile  
**Date:** 24:01:14 3.6.2115

I am extremely honored by the IUPAC committee and especially by all of you for your nomination. In all fairness, Element 114 should bear the name of every person on this project, if only it wouldn't be so long to pronounce! I don't feel I deserve all the honor, given the wholehearted effort made by everyone on this staff.

Thank you.

In any case, I think it's appropriate that the first use we'll make of our "superdense" material is to improve the quality of life here on the station. With the 114 shielding in place, we'll see a stunning drop in radiation levels throughout the spectrum. *Mafaa-3* should be safer than Earth when the project is complete, which means our rotation schedule will become obsolete. (I know, just what you all wanted to hear — longer shifts and less vacation.) Seriously, we won't be dragged out of the lab just when we're in the middle of discovering something important.

One other point: We need a military liaison. We're already besieged about projectile testing and other military applications for 114. I'm negotiating with Tangent as a possible dodge of complete military possession. Volunteers for the liaison position are needed desperately. If I don't get any, I'll ask everyone why they can't do it and pick the person who does the best job of weaseling out of it.

Again, thank you and congratulations to us all!

O

## TRITON ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Heavy Metals Project  
**From:** IUPAC, Geneva, Switzerland  
**To:** A. Olatinia, *Mafaa-3*, Io  
**Encryption:** SPE  
**Transmission type:** textfile  
**Date:** 15:42:15 2.6.2115

Dear Dr. Olatinia:

Please accept the committee's congratulations on your discovery. The IUPAC Elemental Names Committee has confirmed that the name of Element 114 on the Periodic Table is Olatinium.

Sincerely,  
Lili Albrecht, Ph.D.  
IUPAC ENC liaison

# SATURN

|                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Sun                         | Sol           |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2            |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 95.2          |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 74,974        |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 1.10          |
| Atmosphere                  | hydrogen      |
| Indigenous life             | none          |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 10            |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 8.01 AU       |
| Primary satellites          | Tethys, Titan |

## Saturn

Like Jupiter, Saturn is snubbed in favor of its moons. The Ringed Planet is currently the farthest distance that humanity has established permanent outposts within our solar system (although Otha Herzog's mysterious *Huruf al-Hayy* orbital station is rumored to orbit further out, perhaps around Neptune).

## Tethys

This moon is one of the few celestial bodies under complete corporate exploitation. The Tethys water-mining

station is reportedly the 22nd-century equivalent of a "company town," operating without any governmental or colonial restrictions or laws — and with correspondingly poor working conditions, even poorer living conditions, and debt slavery.

ABI owns and operates Tethys and its Amano-Kelsian mining colony, located on the edge of the moon's Odysseus impact crater. The site's mining and support staff has generated astronomical profits. How much return the 20,000 workers have received of the billions of yuan made is another question entirely.

## Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto

The gas giants of Uranus and Neptune and the frozen ball of Pluto orbit the coldest fringes of our solar system. While of scientific interest, the three outermost planets hold little practical appeal to humanity at the present time. Jupiter and Saturn are much closer for studying gas giants, and Pluto is little more than a curiosity. Most corporations and governments feel the risk of setting up a research outpost that far out isn't worth the possible gain, especially with the ever-present threat of aberrant attack. Instead, the metacorps and nations prefer to focus their intentions closer to home.

The only traffic that goes to the solar system's edge are sensor buoy repair crews and manned patrols that search for aberrant and other hostile incursion. Also, the jump ships usually travel beyond Uranus' orbit prior to teleporting. The physical distance gained by traveling

so far out dissipates the noetic shockwave of teleportation before it reaches Earth.

It's thought that Proxy Otha Herzog lives on *Huruf al-Hayy* at the

- Tethys' own small moons,
- Telesto and Calypso, have sufficient mass to generate faint "tidal" effects on the main satellite's surface. Tidal surges make mining operations hazardous, especially due to stress fractures that run through the icy crust.

ABI denies allegations that miners work — and live — in Tethys' natural gravity to improve productivity, and to prevent them from escaping to a planet with higher gravity. Such rumors are surely exaggerated; pseudo-gravity grids are standard in low-gravity complexes, since humans who remain in microgravity develop brittle bones and aren't efficient laborers. Still, it's almost unheard-of for miners to leave Tethys, prompting competing organizations to derisively shorten Amano-Kelsian to "Amano-Kill," or even "Over-Kill."

## Titan

Saturn's largest moon is the newest subject in the ongoing Norça search for extraterrestrial life. Titan is larger than both Mercury and Pluto, and half of it is ice. The rest is rock, and readings suggest that the moon's core may still be hot. Titan's atmosphere is more dense than Earth's and contains such organic compounds as ethane, carbon dioxide and hydrogen cyanide — poisonous to humans, but perhaps a source for carbon-based life.

Norça has financed two exploratory missions to Titan and may stake a claim. What the order hopes to gain from searching Europa and Titan for life is anyone's guess.

## URANUS, NEPTUNE AND PLUTO

|                             |                 |                 |         |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Sun                         | Sol             |                 |         |
| Sun's spectral type         | G2              |                 |         |
| Planet                      | Uranus          | Neptune         | Pluto   |
| Mass [Earth = 1]            | 14.6            | 17.2            | 0.002   |
| Equatorial diameter [miles] | 31,938          | 31,659          | 2,175   |
| Gravity [Earth = 1]         | 1.15            | 1.2             | 0.08    |
| Atmosphere                  | hydrogen        | hydrogen        | methane |
| Indigenous life             | none            | none            | none    |
| Rotation period [hours]     | 16              | 18              | 144     |
| Closest distance to Earth   | 17.28 AU        | 28.3 AU         | 28.7 AU |
| Primary satellites          | Oberon, Proteus | Triton, Nereid, | Charon  |
| Titania                     |                 |                 |         |

# INTERSTELLAR COLONIES

As soon as humanity rose from the ashes of the Aberrant War and its hopes turned to space, the long-time dream of traveling beyond our solar system was rekindled. As they had led the way in most space endeavors, the Chinese were the first to make a foray into the stars.

Early interstellar colonization attempts were made under humanity's own power and ingenuity. It wasn't until the orders were revealed to the world that psi powers could catapult humanity beyond its home. The teleporting Upeo were instrumental to transporting vehicles, people and materials into deep space, to planets that the clairsentients and proxies had located and studied. Indeed, these efforts led to first contact with the qin, and to each race's establishment of embassies on the other's homeworld. The ultimate result of deep-space travel was five colonies that humanity could call home.

Then the Upeo vanished and humanity lost contact with its distant outposts. It was a time of great tension throughout the solar system; one can only imagine what the colonists went through when they discovered that they were cut off from home. The development of jump ships gave humanity access to the stars again, and with it the mixture of relief and shock as we discovered that the colonies still endured — but all faced dangers that threatened their existence. With the return of the Upeo, we can start giving the colonies the full support they need.

## Khantze Lu Ge

The first settlement outside of our own solar system was established in Alpha Centauri, the closest system to home. In 2087, after a decade-long journey, a Chinese exploration ship landed on a lifeless but vaguely Earthlike planet in orbit around Alpha Centauri B. Named Khantze Lu Ge, the planet was barely suitable for human habitation; having little choice, the explorers dedicated themselves to making their new home liveable. An atmosphere-building program had a remarkable effect on the planet and



proved that humanity could survive on other worlds.

Khantze Lu Ge is a dark, cool planet, orbiting at a little less than one AU from its dim orange star. Not even the brighter, yellow Alpha Centauri A alleviates the colony's eternal twilight (and the even more distant Proxima Centauri never seems more than a small red moon). The planet's negligible tilt limits habitation and agriculture to the relatively temperate equatorial region. The air is thin and dry, barely breathable, but massive cold-fusion air regulators forcibly evaporate the polar ice caps to thicken the atmosphere. Indeed, technology makes the colony liveable, from modified and upgraded air regulators to artificially lit hydroponic gardens to light-augmenting contact lenses to thermal clothing for forays outside the arcologies.

After the orders went public, colonists traveled to Alpha Centauri in droves. The inhabitants of Khantze Lu Ge accepted the immigrants grudgingly. Advanced Earth technologies unknown to the isolated world were suddenly available, and the colony grew by leaps and bounds. New arrivals partook in the spirit that had

made Khantze Lu Ge successful during its previous 20 years of self-reliance. Though never integrated fully into the established society, newcomers soon outnumbered the original colonists and overwhelmed any opposition to their presence.

With the Upeos' disappearance, Khantze Lu Ge returned to its former state of isolation and in 2116 the Chinese used the *Mafaa-3* terawatt laser

| NEPTUNE ARCHIVE              |                                                                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ALPHA CENTAURI SYSTEM        |                                                                               |
| Suns                         | Er (Alpha Centauri B; primary),<br>Yi (Alpha Centauri A),<br>Proxima Centauri |
| Suns' spectral type          | K1, G2, M5                                                                    |
| KHANTZE LU GE                |                                                                               |
| Founded                      | 2087 (China)                                                                  |
| Source                       | astronomical<br>observation                                                   |
| Planet mass [Earth = 1]      | 0.87                                                                          |
| Equatorial diameter [miles]  | 7,661                                                                         |
| Planet gravity [Earth = 1]   | 1.07                                                                          |
| Water content [Earth = 0.75] | 0.34                                                                          |
| Atmosphere                   | nitrogen                                                                      |
| Rotation period [hours]      | 31                                                                            |
| Indigenous life              | none                                                                          |
| Human population             | 3,000,000                                                                     |
| Closest distance<br>to Earth | 4.3 light years                                                               |
| Primary satellite            | Jixing Gaozhao                                                                |



## The Castle in the Sky

— Warren Shaw,  
Retrospective © 2115 OBC

Even today, China's venture to Alpha Centauri is considered one of the most suicidal gambles in human history. As much as the "Space Race" of the mid-20th century motivated world powers to throw untried technology at the stars, so too did China, in its frenzy to control space, hasten its expedition.

China's no-frills space ark, piggybacked to the Lito Comet, should never have been able to make the four-light-year journey — and certainly not in a mere 12 years. Yet it did. The majority of the explorers survived, and were on hand to receive the automated colonization freighters that China launched in pursuit of them. Such an extreme achievement bears witness to the heights of both human perseverance and folly. Khantze Lu Ge was truly a "castle in the sky."

array to launch a conventional scout mission to Alpha Centauri. The first jump ship launch surpassed the expedition to re-establish contact with Khantze Lu Ge; and, with the teleporters' return, Upeo now go in search of the expeditionary vessel.

The jump ship *Svaha* discovered that aberrants invaded Khantze Lu Ge two years previously. Fortunately, the creatures hold only the northern polar city of Kuan; the cities of P'eng-lai, Neu Berlin and Lu Yen are embattled, but remain free of aberrant presence. Reports from refugees of Kuan and resistance fighters indicate that Kuan's population has been enslaved in a manner similar to the occupation

of Olympus by the Space Brigade, although this is a far less benevolent group.

The invaders seem to be engaged in a campaign of gradual conquest; the slow progress suggests that the aberrants felt they could conquer the colony at their leisure without fear of reinforcements arriving from Earth. Colonists, Chinese military forces and psi order personnel alike have shared the great pleasure of correcting the aberrants' assumption. Tremendous resources are being allocated even now to support Khantze Lu Ge in its struggle.

## Qinshui

Diplomatic relations between qin and humans began after the historical first contact in 2107. Both have since established embassies in the other's systems, the qin on the Moon, and humans in a domed facility on the qin homeworld in the Qinjunan system.

The qin have a great deal in common with humans, including similar home planets. Qinshui has gravity similar to Earth's and is composed mostly of water, although Qinshui's land masses are smaller, with no recognizable continents. The atmosphere is very thick, soupy and humid but Earthlike; vegetation, animal life

and weather resemble those of Earth's marshy regions. Qinshui has no moons, and therefore no tidal forces, resulting in relatively calm oceans.

On Qinshui, one need merely look up to know he is far from Earth. The world is located on the edge of the 47 Tucanae globular cluster. The sky is brilliant at night, with stars packed so closely together that the concept of constellations is alien to the qin. Our Milky Way is but a dim pool of stars in their northern hemisphere. The intense stellar concentration provides a radiance equal to that of a sunny Earth day, despite even extreme cloud cover. Nights are ethereal, the stars casting a gentle glow

### NEPTUNE ARCHIVE

#### QINJUNAN SYSTEM

|                              |                                               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Sun                          | Qinri                                         |
| Sun's spectral type          | F8                                            |
| <b>QINSHUI</b>               |                                               |
| Founded                      | 2108 (Embassy, Earth United Nations)          |
| Source                       | psion discovery                               |
| Planet mass [Earth = 1]      | 0.99                                          |
| Equatorial diameter [miles]  | 7,966                                         |
| Planet gravity [Earth = 1]   | 0.97                                          |
| Water content [Earth = 0.75] | 0.89                                          |
| Atmosphere                   | nitrogen                                      |
| Rotation period [hours]      | 21                                            |
| Indigenous life              | Qin, variety of animals, vegetables, microbes |
| Human population             | 13,000                                        |
| Closest distance to Earth    | 17,000 light years                            |
| Primary satellite            | none                                          |

## QINSHUI

over the world. Qinshui's seasons are similar to Earth's, and are determined by the cluster core's position in the sky during daylight hours throughout the year. Humans can venture elsewhere on Qinshui without needing environment suits, although it's not unlike walking through a constant drizzle in the height of summer.

The domed human embassy to the qin is a biosphere located on one of the northern hemisphere's large land masses, near the qin equivalent of Earth's United Nations. Designed to be a little piece of Earth on Qinshui, the embassy is regulated to human comfort zones. As Earth's first embassy to an alien race, it is populated by extraordinary individuals and support staff. It has all the comforts of home, with the qin always eager to provide anything lacking.

Human bureaucrats get headaches dealing with the qin, as it is difficult for humans to distinguish between qin nations — indeed, Ambassador Delgado is confident that the aliens' social divisions are functional rather than biological. The embassy identified five major qin nations thus far — factions, really, divided more by philosophy and social function than by geography or biology.

The arrival of the jump ship *Ananda* confirmed that the human embassy staff was safe and in good spirits (though eager to see Earth again). A few deaths occurred in the five years since loss of

contact, but initial inquiries suggest that no foul play was involved. Relations between qin and human appears cordial, but there is significant tension between the qin who were on Earth during the exile and another faction that holds majority upon Qinshui. This latter group has declared an anti-human stance, blaming us for the aberrant attacks on Qinshui. The qin ambassadors who spent so much time on Earth are our staunch supporters, but they have lost a great deal of influence due to being cut off from their homeworld for so long. Even the anti-human faction remains cordial to humans, but there is no mistaking that the political winds could blow against us at the least misstep. It will require great diplomatic skill to strengthen relations with our alien friends.

## Karoo Mining Colony

In 2109, an African expedition made a daring teleport to the Crab Nebula, a supernova remnant first seen on Earth in A.D. 1054. It is an inhospitable region with no large planetary bodies and a single rapidly spinning neutron star. However, the sector is rich with dust clouds, gaseous

nebulae and asteroid fragments composed of valuable heavy elements. The UAN established a stellar science and mining station just outside the nebula. Heavily shielded stations were anchored to planetesimals, and the Karroo Mining Colony was born.

Although the UAN established the colony, rugged humans of all nationalities flocked there, lured by the promise of wealth. The UAN's profitable taxation system funded mining with little investment on the government's part. Importing gravocrystals from Earth to the ever-expanding station system

### NEPTUNE ARCHIVE

#### CRAB NEBULA

|                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Sun                 | Crab Pulsar            |
| Sun's spectral type | neutron star           |
|                     | (21 pulses per second) |

#### KARROO COLONY

|                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Founded                      | 2109                     |
|                              | (United African Nations) |
| Source                       | Upeo/ISRA                |
|                              | joint exploration        |
| Planet mass [Earth = 1]      | n/a                      |
| Equatorial diameter [miles]  | n/a                      |
| Planet gravity [Earth = 1]   | n/a                      |
| Water content [Earth = 0.75] | n/a                      |
| Atmosphere                   | n/a                      |
| Rotation period [hours]      | n/a                      |
| Indigenous life              | Chromatics (?)           |
| Human population             | 85,000                   |
| Closest distance to Earth    | 6,500 light years        |
| Primary satellite            | none                     |

### Qin Welcoming Speech

— Excerpt: textfile transcript, with telepathic notation [] included

"We are cheerful [pleased] to engage in the dual [mutual] advancement of our two selves [peoples?]. Please be accepting of [we hope you enjoy] the pond [home?] we have poured [built?] for you here on Qinshui. If there is anything you thirst for [require], do not falter in inquiring. This is a honorable [historic?] time, and we shall allow nothing to dam [stop] it from becoming a successful future."

## KARROO MINING COLONY

## THE FIRST ATTACK

— General Abasa,  
Karoo Mining Colony

Mwalimu,

We are under attack from an alien force. Our lasers have no noticeable effect, and theirs are deadly. They appeared out of nowhere, and all attempts at communication have failed. Members of the Ministry in residence here have ascertained that these alien creatures perceive us to be like aberrants, whom they have apparently encountered before. The telepaths have been overwhelmed by feelings of intense hatred from these beings. These aliens are not qin. They are something completely new.

I request all possible assistance. Please be advised that we are sending children and wounded back to Earth as soon as we receive word. We have sent a captured alien corpse with this dispatch. I apologize that I could not forewarn you, but I wanted it to arrive as soon as possible, while it was still... glowing.

was too expensive, so the colony started its own manufacturing.

Karoo reached relative stability within a few years, just prior to the chromatic attack in 2113. The first assault took the colonists by surprise. The humans suffered heavy losses, but regrouped and changed focus from mining to warfare to keep the aliens from obliterating everything they had built. The chromatics' apparent photokinetic capabilities rendered the colonists' laser weapons almost useless. The resourceful Karroos fell back on conventional slugthrowers and coilguns as well as orbital knives and clubs. Additionally, the colonists explored the effectiveness of other energy weapons, such as plasma cannons and ion beams.

When the Upeo vanished many expected that the colony



"KARROO ATTACKED" > DAVE A.I. > KARROO MEMORIAL, TANZANIA

would be destroyed without support from Earth. To our great relief, the jump ship *Shaka* arrived to find that the station was intact and the colonists were holding their own against the strange aliens. It turns out that a select few Upeo continued to appear on Karroo during the exile, bringing supplies — clothes, food, even weapons — but refusing to perform missions or carry messages back to Earth. They stated only that the colony was on its own for the time being but the Upeo would help as they could.

Morale is high at Karroo under the circumstances. Chromatic attacks have diminished to skirmishes and raids. The current supposition is that the aliens had the same problem as the Karroos — lack of support from the homeworld. Though much remains unknown about chromatics, the colonists are confident that this is not their home, but perhaps an outpost much like Karroo itself.

Though the intensity of hostilities has abated, the aliens remain combative and unwilling to open a dialogue. With our resumption of interstellar travel, we hope to track down the chromatics' home and learn the secrets of the race and its aggression toward humanity.

## Far Nyumba

Though aided by reported visions of likely areas to begin searching, the likelihood of clairsentient scans finding sectors of space that could support human life was almost nonexistent. So, when Far Nyumba was discovered and proved suitable, the UAN settled it promptly in 2112.

The largest moon of the gas giant Mgitu, Far Nyumba is similar to Earth in size, gravity, planetary tilt and atmospheric composition. Though seven AU from its single sun, the massive Mgitu is nearly a brown dwarf star itself and provides the moon with enough heat and light to make up the difference. Most of Far Nyumba's single land mass is covered by thick rain forest, the remainder devastated by constant volcanic activity. Microbes and insects are the only significant animal life beyond tiny protocreatures destined to become mammals, birds and reptiles. The insect population is kept in check more by the abundance of carnivorous plants than by the scattered protoanimals.

Mgitu dominates the Far Nyumba sky, at least above the tree canopy. The gas giant's eerie colorful glow bathes the moon with more light than the system's sun does — daytime is determined by Far Nyumba's orientation to Mgitu, not to the sun. A dozen other moons, sister satellites to Mgitu, also track across Far Nyumba's sky.

Far Nyumba provides more than enough for colonists to study. Still,

## FAR NYUMBA

| NEPTUNE ARCHIVE                                |                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| SS1515 SYSTEM                                  |                                 |
| Suns                                           | SS1515a                         |
| Suns' spectral type                            | A7                              |
| <b>MGITU (GAS GIANT/BROWN DWARF PROTOSTAR)</b> |                                 |
| Founded                                        | 2112                            |
|                                                | (United African Nations)        |
| Source                                         | ISRA discovery                  |
| Planet mass                                    | 364.6 (Mgitu)                   |
| [Earth = 1]                                    | 1.01 (Far Nyumba)               |
| Equatorial diameter [miles]                    | 116,484 (Mgitu)                 |
|                                                | 8,012 (Far Nyumba)              |
| Planet gravity                                 | 2.8 (Mgitu)                     |
| [Earth = 1]                                    | 0.92 (Far Nyumba)               |
| Water content                                  | n/a (Mgitu)                     |
|                                                | 0.79 (Far Nyumba)               |
| Atmosphere                                     | hydrogen (Mgitu)                |
|                                                | nitrogen (Far Nyumba)           |
| Rotation period                                | 8 (Mgitu)                       |
|                                                | 27 (Far Nyumba)                 |
| Indigenous life                                | Plants, insects, protocreatures |
| Human population                               | 8,000                           |
| Closest distance to Earth                      | 11,000 light years              |
| Primary satellites                             | Far Nyumba, Kala (Mgitu)        |
|                                                | none (Far Nyumba)               |

curious humans also explored the Mgitu's surface atmosphere, mainly as an accessible source of vital gases. The gas giant's cloud layers are truly alien, but beautiful. Particularly brave or foolish Legionnaires, sealed in small capsules or even in reinforced VARGs, used their powers to venture deeper into the atmosphere than exploratory craft could.

A year after the colony's establishment, Legionnaires made an

incredible discovery on the gas giant. All manner of strange structures and objects floated in the atmosphere's stormy layers. Scientists and archeologists rushed out to study these alien relics, causing a surge in Far Nyumba's population.

The moon base was the most promising and hospitable of all the extrasolar colonies for a few short months... and many great minds were stranded on Far Nyumba when the Upeo disappeared. The

- number of colonists and
- available resources were so few that the outpost's
- continued existence five years later was in doubt.

Hopes were high when the jump ship *Meroe* headed for Far Nyumba recently. The ship's Tesser sent back a datapod, just as the other jump ships did upon arrival, but the datapod was crushed somehow during transit. Though all recorded data was destroyed, the datapod configuration suggests that it was launched normally, so we may assume that *Meroe* arrived safely in orbit around Mgitu. While there is no serious concern at present, a new expedition is planned. Until then, the fate of Far Nyumba remains unknown.

## Averiguas

Shortly after aberrant attacks renewed on Earth outposts in space, Brazil took steps to establish a deep-space colony. On Norça recommendation, the Upeo transported explorers to an ancient white dwarf/red giant binary system.

One of the six planets was capable of supporting human life — in fact, due to the red giant's expansion, the barely hospitable rock hosted a sort of proto-algae life form. The planet, named Averiguas, orbited the red giant at an average of 1.5 AU, and was deemed suitable.

The Associação Avanço Universal — the Association for Universal Advancement, or AAU, as the Averiguas colony was named — was meant as a training ground for psions. Here, Brazil claimed, psi-users could explore the potential of their powers without fear of causing harm or destruction. Yet only Norça agents were given the opportunity to use the facility. The Æon Trinity soon learned Brazil's motives: To guarantee its future should the resurgent aberrants prove too

### TRITON ARCHIVE

#### NEW DISCOVERY

— Excerpt: holobrief from Jerome Dannikan, Ph.D. (Noetics), M.Sc. (Electrical Engineering) to the *Journal of Xenological Science*, 17.3.2114

The artifacts found last week range in size from a small... spaceship?... (roughly 45 feet in length) to easily pocketed items (4 inches) and are made of both organic and inorganic alloys. These objects are clearly not of human or qin design.

The items hover with eerie stability, suspended in Mgitu's hydrogen atmosphere, and contain unfathomable circuitry. My plan is to locate and tag as many items as possible, to see if they are linked in any way. I will proceed with a thorough physical examination of minor devices, with noetic examination to follow as soon as appropriate psions become available.

# AVERIGUAS



powerful to stop. Working in conjunction with Norça, the Brazilian government established an extrasolar military base.

The binary system's instability made the site inhospitable to other colonization efforts. The planet was ideal for the Brazilian plan, however — remote, dangerous and of little foreign interest. Despite warnings

that the white dwarf could go supernova, and despite the danger posed by the dwarf's regular flares as it absorbed the red giant's stellar matter, Brazil proceeded with construction.

The Brazilians made one mistake in establishing AAU: They relied on subjugated Euro-American workers. These

disenfranchised looked for new opportunities everywhere, and Averiguas was as good a place as any to make a fortune. Working conditions were quite brutal. It was only a matter of time before the Western "never say die" spirit came to the fore. In 2114, only three months before the Upeo vanished, the Euro-American workers rose up against their Brazilian leaders. It was a quick and carefully staged coup, the mutinous workers taking over key areas of the outpost with minimal bloodshed.

Unwilling to reveal the facility's

## Result of Feasibility Study for Colonization of Averiguas in SS3819

This committee recommends that Averiguas not be chosen as the location of Brazil's first interstellar colony. The nature of the binary star system leads us to predict that the white dwarf star SS3819b will go supernova in the near future, astronomically speaking, resulting in the complete atomization of the entire solar system, including Averiguas.

Based on spectral analysis of the two stars, and the rate at which matter transfers from the giant to the dwarf, a supernova is extremely likely in the next 1,000 to 2,000 years. Furthermore, we cannot anticipate the minor nova behavioral effects that the dwarf currently exhibits. Averiguas' magnetic field may be insufficient protection against the extreme solar winds produced.

Again, this committee advises that Averiguas not be chosen.

Eleanora Bordes

Chair, Astronomical Committee  
University of Rio de Janeiro

## SS3819 SYSTEM

Suns SS3819a (giant),  
SS3819b (dwarf)  
Suns' spectral types G5, A0

## AVERIGUAS (ASSOCIAÇÃO AVANÇO UNIVERSAL)

Founded 2106 (Brazil)  
Source Upeo investigation  
Planet mass [Earth = 1] 1.17  
Equatorial diameter [miles] 7,966  
Planet gravity [Earth = 1] 1.10  
Water content [Earth = 0.75] 0.52  
Atmosphere nitrogen  
Rotation period [hours] 23  
Indigenous life Algae in oceans,  
no notable land life  
Human population 22,000  
Closest distance  
to Earth 2,800 light years  
Primary satellite Vigiar

true nature, Brazil claimed that it was sending resources to quell a miner's strike. This cover story and the sudden disappearance of the Upeo limited the number of reinforcements that Brazil could send, so only a preliminary force was transported.

The jump ship *Mae de Céu* arrived years later to discover that Brazil's reinforcements surrendered once ships stopped arriving after 2114. The rebels and anyone who agreed to their terms remained in New Hope, while everyone who couldn't deal with that was ostracized to a scientific outpost about 30 miles away. Only about 2,100 people were condemned to the outpost — mostly military officers, political types, the troops sent in to put down the revolt, and about half the Norça stranded there. The rest didn't care who was in charge or decided to join the winning team.

The communities maintained a stalemate and even engaged in trade, but flare-ups of violence were not uncommon. Even this fragile peace was shattered once recontact was established. The workers fear subjugation by Brazil and the shifters who joined them fear reprisal by their proxy; in turn, the AAU Brazilians and Norça at last see the opportunity to quell the uprising and return home. Initial reports note increasing outbreaks of violence between the two groups, and all indications are that it will only get worse.

## ALIENS

## ALIENS

Since the dawn of history, humanity has stared into the celestial void. Thirteen years ago, in true Nietzschean fashion, the dark between the stars gazed back at us. With the coming of qin, then chromatics, and finally the Coalition, humanity's very concept of itself has been tilted on its axis and sent spinning into the mysterious sky.

The discovery of life on other worlds, while not quite so shocking as it would have been had humanity never experienced the Aberrant War, was nonetheless an epochal event. (The effects on religious belief alone changed the demographic base of several major faiths.) In the past two decades, humanity has advanced its frontiers of knowledge a hundredfold — and learned to live with the looming fear of invasion from the stars.

Thus far, humanity counts a number of new species: the aforementioned qin and chromatics, and an undisclosed number in the recently discovered Coalition (potentially between five and two dozen species alone). Rumors of another species displaced by aberrant attacks remain just that: rumors. And then there are the veiled references by the proxies of powers beyond even they, that are somehow their allies.

With jump ships active and the Upeo now returned, we at last venture out to investigate those aliens we know of, and search for others that may still dwell amid the stars.

## QIN

"With friends like these...."

The punchline has yet to be written for the enigmatic qin, humanity's for-the-nonce allies among the stars. These quixotic creatures seem friendly — but then again, they seem humanoid and just about everyone has figured out the falsity of that supposition.

Humanity first contacted qin when a Chinese explorer vessel intercepted a transmission of qin radio static. A rendezvous was arranged at the aliens' home system, which later became known colloquially as Qinjunan. First contact went

well with telepathic aid on the part of both human and qin. A dialogue was begun and ambassadors were exchanged —

embassies have even been established on Qinchui and Luna.

The Chinese gave the aliens their name: The term "qin" is a reference to a form of Beijing opera. The race's stylized, lacquered-looking humanoid "bodies" — not their true forms, in fact, but advanced psiware suits — evoke images of the old plays. They're quick learners: The earliest qin "biosuits" were clearly artificial — crystalline, shimmering shells that prompted the occasional nickname "icons" — while the newest are

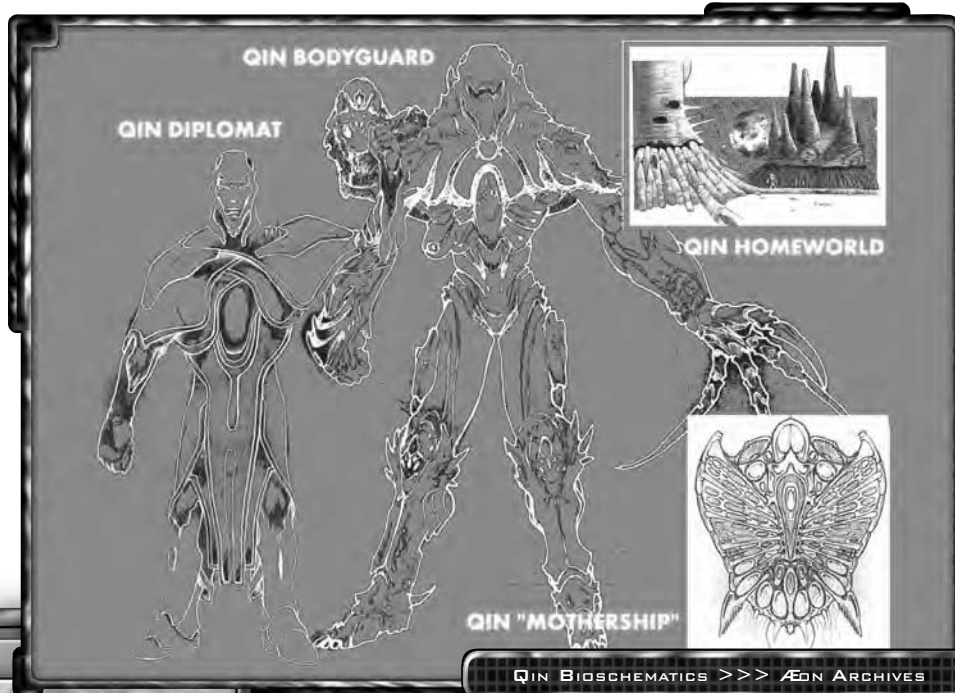
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## Celebration

— Excerpt: *Luna Sun Times* ©  
31.10.2117 Eclipse Media

The smooth, soaring lines of the qin embassy arched high over last night's celebratory banquet as diplomats, press and the wealthy rubbed elbows with the alien exiles in our midst. Our qin allies remind us of two things: that races as rich and intriguing as humanity do exist in space, and it is the very vastness of space that strands our cousins with us. The curving hall, walled entirely in the qins' unique "bioglass," allowed guests the peculiar sensation of walking unprotected on the surface of the Moon. Overhead, the organic spires of the upper towers glimmered in the sunlight.

A qin diplomatic assistant commented that the celebration was one of great importance to their race, but declined to explain further.



## THE QIN

## TRITON ARCHIVE

**Subject:** Staff Memorial  
**From:** Ambassador Flores  
**To:** All Qin Embassy staff  
**Encryption:** SPE  
**Transmission type:** textfile  
**Date:** 27.2.2120

It is a joyous time now that contact is restored to Earth, that our period of isolation on Qinshui has ended. We have a great deal to be thankful for, and we all appreciate the hospitable treatment we have received from our hosts.

However, these glad tidings do not come without some sadness. As you know, junior representative Maria Diaz and engineers Laura Robers and Jerome Sandoz died in a tragic accident last week while venturing *outside* the official ambassadorial sector. I have ordered autopsies and inspected the accident scene personally. Our qin allies apologize profusely for the mishap and offer their condolences.

Though our loss is terrible, it saddens me most to know that these three young people died before the chance came to see their home again.

Human-qin relations have been cordial since first contact, though strain showed during the Upeo exile. The jump ship project offered a vital avenue of focus for both races during that time. Indeed, the program was successful not only in developing a working Tesser engine, but also to provide insights into our respective races.

With interstellar travel restored, our qin allies went with a human expeditionary force to Qinshui aboard the jump ship *Ananda*. It appears that their absence from their homeworld all these years allowed a competing faction to make a play for political dominance. This faction considers humanity dangerous, ultimately responsible for aberrants that still plague the Qinjuna system. Much remains unknown about qin sociology and politics, yet, given that humanity has become a point of contention among their kind, we must learn if we are to retain their aid and continued goodwill.

quite humanlike in appearance and manner. identical to those of humans.

Our biotechnological theories seemed advanced a decade ago, until the qin showed us *their* biotech. The aliens don't talk too much about their technology — not in public, anyway — but evidence suggests that they've developed biotechnology to a level that we can barely fathom. Qin use biotech to accomplish near-unimaginable feats of macrocosmic construction and terraforming. One would presume they are equally skilled in their technology's military applications — though one hopes humanity will never find out firsthand.

RAFAT  
INCORPORATEDTHE QIN COMPACT —  
DEVIL'S DEAL?

— Orisha Mfunne, *Input/Output Special* © 2120 Rafat, Inc.

The First Contact. The Shining Host comes down from the heavens, bearing gifts from the angels on high. The sky opens up in coruscations of light, and beatific ranks of Others descend in drill-corps harmony to pull us up to the celestial firmament.

Great PR. And if we look around and realize we're not in Heaven yet — well, we're not about to be impolite to our newfound friends, are we?

You remember where you were on 23 March, 2107? When an angel passed above the world of wars and sanctions and economies and lies, an angel bearing tidings of new life. Remember that week — everything died down a little, like we were a bunch of kids caught fighting in the sandbox and didn't want to look bad now that the grownups were here. Some people said we should push The Button; some said it was the Rapture, or the Next Wave of Aberrants. Most folks, though, just looked up toward the skies and talked about the Signal.

The Signal. The Aricebo scientists almost wetting themselves on holotransmissions across the solar system as they announced that the crackling belch of radio static intercepted by the *Kowloon* spiderwebbed out into a deliberate message. The Upeo arranging a rendezvous at Qinshui — how they knew exactly where to go, I'll never know, but never let it be said that you heard me questioning psion motives. The holovids spiraling up and down the conveyor craft — you could almost hear "Thus Spake Zarathustra" in the background.

And the coming of the qin.

You've heard the phrase "too perfect," yeh? Look at a qin sometime. I mean, it's like looking at a crystalline cataract sugar-spun into human form, as if Botticelli had conjured Venus from the pure spray itself. Huge, expressive eyes that somehow convey nothing. Beatific smiles in happy, vacuous, perfectly proportioned faces.

They average around 6' 8" — enough to have presence, not enough to intimidate. They're Barbie-doll angelic, but in a bland way — enough to inspire awe without any troublesome sexual baggage. They come in all kinds of colors — silver, ebony, blue, magenta — thus laying to rest any troublesome racial issues. They're androgynous

## THE QIN

enough to dispel chauvinistic approaches without being *weird* about it, yeh?

They learn any languages they need to in a matter of a month or so, then turn around and speak them better than most of the natives. They wear clothes, but not so much worn as grown or spun around them, all whorly and bandy and with cool-looking protrusions and flourishes. They come from a world in the thick of the galaxy, and yeah, they know a little bit about What's Out There, but they haven't gotten any farther than we have... thus laying "evil galactic dictator" fears to rest.

If I were a marketing rep for an alien race, I couldn't put a better spin on these folks.

It's obvious those bodies are like the clothes — spun for public consumption. The first contact files may be locked down, but I have it on good authority that the rumors are true — the qin really are two-foot-long slugs. Not sure about the tentacle bit, though. I bet they slurp right inside the heads of those too-perfect bodies and drive them around like we would a skimmer. They're putting on a show. Don't look behind the screen, Earthlings; it's all done with mirrors.

We know they've got biotech. I mean, the governments — and I'm talking about the *real* governments, not those primped, airbrushed, pixillated holos you vote for — must've been creaming when they got a gander at what these critters could do. We thought we were so high-tech 'cause we could integrate bio-goo with a fusion engine to make "biofighters." Then qin come along and *hand* us techniques that'll turn Mars into Vera Cruz in a couple decades. Instead of a thousand-year terraforming project, we're now looking at 75! And qin just *hand* this to us, like it's pocket change.

For them, biotech is everything. Ever seen ambassadors' reports? When qin want anything — a new suit, a new weapon (and remember that — these angels do have guns), a new road, a new city — they just grow it. Throw your magic crystals in the water, my friends, and conquer the world.

They even use it for travel, surrounding themselves in organic carapaces, then linking together into vast, spaceworthy living robots. They don't need to "build the tools to build the tools" — they *are* the tools. If they need to make something — or to help us make something — they just get enough qin, form themselves into gargantua, and build what they need. Like Amish folks gathering to build a barn, except they build whole cities this way. I wonder if the carapaces are anthropomorphic because it's convenient from an engineering point of view, or because they know we're taping and they don't want us to freak out.

Ever heard the story of the Sphinx? That big stone thing in Egypt, yeh? Archaeologists think that the Sphinx's serene, pharaoh-looking head is actually a later innovation — that the thing was there before the Egyptians, and when they got there, they chiseled off the original face and replaced it with something more... what? Suitable?

Or less disturbing?

Qin are "icons" indeed, mirrors reflecting what they want us to see — what we want to see. Yet if there's one thing I know about good old *Homo sapiens*, we're never content with our icons. We want to break them, to scratch the paint, tarnish the chrome and see just what's behind the mirror. And I don't think our guests will much care for that. And then I think of those build-it-yourself colossi, and how they pulverize rock with a punch, and I imagine....

Well, I'll spare you the paranoid jingoism, boys and girls. That's all for now.



## CHROMATICS

## CHROMATICS

As if conjured from the recesses of a B-grade horror vid, chromatrics have whipped human xenophobia to frightening heights. Perhaps this is because they embody our primordial fears of the Evil Invaders — merciless, inscrutable, grotesque.

Since the chromatrics' initial "Pearl Harbor" assault on the Karroo Mining Colony in 2113, we have learned little about them save their military strategy — and even that is mostly a cipher. Telepathic encounters before the Upeo wa Macho vanished (thus breaking our contact) indicated that chromatrics have nothing but violent intentions, even hatred for humans. Unfortunate — though they're far from pretty by our standards, the

aliens are fascinating.

Studying alien bodies and a handful of living captives, we have confirmed that chromatrics possess a complex system of bioluminescent organs. These organs enable the aliens to produce light in an array of hues and gave

the aliens their name. They support their biological light generation with inherent noetic control of internal and ambient light emission. They've been known to manipulate light, shaping it into blinding flashes and laser beams — and even bending it entirely to create a kind of holographic blending.

Chromatic's light-generation also serves as the race's primary means of communication. The "language" appears to be highly sophisticated, even if the aliens themselves aren't. That they utilize advanced biotech has been a puzzle from the beginning, given that their observed culture is otherwise rather undeveloped. Study of captured biotech and chromatic captives has led to some disturbing conclusions.

## THE NEW MENACE

— Testimony of Major David deBeers,  
UAN Military Forces

The bastards came out of nowhere! We were checking out one of the mining planetoids and came across a pack of 'em — all lit up for war, with those tool-harnesses and whatnot. Well, I couldn't tell what they were thinking — if you can read an expression on those turnips they call faces, I wish you'd clue me in. I went with what I could read — the stance, and the leveled weapons that look like cheap knock-offs of Orgotek bioguns. So we engaged, and... well, it seemed our weapons were useless, because when we cut into 'em, it was like firing into air.

And then we got mowed down from behind. We'd scanned the area, and I swear with what's left of my right arm that nothing was behind us all dayside. Yet there the things were, popped out of nowhere, all warbling while those light-blasters chopped us to hell.

Bastards. I say we find where they live, dump the psions on the planet, and let 'em wipe each other out.

## TRITON ARCHIVE

## CHROMATIC TECHNOLOGY

— Excerpt: Jaqui Rodriguez,  
UN Lead Administrator

Based on extensive analysis, we must conclude that chromatic biotech is based on old human designs, but using chromatic genetic material and with modifications from an unknown source. While the external interfaces were arranged in configurations "unsuitable for human use," the underlying components are very similar to basic human designs.

This is all the more disturbing since the aliens do not treat their technology with great familiarity. Chromatics show the same kind of caution toward their biotech as humans do when exposed to a device with which we are not familiar.

Our current hypothesis is that some other agency provided chromatrics with their biotech weaponry and spacecraft. We do not yet feel comfortable positing who and for what reason, nor do we know why these devices share similarities with human designs rendered obsolete years before chromatrics were first encountered.



## ANALYSIS: OPERATION ABYSS

With regard to the perpetrators of the incident at the Karroo Mining Colony, we urge caution, not only because of lack of knowledge of the species' capabilities, but also due to lack of understanding, which could precipitate a futile and unnecessary conflict. The concept of the "bug-eyed monster" is a fiction, a fantasy best left to the confines of the theatre. We encourage military forces to lay cultural biases aside when dealing with a very critical real-life situation.

We have taken the liberty of studying the specimen General Abasa was kind enough to provide. Initial observations follow herein; subsequent study will no doubt reveal further details.

It is a carbon-based life form; amino acid structure and cell composition display fundamental similarities to our own, though the acids themselves differ from our own guanine, cytosine, *et al.* The entity's superficial parameters, though perhaps grotesque to a casual observer, will comfort those researchers who postulate that, given the existence of certain fundamental laws of physics, organic life develops in similar patterns throughout the known universe.

First, some general parameters. Height: roughly 5.75 feet, though the flexible notochord and extendible neck structure allow for considerable fluctuation even among individuals. Weight: This specimen weighs 180.1 pounds. Bipedal posture and three-fingered opposable thumb structure, though the digits of the hand structures are less developed than our own, while the digits of the foot structures are more



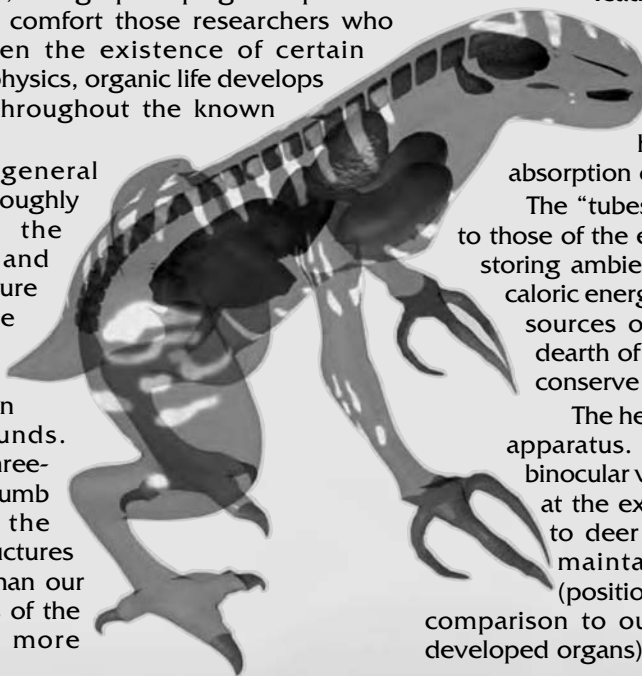
"SECOND CONTACT" > DAVE A.I. > ZWEIDLER COLLECTION

developed. We postulate an evolution from a species of climbers, though the thickened skin of the soles further leads us to speculate that this organism evolved among rocks and crags.

It is an aerobic organism. In addition, certain enlarged pore structures in the skin suggest that it has the capability for osmotic absorption of oxygen in a liquid medium.

The "tubes" running down the back are similar to those of the extinct Dimetrodon, and are used for storing ambient light or heat and converting it to caloric energy. This indicates the presence of such sources on the creature's home world, or a dearth of prey species, forcing the creature to conserve energy.

The head structure displays advanced visual apparatus. Whereas human beings evolved a binocular vision that allows for depth perception at the expense of wide angle focus common to deer and the like, these creatures have maintained both. They have four eyes (position and number of rods and cones in comparison to our ocular structure indicate highly developed organs), two in front and two to the side.



## TRITON ARCHIVE

## CHROMATIC COMMUNICATION

— Excerpt: Keith Olatu, Head Scientist and Lead Researcher, Æon Trinity/Triton Division [Prague Facility]

As per earlier speculation, chromatics communicate in a limited matter using sound; their main mode of communication is visual. A specific set of wavelengths, at the limit of human visual perception, carries linguistic content. Our current rudimentary understanding of this unique, light-based method of communication has already revealed significant insights into the race.

At first the subjects would not cooperate. We achieved a breakthrough when Dr. Gilman asked Chromatic Subject A (later designated Roamer) how she could convince it to talk. After some apparent thought, Roamer asked Dr. Gilman to "state the truth" that answers would not be used to harm the chromatic race.

We think the visual patterns that overlaid Roamer's reply signified skepticism — that it did not believe we are capable of such terms. After lengthy discussion among the subjects — and much to our surprise — the result was notably higher levels of cooperation from the captives. I must stress that this does not mean that friendships have developed between the aliens and ourselves. They continue to refer to us as "beasts," and they often unleash violent outbursts in response to what we assume are innocuous comments. The process is touch and go, but the simple fact that we have started a dialogue gives us hope.

Evidently one pair or the other closes at a time, allowing whatever method of perception is most applicable to a given situation. Additionally, the entire surface of the head structure is covered with "eyespots," enabling the creature to perceive light, shade and movement from all directions.

The being has two brains. The first, located in the head cavity, is smaller and seems dedicated solely to the creature's extensive sensory capabilities. The second is located in the torso with the other organs and is dedicated to handling the rest of the being's processes, including higher thought functions.

And the vaunted "lights"? Just that. Bioluminescent organs of amazing complexity — as though one of Earth's angler fish had evolved to the point at which it is capable of language. We do not exaggerate on this last hypothesis — electroconvulsive stimulation of the epidermis produces a remarkable range of hues, intensities and patterns.

## CONFIDENTIAL

## CHROMATIC TECHNOLOGICAL EVALUATION

— Excerpt: Dr. Sunil Payaparaji, Æon Trinity/Triton Division

Investigation of a captured chromatic spacecraft and interrogation of its crew has given us this shocking revelation: Chromatics gained interstellar capability by enslaving Upeo wa Macho.

The aliens located and captured human teleporters based on information given them by "gods of light." Analysis suggests that these so-called deities are either a separate caste or another alien race entirely, but not aberrants. The latest research indicates that chromatics are opposed violently to them, considering all humans to be aberrants. Just where and when the aliens encountered aberrants is up to Olatu's team to learn.

We have not discovered how the aliens located the Upeo, but we do know how the teleporters were kept from escaping. The craft contains advanced psiware that acts as a teleportation control device. It dampens the individual's own ability to teleport, instead channeling it to power the craft's jumps — similar to a jump ship Tesser, but of a far more efficient and advanced design.

We must learn more about these "gods of light." They are clearly the source behind the otherwise aboriginal chromatics' advanced technology. Further, they seem to be the motivating force behind the chromatics' continued hostility toward humanity.



## THE COALITION

## THE COALITION

When deep space probes reported a huge object headed toward our solar system at near-light speeds, panic was understandable. Aberrant raids showed no sign of slacking off, and it had been almost six years since the Upeo disappeared. Was this thing an Aberrant fleet, a Chromatic warship or something worse? The United Nations authorized dispatching a jump ship on an intercept course with the approaching object. This expedition resulted in the (by now traditional) good news/bad news. The good news is that, while it is indeed a ship of massive scale, it isn't one of our known enemies. The bad news is that we don't know yet if these beings are our friends.



COALITION SHIP &gt;&gt;&gt; YI BRIDGE MONITOR

Despite Aeon's direct involvement in coordinating the jump ship's intercept, the UN has locked down all data regarding this and subsequent encounters. Still, we have been able to confirm some information — such as that the “Coalition” is an apparent collection of various races, each with a regimented place within a larger sociopolitical structure. We do not yet know of the exact number of Coalition races, but preliminary estimates suggest from a dozen to over a hundred.

Limited access to files reveals beings labeled “envoys,” a race of bipeds astonishing in their blandness but who seem to speak for the Coalition; “spinals,” towering nine-foot-tall monsters seemingly dreamed up by a lunatic with a phobia of sea urchins; “sasquatches” or “sasqs,” lumbering, bear-like creatures who handle the Coalition's maintenance tasks; and “drones,” quadrupedal beings who perform menial tasks for the other races.

It seems that first contact did not go well, with the Coalition attacking the Y's crew. The follow-up expedition included both diplomatic and military forces — the former in the hopes that first contact was a tragic misunderstanding, the latter in case it was a prelude to further horrors. We await news from our operatives in the United Nations on what to expect from the approaching “space ark” — which, if its sudden deceleration and course corrections hold true, should arrive in our solar system within just a few years.

## PROTEUS ARCHIVE

**Case Number:** 69-1131

**Date:** 3.12.2119

**Patient:** Captain Li Hu

**Physician:** Dr. Lynn Golden

I am pleased to note some progress in the captain's condition. Today he spoke, breaking the autistic silence under which he had lain, in spite of drugs and hypnosis, since the rescue team found him huddled on Y's bridge.

He still speaks in single words and phrases, his mental processes and brainwave activity are erratic, and certain responses indicate the presence of pronounced phobic abnormalities. Nonetheless, I was able to coax intelligible responses.

From a geopolitical standpoint, Captain Li's report is significant indeed. His testimony indicates the discovery of a new alien species — one or several, it is unclear from his report.

From a psychological standpoint, this “first contact” was a close encounter of a most disastrous kind. I believe you will understand when I advise against disclosing certain details to the media.

To put it bluntly, many of the crew were done to death in a fashion that I can only interpret as rape.

## THE COALITION

### PROTEUS ARCHIVE

#### DATAPOD INFORMATION DUMP

##### REPORT: SECOND CONTACT

— **Excerpt: Molly Irvingson, Ambassador in Chief, Second UN Expedition to the Coalition**

I am pleased to report that second contact with the Coalition has begun much better than the first. After transmitting queries, we were surprised to receive a cordial response — in English! Interpretation was still required, but it became evident that the Coalition regretted the misunderstanding of first contact.

Apparently, sexual contact is considered a normal means of interaction between two species in the region of space from which the Coalition hails. As such, our first diplomats were met according to the aliens' tradition. However, sexual practice among their kind is brutal by human standards; with the communication barrier, the Coalition did not realize their error until too late.

We agreed to attempt second contact and were met by a group led by a trio of those we labeled "envoys." After formal introductions, they again expressed regret over first contact and explained that they knew English — and much else about human culture — by observing two centuries' worth of broadcast transmissions from Earth. We made a point to clarify that not all transmissions reflected our real world, a concept that they grasped quickly. It seems that the Coalition is well-versed in the idea of fiction.

We have found no traces of noetic ability on board the ark; it seems that the Coalition races are not at all familiar with psionic capability, though they are evidently fascinated by what they have seen of it thus far. Indeed, the envoys are eager to learn all that they can of humans, and have been forthcoming with much about the Coalition. Still, we have been restricted to a small area of the ark during our visit, and someone from the Coalition is present at almost every minute of the day. We are each dealing with a new and unknown race, so caution is understandable — likewise, General Luo Meng and the rest of the military contingent has not relaxed their vigilance since we docked.

The general urges caution at all times. It is a sensible approach, but the more time I spend deep in discussion with the envoys, I can't help but wonder at the things we could learn from such a diversity of races.

### PROTEUS ARCHIVE

#### DATAPOD INFORMATION DUMP

##### REPORT: RECON OF COALITION SPACE ARK

— **Captain William Donney, UN Military [detached duty to the Coalition Expedition]**

At 0500 LST — which we estimate to be the Coalition races' time of lowest activity — a four-person field team set out from our quarantine zone aboard the ark. In addition to myself, the team consisted of Corporal Jacqueline Winters, a combat specialist; Corporal Leon Savarese, an engineering specialist; and Ivan Gullichsen, a civilian clairvoyant attached to the Legions.

The ark is vast; Corporal Savarese believes that it is comprised of a core vessel with countless decks and levels added on over time to create a massive, ever-expanding craft. Mr. Gullichsen maintained a clairvoyant scan during the expedition which enabled us to navigate the labyrinth of corridors and to avoid almost all contact with any aliens. We encountered no Coalition races other than numerous drones.

As we approached the center of the ship, Mr. Gullichsen detected taint residue in front of a large hatchway bearing a number of symbols whose meaning is unclassified as yet. After a probe of the area beyond, Mr. Gullichsen claimed that its design was unlike any other portion of the ship. He described a network of chambers, not unlike a honeycomb. He ceased probing upon detecting strong signs of taint within one of the chambers.

We returned to our own zone with no incident. There are signs of increased Coalition activity today, but we have no evidence that they are aware of our expedition.

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SACRIFICE

HOPE

UNITY

**T**rinity is a game of epic science fiction set in the early 22nd century. While its past is much like our own reality in many ways, the Trinity Universe proposes a future that confirms the existence of psionic powers and extraterrestrial life. Humanity has ventured into the stars, and discovered strange aliens and malevolent cosmic forces.

The following chapters take you through the steps of character creation and provide you with the game-mechanical details necessary to run or play in a **Trinity** series.

Note that you do need the *Player's Handbook* to utilize the game content in this book. That core rulebook has the framework of character generation and level advancement, skills and feats, combat and other ground rules that **Trinity** builds upon.

## Character Genesis

**Trinity** is a game of exploration and adventure on an interstellar scale. The standard player characters (PCs) who engage in these exciting exploits are human. Some can manifest psionic abilities through a scientific procedure called the Prometheus Effect. All humans have the genetic potential to manifest psi powers; at this stage in human evolution, however, a minimum level of latent power is required to survive this "triggering" process.

The genesis of your **Trinity** character involves two things: his origin and his triggering.

### Origin

Your character's origin describes him in a word or a short phrase, a vague shorthand that gives you an idea of where he came from. What sort of life did he lead before his triggering? Was it dominated by mundane chores, leaving him no time to look to the horizon? Did he live on the edge, spending each day as if it might be his last?

Consider your character not as a ready-made hero, but as someone who has the seeds of greatness within him. The concept could center on a skill ("I'm the best computer tech in settled space!"). It could come from the character's back story ("He left France for some job just three months before the *Esperanza* crash."). Or you might focus on a personality trait ("He's obsessed with understanding aliens."). If you're more visual than verbal, you might develop a mental picture and go from there ("He's very slender, with pale skin and striking green eyes.").

After that, you can work out in all directions — personality (Why did he *want* to be the best computer tech?), history (What was the job that drew him from his home?), skills (What has he studied in order to understand aliens?), appearance (Is he slender because he's from a low-g environment?) and so forth.

You do not need to flesh out the character's life history nor choose his favorite book. Keep your concept in mind throughout, though. If a skill or background feat fits, take it. If there's a clash ("Why is the computer tech an excellent marksman?"), stick to the concept. Trying to make a character who's good at everything and has no flaws is counterproductive: Not only will you fail, you'll produce a boring character.

## The Trinity Universe

**Trinity** is the third of three Trinity Universe games, speaking chronologically. They occupy different eras of the same history, as well as different portions of a thematic trilogy.

**Adventure!** is a game of pulp action and heroism set in the mid 1920's. Characters in **Adventure!** are drawn from three distinct templates: two-fisted *daring* characters, masters of mental arts known as *mesmerists*, and potent superhumans called *stalwarts*. **Aberrant** is a superpowers game set in the early 21st century, focusing on powerful individuals called *novas* — a new incarnation of **Adventure!**'s stalwarts. **Trinity** is a science-fiction game, a far-future setting featuring evolved humans known as *psions* — the genetic descendents of **Adventure!**'s own mesmerists (called *psychs* in the **Aberrant** era).

Players and Game Masters (GMs) familiar with either **Adventure!** or **Aberrant** are free to include as much — or as little — of the "official" Trinity Universe metaplot as they like, but it isn't necessary to enjoy **Trinity**. It's all up to you how you want to play it.

## d20 System Design Principles

GMs who wish to use material from **Trinity** in other d20 System games should be aware of some core design ideas that went into its construction.

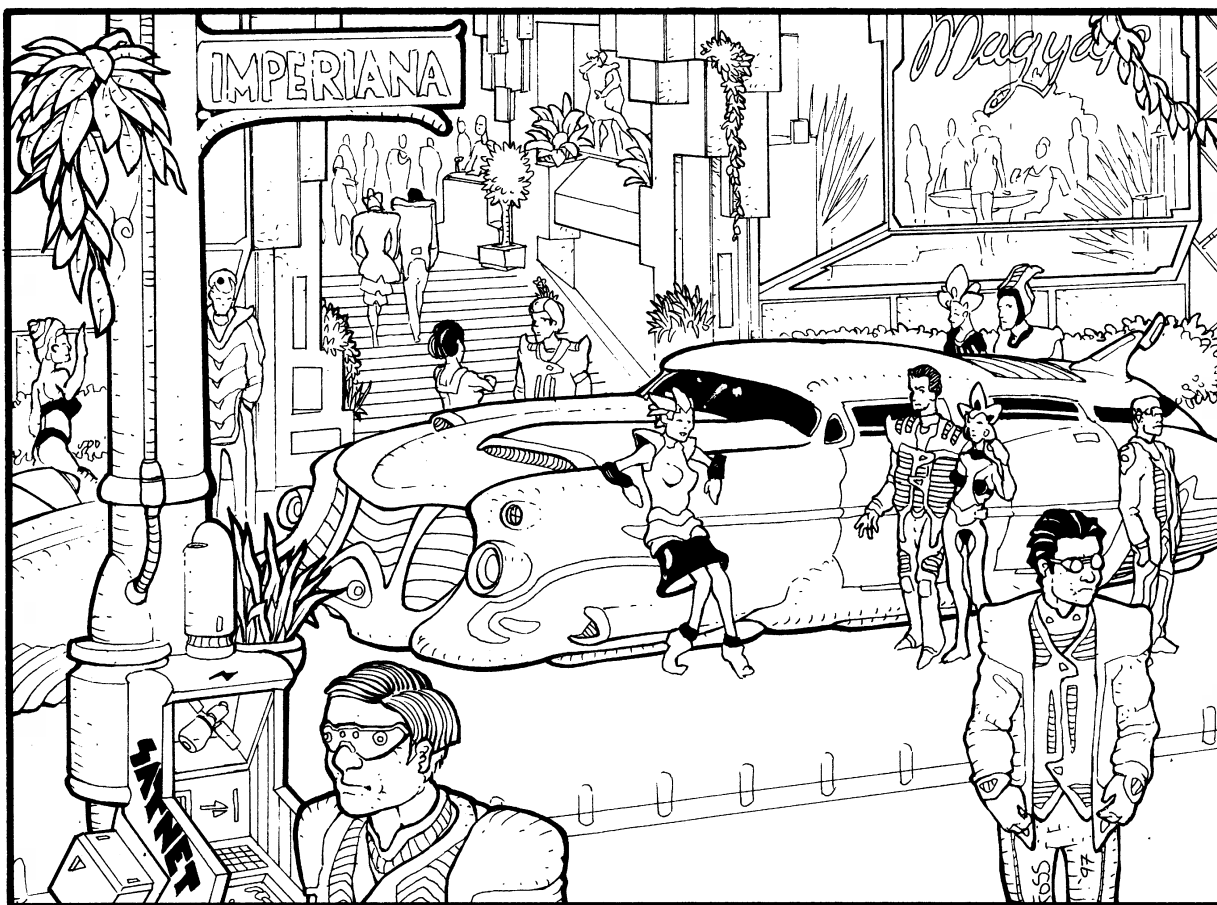
There is no magic in the **Trinity** setting; psions gain their powers from the pseudo-scientific premise of *noetic*, or *subquantum*, energy. This means that a character's Armor Class, abilities, saving throws and the average damage he inflicts are figured differently than you might be used to in other d20 System games.

The bonuses granted by class features and background feats have been left uncategorized to allow them to stack with the bonuses granted by other feats and powers. If class feature bonuses should not stack, that information is included in the description of the features.

## Using d20 Modern and/or d20 Future

The Trinity Universe games utilize the *Player's Handbook* for the simple reason that the majority of d20 System players have it and are familiar with it. Still, you can use *d20 Modern* instead without too much tweaking — **Trinity** incorporates material from that book, after all.

Along similar lines, there's a lot of great stuff in *d20 Future* — expanded rules on genetic engineering, cybernetics, space travel, mechs and the like — that you can incorporate into your **Trinity** game. We'd offer more specifics, but the content wasn't available until just before this book went to press — and there's too much good material to cram in this book anyway. If you want to add more depth to a **Trinity** campaign, it's well worth picking up *d20 Future*.



## Triggering

A character with psi potential is called a “latent.” The minimum latency required to become a psion is rare enough that the psi orders, the Aeon Trinity and even other groups are always on the lookout for latents. Psions and biotech devices can detect latency, and there are even clinics where individuals can be tested to see if they make the grade. Latent individuals who experience the Prometheus Effect (see Chapter Eleven: Psi) are triggered — they become “psi active,” able to draw upon and manipulate subquantum energy.

It is not uncommon for psions triggered by one order to work for another — whether through an initial agreement between orders or when the psion decides to make the switch himself at some point. As a result, a latent can come from any walk of life, trigger any one of the available aptitudes and work for any order or other organization you like.

## Starting Characters

The science fiction genre typically features experienced characters whose capabilities don’t grow a significant amount over the course of their careers. In contrast, the standard d20 System game features characters who start out with little experience but who can rise in power to shake the pillars of the universe.

A **Trinity** series assumes the typical d20 System approach. You choose templates and core classes for your PCs, who start at 1st level. Don’t expect your character to be as powerful as, say, Obi-Wan Kenobi from *Star Wars* or Gully Foyle from *The Stars My Destination* out of the gate; he must earn that kind of power and experience. Still, **Trinity** assumes that even a starting PC is superior to those everyday folks known as nonplayer characters (NPCs).

If the GM and players want a series where the PCs are more seasoned, we recommend starting the PCs at 3rd level. This gives characters the opportunity for some background, but doesn’t make them so experienced at the start of play that there isn’t any challenge to the encounters they face.

### Roleplaying Triggering and Training

It can be fun to start a game before the PCs become psions, and roleplay through their recruitment into one of the orders and their subsequent triggering. A latent character is a normal human who picks a class as normal but is not built off the psychic template (see below). Once each character emerges from the Prometheus chamber, the player applies the psychic template to character and adds the relevant template abilities.

## Characteristics

The default character race in **Trinity** is human; specific qualities are noted below. None of the other races listed in Chapter 2 of the *Player’s Handbook* apply. Non-human PCs are possible, as members of alien races, but the GM may wish to avoid such characters as they are both rare and strange. See the Appendix for details.

Psions in **Trinity** aren’t ordinary people; their genetic structures have been nudged forward an evolutionary step or two so that they can draw upon and control subquantum energy. To reflect this, each psion character uses a psychic template that adds to his standard human racial characteristics (see below).

## Human

**Description:** The average everyday person. The majority of the sentient population in the known Trinity Universe is human. The typical human has no psychic abilities. The prevailing opinion in noetic science holds that humanity has the genetic potential to develop psi powers, but the race is still generations away from realizing this potential without the aid of the Prometheus Effect (aberrants are viewed as, well, aberrations — mutations that leapt the track of evolutionary progress).

**Appearance:** Humans come in all shapes, sizes, colors, noises and smells. They are found throughout settled space and even beyond.

### Human Racial Traits

- **Medium:** As Medium creatures, humans have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- **Speed:** Human base land speed is 30 feet.
- **Bonus Feats:** Humans receive 1 bonus feat in addition to the single feat that all starting characters receive.
- **Skills:** Humans receive 4 extra skill points at 1st level and 1 extra skill point at each additional level.
- **Automatic Languages:** Humans gain full proficiency in their native languages and are considered literate unless their backgrounds dictate otherwise. Starting characters receive one bonus language per point of Intelligence bonus. Characters whose backgrounds indicate that they are illiterate or that they would not be proficient in multiple languages may gain literacy or choose bonus languages during play at the GM's discretion. (For a sample list of available languages, see "Skills" later in this chapter).
- **Psi:** Humans have neither Psi scores nor power points; they cannot manipulate subquantum energy consciously or unconsciously.

## Psychic Template

**Description:** Otherwise called psions, psychs or psychers, individuals with this template unlock psi powers upon emerging from a Prometheus chamber. A psion may be able to read the minds of others, project heat and cold, manipulate electronic devices with force of will, or even teleport from one point in space to another. Such amazing capabilities are channeled via a new ability: Psi. As a psion gains experience with his newfound powers and better understands the subquantum universe, he may develop his capabilities even further.

**Appearance:** A psion's genetic structure is "cleaned up" during the Prometheus Effect, reducing the likelihood of any physiological problems. This can result in a healthier appearance than the norm, but nothing distinct from most humans.

### Magic and the Trinity Universe

Strictly speaking, there is no actual "magic" in **Trinity**. Every extraordinary individual and incident in the Trinity Universe derives its power from a pseudo-scientific premise — quantum and subquantum energies, referred to collectively as telluric energy — rather than through magic.

You can suggest the influence of subquantum energy (or taint, for that matter) as a plausible excuse for ancient mysteries if you would like to add this aspect to your campaign. Although noetic force is a scientific phenomenon (within the setting), that doesn't mean some people of the period don't view it as magic. As such, it is possible — though very rare — for a character whose belief in the supernatural is not undermined by incontrovertible evidence to the contrary. Just be careful of overdoing it.



Table 9–1: Psychic Levels (Psy)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|----------------------------------------|
| 1             | +1                | +0       | +0             | +1          | +2        | 1 background feat, aptitude increase 1 |
| 2             | +2                | +1       | +2             | +1          | +3        | Aptitude increase 11, psi              |

## Creating a Psychic Character

“Psychic,” also called “psion,” is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid character (hereafter referred to as the “base character”). The base character retains all its statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**Size and Type:** Same as base character. Do not recalculate Hit Dice, base attack bonus, or saves.

**Special Qualities:** A psion retains all the special qualities of the base character and also gains the following.

**Psi:** Psychics tap into the subquantum stratum and use its energy to produce fantastic effects. The power that a psion can wield is governed by his Psi score and power points. Determine the base character’s starting Psi score as the modifier derived from the average of his Constitution, Intelligence and Wisdom scores (round down). The base character must have at least a +2 modifier to take the psychic template. Subsequent ability increases gained from level progression do not adjust this total any further.

**Example:** *Mikki creates a character with Constitution 13, Intelligence 14, and Wisdom 15. These three scores average to 14, which confers a +2 modifier. Thus, Mikki’s character’s Psi score starts at 2.*

A character adds +1 to his Psi score for every 4 core or prestige class levels he attains after the template is acquired. The base character may increase his Psi score more quickly by taking psychic levels (see below).

**Advanced and Innovative Super-Science:** The base character can create super-science advancements and innovations. Such pursuits are not a central aspect of **Trinity**, so this book does not contain super-science rules; this special quality is included for the sake of completeness. Refer to **Adventure!** or **Aberrant** for full details.

**Psiware:** The base character can use living biotechnology called psiware to amplify his powers and produce various effects. See “Tolerance” in Chapter Eleven: Psi and Chapter Thirteen: Technology for more details.

**Resist Disease:** The base character’s improved genetics confer a +2 bonus on all saves to resist the effects of disease and infection (e.g., cancer, malaria, flu virus).

**Abilities:** Psychics have disciplined minds. The base character receives a +2 bonus to Intelligence (applied prior to determining his Psi score).

**Skills:** Same as base character, modified for new ability scores. Additionally, the character gains an intuitive understanding of a particular skill relating to his aptitude. Choose one skill that corresponds to your character’s aptitude; it is considered a class skill.

| Aptitude       | Skill                  |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Biokinesis     | Disguise or Heal       |
| Clairentience  | Listen or Spot         |
| Electrokinesis | Computer Use or Repair |
| Psychokinesis  | Intimidate or Survival |
| Telepathy      | Bluff or Sense Motive  |
| Teleportation  | Search or Tumble       |
| Vitakinesis    | Heal or Survival       |

**Psi Aptitude:** The base character has access to 1st- and 2nd-level powers within a single psi aptitude of his choice: biokinesis, clairsentience, electrokinesis, psychokinesis, telepathy, teleportation or vitakinesis. He gets powers upon first taking the psychic template, with additional powers gained upon attaining subsequent levels. Refer to Chapter Twelve: Aptitudes for details on purchasing and using powers.

**Psychic Feats:** The base character gains access to psychic feats. A feat gained through standard level progression can be spent on a psychic feat.

**Psychic Levels:** The base character can take one or two additional levels in “psychic” as a class to further realize his inherent potential (see below).

**Level Adjustment:** 0.

## Psychic Levels

A character with the psychic template can take up to two additional levels in “psychic” at any time after gaining at least one class level. This extra level indicates that the character has increased his incredible abilities even further. A psychic level stacks with the character’s class levels for the purposes of character level advancement and bestows the following abilities.

**Hit Die:** d8.

**Skill Points:** 4 + Int bonus.

**Class Skills:** Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (noetics, physical sciences) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis),

**Background Feat:** At the 1st psychic level, the character gains one additional background feat. He must meet all prerequisites for the chosen feat.

**Aptitude Increase:** At the 1st psychic level, the character gains access to 3rd- and 4th-level psi powers.

At the 2nd psychic level, the character gains access to 5th-level psi powers.

**Psi:** At the 2nd psychic level, the character adds +1 to his Psi score for every 3 core or prestige class levels he attains.

## Class Descriptions

**Trinity** does not use the core classes or prestige classes from other material. Most such classes are geared toward a fantasy milieu, which doesn’t mesh easily with this game’s genre. For instance, magic does not exist in the Trinity Universe, at least in a technical sense. Characters may pretend or truly believe that their abilities are arcane or divine in origin, but all psychic powers derive from subquantum energy.

The commoner and expert NPC classes from the *DMG* are suitable for **Trinity**. They are recommended for NPCs only, though, since their benefits are weak in comparison to the classes listed below.



## Class Entry Alterations

The *Player's Handbook* lists the possible entries for each class (see Chapter 3: Classes, "Class Descriptions," *Game Rule Information*). Some categories don't apply in **Trinity** (such as alignment and races); also, some skills are handled differently, and there are some new ones (see "Skills," later in this chapter).

In addition, classes in the Trinity Universe are listed with allegiances and a Wealth bonus. Allegiances are suggested social groups or organizations for a given class. The Wealth bonus is a method of dealing with money that avoids keeping constant track of different currency (Chapter Thirteen: Technology for specifics on the Wealth bonus).

## New Core Classes

**Trinity's** five core classes are intended to be flexible, allowing many different character concepts to fit into each class role. Classes

don't include any psi ability options; that's based on the psychic template, above.

These classes are designed to fill archetypal roles that transition into more specialized avenues. As such, the core classes in **Trinity** go from 1st to 10th level. A character going through all 10 levels of a class moves on to a prestige class at 11th level (or a different core class, depending on where you want to take your character).

## Multiclassing

No race in **Trinity** has a favored class; characters may multiclass freely, without experience point penalty. The only requirement regarding multiclassing is that players must receive GM approval before taking a level in a new class. Although some GMs may allow characters to take levels freely, others might prefer to maintain a closer eye on level progression — forbidding a lifelong, semiliterate mercenary to take levels in scholar, for instance.

## Academic

**Description:** Bookish, insular and perhaps even unschooled in social graces, the academic may not seem the adventuring type. In fact, academics are responsible for more trips to forbidding locales and hazardous research projects than nearly any other character class. While some may seem too focused on book-learning and a proper education, they all know the value of field work. Real scientists get their hands dirty — they explore, they discover, they talk to locals and natives about important mysteries that lie outside the everyday realm.

Academics may be university professors, librarians, intrepid archaeologists, inventors, mechanics — anyone with a flair for advanced learning or high technology. In fact, given their natural brilliance and the interconnection of things scientific in the modern world, many academics are polymaths — familiar with multiple proper fields of study.

Young (low-level) academics are often intrepid and curious, trekking to distant planets to test a theory or discover a hitherto unknown fact about an arcane alien fungus. Older (high-level) academics tend to be less adventurous. Though they never lose the desire to learn, more seasoned academics tend to keep to their libraries and studies until a *truly* important discovery pulls them back into things.

**Allegiance:** The finest minds in the world study at ISRA, but every order employs academics to research noetic science, alien biology or trends in macroeconomics.

**Abilities:** The finest academics in the galaxy have high Intelligence scores, keeping more raw data in their heads than could fit on any datapad.

**Hit Die:** d6.

**Class Skills:** The academic's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Heal (Wis), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (Wis), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language.

**Skill Points at 1st Level:**  $(6 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$ .

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:**  $(6 + \text{Int modifier})$ .

**Wealth Bonus:** +2.

### Class Features

**Academic Knowledge:** An academic may make a special academic knowledge check with a bonus equal to her academic level + her Intelligence modifier to see whether she knows some relevant information about local notable figures, noteworthy places, or significant objects (whether constructed devices or natural fauna or flora). If the academic has 5 or more ranks in the relevant Knowledge field involved, she gains a +2 bonus on this check.

A successful academic knowledge check will not reveal the full background of a person or place, or the complete capabilities of a given object or creature. Still,

it is more than sufficient to supply the academic with an overview and general understanding of the subject. An academic may not take 10 or take 20 on this check.

### DC

10

20

25

30

### Type of Knowledge

Common, known by at least a substantial minority associated with the subject.

Uncommon but available, details known by a few.

Obscure, known by few, hard to come by.

Extremely obscure, known by very few, possibly known only by those who don't understand the significance of the knowledge.

**Knowledge Specialty:** A starting academic selects a Knowledge category (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, Earth and life sciences, history, noetics, physical sciences, popular culture, space, streetwise, tactics, technology, theology and philosophy, xenobiology) in which she has at least one rank. This is considered her specialty, bestowing a +2 bonus with that skill.

The academic may take an additional +2 bonus at 4th, 7th and 10th level, either on the same Knowledge skill or on a new one in which she has skill ranks. If the academic's specialty bonus exceeds +4, she gets the benefits of the Recognized feat within that field of study.

**Background Feats:** The academic gains a free background feat at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th levels. She must meet all the usual criteria for the feat, and must choose from one of the following trees: Backing, Cipher, Contacts, Device, Followers, Menagerie, Mentor, Reputation or Sanctum.

**Bonus Language:** The academic learns a bonus language at 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th level. These can be any languages the character has been exposed to, whether spoken or in writing (though the academic's pronunciation may be off if she has not heard the language spoken).

**Clever Plan (Ex):** An academic's pool of knowledge can be of great assistance in the field. By 5th level, the academic can develop a plan of action to handle an impending situation. This requires a minute's worth of preparation; an academic can't use this ability when surprised or otherwise unprepared for a particular situation.

