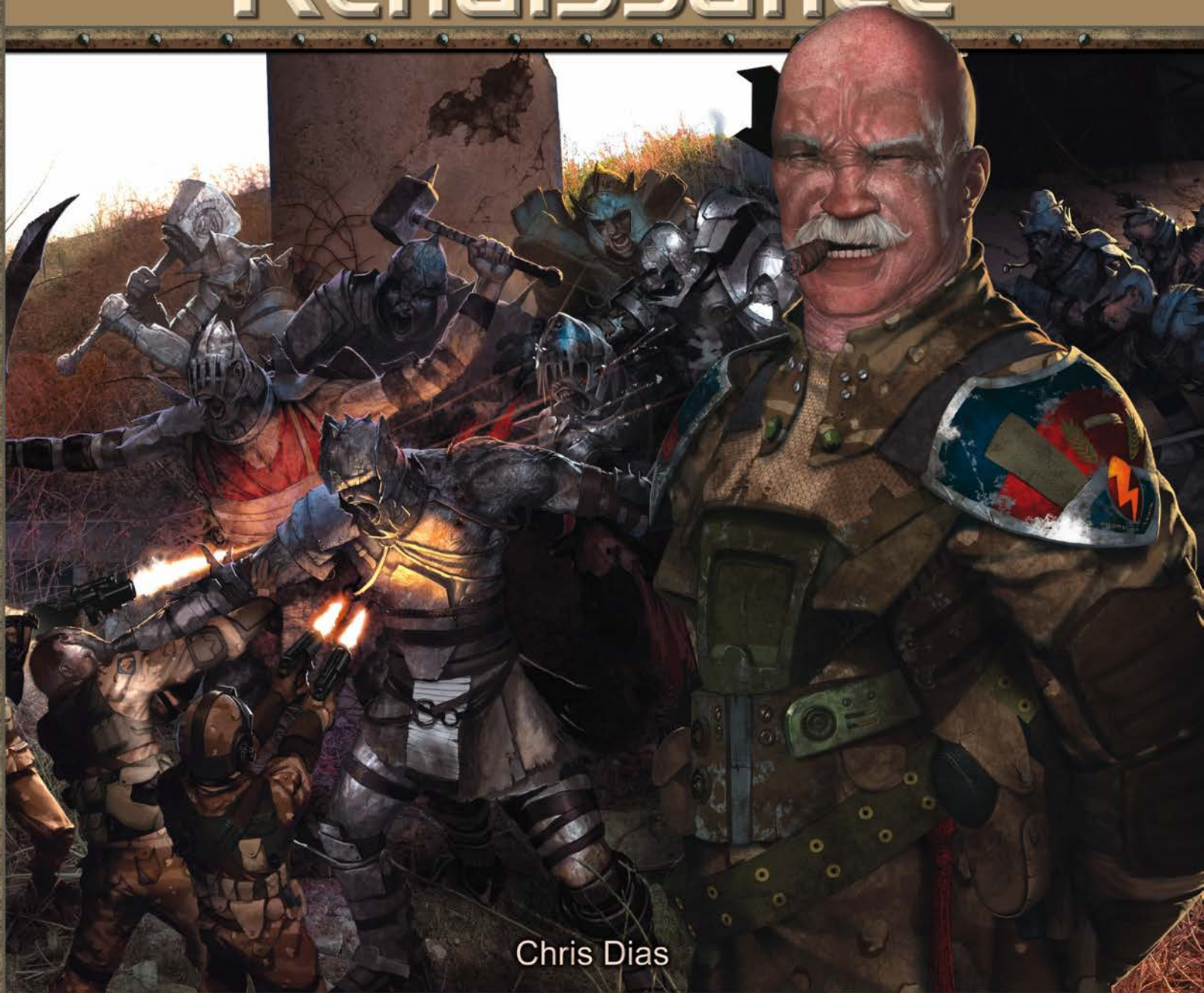


AMETHYST

Renaissance



Chris Dias

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

DEM
Dias Ex Machina





R E N A I S S A N C E



BY CHRIS DIAS



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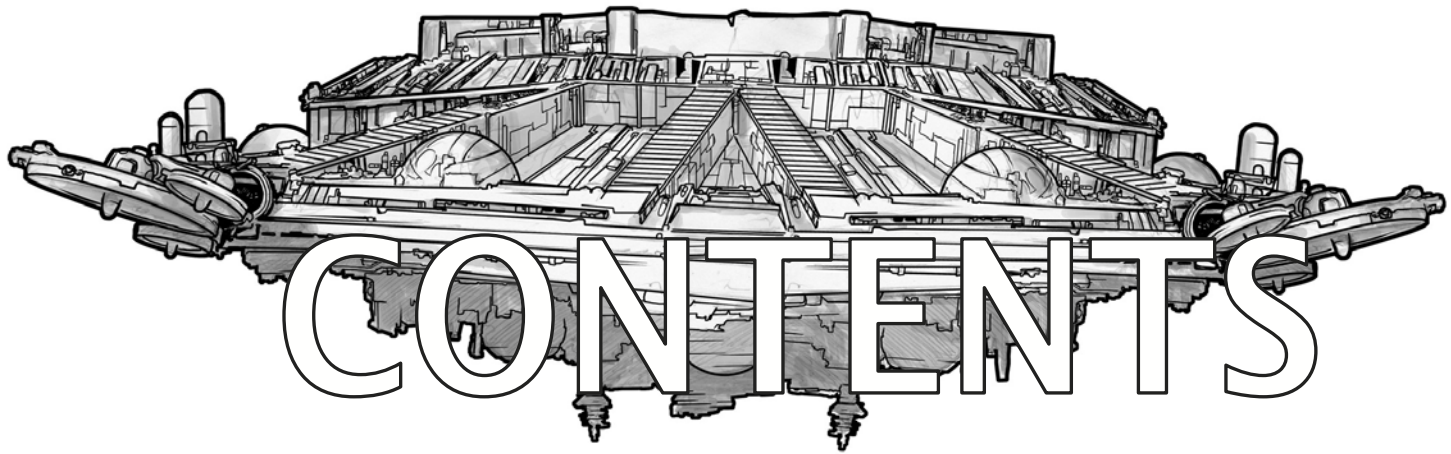


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CHAPTER ONE: FUNDAMENTALS





THREE MINUTES AFTER

When Aiden Camus was twelve, his watch stopped.

He sat fossilized on a field of broken glass, eyes fixed on the sky. His ears were filled with screams, coming from the wounded, the dazed onlookers at the edge of the devastation, and from the fallen boy beside him.

He was older than Aiden by several years, with mottled chin stubble and crewcut hair. His eyes were shut as he wailed through a strained throat. He reached for Aiden, still locked out of time as the events of the past minute began to sink in.

Blood dripped from deep slices across Aiden's palms as he held up his weight. Pain started to jostle his attention. His eyes fell back to the destruction surrounding him. At the overturned cars. At the shattered windows.

At the buckled pavement. Memories that would never fade.

On its surface, his watch looked undamaged. It hadn't broken when he fell, neither had the battery died. It had a miniature electric motor powered by the motion of his arm, intended to keep perfect time forever.

Both children lay crumpled in the middle of the street, flanked by splintered wood and twisted steel. Aiden took a moment to look at the boy beside him, then to the flattened city block. A fountain sprayed from a broken hydrant at the intersection corner a few yards away, trickling water over Aiden's matted brown hair.

Aiden noticed survivors at the periphery desperately attempting to rally support. The vehicles on the fringe had stalled, blocking traffic into the scene. Traffic lights were dark. Cellular phones refused to turn on. Scores of people were still fleeing from what they saw, or rather what they refused to believe they saw.

Aiden remained still, even when the surrounding yells blended into sirens or when the aircraft began swarming above. He felt emergency workers attempting to rouse him from his daze. He repeated the last few moments over in his mind, trying to find some rationale for what had happened and why. It wasn't that it shouldn't have happened, rather that it couldn't have.

His watch's balance wheel which charged the battery had seized. The ratchet and rotor locked the hands three seconds into the third minute past ten o'clock.

It was a Sunday.

Aiden's life until then had been filled with concessions—moments of happiness he accepted only because his dreams could never be fulfilled. He preferred aspirations over practical goals. Aiden, like all children, desired the impossible, until reality forced its way in.

The recovery would be orderly. The damage would soon be repaired. The dead would be mourned. The events of the last few minutes would be reported and then forgotten. Everything would fall back into place.

Except Aiden and his stopped watch.

• • •

Aiden could tell it was a book, and it wasn't his birthday. He knew to be careful in unthreading the burlap knot and tearing the hemp paper away. He rolled his fingers across the swells and dimples of the embossed cover, then rattled his nails across the uneven pages, thick with coarse edges. Aiden was impressed. The book looked like it had been recently unearthed from an ancient tomb, brushed of errant dust, and dropped into a shopping bag. The pearl-shaded dragon on the cover had scales which enmeshed so perfectly, its skin was uniform matted silver. Only the spine showed the title.

The Codex Dracontis.

"Where do you find these?" Aiden asked his mother.

Aiden had passed that age when parents read to their kids. He missed that. From her, every word was impeccably pronounced, never a slur or stumbled phrase. Through his mother's lips, those stories had carried the weight of gospel.

"Is it good?" his mother asked.

Aiden kept his eyes on the book. "Best one yet."

The window was open. She sat beside him with him under the sheets of his bed. Her blond hair fell over his trimmed head. Between them and Aiden's brother's empty bed sat his own collection of books, modern stories and science fiction. Aiden liked the ones with frayed edges, bent spines, and old words.

"This old, it must be magic," she teased.

"Looked like no one had touched it in a century."

"How much did this cost?" He turned to her.

"Twelve year olds are never supposed to ask how much something is."

"Mom?" he pushed.

She patted his lap. "Come on, read me one."

Aiden swung the wooden cover open; it groaned like a satisfied lion. The first cockled leaf repeated the book's title, flamboyantly, like it was hand written on the page. Aiden rolled it over carefully. He flipped several more until reaching the first illustration. The dragon was expertly sketched in graphite and accented with thick strokes of India ink. The image's title was fitting for such a beast, *The Death Dragon, Zmey Gorynych*. They held the book between them.

"Zmey was a sickly creature," Aiden started. "Muscles stretched tightly around his bones. He appeared too feeble to flap his pitted wings, let alone fly. This dragon needed magic to take to the air. He belched soot and flame and blackened the ground when he landed. Where death lurked in abundance, one

would find him. He required the long deceased to feed upon."

"Well that's...appropriate," his mother muttered. Aiden had weathered far worse stories.

"It's a story, Mom," Aiden replied.

"Sorry, go on."

Aiden scanned his finger to find his spot. "He belched soot—"

"You read that part."

Aiden smirked. "It was worth mentioning twice." He returned to the story. "But he was no match for Willum Raenis. Willum was a farmer's child, the second son. Neither favored nor a fond sibling, he dreamt himself as a paladin, a knight of legend. But the only thing bigger than his dream was his appetite. He could neither run fast nor lift great weights. In school, brothers above and below excelled where Willum faltered. He desperately wanted to be special. Without stature or charisma, there was no way for Willum to win the heart of one to suit his wishes. The bigger the dreamer, the loftier the target. He looked no higher than the nice—"

"Niece—" his mother interjected.

"Niece of the elven lord, Elisa Stormbringer, a petite flower of golden petals. She was..." Aiden fell silent as his finger continued to run down the page.

"What are you doing?" his mother asked.

"Skipping."

He flipped a page. And then another. His finger skimmed through the paragraphs until the wasteful romance had finished.

He resumed, "Zmey's shadow was peppered with breaks of sunlight—"

"Wait, wait. Why did you—" his mother started.

"Girl stuff," Aiden answered.

"I think I'd disagree with that—"

"Can I continue?" Aiden interjected with a smirk. His mother shrugged and pointed back to the book.

"Where...right... Zmey's shadow was peppered with breaks of sunlight, piercing through the cracks and holes in his leathery wings. He swooped down and sliced open Willum's brothers as they tended the crops. Willum knew the legend of the dragon of death as well as its appetite. It had already turned its sights to the nearby castle. Deceased elves were the most sweet. Willum offered no deal to the kingdom."

"You know the rest of the story would probably make more sense if you knew what the elf princess was like—" his mother said.

"Nope," Aiden interrupted. Cut to the dragon. He flipped a page. "Willum's father, a once proud servant of realm, owned a blade of refined steel and nobility. Willum took his father's blade and wielding no skill, cut down his farm's livestock. A hundred sheep, the meat rotted until the aroma was irresistible to the mighty creature—"

"It takes daysd for food to spoil," said his mother.

"Wouldn't the dragon have killed them all?"

Aiden gave her a frustrated look. She chuckled, shook her head, and beckoned him back to the book.

"The beast turned from its pillaging to enjoy the impressive feast placed before it by an obvious admirer," Aiden continued. "Little did Zmey know that in the stomach of every corpse, Willum had sewn in fresh food. Berries red and blue, carrots and plums and turnips, even a bushel of green bananas. This meal didn't sit well. Zmey tried desperately to spit up its meal, but the food sat. It gripped the beast in unbearable pain. Willum didn't even need to slice off its head with the blade, for when the creature breathed its last, all he had to do was pull on the withered carcass to tear the skull from the body. He then carried his trophy to the castle."

Aiden closed the book. He looked to his mother.

"That's one," he said, then rolled more pages by.

"Dozens more."

"Yes, but enough for now," said his mother. She closed the book the book and placed it among his collection.

"I missed it when you read to me...but I know I'm too old."

"Doing quite fine on your own," she replied.

"But they sounded real coming from you."

"Well, stories don't need a voice to be any more real." She patted his lap. "In fact, they don't even need a reader."

She eased him down from the backboard. He slumped into the bed and rolled on his side. She kissed his cheek. His eyes were closed, but he wasn't close to being tired. His mother exited quietly.

As she slinked to her bedroom, she noticed the stern look Martin was giving her from the end of the hall. Four years older than his brother, with pruned hair and optimistic goatee, he already resembled their late father. He inherited the same stare mixing bewilderment with annoyance. She paused to offer a forehead kiss and made for her room. He didn't respond and waited for the door to close before returning to the computer and his blog that no one read.

Aiden opened his eyes moments later and stared through the open drapes to the night sky where a thin film of orange pollution garnished the skyline. The view, half way up a strata juggernaut of a thousand apartments, the city appeared to spread to the vanishing point. Aiden couldn't see the outer wall. Bright city lights and a narcissistic waning moon blotted out the stars, except for one brilliant white spark hanging off the edge of a lunar sea.

Aiden stretched out his arm to the shelf and dug his nails into the headband of the codex. He held it precariously by the edge of its spine and carried it back to the bed. The glow bleeding from the window precluded the need of a nightlight. Aiden flipped to the first story, past the sketch of Zmey, past the introductions, to the part about the elf.

Elisa and Willum married. The magic of an elvish bond gave him centuries of youth. And she bore him sons for a new kingdom they would create.

Aiden turned another page, before the start of the next story, to a pencil sketch of the fictional couple.

Willum on his knee, the tall elf princess smiling upon him. Aiden angled the book under the window light to illuminate the girl. Unlike the rough interpretation of the dragon, lacking features from a deficient imagination, the elf showed detail like she had posed for the artist, so he could glean each perfection. Flawless skin, a pointed nose, almond eyes, and a delicate figure. The sharp ears were subtle, barely nudging through straight uncolored hair. Aiden wanted to turn on the light but knew it would alert his mother, or worse, Martin. Aiden just remained there a moment, hoping for that impossible chance when her eyes might meet his.

• • •

A close second to Aiden's obsession with books was his affection for video games. Most of them were Martin's—guns, robots, and tanks vaporizing whatever monsters moved before the reticule. Aiden favored sword-wielding and spellcraft, but those games were difficult to find. His mother located a free one from an obscure website.

"Hey! Homework!" Martin barked as he approached behind Aiden.

"Done," Aiden replied, attention fused to the screen. His warrior dodged and flipped in burdened armor, cleaving with a blade that never wore down. The hero's meal was some generic ration devoured in a single swallow and supplying energy for another twelve hours of continuous movement. Wounds sustained vanished with a moon's pass.

"Where?"

"In the kitchen," he replied with a nudge.

"I have to get on their by the way." Martin poked him.

"Mom said I had until 5:00."

Martin stepped closer, offering a distracting shadow on the screen. "One day, you'll feel like an idiot for wasting your time. How many hours you into it?"

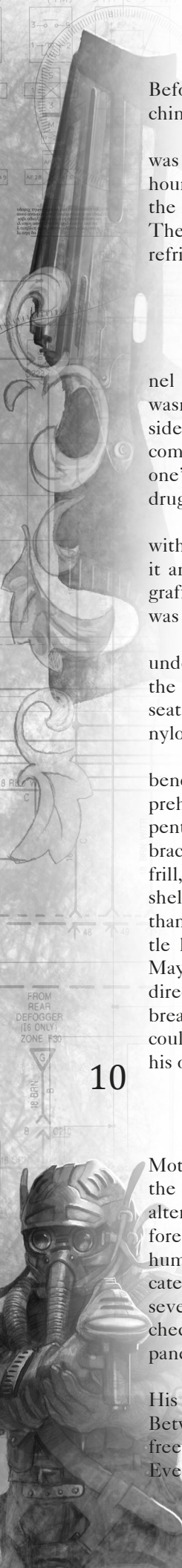
"Last save was sixty five."

Martin coughed a laugh. "Why don't you go out?" Aiden's retort was worth him breaking his focus from the monitor, "There's nothing interesting out there." Aiden returned to his game. "Just people and machines."

"You're going to have to do something with your life eventually, you know."

"Two words: honor, roll. How are your grades?"

Aiden's hero's clothes were always comfortable, the romance always willing. The woman the champion had won was a meagerly decent falsehood with long lines of exposed skin and the brassiere of a medieval dominatrix. She never complained of the cold and fell at the hero's feet when the programmer deemed appropriate. Death was as quickly resolved as one's finger moved to the hotkey. Castles were a minute's walk apart. Money was easily acquired from the bellies of wandering beasts.



Before leaving, Martin reached a foot across to the machine's power supply and turned it off.

"Marty!" Aiden screamed. Martin laughed as he was chased from the room. Aiden had only lost a few hours progress. The hero and his world, secured within the last save file, waited patiently for his player's return. The sprite never complained to its god about the lack of refrigerators, central heating, or proper medicine.

• • •

Aiden's eyes followed the passing lights of the tunnel in the Underground Transit Rail. While the train wasn't moving, a flush flat panel television on the outside of the train played through various ten-second commercials, most involving the necessity to improve one's appearance with cosmetics or the latest synthetic drug made to placate the anxieties of modern life.

The transit system was meticulously controlled, with stringent fines against litter and vandalism to keep it and the city above clean. Walls were unspoiled by graffiti, the floor was practically hygienic, and the air was conditioned.

Aiden's mother sat beside him, holding his books under her arm. Aiden saw a portable electronic game in the hands of a boy half his age sitting on an opposite seat. The boy's father ignored him as he held onto the nylon loop attached to the railing.

Aiden leaned forward to see the inside of the train bending through the tunnels at speeds he couldn't comprehend. He imagined the transit rail was a giant serpent, gnawing its way through the rock. Aiden embraced the creature's course mane, or perhaps boney frill, and commanded the monster to burst from the shell of the Earth. It lifted the child on its head, taller than the tallest tower in the city. Maybe it dangled little legs behind so it could shuffle about the ground. Maybe Aiden hung a cow from a rope in front to coax a direction. He would trick the beast to dig too deep or breach a barricade to the canal and drown. Then Aiden could follow the tunnel to the monster's lair and rescue his own princess.

• • •

Mother and son scaled the crowded stairs and exited the UTR station into downtown. Pine trees genetically altered to survive in the shadow-plagued skyscraper forest flanked the sidewalk. The cars whizzing by them hummed like single-note violins. The sun was bifurcated by the dagger-tip of a corporate monolith looming several blocks down. The ivory tower, covered in a checkerboard of white tinted windows and photovoltaic panels, paved a shadow ahead of them.

Aiden asked for bubble-gum at a passing vendor. His mother relented but told him to choose quickly. Between cherry, apple, watermelon, long-lasting, sugar-free, and extra-chewy, there were a hundred varieties. Eventually, his mother stepped in and snagged a cinna-

mon and paid with a bank card. He didn't want cinnamon but didn't object.

They walked leisurely down the walkway. Occasionally, the cloudless sky would be invaded by a passing aircraft—helicopters mostly—hopping between the peaks. Aiden's mother held him by the hand, guiding him through the street as diversion would deflect him easily.

An elderly man with clean skin and weathered eyes stood at the summit of the ashen citadel, breath slow and calm. He was topped with unkempt white hair which blew madly around his face. The people below looked only as a mélange of reds, oranges, and blues.

The noises below resonated up the spine of the building. The elderly stranger smiled as he leaned forward. Workers, prioritizing their own safety, crawled upon the ridge, screaming for sanity in the man. The stranger spread his arms wide and drifted over the edge. Swollen white garbage bags flopped firmly in his grip. They were stuffed but nearly weightless in the wind.

The workers failed to catch him.

From the altitude, his descent resembled a crawl. The wind didn't slam him into the tower or drift him away from its shadow. He fell straight, the rushing torrent rupturing the bags in his hands. Thousands of wisps of paper fluttered away like feathers from a dying bird.

At ground level, iron-gilded stone supports lent themselves to some dictator's dystopia. Two storey glass shutters opened quickly and effortlessly for customers. The crowds shuffling about the entrance didn't notice the body until the stranger disintegrated through an empty bus. Screams followed, and people gathered quickly.

Aiden's mother noticed the swarming onlookers before her son did. She could see the crushed vehicle and stopped a block away. Aiden was an inch too short to catch the commotion. His mother guided him down another street. "Honey, let's...let's walk around that."

"What's going on?" he asked.

"Let's just avoid it."

Always looking up, Aiden spotted the falling shreds of paper.

"Mom, look!" he shouted, waving his hands to swat the tatters around. One wrapped around his finger. "Like snow..." He noticed hand writing. "It's raining words."

"What's it say?" He showed it to her. She read it, and then grimaced. She pulled him down the side street. "Let's go, we'll be late."

Aiden stroked the paper in his hand as he read it again.

Our dreams are a prison.

• • •

Aiden's school was separated from neighboring skyscrapers by an alienation of white walls, heavy iron gates

with brass balls atop the posts, and a stretch of genetically engineered, perfectly permanent emerald grass. Aiden's mother dropped to his level and fixed his clip-on tie under his brown sweater. "I know it's a Friday but no walking home this time," she said. "Wait for Marty."

"Gotcha."

"You didn't lose the essay did you?"

"No. There's not going to be a test on it, you think?"

"Test? What do you think this is, school?" She smiled; he smiled. "Here." She reached into her pocket. "I got something for you." She pulled out a necklace, a delicate silver chain. Hanging from the chain was a coin bearing an embossed image of an elderly man wielding a staff in one hand and an infant in the other. The letters that ringed the coin were in an old tongue that few people in the city could read. She dropped it around his neck. "It's a charm—a saint—he protects children. Especially brave ones."

Aiden lifted it to his eye and could tell it was old. "Is it magic?"

She tucked it in his shirt. "It's a flashlight to remind God where you're standing."

"He can see us all the time?"

"Every second, every step. Where you've been and where you're going."

"How can he know that?"

"He knows everything."

"But he can't control everything."

"No...You're right." She pointed at Aiden's chest.

"He can't control you."

"Then how can he know where I'm going?"

She thought about it. "Because he knows you so well, he knows where you'll go, what you'll do and what you'll see. We all have a place."

Aiden looked at the pendant again and whispered, "But what if I want to do something else?"

"All right, enough of that." She eased him past the gate. "Off with you and for everything you learn, teach something."

• • •

"Mr. Camus," interrupted the teacher.

Aiden snapped his attention back from the window, the scrap piece of paper still rolling around his fingers. His thoughts had been on the bedtime story, about the parts he skipped. What was she like? Did she read books or play sports? Would she finish Willum's sentences and laugh at his jokes?

"Yes...sorry, Mr. Leach," Aiden answered.

It was a class for advanced students, and Aiden was the youngest by a year. Unlike Willum Raenis, Aiden Camus was exceptional. "You know, you might actually find this subject interesting."

"I was following," Aiden lied.

"Eyes on me then, please." Leach shifted across the front of the small class waving a thousand page opus

in his hand. The blank digital tablet hanging behind him had the color of a chalk blackboard. "What defines a civilization?" He let the moment linger, the students wondering if it was rhetorical. "It could be said that the author believes it's based entirely on its builders and thinkers, and not the kings and presidents at the top or the consumers and peasants at the bottom. You take them away, civilization collapses. A society is worthless if it doesn't develop...both socially and technologically. So what causes a civilization to stop growing?"

As in every class, the students looked to each other and waited for one of them to break the silence. "War," Lara popped up.

"War. I don't think so," Leach corrected.

"Actually war, and the prospect of it, encourages change. War gave us nuclear power. The potential of war gave us computers, rockets, the internet."

"Segregation," spoke up another student, the oldest and largest, William. Leach nudged for clarification.

"The separation of upper and lower class," William continued. "Peasants farm, soldiers fight, nobles rule...and sometimes think." That brought chuckles from a few of the others.

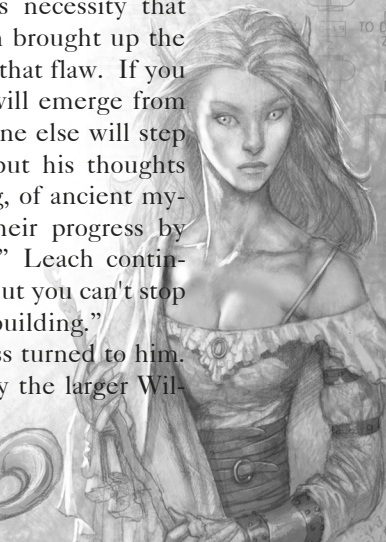
Leach nodded. "That can cause a civilization to slow down."

A fourteen year old girl across from Aiden asked and offered "Religion?" Leach waited for her to continue. "Burned libraries," she continued, "executed or imprisoned anyone that questioned the church."

"Absolutely. We've had famous libraries burned, technological breakthroughs suppressed as being too dangerous... all from religion. They may claim to encourage scientific progress but they've always been its rival." Leach made his way back across to Aiden's side. "A great author once said that if these out-of-place breakthroughs and progressive ideas hadn't been suppressed by their societies, we'd be living in an era 3,000 years advanced from where we are now. Civilization has to expand. It can't help it. We teach our children, and they learn and better our achievements. Something like religion can slow progress but can't stop it. For one, the world is big. You halt the progress of a civilization on this part of the planet; it won't stop another civilization on the other side."

"Take pasta. It wasn't Marco Polo that cultivated it across the world. Pasta just appeared naturally around the same time across the globe. It's necessity that forces us to build and expand." Leach brought up the novel again. "This is why the book has that flaw. If you take away the builders, new builders will emerge from the rabble. You remove a ruler, someone else will step forward." Aiden was listening now, but his thoughts were to the books he had been reading, of ancient mythologies and empires that marked their progress by millennia. "You can impose religion," Leach continued, "suppress dangerous knowledge, but you can't stop progress. Eventually, people will start building."

"Magic?" Aiden offered. The class turned to him. An awkward pause followed, broken by the larger William.



"Magic?!" William mocked.

"What do you mean?" Leach asked calmly.

Aiden cleared his throat, keeping his eyes on the teacher rather than the class. "If you can create anything you want out of thin air, you wouldn't need to build it."

"That's stupid--" William barked

"No," Leach interrupted, "that's actually a good point. In a fantasy world, thousands of years pass without even the hint of technology, beyond carts and swords. But that can never happen."

"Why?" Aiden asked.

William butted in, "Because magic isn't real!"

Leach flicked William's ear as he answered. "Because like I said, necessity forces us to build. That's why it's a fantasy." Leach worked his way towards his youngest savant. "I read one of those when I was your age. George-something. There was magic but it was uncommon. Kingdoms lasted centuries without ever changing. You can include a caste system, religion, ironclad traditions, some ancient law against the use of machines, but eventually, technology will develop. Fantasy novels don't need to explain why. It's fantasy. It doesn't have to make sense. It can't. The moment you apply logic to a fantasy novel, it falls apart. Their worlds are too small, timelines are too long. Monsters are too many and there's usually a frighteningly insufficient lower class. And if that world has magic, there'd be chaos. If any child could be raised to wield a wand, you'd have anarchy. But even considering that, those without magic would still build. In our history, there were empires which lasted beyond a thousand years, but even those had moments of social and technological innovation." Leach was imposing but lowered his voice to not impose. "You simply cannot suppress the desire for humans to grow. I'll also say that I would loathe any civilization that existed for thousands and thousands of years and not be able to figure how to make a machine that washes my dishes." The class laughed, and Leach returned to head of the room. Aiden could still see a few eyes on him from the older students. From Lara, smiling at him. From William, annoyed at the time wasted.

As the class ended, Aiden filed out last, avoiding William's hex-vision stare. As he passed the teacher's desk, Mr. Leach called out, "Aiden?"

"Yes, Mr. Leach?" Aiden answered, noticing the teacher beckoning him back. After the last student departed, Aiden stepped back to the desk. "Was I out of line?"

"Nothing of the sort," Leach answered. "But perhaps it's best you keep such talk about magic private?"

Aiden furrowed his brow. "Why?" he asked.

Leach prepared a detailed answer, but then paused and answered simply with, "It's just best." Aiden still didn't comprehend the issue. Leach leaned forward and spoke decisively, "The people around you, parents, teachers, engineers, they need the world around them to work...in a specific way. They lay down rules and permit only a narrow field of thought.

Nationality, technology, theology, they can't allow something rejecting those tenets."

"I don't understand," Aiden replied.

"Do you believe in Santa Claus?" Leach said suddenly.

Aiden shot glances about the room as he answered.

"Of course not."

"Why?"

"Because he's not real."

"And what if he knocked on your door and said 'Hello'?"

Aiden's answer came quickly. "I'd ask for a bike."

Leach chuckled, covering his mouth to prevent a louder reaction. "And that's the difference between you and the rest of the world," he answered. "They would point and say, 'you're not real'. They can't allow something to break from what they know. They need order; they need a reflection of their beliefs." Leach pointed to the fantasy novel nestled under Aiden's arm. It was an old edition, and one of the last printed. Aiden glanced down at it. "And not to be reminded of what can't exist."

"That's odd," Aiden answered, still honestly confused. He knew there was something not being said.

"I still don't understand the big deal."

Leach smiled and patted the desk in front of Aiden. "You'll have to ask your mother that one day," he said.

• • •

William expressed his dissatisfaction with Aiden after school, only feet away from the exit. "Don't waste the class's time, Aiden!" he snapped. "Take that crap outside the wall!" He loomed inches over Aiden's face, ensuring a moderate amount of spittle landed in the boy's eye.

Aiden wiped his face and leaned back. "Okay," he answered calmly.

"You don't belong in that class. You're too young anyway. And why you reading this?" He snatched the novel under Aiden's arm and gave it a glance.

"Pratchett!" he snapped. Aiden jumped up to the taller student, flimsily pawing at the distant book over his reach. "Magic isn't real! None of it is!"

"Give it back," Aiden shouted, slapping around William's limbs. William pushed Aiden to the pavement with his free hand. The Pratchett novel fell to the fallen boy's lap as a pair of larger arms wrapped around William's collar and lifted him off his feet. Martin had three inches, twenty pounds, and two years on the bully.

"Bill!" Martin barked. "You're smart. Smarter than me even. So, I'm going to start hitting you until you talk me out of it. Good?!"

William wrestled free and made his escape. He grabbed his bag and ran for the gates. Aiden retrieved his book and accepted Martin's offer of a hand.

"Okay?" Martin asked.

"Thanks," Aiden muttered.

"What d'you say to piss him off?"

"I didn't say anything!" Aiden snapped

"Let's just go." Martin pushed Aiden ahead of him. Aiden checked his book for damage. A corner had frayed and a new rip had appeared on the cover.

"So that's why?" Martin said.

"What?" Aiden replied.

"Aiden, I don't care for those books Mom gets you, and a lot of people would agree. And if I wasn't your brother, I may act the same, so keep that stuff guarded. Don't tell anyone you read them, and don't show it off like you do."

"Why?" Aiden replied. "What's the big deal? Teacher said the same thing. How are my books any different than yours?"

Martin stopped and spun around to face his brother. Aiden instinctively dropped the book to his side in case Martin tried to reach for it. "Because mine deal with what could happen," Martin snapped, "about what people can do given enough time. They're about science, progress. Fantasies are not about that; they're about what can't happen. They're about dreams and myths."

"But...we go to church," Aiden muttered. Martin resumed his walk.

"Yeah, well, let's not go there," Martin grumbled. Aiden kept still, glancing at his book. He gently nuzzled it back into his pack and raced to catch up to his brother.

"I liked what you said to William, by the way," Aiden said.

"Yeah, I've wanted to say that to him for like a year."

...

Their mother was not one for the kitchen. Dinner was prepackaged imitation parmesan cheese and powdered milk mixed with stabilizers and corn starch. It was layered over a bed of rock-hard tortellini only softened after five minutes in the microwave. Aiden moved his eyes across the open book beside his plate as his mother followed the rhythms of an artificial cook.

The book was grey with green letters and gilded pages. Aiden read about the lives of pale-skinned, subterranean fae called the tenenbri that lived in underground lairs and had vestigial cataract-covered eyes. Oversized pointed ears gave them the senses of a bat. They were an arrogant sort, clashing often with the dwarvish race called the narros that shared some of the tenenbri's religious beliefs.

The book was advanced. Aiden had to look up some of the words. He didn't care. Octagon-shaped glasses edged precariously off his nose. He forced the words into his mind.

After the meal, his mother began to fill the dishwasher. Aiden remained at the table and stared at the

cover of his novel. "Mom?" he asked.

"Yes."

Aiden ran his fingers around the crevices and grooves in the book. "...Someone died today, didn't they?"

She stopped loading and turned to him. "Yes." She never lied. "Yes, someone died."

"Why'd he do it?"

She placed a mug down and orbited around to sit beside him. He didn't look at her. "I don't know, honey. Some people have a pain that no medicine or words can cure. To them, death is the solution; but they don't realize how selfish and narrow-minded that solution is."

"But what he wrote. It was like he was trapped. Are we trapped?"

She smiled, patted his shoulder, and returned to her dishes. "You're only trapped, honey, if you can't find the door."

She cleared out half the machine when Aiden closed the book and made for the living room, dominated by its 47" liquid crystal flat-screen television. Aiden stopped and voiced another question. "Mom, is Santa Clause real?"

She stood up quickly, bewildered. "Why would," she answered, trailing off. "No."

"Just checking," Aiden said as he left.

...