After creating the plan, the academic makes a DC 10 Intelligence check with a bonus equal to her academic level (she cannot take 10 or 20 on

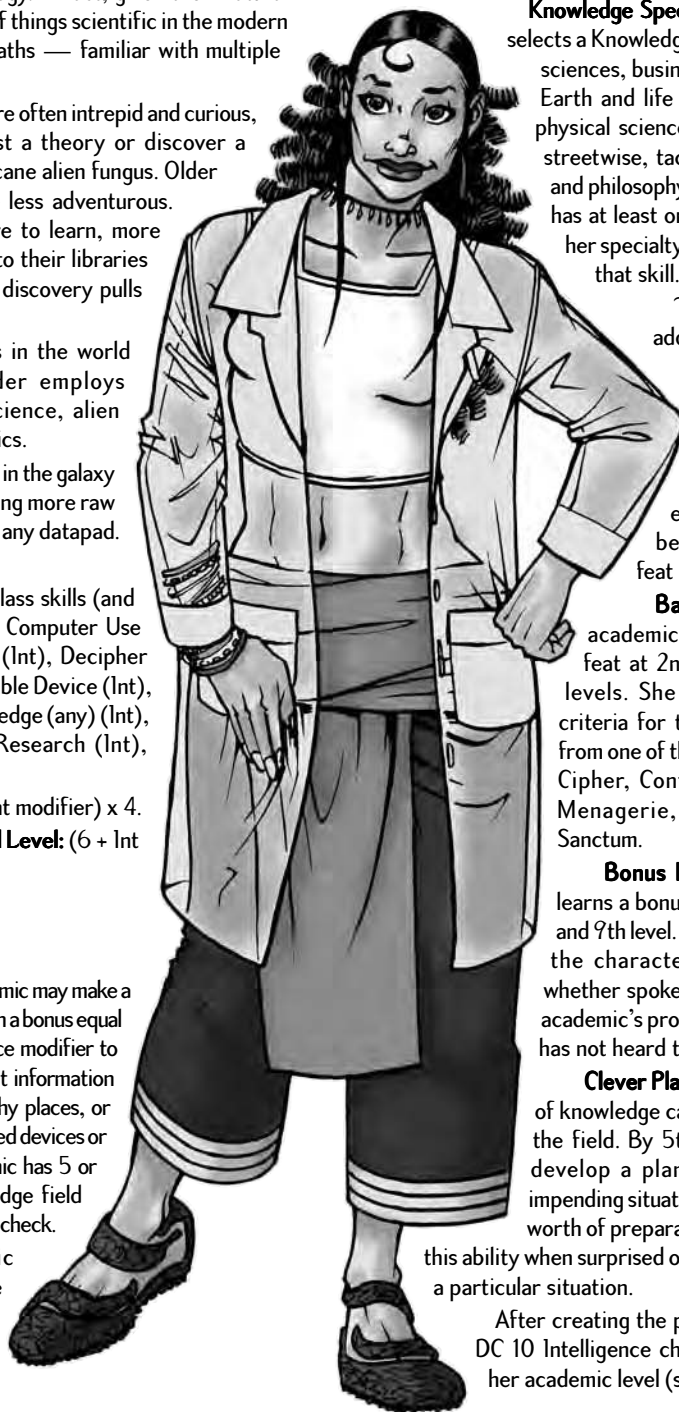


Table 9–2: The Academic (Aca)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                               |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +0                | +0       | +0             | +0          | +2        | Academic knowledge, Knowledge specialty               |
| 2nd           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +0          | +3        | Background feat                                       |
| 3rd           | +1                | +1       | +1             | +1          | +3        | Bonus language                                        |
| 4th           | +2                | +1       | +1             | +1          | +4        | Background feat, Knowledge specialty                  |
| 5th           | +2                | +2       | +1             | +1          | +4        | Clever plan, bonus language                           |
| 6th           | +3                | +2       | +2             | +2          | +5        | Background feat                                       |
| 7th           | +3                | +2       | +2             | +2          | +5        | Academic insight, bonus language, Knowledge specialty |
| 8th           | +4                | +3       | +2             | +2          | +6        | Background feat                                       |
| 9th           | +4                | +3       | +3             | +3          | +6        | Exploit weakness, bonus language                      |
| 10th          | +5                | +3       | +3             | +3          | +7        | Background feat, Knowledge specialty                  |

this check). The result provides the academic and allies with a circumstance bonus, as indicated below. This applies to all their skill checks and attack rolls for the first 3 rounds after making the plan. After that time, reduce the bonus by 1 point (to a minimum of +0) for every additional round the situation continues, as the vagaries of circumstance begin to unravel even the best-laid plans.

| Check Result | Bonus             |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 9 or lower   | +0 (check failed) |
| 10–14        | +1                |
| 15–24        | +2                |
| 25 or higher | +3                |

**Academic Insight (Ex):** By 7th level, the academic has gleaned an impressive knowledge of the universe. She may overcome a lack of hard facts by making comparisons in seemingly disparate areas

to arrive at a sound conclusion for the matter at hand. An academic can always try again once if she fails a Knowledge check for any of the following categories: art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, Earth and life sciences, history, noetics, physical sciences, space, technology, theology and philosophy or xenobiology.

**Exploit Weakness (Ex):** The academic is not a skilled combatant; still, she has sufficient intellectual savvy by 9th level that she can designate one opponent in combat to study for signs of weakness in fighting style — whether physical, intellectual or tactical. After one round of combat, the academic uses a move action and makes an opposed Sense Motive check against the chosen foe, who makes a Bluff check as if he were trying to feint in combat (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 4, "Bluff"). The academic adds a bonus to her Sense Motive check equal to her academic level. If successful, the academic adds her Intelligence bonus to any attack rolls against that specific opponent for the rest of the encounter.

## Entertainer

**Description:** The entertainer's life is the stage, whether it's a concert auditorium, a movie set, a soundstage, or an impromptu street performance. The entertainer must have the charisma to win the crowd over, and the talent to keep them coming back.

Entertainers find themselves adventuring more often than might be thought. This comes about in no small part because an entertainer travels often, going where there are shows to be held. This creates plenty of opportunities for adventure — both in the journey itself and in the destination, whether exotic or conventional. Even so, an entertainer who stays in one place — whether Luna, Sydney or Hong Kong — often rubs elbows with intrigue and excitement in the course of her regular activities.

Young (low-level) entertainers are known locally — whether in regional theater, a minor league sports team or on local television. Older (high-level) entertainers are the top stars of their — or any — field, and are often famous for being celebrities as much as through any actual accomplishment.

**Allegiance:** Most entertainers are free agents, aligned with larger organizations only insofar as it is necessary to get their image and work out in front of the public.

**Abilities:** Charisma is by far the most important ability for an entertainer, but the best entertainers have the Intelligence to have business savvy and the Wisdom to tell when they're being conned.

**Hit Die:** d8.

**Class Skills:** The entertainer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (art, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language.

**Skill Points at 1st Level:**  $(6 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$ .

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:**  $6 + \text{Int modifier}$ .

**Wealth Bonus:** +3.

### Class Features

**Bonus Feat:** An entertainer begins play with one of the following feats: Acrobatic, Agile, Deceitful, Deft Hands, Negotiator, Nimble Fingers or Persuasive.

**Stories from the Road:** The entertainer can pick up useful tidbits of information while traveling the stars on promotional tours, location shoots, book signings or other circumstances appropriate to her area of accomplishment. She may make a special check with a bonus equal to her entertainer level +

Intelligence modifier to know an ordinary fact that she might have learned. This may involve knowing that there's a network of underground fight clubs in a given city, or that the authorities in a particular place can be bought in return for favors of cash or drugs. The DC depends on the type of knowledge involved.

| DC | Type of Knowledge                                                |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Common, known by at least a substantial minority of an audience. |
| 20 | Uncommon but available, details known by a few.                  |
| 25 | Obscure, known by few, hard to come by.                          |

**Inspire Competence (Ex):** At 1st level, the entertainer can inspire her allies to excel at a task at hand. The entertainer must make a successful DC 10 Charisma check and spend one full round using encouraging words, snappy patter, quoting Shakespeare, or another means of entertainment. All allies within sight and/or earshot (as appropriate to the entertainment) gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls and skill checks for a number of rounds equal to the entertainer's Charisma modifier.

The entertainer can inspire a number of allies equal to one-half her entertainer level, rounded down (to a minimum of one ally). The entertainer can't inspire herself.

**Background Feats:** The entertainer gains a free background feat at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th levels. She must meet all the usual criteria for the feat, and must choose from one of the following trees: Allies, Contacts, Mentor, Nemesis, Reputation or Resources.

**Star Treatment (Ex):** By 3rd level, the entertainer enjoys enough clout that she can gain entry to even the most exclusive venues. When she makes a Diplomacy or Bluff check to smooth-talk or trick her way into a private party or invitation-only event, the character adds a bonus equal to her entertainer level.

Also, when an entertainer buys a ticket to a show or for transportation, she can make a Diplomacy check to get that ticket upgraded.

| Upgrade                                     | DC |
|---------------------------------------------|----|
| Seat at sporting event to field pass        | 10 |
| Hotel room to suite                         | 15 |
| Concert or theater ticket to backstage pass | 20 |
| Economy transportation to first-class       | 25 |

**Inspire Courage (Ex):** At 3rd level, an entertainer can inspire allies to feats of great courage. By making a successful DC 10 Charisma check and performing, telling stories or showing off for a full round for

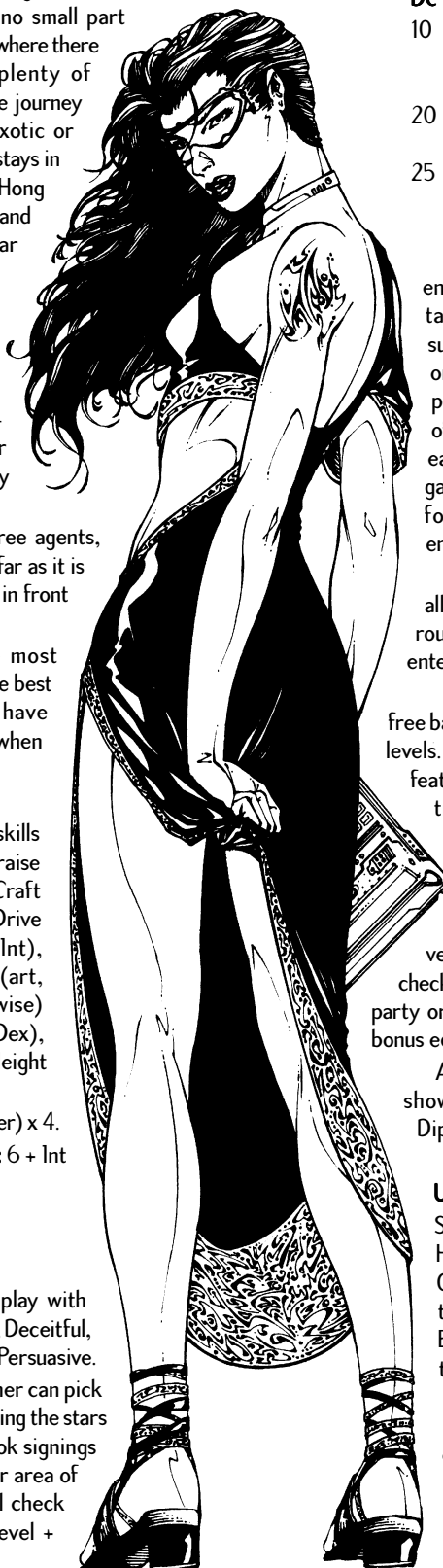


Table 9–3: The Entertainer (Ent)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                               |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +0                | +0       | +0             | +2          | +2        | Bonus feat, stories from the road, inspire competence |
| 2nd           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +3          | +3        | Background feat                                       |
| 3rd           | +2                | +1       | +1             | +3          | +3        | Inspire courage +2, star treatment                    |
| 4th           | +3                | +1       | +1             | +4          | +4        | Background feat                                       |
| 5th           | +3                | +2       | +1             | +4          | +4        | Sway crowd                                            |
| 6th           | +4                | +2       | +2             | +5          | +5        | Background feat, inspire courage +3                   |
| 7th           | +5                | +2       | +2             | +5          | +5        | Fascinate                                             |
| 8th           | +6/+1             | +3       | +2             | +6          | +6        | Background feat                                       |
| 9th           | +6/+1             | +3       | +3             | +6          | +6        | Worldwide renown, inspire courage +4                  |
| 10th          | +7/+2             | +3       | +3             | +7          | +7        | Background feat                                       |

those allies who listen to and observe her, the entertainer grants each a +2 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls and saving throws against fear. The bonus increases to +3 at 6th level and to +4 at 9th level, and lasts a number of rounds equal to her Charisma modifier.

The entertainer can inspire a number of allies equal to one-half her entertainer level, rounded down. The entertainer cannot inspire herself.

**Sway Crowd (Ex):** At 5th level, an entertainer with 8 or more ranks in Perform can sway an entire crowd to follow her urging — encourage people to disperse, stick together, remain calm, defend themselves, run for their lives, behave in an orderly fashion, and so on. The entertainer must spend at least one full round performing or otherwise showing off before the crowd and must make a successful Perform check. The DC depends on the crowd size, as indicated below.

| DC | Crowd Size            |
|----|-----------------------|
| 15 | Small (10–20 people)  |
| 20 | Medium (21–50 people) |
| 25 | Large (51–200 people) |
| 30 | Huge (200+ people)    |

**Fascinate (Ex):** At 7th level, an entertainer with 8 or more ranks in Perform can use her talent to fascinate a number of targets equal to one-half her entertainer level, rounded down. Each creature must be within 90 feet, able to see and hear the

entertainer, and able to pay attention to her. Likewise, the entertainer must be aware of each creature. This ability cannot be used with the distraction of nearby combat or other dangers.

The entertainer makes a Perform check; the result serves as the DC for a Will save that each target creature must make to avoid becoming fascinated. On a successful save, the entertainer cannot attempt to fascinate that creature again for 24 hours. On a failed save, the creature is enthralled with the performance, taking no other actions, for as long as the entertainer continues to concentrate and perform (for a maximum number of rounds equal to the entertainer's class level + Charisma modifier). Any attack breaks the effect automatically.

While fascinated, a target takes a –4 penalty on skill checks made as reactions, such as Listen and Spot checks. Any potential threat requires the entertainer to make another Perform check and allows the creature a new saving throw against the new result.

**Interstellar Renown:** By 9th level, the character achieves an accomplishment that thrusts her into the limelight throughout settled space — a platinum single, a box-office-topping holo, a title bout, a World Series championship or similar success. From this point onward, the GM should assume that almost anyone the entertainer meets anywhere in human space has at least heard her name, and will respond to her tremendous fame accordingly (including being influenced by any feats or powers the entertainer may have).

This also bestows a free feat from the Reputation feat tree. The entertainer may take a different feat if she has all the Reputation feats already, although she must justify the new feat with her reputation or entertainment prowess.

## Entrepreneur

**Description:** The entrepreneur is in it to make a buck — whatever “it” happens to be. He’s not dishonest, necessarily; the entrepreneur looks over the marketplace, finds a gap in it, and ferrets out the best way to fill that gap. He may be a member of a larger organization, following the salaryman’s path to fortune, or he may be a dilettante or freelancer looking to generate the big score on his own.

Entrepreneurs adventure in support of their financial goals. One might venture into the turmoil of Europe to establish a new factory; brave bureaucracy to investigate the viability of introducing a new good or service into Chinese culture; work with a team to secure mining rights on Karroo; or hire a freighter to cruise around the inner planets, buying goods at one port and taking them wherever a customer might be found.

Young (low-level) entrepreneurs may be street hustlers, salesmen, or technology wunderkinds. Older (high-level) entrepreneurs settle in, comfortably in command of the organizations they’ve built.

**Allegiance:** The entrepreneur aligns himself with the greatest potential source of capital. Most entrepreneurs want to work for themselves in the long run, so few sign lifetime contracts of employment. But many put in dedicated work for an employer who treats them well — like one of the orders, Æon or sterling corporate citizens.

**Abilities:** Intelligence and Charisma go hand in hand for the entrepreneur — Intelligence to run the business and do the work, and Charisma to sell himself and his product to customers and investors.

**Hit Die:** d8.

**Class Skills:** The entrepreneur’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (art, business, civics, current events, popular culture) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Swim (Str), and Survival (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (6 + Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

**Wealth Bonus:** +6.

### Class Features

**Bonus feat:** The entrepreneur begins play with the Personal Firearms Proficiency feat.

**Cool Salesman (Ex):** In making sales calls to freaks, weirdoes, and even aliens across the galaxy, the entrepreneur becomes somewhat inured to strange behavior and odd goings-on. Choose three skills; when making a check with any of them, the entrepreneur can take 10 even when distracted or under duress. The character can add one additional skill every three entrepreneur levels, to a total of six skills at 10th level.

**Residence:** Through skill in the real-estate market (or the smarts to check the obituaries for folks giving up nice rent-controlled arcology flats), the entrepreneur begins play with a well-appointed residence — an arcology apartment in New York, a small estate just outside of Buenos Aires, etc. This home doesn’t qualify as a Sanctum, but rather an additional ordinary living place. The character gains an additional residence at 6th level (typically as his corporation really begins to establish itself). This can be just about anywhere reasonable — the entrepreneur is unlikely to acquire a home in the depths of the Amazon, but the construction of a new home on Mars or Titan carries with it the potential for excitement and adventure.

**Background Feats:** The entrepreneur gains a free background feat at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th levels. He must meet all the usual criteria for the feat, and must choose from one of the following trees: Backing, Followers, Influence, Reputation, Resources or Sanctum.

**Social Graces (Ex):** By 3rd level, the entrepreneur enjoys enough clout as an up-and-comer that he can gain entry to even the most exclusive venues. This functions as the entertainer’s star treatment class ability.

**Signature Vehicle:** At 5th level, the entrepreneur gains a truly custom-built vehicle. This is likely a prototype or other unique vehicle. He may already own plenty of ordinary vehicles, but this qualifies as a Device. It can be nearly anything — a personal fast orbital shuttle, a tricked-out limousine, a deep sea submersible, and so on.

**Commanding Aura (Ex):** At 7th level, the entrepreneur has

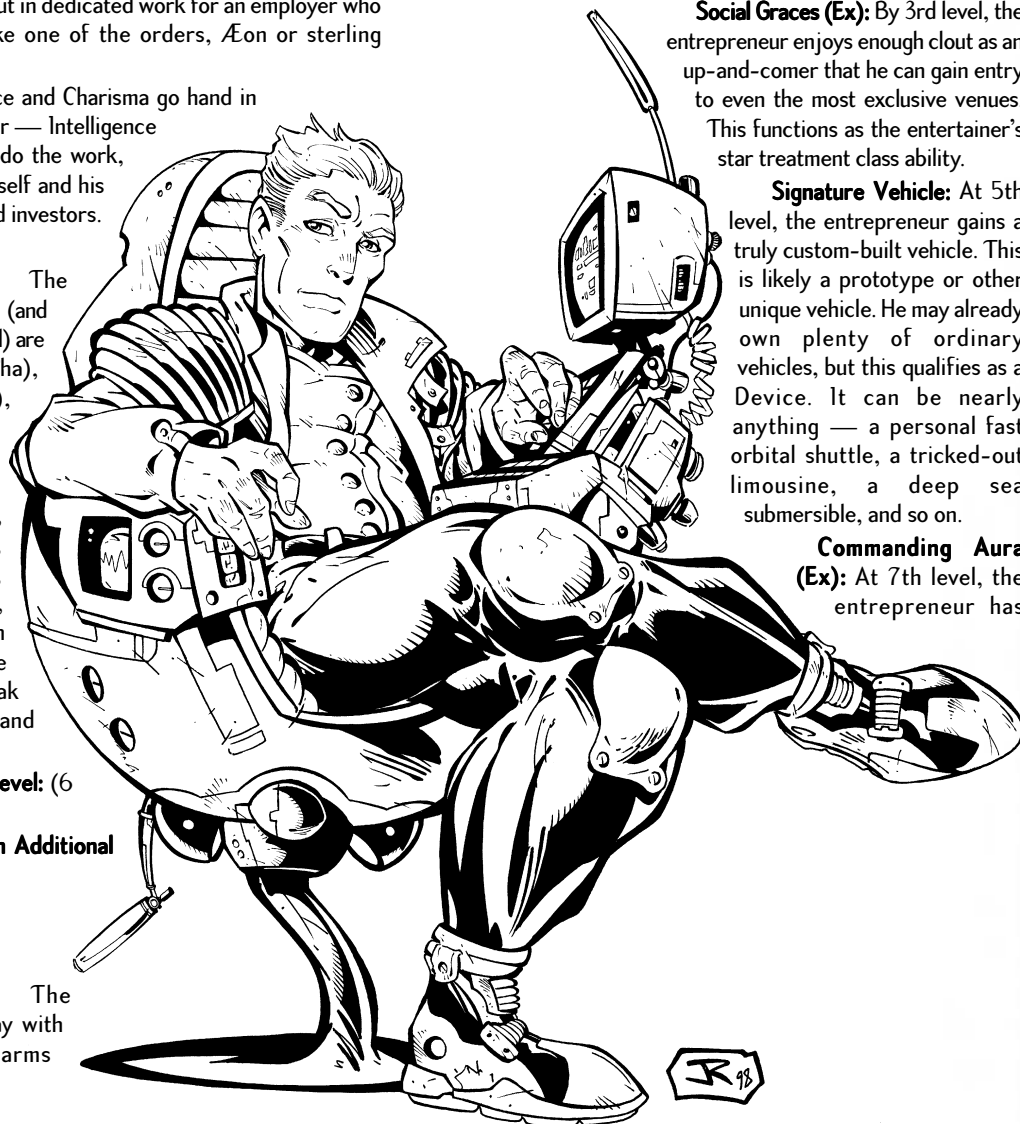


Table 9-4: The Entrepreneur (Enr)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                                |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +0                | +1       | +0             | +0          | +2        | Bonus feat, cool customer (3 skills), residence        |
| 2nd           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +0          | +3        | Background feat                                        |
| 3rd           | +2                | +2       | +1             | +1          | +3        | Social graces                                          |
| 4th           | +3                | +2       | +1             | +1          | +4        | Background feat, cool customer (+1 skill)              |
| 5th           | +3                | +3       | +1             | +1          | +4        | Signature vehicle, residence, cool customer (+1 skill) |
| 6th           | +4                | +3       | +2             | +2          | +5        | Background feat                                        |
| 7th           | +5                | +4       | +2             | +2          | +5        | Commanding aura, cool customer (+1 skill)              |
| 8th           | +6/+1             | +4       | +2             | +2          | +6        | Background feat                                        |
| 9th           | +6/+1             | +5       | +3             | +3          | +6        | Political influence                                    |
| 10th          | +7/+2             | +5       | +3             | +3          | +7        | Background feat, cool customer (+1 skill)              |

developed an aura of authority sufficient to make a single target do his bidding. The target makes a Will saving throw (DC 10 + entrepreneur class level + entrepreneur's Charisma bonus) to avoid being subject to the entrepreneur's words and actions. The exact form of influence the entrepreneur applies may vary, from cajoling to hints of reward to conspiring to downright intimidating.

The entrepreneur cannot control the target, but the target perceives his words and actions in whatever manner is most favorable to the entrepreneur. The entrepreneur can give direct orders, with a +2 bonus on an opposed Charisma check for orders that the target wouldn't undertake normally. The target never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, and any act by the entrepreneur or his allies that threatens the target breaks the mood and clears the target's head. Otherwise, a target remains won over for 1 minute per entrepreneur level.

After the duration expires, the GM determines the target's reaction and attitude based on what the entrepreneur compelled the target to do.

**Political Influence (Ex):** Upon reaching 9th level, the entrepreneur may ignore minor and inconvenient laws — in general, he will never be arrested for a misdemeanor, being both well known to local authorities and something of a minor celebrity. If he is stopped for such a crime, he can be assured of going free after informing the authorities of his identity (some delay may be involved, but no more than a few hours). This ability may not work in a region that is under the active control of someone working in direct opposition to the entrepreneur's goals; in a fascist state such as the Ukraine; or in a region that has recently had a revolution of the sort that gets the wealthy put up against a wall.

## Investigator

**Description:** The investigator works to uncover the root causes of crimes and conflicts between individuals. He may be a private investigator, a consulting detective, a police detective, an intrepid reporter or even an attorney with an itch for sleuthing. The investigator has a keen eye for details that others miss and a flair for describing events (even better than those who were involved with the occurrence).

Young (low-level) investigators may be rookie cops or freelance photographers. Older (high-level) ones might be hard-bitten private eyes, cynical police detectives or investigative (or entertainment) journalists.

**Allegiance:** Aeon employs many investigators, as, of course, do local police and media organizations. Investigators find a great deal of employ tracking rumors of aberrants and aberrant sympathizers. The Ministry is known to have numerous investigators among its ranks.

**Abilities:** Wisdom is the investigator's chief ability — the perceptive powers of the best investigators are without peer.

**Hit Die:** d8.

**Class Skills:** The investigator's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, physical science, popular culture, streetwise, theology and philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (8 + Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 8 + Int modifier.

**Wealth Bonus:** +1.

### Class Features

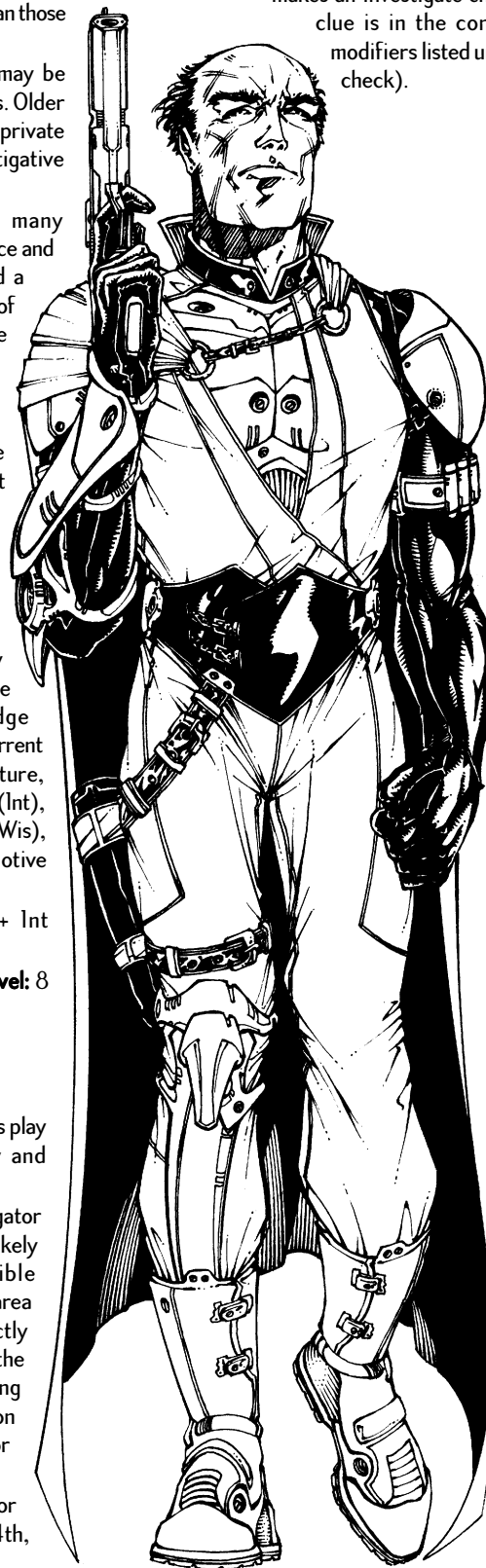
**Bonus Feats:** An investigator begins play with Personal Firearms Proficiency and Persuasive.

**Sweep the Scene (Ex):** An investigator can size up an area at a glance, noting likely clues and getting a read on possible suspects. This sweep covers a 30-foot area around the investigator (except directly behind him). The character states at the beginning of an encounter if he's making a sweep, thereby gaining a +2 bonus on Spot checks and Sense Motive checks for the rest of the encounter in that area.

**Background Feats:** The investigator gains a free background feat at 2nd, 4th,

6th, 8th and 10th levels. He must meet all the usual criteria for the feat, and must choose from one of the following trees: Backing, Contacts, Influence, Mentor, Nemesis or Reputation.

**Cluehound (Ex):** At 3rd level, the investigator can determine with certainty a particular clue's importance to an investigation. The character designates which potential clue he's considering and makes an Investigate check. The DC depends on how obvious the clue is in the context of the investigation (crime scene modifiers listed under the Investigate skill are halved for this check).



| DC | Clue    | Example Context                                                         |
|----|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Obvious | Murder weapon dropped at scene; confession in diary                     |
| 15 | Unclear | Phone number in datapad; wet overcoat in closet                         |
| 20 | Obscure | Name in otherwise empty data file; coat of arms to an adventurer's club |
| 25 | Cryptic | Lines of poetry; non sequitur uttered with dying breath                 |

On a successful check, the investigator confirms that clue's relative level of importance to the current investigation, categorized as follows.

| Relevance | Description                                                               | Modifier |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| None      | Not relevant to investigation                                             | —        |
| Minor     | Little investigative value, but might help discover a moderate clue       | +1       |
| Moderate  | Indicative of means, motive or opportunity, but not conclusive on its own | +2       |
| Critical  | Clear indication of means, motive and/or opportunity                      | +3       |

A relevant clue provides a modifier that the investigator may apply to subsequent Gather Information, Knowledge, Research, Search and Sense Motive checks he makes in the course of the investigation. The character can use this ability to look at multiple clues at the same scene, but multiple cluehound modifiers do not stack.

**Clever Plan (Ex):** As of 5th level, prior to either a combat- or skill-related dramatic situation, the investigator can

Table 9–5: The Investigator (Inv)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                      |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| 1st           | +0                | +1       | +2             | +0          | +2        | Bonus feats, sweep the scene |
| 2nd           | +1                | +1       | +3             | +0          | +3        | Background feat              |
| 3rd           | +2                | +2       | +3             | +1          | +3        | Cluehound                    |
| 4th           | +3                | +2       | +4             | +1          | +4        | Background feat              |
| 5th           | +3                | +3       | +4             | +1          | +4        | Clever plan                  |
| 6th           | +4                | +3       | +5             | +2          | +5        | Background feat              |
| 7th           | +5                | +4       | +5             | +2          | +5        | Discern secrets              |
| 8th           | +6/+1             | +4       | +6             | +2          | +6        | Background feat              |
| 9th           | +6/+1             | +5       | +6             | +3          | +6        | Tarnish reputation           |
| 10th          | +7/+2             | +5       | +7             | +3          | +7        | Background feat              |

develop a plan of action. This requires preparation; an investigator can't hatch a clever plan when surprised or otherwise unprepared for a particular situation.

The investigator makes an Intelligence check (DC 10) with a bonus equal to his investigator levels (he cannot take 10 or 20). The result of the check provides the investigator and his allies with a bonus as indicated below.

| Check Result | Bonus             |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 9 or lower   | +0 (check failed) |
| 10–14        | +1                |
| 15–24        | +2                |
| 25 or higher | +3                |

The investigator and his allies can apply the resulting bonus on all skill checks and attack rolls for a number of rounds equal to the investigator's Intelligence modifier. The bonus is then reduced by 1 point (to a minimum of +0) for every additional round the situation continues.

**Discern Secrets (Ex):** Once each day a 7th-level investigator can deduce a suspect's possible motive for committing a crime or being involved in some form of conspiracy. The investigator must spend at least 15 consecutive minutes in the target's presence

before making a Sense Motive check (DC = 10 + the target's Will save). If successful, the investigator discerns any viable motive the suspect has relating to the crime or conspiracy. This gives the character a bonus equal to 1/2 his investigator level (round down) on any subsequent Gather Information, Knowledge, Research, Search and Sense Motive checks for investigating that subject's ties to the current investigation. Note that this does not divulge the subject's *actual* involvement; rather, it provides a solid working theory that may be used to gain a confession or to line up related evidence to make an airtight case. This ability can stack with modifiers gained from cluehound.

**Tarnish Reputation (Ex):** By 9th level, the investigator has earned enough respect from his exploits that he can tarnish another's reputation simply by suggesting that that individual is under investigation. Once per (game) month, the investigator may suggest to a reporter or other public figure that he is investigating a particular person. That person suffers an immediate reputation loss until the investigator makes a formal accusation or exonerates the subject, or a full month passes with no further news. The reputation loss incurs a –4 penalty on all of the subject's Charisma-based checks, and the loss of access to the target's highest level in the Reputation background feat tree (if the target's reputation is based on anything other than being a rogue and a criminal).

## Scoundrel

**Description:** A scoundrel's abilities are well-suited to a hard life on the street; in all likelihood a character with levels in scoundrel got them the hard way. A scoundrel excels at making his way around the law — he may not burgle and thief actively, but he knows how to sneak, break and enter, and cover his tracks. Police investigators and private detectives often pick up the skills of a scoundrel through exposure and experience, and more than one military scout has learned the same abilities (though perhaps in different proportions than a sneak-thief who grew up on the streets).

Young (low-level) scoundrels are typically thugs, con artists or simple vandals. Older (high-level) scoundrels are diamond-theft-caliber cat burglars, or criminal masterminds who oversee whole empires of crime.

**Allegiance:** Almost every organization can find a use for someone who knows his way around a security system. The Legions might employ scoundrels as scouts, while Orgotek and the Æsculapians use them as security consultants.

**Abilities:** A scoundrel must be fast on his feet and quick to react to danger. Dexterity is the focus for the majority of his skills.

**Hit Die:** d6.

**Class Skills:** The scoundrel's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (business, civics, current events, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Rope Use (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:**  $(8 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$ .

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:**  $(8 + \text{Int modifier})$ .

**Wealth Bonus:** +1.

### Class Features

**Bonus Feat:** A scoundrel begins play with either Brawl or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Cool Customer (Ex):** The scoundrel works well even under pressure. Choose three skills; when making a check with any of them, the scoundrel can take 10 even when distracted or under duress. The character can add one additional skill every three scoundrel levels, to a total of six skills at 10th level.

**Trapfinding:** The scoundrel can use the Search skill to find traps when the task DC is greater than 20.

**Background Feats:** The scoundrel gains a free background feat at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th levels. He must meet all the usual criteria for the feat, and must choose from one of the following

trees: Backing (in a criminal organization), Cipher, Contacts, Mentor, Reputation or Sanctum.

**Evasion (Ex):** By 3rd level, the scoundrel has well-developed self-preservation instincts. If he makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage. Evasion can be used only if the scoundrel is wearing light armor or no armor. A helpless scoundrel does not gain the benefit of evasion.

**Sneak Attack:** At 5th level, the scoundrel can deal an extra 1d6 points of damage with his attack when he catches an opponent who is unable to defend himself effectively — in other words, whenever the target is denied his Dexterity bonus to AC or is flanked.

The extra damage increases by 1d6 every two scoundrel levels thereafter, to a maximum of +3d6 at 9th level.

Should the scoundrel score a critical hit with a sneak attack, the extra damage is not multiplied. Ranged attacks can count as sneak attacks only if the target is within 30 feet. A scoundrel can make a sneak attack that deals nonlethal damage instead of lethal damage using a sap (blackjack) or an unarmed strike. He cannot use a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty.

A scoundrel can sneak attack only living creatures with discernible anatomies. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is not vulnerable to sneak attacks. The scoundrel must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. A scoundrel cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Upon reaching 7th level, a scoundrel can react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. He retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) even if he is caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible or otherwise unseen attacker. However, he still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.

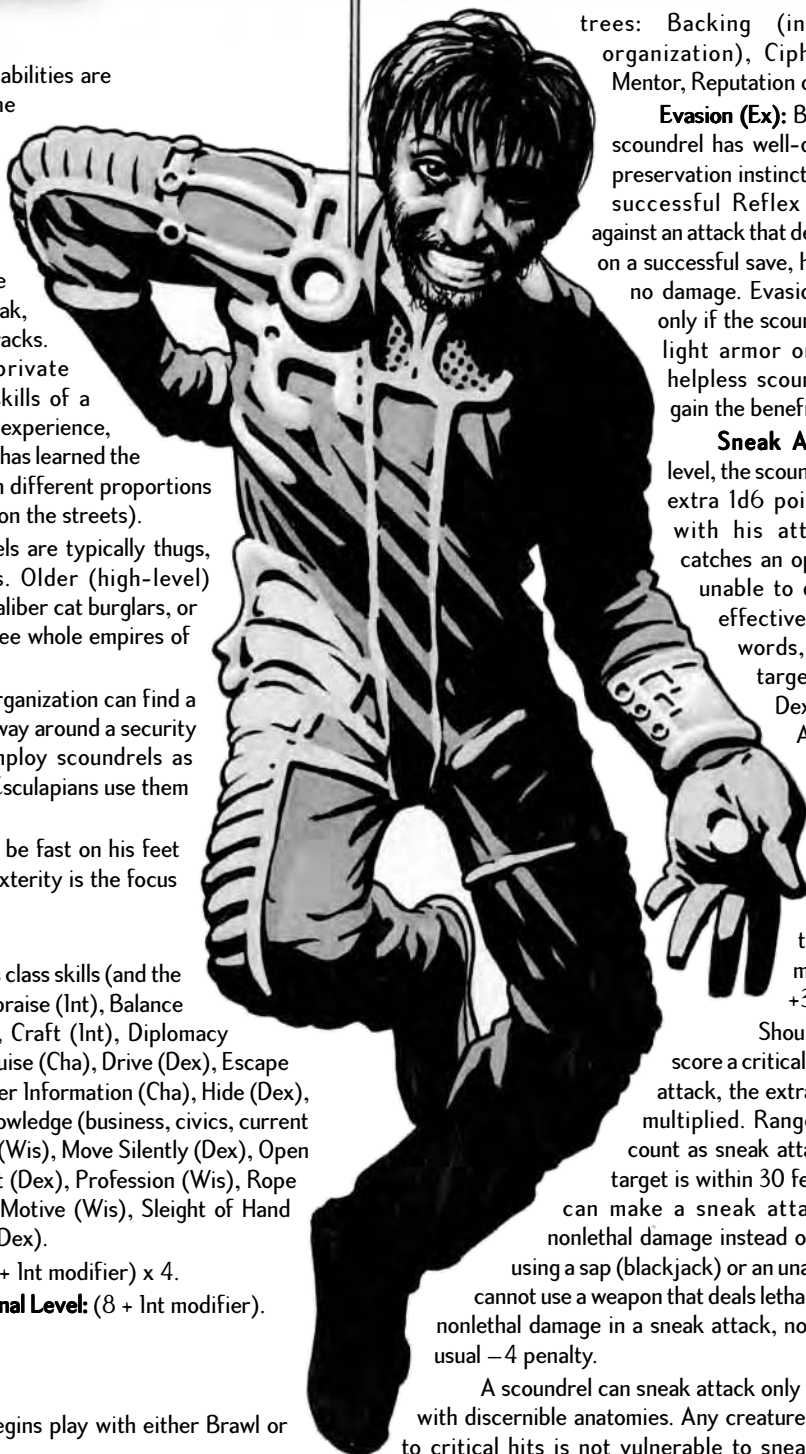


Table 9–6: The Scoundrel (Sco)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                              |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +0                | +2       | +0             | +2          | +0        | Bonus feat, cool customer                            |
| 2nd           | +1                | +2       | +0             | +3          | +0        | Background feat                                      |
| 3rd           | +2                | +3       | +1             | +3          | +1        | Evasion                                              |
| 4th           | +3                | +4       | +1             | +4          | +1        | Background feat, cool customer (+1)                  |
| 5th           | +3                | +4       | +1             | +4          | +1        | Sneak attack +1d6                                    |
| 6th           | +4                | +5       | +2             | +5          | +2        | Background feat                                      |
| 7th           | +5                | +6       | +2             | +5          | +2        | Uncanny dodge, sneak attack +2d6, cool customer (+1) |
| 8th           | +6/+1             | +6       | +2             | +6          | +2        | Background feat                                      |
| 9th           | +6/+1             | +7       | +3             | +6          | +3        | Intuition, sneak attack +3d6                         |
| 10th          | +7/+2             | +8       | +3             | +7          | +3        | Background feat, cool customer (+1)                  |

**Intuition (Ex):** By 7th level, the scoundrel has an innate ability to sense trouble in the air. With a successful DC 15 Will saving throw, he gets a hunch whether everything is all right or not in a specific

situation, based on the GM's best guess relating to the circumstances. The character can use his intuition a number of times per day equal to his scoundrel level.

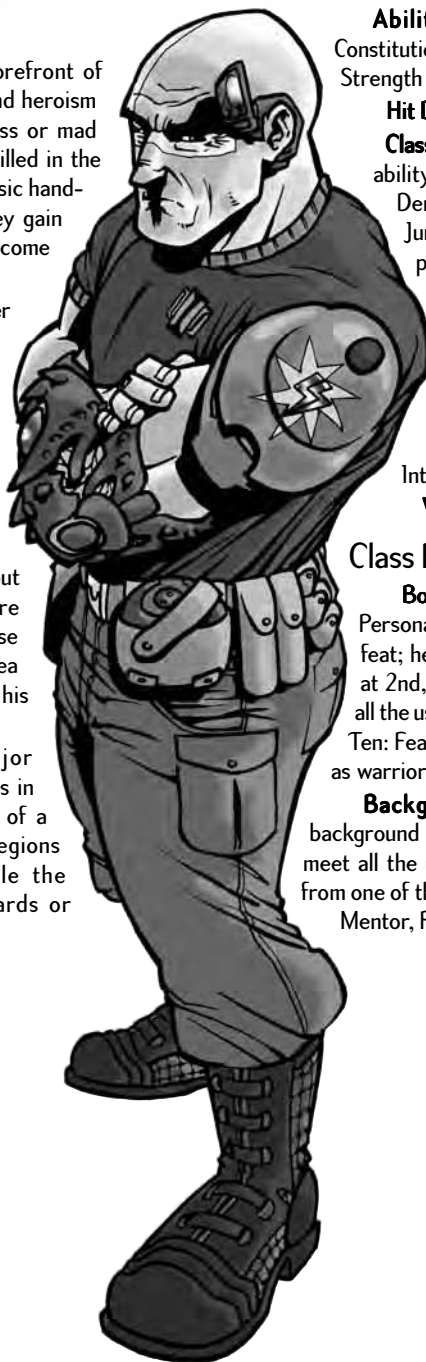
## Warrior

**Description:** The warrior is at the forefront of battle — whether on the side of justice and heroism or in the service of selfishness, wickedness or mad schemes to rule the world. Warriors are skilled in the use of most modern weaponry, as well as basic hand-to-hand fighting techniques; over time they gain expertise in a wide variety of weapons and become truly terrifying on the battlefield.

Warriors range from primitive backwater thugs to Army sharpshooters, and nearly everything in between. Most warriors specialize in particular styles of fighting, though it is not uncommon for them to branch out as they gain experience.

Young (low-level) warriors are often enforcers or grunt soldiers, while older (high-level) warriors bear out the saying “there are old soldiers, and bold soldiers, but there are no old, bold soldiers.” The more experienced a warrior gets, the greater sense he gains of the battlefield, and the better idea he has of how to direct others to accomplish his overall goals.

**Allegiance:** Nearly every major organization in the world has some warriors in its employ, either in security or as part of a recognized armed force. For instance, Legions warriors are traditional soldiers, while the Æsculapians’ warriors are security guards or troubleshooters.



**Abilities:** In the modern age, Dexterity and Constitution figure more into a warrior’s success, though Strength still has its place.

**Hit Die:** d10.

**Class Skills:** The warrior’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, history, popular culture, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Ride (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

**Wealth Bonus:** +2.

### Class Features

**Bonus Feats:** A warrior begins play with Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency and one warrior bonus feat; he then gains an additional warrior bonus feat at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th levels. He must meet all the usual criteria for the feat selected. See Chapter Ten: Feats of this book for a listing of feats available as warrior bonus feats.

**Background Feats:** The warrior gains a free background feat at 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th levels. He must meet all the usual criteria for the feat, and must choose from one of the following trees: Backing, Cipher, Contacts, Mentor, Reputation or Sanctum.

Table 9–7: The Warrior (War)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                         |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +2             | +0          | +0        | Bonus feats, warrior bonus feat |
| 2nd           | +2                | +2       | +3             | +0          | +0        | Warrior bonus feat              |
| 3rd           | +3                | +2       | +3             | +1          | +1        | Background feat                 |
| 4th           | +4                | +3       | +4             | +1          | +1        | Warrior bonus feat              |
| 5th           | +5                | +3       | +4             | +1          | +1        | Background feat                 |
| 6th           | +6/+1             | +4       | +5             | +2          | +2        | Warrior bonus feat              |
| 7th           | +7/+2             | +4       | +5             | +2          | +2        | Background feat                 |
| 8th           | +8/+3             | +5       | +6             | +2          | +2        | Warrior bonus feat              |
| 9th           | +9/+4             | +5       | +6             | +3          | +3        | Background feat                 |
| 10th          | +10/+5            | +6       | +7             | +3          | +3        | Warrior bonus feat              |

## Class Level Extension

Standard level progression in d20 runs from 1st to 20th level. The core classes in **Trinity** stop at 10th level. At that point — or whenever your character meets the necessary prerequisites — you normally choose a prestige class or select a second core class. If your character's level progression tops out before reaching 20th level and you don't want to take on a different class, refer to Table 9–8: Class Level Extension and follow the guidelines below. Note: you cannot extend psychic template class levels. If your character's last level was a psychic level, you must choose to extend a core class (10 levels) or prestige class (5 levels) in which he has topped out.

**Ability Increases:** The character continues to gain ability score increases every fourth character level as normal.

**Attack and Save Bonus:** The character's base attack bonus and base save bonus increase as consistent with his extended class (see Table 9–8).

**Hit Dice and Skill Points:** The character calculates subsequent Hit Die and skill points based on the extended class.

**Feats:** The character continues to gain feats every third character level as normal.

**Background Feats:** The character gains a free background feat at every third level, selected from the background feat categories listed for the extended class.

- For multiclass characters, feats and ability increases are gained according to overall character level, not class level.

- A class feature for the topped-out class that uses the character's class level as part of a mathematical formula continues to increase using the appropriate extended character level in the formula.

- Any class features that increase or accumulate as part of a repeated pattern also continue to increase or accumulate at the same rate. An exception to this rule is any bonus feat progression granted as a class feature.

- A character gains no new class features after topping out.

## Prestige Classes

**Trinity** assumes that all characters begin a more specialized field of study at some point in their adventuring careers. This is represented by prestige classes — although the player can instead choose a different core class if she wishes. The prestige classes from the *DMG* are not used in **Trinity**; instead, select from the listings that follow.

Some of the listed prestige classes have the same names as classes found in **Adventure!** and **Aberrant**; they are adjusted for the Unity Era, however, and should be used in place of write-ups found in the other books. In addition, the disciple from **Adventure!** and the crusader from **Aberrant** may be used almost as-written in **Trinity**, if the GM wishes.

Table 9–8: Class Level Extension

| Level Ext. | Bab (good) | Bab (average) | Bab (poor) | ACb (good) | ACb (average) | ACb (poor) | Bsb (good) | Bsb (poor) |
|------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| +1 lvl     | +1         | +1            | +0         | +1         | +1            | +1         | +2         | +0         |
| +2 lvl     | +2         | +2            | +1         | +2         | +1            | +1         | +3         | +0         |
| +3 lvl     | +3         | +2            | +1         | +2         | +2            | +1         | +3         | +1         |
| +4 lvl     | +4         | +3            | +2         | +3         | +2            | +2         | +4         | +1         |
| +5 lvl     | +5         | +4            | +2         | +4         | +3            | +2         | +4         | +1         |
| +6 lvl     | +6/ +1     | +5            | +3         | +4         | +3            | +2         | +5         | +2         |
| +7 lvl     | +7/ +2     | +5            | +3         | +5         | +4            | +3         | +5         | +2         |
| +8 lvl     | +8/ +3     | +6/ +1        | +4         | +6         | +4            | +3         | +6         | +2         |
| +9 lvl     | +9/ +4     | +7/ +2        | +4         | +6         | +5            | +3         | +6         | +3         |
| +10 lvl    | +10/ +5    | +8/ +3        | +5         | +7         | +5            | +4         | +7         | +3         |

**Level Ext.:** The level extension is based on overall character level at the time of the character's level top-out. Characters who top out at different overall character level — for instance, 10th level (*entertainer 10*), 12th level (*psychic 2/warrior 10*), 15th level (*scoundrel 10/diplomat 5*), 17th level (*psychic 2/investigator 10/troubleshooter 5*) — all start at +1 level extension.

**Bab:** The base attack bonus is calculated from the character's class upon topping out.

*Good:* mercenary, warrior

*Average:* entertainer, entrepreneur, explorer, investigator, scoundrel, space jockey, technologist, troubleshooter

*Poor:* academic, diplomat, scientist

**ACb:** The Armor Class bonus is calculated from the character's class upon topping out.

*Good:* mercenary, scoundrel, space jockey

*Average:* entrepreneur, explorer, investigator, scientist, technologist, troubleshooter, warrior

*Poor:* academic, diplomat, entertainer

**Bsb:** The base save bonus for each saving throw category is calculated from the character's class upon topping out.

*Fortitude (good):* explorer, investigator, mercenary, technologist, warrior

*Fortitude (poor):* academic, diplomat, entertainer, entrepreneur, scientist, scoundrel, space jockey, troubleshooter

*Reflex (good):* diplomat, entertainer, scoundrel, space jockey, technologist, troubleshooter

*Reflex (poor):* academic, entrepreneur, explorer, investigator, mercenary, scientist, warrior

*Will (good):* academic, diplomat, entertainer, entrepreneur, investigator, scientist, troubleshooter

*Will (poor):* explorer, mercenary, scoundrel, space jockey, technologist, warrior

## Diplomat

**Description:** The Earth is less Balkanized than ever in history, with the governments of Africa joining the UAN and the FSA's annexation of most of North America. The new superpowers of the southern hemisphere are still discovering the limits of their power. The orders and metanational corporations provide still further complication to the global power mix.

Into this jumble strides the diplomat. His array of contacts, encyclopedic knowledge of world affairs, and matchless interpersonal communications skills provide him with effortless access to the halls of power. The diplomat brokers deals between powerful international (and interplanetary) organizations, and helps groups find mutually beneficial solutions to their joint problems.

**Allegiance:** Most diplomats are associated with large organizations — whether national governments, orders, the UN or one of its arms, metanational corporations, or interstellar colonies. Freelance diplomats exist also, as mediators or representatives wherever their interests take them or where the price is right.

**Prerequisites:** Diplomacy 8 ranks; Information Broker; Celebrity.

**Hit Die:** d6.

**Class Skills:** The diplomat's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language, and Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Background Feat (Ex):** At 1st and 4th level, you may select one Background feat from one of the following trees: Citizenship, Contacts, Followers, Influence, Resources, Status. You must qualify in all other fashions for whichever feat you take.

**Instant Transportation (Ex):** Since the diplomat must often jet off to remote locations on short notice, he keeps transportation on retainer. The diplomat and his entourage never wait for a cab to the airport, or find themselves in a starport layover: On less than an hour's notice, he can always arrange for the fastest reasonable transport to wherever he needs to be. This ability does not prevent complications en route — the starship might still get hijacked, or the limo might get stuck in traffic. But ordinary routine delays never occur.

**Etiquette Familiarity (Ex):** At 2nd level, the diplomat never suffers penalties to Diplomacy checks derived from unfamiliarity with local custom; he is either knowledgeable about local customs, or can figure out what the proper custom is through keen observation, deduction and insight.

**Honest Broker (Ex):** At 2nd level, the diplomat grows skilled at acting as a mediator between two parties. So long as the diplomat acts as a non-partisan broker in a dispute, he receives a +4 bonus on his Sense Motive rolls to determine the true goals of both parties in the dispute. This is reduced to a +2 bonus if the diplomat advocates one point in the dispute.

**Conflict Avoidance (Ex):** By 3rd level, the diplomat is keenly aware of the ebb and flow of social energy around him, even sensing the imminent eruption of violence. The diplomat is aware enough to keep out of trouble that he gains a +4 bonus on his initiative check and a +2 bonus to his Armor Class for the duration of any combat that erupts from a social interaction — a dinner party that breaks into fisticuffs or negotiations with a hostage taker, but not an ambush or a battlefield skirmish.

**Honored Counsel (Ex):** By 5th level, the diplomat's renown precedes him in the halls of power, providing a +2 bonus to Charisma and a single background feat from the Citizenship, Contacts, Influence or Status trees. Also, powerful organizations frequently enlist his aid in resolving disputes (this confers no direct game effect, but can be a useful tool in developing new plot threads).

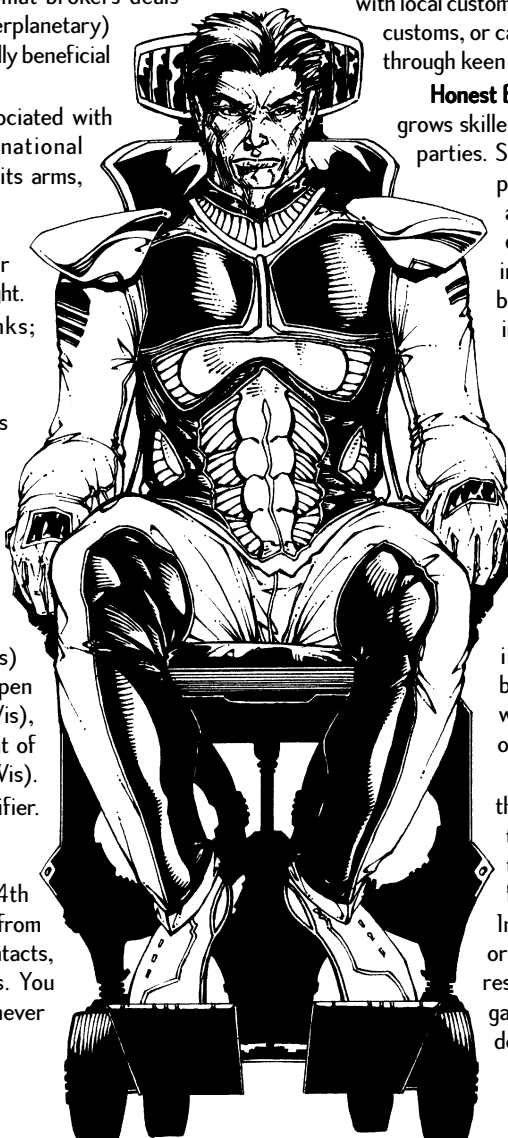


Table 9-9: Diplomat (Dpl)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                 |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +2          | +2        | Background feat, instant transportation |
| 2nd           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +3          | +3        | Etiquette familiarity, honest broker    |
| 3rd           | +1                | +1       | +1             | +3          | +3        | Conflict avoidance                      |
| 4th           | +2                | +2       | +1             | +4          | +4        | Background feat                         |
| 5th           | +2                | +2       | +1             | +4          | +4        | Honored counsel                         |

## Explorer

**Description:** There are no new frontiers left on Earth — or are there? The planet's oceans and the deepest reaches of Antarctica are fast becoming new homes to the ever-growing population, and intrepid souls are needed to help explore these new habitats.

The greatest frontier, though, is found among the stars. Human colonies are built in deepest space and on strange worlds. Despite tremendous technological advances, it's become clear that orbital and satellite photography, remote vehicles and computer modeling can only take planners so far. A living person is still vital to investigating new environs — someone must learn the real lay of the land and discover its secrets.

**Allegiance:** Explorers rarely affiliate with large organizations, but they are not loners; explorers understand the need for a team of professionals to cover one another in the event of an emergency. Some explorers do take on work from colonial governments or metacorporations looking to open facilities on a new world.

**Prerequisites:** Survival 8 ranks; Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) 4 ranks; Endurance; must have visited at least one locale beyond Earth.

**Hit Die:** d10.

**Class Skills:** The explorer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (art, current events, Earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, space, theology and philosophy, xenobiology) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Repair (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Survivor (Ex):** An explorer gains the Track and Self-Sufficient feats.

**Regional Lore:** At 2nd level, the explorer gains greater knowledge of one particular

terrain type of her choice — aquatic, jungle, desert, forest, hills, marsh, mountains, plains, underground; or a single alien environment (including vacuum-exposed craters or entire asteroids). The explorer thereafter has a +2 bonus on any skill checks relating to the exploration of that type of terrain, from navigating the wilderness to knowing whether a particular animal is dangerous. This includes the use of Gather Information, Handle Animal, Knowledge, Search and Survival. This ability even applies if performed on an alien world. The explorer can choose an additional regional lore at 4th level.

**Construction Sense (Ex):** At 3rd level, the explorer amasses sufficient knowledge of planetary geology and construction to gain a +2 bonus on checks to notice unusual work in any construction, such as sliding walls, new construction (even when built to match the old), unsafe surfaces, shaky ceilings and the like. Construction disguised as a natural object or environment counts as unusual workmanship. An explorer who merely comes within 10 feet of unusual construction can make a check as if she were searching actively. This bonus stacks with that granted by regional lore.

This ability functions for all manner of construction, whether stone, wood, metal, bone or otherwise. This increases to a +4 bonus at 5th level.

**Ignore Hardship (Ex):** At 4th level, the explorer gains an almost supernatural ability to ignore the worst hardships of traveling in a harsh environment. She gains 5 points of cold resistance and fire resistance, and 5/— damage reduction against falling damage only.

**Master of the Unknown (Ex):** At 5th level, the explorer gains a +4 bonus on all Reflex saves to avoid natural hazards, from rockfalls to quicksand. She also gains a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves against natural poisons of all kinds. Additionally, the explorer can persevere for double the length of time before having to check against any adverse environmental effects, including exposure to hard vacuum. (See *DMG*, Chapter 8: Glossary, "The Environment" for details on natural hazards.)

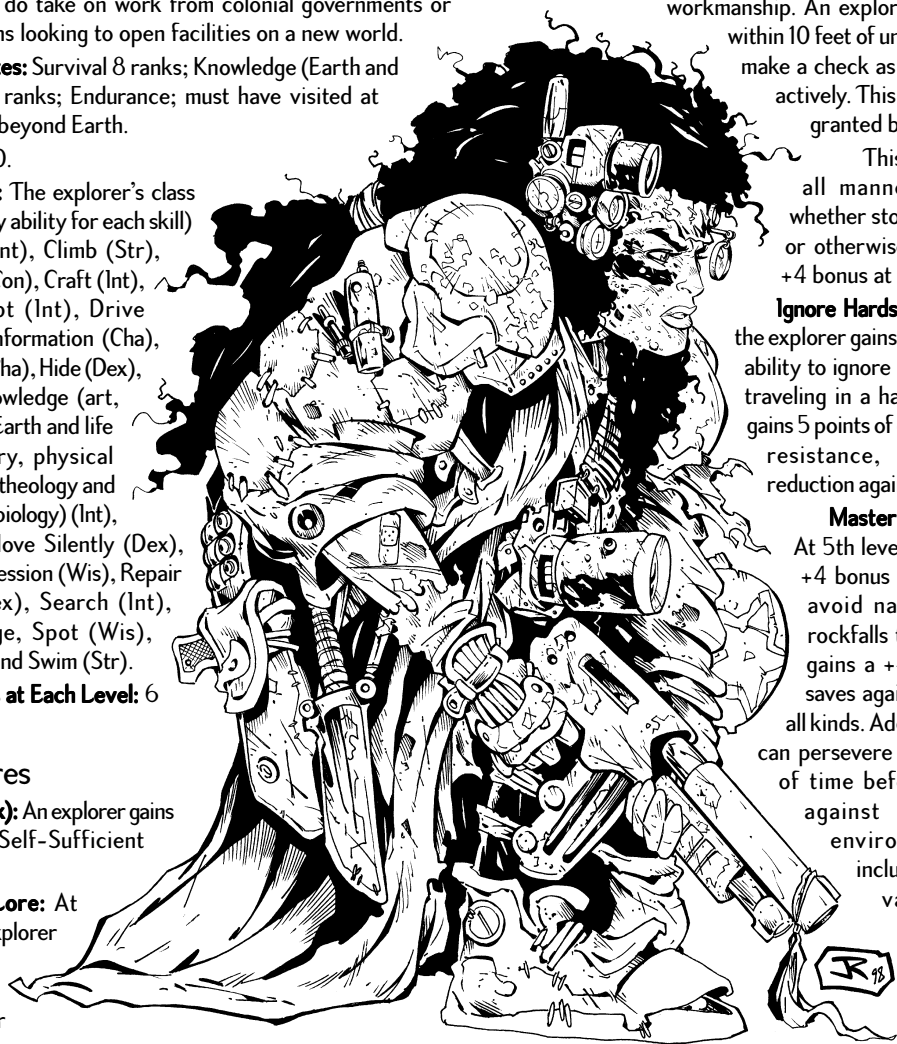


Table 9–10: The Explorer (Exr)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                        |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +2             | +1          | +0        | Survivor                       |
| 2nd           | +1                | +2       | +2             | +1          | +1        | Regional lore                  |
| 3rd           | +2                | +2       | +3             | +1          | +1        | Construction sense             |
| 4th           | +2                | +3       | +3             | +2          | +1        | Ignore hardship, regional lore |
| 5th           | +3                | +3       | +4             | +2          | +2        | Master of the unknown          |

## Mercenary

**Description:** A mercenary is a warrior for hire; he owes his allegiance to no country and no man, but only to the wealth of his employer. Mercenaries are pragmatic; they will not fight to the death for a cause, but rather surrender where necessary — live today to fight again tomorrow. A mercenary prides himself on his professional attitude and his military abilities; an experienced mercenary cannot be matched on the battlefield.

**Allegiance:** Mercenaries never ally themselves permanently with any employer or political organization, but they may become permanent members of a mercenary company or guild. There are exceptions, but most mercenaries are defined by their loyalty to the dollar rather than their allegiance to a cause. The most noteworthy exception to this rule is the Second Legion: Those soldiers are solid members of Psi Order Legions, but within that allegiance will fight for anyone with the right coin.

**Prerequisites:** Base attack bonus +5; Knowledge (tactics) 5 ranks.

**Hit Die:** d10.

**Class Skills:** The mercenary's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, history, popular culture, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

**Training Focus (Ex):** At 1st level, the mercenary chooses a specific weapon in which he is proficient (he may select unarmed strike, grapple or a psi power that requires an attack roll); he adds a +1 bonus on all attack rolls made using the selected weapon.

**Training Specialization (Ex):** At 2nd level, a mercenary gains a +2 bonus on damage rolls with the weapon he chose for training focus. This may be an external weapon or a psi power.

**Tactical Aid (Ex):** Upon reaching 3rd level, the mercenary can provide tactical aid to one or more allies within sight and voice range of his position. With an attack action, he can provide tactical aid to any single ally (other than himself). With a full-round action, he can provide tactical aid to all of his allies (including himself).

This aid provides either a bonus on attack rolls or to Armor Class (mercenary's choice). This bonus is equal to the mercenary's Intelligence modifier (minimum +1), and lasts for a number of rounds equal to his levels in mercenary.

**Defensive Position (Ex):** Starting at 4th level, the mercenary gains an additional +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and an additional +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves whenever he takes cover (see *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 8: Combat, "Combat Modifiers").

**Critical Strike (Ex):** At 5th level, a mercenary can confirm a threat as a critical hit automatically when attacking with his training focus weapon, thereby eliminating the need to make a critical roll.

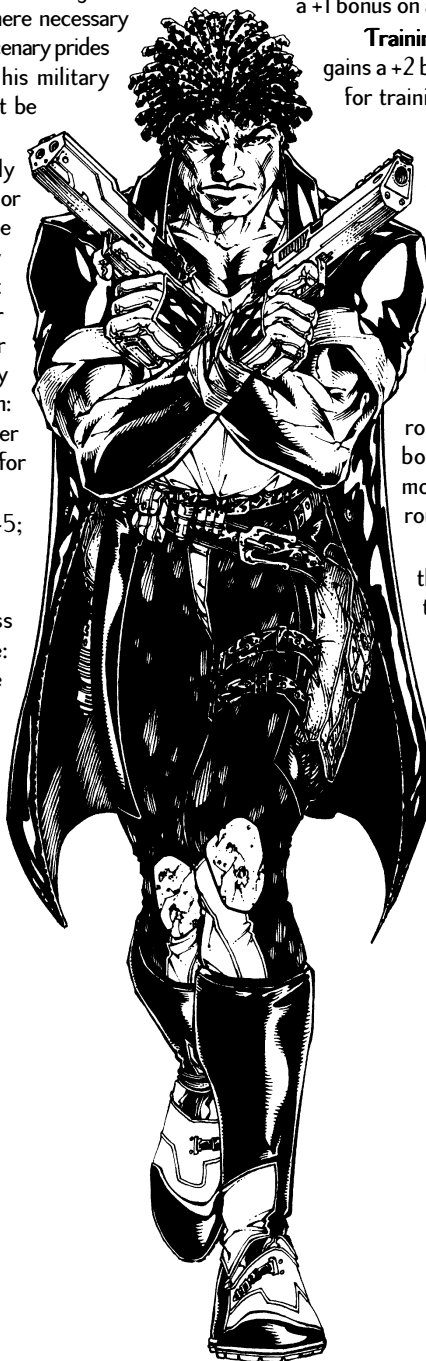


Table 9–11: The Mercenary (Mrc)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                 |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +2             | +0          | +0        | Training focus          |
| 2nd           | +2                | +2       | +3             | +0          | +0        | Training specialization |
| 3rd           | +3                | +3       | +3             | +1          | +1        | Tactical aid            |
| 4th           | +4                | +4       | +4             | +1          | +1        | Defensive position      |
| 5th           | +5                | +5       | +4             | +1          | +1        | Critical strike         |

## Scientist

**Description:** At the end of the 19th century, humans believed that the major problems of science were all but solved. They believed that at the end of the 20th century, too, but the rise of aberrants showed such perceptions to be both quaint and wrong. Scientists in the early 22nd century have no such foolish preconceptions; the discovery of the subquantum stratum, the folding of spacetime, and physical exploration of remote star systems all provide fodder for scientists' infinite curiosity.

**Allegiance:** The days of the great universities and their sky-blue research programs are over. Today, scientific research is funded by Æon, by the orders (particularly Orgotek and ISRA) or by metacorporations. Some nomadic, independently-minded scientists do prowling the spaceways in search of the breakthrough that will make them household names.

### Prerequisites

Intelligence 13 and any three of the following:

Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) 7 ranks,  
Knowledge (noetics) 7 ranks,  
Knowledge (physical sciences) 7 ranks,  
Knowledge (technology) 7 ranks,  
Knowledge (space) 7 ranks or  
Knowledge (xenobiology) 7 ranks.

**Hit Die:** d6.

**Class Skills:** The scientist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (Wis), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language.

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Scientific Prominence (Ex):** At 1st level, the scientist has gained a certain degree of fame within her field, conferring a +2 on any Charisma-related checks to influence researchers or technologists in her field or related fields.

**Scientific Specialty (Ex):** Upon taking this class, the character must choose a scientific specialty. The two primary specialties in modern scientific research are noetics (the study of the subquantum universe and psi abilities) or xenobiology (the study of alien life); GMs may come up with additional specialties. A noetic specialist need not be a psion, but being one does offer benefits to research.

The character gains a +2 bonus on Knowledge checks relating to her specialty; this increases to a +4 bonus at 3rd level and a +6 bonus at 5th level. The specialist also gains a specialty ability, as noted below.

**Noetic Analysis (Noetics):** On a successful DC 15 Intelligence check, a noeticist can discern the type of psi aptitude at work in a given situation (or whether the effect is quantum in origin instead).

**Biosphere Analysis (Xenobiology):** On a successful DC 15 Intelligence check, a xenobiologist can discern whether a given organism is edible, hostile, passively dangerous or intelligent to some degree.

**Research Grant (Ex):** A 2nd-level scientist receives a research grant from a major institution designated by the GM. This provides her with the Deep Pockets feat from the Resources feat tree as long as she provides results to the institution (on average, one breakthrough, advancement or other documented result annually). She gains the benefit of Wealth Beyond Avarice if she has Deep Pockets already.

**Scientific Improvisation (Ex):** Upon reaching 3rd level, the scientist can improvise solutions using common objects and scientific know-how to create inventions in a dramatic situation quickly and cheaply, but with a limited duration.

By combining common objects with a Craft check that corresponds to the function desired, the scientist can build a tool or device to deal with any mundane situation. The DC for the Craft check equals 5 + the purchase DC of the object that most closely matches the desired function. Electronic devices, special tools, weapons, mechanical or biotech devices and more can be built with scientific improvisation. It takes a full-round action for every full 5 points of the object's purchase DC to improvise a device (so, an object with purchase DC 13 takes 2 rounds to make).

Once used, the improvised item lasts a number of rounds equal to the scientist's class level (or until the end of the current encounter, at the GM's discretion). It then breaks down and cannot be repaired. Only objects that can normally be used more than once can be improvised, and they must be existing technology.

**Research Lab (Ex):** At 4th level, the character's research lab takes on nearly mythical proportions, becoming akin to Edison's lab in Menlo Park. This extensive facility confers a +4 circumstance bonus on Knowledge checks relating to her specialty, and a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge checks relating to two other Knowledge categories (chosen at the time this ability is gained). The lab is also equipped with research assistants, as designated by the Retainers feat from the Followers feat tree.

**Scientific Renown (Ex):** At 5th level, the scientist's knowledge and ability put her at the very top of her field. She can treat any other scientist known in the same field as a contact. She also gains any one background feat from one of the following trees: Cipher, Contacts, Devices, Followers, Influence, Resources, Sanctum, Status.

Table 9–12: Scientist (Sci)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                           |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +0                | +1       | +0             | +0          | +2        | Scientific prominence, scientific specialty +2    |
| 2nd           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +0          | +3        | Research grant                                    |
| 3rd           | +1                | +2       | +1             | +1          | +3        | Scientific improvisation, scientific specialty +4 |
| 4th           | +2                | +2       | +1             | +1          | +4        | Research lab                                      |
| 5th           | +2                | +3       | +1             | +1          | +4        | Scientific renown, scientific specialty +6        |

## Space Jockey

**Description:** In the new age of exploration, intrepid adventurers rely as heavily as ever on high technology to get them from place to place. At the same time, new wars are being fought over foreign lands, in the stars, and over the landscapes of strange new worlds. The space jockey provides her comrades with support from behind the controls of a 22nd-century vehicle, be it a starfighter, a VARG, or another craft.

**Allegiance:** Space jockeys are most often found in the service of the Seventh Legion and in the militaries of governments across Earth and beyond. More than one space jockey operates as a VARG pilot in battles against aberrants in the Nebraska wasteland, on Khantze Lu Ge and elsewhere in settled space.

**Prerequisites:** Pilot 10 ranks; Dexterity 15; Device (Gadget) or greater (representing the space jockey's vehicle of choice).

**Hit Die:** d8.

**Class Skills:** The space jockey's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Craft (Int), Computer Use (Int), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

**Safe Escape (Ex):** When a vehicle that the character is in (whether as the driver or as a passenger) is reduced to 0 hit points or otherwise becomes impossible to control, the space jockey can escape from it as a free action. The jockey does not need to make skill checks or worry about any barriers to exit (which may not be the case for anyone else in the situation). The escape may be safe, but there's no guarantee on the landing — say, if ejecting from an exploding starfighter, escaping a critically damaged VARG, jumping from a speeding car or emerging from a sinking submersible, for instance.

**Enhanced Device:** At 2nd level, the space jockey's Device is enhanced from Gadget to Prototype. If the character has a Prototype already, it is enhanced to a Masterpiece. This could be an upgrade to the existing Device or a replacement, as the player and GM prefer.

At 4th level, the Device is enhanced from Prototype to Masterpiece. If it is a Masterpiece already, additional capabilities may be applied at the GM's option.

**Ridiculous Stunt (Ex):** Starting at 3rd level, once per session the space jockey can choose to re-roll any single die roll made while controlling a vehicle. This can be anything, even personal saving throws or weapon damage rolls, so long as it is made while the space jockey is controlling the vehicle. The character must accept the second roll, whatever its result.

**Background Feat:** At 5th level, the space jockey receives a bonus background feat from one of the following feat trees: Allies, Backing, Contacts, Device, Reputation or Resources.



Table 9–13: The Space Jockey (Spj)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special            |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +2          | +0        | Safe escape        |
| 2nd           | +1                | +2       | +0             | +3          | +0        | Enhanced Device I  |
| 3rd           | +2                | +3       | +1             | +3          | +1        | Ridiculous stunt   |
| 4th           | +2                | +4       | +1             | +4          | +1        | Enhanced Device II |
| 5th           | +3                | +5       | +1             | +4          | +1        | Background feat    |

## Technologist

**Description:** The Unity Era is a fabulous age to be a techie. This is the time of minicomps, SI, holograms, and maglev, not to mention biotechnology never before seen on Earth. A technologist isn't an inventor per se; he excels more in combining existing technology in unexpected or unusually efficient ways rather than in blazing new trails of scientific and engineering discovery. A technologist focuses his attention on hardtech or biotech (though only psions truly flourish in biotech design).

**Allegiance:** Not every technologist serves a corporate master; some are independent designers who sell custom eyeballs out of skanky bodegas. Most, though, take the paycheck and security that comes with life as a wageslave to one of the major metacorps.

**Prerequisites:** Intelligence 13, Knowledge (technology) 7 ranks, Craft (electronics) 7 ranks, Craft (mechanical) 7 ranks.

**Hit Die:** d6.

**Class Skills:** The technologist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (Wis), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language.

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Technical Specialty:** Upon taking this class, the character must choose a technical specialty — hardtech or biotech. The character gains a +2 bonus on all Craft and Repair checks relating to his specialty; this increases to a +4 bonus at 4th level.

**Temporary Upgrade (Ex):** If he has hardtech or biotech components (as relevant), a technologist of 1st level or higher can improve a device's performance temporarily. The character makes a Craft check appropriate to the type of device, with the DC depending on the improvement being made; see Table 9–14: Equipment Upgrade.

Completing the upgrade takes a minimum of 1 hour minus 10 minutes per technologist level — so, a 4th-level technologist can complete an upgrade in 20 minutes. The character cannot take 10 or 20 on the Craft check, and the time must be spent regardless of whether the attempt is successful.

If the check succeeds, the upgrade lasts for a number of minutes equal to his technologist level, beginning when the object is first put into use. The device then reverts to its previous state and the technologist rolls to see whether the equipment requires repairs before it can be used again.

**Background Feat:** At 2nd and 4th levels, the technologist may select one background feat whose prerequisites he meets from one of the following feat trees: Cipher, Devices, Followers, Mentor, Resources, Sanctum.

Table 9–14: Equipment Upgrade

| Upgrade Device             | Craft DC | Repair Chance (d%) |
|----------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| +1 equipment bonus         | 15       | 01–25              |
| +2 equipment bonus         | 20       | 01–50              |
| +3 equipment bonus         | 25       | 01–75              |
| <i>Ranged Weapon</i>       |          |                    |
| +1 to damage               | 15       | 01–25              |
| +2 to damage               | 20       | 01–50              |
| +3 to damage               | 25       | 01–75              |
| +5 ft. to range increment  | 15       | 01–25              |
| +10 ft. to range increment | 25       | 01–50              |
| <i>Vehicle</i>             |          |                    |
| +1 on initiative checks    | 20       | 01–25              |
| +1 to handling             | 25       | 01–50              |
| +2 to handling             | 30       | 01–75              |

**Mastercraft (Ex):** At 3rd level, the technologist can create mastercraft objects in his specialty (hardtech or biotech), whether weapons, armor, or certain other types of equipment (computers, electronic devices, psiware devices, etc.).

Building a mastercraft object takes twice as long as building an ordinary object of the same type. The Craft DC is the same as for a normal object of the same type, with the following modification: add +3 to the Craft DC for a +1 object, and add +5 to the Craft DC for a +2 object.

The cost is equal to an ordinary object's purchase DC + twice the mastercraft feature bonus. A technologist can add the mastercraft feature to an existing ordinary object by making the Wealth check and then making the Craft check as though he were constructing the object from scratch.

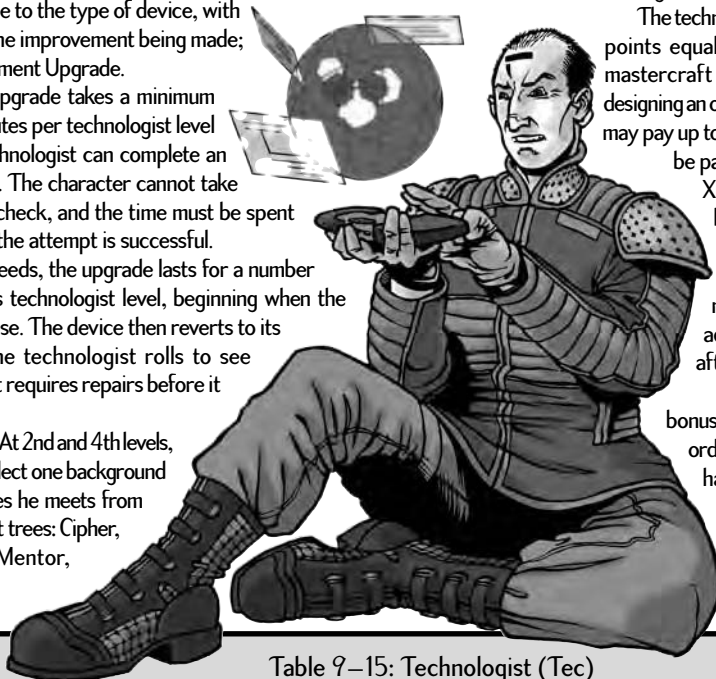
The technologist must also pay a cost in experience points equal to 25 x his technologist level x the mastercraft feature bonus. If the technologist is designing an object for a specific person, that individual may pay up to half the total XP required. The XP must be paid before making the Craft check. If the XP expenditure would drop a character to below the minimum needed for his current level, then the XP can't be paid and the technologist can't use the mastercraft ability until he gains enough additional XP to remain at his current level after the expenditure is made.

A mastercraft object provides a +1 bonus to one of its qualities compared to an ordinary object of the same type (accuracy, handling, etc.).

At 5th level, the technologist can create a mastercraft object that provides up to a +2 bonus.