A Sunday morning meant Sunday service. Aiden refused to set his alarm. Face crammed into his pillow, he rolled his head as his mother parted the blinds. The window was open and the sirens and screams of morning traffic were already polluting the city. The orange sun was poking between several distant buildings. Aiden could see the peaks of the tallest towers parting clouds. Solar cells twisted like blossoms to accept the light. On the horizon, a forest of smokestacks belched pollution to be carried by the wind out to the ocean. A helicopter caused a mild distraction as it passed by Aiden's window.

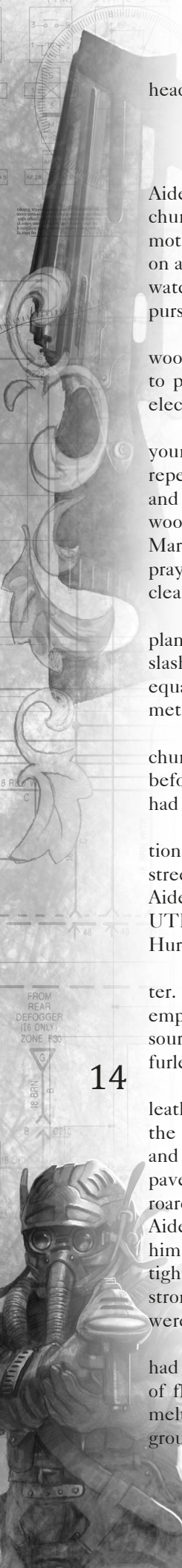
Before Aiden had swallowed his morning yawn or flicked the crust from his eyes, his mother laid out the good clothes, the black dress trousers, socks, shirt, and school vest. By the time his mother had returned, Aiden was still undressed, listening to the news broadcast from the screen in his bedroom. "Find out which food supplement is deadly, after the next break--" Aiden changed the channel. "Guilty is the verdict today in the murder of pop sensation--" Click.

"Get dressed, come on," his mother said.

"Just trying to find a channel while I change," Aiden pleaded. "There's nothing good on. All this news."

She left and called out from the hall, "You've got five minutes." Another channel showed green grass and tall trees put to old music. That would do.

"Aiden!" Martin shouted, already dressed with his



head poking through the doorway, "let's go!"

• • •

Aiden, Martin, and their mother took the UTR to church. On the train, Martin sat on the left of his mother, Aiden on the right. Martin had both his hands on a portable flat-panel screen, watching a rerun. Aiden watched the train. Their mother's left hand held a purse. Her right hand played with Aiden's hair.

The church of the Sacred Mary was a five-storey wooden A-frame as old as the city. No ration was given to parking and every curb was filled with a variety of electric vehicles.

Martin pinched Aiden often during service. The younger brother's mind wandered during the plodding repetitious mass. The priest was old, with a comical lisp and mumbling words. Aiden ran grooves in the soft wood of the bench with his nails. A hand slap from Martin only discouraged Aiden for a short time. A prayer, a passage, and a Eucharist later, and Aiden was clear from his obligations for another week.

As they left the mass, Aiden pondered his day's plans. Part of it involved his armor-clad digital warrior slashing through an improbable number of foes in an equally preposterous dungeon built illogically to geometric precision.

The three of them quickened their pace from the church doors to the sidewalk to catch the street lights before they changed. Aiden checked his watch; it had just ticked two minutes past 10:00.

An air siren jolted the crowd, the high pitch oscillation bouncing off buildings. People ran blindly into the streets, some to their vehicles. Martin's instinct pulled Aiden and his mother close, wrenching them to the UTR tunnel entrance a block away. "Come on, let's go! Hurry!"

The second sound was not a siren, not a helicopter. It was louder, not mechanical, seemingly from an empty sky. People followed with their own yells. The source of the sound revealed itself as a silhouette unfurled its wings to eclipse the sun.

Daggers of daylight broke through the holes in its leather wings. Talons as long and sharp as swords tore the church peak apart as it landed. Wood splintered, and a poorly carved stone Christ shattered upon the pavement. Twice the size of the church, the beast roared and spit a torrent of liquid fire across the sky. Aiden was unable to look away as his brother dragged him by the cuff. The creature's black skin was drawn tight across its body. Its eyes were drops of cream in strong coffee. Its teeth were jagged and jumbled. Lips were too thin to close around its mouth.

"Zmey?" Aiden whispered. He was sure of it. He had pictured it larger and more pestilent. The stream of flame struck an approaching military helicopter. It melted the craft instantly. The vessel toppled to the ground as a forged chunk of glass and iron.

"Aiden! Come on!" his mother snapped.

The creature looked down at the scattering masses before it. Leaping from the church peak, it crushed a half-dozen of them underfoot. It snatched more from across the road, throwing them against the walls of nearby buildings.

Its rampage migrated down the street towards the crowd rushing to the safety of the UTR entrance. Martin held his younger brother's collar, pulling vigorously, indifferent to the monster gaining ground. Aiden's curiosity forced his gaze back. If it was Zmey, why was it not dead? How much of that story was wrong? Martin wrenched Aiden hard, hoping the resulting pain would wrench his brother from his trance.

"Is that Zmey, mom?" Aiden shouted.

"Shut up!" Martin snapped.

"Mom?!"

"Aiden, I'll explain everything later!" she answered.

Her heel broke, and she fell to a knee behind her boys.

"Mom!" Martin shouted, turning quickly back. Aiden stopped as well, but his attention was still on the dragon. The more he stared at it, the more real it became; the less Aiden believed he was dreaming. Perhaps then he could be frightened of it.

Zmey's claw came down in front of them. Martin fell back with a slash suffered on his arm. The concussion of air brought Aiden to his knees. Martin ignored his wound and clenched his fists. He let out a furious scream. He closed his eyes waiting for his end.

Aiden could smell the putridness wafting from the dragon, felt the heat of the inferno brewing in its belly. A part of Aiden kept reminding him that it couldn't happen. This was a normal world and a dragon can't fly, can't spew flames from its mouth. Aiden believed he would awaken, perhaps in his bed, perhaps in a pew.

As Aiden fell, he cut his hand on a shard of glass. The quickness of the pain pulled the air from his lungs. The numbness, the detachment that accompanies a dream, started to pass. Aiden began to notice what had happened, what was happening. People had been killed. Buildings had been destroyed. Crowds were fleeing. Aiden felt a cool sprinkle from a broken hydrant. He heard his brother wailing. Like a bolt of lightning through this spine, Aiden saw the beast for what it was, the monster he should fear. It was real. Zmey's brought its claw back up to claim another victim.

The beast fell back from a tackle, tossed into the empty church. The cathedral collapsed from the weight of two monsters. No one had seen the other beast slam into Zmey. Zmey's opponent pulled away to plot another attack. The new arrival was longer with smaller wings. Its gold and blue scales broke light into colors. Long white whiskers flapped like gravity had no control of them. Four arms each ended with four ivory claws. The monster snaked in the air, and its jaws opened wide enough to swallow a car. Its forked tongue sparked a flame, but it only bellowed. As the echo bounced off the buildings, lights within rooms

went dark. The traffic signals went dead. Cars drifted to a stop.

The newcomer's eyes were those of a man, soft blue and brilliant. Its body twisted around Aiden and Martin. It blocked them from harm as Zmey slashed with a bladed tail. The monster of gold and blue scales kept its defense diligent and suffered a deep gash to its belly. In its counterattack, it leapt across the road and dug talons and teeth into decaying flesh. The creatures coiled around each other, but the black beast could not match the dexterity of its rival. A solid bite and its golden opponent had torn off an arm. Dark blood dripped as molasses from the wound. The black beast tore itself free from gripping claws, causing more damage as it took to the sky.

The one with golden scales swiveled its head to look at the boys. Its eyes were the same shape but the size of a child's head. Aiden couldn't help it. He raised his bloodied palm from the pavement and offered a feeble wave.

The dragon smirked back.

And winked.

It twisted its form again and leapt back to the sky to chase down its opponent. It pursued the cripple around a distant building where Aiden lost sight of them. A dozen military fanjets slipped overhead to take up the chase.

Martin shouted Aiden's name and repeated it until the syllables merged to a wail. Aiden's attention drifted back the area in front of them where the beast had come down. Aiden's daze had begun to lift; his breathing quickened. Whatever lingering strength he had bled away, and Aiden felt a sharp tightness in his chest. His fingers began to tremble as he realized what had happened.

She was gone.

Martin crawled to his brother. He lost the strength to pull Aiden to him but refused to let go. He slumped to the ground. Aiden turned his attention back to the sky while Martin cried.

• • •

The brothers had barely talked since the morning. Aiden sat on his bed with the opened *Codex Dracontis* on his lap. Aiden ignored the clothes he was supposed to take. He rummaged in his coat pocket for his glasses. He curled them around his ears. He tried to ignore the stabbing pain from the stitches in his palms but couldn't avoid the tension in his chest when he thought of his mother. When he thought about the dragon, about the questions he had, the weight would lift slightly. Aiden had blisters over his lips and rings around his eyes from previous breaks in concentration. He sniffed and rubbed his nose as he frantically flipped through the pages.

Finding the entry for Zmey, he studied the sketch. There were differences. Its head was larger in proportion to its body in the drawing. Eyes were white, not

black. Aiden was positive the book took inspiration from the real beast, which was then altered by the artist's foggy recollection. Aiden slumped upon his bed and stared at it. He flipped through the other pages, other dragons, some with white feathers, others with silver scales. He searched for the one that saved him. Aiden glanced at the other books he had acquired, ones on elves, sorcerers, and sword wielding.

"What are you doing?" Martin asked from the doorway, an empty suitcase under his arm.

Aiden looked up from the book. "I can't find it."

"What?" Martin responded, quickly and cold.

"The gold and blue dragon. He's not here. It has Zmey but not the other."

"Mom's dead, Aiden."

Aiden paused. His bottom lip quivered and his throat clenched. He didn't want to cry in front of his brother. "I know...But--"

"Enough..." Martin whimpered. "Just leave it.

Please... leave it. Pack and let's go. People are waiting." He left his brother alone, staring at the book. Both brothers had wanted to remain home, but Martin wasn't old enough, and there was no one willing to stay with them. Cousins willing to take them in lived half way across the city, closer to the "crown".

Martin lingered on his locked softside suitcase and did so for five minutes. He crammed and crinkled five changes of underwear, three dress pants and five shirts, leaving substantial space for a pair of albums and a photo of him and his mother from his Confirmation. He had previously wedged in more photos but realized he hadn't packed any shirts. He always considered himself the surrogate adult, the proxy for his father, someone that Martin knew but Aiden never did. Martin tried to act in a way reflective of his father, but most of time, that just ended up him being angry at Aiden. When Martin returned to his brother's room, he noticed the half-full holdall occupied by one change of clothes and topped with the codex. "Leave the book," he said.

"No," Aiden replied, still focused on the tome.

"Aiden--"

"You knew." Aiden could discern with his brother the difference between fear and surprise. Martin was frightened of the beast, but its existence was not a shock to him.

"Please Aiden," Martin answered.

"You knew."

Martin opened for a lie but couldn't. "Not everything. Just that...this city...is all people like us have left."

"And what's past it?"

"I don't know."

"Has anyone left?" Aiden asked.

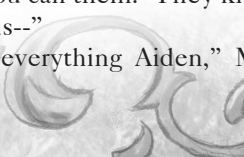
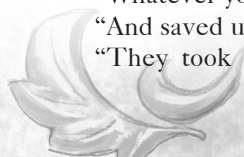
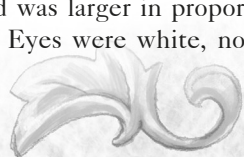
"No one leaves," Martin replied. "They only try to get in."

"Then someone knows. There are dragons." Aiden reached for the book.

"Whatever you call them. They killed mom--"

"And saved us--"

"They took everything Aiden," Martin snapped.



"They took...everything we were and could ever be."

"You never wanted to look?"

"Don't have to."

"Why not--"

"Aiden!" Martin shouted. "It's not our world. She wanted you innocent. Everyone is...for a while. That's over. I'll make sure we stay together. It's just us now."

"But the other dragon?"

"Who cares?! It's done! No more of this!" Martin stepped forward hastily to snatch away the book. Aiden instinctively clutched it to his chest. He grasped it tightly as his armor, tears rolling as he began to cry. Martin tried to wrest the tome from his brother's grip. He shouted as he tried to separate book and boy. "Burn them all! They killed mom!" Aiden curled fetal around the book. He stayed tightly wound in a bundle of clenched limbs, protecting the pages with every muscle and bone he had. Martin pinned one leg on Aiden's shoulder and pried an arm free, ripped the book from his brother's hand. Martin was hurting Aiden; cries turned to yells. Martin felt it had to be done, like tearing a bandage off or striking a disobedient child, the act of an adult. A final lazy punch in Aiden's back was the spiteful act of the child he was.

"It's not a fantasy, Aiden! Grow up!" Martin stormed out of the room. "Two minutes! I'll drag you if I have to!" Aiden could hear the sound of the kitchen garbage can opening and the loud thump as Martin dropped the book into it. Martin knew Aiden could just take it back from the trash, but Martin knew rules needed to be followed and he expected Aiden would respect that.

He didn't.

Aiden waited until hearing the slam of his mother's bedroom door down the hall before shuffling quickly to the kitchen to take back his book. Martin fell upon the queen mattress and began crying while Aiden stroked his fingers across the front cover of the codex, at the embossment, at the image of the dragon's eye. Aiden glanced across his arm to his watch.

He tapped on it with a fingernail. There were no cracks or scratches, no signs of impact damage. It had stopped three minutes past ten.

He opened the book again and noticed the stamp at the bottom of the inside cover. It was printed in two languages, English and some Asian type Aiden's couldn't understand. The ink had faded. Aiden read the book's origin: David Obatala Chen's Biblio, 23C Huangxia Street, Genai.

A STORY

Don't check your brain at the door.
Don't settle for the dream.
This is real.

Amethyst is a Role Playing Game that postulates what would occur if a true-to-book fantasy setting was forced upon our reality. Our world is populated by many peo-

ple wanting more from their lives. Our fantasies are filled with nymphs, valiant knights, and fire breathing dragons. We dream about being carried away by the fancies our mothers tell us every night. But what if it was real for everyone? What if it invaded our society? How would humanity truly respond?

This is not some stylized fanciful view of Earth seen in books and on TV. It is a world with all the problems, both social and political, intact. Would we welcome the world of fantasy into our lives or would we fear its very presence? Magic cannot exist; there's no scientific basis for it to. How could these creatures of whimsy exist and match so closely to our mythology and religious canon?

This future emerged from the world we know—a world where books and movies written about fantasy existed. People that survived into this new age saw firsthand what they had only previously read about or watched. The new world matched so closely to their imaginations. How would major religions respond given such massive doubts to their dogma?

On top of this dilemma, magic breaks down many of the normal rules of the universe technology requires to operate. Chaos inspires creation and – although this influence won't destroy life – it does retard the progress of civilization, preventing technology from operating beyond simple mechanisms like windmills and bicycles. Where magic is prohibited, normality returns and evolution and technological advancement can continue.

What remains of our modern society and its technology survive in cities resembling those of the previous age, though walled in against the encroaching magic around it. Here, they have their cars, their central heating, and their televisions. Outside, the fantasy world may be wondrous, but it is also real. People die from the simplest calamities. Despicable rodents with weapons and wicked brains prey on the innocent and unarmed.

Will mankind be able to retake the planet and push the fantasy back into the realms of our imagination, able to resume our blind passion for consumerism and industrialization?

Is this world better than the one mankind squandered?

The fantasy carries its own mythology suggesting that there are two realms of magic: one dark, the other light. The source of this energy originates from two powerful gates, the white star of Attricana and the black gate of Ixindar. The main axis between evil and good is not one where the law-abiding, civilized nations of good battle against the destructive force of chaos, but where the chaotic tendencies of life clash with the controlled and methodical might of syntropy. The conflict – at its root – sets anarchy against order, uniformity against unpredictability, and determinism against free-will. Where life needs a level of uncertainty to blossom, homogeneity breeds only death. The fantasy world is not some singular entity, but a complicated multi-layered world of warring nations, political strife, and monsters smart and powerful, as well as dumb and many.

AMETHYST EVOLVES

Cities collapse, heroes rise, and the future falls into the hands of a few. The world alters, grows, and plummets into shadow. These heroes encounter their greatest fears and challenge true evil in all forms. They find depth in an easy situation, complexity in a single idea. A world that changes around a band of adventurers. A setting with a point and a climax. A world where an ending waits. Solve it and discover the truth. Fail and the planet crumbles underneath.

The setting of Amethyst relies on its clash between magic and technology. Many fantasy worlds blend the two, usually with magic gaining the foothold and technology falling behind. Amethyst presents a setting where the two sides stand almost at war and – from a metaphysical point of view – actively disrupt each other's existence. This does not equate to a group of heroes only residing from one side. It's in the differences of people that make them stronger when together. Although an individual may not be able to wield a spellbook and a gun, this does not extend to the limits of the group. Perhaps, despite growing tensions and mounting enmity, a balance between the two worlds can be found.

Player characters in Amethyst are neither sitting on the sidelines nor are they following braver and more powerful leaders into glory. The characters in Amethyst are meant to change the world. They do not dig ditches or hand out food while armies march into combat. They command legions. They infiltrate empires. They save princesses and slay kings. The end of the game should be different from the beginning. Of course, a player can claim a kingdom after vanquishing his enemies, but the real journey takes one's soul across the world, to meet one's final destiny after a very long crusade. A GM is encouraged to plan out her strategy for the game—whether the characters will travel to their final destinies in Canam (the continent listed here) or only progress a third of the way before tackling the next chapter in a foreign land.

THE HISTORY

The history of the world begins with the conundrum of the chicken and the egg.

Millions of years ago, a fracture occurred in the fabric of space and time. It exhibited traits relating it to science, yet it broke many acceptable rules regarding electromagnetism, gravity, and quantum mechanics. Scientists later deduced that this rip, called Attricana, was a bridge between two universes. The alternate side contained a cosmos with rules of science abnormal to our own. As this universe spilled into ours, the conflict of two orders of nature encouraged aberrations upon the Earth, impossible until that point.

But what opened the gate?

Amethyst is a modern name given to a dragon from this age—the first creature of fantasy born upon the Earth. Legends also maintain Amethyst was the architect of the gate's creation. But if Amethyst created the

gate, then what created Amethyst? Creatures born from magic require magic to survive. If Amethyst came before, then he would be the single exception in this world. Some historians believe he is not a dragon at all but something else.

Some claim him a god, but gods cannot die.

For millions of years, before Earth was called Earth, the denizens of the planet called it Terros—a land of magic and wonder, spared from the wrath of malevolence. Dragons flew overhead while fae scurried below. Attricana was an encourager of life in every possible form. Monsters did emerge but never with the coordination to form an organized civilization. Meanwhile, the elder races were witnessing a slow degradation of enlightenment. The fae were not evolving; they were degenerating. Their descendants were begetting feral beasts. At the bottom of this inverted tree were uncultured boggs, violent skeggs, and voracious and swarming puggs. The chaparrans hid in their forests. The laudenians took to the sky. Damaskans recorded knowledge and history. Narros defended the cities. This left the gimfen to ignore such concerns and remain forever at play, keeping innocent against the encroaching violence.

Whether or not this could have endured would never be known.

The residents of Terros never questioned the origin of Amethyst. He was the greatest and wisest of them. They called him a god. They called him an avatar. He was connected to Attricana more intimately than any other entity. No one really knew the truth.

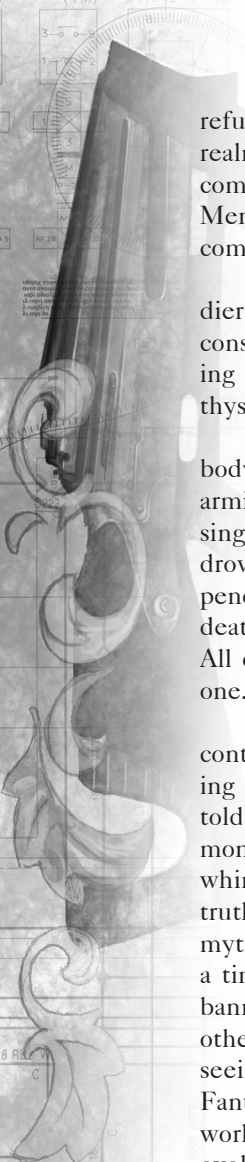
This changed when Ixindar arrived.

Unlike Attricana, records on the black gate's arrival are detailed. It drifted over the planet, sweeping across the night. From it spilled the corruption of order. If Attricana was a wellspring from a chaotic universe (perhaps one in the founding minutes of its creation), then Ixindar was the fountainhead of syntropy. It led to a realm of perfect harmony, perhaps to a cosmos of death and tranquility—a universe in its final moments. This gate had its own avatar, its own god to warrant worship. This was Mengus, a disembodied entity that whispered corruption without creating anything on its own. In one night, Ixindar had distorted a million fae to follow it. Servants gathered at Ixindar's landing site, a spreading expanse of black glass later dubbed Kakodomania.

The noble forces of chaos had difficulty forming an army while their opponents quickly expanded and reproduced into battle lines. Within a thousand years, war had torn the planet apart. It would be several millennia before both sides realized mutual attrition was the only possible outcome. Elements outside the world would prevent this ultimate fate.

Mankind knew this incident at the K-T Extinction event—when a ten kilometer bolide impact off the Yucatan Peninsula created the 180 kilometer Chicxulub crater, wiping out the vast majority of plant and animal life on the planet. The fae called it the Hammer of God. Both sides of fantasy agreed separately to seek





refuge on the other side of their gates, within dream realms formed by those gate's avatars. Mengus faked complicity in order to ambush Amethyst when isolated. Mengus believed Ixindar would survive the calamity to come, being on the far side of the planet.

Amethyst found himself surrounded by the soldiers of order. The general of this army, an intelligent construct known only as Gebermach, inflicted the killing blow, driving the dark sword Dogorasu into Amethyst's heart.

In his reprisal, Amethyst sacrificed his physical body. The resulting eruption of chaos wiped out the armies of Mengus and shattered the sky above them. A single beam of light from the gate before its closing drove Ixindar deep underground, sealing it under impenetrable stone. Attricana closed upon Amethyst's death. All constructs and creations of magic fell to dust. All evidence was washed away. Earth belonged to no one.

With nothing to compete with, science regained control. The natural order of evolution took root, leading eventually into mankind. Through his history, he told stories he could not possibly know, about mythical monsters and warring gods. These tales were from the whims of imaginative writers but all carried a portion of truth, some more than others. These stories became myths, books, films, and religions. This influence from a time no man had seen carried onto crests, flags, and banners. Their origins were explained, connected to other stories and faiths. Some were tied to science—seeing a manatee and believing it to be a mermaid. Fantasies remained locked in the dreams of a real world. Pushed aside as fancy, mankind continued his evolutionary drive to build, understand, and conquer. Society advanced as did the machines in servitude. Gaining a full understanding of science in all its unchanging rules, there was nothing man could not achieve given enough time.

History unfortunately would repeat itself.

A second bolide impact occurred, this time directly over Ixindar. To this day, no one knows the cause, as there was no warning before impact. It was a smaller event compared to the last but enough to reveal Ixindar to the world. The forces of syntropy emerged and corruption followed.

The following events are muddled, another case of a chicken and an egg. Ixindar opened, Attricana followed. By the time of the white gate's emergence, mankind had already been reduced to less than a tenth of its peak population. Was it reverberations from what was called the Second Hammer or had mankind already inflicted untold losses on himself before this occurred? Also not known was how much time passed between the reveal of Ixindar and the opening of Attricana. Some mechanism had to have been in place to open the white gate if Ixindar was exposed.

Mankind couldn't worry about such issues. He was fighting a losing battle on two fronts, from order and from chaos. To make the situation even more desperate, the technology mankind had been relying on for

hundreds of years had begun to fail. From the fountain of Attricana flowed rules of nature in antithesis to the science machines required to function. The more advanced the technology, the greater the chance of disruption. Surviving humans had to make a choice, wall themselves in from the flood of encroaching enchantment or settle upon a primitive life surrounded by the wonders of fantasies they once could only read in fiction.

Five hundred years later, the humans that held onto their machines have built immense cities of technology. These bastions are the last bulwarks of a time these men and woman refuse to surrender, a world run by science where mankind held dominion. These cities have grown to encompass small countries. Outside the bastions live the empires and wastelands of fantasy. Dragons and elves have returned to lay claim.

Monsters hide in dungeons. They prowl in forests. The wilderness has become dangerous but at the same time all the more romantic. Magic will always be a lure to those willing to wield it.

Order versus chaos, science versus magic, these conflicts make fanatics of everyone. An unspoken stalemate has arisen. No one has gained the upper hand. This may change with the proof of a once forgotten legend. When Gebermach had slain Amethyst, the dragon's crest of stone fell upon the ground and shattered. For millions of years, they drifted to the far corners of the world. As one has been found, the crusade to find the others has begun. The legend continues to explain that if the pieces of Amethyst's crown were brought together at the place of his death, one could call the god back to life, or take the mantel of command from him. With such a power, one could resurrect the most powerful creature to walk the Earth, or close the gate of magic forever. Who will find these artifacts?

Who will emerge victorious?

Fanatics of everyone...

THE CONFLICT

The world is not engulfed in war, but widespread peace across the land is still a distant dream. Not only are the remaining bastions of old-man fighting a desperate and seemingly hopeless struggle against the encroaching enchantment, but the individual bastions themselves are also paranoid about their own technological sovereignty from rival bastions. Further, the world of fantasy is not all of wonder. There are two realms of magic, flowing from two different breaches in the normal universe: The white gate of Attricana floating high above the sky, and the black gate of Ixindar half-buried in rock in the land of Kakodomania. Their influence and the armies loyal to them spurn conflicts whenever both sides meet. While Attricana encourages creation and chaos, Ixindar promotes only order and syntropy. While many people directly involved in this conflict do so from an obsessive desire to protect their ways of life, others have been tempted to crossover, embracing an



alternative way of thinking.

MAGIC AND FAITH

In Amethyst, there are only three ways magic can be focused, and thus, at least partially, controlled:

- **Language of Dragons.** The power of god-like creatures to create something by naming it—the magic possessed in the language of the greatest species. Wizards utilize this for all their magic. This language is called Pleroma.
- **Naturally enchanted--inorganic.** There are thousands of elements and combinations of elements that produce different magical results. The practices of alchemy and metallurgy have returned. Those with such knowledge forge items of enchantment by simply being aware of the exacting ratios of components required. Fae iron, coruthil, and angelite are such examples as well as all potions present in the setting. Nearly every magic item features this to a degree.
- **Naturally enchanted--organic.** The same as it is with monsters, some people possess magical abilities on their own from birth. Some claim this as divine, but many others refute that. Just as it was with man's time, god or gods are as silent as he, she, or they always were. There are no proven sanctified or blessed users of magic in a world with a silent and unproven god. This is the path of magic for those wishing to by clerics or druids. They are rare.

Religion does exist in Amethyst. In fact, many are ones dating back through humanity's history (Christianity, Islam, etc). Every faith can claim to possess such sanctified members. There are also those with no faith able to wield magic purely from a natural endowment they cannot explain. Others know very well where their power originates and understand there is no intelligence or deification beyond said gift. Because of this doubt, there is still no proof of god in Amethyst, despite the claims of many who believe.

ALTERED MAGIC

The world of Amethyst is devoid of high level spells, most major magic items, and all artifacts save for the ones included here. Characters may gain several powerful spells during the course of the game but these come in the form of foundation spells which are rare, costly to cast, and time consuming to quest for.

Spell casters also underwent a major change. Spell casting techniques are unique depending on the caster. Clerics, called either gneolistics or vivicators in this setting, gain their power directly from Attricana. This may simply be drawing energy into one's soul from the gate and may not have a divine origin, throwing doubt of an intelligent creator and maintaining god's ambiguity.

Druids also obtain their power from the gate, though not directly. They receive their abilities from a conduit, namely the Earth. They worship nature and the world around. In their belief, the world channels the power from the gate and casters gain their power from below, not from above. Druids harness the wind, earth, fire, and water as well as the animals and plants around them, shaping and controlling them as they wish.

Mages disregard channeling and mysticism, approaching the gate with an almost scientific eye. They claim while clerics and druids blind themselves to the mysteries of the gate, mages dive head first, taunting the cosmos to reveal its darkest secrets. Long before man or even elves, the first power from the gates channeled through the immense capacity of the draconic language, known as Pleroma. This practice continues today and remains the most popular form of spell casting. Only with lifelong persistence and an innate gift for understanding such intricate mysteries can the extremely rare few channel anything more than cantrips.

GLOSSARY

After Enchantment (A.E.): The progress of time in this new era. The game begins for many in the year 508 A.E., just a little over five-hundred years from when the white gate reopened.

Arkonnia: The same region occupied by the old Continent of Africa in old Earth.

Alternate Quantum Vibrational States (AQVS): The generic title to any physical state out of phase with our own. Some scientists refer to the realms beyond the gates as AQVS and claim the

Enchanted Disruption Field (EDF) derives from this. They also claim Attricana and Ixindar are portals to different dimensions or different universes. AQVS may also be the source of incorporeality.

Amethyst: The first intelligence to emerge on Earth, Amethyst was a powerful dragon-god whose death ended the time of magic millions of years before man.

Attricana: The term given to the enchanted realm existing beyond the white gate. It hovers in high orbit near the moon and can be seen and read by at night.

Bastions: Sanctuaries of men and machines. These are technological enclaves heavily fortified and densely populated. Most are echaphobic and forbid the use of magic within their walls. Each bastion stands as its own country, with very little to no contact with either the outside world or other bastions.

Blinder: A common derogative nickname mages and other magically imbued individuals call techans.

Canam: The continent previously occupied by Canada, the USA, and Mexico. It is commonly separated into Eastern Canam and Western Canam.

Corpus Continuity: This is the belief, mostly spiritually-based, that the humanoid form matched by humans and fae resides from a common origin. While some claim it related to echalogical influence—that humans look humanoid because of a lingering echo

from the fantasy age, others claim a divine origin, proving the existence of God.

Disruption: This is magic's capacity to disrupt the laws of nature that technology requires to function. This process only occurs in one direction—technology cannot disrupt magic. The entire planet is covered in a disruption field (see EDF), though the risk of disruption is not uniform, meaning certain areas have a higher rate of disruption than others. Disruption is at its minimum within bastions.

Echa: The slang given to magic or 'enchantment'. It often refers to visual use of magic (spells and magically infused items).

Echan: Someone touched by magic or using magic. This term often refers to humans specifically embracing the path of enchantment. Echans still consider this ugly bastardization of "Enchantment" derogatory. Unfortunately, it stuck.

Echagenics/Echalogy: The study in both echan and techan cultures of the similarities between humanity and its recorded history against the fae, dragons and their recorded history. This analyzes the obvious physical similarities between fae and man in conjunction with historical coincidences in their religions, legends, and mythologies. Theologians studying echalogy are referred to as echalogians.

Enchanted Disruption Field (EDF): The enchantment disruption field prevents radio communication and disrupts electronic circuits like an electro-magnetic pulse when extremely powerful magic is nearby. It also carries the tendency of jamming many mechanical devices more complicated than a wind mill.

Echalogical Influence: The belief that the history of the fae and dragons inspired human fiction through an immeasurable, unproven, undetectable echo which somehow resonated through sixty million years of evolution until minds advanced enough to understand that echo listened.

Lauropa: The term given to the region covering all of old Europe and western Slavic countries.

First Hammer: The first impact that destroyed the dinosaurs and ended the first reign of magic. It initiated the Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction event.

Inosi: The region of Earth previously referred to as India.

Indoaus: The region of land previously occupied by Australia and Indonesia.

Ixindar: The name given to the realm existing through the black gate. The gate is across the world, sitting half buried at the center of Kakodomania.

Kakodomania: A smooth obsidian glass which spreads radically from Ixindar. This realm envelops most of central Slav in permanent darkness.

Second Hammer: The second impact that destroyed the technological empire of man. It struck Siberia, exactly where Ixindar lay buried and exposed its influence to the world.

Slav: Often separated into Western and Eastern Slav, this region on Earth covers the majority of China and the entire Russian/Slavic region.

Southam: The region of Earth occupied by South America.

Techa: The slang term given to the technology of man and is usually reserved for the bastions and their machines.

Techan: One using technology. Unlike echans, techans do not find their title derogatory.

Terros: The era before man, from when the dragons and fae appeared until their disappearance 65 million years ago.

U.C. (Universal Credits): A currency that most bastions and wandering techans trade in. Only techans accept and use uc. Unlike fantasy currency like gold and silver coins, uc has no face value.



Experts in dressing death had reconstructed what was left of her body. They had placed a plastic smile on her face. The waxy finish of the skin convinced Aiden this was less his mother and more an imitation. Friends of his father, military veterans, brought the closed casket up. Father Tom, like the church, was new. One by one, friends neither he nor Martin knew offered hands and hugs. The mass was long with prayer passages reminding the mournful of god's grand purpose. Aiden ignored them. He never paid attention during regular mass; the words now felt equally hollow. Aiden hoped the blue eyed and golden scaled dragon would rip off the roof and whisk him to a new life. The church's packed capacity marched to the casket, touching, praying, crying.

Aiden was relieved to see the afternoon light as he followed the pallbearers out of the church. Martin offered tears for each weeper and wailer walking by. Aiden nodded and hugged but remained dry save for an occasional sniff. More words of divinity leapt from a priest's lips as the casket slipped through the open maw of the marble wall at the necropolis.

Aiden looked scornful at the cross at the entrance. He wondered if God was real as well. An omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient being, benevolent and divine? Then why was she dead? Why did the aging caucasian deity that thundered the clouds when he bowled and carried the faithful on the beach when they suffered allow her to die? Did the dragon break the rules? No creature shaped like that could fly, yet it did. No animal could breathe fire, yet it did. They couldn't exist, but there they were.

Father Tom's words, though carefully chosen, were no more uplifting than the compassionate whispers of distant family members.

"Men pale in the wisdom of God," he said to Aiden. "Not even I can understand why things happen when they happen. There is a reason for everything, Aiden. God has placed you on a path; there is something to learn from this. Even the worst of times are intended, by his will, to guide us. Occasionally, his hand must be firm. In times like this, our faith in his plan must remain strong."

"She was killed by a dragon, father." Aiden emphasized dragon as much as killed. Father Tom didn't say much after that.

As they exited the mausoleum, Aiden glanced at the wall, the periphery of the city. The monstrosity stood twenty stories and topped with tower battlements. It enclosed all ten thousand square kilometers of the city. It was only the latest iteration, with monuments of previous walls counted like tree rings to mark age and expansion. The last one was the tallest, the longest to build, and the most resolute in keeping everything that wasn't in, out. Aiden heard people calling it "the crown." Years ago, when Aiden asked Martin what was beyond the wall, his brother had said, "Nothing you should care about."