Table 9–15: Technologist (Tec)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                                   |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +2             | +2          | +0        | Technical specialty +2, temporary upgrade |
| 2nd           | +2                | +1       | +3             | +3          | +0        | Background feat                           |
| 3rd           | +2                | +2       | +3             | +3          | +1        | Mastercraft +1                            |
| 4th           | +3                | +2       | +4             | +4          | +1        | Background feat, technical specialty +4   |
| 5th           | +4                | +3       | +4             | +4          | +1        | Mastercraft +2                            |



## Troubleshooter

**Description:** Big corporations and private organizations have too many high-value assets spread across too large a volume of space to leave their security to amateurs or even to local rentacops. Instead, troubleshooters are called in. A troubleshooter is a jack-of-all-trades; she may need to find discrepancies on an auditor's balance sheet one week, only to have to root out a chromatic infestation on an alien moon the next. It is also not unusual for a troubleshooter to infiltrate rival organizations and gather information or perform sabotage.

**Allegiance:** Most troubleshooters are affiliated with a specific corporation or organization. Still, there are independent troubleshooters who run the shadows from one job to another.

**Prerequisites:** Bluff 7 ranks; Computer Use 7 ranks; Gather Information 7 ranks; Knowledge (business) 7 ranks.

**Hit Die:** d6.

**Class Skills:** The troubleshooter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, popular culture, streetwise, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

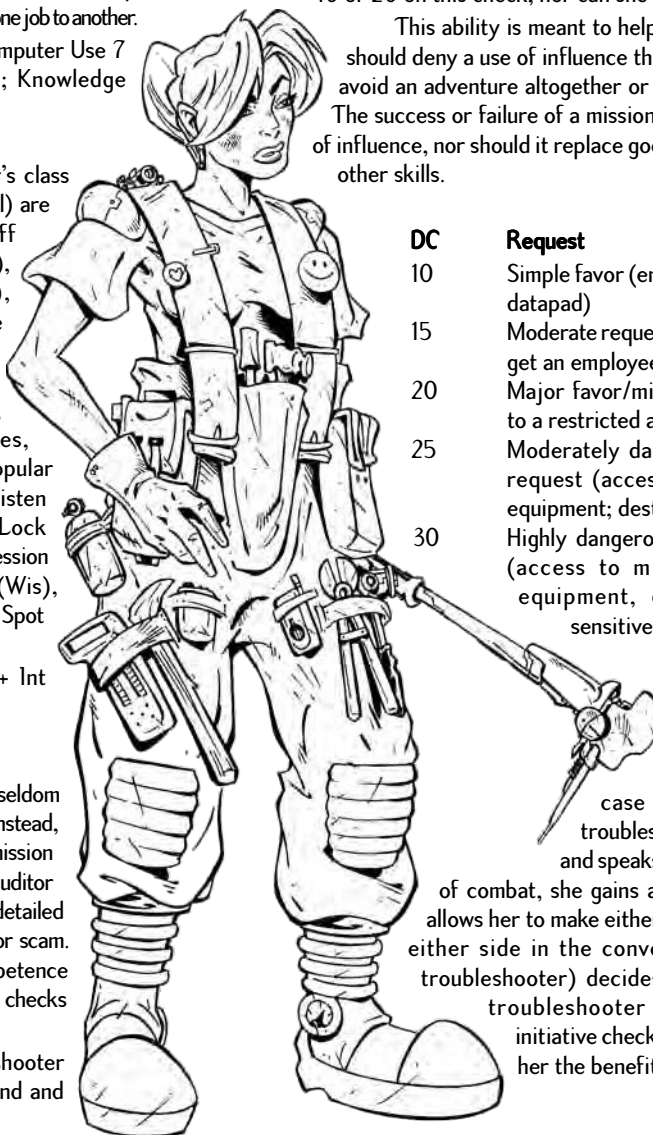
**Incognito (Ex):** A troubleshooter seldom reveals her true calling when on the job. Instead, she assumes a role best-suited to the mission at hand — whether acting as an official auditor for her employer or putting on more detailed masquerades as part of an infiltration or scam. A troubleshooter receives a +2 competence bonus on Bluff, Disguise and Profession checks needed to maintain this façade.

**Background Feat:** The troubleshooter receives a free background feat at 2nd and

4th levels from any of the following background feat trees: Ally, Cipher, Citizenship, Contacts, Resources, Sanctum. She must qualify for the feat in all other regards.

**Influence (Ex):** A 3rd-level troubleshooter is skilled at using attitude and demeanor rather than official authority to learn what she needs. Once per encounter on a successful influence check (d20 + Charisma modifier [if any] + troubleshooter level), she can gain important information from a target without going through the time and trouble of doing a lot of research. This can also be used to acquire the loan of equipment or documents, or to receive other minor assistance. The GM sets the DC based on what the troubleshooter is requesting (see below). The character cannot take 10 or 20 on this check, nor can she retry the check.

This ability is meant to help advance the plot; the GM should deny a use of influence that enables the character to avoid an adventure altogether or otherwise derail the story. The success or failure of a mission shouldn't hinge on the use of influence, nor should it replace good roleplaying or the use of other skills.



| DC | Request                                                                                                                            |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Simple favor (entry into a facility, borrow a datapad)                                                                             |
| 15 | Moderate request (view private documents, get an employee's address)                                                               |
| 20 | Major favor/minor illegal request (access to a restricted area or equipment)                                                       |
| 25 | Moderately dangerous/expensive/illegal request (access to secure information, equipment; destruction of documents)                 |
| 30 | Highly dangerous/expensive/illegal favor (access to military-grade/prototype equipment, destruction of secure/sensitive documents) |

**React First (Ex):** By 3rd level, a troubleshooter is always ready to take action in case things go awry. When a troubleshooter makes contact with and speaks to others prior to the start of combat, she gains a free readied action. This allows her to make either a move or attack action if either side in the conversation (other than the troubleshooter) decides to start hostilities. The troubleshooter gets to act before any initiative checks are made, in effect giving her the benefit of surprise.

Table 9–16: Troubleshooter (Tro)

| Psychic Level | Base Attack Bonus | AC Bonus | Fortitude Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special                |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|
| 1st           | +1                | +1       | +0             | +2          | +2        | Incognito              |
| 2nd           | +2                | +2       | +0             | +3          | +3        | Background feat        |
| 3rd           | +2                | +2       | +1             | +3          | +3        | Influence, react first |
| 4th           | +3                | +3       | +1             | +4          | +4        | Background feat        |
| 5th           | +4                | +4       | +1             | +4          | +4        | Sabotage               |

**Sabotage (Ex):** A 5th-level troubleshooter can subvert an organization's procedures, whether by sowing distrust among its members or sabotaging actual systems (or some combination thereof). The character makes a check with the skill that the GM deems most appropriate to the method of sabotage (in general, Bluff for dealing with personnel and Computer Use or Repair for dealing with systems). The DC depends on the scope of sabotage the troubleshooter is striving for. If successful, she shuts down or otherwise cripples the organization on the scope desired — anything from employee arguments to conflicting orders to system crashes, as determined by the troubleshooter's initial desire and the GM's discretion. Further, no direct evidence points to her meddling. The sabotage lasts for one hour, plus one additional hour for every 5 full points by which the troubleshooter exceeds the DC.

A troubleshooter can also use this ability to negate sabotage enacted by others. The check is handled in the same fashion; on a successful roll, the troubleshooter confirms that sabotage was performed and reduces its duration by one half for every 5 full

points by which the troubleshooter exceeds the DC. This ability cannot counteract disruptions that are not the result of active sabotage.

**DC**

15

20

25

30

**Scope of Sabotage**

Small organization with a single division/location, single department of an organization with multiple divisions/locations.

Mid-sized organization with a single location, multiple departments/regional scope of an organization with multiple divisions/locations.

Large organization with a single location, all departments/regional scope of an organization with multiple divisions/locations.

All divisions/locations of an organization.

## Skills

All the existing skills that follow function in the same way as described in Chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook*. However, the categories they cover require adjustment for the time frame in which **Trinity** is set. Following this section are six new skills — Computer Use, Demolitions, Drive, Investigate, Pilot, Repair, Research — that likewise reflect the time. The Spellcraft and Use Magic Device skills are not used in **Trinity**.

### Craft

**Trinity** adds to the Craft skill options, as described below. Note that some Craft skills may require training. Also, there is no Craft (alchemy); for the creation of drugs, use Craft (chemical). Table 9-17: Craft Examples lists sample tasks and related DCs.

The DCs of all Craft checks involving alien technology (qin, chromatic, etc.) are increased by +2, due to unfamiliar techniques and principles; even more advanced technology may require an even higher DC at the GM's discretion.

**Craft (biotech):** Required to build or repair biotech equipment (see Chapter Thirteen: Technology). Only a psychic character can build or repair psiware. (Trained use only.)

**Craft (chemical):** Required to mix chemicals to create acids, bases, explosives and poisonous substances. (Trained use only.)

**Craft (electronic):** This allows a character to build or repair electronic equipment such as computers, radios or other communications equipment. (Trained use only.)

**Craft (mechanical):** With this skill, a character can build mechanical devices from scratch, including engines and engine parts, weapons, armor and other gadgets. (Trained use only.)

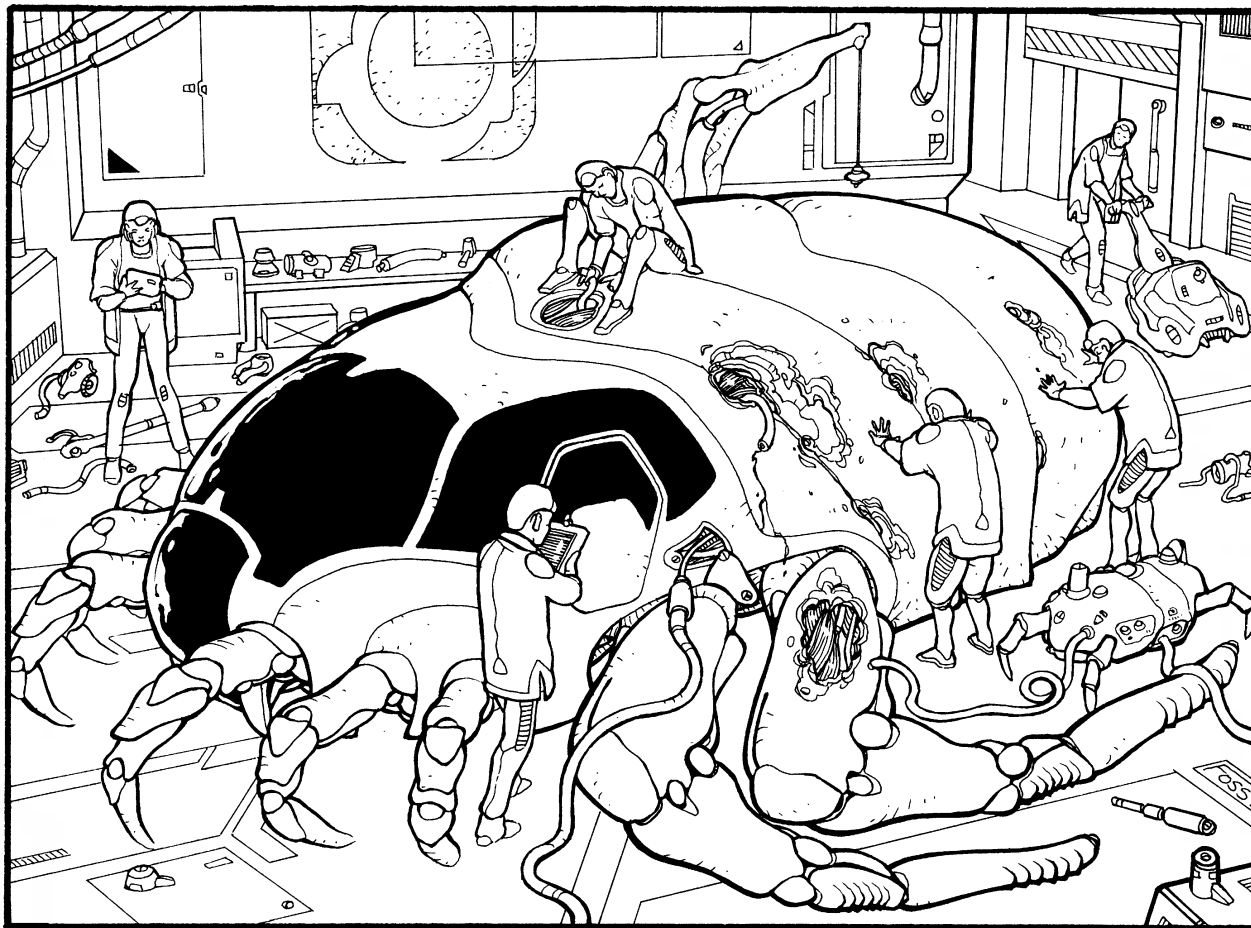
**Craft (pharmaceutical):** Required to compound medicinal drugs to aid in recovery from treatable illnesses. The proper medicinal drug

gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of a disease. The DC to create a medicinal drug to combat a given illness is equal to the disease's Fortitude save DC + 5. (Diagnosis is made using the Heal skill.) (Trained use only.)

**Craft (structural):** This allows a character to build wooden, concrete or metal structures from scratch (including bookcases, desks, walls, houses and so forth), and includes such handyman skills as plumbing, house painting, drywall, laying cement and building cabinets.

Table 9-17: Craft Examples

| Task                                           | Craft Skill           | DC  |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----|
| Acid, potent<br>(2d6 splash damage)            | Chemical              | 20  |
| Explosive, simple<br>(2d6 damage within 5 ft.) | Chemical              | 15  |
| Format psiware                                 | Biotech               | 15  |
| Electronic timer                               | Electronic            | 15  |
| Electronic detonator                           | Electronic            | 20  |
| Tripwire trap                                  | Mechanical            | 15  |
| Engine component                               | Mechanical            | 20  |
| Solar sail                                     | Mechanical            | 30  |
| False wall                                     | Structural            | 15  |
| Catapult                                       | Structural            | 20  |
| House                                          | Structural            | 30  |
| Talented amateur work                          | Visual Art or Writing | 10  |
| Professional work                              | Visual Art or Writing | 20  |
| Masterwork                                     | Visual Art or Writing | 30+ |



**Craft (visual art):** With this skill, a character can create paintings or drawings or sculpture, take photographs, use a movie camera, or in some other way create a work of visual art.

**Craft (writing):** This allows a character to create short stories, novels, scripts and screenplays, newspaper articles and columns, and similar works of writing.

## Knowledge

Knowledge skills function as written in the *Player's Handbook*, except that characters select from the following categories:

**Art:** Fine arts and graphic arts, including art history and artistic techniques. Antiques, modern art, photography and performance art forms such as music and dance, among others.

**Behavioral Sciences:** Psychology, sociology and criminology.

**Business:** Business procedures, investment strategies and corporate structures. Bureaucratic procedures and how to navigate them.

**Civics:** Law, legislation, litigation, and legal rights and obligations. Political and governmental institutions and processes.

**Current Events:** Recent happenings in the news, sports, politics, entertainment and foreign affairs.

**Earth and Life Sciences:** Biology, botany, genetics, geography, geology and paleontology. Medicine and forensics.

**History:** Events, personalities and cultures of the past. Archaeology and antiquities.

**Noetics:** Study of the subquantum stratum and its relationship to the rest of the universe.

**Physical Sciences:** Astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics and engineering.

**Popular Culture:** Popular music and personalities, genre films and books, urban legends, and science fiction, among others.

**Space:** Stellar navigation, spacecraft, human colonies.

**Streetwise:** Street and urban culture, local underworld personalities and events.

**Tactics:** Techniques and strategies for disposing and maneuvering forces in combat.

**Technology:** Current developments in cutting-edge devices, as well as the background necessary to identify various technological devices.

**Theology and Philosophy:** Liberal arts, ethics, philosophical concepts; and the study of religious faith, practice and experience.

**Xenobiology:** The study of the patterns from which alien life arises, and alien life-forms themselves.

## Perform

Characters select from the following categories for Perform.

**Act:** The character is capable of performing drama, comedy or action-oriented roles with some level of skill.

**Bang:** The character is talented at this cross-disciplinary mélange of extemporaneous performance and music.

**Dance:** The character is capable of performing rhythmic and patterned bodily movements to music.

**Keyboards:** The character can play keyboard musical instruments, such as piano and organ.

**Percussion Instruments:** The character can play percussion musical instruments, such as drums, cymbals, triangle, xylophone and tambourine.

**Sing:** The character has a talent for producing musical tones with his voice.

**Stringed Instruments:** The character can play stringed musical instruments, such as banjo, guitar, harp, lute, sitar and violin.

**Wind Instruments:** The character can play wind musical instruments, such as flute, bugle, trumpet, tuba, bagpipes and trombone.

Also, since **Trinity** uses a DC rating for wealth, Perform requires a different method for determining how much money a character can make from a single performance. (See Chapter Thirteen: Technology for the Wealth system in action.)

A character with Wealth bonus of +0 gains a +1 bonus if she succeeds at a DC 15 Perform check for a single performance. A character with a Wealth bonus from +1 to +20 gains a +1 bonus if she succeeds at five consecutive DC 15 Perform checks (each indicating a single performance) or one DC 20 Perform check for a single performance. A character with Wealth bonus +21 or higher gains a +1 bonus if she succeeds at 10 consecutive DC 20 Perform checks (each indicating a single performance) or one DC 25 Perform check for a single performance.

A Perform check result of at least 10 but lower than the DC required indicates that the character simply isn't performing well enough to draw a significant crowd. The character earns enough to get by, but that's it.

## Speak Language

The languages listed in the *Player's Handbook* do not exist in the Trinity Universe. There are thousands of languages to choose from. A few are listed here, sorted into their general language groups. This list is not exhaustive, and languages in listed groups are shown for reference; a character gets a whole language group each time he buys a rank in Speak Language.

Languages noted with asterisks are ancient or alien in origin, spoken by few individuals indeed. A character should have a plausible reason to know such tongues. Speak Language functions as noted otherwise in the *Player's Handbook*.

**African:** Berber, Gikuyu, Swahili

**Algic:** Algonkin, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Shawnee.

**Armenian:** Armenian.

**Athabaskan:** Apache, Chipewyan, Navaho.

**Attic:** Ancient Greek\*, Greek.

**Baltic:** Latvian, Lithuanian.

**Celtic:** Gaelic (Irish), Gaelic (Scots), Welsh.

**Chinese:** Cantonese, Mandarin.

**Chroma:** Chromatic (alien; non-chromatics require a psi or mechanical light-emitting device to "speak" this light-based form of communication).\*

**Finno-Lappic:** Estonian, Finnish, Lapp.

**Germanic:** Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, English, Flemish, German, Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, Yiddish.

**Hamo-Semitic:** Coptic\*, Middle Egyptian\*.

**Indic:** Hindi, Punjabi, Sanskrit\*, Urdu.

**Iranian:** Farsi, Pashto.

**Japanese:** Japanese.

**Korean:** Korean.

**Qin:** Qin (alien).\*

**Romance:** French, Italian, Latin\*, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish.

**Semitic:** Akkadian (aka Babylonian)\*, Ancient Hebrew\*, Arabic, Aramaic\*, Hebrew.

**Slavic:** Belorussian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Ukrainian.

**Tibeto-Burman:** Burmese, Sherpa, Tibetan.

**Turkic:** Azerbaijani, Turkish, Uzbek.

**Ugric:** Hungarian (aka Magyar).

## New Skills

### Computer Use (Int)

Computer Use covers everything from a character working on his personal computer to hacking into a site on the OpNet to operating a spaceship's sensors. A site can range from a single computer to a corporate network connecting terminals and data archives throughout near space. Some sites can be accessed via the OpNet; others are not connected to an outside network (the user must access one of the site's computer terminals physically).

A system administrator (sysadmin) oversees each site and maintains its security. A character is the system administrator of his personal computer. A larger site can have more than one system administrator, often with one on duty at all times. The sysadmin is often the only person with access to all of a site's functions and data.

Working on a computer system is called a session. The session ends when the character stops accessing the site; a new session begins if he goes back.

**Check:** No check is required for most computer operations (though a Research check may be needed; see the Research skill description). Searching an unfamiliar network for a particular file, writing computer programs, altering existing programs to perform differently (better or worse), and breaking through computer security are difficult enough to require skill checks.

**Conduct Active Sensor Scan:** Using a vehicle's sensors to analyze a target in sensory range requires a DC 15 Computer Use check. At the GM's discretion, a -5 penalty or greater applies when scanning over a vast distance (e.g., across a star system) or during some form of disturbance (e.g., solar flare interference).

**Find File:** Search for files or data on an unfamiliar system. This covers finding files on private systems with which the character is not familiar (finding public information on the OpNet instead requires a Research check). The size of the site and the time required determine the check DC.

| Size of Site              | DC | Time       |
|---------------------------|----|------------|
| Personal computer         | 10 | 1 round    |
| Small office network      | 15 | 2 rounds   |
| Large office network      | 20 | 1 minute   |
| Massive corporate network | 25 | 10 minutes |

**Defeat Security (trained only):** The DC to defeat computer security depends on the quality of the security program, as noted on the chart below. Failing the check by 5 or more causes the security system to alert its administrator to an unauthorized entry; the sysadmin or a security agent may attempt to identify the intruder or cut off his access.

Succeeding at the check by 10 or more cancels the need for subsequent security checks at that site until the character's current session ends. Otherwise, a character may have to defeat security at more than one stage (see "Computer Hacking").

| Security Rating | Level of Security | Security DC |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 0               | None              | 10          |
| 1               | Minimum           | 20          |
| 2               | Average           | 25          |
| 3               | Exceptional       | 35          |
| 4               | Maximum           | 40          |

**Defend Security:** A site's sysadmin can defend it against intruders if alerted, either to cut off the intruder's access or to try and identify the intruder. Either effort requires succeeding at an opposed Computer Use check against the intruder.

Cutting off an intruder's access (thereby ending her session) takes a full round. The sysadmin can cut off access without fail by shutting the site down. (This can be difficult and time-consuming if dealing with a large site with many computers, or with computers that control functions that can't be interrupted.)

Identifying the intruder supplies the site she is operating from (or the computer's owner if it's a single computer). This requires one minute, during which the intruder continues accessing the sysadmin's site. The sysadmin fails if the intruder's session ends before the check is finished.

**Degrade Programming:** A character can destroy or alter applications to make using the computer harder or impossible (see chart for DCs). Crashing a computer shuts it down; its user can restart it without making a skill check (a restart takes 1 minute). Destroying programming makes the computer unusable until the programming is repaired. Damaging programming imposes a -4 penalty on all Computer Use checks made with the computer (this can be preferable to destroying the programming, since the user might remain unaware that anything is wrong with her system).

Fixing degraded programming requires 1 hour and a Computer Use check against a DC equal to the DC for degrading it + 5.

| Scope of Alteration <sup>1</sup> | DC | Time       |
|----------------------------------|----|------------|
| Crash computer                   | 10 | 1 minute   |
| Destroy programming              | 15 | 10 minutes |
| Damage programming               | 20 | 10 minutes |

<sup>1</sup> Degrading the programming of multiple computers at a single site adds +2 to the DC for each additional computer.

**Encrypt/Decrypt Transmission (trained only):** A character who wishes to send an encrypted transmission makes an opposed Computer Use check against anyone attempting to intercept or decrypt it. The opposing individual gains a +10 bonus on the check if the encryption uses a cipher known to her.

**Jam Transmission (trained only):** A character can jam or otherwise disrupt a transmission to or from a given target. An opposed Computer Use check between the jammer and the sender or recipient (as appropriate) determines whether the message gets through. Jamming an unmanned computer requires a successful DC 15 Computer Use check.

**Send Transmission:** Routine communications (e.g., hailing a nearby craft, using a subquantum transceiver) require a successful DC 10 Computer Use check. Communications sent over extreme distances (e.g., between star systems) are subject to distortion and delay, applying a -5 or greater penalty to the check at the GM's discretion.

**Write Program (trained only):** A character can create a program to help with a specific task, defined as one type of operation (granting a +2 circumstance bonus when the program is used). Writing a program takes one hour and requires a successful check against DC 20.

**Operate Remote Device:** Many devices are computer-operated via remote links. A character with access to the computer that controls such systems can shut them off or change their operating parameters (see the chart below). Failing the check by 5 or more alerts the sysadmin to unauthorized use of the equipment.

## Computer Hacking

Breaking into a secure computer or network is often called hacking and involves several steps:

**Covering Tracks:** On a successful DC 20 Computer Use check, a character can alter his identifying information. This is an optional step that imposes a -5 penalty on any attempt made to identify the character if his activity is detected.

**Access the Site:** There are two ways to do this: over the OpNet or physically.

**OpNet Access:** This requires two Computer Use checks. The first check (DC 10) is needed to find the site. The GM may increase the DC if the site is programmed in a foreign language or is located in an obscure or hard-to-reach OpNet route. The second check is needed to defeat computer security (see Computer Use). The character accesses the site once he succeeds at both checks.

**Physical Access:** This involves working at the computer physically or via a direct connection. If the site being hacked is not connected to the OpNet, physical access is about the only way to access it. Getting to the computer may require a variety of other skill checks.

**Locate What You're Looking For:** Use "find file" (under Computer Use) to locate the data (or application, or remote device) the character wants.

**Defeat File Security:** Many networks have additional file security. If that's the case, another check is required to defeat computer security.

**Do Your Stuff:** If the character just wants to look at records, no additional check is needed. (Downloading data is possible, although that often takes from several rounds to several minutes depending on the amount of information.) Altering or deleting records may require additional checks to defeat computer security. Other operations can be carried out according to the Computer Use skill description.

| Type of Operation                                               | DC  | Time                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------|
| Shut down passive remote (including cameras and door locks)     | 20  | 1 round per remote  |
| Shut down active remote (including motion detectors and alarms) | 25  | 1 round per remote  |
| Reset parameters                                                | 30  | 1 minute per remote |
| Change passcodes                                                | 25  | 1 minute            |
| Hide evidence of alteration                                     | +10 | 1 minute            |
| Minimum security                                                | -5  | —                   |
| Exceptional security                                            | +10 | —                   |
| Maximum security                                                | +15 | —                   |

**Special:** A character can take 10 when using Computer Use or even take 20 in some cases (though not in those that involve a penalty for failure). A character cannot take 20 to defeat computer security or defend security.

**Time:** Conducting an active sensor scan and sending/jamming a transmission are move actions; other Computer Use requires at least a full-round action. The GM may determine that some tasks require several rounds, a few minutes, or longer, as described above.

## Demolitions (Int; Trained Only)

The character is familiar with setting and disarming high explosives, including dynamite, plastique and simple gunpowder bombs, as well as improvised explosives and even doomsday devices.

**Check:** Setting a simple explosive to blow up at a certain spot doesn't require a check, but connecting and setting a detonator does. Also, placing an explosive for maximum effect against a structure calls for a check, as does disarming an explosive device.

**Set Detonator:** Most explosives require a detonator to go off. Connecting a detonator to an explosive requires a DC 10 Demolitions check. Failure means that the explosive fails to go off as planned. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off as the detonator is being installed.

A character can make an explosive difficult to disarm. To do so, the character chooses the disarm DC before making her check to set the detonator (it must be higher than 10). The character's DC to set the detonator is equal to the disarm DC.

**Place Explosive Device:** Placing an explosive against a fixed structure (a stationary, unattended, inanimate object) can maximize the damage dealt by exploiting vulnerabilities in the structure's construction.

The GM makes the check (so that the character doesn't know how well he has done). On a result of 15 or higher, the explosive deals double damage to the structure against which it is placed. On a result of 25 or higher, it deals triple damage to the structure. In all cases, it deals normal damage to all other targets within its burst radius.

**Disarm Explosive Device:** Disarming an explosive that has been set to go off requires a Demolitions check. The DC is usually 10, unless the person who set the detonator chose a higher disarm DC. If the character fails the check, she does not disarm the explosive. If the character fails by more than 5, the explosive goes off.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when using the Demolitions skill, but can't take 20. A character with the Nimble Fingers feat and at least 1 rank in this skill gets a +2 bonus on all Demolitions checks.

Making an explosive requires the Craft (chemical) skill. Making an electronic detonator requires the Craft (electronic) skill. (See Table 9-17: Craft Examples, above.)

**Time:** Setting a detonator is usually a full-round action. Placing an explosive device takes 1 minute or more, depending on the scope of the job.

## Drive (Dex)

This skill allows a character to drive a surface vehicle (car, motorcycle, boat, truck).

**Check:** Routine tasks, such as ordinary driving, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists (such as inclement weather or an icy surface), or when the character is driving during a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, or trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). When driving, the character can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts. (See Chapter Fourteen: Drama, "Pursuit" for more details.)

**Try Again?:** Most driving checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when driving, but can't take 20.

**Time:** A Drive check is a move action.

## Investigate (Int; Trained Only)

Investigate encompasses a number of crime analysis techniques, including antiquated technology like fingerprinting and ballistics, and newer techniques like DNA matching and even psi prints. It also involves more than passing familiarity with the art of deduction.



**Check:** A character uses Search to discover clues and Investigate to analyze them. If the character has access to a crime lab, he uses the Investigate skill to collect samples for the lab. The result of the Investigate check provides bonuses or penalties to further analysis.

**Analyze Clue:** The character can make a DC 15 Investigate check to apply forensics knowledge to a clue. The check DC is modified by the time that has elapsed since the clue was left, and whether or not the scene was disturbed.

| DC Modifier | Circumstances                            |
|-------------|------------------------------------------|
| +2          | Every day since event (max modifier +10) |
| +5          | Scene is outdoors                        |
| +2          | Scene disturbed slightly                 |
| +4          | Scene disturbed moderately               |
| +6          | Scene disturbed extremely                |

**Collect Evidence:** The character can collect and prepare evidentiary material for a lab. On a successful DC 15 Investigate check, the character collects a usable piece of evidence. If the character fails the check by less than 5, a crime lab analysis can be done, but the analyst takes a -5 penalty on any necessary check. If the character fails by 5 or more, the analysis cannot be done. On the other hand, if the character succeeds by 10 or more, the analyst gains a +2 circumstance bonus on her checks.

**Try Again?:** Analyzing a clue again doesn't add new insight unless another clue is introduced. Evidence collected cannot be recollected, unless there is more of it to take.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when making an Investigate check, but cannot take 20. The Investigate skill does not provide the character with evidentiary items. It simply allows the character to collect items he has found in a manner that best aids in analysis later.

**Time:** Analyzing a clue is a full-round action. Collecting evidence generally takes 1d4 minutes per object.

### Pilot (Dex; Trained Only)

This skill allows a character to fly and land an aircraft or spacecraft, or maneuver a submersible.

**Check:** Typical piloting tasks don't require checks. Checks are required during combat, for special maneuvers, in other extreme circumstances, or when the pilot wants to attempt something outside the normal parameters of the vehicle. When piloting, the character can attempt simple maneuvers and stunts (actions in which the pilot attempts to do something complex very quickly or in a limited space).

Each vehicle's description includes a handling modifier that applies to Pilot checks made by the operator of the vehicle.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when making a Pilot check, but can't take 20.

**Time:** A Pilot check is a move action.

### Repair (Int; Trained Only)

This skill allows trained characters to repair complex electronic or mechanical devices ranging from antique wristwatches to a spacecraft's scanning array or even a biotech crawler.

**Check:** Most Repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices. The GM sets the DC. In general, simple repairs have a DC of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a DC of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete. Making repairs also involves a monetary cost when spare parts or new components are needed, represented by a Wealth check. If the GM decides this isn't necessary for the type of repair the character is attempting, then no Wealth check is needed.

| Task<br>(Example)                                             | Purchase<br>DC | Repair<br>DC | Repair<br>Time |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| Simple (tool,<br>simple weapon)                               | 4              | 10           | 1 min.         |
| Moderate (mechanical<br>or electronic component)              | 7              | 15           | 10 min.        |
| Complex (mechanical<br>or electronic device)                  | 10             | 20           | 1 hour         |
| Advanced (cutting-edge<br>mechanical or<br>electronic device) | 13             | 25           | 10 hours       |

**Jury-Rig:** A character can attempt jury-rigged, or temporary, repairs. This reduces the purchase DC by 3 and the Repair check DC by 5, and allows the character to make the checks in as little as a full-round action. However, a jury-rigged repair only fixes a single problem with each check, and the repair only lasts until the end of the current scene or encounter. The jury-rigged object must be repaired fully thereafter.

A character can also use jury-rig to hot-wire a car or jump-start an engine or electronic device. The DC for this is at least 15, and it can be higher depending on the presence of security devices. Jury-rigging can be used untrained.

**Try Again?:** Yes, though in some specific cases, the GM may decide that a failed Repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks.

**Special:** A character can take 10 or take 20 on a Repair check. When making a Repair check to accomplish a jury-rig repair, a character can't take 20.

Repair requires an electrical tool kit, a mechanical tool kit, or a multipurpose tool, depending on the task. If the character does not have the appropriate tools, he takes a -4 penalty on the check.

Craft (mechanical) or Craft (electronic) can provide a +2 synergy bonus on Repair checks made for mechanical or electronic devices.

**Time:** See the table for guidelines. A character can make a jury-rig repair as a full-round action, but the work only lasts until the end of the current encounter.

## Research (Int)

The Research skill allows a character to use libraries, metacorp or order resources, and newspaper archives to learn obscure or forgotten information about a given topic. Research is often quite time-consuming; it is the specialty of academics.

**Check:** Researching a topic takes time, skill and some luck. The GM determines how obscure a particular topic is (the more obscure, the higher the DC) and what kind of information might be available depending on where the character is conducting her research.

Information ranges from general to protected. Given enough time and a successful skill check, the character gets a general idea about a given topic. This assumes that no obvious reasons exist why such information would be unavailable, and that the character has a way to acquire restricted or protected information.

The higher the check result, the better and more complete the information. If the character wants to discover a specific fact, date, map or similar bit of information, add +5 to +15 to the DC.

**Try Again?:** Yes.

**Special:** A character can take 10 or take 20 on a Research check.

**Time:** A Research check takes 1d4 hours.

**T**rinity is not a fantasy setting, but many of the feats from the *Player's Handbook* are suitable for this game. Table 10–1: Feats lists the general feats available to any character. Additionally, **Trinity** includes background feats, which represent a character's connection to the rest of the world and facets of his history. Last is a small group of psi feats available to characters with the psychic template.

You gain feats through level progression as normal (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 5: Feats, "Acquiring Feats"). You may use regular feat slots to purchase additional background feats. If you have the psychic template, you may use regular feat slots to purchase psychic feats.

## General Feats

### Advanced Firearms Proficiency [General]

You are skilled in the operation of submachine guns and light machine guns.

**Prerequisite:** Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Benefit:** You suffer no penalty when firing a personal firearm on autofire (the gun must have an autofire setting).

**Normal:** Characters without this feat take a –4 penalty on attack rolls made with personal firearms set on autofire.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Archaic Weapons Proficiency [General]

Whether you're a practicing martial artist or took fencing classes in college, you are familiar with archaic weapons such as spears and swords.

**Benefit:** You take no penalty on attack rolls when using any kind of archaic weapon.

**Normal:** A character without this feat suffers a –4 penalty when making attacks with archaic weapons.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Brawl [General]

You have a lot of experience in fistfights, whether from boxing experience or a hard life on the street.

**Benefit:** When making an unarmed attack, you receive a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls and inflict (1d6 + Strength modifier) points of nonlethal damage.

**Normal:** Unarmed attacks normally deal (1d3 + Strength modifier) points of nonlethal damage.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Combat Martial Arts [General]

You've learned an established style of unarmed combat, whether it's the down-and-dirty close-combat training of the military or a formalized martial art.

**Prerequisite:** Base attack bonus +1.

**Benefit:** With an unarmed strike, you inflict (1d4 + the character's Strength modifier) points of lethal or nonlethal damage (choose with each strike). Your unarmed attacks count as armed — opponents do not get attacks of opportunity when you attack them unarmed. You may make attacks of opportunity against opponents who provoke such attacks.

**Normal:** Without this feat, a character deals (1d3 + Strength modifier) points of nonlethal damage. Unarmed attacks provoke attacks of opportunity, and unarmed combatants cannot make attacks of opportunity.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Defensive Martial Arts [General]

You prefer that others keep their hands to themselves.

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class against melee attacks.

**Special:** A condition that makes a character lose his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class also makes him lose dodge bonuses. Also, dodge bonuses stack, unlike most other types of bonuses.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Double Tap [General]

You have a steady hand and a quick trigger finger, and have learned the method of placing two shots on your target in rapid succession, as favored by police and military organizations.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot.

**Benefit:** When using a semiautomatic firearm with at least two bullets loaded, you may fire two bullets as a single attack against a single target. You receive a –2 penalty on this attack, but inflict an additional die of damage appropriate to the weapon with a successful hit. Using this feat fires two bullets, and can only be used if the weapon has two bullets in it.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Drive-By Attack [General]

From military or gang experience, you can adjust your shooting style to account for the motion of a car, boat or plane.

**Benefit:** You take no vehicle speed penalty when making an attack while in a moving vehicle. If you are the driver, you can take your attack action to make an attack at any point along the vehicle's movement.

**Normal:** When attacking from a moving vehicle, a character takes a penalty based on the vehicle's speed. Passengers can ready an action to make an attack when the vehicle reaches a particular location, but the driver must make his attack action either before or after the vehicle's movement.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Escapist [General]

You are almost impossible to keep locked up.

**Prerequisite:** Search 6 ranks.

**Benefit:** Once per session on a successful DC 20 Search check, you can find your way out of nearly any enclosed space (jail cell, dead end alley, meat locker, basement) via some mundane manner of escape (loose bars, an air shaft, a rusted grate, a previously unseen alleyway, etc). This feat does not work against a secure space designed by a psychic character.

### Exotic Firearms Proficiency [General]

From military or other unusual experience, you have been exposed to heavy weaponry. Choose a weapon type from the following list: cannons, heavy machine guns, mortars.

**Prerequisites:** Personal Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Firearms Proficiency.

**Benefit:** You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

**Normal:** A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

**Special:** A character can take this feat up to three times, each time selecting a different weapon group. A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

Table 10–1: Feats

## General Feats

**Player's Handbook**

Acrobatic  
 Agile  
 Alertness  
 Animal Affinity  
 Armor Proficiency (light)<sup>1</sup>  
 Athletic  
 Blind-Fight<sup>1</sup>  
 Cleave<sup>1</sup>  
 Combat Expertise<sup>1</sup>  
 Combat Reflexes<sup>1</sup>  
 Deceitful  
 Deft Hands  
 Diehard  
 Diligent  
 Dodge<sup>1</sup>  
 Endurance  
 Far Shot<sup>1</sup>  
 Great Cleave<sup>1</sup>  
 Great Fortitude  
 Greater Two-Weapon Fighting<sup>1</sup>  
 Greater Weapon Focus<sup>1</sup>  
 Greater Weapon Specialization<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Bull Rush<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Critical<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Disarm<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Feint<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Grapple<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Initiative<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Overrun<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Precise Shot<sup>1</sup>

## Background Feats

**Ally**

Loyal Friend  
 Boon Companion  
 Band of Heroes

**Backing**

Company Man  
 Boss  
 In Charge

**Cipher**

Shadowy Past  
 Secret Life  
 Mystery Man

**Citizenship**

Open Door  
 Regional Pass  
 Global Citizen

## Psi Feats

Auxiliary Power  
 Combat Manifestation  
 Delay Effect  
 Enhanced Attunement

**Player's Handbook**

Improved Sunder<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Trip<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Two-Weapon Fighting<sup>1</sup>  
 Investigator  
 Iron Will  
 Lightning Reflexes  
 Mobility<sup>1</sup>  
 Negotiator  
 Nimble Fingers  
 Persuasive  
 Point Blank Shot<sup>1</sup>  
 Power Attack<sup>1</sup>  
 Precise Shot<sup>1</sup>  
 Quick Draw<sup>1</sup>  
 Rapid Shot<sup>1</sup>  
 Run<sup>1</sup>  
 Self-Sufficient  
 Shot on the Run<sup>1</sup>  
 Skill Focus  
 Spring Attack<sup>1</sup>  
 Stealthy  
 Stunning Fist  
 Toughness<sup>1</sup>  
 Track  
 Two-Weapon Defense<sup>1</sup>  
 Weapon Finesse<sup>1</sup>  
 Weapon Focus<sup>1</sup>  
 Weapon Specialization<sup>1</sup>  
 Whirlwind Attack<sup>1</sup>

**Contacts**

Well-connected  
 Information Broker  
 Kingpin

**Device**

Gadget  
 Prototype  
 Masterpiece

**Followers**

Retainers  
 Troops  
 Legions

**Influence**

Celebrity  
 Luminary  
 Icon

Greater Auxiliary Power  
 Hide Display  
 High Tolerance  
 Improved Psi Recovery

**Trinity**

Advanced Firearms Proficiency<sup>1</sup>  
 Archaic Weapon Proficiency<sup>1,2</sup>  
 Brawl<sup>1</sup>  
 Combat Martial Arts<sup>1</sup>  
 Defensive Martial Arts<sup>1</sup>  
 Double Tap<sup>1</sup>  
 Drive-By Attack<sup>1</sup>  
 Escapist  
 Exotic Firearms Proficiency<sup>1</sup>  
 Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency<sup>1</sup>  
 Force Stop  
 Improved Brawl<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Knockout Punch<sup>1</sup>  
 Improved Combat Martial Arts<sup>1</sup>  
 Knockout Punch<sup>1</sup>  
 Personal Firearms Proficiency<sup>1</sup>  
 Swiftiness  
 Quick Reload<sup>1</sup>  
 Skip Shot<sup>1</sup>  
 Strafe<sup>1</sup>  
 Streetfighting<sup>1</sup>  
 Surgery  
 Unbalance Opponent<sup>1</sup>  
 Vehicle Dodge

**Mentor**

Old Pro  
 Wise Counselor  
 Ancient Master

**Resources**

Well-off  
 Deep Pockets  
 Wealth Beyond Avarice

**Sanctum**

Hideout  
 Private Palace  
 Sanctum Sanctorum

Noetic Bulwark  
 Print Sensitive  
 Strong Template

<sup>1</sup> This feat is available to a warrior as a warrior bonus feat. This does not restrict characters of other classes from selecting the feat, assuming they meet any prerequisites.

<sup>2</sup> Since melee weapons are somewhat rare in the age of firearms, the Archaic Weapon Proficiency replaces the Simple and Martial Weapon proficiencies.

At the GM's option, each existing feat that references ranged attacks, bows or crossbows can also be used with firearms.

## Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency [General]

You have been exposed to unusual weapons from distant lands.

**Prerequisite:** Base attack bonus +1.

**Benefit:** Choose one exotic melee weapon from the Exotic Weapons section of Table 7–5 in the *Player's Handbook*. You are proficient with that melee weapon in combat, making attack rolls with it normally.

**Normal:** A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

**Special:** For exotic weapons with fantasy race references, ignore the race name — so, waraxe, double axe and hooked hammer — and substitute “axe-spear” for “urgrosh.” A character can take this feat multiple times, each time selecting a different exotic weapon. A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

## Force Stop [General]

When driving, you can exert some control over other vehicles by shoving them around with your vehicle.

**Prerequisites:** Drive 6 ranks.

**Benefit:** When you attempt a sideswipe stunt while you have movement remaining equal to your turn number, you can force the other vehicle to a stop by nudging it into a controlled sideways skid. (See Chapter Fourteen: Drama for rules on vehicle maneuvers.)

After succeeding on the sideswipe check, make a Drive check opposed by the other driver. If you succeed, the other vehicle turns 90 degrees in front of your vehicle to form a “T”, and the two move a distance equal to your turn number. The vehicles end their movement at that location, at stationary speed, and take normal sideswipe damage. If you fail the check, resolve the sideswipe normally.

## Improved Brawl [General]

You're a very experienced fighter — you may have won some professional bouts, or you may be the guy in the back of the bar that everyone knows not to mess with.

**Prerequisites:** Brawl, base attack bonus +3.

**Benefit:** When making an unarmed attack, you receive a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls and inflict (1d8 + Strength modifier) points of nonlethal damage.

**Normal:** Unarmed attacks normally deal (1d3 + Strength modifier) points of nonlethal damage.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

## Improved Knockout Punch [General]

You have quite a way with a sucker punch. When you decide to start a fight, you often finish it with that same blow.

**Prerequisites:** Brawl, Knockout Punch, base attack bonus +6.

**Benefit:** When you make your first unarmed attack against a flat-footed opponent, treat a successful attack as a critical hit that inflicts triple damage. The damage inflicted is nonlethal.

**Special:** Even if the character can inflict lethal damage with unarmed attacks, a knockout punch always inflicts nonlethal damage. A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

## Improved Combat Martial Arts [General]

You have extensive experience with hand to hand combat in the style of your choice, and know just where to strike a target to do the most damage.

**Prerequisites:** Combat Martial Arts, base attack bonus +4.

**Benefit:** Your threat range on an unarmed strike improves to 19–20.



**Normal:** A character without this feat threatens an unarmed strike critical hit on a 20 only.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Knockout Punch [General]

You know how to catch an opponent off-guard at the start of a fight.

**Prerequisites:** Brawl, base attack bonus +3.

**Benefit:** When you make your first unarmed attack against a flat-footed opponent, treat a successful attack as a critical hit. The damage inflicted is nonlethal.

**Special:** Even if the character can inflict lethal damage with unarmed attacks, a knockout punch always inflicts nonlethal damage. A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Personal Firearms Proficiency [General]

You are familiar with the operation of pistols, hunting rifles, shotguns and other standard personal sidearms.

**Benefit:** You can fire any personal firearm without penalty.

**Normal:** Characters without this feat take a -4 penalty on attack rolls made with personal firearms.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Quick Reload [General]

You can get bullets into a gun even faster than you usually get them out.

**Prerequisite:** Base attack bonus +1.

**Benefit:** Using a filled box magazine or a speed loader to reload a firearm is a free action. Reloading a revolver without a speed loader, or reloading any firearm with an internal magazine, is a move action.

**Normal:** Using a filled box magazine or a speed loader to reload a firearm is a move action. Reloading a revolver without a speed loader, or reloading any firearm with an internal magazine, is a full-round action.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Skip Shot [General]

You can ricochet a bullet off a hard surface and still threaten a target with that bullet.

**Prerequisites:** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

**Benefit:** If a target is within 10 feet of a solid, relatively smooth surface on which to skip a bullet, you may ignore cover between yourself and the target. You receive a -2 penalty on your attack roll, and the attack deals -1 die of damage. The surface need not be perfectly smooth and level — a brick wall or an asphalt road will work. You can attempt a skip shot around up to double cover (see *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 8: Combat, "Combat Modifiers," Cover).

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Strafe [General]

You have superior control over a submachine gun or other fully automatic weapon when hosing an area down.

**Prerequisites:** Personal Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Firearms Proficiency.

**Benefit:** When using a firearm on autofire, you can affect an area four 5-foot squares long and one square wide (that is, any four squares in a straight line).

**Normal:** A firearm on autofire normally affects a 10-foot-by-10-foot area.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Streetfighting [General]

You've picked up many dirty brawling techniques during your time on the streets, in jail or in a foreign land.

**Prerequisites:** Brawl, base attack bonus +2.

**Benefit:** Once per round, you inflict an extra 1d4 points of damage if you make a successful melee attack with an unarmed strike or a light weapon.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Surgery [General]

You are trained in surgical techniques.

**Prerequisite:** Heal 4 ranks.

**Benefit:** You can use the Heal skill to perform surgery without penalty.

**Normal:** Characters without this feat take a -4 penalty on Heal checks made to perform surgery.

### Swiftness [General]

You are fast on your feet.

**Benefit:** Your movement rate increases by 5 feet per round so long as you are under no greater than a light or medium load.

**Special:** A character may gain this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

### Unbalance Opponent [General]

Your skill in combat is such that you never present a suitable target for a foe to land an accurate blow.

**Prerequisites:** Defensive Martial Arts, base attack bonus +6.

**Benefit:** During your action, you choose an opponent no more than one size category larger or smaller than yourself. That opponent cannot add his Strength modifier to attack rolls when targeting you (an opponent with a Strength penalty still suffers that penalty). Your foe's Strength modifier applies to damage, as usual. You can select a new opponent each time you have an action.

**Special:** A warrior may take this feat as a warrior bonus feat.

### Vehicle Dodge [General]

Thanks to your driving skill, any vehicle you steer suffers comparatively little damage in combat.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 13, Drive or Pilot 6 ranks.

**Benefit:** During your action when driving a vehicle, designate an opposing vehicle or a single opponent. Your vehicle (and each passenger aboard it) receives a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class against attacks from that vehicle or opponent. You can select a new vehicle or opponent each time you have an action.

## Background Feats

Background feats represent your social support structure and pre-adventuring life. You start with one free background feat, but you may use regular feat slots to purchase additional background feats. Some classes acquire additional background feat slots. The listings below include a general description of each background feat "tree," followed by the feats within that tree. Unless stated otherwise, the bonus for a higher-ranking feat replaces that from a previous level (e.g., under Backing, the +4 bonus a Boss enjoys replaces the +2 bonus that a Company Man has).

Background feats are not required for you to have friends, a job, a nice car, a swank home and the like. Rather, these feats indicate

parts of your life and associations that are unique and special — you may have plenty of friends, but those purchased through the Allies background feat are the only ones who'll stick around when the going gets tough; you may have a government job, but it's a mundane post of no consequence unless you get some Backing.

## Ally [Background]

*"You don't even need to ask. I'll be on the next shuttle."*

Almost everyone has acquaintances and friends, but *Allies* represent dedicated individuals with whom you have intimate ties; friends, loved ones or simply someone with similar interests to whom you can turn for assistance and support. Allies are people in their own right, with lives as involved as your own. Friendship is a two-way street; and if you take but don't give, Allies are likely to desert you. Allies do what they can to help you, but don't throw their lives away for nothing. They may also grow weary of repeated demands on their time and resources.

### Loyal Friend

You have a steadfast comrade.

**Benefit:** One human ally of any class (or combination of classes).

### Boon Companions

You also have a pair of close friends.

**Prerequisites:** Loyal Friend.

**Benefit:** Two allies, one of whom may be a psion or alien pending GM approval.

**Special:** These allies are in addition to those gained from Loyal Friend.

### Band of Heroes

You enjoy the company of three more companions.

**Prerequisites:** Loyal Friend, Boon Companions.

**Benefit:** Three allies, one of whom may be a psion or alien pending GM approval.

**Special:** These allies are in addition to those gained from Loyal Friend and Boon Companions.

## Backing [Background]

*"I can have an entire detachment of Proteus operatives here in five minutes."*

*Backing* reflects standing in a single organization (an order, a government agency, the Aeon Trinity, etc.). You may take backing multiple times for rank in different organizations. With this rank comes responsibility; if your character has high backing, she is likely to be responsible for decisions involving great numbers of people and resources.

This is more than an average job. Backing gives you special authority within the organization, as indicated by Charisma and Wealth check bonuses. The Wealth check bonus can be applied to temporary requisitions or outright purchases. To requisition equipment, apply the bonus to a standard Wealth check as normal, except that your Wealth bonus doesn't change regardless of the item's purchase DC. A successful roll indicates that you have "checked out" the item for a period of time. The exact duration may vary depending on the story, but should only ever be long enough for one short mission — trailing a subject through the city for the night, making a dawn raid on an enemy stronghold, etc. If

you lose a requisitioned item or return it damaged beyond repair, your pay is docked to cover the loss — in other words, your Wealth bonus drops -1 for an item up to purchase DC 15 and -2 for an item over purchase DC 15. (See Chapter Thirteen, "Wealth" for more details.)

You can also apply the Backing feat's Wealth bonus to purchase items outright, as someone in the organization puts you in touch with those who have the object available. This is not a constant bonus; instead, you gain this benefit less often for more expensive items, as indicated on the chart below.

You aren't solely on the receiving end of the gravy train here. The group looks out for you, trusts you with its finances and equipment, gives you leadership over its personnel and so on because it expects you to further its goals. (Backing within an organization you don't believe in is ripe with dramatic potential, but don't be surprised if the group stops trusting you pretty quick.) If you abuse the benefits of your Backing, you will face the consequences, sooner or later.

| Purchase DC | Backing Applies...  |
|-------------|---------------------|
| 1–15        | once a week         |
| 16–20       | once a month        |
| 21–30       | once every 6 months |
| 31+         | once a year         |

### Company Man

You have some weight you can throw around — just remember that you can catch it from on high if you make waves.

**Example:** An Army sergeant, division manager or senior field agent.

**Benefit:** Gain a +2 bonus on Charisma rolls and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with someone of the same organization; to resist attempts by others in the organization to sway your attitude or activities; and on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks when dealing with other organizations familiar with the one you belong to.

Gain Wealth bonus +2; you can requisition equipment of up to purchase DC 20 once per session.

### Boss

You're a mover and a shaker, on a first-name basis with the uppermost powers within the organization.

**Example:** 33rd-Degree Freemason, vice president of operations or senior bureau chief.

**Prerequisites:** Company Man, character level 3rd.

**Benefit:** Gain a +4 bonus on Charisma rolls and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with someone of the same organization; to resist attempts by others in the organization to sway your attitude or activities; and on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks when dealing with other organizations familiar with the one you belong to.

Gain Wealth bonus +4; you can requisition equipment of up to purchase DC 30 once per session.

### In Charge

You don't just *have* authority in an organization — you *are* the authority. Becoming the Pope or head of the Joint Chiefs is stretch, but you could easily be the ruler of a small nation, the ultimate mastermind behind a global conspiracy or the leader of a fledgling religious cult.

**Prerequisites:** Company Man, Boss; character level 5th.

**Benefit:** Gain a +6 bonus on Charisma rolls and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with someone of the same organization; to resist attempts by others in the organization to sway your attitude or activities; and on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks when dealing with other organizations familiar with the one you belong to.

Gain Wealth bonus +8; you can requisition equipment of up to purchase DC 40 once per session.

You wield significant influence if you're in direct contact with underlings. More often, you are an impersonal figure who rules from a distance. Your orders are carried through proper channels and trickle down to the individual priests/soldiers/employees, who may choose to ignore or alter them. Note also that you are still subject to Wealth constraints. You're using the organization's funds, which are not your own. (Use Resources if you want to throw your own money around.)

## Cipher [Background]

*"There's no data on file for the subject of this DNA scan."*

Although the Crash destroyed the vast, interconnected computer databases of the previous century, information is still more powerful than most armies. Knowing enemies can be the key to victory — just as being known by them can spell defeat. *Cipher* makes it hard to find you in the chaotic realm of the OpNet. You are a nonentity, a zero, a spook — a veritable ghost in the machine. All the files pertaining to your past, perhaps even to your very existence, have been erased from (or were never entered into) information stores across settled space.

## Shadowy Past

There is a certain amount of uncertainty about your past.

**Benefit:** A –4 penalty applies on any skill checks that involve digging up facts about you or your past.

## Secret Life

You are mystery wrapped in an enigma.

**Prerequisite:** Shadowy Past.

**Benefit:** A –8 penalty applies on any skill checks that involve digging up facts about you or your past. Additionally, you have one "cover identity," a set of falsified legal documents — passport, driver's license and bank account with a Wealth bonus half that of your main identity (round down to a minimum of 1).

## Mystery Man

You cover your tracks so well that you wonder who you really are sometimes.

**Prerequisites:** Shadowy Past, Secret Life.

**Benefit:** A –15 penalty applies on any skill checks that involve digging up facts about you or your past. The penalty applies as long as you take even simple precautions to protect your secrets. You also gain two additional "cover identities" for a total of three; see Secret Life above.

## Citizenship [Background]

*"Papers please? Ah, right through that gate then, sir."*

Ironically, the addition of extraglobal territories has brought human societies much closer than ever before. Walking from one end of a space station to another, you might pass through four separate countries, each with its own laws on immigration and its own customs. Possessing *Citizenship* for a particular country allows you to avoid the hassles normally associated with entering its



territories. Although local security codes still apply, passage is a lot easier than it would be for a “foreigner.” Still, gaining an additional Citizenship is a complicated process. No major country wants undesirables moving freely about its territories.

You enjoy all the usual perks and complications of being a citizen of each nation in which you have Citizenship, including identification, legal rights, tax requirements, and so on. You also gain a +4 circumstance bonus on skill checks where being a citizen of the region in question is important. Additionally, you may apply for political asylum at any embassy or consulate for a country in which you have Citizenship.

## Open Door

You are a legal citizen of two nations.

**Benefit:** You enjoy the full benefits of being a citizen in one country in addition to your nation of birth.

## Regional Pass

You have full citizenship in two additional nations.

**Prerequisite:** Open Door

**Benefit:** You have the rights and responsibilities of full citizenship in two additional countries.

**Special:** These citizenships are in addition to those gained from Open Door.

## Global Citizen

Numerous countries acknowledge your residency and legal rights.

**Prerequisite:** Open Door, Regional Pass

**Benefit:** You have full citizenship in three additional nations.

**Special:** These citizenships are in addition to those gained from Open Door and Regional Pass.

## Contacts [Background]

*“That guy runs an arms and legs shop in New Delhi. Just tell him Jake sent you, yeh?”*

**Contacts** are people with whom you’ve developed a mutually beneficial arrangement. They use their talents, information or resources to help you, but they always expect some favor in return — whether a service, trade or simple payment. These associates don’t risk themselves as far as a follower or even an ally will (although a well-cultivated contact could grow into one or the other over the course of the series).

Contacts are easy to reach, either directly or through an underling, and are available on short notice — though not always at your convenience. They are not guaranteed to help you in every situation, but they don’t act against you willingly. (Using the *Influencing NPC Attitudes* sidebar in the *Player’s Handbook*, Chapter 4: Skills, “Skill Descriptions,” a contact’s attitude toward you is never worse than indifferent.) The only exception is if you take repeated

action to offend the contact. Like an ally or a follower, a contact has a will of his own and won’t long stand for being mistreated.

Each contact has an area of interest, a broad but defined field of inquiry involving a diverse network of experts and informants. The network’s geographic size is limited depending on which Contacts background feat you have. You and the GM must agree upon the contact’s area of interest; the GM then determines secretly the extent of the contact’s expertise, knowledge and resources.

## Well-Connected

You know a few people who can get things done.

**Benefit:** You receive a +2 bonus on general Gather Information checks. You also gain three local contacts or one national contact; each confers a +4 bonus on your Gather Information checks in a specific area of interest.

## Information Broker

You have a solid network of informants.

**Prerequisite:** Well-Connected.

**Benefit:** You receive a +4 bonus on general Gather Information checks. You gain three national contacts or one global contact; each confers a +8 bonus on your Gather Information checks in a specific area of interest.

**Special:** The contacts gained with this feat are in addition to those from Well-Connected.

## Kingpin

You don’t just curry favor with powerful individuals; you are the ultimate arbiter of favor. You have many capable folks convinced (perhaps fraudulently) that it is in their best interests to provide you with any favor, information or advantage they can.

**Prerequisites:** Well-Connected, Information Broker; character level 5th.

**Benefit:** You receive a +6 bonus on general Gather Information checks. On a successful DC 13 Charisma check, you know of a nearby contact anywhere in the known world who confers a +10 bonus on your Gather Information checks on a local area of interest of your choosing. You can also prevail upon this contact for free food and lodging for a number of weeks (if you’re alone) or days (if you’re with a group) equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1). The contact’s receptiveness does not extend to floating you a million-dollar loan or committing felonies at your request.

**Special:** You retain the contacts gained from Well-Connected and Information Broker.

## Devices [Background]

*“Hold on tight. This baby has a bit more get-up-and-go than your typical P-34.”*

**Devices** are guns, bioware, computers and vehicles that have special functions or powers that separate them from common equipment. They are highly valuable, often being prototypes or extreme modifications of existing gear. A computer with a built-in laser or a ship with olaminium plating are both examples of Devices. Make sure you have a plausible reason for possessing something so unique.

If you have access to the Gadget/Device background and super-science rules from **Adventure!** or **Aberrant**, those rules replace the listings presented here. (Since the overall technology level in **Trinity** is higher than in the other two Trinity Universe time periods, super-science rules are not included here.)

| Contact      | Geographic Scale                          | Example                         |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Local        | Large metropolitan area or small country  | New York arcology               |
| National     | Large nation or small continent or colony | Aberrant activities in the FSA  |
| Global       | A planetary community                     | Coca dealers worldwide          |
| Interstellar | Multiple planets                          | Universal activities of Orgotek |

## Gadget

A piece of cutting-edge technology.

**Benefit:** A Gadget is an upgraded version of an existing piece of technology (biotech or hardtech) whose cost does not exceed 15 + your Wealth bonus. You may allocate a total +5 bonus among the device's different capabilities — weapon accuracy, handling, hardness and the like. A psiware gadget is considered formatted and has a tolerance rating (TR) 1.

**Special:** You may take this feat multiple times, with each representing a different device.

## Prototype

An unparalleled device with numerous integrated features.

**Prerequisite:** Gadget

**Benefit:** As a starting template, use an existing piece of technology (biotech or hardtech) whose cost does not exceed 20 + your Wealth bonus. You may then apply either a total +10 bonus among its different capabilities, or a number of built-in and integrated pieces of other equipment whose total cost does not exceed 10 + your Wealth bonus. A psiware prototype is considered formatted and has TR 2.

**Special:** You may take this feat multiple times, with each representing a different device.

## Masterpiece

You have a strange and heretofore unknown piece of technology that operates on little-understood principles.

**Prerequisites:** Gadget, Prototype

**Benefit:** As a starting template, use an existing piece of technology (biotech or hardtech) whose cost does not exceed 30 + your Wealth bonus. You may then apply either a total +15 bonus among its different capabilities, or a number of built-in and integrated pieces of other equipment whose total cost does not exceed 15 + your Wealth bonus. A psiware masterpiece is considered formatted and has TR 3.

**Special:** You may take this feat multiple times, with each representing a different device.

## Followers [Background]

*"If we all pull together, we can get the engines back online before we burn up in re-entry."*

Followers are ordinary people, NPCs who obey your orders. They may be your loyal assistants, crew under your command or thrillseekers who share your love of adventure. Whatever the case, you must maintain that relationship — loyalty to a cause, signing paychecks, espousing a philosophy — through the course of your series or your followers will become disillusioned and look for more rewarding pursuits. Likewise, followers are not blindly obedient and may leave if treated callously. Followers killed in the line of duty are not replaced automatically; you need to recruit them through roleplay.

A follower has one particular asset or talent, but otherwise does not enjoy tremendous breadth of ability (if he did, he wouldn't be following you). A follower lacks the accomplishment of an ally or a contact.

## Retainers

You have a few reliable agents.

**Benefit:** Three 1st-level followers or one 2nd-level follower.

## Troops

You have a band of loyal followers.

**Prerequisite:** Retainers; character level 4th.

**Benefit:** Eight 1st-level followers or three 2nd-level followers.

**Special:** These followers add to those gained from Retainers.

## Legions

You have a great number of people willing to do what you say.

**Prerequisites:** Retainers, Servants; character level 8th.

**Benefit:** The number of followers you can call on depends on how loyal and how skilled they are. Conceptually, you could have anything from a dozen expert assassins to hundreds of normal people (or, perhaps, a little more gullible than the norm) who follow you as long as it doesn't get them in trouble. Practically, you determine your followers' loyalty and parameters of skill, as indicated in the corresponding chart. Once that's set, roll as indicated determine how many members of your legions you can call upon in each game session.

**Special:** These followers add to those gained from Retainers and Servants.

| Follower | Degree of Skill |                      |                                                  |
|----------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
|          | Loyalty         | Average <sup>1</sup> | Competent <sup>2</sup> Professional <sup>3</sup> |
| Hired    |                 | d% + 3d8             | 5d10 2d8                                         |
| Loyal    |                 | d% + 3d6             | 4d8 2d6                                          |
| Fanatic  |                 | d% + 3d4             | 4d6 2d4                                          |

<sup>1</sup> 1st-level.

<sup>2</sup> 3rd-level, up to 25% may be psions or aliens.

<sup>3</sup> 5th-level, up to 50% may be psions or aliens.

*Hired* followers are just that — they don't put in any effort beyond what they get paid to do.

*Loyal* followers trust in your leadership, but won't sacrifice themselves for the cause — each gains a +2 bonus on saving throws and skill checks to resist betraying you knowingly.

*Fanatic* followers give themselves fully to the cause — each is immune to any psi feat or skill check that would cause them to abandon you or subject you to harm knowingly.

## Influence [Background]

*"I'd really like a seat on that commission, Governor. Any way to fit me in?"*

*Influence* reflects your pull and status in normal society. This may derive from political office, running a business, or being an entertainer or even a religious figure. Whatever your specific credentials, people pay attention to your words and deeds.

*Influence* may be used to garner special favors from others, to promote a personal agenda in public or to simply get a good seat at the theater. Additionally, *Influence* may be drawn on to network and to make important connections — or even to draw more people under your sway.

This background doesn't cover standing in a private organization; that's handled by Backing.

## Celebrity

You are a regional newsmaker of some note.

**Benefit:** Gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks. Additionally, on a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, you can get access for casual or professional conversation with a politician, media representative or celebrity within your sphere of influence (large metropolitan area or small country).

## Luminary

You're renowned internationally for an area of expertise or have a broader influence in a smaller area.

**Prerequisite:** Celebrity; character level 4th.

**Benefit:** Gain an extra +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks (total +4). Also, once per session you can call for (or call off) official or public intervention — summon the police, arrange for a search warrant, have a nosy reporter pulled off a story, etc. — within your sphere of influence (large nation or small continent). You can't use this to break the law, but you can certainly *bend* it. Still, using this for trivial and/or falsified reasons may work for the moment, but could have repercussions later — whether bringing your activities to the attention of others in power or even resulting in your arrest.

**Special:** This benefit adds to that gained from Celebrity.

## Icon

You seldom debate with the top minds in your field, for your views wield such authority that it's almost impossible to gainsay your words. Even if your renown is in art history, your influence as a great mind of the early 22nd century lends you tremendous clout in other areas. Whether global politics or military strategy, if you can speak on the subject knowledgeably, people will give everything you say serious consideration.

**Prerequisites:** Celebrity, Luminary; character level 8th.

**Benefit:** Gain an extra +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks (total +6). Once per character level, you may attempt to call for (or call off) official or media attention on an international scale. The world at large may not know about your influence in the matter, but there's no hiding your involvement from other figures of power. This requires a Diplomacy check with the DC based on the desired outcome.

**Special:** This benefit adds to that gained from Celebrity and Luminary.

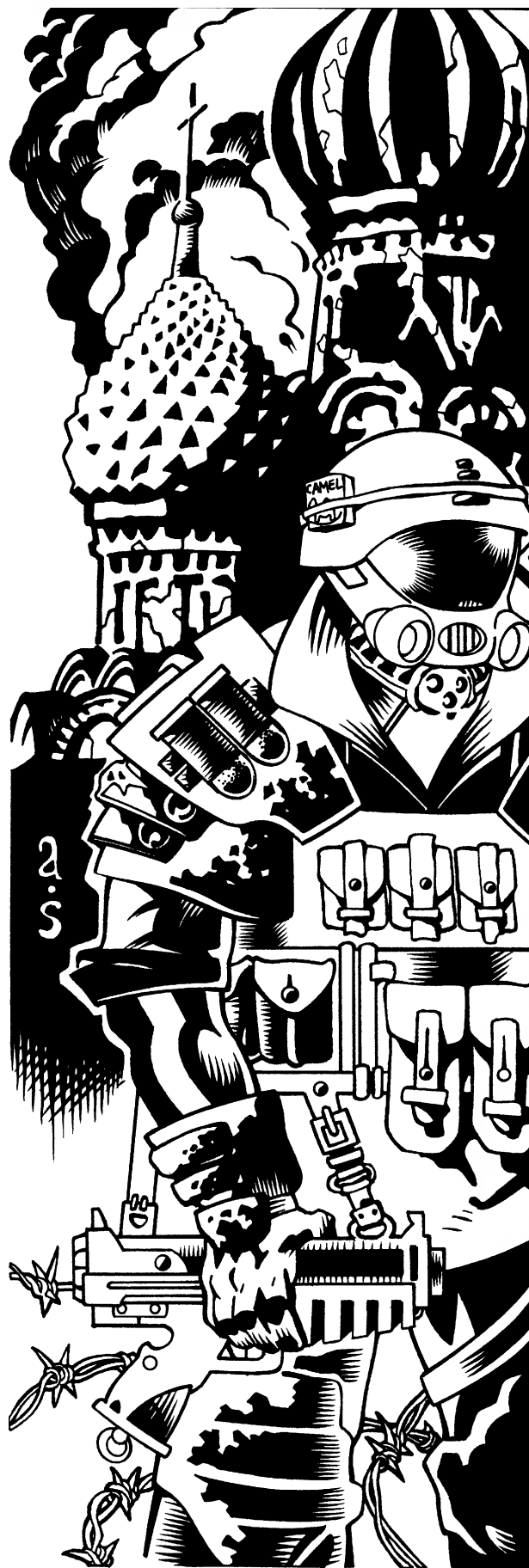
| DC | Desired Outcome                                            |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Trigger a local protest                                    |
| 15 | Have a major OpNet news source run an exposé               |
| 20 | Tie up a bill in committee                                 |
| 25 | Call for a political prisoner's release                    |
| 30 | Have top secret diplomatic or corporate information leaked |
| 40 | Mobilize the Legions                                       |

## Mentor [Background]

*"Stop trying to hit me and hit me!"*

A *Mentor* is many things: a patron, teacher, defender and friend. You may see one or all of these facets at any given time. While a mentor won't always respond to your requests for help, he always acts in your best interests (or what *he* considers best). A mentor-student relationship is a complex and personal association that entails responsibilities on both sides. It should be the subject of involved roleplaying.

A mentor may be a high-ranking psion of your order, or even someone seemingly unrelated to your circumstances who has taken a special interest in your development. A mentor may teach modes or abilities or make information or resources available, depending on his capabilities and means. He may also serve as your advocate in dealing with a particular organization, or may simply show up in time to pull you out of a tight spot. It's advisable not to rely on a mentor too much, though.



Each Mentor feat lists the mentor's character level in relation to yours. This is influenced further by his availability and influence, as indicated below. Each level modifier increases the mentor's level relative to you, but reduces his maximum possible level. So, an Old Pro who is moderately available gains one additional character level and is reduced to a 9th-level possible maximum.

| Level Adjustment | Reason                                                                    |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                | Moderately available (brief encounter once per session)                   |
| 2                | Readily available (frequent interaction each session)                     |
| 2                | Extensive influence or resources (mentor is highly ranked in order, etc.) |

## Old Pro

Your benefactor is probably a great deal like you, only more experienced and better connected.

**Benefit:** Mentor is two levels higher than you, to a maximum of 10th level.

## Wise Counselor

The person supporting you has broad and deep connections, and a great deal of experience when it comes to using them.

**Prerequisite:** Old Pro

**Benefit:** Mentor is three levels higher than you, to a maximum of 15th level.

## Ancient Master

Whoever your mentor is, he is well known among the corridors of power.

**Prerequisites:** Old Pro, Wise Counselor

**Benefit:** Mentor is four levels higher than you, to a maximum of 18th level.

## Resources [Background]

*"How much? Here, use my oluminium card."*

Your class determines your base Wealth bonus, which you use to buy the things you want (see Chapter Thirteen for specifics). This feat tree indicates your ability to get the most out of your finances. Just how it's handled is up to you — you negotiate incredible deals, someone is always popping by to repay a debt, you enter (and win) every raffle under the sun, you have a keen eye for the stock market, or you're just really, really loaded. The bottom line is that your finances don't suffer the same ebb and flow that others experience.

### Well-Off

You always make sure you have money set aside for a rainy day — or for an urge to indulge.

**Benefit:** Increase your Wealth bonus by +2. An item's purchase DC is considered five points lower when applying a Wealth bonus decrease. The item's purchase price remains the same, and the decrease for a purchase DC 15 or higher still applies.

### Deep Pockets

You lack nothing in the way of comfort and can buy just about anything that catches your eye.

**Prerequisite:** Well-Off.

**Benefit:** Increase your Wealth bonus by +4. An item's purchase DC is considered 10 points lower when applying a Wealth bonus decrease. The item's purchase price remains the same, and the decrease for a purchase DC 15 or higher still applies.

## Wealth Beyond Avarice

It's simplicity itself for you to acquire any mass-produced or common object. More expensive items may require longer (months or possibly even years) — not because you can't afford them, but because they have to be made to order. The plus side is that when you buy very expensive things such as custom shuttles and buildings, you can design them to your own eccentric specifications.

**Prerequisites:** Well-Off, Deep Pockets

**Benefit:** Increase your Wealth bonus by +8. An item's purchase DC is considered 20 points lower when applying a Wealth bonus decrease. The item's purchase price remains the same.

Alternately, you can purchase a unique device, vehicle or building — the sort of thing that counts as a unique device or sanctum. In such circumstances, your Resources feat benefit drops to the equivalent of Well-Off for as long as the device or sanctum is under construction. After it's completed, you regain the full benefit of Wealth Beyond Avarice within (18 months — your unmodified Wealth bonus).

## Sanctum [Background]

*"Olympus was getting too crowded, so I had my own arcology constructed on the dark side of the Moon."*

Just as a device represents a unique machine or possession, a sanctum represents a unique location. It could be a base burrowed into an asteroid, a private island, an underground headquarters, or some other place. Sanctum feats determine how exotic your special residence is, how useful it is and how difficult it is for others to discover and infiltrate it.

You're not homeless if you don't have a sanctum (unless you want to be) — you simply own an ordinary home or rent a regular apartment.

A sanctum is more secure and private than a normal dwelling. Each feat on the tree applies a penalty to any efforts to discover anything about the sanctum — from its very existence to its specific location to its security measures to how many light fixtures it has — and to breach its security. See below for specifics.

### Hideout

A place of limited size that's either particularly pleasant or unusually secure (e.g., a handful of secret rooms under your basement).

**Benefit:** A hideout can be as small as a single room or as large as a two-bedroom apartment. It may be especially secure or well-appointed.

**Secure:** A -6 penalty applies on any efforts to learn about a secure hideout. Good security (DC 30 Open Lock, Disable Device); basic furnishings.

**Well-appointed:** A -2 penalty applies on any efforts to learn about a well-appointed hideout. Average security (DC 25 Open Lock, Disable Device); you gain a +4 bonus on any checks made in the sanctum to impress or otherwise influence visitors due to the masterwork furnishings and modern conveniences.

**Special:** This feat may be taken more than once; each additional Hideout feat represents another sanctum.

## Private Palace

Your sanctum is of significant size and is both unusually secure and well-appointed.

**Prerequisite:** Hideout.

**Benefit:** A private palace can be anything from an Olympus penthouse apartment to a mansion to a luxury spacecraft. It includes sleeping quarters for your entire team and any mentor, allies or followers that you may have. It is also equipped in whatever fashion you wish — expensive furniture, a library, fine china; stark and imposing with gleaming machinery arrayed in impressive fashion; relaxing and spare décor with a breathtaking view; and so on.

A –6 penalty applies on any efforts to learn about a private palace. Superior security (DC 40 Open Lock, Disable Device); you gain a +6 bonus on any checks made to impress or otherwise influence visitors in the sanctum due to its impressive location, design and/or furnishings.

**Special:** This feat may be taken more than once; each additional Private Palace feat is in addition to and independent from any gained from Hideout.

## Sanctum Sanctorum

A sanctum sanctorum is frightfully secure and remarkably useful. It is invulnerable to infiltration by any but the most immensely capable burglar and its defenses are sufficient to hold off an entire army for a week, if necessary.

**Prerequisites:** Hideout, Private Palace.

**Benefit:** A sanctum sanctorum is limited in the direct in-game benefit it offers you, as noted below. Otherwise, however, you are free to design almost any exotic domain imaginable (subject to GM approval).

A –10 penalty applies on any efforts to learn about a sanctum sanctorum. Unparalleled security (DC 45 Open Lock, Disable Device); you gain a +8 bonus on any checks made to impress or otherwise influence visitors in the sanctum due to its impressive location, design and/or furnishings.

**Special:** You may have only one sanctum sanctorum; this is in addition to and independent from any number of Hideouts and Private Palaces.

## Psi Feats

Only characters with the psychic template may select the following feats.

### Auxiliary Aptitude [Psi]

Your psi ability extends beyond the norm of a single aptitude.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template.