He had lied.

Aiden wished he had asked his mother. He wished he had discovered the truth by her telling him, by closing the codex and whispering, "It's all real." He should have followed what Leach had suggested and just asked her. Aiden wished that if the cost was to be that great, he would've preferred ignorance a few more years. Wishes kept Aiden a child. Wishes separated Aiden from his brother. Wishes were magical and romantic and had a peculiar tendency of coming true. Aiden wished his mother would come back, but that could never happen.

• • •

After a week, Aiden was back in class. The students kept their distance, even William. Lara was the only one that attempted to console him, offering a hug and asking how he was. No one else bothered, keeping a wide berth as the orphan passed them. To acknowledge his loss would be to admit that it occurred, that something abnormal could happen in an ordinary world. Were all the victims that day as disregarded? If only it had been cancer like Aiden's father, something average, common, and predictable. Lara offered him a half sandwich at lunch.

Martin with Aiden on the UTR. The train conveniently shepherded them a hundred miles in twenty minutes. Such a wonder was lost on Aiden. He wanted to open a book and read but was afraid of Martin's possible reaction. Aiden just leaned forward, feeling the breeze across his face. He didn't close his mind and imagine a dragon. He thought of the memory of when his imagination was all that was required.

What about magic?

And Elisa the elvish princess?

Aiden pondered what other fictions could invade his life. Martin reached over and began to coddle his brother's hair.

• • •

It was a week before Aiden could sneak out of his new house. He waited until everyone had settled. Their house was cast in an early night as the sun dropped behind the crown. Past 10:30 pm, Aiden saw the crack of light peeking under the bottom of the bedroom door go dark. He heard his relatives conclude their evening bathroom rituals. The opposite bed was empty; Martin was

hanging with friends that weekend, drinking and forgetting his problems. Their guardians offered him a wide berth.

He would have taken it either way.

Aiden knew Martin was doubtful to return for several hours, if at all until morning. Even if Martin was sleeping beside him, Aiden would've still have chanced sneaking out.

The UTR station was a two-block walk. The few coins in his pocket would get him to Genai. The navigation screens were easy. The ride was forty minutes in an empty car. Each time the train stopped, Aiden leaned out to see if anyone was boarding. He tapped his feet uneasily, waiting for the seconds to pass before the doors closed. Just as Aiden's imagination had turned the train into a serpent, it was now unwillingly generating various subway denizens, none of them terribly friendly. The doors closed and shuffled Aiden to the next station, where he had to change lines, forcing a five minute wait alone on the platform. His head twitched in the direction of every little snap or pop. Distant laughs from drunken teens faded as they diverted down another street.

The next train contained a single passenger, an elderly olive-skinned man that never stopped staring at Aiden. Aiden looked up occasionally, wondering who would break the silence. Neither did. Aiden disembarked twenty minutes later.

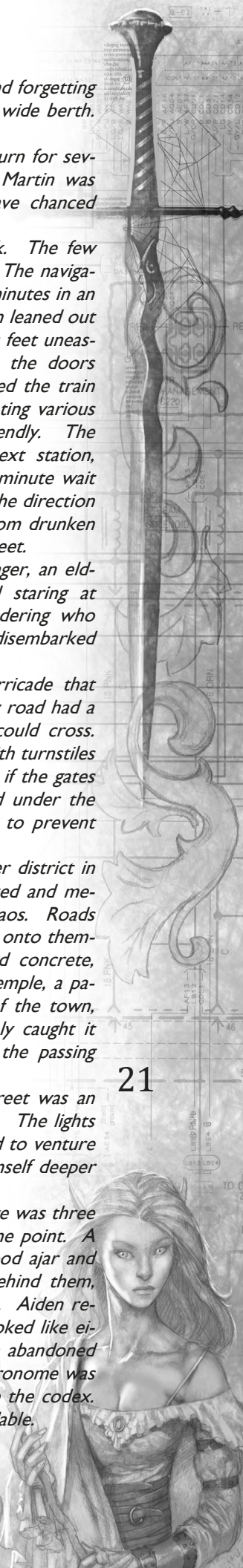
He finally stopped at the concrete barricade that sealed Genai from the rest of the city. Every road had a gate any card-carrying member of the city could cross. Pedestrian walkways were seldom watched with turnstiles installed to monitor traffic. Aiden wondered if the gates were meant to keep out or in. He dodged under the ratchet bar as there was no guard on hand to prevent him.

Genai bore no resemblance to any other district in the city. Unlike the rest of the city, organized and methodically laid out, Genai was a model of chaos. Roads split into dead ends; walkways looped around onto themselves. Buildings were built with wood and concrete, topped with ceramic tiles or gardens. The temple, a pagoda atop a pyramid, stood at the center of the town, towering the buildings around it. Aiden only caught it from the corner of his eye as he tracked the passing street signs.

Aiden found the address. Huangxia Street was an alley branching from the towering monument. The lights barely reached into the dark chasm Aiden had to venture into. Bottom lip quivering, Aiden forced himself deeper down the alley, waiting for his eyes to adjust.


A hundred feet in, he found it. The store was three stories, probably an apartment complex at one point. A large set of unlocked wrought iron gates stood ajar and portentous, like a patient basking shark. Behind them, tattered wooden doors tapped in the breeze. Aiden rechecked the address. From the outside it looked like either the place had been robbed or had been abandoned years ago. The sign above rocking like a metronome was in the same Asian type Aiden had read inside the codex.

At least the number 23C was understandable.



CHAPTER TWO: CREATION





Earth remains a crowded place. Millions of humans survived the holocaust they may have assisted in bringing. Add to that the flood of peoples only previously believed to exist in fiction. They have their own culture matching closely to those portrayed in human mythology. From those ancient tales, encroachers went by many names. Humans, to this day, still often refer to them by these labels, sometimes intended as endearing, other times taken as insult.

How these races respond to them is based strictly upon the individual. Some take it a compliment being measured to noble and whimsical creatures of legend. Others despise the comparison. None of them ever match the mold exactly. Some may look the part, but their personality may differ radically. Some exhibit traits from a variety of different legends while others are wholly unique without a mirror in mythology. There are also creatures birthed from enchantment which are new to this era, possessing no history from the previous age.

The following races are broken up into three categories:

Fae races: These are races naturally born from magic, with no original primordial form to track evolution back to. They began as the original fae, but have been continuously slaves to magic's whim. As time progresses, they continually "devolve" in more tribal, animalistic forms. It is believed the initial fae have long since vanished. Fae races include descendant species like damaskans, laudenians, and narros. Although some claim they no longer fit into the category, the tilen can also be found here. In truth, there are dozens of fae races and only a few of the oldest fae actually know them all. Other variations are dealt with later as monsters.


Evolved races: Humanity stands as the only example of an evolved race (at least on Earth) that has achieved intelligence without the assistance of magic.

Spawn races: Spawns are races that were once normal evolved creatures that have succumbed to magic's influence and have been altered and enhanced. For the purposes of this chapter, spawn races listed here are those that have been pushed by enchantment into a form that possess enough intelligence to form a community. All creatures on Earth which are not fae or human are spawn. On Canam, only the kodiaks have advanced to the point of developing a culture.

THE LINE OF FAE

No one is certain how the fae appeared. Some insist they birthed from trees while others claimed the sky. Others profess neither, pointing to the soil as the source. Only dragons knew for certain and they appeared to intentionally forget such trivial facts. Considering the oldest fae races maintain a connection with nature, the exact specifics of their origin seemed inconsequential (though never state that to a laudenian or a chaparran). The word "fae" is another controversial debate. While the etymology points to a simple "touched by magic" description, it shares its root with "faerie."

Echological influence appears in numerous cultures, connecting threads from various human legends and myths from the time of Terros. The races of fae would later influence mythologies previously thought unconnected. Though damaskans, laudenians, and chaparrans would fall under a wide range of Germanic elf legends, other distant cousins would appear in Greek or Egyptian lore. There appears no connection where these influences would appear. Even obscure concepts of Attricana found its way into Chinese and Japa-



nese myths. Most fae are aware how they were represented in human literature. Oddly enough, the ones presented in a negative light are not looked on highly by the other races. These are mentioned only as the outcasts—uncivilized and primitive fae offshoots prone to violence. Few, if any, survived the exodus. Magic kept its persistence and they reappeared soon after in the modern age, as if their introduction could not be stopped.

As fae continued to grow and develop, a rising concern emerged as the newer races appeared less developed and intelligent than their ancestors. Though some claim a higher status, there is no denying the recent branch species exhibit a primitive mentality, preferring to pillage and devour rather than develop and civilize. Fae wonder if they're doomed to devolve into mindless animals while man continues to grow and expand. The fae take pride in their rich culture and a growing fear has taken root that it may all bleed away in time.

Then there are the pagus, appearing with the Ixindar migration when the black sun passed over the world and settled in its new home in the previous age. Pagus break most of the rules associated with fae. They are the oldest species without a deviation branch of their own. After Mengus created them, they never changed, as if Attricana stopped talking to them.

In the present, the descendants of the original fae continue their traditions and beliefs with hardly a hiccup from the old time. Tenenbri dig, laudenians fly, narros protect, and damaskans remember. Meanwhile, their new ape-evolved neighbors continue to expand.

RELATIONS AND TRADITIONS

Narros salute by touching the first knuckle of a clenched fist to the middle of their brow. Damaskans abhor unnecessary physical contact with strangers, though they still don't acknowledge an acceptable field of personal space. Tenenbri curse and swear loudly during the course of their daily affairs. Gimfen wipe sweat from their face before shaking hands. Laudeni-ans never wear undergarments and usually keep to single layers, especially at home, regardless of company entertained. Such unique cultural traditions often come as a surprise to visitors, namely mankind. Though they have their own such customs across many nations, there has never been a diplomatic incident between human nations over traditional practices. Hand shaking is understood, as is bowing despite regional variations on the specific motions involved.

Thankfully, echological influence inherited many of these customs from the ancient past. Bowing, including kowtowing is understood and practiced in several fae races. Nevertheless, despite some common ground, there exist major cultural differences between human and fae nations. When the first fae encountered humans, the elves assumed by understanding one group of men, they could ascertain the entire species, as it is so

with most fae. Disastrous initial encounters between fledging communities in southern Canam between fae and humans soured relations for decades. Early chaparran encounters with mankind were so dire, it curdled opinions that have never fully been absolved. The bulk of the blame fell with man on that account. Laudeni-ans also share a resentful opinion of man after an unfortunate incident with the miners of Selkirk. Selkirk already benefitted from a successful first encounter with the narros years earlier. Though the miners were not immoral or wicked in any way, and tried their best to impress the elder elves, the humans' brash and unkempt nature came afoul of the decorous and conceited attitude of the laudenians. The laudenians judged the whole of the human race upon that single meeting as offensive and unpleasant, and the majority has not changed their opinion since.

In Southam, where humans were a minority, their bitter opinions of the fae came from constant conflict. With the exception of the narros, most fae in Southam care little for mankind other than as a food or slave source. Thankfully, other encounters in the north were not nearly as soiled. Damaskans and narros discovered kindness and loyalty among the humans in their first encounters. They uncovered to their initial shock that human traditions change with each nation and that time and distance encourage greater deviations. After only a few decades, two separate human societies populated with identical humans would create distinct traditions and even new languages. Unlike the chaparrans, laudenians, and tenenbri, inconsiderate and unmoving in their traditions and their acceptance of other customs, damaskans and gimfen grew to tolerate and even welcome cultural diversity.

Since damaskans don't officially recognize royalty or religion, the concept of bending a knee or committing to prostration to a lord or faith is unknown to them, causing accusations of disrespect. Meanwhile, gimfen kowtow to virtually anybody, including their own tools. Considering how close their heads are to the ground, this is hardly an impedance or strain on their backs. Chaparrans bend the knee but never bow. Chaparrans share with tenenbri their exuberance with affection. Where chaparrans limit this to hand kissing and the brushing of noses and cheeks, tenenbri only limit their expressions to sports with the mouth, drawing the line at open oral sex. The basic kiss, thankfully, rarely changes and is still a sign of affection with both human and fae nations.

Damaskans consider kisses against any skin in public taboo, but make a game of concealment whenever possible. They also have no problem with cheek-to-cheek contact or air kissing from a distance.

Holding one's hands up, palms open, is considered a sign of submission or greeting in many human cultures, and is repeated with both damaskans and laudenians. However, the narros take it as an insult, insinuating one of "raising a wall" in defiance to the other. Other misunderstandings include the use of connecting the forefinger and thumb to form an "O" or the crossing

of the index and middle fingers, both considered sexual insults with chaparrans and laudenians, though each sign insinuates opposite slurs. To the tenenbri, all silent hand signals are considered rude, against the open nature of the people. Even the most basic manual communication is frowned upon unless joined by a verbal accompaniment. On the other hand, Laudenians despise noise and relish silence, thus screaming in joy is considered coarse, regardless of the situation. By assumption, applause is welcomed among the tenenbri, accompanied by roars and foot pounding while the laudenians show praise with simple bowing.

Gimfen throw money. Waving one hand to another is a greeting to many human cultures, holding it steady is an insult. This is found with fae nations as well though gimfen hate any hand gesture where the palm is exposed to them.

Showing only the middle finger is a human insult with no equivalent in any fae culture. However, one of the most bizarre confused misunderstandings involving hand gestures is the corna, or "horn" sign. This involves extending the two outer fingers from an otherwise closed fist. Though initially considered an insult and a symbol of the devil in many human cultures, it is well known throughout most fae nations as a welcomed sign of greeting, often used by fae to display racial pride. It is welcomed from humans, interpreted to saying "I respect you and your species." However, the thumb must be kept closed for this salutation, as extending it out the side indicates a request for intercourse. Since this discovery, some humans have created a variation, where placing the gesture unknowingly behind a human's head insults him or her as a "fae lover," a slur in some communities.

These are a few examples of the many cultural confusions that have arisen when fae mingle with humans. While most cultures shake hands, damaskans frown upon it, as is nearly all open physical contact. Chaparrans and tenenbri hardly keep their hands off each other. With Limshau, containing a mixed demographic, the resident humans adopted many of the damaskan traditions and practices, offering a few back in trade. Since the influx, damaskans from Limshau have adopted the practice of slapping the raised hand of another in celebration, a gesture no other fae do (including other damaskans).

Beyond simple hand gestures, most humans find the honesty of fae alarming. Though they might not answer a question directly or volunteer a secret willingly, they rarely lie. The sometimes brutal application of this belief has ruffled more than a few feathers, especially among the noble human houses. This accompanied by the fae's tolerance for alternate lifestyles and practices among their own people has made them unpopular with fanatical human religious movements.

Many fae have been declared corrupt and wicked by church leaders. Some fae are guilty of this as well, considering mankind barbaric and primitive, regardless if he uses magic or technology. Some fae have accused man as inferior, both in breeding and in brains. Hu-

mans have countered with similar accusations, adding that fae are tools of the devil, an image personified in the zealous ramblings of King Darius and his disciples of Baruch Malkut.

And yet, many fae nations carry a positive relationship with humans in spite of the massive casualties the fae suffered at the hands of humans in the first century and their capture and enslavement by raiders and evil nations, a practice as prevalent now as it was when it began 350 years ago. With the fae's long life and even longer history, the intricacies of their culture are so extensive that a human marrying a fae can take the entirety of his extended life learning the details and still be surprised at the end.

FAE DESCENDANTS

After dragons, the first species born on Earth were the fae. No one remembers what they originally looked like or how many there were. Their susceptibility to magic altered their original form and they broke off into dozens of smaller offshoots relatively quickly. These offshoots remain genetically compatible and physically similar in basic ways. They are usually bipeds with ten fingers and ten toes, stereoscopic vision, and sexual reproduction. Human scientists, after a few centuries of examining, failed to determine how fae resemble evolved apes to such an extent. Although it's been commonly agreed upon that alien life would evolve naturally along similar lines, the parallels between fae and man are too numerous to be considered a coincidence.

Creationists (those believing in a creation by a divine hand) had their answer and their proof. It became known as Corpus Continuity. This belief, held by some echans and techans, posits that numerous similarities in enchanted species of fae and the evolved species of man prove the existence of God. The humanoid form, consisting of binocular vision, binaural hearing, base ten appendages, erect stature, and mammalian physiology match the fae species exactly, a species not evolved from primitive animals but formed from magic itself. With the exception of the pointed ears and the variations of fae species when they adapt to their environment, there still remains remarkable similarities scientists cannot explain. Because fae arose first, many believers in Corpus Continuity also subscribe to Echalogical Influence. Those of faith on both sides believe in the idea that God liked the humanoid form but tried different ways to succeed at it. Scientists refuse to acknowledge this and believe a genetic reason exists for the similarity. To them echalogical influence may be the reason itself--the previous age influencing evolutionary paths to make humans resemble their long dead progenitors.

Another popular theory claims it to be a coincidence; base ten appendages, binocular vision and stereoscopic hearing simply makes sense and that all intelligent life will eventually move towards that end. Others cling to the prevalent theory that the fantasy

TABLE: AGING EFFECTS

RACE	MIDDLE AGE ¹	OLD ²	VENERABLE ³	MAXIMUM AGE
Chaparran	400 years	800 years	3,000 years	+4d% years
Damaskan	300 years	500 years	1,000 years	+4d% years
Gimfen	100 years	300 years	400 years	+3d% years
Human	35 years	53 years	80 years	+2d20 years
Laudenian	500 years	1,000 years	5,000 years	None
Narros	250 years	400 years	900 years	+2d% years
Tenenbri	200 Years	300 years	500 years	+4d% years
Tilen	300 years	400 years	500 years	+3d% years

¹ At middle age, -1 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

² At old age, -2 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

³ At venerable age, -3 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

world doesn't exist at all, only emerging because of man's desire for it to exist.

The original fae vanished hundreds of thousands of years before the First Hammer struck. A few of their dominant features, like their pointed ears and sharp features, still survive with all their descendants.

Fae all share several common qualities. They are peaceful within their own species (i.e., laudenians never fight laudenians). Divorce is virtually non-existent. They are also monogamous and loyal to their mates. When single, they are also known to be somewhat promiscuous. Even the laudenians, with their strict heritage and tradition, do not consider sex for pleasure either sinful or immoral between consenting non-bonded adults. Although they denounce the use of sex slaves by human masters, fae races do not prohibit pre-bonded (pre-marital) sex. Prostitution is rare given their sexual freedom, but it has been known to occur. There are virtually no crimes dealing with vices in fae cultures. They gamble, smoke, and never gain an addiction to either. Additionally, they do not consider homosexuality a sin and bonded same sex couples occur openly in all fae communities. Some observers claim fae are all pansexual, though this is not entirely the case. Some human nations frown on these freedoms and expressions, especially within those nations that use religion as a device of fear to keep the population in line (a technique used exclusively by mankind).

These rules apply when the fae cultures are allowed to govern themselves. In some locations, where fae are not in places of authority, they are forced to abide by the rules of the nation they inhabit. With the pagus, they are run almost entirely by either dragons or demons and are seldom permitted to rule themselves.

FAE RACIAL TRAITS

There are several features applying to all of the fae descendants:

UNIVERSAL FAE RACIAL TRAITS

Echan Origin: All fae (save for pagus) are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight).

Immunities: You are resistant to all mortal disease. You are resistant to such annoying ailments as the flu, measles, and polio. You are unaffected by all genetic diseases, but not mutated genes from radiation or enchanted viruses. You are immune to all transmitted diseases in human history. You cannot be carriers or infected in anyway. You never contract cancer naturally, but external forces (chemicals, radiation, or magic) may still infect you. Enchanted diseases (all diseases in the game with an attack) can still affect you

Light Sleeper: Unlike humans, fae races require little sleep and they jostle awake with surprising ease. You can sleep lying down or just leaning back. This is due do a subconscious effort to maintain balance. It allows you to sleep comfortably on branches or on cliff edges. You require only four non-consecutive hours of total sleep every 24 hours. Like all living creatures, you require REM sleep. You must lie down and be comfortable to do so, but only need four hours of sleep in this state to be satisfied every three days. If you are not allowed comfortable sleep in order to reach a REM state, sleep deprivation will eventually set in. You can sleep in heavy armor for three days before fatigue sets in. You gain a +5 racial bonus against sleep effects and can make Listen skill checks while asleep without penalty.

Fae-Iron: A specific ratio of lead and iron is extremely toxic to all fae. It is a forbidden substance, outlawed in most civilized communities. You are vulnerable to fae iron (you take half again as much damage (+50%) from attacks with weapons made from fae iron).

CHAPARRANS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 5'8" – 6'3"

Average Weight: 80-120 lbs.

Average Starting Age: 100 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: 3,000 years

Ability Scores: +2 Wisdom; +2 Constitution or +2 Strength; -2 Charisma

Size: Medium; as a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 30 feet, see Brachiata

Vision: Low-Light Vision; you can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. You retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Languages: Chaparra and one human language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Stealth, +2 Survival

Brachiata: You have a climb speed equal to your normal speed when climbing trees. You gain a +5 bonus to Acrobatics and Climb checks when moving through difficult forest terrain. You can move through difficult forest terrain without a reduction in speed.

Chaparran Weapon Proficiency: You are proficient with the longbow, the shortbow, and one one-handed melee weapon of your choice.

Listen to the Wind: Your perceptions are so keen you could use an enemy's breathing in the dark to aim your shots. When wielding a shortbow or longbow, you may use Wisdom as your primary ability for all attack and damage rolls with it.

Long Shot: The range entry for any shortbow or longbow you wield is doubled.

Natural Habitat: You are one with the forest. While you are in a forest (wood), you gain a +2 racial bonus on Perception checks and your Combat Maneuver Defense and you cannot be surprised. When outside of a forest, you suffer a -1 penalty to initiative.

Surprisingly Resilient: While you are not wearing heavy armor or carrying a shield, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC and Reflex saves.

Weald Walk (Su): You are able to vanish into the forest and reappear elsewhere to assault your opponent. If you are within 5 feet of a tree, you can use a *swift action* to teleport up to 50 feet to another tree within range. You emerge within 5 feet of the targeted tree. The trees must be rooted in the Earth. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. You can use Weald Walk *as many times a day as your Wisdom modifier*.

Hiding in the deep woods across the world, the fae of chaparra evolved concealment to an art form. Their xenophobia rivals even the laudenians. Nearly all descendants of

fae believe that they are the true form of the ancient race. Chaparrans are almost as close to laudenians to that claim. Their race dates back further than anyone can recall, including them as they keep few records.

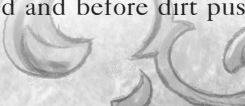
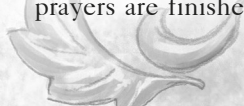
Chaparrans believe most other races have forgotten their origins. They believe that the original fae birthed from the forests and should always remain tied to them. The chaparrans take their homes from the woods, growing towers, temples, and whole communities from the soil. Their mere presence encourages vegetation. As result, chaparran communities boast the tallest, thickest trees. Chaparrans mostly keep to themselves, refusing involvement in most wars. They contend that their souls will move from wood to flesh every generation. Killing one simply moves their soul to a tree for its lifetime. After an era, the soul returns to flesh. One could walk through a chaparran forest without ever knowing their presence. Unless threatening elf or tree, trespassers often cross without worry or encounter. More nefarious individuals vanish after entering.

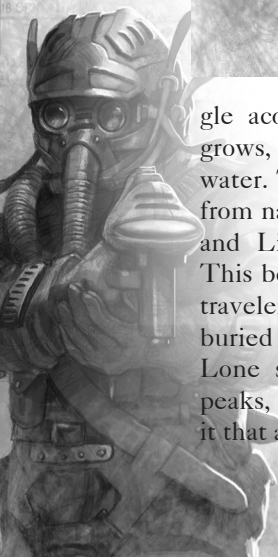
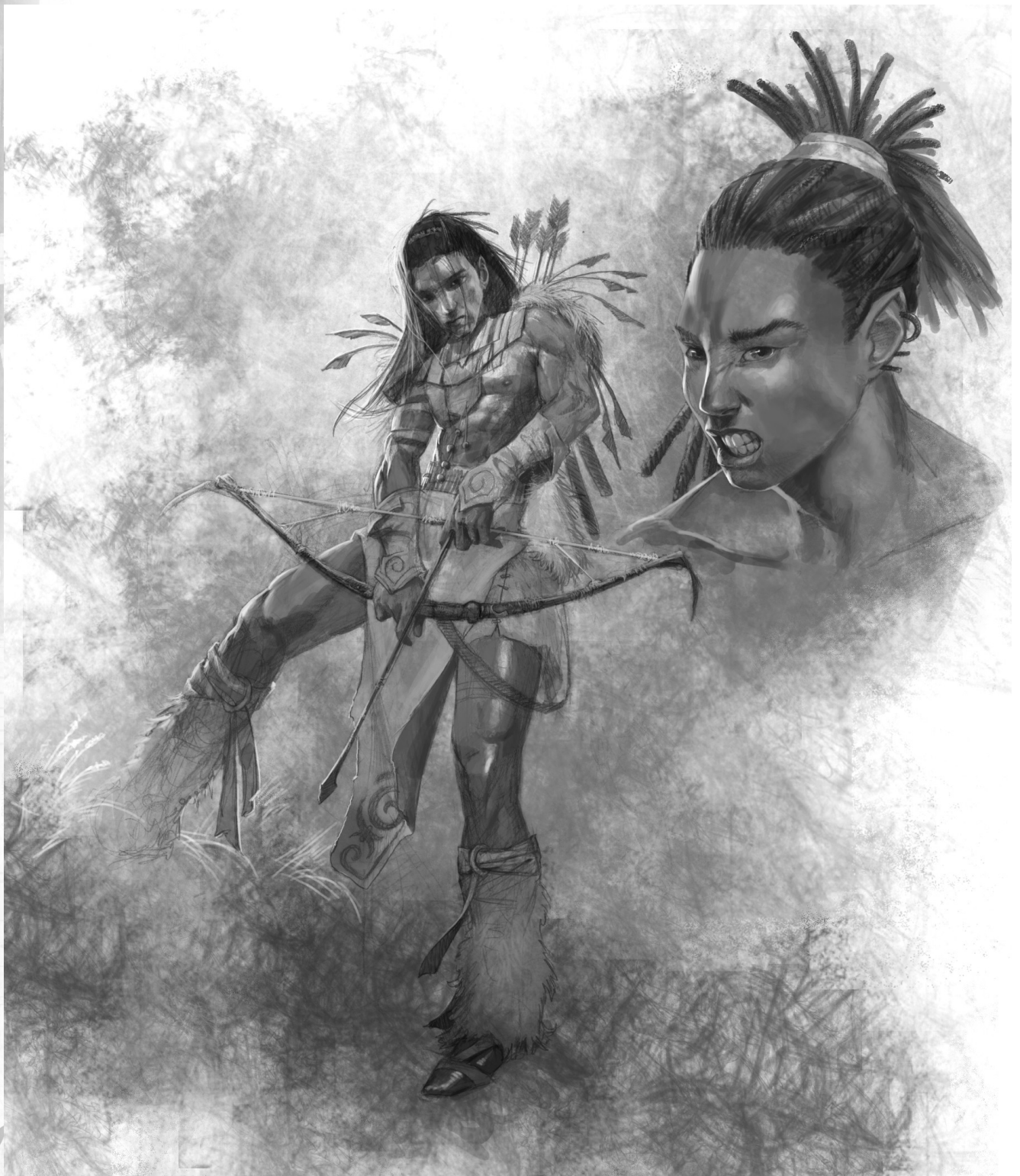
Most communities are small. With such an obscure people, numbers are impossible to come by. Estimates range from 80,000 to 800,000 chaparrans across the world, scattered among a thousand forests of varying size. One optimistic guess claims that number closer to a million. They defend the forests when necessary, often with arrow fire. Their bows and arrows grow naturally from wood, a result of their symbiosis with the trees around them.

Where other fae races take pride in their books and scrolls, chaparrans seldom write anything. Their outward emotional displays are reflected mostly in their music and dance. They pound beats into fallen logs with amazing speed and augment those sounds with kinetic syllables of phrases strung so fast as to make the words meaningless. Chaparrans' passion for dance knows no equal. The flailing of bodies and limbs pulse with speeds unheard. A chaparran's heartbeat will increase to virtually that of a hummingbird in spasm. Bodies move almost violently, with fists pounding and legs striking. Only their absolute discipline prevents injury to others. Watching a chaparran dance charges the soul and pumps the heart. Every move denotes a meaning others seldom understand. To outsiders, the dance looks chaotic with thrashing appendages and whirling bodies without care for people or objects around. Ones involved in the dance hardly open their eyes, confounding outsiders to how the dancers don't crash into each other. All chaparrans know this dance and practice it daily. The art connects to a form of martial art called Manora Chaparra, believed to push the darkness from their souls, allowing them to fight with clean spirits.

This form developed after the First War. The majority of the pagus that birthed and walked on the night of migration came from chaparrans and the fae left behind swore an oath to eliminate their cursed brothers from the world. The obsession continues today.

When chaparrans die, tradition decrees the body must be dropped into a grave without a coffin. After prayers are finished and before dirt pushed over, a sin-





gle acorn is placed in the mouth. This seed always grows, despite surrounding competition and available water. These trees grow taller and wider than any grown from nature and many claim the great temples of Jibaro and Libanus emerged from fallen chaparran priests. This belief passes to wandering chaparrans as well, and travelers across the world always know where one is buried by the massive tree dwarfing all those around. Lone sentinels have appeared in deserts, atop great peaks, and even in caves, declaring to all those who see it that a chaparran rests there.

Physical Description: Chaparrans are slightly taller than damaskans but give the illusion of much greater size due to their increased muscle mass and physical stamina. They also often wear furs and pelts, adding to their girth, but exposing a great deal of skin to maintain agility. Of all the fae descendants, the chaparrans have the greatest spectrum of skin tones, from light tan to ebony black. They hate adorning themselves with gems or shiny rocks and seldom wear metal of any kind. Their ears are short and flush with their heads, making them almost indistinguishable from humans at a dis-

tance. A chaparran's eyes usually reflect green and bluish hues and will often pierce their ears in several areas and color their bodies with tattoos, especially around the face, shoulders, and back.

Playing a Chaparran: Many assume a wild behavior when spotting a chaparran. In truth, they are quite civilized and maintain good grooming and health. Unlike other fae, known for being austere, chaparrans wear their emotions on their sleeves...though most don't actually have sleeves. Everyone knows immediately when a chaparran is upset. Thankfully, this passion spreads to upbeat emotions as well.

Chaparrans seldom seek adventure outside their forests. Of all fae races, they and the tenenbri are the least encountered outside of their regions. Since cross-breeds seldom result in chaparrans, few outcasts can be identified as such. Only in extremely rare cases do chaparrans brave the outside world. Only the young and curious disobey their culture and heritage to embark on such a voyage.

A player creating a chaparran should be aware of their propensity of solitude. Though some will obviously forge and protect friendships with outsiders, they still prefer fae to humans and seldom invest time or emotion in relationships with the latter. Chaparrans rarely bond with non-chaparrans and less so with humans.

Chaparrans avoid heavy armor and weapons with no wood component. Their swords often sport wooden grips. They prefer ranged fire but a few have been known to wield scythes, maces, and spears. Chaparrans enjoy the outdoors and need to see the sun to orientate themselves. Without this, they often grow confused about the time of day, sleeping at odd hours for random lengths. A chaparran is crippled when in a castle or a dungeon but are virtually unstoppable in a forest. It is not a stretch to conclude that the majority of chaparrans are claustrophobic.

Chaparrans are also highly religious and commonly profess a faith in Berufu, the fae mother god who gave life to their ancestors. Nearly all chaparrans openly pray to the woods every morning, noon, and night, thanking her for their life. The chaparrans believe the fae are not devolving, but becoming one with nature. Their descendant offshoots are not necessarily violent, but more xenophobic, becoming increasingly skittish of outsiders.

They also grow more connected with nature, even to the point of exhibiting animal physical traits. Chaparrans respect their descendants and scold the laudenians for hanging onto what they call a "bankrupt obsession."

If player creates a chaparran, that character is one who wishes to see beyond the trees of home. They may still be skittish of strangers but brave enough to take chances where others would run away. Chaparrans have a flight instinct and will bolt instead of standing ground unless allies or the innocent are threatened. Chaparrans are the best race to play because they are the most like the traditional elves of legend. They have the oldest history and the most exotic beliefs. They are proud and powerful and are the envy of many others.

To play a chaparran is to wholly embrace the fantasy world and all of its possibilities.

Names: Unlike other fae, often taking human-like names to better associate with the human world, chaparrans refuse to do so. Their names, like all fae, are personal and are only meant to be heard by pointed ears. A chaparran's family name merges with their given name. The given name is usually one or two syllables and the full name usually features one to several 'K's when spelled in the English tongue. Since they don't adopt human names and refuse to let humans address them by their given titles, most simply ask that outsiders refer to them each as "Krysid" which means "Fae-Born" in their language. It was more than a century after mankind's initial contact with chaparrans before they figured out why they all had the same name.

Examples: Marakenassa, Jassakerak, Brassekonnas

DAMASKANS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 4'8" – 5'7"

Average Weight: 70-100 lbs.

Average Starting Age: 100 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: 1,500 years

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity; +2 Intelligence or +2 Wisdom; -2 Strength

Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 35 feet

Vision: Normal, as per human.

Languages: Damaskan, English. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Acrobatics, +2 Knowledge (History)

Ambidexterity: The attack penalties for your off-hand are the same as your primary hand for the purposes of two weapon fighting or if forced to fight with your off-hand.

Encyclopedic Knowledge: You can take 10 on all trained Knowledge checks in any situation. This takes no additional time.

Fearless: You gain a +2 racial bonus to all Will saves.

Gravity Focus (Ex): You are able to enter a state of heightened awareness. Your heart beats faster. Your muscles twitch and quiver. You are able to surge your body and mind to spectacular speeds. *As a free action*, you can employ gravity focus. This does not provoke opportunity attacks. You can activate this ability as *many times a day as your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier*. When employed, until the beginning of your next turn, you gain the following benefits:

- Increase your speed by +10 feet.
- Gain a +5 bonus to Acrobatics and Climb checks.
- Gain a +2 bonus to AC and a +5 bonus to all



Ref saves.

- Enemies gain no attack bonuses against you from flanking, if on higher ground, or if you are flat-footed, kneeling, sitting, or prone.

Polyglot: You gain a +4 bonus with Linguistics checks

Tachygraphy: The damaskan written language is a shorthand allowing them to write in a fifth the time while using their system. Mages must still use Pleroma, so they cannot apply tachygraphy to spellwork.

Tactless: Damaskans are honest and speak often without thinking. You suffer a -2 penalty to all Diplomacy checks against non-Damaskans.

Think Before Acting: Your intellectual pursuits, far from impeding your combative edge, have only honed it. You may use Intelligence as your primary ability for attack and damage rolls with all ranged attacks. You can also use Dexterity in place of Strength when determining your Combat Maneuver Defense.

The first Damaska was the oldest empire in history, erected on the ruins of ancient fae. After the gate re-opened, damaskans rebuilt their civilization, though split into two different empires on opposite sides of the planet. On one, Damaska was made to mimic its former glory. On the

other, the fae erected the empire of knowledge, Limshau. Because of a peculiar trait of all fae, both nations looked initially similar. All damaskans live in homes made of stone, not wood. Most of their cities are built into tall mountains or next to cliffs and always facing a major river or body of water. Where they differ is that Damaska's cities expand with whim across open fields stopped only by water and cliffs where Limshau restricts its cities by erecting walls. Damaskan cities scrape the sky with sharp spires—a landscape of porcupine quills—while Limshau's jigsaw of flat, interlocking, and tessellating buildings allow one to sit atop a roof and watch an unobstructed sunset. The Damaskan damaskans across the ocean in Lauropa wear looser clothes, wielding different weapons, and are more open in public. Since fae never change unless branching into a new species, this deviation in Canam can only be attributed to the introduction of man, a species foreign to the Damaskan Empire in the East.

Damaskans are the most common, most seen, and most widely circulated in the world. Both those from Damaska and Limshau are considered damaskan even though fae from Limshau often refer to themselves as Limshau fae. Damaskans are also one of the few fae species to permit the term “elf” in conversation, often heard even from their lips. Of all fae, damaskans are the

most numerous with the largest kingdoms. Narros hold rights to the largest armies, but damaskans claim all other records. They have the most artisans, the most diplomats, the most historians, and the most architects.

Their wizards all employ the book as their totem, which may be hard to distinguish since nearly all damaskans (at least in Limshau) carry books.

Each individual possesses an encyclopedic knowledge on a subject defined by their taste. Where those from Damaska prefer internal recall for this information, residents from Limshau insist on writing all of it down. Until the damaskans' arrived, fae races seldom recorded anything. Their history was marred with inaccuracies, legends claimed as fact, facts discredited as myth. This was part of the reason why fae history from the time of Terros is so vague and sporadic. Alas, damaskans could bring nothing with them to the new world and had to reconstruct their past from memory. One distinction damaskans are clear to make is that they won't volunteer their own opinion on their pages, clogging the books with judgment, sentiment, and meaningless monologue. Where humans believe any individual can stand on a box and preach prose worthy of print, damaskans remain quiet, recording events and rarely the thoughts of those involved.

The damaskan written form is substantially different from other fae languages. Damaskans know both the classical cursive and a shorthand variation they invented called Sonna-eliano, which has been translated into English as orthoglossy. Every damaskan, regardless of their place in the world, knows this writing style. Using orthoglossy allows a damaskan (or any other trained in the skill) to write five times faster than any other scholar.

Damaskans rely on woodwind instruments throughout their performances. They prefer quiet, more subdued music by a majority. When they die, their bodies are burned and scattered to the wind. Because of their circulation over the globe, no one can be sure how many damaskans live on Earth, but it's probably between 4-5 million. Less than half of them reside in Canam. Damaskans migrated across the globe very quickly. Even though Damaska remains the largest fae empire, dozens of others appeared in a matter of decades. The Damaskan and Limshau empires remain loyal to each other, though not often in contact.

Damaskans loathe pagus. More than any other race, the dragons deeply respect the damaskan people. Limshau places its trust in alliances with the gimfen, chaparrans, and humans – specifically with the kingdoms of Abidan and Kannos.

Physical Qualities: A damaskan's eyes slant slightly, similar to Asian humans. Damaskans frequently wear new clothes, pressed and clean, which fit snugly. They abhor getting dirty. Their ears taper straight out the sides of the skull to a very sharp point and have a tendency to flutter and vibrate slightly depending on mood. Obviously, due to discomfort, damaskans avoid wearing helmets whenever possible. They feature darker hair tones and seldom grow it beyond

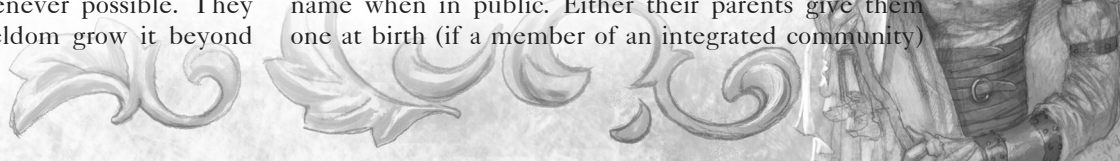
shoulder length. The skin ranges from light tan to olive color with eyes of brown and grey. Damaskans rarely pierce their skin or adorn their bodies with tattoos. When reaching adulthood, damaskans still resemble human young adults barely out of puberty (17-19 in human years). Even at their venerable age, damaskans don't often look a day past 30 and do not look older than 40 when they finally shuffle on.

Playing a Damaskan: Damaskans maintain a deep pride for whichever beliefs they have and are known to defend their convictions to the death. Damaskans seldom understand fear and often engage in fights they know they cannot win to save the life of another. Damaskans are shy, often staying quiet during conversations. They prefer to speak only when having something useful to say. Until then, they keep back and avoid making their presence known. This makes them appear distant, detached, and even cold. They do exhibit emotions when they are encountered, but this happens more often when the damaskan is off-duty or when in private.

When dedicated to the task, they think of little else and speak only when necessary. Get them started on raw knowledge or ask them to recite some nugget of information and they talk like uncorking a Champaign bottle. They believe in discipline and order and find disorganization of any kind unsettling. They also place an unnatural level of security on the written word, putting themselves in harm's way to protect a book. Even the less scholarly inclined from Damaska find this urge nearly unavoidable.

Due to their large numbers, damaskans follow several beliefs. The largest numbers worship the dragon god, Amethyst, believing his soul exists beyond the gate. Others worship the fae god of Berufu, while others follow the narros god of Oaken. A smaller number have even embraced a few human faiths. Those of piety are few with damaskans. Less than 10% of damaskans worldwide endorse a religious belief. Damaskans welcome adventure and often leave their lands for such desires. Some also embark on quests for their people. A common sight in open echa, damaskans are ever expanding and rely on the adventuring spirit of their people to establish a growing civilization. A player creating a damaskan should be aware of their timid nature. They are often reserved, seldom speaking out of turn. They can be prone to sudden burst of emotion when finally pushed. Threatening flame to parchment is a sure way to enrage such a fae. Damaskans are clearly the best race to play because they are built on the strengths of being a fae without the arrogance and xenophobia of other races like laudenians and chaparrans. They are the easiest to get along with, possess the widest range of abilities for nearly all classes, and have a virtuous path ingrained in their soul—the pursuit of knowledge. What path could be more honorable? They are civilized, numerous, and have the smallest stigma of any fae race without exception.

Names: Damaskans often adopt a human-sounding name when in public. Either their parents give them one at birth (if a member of an integrated community)



or the damaskan chooses it before leaving an all fae village. Some damaskan families adopted their chosen human name as their true name, nearly forgetting their heritage. This occurs in Limshau far more often than anywhere else. Not just due to integration, many believe a new world requires a clean slate, and a new family name is a good place to start. Those families will also frequently choose a human name for their children, forgoing the fae. Several outside races deplore this practice and a few fae without native names have been denied entry in fae-only communities on this basis.

Most damaskans keep their fae names if they have them, privately known only by loved ones and family. Even in situations where the damaskans use their last name, they still regularly select a human first name because damaskan names are somewhat hard to pronounce. Human names selected are usually simple, with little cultural identification. They are often chosen to reflect an attribute of the individual. Last names are very culturally specific and sometimes reflect an attribute of the family or important individuals within it.

Examples: Ravenar Limshau III is his real name, but his sister's husband elected to adopt the human title "Strongbow" to replace their damaskan family name of Kaixiu'Ooria. Centuries later, few in that family ever use that title. Their fourth child, a daughter was given the damaskan name Reivune, which eventually turned into Raven, which she elected as her open name, as well.

GIMFEN

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 3'3" – 4'3"

Average Weight: 40-60 lbs.

Average Starting Age: 30 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: 500 years

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity; +2 Charisma or +2 Wisdom; -2 to Constitution

Size: Small. As a Small creature, you gain a +1 size bonus to Armor Class, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, a -1 penalty to your Combat Maneuver Defense, and a +4 size bonus on Stealth checks.

Speed: 25 feet

Vision: Normal

Languages: Damaskan and one human language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Bluff; +2 Escape Artist

Builder: You gain a +4 bonus to Engineer or Sleight of Hand.

Disruption Reduction: You do not disrupt technology like other echan races. You do not increase the penalties to disruption during combat.

Scurry: Your movement is not reduced if you crawl. You do not provoke an attack of opportunity by crawling or standing up from prone.

Tiny Frame: You suffer a -4 penalty when at-

tempting a bull rush against targets bigger than you.

Jump Charge: The minimum distance you must move during a charge is reduced to 5 feet. If you only move 5 feet during the charge, this movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity from other creatures, even if you pass through their threatened area

Lithe and Irritable: Size is not an obstacle to you in a scrap. You may use Dexterity as your primary attribute for attack and damage rolls with all melee attacks. You can also use Dexterity in place of Strength when determining your Combat Maneuver Bonus.

No one is sure how the gimfen broke off from the other fae. They possess a natural curiosity of the world. They have a flare for fine food, good tobacco, and comfortable clothes. Gimfen love dance from every culture but have never developed one of their own. They embraced many human customs when relationships blossomed between the two species, and are one of the most common nonhuman species seen in exclusively echan human communities. The curiosity of gimfen eventually spread to technology. Most Fae races reach an impasse when encountering human technology. Even holding onto one for any duration eventually leads to breakdown in another fae's hands. However, the gimfen don't share this curse. This strange deviation, once thought to be a production of corruption from Ixindar, was later accepted by the other races as another attribute of a later branch in the fae tree. Their desire to pursue technology in an age where machinery didn't work reliably turned into a fixation. Many of them obsessed about discovering a way to allow machinery to operate in a realm of magic. Numerous gimfen eventually turned into masterful technicians, engineers, alchemists, and inventors. Where laudenians pioneered totem magic and narros the forging of magical items, gimfen took pride in alchemy, stumbling into potion brewing soon after. What they lack are spell casters.

Gimfen enjoy a natural curiosity of the world but believe it can always be improved. Some pursue basic carpentry and metalwork while others found a happy medium with minor gadgets and tools. Many a gimfen's home would be adorned with inventions never used. After the return of magic, the first bastions were barely more than a few buildings. They grew slowly under constant attack from the outside. A few collapsed or turned to magic, abandoning the old ways of science. Others remained stubborn and fought against the enchantment. Such was the case with the eastern Canam city of York, under barrage from dragons and pagus. The bastion turned to a nearby growing civilization of gimfen for assistance. The gimfen were welcomed into the libraries to learn everything they could about human technology, sciences of the body, machine, and atom. With the help of the resourceful and inventive gimfen, York was able to defend itself against predators, and their expansion became reinvigorated. This agreement with an echan race was unofficial and kept secret. The gimfen were not allowed to live within the popula-



tion or enter through the main gates. After their usefulness expired, the gimfen returned to their homes leaving only a few behind in the city for maintenance. The neighboring gimfen town, Gnimfall, accepted back its pilgrims and the nation flourished. They held the secrets of magnetism, electricity, and internal combustion—advances they would not have discovered on their own.

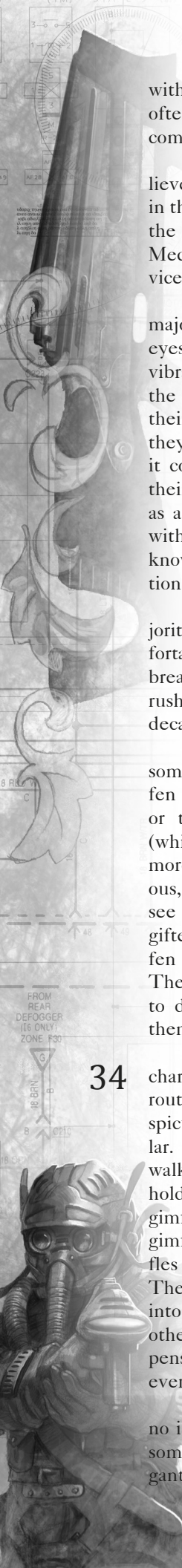
Despite lacking the technical prowess of even the most ham-fisted human, gimfen knew one thing mankind didn't: how to insulate technology from magic. Although not perfect by any means, this clumsy procedure could help certain machinery operate without the constant fear of disruption. The gimfen combined what they discovered with what they already knew and within a century the landscape of gimfen communities changed. Where once there were tiny shops and garages surrounded by farmlands, now the villages were domi-

nated by grind towers—oddities of mutated technology.

They hold few people, designed primarily for defense, sound baffling, and temperature maintenance for underground factories. Gnimfall, the largest collection of towers, is not an open-air city, but hundreds of levels stretching more than a mile underground. The levels are a mixed lot of housing, factories, and processing plants so jumbled and seemingly disorganized that tourists often get lost without a guide. Grind towers now dot the globe, marking the presence of Gimfen communities.

Not all have embraced the way of technology, preferring to keep a balance between nature and machine. In contrast, gimfen communities like Salvabrooke are laid back, agrarian, possessing little technology. Currently there are more than three million gimfen in various villages and colonies about the world. They get along with the narros and damaskans, but their relations





with other fae have strained since the gimfen have so often turned away from their roots. Gimfen often welcome humans, especially ones with a new toy.

Most of gimfen worship “Mecha,” which they believe allows them and only them to operate machinery in the presence of magic. Mecha’s symbol of faith lies in the gimfen’s tools, which he prays to every morning. Mecha, or Machine God, is responsible for all the devices the gimfen make.

Physical Qualities: Gimfen are the shortest of the major fae races. They feature thin, almost Asian-like eyes of bright green and blue tones. Their hair is often vibrantly colored and their ears taper straight back, with the tips sometimes as much as an inch from the back of their head. Their skin is often lightly colored. Because they often to adopt other cultures, anything goes when it comes to their attire and whatever else they do to their bodies. Gimfen enjoy their sense of humor as well as a desire to possess shiny objects. Their connection with nature fell by the wayside in favor of the new knowledge from man. They have an obsessive fascination with human machinery.

Gimfen look as pubescent youth through the majority of their lives. This makes many humans uncomfortable when dealing with gimfen adults. They only break from that in their final years, when their age rushes upon them, growing wrinkles and spots, aging decades in days.

Playing a Gimfen: All gimfen leave their village at some point in their lives but seldom make roots. Gimfen leave for a variety of reasons including adventuring or the acquisition of treasure, fame, or technology (which for many is treasure). For them, adventuring is more of a career than an opportunity. Gimfen are curious, inquisitive, and extremely impulsive. They love to see the world and often feel other cultures should be gifted with the odd knowledge they alone possess. Gimfen come close to developing addictive personalities. They are happy to try new things, especially in regards to dance and food. Their unending curiosity makes them open to anything.

A player creating a gimfen must decide on their character’s path, nature of technology. One common route is the thief, as gimfen look innocent and inconspicuous, though dungeon delvers are equally as popular. An alternative approach is the techan enthusiast, walking around with a modified human firearm she can hold and fire safely. When brandishing such a trophy, a gimfen is no longer unassuming. There have even been gimfen spotted sporting a heavily insulated plasma rifles on their backs. Gimfen are the first to try anything. They are naturally inquisitive, but this often gets them into trouble. Despite being great liars, an attribute the other fae dislike, gimfen share with the other fae a propensity for naivety. They believe everything is safe and everyone is honest unless proven otherwise.

Gimfen are the best race to play because they have no inhibitions. They are not bound by foolish honor or some obsolete drive to survive. They are neither arrogant nor afraid. They don’t worry themselves about the

petty issues that absorb so many others. They are the best because they are the only fae race to be able to embrace a new world while remembering the old one. No other fae can enter a town tavern with laser rifle on his back. They are the life of the party and the center of attention.

Names: Like the damaskans, gimfen adopt a human first name either at birth or when leaving an all-fae community; but – unlike the damaskans – they intentionally incorrectly spell these names. They also change them every 100 years. Family lineage means nothing to them. Because of this constant variation, some outside critics grow concerned with potential gimfen inbreeding. Gimfen never seem to worry about it. Their names sometimes reflect the cultures they integrate in, adopting narros and or human titles. They also frequently, but not always, use alliterations.

Examples: Xris Jiggadaxion, Kimma Kutaming, Malachi Boomfellow, Maris Nippentuck

LAUDENIANS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 5’10” – 6’7”

Average Weight: 40-55 lbs.

Average Starting Age: 150 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: Unknown (10,000 years?)

Ability Scores: +2 Wisdom; +2 Intelligence or +2

Dexterity; -2 Strength

Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 35 feet

Vision: Normal

Languages: Laudenian, one human language, and one additional fae language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Acrobatics, +2 Spellcraft

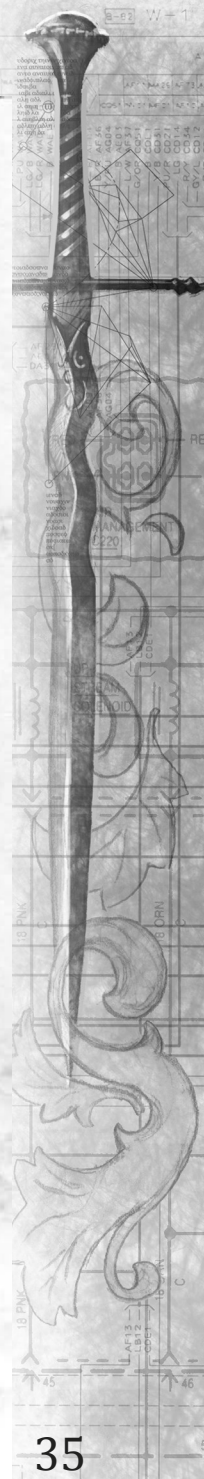
Adept User: You receive a +2 racial bonus to saving throws against enchantment spells and effects.

Emergence: You know where and when to be to strike the critical blow. When wielding a light melee weapon, you can use Wisdom in place of Strength as your primary melee attack/damage attribute. If you are wielding two weapons, both must be light weapons for this ability to apply.

Equilibrium: If you have 4 or more ranks in Acrobatics, you gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC when fighting defensively instead of +3, and a +7 dodge bonus to AC when taking total defense actions instead of +6.

Light Body: Reduce all fall distances by 10 feet (2 squares). If bull rushed, you are pushed back 10 feet; for every 5 by which the attack exceeds your CMD, you are pushed an additional 10 feet.

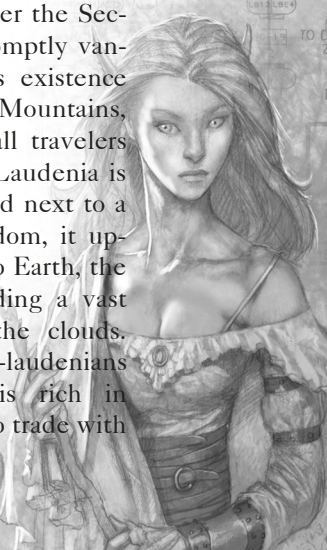
Slide Waltz (Ex): Your body can move like water, swaying around an opponent with ease. *As many times a day as your Wisdom or Intelligence modifier*, you can

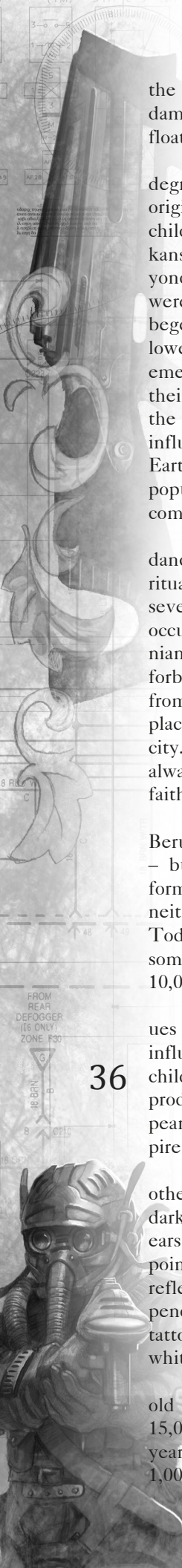


use a *swift action* and move to any location that is within 5 feet of one Medium-sized creature you are within 5 feet of. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Laudenians believe they are the true descendants of the original fae. Some claim their embracing of the sky made them immune to the physical changes brought on by interacting with the Earth. Most people have never seen a laudenian and could not describe one if asked. Their single city appears on the surface to be one of technology, but underneath the shine of the walls flows pure magic. Laudenia is a dream to many that swore they saw it. Before the First Hammer, most laudenians lived in a

floating city no one could locate unless the laudenians wished it to be found. After their return after the Second Hammer, the city reemerged, then promptly vanished once again. Everyone aware of its existence knows the city floats around the Nankani Mountains, but the rocks are virtually impassable to all travelers save for the single path of Dianaso, which Laudenia is nowhere near. The city often remains rooted next to a mountain for years, then seemingly at random, it uproots and drifts elsewhere. Since returning to Earth, the laudenians have retaken the skies, rebuilding a vast network of floating keeps shrouded in the clouds. Laudenians commonly prohibit any non-laudenians from entering their keeps. Their land is rich in natural resources and they use these riches to trade with





the few other nations they find agreeable, generally damaskans and narros. Few non-fae ever see these floating keeps.

Laudenians commit to this life because of a fear of degradation. If they truly were the first branch from the original fae, then they have watched helplessly as their children turned into the chaparrans, narros and damaskans. This might not have alarmed them initially beyond the observation that the laudenians themselves were growing fewer. Then the chaparrans started to beget deviations, and then the narros. Damaskans followed shortly behind and with each branch, the emerged race acted more feral, more uncivilized than their ancestors. Fearing a fate similar to the original fae, the laudenians fled to the sky, convinced the magical influence stemmed from the fae's interaction with the Earth. Their theory proved correct, and the dwindling population of laudenians slowed . . . though didn't stop completely.

Laudenians enjoy the music of strings and their dance often involves slow, subtle movements. Their rituals, like everything involved in their culture, take several days to complete. One festival, the Kenaz Sky, occurs once every 500 years, lasting six months. Laudeni-ans rarely mate with non-laudenians, and they strictly forbid bonding with humans under penalty of expulsion from the sky. The few laudenians that ever die are placed in a gargantuan mausoleum at the base of their city. All laudenians, even the ones that perish far away, always wish their bodies returned to their home. Their faith dictates that is the only way they may find peace.

The laudenians worship a god of the ancient fae, Berufu, whom they believe lives – not beyond the gate – but in the shadow realm where the universe was formed. Attricana to them is a source of power but is neither a divine entity nor the gateway to god's domain. Today, laudenians number less than 50,000, though some suspect this number is much lower, closer to 10,000.

Despite near immortality, their population continues to fall. This is largely the product of the whispering influence of magic they cannot escape from, resulting in children of lesser quality in their eyes. Laudenians reproduce extremely rarely and their eventual fate appears certain, ultimately leaving a vast, sprawling empire of empty and forgotten castles in the air.

Physical Qualities: Laudenians tower over all other fae and even most humans. They have olive to dark skin and dark hair often long and flowing. Their ears are smaller than a chaparrans, tapering quickly to a point. Their eyes though dark brown and grey, always reflect a glint of light as if a candle always hangs suspended over their eyes. Braided hair is common but tattoos and piercings are not. Most wear long robes of white or green terminating just above the ankle.

There is a claim that no laudenian has ever died of old age. Some have been rumored to have lived for 15,000 years or more. They reach adulthood around 150 years and don't show any discernible growth for another 1,000. No laudenian has ever looked over 50.

Playing a Laudenian: To meet a laudenian outside of the city is rare and few ever leave their home unless under orders. The ones that do leave are either on an extremely important quest that requires their undivided attention, or they're one of the rare individuals who wished to see the world for themselves. Laudeni-ans are known to be extremely arrogant. They are the longest-lived echan race outside of dragons and most of the elders date back to before the gate exodus. Their egotism refused to die when they lacked corporeal forms and only amplified when returned to the world.

Laudenians consider themselves superior and often patronize those unlike them.

It should be noted that a laudenian character would be a rarity. This laudenian would be the only one in a group and probably would not have seen another of his kind in years. There would be a reason why this laudenian has taken the risk of walking on the soil. Laudenians dislike nature. They have no problem wearing metal armor and wielding forged weapons. They abhor the natural world and have lost their empathy for it. The only reason why they have been able to survive these thousands of years is from fleeing to the sky. Since the magic of Attricana reflects off the Earth, the laudenians took the sky to stave off degradation. They never walk around in bare feet and cannot stand being immersed in water. Since they never perspire, the concept of washing becomes only necessity when being dirtied from earth-walking.

Laudenians are often revered by other fae races, a fact a laudenian is sure to bring up. They command respect and believe themselves correct in every assumption. The more a fae species is connected to the earth, the more animalistic they become. Chaparrans and narros are all on average stronger and sturdier, their later branches even more robust. Laudenians are known to have the most powerful spellcasters of all fae. A laudenian character could be more humble than her parents, whom most likely still live in the sky, but this would not mean the character isn't still arrogant. Of all the fae, a laudenian would be the most pompous.

Laudenians are the best race because they are the oldest fae and the most proud. The wisest of them have their names etched in books in every library of every other fae race. Laudenians forged the first magical items, pioneered the use of totems and the language of dragons, and built an empire in the sky to look upon others below. They are arrogant and believe themselves to be always right...but that's because they usually are.

Names: Laudenians refuse to adopt human names. Thankfully, their fae names are much easier to pronounce than chaparran or damaskans. Their names are soft and roll quite easily with the slightest effort. The one bizarre aspect with laudenian names is that their given and family names have exactly the same number of syllables and most despise foreigners shortening them, though quite easy to do so. Laudenians list their ancestor's names last and every generation adds a name. Only the first name is the given name of the individual. Most laudenians only mention one generation, but eld-

ers and fanatics to laudenian heritage will often insist on announcing themselves tracking back five or six generations

Examples: Massinan Lasseriss, Sirenus Fellerose, Brassana Halcyos, Milanus Serani Lissero Renessan

NARROS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 4' – 4'9"

Average Weight: 195-395 lbs.

Average Starting Age: 75 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: 1,000 years

Ability Scores: +2 Constitution; +2 Charisma or +2 Wisdom; -2 Dexterity

Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 25 feet. Your speed is never modified by armor or encumbrance.

Vision: Darkvision. You can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Languages: Narroni and one human language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Intimidate, +2 Survival

Big Boned: You suffer a -3 penalty to all Swim checks.

Iron Roots: You have a +4 racial bonus to your CMD against a bull rush or trip. You are treated as a Large creature when dealing with wind effects.

Militaristic: You are proficient in any two melee weapons of your choice (even if techan).

Stone Blood: You gain a +2 racial bonus to Fort saves but suffer a -1 penalty to Ref saves. You also gain a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.

Final Word: If you are reduced to 0 or less hit points, you do not fall unconscious until the end of your next turn (regardless of damage taken). On your next turn, you can take only a single standard action. If you use that action to attack the enemy that reduced you to 0 hit points or lower, you automatically hit (you still roll to determine if the attack is a critical threat).

Despite ignorant stereotyping claiming them all squatty, long-nosed dirty miners, narros don't resemble the fantasy creature they're often compared to. While the majority live underground, they are not singular in their purpose of greedily digging for riches in the Earth. In fact, narros are one of the most selfless of all fae, taking on the role as protectors for all their allies.

Narros caves never burrow below a certain depth. Their mines are like a labyrinth, covering hundreds of square miles. Part of their belief system demands that they climb the highest mountain in their city (every narros city is built around and/or within a mountain) every year to reaffirm their confidence that the sun remains above.

Even when outnumbered, narros often win in open combat. They are the greatest soldiers of the fae, with only the pagus threatening the claim. Almost every narros citizen knows how to use a weapon. Soldiers enforce a strict discipline in the art of war, a reflection of the culture as a whole. There is a martial skill attached to every facet of their lives. The same techniques and movements used in warfare are duplicated in the mines, planned and coordinated with precision.

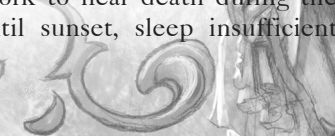
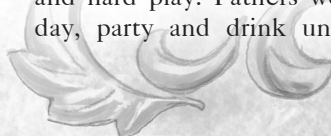
Narros love the horn and drums and their battle marches move to the sound of heavy bass from trumpets and skins louder than the footfalls of a thousand feet. Narros don't, and can't, dance. The narros estimate more than seven million of their kind walk the Earth. Like man, most narros bury their dead. Narros live almost exclusively in Canam and Southam and rarely appear anywhere else. Their biggest concentration lies at Fargon with another collection in Southam where the people often clash with the tenenbri.

The few narros holy men worship an idol-less god referred to as Oaken – the spirit of Earth. Oaken lives deep underground at the core. The narros dogma explains that Oaken, originally a fragment of a much larger being, drifted into the Solar System and the Earth formed around him. To them, the white gate created the fae, but Oaken provided them with a shape and a world. Narros believe their power comes from below, not above, which may explain why most narros hate to fly. The root of their abhorrence for the tenenbri leads from a belief that their cousins dug too far and suffered Oaken's punished. In the narros view, tenenbri never got the message.

Physical Qualities: The narros insist on a high degree of personal grooming. They do not possess the heavy trunk torso many would expect though they are still much stronger than other similar bipeds. They simply don't show it. Narros are slower and less agile than their cousin races. Where all other fae have hollow bones, the narros claim their skeletons' marrow is solid iron. The proof is in their unbreakable physiques and shockingly heavy frames.

Narros' silvery skin reflects a glitter in sunlight. Their skin tones range usually between peach and pale white. Their ears are long but remain flush to their heads. Their eyes, seemingly always squinting, can open extremely wide and their irises loom large in their sockets, though their colors, dull browns and matted grays, don't shine even in the brightest light. Males despise painting their bodies in any way but women often do. Males sport trimmed beards or short braids when they grow them. Their hair is often pulled back to a tail, despising loose strands. Some narros males shave themselves bald. Unlike the legends they inspired, female narros neither grow facial hair nor look overtly masculine. It is only when narros dress for war when males and females are indistinguishable. Narros age proportionately to humans.

Playing a Narros: The narros believe in hard work and hard play. Fathers work to near death during the day, party and drink until sunset, sleep insufficient





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hours, and start everything again the following dawn. They are extremely regimented in whatever direction they take in life. Mages own more books. Priests pray longer. Soldiers train much more fiercely. They are focused in their view, a coincidence carried with their name.

Narros uphold their discipline when on their own or outside of their community. A few leave because of dishonor encountered at home. They depart to redeem

themselves. Those who lost their community or their lord often travel alone across the world as masterless ronin. All narros adventurers maintain an utter dedication to their chosen path, even without a crusade or cause in their hearts.

A narros character need not be some loud fighter with an axe. They can be anything they choose and commit themselves 100% to that duty, often ignoring other concerns. They are fanatical about any crusade

they are on. A narros would be the first to awake in the morning to tackle the day's goals. They will ignore fleeting pleasures like smoking and sex when committed a quest. When indentured to a lord or sworn to a friend or party, a narros will risk everything including his own life to protect them. This focused spirit is admirable but can sometimes make a narros a real drag at parties. As a result, the narros and gimfen don't always get along. The same can't be said for the tenenbri, which the narros overwhelmingly despise. The schism between the two races is rarely mentioned – its roots are stemmed with a religious dispute, a divergence of dogma that can be tracked back thousands of years in the old age. Still, this discord is a poor rubbing of the hatred the narros feel for the pagus. Not even the ogres, a lower fae branch from the narros, can match the loathing felt to the corrupted fae of Ixindar. Being the primary military force for all good and honorable fae, the narros have clashed with pagus more often than other races. A narros need not require a reason to fight them and the opportunity to do so would be reason enough to join a quest. Others have accused the narros of holding grudges far longer than socially acceptable. The row with the tenenbri remains unresolved. Narros hate the water as they are all tremendously bad swimmers (size to weight ratio). Narros will avoid any body of water where he cannot keep his feet on the bottom and still breathe.

Narros are well and beyond the best race as there is no subtlety behind them. They scoff adversity and seldom run from a fight. They are the strongest and take pride that the entire fae species would have been wiped out long ago if it weren't for them. They are soldiers from birth. In the end, why would anyone want to be anything but the greatest warriors of legend?

Names: Unlike gimfen and damaskans, placing little stock in their family names, narros cherish their family names more than their given ones. They place their family names first when writing them down and announcing themselves in public. Because narros families are vast, many outsiders believe narros are not original with their names. Narros refer to each other only by their given names in private or when asked. Married couples call themselves by their given names in their homes. Friends often refer to the family by the additional title Kar (Father/Ruler), Mir (Mother/Mistress), Lan (Son, first born), Sen (Son, any born), or Jes (Daughter, any born). The given names are usually shorter than their family titles, thus making their full names somewhat front-heavy.

Examples: Ragerick Griff, Kranerose Gibbs, Ungnarona Mina

PAGUS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 6'3" – 6'7"

Average Weight: 200-250 lb.

Average Starting Age: 9 years.

Estimated Life Expectancy: 40 years

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity; +2 to Strength or +2 Constitution; -2 Wisdom

Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 30 feet

Vision: Darkvision. You can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Languages: Paggin. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Climb or +2 Acrobatics; +2 Intimidate

Earned Stigma: You suffer a -4 penalty to all Diplomacy checks against non-pagus.

Ixindar Keyword: You do not disrupt technology. You do not increase the penalties to disruption in during combat. However, you do not have access to any techan classes or feats. See Saturation Rule below.

Steadfast: Select either Ref or Fort at 1st level. Whenever you make save against your selected type, roll twice and take the higher value.

Trained from Birth: You reduce armor check penalties by 4 (to a minimum of 0) when wearing any armor.

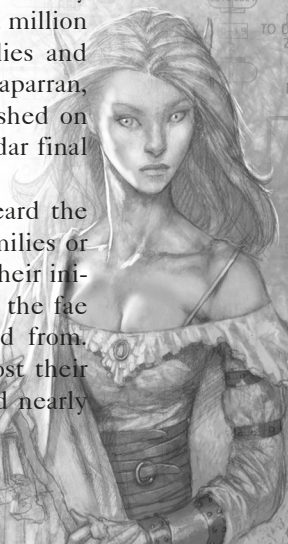
Focused Aggression: Whenever an enemy scores a critical hit on you, you gain an additional standard action on your next turn. You can only gain 1 additional standard action this way per round.