**Benefit:** You gain the granted power of a separate aptitude in addition to the one from your chosen aptitude.

### Combat Manifestation [Psi]

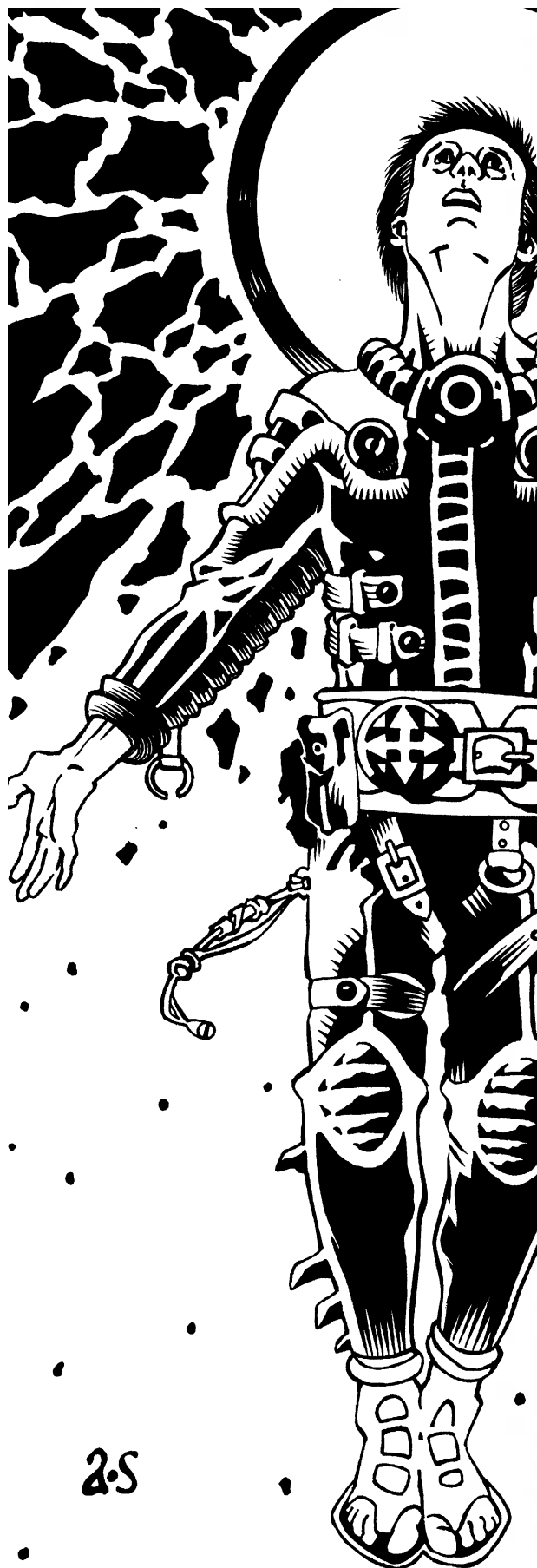
You are skilled at manifesting psi powers in the thick of combat.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 bonus on Concentration checks made to manifest a power while on the defensive or while you are grappling or pinned.

### Delay Effect [Psi]

You can delay a power's effect to trigger some time after its manifestation.



25

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template; Psi 4

**Benefit:** You can delay the activation of an area, personal or touch power for 1 round per two character levels. Declare the delay during manifestation; the delay cannot be changed once set. The power activates just before your turn on the round designated. Any decisions you make about the power (e.g., attack rolls, designating targets, determining or shaping an area) are decided during manifestation, while any effects resolved by those affected by the power (e.g., saving throws, dealing damage) are decided when the power triggers. You may negate a delayed power as normal before it triggers. Powers that can detect psionic effects may register the power in the area or on the target before it triggers.

You spend power points as normal when the power first manifests, plus additional power points each round of delay afterward (including the round the power triggers). You cannot spend more than 6 power points in a single round.

| Psi Power             | PP/Round |
|-----------------------|----------|
| 0-level — 2nd-level   | 1        |
| 3rd-level — 4th-level | 2        |
| 5th-level             | 3        |

### Enhanced Attunement [Psi]

You have a superior sensitivity to the subquantum energy flow.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template.

**Benefit:** Your Psi score is considered three points higher when determining attunement checks and range.

**Special:** You may take this feat more than once; its effects stack.

### Greater Auxiliary Aptitude [Psi]

Your command of noetic forces grows further beyond the confines of your chosen aptitude.

**Prerequisites:** Psychic template; Auxiliary Aptitude; character level 3rd.

**Benefit:** You gain a 1st-level power from the same aptitude chosen for the Auxiliary Aptitude feat.

**Special:** You may take this feat more than once, selecting a different 1st-level power each time, as long as all the powers selected are from the same aptitude.

### Hide Display [Psi]

You do not emit a certain normal noetic display when manifesting a power.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template.

**Benefit:** You can manifest powers without one associated display characteristic chosen when you take this feat: auditory, material, mental, olfactory or visual.

**Special:** You can take this feat multiple times, each time choosing a different display characteristic to hide while manifesting a power.

### High Tolerance [Psi]

You have a greater than normal capacity for psiware.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template; Constitution 15

**Benefit:** Your Psi score is considered three points higher when determining your tolerance limit (see Chapter Eleven for details on tolerance).

### Improved Psi Recovery [Psi]

You recover noetic energy faster than most psions do.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template.

**Benefit:** Double your power point rate of recovery.

### Noetic Bulwark [Psi]

You are resistant to the effects of backlash.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template; Wisdom 15

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws to resist noetic backlash and are not sickened if successful. See Chapter Eleven for details on backlash.

### Print Sensitive [Psi]

You can perceive the noetic residue of a psi print long after it has faded from other psions' awareness.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template; Wisdom 15

**Benefit:** You can sense a psi print even after it has faded, up to a number of hours equal to your Psi score; see "Psi Prints" in Chapter Eleven for details.

**Special:** You may take this feat up to a total of three times; its effects stack.

### Strong Template [Psi]

Your genetic makeup is notably resistant to alteration by psi powers or taint.

**Prerequisite:** Psychic template.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws to resist psi or quantum effects that alter your physiology (e.g., biokinesis effects, vitakinesis effects). You stand out like a beacon amid the subquantum flux; attunement rolls to detect your presence are made with a +5 bonus.

In the 22nd century, science has confirmed the existence of a subquantum energy stratum. Whether you call it subquantum force, the implicate order, noetic energy or psi, this energy permeates all of reality. Select humans — as well as some alien races, such as the qin, chromatics and mysterious doyen — can channel this energy to create various astounding effects. A character's Psi score measures his ability to control and manipulate these energies — and thus, in general, his "power." See Chapter Nine, "Psychic Template" and Chapter Twelve: Aptitudes for further details.

## Psi Benefits

The specific powers a psion manifests depend on his aptitude. Still, all psions share certain qualities by virtue of their genetic advancement.

## Power Points

A psion is always connected to the universal subquantum flow. Power points (pp) represent noetic energy that you can draw upon to manifest effects without disrupting that flow. Power points are determined as follows.

$$5 + (\text{character level} + [\text{Psi score} \times 5])$$

Thus, a 3rd-level character with Psi 3 has 23 power points ( $5 + [3 + (3 \times 5)]$ ), while a 7th-level character with Psi 5 has 37 power points ( $5 + [7 + (5 \times 5)]$ ). Your power points are recalculated when your Psi score increases through level progression or similar means.

**Spending Power Points:** Many psi powers cost a certain number of points to manifest and/or maintain (see Chapter Twelve: Aptitudes). You can spend a maximum of 6 power points each round. Spending all your power points depletes your energy reserve until you can rest and recover.

**Spending Hit Points for Power Points:** If you lack sufficient power points for a certain action, you can expend hit points instead — disrupting the normal subquantum flux and burning your own life force to trigger an effect. You are dealt 2 hit points of damage for each power point you generate in this fashion. This is the only circumstance in which you can raise your available power points above the normal maximum.

Any power points generated in this fashion that are unused vanish at the end of the round (this does not restore your hit points). You may still spend no more than 6 power points in a round.

## Recovering Power Points

You can recover power points by relaxing, resting or meditating. You cannot recover power points above your normal maximum.

- **Relaxing:** While relaxing (e.g., going for a walk, doing paperwork, watching holos, talking with friends), you recover 1 power point per hour.

- **Resting:** While resting (e.g., sleeping, sitting around doing absolutely nothing), you recover 2 power points per hour.

- **Meditating:** On a successful DC 15 Concentration check, you can enter a meditative trance for a set period of time (determined when the check is made), recovering

4 power points per hour. You are unaware of your surroundings during this time; you can be shaken awake as if from sleep, but you recover no power points if it is before a full hour has passed.

## Attunement

A psion can sense strong sources of psi energy and perceive sudden, dramatic changes in the subquantum flow. Think of the subquantum universe like a pond, with psi energy the water. Anything that happens in the universe that involves a shift of matter or energy sends tiny ripples through this pond. The ripples are strong close to the source, growing weaker as they spread until they're so insignificant as to be almost imperceptible. In a similar vein, each physical object has its own concentration of subquantum energy that gives it a higher "noetic density" than the empty volume of its surroundings — eddies and ripples flowing around a solid object in a pond. Living beings are even more dense, and psi-active individuals have yet greater psi concentrations. Thus, actions that they take make correspondingly larger disturbances in the noetic "pool."

A psion's attunement can sense strong impacts upon the subquantum flow (e.g., the warping in of an aberrant, activation of a psi power and the like) for miles — even thousands of miles, for those with high Psi scores.

This can be hard to adjudicate in a game, since a PC might register a dozen different noetic influences every minute. To keep things at a manageable scale for the GM, a character's Psi score determines his practical attunement radius, as indicated on Table 11–1: Attunement Radius. Assume that each psion tunes out noetic influences beyond this range automatically, much like one learns to ignore background noise.

Table 11–1: Attunement Radius

| Psi Score | Sensing Radius | Psi Score | Sensing Radius          |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1         | Touch          | 6         | 50 feet                 |
| 2         | 5 feet         | 7         | 100 feet                |
| 3         | 10 feet        | 8         | 250 feet                |
| 4         | 20 feet        | 9         | 500 feet                |
| 5         | 30 feet        | 10        | 1,000 feet <sup>1</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Double the highest range for each point a Psi score exceeds 10.

## Attunement Checks

By concentrating for a round, you can make an attunement check (d20 + your Psi score) to sense whether something of a given parameter is within your sensing range. Table 11–2: Attunement Circumstances lists general sensing parameters and their DCs. If the initial check is successful, you can glean additional details each subsequent round you focus, as indicated below.

**1st Round:** Presence or absence in the area of the searched-for parameter.

**2nd Round:** Number and general strength in the area of the searched-for parameter.

**3rd Round:** The location in the area of the searched-for parameter. If the parameter is outside your direct perception, you discern its direction and general range but not its exact location.

Table 11–2: Attunement Circumstances

| Sensing Circumstance                           | DC |
|------------------------------------------------|----|
| Aberrant with Quantum 1–3                      | 23 |
| Aberrant with Quantum 4–6                      | 20 |
| Aberrant with Quantum 7+                       | 15 |
| Individual is psi latent (Psi 1+) <sup>1</sup> | 15 |
| Individual is psi-neutral (Psi 0) <sup>1</sup> | 20 |
| Psion (proxy)                                  | 10 |
| Psion with Psi 2–3                             | 23 |
| Psion with Psi 4–6                             | 20 |
| Psion with Psi 7+                              | 15 |
| Psi power (active 1st- or 2nd-level)           | 23 |
| Psi power (active 3rd- or 4th-level)           | 20 |
| Psi power (active 5th-level)                   | 15 |
| Psiware (Fine to Small)                        | 30 |
| Psiware (Medium to Large)                      | 25 |
| Psiware (Huge to Colossal)                     | 20 |
| Psiware (Gargantuan)                           | 15 |
| Tainted area, mild                             | 20 |
| Tainted area, moderate                         | 18 |
| Tainted area, severe                           | 15 |

<sup>1</sup>The ability modifier derived from an average of Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma (round down) determines the target's Psi score for these purposes.

## Backlash

Not unlike tossing a rock in the pool, sudden releases of physical, noetic or emotional energy trigger pronounced ripples — or even waves, if there's enough of a disturbance. Called backlash, such strong noetic stimulus can overwhelm an unprepared psion. The ultimate example is *Esperanza's* crash into France, which unleashed a tremendous amount of kinetic and nuclear energy as well as raw psionic and emotional waves that combined in a massive tsunami thundering through the subquantum stratum.

The GM determines when backlash occurs — as a general rule, significant events only. The corresponding chart lists examples; each has a multiplier to attunement range which indicates the furthest distance at which a backlash event can affect a psion.

If subject to backlash, you must make a Fortitude save. If successful, you are sickened for 1 round; on a failed save, you suffer the effect corresponding to the degree of backlash. (See the *Player's Handbook* Glossary for the dazed, nauseated, sickened and stunned conditions.) Regardless of the save result, you are aware of only the general circumstance that triggered the backlash.

## Psi Prints

Noetic theory states that everything, from living beings to inanimate objects, resonates with psi energy to some degree. A psion may actually attune to the noetic aura — the “psychic fingerprint” — that an individual leaves behind.

An object must be in someone's possession or presence for at least 6 hours to establish a “psi print.” This noetic imprint remains 1 hour for every 6 hours that the individual had it in his possession (this can vary at the GM's discretion — a wallet which is with you constantly has a stronger imprint than does a coffee cup, which is nearby but not always in your hand).

This sensing requires physical contact; heavy materials (a briefcase, vac-suit fabric, a bulkhead) are sufficient to block the psion's ability to sense a psi print.

## Burnout

If you roll a natural “1” when using your last power point or in any circumstance when you burn hit points for power points, you are in danger of burnout. Make a DC 15 Will save; if you fail, you lose use of the aptitude in question for 2d4 minutes.

If you roll a “1” on the Will save, you suffer total burnout. You cannot use the aptitude for 1 day, *and* you suffer 1 point of permanent drain to your Psi score.

## Tolerance

As noted in Chapter Thirteen: Technology, every piece of psiware has a tolerance rating (TR). If the total TR of all psiware that you carry is greater than your Psi score, you have exceeded your tolerance limit. Reduce your power points by the amount the TR exceeds your Psi score. Lost power points return only after the total TR is equal to or lower than your Psi score.

Tolerance overload occurs if you exceed your tolerance limit for a number of days equal to your Psi. You must make a Fortitude save against a base DC of 13 + the TR of all psiware you carry. On a successful save, you are sickened until you remove all psiware for (12 hours – your Psi score). On a failed save, you are nauseated until you remove all psiware; you are then sickened for (24 hours – your Psi score). A psi power that heals hit points can be used to reduce this duration by 1 hour for each hit point “healed.” See the *Player's Handbook* Glossary for the sickened and nauseated conditions.

## Psi and Taint

In the Unity Era, “taint” refers to quantum radiation that occurs as a byproduct of an aberrant's power use. Noetic science states that subquantum and quantum forces exist in natural

| Backlash Degree | Example                                                                                                                      | Attunement Range | Save DC | Effect                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Mild            | Close friend injured; violent deaths of 1–3 individuals                                                                      | x5               | 13      | 1d3 nonlethal, nauseated 1 round    |
| Moderate        | Loved one killed; <i>transportal</i> manifestation; minor volcanic eruption or earthquake; violent deaths of 4–9 individuals | x10              | 18      | 1d4 nonlethal, nauseated 1d3 rounds |
| Severe          | Multiple loved ones killed; <i>Leviathan</i> jump; violent deaths of 10 or more individuals                                  | x25              | 20      | 1d8 nonlethal, dazed 1d3 rounds     |
| Critical        | Major natural disaster; violent deaths in the hundreds                                                                       | x50              | 25      | 2d6 nonlethal, stunned 1d3 rounds   |



opposition. This makes it difficult for psions to manipulate psi energy within areas of ambient taint — but it also confers upon psions a degree of resistance to an aberrant's powers.

### Ambient Taint

There are three recorded levels of ambient taint: mild, moderate and severe.

- **Mild:** This radiation remains after massive uncontrolled use of quantum powers, such as a firefight involving a handful of aberrants. Apply a  $-1$  penalty on attunement checks and relevant rolls to manifest 1st-level psi powers within the area.

- **Moderate:** Residue from the prolonged application of specific aberrant powers, or wide-scale quantum discharges such as a large battle involving aberrants. Apply a  $-2$  penalty on attunement checks and relevant rolls to manifest 1st-level psi powers within the area; 2nd-level psi powers suffer a  $-1$  penalty on relevant rolls.

- **Severe:** A byproduct of the use of so-called Prime Threat-class aberrant powers (such as Wycoff's detonation). Apply a  $-4$

penalty on attunement checks and relevant rolls to manifest 1st-level psi powers within the area; 2nd-level psi powers suffer a  $-2$  penalty and 3rd-level psi powers suffer a  $-1$  penalty on relevant rolls.

Living things (from humans and animals to plants and insects) that lack the psychic template must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save after being exposed to severe ambient taint for 6 hours; on a failed save, the subject contracts a taint-related disease or mutation. The subject must make a new save each hour he remains in the area, at a cumulative  $+2$  to the DC.

### Quantum Resistance

If you use the **Aberrant** campaign setting, note that a character with the psychic template can make a Fortitude save ( $DC\ 10 + 1/2$  the attacker's HD + the attacker's Quantum score) when he is the direct target of a quantum power (see **Aberrant**, Chapter Four: Quantum Powers). If successful, the quantum power's effect is reduced by half (typically its damage or duration, though the GM may designate some other parameter as appropriate).

A character with the psychic template can develop powers arrayed under one of seven aptitudes. Each aptitude is a broad grouping of related powers that share a common noetic resonance. Within each aptitude are three modes with even stronger noetic similarities. An individual can have latent tendencies toward a specific aptitude, but the Prometheus Effect's coding overrides this if she is dunked in a different tank (see below).

An individual cannot gain a second full aptitude, even through immersion in a different chamber — in fact, the human body cannot survive multiple plunges in the nanotech bath. At best, a powerful psion can develop 1st-level powers in a single “auxiliary” aptitude (see “Psi Feats” in Chapter Ten).

## The Prometheus Effect

The orders, established to develop the full capabilities of their respective aptitudes, use tests to confirm whether a subject has the minimum noetic latency required to use psi powers. Each time a latent is confirmed and is interested in becoming a psion, he goes through the Prometheus Effect. This is an advanced scientific procedure that involves immersion in a nanotech suspension fluid contained within a unique psiware device called a Prometheus chamber. There are seven active chambers in the Unity Age currently, each under the control of a different psi order. Each chamber's nanites “rewrite” portions of the latent's DNA, unlocking the ability to wield a specific psionic aptitude.

| Order                     | Aptitude       |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Æsculapian                | Vitakinesis    |
| Chitra Bhanu <sup>1</sup> | Quantakinesis  |
| ISRA                      | Clairentience  |
| The Legions               | Psychokinesis  |
| The Ministry              | Telepathy      |
| Norça                     | Biokinesis     |
| Orgotek                   | Electrokinesis |
| Upeo wa Macho             | Teleportation  |

<sup>1</sup> This order was destroyed and its Prometheus chamber dismantled.

## Gaining Psi Powers

Your psion gets powers upon first taking the psychic template, with additional powers gained every second character level thereafter.

Select two of the three 1st-level powers within your chosen aptitude when you first take the psychic template; you also get that aptitude's 0-level granted power automatically. You gain the remaining 1st-level power the following character level. This sequence repeats with the next higher level powers — 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th — with every third character level you attain. So, you receive two 2nd-level psi powers in your chosen aptitude three character levels after you gained your initial pair of 1st-level powers.

Note that you must have one psychic level to receive 3rd- and 4th-level powers and two psychic levels to purchase 5th-level powers. See “Psychic Levels” in Chapter Nine for further information. The specific sequence is outlined in Table 12–1: Purchasing Psi Powers.

Table 12–1: Gaining Psi Powers

| Level Progression <sup>1</sup> | Psi Powers of Chosen Aptitude |     |     |     |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                                | 0                             | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th |
| 1 level                        | 1                             | 2   | —   | —   | —   | —   |
| 2 levels                       | 1                             | 3   | —   | —   | —   | —   |
| 4 levels                       | 1                             | 3   | 2   | —   | —   | —   |
| 5 levels                       | 1                             | 3   | 3   | —   | —   | —   |
| 7 levels                       | 1                             | 3   | 3   | 2   | —   | —   |
| 8 levels                       | 1                             | 3   | 3   | 3   | —   | —   |
| 10 levels                      | 1                             | 3   | 3   | 3   | 2   | —   |
| 11 levels                      | 1                             | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   | —   |
| 13 levels                      | 1                             | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 2   |
| 14 levels                      | 1                             | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   |

<sup>1</sup> The listed level progression begins with your current character level when you first take the psychic template.

**Example:** At 5th level, Malcolm takes the psychic template. Choosing the telepathy aptitude, he gets two of its 1st-level powers right away; he then receives the third automatically when he reaches 6th level (one character level later). Subsequently, Malcolm gets two 2nd-level telepathy powers upon achieving 8th level and the remaining 2nd-level power upon reaching 9th level.

If Malcolm takes one psychic class level by the time he reaches 11th level, he can select two 3rd-level telepathy powers and gets the remaining one at 12th level; he may then select two 4th-level telepathy powers at 14th level and gets the last at 15th level.

If Malcolm takes the second psychic class level by 17th level, he can pick two 5th-level telepathy powers and gets the remaining one at 18th level.

## Auxiliary Aptitudes

As described under “Psi Feats” in Chapter Ten, you can get secondary, or auxiliary, powers from a different aptitude by spending a feat slot. An auxiliary power gives you access to an additional power outside your chosen aptitude, which you can use just like your chosen aptitude's powers.

## Using Psi Powers

You can manifest any power that you know as long as you succeed at any relevant check and/or spend the required power points (pp). Unless stated otherwise, activating a power is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. As a move action, you can maintain a power with a duration other than “instantaneous” by spending the required power points before its current duration expires. The new duration starts that round, and no roll is required.

## Display

Typically, a secondary noetic display accompanies a psionic power manifestation. This is typically a brief, faint ripple in the air as appropriate to the power (around your head for clairsentience and telepathy effects, springing from your eyes or hands for electrokinesis and psychokinesis effects, from your hands for vitakinesis effects, etc.). Some modes have more dramatic side effects — a crackle of electricity with electrokinesis, a small flurry of ice crystals with cryokinesis, and so on.

### Striking a Balance

A number of powers — especially those under the clairsentience and telepathy aptitudes — can reap a great deal of information, to the point that a character's excessive use may derail the plot that a GM took great care to construct. The GM is encouraged to strike a balance of providing helpful results while maintaining a sense of the intangible and mysterious. For instance, a clairsentient vision or telepathic probe might contain relevant insights, but conveyed in a hazy or even downright obscure manner that requires the PCs to consider the results before taking action.

Though noticeable, a display is not significant enough to create consequences for you or others during combat. If multiple powers with similar displays are in effect simultaneously, the general display remains much the same, though with minute spikes in intensity. An attunement check (DC 10 + 1 per additional power in use) reveals the exact number of simultaneous powers in play.

Display types are listed below. A display occurs when the power first manifests only if a power's description indicates it. It lasts for 1 round or the duration of the power's manifestation (whichever is greater), dissipating after that time. Each display issues from your vicinity or the vicinity of your target. You choose the specific details of the display and at which locale it occurs when you first select the power; it may not be changed thereafter.

You can suppress a secondary display by spending 1 additional power point when you first manifest the power. You can also try to hide this manifestation byproduct using a Sleight of Hand check, opposed by each observer's Spot check (see the Sleight of Hand description in the *Player's Handbook*). The Hide Display feat (see Chapter Ten) allows you to automatically suppress one display type.

**Auditory:** A hum, crackle, chime or other tone rises in volume from a whisper to a shout which can be heard by those within 100 feet.

**Material:** A brief, harmless physical manifestation occurs — typically some type of ectoplasmic goo, though a rime of frost, wave of heat or other display may occur as appropriate to the power.

**Mental:** As per an auditory display, except that the sound manifests within the minds of any creatures within 15 feet.

**Olfactory:** An odd but familiar odor manifests in a 20-foot radius. The scent is difficult to pin down, and no two individuals ever describe it the same way.

**Visual:** An instantaneous flash occurs as appropriate to the power — your eyes burn like flame, a glow emits from your hands or the center of your forehead, electricity crackles around the target, the very air ripples, or some other harmless but notable effect.

### Power Boost

A psion can push his powers beyond the norm by drawing upon his reserves of energy. Each time you wish to boost a power, select a single category from the corresponding chart; you then spend the requisite power points and must make a save (see the chart for type and DC). The total power points spent — including those needed for the power itself — cannot exceed your Psi score or the maximum that you can spend in one round. On a successful save, the power manifests with the desired boost and lasts for the power's standard duration (unless you spent power points to increase its duration); otherwise, it functions to its standard degree but the extra power points are still lost.

Trying a boost is a full-round action, and you may attempt one power boost per three character levels per encounter.

### Save for Each Boost Category

DC 15 + power level + extra power points allocated

| Category           | Save   | Power Boost (per power point spent)                            |
|--------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Area <sup>1</sup>  | Reflex | The power can affect a 5-foot radius area per character level. |
| Damage             | Fort   | Increase the power's damage by one additional die.             |
| Duration           | Will   | Double the power's duration.                                   |
| Effect             | Reflex | Double the power's area of effect or number of targets.        |
| Other <sup>1</sup> | Fort   | Apply the power's effect on one other target.                  |
| Range/Speed        | Will   | Double the power's range increment or speed.                   |

<sup>1</sup>Requires 2 power points. Available only for powers that affect a single creature; this can include a target of "you" at the GM's discretion.

### Psi Power Descriptions

Powers are divided into six levels, from 0-level granted powers through potent 5th-level powers. Each is listed with the following format.

**Name:** The name by which the power is known generally.

**Psi Mode and Descriptors:** For reference, each power after the aptitude type lists its mode (in parenthesis) — adaptation, algesis, cryokinesis, electromanipulation, empathy, iatrosis, mentatis, mindshare, photokinesis, psychbending, psychometry, psychomorphing, psychonavigation, pyrokinesis, technokinesis, telekinesis, telesthesia, translocation, transmassion, transmogrify or warping.

Descriptors that apply are listed [in brackets].

Descriptors include acid, cold, compulsion, darkness, death, electricity, fear, fire, force, healing, language-dependent, light, mind-affecting, sonic and teleportation. Descriptors function as described in the *Player's Handbook* (see Chapter 10: Magic, "Spell Descriptions," [Descriptor]), except that compulsion is the equivalent of the Enchantment subschool.

**Level:** The power's level, an indicator of its initial comparative potency.

**Display:** The power's secondary display (auditory, material, mental, olfactory, visual).

**Manifestation Time:** The time required to manifest the power.

**Range:** The maximum distance from you at which the power can affect a target.

**Targets or Targets/Effect/Area:** The number of creatures, dimensions, volume or weight that the power affects.

**Duration:** How long the power lasts. Some powers are "constant," in which case they are always considered active. It's possible that a power or device might "turn off" a constant power for a period of time, but never permanently.

**Saving Throw:** Whether a power allows a saving throw, what type of saving throw it is, and the effect of a successful saving throw. A saving throw against your power has a DC of 10 + the level of the power + your Psi score.

**Power Resistance:** Whether power resistance (PR) resists the power. (If you use creatures from the *MM* or other magic-setting d20 System sources, just convert spell resistance to power resistance.)

**Power Points:** The power's cost to manifest. For a power with a duration other than "instantaneous," you can also spend the listed amount to sustain the effect before its current duration expires. Doing so is a move action; the new duration starts that round.

**Description:** An explanation of the power's function.

**Effect:** How the power works in a rules format.

# Aptitudes

Each aptitude is categorized into three modes — distinct expressions of that aptitude's power. The aptitudes and their modes are described below; individual psi powers follow.

## Biokinesis Aptitude

Also referred to as morphing or shifting, biokinesis concerns the manipulations of a psion's own body and cellular structure. Masters of shifting have been known to apply "modifications" to the bodies of others in rare instances.

Unless stated otherwise, all biokinesis powers have a target of "you," and you may negate self-modifications as a move action on a successful DC 10 Psi check.

**Granted Power:** *Biosense*. Sense the presence of living organisms.

### Adaptation Mode

This mode's powers preserve you against hostile environments — the surroundings (crash-landing on a world with a methane-based atmosphere), not the circumstances (getting in a fight at a dive bar in Marrakech), in which you find yourself. Adaptation is unique in that its effects are considered constant, and are activated by your very survival urge. A suicidal psion might deactivate an adaptation power, but otherwise your body adjusts itself automatically to compensate for its surroundings.

- 1 **Metabolic Efficiency:** Immunity to or reduced effect of poison and toxins.
- 2 **Oxygen Absorption:** Breathe in any environment with a trace amount of oxygen; can resist becoming fatigued or exhausted.
- 3 **Heightened Reflexes:** Either go first or take a bonus standard action for the round.
- 4 **Biosynch:** Suffer no adverse effects from any hazardous physical environment.

- 5 **Autonomic Shunt:** Increased Fortitude saves against massive damage; increased chance to stabilize while dying; ability to function without penalty; disabled and dying categories increase.

### Psychomorphing Mode

With this mode's powers, you can modify your body's inner functions in a number of ways that are not visible to the naked eye. There are rare instances in which you can affect another person's genetic template.

- 1 **Detect Augmentation:** Detect whether a target is subject to biokinesis augmentation or manipulation.
- 2 **Bioshift:** Gain a bonus to a single physical ability for each power point spent, up to your Psi.
- 3 **Assimilation:** Incorporate psiware into your body, gaining a competence bonus and reducing the device's tolerance rating.
- 4 **Redundancy:** Gain damage reduction; you are not subject to critical hits.
- 5 **Catabolysis:** Touch attack against an organic creature or object applies 1d6 points of damage per character level (maximum 20d6).

### Transmogrify Mode

You can use this mode's powers to alter your cellular structure, changing your very appearance. Some psions have morphed themselves to such degrees that baselines confuse them for aberrants.

- 1 **Gross Manipulation:** Make minor physical changes to increase offensive or defensive capability, or even to adjust your appearance.
- 2 **Bodywarp:** Stretch and shape your body to extend your reach or fit into narrow spaces.
- 3 **Transform:** Change your appearance to any extreme within the human paradigm.



- 4 **Body Sculpt:** Manipulate your body in extreme ways to create modifications far outside the human norm.
- 5 **Simulacrum:** Extract part of your body to create a miniature, independent self.

### Clairsentience Aptitude

A psion with clairsentience — also referred to as “CS” and “seeing” — can extend his mind beyond his body to sense physical surroundings, even at great distances. He may also “read” noetic traces to locate objects, sense other beings’ recent actions or even glimpse the past and future.

**Granted Power:** *Enhanced attunement.* Increase attunement radius and attunement checks.

### Psychometry Mode

Noetic theory states that all things — from living creatures to inanimate objects — interrelate on the subquantum level. With this mode’s powers, you can perceive this connection as an “aura” which reveals a subject’s condition or recent activities. You can even glean details that are important to you or to the subject being scanned — so, in sensing a subject’s recent activities, you may learn that she was home, but you won’t discover how many trips she made to the bathroom (unless those trips are significant to you or to the subject).

- 1 **Sensory Echo:** Touch an object or person and sense who or what has come in contact with it in the recent past.
- 2 **Insight:** Sense significant places where an object or person has been recently.
- 3 **Find Flaw:** Discern weakness in a target or object.
- 4 **Flashback:** View past events in a designated area or from the subject’s perspective.
- 5 **Premotion:** See a possible future course of events within 1 day per character level.

### Psychonavigation Mode

Using this mode’s powers, you gain a fundamental understanding of how you relate to the universe, whether to find a particular object in the next room, track someone across a city or even plot a course through deep space.

- 1 **Orientation:** Determine your location with respect to familiar landmarks.
- 2 **Dowsing:** You can scan for a certain category of object or person.
- 3 **Psi Cloak:** Conceal a target’s presence from psionic detection.
- 4 **Farsensing:** Find the shortest, most direct physical route to a specified destination.
- 5 **Astrolocation:** Detect stellar objects across light years.

### Telesthesia Mode

With the powers of this mode, you extend your senses to a level outside that of normal consciousness to sense surrounding or distant people, objects and occurrences.

- 1 **Sense Mastery:** Gain blindsight in your immediate surroundings.
- 2 **Danger Sense:** Become aware of impending danger.
- 3 **Sensory Projection:** Extend your senses even through physical barriers.
- 4 **Remote Sensing:** Perceive the surroundings of a remote target.
- 5 **Noetic Survey:** Learn specific details about areas up to light-years away.

### Electrokinesis Aptitude

A user of electrokinesis (or “EK”) can channel subquantum energy to manipulate the electromagnetic spectrum. Communications devices, vehicles, computers, biotechnology, even

human physiologies interact with this spectrum in some way and may be subject to this aptitude’s control.

**Granted Power:** *Static burst.* Touch attack does 1d4 points of electrical damage/2 levels.

### Electromanipulation Mode

You can use this mode’s powers to manipulate electrical impulses within any electrochemical-based organic system — including animals, humans or biotech.

- 1 **Stun:** Organic targets make Fortitude saves or are stunned for the power’s duration.
- 2 **Disruption:** Generate 1 arc/3 levels (max. 6); each deals 1d8 points of nonlethal electrical damage +1/3 levels (+6 max).
- 3 **Static Shield:** Resistance to electricity equal to level; add Psi score to saves against electricity; may make opposed Hide check to avoid electrical-based detection.
- 4 **Impulse Control:** Control actions of 1 organic target/4 levels.
- 5 **Feedback:** A single target suffers 1d6 points of electrical damage/level, plus 1d4 points of Dexterity damage; on a successful save, half damage and stunned 1d4 rounds.

### Photokinesis Mode

Also called photo-K, this mode enables you to manipulate the high ranges of the electromagnetic spectrum. Reports suggest that the alien chromatrics are even more accomplished with such powers than are psions.

- 1 **Control Illumination:** Adjust an area’s ambient illumination or create a beam of light.
- 2 **Spectrum Sight:** Detect emissions in the infrared, visible light, ultraviolet, X-ray, gamma ray or cosmic ray range.
- 3 **Electromagnetic Shield:** Resistance to light, fire, radiation equal to 1/2 level; add Psi score to saves against light, fire, radiation; may make opposed Hide check to avoid EM-based detection.
- 4 **Laser Generation:** Laser beam deals 1d6 points of damage/level (max 20d6) in a line.
- 5 **Hologram Creation:** Create static or dynamic holograms.

### Technokinesis Mode

With the powers of this mode, you can manipulate energy flow at the low end of the electromagnetic spectrum, focusing on control of inorganic technology.

- 1 **Power Surge:** Electronic devices make Fortitude saves or are inoperable for the power’s duration.
- 2 **Interface:** Gain mental control over electronic devices.
- 3 **Lockout:** Alter the security DC of an electronic device.
- 4 **Frequency Tap:** Send and receive electromagnetic signals.
- 5 **Microwave Burst:** Organic creature or object suffers 1d6 points of radiation damage/level and 1d6 Con points of damage or –1 hardness.

### Psychokinesis Aptitude

Psions who trigger to psychokinesis (or “PK”) channel subquantum force to affect the physical world in often blatant ways. The powers under the cryokinesis, pyrokinesis and telekinesis modes offer different ways to manipulate molecules — cryo slows them down, pyro speeds them up and teke moves them around. Each method involves a different application of noetic force, expressed in the development of the three separate modes.

**Granted Power:** *Temperature control.* Alter ambient temperature by 10 °/3 levels.

### Cryokinesis Mode

You use the powers of this mode to slow the motion of overactive molecules, cooling — even freezing — the objects and individuals they comprise.

- 1 **Thermal Screen:** Gain Psi + level resistance to cold.
- 2 **Adhere:** Freeze a target to one spot, or use to cling to walls.
- 3 **Hypothermic Blast:** 1d6 points of cold damage/2 levels plus 1d4 rounds fatigued.
- 4 **Heat Sink:** Extinguish any fires within a 5-ft.-radius spread/level.
- 5 **Cryofreeze:** 1d6 points of cold damage/3 levels (max. 6d6), 1d3 points of Dexterity damage and movement halved for 1 round/2 levels in a 20-ft. spherical radius spread.

### Pyrokinesis Mode

With this mode's powers, you excite molecules in an object or individual. At extremes, you can even direct the very size and shape of the molecular flow to control heat and flame.

- 1 **Flame Immunity:** Gain Psi + level resistance to heat, 1/2 this amount as resistance to light.
- 2 **Heatburn:** Generate 1 beam/3 levels (max. 6); each deals 1d8 points of nonlethal fire damage +1/3 levels (+6 max).
- 3 **Thermal Awareness:** Gain heat-based blindsight in your immediate surroundings.
- 4 **Liquefy:** Melt inorganic targets.
- 5 **Plasma Control:** Control size, shape and extent of an extant fire to create different effects.

### Telekinesis Mode

You can employ the powers of this mode to manipulate the subquantum energy within a target to move her through force of will.

- 1 **Tow:** Move objects telekinetically weighing a total of 25 pounds + Psi/level.
- 2 **Remote Manipulation:** Gain telekinetic Strength and Dexterity each equal to Psi + 1/2 levels.
- 3 **Force Barrier:** Invisible shield provides total concealment against ranged physical attacks, prohibits physical passage.
- 4 **Flight:** Fly at 10 ft./Psi and good maneuverability.
- 5 **Resonant Interference:** Disrupt a target's physical integrity.

### Telepathy Aptitude

One of the most subtle, yet most notorious of the aptitudes, telepathy (or "teep") allows access to the minds of others — whether they be human, animal or alien.

This has contributed to the paranoia and mistrust that many feel in the 22nd century — one can never tell when he is being eavesdropped upon mentally. Many nations have imposed or currently argue over laws that restrict use of telepathic powers. In some countries, use of even *mindspeak* invokes charges ranging from invasion of personal privacy to assault (confirming when such an effect has been used brings its own set of difficulties). To be safe, important persons commonly employ psiware dampeners to prevent just such unwelcome observation.

**Granted Power:** *Mindscan.* Make a mental connection with a single known target over distance.

### Empathy Mode

The powers of this mode enable you to interpret — and manipulate — the emotions of others (often without the targets even being aware of it).

- 1 **Detect Emotion:** Learn a target's emotional state and gain Psi score as a bonus to Sense Motive checks.
- 2 **Empathic Polarization:** Allies gain +1 morale bonus/4 levels and foes apply a -1 penalty/4 levels on attacks and saves against empathy and fear.
- 3 **Emotional Fortress:** Gain Psi as insight bonus to Int- and Wis-based skill checks and immunity to emotion manipulation.
- 4 **Muse:** Incite loyalty in those around you.

- 5 **Mind Bomb:** Target is stunned by powerful emotion for 1 round/level.

### Mindshare Mode

You can use the powers of this mode for the transmission of information from one mind to another.

- 1 **Babel Effect:** All creatures within a 30-ft. burst understand any language spoken.
- 2 **Pilfer Thoughts:** Search through subject's memory to extract specific thoughts.
- 3 **Mindspeak:** Communicate telepathically with 1 target/3 levels.
- 4 **Brainjack:** Targets in a 15-ft.-radius burst are at -2 on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks, and take a random action.
- 5 **Mental Projection:** Create illusions within targets' minds.

### Psychbending Mode

With the powers of this mode, you can manipulate the conscious and subconscious actions of others. The potential abuses possible with this mode make its misuse punishable as rape in many settled regions of space.

- 1 **Willfinder:** Determine if target is under telepathic influence.
- 2 **Will Control:** Control actions of 1 living target/4 levels.
- 3 **Mindshield:** Gain PR = level + Psi against telepathy and mind-affecting powers.
- 4 **Mindwarp:** Create, delete or alter the target's memories.
- 5 **Mindstorm:** A direct assault on the subject's mind, dealing 1d6 points of nonlethal damage/2 levels and 1d6 points of Intelligence and Wisdom damage.

### Teleportation Aptitude

A psion using this aptitude can influence the subquantum stratum to alter space or change the locations of objects or individuals. With teleportation (also known as "hopping," "porting" or "blinking"), the only significant factors in travel are "here" and "there." It doesn't matter if "there" is in another city, on another continent or in another galaxy. The challenge isn't how *far* the target is, but how *clear* your mental picture is of it. Just knowing that a place exists is insufficient: If you haven't visited the Sistine Chapel, you can't teleport there, no matter how many images of it you study.

Telepathic powers and psiware that emulates such effects can be used to implant "psi coordinates," a sense memory of a location that enables a psion to teleport there even if he's never been there himself.

**Granted Power:** *Spatial sense.* Gain equivalent of blindsight to perceive all solid objects within attunement range.

### Translocation Mode

You use the powers of this mode to move yourself from place to place. With mastery of this mode, "distance" has no real meaning — the other side of the galaxy is as "close" as the other side of a door.

- 1 **Noetic Integrity:** Area of effect gains PR = to your level + Psi to resist teleportation effects.
- 2 **Spatial Hop:** Transfer yourself instantly from your current location to another spot within range.
- 3 **Flicker:** You teleport randomly, gaining 50% miss chance against physical attacks and 20% miss chance against directed powers; you attack as an invisible creature but suffer 20% miss chance.
- 4 **Spatial Jump:** Teleport to any location with which you are familiar.
- 5 **Bilocality:** Exist simultaneously in two locations.

### Transmession Mode

This mode's powers deal with moving other things, from objects to living beings. The difference is a subtle one, but distinct — the mindset required to manipulate objects *at* a distance is quite different from that needed to manipulate yourself *through* distance.

- 1 **Relay Object:** Teleport an object in line of sight to your hand or vice-versa.
- 2 **Relay Person:** Teleport a living creature in line of sight to direct contact with you or vice-versa.
- 3 **Transmass Shield:** Gain damage resistance by bending space.
- 4 **Transmit:** Teleport an object weighing up to 50 lb./level or 1 living creature/2 levels.
- 5 **Selective Transmession:** Teleport part of an object or person, dealing 1d6 points of damage/level.

### Warping Mode

This mode focuses upon changing the nature of location itself. You can use warping powers to bend space like a child toys with a wad of chewing gum, stretching and folding it to suit your own purposes.

- 1 **Minor Flux:** Gain +1 bonus/2 levels to apply to combat or noncombat actions.
- 2 **Spatial Divergence:** Reduce or increase a single target's speed by half per 4 character levels.
- 3 **Fade:** Become partially ethereal, gaining damage reduction, 50% miss chance versus all but force and light, extended survival in hostile environments, and other benefits.
- 4 **Extrusive Warp:** Expand or contract the perceived size of a target.
- 5 **Transportal:** Teleport everything within a 25-ft.-radius spherical emanation + 25 ft./3 levels.

### Relative Mass and Inertia

This is a game, not a quantum physics course; so, for game purposes, teleportation and relative mass and inertia boil down as explained here.

**Mass:** A vacuum is created in spacetime when the target of a teleportation effect teleports away; the local atmosphere makes a distinct noise as it rushes to fill the empty space — a kind of *whooshPOP*. The same happens on arrival, as spacetime makes room for the target's mass. Anyone within 10 feet hears this noise with a successful DC 10 Listen check (range modifiers apply as normal to those further out). You can make a "quiet jump," easing through the subquantum stratum to avoid the sudden mass displacement. For each additional round you add to the manifestation time, increase the Listen DC by +5. You are aware of your surroundings during this time but can take no other actions and are considered helpless.

**Inertia:** Teleportation cancels all inertia and momentum from movement. Put another way, the target of teleportation is considered stationary when it appears, regardless of speed prior to the teleport or the current velocity of the point of arrival. The target suffers no damage from a sudden change in momentum; teleportation compensates for such factors.

### Vitakinesis Aptitude

This aptitude's powers relate to repairing — or disrupting — a subject's essential physiological state. With modes that can provide physical and mental well-being to subjects with but a focus of will, vitakinesis (also called "VK" or "vik") is among the most valued of aptitudes. It comes with a dark side, however — algesis, the ability to reverse healing powers and cause permanent harm.

**Granted Power:** *Kirlian eye.* Detect a target's current physical condition.

### Algesis Mode

The powers of this mode focus on nothing less than inflicting physiological trauma upon a target's genetic structure. Given such deadly potential, development of algesis powers is accompanied by strict ethical training.

- 1 **Inflame:** Deal 1d6 points of damage/3 levels to a target that has suffered damage already.
- 2 **Paralysis:** Target is unable to move, speak or take any physical action.
- 3 **Algesic Shield:** Gain PR = level + Psi against algesis and electromanipulation powers, *catabolysis* and *resonant interference*.
- 4 **Seizure:** Targets fall prone, unable to take action, and suffer 2d6 points of Strength damage.
- 5 **Morbidity:** Target suffers 1d6 points of Strength, Dexterity, Constitution and Charisma drain and is sickened.

### Iatrosis Mode

You use the powers of this mode to repair a subject's genetic makeup — knitting broken bones, closing wounds, curing diseases and even regenerating mutilated flesh or organs.

- 1 **Mend:** Heal 1d8 points of damage/4 levels +1 point/2 levels.
- 2 **Antitoxin:** Make yourself or others immune to the effects of poisons.
- 3 **Boost:** Increase a subject's ability scores temporarily.
- 4 **Cellular Repair:** Remove damage from disease, mutation, parasitic infestation or radiation poisoning.
- 5 **Regeneration:** Reattach or regrow a target's lost digits, organs or limbs.

### Mentatis Mode

With the power of this mode, you heal wounded minds and psyches rather than torn flesh and broken bones.

- 1 **Detect Minds:** Perceive the presence, and relative intelligence and psychological condition, of creatures.
- 2 **Passive Voice:** Calm creatures in a 20-ft.-radius spread.
- 3 **Bolster:** Grant immunity to fear and a +1 morale bonus/4 levels on attack rolls, saves, skill checks.
- 4 **Negation:** Remove any mind-affecting influences.
- 5 **Noetic Blueprint:** Record a target's psyche to return her to life at a later date.

# Psi Powers

## Adhere

*"Chill out; you're not going anywhere."*

Psychokinesis (Cryokinesis) [Cold]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or material (cold)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); see text

**Targets:** 1 creature or object/4 levels, no two of which can be more than 10 ft. apart; see text

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Reflex partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You cool the target at its point of contact with another surface to suppress the natural electrical repulsion. This causes the two to join together — useful for "freezing" a target in one spot, or for moving along walls and even ceilings.

**Effect:** You may apply this power at one of two degrees of intensity, determined each time you manifest it.

**Immobilization:** When the power is used at full strength, each target who fails a Reflex save is considered entangled for the power's duration. She moves at half speed, cannot run or charge, and takes a -2 penalty on all attack rolls and a -4 penalty to Dexterity. The target can break free and move half her normal speed by using a full-round action to make a DC 20 Strength check or a DC 20 Escape Artist check. A target who succeeds on a Reflex save is not entangled but can still move at only half speed for the power's duration.

**Adhesion:** A less intense application of the power allows subjects to travel on vertical surfaces or even ceilings as well as a spider does. Each subject gains a climb speed of 20 feet, but cannot use the run action while climbing. The subject need not make Climb checks to traverse a vertical or horizontal surface (even upside down), retains her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus to their attacks against her. The subject must use both hands and feet to climb in this manner, but can remain in one place with just her feet (or hands).

## Algesic Shield

*"No, no tentacles, thanks. I like me just the way I am."*

Vitakinesis (Algesis)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You harness noetic energy to protect your genetic structure against manipulation.

**Effect:** You gain power resistance equal to your character level plus Psi score against all algesis and electromanipulation powers, as well as *catabolysis* and *resonant interference*.

## Antitoxin

*"Time to sober up; we've got work to do."*

Vitakinesis (Iatrosis)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 10 min./level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You manipulate noetic energy to enhance the target's genetic makeup to better resist or even ignore poisons, viral infections and other toxins.

**Effect:** You detoxify any sort of venom, poison or virus in the creature touched. A poisoned creature suffers no additional effects from the poison, and any temporary effects are ended; but the power does not reverse instantaneous effects, such as hit point damage, temporary ability damage, or effects that don't go away on their own. The creature is also immune to any poison it is exposed to while the power is in effect.

This power has no effect on diseases or parasitic infections.

## Assimilation

*"Is that a biolaser you've assimilated or are you just happy to see me?"*

Biokinesis (Psychomorphing)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Material

**Manifestation Time:** See text

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Constant; see text (D)

**Power Points:** See text

**Description:** Your flesh sculpts around a psiware device, bonding it to you as part of your natural physiology.

**Effect:** To incorporate a piece of psiware into your body, spend the listed power points under Assimilation Cost on Table 12-2: Psiware Assimilation. You then make a Disguise check against DC 10 + the psiware's tolerance rating (TR) + its size modifier (see Table 12-2). On a successful Disguise check, you assimilate the device completely, leaving no apparent evidence of its existence. Genetic manipulation detection — such as with *detect augmentation* — can detect an assimilated device.

On a failed Disguise check, the psiware is assimilated only partially, with recognizable portions sticking out from your body in obvious (and unsightly) manners. The psiware functions as normal, but you suffer a -2 penalty on all checks and rolls relating to Charisma until the device is removed. Assimilating the device fully requires a separate use of the power.

You receive the following with each separate piece of assimilated psiware:

- +1 competence bonus when using the psiware (on Computer Use checks for a minicomp, on attack rolls for a weapon, etc.); this increases by an additional +1 every four character levels (maximum +4).
- -1 to its TR when comparing total TR against your tolerance limit (for specifics, see "Tolerance" in Chapter Eleven: Psi).

Each power point you spend provides a 1 hour charge for an assimilated device, or provides 1 new clip for an assimilated weapon. Assimilated psiware remains inert but does not hinder you when no power points are spent.

You can assimilate 1 Medium, 4 Small, or 16 Tiny or smaller psiware devices at one time. To remove assimilated psiware, your body extracts the device within the listed manifestation time once you spend the assimilation cost again. Others may try to remove an assimilated device, but the procedure is identical in complexity to removing a major organ.



Table 12–2: Psiware Assimilation

| Size       | Example       | Size Mod. | Manifestation Time | Assimilation Cost |
|------------|---------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Fine       | Wristwatch    | 1         | 1 full round       | 1 pp              |
| Diminutive | Biowelder     | 2         | 2 rounds           | 1 pp              |
| Tiny       | Minicomp      | 4         | 1 minute           | 2 pp              |
| Small      | Biocarbine    | 6         | 1 minute           | 3 pp              |
| Medium     | Bioarmor suit | 10        | 5 minutes          | 4 pp              |

You cannot assimilate psiware larger than Medium size.

## Astrolocation

*“I’m picking up multiple small masses about five light years distant. Trajectory is too uniform for asteroids; I’m thinking spacecraft.”*

Clairsentience (Psychonavigation)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 10 minutes; see text

**Range:** 1 light year/level

**Area:** Cone-shaped emanation

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 day/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You can extend your senses over vast distances — across a planet or even through the reaches of space — to perceive the general location of significant objects, thereby identifying the existence of stellar masses in space and major

geographic features on worlds. Sensing details requires *noetic survey* — in fact, the two powers are often used in conjunction.

**Effect:** Using this power requires complete concentration for the duration of the manifestation time; you can take no other action and are considered flat-footed if attacked. Once the power manifests, you enter a trance state where you are considered to be concentrating (taking a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity), but you postpone the need to rest. You remain in this state until the duration ends, some outside influence breaks your concentration, or you end the effect. You are then considered exhausted.

Scanning requires a Search check, with your Psi score applied as a bonus to the roll. You cannot take 10 or 20 on the roll. The DC depends on the scope of the scan as well as the number and size of significant objects in the region being scanned (see Table 12–3: Astrolocation Scan). Assume that scanning requires 1 day per 5 points in the base DC. The GM may call for an initial check to confirm whether there is any significant stellar mass in a given region, with

separate rolls made to detect each individual object; alternatively, she may ask for a single Search check against which she compares each object's DC separately.

You cannot normally manifest a power while concentrating on another one; you may manifest *noetic survey* while concentrating on *astrolocation*, however.

Table 12–3: Astrolocation Scan

| DC  | Scope of Scan <sup>1</sup>                                                  |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5   | Solar system, well-known (Sol)                                              |
| 10  | Solar system, somewhat known (Alpha Centauri, Qijnunan)                     |
| 15  | Solar system, little-known (Crab Nebula, SS1515, SS3819)                    |
| 20  | Solar system, unexplored                                                    |
| DC  | Object <sup>1</sup>                                                         |
| –5  | Star (Sol, Betelgeuse)                                                      |
| –2  | Large gas giant (Jupiter, Mgitu)                                            |
| +0  | Gas giant (Uranus)                                                          |
| +3  | Terrestrial planet (Earth, Venus, Qinshui)                                  |
| +5  | Small terrestrial planet/large moon (Luna, Mercury)                         |
| +8  | Small moon/asteroid (Phobos)                                                |
| +10 | Orbital station/large starship ( <i>Lulong</i> , Leviathan-class jump ship) |
| +13 | Small stellar mass (meteor, spacecraft)                                     |

<sup>1</sup>These listings are guidelines for any stellar region or object of equivalent size.

## Autonomic Shunt

*“Do I look dead? Wait, don’t answer that.”*

Biokinesis (Adaptation)

**Level:** 5

**Manifestation Time:** N/A

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 hour/3 levels

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** Upon mastering *autonomic shunt*, you become nearly indestructible. Your body can endure even extreme damage, shutting down into a kind of suspended animation while it repairs the damage.

**Effect:** While this power is active, add your Psi score to Fortitude saves to avoid dying from massive damage. You also have a 25% chance each round while dying of becoming stable. Your ability to function without penalty increases, as do your disabled and dying categories; see the corresponding chart. If the power's duration would end while you are unconscious, your body will automatically spend power points to renew the duration (you cannot burn hit points for power points while unconscious). If you are under the threshold of dead when the power ends and you have no more power points, you die.

| Character Level | No Penalty | Disabled      | Dying         | Dead   |
|-----------------|------------|---------------|---------------|--------|
| 13th            | 0 hp       | –1 to –4 hp   | –5 to –14 hp  | –15 hp |
| 16th            | 0 to –4 hp | –5 to –9 hp   | –10 to –19 hp | –20 hp |
| 19th            | 0 to –9 hp | –10 to –14 hp | –15 to –24 hp | –25 hp |

## Babel Effect

*“Sorry, I only translate language — I can’t help you understand your teenager.”*

Telepathy (Mindshare) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 30 ft.

**Area:** All creatures within a 30-ft. burst, centered on you

**Duration:** 10 min./level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** By accessing the surface thought patterns tied to the speech of those around you, you translate all physical communication, from speech to sign language.

**Effect:** All targets (including yourself) understand any language spoken or signed physically within the area of effect while this power is active. The creatures speak in whatever language they choose, but others in the area have no difficulty comprehending what they say.

## Bilocality

*“Whomever said ‘you can’t be in two places at once’ wasn’t talking about a teleporter.”*

Teleportation (Translocation)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 full round; see text

**Range:** Unlimited; see text

**Target:** You; see text

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You manifest a portion of your physical and mental being in two separate places at once. Both “selves” look solid, but each form is more fragile than normal and your perceptions are likewise split.

**Effect:** You transfer a portion of your physical and mental being to manifest a second self at any location you can reach through *spatial hop* or any *spatial jump* destination of “intimate” familiarity.

Your primary and secondary selves draw from the same individual being. In game terms, reduce the ability scores, skill ranks and body mass for your core self by one-third (round down); these reduced totals are then used by both your primary and secondary selves. You then divide your character levels between the two selves, allocating no fewer than one-third and no more than one-half your levels to the secondary self. Your base attack bonus and base saving throws adjust accordingly. Each self retains access to your core self's powers, feats and special abilities, unless a self no longer meets a level, ability score or other prerequisite.

The selves can think and act independently within the constraints of a power that requires concentration, but they share the same consciousness, with each knowing instantly everything that happens to the other. You may switch places of your primary and secondary selves as a move action.

The two forms share a single hit point total; any damage that one self takes is apparent instantly upon the other. They also draw from the same power point pool.

Any clothing and gear with your psi print is split as well. Technological devices become unreliable under these circumstances — mechanical devices function as normal but electronic and chemical devices (e.g., computers, lasers, radios) do not; psiware works 50% of the time.

You can revert to a single self at will prior to the end of the power's duration, regaining one-third of all lost hit points (round down) when the two selves recombine. You may recombine at either location, even if only one self remains conscious (drawing the other, unconscious self to him).

## Biosense

*"One freak behind that door, and it's hurt bad."*

Biokinesis

**Level:** 0

**Display:** Mental

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 10-ft.-radius spherical emanation + 5 ft./2 levels

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 0

**Description:** You are sensitive to the genetic signature of living organisms — whether plant, animal, human or even psiware — and can perceive when they are nearby.

**Effect:** You can detect a particular kind of living organism in a radius emanating out from you. You must think of the desired organism when using the power, but you can change the organism type each round. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you search a particular area or focus on a specific kind of organism (see Table 12–4: Biosense).

Any target behind 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of metal or 3 feet of plastic, wood or dirt within the power's radius may make a Hide check, opposed by your Spot check, to avoid registering on your *biosense*. You can use this power to conceal your own genetic signature from other *biosense* attempts regardless of whether you are obscured by a physical obstruction. In this circumstance, you each add your Psi scores to your opposing checks.

Table 12–4: Biosense

| Round | Information                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st   | Presence or absence of that kind of living organism in the area.                                                                                                                |
| 2nd   | Number of targets of the specified kind in the area, and the condition of the healthiest specimen.                                                                              |
| 3rd   | The condition <sup>1</sup> and location of each target present. If a living organism is outside your line of effect, then you discern its direction but not its exact location. |

<sup>1</sup>The categories of condition are listed below. If a target falls into more than one category, you sense the weaker of the two.

**Normal:** Has at least 90% of full normal hit points, free of disease.

**Fair:** 30% to 90% of full normal hit points remaining.

**Poor:** Less than 30% of full normal hit points remaining, afflicted with a disease, or suffering from a debilitating injury.

**Weak:** 0 or fewer hit points remaining, afflicted with a disease in the terminal stage, or crippled.

## Bioshift

*"What, you haven't got your space legs yet?"*

Biokinesis (Psychomorphing)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Material

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** See text

**Description:** You can adjust your physical frame and muscle tone in subtle ways. This is used most often to function without hindrance in different gravity environments.

**Effect:** You receive a +1 bonus to a single physical ability of your choice (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution) for each power point spent. You can spend a number of points equal to your Psi score with each use. This power can be applied to no more than two of your physical abilities at once; multiple uses of *bioshift* do not stack. The bonus provides the usual benefits conferred with an ability increase (e.g., damage, Armor Class, hit points).

## Biosynch

*"No time for you to get protective gear. I'll shut down the core; just tell me how."*

Biokinesis (Adaptation)

**Level:** 4

**Manifestation Time:** 1 free action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You use *biosynch* (short for "biosphere synchronization") to modify your genetic structure to survive physical environment extremes such as pressure, gravity and temperature — even nuclear radiation or explosive decompression.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you suffer no adverse effects from any hazardous physical environment. You have no protection against attacks, however, such as some form of gravitic blast or a nuclear detonation.

## Body Sculpt

*"Eyes in the back of my head? That's nothing."*

Biokinesis (Transmogrify)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Material or olfactory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 full round

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 hour/2 levels (D)

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You can manipulate your body in extreme ways, creating patterned flesh, adding functional limbs, changing your size dramatically and creating other modifications outside the human norm.

**Effect:** This power functions like *transform*, except that it enables you to assume the form of any single non-unique creature of the following types: animal, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, outsider (lawful), plant, reptilian, vermin. Refer to the *MM* for details on these creatures. The size of the form you assume can range from Tiny to Huge; at 14th level, this range becomes Diminutive to Gargantuan.



Your creature type and subtype (if any) change to match the new form. You gain the Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores of the new form but retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You also gain all of the form's extraordinary special attacks and special qualities. If a creature from the *MM* is used, you do not gain any of its "supernatural" or "spell-like" abilities. The GM may allow you to gain psychic equivalents of these abilities or she may set specific traits herself.

The genetic manipulation required for *body sculpt* extends in a kind of aura surrounding you; with a successful DC 15 Disguise check, you may also alter your clothing or even subsume it into yourself. Parts of your body or clothing do not revert to their original forms if separated from you.

Unlike *transform*, you cannot change forms at will while *body sculpt* is in effect. Reverting to your natural form is a free action that ends the effect; changing to a new form requires a new use of the power.

## Bodywarp

*"Let me get that down for you."*

Biokinesis (Transmogrify)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Material or olfactory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1; see text

**Description:** You can stretch and shape your body to extend your reach, fit into narrow spaces, slip free of manacles and the like.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you can stretch your limbs up to 3 feet and/or flatten and reshape your form to fit through any opening as small as 6 inches in diameter. You also gain your Psi score as a competence bonus on any Escape Artist or Sleight of Hand checks; your physical ability scores and speed remain unchanged.

For each additional power point you spend (up to your maximum per round), you can stretch your form an additional 3 feet or reduce by half the minimum diameter you can fit through (to a 3/4 inch minimum). If you spend at least 2 power points, you attack and threaten with a 10-foot reach; but you may not attack adjacent targets unless you have the Combat Martial Arts or Brawl feat.

## Bolster

*"Everything will be fine — once we kick its ass."*

Vitakinesis (Mentatis) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 30 ft.

**Targets:** 1 creature / 4 levels, no two of which can be more than 10 ft. apart

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** Through subtle manipulation of neurochemical processes, you enhance a target's mental fortitude — from increased clarity of thought and perception to great courage.

**Effect:** Each target gains a +1 morale bonus per four character levels on attack rolls, saves and skill checks and is immune to fear effects for the duration of this power.

## Boost

*"I can make you better, faster, stronger."*

Vitakinesis (Iatrosis)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Targets:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 10 min./level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You stimulate a biochemical reaction within a target to increase her physiological capabilities, often to impressive degrees.

**Effect:** You may apply a +1 enhancement bonus per two character levels to the target's Strength, Dexterity, Constitution and/or Intelligence. The target enjoys the usual benefits of the adjusted ability score.

A single ability score can have a bonus no more than half its total (round down) — so, a score of 10 can have up to a +5 bonus while a score of 17 can have up to a +8 bonus. Points may not be shifted once they are applied, and multiple uses of this power on the same target do not stack.

## Brainjack

*"Say good-bye to rational thought."*

Telepathy (Mindshare) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Targets:** All creatures in a 15-ft.-radius burst

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** By interweaving the subject's own random thoughts, you engender such an overwhelming sense of confusion that the target is unable to take effective action.

**Effect:** Each subject takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks due to constant mental confusion while the power is in effect. Further, roll on the corresponding table at the beginning of each subject's turn each round to see what the subject does in that round.

If a creature cannot carry out the indicated action, she does nothing but babble. A *brainjacked* character who is attacked returns the attack automatically on her next turn, as long as she is still subject to the power. A *brainjacked* character will not make attacks of opportunity.

| d20   | Behavior                                                 |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1–2   | Attack you or close for attack with primary attack type. |
| 3–4   | Act normally.                                            |
| 5–9   | Do nothing but babble incoherently and fidget.           |
| 10–12 | Flee away from you at top possible speed.                |
| 13–16 | Repeat one random simple task.                           |
| 17–20 | Attack nearest creature (excluding you).                 |

## Catabolysis

*"One touch, and you'll fall apart like a child's tower of blocks."*

Biokinesis (Psychomorphing)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Material

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** 1 creature or organic object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You destroy the genetic makeup of another organic form — whether human, animal, plant or even bioware — breaking the very bonds that connect the target's component molecules! Psychomorphing experts keep this power a secret — not only because of its effects, but because it is one of the few biokinesis powers that can be used to affect others.

**Effect:** On a successful melee touch attack, the targeted creature or organic object takes 1d6 points of damage per character level (maximum 20d6). When used against an object, you destroy as much as one 10-foot cube of organic matter (from wood to biotech). Thus, the power destroys only part of any very large object or structure targeted.

A creature or organic object that makes a successful Fortitude save suffers half damage. A living creature's genetic template — her inherent noetic aura, if you will — resists manipulation in this way, conferring a second Fortitude save with a +4 resistance bonus to negate the actual body part loss.

The target recovers lost hit points as normal; however, the power "erases" the target's genetic template in the affected area, making it impossible to restore other than through advanced vitakinesis (see *regeneration*).

Any target reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by this power is destroyed entirely, collapsing into a puddle of gray sludge. A destroyed creature's equipment is unaffected (unless the equipment is assimilated).

## Cellular Repair

*"Sleep now. You'll feel much better in the morning."*

Vitakinesis (Iatrosis)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** With this power, you tap into the target's own genetic code to restore damage from disease, mutation or parasitic infestation.

**Effect:** You rebuild all damaged portions of the subject's cellular structure, curing her of any disease, parasite or radiation poisoning. This reconstruction takes a base 120 minutes – (5 x subject's Constitution score) minutes. This power also restores ability scores reduced through ability damage or drain.

The reconstruction does not cure the subject of congenital anomalies, since those are part of her normal genetic makeup. Similarly, since the power returns the subject to her pre-diseased state, it does not prevent re-infection after a new exposure to the same disease or infestation at a later date.

## Control Illumination

*"Let's shed some light on the situation, shall we?"*

Electrokinesis (Photokinesis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect:** See text

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You may adjust the intensity of illumination in an area or even create a focused beam of light.

**Effect:** Each time you use this power, declare first whether you are creating a beam of light or adjusting ambient illumination. This power gives you no special immunity to the illumination changes it creates.

**Light Beam:** You cause a focused beam of light to emit from a specific object in range (e.g., your hand, a weapon sight, a rock). The beam is 1 foot across at the base of projection and has an effective range of 5 feet per level; you may adjust it at will between a line or a cone. As a move action, you can move the light to a new point of projection.

**Adjust Illumination:** You can adjust the intensity of light by one category in a 5 foot radius per level spherical emanation, thereby enhancing or dampening the ambient illumination.

| Illumination | Effect <sup>1</sup>                                                       |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dark         | Pitch black; creatures are considered blind.                              |
| Dim          | Shadowy illumination; creatures have concealment relative to one another. |
| Normal       | Bright light; no modifiers to vision.                                     |
| Intense      | Brilliant illumination; creatures are considered dazzled.                 |
| Blinding     | Overwhelming brightness; creatures are considered blind.                  |

<sup>1</sup> Creatures not dependent upon visible light (or lack thereof) to perceive their surroundings — such as with *sense mastery* or *spectrum sight* — ignore illumination effects.

## Cryofreeze

*"You're walking on thin ice with me."*

Psychokinesis (Cryokinesis) [Cold]

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual or material (cold)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** 20-ft.-spherical-radius spread

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial (object); see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You plunge the core temperature of anything within a targeted area to close to absolute zero. Anything from flesh and blood to wood, plastic or even metal can suffer from this brittle, supercold state.

**Effect:** While in effect, this power deals 1d6 points of cold damage per three character levels (maximum 6d6) and 1d3 points of temporary Dexterity damage each round to all creatures within the targeted area. On a successful Fortitude save, a target suffers half damage and avoids Dexterity damage.

Further, exposed surfaces within the area become slick and icy, reducing all land movement within or through the area to half normal speed with a DC 10 Balance check. Failure means that the target can take only a 5-foot step in that round, while failure by 5 or more means that the target falls (see the Balance skill for details). The effect cannot be moved once it manifests.

A target reduced to negative hit points can literally be shattered with a sharp blow (see "Smashing an Object" in the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 9; assume the subject has hardness 2). A target restored to positive hit points may suffer permanent ability damage and/or loss of extremities, at the GM's discretion.

## Danger Sense

*"Something doesn't feel quite — duck!"*

Clairsentience (Telesthesia)

**Level:** 2

**Manifestation Time:** 1 move action

**Range:** See text

**Effect:** See text

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** Your spatial awareness makes you alert to imminent physical danger, such as ambushes or structurally unsound areas.

**Effect:** While this power is active, if the GM designates that you are the target of some threat within a range equal to your attunement radius (see Chapter Eleven) — you are about to trip a trap, someone points a gun at you, etc. — she may have you make a Sense Motive check with a bonus equal to your Psi score. The check is a free action; the DC depends on the severity and immediacy of the danger, as noted on the corresponding chart.

With a successful result, you gain awareness of the general direction and nature of the threat. You are not considered flat-footed and may act in a surprise round before regular rounds begin (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 8: Combat, "Initiative," *Surprise*).

This power offers some degree of precognition from sensing the flux of the subquantum flow. You can detect danger one round in the future for every four character levels (up to 5 rounds in the future at 20th level).

| DC | Category of Danger                                                                                        |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13 | Imminent <i>and</i> severe, directed (a lethal attack directed at you)                                    |
| 15 | Imminent <i>and</i> severe, general (a bomb is about to detonate in the area)                             |
| 18 | Imminent <i>or</i> severe, directed (triggering a tripwire, someone is moving to get a clear shot on you) |
| 20 | Imminent <i>or</i> severe, general (an earthquake starts, the floor may give way)                         |

## Detect Augmentation

*"Uh, no, those aren't real. Trust me."*

Biokinesis (Psychomorphing)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 10-ft. cone-shaped emanation + 5 ft./2 levels

**Effect:** 1 living organism + 1/3 levels

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points: 1**

**Description:** You can determine whether a target has been subject to biokinesis augmentation or manipulation.

**Effect:** The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject, as indicated on Table 12-5: Detect Augmentation. If the subject is in line of effect, you can make Heal checks to determine the mode used for each. (Make one check per alteration; DC 15 + half character level.)

**Past Modification:** Depending on the degree of alteration, the signs of augmentation can linger even after the subject returns to his normal genetic configuration (see Table 12-5).

Each round, you can turn to sense in a new area. Any target behind 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of metal or 3 feet of plastic, wood or dirt within the power's radius may make a Hide check, opposed by your Spot check, to avoid registering on *detect augmentation*.

**Detect Emotion**

*"The aliens seem upset, Captain."*

Telepathy (Empathy) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Targets:** 1 sentient target/3 levels, no 2 of which can be more than 10 ft. apart

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will partial; see text

Table 12-5: Detect Augmentation

| Round | Information                                                                                          |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st   | Presence or absence of current biokinesis alteration.                                                |
| 2nd   | Number of different current alterations and the presence or absence of past biokinesis modification. |
| 3rd   | The location of current alterations.                                                                 |
| 4th   | The location of past alterations.                                                                    |

| Power Level | Signs of Modification Linger for... |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1st         | 1d6 rounds                          |
| 2nd         | 1d6 minutes                         |
| 3rd         | 1d6 x 10 minutes                    |
| 4th         | 1d6 hours                           |
| 5th         | 1d6 days                            |

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can attune to a subject's emotional state, even perceiving the general cause of her current mood.

**Effect:** You detect the current emotional state for a target (any conscious creature with a Wisdom score of 1 or higher). With sustained focus, you can discern further emotional nuances relating to the target. If the target succeeds at a Will save, you register only the current general emotion at that moment.



*1st Round:* Presence or absence of emotion.

*2nd Round:* The emotional state of each target ("She's disturbed.").

*3rd Round:* Full nuance and cause of each target's emotional state ("She's aggravated because she has a cold, she's uncomfortable because her shoes are one size too small, and she's incensed at having to deal with someone as irrelevant as you.").

Each round, you can turn to detect emotion in a new area. The power can penetrate barriers, but any kind of energy field blocks it. You can perceive emotional states for targets within range for whom you do not have line of effect, but you cannot use this power to determine their location nor to target them with other effects.

Sentient creatures have an instinctual emotional response when lying. You may also apply your Psi score as an insight bonus on any Sense Motive attempts to detect falsehood in others while this power is in effect.

## Detect Minds

*"Frankly, Xue, sometimes you're not even a blip on my scan."*

Vitakinesis (Mentatis) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 30 ft.

**Area:** 30-ft. spherical radius spread + 10 ft./2 levels, centered on you

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can register the presence, general intelligence level and psychological condition of nearby minds.

**Effect:** You detect the presence of any creature with an Intelligence score of 1 or higher. With sustained focus, you can discern further details relating to the target.

*1st Round:* Presence or absence of minds in the area.

*2nd Round:* The number of minds and the degree of intellect of each (see below) in the area.

*3rd Round:* The current attitude (see below) and location of each individual mind in the area.

*Degree of Intellect:* A target's degree of intellect is determined by its Intelligence score, as given on the corresponding chart.

| Int   | Degree of Intellect          |
|-------|------------------------------|
| 1-3   | Animal                       |
| 4-7   | Rudimentary/proto-sentient   |
| 8-12  | Sentient, average            |
| 13-16 | Sentient, highly intelligent |
| 17+   | Sentient, advanced           |

*Current Attitude:* For purposes of this power, use the "Influencing NPC Attitudes" sidebar (*Player's Handbook*, Chapter 4: Skills) to determine a given mind's attitude at the moment.

The power can penetrate barriers, but any kind of energy field blocks it. You can perceive the presence of a target within range for whom you do not have line of effect, but you can determine only her direction and not her exact location. If the target succeeds at a Will save, you register only the target's existence within range.

## Disruption

*"One more step and I'll light you up like the Olympus power grid."*

Electrokinesis (Electromanipulation) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or olfactory (ozone)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** Up to 6 creatures, no two of which can be more than 15 ft. apart

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You make the target's existing bioelectric energy fire at random, shorting out voluntary muscular control and causing excruciating pain (involuntary systems like heartbeat and breathing are unaffected).

**Effect:** You generate one bioelectric arc for every three character levels (maximum 6 arcs). Each arc deals 1d8 points of nonlethal electrical damage +1 point per 3 character levels (+6 maximum). You can direct the arcs to strike a single target or several targets (a single arc can strike only one target). You must designate targets before you check for power resistance or roll damage.

## Dowsing

*"Somewhere over there. Keep going... a little further...."*

Clairsentience (Psychonavigation)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 50 miles + 25 miles/level

**Area:** Spherical emanation, centered on you, with a radius of 50 miles + 25 miles/level

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You search for the noetic resonance common to a certain kind of object or person.

**Effect:** You sense the direction of a clearly visualized or specific kind of object or creature. Make a Spot check against DC 20, applying your Psi score as a bonus to the roll. On a successful check, you register each thing within the power's range that meets your sensing parameters. On a failed check, you locate the nearest one of its kind. You maintain a sense of where the target is as long as it remains within range while the power is active.

If searching for a general item or creature, you must have a strong sense of what you're looking for — e.g., guns, buildings, sentient beings. Attempting to find a specific type of object or creature — e.g., model of gun, style of building, race of being — requires that you have seen it up close (within 30 feet) at least once.

If the image is not close enough to the actual object or creature, the effect fails. The GM may call for an Intelligence check to determine whether your mental image is close enough to the desired object or creature. You cannot specify a unique item or individual.

## Electromagnetic Shield

*"Hey, watch the laser blasts. I almost felt that one!"*

Electrokinesis (Photokinesis)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You harness ambient wavelengths to create an energy field to protect against everything from laser bolts to radiation.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you gain resistance to fire, light and radiation (e.g., microwave, gamma, cosmic) equal to one-half your character level (round down). This includes all lasers. You also gain a bonus equal to your Psi score on any saves against such effects (including photokinesis effects).

This power also inhibits radar, radio and infrared scans. You can make an opposed Hide check applying a bonus equal to your Psi score against any power or device that transmits on such wavelengths; if your result is higher than the opposing check, you do not register on the scan. The shield also disrupts holographic integrity if the two intersect directly.

## Emotional Fortress

*"You don't scare me. Not right now, at least."*

Telepathy (Empathy) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You subdue your own emotions, becoming cold and clinical. This provides a heightened ability to apply objective critical thought to matters, and also offers immunity to emotional manipulation.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you gain your Psi score as an insight bonus on all Intelligence- and Wisdom-based skill checks. Further, you are immune to any emotional manipulation (e.g. fear effects), beneficial or otherwise.

## Empathic Polarization

*"Come on, we can take 'em!"*

Telepathy (Empathy) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 50 ft.

**Area:** All creatures within a 50-ft. burst, centered on you; see text

**Duration:** 1 min./level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You enhance feelings of confidence and courage in your allies while simultaneously accentuating sensations of fear and doubt in foes.

**Effect:** Each ally in range (including you) gains a +1 morale bonus per 4 character levels on attack rolls and on saving throws against empathy or fear effects. Each enemy affected takes a -1 penalty per 4 character levels on attack rolls and on saving throws against empathy or fear effects.

Multiple uses of this power do not stack. However, you can use it to counter and negate another character's use of *empathic polarization*.

## Enhanced Attunement

*"I sense a disturbance in the implicate order."*

Clairsentience

**Level:** 0

**Manifestation Time:** N/A; see text

**Range:** See text

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Constant

**Power Points:** 0

**Description:** Your standard subquantum attunement is enhanced significantly.

**Effect:** Apply a +1 bonus to your Psi score to determine your practical attunement radius and attunement check (see Chapter Eleven: Psi, "Attunement"). The bonus increases by an additional +1 every three character levels. This bonus applies *only* to increase your sensing radius and when making attunement checks; your Psi score is not adjusted for any other factors (e.g., calculating power points, determining backlash effects).

## Extrusive Warp

*"I'll twist you up like a pretzel if you don't settle down."*

Teleportation (Warping)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** 1 target no larger than 15-ft. cube + 15-ft. cube/3 levels (S)

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You can adjust a segment of spacetime — expanding it in all directions or compressing it to a lump — without inflicting any actual damage to the target. You can extrude a germ up to macro scale or crumple a bookshelf into a softball-sized wad.

The change in size is effectively an optical illusion; you are altering the spatial relationship between the target and its surroundings. A target's body remains undamaged; only the space it occupies is altered — turning the head, arms and legs inward and pushing them against the stomach. This can be handy to expose a subject's internal organs, although you'd still need an internal light source to see detail — you don't actually cut the target open; it just *looks* like you have.