Saturation Exemption: Like humans (but for different reasons), pagus do not generate an EDF. With humans, it's because they are produced via evolution. With pagus, it's because they are corrupted by Ixindar. You have a saturation value of 0 and a corruption value of 10. This is before the selection of a class, which may make you an echan instantly (See Chapter Eight).

The pagus emerged over a single night during the age of Terros—the era before man when fae and dragon reigned unopposed. When the black gate of Ixindar drifted over the sky on its arrival, the whisper of Mengus corrupted a million fae to its cause. They abandoned their families and friends. Most of these tainted creatures were chaparran, though no race was left unspoiled. They vanished on an unspoken pilgrimage to the land where Ixindar final settled.

Loved ones that followed that had not heard the whisper were killed by their own corrupted families or cursed themselves. When finally emerging in their initial raids against their ancestors centuries later, the fae no longer resembled the peoples they escaped from.

They had grown in muscle. They had lost their hair. Their skin had grown pale. They looked nearly





identical to each other and shared a single disposition, one single desire--to eliminate anything not blessed by Ixindar.

When the black gate was unearthed again at the beginning of the new age, the pagus were the first to emerge. The whisper of Mengus could have tainted the nearby humans as well. Five centuries later, the pagus number in the tens of millions with concentrations on every continent.

A little known fact about the pagus is that Ixindar's control is lessened the further one travels from Ixindar. Mengus strengthens its influence by channeling through the will of its loyal disciples, the shemjaza. If not present, it falls under corrupted dragons to enforce the will of syntropy, despite not always following their avatar's will. Away from these authorities, pagus act independently. Still bound by the compulsion for violence, the culture that emerges reflects that propensity. This is not helped by the attribute of pagus to degenerate into madness as they grow old (if they survive that long). Only a noteworthy few maintain their sanity.

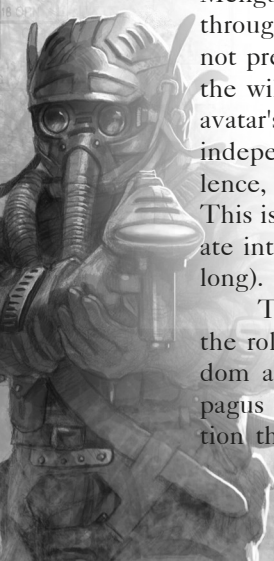
These singular elders gain an enlightened view of the role pagus are forced fill in this world. Their wisdom and strength of personality is such that younger pagus around them will swear thoughtlessly to any action the elder commands. Unfortunately, this usually

entails the same bloody conflict forced upon them from demons and dragons.

Even more uncommon are the elder pagus that preach a rejection of the ideals imposed by their creator and controllers. These pagus attempt an unpretentious life filled with hunting, revelry, and reproduction. They avoid the wars demanded by others. Regrettably, these pagus are often still called into conflict as they must habitually defend their lands from outsiders, often their own kind.

Most travelers upon encountering roaming pagus in Canam immediately assume an impending bloody encounter. This is a proper and warranted assumption. The number of enlightened and peaceful pagus is miniscule. They are seldom seen wandering on open roads. Every fac race has sworn to their destruction with no reprieve offered to the redeemed. While non-fac like humans and kodiaks don't always reflect this racial hatred, they have all been warned about the pagus. To see one is to assume combat; to see more is a portent to invasion.

In Canam, pagus currently live in the landlocked region of Apocrypha. As creatures of syntropy, they find the overwhelming chaos of nature distasteful and generally avoid mountains and large bodies of water. This has kept them sealed in this region for centuries. Pagus



that are found outside this are often raiding bands free from the will of Ixindar. They may also be expeditions seeking a safe route from Apocrypha. The enemies of pagus seldom ask for details. It is unknown how many civilized pagus have lost their opportunity to develop because of this.

Physical Qualities: Pagus are taller than most men, looming over all other fae save laudenians. Pagus have pale, cracked skin marked with raised veins and bruises from rapid aging. Only the ears remain the recognizable feature from the old fae--pointed, but short and flush to their heads. Although pagus don't appear "stretched" like laudenians, they still look thin given their height. They are muscular but not incredibly built like the shorter narros. This is deceptive, as the pagus are one of the strongest races. The arms of a pagus dangle nearly to his knees.

Pagus are completely hairless, and there is no sexual dimorphism, with females as strong and as violent as the males.

Playing a Pagus: A pagus joining a party has an uphill journey. Where the tilen are unjustly pigeonholed as predators, the pagus' reputation has been well earned. Creating a pagus character must begin with an origin. Where was this pagus born and how did he reach this point in life? If joining an evil party, no explanation is required. However, if the group is populated by noble warriors, an initial encounter should be established (if not fully played out). Kodiaks carry no grudge with pagus, a feeling shared by many humans and tilen, but absent in all other fae. This generally prevents pagus from being encountered alone in a tavern.

Once the pleasantries of introductions have passed, a pagus can be a fierce and effective (as well as loyal) contributor to a party.

Pagus are the best race to play as they are committed and single-minded warmongers. There is no strategy when dealing with a pagus. You point him in a direction, let him go, and keep your distance.

Names: Pagus possess a guttural language assembled from other fae tongues. Paggin borrows heavily from narroni and damaskan into a patois mixed from the shemjaza tongue of ignotan. This language forms the basis of their names, despite that pagus are forbidden to speak pure paggin in any village controlled or influenced by Mengus. Pagus place their given names at the end and their clan names at the beginning, forming it into a single title broken by apostrophes and dashes. Outside of pagus villages, these additional names are dropped in favor of a more fearful title like Manik the Maligned and Kallis the Monster.

Examples: Alik'asti-Kross, Monko'Kallis, Manik'kalik-Manik



TENENBRI

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 4'5"-5'3"

Average Weight: 50-75 lb.

Average Starting Age: 55 years.

Estimated Life Expectancy: 500 years

Ability Scores: +2 Charisma; +2 Wisdom or +2 Dexterity; -2 to Strength

Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 35 feet

Vision: Blindsight 100 feet

Languages: Tenenbra. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Perception, +2 Sense Motive

Blindsight: You possess blindsight to 80 feet. You cannot read with blindsight, but you do see the written language of dragons (Pleroma)--its glowing words illuminate to even those who cannot see. You cannot be subjected to gaze or blinding attacks. You also can negate displacement and blur effect. You can still be subjected to deafening attacks. Any of the following conditions reduce the blindsight range to 30 feet: Being on a mount, being in the air or on a boat, or when you are sleeping.

Ich: Blindness might hinder swordsmen of another race, but never you. You may use Wisdom in place of Strength for attack and damage rolls with any melee weapons. You may also use Wisdom in place of Strength when determining your Combat Maneuver Bonus and Defense.

Piezo Scream (Ex): *As many times a day as your Constitution, Strength, or Wisdom modifier (select one), you can use a swift action to emit a high-pitched scream to disorientate or damage your foes. This does not provoke opportunity attacks. All creatures within 5 feet of you are deafened and staggered for 1 round. Fort negates; the DC is 10 + ½ your level + your Constitution/Strength/Wisdom modifier (select one).*

The tenenbri mark a point in fae history where the naivety of free-thinking elves was stained with bloody civil conflict. The tenenbri live underground, but unlike the similarly subterranean narros, they seldom return to the surface. This is one of many points where the xenophobic tenenbri differ from their dwarven cousins. Although both share some common heritage and religious beliefs, the two races oppose each other on many fundamental values and had already been involved in smaller ethnic clashes by the time the pagus arrived. After the War of the Fallen--the conflict between the fae and pagus--had defused from immediate fear to daily concern, the clashes between the narros and tenenbri resumed.

The narros are a much older race than the tenenbri, having broken directly from the laudenians, while





the tenenbri branched later from damaskans. Tenenbri are as fanatically religious as the narros and worship the same god, Oaken. However, tenenbri differ on interpretation and several fundamental beliefs. This includes the approach of daily rituals, the formation of culture and government, and the views of other ethnicities not sharing their beliefs.

The focal-point of conflict in the previous age revolved around the ownership of the Well of Salvation—

a holy monument to all that worship Oaken. The well, a smooth, naturally-formed circular pit 345 feet wide and 1.25 miles deep, was said to have been formed by Oaken to be his voice. He commanded the fae to emerge into existence from this very mouth. Naturally formed steps allowed a long and dangerous trek to the flat and featureless bottom. Only the most devout narros were allowed to make the pilgrimage to its base. The well carried a breath of cold, moist air that continu-

ously spilled from its mouth, felt by believer and unbeliever alike that lined the perimeter. Suicide was an unfortunate common side-effect (history books don't detail how this is issue dealt with, whether on a theological level or a sociological one).

The narros, long before the tenenbri had even been formed, forged the great surface city of Antok to serve as the haven for all religious fae that endorsed Oaken as their creator and savior. One of the basic commandments of Oaken passed by the Antok cardinals was that no fae was to dig deeper than the depth of the pit. It was this sin the tenenbri had committed and had done so willingly and repeatedly. While the tenenbri claimed they had already embraced the darkness when this occurred, the narros contend the tenenbri lost their eyes and their desire for daylight the moment they affronted God.

The smaller conflicts that broke out over minor religious disagreements continued until a tenenbri cardinal, Nihilochrysis, founded the Enos movement—a subset of tenenbri dogma that revolved around the guilt of being cast down by Oaken for the sin of digging too deep. This differed from standard doctrine that claimed the tenenbri were a master race and are the only ones with the right to venture into God's sworn land. Thousands of followers of Enos, including Nihilochrysis, marched upon Antok on pilgrimage with the peaceful intent of praying alongside their narros cousins. The guards of Antok, on orders from the religious hierarchy, prohibited the tenenbri's entrance. Nihilochrysis and his followers set up camp around the fortified city in peaceful protest and refused to leave while runners returned to their underground empire to inform them of what was occurring. The other tenenbri, despite having ulterior religious views, supported their brothers. The elders called for a crusade. The tenenbri withdrew their forces currently in conflict with the pagus and marched upon Antok to lay it under siege. The narros, in far superior numbers, were also rallied. But to the majority of narros, their religious convictions took second place to their loyalty to the greater cause. Few answered the call to defend the faith and continued their fight against the pagus.

The fall of the Hammer precludes an accurate account of history. Tenenbri claim their mythology holds a factual account of the events at Antok. This involved their armies digging beneath the narros defense tunnels that surrounded the perimeter of the city, below the prohibited depth, and then attacking the city from below. It also stated the tenenbri survived the Hammer's fall by hiding within the well.

By a miracle of every sense of the word, the Well of Salvation reappeared in the new age, emerging in Southam, a realm already claimed by both the narros and tenenbri. Despite the narros in the north living their lives without care or concern of the matters in the far south, the narros in Southam wage a holy war against the tenenbri over possession of Antok and the Well of Salvation. Ownership of the city has changed hands several times over five centuries, and to complicate the

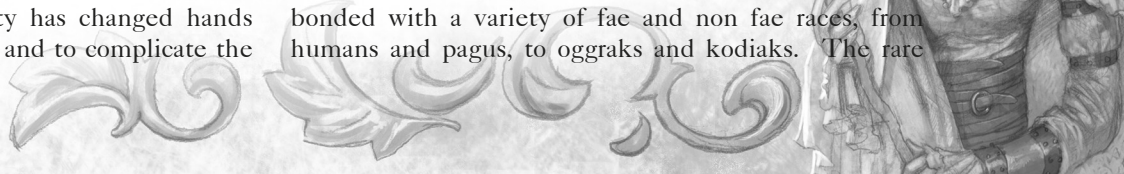
conflict even further, oggraks have promised to destroy Antok utterly and rob both sides of their greatest prize. Currently, the tenenbri control Antok, the only tenenbri city above aground. Most buildings exposed to light are empty. Meanwhile, the narros are forming another army to retake the city.

The tenenbri are passionate about their beliefs and show their emotions visibly. Their faith is neither evil nor overwhelmingly corrupt. The Enos movement, though sparking a campaign that cost thousands of lives, never endorsed the use of violence. Even Nihilochrysis, father of the movement, deplored the actions of the tenenbri hierarchy, condemning their aggressive response to the narros, though knowing the needs of Enos were secondary to the desires of the tenenbri fundamentalist leaders. The elders wished to spark a war with the narros over an artifact the other tenenbri hadn't, until that point, even cared about. Nihilochrysis did not survive the siege but his movement lived and is now considered a minority ethnic group within the tenenbri—scorned and ridiculed for their adverse belief system despite it causing the greatest schism in the history of the fae.

Tenenbri that don't follow a specific belief system or are not fanatical about their faith are still notorious for being stubborn and close-minded about what they consider to be true. They are demonstrative with their preconceptions, and will often volunteer them freely even if not asked. This is in sharp contrast to the damaskans, known for their privacy. Tenenbri honesty comes from their natural ability to detect deception and hidden emotions in others. Like the narros, tenenbri bury their dead. No one is sure how many tenenbri there are but estimations place them between three and six million.

Tenenbri are astoundingly selfish most of the time, thinking only of themselves or the group they travel with. When they mate, it is for life and they often go to extremes to protect their loved ones. In closed tenenbri communities like the kingdom of Vanaka, bonding outside their race is strictly prohibited. This is known to go against the tenenbri's natural desire.

Everything that occurred in their culture is a consequence of them losing their sight. Tenenbri don't rate physical attractiveness the same as other races with normal vision. Perfect bodies with perfect skin are boring to them. They find imperfections and physical flaws attractive, especially if they are natural or from accidental injury. Tattoos are worthless to them. Scars from combat or labor, missing digits, or simply hereditary features that are different from the norm are naturally attractive, an aspect the religious elite have been trying to train their people to reject. Since there are few humans in Southam and the majority of non-tenenbri races are in open war, it's an easy law to enforce. When the tenenbri escape from their land and venture north into Canam, this often changes. Outcast tenenbri have bonded with a variety of fae and non fae races, from humans and pagus, to oggraks and kodiaks. The rare



cases when tenenbri marry outside their race are often described as avidly passionate. Other words to describe them in a relationship are hot-blooded, fiery, and lustful.

Physical Qualities: The tenenbri resemble normal fae in many ways, save for their skin, their demeanor, and their eyes. Their entire race is blind. Their eyes are glossed over; irises are faded to near nothing, concealed under cataracts. The slightest light reflects a glint off the back of their corneas, shimmering with a white glow in direct illumination. Their deathly pale skin feels cool to the touch and tastes salty, a sign in humans of cystic fibrosis, a condition the tenenbri would all probably suffer from if magic did not suppress the gene in their body. They are shorter than most fae but taller than the narros. Their long ears respond to vibrations in the air, detecting movement in total darkness. Like the damaskans, their ears are prone to twitch depending on their emotional state. Though their enhanced hearing greatly assists them, it's their connection to the ground that offers them the greatest awareness of their surroundings. Even though the tenenbri have no vision to speak of, they still maintain a surprisingly high level of personal grooming. They refrain from flamboyant clothes, preferring simplicity. They rarely employ vibrant colors.

Playing a Tenenbri: Tenenbri that leave their land are often outcast. Some communities are so fanatical, that even talking to a non-tenenbri may exact banishment. Virtually all tenenbri found in Canam are those exiled from Southam, rejecting the growing belief that the tenenbri are a master race others should serve. Even though the tenenbri would be valuable in mines, most narros refuse to employ them. Gimfen are willing to look past prior hatreds. Tenenbri outside of Southam find surprising acceptance in echan human kingdoms, unaware of the long-standing hatred the narros have towards them. Limshau allows their entry and finds the tenenbri braille books fascinating additions.

The narros are the only ones holding a grudge and their religious disagreement has transformed into full-blown racial prejudice, with the majority of the narros judging the tenenbri as dishonorable and untrustworthy. Where the narros take pride in their discipline and military might, tenenbri play life looser, letting their emotions carry them. As warriors, they employ stealth and trickery more than a taunting shield wall. Tenenbri prefer talking their way out of fights or finding a way to trick two enemies into killing each other. Their expanded senses from their lack of sight have allowed them an impeccable awareness of people's intents. The narros consider this cheating. Tenenbri are considered extremely exotic and many humans get tongue-tied when dealing with them, more because these fae can sense the urges and emotions in humans better than any others.

Regardless of the class chosen, a tenenbri willingly sworn into a group of adventurers will seldom steal from them or betray their trust. But while a narros might pick a fight with someone she shouldn't, tenenbri may

invite trouble with her very presence. If not, she is likely to cause a stir the moment she starts talking.

Tenenbri are the best race to play because they have a single feature that sets them apart from all others; they can see without seeing. They can feel the beating hearts of those around. They can notice enemies while all others are helpless. They look through walls, through crowds, and through deceit. They are bizarre and graceful without the petty naiveté that so many other fae exhibit.

Names: Tenenbri shed off family ties narros keep so dear. Tenenbri only have one name. Syllables mark individual genetic lines. For example, two names like Sharajaclypse and Lamaclypse, the ending Clypse denotes their genetic similarity. Most children are raised in communal areas and some tenenbri children don't even know who their parents are. In larger cities, this is not always the case. It's a complicated system and few outside of the tenenbri understand it completely.

Examples: Sianodell, Mianodell, Farianoda (These would mark similar genetic markings based on the "iano" in their names. Sian and Mian may be sisters but Fari would be an uncle or cousin).

TILEN

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 5'8" – 6'4"

Average Weight: 45-70 lbs.

Average Starting Age: 30 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: 600 years

Ability Scores: +2 Wisdom; +2 Strength or +2 Dexterity; -2 Constitution

Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 30 feet

Vision: Darkvision. You can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Languages: Two human languages. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Sense Motive, +2 Acrobatics

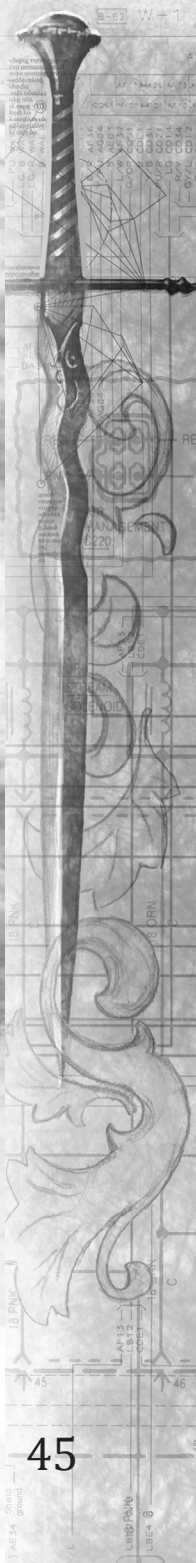
Blessed Body: You receive a +2 racial bonus to saves against all Necromancy spells.

Blood Vengeance: You gain a +2 racial bonus to attack and damage rolls against all undead. You also gain an additional +1 racial bonus to attack and damage rolls against ghulath (vampires).

Deceptive Strength: For all your gaunt appearance, you have power in you. You may use Dexterity in place of Strength all melee attack and damage rolls. You also gain a bonus to your Combat Maneuver Bonus equal to your Dexterity modifier.

Reduced Healing: Effects from healing spells, scrolls, potions, and any other healing effects are halved. Natural healing is reduced this way as well. You can offset this with Blood Surge.

Vampiric Remnants: Under direct sunlight, your vision is reduced to 10 squares and you lose all racial

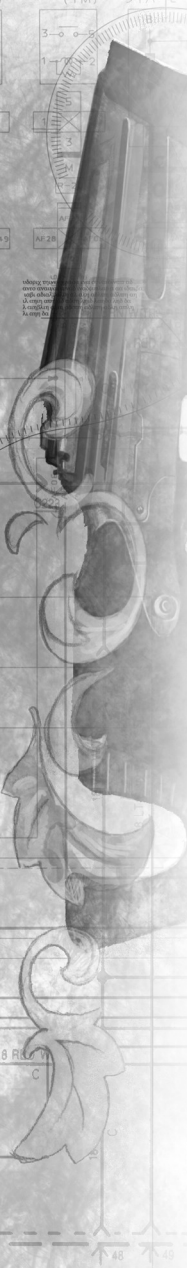


skill bonuses. Additionally, when you get emotional in any way (in combat, when angered, or in passion), old vampiric traits emerge. Your eyes glow and your incisors extend. When in this state, you gain a +2 bonus to Intimidate but a -4 penalty to Diplomacy.

Blood Surge (Su): Out of necessity, but still filled with trepidation, you possess the ability to drain the blood of a target to heal your wounds. Blood surge is an action (along with move, damage, pin or tie up) that is

part of the standard action spent to maintain a grapple. You can still only perform one action when maintaining a grapple. You can use blood surge *as many times as your Strength or Dexterity modifier* (select one). One target you are grabbing takes 1d6 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier + half your level. You recover hit points equal to the damage inflicted. If the target is awake and willing, you can choose the amount of damage you inflict and you regain double that amount.





The birth and history of the tilen is marred in pain, suffering, and mystery. How they came to cherish life from origins stemmed in evil points to the tenacity of their spirit. The details of their curse and crusade for redemption are known only to a few, and they rarely speak of the past. Before the time of man, when the war with the dark forces of Ixindar was sweeping the planet, a group of corrupted rebels created a land that refused to follow either path. They embraced the negative energy of Ixindar but believed that death was the true gateway to everlasting power. Within these insurgents formed the initial lords of decay, the ghulath (creatures of darkness that have gone by dozens of names throughout human history). They created armies of mindless undead and forged a kingdom to call their own. They were despised by both sides. Requiring servants, allies, slaves, and lovers; these initial lords brought others into their fold. These disciples were horribly corrupted to the wicked will of their seducer. Ghulath may be creatures of the night, crossing to the other side from life, but they never actually died. Like all the forces of Ixindar, the ghulath lords and their kin hid within the realm past the black gate, waiting for the opportunity to be brought to solid form again. Upon their return, they found a world very different from the last. They claimed their own patch of grass and soaked it with blood, starting the infection known as the Necrosea.

Their devotees followed their lords in their crusade to forge an army of death to even rival Kakodomania. They were expecting neither the white gate to burst open nor the effect of its flood across the world. When the white gate returned, a deluge swept over the Earth. Records are vague on specifics, but the wave changed everything, recoiling the armies of Ixindar back into their realm of Kakodomania and destroying the undead hordes where they stood. It forced the ghulath to rebuild, but they would do it alone. When the flow of Attricana hit their loyal spawn, it forced them back into the light. This process did not occur with the minions from Kakodomania or with the ghulath lords (who chose their fate willingly), but only those with hands forced. A precious few awoke from their feral existence and remembered their lives. Many died trying to escape the darklands. The remaining survivors vanished. Their determination allowed them to endure. These individuals became known as the elder tilen. They were the most powerful and the most shamed over past sins. Their children would resemble them but pale in their power. Elder tilen never die, only able to leave this planet through an accident or through the brutality of a deliberate death by another's hands. They are psychologically incapable of taking their own lives. This curse of immortality is not shared by their descendants.

Tilen are extremely sensitive and avoid violence when they can. Their conception rate is virtually nonexistent and the only other way to expand their population is to embrace outsiders into their clan and cross-

breed. To reproduce outside their species, tilen need to bond, not only to humans, but to their fae ancestors as well. This is invited by their culture since a tilen female's menstrual cycle is between two and three years. Conception is extremely low, even when bonded to another tilen. This increases by 300% if the tilen is bonded to a non-tilen. However, tilen genes dominate all others in reproduction. Regardless of the paired species, if a tilen produces offspring with a non-tilen, even a pagus, a tilen always emerges. Their bonding ritual is a passionate and extended kiss that nearly suffocates the non-tilen partner.

Tilen don't need blood to survive, but it is the only way they can heal major wounds since the regenerative rate of their own body is slow. Most tilen are nomadic, hiding from the light and judgmental outsiders. They spend most of their time fighting back their own untamed natures, believing themselves one step from regressing back to the undead. It's a fear they carry today, though in their history, only one has ever fallen back to darkness, albeit temporary. Tilen both fear and despise undead and many of them have vowed to remove the Earth of all mindless mockeries of life. They consider necromancers, nihilimancers, and their old ghulath masters sworn enemies.

There are less than 10,000 tilen in the world but with their appealing nature and hospitality to outsiders, their numbers are increasing at a rapid rate despite their low birth rate.

Physical Qualities: Remnants of the tilen past include their sensitivity to light and their lack of reflections in mirrors. Tilen are generally thin, almost frail. They were all fae before their souls were soiled but, despite their original race, they all share the same characteristics now. They age at nearly the same rate as humans, reaching adulthood in their twenties but remain in that state for nearly 200 years before slowly aging, though never appearing older than 50 human years. Their slightly pale skin is cool to the touch but not cold, dry, or cracked. Their hair is usually bleached gold or white, often streaked with silver. Their ears taper long and straight up though years of necromancy have made the edges jagged. Their eyes stand out from their monochromatic skin and attire, reflecting brilliant greens, blue, and even orange but seldom yellow or red. Their eyes often expose a tilen's presence from across a crowded room, as their radiance bursts from the shadows where they frequently hide. Though passionate and kind creatures in general, tilen are incapable of crying. All tilen and ghulath bear this description. Tilen claim the foreign influence of Ixindar resulted in a shape closer to the original fae. Many damaskans, laudenians, and chaparrans view this as an insult, all claiming their form to be direct descendants of the original stock. Most humans don't understand the value fae seem to place on their ancestors. The human view is also shared by the gimfen, who simply don't care. The narros and tenenbri never made an official stand on the matter, but secretly disapprove of the tilen claim. The tilen don't assert arrogance or superiority with this contention. In



their view, it simply makes sense.

When tilen get excited, by either positive or negative input, their ghulath traits become more exposed. Their eyes change to bright red or yellow, their canine teeth sharpen and extend, and their nails grow long. They despise showing this side of themselves, especially to those they care about. The majority of tilen are female and are on average taller than the males. This fact has also brought accusations of corruption—believers claiming the tilen were intentionally released by the darkness to convert the planet to their form.

Playing a Tilen: Tilen keep to themselves and seldom advertise their presence outside their own villages. Though almost entirely benign and peaceful, tilen suffer the greatest at the hands of others. Most fae races avoid the tilen and several human villages openly hunt them. Despite this, tilen numbers continue to rise. This is because their demure nature and statuesque good looks have been sought after by those seeking them as mates. This desire is most popular among humans, causing a hostile response by those accusing the tilen as being servants of darkness, mostly from other humans.

Tilen are emotional and expressive but rarely lose control of their facilities. Even when they do, it is often in a positive direction and never to endorse an evil act. Tilen are often gripped with fear of a relapse that will turn them back to darkness. They loathe exposing their ghulath traits, which can occur if they are angry or otherwise excited. To them, it unmasks them. Tilen fear that, if others were to see them in that state, it would cause a violent reaction and endanger them and those they care about.

Among allies, friends, or family, tilen are open, honest, gentle, and fiercely loyal. Once they establish a bond in any form, they honor and relish such attachment, knowing perfectly well how rare they are. Although a few species accept the tilen, other cultures—mostly human (like Baruch Malkut) – view tilen as subversive, planning a clandestine route to destroy all children of God by breeding them out. They regard the tilen as demon masters of seduction—modern day succubi and incubi—whose only purpose is to tempt men away from chaste and loyal human marriages, to breed an army of cambion half-breeds. More than 85% of all tilen are female, a ratio also shown in their offspring, which does not help this growing stereotype. As a result, images of tilen fall under headers on posters declaring them a variety of demons from a wide range of legends and religious books.

All racial traits presented refer to the children of the first tilen. The elders of the tilen are substantially more powerful. They should not be player characters. A player creating a tilen must accept a stigma with their race that rivals even the tenenbri. Tilen are executed in some nations in the world. Tilen continue to live their lives, willingly offering the hand of friendship at the risk of having said hand removed. Their strength is deceptive given their slender bodies.

Tilen are the best race to play because their color-

ful heritage will encourage role playing outside of combat. They are the best choice because they are the fewest on the planet. When a tilen enters a crowded room, they are the only ones of their kind in it, and eyes will turn. They are a double-edged sword because of their dark past and kind nature. In the end, such a rich palette will create a more interesting character to play.

Names: Tilen shed their previous names when they were pulled back into the light. They discarded any connection with their dark past as well as their fae lineage. The first tilen elders changed their titles, adopting new names. Most are human inspired. Their descendants continue the trend.

Examples: Saleena Kaeris, Zacheria Korvek, Lhamah Cyrose, Mira Diemasko

NON-FAE RACES HUMANS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Starting Age: 20 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: 80 years

Ability Scores: +2 to any ability score of your choice.

Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 30 feet.

Vision: Normal

Languages: You may choose English, Englo-Lingo, or Onespeak. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Bonus Feat: You gain one extra feat at 1st level.

Skills: You gain 1 additional skill rank at 1st level and one additional rank whenever you gain a level.

Evolution is the adaptation of a natural animal to its environment. Further generations of a species may not necessarily be superior, but those that survive would be better suited to their surroundings with an advantage over competition. This process eventually resulted in humanity – with no signs that evolution had ceased. The fae continue to adapt to their surroundings as well, but their development degrades their form, making them more animalistic and feral. Some humans, especially those of echa, firmly believe mankind's turn to magic will be the key to their final path to perfection, able to master the world of enchantment in all its forms while fae continue to be slaves to it. Even the laudenians, the most magically endowed of all fae, fled to the skies to prevent degradation. Since only humanity has arisen with any notable footprint as an evolved species, they are the only ones listed, however broken into two classes: echan humans and techan humans.

Humans emerged long after the last magical creatures escaped or fell to dust. Mankind grew from hairy apes to the form they walk with pride today. Since their peak in the age of technology, most of the human population had died off, leaving less than 3% to rebuild. The origins of this disappearance are not fully understood.



Some escaped into bastions while most embraced the ways of magic. Many more were killed in the first few decades. After five hundred years of living on their own, mostly xenophobic of outsiders, the citizens of bastions can sometimes be looked upon in a wholly different light than their magically infused brethren. Techa-folk often fear magic, claiming it steals their souls or changes them irreparably.

The use of magic does change a human. He stops being a creation of nature, falling alongside elves or narros. Techa-folk claim this removes them from the human race. Echa-folk claim this is how man is supposed to be. They are both wrong, but that's beside the point. Until magic infuses a human, by embracing it as a mage, wearing it as armor, or wielding it with a sword, she has a choice whether or not to let the enchantment into her spirit. Once one does, she loses a portion of her own spirit in favor of the infusion.

Humans have maintained most of their old religions. Virtually all-religious zealotry disappeared when less than 200 million people survived to the new age. They quickly banded together, abandoning old bigotries and conceits from the old world. The holy lands many fought, died, and killed for were gone. Sworn enemies put aside their pasts in favor of rebuilding. Many of them found new enemies with arriving echan races. In this new world, the big five religions survived: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Chinese Folklore, and Buddhism. They remain the majority by huge margins. Smaller faiths – Judaism, Sikhism, Shinto, etc. – appear in certain regions. Those embracing echa believe the

gate as a lens of their faith and not necessarily a symbol. Faiths including a heaven believe it sits beyond the gateway of Attricana. Those without a heaven (or even a god for that matter) believe the gate to be either a reflection of nature or a mirror of their own soul.

Many languages died within a few generations. Others merged to create new variations. Now only a handful remains. Surviving vernacular soon divided into regional slangs and patois, becoming recognized languages themselves with distinct lexicons, syntaxes, and phonetic pronunciations. English remains the only dominant dialect in Canam with regionally endangered languages finding themselves assimilated into mother tongues to form geographically bound hybrids like Common (western and northern Canam), Native English (eastern Canam), and Onespeak (southeast Canam). Common is the lingua franca of the human race and the language most non-humans pick up when wishing to communicate with mankind.

Less than 400 million humans live today, most of them outside of bastions. The majority of bastions and a vast number of humans outside of them endorse natural selection as the theory of choice for the appearance of mankind. Too much evidence pointed to evolution and as time progressed, even the religious leaders of the world began to support the idea. Before the gate opened, the world was divided on the origin of man, firmly separated between a scientific theory and a religious belief. This all changed when Attricana opened.

With this new angle on the world, many humans faced new facts unable to ignore: The introduction of

the fae and dragons, and a past world and history unknown to them. Some elected to believe their dogma accurate despite contradictory evidence. They concocted extravagant theories claiming the previous age did not exist at all, and the new arrivals were demons meant to be repressed or destroyed.

Others took these new races and their similarities as the final proof of divine creation, still placing man atop this ladder of progressive superiority. Many older religions did adapt and changed their scripture based on the new world. Some still attempted to use fear to suppress their believers while others took this as an opportunity to start over.

With 95% of humanity eliminated by the previous age, the survivors believed that Armageddon either had passed or was still to come. The majority of man is still controlled by rulers professing a faith in an almighty power. With the exception of a scant few, most use this belief to lead the people in wisdom and kindness, not in fear and lunacy. No longer did the various nations of the world have to fight over relics and lands deemed sacred by some silent divinity. None of those past nations exist and barely a handful of those relics and lands survived. Some took this as a sign to live for the betterment of all mankind and not die over the buried remnants of forgotten conflicts. Mankind emerged with nothing. Not a shred of pavement remained. No corporations or organizations, no clubs or allegiances, nothing that defined mankind as a species, or anchored them to their fidelity to god or country, endured. Fragments of the old age were few and scattered. Survivors had to set aside their ignorance and stubbornness. Many refused and died praying for a deliverance that never arrived. Suicide took many in the first few years. Later – when the first fledgling communities encountered the first non-humans – hostilities followed.

Many more humans fell under the blade in conflicts they often initiated. A pause in their fear and paranoia resulted in a stay of annihilation, preventing man's second near extinction. Eventually, even though some regressed back into that state, these first communities grew enough to sustain themselves. Though nations changed, ethnic groups continued to grow. Racism was set aside with humanity too few in the face of monsters too many. Bastions formed with wide spectrums of color and creed. Some cities did separate regions for specific groups, but this was not forced upon the population. Outside of the bastion walls, racism often enough was merely diverted to other species.

The majority of bastion-born believe mankind earned his right for total dominion of the globe and wait for the day when technology will recover the planet again. A few believe in a shared future where technology can exist side by side with magic though with mankind the true proprietors of the world.

In echa, this belief is reversed. While some think the new races are intruding and should be eliminated or enslaved, many have embraced the new world, considering it the utopia and haven predicted in religious texts. Only when the dark hordes and their minions are

eliminated and the hell gate closed will this world truly turn into Eden.

Physical Qualities: Humans continue to be more varied than any other civilized race on Earth. They possess virtually every possible skin color, range in height from three feet to a towering seven, are thin and fat, and sport a variety of hair colors and styles. Since almost every religion and ethnic group is represented on Canam, a player can select any ethnicity of his choosing. It is suggested, however, upon choosing an ethnic group, the player takes the time to research the unique strengths of the group chosen.