**Effect:** Declare whether you expand or compress the target when you first manifest the power. The change in size offers no benefit other than what is listed for this power specifically.

Expanding doubles a target's size instantly per two character levels — e.g., at 10th level, you can expand a target to appear up to 32x larger than normal size; at 16th level, you can expand a target to appear 256x larger than normal size. This increase changes the target's size category to the next larger one, applying a -1 penalty on attack rolls and to Armor Class. A creature whose size increases to Large has a space of 10 feet and a natural reach of 10 feet. This power does not change the target's speed. If insufficient room is available for the desired growth, the target attains the maximum possible size and is constrained without harm by the materials enclosing it.

Compressing halves a target's size instantly per four character levels — e.g., at 10th level, you can compress a target down to one-quarter its normal size; at 16th level, you can compress a target down to one-sixteenth its normal size. This increase changes the target's size category to the next smaller one, applying a +1 bonus on attack rolls and to Armor Class. A target that fails her save is considered paralyzed until the effect ends.

Though size changes, mass does not. A germ exploded to the size of a table or a horse crumpled into a fist-sized ball retains its normal-sized mass.

## Fade

*"Zip security system? Not a problem."*

Teleportation (Warping)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You translate a significant portion of your physical form into noetic energy. Though it becomes difficult to interact with the physical world, you gain the ability to pass through solid objects and avoid the full effect of almost any attack.

This power is disturbing to some, since you assume a translucent appearance — even your internal organs, circulatory system and skeleton are visible as vague, shadowy shapes beneath your ghostly skin.

**Effect:** Your body (including everything that you carry up to a medium load) becomes partially insubstantial. You gain damage reduction N/—, with N equal to your Psi score +1 per two character levels. Further, you have full concealment (50% miss chance) against all attacks except for a force or light effect. You gain a +6 circumstance bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. You can survive without harm in hostile conditions (e.g., extreme temperatures, underwater, vacuum) for 10 times the normal duration. You have one-tenth your normal mass, and your increment for falling damage increases to every 50 feet rather than every 10 feet.

While in this state, you can pass through physical objects with some effort. Make a DC 13 Strength check for each foot of solid substance; on a failed roll, you make no progress. You cannot see when your eyes are within solid matter. Every round that you are within a solid object — including just passing through an obstruction, no matter how thin — you must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of damage (this bypasses the *fade* damage reduction). You leave a film of genetic residue — what some call ectoplasm — when you pass through solid matter. You cannot pass through energy barriers.

Your Strength and Dexterity ability scores are considered 1 for the purposes of manipulating solid objects. You interact normally with anything that faded with you, although a device with any electronic component does not function in this state. A faded object that you release disperses harmlessly into subquantum wave particles.

You use your standard ability scores and other modifiers when attacking while faded, but targets gain damage reduction 10/— against your non-psionic attacks.

This power functions at a unique wavelength for each individual, so faded characters interact with one another just as they would with a solid object.

## Farsensing

*"Follow me. I know the way."*

Clairsentience (Psychonavagation)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 hour/2 levels; see text

## Power Points: 2

**Description:** You monitor fluctuations in the subquantum stratum to find the shortest, most direct physical route to a specified destination.

**Effect:** This power works with respect to locations, not objects or creatures at a locale. Nor is distance an issue. The locale can be anywhere — within a building, outdoors, even through deep space.

If the course is not a direct line, you perceive the correct direction to go at each stage, sensing intuitively when to change course and which new direction to go. Your connection to the noetic flow is sensitive enough to perceive potential obstacles and how to bypass them — whether to move at an incremental pace to avoid tripping a motion sensor, or whether to take a detour to avoid an accident. You cannot anticipate actions before they occur or otherwise predict actions that others may take, however.

The effect ends when you reach the destination or when the duration expires, whichever comes first.

## Feedback

*"Reboot time."*

Electrokinesis (Electromanipulation) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual or olfactory (ozone)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 creature or organic object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You send a massive dose of bioelectric energy surging through the target.

**Effect:** On a successful ranged touch attack, the targeted creature or organic object takes 1d6 points of electrical damage per character level (maximum 20d6). A creature or organic object that makes a successful Fortitude save suffers half damage.

A creature who makes her save is also sickened for 1d4 rounds. On a failed save, she suffers 1d4 points of Dexterity damage due to nerve damage. A target reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by this power must make an additional Fortitude save or suffer 1d3 points of ability drain due to nerve damage (the GM determines the specific ability affected depending on circumstances).

When used against an object, add the device's fail-safe rating (if any) to its Fortitude save. A piece of psiware with no ability scores loses one system function (as determined by the GM). Once all of a device's functions are lost, the psiware is destroyed beyond repair.

## Find Flaw

*"Everything has a weakness."*

Clairsentience (Psychometry)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 100 ft.

**Target:** One creature or object

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** Subquantum energy flows through all things to some degree. By perceiving the variations in this flow around and within a given target, you can detect its flaws or weak points.



**Effect:** If the designated target is within line of effect and fails a Will save, you perceive a weakness within the creature or object. Depending on the nature of the target and your desire, you can try to repair the flaw or exploit it to your advantage, as indicated on the corresponding chart.

| Target          | Effect                                                                                                          |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Living creature | +1 insight bonus/Psi on attack rolls against the target.                                                        |
| Physical object | –1/Psi to the object's effective hardness (minimum 1).                                                          |
| Structure       | +1 insight bonus/Psi on checks to repair, modify or damage a building, bridge, vehicle or equivalent structure. |
| System          | +1 insight bonus/Psi on checks to interact with or bypass a security system or program.                         |

## Flame Immunity

*"And Mum told me I should never play with fire...."*

Psychokinesis (Pyrokinesis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You vent excess heat to resist the worst effects of exposure, fire damage or even pyrokinesis effects.

**Effect:** While this power is in effect, you gain resistance to fire equal to your Psi score plus your character level, and half this total (round down) as resistance to light.

Your infrared register is reduced as well (anyone with IR-sensing equipment suffers a –4 penalty to pick up your signature). You cannot have *flame immunity* and *thermal screen* active at the same time.

## Flashback

*"Don't remember what happened? Let's see if I can find out."*

Clairsentience (Psychometry)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Target touched

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 hour/2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You attune to the subquantum flow within a target, tracing the waveform fluctuations to perceive past events relating to that person or area.

**Effect:** To use this power, you must first touch the target; this may require a melee touch attack if the target is unwilling. (If the target is a location, you must be within its confines.) Each round of sustained contact reveals an increasing amount of information. You can sense 1 day/character level in the past.

You witness events from a subjective vantage point. If you use *flashback* upon a living creature or an object, you view events

only from that subject's point of view. If you use this power in a locale, you view events only from the spot in which you stand. You cannot witness events that the subject was not exposed to or that are not apparent from your location.

You can view events at any time in the past within the extent of your power, but time passes normally within the *flashback* once you determine the starting point. You can jump to a different point in time on a successful DC 18 Concentration check.

## Flicker

*"Now you see me, now you don't."*

Teleportation (Translocation)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 5 ft.-radius/level spherical emanation

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You blink from one spot to another around the immediate area with seeming randomness.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you teleport once per round as a move action within a 5-foot-radius per level sphere. You can choose where you appear with a successful DC 20 Concentration check. On a failed check, you arrive off-target (see "Off-Target Arrival" under Table 12-8: Teleportation).

The following conditions apply while this power is in affect:

Physical attacks against you have a 50% miss chance. The Blind-Fight feat doesn't help opponents, since you are vanishing from a location rather than merely turning invisible. Any individually targeted power has a 20% chance to fail against you unless the attacker has *spatial sense*.

Your own physical attacks and individually targeted powers have a 20% miss chance, since you cannot always orient your facing precisely enough to strike with certainty.

If you appear next to a target, you strike as an invisible creature (with a +2 bonus on attack rolls), denying your target any Dexterity bonus to AC. You take only half damage from area attacks and from falling.

If you become material in a solid object (typically due to arriving off-target), you are shunted to the nearest open space and take 1d6 points of damage per 5 feet so traveled.

## Flight

*"Parachute? That's for beginners."*

Psychokinesis (Telekinesis)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You use telekinetic force to propel yourself independent of the ground, in much the same way that you use *remote manipulation* to move around other objects.

**Effect:** You can fly at a speed of 10 feet per Psi (reduced by 10 feet if you carry a medium or heavy load) with good maneuverability. You can ascend at half speed and descend at double speed. Using *flight* requires only as much concentration as walking,

so you can attack or manifest powers normally. You can use *flight* to charge but not run, and you cannot carry aloft more weight than your maximum load.

You can hustle for long-distance movement the same as with moving on the ground; a forced march still requires Constitution checks (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 9, "Movement").

Should the power's duration expire while you are still aloft, the effect dissipates slowly. You float downward 60 feet per round for 1d6 rounds. If you do not reach the ground in that amount of time, you fall the rest of the distance, taking 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet of fall.

## Force Barrier

*"I'll hold them off; just get to the ship!"*

Psychokinesis (Telekinesis)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect:** Wall whose area is up to one 5-ft. square/level

**Duration:** 1 min./2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** None; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You create a telekinetic plane of concentrated force that blocks most attacks.

**Effect:** The *force barrier* is a 6-inch-thick, flat, invisible plane; you can bend it into up to a 30 degree curve or dome shape. It appears as a scintillating net to forms of detection that register noetic energy (such as attunement).

The barrier provides total concealment (50% miss chance) against all physical ranged attacks and blocks physical passage from either direction. It has no influence on energy or gas attacks.

A target may take a full-round action to push through, passing through with a successful DC 18 Strength or DC 18 Escape Artist check. If the target fails this check, she must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or be caught within the TK force. The target is considered entangled until she makes the Strength or Escape Artist check to break free.

The barrier remains in the same position relative to you once created, and moves with you. Changing its position or facing is a move action. It dissipates if you move further away than the power's effect range.

## Frequency Tap

*"It's funny what people say when they think no one is listening...."*

Electrokinesis (Technokinesis)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 10 miles/level

**Effect:** Cone-shaped emanation

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 min./2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You can access the lower "half" of the electromagnetic spectrum to monitor or transmit along radio or microwave frequencies without need of an actual receiver or transmitter.

**Effect:** You can monitor or transmit along a particular electromagnetic wavelength in a cone emanating out from you in whatever direction you face. You must select the desired wavelength to scan — radio or microwaves — but you can change the wavelength each round.

When scanning, the amount of information revealed depends on how long you search a particular area or focus on a specific wavelength. Each round you can turn to detect a wavelength in a new area.

**1st Round:** Presence or absence in the area of that wavelength in greater than normal background levels.

**2nd Round:** Number of different sources of the wavelength and the location and relative intensity of the strongest source.

**3rd Round:** The specific frequency and location of each wavelength. Powerful emanations and/or multiple wavelength emissions may distort or conceal weaker emissions.

When transmitting, you may generate a transmission along a desired wavelength. To create an encrypted transmission or to jam a targeted transmission, you make an opposed Craft (electronic) check against the opponent.

## Gross Manipulation

*"See, officer? No weapons."*

Biokinesis (Transmogrify)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Material

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min./2 levels (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can make minor physical changes to increase your offensive or defensive capability, or even to adjust your appearance.

**Effect:** Each time you use this power, you must declare whether it is for offense, defense or appearance. You can manifest this power separately for each option, but multiple uses in the same option do not stack.

**Offense:** You harden your hands, gaining natural weaponry that inflicts 1d6 + Strength modifier points of lethal damage. Damage type is slashing if you change your nails into claws, bludgeoning if you calcify your knuckles in some fashion. The base damage increases by +1d6 every four character levels (maximum 5d6).

**Defense:** You toughen your skin, gaining a +2 natural armor bonus. This bonus increases by +1 every four character levels (maximum +6).

**Appearance:** You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks while the power is active. This bonus increases by +1 every four character levels (maximum +6).

## Heatburn

*"Hot enough for ya?"*

Psychokinesis (Pyrokinesis) [Fire]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** Up to 6 creatures, no two of which can be more than 15 ft. apart

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Reflex half

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You launch a burst of superheated air that ripples in a blistering wave from you to your target. *Heatburn* can cause intense blistering and dehydration in living targets and can ruin most electronic equipment.

**Effect:** You generate one heat beam for every three character levels (maximum 6 beams). Each beam deals 1d8 points of nonlethal fire damage +1 point per 3 character levels (+6 maximum). You can direct the beams to strike a single target or several targets (a single beam can strike only one target). You must designate targets before you check for power resistance or roll damage.

The GM may call for flammable objects targeted by this effect to make a Fortitude save or burst into flame.

## Heat Sink

*"Three hundred days and counting since the last explosion in the lab."*

Psychokinesis (Cryokinesis)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or material (cold)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

**Area:** 5-ft.-radius spread/level

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 2; see text

**Description:** You can extinguish open fires with a glance, halting the molecular motion to cool even a red-hot ember in an instant.

**Effect:** You bleed off all intense heat and extinguish all open flames within the power's area. Any fire beyond this area is unaffected and may sweep through the extinguished area within 1d6 rounds if combustible materials remain.

*Heat sink* is normally a reactive effect applied against existing fires. You may try to use it to snuff out an explosion or other sudden eruption of fire (including pyrokinesis effects), negating 1d6 points of fire damage per character level within *heat sink*'s area of effect. This requires a full-round action and doubles the power point cost.

## Heightened Reflexes

*"Let the hostage go, or I'll drop you before your finger squeezes the trigger."*

Biokinesis (Adaptation)

**Level:** 3

**Manifestation Time:** 1 free action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 round

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** Your reactions are lightning-quick, almost as if your body knows what is going to happen before it occurs.

**Effect:** You may use this power in combat — or in any other situation where actions are measured in rounds — to achieve one of two effects for a single round:

*Highest Initiative:* You perform your action before anyone else.

*Extra Standard Action:* You take one extra standard action at no penalty.

You must declare which effect you wish to perform and spend the requisite power point before any actions are taken for that round.

## Hologram Creation

*"Need a distraction, eh? I think I can whip up a little something."*

Electrokinesis (Photokinesis)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** Figment that cannot extend beyond 1 20-ft. cube + 1 10-ft. cube/2 levels (S)

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 min./2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will disbelief (if interacted with); see text

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** See text

**Description:** You use low-level visible laser energy to create holographic images just as a technological device would, except that the intersecting lasers which create the images are pinpoints of focused light that originate spontaneously from the air (rather than beams that can be traced to a point of origin).

**Effect:** This power creates the visual and thermal illusion of an object, creature or force, as visualized by you. This does not include sound generation; *transmit* must be used in tandem to create full audio-visual images.

The power points spent depend on the degree of realism and detail you devote to the illusion created, as indicated in the corresponding chart. Subjects receive a +10 circumstance bonus on Will saves for a translucent image unless it emulates a plausible effect (e.g., electrical flickers, an energy field).

### PP Image

- 1 Translucent, static image.
- 2 Translucent, dynamic image.
- 3 Opaque, static image.
- 4 Opaque, dynamic image.

*Static:* The illusion is stationary and makes no movement.

*Dynamic:* The illusion involves movement to some degree.

The GM may call for a Bluff or Perform check if you want to create plausible complex interactions.

## Hypothermic Blast

*"I said cool it, sparky."*

Psychokinesis (Cryokinesis) [Cold]

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or material (cold)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Targets:** 1 creature or object/3 levels, no two of which can be more than 10 ft. apart

**Duration:** Instantaneous; see text

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You create a drastic temperature drop, flash-freezing targets for an instant.

**Effect:** This power deals 1d6 points of cold damage per two character levels (maximum 10d6) to each target affected. Further, each target is considered fatigued for 1d6 rounds due to the shock of intense cold. A target who makes a Fortitude save suffers half damage and avoids fatigue.

## Impulse Control

*"Sure, I can make him do what I want — but I like to ask nicely first."*

Electrokinesis (Electromanipulation) [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or olfactory (ozone)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** 1 creature/4 character levels, no two of which can be more than 15 ft. apart

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You take control of another organism that has basic synaptic relays, from a piece of psiware to a fellow human being.

**Effect:** If the target fails a Will save, she is subject to your control for the power's duration. She may make a Will save to resist each command you issue during this time, with a bonus to her save depending on the command's intensity (see Table 12–6: Control Commands). If successful, she resists performing the action but is considered dazed for the round. The target may act normally if you do not issue a command for a given round.

As long as all targets are given the same order, issuing a command is a move action regardless of the number of targets. Issuing different commands for separate targets is a full-round action.

You may attempt *impulse control* on one organic target for every four character levels (maximum 5) within range whom you can perceive clearly (e.g., line of sight, video monitor). Since large psiware devices are often composed of several smaller devices working in tandem, the GM should have each component be affected separately — so, you might control a bioVARG's locomotive systems, but its weapon systems may remain unaffected.

You need not speak your commands aloud or even know the same language as the target; your commands are transmitted as a series of nerve impulses.

Table 12–6: Control Commands

| Save Bonus                                                              | Command Intensity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0                                                                       | <i>Minor/Quirky:</i> Blink; eat a bug; wear a particular suit of clothes (creature). Read or delete data; shut down; open/close (object).                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| +2                                                                      | <i>Major/Noteworthy:</i> Do my chores; buy dinner for someone you hate (creature). Alter or insert data; bypass security systems; communicate within a network (object).                                                                                                                                                     |
| +4                                                                      | <i>Complex/Antithetical:</i> Worship a foreign god; follow a particular set of commands ("Fill out this form, transmit it to Luna from Beijing, and after doing so, make an OpNet post which reads..."); attack (or refrain from attacking) whomever you indicate in combat (creature). Add or rewrite programming (object). |
| +8                                                                      | <i>Total Control:</i> Commit suicide; perform any task, no matter how difficult or vile (creature). Complete system change, reprogramming for a function never intended (object).                                                                                                                                            |
| A psychic character receives an additional +2 bonus to resist commands. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

## Inflame

*"That's a nasty looking cut you've got there."*

Vitakinesis (Algesis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 0 ft. + 5 ft./3 levels

**Effect:** 1 living creature + 1/4 levels

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** With this power, you exacerbate a target's existing injuries to cause further damage.

**Effect:** On a successful ranged or melee touch attack, you deal 1d6 points of damage per three character levels (maximum 6d6) to a target that has received a minimum of 1 hit point of damage from another source. Multiple subjects are targeted separately. This power has no effect on a target that has not suffered any damage.

## Insight

*"Hold still; I need more details than that the man was 'tall, dark and handsome.'"*

Clairsentience (Psychometry)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Target touched

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can glean a psionic impression of the places where an object or person has been.

**Effect:** To use this power, you must first touch the target; this may require a melee touch attack if the target is unwilling. A location's significance to the subject or to you is what matters, rather than how long the subject was there. For instance, you would perceive the kiosk where the subject makes dead drops to his contact even if you are unaware that he is a spy. Conversely, you would sense whether a target had been on the subway if you are interested in how she traveled, even though it's an inconsequential detail to her.

This power does not convey context. You may perceive the kiosk, but its importance to the subject — as well as its specific location — is not apparent. Although you may not be familiar with an area, you recognize it immediately should you ever encounter it, even after the power's duration expires.

Each round of sustained contact reveals an increasing amount of information. You can sense up to 1 day in the past per two character levels.

**1st Round:** General idea of places with significance to yourself or to the subject (e.g., a large, dirty room; a comfortably-appointed vehicle).

**2nd Round:** Details of the location and relative time that the subject was there (e.g., the room visited three hours previously is



a disused storage garage with only a small stack of crates in one corner; the vehicle used two days before is a late-model luxury limousine with real leather interior, with a cityscape of crumbling buildings passing by outside).

**3rd Round:** A sense of what took place at the locale (e.g., the subject meets a woman in the room only long enough to hand her a small plastic case; the car's interior holo broadcasts an MMI dance party while a handful of well-dressed people laugh and yell at one another, drink from glass containers, and pass around small vials and ingest their contents).

## Interface

*"Open sesame! Heh; I love doing that."*

Electrokinesis (Technokinesis)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Targets:** 1 terminal/3 levels

**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You may interface with any device equipped with an electronic operating system — a security system, hovercar, computer, SI network or even a vending machine.

**Effect:** This power functions the same as *impulse control* does upon psiware except that it applies to electronic devices, designated "terminals." A terminal can be any electronic system — a minicomputer, a video camera, a keycode lock, a cell phone, etc. You must touch a portion of the terminal; this may require a melee touch attack if the terminal has motive capability (e.g., a vehicle, a robot, in the possession of someone else).

## Kirlian Eye

*"This one's critical; get him into surgery, stat!"*

Vitakinesis

**Level:** 0

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 10-ft. cone-shaped emanation + 5 ft./2 levels

**Effect:** 1 living organism + 1/3 levels

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You tap into the subquantum stratum that connects all things to perceive a subject's current physiological condition. This power is used most often to perform instant triage on a patient, but it can also be handy for sizing up an opponent's condition.

**Effect:** The amount of information revealed about a subject's condition depends on how long you study a particular subject.

**1st Round:** General physical condition — critical (between 0 and -9 hit points), near death (10% or less of total hit points), injured (between 11–50% of total hit points) or well (above 50% of total hit points).

**2nd Round:** Total and current hit points and the location and condition of existing wounds.

**3rd Round:** Presence or absence of additional ailments aside from damage suffered currently (e.g., ability damage or drain, poison, disease).

You can target a new subject each round. The power can penetrate barriers, but any kind of energy field blocks it. You can perceive physical conditions for targets within range for whom you do not have line of effect, but you cannot use this power to determine their location nor to target them with other effects.

## Laser Generation

*"...then he shot laser beams from his eyes, just like on the vid!"*

Electrokinesis (Photokinesis)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** 100 ft. + 10 ft./level line

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Reflex half

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You absorb ambient electromagnetic energy and channel it into a focused laser beam.

**Effect:** You project a beam of energy that deals 1d6 points of fire and light damage per character level (maximum 20d6) to each target within its area. The beam begins within 1 foot of your body; each target gains a +2 circumstance bonus on the Reflex save if the beam does not emit from a body part that allows you to "aim" it (e.g. eyes, fingertips).

The laser sets fire to combustibles and damages objects in its path. It can melt plastics and metals with a low melting point (e.g., lead, gold, copper, silver, bronze). If the damage caused to an interposing barrier shatters or breaks through it, the beam may continue beyond the barrier if the power's range permits.

## Liquefy

*"I hope you weren't too attached to your car. Or your garage."*

Psychokinesis (Pyrokinesis) [Fire]

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 round; see text

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** 1 10-ft. cube + 1 5-ft. cube/2 levels (S)

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You excite an object's molecular structure to such an intense degree that it shifts from a solid to a liquid state. The effect works best on materials with a low melting point; it is simplicity itself to *liquefy* cheap plastic compared to oluminium.

**Effect:** A targeted object saves against this power, applying the save modifier listed on Table 12-7: Liquefy Parameters. (Unattended objects do not generally make saving throws; see Chapter Thirteen: Technology, "Technology and Saving Throws.") On a successful save, the target heats up enough to deal 2d6 points of fire damage to anyone who comes in contact with it for the next round (DC 13 Reflex for half damage).

On a failed save, the target liquefies after the buildup time listed on Table 12-7. An object during its heat buildup prior to liquefying deals 2d6 points of fire damage the first round and 4d6 points of fire damage each successive round (DC 13 Reflex for half damage) to anyone who comes in contact with it. A liquefied substance cools down to a solid state in its melted shape after the number of minutes listed on Table 12-7. During the cooldown, the

object deals 2d6 points of fire damage (DC 13 Reflex for half damage) to anyone who comes in contact with it.

With a successful DC 10 Spot check, observers within visual range can see and those within 10 feet can feel the object's buildup and cooldown as it glows red-hot and gives off waves of heat.

This power can target only nonliving matter.

Table 12–7: Liquefy Parameters

| Save Mod. | Substance                  | Buildup   | Cooldown  |
|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| –4        | Frozen liquid <sup>1</sup> | 1 round   | 1 minute  |
| –2        | Plastic                    | 1 round   | 1 minute  |
| 0         | Glass                      | 2 rounds  | 2 minutes |
| +1        | Copper                     | 2 rounds  | 2 minutes |
| +2        | Orbital steel              | 3 rounds  | 3 minutes |
| +4        | Granite                    | 1 minute  | 4 minutes |
| +8        | Olaminium                  | 2 minutes | 5 minutes |

<sup>1</sup> A frozen liquid does not inflict fire damage during buildup or cooldown.

## Lockout

*“Impregnable? Yeah, right; my team can crack any system.”*

Electrokinesis (Technokinesis)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** 1 electronic device

**Duration:** 1 day/2 levels

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You can manipulate ambient electromagnetic energy to alter the security of an electronic device.

**Effect:** If a targeted electronic device fails its save, you may increase or decrease its security DC by 1 point per two character levels. For instance, a computer with security rating 3 (exceptional) has a security DC of 35; if the computer fails its save, a 9th-level character can reduce it to DC 31 or enhance it to DC 39. You must determine whether to increase or decrease the security DC when you first manifest the power. Multiple uses of this power on the same device do not stack. A device with no listed security rating has a security DC of 10.

## Mend

*“You’ll be back on your feet in no time.”*

Vitakinesis (Iatrosis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 0 ft. + 5 ft./3 levels

**Target:** 1 living creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You manipulate noetic energy to mend physical damage that a subject has suffered.

**Effect:** You heal 1d8 points of damage per four character levels (maximum 5d8) +1 point per two character levels (maximum +10). This may require a melee or ranged touch attack, if the target is unwilling for whatever reason.

## Mental Projection

*“Welcome to my nightmare.”*

Telepathy (Mindshare) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Mental or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Targets:** 1 living creature/4 levels, no two of which can be more than 10 ft. apart

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will disbelief; see text

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You project a mental image, or phantasm, into a targets' minds.

**Effect:** Each target makes a Will save to resist this power initially, with a bonus depending on its complexity (see below). If a target fails, she is subject to the phantasm for the power's duration. Each target may make a new save if the phantasm does not react as she expects (e.g., a stranger treats her like an old friend), or if you change the complexity.

### Save Bonus Phantasm Complexity

- 0 *Simple:* Change appearance or nature of existing objects or persons; generate phantasms of minor objects or people where none exist.
- +2 *Complex:* Change appearance or nature of important existing objects or persons; generate phantasms of important objects or people where none exist; minor changes to overall environment.
- +4 *Very Complex:* Phantasm changes entirely the target's environment or the people and objects around her.

## Metabolic Efficiency

*“Fugu? Hand me the chopsticks.”*

Biokinesis (Adaptation)

**Level:** 1

**Manifestation Time:** 1 free action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** Your body neutralizes the effects of poisons or toxins, converting them into waste (it's not uncommon to need to urinate after this power has been active). *Metabolic efficiency* does make it difficult to enjoy the effects of drugs (whether beneficial or otherwise) and alcohol since your body eliminates them as they are introduced.

**Effect:** While this power is active, drugs and poisons with save DCs equal to or less than (10 + Fortitude save) have no effect on you. Drugs and poisons whose save DCs exceed (10 + Fortitude save) have no effect if you make a successful save, and a reduced effect if you fail a save. A reduced effect is typically half the listed damage and/or duration; the GM determines specifics.

You may manifest this power whenever you are exposed to a poison, subject to standard rules for power activation and power point expenditure.

## Microwave Burst

*"Try that again and I'll boil your eyes out."*

Electrokinesis (Technokinesis)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 organic creature or object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You focus an intense microwave discharge at your desired target, boiling the victim from the inside.

**Effect:** On a successful ranged touch attack, the targeted creature takes 1d6 points of radiation damage per character level (maximum 20d6) and suffers 1d6 points of Constitution damage (also see Table 6—1: Radiation Poisoning). An object lacking a Constitution score reduces its hardness by 1 point. Any target reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by this power is boiled alive, even to the point of literally bursting apart in gruesome fashion.

A creature or object that makes a successful Fortitude save suffers half damage and is not subject to the Constitution damage or hardness reduction. *Microwave burst* affects any target with some degree of fluid interior physiology — e.g., organic creatures, plants, bioware.

## Mind Bomb

*"One emotional meltdown coming up right... now."*

Telepathy (Empathy) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action; see text

**Range:** 15 ft.

**Target:** 1 sentient target

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Will partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** Labeled officially "emotional focal resurgence," this power enables you to unleash the full, unfiltered force of a single emotion from within a target's psyche — giving rise to the more blunt term of *mind bomb*.

**Effect:** A raw emotion of your choice — e.g., fear, rage, ecstasy, sorrow — renders the target stunned for the power's duration (drop anything held, cannot take actions, –2 penalty to AC, lose any Dex bonus to AC).

If the target makes her save, she remains overwhelmed by the emotion to the point that she takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks for the power's duration.

With a successful DC 20 Concentration check, you may set this power to trigger at a later time of your choosing instead of immediately upon manifesting, up to 10 minutes per character level.

## Mindscan

*"Give me some time. If he's here, I'll find him."*

Telepathy [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 0

**Display:** Mental or visual



**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** 300-ft. spherical emanation/2 levels  
**Target:** 1 sentient creature  
**Duration:** Concentration; see text  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Power Resistance:** Yes  
**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You “tune” your mind to discover a specific individual’s noetic resonance. While you do not discern the target’s exact location, *mindscan* does establish a mental connection through which you may use more significant psionic effects.

This doesn’t allow you to gauge your target’s exact location or distance (at best, it conveys a sense of “over there a short distance”). However, *mindscan* does give you a mental connection to the subject through which you may use more significant psi effects.

**Effect:** You make a basic mental connection with a desired target within range. The base save DC to resist this power is adjusted further by your familiarity with the subject, as noted in the corresponding chart.

Once connection is established, you gain a general sense of the target’s location (nearby, far away). Further, you may use other telepathy powers on the target as if you had line of effect. This requires your full concentration; you can take no other action and are considered flat-footed if attacked.

#### DC Mod. Familiarity with Subject<sup>1</sup>

|    |                                                   |
|----|---------------------------------------------------|
| –2 | Intimate (good friend, close relative)            |
| 0  | Strong (co-worker, general acquaintance)          |
| +2 | Casual (met once or twice, studied information)   |
| +4 | Vague (described only, saw briefly at a distance) |

<sup>1</sup>You are considered *intimate* if you have a psi print relating to the target.

### Mindshield

*“He’s shielding his thoughts; I can’t pick up anything!”*

Telepathy (Psychbending) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You set up a barrier of “psi static” that diffuses telepathic effects into harmless waves of noetic energy.

**Effect:** You gain power resistance equal to your character level plus Psi score against all telepathy and mind-affecting powers.

### Mindspeak

*“Quit the chatter and focus, people. You’re giving me a migraine.”*

Telepathy (Mindshare) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 30 ft.; see text

**Targets:** You plus 1 willing creature per 3 levels

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You forge a telepathic bond among a number of willing creatures and yourself. This effect transcends barriers of language and distance.

**Effect:** You must have line of effect (e.g., line of sight, a psi print) on each creature at the time the power manifests. Each creature included in the link must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher. Each creature is linked to all the others and no special power or influence is established as a result — however, as the one who established the link, you may choose to communicate with a single subject. The creatures can communicate telepathically through the bond regardless of language. Once the link is formed, it works over a distance of 100 miles per character level.

### Mindstorm

*“You think I’m bluffing? One step closer, and you won’t think at all.”*

Telepathy (Psychbending) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 living creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You unleash all the target’s conscious and subconscious thoughts at once. This creates a massive psychic torrent that can drive even the strongest-willed individual to his knees.

**Effect:** This power deals 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per two character levels (maximum 10d6) and 1d6 points each of Intelligence and Wisdom damage. On a successful Will save, the target takes only half the nonlethal damage and avoids the Intelligence and Wisdom damage.

### Mindwarp

*“You know this woman. You love her. You don’t know why you ever lost touch.”*

Telepathy (Psychbending) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** See text

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** 1 living creature

**Duration:** Permanent

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You can alter existing memories or implant false ones. You cannot read the target’s thoughts; that requires *mindspeak* or *pilfer thoughts*.

**Effect:** You decide the degree of intended memory change, as listed on the chart below. You must then maintain line of sight and focus on the target for a corresponding number of rounds. The target makes a Will save, with a bonus depending on the degree of memory change. If successful, she resists the attempt; if she exceeds the save DC by 10 or more, she is aware that someone tried to affect her mind in some way. The GM may keep secret whether you were successful.

You can also use *mindwarp* to restore a subject’s memories that were changed by some other use of this power, or to implant

“psi coordinates” that allow teleportation to a place a character has never been to physically (see the Teleportation description under Aptitudes at the start of the chapter).

| Rounds to Concentrate | Save Bonus | Degree of Alteration                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                     | +0         | <i>Trivial:</i> Forget home address or your name.                                                                       |
| 5                     | +1         | <i>Minor:</i> Forget anniversary, change basic job facts.                                                               |
| 10                    | +2         | <i>Major:</i> Change vital personal facts, privileged information, perception of relationship with a single individual. |
| 20                    | +4         | <i>Severe:</i> Change her entire past or her perception of relationships with everyone she knows.                       |

## Minor Flux

“Closer, closer... too close!”

Teleportation (Warping)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You manipulate the physical space between yourself and an opponent, compressing the distance at the moment you attack or expanding it when your foe tries to strike you.

This power does have uses out of combat also, such as when you want to reach something on a high shelf.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you gain a +1 bonus per two character levels that you may apply to combat or to noncombat actions.

In combat, the bonus acts as a circumstance bonus on a single attack action or as a dodge bonus to Armor Class against a single attacker. You may split the total bonus between attack and AC any way you like, as long as the attack bonus does not exceed your base attack bonus. You may reappropriate the total bonus on your action, before making attack rolls for a round.

Out of combat, the bonus acts as a circumstance bonus on any skill check involving distance (e.g., Jump, Spot).

## Morbidity

“You’re a dead man walking, and you don’t even know it.”

Vitakinesis (Algesis)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** 1 organic creature

**Duration:** 1 round/3 levels

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** Also called “the rot,” this disturbing power stimulates the bacterial and biochemical processes involved in decomposition — while the target is still alive.

**Effect:** On a successful melee touch attack, the target suffers 1d6 points each of Strength, Dexterity, Constitution and Charisma drain each round the power is in effect, and is considered sickened (–2 penalty on all attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks). A target who makes a successful Fortitude save each round suffers 1 point of drain to each ability above and is still sickened for that round.

Only advanced vitakinesis may restore the points lost through ability drain (see *cellular repair* and *regeneration*).

## Muse

“I have them eating from the palm of my hand.”

Telepathy (Empathy) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Targets:** One or more creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart; see text

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** This effect enables you to incite whatever feeling you wish within an audience. Deep sorrow, raging fury, fawning adoration and cowering fear are all at your disposal. This power could be used by petty dictators and politicians during speeches to rally their people into patriotic fervor, and by stage performers to generate vicarious catharsis through their performances.

**Effect:** Targeted creatures regard you as a trusted friend and ally (treat the target’s attitude as friendly toward you). The targets’ save is modified depending on the number you wish to affect when the power first manifests, as indicated on the corresponding chart.

You cannot control creatures affected by this power as if they were automatons, but they perceive your words and actions in the most favorable way. You can give subjects orders, but the GM may require a Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check, as appropriate, to convince them to do anything that they wouldn’t do ordinarily. (Retries are not allowed.) Affected creatures never obey suicidal or obviously harmful orders, but they might be convinced that something very dangerous is worth doing.

Any act by you or your apparent allies that shows a clear threat to subjects of the power breaks the effect for those who witness it. You must speak the same language as the subjects to communicate your commands, or else be good at pantomiming.

| Save DC | Targets Affected   |
|---------|--------------------|
| –2      | 1 creature         |
| +0      | 2–10 creatures     |
| +2      | 11–20 creatures    |
| +4      | 21–50 creatures    |
| +6      | 51–200 creatures   |
| +8      | 201–500 creatures  |
| +10     | 501–1000 creatures |

A creature whose Hit Dice exceed your character level gains an additional +2 bonus on its saving throw.

A creature under clear threat or attack by you or your allies gains an additional +5 bonus on its saving throw.

## Negation

*"Get... out... of her... mind!"*

Vitakinesis (Mentatis) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Material and mental

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** One creature, or 20-ft.-radius burst

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You remove or negate compulsions or mind-affecting influences.

**Effect:** You use this power to end ongoing mind-affecting influences — whether mundane or psionic in origin — on or emitting from a creature. The effect of a power with an instantaneous duration can't be negated, because the effect is over before *negation* can take effect. You use this power on a single target, over an area, or as a countereffect.

**Single Target:** Make a negation check (1d20 + your character level) against the power or against each ongoing power currently in effect on the creature you target. The DC for this negation check is 15 + the opposing power's level. If you succeed on a particular check, that effect is negated; if you fail, that power remains in effect.

You automatically succeed on your negation check against any effect that you manifested yourself.

**Area:** The power affects everything within a 20-foot radius. For each creature within the area that is the subject of one or more compulsions or mind-affecting influences, you make a negation check against the power with the highest level. If that check fails, you make negation checks against progressively weaker effects until you negate one (which discharges your *negation* so far as that target is concerned) or until you fail all your checks.

You may choose to automatically succeed on negation checks against any power that you have manifested in the area.

**Countereffect:** When used in this way, the power targets a specific creature with the intent of disrupting the compulsion or mind-affecting power that opponent is manifesting. You must select an opponent as the target and choose the ready action to wait until your opponent tries to manifest a power. If the target tries to manifest a power, make a negation check as described above. If you are successful, the opponent spends power points as normal but her power does not manifest.

## Noetic Blueprint

*"Your psyche is recorded on this little crystal. Pray we don't even need to use it."*

Vitakinesis (Mentatis)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Material; see text

**Manifestation Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** Touch

**Effect:** See text

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** See text

**Description:** You create a record of a target's neurological processes that you can later use to repair damage the target suffers from psychological or neurological trauma.

**Effect:** By spending 4 power points and 500 XP, you transcribe the essence of a target's living mind upon a psiware storage crystal. The crystal has no inherent sentence of its own, acting merely as a storage medium for the subject's psyche. You may update the blueprint with additional uses of this power; the power point and XP cost is applied in each instance.

If the target dies or becomes brain dead at some later date and her brain is relatively intact (still attached to the body and at least 25% of its structure remains whole), anyone with this power may use the blueprint to rebuild her mind and restore her to life. The rebuilding process must start within a number of days equal to the subject's character level; after that point, her neurological structure has degraded too much.

The rebuild requires an additional use of this power, and the subject remains unconscious afterward for a number of days equal to the time her body was dead. When the target regains consciousness, she has all the knowledge and experiences she possessed when *noetic blueprint* was last used prior to her death. She also retains her abilities, but at one level lower (any level-dependent abilities that the character no longer meets the prerequisites for remain unavailable until she once again qualifies).

## Noetic Integrity

*"This is now a no-jump zone, people."*

Teleportation (Translocation)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Area:** 25-ft.-radius spherical emanation + 5 ft./2 levels

**Duration:** 10 min./level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can impede space from being warped or changed, thereby shielding an area from teleportation. It becomes more difficult to teleport in or out of that space — even aberrant warp abilities are inhibited.

**Effect:** Anyone attempting to use a teleportation power in the area of effect (including teleporting into the area) must defeat power resistance equal to your character level plus Psi score. This applies to any teleportation powers that you wish to use also. The area of effect is stationary once the power manifests.

## Noetic Survey

*"Looks like a good time for a jump; the solar flares have died down."*

Clairsentience (Telesthesia)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 minute; see text

**Range:** 1 light year/level

**Area:** 500-mile-radius emanation + 250 miles/level

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 hour/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You can study vast areas up to light-years away. You must know the location of the targeted area prior to using the power (whether through visual contact or through use of *farsensing*, *astrolocation* or psi coordinates). *Noetic survey* is often used to scan solar systems as a prelude to jump travel.

**Effect:** Using this power requires complete concentration for the duration of the manifestation time; you can take no other action and are considered flat-footed if attacked. Once the power manifests, you can concentrate to use it at any time before the duration ends. Once the power's effect concludes, you are considered exhausted.

Each minute of sustained scan reveals an increasing amount of information, as noted below. Understanding even basic information may require a Knowledge (physical sciences) or similar check, at the GM's discretion — after all, perceiving that the Sun is extremely hot may not mean much if you can't relate it in specific temperature terms.

**1st Minute:** Basic details of the object within the area with the greatest stellar mass (e.g., the Sun is a yellow dwarf main sequence star over 100 times the size of Earth).

**2nd Minute:** Comprehensive details of the object within the area with the greatest stellar mass (e.g., the Sun has a diameter of 865,000 miles; its surface temperature is 9,900°F and its core is about 20 million°F).

**3rd Minute:** Specific details of the object within the area with the greatest stellar mass (e.g., the Sun rotates at the equator more slowly than at the poles; its rotational axis is tilted from perpendicular to the ecliptic by 7.25°; a major solar flare is starting to form in the southern hemisphere that could extend over 8,000 miles from the surface).

Each minute, you can refocus this power on a new stellar object within the area being scanned, or you can refocus upon an entirely new area.

## Orientation

*"Compass? Please; I know exactly where we are."*

Clairsentience (Psychonavigation)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 50 miles + 25 miles/level

**Area:** Spherical emanation, centered on you, with a radius of 50 miles + 25 miles/level

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can establish your location almost anywhere by attuning your senses to perceive familiar configurations within the subquantum energy flow.

**Effect:** Make a Survival check, applying your Psi score as a bonus to the roll. The DC depends on the familiarity of any landmarks within the power's area, as indicated on the corresponding chart. You cannot take 10 or 20, but you can try again on a subsequent round as long as the power is active.

If you succeed, you know where you are in relation to the landmark by specific compass direction, distance, elevation and heading (e.g., "I'm north-northwest of São Paulo at a distance of 300 miles, at a higher elevation and moving away"). If there are multiple familiar landmarks within the power's area, you detect the closest in the first round of concentration and sense each additional landmark at increasing distance in each successive round of concentration.

If you fail the check, you get only a general idea of your relative position and no specifics on the landmark sensed (e.g., "I'm roughly north and quite a ways off from a large population center").

If there are no familiar landmarks within the power's area, the result is as if you failed the Survival check regardless of your roll.



|           |                                                                     |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DC</b> | <b>Location Familiarity</b>                                         |
| 10        | Intimate (childhood home)                                           |
| 15        | Very (visited frequently and/or within the past day)                |
| 20        | Casual (visited on occasion and/or studied through other means)     |
| 25        | Vague (visited once or twice, studied somewhat)                     |
| —         | Unfamiliar (never visited, studied once or twice, only heard about) |

## Oxygen Absorption

*"You use the air tank; I'll be fine."*

Biokinesis (Adaptation)

**Level:** 2

**Manifestation Time:** 1 free action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 hour/level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can process even the slightest amount of oxygen to survive in hostile environments for extended periods, whether underwater, on an alien world or even with a plastic bag over your head. This efficient oxygen intake also increases your stamina.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you can breathe freely in any environment where at least a trace amount of oxygen present. You may also add your Psi score on any Constitution checks and Fortitude saves to resist becoming fatigued or exhausted.

## Paralysis

*"Relax, you won't feel a thing."*

Vitakinesis (Algesis)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Targets:** 1 living creature

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You deaden a target's nerve impulses, blocking any physical sensation and rendering her unable to move for the power's duration. *Paralysis* is used most often in lieu of anesthetic, but it has an obvious combat application as well.

**Effect:** You render a living creature within line of effect unable to move, speak or take any physical action for the power's duration. Her body goes limp and she loses any sense of touch (her other senses function as normal). The target may take purely mental actions, such as manifesting a psionic power.

## Passive Voice

*"Now is not the time to panic."*

Vitakinesis (Mentatis) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Area:** Creatures in a 20-ft.-radius spread

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 round/2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You manipulate the biochemical processes of targets within range of this power, imposing calm upon them whether they feel violent rage, paralyzing fear or wild joy.

**Effect:** While this power is in effect, you calm agitated creatures. You have no control over the affected creatures, but the power can stop raging creatures from fighting or joyous ones from reveling. Creatures so affected cannot take violent actions (although they can defend themselves) or do anything destructive. Any aggressive action against or damage dealt to a calmed creature immediately negates the power on all calmed creatures.

This power suppresses (but does not dispel) any morale bonuses or penalties from other powers (such as *empathic polarization*), as well as negating an entertainer's ability to inspire competence or courage. It also suppresses any fear effects and removes the *confused* condition from all targets. A suppressed effect resumes once *passive voice* ends (provided that its duration has not expired in the meantime).

## Pilfer Thoughts

*"The passkey is the first 50 digits of the Fibonacci sequence. He never changed the default!"*

Telepathy (Mindshare) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 sentient creature

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You may search through a subject's memory for specific thoughts.

**Effect:** The power affects a target with Intelligence 3 or higher, but the creature need not be conscious. You must have line of effect initially, but the power is thereafter limited only by the listed range. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular subject.

*1st Round:* Cursory thoughts.

*2nd Round:* Unguarded thoughts/simple plans.

*3rd Round:* Important thoughts/involved plans.

*4th Round:* Intimate secrets/complex plans.

*5th Round:* Deeply buried secrets.

Each round that the power remains active, a conscious target may make a Wisdom check against DC 20. If successful, he realizes that he is subject to telepathic intrusion and may make a new Will save to resist the effect.

## Plasma Control

*"Give me a second and I'll shape us a path right out of this inferno."*

Psychokinesis (Pyrokinesis) [Fire]

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Long (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** See text

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** See text

**Power Resistance:** See text

**Power Points:** See text

**Description:** Your control of subquantum energies is such that you can control the very shape and substance of fire.

**Effect:** A reasonable portion of fire must be within 10 feet per level for you to manifest various effects. The GM is the final arbiter of what is considered a "reasonable portion"; as a general guide, the fire should cover a 5-foot area. The effects possible with this power are as follows:

**Plasma Shape:** You manipulate fire that fills an area up to 5 cubic feet plus 1 cubic foot per level, altering its shape to suit your desire, whether geometric shapes (blocks, poles) or simple "sculptures" (people, flowers). You can change the fire's shape as a move action for the power's duration; the GM may call for a Craft check if you wish to make detailed shapes. This expression of the power requires 1 power point and lasts as long as you concentrate.

**Alter Intensity:** You increase or decrease fire within a 10-foot radius per two level spherical emanation (e.g., brighten or dim light, increase or reduce the flames' intensity), as indicated below. You may not alter your own powers, but you may adjust the powers of another pyrokinesis user or of any device that has a fire effect. A target whose powers you want to adjust may negate the influence with a successful Fortitude save against the effect. This expression of the power requires 2 power points and lasts for 1 round per character level.

| Effect Type         | Result                                            |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Non-damaging effect | Enhance by 25%/3 Psi<br>Diminish by 25%/2 Psi     |
| Damage effect       | Enhance by 1 die/3 Psi<br>Diminish by 1 die/2 Psi |

**Firestorm:** You whip flames into a frenzy within a 10-foot radius per two level spherical spread; the area of effect is stationary once targeted. The flames deal 1d6 points of fire damage per three character levels (maximum 6d6) to each target in the area; a Reflex save reduces this damage by half. Each target that fails her Reflex save must make a Fortitude save or burst into flame. A burning target suffers an additional 1d6 points of fire damage each subsequent round until she succeeds at a Fortitude save; alternately, she or someone within reach may take a full action to douse the flames. This expression of the power requires 4 power points and lasts for 1 round per five character levels.

## Power Surge

*"Not very smart of them, using an electronic lock on my cell door!"*

Electrokinesis (Technokinesis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 5 ft. + 5 ft./4 levels

**Target:** Cone-shaped burst

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You overload an electronic device, rendering it useless temporarily.

**Effect:** Any electronic device within the power's area of effect that fails its save is rendered inoperable for the power's duration. Since large devices are often composed of several smaller systems working in tandem, the GM should have each component save separately — so a Banji Falcon's navigation system may be disrupted, but its flight controls may remain unaffected.

## Premonition

*"You have a rough week ahead of you. Stay sharp."*

Clairsentience (Psychometry)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** See text

**Effect:** See text

**Duration:** Special

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You can tap into the subtle flow of subquantum energy to view probable future events.

**Effect:** You can "read" experiences associated with a specific person, place or object that will occur within 1 day per character level. The base chance for accurate *premonition* is 70% + 1% per character level, to a maximum of 90%. If the roll fails, you could not gain adequate focus on the noetic flow for an accurate read.

The impressions are clear in the immediate future and grow progressively more vague, subjective and surreal the further you scan. Conditions may change depending on the actions you take, making the experiences observed no longer relevant. The GM may apply either circumstance if the alternative would reveal the entire plot of the game and remove any drama and excitement.

## Psi Cloak

*"They can scan all they want, but they won't find us."*

Clairsentience (Psychonavigation)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** 1 creature or object touched

**Duration:** 1 hour/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless, object)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless, object)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can obscure a targeted creature or object's presence within the subquantum energy flow, shielding it from psionic detection.

**Effect:** The target becomes difficult to detect by any powers that register psi energy, such as attunement checks and clairsentience powers. Similarly, the target becomes more difficult to affect with powers that use psi energy as a means of targeting, such as telepathy powers.

An opponent must succeed on a level check (1d20 + character level) against a DC of 11 + your character level to use any power that targets a cloaked subject by a means other than direct line of effect. If you (or an item that is in your possession currently) are cloaked, the DC is 15 + your character level. If the opponent fails, the cloaked subject simply does not register to noetic senses. This does mean that a cloaked subject may not register on psychometry powers such as *insight* or *flashback*.

## Redundancy

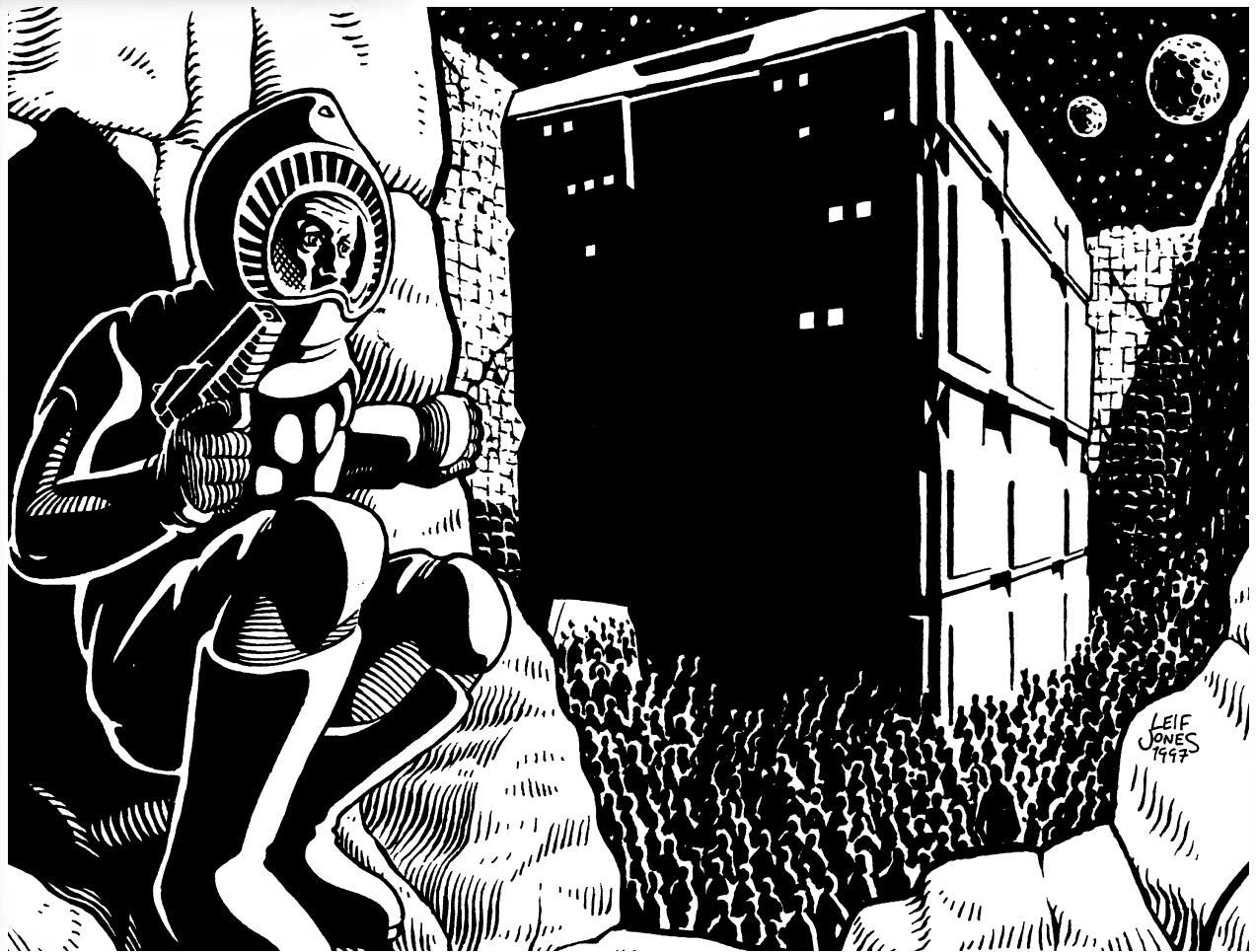
*"Sure, I know smoking's bad for you. That's why I grew a second set of lungs."*

Biokinesis (Psychomorphing)

**Level:** 4

**Manifestation Time:** See text

**Range:** Personal



**Target:** You

**Duration:** Constant; see text (D)

**Power Points:** See text

**Description:** You grow additional internal organs — a liver, lungs, even a heart — and develop selective nerve response to better weather adverse conditions or injuries.

**Effect:** You gain damage reduction  $N/—$ , with  $N$  equal to the number of power points you keep in reserve when you first manifest this power. It takes 1 hour to manifest each point of damage reduction initially; the total amount may not exceed your Psi score. You are also not subject to critical hits while this power is active.

*Redundancy* remains active only as long as you do not spend the power points you keep in reserve (this applies solely to your own supply; you cannot use power points gained through other means).

For each power point you spend of those held in reserve, you are sickened for 10 minutes and your damage reduction is reduced by 1. If you spend all the power points held in reserve, you are nauseated for 1d3 hours and the power is canceled. See the *Player's Handbook* Glossary for details on the sickened and nauseated conditions.

## Regeneration

*"Stay calm; we'll get your legs back on just as soon as we find them."*

Vitakinesis (Iatrosis)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 4; see text

**Description:** You can draw upon the genetic map that a subject's DNA provides to reattach or regrow damaged organs or limbs.

**Effect:** You can reattach severed body parts (fingers, toes, hands, feet, arms, legs, tails) and grow back limbs or organs. A severed body part is nonfunctional for 10 minutes after the power manifests, as the subject's body completes the restoration process.

Regenerating a limb or organ takes (24 days — subject's Constitution score) and costs a number of power points equal to the days required to complete the regeneration. So, regenerating the hand of a subject with Constitution 15 takes 9 days and costs 9 power points.

This power also restores ability scores reduced through ability damage or drain (use the time frame above, but in minutes for ability damage). Restoring body parts destroyed by *catabolysis*, *selective transmassion* or *simulacrum* is as with regenerating a limb or organ, except that you and the subject must also spend 1,000 XP.

Reattaching or regenerating a subject's head does not return her to life.

## Relay Object

*"Are these the keys you're looking for?"*

Teleportation (Transmassion)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One object you could hold in one hand, weighing up to 5 lb./2 levels

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None or Will negates; see text

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can transport an inanimate object instantly to you or away from you. As with all psionic powers, this effect is more difficult if the targeted object is in another person's possession — within that person's noetic aura.

**Effect:** With each use of this power, you may either call or send an object within range that you can see. When calling an object, you teleport it directly to your hand. When sending an object, you must be in physical contact with it initially. An opponent who holds the object — whether grasping it in hand or simply wearing it — must succeed at a Will save to retain possession.

On a successful Reflex save (DC equal to 10 + half the attacker's Hit Dice), you may use this power to "deflect" a low-velocity projectile (e.g., thrown knife, grenade) into your hand, thereby negating its momentum. You must be aware of the attack and must see the object clearly.

## Relay Person

*"I said, stay back!"*

Teleportation (Transmassion)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** One sentient target

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You may use this power much like *relay object*, to relay a living creature to or away from you.

**Effect:** You may either call or send a living creature within range that you can see. Physical contact is necessary, requiring a melee touch attack when sending a target and a ranged touch attack when calling a target. An unwilling target resists the effect with a successful Will save.

## Remote Manipulation

*"Multiple security scanners in the room? Not even an issue; just get me a clear view of the keypad."*

Psychokinesis (Telekinesis)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect:** See text

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can use TK as if it were a second pair of hands to perform actions remotely that would otherwise require physical touch, such as picking a pocket from across the room or grappling a target at range.

**Effect:** You manifest a pair of telekinetic "hands" with Strength and Dexterity equal to your Psi score plus 1 point per two

character levels. These "hands" can be applied to certain skill checks or combat maneuvers at range within your line of effect. You are considered flat-footed while using *remote manipulation*.

Skill checks apply most commonly to Disable Device, Open Lock, Repair, Sleight of Hand and Use Rope. Other skills may be considered suitable at the GM's discretion. Standard modifiers apply as with any skill attempt, including any requirements for using tools.

The "hands" can wield weapons to perform melee or ranged attacks, and to perform a bull rush, disarm, grapple (including pin), or trip (see Chapter 8: Combat in the *Player's Handbook*). Such maneuvers use your Psi score in place of your base attack bonus (for disarm and grapple) and do not provoke attacks of opportunity, but they are subject to standard modifiers for Strength and/or Dexterity. A failed attempt doesn't allow the target a reactive attempt for special maneuvers. The target is not allowed a save against these attempts, but power resistance applies normally.

The "hands" can be attacked, and will dissipate for one round if they suffer damage equal to your Psi score. They are considered invisible; an attacker with the psychic template can perceive them with a successful attunement check.

## Remote Sensing

*"Just need a moment to see how my grandfather is doing."*

Clairsentience (Telesthesia)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 1,000 miles + 500 miles/level

**Target:** 1 creature

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You use the psi print of a specific subject to observe her in her current circumstances, even over tremendous distances.

**Effect:** You don't need line of effect, but you must have an object that holds the subject's psi print (see Chapter Eleven). Your remote location is anchored to the subject, but you can rotate your perception in all directions. External enhancements to your senses (e.g., night vision goggles) do not work in the remote location.

You do not perceive your immediate surroundings, and you may take only a single move action each round while your senses are remote. You can focus upon either your immediate physical senses or your remote senses at one time; switching from one to the other is a free action.

## Resonant Interference

*"... Ashes, ashes, you all fall down."*

Psychokinesis (Telekinesis)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action; see text

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** See text

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You disrupt a target's unique resonant frequency, literally shaking it apart on a molecular level.

**Effect:** On a successful touch attack, you deal force damage to the target. The amount of damage dealt increases with the

duration of contact, as listed in the corresponding chart. Damage reduction and object hardness apply as normal.

Any target reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by this power is shaken to pieces — nonliving matter crumbles to rubble, while living matter bursts apart.

A creature or object that makes a successful Fortitude save suffers half damage. If this damage reduces the creature or object to 0 or fewer hit points, it is shaken apart. Equipment for a target that is destroyed in this fashion must make a Fortitude save or be shattered also.

| Round | Damage |
|-------|--------|
| 1     | 1d8    |
| 2–3   | 2d8    |
| 4+    | 4d8    |

The target is dealt a final 2d8 points of force damage if contact is broken before the duration ends.

## Seizure

*"Stop right there or you'll be flopping around like a fish in another second."*

Vitakinesis (Algesis)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Targets:** 1 living creature/4 levels, no two of which can be more than 10 ft. apart

**Duration:** 1 round/level; see text

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You overload a target's nervous system, triggering wracking pains and spasms.

**Effect:** The target is considered prone but not helpless, unable to take any action for the power's duration. She also suffers 2d6 points of Strength damage, recovered as normal. A target who makes a Fortitude save instead suffers a –4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks and ability checks for the power's duration.

## Selective Transmassion

*"I can bring down the whole thing if I take out the keystone."*

Teleportation (Transmassion)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level); see text

**Target:** 1 creature or object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial (object); see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** Teleporting one apple, or even a bushel of apples, is far easier than teleporting only half of an apple; but it can be done. You can use this power to teleport the power cell out of a laser carbine, hollow out an asteroid... or remove a person's hand from his body!

**Effect:** You use teleportation to remove matter from a targeted creature or object on a successful ranged touch attack, dealing 1d6 points of damage per character level (maximum 20d6). A creature or object that makes a successful Fortitude save suffers half damage.

A living creature's genetic template — his inherent noetic aura, if you will — resists such manipulation, conferring a second Fortitude save with a +4 resistance bonus to negate the actual body part loss. The target recovers lost hit points as normal; however, the power "removes" the target's genetic template in the affected area, making it impossible to restore other than through advanced vitakinesis (see *regeneration*).

For inanimate objects, you teleport as much as one 10-foot cube of nonliving matter from an object in very basic shapes (e.g., sphere, cube). You may teleport a specific section or component instead of removing large chunks. If the section can be removed through normal means with no damage to the object (e.g., a power cell, tire, door), you can teleport it with no loss of hit points to either portion. You can remove material from the interior of an object as long as you have direct exposure to or a sense memory of the target (e.g., a core sample from a targeted asteroid, familiarity with the style of ammunition clip in a targeted weapon).

## Sense Mastery

*"Something's moving behind those crates!"*

Clairsentience (Telesthesia)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 move action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 5-ft.-radius/level spherical emanation, centered on you

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can maneuver with confidence when anyone else would be debilitated by blindness, deafness or loss of footing.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you function as if you have blindsight: Using nonvisual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, keen smell, acute hearing or echolocation, you maneuver and fight as well as if you used normal sight. Invisibility, darkness and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant; you do not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice a creature or object within range of this power, although you must have line of effect to discern the creature or object.

## Sensory Echo

*"You can't tell me you've never seen this report before."*

Clairsentience (Psychometry)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Target touched

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./2 levels (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can sense who or what has come in contact with a specific person or object that you touch.

**Effect:** To use this power, you must first touch the target; this may require a melee touch attack if the target is unwilling. Each round of sustained contact reveals an increasing amount of information. You can sense echoes of past contact for a number of hours equal to your Psi + character level.

**1st Round:** Basic details of the strongest contact that occurred (e.g., someone sat in the chair that you are touching).

**2nd Round:** Specific circumstances and time of the strong contact (e.g., nine hours ago, a woman sat in the chair for about an hour).

**3rd Round:** Physical details of the strong contact (e.g., the woman remained tense the entire time she was in the chair; she was breathing heavily and was bleeding from her right side).

**4th Round:** General mental state of those involved with the strong contact (e.g., the woman was frightened but also pleased, despite being in a great deal of pain).

Starting with the 5th round, you can sense for the next strongest contact, repeating the degree of detail learned as described above. You can continue with increasingly incidental contacts until the power's duration ends or until there are no more contacts of note to sense.

## Sensory Projection

*"I wouldn't go in there."*

Clairsentience (Telesthesia)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal; see text

**Area:** Cone-shaped emanation

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You can extend your awareness beyond normal human limits, even to the point of using your normal senses through physical barriers or registering the existence of poisonous substances without making actual contact.

**Effect:** You suffer no penalties for range on any rolls or checks based on sight or hearing within the power's area as long as you have line of effect. As a move action, you can take actions that require taste, touch or smell as long as you have line of effect (e.g., feeling a wall's texture, smelling for toxic fumes). As a standard action, you can use your senses as normal on the other side of an intervening barrier if you do not have line of effect.

Conditions that exist in an area being sensed (e.g., blinding lights, overwhelming noise, poison gas) limit your extended senses as if you were present physically, but you remain unaffected if you are outside those conditions. So, the projected sight that this power grants could not pierce an area of pitch blackness, but you remain able to see normally. Powers such as *sense mastery* can be used to perceive through this power in such circumstances.

This power's range extends in a cone-shaped emanation equal to your attunement (see Chapter Eleven).

## Simulacrum

*"All right, guys, let's... well, you already know what to do."*

Biokinesis (Transmogrify)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Material or olfactory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 full round; see text

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You; see text

**Duration:** 1 hour/level (D)

**Power Points:** 5

**Description:** You can create miniature versions of yourself, becoming a one-person espionage team.

**Effect:** You can create one miniature duplicate of yourself for every 3 points you have in Psi. Each *simulacrum* takes one full round to create and lasts until the power's duration ends or until you

absorb it back into yourself (requiring physical contact and one full round). You are considered nauseated during creation and absorption.

The *simulacrum* is a miniature replica of you, complete with your personality and outlook, but it is loyal to you and is under your absolute command. You always know the general condition of your duplicate, but no true extrasensory communication exists.

While this power does convert noetic energy into mass, you must infuse a significant portion of your genetic code into each duplicate created. Determine from where the *simulacrum* is drawn (hand, foot, back); you lose that portion of your body and 10% of your total hit points until you absorb the duplicate. You assimilate the *simulacrum*'s experiences and knowledge upon absorbing it.

A duplicate that is not recombined dissolves into inert gray sludge as the genetic bonds that formed it break down. If you do not absorb a *simulacrum*, you recover the lost hit points but you do not recover that part of your genetic template removed to create the duplicate. It is impossible to restore these lost body parts other than through advanced vitakinesis (see *regeneration*).

Each *simulacrum* has the following traits; abilities with a negative or positive modifier are factored from your abilities.

- Tiny size.
- Land speed of 15 feet.
- 1 Hit Die for every two points you have in Psi.
- -8 Strength (minimum 1).
- +4 Dexterity.
- -2 Constitution (minimum 1).
- -4 Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma (minimum 2).
- +2 Armor Class.
- +2 attack modifier.
- 1d2 + Strength bonus (if any) unarmed strike.
- -3 Psi (minimum 2).
- All of your 1st-level psi powers.

## Spatial Divergence

*"His skimmer may have more power, but there's no chance he'll get away from me."*

Teleportation (Warping)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 creature or object

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

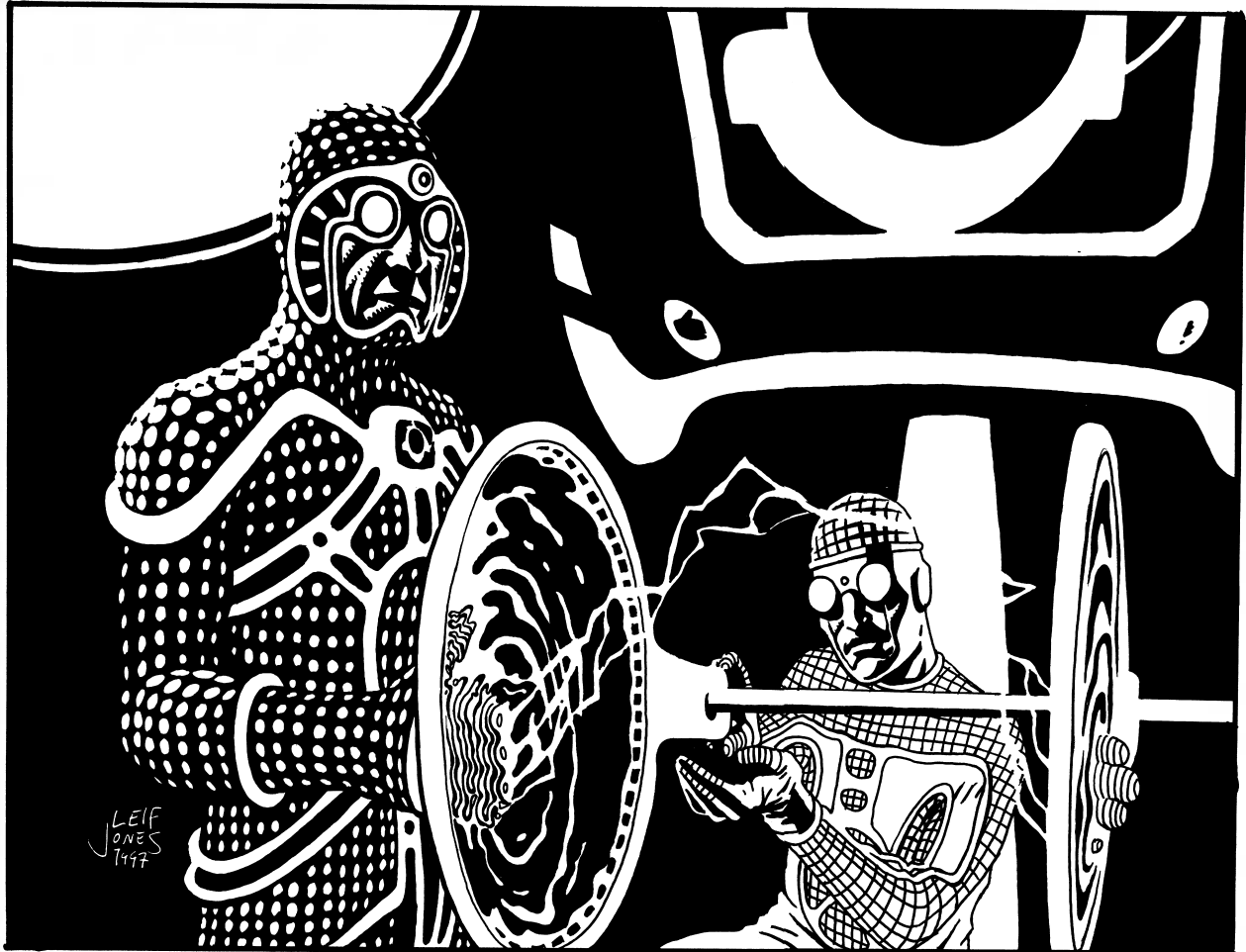
**Saving Throw:** Reflex negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You expand or contract spacetime to modify a target's effective speed. You don't change the target's velocity; instead, you allow it to cover physical distance more quickly or slowly.

**Effect:** You can adjust a single target's effective speed by half — either reducing or increasing it — for every four character levels you possess. Determine at the time the power manifests whether speed is reduced or increased. Multiple uses of this power do not stack. The target takes actions as normal; this power affects only the physical distance being covered. You cannot change a moving target's course.



## Spatial Hop

*"Hey, freak! Over here!"*

Teleportation (Translocation)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** You; see text

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You transfer yourself instantly from your current location to another spot within range for which you have line of effect.

**Effect:** You can arrive anywhere within this power's range regardless of intervening barriers as long as you can perceive the destination clearly, whether through sight or *spatial sense*. You can carry inanimate objects up to your medium load as long as they have your psi print (see Chapter Eleven). After using this power, you cannot take any other actions until your next turn.

If you somehow attempt to transfer yourself to a location occupied by a solid body, the power simply fails to function.

## Spatial Jump

*"Place' is just a state of mind."*

Teleportation (Translocation)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Unlimited; see text

**Target:** You; see text

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** You transport yourself instantly to a designated destination. *Spatial jump* can reach "portable" locations (e.g., a spaceship cabin) and "stationary" sites (e.g., your childhood home) with equal ease — when it comes down to it, everything in the universe is in constant motion anyway, so such concepts aren't truly relevant.

**Effect:** Distance is not a factor for this power, but you must have a sense memory of a given location to use it as a destination — a good description of a place you've never been is not sufficient. In general, this requires that you were at the site physically, however briefly. Psi coordinates relayed via psiware or *mindwarp* are the only other means to reach a destination that you've never been to physically.

You teleport on a successful Intelligence check against DC 18 (add your Psi score as a competence bonus). The stronger your sense memory of the destination, the more likely the teleportation works; refer to Table 12–8: Teleportation for variables to the Intelligence check. Areas of strong quantum or subquantum energies may make teleportation more hazardous or even impossible, at the GM's discretion.

You can carry inanimate objects up to your medium load as long as they have your psi print (see Chapter Eleven). After using this power, you cannot take any other actions until your next turn.

Table 12–8: Teleportation

When using *spatial jump*, *transmit* or other teleport powers, determine your level of familiarity and consult the following chart for additional modifiers when you make your Intelligence check.

| DC Mod. | Familiarity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| +0      | <i>Intimate</i> : A place you've been very often and where you feel relaxed, such as a childhood home; a close relative or good friend, a favorite garment.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| +2      | <i>Strong</i> : A destination you know well (e.g., you visit it frequently, you were there within the past day); a co-worker or general acquaintance, or gear used frequently for work.                                                                                                                                           |
| +4      | <i>Casual</i> : A place that you have visited on occasion but with which you are not very familiar; a person or object you've encountered a couple times or know from studied information.                                                                                                                                        |
| +8      | <i>Vague</i> : A destination that you have seen only once or twice, typically for no more than a few minutes; a person or object described only or seen briefly at a distance.                                                                                                                                                    |
| N/A     | <i>False</i> : The place, person or object does not exist — whether a fake person who you've been led to believe is real, a familiar object that has been destroyed or a place that has been altered to the extent that it is no longer familiar. In this case, the power points are expended but the power simply does not work. |

A destination or target within line of sight is considered “intimate.” Psi coordinates or other sense memories provided via psiware or telepathy are considered “casual” unless otherwise noted in a power’s description or as modified by the GM. The GM is the final arbiter of how familiar you are with a given destination, object or individual.

#### Off-Target Arrival

An Intelligence check that fails by 4 or less means that the subject appears safely a random distance away from the destination.

- *Misdirection of Arrival*: Roll 1d8; 1 is the square closest to the subject’s previous location and 2 through 8 count clockwise around the intended arrival point.

- *Distance from Desired Arrival Point*: Roll 1d3; this is the number of squares that the subject appears away from the intended arrival point.

Teleporters compensate instinctively for safe arrival, so this method assumes only two dimensions. If the GM wants to include a vertical axis, determine “up” or “down” with a coin toss and roll another 1d3 for the number of squares the subject appears above or below ground level.

#### Teleportation Mishap

An Intelligence check that fails by 5 or more results in a mishap. The subject being teleported takes 1d10 points of damage (this bypasses any damage reduction or other defense); you then roll for an off-target arrival to see where the subject winds up. If the arrival point is in a solid object, the subject sustains another 1d10 points of damage and another roll is made for off-target arrival from that spot.

## Spatial Sense

“Incoming!”

Teleportation

**Level:** 0

**Manifestation Time:** 1 move action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** See text

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** Practitioners of teleportation note that the key is knowing your place in the universe. *Spatial sense* is the beginning of that understanding. The power enables you to sense the relative location, shape and even general density of everything around you — even through barriers. It also attunes you to the telltale signature of impending or recent teleportation.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you function as if you have blindsight in a cone-shaped emanation equal to your attunement (see Chapter Eleven): Using nonvisual perception, you maneuver and fight as well as if you used normal sight. Invisibility, darkness and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant; you do not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice a creature or object within range of this power.

This perception ignores barriers and line of effect within range — you can perceive objects behind obstructions as clearly as you perceive the obstructions themselves. You register only size, general shape and density and location relative to your position. You cannot discern precise details of anything you sense.

You also detect recent teleportation within the power’s range. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you search a particular area.

*1st Round:* Presence or absence in the area of teleportation activity within 1 minute per character level (past or future).

*2nd Round:* Number of different occurrences of teleportation, and the location and time frame of the strongest source.

*3rd Round:* The specific location of all teleportation within the power’s range.

## Spectrum Sight

“Get everyone out of here — radiation is leaking in from multiple sources!”

Electrokinesis (Photokinesis)

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Visual

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** Cone-shaped emanation

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can perceive electromagnetic energy wavelengths — whether to detect heat traces, perceive hologram projection sources or even register harmful radiation.

**Effect:** You can detect a particular electromagnetic wavelength in a cone emanating out from you in whatever direction you face. You must select the desired wavelength to scan — infrared, visible light, ultraviolet, X-rays, gamma rays, cosmic rays — but you can change the wavelength each round. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you search a particular area or focus on a specific wavelength. Each round you can turn to detect a wavelength in a new area.

*1st Round:* Presence or absence in the area of that wavelength in greater than normal background levels.

*2nd Round:* Number of different sources of the wavelength and the location and relative intensity of the strongest source.

*3rd Round:* The specific frequency and location of each wavelength. Powerful emanations and/or multiple wavelength emissions may distort or conceal weaker emissions.

Instead of performing an active search, you can use ambient wavelengths to gain blindsense in a 5-foot cone per level emanation. You do not need to make Spot or Listen checks to pinpoint the location of a creature within range, provided that you have line of effect to that creature. Any opponent that you cannot see still has total concealment, and you have the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. You are denied any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class against attacks from creatures that you cannot sense.

The power can penetrate barriers; but 1/2 inch of lead, 1 inch of common metal, 1 foot of stone, or 3 feet of plastic, wood or dirt blocks it.

## Static Burst

*"It works even better if I shuffle my feet."*

Electrokinesis [Electricity]

**Level:** 0

**Display:** Visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One creature or object

**Duration:** Instantaneous; see text

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial (object); see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You generate a small, unfocused electrical charge sufficient to shock a person, or even scramble a computer's operating system momentarily.

**Effect:** On a successful melee touch attack, you deliver 1d4 points of nonlethal electrical damage for every four character levels (maximum 5d4).

The burst can also disrupt a localized electronic system temporarily (e.g., computer terminal, transmitter, maglock). If the object fails the Fortitude save, it is scrambled and non-functional for your Psi score in rounds.

## Static Shield

*"Put down that stun baton before you hurt yourself."*

Electrokinesis (Electromanipulation) [Electricity, Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or olfactory (ozone)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You generate a low-level field that offers protection against direct electrical and synaptic manipulation. *Static shield* sees regular use as a defense against electromanipulation attacks and tasers, and is also useful in disrupting scans made on you.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you gain resistance to electricity equal to your character level. You also gain a bonus equal to your Psi score to any saves against electricity.

This power also inhibits all electrical scans. You can make an opposed Hide check applying a bonus equal to your Psi score against

any power or device that is powered by electricity; if your result is higher than the opposing check, you do not register on the scan.

## Stun

*"Nobody move!"*

Electrokinesis (Electromanipulation) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or olfactory (ozone)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 5 ft. + 5 ft./4 levels

**Target:** Cone-shaped burst

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** This power creates a bioelectrical surge in a living target's nervous system; it inflicts no damage, but can be quite effective at knocking the target senseless. *Stun* can be used against people, animals and even psiware.

**Effect:** Any organic creature within the power's area of effect that fails his Fortitude save is considered stunned (drops everything held, cannot take actions, takes a -2 penalty to AC, and loses his Dexterity bonus to AC [if any]) for the effect's duration, and must make a Reflex save or fall prone. If successful, he is considered shaken (-2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks) for the next round.

A psiware object that fails its save is rendered inoperable for the power's duration. Since large psiware devices are often composed of several smaller devices working in tandem, the GM should have each component save separately — so a bioVARG's organic laser may be disrupted, but the suit's life-support system may remain unaffected.

## Temperature Control

*"Let's cool things off a bit."*

Psychokinesis

**Level:** 0

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 10-ft.-radius spherical emanation + 5 ft./2 levels

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You may adjust the ambient temperature to something that you find comfortable or that reflects your current mood.

**Effect:** You can raise or lower the temperature within the power's area of effect by 10° Fahrenheit per 3 character levels. You may take a move action to alter the degree of temperature change while the power is in effect; multiple uses of this power by separate individuals do not stack. The change lasts as long as you concentrate, returning to normal ambient range within 1d6 minutes after the power's duration ends.

## Thermal Awareness

*"Multiple heat traces behind this bulkhead. Looks like we found our stowaways."*

Psychokinesis (Pyrokinesis)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 5-ft.-radius/level spherical emanation, centered on you

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You draw upon heat traces — or the lack thereof — to sense your surroundings. This sense is far more extensive and subtle than simply registering infrared; you can perceive your environment even if blindfolded or otherwise unable to see.

**Effect:** Thanks to an intuitive perception of heat traces around you, gain blindsight while this power is active: You maneuver and fight as well as if you used normal sight. Invisibility, darkness, and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant; you do not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice a creature or object within range of this power, although you must have line of effect to discern the creature or object.

Further, on a successful DC 13 Search check, you memorize a specific target's individual heat signature. You can thereafter recognize that target under any circumstances, even through disguises. The GM may call for a Sense Motive or Spot check if the target has undergone significant physiological change — e.g., biokinesis manipulation, genetic engineering, transplants.

The power can penetrate barriers, but 1/2 inch of lead, 1 inch of common metal, 1 foot of stone, or 3 feet of plastic, wood or dirt blocks it.

## Thermal Screen

*"Yeah, it's handy in combat, plus I save a ton on my heating bill."*

Psychokinesis (Cryokinesis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or material (heat)

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You draw in ambient heat to shield yourself from the worst effects of exposure, cold damage or even cryokinesis effects.

**Effect:** While this power is in effect, you gain resistance to cold equal to your Psi score plus your character level.

Your infrared register also increases drastically (anyone with IR-sensing equipment gains a +4 circumstance bonus on checks to pick up your signature). You cannot have *thermal screen* and *flame immunity* active at the same time.

## Tow

*"Gimme that!"*

Psychokinesis (Telekinesis)

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Visual or auditory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

**Targets:** 1 or more objects weighing a total of 25 pounds + Psi/level; see text

**Duration:** Concentration + 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Reflex negates (object)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (object)

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You manipulate subquantum energies to lift and move things without touching them physically. This power is useful

for snatching loose weapons, opening unsecured doors from a distance and the like.

**Effect:** You can move a targeted object vertically, horizontally, or in both directions at a speed up to 20 feet per round. The owner can negate the effect on an object she possesses with a successful Reflex save or with power resistance.

You can manipulate telekinetically an object within the weight limitation as if with one hand (e.g., pull a rope or lever, turn a key, push a button, rotate an object). Delicate activities are not possible. You can manipulate up to one target per three character levels as long as they are within 10 feet of one another and their total weight does not exceed your lifting capacity. You must take a full-round action if you want to move multiple objects in different directions.

## Transform

*"Don't I look like your commanding officer? Then quit gawking and obey my order!"*

Biokinesis (Transmogrify)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Material or olfactory

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You can change your appearance to any extreme within the human paradigm, whether subtle — altering eye color, complexion, fingerprints — or radical — changing your physique, voice box, even impersonating another.

**Effect:** You can assume the form of any creature with the humanoid type. Your creature type and subtype (if any) remain the same regardless of your new form. You can take the form of a creature with a template that doesn't change the creature type or subtype, but you gain no benefits from that template (for example, you may impersonate an aberrant, but you do not gain the benefits of the superhuman template). The new form must be within one size category of your normal size. The maximum HD of an assumed form is equal to your character level. This power works only for your body; your clothes and any gear carried remain the same whatever the form you choose.

Regardless of the form you assume, you retain the following aspects of your normal form: ability scores, class and level, hit points, alignment, base attack bonus, base save bonus, psychic special attacks and qualities (except for those requiring a body part that the new form does not have), extraordinary special attacks and qualities derived from class levels (you lose any from your normal form that are not derived from class levels).

When assuming a new form, you retain your own mind but acquire the new form's physical qualities — natural size, mundane movement capabilities (such as burrowing, climbing, walking and swimming, to a maximum speed of 60 feet), natural armor bonus, natural weapons (such as claws, bite and so on), racial skill bonuses, racial bonus feats, and any gross physical qualities (type of skin or hide, number of extremities and so forth). A body with extra limbs does not allow you to make more attacks (or more advantageous two-weapon attacks) than normal. If the new form is capable of speech, you can communicate normally.

You do not gain any extraordinary special attacks or special qualities not noted above under physical qualities (e.g., darkvision, low-light vision, blindsense, blindsight, fast healing, regeneration,

scent). You do not gain the form's psychic abilities. Any part of your body that is separated from the whole reverts to its true form.

You can designate basic physical qualities (e.g., height, weight, sex, skin color, hair color, hair texture) within the normal ranges for a creature of the kind you assume. If you use this power to create a disguise, you may add your Psi score as a bonus on your Disguise check.

While the power is in effect, you can change form once each round as a move action. Parameters noted above apply as normal.

### Transmass Shield

*"Missed me! Ha! Missed me again!"*

Teleportation (Transmassion)

**Level:** 3

**Display:** Audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Power Points:** 2

**Description:** You create a small field that causes most attacks directed at you to teleport past you, thereby reducing — or even negating entirely — their effect.

**Effect:** While this power is active, you create a near-invisible aura in front of you that provides damage reduction N/light, with N equal to your Wisdom modifier (if any) plus 1 per two character levels. The shield is effective only against attacks from the front, and is visible as a ripple in the air with a successful DC 20 Spot check.

### Transmit

*"Hold tight and I'll have you safe and sound in London before you can say 'subquantum spatial matter transference.'"*

Teleportation (Transmassion)

**Level:** 4

**Display:** Audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** See text

**Targets:** One object weighing up to 50 lb./level or 1 living creature/2 levels, all of whom must be touching

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None or Will negates; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

**Description:** Though similar to *relay object* and *relay person*, this power has a key difference: You need not touch — or even see — the target involved and may *transmit* it to any place for which you have a strong sense memory.

**Effect:** You *transmit* an object or a willing creature with a successful Intelligence check against DC 18, adding your Psi score as a competence bonus to the roll. Familiarity — with the subject and with the points of departure and arrival — is key, so apply all relevant modifiers from Table 12–8: Teleportation to the Intelligence check. Teleporting the golf clubs (intimate) that your father gave you to your side (line of sight) remains DC 18; teleporting a new teammate (casual) from a mine shaft that you just passed through (vague) to your ship's medical bay (strong) is DC 32. A living creature resists this effect with a successful Will save.



If you *transmit* more than one living creature, you need only focus on the most familiar one as long as they are all in physical contact. You may use *spatial jump* to travel with the targets of *transmit* at the same time on a single successful Intelligence check; power points are spent for each power, however.

Areas of strong quantum or subquantum energies may make teleportation more hazardous or even impossible, at the GM's discretion.

## Teleportal

"Anyone not intending to travel to Qinchui should leave the transport area immediately."

Teleportation (Warping)

**Level:** 5

**Display:** Visual and audio

**Manifestation Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Unlimited; see text

**Area:** 25-ft.-radius spherical emanation + 25 ft./3 levels, centered on you

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** See text

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 4

**Description:** You generate a shimmering, coherent noetic field that transports everything within instantly from one physical location to another.

**Effect:** This power functions as per *spatial jump*, with the following distinctions.

Manifesting a *teleportal* requires your full concentration; you can take no other action and are considered flat-footed if attacked. If you lose concentration before the power manifests, the attempt fails but you must still spend the power points. Anyone may pass without harm through the area of effect before the power manifests; however, all actions performed by or upon any beings within the area during this time suffer a -2 penalty due to the noetic flux.

There is no weight limitation. Instead, each creature and object fully within the area is transported automatically when the power manifests. A living being on the edge must make a Reflex save; if successful, she is not teleported. An object on the edge of the area is sliced cleanly by the power's spherical manifestation, with whatever portion inside transported to the destination. This includes the earth beneath you if you create a *teleportal* while standing on the ground.

The mass displacement at both departure and arrival points creates a compression wave that deals 1d6 points of force damage per two character levels to all within 60 feet of the *teleportal* sphere's edge; the wave deals half this amount to all within an additional 120 feet. A Fortitude save halves the force damage.

Each being with the psychic template whose attunement can detect a *teleportal* departure or destination must make a Fortitude save against moderate backlash (see Chapter Eleven).

Those within the *teleportal* are not subject to the mass displacement or backlash effect. They are subject to any local conditions upon arrival, however — gravity or atmospheric change, unsure footing as transported earth falls apart on the destination surface, and so on.

To avoid unforeseen problems with both departure and arrival, those with this power use it most often in vacuum or upper atmosphere to transport craft that fit within the power's radius.

## Will Control

"You'll leave when I tell you to go."

Telepathy (Psychbending) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 2

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** 1 living creature/4 character levels, no two of which can be more than 15 ft. apart

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You subject a sentient target's will to your mental command.

**Effect:** If a target fails a Will save, he is subject to your control for the power's duration. He may make a Will save to resist each command you issue during this time, with a bonus to his save depending on the command's intensity (see Table 12-6: Control Commands). If successful, he resists performing the action but is considered dazed for the round. The target may act normally if you do not issue a command for a given round.

You may attempt *will control* on any target with Intelligence 1 or higher within range whom you can perceive clearly (e.g., line of sight, video monitor). You communicate your commands telepathically, without need for speech (this also ignores any language barriers). Issuing a command to multiple targets is a move action regardless of the number involved, as long as you give the same order to each. Issuing different commands for separate targets is a full-round action.

## Willfinder

"You're correct; she's not in her right mind."

Telepathy (Psychbending) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** 1

**Display:** Mental or visual

**Manifestation Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 10-ft. cone-shaped emanation + 5 ft./2 levels

**Effect:** 1 living organism + 1/3 levels

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 1

**Description:** You can determine whether a target has been subject to telepathy manipulation.

**Effect:** The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject. Each round, you can turn to sense in a new area. This power does not reveal the details of what any telepathic manipulation has done, but it does offer specifics on any power used and the degree of influence applied.

*1st Round:* Presence or absence of telepathic influence.

*2nd Round:* Number of different telepathic influences and mode used.

*3rd Round:* Type of telepathic influence (specific power used, degree of influence upon the subject).

## Wealth

The Wealth bonus reflects your buying power — a composite of income, credit rating and savings — and serves as the basis of your Wealth check for purchasing equipment and services. Your starting Wealth bonus is +0 plus:

- 2d4
- Wealth bonus from starting class
- Wealth bonus from relevant feats
- +1 for having 1 or more ranks in the Profession skill

The Wealth bonus fluctuates over the course of play, decreasing as you purchase expensive items and increasing as you gain levels. The bonus can never fall below +0 and has no upper limit (see the range below). With Wealth bonus +0, you cannot purchase any object or service that has purchase DC 10 or higher, nor can you take 10 or take 20 on a Wealth check.

| Wealth Bonus  | Financial Condition     |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| +0            | Impoverished or in debt |
| +1 to +4      | Struggling              |
| +5 to +10     | Middle class            |
| +11 to +15    | Affluent                |
| +16 to +20    | Wealthy                 |
| +21 to +30    | Rich                    |
| +31 or higher | Very rich               |

### Making Purchases

Make a Wealth check (1d20 + your current Wealth bonus) against the purchase DC of the object or service in question to buy it successfully. You succeed automatically if your Wealth bonus is at least equal to the purchase DC. Buying a less common object or service (at the GM's discretion) takes a number of hours equal to its purchase DC, reflecting the time needed to locate the wanted materials and close the deal.

On a failed roll, you can't afford the item or service at the time. You can retry after spending an additional number of hours shopping equal to the purchase DC.

After a successful acquisition with a purchase DC higher than your current Wealth bonus, or if the purchase DC is 15 or higher, your Wealth bonus goes down. Your bonus stays the same if you fail the purchase check.

One other character who makes a successful aid another attempt can give you a +2 bonus on your Wealth check. That character then reduces his Wealth bonus by -1, however.

| Purchase DC Is...                             | Wealth Bonus Decrease |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 15+                                           | 1 point               |
| 1–10 points higher than current Wealth bonus  | 1 point               |
| 11–15 points higher than current Wealth bonus | 1d6 points            |
| 16+ points higher than current Wealth bonus   | 2d6 points            |

### Regaining Wealth

Every time you gain a new level, make a Profession check (or a Wisdom check if you have no ranks in the skill);

DC = your current Wealth bonus. On a successful result, raise your current Wealth bonus by 1, +1 for every 5 points by which the check result exceeds the DC.

Riches found or items discovered in the course of gameplay that are sold increase your Wealth bonus, as determined by the GM.

### Selling Stuff

To sell something, you must first determine its sale value. Assuming the object is undamaged and in working condition, its sale value equals the original purchase DC - 3.

You gain a +1 Wealth bonus if the object goes for a sale value greater than your current Wealth bonus, or if the object's sale value is 15 or higher. You cannot sell objects legally that are reported as stolen. Illegal sale often requires dealing with a black market, and reduces the sale value by an additional -3.

## Gear

Technology in the 22nd century derives from two sources: physical manufacturing processes (or hard technology) and organic manipulation (or biotechnology). Although each type involves strikingly different development and construction techniques, many devices from each form of technology have similar functions. When it comes down to the plain facts, hardtech and biotech devices are exactly that — gear, equipment and commodities. They're manufactured, sold and bought like any other physical resource, and form the backbone of much of 22nd-century commerce.

### Hardtech

Humans have used "hard" technology for centuries. It's still the cornerstone of 22nd-century society, from clothes to computers, armaments to arcologies. Biotech offers a new avenue of utility and commerce, but hardtech remains as reliable as ever.

### Orbital Manufacture

Many hardtech devices are available in regular or orbital models. Both types are constructed using advanced steel or aluminum alloys, ceramics, or a polymer-and-aluminum extrusion (often called "plasteel" since it rolls off the tongue more easily than does, say, "polynum"). The only notable distinction is in their manufacture — regular models are manufactured terrestrially, while orbital models are made on Luna or on orbital stations. Most Asian companies use orbital manufacturing processes. Western manufacturers have some orbital plants, but still construct the majority of their products on Earth.

Unlike terrestrial manufacture, gravity and environmental impurities have little influence on orbital manufacturing. As a result, orbital models are lighter, stronger and of uniformly higher quality than regular models... and more expensive.

Orbital weapons provide a +1 enhancement bonus on attack rolls; orbital armor reduces the armor check penalty by -1. An item of orbital manufacture weighs one-third less and costs 50% more than the equivalent regular model.

## Heavy Metal

Olaminium is a rare but useful substance that sees extensive use for everything from cosmic radiation shielding to tactical armament and defense. Its availability on the open market is limited severely; the GM is under no obligation to make it available.

**Weapons:** Olaminium-coated rounds reduce the target's armor bonus to AC by  $-2$ ; pure olaminium rounds reduce the armor bonus to AC by  $-4$ . A target's armor bonus to AC cannot be reduced below  $+1$ .

**Armor:** Olaminium-coated armor gives the wearer damage reduction  $2/$ — but increases the weight by one-half and reduces the maximum Dexterity bonus by  $-1$ . Pure olaminium armor gives the wearer DR  $5/$ — but doubles the weight and reduces the maximum Dexterity bonus by  $-2$ .

**Cost:** Olaminium coating raises the purchase DC by  $+4$ , while pure olaminium raises the purchase DC by  $+8$ .

## Biotechnology

Biotechnology refers to something a bit different in the 2100's than in the previous century. Biotech manufacture in the Unity Era is based on noetics rather than physics, and is divided into two categories: inert and active.

- **Biotech, Standard (Inert):** This category encompasses ordinary consumer products (anything from a desktop to an automobile tire to a business suit) created through biotechnological processes but which are not considered alive by any definition. "Nonliving" biotech is by far the more common (and less expensive) category, and is typically referred to simply as "biotech."

- **Biotech, Psiware (Active):** Referred to as "psiware," this category encompasses equipment that is alive after a fashion, subsisting on nutrients and/or psi energy. Only those with the psychic template can utilize active biotech.

## Biotech Design

A typical biotech device has a photosynthetic outer membrane protected by a ceramic or polymer casing. Organic energy cells link to a battery that nourishes the device and provides power. Nutrient clips fulfill a device's alimentary needs as necessary.

Biotech manufacturers design with hardtech in mind. Organic pistols and carbines, for instance, look similar to their hardtech counterparts. If a biotech device looks "normal," the average person — "Joe Hologram," in 22nd-century parlance — is more inclined to use it.

The typical individual knows little about the practical differences between biotech and hardware. Indeed, there's little distinction — for instance, biotech weapons use organic processes to simulate the effects of their hardtech counterparts. A knife of matrix enamel cuts just as well as one made of orbital steel; a photosynthetic laser burns as well as one that uses solar chargers.

## Psiware Formatting

Most psiware is unformatted — that is, not coded to a specific user. Formatting psiware codes the device to you specifically, unlocking greater capabilities.

Anyone with the psychic template can use unformatted psiware weapons, vehicles and the like; they can also use the unformatted functions of another character's formatted psiware. Only those formatted to a device can use its higher functions. A piece of psiware can have a number of formatted users equal to its tolerance rating (TR).

To format psiware, a biotechnician uses a sample of the subject's DNA to act as a genetic "key," unlocking the device's higher functions. The techie must succeed at a DC 10 Heal check to get the DNA sample and a DC 15 Craft (biotech) check to perform the necessary implantation and coding in the psiware. The formatting procedure requires a biotech lab; all labs must be licensed by the government in which the lab is situated, though black market biolabs are known to exist.

## Tolerance Rating

Each piece of psiware has a tolerance rating (TR). Unless noted otherwise, unformatted psiware has TR 1. The TR for formatted psiware varies depending on the device; as a general rule, the greater number of higher functions it has, the higher its TR. Standard biotech has TR 0.

If the total TR of all psiware that you carry is greater than your Psi score, you have exceeded your tolerance limit. Reduce your power points by the amount the TR exceeds your Psi score. Lost power points return only after the total TR is equal to or lower than your Psi score. Tolerance overload occurs if you exceed your tolerance limit for a number of days equal to your Psi (see Chapter Eleven).

## Weapons

Even those with psi powers supplement their unique abilities with technological devices. Still, no matter how you equip yourself, your best weapon is always your own wits.

## Melee and Missile Weapons

A sturdy tonfa or sharp orbital knife can be just as effective as a gun — sometimes moreso — when you must defend yourself. Table 13–1: *Melee Weapons* supplements the list of simple, martial and exotic melee and missile weapons on Table 13–5: *Weapons* in the *Player's Handbook*. (Note: the Archaic Weapon Proficiency feat covers both simple and martial weapons.)

- **Bioclaws:** These retractable claws are implanted in your fingertips and must be formatted to function. They grow naturally, and must be trimmed to remain beneath the skin's surface when not in use. Bioclaws are considered light weapons and require the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to use without penalty. You gain a  $+2$  competence bonus on Climb checks but suffer a  $-2$  penalty on checks involving fine manipulation (bioclaws restrict motion slightly in the last finger joint).

- **Combat Gloves:** Though they look like an ordinary pair of leather or polymer gloves, combat gloves have an inner plasteel weave that lets you deal lethal damage with unarmed strikes. The gloves also provide DR  $1/$ — against attacks that target your hands.

- **"Spider" Battle Harness:** The harness holds up to six biolaser batteries, recharging one per hour by channeling light and heat absorbed through its photo- and thermosynthetic outer membrane. (The harness nourishes itself using the same process.) You gain a  $+2$  natural armor bonus while wearing the spider from the set of eight articulated spines that extend from the enamel chassis and clasp you around the shoulders and ribs for additional support.

If the spider is formatted, you can control the spines to assist with movement or to act as weapons. You gain a  $+2$  competence bonus on Balance and Climb checks and on Tumble checks that involve falling. The user must have an Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to attack without penalty with the spines; they have a 10-foot reach and may also be used against adjacent foes.

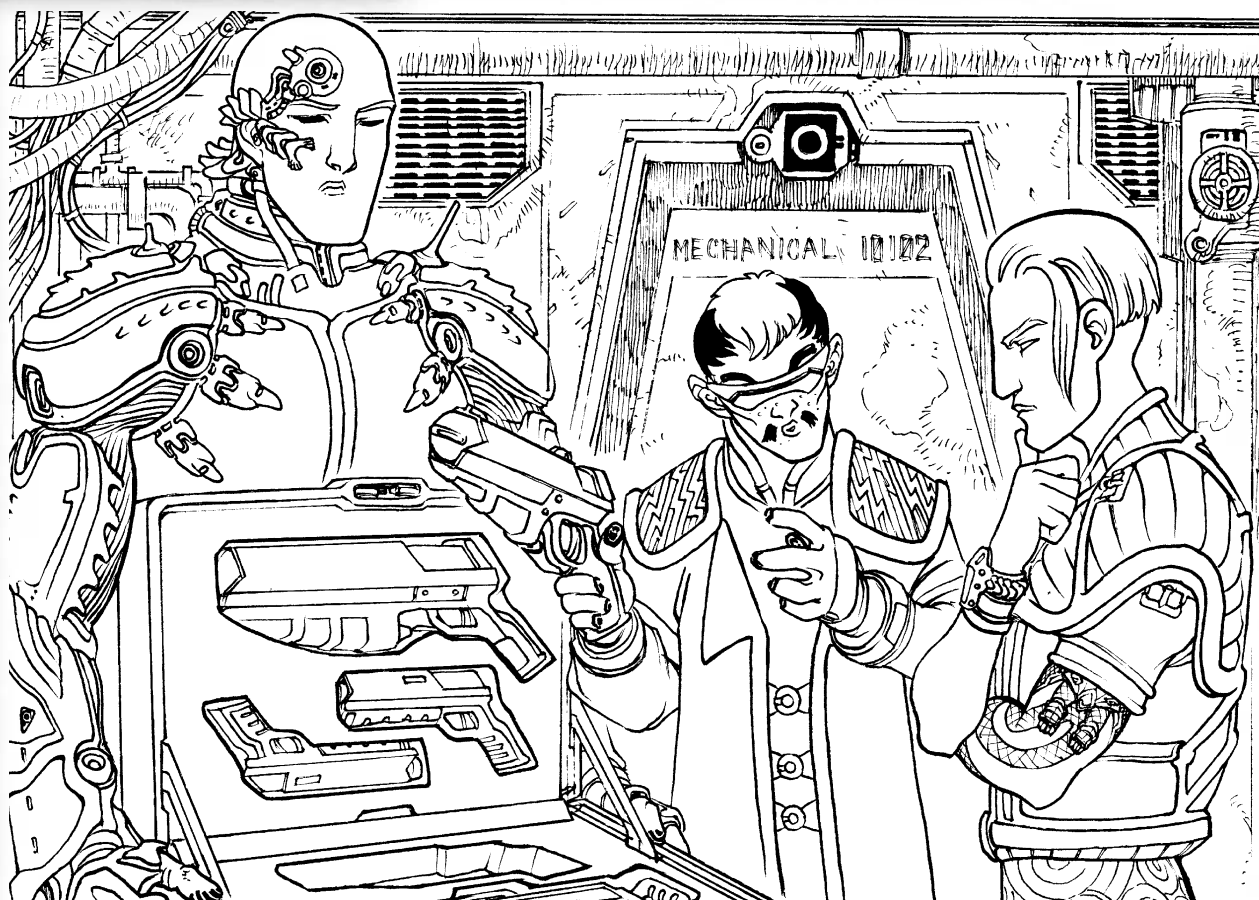


Table 13–1: Melee Weapons

| Martial Weapon           | Dmg (S)          | Dmg (M)          | Critical | Range | Weight <sup>1</sup> | Type                        | Tech <sup>2</sup> | TR <sup>3</sup> | Cost |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|-------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------|
| Combat gloves            | 1d2 <sup>4</sup> | 1d3 <sup>4</sup> | x2       | —     | —                   | Bludgeoning                 | Ω                 | —               | 10   |
| Taser baton <sup>1</sup> | 1d4              | 1d6              | x2       | —     | 1 lb.               | Bludgeoning and electricity | Ω/Ψ               | —/1             | 16   |

| Exotic Weapons                     | Dmg (S)           | Dmg (M)          | Critical | Range | Weight <sup>1</sup> | Type     | Tech <sup>2</sup> | TR <sup>3</sup> | Cost |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|-------|---------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------------|------|
| Bioclaws                           | 1d3               | 1d4              | x2       | —     | —                   | Slashing | Ψ                 | 2               | 19   |
| Spider battle harness <sup>5</sup> | 1d10 <sup>6</sup> | 2d6 <sup>6</sup> | x3       | —     | 11 lb.              | Piercing | Ψ                 | 3               | 23   |

<sup>1</sup>Weight figures are for standard model Medium weapons. A Small weapon weighs half as much, and a Large weapon weighs twice as much. An orbital model weapon weighs one-third less than a normal weapon of its size.

<sup>2</sup>Technology type: “Ω” = hardtech, “Ψ” = biotech.

<sup>3</sup>Formatted tolerance rating (standard biotech has TR 0; unformatted biotech has TR 1).

<sup>4</sup>Use your standard unarmed strike damage, though converted to lethal damage.

<sup>5</sup>Reach weapon.

<sup>6</sup>Do not apply your Strength modifier to damage dealt.

• **Taser baton:** The weapon deals the listed bludgeoning damage on a successful melee attack roll; in addition, the target must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. This device is available in hard- and biotech in different designs, from a 2-foot long club to a 4-inch extendable wand.

## Ranged Weapons

Some cultures have strict restrictions regarding firearm ownership. The process can range from paying a healthy tax and filling out a short form (Russia), to paying a significant registration fee and submitting to a background check (FSA), to talking to the fellow down the street (Argentina), to resorting to the black market (Nippon, China, Olympus).

See Table 13–2: Ranged Weapons for representative firearms. Weapon listings include the following information.

**Damage:** Unless noted otherwise, each weapon threatens a critical on a 20 and deals double damage on a confirmed critical.

**Range:** Range increment. Attacks at less than this distance are not penalized for range, but each full increment applies a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll. Ranged weapons have a maximum of 10 range increments.

**Rate of Fire — 1:** Use once per round; must then reload or replace.

**Rate of Fire — Si (Single Shot):** Must operate the action to load a new round or recharge the power cell between each shot.

This allows only one shot per attack, regardless of abilities that might allow more than one shot per attack.

**Rate of Fire — Sa (Semiautomatic):** Fires one shot per attack, but can make multiple shots in rapid succession if you have abilities that allow more than one shot per attack.

**Rate of Fire — A (Automatic):** Fires a burst or stream of shots with a single squeeze of the trigger. Can be set on autofire or used with feats that take advantage of automatic fire.

**Magazine:** Box magazines can be removed and reloaded separately from the weapon; cylinders (cyl.) and internal (int.) magazines are part of the weapon and must be reloaded by hand; linked magazines are bullets chained together with small metal clips, forming a belt.

**Size:** Weapon size categories are as follows: A Small or smaller weapon is a light, one-handed weapon. A Medium or smaller weapon can be used one- or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands. A Huge weapon requires two hands and a bipod or other mount.

**Weight:** The weapon's weight when loaded.

**Tech:** The weapon's technology type, designated with a "Ω" for hardtech and a "Ψ" for biotech.

**FT:** The weapon's formatted tolerance rating (standard biotech has TR 0; unformatted biotech has TR 1).

**Cost:** The base purchase DC to acquire the weapon.

## Personal and Advanced Firearms

• **Automatic:** A clip-loaded slugthrower that combines a higher rate of fire than a revolver with as much as three times the ammo capacity. Automatic handguns typically use lighter but more accurate 9mm ammunition, though larger calibers are common.



L-K AVENGER

• **Carbine:** Carbine slugthrowers fire high-velocity ammunition while lasers use focused beams; either model is capable of both semi-automatic and full-auto fire. These powerful weapons are restricted to military and special law enforcement units, but criminals and private owners pay premium prices to obtain them.

• **Enhancer gauntlet:** This psiware device channels electrokinesis and psychokinesis energy into a power cell, where it is magnified and fired as a traditional laser beam. A gauntlet stores up to 10 shots and recharges after 2 hours. When the power cell is depleted, each power point you spend charges the power cell for 2 more shots (up to its total capacity).

If you have a formatted gauntlet, you are considered two character levels higher when using your existing electrokinesis and/or psychokinesis powers. If you get a natural result of 1 on an attack roll with an enhancer gauntlet, you burn out the power cell for 1 hour and must make a backlash check against DC 18.

• **Flechette weapon:** Also called "stingers," "needlers" or "dart guns," these projectile weapons use compressed gases to fire high-velocity metal or ceramic darts in controlled bursts. Organic flechette weapons are configured differently from hardtech models, but both

function similarly — biotech weapons are even designed to accept traditional flechette clips. The darts are designed not to penetrate hard targets — a flechette shot deals half damage (round down) against a target wearing heavy armor or with hardness 5 or more. As such, needlers see widespread use in pressurized environments.



ORGOTEK  
WASP

• **Laser:** Firing a coherent energy pulse generated from a power pack, the laser is relatively quiet, accurate and clean (aside from the smell of ozone and seared flesh). The laser is available in pistol, carbine and gauntlet models. Pistols are easy to conceal, carbines offer more power and gauntlets are easy to use (the emitter is positioned to fire from the back of your hand).



ORGOTEK  
SCORPION

• **Revolver:** A simple slugthrower that stores several rounds in a revolving cylinder. As the trigger is pulled, the cylinder revolves to bring the next bullet in line with the barrel. Less flashy but easier to operate than an automatic.



VOSS 63K

• **Shotgun:** Shotguns are common among law enforcement personnel, sportsmen and homeowners. They fire a spreading cone of lead shot that is very powerful at close range, and require little in the way of marksmanship.



BANJI TORNADO

Table 13–2: Ranged Weapons

| Weapon                                                                                                | Damage              | Type                  | Range    | RoF   | Magazine | Size  | Weight  | Tech | FT  | Cost            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|------|-----|-----------------|
| <b>Handguns (Personal Firearms Proficiency feat)</b>                                                  |                     |                       |          |       |          |       |         |      |     |                 |
| Automatic, light<br>( <i>Banji Cyclone, L–K Defender</i> )                                            | 2d6                 | Ballistic             | 40 ft.   | Sa    | Box 20   | Tiny  | 2 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 17              |
| Automatic, heavy<br>( <i>L–K Avenger, Stavros Autoload</i> )                                          | 2d8                 | Ballistic             | 40 ft.   | Sa    | Box 20   | Small | 3 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 18              |
| Flechette pistol<br>( <i>Ω: Aris SureSting; Ψ: Alchemy Bulldog F-40, Orgotek Stinger</i> )            | 2d3                 | Piercing <sup>1</sup> | 20 ft.   | Sa, A | Box 50   | Small | 2 lb.   | Ω, Ψ | —/1 | 16              |
| Laser pistol<br>( <i>Ω: Banji Spark, L–K Personal Protector; Ψ: Alchemy 2117-A, Orgotek Wasp II</i> ) | 2d8                 | Fire                  | 40 ft.   | Si    | Box 50   | Small | 2 lb.   | Ω, Ψ | —/1 | 17              |
| Revolver, light<br>( <i>Banji Bolt, L–K Holdout</i> )                                                 | 2d6                 | Ballistic             | 30 ft.   | Sa    | Cyl. 6   | Tiny  | 1.5 lb. | Ω    | —   | 16              |
| Revolver, heavy<br>( <i>L–K Heavy Duty</i> )                                                          | 2d8                 | Ballistic             | 30 ft.   | Sa    | Cyl. 6   | Small | 3 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 16              |
| Sonic weapon<br>( <i>Aris Whistler</i> )                                                              | 2d4                 | Sonic                 | 40 ft.   | Si    | Box 20   | Small | 3 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 18              |
| Taser pistol <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>Orgotek Electric Eel</i> )                                          | 1d6                 | Electricity           | 20 ft.   | Si    | Box 20   | Small | 2 lb.   | Ψ    | 1   | 18              |
| Web emitter <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>Ω: L–K Netgun s5–ST; Ψ: Alchemy Webgun, Orgotek Spinneret</i> )      | Special             | —                     | 15 ft.   | Si    | Box 5    | Small | 6 lb.   | Ω, Ψ | —/1 | 17              |
| <b>Longarms (Personal Firearms Proficiency feat)</b>                                                  |                     |                       |          |       |          |       |         |      |     |                 |
| Shotgun<br>( <i>Banji Thunder, L–K Protector, Stavros .00 Shotgun</i> )                               | 2d10                | Ballistic             | 30 ft.   | Si    | Varies   | Large | 9 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 16              |
| Web emitter, heavy <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>L–K Netlauncher s9–MT</i> )                                   | Special             | —                     | 25 ft.   | Si    | Box 20   | Large | 10 lb.  | Ω    | —   | 19              |
| <b>Carbines (Advanced Firearms Proficiency feat)</b>                                                  |                     |                       |          |       |          |       |         |      |     |                 |
| Assault weapon<br>( <i>Banji Tornado, L–K MAC-803</i> )                                               | 2d8                 | Ballistic             | 80 ft.   | Sa, A | Box 50   | Large | 11 lb.  | Ω    | —   | 23 <sup>3</sup> |
| Flechette<br>( <i>Orgotek Scorpion</i> )                                                              | 2d6                 | Piercing              | 60 ft.   | Sa, A | Box 90   | Large | 10 lb.  | Ψ    | 1   | 21 <sup>3</sup> |
| Laser<br>( <i>Ω: L–K Vindicator II, Voss 63K; Ψ: Alchemy 2118-D, Orgotek Hornet VI</i> )              | 3d8                 | Fire                  | 120 ft.  | Sa, A | Box 50   | Large | 9 lb.   | Ω, Ψ | —/1 | 21 <sup>3</sup> |
| Sonic weapon <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>Aris SuperSonic</i> )                                               | 2d6                 | Sonic                 | 60 ft.   | Si    | Box 30   | Large | 8 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 21              |
| <b>Gauntlets (Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat)</b>                                                     |                     |                       |          |       |          |       |         |      |     |                 |
| Gauntlet, light<br>( <i>Orgotek MiniPulse-L</i> )                                                     | 2d6                 | Fire                  | 50 ft.   | Si    | Box 20   | Tiny  | 1 lb.   | Ψ    | 1   | 20              |
| Gauntlet, heavy<br>( <i>Orgotek Pulse-L</i> )                                                         | 3d8                 | Fire                  | 100 ft.  | Sa, A | Box 50   | Small | 4 lb.   | Ψ    | 1   | 22              |
| Gauntlet, enhancer <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>Orgotek Iris-L II</i> )                                       | 3d6                 | Fire                  | 80 ft.   | Sa, A | Box 10   | Small | 4 lb.   | Ψ    | 3   | 23              |
| <b>Heavy Weapons (Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat)</b>                                                 |                     |                       |          |       |          |       |         |      |     |                 |
| Coilgun, light <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>L–K Junior r3</i> )                                               | 3d12                | Ballistic             | 120 ft.  | Si    | Box 50   | Large | 15 lb.  | Ω    | —   | 23 <sup>3</sup> |
| Coilgun, heavy <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>L–K Big Boy r5</i> )                                              | 4d12                | Ballistic             | 200 ft.  | Si    | Box 80   | Huge  | 25 lb.  | Ω    | —   | 24 <sup>3</sup> |
| Grenade launcher <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>L–K Hail Mary I2</i> )                                          | Varies <sup>2</sup> | Varies <sup>2</sup>   | 70 ft.   | 1     | 1 Int.   | Large | 7 lb.   | Ω    | —   | 20 <sup>3</sup> |
| Missile launcher <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>L–K Killjoy</i> )                                               | Varies <sup>2</sup> | Varies <sup>2</sup>   | 1000 ft. | 1     | 4 Int.   | Huge  | 30 lb.  | Ω    | —   | 26 <sup>3</sup> |
| Plasma thrower <sup>1</sup><br>( <i>Voss 88T</i> )                                                    | 4d10                | Fire                  | 30 ft.   | Si, A | 50 Int.  | Huge  | 20 lb.  | Ω    | —   | 25 <sup>3</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> See the weapon description for other effects.<sup>2</sup> Damage and damage type varies depending on the ammunition used.<sup>3</sup> Restricted availability through law enforcement or military; add +4 to the cost if purchased through the black market.



ARIS  
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- **Sonic weapon:** Also called a “screamer” or “stunner,” a sonic weapon is designed to subdue a target without serious injury. The weapon requires a ranged touch attack to hit and the damage listed is nonlethal. In addition, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or be deafened and shaken for 1d4 rounds.

- **Taser weapon:** A “zapper” emits an electrical charge that causes nerve disruption. The damage listed is nonlethal; in addition, the target must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

- **Web emitter:** Also called a “webgun” or “webber,” a web emitter fires a viscous glob that dries instantly into a hard, permeable layer to immobilize the target. Hardtech webs are synthetic while biotech webs are organic; the two types of emitters are otherwise almost identical in function. A webber requires a ranged touch attack to hit, and each successful shot deals a cumulative –1d3 penalty to Dexterity. The target is immobilized once the total penalty equals or exceeds his Dexterity score. Hand web emitters are single-target weapons, while heavy webguns fire globular clusters that cover a 5-foot radius on a successful attack against AC 5.

## Heavy Weaponry

Heavy weapons are used mostly in military situations; the GM may restrict heavy weapons purchases to official military or black market channels (if the latter, add +4 to the purchase DC).

- **Coilgun:** A portable electromagnetic accelerator, the coilgun launches projectiles at phenomenal velocities.

- **Grenade launcher:** This rifle-like device launches grenades much farther than they can be thrown. Make a ranged attack against a specific 5-foot square (instead of targeting a person or creature); damage depends on grenade type.

- **Missile launcher:** This compact, shoulder-mounted device fires a miniature warhead. Make a ranged attack against a specific 5-foot square (instead of targeting a person or creature); damage depends on grenade type.

- **Plasma thrower:** This heavy weapon fires a stream of hot ionized gases not unlike a flamethrower — except an order of magnitude more intense. The plasma stream sprays in a cone for full effect up to 30 feet; damage is halved for any targets caught in the cone up to an additional 30 feet.

## Explosives

Table 13–3: Explosives lists grenades and other explosives. These show information noted above, as well as the following specifications.

**Damage:** The damage dealt to all within the explosive’s burst radius. For a Molotov cocktail, only a direct hit inflicts full damage; targets within the burst radius take 1 point of fire damage.

**Burst Radius:** The area the explosive affects.

**Damage Type:** Damage is classified according to type: energy (of a specific type) or slashing. All explosives but a Molotov cocktail

threaten a critical on a 20 and deal double damage on a confirmed critical.

**Reflex DC:** Any creature caught within the burst radius may make a Reflex save against the listed DC for half damage.

**Range Increment:** Explosives with no range increment must be set in place before being detonated.

- **Plastique:** Each additional block increases the damage by +2d6 (maximum 10d6) and the burst radius by 10 feet (maximum 20 feet).

On a successful Demolitions check (see Chapter Nine), you can increase the damage or the burst radius by 50% (your choice) by wiring together several blocks of plastique (DC 10 + 1 per block).

Plastique can only be detonated electronically, either with a timed electronic detonator or a remote detonator. Timed detonators can be set to explode within a few seconds to as long as 24 hours. Remote detonators have a range of one mile.

- **Grenade, concussion:** Often used for crowd control, this device deals nonlethal force damage to all living targets within the blast radius (DC 15 Reflex save halves damage).

- **Grenade, fragmentation:** A small explosive device that detonates shrapnel within the area of effect.

- **Grenade, smoke:** Smoke fills the coverage area, obscuring all sight and giving total concealment to anyone within. Smoke grenades are also used as signal devices, with smoke coming in various colors.

- **Grenade, tear gas:** A cloud of irritant causes a target’s eyes to fill with tears; a DC 15 Fortitude save is required to avoid being nauseated. This lasts for 1d6 rounds after leaving the cloud. Even if successful, a save is required each round the target remains in the cloud. Wearing a gas mask negates the effect. A wet cloth held over the eyes, nose and mouth provides a +2 bonus on the Fortitude save.

- **Molotov cocktail:** You can make this improvised weapon with a DC 10 Craft (chemical) check or DC 15 Intelligence check. It detonates in 2 rounds or on impact with a solid object, whichever comes first. A target that takes a direct hit suffers an additional 1d6 points of fire damage in the following round and risks catching on fire.

## Armor

Typical armor available in the Unity Era is made of lightweight polymer or organic carapace. Whether hard- or biotech, armor protects the wearer in the same way.

While armor offers handy defense against getting hurt, it is impractical to wear every minute of the day and night. There are also social and legal implications to wearing armor in certain environments — you can be arrested for wearing heavy armor without a license on the upper levels of Luna. Not even Legionnaire Avengers or FSM Marines are decked out in full combat gear every minute of the day. Instead, most armor is donned only when individuals plan on encountering danger. Ultimately, the amount of armor that you wear doesn’t matter. If someone really wants to hurt you, he’ll find a way.

See Table 13–4: Armor for representative armor. Listings include the following information.

**Type:** The type of armor. “Light” can be concealed under — or designed to look like — normal clothing; “medium” offers reasonable protection with little restriction; “heavy” provides significant protection at the cost of some flexibility. Medium and

Table 13–3: Explosives

## Grenades and Explosives

| Weapon                         | Damage           | Damage Type | Burst Radius | Reflex DC | Range Increment | Size  | Weight | Cost            |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|-------|--------|-----------------|
| Plastique                      | 2d6              | Force       | 5 ft.        | 15        | 10 ft.          | Tiny  | 1 lb.  | 12 <sup>1</sup> |
| Grenade, concussion            | 4d6 <sup>2</sup> | Force       | 10 ft.       | 15        | 10 ft.          | Tiny  | 1 lb.  | 15 <sup>3</sup> |
| Grenade, fragmentation         | 4d6              | Slashing    | 20 ft.       | 15        | 10 ft.          | Tiny  | 1 lb.  | 15 <sup>3</sup> |
| Grenade, smoke <sup>4</sup>    | —                | —           | See text     | —         | 10 ft.          | Small | 2 lb.  | 10 <sup>3</sup> |
| Grenade, tear gas <sup>4</sup> | See text         | —           | See text     | —         | 10 ft.          | Small | 2 lb.  | 12 <sup>3</sup> |
| Molotov cocktail               | 1d6              | Fire        | 5            | —         | 10 ft.          | Small | 1 lb.  | 6 <sup>5</sup>  |

<sup>1</sup>The purchase DC is for a single 1-lb. block. Restricted availability through law enforcement or military; add +4 to the cost if purchased through the black market.

<sup>2</sup>The damage is nonlethal.

<sup>3</sup>The purchase DC is for a box of 6. Restricted availability through law enforcement or military; add +4 to the cost if purchased through the black market.

<sup>4</sup>A cloud fills the four squares around it on the round it is thrown. This spreads to all squares within 10 feet on the next round, and to all squares within 15 feet on the third round. It disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses it in 4 rounds and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses it in 1 round.

<sup>5</sup>The purchase DC is for the weapon's components.

heavy armor is too bulky to disguise as anything other than what it is. Armor bonuses from multiple layers do not stack.

**AC Bonus:** The armor's protective value, added as an armor bonus to your Armor Class.

**Nonprof. Bonus:** The maximum AC bonus you can apply if you're wearing armor that you're not proficient in.

**Max. Dex Bonus:** The maximum Dexterity bonus you can apply to your AC when wearing the armor.

**Armor Penalty:** This penalty applies on checks involving Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Swim and Tumble.

**Speed:** Your speed while in this armor.

**Weight:** The armor's weight.

**Tech:** The armor's technology type, designated with a "Ω" for hardtech and a "Ψ" for biotech.

**FT:** The armor's formatted tolerance rating (standard biotech has TR 0; unformatted biotech has TR 1).

**Cost:** The base purchase DC to acquire the armor.

• **Bioweave:** Created from connective tissue and modified spider silk, this piece of psiware fits against your body like a second skin — even shaping tiny holes for your hair to grow through. Its

pigmentation matches your own once formatted, disguising it from detection by all but close examination (DC 20 Spot check). Donning or removing bioweave takes 3 full rounds (you must spend 1 round pinching the psiware at the base of your neck for it to relax for removal or bond to you for use); the psiware rolls into a baseball-sized bundle for storage. Bioweave must be formatted prior to use. Bioweave gets nutrients from your body through connected microfibrils or by soaking in a nutrient solution.

• **Carapace:** Also known as a "beetle" or "bug suit," this inert biotech armor is comparable in quality to a hardtech combat suit, though lighter and more flexible.

• **Combat Suit:** Full-body, hard-shell combat gear seen most often on advanced tactical soldiers and police forces. Unavailable to commercial markets.

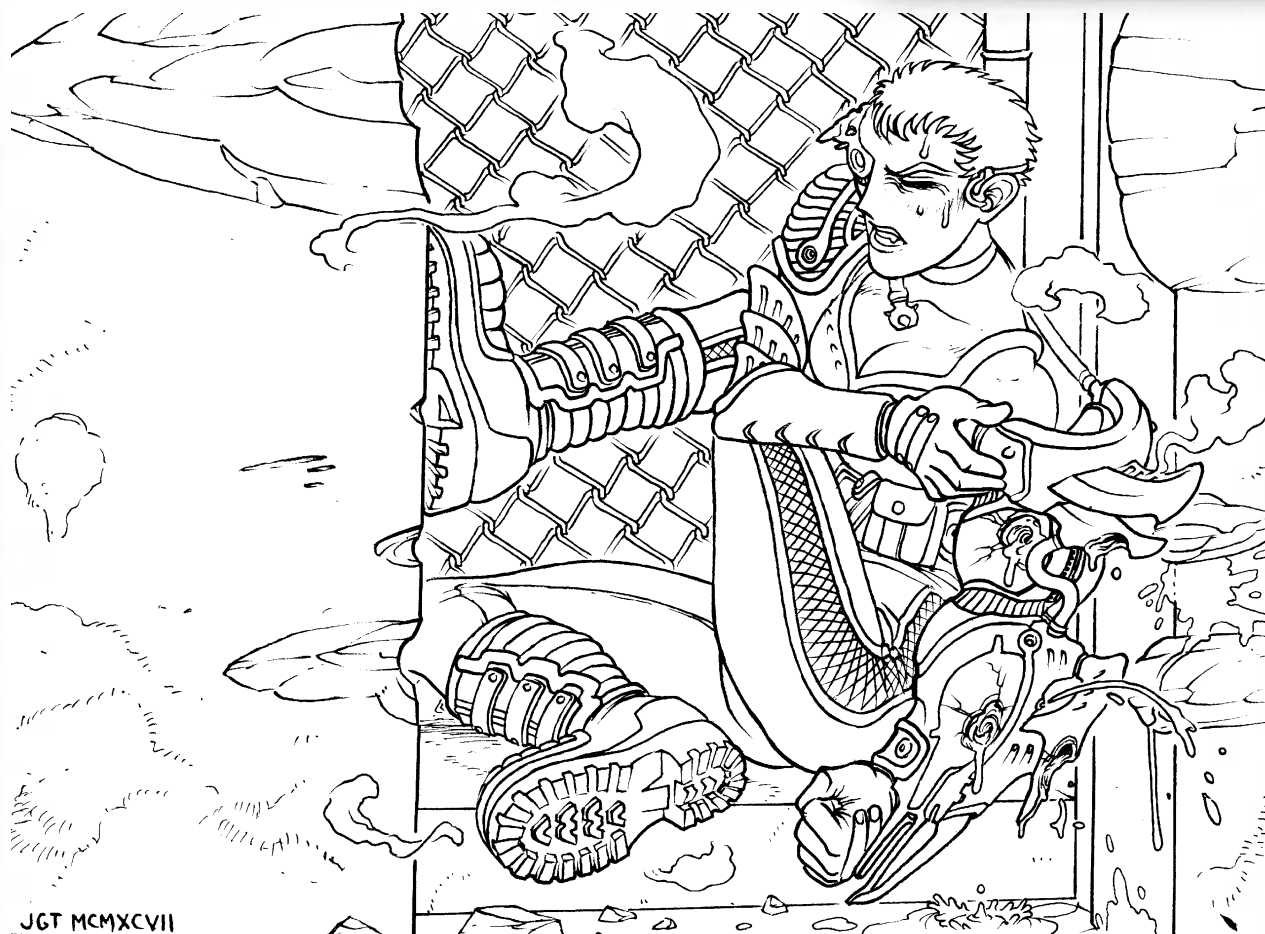
• **Fiberweave:** A polymer or organic weave lining added to normal clothing. The armor adds little mass, and tough fibers offer moderate protection.

• **Field Suit:** A lighter version of a combat suit, made of monofiber weave and ceramic inserts.

• **Vacsuit:** The vacuum suit is a lightweight but durable full-body garment that sees ubiquitous use in space. Designs vary, but all offer a self-contained 14-hour air supply; emergency beacon;

Table 13–4: Armor

| Name                | Armor Bonus | Nonprof. Bonus | Max. Dex Bonus | Armor Penalty | Speed  | Weight | Tech | FT  | Cost |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------|--------|------|-----|------|
| <b>Light Armor</b>  |             |                |                |               |        |        |      |     |      |
| Bioweave            | +5          | +2             | +6             | –0            | 30 ft. | 2 lb.  | Ψ    | 3   | 25   |
| Fiberweave          | +1          | +1             | +7             | –0            | 30 ft. | 1 lb.  | Ω/Ψ  | —   | 8    |
| Vest                | +2          | +1             | +5             | –0            | 30 ft. | 3 lb.  | Ω/Ψ  | —   | 9    |
| <b>Medium Armor</b> |             |                |                |               |        |        |      |     |      |
| Field suit          | +3          | +1             | +5             | –1            | 30 ft. | 4 lb.  | Ω/Ψ  | —   | 14   |
| Vacsuit             | +2          | +1             | +3             | –1            | 30 ft. | 3 lb.  | Ω/Ψ  | —   | 10   |
| <b>Heavy Armor</b>  |             |                |                |               |        |        |      |     |      |
| Carapace            | +5          | +2             | +3             | –2            | 20 ft. | 6 lb.  | Ψ    | —   | 20   |
| Combat suit         | +6          | +1             | +2             | –3            | 20 ft. | 15 lb. | Ω    | —   | 18   |
| VARG                | +9          | +3             | +1             | –7            | 15 ft. | 50 lb. | Ω/Ψ  | —/4 | 28   |



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resistance to radiation 15; and protection against explosive decompression and other hazards of vacuum.

- **Vest:** A monofiber vest with small ceramic plates.

- **Vacuum Assault and Reconnaissance Gear (VARG):** The term “VARG” has come to refer to all manner of powered armor, from basic reinforced vacsuits to the massive deep space “mecha” glorified in entertainment media. The listed version is a form-fitting, if bulky, armor suit with an internal air tank and pressurized system that provides air for up to 6 hours, protects against vacuum and provides resistance 20 against radiation, biological and chemical emissions. The plating covers an integral musculature which gives you a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength. A small jetpack and maneuvering thrusters provide mobility in zero-g.

VARGs are available in hardtech and biotech models. A formatted bioVARG increases the maximum Dexterity bonus to +3 and reduces the armor penalty to -4.

For more extensive VARG options, see *d20 Future*, Chapter 9: Mecha (just substitute the term “VARG” for “mecha” where appropriate).

## Equipment

The 22nd century offers all manner of equipment, from neo-deco clothing to ultra-sleek minicoms. You can find most anything you want, it just depends on how far you’re willing to travel — and how much you’re willing to pay — to get it. Some sample items are listed in Table 13–5: Psiware Enhancers, Table 13–6: Electronics and Table 13–7: General Equipment; refer to *d20 Modern* (Chapter 4) and *d20 Future* (Chapter 3) for more options.

Table 13–5: Psiware Enhancers

| Object     | Weight    | Tech | FT | Cost           |
|------------|-----------|------|----|----------------|
| ARES shell | 4,000 lb. | Ψ    | 3  | — <sup>1</sup> |
| IA relay   | —         | Ψ    | 2  | 12             |
| MARS suit  | 20 lb.    | Ψ    | 3  | 25             |
| MISI       | 1 lb.     | Ψ    | 3  | 26             |

<sup>1</sup>Not available commercially.

## Psiware Enhancers

Psiware covers “living” biotech that requires formatting to function. Also called augmentation devices, enhancers or boosters, this category of psiware expands the facility with which you use your powers — it does not endow you with new capabilities, however. An enhancer must be formatted to you to provide the listed benefits.

- **ARES shell:** The Astronomical Range Enhancement Sensor (ARES) shell is a green, ovoid shell large enough to hold a single adult human. It sustains itself through photosynthesis and nutrient packs. The ARES works in concert with a MARS suit to enhance clairsentience powers for effective interstellar jump ship travel. You enter it wearing a MARS suit, which emits the required code to seal the ARES and fill its interior with an organic suspension fluid to create an advanced sensory deprivation tank. This links your sensory capabilities with that of the ship the ARES is connected to. An emergency override can be triggered from inside or outside the ARES to disgorge the occupant, although it does not open if it registers a hostile environment (e.g., laser fire, explosive decompression).

While wearing a MARS suit inside an ARES shell, the range and duration of your psychonavigation and telesthesia powers are multiplied by 10.

- **IA relay:** An interface augmentation relay increases by 100% the range of all electrokinesis powers, except those with a range of personal or touch. The psiware is produced in variations of a clamshell design that clips over your ear for use. The power's cost increases by 1 power point each time the relay is used.

- **MARS suit:** The Magnified Attunement and Resonant Sensor (MARS) is a skin-tight bodysuit that forms a three-dimensional network of enhancement points throughout your noetic aura. This provides a +4 bonus to your Psi score for determining *astrolocation*, *dowsing* and *orientation* effects. A MARS also confers the benefits of a vacsuit.

- **MISI:** The Memory Impulse Survey Instrument (MISI), more commonly known as a "mind scanner," is actually a pair of black rings fitted with telepathic enhancement biotech. One is placed on the target's head, while you wear the other. The psiware increases your effective character level by 3 for every additional power point you spend on mindshare effects applied to the target.

## Electronics

The post-Aberrant War Crash brought the headlong advancement of technology to a screeching halt. As a result, many areas of technology in the Unity Age are scarcely more advanced than in our own modern times. Feel free to draw from *d20 Future* if you want to push things further than what's listed here.

### Technology and Saving Throws

Objects are not normally allowed saving throws unless attended by a character (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 9, "Smashing an Object"). A psiware device, being alive, is allowed a save, but its base save bonuses are always +0 (unless increased through the Devices background or some other extraordinary manner). Formatted psiware devices are always allowed a save using the owner's save bonuses. A device with a security rating always gets a saving throw against electrokinetic intrusion or control, but not against physical effects. Such an object has a Fortitude, Reflex and Will save bonus equal to twice its security rating — so, a minicomp with security rating 2 (average) gains a +4 bonus on its saves.

At the GM's option, items made from olaminium receive a +2 Fortitude save bonus when allowed a save, while objects of orbital manufacture receive a +1 on all saves.

## Computers and Peripherals

- **Application:** A software program that emulates a specific Intelligence- or Wisdom-based skill. The bonus is applied as a competence bonus on any checks made with the relevant skill.

- **Cellular service:** Also called a cell link, this is required for connection to cellular transmission networks.

- **Computer agent:** A key element of any computer is its agent, the interface between the user and the computer. Every computer agent interacts in text and voice formats, although holo or screen projection may be limited. An agent can be anything from a simple, emotionless drone to a fully intuitive, dynamic character construct.

Each agent has an artificial Intelligence bonus which indicates its processing power and analytical capability, and may also have a bonus with certain skills. You can direct an agent to perform a task

with any Intelligence- and/or Wisdom-based skill that can be used untrained or with any skill in which it has a bonus, at the GM's discretion (substituting its artificial Intelligence bonus for a Wisdom bonus as appropriate). This works the same way as if you perform the task yourself, except that the agent uses your minicomp (and any other system resources to which it might be connected, either directly or via the OpNet) to perform the task without your direct involvement. The agent can assist you in performing a task also; simply add the agent's relevant skill bonus to your check result.

**Alchemy "Genie":** This advanced agent is designed to be highly responsive to user needs, and can adapt easily to different users. The Genie has no set projection; it has an image-projection template and tutorial that enables multiple users to design the icon however each prefers. Int +5; Knowledge (business) +2, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences: geography) +1, Knowledge (physical sciences) +4, Research +3, Speak Language (2 slots).

**Alpha Software "Chris":** This popular computer agent projects up to a full-body visual, coded to assume either gender. The default personality can be aggressive but it adapts to become quite responsive to the user's needs. Urban legend is rife with stories of people falling in love with the Chris agent. Int +2; Knowledge (art) +1, Knowledge (business) +2, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences: geography) +1, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Research +2, Speak Language (3 slots).

**Apoderado "Estelle":** This popular head-only projection agent is also called "Evita" due to its resemblance to the historic figure. The agent is considered somewhat obsequious, despite an ability to adapt and anticipate the user's needs. Int +1; Knowledge (business) +1, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Research +1, Speak Language (2 slots).

**DataWarp "Friday":** This highly responsive agent is popular among government functionaries but finds little acceptance on the open market, presumably due to its fawning yet brusque manner. Friday can project a full-body visual of a smartly dressed politico of the user's choice. Int +3; Diplomacy +1, Knowledge (business) +3, Knowledge (civics) +2, Knowledge (current events) +2, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences: geography) +1, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Research +2, Speak Language (3 slots).

**DataWarp "Patton":** One of the first of the "new-era" designs, this agent still finds extensive use throughout military organizations. While the projection is of a 20th-century American general, Patton has extensive data on every major military mind and tactical analysis of the past three centuries. Int +2; Knowledge (civics) +1, Knowledge (current events) +1, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences: geography) +3, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Research +1, Speak Language (3 slots).

**Orchidware "Bill" v.5.0:** An efficient businessperson's agent, Bill projects as a head-only visual. The v.5.0 has a strong ability to anticipate information needs, but its personality remains cool and professional. Int +3; Knowledge (business) +4, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Research +1, Speak Language (2 slots).

**Orgotek "Hare":** This agent is designed for user ease foremost. Its default projection is an animated rabbit that gives a diverting performance of the task given (e.g., digging recklessly through a file cabinet for research, dashing around a globe to find a geographic point). This subroutine can be replaced by less animated processes for those who just want to get the job done. Int +5; Knowledge (business) +2, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences: geography) +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Research +4, Speak Language (2 slots).

Table 13–6: Electronics

| Object                           | Weight    | Tech | FT | Cost            |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------|----|-----------------|
| <i>Computers and Peripherals</i> |           |      |    |                 |
| <i>Application</i>               |           |      |    |                 |
| Basic (+1)                       | —         | Ω    | —  | 5               |
| Advanced (+2)                    | —         | Ω    | —  | 6               |
| Professional (+3)                | —         | Ω    | —  | 7               |
| Expert (+4)                      | —         | Ω    | —  | 8               |
| <i>Cellular service</i>          |           |      |    |                 |
| monthly service                  | —         | Ω    | —  | 17              |
| single call                      | —         | Ω    | —  | 8               |
| uplink installation              | —         | Ω    | —  | 12              |
| <i>Computer agent</i>            |           |      |    |                 |
| Alchemy “Genie”                  | —         | Ψ    | —  | 20              |
| Alpha Software “Chris”           | —         | Ω    | —  | 15              |
| Apoderado “Estelle”              | —         | Ω    | —  | 13              |
| DataWarp “Friday”                | —         | Ω    | —  | 18              |
| DataWarp “Patton”                | —         | Ω    | —  | 20 <sup>1</sup> |
| Orchidware “Bill” v.5.0          | —         | Ω    | —  | 13              |
| Orgotek “Hare”                   | —         | Ψ    | —  | 20              |
| Wazukana “C–Tech”                | —         | Ω    | —  | 17              |
| Wazukana “E–Tech”                | —         | Ω    | —  | 17              |
| Wazukana “Lt. Bushido”           | —         | Ω    | —  | 19 <sup>1</sup> |
| Wazukana personal assistant      | —         | Ω    | —  | 3               |
| Data disk (box of 10)            | —         | Ω    | —  | 3               |
| Datapad                          | 0.5 lb.   | Ω    | —  | 9               |
| HUDset                           | 1 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 10              |
| Keyboard                         | 0.5 lb.   | Ω    | —  | 8               |
| <i>Medcomp</i>                   |           |      |    |                 |
| Wazukana MedX I Medkit           | 5 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 5               |
| Wazukana MedX II Fieldkit        | 25 lb.    | Ω    | —  | 20              |
| Wazukana Medstation              | 200 lb.   | Ω    | —  | 27              |
| <i>Minicomp</i>                  |           |      |    |                 |
| Alchemy BiC–20                   | 2 lb.     | Ψ    | 1  | 19              |
| Orgotek Tortoise                 | 3 lb.     | Ψ    | 1  | 21              |
| Steinhardt VirtuX                | 3 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 7               |
| Steinhardt MI–AC II              | 3 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 21              |
| Steinhardt MI–CC                 | 3 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 22              |
| Steinhardt P–CC                  | 3 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 15              |
| Wazukana 300E                    | 2 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 7               |
| Wazukana DX70                    | 4 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 15              |
| Wazukana DX70–L                  | 4 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 21              |
| Sound pack                       | 1 lb.     | Ω    | —  | 10              |
| Splitter                         | —         | Ω    | —  | 6               |
| <i>Other Electronics</i>         |           |      |    |                 |
| A/V recording device             | —         | Ω    | —  | 7               |
| Beacon                           | —         | Ω    | —  | 3               |
| <i>Charger</i>                   |           |      |    |                 |
| single cell                      | 1 lb.     | Ψ    | —  | 4               |
| generator                        | 20 lb.    | Ψ    | —  | 10              |
| Datatap                          | —         | Ω    | —  | 18              |
| Electronics sniffer              | 0.5 lb.   | Ω    | —  | 13              |
| Holovision set                   | 30 lb.    | Ω    | —  | 18              |
| Somatic imaging system           | 1,000 lb. | Ψ    | —  | 30              |
| Static generator                 | 0.5 lb.   | Ω    | —  | 9               |
| <i>Vocoder</i>                   |           |      |    |                 |
| Basic (3 slots)                  | —         | Ω    | —  | 10              |
| Standard (5 slots)               | —         | Ω    | —  | 11              |
| Deluxe (8 slots)                 | —         | Ω    | —  | 13              |
| Ultra (14 slots)                 | —         | Ω    | —  | 15              |
| add-on (1 language group)        | —         | Ω    | —  | 6               |

<sup>1</sup> Restricted availability through law enforcement or military; add +4 to the cost if purchased through the black market.

**Wazukana "C-Tech":** This agent assists with computer engineering for the casual or beginning engineering student. Int +3; Computer Use +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Repair +2, Research +2, Speak Language (3 slots).

**Wazukana "E-Tech":** This agent is like the C-Tech, but geared toward the casual or beginning mechanic. Int +3; Craft (electronics) +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Repair +2, Research +2, Speak Language (3 slots).

**Wazukana "Lt. Bushido":** One of the most reliable law-enforcement agents available, Lt. Bushido is coded with standard law-enforcement techniques for every major nation. The agent has up to a full-body projection of a Nihonjin male (the uniform adjusts for the nation being referenced). Int +4; Knowledge (behavioral sciences) +4, Knowledge (civics) +4, Knowledge (current events) +1, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences: geography) +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +1, Knowledge (tactics) +3, Research +1, Speak Language (4 slots).

**Wazukana Personal Assistant:** The "PA" is a basic avatar lacking visual projection. It speaks in a male voice with a Nihonjin accent, no matter what language is coded into the system. Int +2; Knowledge (business) +1, Knowledge (physical sciences) +2, Research +1, Speak Language (1 slot).

- **Data disk:** A disk is an orbital data crystal contained in a matte-white case roughly the size of a single stick of gum. Storage capacity is 1.3 blocs. Since data storage and retrieval uses laser transmission, data cannot be wiped magnetically.

- **Datapad:** The d-pad is a no-frills "electronic clipboard" — a minicomp containing set files (questionnaires, legal or test forms, checklists). It has one SIO, slaved via hard line or infra-red beam to a minicomp or network. The information entered on a datapad is downloaded easily to the main system's database.

- **HUDset:** This device consists of translucent goggles on which information is displayed, an earpiece and a subvocal throat microphone. Useful for maintaining privacy in public places or where normal holographic display is inappropriate.

- **Keyboard:** For people who can type faster than they can talk. The standard keyboard unrolls from an internal storage port and becomes rigid for use.

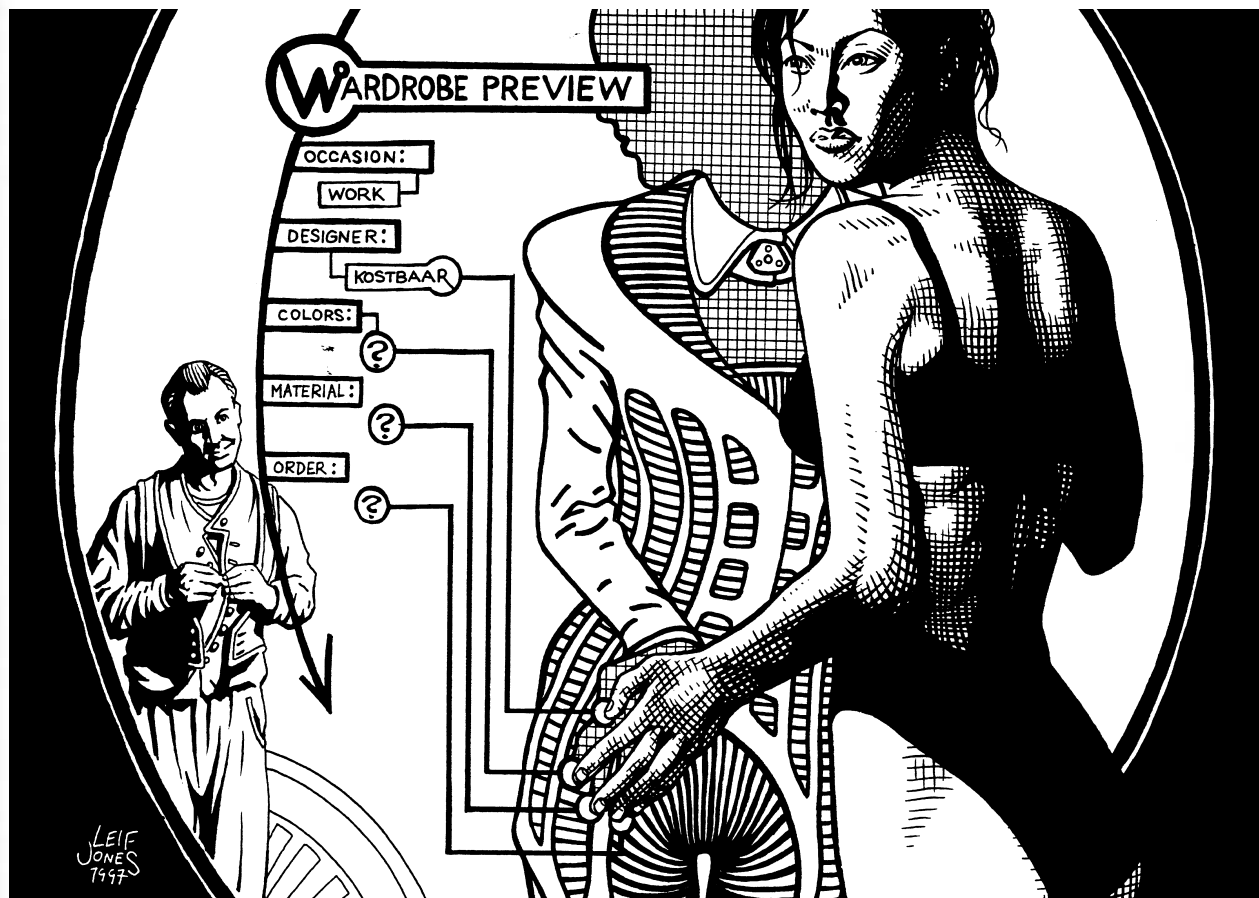
- **Medcomp:** A medical computer geared specifically for first aid and even surgical techniques. The medcomp's on-board agent is programmed to make diagnosis and can support basic surgical procedures. Diagnosis can be performed independently, but it only supports actual medical or surgical tasks.

**Wazukana MedX I Portable Medical Kit (Medkit):** The medkit is basically a minicomp with additional first-aid gear. Int +2; Craft (pharmaceuticals) +2, Heal +2.

**Wazukana MedX II Field Medical Kit (Fieldkit):** The fieldkit, roughly the size of a large suitcase, is common to ambulances, spacecraft and small infirmaries. The MedX II has first-aid gear, bandages and a small supply of drugs, as well as a specialized agent to assist in diagnosis and treatment. Int +4; Craft (pharmaceuticals) +4, Heal +2.

**Wazukana Medstation III:** A semirobotic non-portable doctor's assistant, shaped much like a big fireplug, installed in clinics, hospitals and on large spacecraft. The Medstation III is fully equipped with first-aid gear, bandages, sedatives, stimulants, manipulator arms and a specialized agent which can attempt treatment if no doctor is present (the Medstation always takes 10 or 20 if circumstances allow). Int +5; Craft (pharmaceuticals) +4, Heal +4; Surgery feat.

- **Minicomp:** The personal computer (or "minicomp") of the 22nd century is truly personal in most cases — a portable device the size of a paperback book that is typically clipped to a user's



belt or strapped to a forearm. It serves as a daily planner, accounting system, phone book, atlas, thesaurus, personal entertainment center and workstation.

The minicomp has an inset microphone, a disk-reader and a camera in its top surface; it also has three SIO (Standard Input/Output) jacks with 3-foot-long, extending optical cables; a retractable roll-out screen for flat projection; a factory-equipped basic computer agent, and room for up to three additional hardware add-ons. It has a 50-bloc-data-storage capacity (one bloc can hold the entire text of a major library, or thousands of hours of video). The fully-interactive operating system (FIOS) takes up a third of this storage space, with add-on applications eating up remaining room with terabytes worth of programming. On a practical level, the enhanced holographic and interactive capability of 22nd-century computers is not too different from state-of-the-art systems in use today.

**Alchemy BiC-20:** A biotech-designed computer with a hardtech casing, this new minicomp has proven a competitive choice in the market. Security rating 4.

**Orgotek Tortoise:** This "biocomp" is at least as fast and reliable as any computer on the market, and is equipped with an extruded casing engineered from turtle DNA for a pleasant, pebbly exterior. Security rating 5.

**Steinhardt VirtuX:** The VirtuX has an angular, boxlike design for the utilitarian-minded. It runs a close second to the 300E in the market. Security rating 2.

**Steinhardt MI-AC II:** This minicomp has a durable shell (hardness 4), cellular link, locator beacon and Friday computer agent. It is popular among diplomats, government agents and corporate heads alike. Security rating 3.

**Steinhardt MI-CC:** The military-issue minicomp is equipped with a durable ceramic-polymer shell (hardness 4), cellular link, locator beacon and Patton military agent. Security rating 3.

**Steinhardt P-CC:** The popularity of the MI-CC gave rise to this civilian version, which lacks only the cell link and Patton agent. Security rating 2.

**Wazukana 300E:** The most popular minicomp on the market, made in a fetching neo-deco ovoid design and available in a variety of colors. Security rating 1.

**Wazukana DX70:** The DX70 is designed for rugged use, complete with an airtight plasteel shell (hardness 3). Security rating 2.

**Wazukana DX70-L:** The law-enforcement version of the DX70 comes with an emergency beacon and the Lt. Bushido agent. Security rating 3.

- **Sound Pack:** Includes an IR/UV laser microphone and a parabolic microphone.

- **Splitter:** Plugged into an SIO port, this small connector gives 3 SIO connector ports.

## Other Electronics

Listed electronic equipment has a SIO port for computer interface, and runs for two years on internal batteries, given normal use.

- **A/V recording device:** Also called a "bug," this combination camera-microphone can be as small as a pinhead. A bug can transmit through a ground line or via wireless transmission — though the latter has the danger of detection by scanners or electrokinesis powers.

- **Beacon:** The small device transmits a locator signal, used often for emergencies.

- **Charger:** This biotech solar and thermal energy collector has battery ports in the base and a flowerlike "pod" at the top

## Transmissions

"Ground" lines, whether to a phone in your apartment or to a local OpNet node, utilize optical cables as they have for a century-and-a-half. Cellular and radio transmissions, also known as "cell" lines, have not changed in function, but their availability is restricted. Service fees to start up and maintain a cellular link range from exorbitant to criminal, but it's hard to deny the advantage that portable communication has over ground lines.

Still, cell lines do have practical limitations. A transmission's clarity and range may be hindered by buildings, hills, forests and other dense materials. A message sent into or across space can get lost due to the curvature of the planet, cosmic waves, solar flares and simply stronger transmissions. Then there are artificially generated barriers, such as frequency scrambling devices and electromagnetic pulses.

The GM may impose transmission penalties — or even state flat-out that a transmission can't get through — depending on the circumstances. It's just as hard to radio through miles of rock and orbital steel from the bowels of the crowded Pit as is to communicate from some remote Martian canyon.

which unfolds into energy collector panels. The energy stored can recharge hard- or biotech batteries, or act as a backup power supply. A generator can recharge up to 30 devices or 10 vehicle batteries at one time.

- **Datatap:** The "d-tap" has the storage capacity of a data disk. It fits around any standard optical cable and records all data-traffic passing through.

- **Electronics sniffer:** The favorite device of the privacy-conscious, this palm-sized detector alerts the user to any active electronic device within 90 feet.

- **Holovision set:** This multimedia entertainment unit is designed for home use, with a large holo- and flat-image projector and TIE (total immersive environment) speakers.

- **Somatic imaging system:** Utilizing photokinesis and clairsentience components, this biotech device can project a hologram of an organism's scanned internal structure. The subject slides into the 9-foot-long device on a slab; the scan takes about a minute. The system's biocomputer has a port for data disks onto which the holographic scan can be stored.

- **Static generator:** About the size of a deck of cards, this antibug device creates a localized static field that blocks transmissions into or out of the area (transmitting through a static generator requires a successful DC 25 Computer Use check). The field can be adjusted between a 5-foot and 30-foot radius.

- **Vocoder:** The vocal translator is an ear insert clip that contains between three and 20 language databases. Words spoken that match any of the languages the device stores are translated automatically into the wearer's language of choice. A vocoder gives you artificial ranks in Speak Language for hearing only; you do not gain the capacity to speak other languages.

A vocoder is programmed with the default language of your choice, plus additional free language groups at the time of purchase (2 for basic and standard, 4 for deluxe and ultra). You may install add-ons — additional language groups — up to the vocoder's limit of slots. Note that software for the Nihonjin language isn't available on the open market (+6 to cost on the black market).