Playing a Human: Human ethnic groups usually accept all other human ethnic groups despite ancient hatreds and conflicts in times before the second Hammer. Survivors simply could not afford to continue their wars in the view of new dangers; a blank slate was justified. Few nations advocated hatred to other humans.

Unfortunately, techan humans often act superior to those outside. Echan human nations respond well to each other with Baruch Malkut being a notable exception. With Darius Konig's doctrine of Sapien Superiority and their murder and enslavement of thousands of fae and humans, no other human echan kingdom will trade with them. These other nations like Kannos and Abidan maintain good relations with their surrounding fae neighbors. Specific diplomatic ties depend on the race nearby. Outside of the big human nations, dozens of dotted villages and communities across Canam and even the world practice bigotry against the fae ranging from shunning to expulsion to eradication. A player creating a human should first determine his origin: from a bastion or from the outside world. The player character choosing a path of technology must have access to said technology on a regular basis. Without upgrading their technology, techan characters won't fare much better than low-level echans.

Humans often seek excitement for the sheer thrill of it. Ones with devout religious belief may venture out on a crusade, personal, or part of a national movement. Some escaped bastions while others dedicated themselves to entering one. Humans follow whims and dreams more than any other species. They are caught up on causes while others let it pass. Their short lives force them to condense as much life as possible in a brief span of time. A techan character is a stranger in a strange land. It might be Earth but centuries under the glare of Attricana have changed the landscape. Techans leaving the walls are truly entering a fantasy world they have little to no preparations for. Some may leave willingly while others are forced to because of obligations or because of an obsession that haunts them. Some may open their eyes, welcoming the wonder of this new world. Others watch with jealousy and resentment. Regardless, techans choosing techan classes are loyal to their own kind and don't often welcome foreigners. While outside, they miss their refrigerators and computers. On the other hand, some techans have given up their central heating and televisions to pursue a path of magic, embracing the new world with a romantic na-



ivety, unaware of the horrors awaiting them.

Most players creating echan have wholly accepted their path with no desire to settle within the walls of industry. They take on magic without worry of the consequences. They believe techans to be members of an obsolete conviction, frantically clinging on to a dying mind-set. Loyal techans strive for the day when the gates close, orphaning the fae to the ravages of the real world, a time where mankind could retake the planet as its true inheritors. The fae would be forced to escape back into the formless void of dreams and delusions.

Those unable or unwilling to make such a journey would be subject to the harsh reality of natural laws and perish quickly. No one knows if echan humans would suffer the same fate as the fae. Techans fear the future of a world where magic reigns uncontested and humanity lives stagnant, in limbo, never changing, forever in a fantasy world without consequences. Echan humans insist this new world is as real as the one that came before and it deserves to exist as much as anything else. Those with a faith in the unseen believe it to be the ultimate solution to humanity's avarice. If man continued alone, he would have destroyed the world in his greed. With magic and disruption, it forces mankind humble and keeps them in check—Nature finally striking back for sins committed on its soil. Even those without religion on the outside believe this new world as the proper one. At the very least, it's far more interesting. Still, some don't care about the fate of humanity and have turned their back to selfishly embrace the romance and exotic nature of their new neighbors.

With such a wide range of possibilities, humanity is the best race to play. They have the greatest variety of options. In this new world, they have the most to gain (and lose) with the coming events to follow. In the end, humanity will be the force that will decide the fate of the world.

Names: Human names continue to evolve today. Now with the commingling of many ethnic groups, first and last names can represent one or several cultures.

Examples: Robert Naseen, Kiba Hebrus, Miranda Okama

Mixed Groups: Of course, one could mix both echan and techan players together into one group. Why they would choose to unite is left up to the imaginations of the players or DM. One idea could be a shared past between several characters (both raised in Angel, one in Genai, the other in the main city), a techan out of place in the world or even characters romantically linked. Either way, they attempt to survive together, flying in the face of convention insisting the worlds live apart. In this situation, the techan must exercise caution and not wield or use magic though surrounded by it. The techan or techans also must be careful to keep their more sensitive gear away from the powerful magic items in the group or risk disruption. This problem escalates as levels progress and more powerful technology shorts out more often and more severely. This is despite the shielding techniques some bastions developed. This struggle reflects in the rest of the world as well.

Saturation Value: You have a saturation value of 0. You do not generate an EDF and therefore can use any tech level weapons, armor, or devices without disruption. The equipment in question is still susceptible to outside sources or by magic equipment held by the character.

KODIAKS

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 6'4" – 7'2"

Average Weight: 350 -450 lb.

Average Starting Age: 15 years.

Estimated Life Expectancy: 80 years

Ability Scores: +2 Strength; +2 Constitution or +2 Wisdom; -2 Intelligence

Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 30 feet

Vision: Low-Light Vision; you can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. You retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Languages: Argose. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Survival, +2 Swim

Enchanted: You are an echan. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight).

Natural Runner: As long as you have nothing in your hands, you can run on all four limbs. If you do, you can move up to six times your speed (or four times if you are wearing heavy armor). If you choose to run at four times your speed (per normal rules), you can maintain that run for as many hours as your Constitution modifier. When running, you ignore movement penalties from difficult terrain.

Imposing but Clumsy: You are too large and clumsy to ride a mount. You also suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls with weapons you wield in one hand. You can wield weapons of one size larger than you as if they were your size.

Natural Weapons: You possess powerful weapons. They are treated as simple weapons and you're automatically proficient with them.

(Primary) 2x Claws: 1d6; (Secondary) Bite: 1d3

In the north of Canam, influence from Attricana has forced the native bears upright. At first, these creatures remained lawless. They quarreled amongst themselves and raided neighboring communities for food. Even today, kodiaks still lack sufficient success at civilized society. Most cling onto survival with such an obsession that they care for little else.

A band's disposition relies on its leader, dictating how



the tribe will act and where they will travel. Will they hunt or forage? Will they attack or trade? A few tribes close to the narros in Fargon, understanding their future depended on pushing past their fear of others, attempted a dialogue. The kodiaks developed into trained hunters and farmers. As they brought in food, the narros repaid their allies with knowledge, clothes, tools, and finally weapons. Better armed, these civilized kodiaks overwhelmed their unfortunate rivals, whether they be boggs, skeggs, or other kodiaks.

Almost all kodiaks reside in Northern Canam with a few migrating through the rest of the continent. They are virtually unknown elsewhere. Their presence in any non-kodiak community is uncommon. When they do associate with outsiders, it's often with other races bound to nature (chaparrans being the noteworthy example). Kodiaks speak in a series of grunts and whimpers known as Argose. Few non-kodiaks comprehend

the language.

Physical Qualities: Kodiaks are enormous, with many towering over seven feet. They prefer loose-fitting armor to heavy plates. They avoid shields and relish two-handed weapons. They are covered from head to toe in heavy fur with large eyes and articulate claws. Their snouts are shortened to fit a proper mouth that can articulate speech. It is nearly impossible to tell a female from a male upon a cursory examination. Only kodiaks can distinguish themselves. There are a branch of elder shamans revered by the kodiaks as living deities. These are not true kodiaks, as they are proportioned more like normal bears. They sport shorter limbs and larger torsos. They also rarely wear clothes or wield weapons. Kodiaks only wear layers for protection. If they travel too far south, they stop wearing unnecessary clothes, leaving the only exception for armor.

Playing a Kodiak: Kodiaks are a rare addition to





any adventuring party. They seldom leave their tribes and when they do find themselves aided with non-kodiaks, they are often taken advantage of. Kodiaks may be the strongest and most durable, but they are rarely the smartest. There has never been a kodiak wizard mentioned in any book. They are brought into a party for their strength and not their colorful conversation. They say little, making others skittish around them. The only race that has accepted them in significant numbers has been the chaparrans. Other semiferar races often take a liking to kodiaks. There have even been a few rumors of kodiaks taking changelings or nariissa as mates.

No one dares cross a kodiak. They defend their friends with violent fervor, building themselves into a crazed frenzy like a mother bear with a cub. Kodiaks suffer from low intelligence but they should not be considered stupid. They are simple and talk in basic phrases but only speak this way because of apathy towards conversation. Kodiaks can't stand small talk.

They despise politeness and rarely return courtesy. Words like "please" and "thank you" have no mirror in their tongue. A kodiak character has likely left his tribe because of dishonor or less commonly because of a command or need to wander the world. He may even be the last of his family.

Kodiaks are the best race; there can be no argument. A kodiak enters the room and all eyes turn. Every mouth gulps its drink. Respect is bestowed without knowing anything further. It's a gigantic, bipedal bear. Its roar can be heard from across the room. See-

ing one in battle fills enemies with dread. They are the biggest and the strongest. Who cares about anything else?

Names: Kodiaks can tell each other apart easily, differentiating sex, age, and family line. Because of this, they have no need for complicated names or family titles. They have single names of few syllables, which are easy to pronounce. One account claims the kodiaks only have thirty different actually names they continually recycle, but this has never been proven.

Examples: Rogan, Goran, Donan.

Half Kodiak: Kodiaks rarely breed outside their species. Although not fae, like humans they can mate with any fae, their children will always possess the fae's racial traits. Humans and kodiaks cannot produce children.

CROSS BREEDS & MATING

Fae are capable of mating with each other with varying success. Fae and humans mate as well, albeit with help. Humans and fae are technically not biologically compatible even though similar looking. The first issue is with time. Fae races are generally long lived, embalmed with an amazing degree of patience. Most fae gestations take more than fourteen months, and an opportunity for conception revolves once a year or more, not monthly as with human females. Many fae refuse to take non-fae mates not out of bigotry but fear of loneliness. Fae mate for life and the idea of outliving the short lifespan of their mate by hundreds or thousands of years frightens



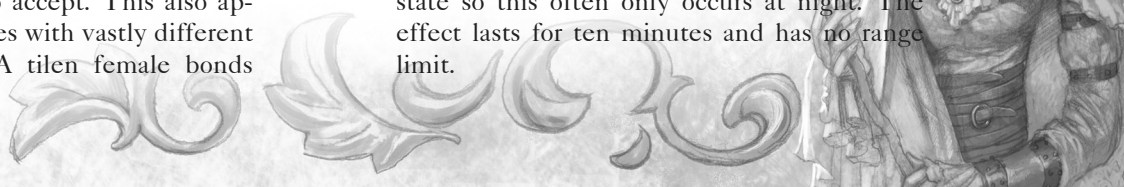


them. However, a strange side effect does occur to those rare situations where fae bond for life with a shorter-lived species. Throughout all fae species, the process of pair bonding forces both sides to sacrifice part of their soul to the other. The ceremony, differing with each species, can take less than five minutes in a private encounter, to several hours or even days in a public venue. The consequences are eternal. After the ceremony, the effects are permanent.

- **Locator:** Both mates know each other's exact position within 5 miles and general direction within 25 miles.
- **Life Sharing:** The side with the lesser life span lives longer. 20% of the difference between their maximum ages is added to the age of the lesser-lived species. All other age quantities are unchanged. This information is uncommon and few outside of the fae know it. The longer-lived side loses that same 20% quantity from his or her age. It's the trade-off both must be willing to accept. This also applies to different fae races with vastly different age limits. (Example: A tilen female bonds

with a human male. The human has the capacity to live to 184 years while the tilen drops to 496 years.)

- **Whisper:** Sides can both whisper messages and receive whispered replies from each other with little chance of being overheard. When each whispers, the whispered message is audible to the other if within range and within sight. Magical silence, one foot of stone, one inch of common metal (or a thin sheet of lead), or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks the whisper. The effect transmits sound, not meaning. It doesn't transcend language barriers. To speak a message, one must mouth the words and whisper, possibly allowing observers the opportunity to read lips. The effective range is 1 mile.
- **Dreamspeak:** After two hours of sleep, both sides can carry on a conversation as if they were next to each other. Both must be in this state so this often only occurs at night. The effect lasts for ten minutes and has no range limit.



- **Consequences:** If one side dies for any reason, not only do all these bonuses vanish (sometimes resulting in the surviving mate dropping dead instantly if their time is up), but they also suffer a -1 to their Will and Fortitude saves for life. This cannot be removed by any means. Re-bonding to a new mate does not recover this penalty and another death compounds this further. The shortened life of the longer-lived side stays shortened.

The longest bonding ceremony (taking three days without sleep, exchanging thirty pages of vows) is with the laudenians, who rarely ever take human mates. Laudeni-ans share magical spirit via special chant cast by an arcane priest. The shortest ceremony, with the tenenbri and chaparrans, takes less than five minutes. With chaparrans, a tree is planted and the blood of both sides drips into the roots. With tenenbri, the two sides simply mate in private. Gimfen ceremonies involve some poetry and vow exchanging, drinking from enchanted waters, and prayers to whatever god/s they worship (if any). Damaskans include vows but also exchange colored ribbons, sashes, or scarves (depending on family tradition), which the married couple wear for life. Limshau custodians exchange small blades. These blades, not much use in combat, are ornately decorated with merging family symbols. Sometimes offering said ribbon or blade is akin to a marriage proposal. Humans and fae races cannot reproduce with each other without this ceremony. The bonded souls push past scientific barriers. Humans may not be born enchanted creatures, but they instantly become one when they bond with a fae. Their offspring are as well. Although bonding is technically not necessary between fae races, many frown on married couples not bonding (and it does increase the chances of conception).

Because fae are immune to all human disease, females became sought after for slaves. Sexual merchants bought and sold stock from the backs of carriages for centuries. Many governing bodies attempted to close these crime rings, but rumors point to a few still circulating. Baruch Malkut, for example, still employs thousands of slaves. Some believe those are urban legends meant to scare fae from leaving their homes. Though a few have tried, no one has ever successfully forced a bonding in order to extend one's life. Both parties must be willing or the procedure can never finalize. Fae never jump into marriage and few fae marriages have ever ended in divorce. Even when elders frown and forbid the pairing, once it occurs, nothing more is said on the matter.

Unfortunately, there resides one exception to this rule: the pagus. They somehow found a way to mate with anything successfully, regardless of bonding or not, and they do it often. Pagus can bond for life like all fae, but this situation is extremely rare and reserved for those embracing the path of good. Bonding is strictly forbidden in Kakodomania and – in any villages run by evil dragons – falls under penalty of death. The pagus

ceremony looks strangely alluring and involves hours of synchronized chanting from the couple and friends. The chants blend into a moan that shakes the ground. Compared to the usual negative views many have of the race, this remains one aspect of the pagus still beautiful.

Note: No character can be created at 1st level pre-bonded without GM authorization.

FAE MIXED BLOOD

Crossbreeding fae races occur often. Because of many similarities between the many descendant species, common features are always inherited:

Elven Blood: For all effects related to race, you are considered a fae.

Fae Gift: Depending on the fae parent, you receive the following additional abilities:

Chaparran: Brachiate and Natural Habitat.

Damaskan: Ambidextrous and Polyglot.

Gimfen: Disruption Reduction, and Scurry.

Laudenian: Equilibrium and Light Body.

Narros: Iron Roots and Stone Blood.

Pagus: Focused Aggression and Steadfast.

Tenenbri: Darkvision (60 feet) and Piezo Scream (not blindsight).

Note: You may also take feats relating to these abilities, ignoring the racial prerequisite.

Human Versatility: You gain an extra feat at 1st level.

Sleep: Half-fae sleep like normal humans and don't gain fae sleeping benefits. However, they only require 5 hours or sleep a night.

Special: Tilen of mixed blood are full tilen and are not half-fae.

Sensitivity: Like fae, half-fae are vulnerable to Fae Iron.

HALF-FAE (HUMAN/FAE)

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height & Weight: Average of human and fae

Average Starting Age: 20 years

Estimated Life Expectancy: Average of human and fae

Ability Scores: You inherit the fae parent's attribute bonuses

Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.

Speed: 30 feet

Vision: See below

Languages: Human parent's language or fae parent's language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.

Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 to any two skills of your choice

FAE HYBRID (FAE/FAE)

RACIAL TRAITS

Fae: As fae, hybrids gain all universal fae attributes.

The Fae Ladder: When different fae species mate, their offspring, though inheriting the minor distinctions of each parent, will only exhibit the dominant traits of one, utilizing the ladder below.

Pagus > Gimfen > Tenenbri > Damaskan > Narros > Chaparran > Laudenian

This translates to mean that, if a pagus mates with any other fae, their children will always have pagus special rules, and a laudenian mating will always result in the other race.

Tilen Special Rule: Tilen crossbreeding creates pure tilen every time, not a mixed result.

When humans first found their world invaded by these pointed-eared humanoids, racism quickly followed. Most human communities openly hated them. Humans harboring these feelings turned to xenophobia with some of them becoming the first bastions. Populations that didn't expand with technology turned either on themselves or were destroyed by predators (as those communities had no allies to turn to). Baruch Malkut was a notable exception. Most human echan civilizations that flourished did so by declaring no ill will to their new neighbors. Laudenian and chaparrans still hold the humans in distrust and seldom communicate. Tenenbri avoid everyone equally. Only damaskans, narros, and gimfen embraced their new fellow inhabitants.

Despite attempts to quash the use of the term "half-elf," it's often still ascribed. Many half-fae try to use the term "minaan", which is damaskan shorthand for "gifted from two" or "mesinaan" which is similar, but comes from laudenian as "strengths with differences," though the laudenian term is not used in their language to that effect. Unfortunately, in many communities, those of mixed human blood are labeled as half-castes or worse, half-breeds, a derogatory slur no "minaan" takes lightly.

Those born from the rarer species like tenenbri, chaparran, and laudenian often find their lives difficult. Thankfully, this problem does not occur with damaskans whom embrace their children, regardless of who they are. This resulted in a heavy migration of half-fae to these cities, increasing their population. Gimfen half-breeds occur more rarely.

Half-fae don't develop nations or communities on their own. They either remain in their communities of birth or venture to others if not accepted. Because a half-fae is usually birthed from loving couples, if the culture outcasts the half-fae, the entire family typically leaves as well. This happens more in chaparran, tenenbri, and laudenian cultures. In others, the half-fae usually finds acceptance. The most obvious examples of this occur in

Limshau, possessing the largest ratio of half-fae in Canam. In human circles, feelings towards them depend on how the community responds to integration. Some fearing the fae ostracize the half-breeds as much as the laudenians do. Half-fae rarely attempt entry into bastions. It's never advised.

Physical Qualities: Half-fae share the most dominant characteristic of their fae parent. Their ear size is half of the human size and the fae parent. They are also between their parent's heights. Their skin tone is always the darker tone. Magic often forces submissive genes into dominance when humans and fae breed. Blonde hair will sometimes surpass black, blue eyes over brown. Thankfully, the fae parent filters out genetic defects or inherited disease. Human physical features not seen in fae (like freckles) often pass on though baldness and obesity seldom do. Half-fae may grow beards regardless of their fae parent.

Note: Half-fae breeding with another half-fae produces another half-fae, using the fae hybrid chart to determine the fae traits emerging. Half-fae breeding with a pure-breed fae brings on another half-fae, same as mentioned before. A half-fae breeding with a human brings another human into this world. Though they may have certain inherited traits from their fae parent (eye and hair color), they are still totally human.

Playing a Half-Fae: Because a half-fae results only from bonded parents, raising one is a blessed affair, despite the feelings of the community. Half-fae rarely encounter abuse within the family. They seldom abandon their loyalties. Only acts of fate can result in a half-fae not having a normal childhood.

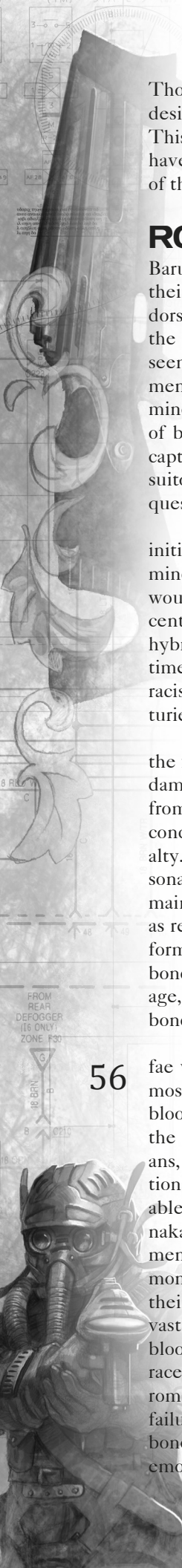
This, of course, assumes both parents are good. Evil parents can commit whatever atrocities they want to their children.

Half-fae, like humans, develop their personality more from how they are raised than what their racial stereotype denotes. Ones raised in open and welcoming cultures like Limshau grow similar to the other members of the city. In creating a half-fae, a player must determine which side of the family the fae parent resides and what specific fae he is. This will help create a believable back-story.

Despite a probable pleasant childhood, when a half-fae ventures into the world, she might encounter problems in traveling. Some nations accept those of mixed blood as no different as any other citizen while others revere them as much as other fae. In locations where fae are reviled, half-fae don't fare any better. Their unique heritage may stave off lynching but a beating following banishment would be an accepted alternative. This assumes a human nation, as entirely fae communities that deride mankind still consider themselves too civilized for such harsh action. Half-fae, for the most part, tolerate this unpredictability.

Many believe the half-fae are the future of the planet, the eventual course for everyone. Together, as one mixed species, the planet's population can truly be in peace, to unite against the coming darkness. Half-fae often let the winds call them to the open country.





Though longer lived, like their fae parent, they still desire to seek adventure like their human progenitor. This makes them the best race to play because they have the versatility of humans with the exotic strengths of the fae.

ROMANCE

Baruch Malkut considers Limshau the greatest threat to their ideals of the world. Not only does Limshau endorse public opinion and free speech, it also approves of the mingling of blood between fae and man. This is seen as nothing less than devil worship by the fundamentalists of Baruch Malkut. Their opinion is in the minority, with the majority of mankind trapped outside of bastion walls looking upon their fae neighbors with captivated eyes. In the decades after first contact, many suitors attempted to woo fae maidens, some for conquest and others for marriage. This seldom worked.

Initially, the fae were skittish of mankind. Most initial meetings ended in violence. Eventually, saner minds began to reach out. Still, the mingling of breeds would not occur for many more decades. In the first century, the entire planetary population of fae-human hybrids could be counted on a single hand. Most of the time the fae refused a human wooer, not because of racism, but because of a fear of being alone for the centuries after their mate died.

There is no record about which cross-couple was the first paired, though it's assumed to have been with a damaskan. As is usually the case, it probably occurred from shared experiences. Not a single fae race or nation condones arranged marriages, not even within their royalty. Fae establish a connection that overcomes personal beliefs and interests. Most of the time, this remains mere friendship, though this comradeship can be as resolute as any marriage. Occasionally, it continues to form an intimate sharing of souls, and the two sides bond for life. This surmounts such pesky hurdles as age, sex, or race. As humans and elves shared time, bonded couples began to emerge.

In nations like Laudenia and Dawnamoak, pairing fae with human is frowned upon or outright forbidden, mostly due to racial purity and a fear of losing one's blood to another race. This fanatical view is not held by the majority of others. Chaparrans, more than laudenians, are often more approachable outside of their nations, and the tenenbri are frequently more approachable the farther one travels from the labyrinth of Vanaka. Narros' discipline and their preferred environment has made interracial couples relatively uncommon. The same goes for gimfen, but with them, it's their visible age that turns most away. This leaves the vast majority of interracial couples from damaskan blood. Since Limshau permits and encourages mingling races on every level, the kingdom became the hub of romantic voyages. In the end, most suitors encounter failure. Despite being quixotic, elves are skittish to bond, especially damaskans, known for their distant emotions when in public. Fae often act alien compared

to common human customs. They are all brutally honest and find deception rather repugnant. Coupled with their long lifespans and aged wisdom, most wooers are apprehensive to speak up. Fae do not fall in love in a day like humans. For them, it takes time and most pursuers don't have the necessary patience. Nearly all half-elves in Canam are in Limshau, but it accounts for a very small portion of the kingdom's population (some say less than a thousand). Those doggedly determined to win the favor of a fae's attention can be rewarded with a prize greater than the trophy of the exotic catch or the years the bond offers.



Aiden realized that he hadn't considered what he was going to do next. He was half-way across town, past most adults' bedtime, staring at a store that appeared to have been forsaken. Even if it wasn't, it would still have been closed.

He knew he wasn't being rational. Part of him was wishing he had stumbled on an elderly Asian man with a crooked wooden cane, round glasses, and a white fumanchu beard running a 24-hour corner store stocked with a witch's brew of spices, frozen food, and bottled soda with a curtained-off backroom hiding wands, magic powders, and tiny creatures that looked adorable but acted as monsters if you angered them.

Aiden considered returning home. However, since the door was open, there was no harm in taking a peak. He saw only glimpses in the darkness as he peaked past the threshold. A few shelves sat in silhouette. Cheap tables and bamboo chairs lined one-half of the store. A dim lantern with a faint glow hung over an oak desk sitting at the other end. A few books waited open for a reader. Aiden willed himself through the iron jaw and past the tapping doors.

He squeaked a "hello" to announce himself but only managed a whisper. He snuck across the room and approached the oak desk. The immense open tome before him had broken its spine at the gutter like it sat at this page for a hundred years. The cover had the finish of marble and as Aiden scrapped his finger across the tail, he realized it was. He removed his glasses from his coat and tried to read.

The lettering was flamboyant. Aiden could make out most of the words though a few were hidden in the shadow of the gutter. He was apprehensive about touching anything but fought through it to turn the nozzle on the lantern. The light grew bright and Aiden shifted his attention back to the book.

Humans suffer from the obsolete notion that they are the dominant species upon this world. Man's strength for conquest comes only from population. He exists in numbers. Using numbers, by all rights, puggs deserve dominion. The Earth requires penance from man for he committed sins against the world that gave him birth.

Aiden didn't notice the light from the lamp was growing brighter. He was engrossed in the words, wondering what puggs were, what sins the writer was referring to. The light began to drift slightly over Aiden's head, illuminating the gutter nicely. Aiden continued to read.

Nature offered man renewable resources, friendly denizens, and land uncontested by evil. He abolished this unwritten rule to care for the world. He committed unforgivable sins against nature when he embraced the machine. Technology offered man growth beyond what he could accomplish by natural means. He turned his back on life.

Aiden finished and then realized that the light on the page had shifted from his right to his left. He twisted slowly to spot the flicking flame hovering in the air beside his head. It had opened the lantern door, drifted gently from its cage, and moved closer to offer better illumination.

Aiden screamed and spun around, pinning himself against the desk. The spark of flame jumped from its spot and fluttered around him. It was no dragon, but Aiden's growing anxiety of being so far from home made him jumpy. He also didn't like bugs, and this thing moved very bug-like.

It floated to the book and then tapped the page repeatedly. Aiden didn't know how to respond, or even if he should. It didn't have legs or a head; it was just a lantern flame that had floated from its lantern. Aiden bent his head and leaned forward. It tapped the page again.

"What?" Aiden asked.

Tap. Tap.

"You want me to read?"

Tap.

Aiden's heart started to temper. The light drifted up over the book. Aiden stepped back to the desk. "If...you...insist."

He was about to look back down, then it occurred to him that a flame with no fuel source was floating in the air in front of him. "You can't be real," Aiden whispered. It bobbed in the air like it was floating on an invisible ocean. Aiden didn't know if that was an answer. "You shouldn't...exist."

"Its life has no meaning unless it can light the way for others," spoke the tall figure approaching from the shadow. Aiden jumped upon hearing him. "If only all things had such simple ambitions."

The man wasn't a dumpy figure with almond eyes and shriveled skin. This stranger towered over Aiden by several feet. His eyes were a radiant blue, skin darker than the room. He had fuzzy grey hair with matching whiskers under his chin, thin with a granite physique.

Aiden backed away from the desk into the shelf behind him, jostling the heavy books resting upon it. The youth glanced back and noticed a hefty volume toppling over. It had a cover of obsidian, parading gold bosses of the gaping maws of dragons. Their front claws reached across the outer edge to the single oversized clasp keeping the book closed. Aiden righted it quickly—with considerable strain—and turned back to the man.

"I'm sorry," Aiden started, "I was just—"

"Quite all right, Mr. Camus," he answered. The spark orbited the two of them like they had gravity. "It likes you." His voice was deep and rough, with a heartening charisma in the way he addressed the child. Aiden couldn't place the accent but he had no problems understanding him. The man stopped opposite of the desk and looked down to the book.

"The memoirs of Renar Alkanost, laudenian council leader, written 300 years ago." Aiden offered only a blink.

"Though personally I think the fae is arrogant in his opinion. Most laudenians are like that."

"I just wanted to look..." Aiden trailed off. "You know my name—"

"I knew your mother. I sold her the books. She talked about you at length. Sorry about..." he paused to choose an appropriate word, "everything."

"Who are..." Aiden's voice faded and he mouthed the last word formed.

"I'm a collector. You may call me David...or Chen."

"You collect books, Davidorchen?"

"I share them," Chen corrected. He opened his palm and the spark flew obediently to it. A whisper from his lips and it leapt from his hand. It bounced and fluttering across the room, igniting every candle and lamp.

Aiden's eyes followed the spark as it made its journey. Aiden's mouth fell open as he took sight of the forty rows of books that encircled the chamber, every wall, floor to ceiling. Each volume looked as old as the book on the desk, like the books Aiden owned. They were magnificent. The only break in the books came from a glass showcase of old weapons modern man never used. They were obsolete devices and implements from a time Aiden delighted to remember. They gleamed with polish as if forged and shaved into shape yesterday—broadswords, throwing axes, and a single longbow shaped from black wood. The flame finally returned to its home and closed the door behind it.

"How did you..." Aiden started.

"I asked it to."

"But it's not alive."

"First rule: Anything you can think of...thinks for itself."

Aiden gathered his thoughts. "Dragons."

"Quite right. Hard to miss when they appear as they did."

"Dragons aren't real," Aiden forced himself to say.

"So says the normal world," Chen replied with a shadow of a smirk. Aiden was not smiling. Desperation had set in.

"I don't understand."

"Nor should you."

"Was it Zmey?"

"Zmey?" Chen pondered the sudden question. Aiden could see the man rifling through old thoughts. "Zmey is a myth, based on several stories. What attacked you was a death dragon."

"I couldn't find the other one in my book."

"Book?"

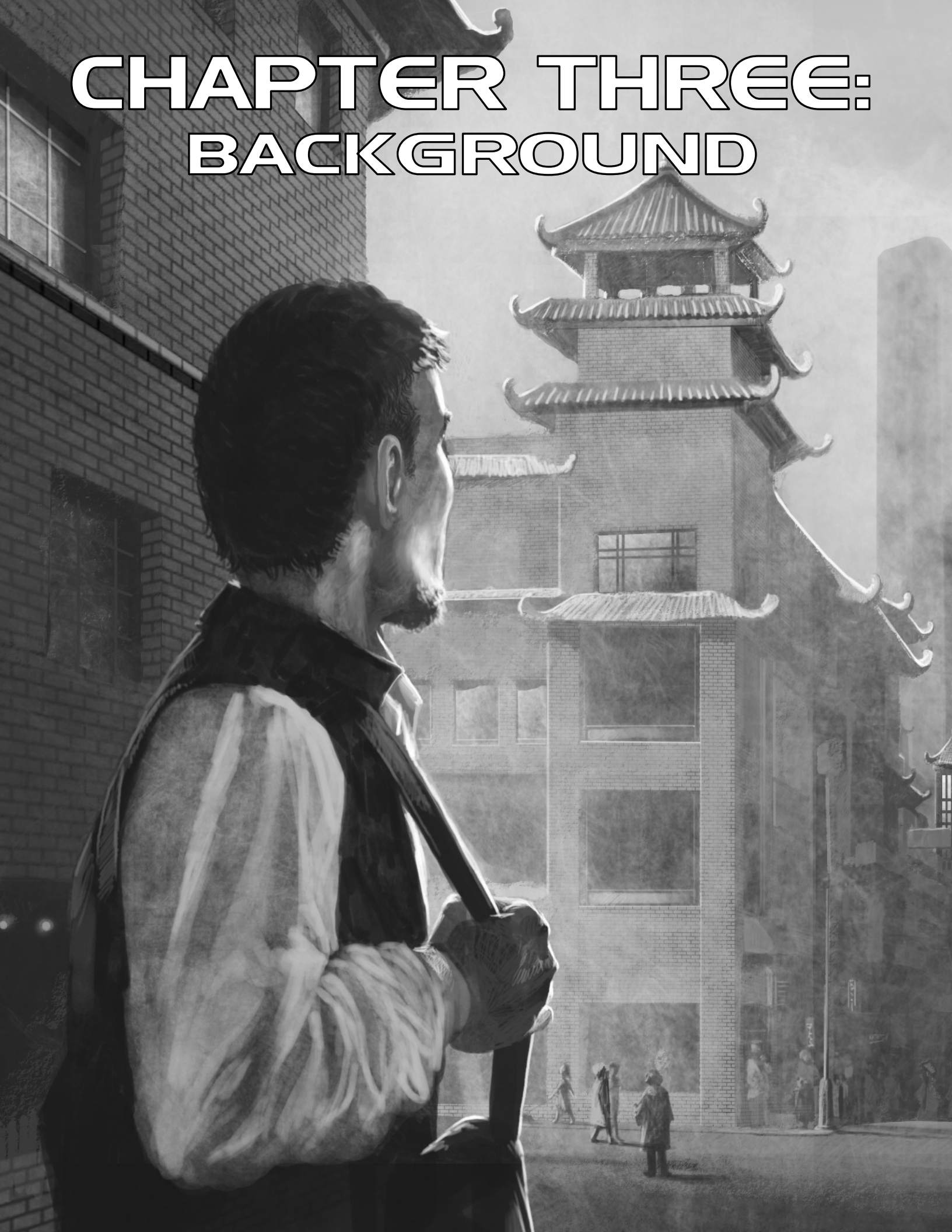
"Codex Dracontis—"

"Oh yes. There are better resources."

"That show the other dragon? The one with gold and blue scales, blue eyes, white whiskers and white talons. A long snake body. Four arms, four talons?"

Chen circled around the desk, rolling his fingers across the spines on the shelf behind Aiden. "You know, they say spotting a Yok-ani is a good omen. Seeing two portends a blessed life." Chen found the book in question and pulled it out. It was almost as large as the one already on the desk, but with no cover art. There was only a single large Asian-sinitic letter and the English words underneath Myths of the Kurau-kou-Puru.

CHAPTER THREE: BACKGROUND





ORGANIZATIONS

Rarely do characters meet in taverns or stumble upon each other on a dirt road. Many are not foolish to venture into the outside world alone and unprepared. Often, they've made friends and forged their alliances long before seeking adventure. Characters can be either part of a much larger organization or they can be independent, answering to no one but themselves.

Players should work together in forging a group that maximizes each other's abilities. They know their names, their strengths, and their weaknesses.