Table 13-7: General Equipment

| Object                       | Weight  | Tech | FT | Cost |
|------------------------------|---------|------|----|------|
| <i>Miscellaneous Gear</i>    |         |      |    |      |
| AquaLung                     | 4 lb.   | Ψ    | —  | 10   |
| Biowelder                    | 1 lb.   | Ψ    | —  | 5    |
| Cryogenic vial<br>(set of 3) | —       | Ω    | —  | 3    |
| GPN pack                     | —       | Ψ    | —  | 3    |
| GPN ethanol nodule           | 0.5 lb. | Ψ    | —  | 3    |
| HemChem chip                 | —       | Ψ    | —  | 10   |
| Sticky pad<br>(box of 20)    | —       | Ω    | —  | 2    |
| Survival blanket             | 1 lb.   | Ψ    | 1  | 8    |
| Trauma foam<br>canister      | 1 lb.   | Ψ    | —  | 3    |
| <i>Clothing outfit</i>       |         |      |    |      |
| Business                     | 3 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 12   |
| Casual                       | 2 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 8    |
| Formal                       | 3 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 15   |
| Fatigues                     | 3 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 9    |
| Jacket                       | 2 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 8    |
| Overcoat                     | 3 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 9    |
| Uniform                      | 2 lb.   | Ω/Ψ  | —  | 9    |

## Miscellaneous Gear

• **AquaLung:** A clear biopolymer bubble fits over the user's head; attached to this is a small pack that unfurls long tendrils in water. The tendrils extract oxygen from the water and remove exhaled carbon dioxide from the bubble. Slow pressure applied to the bubble deforms and finally penetrates it, but the bubble maintains a perfect seal around the penetrating object, thereby allowing the user to eat and drink even while underwater. The AquaLung must rest, unused, 10 minutes for each hour that it processes air, up to a maximum 8 hour processing limit.

• **Biowelder:** This palm-sized device extrudes thousands of microscopic caterpillar-like "biobugs" that inject an organic polymer in fractures, effectively re-welding any cracks (+8 bonus on Repair checks for fixing structural damage). A biowelder cannot repair actual breaches (i.e., if the object falls to 0 hp). A single biowelder can repair structural damage in a 10-foot-radius area; it adheres when slapped against the targeted surface, falling off once all the biobugs are spent.

• **Cryogenic vial:** Also called a "cryal," this 2-inch-long vial is used to carry and store a biological sample. It sustains a refrigerated temperature for up to 6 months on a single dot battery.

• **GPN (Glucose-Protein Nutritional) or "glup" pack:** The fist-sized packet splits open like an oyster, revealing a green photosynthesis array that processes ambient water, carbon dioxide and its own nutrients. After 6 hours of operation, it produces enough bland yet nutritious paste to feed 2 grown people for a day. Once opened, a pack can generate paste for 3 weeks (an unused packet can be stored up to 2 years before the bio-organisms inside expire).

• **GPN ethanol module:** This attachment converts a glup pack's glucose to ethanol. Fruit flavor packs are also available.

• **HemChem (HemoChemistat) chip:** After being injected into the patient, this biochip affixes to a vein wall and monitors the patient's physiological condition (in a manner equivalent to the *Kirlian eye* power). A standard medical sensor can pick up a HemChem's data transmission.

• **"Sticky" pad (sterile trauma compress):** Each self-adhesive bandage is designed to improve the rate of healing and protect against infection. The pad enhances the recipient's rate of healing by 1 hit point per day and grants a +4 resistance bonus on Fortitude saves against infection. The effect of multiple sticky pads does not stack.

• **Survival blanket:** The blanket unrolls from a green ball 3 inches in diameter. It has a photosynthetic exterior which nourishes the blanket and provides the user with a comfortable regulated temperature inside. The blanket doubles the time between each Fortitude save the user must make in extreme temperatures (once per two hours in cold or hot weather, once per 20 minutes in severe cold or heat) and gives the user a +4 resistance bonus on each save.

If formatted, a blanket within 300 feet of the user can sense sudden fluctuations in her biorhythms (e.g., suffering sudden severe trauma, falling unconscious). The blanket then unrolls itself and crawls 20 feet per round like a caterpillar to the user; the blanket enfolds the user, creating an organic stasis chamber — the user is stabilized but is considered comatose until she heals to positive hit points. The blanket can maintain stasis up to 3 days, after which it expires and peels away from the user. The user can open the blanket at will if conscious, or an outside force can do so with a successful DC 15 Strength check.

A blanket that "rests" (rolled up) at least 10 hours each day lasts for 1 year.

• **Trauma foam canister:** The size of a beer bottle, this bio-organic canister emits a fast-hardening foam that covers up to a 1-foot radius; it can secure broken limbs and seal open wounds within 1 round. The foam immobilizes the portion of anatomy that it covers, stabilizing the subject immediately and doubling his rate of healing. The foam crumbles to inert powder after 1 day, but a new dose can be applied to the same area; multiple doses do not stack. A canister has 6 doses.

## Vehicles

Unless noted otherwise, all vehicles produced in the 22nd century are equipped with on-board computers, dedicated agents, global-positioning systems, emergency cellular uplinks, climate control and anti-theft systems. More sophisticated vehicles have computer-supported maneuvering systems.

Ground vehicles are powered by solar or electric batteries, with small solar backup batteries. A standard battery runs for up to 12 hours at continuous cruising speed or 4 hours at top speed before a recharge is required (a backup runs up to 1 hour). Recharge stations are as common in the Unity Age as fueling stations are in current times. It takes 20 minutes to bring a dead battery up to full charge (DC 2 Wealth check), or you can exchange a dead battery for a fully charged one (DC 5 Wealth check).

Air and space vehicles are powered by hyper-fusion reactors, giving them virtually unlimited range and flight capability. A reactor requires weekly maintenance to keep it in prime working condition. The GM should feel free to degrade a craft's performance if you don't make an effort to keep your vehicle running properly.

## Biotech Vehicles

Virtually all biotech vehicles use hardtech engines and suspension. Human-made, bio-organic power systems are still inferior to hyper-fusion or even to large solar batteries. Secondary systems and on-board computers are often bio-organic and interface with hardtech; the biotech systems create a more responsive vehicle

overall than an equivalent hardtech vehicle. A biotech vehicle's exterior composition (though not necessarily appearance) is much like that of a crab: lightweight, solid and resilient.

Formatting a biotech vehicle integrates pilot and craft into seamless unity. You are connected directly with the vehicle's maneuvering capability — motion, velocity, turning and orientation all become instinctual, granting you a +4 bonus on both initiative checks and Drive and Pilot checks with the formatted vehicle, in addition to the normal initiative and handling scores of the vehicle.

## Vehicle Types

Vehicles have a simple set of statistics that define everything from how well they handle to how tough they are, as noted in Table 13–8. General vehicle categories are covered below.

**Crew:** The standard number of crew. Only one person is needed to drive in most cases; other crew members serve as gunners or copilots.

**Pas. (Passengers):** The number of passengers (in addition to the crew) the vehicle is designed to carry. Passenger vehicles with unused passenger space can carry an additional 100 pounds of cargo per slot.

**Cargo (Cargo Capacity):** The amount of cargo the vehicle is designed to carry. Passengers may occupy cargo space, but this is often a cramped, uncomfortable, and even unsafe experience. One additional passenger can be carried for each 250 pounds of unused cargo capacity.

**Init. (Initiative):** The modifier added to the driver's or pilot's initiative check when operating the vehicle.

**Hand. (Handling):** The modifier applied on any Drive or Pilot checks attempted with the vehicle.

**Speed:** The distance the vehicle can move in 1 round.

**MPH:** The vehicle's cruising and maximum speed, separated by a slash.

**AC (Armor Class):** The vehicle's Armor Class.

**Hard. (Hardness):** The vehicle's hardness. Subtract this number from any damage dealt to the vehicle.

**HP (Hit Points):** The vehicle's full normal hit points.

**Size:** Vehicle size categories are defined differently from the size categories for weapons and other objects.

**Tech:** Whether the vehicle is hardtech ( $\Omega$ ) or biotech ( $\Psi$ ).

**FT:** The vehicle's formatted tolerance.

**Cost:** The Purchase DC to buy the vehicle.

- **Aircraft:** The skies of human civilization buzz with passenger and cargo aircraft, ranging from helicopters to propeller and jet-driven aircraft, to the extremely fast suborbital hyperjets. A military aircraft has two slots for forward-mounted vehicle weapons and two missile rack slots.

- **Hover vehicle:** Also called skimmers, hover vehicles are advanced skirtless hovercraft. An assault skimmer has a single slot for a turret-mounted vehicle weapon.

- **Maglev vehicle:** Designed much like a skimmer, the magnetic levitation vehicle runs more quietly — although only along conductor-laced roadways (which only well-maintained urban areas can usually afford to install).



Table 13–8: Vehicles

| Vehicle                                                                                          | Crew | Pas. | Cargo    | Init.             | Hand.              | Speed                        | MPH                              | AC                | Hard.            | HP | Size | Tech | FT | Cost               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|----|------|------|----|--------------------|
| <b>Wheeled Vehicles</b>                                                                          |      |      |          |                   |                    |                              |                                  |                   |                  |    |      |      |    |                    |
| Car, sedan<br>( <i>Mashindano Sentry, Porter-Andersen Zenith</i> )                               | 1    | 4    | 200 lb.  | –2                | +0                 | 700 ft.                      | 80/125                           | 8                 | 5                | 35 | L    | Ω    | —  | 25                 |
| Motorcycle<br>( <i>Davidson-Wheeler American, Mashindano Scout</i> )                             | 1    | 1    | 100 lb.  | 0                 | +2                 | 970 ft.                      | 110/195                          | 9                 | 5                | 20 | M    | Ω    | —  | 18                 |
| Truck,<br>pick-up<br>( <i>Concurso MH–1 Hauler, Porter-Anderson 420</i> )                        | 1    | 2    | 1000 lb. | –3                | –1                 | 500 ft.                      | 75/120                           | 6                 | 5                | 38 | L    | Ω    | —  | 23                 |
| Truck, panel<br>( <i>Mashindano Kuchuka Bronto</i> )                                             | 1    | 2    | 4000 lb. | –4                | –4                 | 400 ft.                      | 75/100                           | 6                 | 5                | 54 | H    | Ω    | —  | 28                 |
| <b>Hover Vehicles</b>                                                                            |      |      |          |                   |                    |                              |                                  |                   |                  |    |      |      |    |                    |
| Skimmer,<br>coupe<br>( <i>Banji Zephyr, Reed Rosen Coupe</i> )                                   | 1    | 1    | 100 lb.  | +1                | +1                 | 600                          | 75/130                           | 9                 | 5                | 25 | L    | Ω    | —  | 30                 |
| Skimmer,<br>hovercycle<br>( <i>Orgotek Hummingbird, Reed Rosen Tsunami, Shendai LightRider</i> ) | 1    | 1    | 25 lb.   | +2                | +4                 | 750 ft.                      | 85/130                           | 9                 | 5                | 23 | L    | Ω/Ψ  | 2  | 27                 |
| Skimmer,<br>sedan<br>( <i>Reed Rosen Brougham, Shendai AirFoil</i> )                             | 1    | 4    | 300 lb.  | +0                | +1                 | 500                          | 70/120                           | 9/11 <sup>2</sup> | 5/8 <sup>2</sup> | 25 | L    | Ω    | —  | 30/36 <sup>2</sup> |
| <b>Miscellaneous Vehicles</b>                                                                    |      |      |          |                   |                    |                              |                                  |                   |                  |    |      |      |    |                    |
| Maglev, sedan<br>( <i>Porter Andersen Checker</i> )                                              | 1    | 3    | 400 lb.  | –1                | +0                 | 425 ft.                      | 50/100                           | 9                 | 5                | 32 | L    | Ω    | —  | 25                 |
| Track,<br>land rover<br>( <i>Mashindano Rover</i> )                                              | 1    | 1    | 1500 lb. | –2                | –4                 | 175 ft.                      | 55/100                           | 8                 | 5                | 40 | H    | Ω    | —  | 20                 |
| Skimmer/<br>crawler<br>( <i>Orgotek Cicada ATV</i> )                                             | 2    | 6    | 3500 lb. | 0/–2 <sup>3</sup> | –2/–4 <sup>3</sup> | 200/<br>100 ft. <sup>3</sup> | (70/110)<br>(60/95) <sup>3</sup> | 8                 | 5                | 40 | H    | Ψ    | 2  | 26                 |
| Crawler<br>( <i>Orgotek Mantis CL</i> )                                                          | 1    | 1    | 5000 lb. | +1                | +2                 | 60 ft.                       | 30/50                            | 9                 | 6                | 25 | L    | Ψ    | 2  | 20                 |
| <b>Air Vehicles</b>                                                                              |      |      |          |                   |                    |                              |                                  |                   |                  |    |      |      |    |                    |
| Airplane,<br>small passenger<br>( <i>Banji Condor, L–B 27K</i> )                                 | 2    | 10   | 2 tons   | –4                | –4                 | 1,500 ft.                    | 250/450                          | 6                 | 5                | 68 | G    | Ω    | —  | 35                 |
| Hyperjet<br>( <i>Banji Cirrus, L–B 878 Ionoliner</i> )                                           | 3    | 200  | 25 tons  | –4                | –4                 | 2,000 ft.                    | 3,500/<br>4,200                  | 15                | 10               | 70 | C    | Ω    | —  | 45                 |
| <b>Military/Restricted Vehicles</b>                                                              |      |      |          |                   |                    |                              |                                  |                   |                  |    |      |      |    |                    |
| Wheeled APC<br>( <i>ClinTech Morris APC</i> )                                                    | 3    | 20   | 250 lb.  | –2                | –2                 | 150 ft.                      | 30/70                            | 11                | 9                | 45 | H    | Ω    | —  | n/a <sup>1</sup>   |
| Skimmer,<br>assault<br>( <i>Bisai Assault Skimmer, ClinTech Warden LAV</i> )                     | 2    | 2    | 100 lb.  | –2                | –4                 | 375 ft.                      | 55/105                           | 10                | 9                | 35 | H    | Ω    | —  | n/a <sup>1</sup>   |
| Tank, tracked<br>( <i>ClinTech Osner ATV, Mashindano Class III</i> )                             | 4    | 4    | 500 lb.  | –3                | –8                 | 150 ft.                      | 30/70                            | 8                 | 11               | 55 | G    | Ω    | —  | n/a <sup>1</sup>   |
| Jet,<br>transport <sup>4</sup><br>( <i>ClinTech BC–9 “Black Cat” Military Transport</i> )        | 3    | 3/43 | 10 tons  | –2/–3             | –7/–8              | 600 ft./<br>425 ft.          | (620/<br>750)<br>(450/<br>575)   | 6                 | 7                | 60 | G    | Ω    | —  | n/a <sup>1</sup>   |

<sup>1</sup>Restricted availability through law enforcement or military; add +4 to the cost if purchased through the black market.<sup>2</sup>The second set of numbers are for the optional armor package.<sup>3</sup>Use the second set of numbers if the crawler has a cargo attachment.<sup>4</sup>The piloting frame has interchangeable cargo pod options: troop-transport, weapons, vehicle-transport, field-command, communications, cargo.

• **Ship:** The vast bulk of international cargo transport is still handled by seagoing cargo ships; tourists are known to book passage on cruise liners, though the practice is far less common than in the previous century. Cargo ships have crews twice as large as their passenger capacity or more, while passenger ships have about one crew member for every five to ten passengers.

• **Tank:** The backbone of any army, the tank still sees significant use on the battlefields of the 22nd century. A tank has two slots for turret-mounted vehicle weapons (only one system may be active at a time), one slot for a forward-mounted vehicle weapon, and one missile rack slot.

• **Train:** Maglev rail lines handle everything from interstate cargo transport on Earth to cargo and passenger routes on Luna and other offworld colonies.

• **Wheeled vehicle:** Though 22nd-century vehicles are made from the latest in lightweight, durable alloys and plastics with state-of-the-art systems, the wheeled automobile or motorcycle is still based on much the same design as in centuries past.

• **Wheeled APC:** This no-frills armored personnel carrier has a cab with room for four and bay space for one 20-man squad. It has one slot for a turret-mounted vehicle weapon.

• **Crawler:** A common sight on off-world colonies and even remote regions on Earth, the crawler has a cab and leg assembly. The crawler's legs propel the vehicle much like an insect, and the driver can even initiate "precision control" to direct individual leg placement when necessary.

Larger crawlers have a turbine hoversled under the cab for additional power and speed, and can attach a 12-cubic-foot cargo pod behind the cab for hauling or even to serve as a camper.

## Spacecraft

Certain components are vital to all spacecraft, from hybrid fighters to frigates to freighters.

• **Astrogation System:** Even the best fighter pilot can find it difficult to orient himself properly in deep space without a guidance system to provide orientation.

• **Flight Chair:** Acceleration and centripetal force are significant factors in flight, since both can apply an active gravitational force even though no external gravity source exists. Velocity or vector changes themselves create force. Flight chairs reduce the effects of this high stress. A flight chair is filled with shock-absorbing gel, which the pilot straps into using suspension webbing. Furthermore, ships have automated systems that flush extra oxygen into a pilot's breathing mix to keep him from blacking out even as applied force crushes air from his lungs.

• **Life-Support System:** A ship's life-support system keeps the crew from suffering the effects of brutally cold temperatures, oxygen deprivation and pressure extremes. Some spacecraft have separate, redundant backup systems for the pilot in case the main life support and its backup fail.

• **MSYS:** Maneuvering safety monitoring systems (MSYS) are standard in all crafts. The automatic measures prevent the pilot from overwhelming himself and his passengers with the applied forces of a severe maneuver.

• **Power Plant:** A ship's heart is its power plant. Hyper-fusion reactors power the craft's various functions. Frigates and freighters are equipped with multiple fusion engines for increased power, backup or both. Small ships rely on solar-battery arrays for their backup power.

• **Thrusters:** Directional miniature exhaust ports, thrusters allow for precision steering, whether to send the ship in a desired direction or avoid debris and enemy attacks. A ship with damaged thrusters is not simply slow, it maneuvers like a wounded cow.

## Vacuum Speed

Listing specific rates of speed for traveling in the vastness of space involves a degree of detail that isn't necessary to enjoy this game. To simplify play, a spacecraft's top vacuum speed, or "VS," is an abstract rating.

Velocity in space is listed on a scale of 1 to 5. The higher the rating, the shorter the travel time to a destination. A ship with a high VS can accelerate (and decelerate) more quickly than can one with a low rating, thereby covering the same distance in a shorter period of time. A craft's standard cruising speed in vacuum is one-half its VS rating (minimum 1).

Fighters have atmospheric cruising and top speeds because they can travel in an atmosphere and in space.

| VS | Average Distance Covered                                                 |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Very slow; Earth to Luna in 1 day; Earth to Mars in 6 months.            |
| 2  | Slow; Earth to Luna in 12 hours; Earth to Mars in 3 months.              |
| 3  | Average; Earth to Luna in 6 hours; Earth to Mars in 1 month.             |
| 4  | Fast; Earth to Luna in 3 hours; Earth to Mars in 2 weeks.                |
| 5  | Very fast; Earth to Luna in 1 hour, 30 minutes; Earth to Mars in 7 days. |

## Spacecraft Types

There are three main spacecraft designations — hybrids, frigates and freighters — though sizes and types can vary within each group. Vehicle information in Table 13-9: Spacecraft is consistent with that listed for ground and atmospheric vehicles (see above). In addition, spacecraft have advanced propulsion systems and onboard computers that assist in almost every aspect of operation. This confers superior handling — far greater than a craft of such significant size would have normally.

• **Spacecraft, hybrid:** Also called "fighters" since the first air- and space-compatible craft were military in function, these craft use F-HVTR (Fusionjet High-Velocity Tilt Rotor) engines to maneuver in atmosphere and vacuum.

Craft range in size from 30-foot-long fighters to 140-foot-long hybrids with space for cargo or passengers. They are designed to require only a single pilot, though a mid-size hybrid typically has a copilot as well. From small patrol fighters to luxurious passenger shuttles to versatile passenger/cargo hybrids, hybrids comprise the majority of traffic in near space.

Hybrids are divided into assault, patrol and transport categories. Assault craft have two linked front-mounted vehicle weapon slots and two missile rack slots. Patrol craft have two front-mounted vehicle weapon slots (linked). Transports have one front-mounted vehicle weapon slot.

• **Spacecraft, frigate:** These craft are designed entirely for operation in vacuum, using shuttles and other hybrid craft for planetfall. Smaller and armed more heavily than freighters, frigates are used primarily for patrol and travel near disputed territories.



Table 13-9: Spacecraft

| Vehicle                                                                                       | Crew | Pas. | Cargo               | Init. | Hand. | VS | MPH           | AC | Hard. | HP    | Size | Tech | FT  | Cost             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|---------------------|-------|-------|----|---------------|----|-------|-------|------|------|-----|------------------|
| <b>Fighter/Hybrid</b>                                                                         |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Assault                                                                                       | 2    | 0    | 1,000 lb.           | +2    | +4    | 4  | 1600/<br>2000 | 5  | 9     | 40    | H    | Ω    | —   | n/a <sup>1</sup> |
| <i>(Bakuhatsu E-15, Banji Hyo, Nova Starcraft A-4L Guardian, Nova Starcraft A-5L Phoenix)</i> |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Patrol                                                                                        | 1    | 0    | 2 tons              | +1    | +3    | 4  | 1600/<br>2000 | 5  | 9     | 45    | H    | Ω/Ψ  | -/3 | 44               |
| <i>(Banji Owl, Orgotek Locust C)</i>                                                          |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Transport,<br>light                                                                           | 2    | 10   | 20 tons             | +1    | +2    | 3  | 775/<br>900   | 3  | 7     | 90    | G    | Ω    | —   | 40               |
| <i>(Banji Raven II, L-B Comet OPS)</i>                                                        |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Transport,<br>heavy                                                                           | 2    | 20   | 45 tons             | -1    | +1    | 3  | 750/<br>825   | 3  | 7     | 110   | G    | Ω    | —   | 40               |
| <i>(Bakuhatsu ACS-100, Bakhuatsu GPT-03 "Trey," Banji Falcon, L-B MEL<sup>1</sup>)</i>        |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| <b>Frigate</b>                                                                                |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Scout                                                                                         | 5    | 30   | 1000<br>tons        | -2    | +0    | 5  | 775/<br>900   | 5  | 10    | 500   | G    | Ω/Ψ  | -/3 | 50               |
| <i>(Banji Peregrine, Orgotek Scarab)</i>                                                      |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Destroyer                                                                                     | 100  | 400  | 50000<br>tons       | -4    | -1    | 5  | —             | 5  | 11    | 900   | C    | Ω    | —   | n/a <sup>1</sup> |
| <i>(L-B Supernova IPF-Delta)</i>                                                              |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Cruiser                                                                                       | 250  | 900  | 950000<br>tons      | -7    | -3    | 5  | —             | 5  | 13    | 1,500 | C    | Ω    | —   | n/a <sup>1</sup> |
| <i>(Banji Kestrel IV, L-B Aerie IFC)</i>                                                      |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| <b>Freighter</b>                                                                              |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Freighter,<br>cargo                                                                           | 15   | 5    | 10 million<br>tons  | -5    | -14   | 5  | —             | 2  | 9     | 2,300 | C    | Ω    | —   | 52               |
| <i>(L-B Venture B9 IFT)</i>                                                                   |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Freighter,<br>passenger                                                                       | 160  | 800  | 850000<br>tons      | -8    | -11   | 5  | —             | 3  | 9     | 2,000 | C    | Ω    | —   | 56               |
| <i>(Banji Condor, L-B Starlight ICT)</i>                                                      |      |      |                     |       |       |    |               |    |       |       |      |      |     |                  |
| Jump ship                                                                                     | 20   | 10   | 1.5 million<br>tons | -4    | -122  | 5  | —             | 3  | 10    | 2,400 | C    | Ψ    | —   | n/a <sup>1</sup> |

<sup>1</sup>Not available commercially.

Table 13–10: Vehicle Weapons

Vehicle weapon information is consistent with that listed for personal weapons (see above), with any distinctions noted below.

| Weapon <sup>1</sup> | Damage <sup>2</sup> | Type      | Range          | RoF | Magazine <sup>3</sup> | Size <sup>4</sup> | Tech | FT | Cost <sup>5</sup> |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------------------|------|----|-------------------|
| Coilgun, light      | 6d12 (39)           | Ballistic | 4,000 ft.      | Si  | Rack 100              | H                 | Ω    | —  | 34                |
| Coilgun, heavy      | 8d12 (52)           | Ballistic | 6,000 ft.      | Si  | Rack 100              | C                 | Ω    | —  | 36                |
| Laser, light        | 6d8 (27)            | Fire      | 3,000 ft.      | Sa  | Plant                 | H                 | Ω    | —  | 32                |
| Laser, medium       | 8d8 (36)            | Fire      | 4,000 ft.      | Sa  | Plant                 | C                 | Ω    | —  | 35                |
| Missile, fusion     | 20d8 (90)           | Energy    | — <sup>6</sup> | Si  | Rack 6                | C                 | Ω    | —  | 50                |
| Missile, mini       | 12d8 (54)           | Ballistic | — <sup>6</sup> | Si  | Rack 12               | H                 | Ω    | —  | 38                |
| Missile, smart      | 16d8 (72)           | Energy    | — <sup>6</sup> | Si  | Rack 2                | C                 | Ω    | —  | 47                |

<sup>1</sup> All vehicle weapons require Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Vehicle Weapons) to use without penalty.

<sup>2</sup> Vehicle weapon damage has a different threat range and critical multiplier depending on the vehicle size and the target size, as noted in the corresponding table. (The number in parenthesis for each weapon's damage listing is its average damage if you want to avoid rolling a massive amount of dice.)

Vehicle weapons can be linked; you make a single attack roll, but on a successful hit increase the base damage for a single weapon by one-half. Linked weapons must be of the same type and must point in the same direction.

| Target<br>Size   | — Attacker Size — |          |            |           |
|------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|-----------|
|                  | Large             | Huge     | Gargantuan | Colossal  |
| Large or smaller | 20/x2             | 19–20/x2 | 10–20/x10  | 10–20/x10 |
| Huge             | 20/x2             | 20/x2    | 15–20/x4   | 15–20/x4  |
| Gargantuan       | 20/x2             | 20/x2    | 20/x2      | 19–20/x2  |
| Colossal         | 20/x2             | 20/x2    | 20/x2      | 20/x2     |

<sup>3</sup> Plant indicates that the weapon draws power from the vehicle's power plant, providing effectively unlimited ammunition; linked is a series of rounds chained together with small metal or plastic clips; rack is a series of rounds in a single magazine, each of which can be removed and reloaded separately from the weapon.

<sup>4</sup> The minimum vehicle size capable of supporting the weapon.

<sup>5</sup> Vehicle weapons are not available commercially; each cost listed assumes access via proper military or other licensed channels. Add +4 to the cost if purchased on the black market.

<sup>6</sup> Missiles are equipped with guidance systems that negate range increments.

Frigates are typically between 150 and 400 feet long, with a docking bay which can house two escort fighters or one mid-size hybrid transport. Frigates are also equipped with exterior docking ports for up to six hybrid craft.

A frigate has paired cabins for one third of the crew (only the captain has her own cabin) and bunk space for the remainder. A skeleton crew of one-fifth the standard crew listing can maintain a frigate's vital functions (e.g., piloting, astrogation, engineering, life support), but a full crew is required to utilize its full maneuvering and weapons capabilities.

Frigates are subdivided into scout, destroyer and cruiser classes. A scout has two sets of two linked front-mounted vehicle weapon slots, two aft-mounted vehicle weapon slots, and four missile rack slots. A destroyer has seven sets of two linked, turret-mounted vehicle weapon slots, two front- and two aft-mounted vehicle weapon slots, and ten missile rack slots. A cruiser has ten sets of two linked, turret-mounted vehicle weapon slots, two sets of two front- and aft-mounted vehicle weapon slots and thirty missile rack slots.

• **Spacecraft, freighter:** The behemoth of the spaceways, freighters handle virtually all interstellar cargo transport. A typical freighter dwarfs even the largest frigate in size, but its weapons barely match even those of a hybrid.

The mammoth of the spacelanes dwarfs even a frigate, ranging in size from 800 to 2,000 feet long with an internal docking platform suitable for four escort fighters or two mid-size hybrid transports, and exterior docking points for up to 10 hybrid ships.

A freighter is highly automated, needing a crew of only 15 to 20 to control the ship's basic functions. A standard cargo freighter's

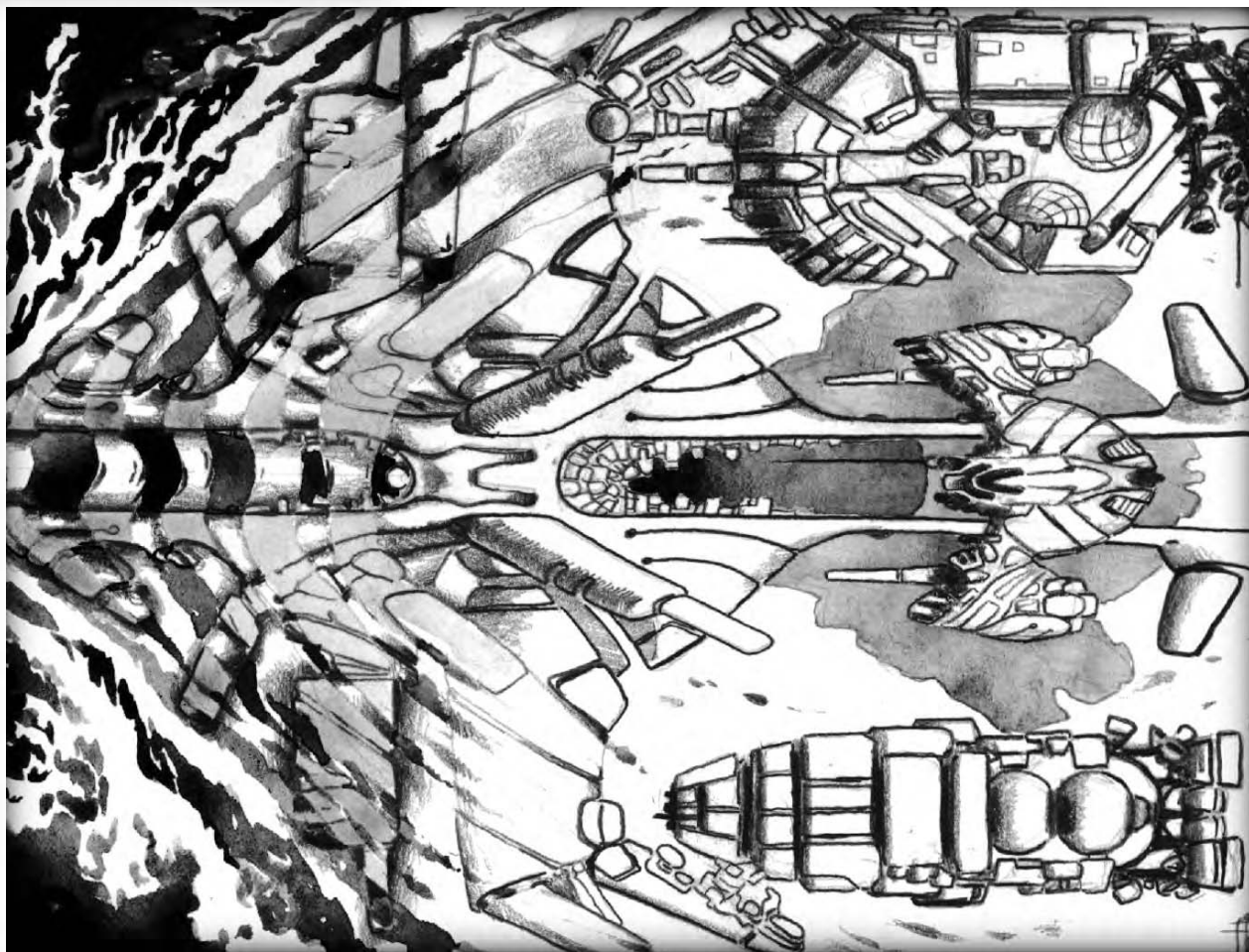
complement is 50 individuals, to allow for shift rotation. A luxury freighter (a ship outfitted for passenger travel rather than cargo hauling) loses 80% of its cargo space to passenger and additional crew cabins.

A freighter has four turret-mounted vehicle weapon slots and two missile racks.

## Interstellar Jump Ships

In the absence of the Upeo wa Macho, the remaining psi orders worked with the Aeon Trinity to design a device that could make interstellar jumps. The result was the Orgotek *Leviathan*-Class jump ship, a 4,000-foot long masterpiece of bio- and hardtech integration. Though it combines biotech life-support and operations gear with hardtech propulsion systems, the *Leviathan*'s crowning achievement is the extensive psiware system, the Tesser, which enables it to teleport through vast reaches of space. The Tesser combines modified matrix biocomputers with Upeo augmentation devices and qin biotechnology. The device is a tantalizing mystery even to the scientists who designed it; the biocomp seems to be the closest thing to true artificial intelligence ever created by humans or qin.

The Tesser takes up almost 70% of a *Leviathan*'s mass, but every element is vital to calculate the ship's wavefunction that makes the entire mass/energy exchange involved with a jump possible. Still, the craft has some cargo space — four cargo bays, to be specific, each sufficient to hold three assault- or patrol-class hybrids. It also has exterior docking for up to four destroyer-class frigates and 12 transport-class hybrids.



The exact number of jump ships in service is confidential, although various sources agree that less than 20 are active currently.

### Performing a Jump

A Tesser jump requires *astrolocation* from the clairsentient jump pilot, who is connected with the ship's biocomps through an ARES pod (while others can steer the freighter in vacuum, only a clairsentient can trigger an actual jump). The psion casts out his perceptions to the location he wants the ship to be in. The noetic intermingling between Tesser and clairsentient — difficult to accomplish and draining to maintain — enables the Tesser to perceive the intended location.

With the intended location's sense memory stored, the Tesser recalculates the ship's wavefunction, changing only one aspect: the location. The clairsentient then triggers the jump ship's transmission from one physical place to another through access to and manipulation of subquantum energy.

Some passengers claim the transit lasts only an instant, while others describe it as a lifetime. Tests show that jumps aren't actually instantaneous; a ship remains in subquantum flux for a period of time between a day and a week. Though travel time has little bearing on the distance traveled, noeticists have not confirmed what factors do influence it.

Jumps cause strong disturbances in psi energy — the equivalent of a critical backlash effect in the surrounding area (see Chapter Eleven, "Backlash"). To reduce the noetic impact on the surroundings, jumps are targeted for coordinates well away from the nearest settled regions of space. A *Leviathan* is equipped with extensive bioshielding to absorb the subquantum flux, further reducing the backlash for those in the craft. Those within a jump ship gain a +6 bonus on saves against any backlash that occurs outside the ship, and effects of a failed save are always treated as mild.

Jumps require massive amounts of energy to perform; though a *Leviathan* can carry out normal space maneuvers after a jump, it requires roughly a week to recharge the Tesser and the fusion engines that power it sufficiently before it can jump again.

This chapter covers additional rules to aid in playing adventures in the Unity Age.

## Stunt Bonus

Few things are less exciting in a roleplaying game than hearing a 15-minute exchange of: "I shoot him. I got a 22." "You hit; roll damage." "Nine points." "The guy's still up. Okay, who's next?"

Exciting descriptions of action make the game more real and far more enjoyable: "I push off the ladder, twisting in midair to grab the lip of that drainage tube, then haul myself up inside." "You can just make out the aberrant's multifaceted eyes catching the light as it scans the shaft; you think it might have sensed something, but, seeing nothing on the ladder, it moves off toward the bunker."

Psions are action heroes, whether they are caught in complex investigations or battling monsters from the depths of space. Combats are dangerous, and should evoke the sort of imagery seen in near-future action movies. Players (as well as the GM) should describe the characters' impact on the environment, and the environment's impact on the combat, throughout any battle.

To encourage these kinds of cinematic stunts and clever tricks in your **Trinity** game, a GM may apply a circumstance bonus to reward a well-described and appropriate stunt performed as part of your action. This may be purely a dramatic maneuver — such as lunging across the cockpit to grab the control yoke — or it may incorporate some aspect of the scenery — such as bouncing a grenade around the corner to stun the advancing guards.

For that action, the GM may apply between a +1 to +3 circumstance bonus either on your attack roll or to your Armor Class (never both at once). The GM is never *required* to provide this bonus, and should feel free not to apply it if you describe the same stunt over and over or come up with a routine inappropriate to the scene just to get a bonus. The goal is to reward cleverness and contributions to the game.

## Radiation Poisoning

Radiation is an energy type just like fire and electricity — it can cause damage to living creatures just as immediately as a flame or a jolt of current can. It is also far more insidious than the other energy types: it poisons those exposed to it, causing lingering sickness and even death.

Some advanced technology equipment and some psi powers provide protection from radiation in the form of radiation resistance (any piece of equipment that provides full-spectrum energy resistance also protects against radiation). If even a single point of radiation damage gets through the protection, the individual must immediately make a Fortitude save against a DC determined by the intensity of the radiation, as found below.

An individual who fails the Fortitude save takes the initial damage. Even those who resisted the initial damage must save again against the secondary damage. But that isn't the end.

A subject who fails either save and takes any temporary Constitution damage or permanent drain now suffers from radiation poisoning. The individual must make a Fortitude save against the same DC in 24 hours or suffer

the secondary effect again. The Heal skill can be used to reduce the effects of radiation poisoning; until a successful Heal check (using the same DC as the Fortitude save) is made on the poisoned individual, he faces the radiation's secondary damage every 24 hours. Once the individual has been treated, his level of radiation poisoning drops by one intensity level each time he succeeds at his Fortitude save, until he has recovered (i.e. moderate to weak, weak to cured). Anything reduced to 0 Constitution from radiation poisoning dies, and leaves behind a poisonous corpse. Anyone touching the corpse without protection against radiation must make a Fortitude save against weak radiation. Anything desperate enough to eat the flesh of the tainted corpse must make a Fortitude save against moderate radiation — there is no protection against this sort of complete immunity to radiation effects.

Table 14–1: Radiation Poisoning

| Radiation Intensity | Fort Save DC | Initial Damage | Secondary Damage |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| Weak                | 5            | 1d2 Con        | 1 Con            |
| Moderate            | 10           | 1d2 Con        | 1d2 Con          |
| Strong              | 15           | 1d3 Con        | 1d3 Con          |
| Intense             | 20           | 1d3 Con*       | 1d4 Con          |

\* This amount is a permanent drain.

## Dramatic Editing

Dramatic editing is an optional rule which you can use to influence the story — perhaps even to save your character from certain defeat. This version of dramatic editing is pared down from **Adventure!**, a game that emulates the pulp setting in which surprise twists are quite common. If you prefer your **Trinity** game to be more on the gritty side, just ignore this section.

To use dramatic editing, you spend power points to insert details specific to your character into the scene, as long as the GM approves of it and it does not contradict anything that's been established already.

Dramatic editing departs from the usual conventions of roleplaying, in which the player controls his character's actions in the game but cannot dictate how his character is acted upon. It does *not* allow you to supersede the GM's descriptions of the scene; instead, it lets you *supplement* them for purpose of making a more enjoyable and exciting story for everyone.

All psychic characters, whether PCs or NPCs, may use dramatic editing. The GM is encouraged to have NPCs do so sparingly, though, since the deck is stacked in her favor by the nature of her role in directing the game.

## Dramatic Editing Parameters

You spend power points each time you want to apply dramatic editing. How much you spend depends on what you want to accomplish (see "Cause and Effect," below). Regardless of your specific desire, all dramatic editing abides by the same overall parameters.

- **Believability:** The dramatic editing result must be something that could conceivably occur within the setting and the events of the story. This maintains suspension of

disbelief and encourages everyone to think of dramatic editing opportunities that keep the proper tone for the game. Finding a delicious stash of Kobe beef in the middle of a Martian wasteland isn't believable. However, finding a crashed transport with sufficient supplies to feed the team for a few days is plausible (and could give rise to further plot ideas).

• **Consistency:** The dramatic edit cannot contradict anything established previously, nor can it overrule a check result that has occurred already *unless the dramatic editing is for the explicit purpose of saving a PC from certain death*. If the GM stated before that a warehouse is empty, you cannot use dramatic editing to say, "Hey, look, there's a pair of VARGs in this hanger!" However, if some FSM stooge blasts your 5th-level scholar with a light coilgun for 100 points of damage, you may use dramatic editing to declare, "Fortunately, the projectile struck at just the proper angle off his armor carapace to send him flying so he didn't take the full brunt of the attack. He's knocked unconscious, but he's not dead! Whew!"

Along similar lines, you cannot use dramatic editing to contradict or negate another person's power point expenditure. This covers everything from manifesting a power to other dramatic editing uses, and applies equally to other PCs and to NPCs.

• **Player — Not Character — Influence:** Dramatic editing is a function of *your* self motivation, not your *character's*. No character is ever aware that dramatic editing has just occurred. Power points power the dramatic edit, but your character does not activate this capability. The points are just a convenient rules measurement.

Dramatic editing is *not* a reality-altering power that exists within the Trinity Universe that characters wield. It is an *out-of-game* way to explain and facilitate the incredible surprises that can occur in situations *within* the sci-fi adventure genre. Characters have no awareness that dice are rolled to determine the results of their actions, right? Dramatic editing presents a similar influence.

• **GM Override:** The GM is the ultimate authority in every game. She may deny a given dramatic edit if it will ruin the entire plot, seems overly powerful or intrusive, or simply doesn't fit into the world of **Trinity**. Any ponied-up power points are not lost if the GM refuses an edit, since they aren't actually spent.

You may provide clarification if the GM isn't clear on how a proposed dramatic edit could happen. To keep the pace of the game running smoothly, however, such modifications should be handled quickly and with decisive action. If the GM's final answer is "no," that's it. End of discussion.

## Cause and Effect

This section outlines the costs to use and degree of influence possible with dramatic editing. A single dramatic edit may cost actual power points (pp) or it may just require a dramatic editing check (see below). Table 14–2: Dramatic Editing Scale shows the range of editing possible and any associated power point costs.

Regardless of plot complications, no dramatic editing effect can cost fewer than 0 power points — in other words, reducing the final cost of a dramatic edit to a negative doesn't give you power points.

## Dramatic Editing Checks

You must succeed at a dramatic editing check (1d20 + your character's Psi score) whenever the proposed dramatic edit falls under "0 (check)" in Table 14–2. The check is against DC 12. You may simply spend 1 power point instead of making a check.

Table 14–2: Dramatic Editing Scale

| pp Cost           | Dramatic Editing Effect                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 0 (check)         | Minor offscreen effect; minor extension |
| 1                 | Minor onscreen effect                   |
| 2                 | Major onscreen effect                   |
| 3                 | Obvious continuity violation            |
| Step <sup>1</sup> | Type of Influence                       |
| +1                | Plot ramifications                      |
| –1                | Plot complications                      |
| –1                | Improved dramatic editing               |

<sup>1</sup> Step indicates how both the cost and scope may change depending on the specifics that you incorporate to the dramatic edit (see below).

## Minor Offscreen Effect (0 pp + check)

Your edit does not have an immediate impact on the scene, but it will influence events within 15 minutes to an hour. That may be too late depending on the circumstances (like a vat filling with acid) but works just fine for less immediately deadly events (like a shipwreck).

**Example:** *A passing transport happens to pick up your distress beacon.*

## Minor Extension (0 pp + check)

Your edit expands on another player's dramatic editing coincidence, typically to benefit both of your characters. A minor extension cannot get too blatant — no fair turning the piece of shipwreck flotsam into a functional motorboat!

**Example:** *The cell's electromagnetic lock has a faulty circuit that cuts out intermittently; if you can just time a Strength check to bash it open at the moment the power fluctuates....*

## Minor Onscreen Effect (1 pp)

Your edit doesn't offer an easy solution to your character's situation all by itself, but it can provide breathing room or a fighting chance. A minor onscreen effect may include the unexpected arrival of NPCs who, while unable to rescue your character directly, can provide other sorts of aid. Alternatively, it may be a piece of (easily concealed) equipment that your character "forgot" that he'd had.

**Example:** *The ship's hatch is reinforced; too tough to blast through — but is that a hairline crack in the cockpit's mylex window?*

## Major Onscreen Effect (2 pp)

Your edit provides an immediate, plausible solution in your character's favor to the current circumstance. A major onscreen effect can be just about anything that doesn't contradict the GM's summary of the situation, and may offer a benefit to your character's companions as well.

**Example:** *There's one emergency pod left on the orbital station that should get all of you to safety.*

## Obvious Continuity Violation (3 pp)

Your edit directly contradicts the GM's description of the scene or is thoroughly beyond the bounds of plausibility. Applying an obvious continuity violation demands the GM's scrutiny, but it should be possible as long as it is creative and maintains the feel of the game and the genre.

**Example:** *The mercenary about to strike the killing blow is actually an old friend from your college fraternity!*



### Plot Ramification (+1 pp)

Your edit gives you a clue to solving a mystery that has plagued you, lands one of the villain's henchmen in jail or brings any character in the group an unexpected benefit. This extra cost also applies if you choose to solve the team's problem by making the life of another PC much harder (though injury, social inconvenience, great expense, etc.).

A plot ramification doesn't aid much in dealing with the *immediate* situation, but provides a useful benefit to the story afterward.

Minor things — losing property that the subject could purchase again with no reduction of Wealth bonus, a loss of cleanliness or basic human dignity — do not qualify as plot ramifications. You may pile such things on, but the GM is within her rights to nix anything if it looks like you're messing with another player's character for out-of-game reasons (rather than to make the game more interesting). If both parties find the ramification entertaining, the GM should feel free to have it occur.

### Plot Complication (–1 pp)

This is a circumstance that makes life harder for your character — he breaks his leg leaping to safety; he escapes from certain death only to fall under the influence of a lesser enemy; and so on. A plot complication is not a trivial matter. It should affect your character in some fashion for at least the next few encounters, next game session or even — always the best option — give rise to an ongoing subplot.

The reduced cost applies only if your *own* character suffers the complication. Making things complicated for other PCs qualifies as a plot ramification, above.

## Dramatic Editing and Combat

Dramatic editing can liven up an encounter, but it can also complicate things. Given the impact that it can have on combat, the GM may consider the following section an optional addition to the rest of the dramatic editing rules.

### Complication Bonuses

You can add nearly any complication that you can think of to a combat scene. By describing a coincidence that benefits you or inconveniences your opponent, you can use dramatic editing *after* making a roll, granting a +2 circumstance bonus on your choice of attack, saves, or skill or attribute check, or a +2 circumstance bonus to AC, for that round.

You can use a minor onscreen effect to move characters around, essentially providing — or forcing — a bonus 5-foot step. You can do this to friendly or hostile characters, but a plot ramification penalty applies if you put a PC in the direct line of an attack. Conversely, you get a plot complication bonus if you edit *your* PC into the line of danger.

This sort of movement can be applied in one of two ways, pending the GM's approval: Either you describe an event that causes a character to move in the designated direction, or it's a simple "clarification" that hand-waves the entire affair with "oh, it turns out that they were farther apart than they thought."

### Altering the Map

In a non-combat encounter, you can use dramatic editing to make minor additions or changes to the landscape. Any alterations must be reasonable and cannot contradict something the GM has described.

As a minor onscreen effect, you can detail a 10-foot-by-10-foot area of the combat map that the GM has not yet drawn or described in detail. (This may involve using a marker or props suitable for the map being used.) You might add an opening to an alleyway, put a parked car on a street, insert a fire hydrant and the plate glass window behind it, and so on.

If the map portion being modified is at least (100 ft. + 10 ft. per character level) distant from your character, such alterations are considered minor offscreen dramatic editing instead.

## Transportation

Most of the time, transportation from spacecraft to camels exists to get the PCs from one locale to the next. Measure off time and distance, and there you are, ready for the next dramatic moment. Sometimes, the journey itself is the adventure, and sometimes the vehicle plays an important part once the characters get to where they're going. The *Player's Handbook* covers the basics of travel by horse and wagon; the following material provides a basic framework for vehicle travel, chases and combat.

### Space Flight — A Primer

Maneuvering effectively in space takes skill. There are a number of variables involved in this process (most of which are handled by a craft's navigation system), but the basic theory is relatively straightforward.

All spacecraft are equipped with a main propulsion engine and multidirectional thrusters. The main engine is used primarily for atmospheric and long-range space travel. The rudders and flaps that are so useful in an atmosphere have no effect in space. Thrusters handle the majority of space maneuvering.

When the pilot fires aft thrusters, the ship moves in a straight line in the direction in which the nose points (this is referred to as the ship's vector of motion). As long as the pilot maintains thrust, the ship continues to accelerate to maximum speed. The highest speeds that ships can travel at are determined by engine capacity, ship structural integrity and the laws of physics (see Chapter Thirteen: Technology for more information on ships' speeds). When the pilot cuts off the thrusters, the craft still maintains its previous speed and straight-line course.

**For Example:** *Linsey Marsden fires his Locust fighter's aft engine for a few seconds until the ship reaches a velocity of 300 mph. When Marsden releases the thruster controls, the Locust continues traveling straight ahead at 300 mph.*

To change speed, the pilot fires a thruster again. Activating the aft thruster increases the craft's forward velocity. If thrust is fired in the direction exactly opposite of the ship's vector of motion, the craft slows. Stopping involves expending exactly the right amount of thrust to counteract the ship's velocity. Spacecraft have advanced navigation systems that are more than capable of synchronizing thrusters for these otherwise difficult maneuvers.

**For Example:** *Marsden hits the aft thruster again, goosing the craft up to 500 mph. When he nears the Legion landing platform, Marsden fires the forward thruster, watching the velocity indicator until it reads zero. The fighter floats a mile over the platform, drifting perhaps a few inches per hour relative to the Lunar site.*

Changing direction involves adjusting the ship's attitude with multidirectional thrusters and then firing the primary engine. No matter what direction a craft is traveling in, when the nose is pointed in a different direction and the aft engine fires, the ship's vector changes to the new direction. Attitude can be changed to any direction that a pilot desires without altering the ship's current

### The Costs of Travel

Maintaining a vehicle is an ongoing expense; for simplicity's sake, handle it as a monthly Wealth check (purchase DC 7). Actual repairs — say, due to damage — require a Repair check once each day. The check result indicates the amount of damage repaired and the cost to make the repair. If you pay someone else to repair the vehicle, add +5 to the purchase DC for the Wealth check.

| Repair Check | Damage Fixed <sup>1</sup> | Purchase DC |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Up to 9      | 2d4 (1)                   | 15          |
| 10–14        | 2d6 (2)                   | 18          |
| 15–19        | 3d6 (3)                   | 21          |
| 20–24        | 4d6 (4)                   | 24          |
| 25–29        | 5d6 (5)                   | 27          |
| 30–34        | 6d6 (6)                   | 31          |
| Every +5     | +1d6 (+1)                 | +5          |

<sup>1</sup> The number in parenthesis is the amount of the vehicle's handling modifier repaired that day (if its handling was reduced by damage).

Public transportation ranges from inexpensive to extremely costly, depending on where you're going and what you're taking to get there.

| Transportation                                   | Purchase DC |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Local public (taxi, subway, bus)                 | 1           |
| Train (regional, short distance up to 100 miles) | 2           |
| Train (regional, maglev)                         | 4           |
| Sea passage (steerage)                           | 2           |
| Sea passage (second class)                       | 6           |
| Sea passage (first class)                        | 13          |
| Air fare (short distance up to 250 miles)        | 4           |
| Air fare (suborbital)                            | 9           |
| Space travel (in-system)                         | 8           |
| Space travel (interstellar)                      | 15          |

vector of motion. It's only when aft thrusters fire at a new attitude that direction of travel changes.

Since a spacecraft moves by vector motion, it doesn't generally assume a curved flight path in a vacuum. The only way to achieve "curved" flight is to apply constant "side" and aft thrust. When the pilot releases the thrust controls, the ship continues in a straight line.

A fast and efficient method of maneuvering involves firing aft thrusters, pivoting and firing more bursts of aft thrust. These actions allow for high-speed and quickly performed moves, but are limited by the pilot's physical capabilities and the ship's safety restrictions.

**For Example:** *Marsden could swoop down to the landing platform, but while a curved dive is visually elegant, it wastes time and power. Instead, Marsden pivots the Locust so that its nose points toward the platform, then fires the aft thruster. The craft shoots toward the landing site, and Marsden activates the forward thrusters gradually until the ship is a few meters above the surface. A swivel of the nose and a burst from the landing thrusters sets the Locust down gently on the landing pad.*

### Space Combat

Few defensive orbital platforms exist around Earth given the stigma they gained during the Aberrant War. The defense platforms of the 22nd century are manned and heavily armed craft that remain

in orbit around stations and other inhabited planets. Various governments' fighters and frigates also patrol the vast intrasolar spacelanes routinely, alert for not only aberrants but for pirates and opposing government forces.

While patrol craft are largely automated, they are still manned and operated by human crews. Computer systems handle most details of astrogation and combat, but a human presence is vital. With most craft, a ship's pilot monitors systems and initiates key maneuvers (using the Pilot skill), while a separate gunner tracks targets and triggers missile or laser fire (using his base attack bonus, plus weapon specialization or other feats' bonuses). Frigate- and freighter-class ships operate in essentially the same ways, although specific job duties are often assigned to a number of crew members instead of just one, as on a fighter.

Space combat, although distinct from old atmospheric dogfights, is deadly. Spacecraft don't lock onto opponents' tails as atmospheric craft do. In space combat, opposing craft spin like tops and trace evasive geometric patterns as they trade deadly missile volleys and laser salvos across vast reaches of vacuum.

Maneuvering and countermaneuvering can go on for some time between two craft, which is when a wingman, an allied pilot in another craft, is useful. Coordinating maneuvers between two allied craft brings an enemy ship into one of the craft's line of fire relatively quickly. Only the absolute best solo pilots can hope to win a two-on-one fight.

## Pursuit

Much of vehicular combat revolves around some form of pursuit. AEG's *Spycraft* has excellent, intuitive chase rules that are incorporated here to make vehicle encounters in *Trinity* as dramatic as the rest of the game.

Pursuit is abstract intentionally. This makes it easy to allow chases to erupt at any point, and leaves room for you to elaborate on maneuvers, successes and failures as you see fit. The rules focus on landbound vehicular pursuit, but you can extrapolate them for anything from foot chases to space pursuit.

### Starting Pursuit

During a chase, one vehicle — the pursuer — is assumed to be trying to catch the other — the target. The distance between vehicles during pursuit is called the lead. This is measured in lengths, adjustable units determined by the vehicles involved in the chase. Unless noted otherwise, one length equals 10 feet.

Either the pursuer or the target initiates a chase in most cases, which also determines the lead (see below). If there is no clear initiator, both sides roll initiative and the highest result is considered to have started pursuit. Change the distances below from feet to kilometers for starship pursuit.

| Initiates Pursuit | Initial Lead (typical) |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Pursuer           | 2d6+3 (50–150 feet)    |
| Target            | 2d6+8 (100–200 feet)   |

The lead may never be less than 0 or greater than 30. If any maneuver result would put the lead past one of these limits, adjust the lead to the closest appropriate number.

The pursuer wants to decrease the lead enough to perform a finishing maneuver and catch the target, while the target wants to increase the lead enough to get away with his own finishing move. Pursuit continues until either one performs a successful finishing maneuver, a crash occurs, or one of the vehicles is disabled.

## Pursuit Speed

Vehicle speeds are in miles per hour (mph), determined by terrain at the start of pursuit (see "Terrain," below). Speed changes throughout pursuit according to the maneuvers that each driver selects (see "Pursuit Steps," below). Whenever the pursuit speed exceeds one or more vehicles' maximum speed, those vehicles take 2 points of damage. This damage bypasses hardness.

## Pursuit Steps

### 1. Choose Maneuvers

Each driver chooses a maneuver secretly from those available to him (see "Maneuvers," below).

### 2. Maneuver Checks

Drivers reveal their maneuvers and make any resulting changes to the chase speed. Each then makes an opposed maneuver check with his respective vehicle skill, including any modifiers from vehicle handling, terrain speed bonus, maneuvers, feats or vehicle damage.

If one driver succeeds, his maneuver's effects are applied during the next step. If neither succeeds or if the results are a tie, the chase continues, ignoring all maneuver effects except for speed. If both drivers succeed, the GM applies the maneuver effect from the higher result.

### 3. Resolve Maneuvers and Adjust Lead

Apply the winning driver's maneuver to the chase and adjust the number of lengths between vehicles as necessary.

### 4. Obstacles

Obstacles may crop up during a chase — washed-out road for ground chases, a dirigible or a fireworks display for air chases, an asteroid belt for space chases, a low bridge or a whale for water chases, or a crowd or a locked door for foot chases. Obstacles are intended as spice, not the main focus of pursuit, with frequency dependent on the terrain (see "Terrain"). The GM may decide not to apply random obstacle rolls if the drivers are keeping things dynamic.

If an obstacle is encountered, the target and then the pursuer makes an obstacle check. This may be a Reflex save or a vehicle skill check, as appropriate, against the obstacle's DC. The GM may further apply up to a +2 bonus or a –2 penalty depending on the circumstance. On a failed roll, the driver must make a crash check (see below).

### 5. Other Actions

Whether pursuit has ended due to a finishing maneuver or not, the drivers and passengers now perform any actions open to them. See "Vehicle Combat" for differences from normal combat.

### 6. Resolve Damage, Make Crash Checks

Apply any damage inflicted to each vehicle (see "Vehicle Damage"), and see if the driver must make a crash check (see below). This occurs if an unsuccessful maneuver calls for one, if the vehicle has suffered enough damage to require one, or if a tire bursts.

## Terrain

Terrain falls into three basic categories: open, close and tight. Each applies certain conditions to a chase, including how often obstacles can crop up and the average DC for any checks made in that terrain.

• **Open Terrain:** Easy to traverse, with only slight changes in elevation and few imposing obstacles (see examples below). A vehicle suffering a crash on open terrain usually overruns what it hits with little or no damage, unless the obstacle is too big or too solid for the

vehicle to go over or through it. Outer space is almost *always* open terrain, unless the ships are traveling through an amazingly thick asteroid belt, turning tight loops around the moons of a gas giant, or something equally cinematic. In space, obstacles are always meteorites.

**Pursuit Speed:** Begin at three-quarters of the fastest vehicle's maximum mph (round down). The vehicle with highest maximum mph receives a +2 speed modifier on all maneuver checks. If only one vehicle is considered to be in open terrain (either due to two or more terrain types, feats or mixed vehicle types), that vehicle receives the +2 speed bonus.

**Obstacle Chance:** 1 on a d10.

**Obstacle DC:** 12.

| Terrain Type | Open Terrain Example                                                                 |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ground       | Empty highways, racetracks, salt flats.                                              |
| Water        | Lakes, empty marinas, open seas with fair to excellent weather.                      |
| Air          | Clear skies at 1,000 ft. or higher.                                                  |
| Space        | Most everywhere.                                                                     |
| On foot      | Wide, flat plains and large paved areas with few structures, fences or obstructions. |

• **Close Terrain:** Close terrain is generally narrow and filled with things to run into, sideswipe and burst through (see examples below). Vehicles are often still going fast enough to overrun most obstacles in these conditions.

**Pursuit Speed:** Begin at one-half of the fastest vehicle's maximum mph (round down).

**Obstacle Chance:** 1 on a d6.

**Obstacle DC:** 18.

| Terrain Type | Closed Terrain Example                                                               |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ground       | City streets, winding dirt roads.                                                    |
| Water        | Narrow rivers with many rocks, busy docks, choppy seas.                              |
| Air          | Cloudy mountaintops, fields with occasional power lines, light to medium rain.       |
| Space        | Close to space stations, dense asteroid belts, near Lagrange points.                 |
| On foot      | Narrow alleys and open areas with many obstructions (stairways, hospital corridors). |

• **Tight Terrain:** The most dangerous of all terrain, this is filled with sharp drops and large, dense obstacles (see examples below). Tight terrain is unstable; drivers should be prepared for anything.

**Pursuit Speed:** Begin at one-quarter of the fastest vehicle's maximum mph (round down). If pursuer and target are both in tight terrain, the driver whose vehicle has the highest handling gains an additional +1 speed bonus on all maneuver checks.

**Obstacle Chance:** 1 on a d4.

**Obstacle DC:** 24.

| Terrain Type | Tight Terrain Example                                                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ground       | Congested highways, steep downhill inclines, battlegrounds, debris-riddled areas. |
| Water        | Whitewater rapids, crowded marinas.                                               |
| Air          | Ground level ( <i>under</i> obstacles!), antenna clusters, bad weather.           |

Space  
On foot

Not seen.  
Staircases, corridors, indoor parking garages, hedge mazes.

## Maneuvers

Since pursuit is left abstract, the distance covered and specific locations of each vehicle are left to your imagination. What's important is the lead — the distance between pursuer and target at any given time. Many maneuvers require a certain minimum or maximum lead, so make sure to update the lead at the start of each round.

Maneuvers are split into pursuer and target categories. They focus on ground vehicle pursuit, but apply with few changes to air, space, water and foot chases.

**Air Pursuit:** "Driver" becomes "pilot" and maneuvers are based on the Pilot skill. Air collisions can easily be fatal, and most pursuits end with one of the vehicles being forced down by damage.

**Space Pursuit:** "Driver" becomes "pilot" and maneuvers are based on the Pilot skill. Crashes lead to a ship's engines being disabled; a ship with disabled engines cannot accelerate or decelerate, so its velocity stays the same as it was before the crash (it does not drop to zero unless the crash occurs because the ship hits a large obstacle).

**Water Pursuit:** Terrain depends on the weather and the room the boats have to maneuver; otherwise, techniques are similar to ground pursuit. (Underwater pursuit uses the Pilot skill in place of Drive for maneuvers.)

**Foot Pursuit:** This may involve pedestrians or riding animals — for obstacle checks use Balance, Jump or Tumble as appropriate for the former, and Ride for the latter. Lengths are standard 5-foot-squares.

## Maneuver Descriptions

Each maneuver has a general description that you can modify to fit the particulars of each pursuit. Refer to Table 14-3: Pursuit Maneuvers for maneuver modifiers. Remember that each driver may choose his maneuver secretly to surprise his opponent.

**Finishing:** A finishing maneuver has prerequisites that must be met before it can be attempted, but ends the chase if performed successfully.

**Lead:** The minimum or maximum distance required between pursuer and target to perform the maneuver.

**Speed:** Some maneuvers may modify the current pursuit speed. If both pursuer and target choose maneuvers that alter the speed, only the highest modifier (positive or negative) applies.

**Success:** The maneuver's effect, applied when a driver who chooses it wins the opposed maneuver check for the pursuit round.

**Special:** Any additional information relevant about the maneuver.

**Air/Space Equivalent:** The term used for the maneuver in an air pursuit or space pursuit.

## Pursuer Maneuvers

All pursuer maneuvers are geared toward slowing down or catching the target.

### Box In [Finishing]

It takes skill to trap an opponent with minimal damage, but sometimes it's essential to take the target intact.

**Lead:** 5 lengths or less.

**Success:** The pursuer wins the chase, forcing the target into a corner from which there is nowhere to run.

Table 14–3: Pursuit Maneuvers

| Target Maneuvers       | Pursuer Maneuvers |       |         |        |      |        |      |         |          |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|------|--------|------|---------|----------|
|                        | Box In            | Crowd | Cut Off | Gun It | Herd | Jockey | Ram  | Redline | Shortcut |
| <b>Barnstorm</b>       | —                 | —     | —       | –6/0   | —    | —      | —    | –8/0    | 0/–6     |
| <b>Bootleg Reverse</b> | 0/–6              | 0/–4  | –8/0    | 0/–6   | 0/0  | 0/–2   | –4/0 | –4/0    | –6/0     |
| <b>Hairpin Turn</b>    | —                 | —     | —       | 0/–4   | —    | —      | —    | –2/0    | 0/–4     |
| <b>Lure</b>            | 0/–4              | –4/0  | 0/–4    | –2/0   | –2/0 | 0/0    | 0/–2 | 0/–2    | 0/–6     |
| <b>Pull Ahead</b>      | –6/0              | 0/–4  | –2/0    | 0/0    | –6/0 | –2/0   | –2/0 | 0/–4    | 0/–4     |
| <b>Set Up</b>          | –2/0              | –4/0  | 0/–4    | 0/–4   | 0/–2 | –2/0   | 0/–4 | 0/0     | –4/0     |
| <b>Stunt</b>           | —                 | —     | —       | –2/0   | —    | —      | —    | –4/0    | 0/–2     |
| <b>Vanish</b>          | —                 | —     | —       | 0/–4   | —    | —      | —    | 0/–6    | –4/0     |
| <b>Zig-Zag</b>         | –2/0              | 0/–6  | –2/0    | –6/0   | 0/–6 | 0/–2   | –4/0 | –2/0    | 0/0      |

Cross-reference the pursuer and target maneuvers chosen to find the modifier for each vehicle for the round. Apply the modifier before the slash to the pursuer's maneuver check, and the modifier after the slash to the target's maneuver check.

### Crowd [Finishing]

Crowding, or “tailgating,” involves getting up against the target's backside to force him into a crash. This option is safer for the pursuer than ramming, but is less likely to work.

*Lead:* 2 lengths or less.

*Success:* The pursuer wins the chase. If the pursuer's maneuver check result exceeds the target's by 5 or more, the target collides with an obstacle (a tree, storefront, debris). The target is assumed to have failed a crash check, and the pursuer comes to a safe stop.

*Air Equivalent:* Force down.

*Space Equivalent:* Engine nudge.

### Cut Off [Finishing]

The pursuer surges forward and pulls in front of the target, with the pursuer's own vehicle becoming a barrier to cut off the target.

*Lead:* 0 lengths.

*Speed:* Reduce the pursuit speed by one-third (round down) this round.

*Success:* The pursuer wins the chase, cutting off the target. If the target fails his maneuver check, he collides with the pursuer's vehicle with no crash check rolled (see “Vehicle Damage”). The pursuer may make a Jump check to leap from a stationary vehicle and avoid crash damage.

*Air/Space Equivalent:* Collision.

### Gun It

The pursuer tries to catch up in a straightforward manner by putting on a brief burst of speed.

*Lead:* Any distance.

*Speed:* Increase the pursuit speed by one-quarter (round down) this round.

*Success:* Reduce the lead by a number of lengths equal to the difference between maneuver check results.

### Herd

By keeping the pressure on and cutting off the target's options, the pursuer uses strategy and brute force to drive the target into dangerous situations.

*Lead:* 10 lengths or less.

*Success:* Reduce the lead by 1 length. Each driver must make a crash check, but the target's DC is increased by the difference between the maneuver check results.

*Special:* If the pursuer's maneuver check result exceeds the target's by 5 or more, the pursuer may shift the terrain by one step at the end of the round (open or tight becomes close, and vice versa); this also reduces or increases each driver's crash check DC by 5.

### Jockey

The pursuer matches the target's movements, forcing the vehicles' relative speeds down to almost zero and stabilizing the chase so that others in the vehicle can attack.

*Lead:* 10 lengths or less.

*Success:* Reduce the lead by 1 length. The driver and all passengers in the pursuer vehicle gain the benefit of the aid another maneuver for that round (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 8: Combat, “Special Attacks,” *Aid Another*).

### Ram [Finishing]

The pursuer speeds up and slams into the target, forcing him off the road, into the ground, or onto the shore (as appropriate). It's dirty, but it gets the job done faster than crowding.

*Lead:* 5 lengths or less.

*Success:* The pursuer wins the chase, colliding with the target. Both are assumed to have failed a crash check; the vehicles come to a stop after resolving the collision (except in space, where they continue at their current velocities).

### Redline

The pursuer guns it, but then maintains the vehicle's top speed. This isn't good for the vehicle, as the engine literally burns up in the process.

*Lead:* Any distance.

*Speed:* Increase the pursuit speed by one-third (round down) this round.

*Success:* Reduce the lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between maneuver check results. The pursuer's engine suffers 4 points of damage.

### Shortcut

Though useful for catching up with the target, a shortcut often involves losing line of sight and can result in a nasty spill for the pursuer.

*Lead:* Any distance.

*Speed:* Reduce the lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between maneuver check results. The pursuer must also make a crash check.

*Air/Space Equivalent:* Intercept.

## Target Maneuvers

All target maneuvers are geared toward escaping the pursuer.

### Barnstorm [Finishing]

Though associated with planes, any vehicle may “barnstorm” — a car could storm a warehouse, while a boat may storm the wreckage of a burning oil tanker.

*Lead:* 25 lengths or more.

*Success:* The target wins the chase, barreling through a cluttered area. Both drivers must make crash checks, and the target's vehicle suffers 10 points of damage regardless of hardness.

### **Bootleg Reverse**

When the pursuer gets close, the target brakes and turns hard to one side to slew around — pointing suddenly in the opposite direction!

*Lead:* 10 lengths or less.

*Speed:* Reduce the pursuit speed by one-quarter (round down) this round.

*Success:* Increase the lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between maneuver check results. The target's tires suffer 4 points of damage.

*Air Equivalent:* Roll-out.

*Space Equivalent:* Vector Reversal. Halve any maneuver modifiers that the target suffers for performing this maneuver in space.

### **Hairpin Turn [Finishing]**

The target leads the pursuer at high speed around blind curves until one falls out of the race. This involves longer and far sharper turns than the zig-zag maneuver, resulting in a greater chance of a crash.

*Lead:* 20 lengths or more.

*Speed:* Reduce the pursuit speed by one-third (round down) this round.

*Success:* The target wins the chase, taking one or more turns that the pursuer can't manage. Both drivers must also make crash checks.

*Air/Space Equivalent:* Veer off.

### **Lure**

The target controls the direction of pursuit, leading the pursuer into all kinds of trouble.

*Lead:* Any distance.

*Success:* Increase the lead by 1 length. Each driver must make a crash check, but the pursuer's DC is increased by the difference between the maneuver check results.

*Special:* If the target's maneuver check result exceeds the pursuer's by 4 or more, she may reverse the vehicles' positions, becoming the pursuer until the end of the round (this lets the target use any forward-mounted weapons on the pursuer).

If the target's maneuver check result exceeds the pursuer's by 5 or more, the target may shift the terrain by one step at the end of the round (open or tight becomes close, and vice versa); this also reduces or increases each driver's crash check DC by 5.

### **Pull Ahead**

A straightforward maneuver, where the target tries to get as far ahead of the pursuer as possible.

*Lead:* Any distance.

*Speed:* Increase the pursuit speed by one-quarter (round down) this round.

*Success:* Increase the lead by a number of lengths equal to the difference between maneuver check results.

### **Set Up**

Instead of running, the target leads the pursuer on a merry chase — usually to the tune of gunfire.

*Lead:* 10 lengths or less.



**Success:** Increase the lead by 1 length. The driver and all passengers in the target vehicle gain the benefit of the aid another maneuver for that round (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 8: Combat, "Special Attacks," *Aid Another*).

Also, if the target's maneuver check result exceeds the pursuer's by 4 or more, she may reverse the vehicles' positions, becoming the pursuer until the end of the round.

#### **Stunt [Finishing]**

This is a finishing maneuver that's just short of suicidal — leaping a car across a rising toll bridge, skipping a boat across a pier, exploding a convenient line of oil drums, and the like.

**Lead:** 20 lengths or more.

**Success:** The target wins the chase, performing a stunt that the pursuer can't manage. If the target's maneuver check result exceeds the pursuer's by 5 or more, the pursuer must make a crash check.

#### **Vanish [Finishing]**

The target leaves all pursuit choking on her dust in a display of driving virtuosity and pure velocity.

**Lead:** 30 lengths.

**Speed:** Increase the pursuit speed by one-third (round down) this round.

**Success:** The target wins the chase.

#### **Zig-Zag**

The target clips obstacles, terrain and even other vehicles in an attempt to send them into the pursuer's path. This also increases the chance that the target may actually collide with, rather than merely sideswipe, an obstacle.

**Lead:** Any distance.

**Success:** Increase the lead by a number of lengths equal to twice the difference between maneuver check results. The target must also make a crash check.

**Air Equivalent:** Break right/left.

**Space Equivalent:** Vector shift

Vehicle combat differs in some ways from what's described in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*. Rather than list actions that you can or cannot perform in a vehicle, this section covers general modifiers and leaves specifics to your feel of what's appropriate to the game. For instance, a charge doesn't work in most instances, but you could make a leaping charge from the top of one careening panel truck to another. When in doubt, use common sense.

- **Passenger Actions:** A passenger in a moving vehicle suffers a -2 penalty on any attack roll. Move actions are possible, but the GM may require a Balance check. A Jump check is required to leap from a moving vehicle, with a Tumble check applied as appropriate.

- **Driver Actions:** In addition to the maneuver options covered above, the driver of a moving vehicle may take one standard action each round. Doing so applies a -4 penalty on his next maneuver check, however.

- **Vehicle Speed:** The faster a vehicle goes, the harder it is to attack accurately. All characters suffer an additional -2 penalty on attack rolls for every 50 mph the vehicle is traveling (round down). In space, the penalty is -2 for every 200 mph of relative speed.

- **Melee Attacks in a Vehicle:** You can only make a melee attack if the lead is 0 lengths and/or if the attacker is in or on the same vehicle as his target.

- **Falling From a Vehicle:** Falling from a moving vehicle inflicts 1d6 points of damage for every 10 mph of the vehicle's current

speed above 10 mph (round down). A successful Jump or Tumble check reduces this damage by 1d6.

## **Attacking Vehicles**

Attacks during pursuit are assumed to hit an opposing vehicle unless you confirm a critical hit or the driver tries to ram bystanders (see below). A vehicle's Armor Class rating is equal to its listed Armor Class plus the driver's Dexterity modifier, if any. Remember to subtract the vehicle's hardness from any damage applied (except if noted otherwise).

Characters in vehicles may fire hand weapons — pistols, shotguns, etc. — in any direction. This may first require shooting out their own vehicle's window, hanging onto the side of the vehicle or some other move.

Most vehicle weapons fire only in a forward arc, giving the pursuer a distinct advantage in many cases. The target can use the lure or set up maneuvers to turn the tables for a round, and can even become the pursuer in a new chase if the original pursuer ever breaks off the chase.

## **Critical Hits Against Vehicles**

When you confirm a critical against a vehicle, roll on the appropriate section of Table 14-4. The following entries note special results in addition to the critical hit damage rolled. Bear in mind that some maneuvers may apply damage to the vehicle.

- **Controls:** The ship's computer loses 2 points from its handling rating.

- **Engine:** Do not subtract hardness from the critical hit damage. Also, the vehicle loses a cumulative 10% of its top speed with each engine critical suffered. Thus, a vehicle that suffers three critical hits to its engine loses 30% of its top speed.

- **Flaps:** Apply the same rules as for tires, including taking damage from a bootleg reverse/roll-out maneuver.

- **Life Support:** The ship remains intact, but has lost the ability to process carbon dioxide into oxygen. A hybrid-class ship retains 1 hour's air; a frigate has 4 hours, and a freighter has 8 hours air for typical levels of crew and passengers.

- **Holed:** The watercraft is damaged below the waterline and is taking on water. This mirrors the effects of the "steering" critical hit.

- **Hull Breach:** The spacecraft has lost hull integrity; all spaceships can seal off breached sections, but anyone within 5–20 feet of the hull breach location loses all oxygen and begins suffering both from vacuum exposure and suffocation.

- **Steering/Maneuvering Thrusters:** Every 10% of the vehicle's maximum hit points that the critical hit inflicts (round down) reduces the vehicle's handling by -1. So, a vehicle with 35 hit points loses 1 point from its handling modifier for every 3 points of critical hit damage it suffers.

- **Tires:** A normal tire can take 5 hit points of damage before being rendered useless. When a tire bursts, the driver must make a crash check. The driver suffers a -2 cumulative penalty for each tire that blows (if the vehicle has 9 or fewer tires), or for every two tires that burst (if it has 10 or more), to a maximum -10 penalty. If all the tires are blown, or if the vehicle has no tires, the critical hit strikes the steering instead.

- **Weapon:** Apply damage to one of the vehicle's mounted weapons (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 9: Adventuring, "Exploration," *Breaking and Entering* for details on smashing an object). The attack may strike one of the vehicle's communications or sensor systems instead, at the GM's discretion.

Table 14–4: Vehicle Critical Hit Locations  
Enclosed Ground Vehicle (auto, truck, van)

| d10 | Group/Location |
|-----|----------------|
| 1   | Engine         |
| 2–3 | Steering       |
| 4–7 | Tires          |
| 8–9 | Weapon         |
| 10  | Window         |

Open Ground Vehicle (motorcycle, convertible)

| d10  | Group/Location |
|------|----------------|
| 1    | Engine         |
| 2–3  | Steering       |
| 4–6  | Tires/Holed    |
| 7    | Weapon         |
| 8–10 | Window         |

Water Vehicle (speedboat, submersible)

| d10  | Group/Location |
|------|----------------|
| 1–2  | Engine         |
| 3–5  | Holed          |
| 6–7  | Weapon         |
| 8–10 | Window         |

Air Vehicle (airplane, helicopter)

| d10 | Group/Location |
|-----|----------------|
| 1–3 | Engine         |
| 4–6 | Steering       |
| 7   | Flaps          |
| 8–9 | Weapon         |
| 10  | Window         |

Space Vehicle (fighter/hybrid, frigate, freighter)

| d10 | Group/Location        |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 1   | Engine                |
| 2–3 | Maneuvering thrusters |
| 3–5 | Hull breach           |
| 6–7 | Controls              |
| 8–9 | Weapon                |
| 10  | Life support          |

If the target has no mounted weapons or equipment, the critical hit strikes the tires instead.

• **Window:** The attack smashes through a window or other “soft spot.” Select one of the occupants at random or determine the most likely target in the line of fire; that character is hit if his flat-footed Armor Class is less than or equal to the critical’s confirming result. If the attack misses, repeat the process for any occupants in line behind him. If there are none, the attack passes through the vehicle harmlessly.

## Bystanders

The driver can use her Drive skill to attack bystanders with a vehicle, applying any relevant attack modifiers. On a successful hit, the vehicle inflicts 1d6 points of damage for every 10 mph of its current speed. Critical hits are applied as normal.

Bystanders can target vehicles and their occupants as well, following the rules above.

## Vehicle Damage

A vehicle is in one of four conditions after suffering damage:

**Operational:** A moving vehicle with at least half its maximum hit points operates normally.

**Crippled:** A moving vehicle reduced to less than half its hit point total loses –5 points from its handling modifier. The driver must also make an immediate crash check with a +5 DC.

**Disabled:** A moving vehicle reduced to 0 hit points or lower stalls and comes to a halt. The driver must also make an immediate crash check with a +10 DC.

**Destroyed:** A moving vehicle that suffers more than twice its hit point total is destroyed. It rolls, skids or plummets to a halt and then explodes as per a base failed crash check. The vehicle’s occupants may try to escape as with a crash (DC 20 + 2 for every full 25 mph of speed).

## Crash Checks

Crash checks are required in the following circumstances:

- The vehicle’s tire bursts.
- The driver makes a critical failure on a maneuver check.
- A successful maneuver calls for a crash check.
- The vehicle suffers damage that calls for a crash check.

This is rolled like a maneuver check against DC 15 for ground and water vehicles, DC 10 for air, space and submersible vehicles. You make only one crash check in a round even if more than one is called for; just apply +5 to the DC for every additional check required. Other modifiers may also apply, as indicated below.

### DC Modifier Circumstance

|    |                                                                         |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| –5 | Open terrain                                                            |
| 0  | Close terrain                                                           |
| +5 | Tight terrain                                                           |
| +2 | Per full 25 mph of speed; in space, per every 200 mph of relative speed |

On a failed check, the vehicle crashes into an obstacle (or the other vehicle, if the maneuver calls for it). The vehicle and the obstacle (and any occupants) suffer base crash damage of 1d6 per 10 mph of vehicle speed, +1 for each point by which the driver failed his crash check. Each occupant may make a Jump or Tumble check to suffer half damage from the crash (DC equal to the failed crash check).

An air vehicle may stall out instead if there is no hard terrain or other obstacle to collide with logically. The pilot may restart the vehicle with a single successful Repair check (DC equal to the crash check). Aerial crash damage is 1d10 per 30 mph of vehicle speed, and is considered a rough landing rather than a cataclysmic collision. On a critical failure of the crash check, the air vehicle comes in for a hard crash and suffers the standard 1d6 per 10 mph points of damage.

A space vehicle only crashes if there is an obstacle nearby; otherwise it enters a tumble which requires a DC20 Pilot check to resolve – until that tumble is resolved, the ship may take no chase maneuvers, and any weapon use or other activity aboard suffers a –4 penalty.

After the crash is resolved, roll d%. If the result is higher than the speed that the vehicle was traveling (in mph) at the time of the crash, it remains upright. The vehicle still runs as long as it has 1 hit point left.

With a failed crash check on foot, the character takes a spill, collides with a wall, etc. He suffers 1d6 points of damage and has a –4 penalty on his next maneuver check. Double the damage for a character on an animal mount or bicycle.

This chapter discusses aspects of roleplaying on both sides — player and GM — and offers suggestions that may improve your game.

## The World of Trinity

The **Trinity** setting proposes a future extrapolated from both our reality and the pulp and superpowered genres explored in **Adventure!** and **Aberrant**, respectively. It's meant to be believable within a premise that allows for the existence of individuals with supernormal abilities, but without getting bogged down overmuch in pseudo-scientific detail.

In the Unity Age, the societies of Earth have spread their influence into outer space two generations after the destruction of a hellish global war. While most national boundaries would be familiar to anyone transplanted from our 21st century world, the balance of global power has shifted from the northern and western hemispheres to the south and east — China, Australia, Brazil and Africa dominate 22nd century politics.

Humans remain human, but the recent turbulent history, introduction of alien races and development of noetic powers and biotechnology create fundamental changes in the social fabric of the time.

The psi orders and the **Æon** Trinity provide the other major social change in the Unity Age. They are transnational — indeed, interstellar — in scope, with great social influence, wealth and political power. The Prometheus Effect is at the core of this influence; only the orders can create psions, and **Æon** mediates and coordinates a significant amount of psi order activity. A segment of humanity voices concerns about the orders and/or **Æon**'s influence and agendas. Though records of the Nova Age are scattered and incomplete and few survivors remain, some still remember how “superpowered” types changed the world, and not always for the better. Throughout that chaotic time, **Æon**'s influence was felt to some degree.

Some claim conspiracy and corrupt agendas on the part of the psi orders and **Æon**. On the whole, such claims are mere paranoia. These are not sinister groups out to subjugate the universe. The psi orders' primary goal is to protect humanity from destruction — whether against mutated aberrants or the mysterious Coalition races or human despots. Psi order and **Æon** personnel are not all saints, of course — humans are far from perfect, and corruption can spread from even the most noble pursuits — but the vast majority are a force for good in the universe.

As in the previous Trinity Universe settings, **Æon** is a key motivating force for the time. **Æon** has existed for almost 200 years by the Unity Age, dating back to the dawn of the 20th century. While it has gone through many changes (including a near-revolution at the peak of the Aberrant War) it remains a fundamentally altruistic and positive group, with the same goal as when Maxwell Anderson Mercer first established **Æon** in the early 1920s — to explore the unknown and help guide humanity to a brighter future. **Æon** has its secrets, to be certain, and the reasons for keeping them are not always the best. But its fundamental motivation is not a malevolent one.

## Echoes of the Past

Each Trinity Universe game — the shared setting of **Adventure!**, **Aberrant** and **Trinity** — represents one of three thematic aspects, set in different points in time. **Adventure!**, a pulp game set in the early 20th century, represents Hope; **Aberrant**, a super powers game set in the early 21st century, represents Sacrifice; and **Trinity**, a science fiction game set in the early 22nd century, represents Unity.

In the “official” Trinity Universe, relations in the Nova Age between novas and humans worsen over time, culminating in the Aberrant War of 2049–2061. The world of **Trinity** assumes a present built upon the ravages of that time. The echoes of both the Inspiration Age and the Nova Age are felt even into the 22nd century, whether through Max Mercer's occasional jaunts through time or the renewed aberrant assault on human space, led by the mysterious creature — or creatures — known only as the Colony.

The Storyteller versions of the Trinity Universe have hundreds of thousands of words in print in addition to the new d20 core books. You don't need any of it. The only thing you really need is this book (and the *Player's Handbook*). Even then, don't take any of it as biblical canon. If a GM reads something in **Trinity** that just doesn't fit with her conception of the game, she should take a minute and figure out what the implications of throwing that thing out will be. If doing so doesn't appear to cause further problems, she should feel free to toss it. Likewise, **Trinity** can be played as a stand-alone game without need of **Adventure!** or **Aberrant**; or the PCs' actions may forever alter the setting's future to change (or outright ignore) the **Trinity** time frame. The other Trinity Universe games are only *possible* histories for **Trinity**. No GM or player should feel constrained by material found in those books when it comes to the PCs' 22nd-century exploits.

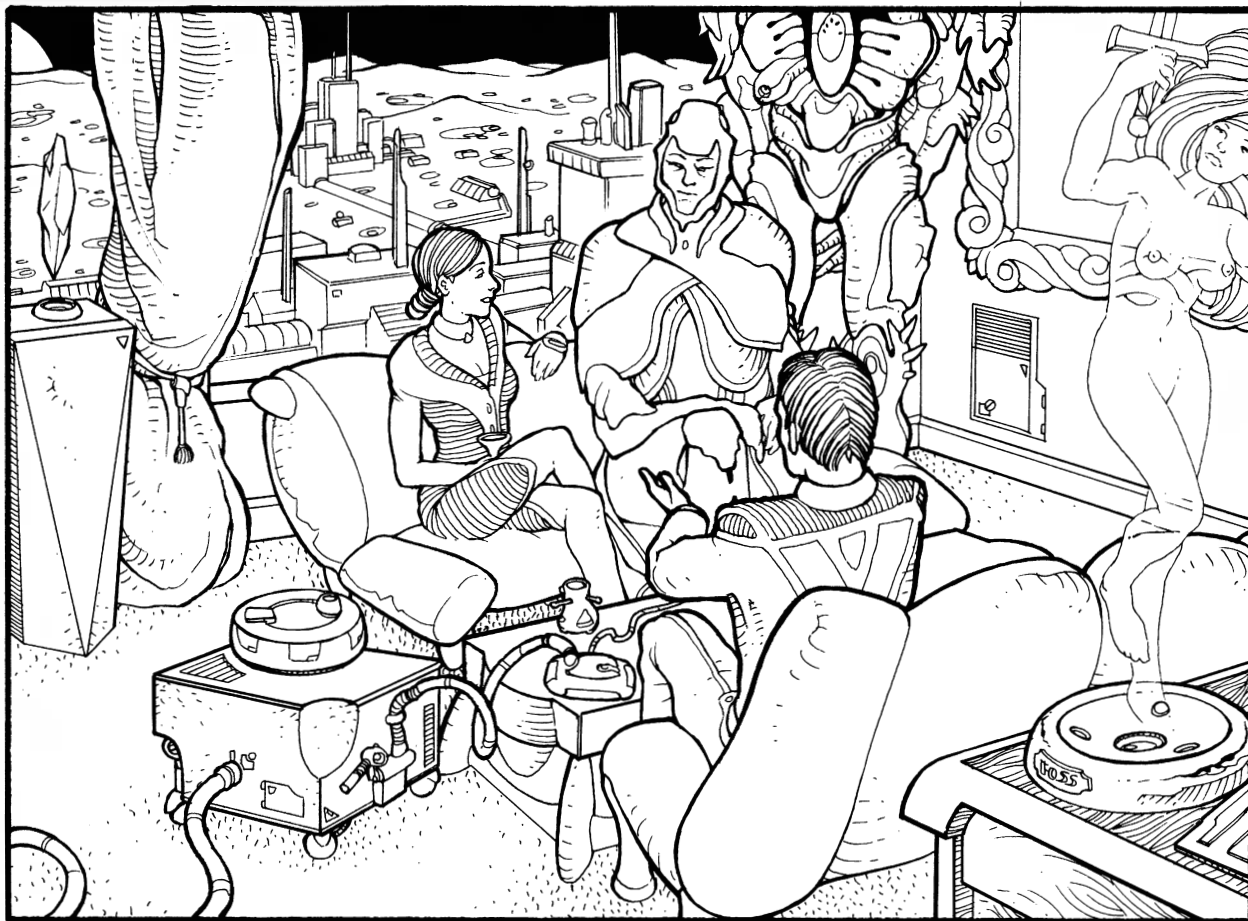
## The Team

It's a dangerous universe out there; it isn't a good idea to take it on alone. Both “neutral” and psi-active individuals band together, whether for strength in numbers, camaraderie, shared belief or some other need. Whatever the motivation, different teams are alike in one key area: a dedication to the team and to the individuals who comprise it.

Whether you're creeping down a corridor checking for aberrant infestations or arguing the regulations involved in “requisitioning” prototype Legion psiware, you need to know that your team supports you. Much like a family, the team may not always get along — individuals could even have distinctly opposing philosophies — but there remains a foundation of respect and reliance on one another that can weather almost any storm.

## Creating a Team

The type of team the characters comprise has a tremendous bearing on what the series will be like. If the GM plans to run a series steeped in intrigue and inter-order politics, she should make sure the players know this before they create a group of combat-hungry Legionnaires. In the end, the story revolves around the team (and, therefore,



the PCs); understanding what the team is about helps both players and GM to immerse themselves in the Unity Era.

The following are a few questions that players and the GM alike should consider during character creation.

- **Where is the team based?** This depends on where the GM sets her series. Knowing that the team operates out of Orgotek regional offices, a Legion post, a patrol craft or simply meets at someone's flat gives a good basis for both GM and players.

- **How do the team members interact?** A team's internal dynamics can give everyone a wealth of roleplaying opportunities and story hooks. Are the members all close friends? Is the team a business venture? Are there any jealousies or rivalries among members? Are there any secrets kept from certain members? What's the level of trust and camaraderie?

- **What are the team's missions?** This ties closely with the type of series the GM runs. The team may have a specific charter given to it by superiors (patrol the Belt for signs of aberrant incursion, act as emissaries to the new qin embassy on Mars), or it may have its own agenda (make life rough on Orgotek, help the elgees). The team's focus may be on combat or intrigue, and the GM should be sure that missions are geared accordingly. Still, it helps to mix things up a bit (having a rough-and-tumble Legion squad escort a high-ranking UAN official to an international symposium can make for some interesting roleplaying).

- **Is there a team leader?** Decisions must be made somehow. Does your team go by military rank or corporate structure? Is it a democratic group? Are the members well-disciplined and respectful of others' suggestions, or do they tend toward petty squabbling?

- **What is the team's allegiance?** A group with the support of an order or government can draw upon this resource for finances, gear and backup — although usually at the cost of restrictions on the members' freedoms and responsibilities. A team that goes it alone can call its own shots, but operates without a safety net.

- **Who are the team's enemies?** The team might have chosen to defy a specific group. Is that organization aware of the team's defiance (and does it care)? Are there other agencies operating contrary to the team's goals? Is the team aware of these forces? What do these enemies intend?

- **Why does the team exist?** This is perhaps the most important question of all. There's a reason why the characters got together and remain together. Did they have a friend in common? Were they assigned by the Trinity or some other group? Were they drawn together by similar goals or philosophies, or is it simply a marriage of convenience?

## The GM's Toolkit

The rest of this chapter has tips for the GM on running **Trinity** games. Players can read it; just know that the information is focused for GM use.

### Theme

Each Trinity Universe game represents one of three thematic aspects. **Adventure!** represents Hope, **Aberrant** represents Sacrifice, and **Trinity** represents Unity.

Unity offers countless possibilities. On the largest, most grandiose scope, **Trinity** suggests the dream that humanity —

indeed, all sentient beings — can unite to forge a better future for all. At its most narrow focus, **Trinity** shows that every individual needs help at some time or another. Myriad options exist amid this range — the unity of a psion team forming, of extrasolar colonists joining forces, of psi orders or metacorps working together... and of antagonists like the doyen and aberrants and the Coalition uniting with allies and pawns for their own sinister goals.

You can also view unity on a “meta” level. The roleplaying game is not a solitary experience; players and GM must unite to tell the story together.

Promoting unity on a basic level — “The PCs work together because otherwise the plot falls apart” — gets the job done, but it doesn’t make for the most compelling game. Consider that the Unity Era is a time at once hopeful and paranoid. Humanity has gone through a rough century; and the return of aberrants, rise of psions, and emergence of alien threats — not to mention the constant schemes and machinations that humans have indulged in since time immemorial — make it hard for people to trust easily in one another. Still, it is perseverance through the past eras and the possibility of a bright future that allow many to have faith in their fellow men and women.

Unity need not be altruistic in every instance. There are sure to be times when someone — PC or NPC or both — joins forces with someone else out of purely selfish reasons or ulterior motives. That’s simply another expression of unity.

While most of the story’s events and characters should somehow relate to the story’s theme, the theme itself need not be emblazoned across the stars in neon. It doesn’t have to be blatant to provide internal consistency.

## Mood

If a theme is an intellectual hook into the story, a mood is an emotional hook. The mood or tone that you want to create with a story largely determines the setting of events. In other words, your choice of location for encounters should evolve naturally from the tone that you want to evoke in your game. The bowels of a vast arcology are an appropriate setting for dark, brooding scenarios. Gleaming orbital stations are a fitting home for social and political intrigue. There should be dynamic environments and obstacles for action-packed stories with chases and high-adrenaline firefights.

## Setting

A game that involves space travel and multiple worlds can have a diluted setting. It makes for a huge scope in which the PCs can be lost easily. A well-defined setting, in which the PCs feature prominently, is key to maintaining continuity in your game. Your story may be set in Luna’s Underworld, with all its dives, squalid tunnels and malfunctioning gravcrystals; it may be set on the fringe of known space, in a solar system where chromatics were encountered recently; it may be set aboard a frigate that the PCs know top to bottom but in a region of space that they have no clue about.

Whatever the case, the PCs should be introduced to and allowed to become familiar with the locales and supporting cast of the setting before you move them along to discover new areas. If the story’s locales change constantly, the players have no sense of consistency and must scramble to understand each new area... and, as a result, spend little time getting to know their own characters. Lack of stability is distracting and undermines your story.

# Pulling Back the Veil

## Spoiler Alert!

**This section is intended for GMs only! It takes a revealing look behind the scenes of the Trinity Universe, exposing key plot points and motivations of various forces that the PCs may encounter.**

This section outlines what we’ve come to call the “metaplot,” the overarching storyline that runs through the Trinity Universe eras. The metaplot is epic in scope, but offers plenty of room to incorporate your own adventures into the greater story.

As with everything else in **Trinity**, you’re at liberty to follow as much or as little of the metaplot as you like. It’s simply a tool to help you create challenging and entertaining stories. Feel free to discard anything that doesn’t match your vision of the setting. You (and your players) determine the ultimate fate of the Trinity Universe.

## In the Beginning

Unknown to the populace at large, superhumans (“aberrants” in the 22nd century, “novas” in the early 21st century) and psychics (“psions”) sprout from the same divergent evolutionary track. Aberrancy in superhumans originates from the Mazarin-Rashoud node. Noetic power in psychics derives from key changes in the DNA. The potential to become superhuman or psychic arises from the same genetic potential, rare distinctions from the norm to the individual’s genetic structure. However, once the individual trips to one manifestation or other, there’s no going back. A character with the requisite genetic potential can become a superhuman or a psion, *never* both.

What are the circumstances that can trip someone to become an aberrant versus a psion? We leave that up to you. In general, aberrants erupt in a single sudden circumstance of tremendous stress; psions develop noetic latency through a series of confrontations (some then evolve into “proto-psions” or naturally-manifesting psi users, but the majority undergo the Prometheus Effect). The significant thing from a setting standpoint is what happens after that potential triggers to superhuman or psychic.

A superhuman manipulates quantum energy, the fundamental forces of the universe, the building blocks of reality. Psions manipulate noetic or subquantum energy, which exists “between” the known particles of the cosmos.

Quantum and noetic energy function as polar opposites — not dissimilar to matter and anti-matter, except not as volatile (they disrupt one another, but don’t cause explosions). Aberrancy triggers more easily than psi does, but is much more rare. Theoretically, both potentials could develop naturally in humanity, with the race splitting into two sub-species over time. Reality isn’t so accommodating, though.

During the Nova Age, a number of novas lose themselves in their tremendous abilities. They draw upon their power without care, not recognizing the danger until it is too late. The mutations and madness that result would (and does) kill a normal human. But these warped aberrants are sustained by the very power that taints them, growing ever stronger as they become more crazed... and less human.

## The Aberrant War

Conflict erupts as those novas who maintain control of their abilities try to restrain their mad siblings. Human groups aid both sides, but millions of innocents are caught in the crossfire. Finally,

important individuals in certain nova groups, in the *Æon* Society and in world government work together to find a final solution. The Chinese Ultimatum is the result.

The aberrants are variously tricked, threatened, chased and dragged from Earth by *Æon* and its nova and government allies. A scant number of novas and aberrants remain hidden on Earth. Some novas volunteer to protect the solar system from aberrant incursion as the conflict continues in space. These dedicated few create and maintain a quantum barrier that bars quantum passage into and out of the solar system.

Unable to return to Earth, aberrants and novas use their incredible powers to find and settle a few worlds in deep space. These planets serve as bases from which to launch their attacks on one another, and become home to many. The largest group of aberrants denies its fate, though, and works ceaselessly to reclaim Earth.

This band is led by the Colony, almost unknown in the Nova Age but a rival in power and drive to Divis Mal himself. The Colony's intensive breeding and sustained taint influence swells the ranks of that creature's forces. It decides the time has come to return to Earth. Instead of trying to break through the quantum barrier the novas maintain around the solar system, the Colony strikes at the guardians themselves. Scores of aberrants surprise the nova guardians and the Colony prevails.

The Colony learns from past mistakes, though. It wants to return home, but the victory won't mean much if Earth is a cinder. The Colony also hopes to use its mutational ability (which it passes on to some of its children, including creatures that call themselves Kali and Yog-Death) to transform all of humanity into either full-fledged aberrants or sub-aberrant breeder stock.

The Colony plans to cripple humanity's defenses while making sure that novas aren't around to help. It sends forces to harry known nova worlds, keeping them distracted. Back in our solar system, the aberrants start to draw a noose around Earth, attacking orbital locations and near-space colonies. Once those are subjugated or destroyed, the aberrants will concentrate fully on Earth without worrying about outside influence.

Just who is the Colony? We never decided, on purpose. Make it whomever you feel is most appropriate — whether a splinter personality of Divis Mal, a warped Anibál Buendía from *Aberrant*, an evolution of the Ubiquitous Dragon from *Adventure!* or someone unrelated to published Trinity Universe canon.

### The Doyen

The emergence and manipulation of quantum energy is felt by a race of beings composed almost entirely of noetic energy. These beings, called the *doyen*, fear the disruption between quantum and psi, since it seems to threaten the aliens' very existence.

Although powerful psi users, the *doyen* consider themselves too highly evolved to take part in direct conflict. They instead search for another race to act as their agents and eliminate the nova threat. (Put another way, the *doyen* are cowards who like to have others do their dirty work.) Pawns with the appropriate potential would receive the benefit of the *doyen*'s societal evolution — psi use and biotechnology.

Some *doyen* suggest using humanity as the best tool against itself. Other *doyen* feel that such a course is too dangerous, since these same humans are the source of the quantum energy that threatens the *doyen*. The debate splits the *doyen* into two factions. One group feels that all humanity is corrupted by aberrancy and should be exterminated. This collection of *doyen* searches space for another race to foster.

The remaining *doyen* group assumes that humans purged aberrants from Earth in an attempt to stay pure from the "taint" of aberrancy. This *doyen* faction searches for the most appropriate humans to serve as their lieutenants in the struggle. Each of these humans will act as a proxy for the aliens, transforming others into active psychics to take up the fight against corruption.

### The Proxies

The proxy candidates are subjected to visions of the aberrants' impending return and told that they are chosen as humanity's defenders — all manner of subtle noetic propaganda to ensure their compliance. Not all of the proxy candidates respond to this urging, but the *doyen* find enough for their purposes.

On the Moon, the *doyen* reveal the proxies' roles as Earth's "chosen defenders." The aliens use vague references and intentional omissions to give the proxies the impression that the *doyen* are hard pressed elsewhere and can't act directly in the impending struggle. The proxies must take up the banner against the aberrants. Those who accept undergo noetic surgery that melds *doyen* genetics into their human physiology. (Those who do not have all knowledge of the *doyen* wiped from their memories — likewise, those who accept lose all memories of those who did not join them.)

The proxies become potent psychics, one step removed from *doyen* themselves. However, the aliens include a control factor in the transformation process, restricting each proxy's noetic power to a single type of psionic aptitude. Paranoid as well as cowardly, the *doyen* want to make sure that their creations must rely on one another and cannot turn on their "benefactors."

Once the change is complete, each proxy receives a strange container that pulses with subquantum energy — a nascent Prometheus chamber. Each tank reconfigures the genetic structure of a human with suitable latent potential, enabling her to channel subquantum energy. Unlike the human-*doyen* hybrids that the proxies have become, the so-called *psions* are fully human, but are likewise restricted to using a single aptitude.

### The *Æon* Trinity

By the 21st century, forces within the *Æon* Society lost sight of its goals in favor of their own interpretations — or ignored those goals outright to pursue personal agendas. The direct and public meddling, establishing nova-sponsored programs and trying to force society down what *Æon* viewed as the right path, changed the world forever — though not in ways envisioned by the organization's founders. *Æon* couldn't have stopped the Aberrant War even if it had stayed true to its original tenets, but this loss of focus and outright corruption made things worse than they might have been otherwise.

In the wake of the Aberrant War, *Æon* cleaned house. Programs were either shut down or overhauled entirely, and the structure was reorganized into three key areas — a trinity of diplomacy, research and investigation. Though by no means perfect, *Æon* of the Unity Age again offers guidance to humanity rather than forcing humanity's course.

This focus on observation and subtle influence enables *Æon* to learn of the psi orders' existence long before the groups go public. Seeing the potential in these organizations — and heeding past mistakes — *Æon* offers to help the psi orders' development but does not seek to gain control of them.

The doyen are extremely long-lived and shape plans over vast stretches of time. They apply a similar approach with the proxies, directing them to amass their forces in secret for years before going into action. The proxies are granted knowledge of how to create biotechnology, as well as psi coordinates to habitable worlds that surround known aberrant space. Unknown to the proxies, the doyen divulge only those coordinates that will enable humanity to set up a net around aberrant extrasolar outposts, much like the one the Colony is creating around Earth. These worlds are supposed to be developed secretly into staging points from which to launch large-scale strike forces.

The psi orders soon grow impatient when aberrants start attacking. Psions have power, why can't they use it? Once Solveig Larssen orders her troops to publicly defend Sydney Spaceport, the other orders emerge from the shadows as well. The doyen are shocked but cannot turn back time. They move with uncharacteristic speed to minimize the damage of exposure, urging the proxies that it is vital to keep the existence of the doyen a secret. The doyen also emit subtle telepathic influence throughout humanity, encouraging them to be receptive to the psions' existence especially when compared with aberrants. The proxies are not made aware of this manipulation, but Rebecca Bue Li, Giuseppe del Fuego and Otha Herzog have strong suspicions.

### The Chitra Bhanu Purge

Unknown to even the proxies, the Chitra Bhanu Order is a test. The doyen are masters of noetic energy, but even they can't focus quantakinesis techniques. The potential is unique to — and exceedingly rare in — humanity. Quantakinesis uses noetic force to manipulate quantum forces, duplicating many nova capabilities — at a lower power scale but without the risk of quantum taint. The doyen are interested in seeing if this capability can be used to shut down quantum (and thereby stop taint from spreading).

Though the human S. K. Bhurano was a latent with quantakinesis potential, she is not like the other proxies. A doyen's essence possesses her (the same is true of Varya in the opening fiction of this book, as well as Robert Wei and Hampsah Cisse in the Storyteller sourcebooks *Ascent into Light* and *Stellar Frontier*, respectively). This alien poses as Bhurano to keep tabs on the order's research and to monitor the other proxies. The proxies never know the truth... although Bolade Atwan, Rebecca Bue Li and Giuseppe del Fuego suspect something near the end.

Viewing each successive breakthrough in quantakinesis, "Bhurano" grows ever more concerned — studies manipulate taint radiation, posing a grave danger of increasing the spread of quantum taint. The doyen within Bhurano shares its findings, and the faction decides that the Chitra Bhanu experiment must end.

The aliens use telepathy to reinforce the influence among the populace that psions in general are forces for good — except for the Chitra Bhanu, who surely must be corrupted by taint. The psi orders are as compromised as any by the doyen manipulations. The proxies call for an investigation that "Bhurano" makes a show of resisting, forcing them to demand one backed by force. Meanwhile, "Bhurano" betrays her followers: The doyen possessing her restricts normal lines of communication, calls all chib psions in from the field who can be located, and insists that they welcome the other orders with open arms.

When the psi orders arrive, the doyen manipulators ignite the existing high tension into outright conflict. The doyen-as-Bhurano allows the human form to be slain and slips away. This throws the rest of the order into panic and a massacre results. Only a handful

of chib psions escape. The order's Prometheus chamber is dismantled and most of its parts are destroyed. The few remaining chibs go into hiding. Some meet with psions not loyal to the orders (or to Æon), and a few join the Norça secretly. (Proxy del Fuego witnesses the Chitra Bhanu fate. Though he doesn't know the truth, he's savvy enough to disguise his own order's research into extinguishing taint, maintaining a cover of criminal activities to deflect suspicion.)

### Esperanza and the Upeo wa Macho Disappearance

Cosmos-exploring Upeo come across Eden, a world inhabited by novas who fled from Earth with their followers after the Aberrant War. The two groups begin a dialogue. Eden's novas are saddened to hear of the aberrants' recent attacks on Earth and agree to aid humanity. They are reluctant to return to Earth uninvited, though, so the Upeo act as their liaisons.

Bolade Atwan tells her fellow proxies about Eden. This time there is no manipulation from the doyen; the proxies' own fear and hatred of aberrants overwhelm Atwan's claims. Cassel and Bue consider the Eden encounter proof that it's too dangerous for teleporters to wander the stars alone. The proxies demand that the Upeo place themselves under the other orders' control.

Fearing a repeat of the Chitra Bhanu purge, Atwan sets about relocating the entire Upeo Order. Cassel, Bue, Solveig Larssen and Matthieu Zweidler marshal their own forces to Africa. The proxies keep the situation under wraps — not even their troops know the whole truth; they are told only that the Upeo Proxy is under aberrant influence and that the teleporters are to be held (using psiware dampeners that drain noetic power) "for their own safety."

Through moles in the Æon Trinity, the Colony learns that the proxies have been embroiled in secret meetings and that all manner of psion combat forces are converging on the Upeo base. Believing that the psions are preparing a massive attack against one of the aberrant worlds, the Colony stages a pre-emptive strike, ordering an assault on *Esperanza*. At worst, the diversion will occupy the psions long enough to warn the Colony's worlds. At best, the massive orbital station could crash into Africa and take out the majority of the psi orders.

The *Esperanza* attack does surprise the psi orders — even the ISRAns, who sense massive subquantum flux but mistakenly assume it relates to the Upeo. In turn, Atwan thinks the *Esperanza* attack is a ruse staged by the proxies to trap the Upeo. She comes to a difficult decision: It is not in humanity's best interests for the Upeo to become subjugated; they must leave now, and can plan later what to do about the Eden novas and the other orders' reactions.

The misjudgment, fear and paranoia that the proxies and the psi orders express in this double catastrophe offer a grim reminder to all that, for all their power, psions are still very human, and very fallible.

### The Huang-Marr Conspiracy

Another lesson in fallibility is seen when a collection of individual Æsculapians and Orgotek personnel begin covert research similar to that pursued by the Chitra Bhanu and the Norça. The Huang-Marr conspirators leave morality and conscience by the wayside, though, exposing psions and psiware to taint in hopes of creating more powerful weapons with which to fight aberrants. The project is exposed, but the rogue psions' efforts cast a shadow over the psi orders.

## The Aliens

### The Qin

One of the worlds the doyen reveal to the proxies is home to the qin, aliens subjected recently to aberrant assaults. Aberrants there have nothing to do with the Colony's forces, having stumbled across Qinshui by accident. Still, revealing the world to the proxies suits doyen purposes perfectly.

The alien benefactors once considered the qin their front-line warriors, but the slug-like aliens had already evolved to their fullest noetic capability. Any further development would have required genetic modification far more involved than was possible with a Prometheus chamber. Each qin would require hybridization as was done with the human proxies — too involved an effort for doyen interests. Still, the qin could serve as cannon fodder.

The qin live in a kind of caste society, split into different "houses" with different roles in society. One house, Lle-ji, sends most of its influential members to Earth to act as diplomats. Once the Upeo vanish, these qin are cut off from home. The power balance back on Qinshui experiences a dramatic shift and has just settled when humanity sends its jump ships to re-contact the extrasolar colonies. Political influence shifts yet again as the returning members of House Lle-ji make a play for leadership of all qin.

### The Chromatics

Separate from all this is the faction of doyen who consider quantum taint too much of a danger to trust humans. This faction searches for its own warrior race. The most promising are the chromatics, whose lack of societal advancement makes them the perfect tool. The doyen lure a band of aberrants to the chromatics' world, then appear to the chromatics after the aberrants attack. Posing as the chromatics' "gods of light," the malevolent doyen recruit the race into the conflict.

The chromatics have a potent inherent capacity for photokinesis, but they lack technological means to reach Earth in order to wage war against humanity. Doyen patrons use a human pawn, Hampsah Cisse, to capture Upeo teleporters and human biotech designs for chromatic use.

This doyen faction works directly with its agents — more so than the opposing faction does with humanity. The difference is dramatic. The chromatics leap from a Bronze Age to a Space Age in a matter of years.

### The Coalition

On the surface, the Coalition is a mix of many different aliens. In truth, every Coalition race springs from the same genetic source, with different breeds or "phyles" created to fulfill various roles. The aliens are ruled by a dominant phyle that has the genetic capacity to bond to any other race through a kind of genetic virus. This explains why the initial encounter with humans is "equated with rape."

The Colony learns of the Coalition's existence through its network of human pawns. It sends a band of aberrants to the Coalition space ark shortly after the first jump ship returns to Earth with its remaining crew. A second human expedition to the ark is also destroyed, though not before sending a datapod back to Earth — with the disturbing revelation that aberrants and the Coalition are breeding! Due to the Coalition's accelerated gestation and growth periods, the aberrant-Coalition crossbreeds will be a threat in a matter of months.

### The Future

The Trinity Universe grows ever more turbulent. The psi orders show increasing resistance to doyen influence — indeed, some of the proxies (Giuseppe del Fuego and Solveig Larssen most notably) have worked in secret for some time to throw off the doyen shackles. They are far from a unified force, however, for they have destroyed one of their own orders and driven off another.

The humans' willfulness causes the doyen to reconsider their decision to create psions. Meanwhile, the malevolent doyen faction stops at nothing to destroy the human race. With the doyen no longer exerting telepathic influence on humanity, the populace grows increasingly concerned by rumors of psion corruption as a the result of the Huang-Marr conspiracy, the truth behind the Upeo disappearance and the details of the Chitra Bhanu purge.

The Colony diverts its forces from distracting novae in deep space to make a concerted play for Earth. It is only a matter of time before it gathers its aberrant-Coalition crossbreeds and heads for our solar system intent on conquest. The qin must decide whether to stand with humanity or retreat to safety. Some chromatic tribes spurn the pretender "gods of light." Civil war threatens to erupt among the still-primitive race, which must also struggle to decide its place in a suddenly huge universe.

Amid all this, the Aeon Trinity must learn to consider humanity's needs before its own.

The following information is included as a quick reference, and should not be considered a limit on any NPC type or on possibilities that you may explore within the setting.

## Other Character Races

### Alien

**Alien Humanoid Type:** Alien humanoids are similar to humanoids, but they originate on planets other than Earth and have biological natures distinctly different from humans. Most alien humanoids rely on DNA. Some have psi abilities, giving them access to the psychic template.

**Features:** An alien humanoid has the following features.

- 8-sided Hit Dice.
- Base attack bonus equal to total Hit Dice (as fighter).
- Good Reflex and Will saves.
- Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

**Traits:** An alien humanoid possesses the following traits unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry.

- Proficient with all simple weapons and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

• Proficient with whatever type of armor it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Alien humanoids not described as wearing armor are not proficient with armor.

- Alien humanoids eat, sleep and breathe, although their preferred food and atmosphere may be other than that normally found on Earth (if that is the case, the alien's preferred food and atmosphere will be described in its entry).

**Alien Subtype:** This subtype is used to represent creatures not native to Earth. They may have a different preferred atmosphere or a diet that requires amino acids not natively found on Earth. They may not be seen as potential prey by Earth-native predators and are immune to most Earth-native diseases.

### Qin

#### Alien Humanoid

**Hit Dice:** 2d8 + 2 (11 hp)  
**Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)  
**Armor Class:** 16 (+2 natural, +4 biosuit), touch 10, flat-footed 16

**Base Attack /Grapple:** +2/+3  
**Attack:** Slam +3 melee (1d6+1) or laser gauntlet +3 ranged (2d6/19-20)

**Full Attack:** Slam +3 melee (1d6+1) or laser gauntlet +3 ranged (2d6/19-20)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

#### Special

**Qualities:** Psi 2, telepathy, *mindscan*, *Babel effect*  
**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3  
**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8  
**Skills:** Balance +1, Bluff +1, Computer Use +4, Concentration +3, Diplomacy +1, Disguise +0,

Drive +1, Investigate +3, Knowledge (art) +3, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (technology) +4, Listen +2, Sense Motive +3, Spot +2.

**Feats:** Contacts (Well-Connected), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Devices (Gadget)

**Environment:** Swamp (Qinshui)

**Organization:** Complex modern society

#### Challenge

**Rating:** 2

**Allegiance:** Qinshui

**Advancement:** By character class. All qin have the psychic template, which is figured into the abilities listed above. A qin may take up to one psychic class level in the course of level advancement.

#### Level

**Adjustment:** +1 (if equipped with a biosuit)

### Description

The qin (pronounced "chihn" or "chehn") give the impression of being humanoid due to the advanced psiware "biosuits" that they wear for all interactions with humans. The qins' true form is a 3-foot long sluglike being with a row of 6-inch-long, prehensile tentacles just above its underside tread.

### Combat

Qin avoid combat where possible, since they are little able to defend themselves physically when outside a biosuit. The suit offers enhanced physical abilities and armor that gives the qin some skill in combat, but they nonetheless prefer diplomacy and subterfuge to direct conflict. (The qin do have biosuits designed for combat, but violence is always considered a last resort [the GM may equip a biosuit with additional offensive capability as necessary].) If conflict is unavoidable, qin use their noetic powers and any biotech they have to full effect.

**Psi:** A qin is psi-active and aware; it is assumed to have the psychic template, a Psi score, and can format psiware. The vast majority of qin can access only telepathy powers; some rare few have shown auxiliary aptitude in clairsentience or psychokinesis.

**Mindscan:** As the granted power of telepathy (see Chapter Four: Aptitudes).

**Babel Effect:** As the 1st-level mindshare power (see Chapter Four: Aptitudes).

### Qin Biosuit

The statistics listed above are for a qin within its biosuit (a Device usable by a qin alone). Apply the following changes to a qin outside of its biosuit:

- Small size.
- Armor Class 10 (–3 Dex, +1 size, +2 natural)
- Melee attacks are –1 to hit and –2 to damage. Ranged attacks are –1 to hit. A qin deals 1d3 points of nonlethal damage in unarmed combat.
- –4 to Strength and Dexterity, –6 to Charisma (when relating to humans).

### Qin Characters

All qin have the psychic template but have normal access only to the telepathy aptitude.

## Chromatic

### Medium Aberration

**Hit Dice:** 3d8 (14 hp)  
**Initiative:** +1  
**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)  
**Armor Class:** 12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11  
**Base Attack**  
**/Grapple:** +2/+5  
**Attack:** Slam +5 melee (1d4+3) or biogun +3 ranged (2d4/19–20)  
**Full Attack:** 4 slams +3 melee (1d4+3)  
**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.  
**Special**  
**Qualities:** Psi 2, photokinesis, *blending*, *invisibility*  
**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1  
**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 9  
**Skills:** Balance +2, Climb +4, Hide +2, Jump +4, Move Silently +2, Spot +12\*, Tumble +2.  
**Feats:** Archaic Weapon Proficiency, Dodge  
**Environment:** Varies (Chrome Prime)  
**Organization:** Primitive tribal society  
**Challenge**  
**Rating:** 3  
**Advancement:** By character class  
**Level**  
**Adjustment:** +0

### Description

Chromatics proved to be dangerous opponents in the few months before the Upeo disappeared. Of course, once the teleporters vanished, Earth was cut off from the aliens.

Much about the chromatics remains a mystery, even in the recent times since the return of the Upeo. The creatures are known to be cunning and vicious, but lacking a civilization as advanced as that of humans or qin.

Chromatics are roughly 4 to 5 feet tall, with smooth, dry skin. Their colorful, mottled hide and hunched, surprisingly flexible frames give the aliens a vaguely reptilian appearance. Chromatics have long, forward-thrusting heads with two sets of eyes (only one set may be open at a time). One set allows binocular vision and the other allows wide-angle vision. The aliens have no other visible sensory organs. A chromatic's mouth is a vertical slit set between its arms; all four limbs are long and powerful, ending in three-digit extremities. The alien's stubby, vestigial tail seems to merely provide counterbalance for the creature's forward-leaning frame.

### Combat

Chromatics use their natural psi abilities with archaic weapons and armor. They may also utilize biotech laser pistols and laser carbines provided by the secretive aliens called the doyen. In the latter case, the chromatics gain Personal Firearms Proficiency as a bonus feat.

**Special Qualities:** Chromatics have the following special qualities:

**Psi:** Chromatics have the psychic template and may take up to two psychic class levels, but they can develop only the photokinesis mode of the psychokinesis aptitude.

**Blending:** While this ability is active, a chromatic can bend light to conceal itself with holographic emanations much like a chameleon uses pigmentation. The chromatic gains a +4

circumstance bonus on Hide checks. *Blending* costs 1 power point and lasts for 10 minutes per level.

**Invisibility:** A chromatic of 5 or more Hit Dice can bend light with sufficient skill that it becomes invisible (see the Glossary in the *Players Handbook*) from all forms of sight — even darkvision — while this power is active. The power ends if the chromatic attacks any creature; actions directed at unattended objects do not disrupt the effect. *Invisibility* costs 4 power points and lasts for 10 minutes per level.

\* Chromatics receive a +6 racial bonus on Spot checks.

### Chromatic Characters

Chromatics can advance in any character class, though presently only warriors and scoundrels are found in any quantity. All chromatics can manipulate light — that's how humans named them, after all — but their psychic ability is almost exclusively focused upon photokinesis. Very rare chromatics have shown auxiliary use of other electrokinesis modes.

### What About the Coalition?

There are no specific Coalition statistic blocks because there is no single representative type of Coalition alien, and we just don't have the room in this book to list the possible varieties. The leaders of the Coalition extract and manipulate genetic material of other races they come across, creating suitable minions to perform various tasks. This makes for almost countless variety. So, if you want the PCs to confront the Coalition, feel free to delve through the pages of the *MM*, the **Creature Collection** or some other monster tome for suitable antagonists (adjusted for a science fiction setting, of course). There are some truly freakish creations roaming the corridors of the Coalition ark, after all.

Note, however, that no Coalition race has the psychic template — with the possible exception of the rumored aberrant/Coalition crossbreeds. (That's a big reason they're so interested in humanity, the qin and the chromatics....)

### Aberrant

The aberrants of the Unity Age are powerful, mad beings. Though once human, these beings have been corrupted by mutation. Indeed, aberrants are all the more horrific for having once been human. Those aberrants who take the time to shout proclamations claim that they're retaking the Earth as their rightful home, though only recently have they shown any coordination in pursuing this goal — most notably in organized assaults on human intrastellar outposts.

Humanity finds two areas of small comfort when faced with the disturbing prospect of aberrants. First, the creatures are not well-organized in pursuing their proclaimed crusade to retake Earth as their rightful home. Second, the aberrants of the 22nd century are, on the whole, less powerful than their counterparts, once called "novas," were in the 21st century. The consensus is that the Mazarin-Rashoud node that gives aberrants their power mutates so rapidly now that it warps the beings into stunted monstrosities before they have a chance to develop their full potentials.

The listed writeups are that of representative aberrants; individuals vary significantly. For a more complete exploration of aberrant possibilities, refer to the d20 System version of **Aberrant**.

## Aberrant Minion

**Aberrant Minion, Male or Female Human (superhuman) War2/**  
**Abr2:** CR 4; SZ M; HD 4d10+8; hp 38; pp 23; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 class), touch 14, flat-footed 10; BAB/Grp +4/+7; Atk +7 melee (2d6+7, claws) or by weapon; Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+7, claws); S/R 5 ft./5 ft.; SA claws; SQ Quantum 3, Quantum Leap, Adaptability, *armor*; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

**Skills:** Climb 5, Intimidate 2, Jump 6, Knowledge (tactics) 1, Listen 2, Spot 2, Survival 3

**Feats:** Brawl, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Power Attack, Mentor (Old Pro)

**Special Abilities/Qualities:** Aberrant minions usually run in packs under the command of a more powerful aberrant, such as the aberrant freak. They are melee fighters, but they are not stupid; and they can use modern weaponry if they get their hands on it.

**Quantum:** The aberrant minion's Quantum functions similarly to a psion's Psi. The aberrant minion can spend up to 6 power points per round.

**Claws:** By spending 1 power point, the minion grows natural weapons that inflict 2d6 + 3 points of slashing damage. The claws last for 4 minutes before retracting.

**Quantum Leap:** The aberrant minion can leap up to 100 feet horizontally or up to 25 feet vertically per power point spent, with no Jump check required. Similarly, he suffers no damage from falling an equivalent distance as long as it is a controlled fall (the GM may call for a Jump or Tumble check, depending on circumstances). The power point expenditure lasts for a single leap.

**Adaptability:** By spending 1 power point every 24 hours, the minion can endure temperature extremes between -50° and 140° Fahrenheit without having to make a Fortitude save (as described in the *DMG*). He doesn't need to eat, sleep or breathe (he must relax or rest as normal to regain spent power points). He is immune to most poisons, gases, diseases and drugs, and gains his Quantum score as a bonus on all Fortitude saves against virulent diseases or nova-derived poisons. By spending 1 additional power point, the minion can endure without harm very hostile environments — the vacuum of space, the bottom of the Marianas Trench, the heart of a volcano, the core of a nuclear facility — for 4 hours.

**Armor:** By spending 2 power points, the aberrant minion develops a thick armored hide for 40 minutes. This grants an armor bonus of +4 with an additional +1 per Hit Die. The minion also suffers -10 feet to unencumbered speed and a -2 penalty on Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble checks and -4 on Swim checks.

## Aberrant Freak

**Aberrant Freak, Male or Female Human (superhuman) Sup1/Sco3/**  
**Abr4:** CR 8; SZ M; HD 5d10+3d8+8; hp 49; pp 30; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., 40 ft. (good) fly; AC 19 (+4 Dex, +5 class), touch 14, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp +7/+8; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1 slam or poison) or by weapon; Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1 slam or poison) or by weapon; S/R 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Crush, *poison*, *quantum leech*; SQ Quantum 4, cool customer, evasion, feeding requirement (fresh blood), Flexibility, *flight*, Hyperenhanced Hearing, *invisibility*, *invulnerability*, trapfinding, vulnerability (fire); SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 18, Cha 8.

**Skills:** Balance +9, Bluff +1, Climb +3, Concentration +3, Decipher Script +1, Demolitions +2, Disable Device +3, Drive +5, Escape Artist +6, Heal +5, Hide +9, Intimidate +1, Jump +6, Knowledge

(behavioral sciences) +1, Knowledge (current events) +1, Knowledge (streetwise) +1, Knowledge (technology) +1, Listen +12, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Repair +1, Search +1, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +7, Survival +5, Swim +2, Tumble +7.

**Feats:** Brawl, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mega-Dexterity, Mega-Wisdom, Mega-Strength, Mobility, Node (Second-Stage Node), Node (Third-Stage Node), Weapon Finesse

**Special Abilities/Qualities:** The aberrant freak resembles a humanoid snake/bat monstrosity. She has enormous bat-ears and snake's scales, as well as patagia which enable her to fly quite swiftly. Her face is closer to a bat's than a snake's, though she has a snake's eyes. The aberrant freak is a stealthy infiltrator and horror-inducing monster.

**Quantum:** The aberrant freak's Quantum functions similarly to a psion's Psi. The aberrant minion can spend up to 10 power points per round.

**Cool Customer (Ex):** The aberrant freak may take 10 on Hide, Move Silently and Listen checks even when under stress.

**Crush:** By spending 1 power point and taking a full-round action, the aberrant freak can make a Crush attempt on her next attack. A successful strike inflicts lethal damage and increases her Strength modifier by +8 for a single unarmed strike.

**Evasion (Ex):** The aberrant freak takes half damage from effects requiring a Reflex save; she takes no damage if she makes her save.

**Feeding Requirement:** The aberrant freak suffers a -2 penalty on any attack rolls, saves, skill checks and ability checks if she has not consumed at least one pint of fresh blood from a live mammal within the past 20 hours.

**Flexibility:** By spending 1 power point, the aberrant freak can contort and reshape her form to fit through any opening that her fist can pass through normally, and/or stretch its limbs up to 3 feet. The freak can stretch her form an additional 3 feet for each extra power point spent. The freak also gains her Quantum score as a competence bonus on any Escape Artist or Sleight of Hand checks. The effect lasts for 4 hours.

**Flight:** The aberrant freak must spend 2 power points to fly for 80 minutes.

**Hyperenhanced Hearing:** By spending 1 power point, the aberrant freak's ranks in Listen are effectively doubled; and she gains infra/ultrasonic hearing and sonar for 4 rounds.

**Invisibility:** For 2 power points, the aberrant freak can turn invisible for 8 minutes. The power ends for one round if the freak attacks any creature.

**Invulnerability:** The aberrant freak has DR 12/— against piercing and ballistic attacks, and is not subject to critical hits from such attacks.

**Node:** The aberrant freak can spend up to 10 power points per round and recovers 8 power points per hour.

**Quantum Leech:** By spending 2 power points and making a successful melee touch attack, the aberrant freak can steal 4d6 power points from another character with the superhuman template.

**Poison:** By spending 2 power points and making a successful melee touch attack, the aberrant freak poisons an opponent (DC 18 Fortitude save; 1d10 Constitution primary and secondary damage).

**Trapfinding (Ex):** The aberrant freak may make Search rolls to detect traps with a DC over 20.

**Vulnerability:** The aberrant freak suffers an additional 4d6 points of fire damage when struck by a fire-based attack.

## Æon Trinity

This independent organization is involved in almost every level of 22nd-century society. Most people on the street are familiar with the name, but most have no idea what the Æon Trinity is really about.

People from all walks of life, from slummers to corporate executives, government officers to psion leaders, are either members of or are associated with the Æon Trinity. The Trinity is a subtle yet powerful force for change. The templates below are for non-psychic humans, but psions make up an increasingly large number of Æon's members.

### Neptune Division

This Æon Trinity division ensures that the organization runs smoothly. It maintains communications between the various divisions and teams, and it is the face that the public sees when dealing with the Trinity.

**Neptune Division Operative, Male or Female Human Ent2:** CR 2; SZ M; HD 2d8; hp 9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 class), touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB/Grp +0/+0; Atk +0 melee (by weapon) or +3 ranged (by weapon); Full Atk +0 melee (by weapon) or +3 ranged (by weapon); S/R 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ stories from the road, inspire competence; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 15

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (current events) +4, Knowledge (popular culture) +4, Knowledge (streetwise) +4, Listen +4, Perform +5, Profession (Neptune Division) +5, Sense Motive +4, Speak Language (Chinese).

**Feats:** Persuasive, Citizenship (Open Door), Contacts (Well-Connected), Influence (Celebrity).

**Languages:** Arabic, English, Chinese.

**Special Qualities:** A Neptune operative has the following special qualities.

**Stories from the Road (Ex):** Already know ordinary local facts with a check using Level + Intelligence modifier against a DC between 10 and 25.

**Inspire Competence (Ex):** Full round action and DC 10 Charisma check to provide 1 ally with +2 competence bonus in combat for 2 rounds.

### Triton Division

This arm of the Æon Trinity follows the dictum: Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. These investigators are masters of uncovering facts, from archeological digs to crime scenes. This group also includes important scientific minds.

**Triton Division Operative, Male or Female Human Aca2:** CR 2; SZ M; HD 2d6+2; hp 9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 class), touch 11, flatfooted 10; BAB/Grp +0/+0; Atk +0 melee (by weapon) or +1 ranged (by weapon); Full Atk +0 melee (by weapon) or +1 ranged (by weapon); S/R 5 ft./5 ft.; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12.

**Skills:** Computer Use +6, Concentration +2, Decipher Script +5, Demolitions +3, Disable Device +3, Gather Information +3, Investigate +5, Knowledge (art) +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (technology) +5, Knowledge (streetwise) +5, Knowledge (behavioral sciences) +7, Profession (Triton Division) +5, Research +6, Search +6.

**Feats:** Investigator, Citizenship (Open Door), Contacts (Well-Connected), Status (Company Man).

**Languages:** Arabic, Chinese, English, Spanish.

### Proteus Division

The shadowy, third arm of the Æon Trinity, this division is the one that "gets things done." This may include liberating captured agents, assisting a nation in covert operations or dealing with a potential threat to the Trinity. Proteus agents also guard sensitive materials and information acquired by the Neptune or Triton divisions.

**Neptune Division Operative, Human Sco2:** CR 2; SZ M; HD 2d6+4; hp 11; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 class), touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +2 melee (by weapon) or +3 ranged (by weapon); Full Atk +2 melee (by weapon) or +3 ranged (by weapon); S/R 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ Cool customer, trapfinding; SV Fort +X, Ref +X, Will +X; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8

**Skills:** Balance +5, Bluff +2, Climb +4, Disable Device +3, Disguise +1, Drive +5, Escape Artist +5, Forgery +2, Gather Information +2, Hide +7, Jump +3, Knowledge (current events) +2, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +5, Perform +1, Profession (Proteus Division) +3, Search +3, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +6, Tumble +5.

**Feats:** Alertness, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Contacts (Well-Connected), Stealthy.

**Languages:** English.

**Special Qualities:** A Proteus operative has the following special qualities.

**Cool Customer (Ex):** Take 10 on Hide, Listen, and Move Silently checks even when distracted or under duress.

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Make Search checks even against traps with a DC above 20.

## The Proxies

Although among the most influential figures in the 22nd century, much about this eclectic group remains a mystery.

### Bolade Atwan

The Upeo wa Macho Proxy feels a keen sense of duty to justice and social order that expresses itself in a serious, almost solemn demeanor. Her driving desire to help the whole of humanity overshadows all other concerns in her life and colors every decision she makes.

Though her goal is vast in scope and ambition, Atwan knows that the key is in concrete details rather than in abstractions — ensuring that people have sufficient food, shelter, protection from danger, and the like. This relentless focus on the practical often blinds her to political necessity, resulting in the hardest choice — and, some might say, the greatest mistake — she ever made. Atwan trusted that her fellow proxies would agree that the novas of Eden would be a potent tool against aberrants. She failed to reckon with almost a century worth of emotional and political baggage that came with all reference to aberrants — even so-called "good aberrants" like the novas of Eden.

In the years that she forced the Upeo order to remain at their hidden retreat on Ruan's World, Atwan had extensive time for reflection. She still feels that she made the right choice to leave Earth when the other orders advanced on the Upeo base. Still, she has begun to admit, if only to herself, that events might not have reached that crisis point if she had handled things with the proxies differently.

### Rebecca Bue Li

The Ministry Proxy is the most private of all the proxies, more of a mystery than even del Fuego. She was a key figure in Philippine intelligence, so her past was sealed in intelligence records even before she became proxy. As China's Minister of Noetic Affairs, she wields

tremendous influence, but thus far has focused her attention on protecting human society just as her fellow proxies do.

Bue Li has a deep-rooted interest in protecting humanity, and believes just as strongly that she is justified in taking whatever direct action (whether overt or not) is necessary to ensure that humanity endures. Put another way, Bue Li agrees with the sentiment that making an omelet requires breaking eggs. Her religious beliefs offer no conflict to this view — indeed, her faith appears to do the opposite, giving her an inner calm to empathize with her fellow human beings but still make the hard choices when necessary.

## Alex Cassel

The Orgotek “Prexy” has many layers to his personality, and his motives and goals sometimes interfere with those of his allies — and even with Cassel’s own plans, on occasion. There is a certain madness to his methods, but Cassel is far from insane. He simply sees more sides to a problem — and, therefore, a correspondingly greater number of possible solutions — than most people do.

Cassel dreams of a human race prospering in every sense of the word: free of aberrants and other menaces, expanding through the universe, living long, full, satisfying lives. Cassel wants to abolish tyranny and poverty and everything else that keeps people from fulfilling their dreams. And he’s willing to do almost anything to make all this happen.

Alex Cassel’s moral code revolves around these plans for humanity. He condones subterfuge, theft and even killing, but he is nonetheless an idealist. The Prexy wants to build a peaceful, prosperous future; he doesn’t sit in a board room and declare hits like a mob boss. He has heroic and humanitarian goals, but his actions can pose moral quandaries for his allies and followers.

## Giuseppe del Fuego

The Norça Proxy is the most and the least human proxy. His life is a collection of lies, yet he struggles most to uncover universal truth. Each movement and expression is both calculated and sincere. He is gracious and apologetic when necessary, but can harden his heart at a moment’s notice when he feels circumstances require it.

Pai de Norça is a hard man to impress, for he assesses the breaking point of each person he meets and only forms a favorable impression if they push themselves beyond this point without snapping. Those who win his increased scrutiny often find themselves in difficult positions, for they must exceed his expectations repeatedly as a matter of course or he loses interest.

Though del Fuego is known for his myriad interlocking policies, he doesn’t have a direct agenda based on successive achievements and fallback strategies. Rather, all his plans are intertwined contingencies. Should hostile forces appear at any given time — whether aberrant or alien, government or personal — Norça are prepared to respond in an instant knowing exactly what to do and whom to save... and it all starts with saving Norça first. Plans exist for the order’s members to survive purges, internal coups, aberrant infiltration, a second Ultimatum directed at psions and even the death of the proxy himself. Pai de Norça is a born survivor, and he has taught his order well.

## Otha Herzog

Despite reclusive tendencies, the ISRA Proxy has little to hide. His influence in recent decades has had a profound, though subtle,

impact on society. Herzog could be a powerful religious figure if he so chose — and many have already promoted the “hidden Imam” to godhood. He shows no inclination to be an object of worship, however; indeed, his retiring nature was assumed largely to avoid encouraging such attitudes in others.

Despite a distracted demeanor, Herzog is not naïve (as evidenced by the extensive steps he’s taken to make people think that the ISRA Order’s headquarters, *Huruf al-Hayy*, is an orbital station hidden somewhere in the galaxy, when it is actually secreted hundreds of miles beneath the lunar surface). The Old Man is willing to take extraordinary steps to protect individuals or courses of action that he feels are important to humanity’s future. He is not above manipulation (within reason), or playing on conscience, pride or glory to steer others down a course of his choice.

Herzog’s gentle attitude keeps both enemies and supplicants off-base. Even so, he knows he’s not fooling everyone; he may seem distracted perpetually, but that’s because he engages in constant information-gathering. The other proxies and Æon know him well enough that they stay on their toes around the Man Who Sees Everything.

## Solveig Larssen

The Legions Proxy is an earnest, honest soldier who prefers a stand-up fight to a battle of words. She believes that only the Legions have the power and skill to defend Earth. All other forces — from military forces to the other orders — are subordinate to the Legions. This comes across as mind-bogglingly arrogant to many, but there is little argument that *someone* must lead humanity’s defense, and the Legions Proxy has spent the last 20 years doing little else.

After a career in the NC Army and a stint leading a mercenary group, Larssen’s role as proxy opened new vistas of opportunity. Still, the strain of coordinating so many aspects of humanity’s defense is starting to show. She doesn’t take vacations and she can’t possibly step down, retire or quit. While Larssen has a skilled support staff, no one can do her job as well as she can. Even she has begun to admit — at least off the record — that a solution must be found. Even her unique constitution is showing signs of wear, and the struggle to protect humanity doesn’t show signs of ending any time soon.

## Matthieu Zweidler

The Æsculapian Proxy is a brilliant scientist but a marginal leader. He has keen insights regarding medicine and noetics, but he is often obtuse concerning other people. Zweidler views science and medicine as the best human endeavors — the progress of medical science is the progress of humanity. He attends to other matters only grudgingly.

Of all the proxies, Zweidler has the most tenuous control over his order. He trusts in his management staff to make sure everything runs smoothly. This is the best policy for those individuals who are capable and have the order’s best interests at heart, but Zweidler is not always the best judge of character.

The recent Huang-Marr conspiracy shocked Zweidler. That fellow psions — fellow vitakinetics! — were perverting the techniques that he developed was a shocking blow. He has been stirred to action, but he’s been out of the loop in his order for so long he isn’t sure what steps to take. Humbled and confused, Zweidler must face hard truths about himself and his order if he is to truly embody the role of proxy.

# Glossary

**afoxé:** African/Brazilian-mix music.

**anima:** A popular music form that involves "organic" stylings. Similar to a variant of 20th-century mid-range alternative, mixed with trance-y goth. Fans are divided into two groups. One embraces an intuitive reality in which physicality (usually represented by hardtech) is ignored in favor of emotions and spirituality (signified by biotech). The other group worships the death drive and is typically depressed by the "terrible existential problems of being trapped in an artificial cyberworld." Developed in the wake of Anima Culture (q.v.), anima music became very popular in Europe and Nippon.

**Anima (also "Anima Culture," "Anima Continuum," etc.):** Influential "underground" or popular school of cultural criticism that seeks to predict how humanity will adapt to the technological advances of the 22nd century, notably biotech and psi. The term is also used as a descriptor of evolving aspects of culture that are "organic" or radically different from the "hard" cultures and political structures that existed before. Generally, "anima" means "decentralized, holographic, recursive, fluid" or "mutable."

**Anima Music Society:** A pro-Western, pro-psi democratic group in China, predominantly in the north where bang music (q.v.) is popular.

**Ant Farm Syndrome:** A psychological disorder in which the ego disappears, leaving only the exoskeleton of protocol and duty behind. Caused by severe crowding in heavily artificial environments. Endemic to Nippon.

**asesino(s) de la moto(s):** Portuguese for "motorcycle assassinations."

**augies:** Psiware augmentation devices, also known as "enhancers" or "boosters."

**Aum Soto:** A cryptic Nihonjin phrase that closed the "Quarantine Broadcast."

**bandeirante(s):** Portuguese for South American "cowboys."

**bang:** A popular music form, similar to rock in its driving rhythms, highly sexualized imagery and electronic modulation. Sounds like a worldbeat mutation of techno with important strains including Muzzein Bang (q.v.), Bengal Bang, Marrakesh Bang, Angkor Bang and Harbin Bang.

**bangboy:** Fan of bang music. Nongender-specific; used as per "clubkid."

**Bharati Commonwealth:** The official name of the Indian bloc, but used rarely by foreigners; "India" is still preferred. Includes present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

**Belt, the:** Spacers' slang for the Asteroid Belt.

**bioapps:** Biological appliances; biotechnological devices.

**Bumen Jibo Tingjiao:** Mandarin for "Office of Semiotics."

**Bumen Jingshen Jingcha:** Mandarin for "Office of Psionic Security."

**burrios clandestinos:** Portuguese for "shantytowns."

**buzhang:** Mandarin for "minister."

**buzio(s):** Portuguese for "shell(s)."

**cafezinhos:** South American "little coffees"; very thick and sweetened heavily.

**Caipirinha:** A South American cocktail.

**Candomblé:** Proper name of African/Brazilian-mix religion.

**canga:** Portuguese for a beach-wrap skirt.

**capoeira:** African/Brazilian-mix dance and martial art.

**Carioca(s):** Portuguese slang for residents of Rio de Janeiro.

**Caucasian:** Fierce little country sandwiched between Russia and the Turks. Originally known as Georgia or Armenia.

**centro(s):** Portuguese for "center(s)."

**Chitra Bhanu:** Originally a Vishnavi messianic term used to refer to the eradicated Bombay-based quantakinetic order. Spelled "*Chitra Bhanu*" in Hindi.

**CPO:** Central processing organism, used in reference to biotech that contains biological computers.

**cybershinto:** Slang term used by foreigners to describe the quasireligious protocols that regulate how the *zaibatsu* interact with their corporate computer avatars. Nihonjin have no name for such relationships.

**desechables:** Portuguese for "throw away" children; street urchins, poor children.

**De Naturis Vibus Mentis:** Official Catholic position on the psi phenomenon presented by the current pope, Benedict XVIII. Noteworthy for pleading for scientific detachment when dealing with psi. Discourages projecting saintly or demonic attributions to psions.

**divina:** The performer/composer of Muzzein Bang who is responsible for both music and visuals at an event. Equivalents in 20th-century media would be "performance artists" or "mixmasters." The sophistication of Muzzein requires that most divinas be psi-active clairsentients.

**Djakarta:** The most important of the Indonesi city-states; a sort-of "happy man's Tokyo"; the "Computer Crossroads of the World." The region contains so much wealth that the gap has been bridged between Djava and some outlying islands in order to expand real estate.

**dongrenyi:** Mandarin for "telepathy."

**El Capybara:** Portuguese for "the Giant Rat."

**elgee (from L.-Gee, or lunar gravity):** Lunar natives born to parents who are unable to leave Lunar-gravity regions.

**en Brazilia:** Portuguese for "Brazil"; Brazilian.

**er:** Mandarin for "two"; Chinese designation for Alpha Centauri B.

**Erthroxylon coca:** Proper Latin name for the coca leaf's active agent.

**fengming:** Mandarin for "phoenix song."

**figa:** A talisman shaped like a fist with the thumb up between the second and third fingers; a good luck charm in most South American cultures.

**fulgee (from full gee, or full gravity):** Natives of the Moon born to parents capable of functioning in full Earth gravity.

**Funan:** "Vietnam." A decentralized Anima Zone with no capital city. The name is homage to the ancient mercantile culture of the region, similar to that of the Phoenicians.

**Han:** "Chinese," not generally used by non-Chinese.

**Hidden Fortress:** An elaborate defense screen designed to keep any aberrant short of Godzilla out of Japan, and designed to fry those who are stupid enough to try.

**holosim:** Also just "sim." A virtual-reality environment. Holosims range from basic headset-projection holograms to room-sized holographic environments to advanced playgrounds with multiple holographic projectors, live actors, computer-controlled gimballs and adjustable rooms.

**honglong:** Mandarin for "red dragon."

**Honshu:** The largest of Nippon's Home Islands. Every inch is paved and built up.

**Indonesi:** "Indonesia." Includes the old "Malaysia." The center of New Islam. Ba'hai and computers predominate.

**IPETA:** "Island Peoples' Economic Treaties Alliance." A loose economic bloc dominated by Nippon, including the Indonesian city-states and the various Polynesian groups. Singapore is a member in name only, as it relies more on China and Brazil.

**Israel-Judah:** Messianic nation comprising the present-day states of Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Sinai peninsula, and parts of Syria. "The Promised Land."

**jibo tingjiao:** Mandarin for "empathy."

**Jingshen Daxueyuan:** Mandarin for "Psi Institute."

**Jingshen Jiaobu:** Mandarin for "Ministry of Noetic Affairs."

**Joe Hologram:** An everyday person; the average citizen. While the slang term survives, the computer agent from which it originated has long since fallen into obscurity.

**jogo do bicho:** Portuguese for "game of the animals"; a gambling lottery.

**jogo dos buzios:** Portuguese for "game of shells"; future-reading, like tarot.

**justa(s):** Portuguese for "bully government."

**justiça:** Portuguese for "justice."

**Kampuchea:** "Cambodia." The multimedia art capital of Asia. Fab anima scene.

**Kazuhito:** Nippon's quasidivine, titular leader.

**Khantze Lu Ge:** "Castle in the Air"; Alpha Centauri Colony (the Chinese refer to it as Kongzhong Lou Ge).

**Kuala Lumpur:** The last vestige of "Malaysia." Supports terrorists all over the continent in hopes of restoring the "sanity" of the 20th century; ally of the FSA.

**kusanyika:** Swahili for "assembly."

**LAO:** Lunar (or Low-gravity) Aggravated Osteoporosis; a syndrome that consists of weakened musculature and thin, brittle bones brought on by living in a low-gravity environment. Both genders have shortened life spans and low quality of life as their internal organs compress and their bones collapse. Post-menopausal women are generally affected more severely than are men.

**lei:** Portuguese for "law."

**Ligua Zhixun:** Advice from the Widow/Madame Bue's Little Book.

**los magico(s):** Portuguese for "the magician(s)."

**lulong:** Mandarin for "green dragon."

**macrotech:** Large, obvious devices, mostly non- or minimally invasive to the user's body.

**madonna:** The latest fashion movement.

**mafaa:** Swahili for "utility."

**Malaya-Indonesi Islands:** "Indonesia." The name reflects a wave of ethnic solidarity; the Malaysians are little more than another Indonesian subculture, speaking the same language.

**Mao Restoration:** A dangerous, underground political alliance between Chinese tongts and Russian extremists.

**Mashriq:** ISRA's collective leadership. Singular "Mashriq." From the Arabic term for a Ba'hai temple. Symbol is a nine-sided figure like one of Gurdjieff's enneads.

**matrix:** The cells used to produce biotech.

**matrix computers:** The computers that interface noetically with technicians to produce biotech; they also record templates for biotech.

**mestizo:** Portuguese reference to a half-Native American, half-foreign person.

**Mianmar:** "Burma." A sleepy and anachronistic place full of those who just want to be left alone. They agree with China on political issues to assert how different they are from India.

**microtech:** Tiny, biological nanotechnology that is mostly invasive to the user's body.

**Mineiro(s):** Portuguese slang for residents of Minas Gerais.

**moja:** Swahili for "one."

**Moskva:** "Moscow."

**mujukuu:** Swahili for "grandchild."

**muzzein bang:** A strain of the bang music entertainment genre, marked by heavy incorporation of clairsentient imagery and propaganda; the unofficial theme music of 22nd-century Ba'hai. Also called "vision bang" for its reliance on symbolic simulation of clairsentient states and "holographic awareness."

**mwilimu:** Swahili for "teacher" (an honorific).

**Netherlands:** A collection of tiny islands ravaged in the Aberrant War.

**Nippon:** "Japan"; also "Nihon." Includes the "Kuri" (Chishima) Islands.

**Nihonjin:** "Japanese." Used as both a cultural and ethnic adjective.

**Nordisto(s):** Portuguese slang for residents of the northern areas.

**Nova Força de Nacionais:** The New National Force.

**olaminium:** The ultradense element 114, named for the head of the research project on *Mafaa*—3, Dr. E.J. Olamina; stable, nonradioactive, used mostly for military applications at this point.

**Oman:** A rich and decadent place of gambling and glamor; the new Riviera. The "depraved sultan" splinter of the Islamic world.

**Orbital China:** The community of Chinese living and working in space. Treated like "Overseas China" was in the 20th century.

**orgone:** Alex Cassel's term for the noetic energy particular to electrokinesis manipulations. The Prexy claims orgone permeates all living things and carries the erotic drives. EKs often draw parallels between this hypothetical fluid and electric current.

**Orgosoft Farms:** Orgotek biotech plantations.

**Orgulho de Céu:** Portuguese for "Pride of the Sky."

**Outer Manchuria:** "Kamchatka." Territories shared with Russia after the Collapse in a perpetual lease/resource-sharing arrangement. Chinese are encouraged to emigrate there in order to secure a permanent hold on the territory.

**Pai/Mae de Santo:** Portuguese for "Father/Mother of the Saints."

**paredão necessário:** Portuguese for "necessary wall."

**Paulista(s):** Portuguese slang for residents of São Paulo.

**Permanent Refugee Zones:** Regions of the Earth's surface that are so badly damaged that they will remain uninhabitable for decades to come. Includes France, the Zuider Zee, Berlin, Saudi Arabia, Northern Ireland, and many others.

**Persia:** "Iran." An introspective, even mournful country where post-Old Jerusalem Islam has evolved into something approaching medieval Catholicism.

**plasmal matrix:** Cells of single-celled eukaryotic origin, pre-distinguishing between flora and fauna.

**preserva:** Portuguese for "(to) preserve."

**preservação(s):** Portuguese for "preservation(s)."

**Psi Nippon:** The Nihonjin youth culture that embraces biotechnology, psions and anima culture. Most live either outside Nippon or wish they could. They're considered delinquents by proper Nihonjin society, but not yet viewed as a threat to Nippon's cultural stability.

**psiware:** Living biotechnological devices.

**Pyongyang:** The "Inner Capital" of reunited Korea.

**qigong:** Mandarin for "acupuncture."

**Qin:** The Mandarin character for "elegant" or "pleasingly artificial." Also a Cantonese term for the "painted" class of Chinese opera characters. Name given to the first alien race humans contacted.

**Qinri:** Mandarin for "sun of the qin."

**Qinshui:** Mandarin for "ocean of the qin"; designation for the qin homeworld.

**Quarantine, the:** Japan's "Closed-Door Policy," 2047–2103.

**Rock, the:** Earth; orbital-station slang.

**rockwell:** To analyze fashion and judge it fabulous (or atrocious).

**Russian Federation:** Includes Belorussia and Ukraine; does not include Kazakhstan or any of Soviet Central Asia southward.

**santo(s):** Portuguese for "saint(s)."

**scan that spectra:** Miners' jargon that's comparable to "check that out!"

**shekh:** From the Hindi "*shekhiṇah*." The indwelling presence of God; "fun" in bangspeak. The quality that makes something good.

**Society of Jesus:** A Jesuit organization. Telepath Proxy Rebecca Bue Li was reportedly schooled by the society years ago.

**symcause:** Slang term; abbreviation for "symptom + cause" or "symbiotic cause." It means by-product, holographic result or synchronistic effect.

**Taiwan:** The glorious 23rd province of united China.

**Tekne Group:** The hardtech and cyberkinetic research arm of Orgotek.

**Temple Judaism:** A modification of modern Jewish doctrine that harkens back to more traditional views; the result when an expansionist Israel doesn't have to share Jerusalem any longer.

**tepuis:** Portuguese for "flat-topped mountain steppes" (singular and plural).

**tereiro:** Candomblé house of worship.

**terra de natureza:** Portuguese for "land of nature."

**terraforming:** Manipulating a planetary environment artificially to make it more like Earth.

**Tesser:** The bio-organic computer that performs calculations for the *Leviathan*-class jump ships.

**Tibet:** A nation more firmly Chinese than in previous centuries. It is not assimilated entirely, as suggested by the "problems" had with the choice of the current Dalai Lama.

**Total Allergy Syndrome:** A psychogenetic disorder with which the sufferer becomes oversensitive to such a degree that contact with just about anything can be deadly. Sufferers live in plastic-bubble environments.

**Tours:** Site of the *Esperanza*—France Memorial.

**Turkic Federation:** The loose union of Turkey and the various ex-Soviet Central Asian republics as far east as the Chinese border (separated from Turkey proper by the Caspian Sea). The secularist splinter of Islam, populated by rational-talking sufi; a trusty supporter of ISRA. Home to some of the sanest people on Earth in the 22nd century.

**uitlander(s):** Swahili for "foreigner(s)."

**Ulanbator:** Capital of the former Mongolia, now the main staging area for Chinese heavy industry and military orbital activities; a major power involved with the Co-Development Zone. A beautiful city in the 2120s; arguably one of the greatest examples of 22nd-century architecture.

**Umbandist Heresy:** The Orthodox Catholic term for Umbanda.

**Upeo Wa Macho:** Swahili for "the horizon."

**Vatican Reforms (2084):** The conciliatory bull that updated the Vatican to the 21st century. An impressive document (its main flaw is that it came as late as it did), the bull outlines such things as allowing women to join the priesthood, and instructing the clergy to take a more active role in charity work.

**vidmusic:** sight/sound recordings.

**wakina sisi:** Portuguese for "people like us."

**Wanjing:** "City of Endurance"; designation for the Chinese colony on Mars.

**WEI:** The public relations/administrative arm of Orgotek.

**Xigaze:** Tibetan administrative center with a small orbital launch port, used primarily for research and some tourism.

**Xinjiang:** A desert and westernmost province of contemporary China, inhabited primarily by the mean-spirited Turkic descendants of Tamerlane.

**yeh:** Used globally as an adjective as well as an expression of agreement. Means "cool," "it's good," and "know what I mean?"

**yi:** Mandarin for "one"; Chinese designation for Alpha Centauri A.

**Young Marxians:** Idealistic young neo-Marxist types who stage demonstrations in Chinese universities.

**Yunnan:** A backwater province in southwestern China; home to many ethnic minorities. The region was damaged by a supposedly malfunctioning fusion dome.

**Yutu Yinchan:** "The Rabbit in the Moon"; Chinese section of Olympus.

**zaibatsu:** Nihonjin for "corporation." Rigid semiheditary organizations that rule Nippon in the absence of a civil government.

**zhan:** Mandarin for "station" (to stand).

**Zhongguo:** Mandarin term for "China." The English "China" and "Chinese" are generally used in text because "Zhong Guo" isn't as familiar to Western audiences as is "Nippon," for example. Includes Taiwan, Korea and Mongolia on maps, as well as some indication of shared control over the southeastern region of Siberia.

**zikkir:** An ISRA mnemonic trigger; derived from Arabic sufi terminology.

**Zizhiqu:** Mandarin term for China's Autonomous Region.

**Zurich-Geneva:** The voice of Switzerland (and often the rest of the fragmented European Commonwealth).

# TRINITY™

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## Special Thanks

**Wizards of the Coast** for permission to use the radiation rules from *Gamma World*, and for inclusion of assorted material from and references to *d20 Future*.

**Alderac Entertainment Group** for the use of the chase rules from *Spycraft*. Always a fun, cinematic game.

## Dedication

To **Trinity Universe fans**. It's been a blast to take another spin around this crazy, mixed-up, muddled-up world. We hope you enjoy it as much as we have!



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## A Battle Rages Across The Stars

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ISBN 1-58846-971-9 WW16707 \$34.99 U.S.