At character creation, a group of players may select one of the following affiliations. Being signed under an organization offers funds or equipment while independence offers the greatest gift of all, freedom. The GM may select an organization for the player group if the choice affects the campaign being designed. Not all members of a party need to select a single organization, though the party can only receive the benefit of one, regardless of the number of players in the party. To receive the benefits of an organization requires at least three members of party to share that affiliation. Players can only belong to one organization at a time. It is not impossible for players to switch their affiliation but this is not easy and requires the GM's complicity.

ABIDAN MISSIONARIES

Tasked with protecting the innocent and encouraging hope and virtue throughout the kingdom, Abidan missionaries are gathered by a mutual desire to help others in need. They need not all be followers of the same faith, neither are they required to promote said faith to those requiring their help. These missionaries care nothing for political or theological agendas. They only concern themselves about helping the needy and serving the cause to defeat evil whenever they encounter it. Generally, missionaries are multi-talented; they're not all just trained swords. Members are educators, leaders, and healers. As the threat of an encroaching darkness looms, these missions have been found more and more often outside of Abidan borders.

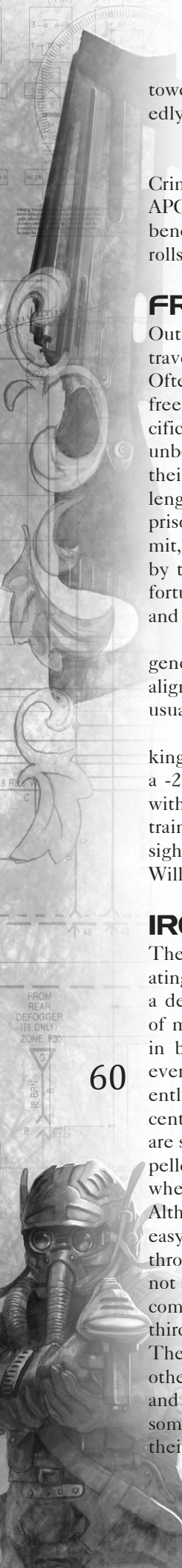
Requirement: All members of this organization must have a good alignment.

Benefit: All party members gain a +2 bonus to Knowledge (Religion) skill checks. All party members gain a +1 bonus to all damage rolls against targets with the lawful evil alignment.

CRIMSON STARLIGHT

The CS is the military arm of Angel, often taking missions outside of city walls. They venture out on all-terrain vehicles, ETVs, or VERTOL flyers. The CS operates from four immense towers situated around the outer perimeter of the city. Response time to an outside attack is measured in seconds. Recently, attacks on the wall have subsided, with boggs and puggs shifting their attention to those passing to and from the city. This forced the CS to leave the walls and take a more aggressive stance on outside threats. They clash not only with surrounding raiders but with the growing armies of skeggs in the nation of Xixion in the north. Of all the bastion organizations, the CS receives the most combat experience. Squads are often sent to patrol the great outer forests of Cyon.

Another branch of CS handles internal problems dealing with Genai. Rumors tell of a smuggling route under the city leading past the walls to the outside, allowing free passage for those wishing to avoid the main gates. Then there is the matter of the temple, a giant



tower in the centre of Genai and the great beast supposedly living underneath it.

Requirement: Techan characters from Angel only

Benefit: The player group signed to work for the Crimson Starlight receive a wheeled truck or a tracked APC for free. It is a loan and cannot be sold. They also benefit from a preferred enemy, gaining a +1 to attack rolls against pugs, boggs, and skeggs.

FREE-LANCE

Outcast or deserted from a lord or king, the free-lance travels from town to town seeking money or purpose. Often mistakenly dubbed mercenaries or sellswords, a free-lance began its life as military unit sworn to a specific flag. For specific reasons, this lance found itself unbound from a higher authority. Did they abandon their assignment? Did they violate doctrine, or challenge the word of a lord? Were they arrested, sent to prison by a military court for a crime they didn't commit, only later to escape? Whatever the reason, wanted by their nation or kingdom, they survive as soldiers of fortune. If there's a problem, if no one else can help, and if they can be found, a free-lance may be hired.

Good-aligned nations like Abidan and Limshau generally do not put prices on the heads of similarly aligned characters, and never post death marks; bastions usually simply exile offenders.

Benefit: Members of a free-lance must select a kingdom, free house, or bastion. Party members suffer a -2 penalty to all Diplomacy checks when associating with any resident of this nation. Because of shared training, if ALL members of the free-lance are in line of sight within one another, they each gain a +1 bonus to Will saves.

IRON SONS

The Iron Sons is the largest techan free company operating in the world. They command thousands through a decentralized control network connected via a series of mobile command posts. They operate fixed offices in both York and Angel, though outlawed practically everywhere else. Although able to function independently, each command node can receive directives from a central voice, known as General Chauk. Instructions are seldom relayed but when ushered, all units are compelled to act. Only a few people in the world know where Chauk is at any time, and his location shifts daily. Although the Sons are classed as mercenaries, and are easy to hire out, they receive their primary income through York and Angel service contracts. This does not account for their entire budget, and it's believed the company receives significant investment from unknown third parties using the Sons as their proxy in Canam. The objective of these third parties is shared by most others that hire out the Sons—destroy the world of echa and return the planet back under control of man. While some cells are known to be lenient if not diplomatic in their relations with fantasy, most are ruthless.

Requirement: Techan characters

Benefit: A party signed under the Iron Sons receives a scrambler. It is a loan and cannot be sold. If the party breaks from the Iron Sons (or attempts to sell the scrambler), Iron Sons command will put out a contract for the party's elimination.

LOGOS LANCE

It is not uncommon to see Limshau custodians operating outside of city walls. Clad in black kawabari armor instead of the city-white of most custodians, members of this group are often sent out to either retrieve a previously lost tome of knowledge or authenticate an important event. Although occasionally travelling alone, most join up with a group of travelers with similar goals. Circumstances have occurred where an entire party of Limshau citizens is gathered together to venture into the open world. Not all have to be custodians, though one of them usually is (or perhaps a librarian). The logos lance, as they are called, is tasked for a specific mission. It is often difficult, involving a journey encompassing months or even years. This lance is commissioned by a higher authority, up to and sometimes including the king himself.

Requirement: At least one member of a logos lance must have a trait connected to the kingdom of Limshau.

Benefit: All party members gain a +2 bonus in one Knowledge skill of their choice. The entire party is also supplied riding horses.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This group from Sierra Madre is more interested with subversion and intelligence gathering than anything else. Even though flaunting advances few other bastions even dream of, Sierra Madre still lacks many developments even bastions like York claim. This is from the lack of outside threats and from a naïve, narrow-minded population. Groups sent out from the subterranean bastion often travel north to acquire (steal) technology from others, especially York and Angel. Mann remains a hard target and most attempting entry are killed upon discovery. The Ministry also tracks all movement above the city. They intercept and deal with forces marching over their soil.

Requirement: Techan characters from Sierra Madre

Benefit: All players working for the MFA receive the shielding modification to all pertinent equipment they purchase at 1st level and a 30% discount to purchasing said modifications later.

NOMADS

Strictly speaking, to be among this group is to be classed as an itinerant rather than a nomad, but the latter term is often employed. This group doesn't follow a herd; they don't migrate with the passing seasons. They wander the world because of a personal need to

see it or because of a fear of discovery. They may have secrets or carry something of value others covet. Of course, this need not be so melodramatic. Techan nomads, those outcast or unable to enter bastions, migrate to keep within areas with a low ED value. Fantasy nomads may be bound by their racial traits to wander aimlessly without a home. Members may possess a stigma preventing their settlement.

Benefit: Despite being labeled as an organization, the group is not affiliated with any establishment. Each character gains a +4 bonus to Survival checks and +1 bonus to all Fort saves.

OROBAS

The Selkirk defense authority, unlike many other interdiction forces from bastions, doesn't consider echans their enemy. Most missions by members of Orobas entail escorting and protecting narros patrols through the Selkirk controlled section of the Dianaso pass. Orobas personnel are usually selected from the mining population and trained separately. Already used to working in groups, the operatives quickly learn to offset each other's weaknesses and operate as a cohesive unit. They seldom fight amongst themselves and stay together, even when on vacation. Other missions include scouting and recon outside the Dianaso pass, as well as dealing with the encroaching invasion from the skeggs of Xixon. A few groups even went on loan to Angel for a short time. Orobas personal are especially well trained.

Requirement: Techan characters from Selkirk only

Benefit: Each member gains a +2 bonus to a skill they don't have as a class skill but is a class skill from any other character in the group.

RETINUE

The party has been gathered to be the willing or unwilling cohorts of a noble. The aristocrat may be a childhood friend or a stranger. He or she may be pretentious or down-to-earth. Regardless, you are stuck with this task, sworn by ensure the safety of the noble, even at the cost of your life. The reasons for this excursion can be varied. It may be part of some undisclosed diplomatic mission to a foreign land or a quest the noble is insisting on undertaking personally. It may be the beginnings or the unfortunate end of a crusade. Rarely, the noble may be an outcast, the last living heir to a throne claimed by a usurper, the noble's allies being all that stands in the way of a hangman's noose.

Requirement: A party belonging to this organization must have one member (a PC, companion character, or non-combatant NPC) who belongs to the nobility (i.e. has the Free House Citizen or True Royal Blood trait, or equivalent).

Benefit: As long as the noble is active (not dead or unconscious) and in line of sight, all in-game purchases made by members of the party (other than magic item), including drinks, room & board, and booking passage

on vessels, are reduced by 50%; magic item purchases are reduced by 10%. The GM may require a Diplomacy check on the part of the noble to secure this.

SLAVER CARAVAN

Citizens of Baruch Malkut found outside of the nation are defectors, outcasts, or slavers. The latter often leave only when on a hunt. On mission, they present a cold demeanor, mated to a desire for profit at the expense of the freedom of creatures they consider inferior. Regardless of the campaign they find themselves in, slavers are seldom noble. They care about themselves and their next payoff. Trained swords are bound only by gold. Barring this, loyalty is earned through family blood, a common occurrence with slaver caravans. Fathers train their sons to carry the tradition of racial superiority and malice that make the family name what it is. The only path of redemption lies with those that escape the life. If part of an active caravan, then morality has long died.

Requirement: Evil or Neutral characters.

Benefit: The group receives a slaver caravan, consisting of two sleeper carriages and one slaver carriage outfitted with fae iron bars (draught horses are included). Every party member receives a riding horse. The party receives a 5% XP bonus when defeating fae creatures; if the party contains any character with a good or lawful good alignment or forswears their slaver lifestyle, this benefit is lost.

TECHAN MERCENARIES

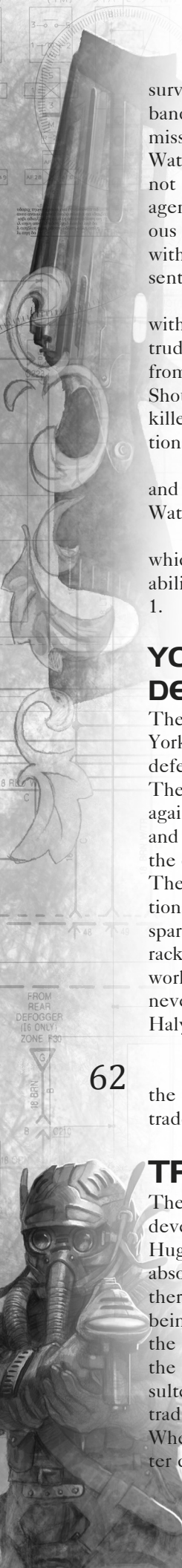
Some people prefer working alone. Though they receive no benefits from governments or corporations, they do set their own clocks and answer to no higher authority. They are on their own in the face of a wild landscape of wonders and monstrosities reserved usually for bedtime tales. Some mercenaries work out of bastions, though many actually travel between them. Some consider themselves wandering souls, looking for a noble fight to join. Others seek only profit. The group may have decided technology was the future over magic. Alas, these groups often fail early on, unable to replace their technology fast enough when it disrupts or they simply fall victim to enemies they underestimated. Mercenaries, acting heroic or selfish (or both), must keep constant diligence on the acquisition of funds. Jewels, gold and rare items fetch a high price in bastions and mercenaries need to keep themselves funded and armed.

Requirement: Techan characters only

Benefit: Players forming a mercenary group gain a 20% discount on all purchases at 1st level and 5% discount on all subsequent purchases with further levels.

WATCHERS

The city of Taskin-Kada is the home of a very unique society charged with counter-intelligence for the entire nation of Abidan. Operations involve scouting in the pagus-controlled land of Apocrypha as well as extensive



surveillance of Baruch Malkut. Very often, a mixed band of trained operatives will be sent on a long-term mission vital to the security of the kingdom. Although Watchers may comprise the majority of this unit, this is not always exclusive. The team consists of intelligence agents, military men, and operatives specialized in various scientific and magical fields. They can be tasked with espionage or sabotage. Abidan has never officially sent the Watchers on assassination.

Watchers carry a reputation of moving quickly without being noticed, escaping from any situation, and trudging on while others fall to exhaustion. Support from the nation will not be on hand if a crisis occurs. Should any member of the Watchers be caught or killed, Abidan will disavow any knowledge of their actions.

Requirement: All characters must be from Abidan and at least one inducted member of the Taskin-Kada Watchers.

Benefit: Any ability a character in the party has which is limited to a number of uses a day based on an ability score has the number of uses a day increased by 1.

YORK SELF DEFENSE FORCE (YSDF)

The largest standing army of Techa in Canam is the York Self Defense Force. They walk the streets and defend the outlying fields from impending invasion. They break up drunken tavern brawls and lead assaults against dragons. Some escort echans through the city and forcefully eject others for flaunting the magic that the city requests they keep to an appropriate minimum. The most boring job is patrolling the defense installations between York and Mann, which have never sparked a conflict. On the other hand, the northern barracks often suffer attacks from dragons. The YSDF works alongside the robotic zeros, but the droids are never allowed to depart the surrounding York fields of Halcy.

Requirement: Techan characters from York

Benefit: Members of the YSDF receive 75% of the value for all techan equipment and weapons they trade or sell while in York.

TRAITS

The world is a vast and varied. Cultures and customs developed with no outside influence for centuries. Huge kingdoms formed and claimed land, occasionally absorbing smaller ones in the expansion. With man, there were immeasurably different traditions despite being a single species. This is a unique aspect of man the fae do not share. Narros in Fargon are the same as the narros in the Finer Fire Pits. Human influence resulted in the damaskans of Limshau deviating from the traditional damaskans of Damaska across the ocean. Where on Earth a player chooses to nurture her character can radically alter the result, influencing the chosen

class and even their destiny.

Amethyst Traits: The following traits follow the same rules regarding traits as established in the PATH-FINDER role playing game. Although the default number of traits a character receives at 1st level is two, *only one can be an Amethyst trait*. Because many of the Amethyst traits are considered more powerful than others, several are indicated as counting as two choices. The GM has final approval over all choices and can veto any inappropriate selections. If a game does not endorse traits, player should still be allowed to select one Amethyst trait, counting it as a lifepath.

PATHFINDER traits are broken up into the following categories, basic (further broken into combat, faith, magic, and social), campaign, race, regional, and religion. Because of the nature of the Amethyst setting, by default, faith and religion traits are prohibited unless the specific trait can be explained without a God or gods. As per the rules regarding traits, a player cannot have traits from identical categories. In addition, Amethyst offers supernatural traits.

Supernatural: There are only three ways to tap into magic: the words of Pleroma, the mixing of elements (alchemy), and the natural unexplained gifts of an exclusive few. You are a member of the latter. You possess exceptional abilities that cannot be readily explained. Some ascribe it as a divine gift while others view it as the next step in the evolution of the species. Others simply believe themselves especially sensitive to the saturation of Attricana. When choosing this trait, you are a distinct individual.

Only one character in a player group should be permitted to choose a supernatural trait. This gift is bestowed from birth and occupies the mind of the character so much so that they gain no benefits from choosing a region or discipline, despite where they were born or the choices they made. They can be born from anywhere on Earth, but receive nothing additional other than their gift. All supernatural traits are echan by default and as such you disrupt technology. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight).

ANCIENT WUXIA

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisites: From Genai, Fargon, or Limshau

BENEFITS

Devout Belief: You gain a Knowledge (Religion) or Acrobatics as class skills. If you select a class with those skills as class skills, you gain an additional +2 trait bonus with that skill.

Proficiencies: Choose any one-handed weapon and gain proficiency with it. It also counts as monk weapon.

The narros love to take credit for influencing the ancient Asian martial arts, as well as their mythology and

culture. They place a lot of pride in this and were happy to see the pillars of disciplines replicated and honored for thousands of years to emerge virtually unchanged with their return. Some humans don't appreciate the assumption, claiming the narros had no influence in the development of human martial arts. Damaskans make no such claim and only admit to a mild cultural inspiration. Those from Limshau absorbed so much human culture into their nation, it's hard to determine which was fae influenced and which was originally a human concept. Despite this disagreement, three similar styles of unarmed combat emerged in three different regions in Canam. It is thought those from

Limshau gleaned theirs from their Genai neighbors when so many residents of Angel left to help build the empire of knowledge. The narros from Fargon were too remote to have this claim. Their discipline stems back to the old age, where they perfected their art over thousands of years, another thorn to them, as humanity was able to create more complicated systems with greater physical and mental conditions in a tenth the time.

One trained in this practice may prefer weapons endowed with magic, but a follower of wuxia is not helpless while unarmed. This path does not encourage violence. Instead, it is designed for self-control and mental clarity. Many narros and humans teach this discipline alongside book studies and commit time to its practice as another might perform aerobics in the morning. Some practitioners refuse to apply their discipline in a violent fashion, believing to do so would be a failure of their philosophy. For others, to commit this practice to violence is a logical progression. Some take this to an extreme, using it only to benefit themselves. Others are considered heroes, fighting for noble causes and refusing to stand idle while the innocent suffer. These



adventurers love sparring and often duel aggressively with allies to test their mettle and skill. Though not a requirement for friendship, it goes a long way to match a wuxia in combat. Even enemies matching their skills in a fair duel will garner respect.

BARUCH THUGGEE

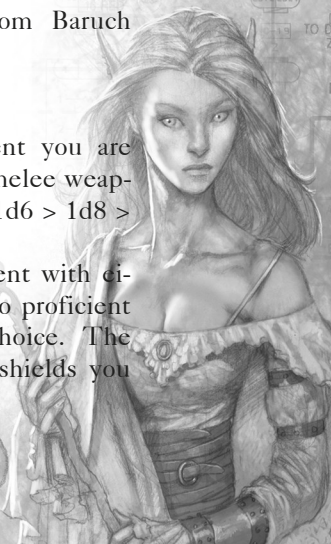
Trait: Combat. This selection counts as two traits.

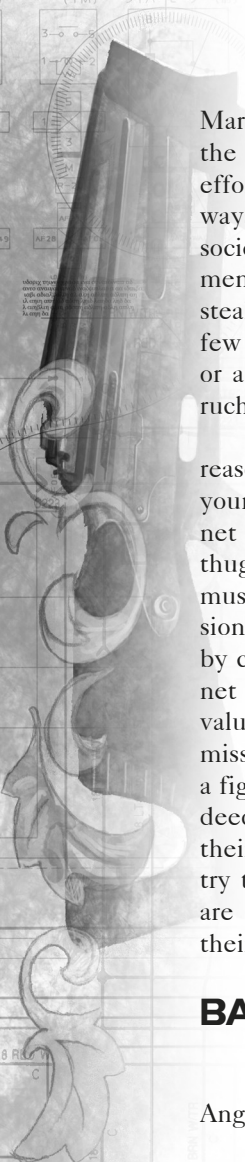
Prerequisites: Human, must be from Baruch Malkut.

BENEFITS

Throttle Lock: Against any opponent you are grappling, the damage dice of one-handed melee weapons you wield improve by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Military Background: You are proficient with either shields or medium armor. You are also proficient with one 1-handed melee weapon of your choice. The check penalty for any armor you wear or shields you weave are reduced by 1.





Marshes and swamps cover most of the countryside in the kingdom of Baruch Malkut. A massive landscaping effort had connected distant towns and cities by roadways. This led the more nefarious segments of Malkut society to adapt their skills to the surrounding environment. Bandits and outlaws mastered subterfuge and stealth, utilizing the natural cover of the landscape. A few found a calling within the military, working as spies or assassins. These individuals became known as Baruch thuggees.

Thuggees leaving the "Blessed Kingdom" for any reason find their title a burden or a curse. Declaring yourself a thuggee in Limshau or Gnimfall may likely net you jail time or expulsion. Declaring yourself a thuggee in a free house may get you executed. You must keep your identity secret, either because of a mission or to prevent a lynching. Most following this path by choice seldom have problems using their training to net themselves personal benefit, as their morals and values have already been stretched. The qualifying mission for the order is to sneak into a rival city and slay a figure of importance. A few rare cases found the final deed abhorrent to their nature and escaped, carrying their training with them into the outside world. Some try to find new lives pursuing a nobler course. These are declared traitors, with bounties are placed upon their heads.

BASTION OF ORIGIN - ANGEL

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in Genai or Angel.

BENEFITS

Bonus language: Your historical connection to the builders of Angel combined with your mercantile relationship with the Genai grant you Sinitic as a bonus language.

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) -- Angel, Antikari, Crax, Torquil, and Xixion

Naïve and Tactless: You have a -1 penalty to all Charisma based skills when used against echan.

Proficiency: You prepared yourself before taking on the world. You can choose one of the following feats: Akimbo, Burst Fire, One-Handed Small Arms, or Ground Vehicle Proficiency.

Starting Bonus: You gain +50 uc in starting money.

Although Angel does not fear the outside world as much as Sierra Madre and Mann, they still insist on keeping that world as far away as possible. They even erected a vast wall to keep the enchanted world out. Angel characters from Genai should be counted as techan humans. Angel residents still know enough of the outside. Ones leaving are either nomads hoping to find riches or part of a defense force patrolling the outside of the wall, hunting down the raiders that plague the forests around the city. Angel characters are not exposed to the en-

chanted world for much of their youth. The televisions don't talk about it. Books don't discuss it. Even schools avoid the topic. Like tales of oversized mutant rabbits carrying baskets of eggs or jolly obese contortionists offering gifts to children, eventually the truth is revealed. In this case, it turns out the fantasy world is real. With the echan town of Genai within the walls, one would expect Angel residents to be tolerant to the ways outside. The adverse is actually true. Angel threw a massive wall up to shield themselves from having to acknowledge the reality of what's around them. Very few leave. Those that do frequently commit to military missions or follow childish dreams inspired by excursions into the echan town hidden in the shadow of the southeastern wall.

BASTION OF ORIGIN - MANN

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in Mann.

BENEFITS

Class Adept: You select any one class skill you have at least 1 rank in; gain a +1 trait bonus to that skill.

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Mann, and York

Naïve and Tactless: You have a -1 penalty to all Charisma based skills when used against echan.

Techan Experience: You gain Knowledge (Science) as a class skill.

Mann characters face an uphill struggle. Outcast, they may not return to their bastion of birth. Mann characters either take jobs in other bastions or they roam the outside world, selling what they find in echa to trade in techa. To gain the benefits from choosing this trait, a character must have lived in Mann for some time. Perhaps they committed a crime or took a liking to the outside world and were ostracized for it. Leaving might have been by choice, but the separation was not amicable, as Mann never allows its residents – especially the ones with needed skills – to return. The Mann character is most likely alone and clearly the most inexperienced with dealing with the outside world. Despite the circumstances of the escape, the Mann character may be the most fundamental in her beliefs. If following technology, they not only dislike magic, they despise it. Among other techans, the member from Mann is looked upon with respect and trepidation. Mann is the most advanced bastion in Canam, as well as the most mysterious. No one attempting to enter has ever survived and those that have escaped have a mark on their head, for the knowledge locked in his mind is a dangerous commodity to be allowed to roam outside of Mann territory.

BASTION OF ORIGIN - SELKIRK

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Techan human, born and raised in Selkirk.

BENEFITS

Miner's Eyes: You have lowlight vision, you can see twice as far as normal humans in conditions of dim light. Unfortunately, your line of sight in daylight is limited to 100 feet.

Combat Implements: You are proficient with all hammers and picks.

Characters from Selkirk are born into a world of darkness and live most of their lives in the mines. Ones that do depart know of narros through trade and military patrols and find their company acceptable. Selkirk military seeks to make the Pass of Dianaso safe. Others trek south to find warmer climates and warmer beds. Those that end up taking root around Angel often sign up for military duty outside the walls.

There is a stereotype attributed to Selkirk, that the residents are all brutish and loud. This is unfortunately true. The chances that a character from Selkirk stems from the mines are high. They have been trained from birth to extend their body's endurance and survive conditions that would kill most others. Since they must serve the military at one point, they're also trained to live in the outside world. Rarely does a single Selkirk grunt lose a hand-to-hand fight against an equivalent rank from any other bastion. They are usually the most prepared in the open world and don't often experience the culture shock that plagues many other techans.

BASTION OF ORIGIN - SIERRA MADRE

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in Sierra Madre.

BENEFITS

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Sierra Madre, the Gloam

Naïve and Tactless: You have a -1 penalty to all Charisma based skills when used against echans.

Fast Learner: You may choose one class skill and gain a +1 trait bonus to that skill.

Resistant Equipment: All TL0 gear you begin with--as well as any TL0 gear you purchase from Sierra Madre directly--gains a +2 trait bonus to saving throws against disruption.

Those away from Sierra Madre are the most unprepared for the outside world. Those that find the courage remain hidden throughout the planet, analyzing what they find and returning it to their home for study. Even though they possess unique technology, they strive to adapt what they find to better their own society. Because the majority from Sierra Madre follows a faith of internal meditation and personal discovery, many citizens brave the landscape outside to fortify their souls and open their minds. A techan from Sierra Madre is often considered the most naïve of any bastion resident

(save perhaps for the youth in Angel). Being underground, the population has had virtually no contact with outside. Not even Selkirk can boast that level of isolation. Unlike Mann, swept up in xenophobic paranoia, characters from Sierra Madre are the most hopeful for a time when the two worlds can live together. Their technology is the most advanced on Canam in the field of disruption resistance but they remain locked tightly in their underground fortress. Of all the techans found in the open world, those from Sierra Madre are the fewest.

Being from Sierra Madre, characters take their strength more from their own skills than on the technology they flaunt. Despite being naïve and prone to cowardice in the face of enchantment, those from Sierra Madre are the quickest to adapt when forced to. This also means the majority of those from the underground bastion rarely return, taken in by the whispers of a fantasy world.

BASTION OF ORIGIN - YORK

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in York.

BENEFITS

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus Knowledge (regional history) - Gnimfall, Mann and York

Tact: You don't receive any techan penalties to Charisma-based skills when rolling against echans.

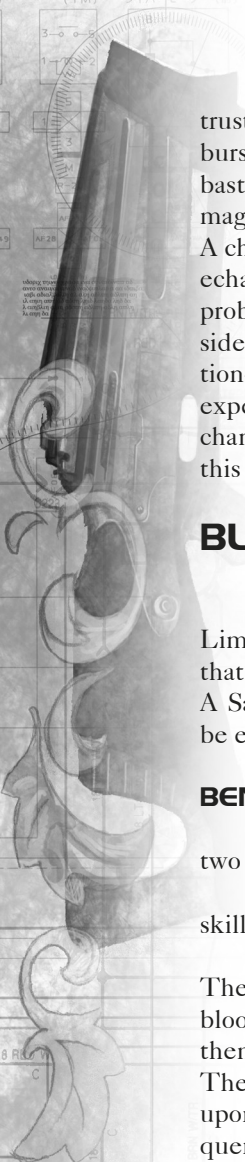
Saturation Penalty: Your saturation point at 1st level is preset to 5 and can never go below 5.

Prepared: You gain one basic TL0 firearm of your choosing.

Starting Bonus: You gain +50 uc in starting money.

With no walls around, the people of York welcome tourists and travelers. However, they privately lament the use of magic. Those taking advantage of their friendliness and flaunting such enchantment may find themselves victims of a mob. Due to the prevalence of passing magic users in York, citizens neither fear nor loathe the echans. They prefer living their lives with air conditioning, elevators, and parking meters. York citizens leave the city often as they may reenter when they wish. They are one of the most commonly seen techans in all of Canam. York is also the most aggressive with their borders. Instead of a great wall, York keeps a vast expanse of open fields patrolled by a large militia of soldiers and low-tech robots known as zeros. They must stand on constant guard from attacks. They also operate a counter-intelligence organization that monitors activity within the rival bastion of Mann.

Characters from York have known about magic from the day they were born. They see it passing through the city to the docks. The main highway is a common route of passage of all residents and is the only safe route for echans. York characters have gotten used to not voicing their opinions of the world outside. They privately bemoan the enchanted world and what it has sullied man into. Other bastions look at York with dis-



trust, believing one false step could send a massive ED burst throughout the city, demolishing the brightly lit bastion and causing it to crumble into the madness of magic.

A character from York has had the most experience with echans despite their feelings towards them. They also probably know someone that has ventured into the outside world and returned to tell the tale. Of all the bastion-born, those from York are the most romantic and experience the largest number of emigrants of any techan city. Thankfully, they are the largest growing, so this small migration is not noticed.

BLOOD ROYAL

Trait: Social, Supernatural

Prerequisite: You must pick a royal line (Savarice, Limshau, or Alkanost). Your race must coincide with that line (human, damaskan, or laudenian, respectfully). A Savarice descendant may be a half-fae. You cannot be evil.

BENEFITS

Natural Instinct: You gain a +1 trait bonus to any two Charisma- or Wisdom-based skills of your choice.

Aura of Admiration: You gain Diplomacy as a class skill and gain a +1 trait bonus in it.

The history of royalty involving mankind is marred with bloodshed. Those wearing the crowns had claimed themselves and their descendants as chosen by God. The path to reach such consecration was often paved upon the bones of their competitors. Every single conquering warlord announced himself by such a stately title the instant their hands finished executing the previous holder. Earthly envoys professing to speak for the divine took side with the new claim, lest they fall under the same fate. This process continues today, despite the supposedly morally evolved view of modern man. As the old ways returned in the absence of true civility, new declarations of nobility emerged. Some of these first aristocrats and generals had no entitlement, but called themselves kings and queens regardless. Most of the first rulers of man either witnessed the collapse of their virgin kingdom, or were executed by those that despised them. These included Saron Sana, Avraham Torquil, and Darius Konig; of these, only the last has maintained his lineage (and his life).

The fae ascribe a much more humble approach to royalty. The title is given to them from a higher power. Not from a silent god, mind you, but from the endorsement of a dragon. This has only taken place with four such individuals in Canam: Renar Alkanost of Laudenia, Sharajaclypse of Vakai, Ravenar Limshau of Limshau, and Vincent Savarice of Abidan, the latter being the only human (at least in this half of the world).

To receive this blessing, one must be in an esteemed position of authority and not be corrupted by the power it offers. One must show true humility and benevolence in the application of authority. Even then,

such an exalted title is uncommon. If it does occur, the individual is approached in a brilliant fashion by a dragon of the Noble or Holy lines. That dragon announces that he or she has adopted that individual under the wing of protection. Said noble's name is now synonymous with the dragon's. It's believed the first fae royals possessed dragon's blood from a pairing with dragon taking elvish form. Their lineage carries through to today. It's thought that Alkanost and Limshau are of such a pedigree, though Sharajaclypse and Savarice are most definitely not. As with all royalty, the mark continues through later generations. With fae, this had only spread to a handful of offspring. Sharajaclypse has no husband, let alone children. Alkanost has sired a half-dozen over 5,000 years. Limshau has had two children, each with one child of his own. Savarice sired many, making the dragon-touched human royalty the largest in Canam.

Being of true royal blood, you are a descendant of one of these glorified family lines (Alkanost, Limshau, or Savarice). You currently don't have a claim to the thrones; why that may be is entirely up to you, but these houses are highly respected, so betrayal and expulsion is unlikely. It's also unlikely that you would openly announce your title to those around, as those who do so without the presence of armed men to back them up tend to attract unwelcome attention. Your voice resonates to those with open ears. You possess a natural charismatic gravity that followers are eager to orbit around.

BOTTLED BEAST

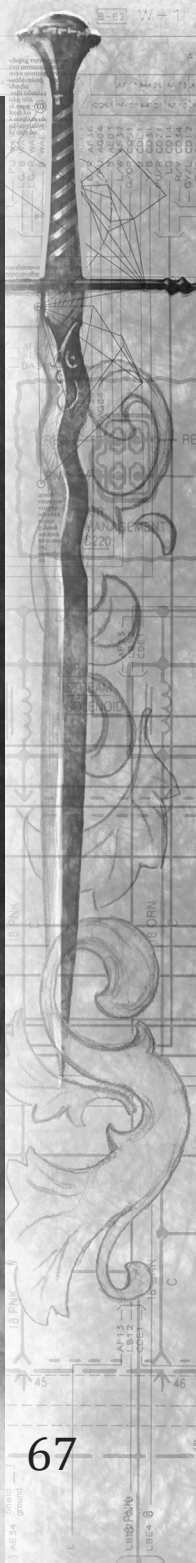
Trait: Race, Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisites: Tilen

BENEFITS

Regression (Ex): When lose your temper, you have the tendency to regress into old ways. As a *swift action*, you can gain a +1 trait bonus to Strength-based attack rolls and a +2 trait bonus to Strength-based damage rolls and temporary hit points equal to 5 + your Constitution modifier. This effect lasts *five minutes*. During the same duration, you cannot use any Charisma-, Wisdom-, or Intelligence-based skills. Using regression *does not provoke opportunity attacks*. The number of uses per day of regression is based on your level (1st level—1, 5th level—2, 10th level—3, 15th level—4, 20th level—5)

Tilen loathe the idea of returning to their roots. The elders remember the old ways and detest their traits more so than their descendants. The elders preach the ways of redemption with an emphasis on the obligation to repair the damage caused by their hands and others in the name of syntropy. Although virtually every tilen follows this tenant, not all of them agree to ignore their inner strengths, despite the worry it may cause a regression to old habits. When their blood pumps too quickly

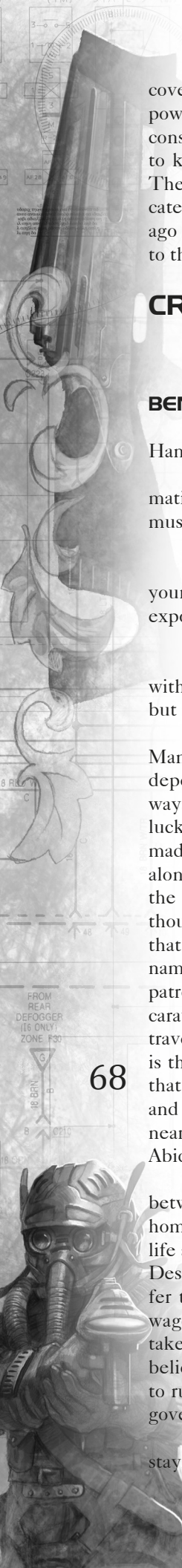


or if adrenaline starts to flow, their previous characteristics surface, though only on a visible layer. They remain themselves in every way that is important. Some think greater power sits buried within, and proper meditation and self-control could tap this resource without risking degeneration. Many tilen consider it too much of a risk and elders prohibit its practice. This hasn't stopped some trying, often with noble intentions. During this moment, the tilen gains a heightened sense

of his surroundings. He hears the footfalls of enemies, the beating of their hearts, their lungs heaving with exhausted breath. The tilen's blood pumps faster. Muscles quiver and spasm. He moves with speed and agility unseen, weaving through enemies, delivering quick and deadly blows, like a four legged predator racing through a herd of prey.

There is no set discipline, no books to read, and no teachers to find to learn this talent. Each tilen must dis-





cover the necessary circumstances to bring this inner power to the surface. Because of this uncertainty, some consider it too risky and many tilen would be prepared to kill a loved one if she went too far down this path. The tilen are a fragile people, few and scattered, dedicated to repairing the damage they committed centuries ago in another life and they will not risk further damage to their reputation.

CROSSROAD DRIFTER

Trait: Regional

Prerequisite: From the Continental Cross

BENEFITS

Survival Instinct: +1 trait bonus to Ride, Sleight of Hand, or Survival.

Unusual Childhood: You can replace one automatic language at character creation with another. It must be a human or fae-based language.

Echan

Always Ready: Gain any one martial weapon of your choice. You also gain proficiency with all bastion export melee weapons.

Techan (must be human)

Heirloom: You gain a free one-handed small arm with the immune property. The weapon is functional but practically worthless due to its age if sold.

Many individuals are raised in a stable environment, dependant on reliable income from parents that are always present. The Crossroad Drifter is not one of these lucky people. If he actually had a family, they were nomads or merchants. Nearly every wanderer, in packs or alone, eventually migrates to the Continental Cross—the singular highway that bisects Canam. There are thousands – if not tens of thousands – of miles of road that criss-cross the continent, but they're mostly unnamed and unmonitored. Only the Cross has regular patrols and has been cleared wide enough for three caravans to sit side by side. It is generally accepted that travelers will pass oncoming traffic at least once a day. It is the only safe route to Angel and the only direct road that connects the bastion, through Antikari, to Limshau and Gnimfall. Large tributary roads break off to several nearby free houses and the kingdoms of Kannos, Abidan, and the Finer Fire Pits.

Because of slow travel time and the long distances between locations, thousands of are born with no real home to speak of. These drifters learn to walk early in life and never stop moving for the entirety of their lives. Despite loyalties to family present or passed, they prefer to keep few ties. Their homes are temporary bed, wagon, and stable rentals. Crusades, causes, or jobs they take on are often considered peripheral, and they never believe them obligatory. They refuse to be tied down to rules or by the laws passed down by some egotistical government, despite the veneration of its rulers.

Even if a fae, a drifter cannot stand the idea of staying rooted in one place, and the company they keep

should share that desire. They outlive their welcome early as they don't consider diplomacy a useful talent. If feathers are ruffled, these nomads simply pack up and move on.

CRYPTHTARON

Trait: Race

Prerequisites: Pagus over 20 years of age.

BENEFITS

Ritual Scarring: Gain 4 hit points.

Mark of Trust: Gain a +2 trait bonus to Diplomacy and Bluff checks against pagus.

In locations where pagus are allowed to develop their own culture (where their actions are not compelled by others) they often develop traditions based around the same levels of violence. One ritual coincides with a pagus reaching the Second Age of Krenkallakoss. A pagus at nine becomes an adult and is assumed to be a warrior. Upon reaching the age of twenty, a pagus is permitted the opportunity to reach a higher level of authority within the village, the equivalent to a lieutenant. The subject undergoes repeated punishment under sensory deprivation. The pagus is blindfolded and rendered deaf. He is lowered into water and repeatedly stabbed. Salt is packed into the wounds to induce permanent scars. These marks (assuming the pagus survives) denote the pagus as a crypttaron—a trusted warrior all pagus can respect. If a pagus encounters a crypttaron in passing, it is automatically assumed the elder warrior is a loyal disciple of free pagus. Even pagus loyally following their demonic masters have a profound adoration for the order. Crypttaron are rarely taken alive in combat, but if rival pagus do manage to capture one, the crypttaron is permitted to take his own life; afterwards, his body and belongings are returned unspoiled to the rival village. Sometimes a captured crypttaron is permitted the opportunity to fight for his freedom. He is given impossible odds against the village's greatest heroes. If he succeeds, the crypttaron is permitted to either challenge the chief for control of the village (which he usually does) or leave with additional scars to return home.

Outside of pagus circles, a crypttaron looks even more revolting than his cousins. To a pagus, however, the crypttaron is a walking angel.

CUSTODIAN

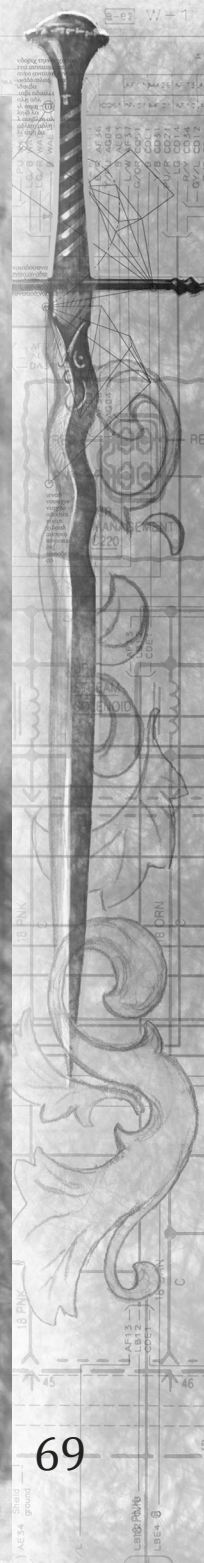
Trait: Combat.

Prerequisites: Received training from Limshau

BENEFITS

Proficiency: You are proficient in one Limshau-specific weapon. You are also proficient in Limshau kawabari armor.

Custodian training: You can replace Strength with Dexterity for all your melee attacks with any weapons that weigh 8 lbs. or less.




Behind the white walls of Limshau, elite guardians patrol the hallways, defending knowledge and people against anyone wishing to destroy such riches. Because of the tight confines of narrow city streets and alleys, this elite force eventually developed a discipline revolving around fast movement and quick, decisive strikes at critical enemy weaknesses.

After an attack from a large and somewhat organized bogg force 300 years ago left a section of the geol-

ogy branch in ruins, Ravenar Limshau III decreed that a specific echelon of elite librarians be trained exclusively in combat, relegating their librarian skills to a lesser importance. Before custodians were named such, there was Stratos Stormguard, a master of all arms and trusted ally of Ravenar Limshau. He stayed behind to watch the flock when the leader went on crusade. Stratos developed the martial practice all custodians would soon follow. The martial art was known as





“Gorna Sersannis,” though later masters would use the modern English term “Lotus Blade.” Oddly enough, Stratos preferred the use of a halberd to the common twin swords employed by most custodians today. Stratos is one of the few to use both ends of his weapon without losing balance. He advanced his art to perfection before even attempting to train another. In the end, he required Ravenar to fill in the gaps in the defense Stratos could not satisfy. It would take 150 years before Stratos considered the discipline finished. By then, he had already taken control of the city of Zorahn by request of his commander. The new discipline incorporated an agile battle stance, able to maximize maneuverability in a restricted field of movement. Heavy armor weighed down combatants and blocked the advance of reinforcements. Shields also proved a hazard. Pure speed became the greatest ally, along with the insight to anticipate and counter a foe’s every move and attack. Lighter weapons were preferred. The discipline of the custodians finally found form. In their natural habitat, the custodian finds no equal.

A custodian’s priorities are on the freedoms of all. Free speech and the written word are both worthy causes for a custodian to die for. Some abandoned those beliefs, turning away from their great city. These rogues seek adventure for their own satisfaction, but no evil soul survives the training process without being discovered, and it is seldom necessary to hunt deserters down. A loyal custodian outside the walls stands ever vigilant to fight for the freedom and the retrieval of information. Being sent on fact-finding missions or quests to retrieve priceless tomes, a crusading custodian climbs the tallest mountains and digs into the deepest dungeons to seek their treasure. An independent soul still believes in the value of his training but seeks personal adventure more than the acquisition of knowledge.

DARAWREN

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisites: Wisdom 16, from Jibaro

BENEFITS

The Ways of Wood: You may select druid as your chosen class. The selected class becomes a free favored class, meaning you can still select another class as your favored class and gain the benefits to both. However, you cannot cast 8th or 9th level divine spells if a druid. You can still cast lower level spells in higher spell slots (either by enhancing a spell or simply having a lower spell occupy a higher slot). You cannot cast spells with the Dead or Evil descriptor. This is a variant arcane spellcaster, and like a spellcaster, you must select a totem (which operates the same as an Arcane Bond). See Chapter Four: Classes, for information on wizard and totems.

Many wizards across the world classify the Towers of Jibaro as the greatest collection of arcane magic, against the common assumptions that the claim falls to Lim-

shau or Laudenia. However, the knowledge locked inside Jibaro is accessible only to a select few, those of the elite spellcasters of Jibaro, the darawren. With only one wizard graduating each a year, Jibaro is considered one of the most prestigious and daunting learning experiences in arcane wizardry on the planet, more so than even Laudenia. Where Laudenia’s limited enrollment stems from its prohibition of non-laudenians, Jibaro’s is due to a lengthy and unorthodox teaching model. Although still employing totems, the mandatory standard of all wizardry, Jibaro enforces an altered viewpoint of their purpose, being only a repository of words, and not the focus of magic. Jibaro teaches its students that magic rises from the Earth, not falls from the gate. The gate may be the cause of the magic in the world, but the chaparrans cite one observable fact—there’s no magic in space. All creatures rise from the soil, and the claim holds that magic rises up as well. Magic would not exist without the Earth. The wizards of Jibaro are taught to channel Pleroma—the language of magic—through material components brought up from the Earth. This can be as extravagant as jewels but often enough it only a handful of dirt or sand. A darawren often carries a pouch of soil when entering a dungeon or building.

The tests of admittance to enter the order of darawren are extremely taxing, and despite not forbidding non-chaparrans to enter, such exceptions have been rare. No laudenian, damaskan, or tenenbri have endured the opening trials. Several narros have claimed the honor, as have a few kodiaks. There have been stories of one or two humans managing to accept the title of darawren but no one has been able to confirm names.

DAWNAMOAK KITARRI

Trait: Combat, Race

Prerequisites: Chaparran, Strength 16, from Dawnamoak

BENEFITS

From Birth: You are proficient with the Kitarri Black Bow.

Great Pull: If you select the Point-Blank Shot feat, the damage bonuses increases to +2.

Power Arrow: If you select the Power Attack feat, you can apply its effects to ranged weapons as well as melee weapons.

Many of the tales about chaparrans describe them as phenomenal archers, able to send arrows clear over the horizon to strike a bull’s-eye. They carry bows of inflexible wood only they can coax to bend. When a chaparran fires his bow, the arrow flies with enough strength to pass through trees or skulls. When images of these archers come to mind, people are thinking of the Dawnamoak kitarri. Technically the order did not originate from Dawnamoak, having derived from a much older chaparran forest-nation from the previous age. With the immigration of echa, all the grand masters of kitarri-



kansi (the martial discipline) were gathered by Sylvan-kassus to her three tower-trees of Jibaro and allowed to perfect their art. It was thought originally this effort was meant to compete with the emerging custodian martial art. Sylvan insisted this was not the case. Regardless, chaparrans from all over the world converged to the towers to accept training. They returned to their people in hopes of passing their skills on to others.

In every situation, the second generation kitarri was a pale imitation of the original student. Eventually, potentials were sent straight to Dawnamoak to complete their training under the grand masters, all of whom are alive today. They are Korrisessoro, Marriskorna, and Skylenaskanna, the latter being the only one to have left the towers. Skylen took her knowledge to other forests to train their chieftains and splinter-hounds (the leaders of a splinter-pack). The other two grand masters have forbidden her to teach non-chaparrans the art, a directive she doesn't necessarily agree with but follows nonetheless.

With the exception of the rare kitarri trained under Skylenaskanna, all adepts of the discipline must embark to Dawnamoak (unless already living there) to receive the black-bow of the order. No chaparran would even think of wielding a black longbow fraudulently and a non-chaparran carrying an original black kitarri bow is considered a dire insult. Most kitarri live in the nation pierced by the three tower trees but most chaparran villages across Canam can claim at least one citizen of the order.

DEATH HUNTER

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisite: From Jairus

BENEFITS

Corrupted Resistance: You receive DR2/- against hits from creatures with the Ixindar or Undead keywords.

The Stains of the Profession: You suffer a -1 penalty to all Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

Jairus was a poor mining village with a small but promising lumber industry. Centuries ago, word came from the lips from dying immigrants from the south of the collapse of a great kingdom of men. The bravest of Jairus took it upon themselves to see the extent of the calamity. They expected to see razed buildings and scorched soil. They were not prepared for the Black Marsh of Sana. A curse had taken the entire land, spreading into the soil, flora, and the sky. Thick, black oil – unable to burn – seeped from the ground. The few plants that did grow had no color or leaves. The Jairus militia found only empty huts and keeps, no bodies. Then they saw the shadows move.

Silver claws lashed from the darkness and only a handful of the group escaped to tell the tale. The first legends of the marsh were born and generations later, brave warriors take it upon themselves to venture into

the marsh in hopes of destroying the armies of corruption. The Jairus death hunters believe that if the shapeless wild of the Marsh are destroyed, the marsh would weaken. The true key to its elimination is the discovery and destruction of King Sana's old castle, Kardia-Gothas, the source of the plague. To prepare themselves for the traumas of the marsh, recruits are taught to control their fears by undergoing a battery of ordeals to tax one's mental stability. Outsiders claim this leaves emotional scars so cavernous that incoming terrors simply fall into the depths. They assert that death hunters are no longer stable and would be prone to sudden, unpredictable acts of extreme violence if they didn't temper that need with excursions into the Marsh. The hunters may possess some demented addiction to such horrors. If Kardia-Gothas were to be found and destroyed, and the Marsh was to fade away, the death hunters of Jairus may turn on their own people in some manic dependence on sadism.

Outside of their duties, death hunters are detached and unfriendly. They are not necessarily mean but care nothing for manners or etiquette. They speak blatantly of their personal demons including simple addictions to the perverse pleasures of dominance and masochistic activities. They are neither welcomed at parties nor do they make a point to socialize with groups. Even those with a shred of charity left don't reveal those emotions and their rare acts kindness often come to the surprise of others.

Jairus death hunters skirt the line between nobility and wickedness and many admit – even to themselves – that they have crossed the line, believing only their oath to eliminate the corruption of Sana and other infections like Tranquiss, Ixindar, and the Necrosea keeps them from turning on those they swore to protect.

DOPPELSHIDO

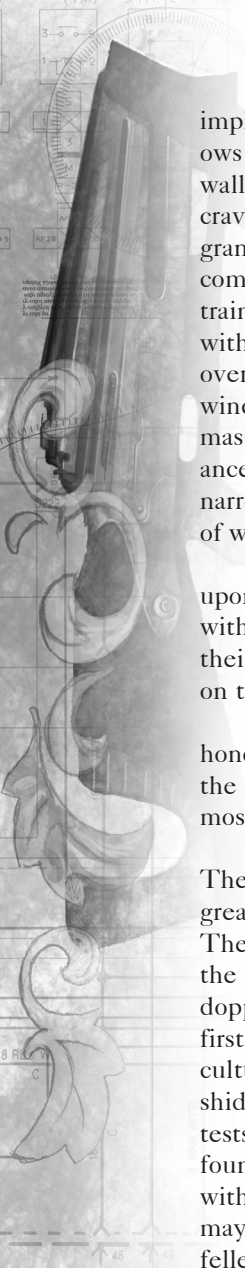
Trait: Combat, Race. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisites: Narros, Strength 16

BENEFITS

Double-Form: Select one one-handed melee weapon without the double or reach property. This is your selected weapon with Double-Form. If you wield your selected weapon with two hands, the weapon gains the double property. Both the primary and off-hand attacks inflict the same damage. You must be proficient with the chosen weapon. Your chosen weapon is the only type of weapon you can receive these bonuses from (you may purchase magical versions later, but the specific weapon type cannot be changed)

Normal narros circulate through many careers in their early life, only settling on their final calling after experiencing many others. Families support this for their youth and adult narros can often claim many feathers in their caps. A few find their calling early and desire no other. They take to weapons as quickly as their eating



implements, learning early skills by swinging at shadows and driving their blunt wasters into benches and walls. When their talents are allowed to develop, they crave no other path. In a few cases, these narros are granted an audition to tutor under (and possibly become) one of the ravnorra lords. They undergo brutal training including walking and running for hours laden with heavy weights, as well as beaten on with sticks over their legs and arms until they no longer stumble or wince. They are not allowed to choose a weapon. The master chooses one best suited. They learn every balance point, every edge with the capacity to kill. The narros learns to use every inch of the weapon in the art of war.

By the time they reach adulthood, they can perch upon their hilt, edge in the soil, and stand in a field without falling. They can twirl their swords behind their back, juggle them between their arms, and strike on the upswing as well as the downward cleave.

These proud knights of narros take positions as the honored guards of kings and favored guests. They climb the ladders of prestige and set themselves apart as the most devout disciples of combat.

Their path to perfection, however, is not yet over. The final test still waits—becoming a ravnorra lord, the greatest and most legendary line of narros in history. These fae equivalents of ancient samurai are considered the greatest soldiers of all the fae and the envy of every doppelshido student the moment they pick up their first blade. The majority of narros that join multi-cultural adventuring parties begin their lives as doppelshidos. Whether or not they intend to pursue the final tests is dependent on their individual personality. Some found the final grueling tests too taxing and escaped with basic skills and little honor. Some encountered may be masterless ronin, their sworn lord or father felled by a coward's weapon. The lost student must now follow an unfocused path in search for vengeance, which may never be fulfilled.

EXPERTEERING ENGINEER

Trait: Race. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: Gimfen

BENEFITS

Techan Adept: You gain Engineer as a class skill.

Widget Bag: You keep pieces handy for on-site repairs. You have enough parts on hand for 200 uc worth of repairs. These parts cannot be sold or traded.

They are useless to others. The bag weighs 5 lbs. It cannot be disrupted and the parts work with the device you attempt to repair. You can increase the size of this widget bag later by investing in more widgets.

Every 500 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 7th level, the bag's weight drops by half and every additional

1,000 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 14th level, the bag's weight drops by half again and every 100,000 uc adds another 1 lb. Once invested, you do not

get this value back. When you scavenge technology, the GM may award a certain value in uc of additional widgets. You can only use widgets to build, repair and modify items.

Adaptation: You learn how to reverse engineer technology you acquire and gain the ability to rebuild it with increased insulation and redundant electronics and gears for it to operate in ED fields without disruption. First, you must find or purchase a piece of technology with a rated tech level of TL0 and TL1 (later feats can improve this). You dismantle the item and reassemble it. The new item replicates the old in every way except it grows in size and weight. As a result, many large items cannot be converted. You must have ranks in the Engineer skill to adapt anything. The time to accomplish the adaptation is one day (8 hours of hard work) per tech level of item. You must also invest uc = 25% the original cost of the item (round up). You may use your widget bag for this cost. The weight of the item increases by 100% if it weighs less than 10 lbs, +50% if it weighs between 10 lbs and 50 lbs, and +20% if it weighs over 50 lbs.

Weapons: One-handed small arms become two-handed small arms. Two-handed small arms become heavy weapons. Heavy weapons become Super Heavy Weapons. Grenades cannot be adapted. Weapons requiring tripods when adapted automatically come with one during the procedure.

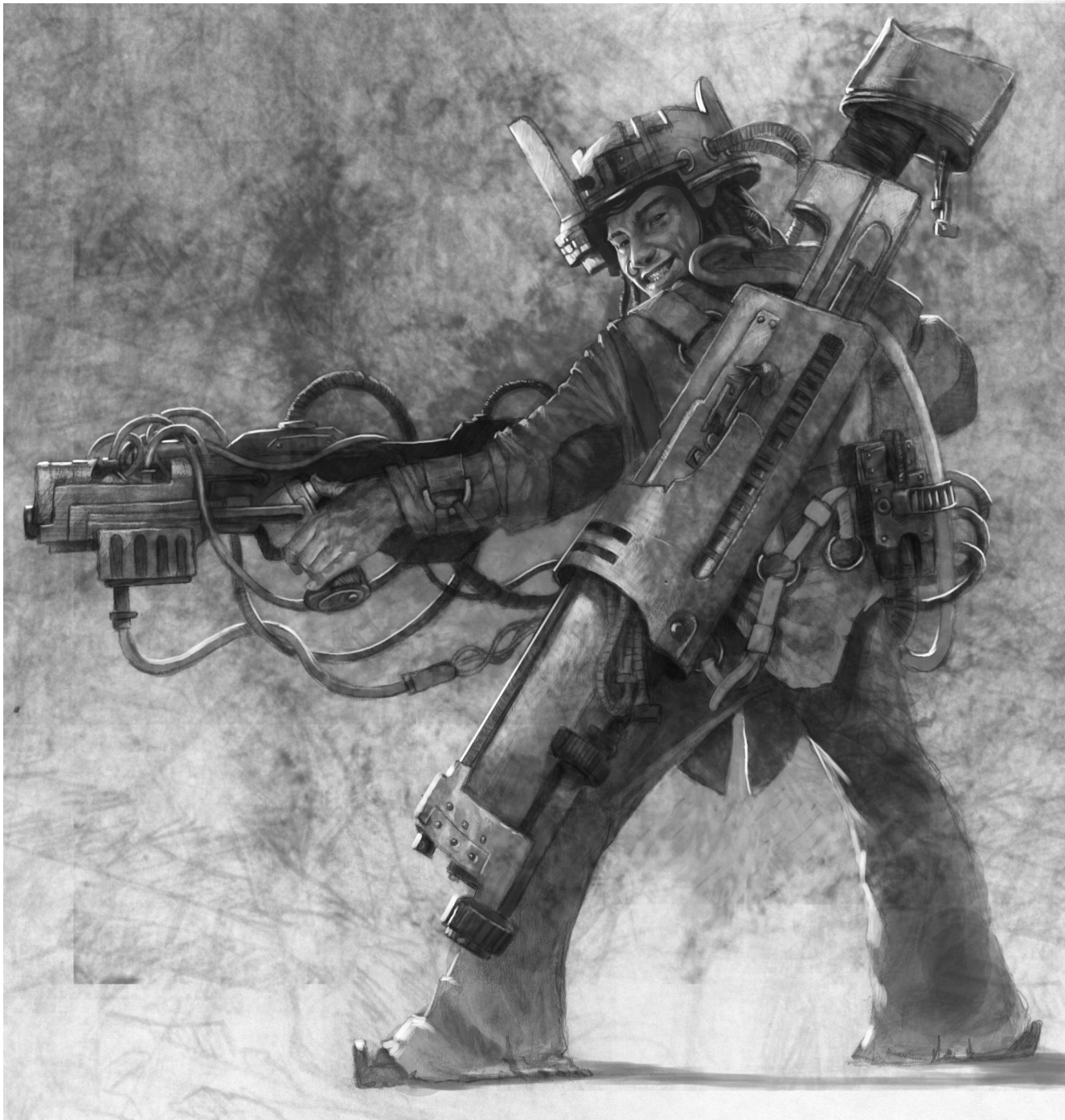
Power Armor: Because the increased weight and the need to adapt it to gimfen appendages, power armor's check penalty incurs a further -2 penalty.

Equipment: Medical gear and professional equipment cannot be adapted. Neither can battery cells as they benefit from the shielding of the adaptation while inside the weapon (disruption checks are only for batteries when outside of equipment). You should purchase a disruption muffler bag.

The original item being adapted is not retained as it is taken apart and incorporated into the new shape. This new shape is no longer sleek or beautiful. It is ugly, clumsy, and heavy. It spits, whines, and creaks with every movement, seemingly on the verge of blowing apart at any second, though never doing so. The technology looks clumsy, with exposed tubes and cables running to backpack mounted insulated power packs. Goggles are massive helmet assemblies.

Armor hobbles around quickly, shifting its weight left and right like a drunken narros. Worse, the style of adaptation is unique to you. Only you know exactly how you adapted the item and attempts to teach others the technique results in utter confusion for anyone other than a gimfen with equal Engineer ranks. Even if explained, the exact supplies would be required, including the original item. Further, the item adapted is so fragile and requires so much fine-tuning by you that, if the item is given to another to use, it breaks after a round. Not even another gimfen could figure out the eccentricities of the device before it fails. As a result, you can neither lend nor sell your monstrosities to anyone and they are only useful to you. You must spend 5





uc x tech level of the item from your widget bag each week for every piece of adapted technology you possess to keep them running (or they break). You can trade gp to uc or directly into widgets on a 1-to-1 basis if find a techan merchant willing to trade. You do not need to maintain TL0 technology, though it can still disrupt if you do not adapt it.

You are proficient with using your adapted technology even if you didn't have the proficiency with it previously. If you have a laser gun, you are proficient with that specific adapted laser gun, but not the original or others you find along the way.

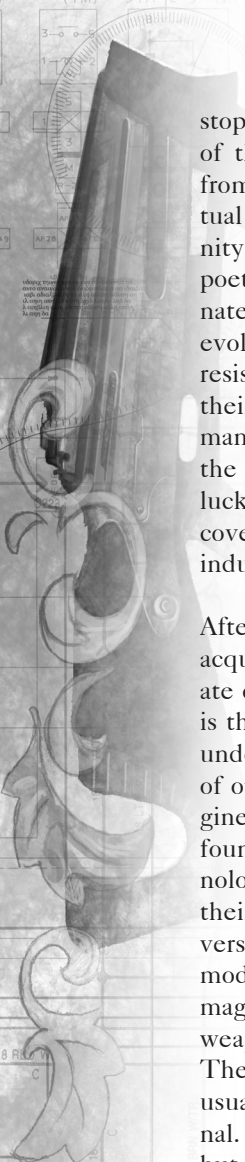
Results: Adapted technology does not disrupt from ambient disruption. It can still disrupt from active attacks (EMP weapons) or if an attempt is made to en-

chant the weapon.

Gimfen developed a way to prevent their existence from shorting out technology. This permitted them to slowly build a technological industry. They were one of the very last species to break off from the first fac branches, and like to claim that their race's capacity to hold technology without disruption proves them to be the final form of the fac – the end result, the ones meant to escape the cradle of Earth.

The inherent problem with this theory is the fac's natural imperceptiveness of technology. They developed a language, a culture, and an expanding empire. They forged swords, laid down paths, and erected communities. After a certain point, however, they simply





stop. Any desire to fashion an industry falls in the face of their mechanical inability. Some claim this stems from a lack of scientific evolution preventing an instinctual push to selfishly better themselves or the community. Despite their wisdom and creative brilliance with poetry and song, fac lack the drive to push and dominate their world, a natural byproduct of a short-lived evolved species. The gimfen, although developing a resistance to technology, still lack the drive to develop their own, especially in comparison to the fast pace of mankind. For thousands of years they languished with the few advances they stumbled upon through mere luck. All of that changed when they returned and discovered humanity. The short-lived hairless apes found industry and technology second nature.

Gimfen cannot innovate, but they can replicate. After gleaning every nugget of information they could acquire, they started to adapt what they learned to operate outside the walls of bastions. The gimfen engineer is the result of this growth. Instead of hiding inside or underneath the grind towers of Gnimfall or the dozens of other communities around Canam, Experteering Engineers embark into the outside world with this newfound knowledge. They travel the world finding technology they can either use outright, or return home to their people. Their greatest ability is their knack to reverse engineer human technology they encounter and modify it to operate without disruption in the lands of magic. Most employ this ability in the field of high tech weapons, but some utilize it with standard gear as well. They are limited to what they can adapt, as the result is usually clumsier and substantially larger than the original. Gimfen engineers are an unusual sight in Canam but their presence proves that technology's eventual dominance over magic is inevitable.

(EX) TRAFFIC HUNTER

Trait: Race, Regional

Prerequisites: Human, from Baruch Malkut

BENEFITS

Symbol of Hate: You are given a fac-iron dagger and are proficient with it. Whether or not you use it is up to you.

Know Their Tricks: You gain a +2 trait bonus to all saving throws against charm, fear, illusion, psychic, or sleep attacks made by fac.

There is a small but vocal portion of the human race that firmly believes that they are the true inheritors of the planet. The invading fantasy creatures either had their chance and failed or are the result of a breach in the laws of reality and don't truly exist at all. As such they're not afforded any dignity or rights. Any commandments or tenets that pertain to humans do not apply to fac; these creatures can be dismissed or categorized as demons, fiends, or any other evil force mentioned in religious and mythological texts. They must be more than just disregarded; they must be sup-

pressed, dominated, or destroyed. After a few decades, this belief tempered to enslavement, as the massive boom of an indentured population could not be ignored. King Darius founded Baruch Malkut on the elimination of the fac races, but relented in the face of the economic possibilities offered by the businessmen and landowners of the new properties he had conquered.

Either you came into this career naturally or were bequeathed it from a family's legacy. You were trained on how to track and capture every type of fac. For reasons that are unquestionably complicated, you have moved away from this profession. More than likely, when faced with this birthright, you rebuffed the responsibility, appalled by the actions of your ancestry. Unfortunately, one cannot simply walk away from his or her duty. The kingdom knows everyone under its law. It never forgets, and it seldom forgives. Rejecting the traditions of your heritage, you have escaped the kingdom, obsessed with making amends for actions you might never have committed.

FARGON DISCIPLINED

Trait: Race, Regional

Prerequisite: From Fargon, Narros

BENEFITS

Specialty: Choose one more skill and make it a class skill. You gain a +1 trait bonus in that skill.

Master Class: Select one of the following:

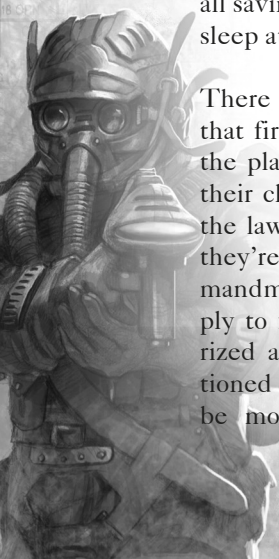
- At character creation, choose one class skill you have ranks in. Once a day, you can re-roll one unfavorable roll for that skill.
- You gain proficiency with the narros krollish.

As is their way, most narros dedicate the entirety of their energy in the application of the task at hand. They reserve nothing for the possibility of failure. They consider one plan, one option, one course for their life. There is no casual hobby. When a narros enters the military (which most are required to do for at least ten years in their youth), they think of nothing else. Waking at sunrise, they train until the fall of night. Others turn to spellcraft. Some embrace medicine. Many take to the mines. When they finally choose their preferred career, there is very little that will change their minds. And in turn, they throw everything of themselves into that path, rejecting hobbies or passing fads. Despite this being a common stereotype of nearly all narros, the ones in Fargon take this course to near fanaticism. Each city has a certain skew towards a certain path, but it hasn't changed a broad range of dedicated warriors and wizards coming from the sprawling kingdom in the North.

FREE HOUSE CITIZEN

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Born from any Free House in Canam



BENEFITS

Local Knowledge: Receive a +2 trait bonus to all Knowledge (regional history) checks when dealing with your free house of choice. You also gain a +1 trait bonus in one of the following skills: Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (religion), Stealth, or Sleight of Hand.

Expanded Language: Free Houses are often multicultural. You gain one language from the following list: Argose, Damaskan, English, Englo-Lingo, Indic, Narroni, Onsespeak, Romanic, Semetic, Sinitic, or Slavic.

A very small segment of the echan population in Canam considers themselves free from obligations. They have no debts and answer to no one but themselves. With growing concerns of raiding bogg and pugg swarms, the number of truly free people dwindles daily. Many congregate around the huge nations of Canam like Limshau, Kannos, or Baruch Malkut. Others try desperately to win favor in a bastion. Many others simply settle for one of the many free houses across the land. The free houses are sovereign states squeezed between and around larger kingdoms. They are relatively self-sufficient and, despite their pride, spend most of their diplomatic capital towards earning favor with larger kingdoms. They do this either through trade goods or noble marriage, though the latter is unsuccessful with the fae houses.

Those raised in free houses must contend with a chaotic upbringing. Free houses are renowned for being unable to supply the needs of their people. There is not enough food, not enough shelter, not enough clean water, and not enough law enforcement. Those adept in the skills required for adventuring often acquired these skills from nefarious sources – robbing or pilfering their necessities on the streets. Before finding their calling, many of these travelers lived a sordid past with sins they would prefer not bring up.

On the converse, those seeking adventure with roots in a free house may have come from a rich peasant household, adorned in the rare and costly purple-dyed tunics that set them apart from the serfs. It's possible they were related to royalty or to a family with ties to the inner circle of the aristocracy. Why these individuals would choose to leave such a station could be obvious or rooted in issues best suited for privacy. If their path keeps them around their homeland, they will obviously have needed expertise when dealing with the local customs and practices. If outcast, they may wish to remain as far away from their home as possible.

FINER MINER

Trait: Race, Regional. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: Narros, from the Finer Fire Pits

BENEFITS

Like it Hot: You take half damage from all fire attacks.

Look for the Shiny: You gain a +2 trait bonus to unopposed Perception checks.

The Pits: You gain +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) to the Finer Fire Pits, Kannos, and Quinox.

The narros from Finer fit the stereotype of their fictional parallel. The city's founder, Garach Glim, desired an underground kingdom to rival anything found in Fargon. When he stumbled upon an astounding treasure of un-mined minerals in the Finer Vallis, he knew his search was over. Three centuries later, Glim can still be found in any one of the thousands of miles of tunnels that branch off the colossal Finer Cavern, a single chamber large enough to fit the entire city of Limshau. From there, huge smelters constantly burn, laying heavy deposits of grime and heat over everything inside.

Being from this region, you probably served more time in the mine than in the military. The greatest by-product of this life is a natural resistance to heat and a canny eye to notice what others don't. Narros from Finer take after the gimfen of Gnimfall—uncaring for personal grooming and fascinated by whatever glitters. But where gimfen take interest in machinery, narros look for the sparkles in stones. Narros from Finer consider those from Fargon too militant. A discipline that forces punching shadows and meditating on balance beams is pointless in contrast to a hard day's work where the sweat and physical exertion is reflection enough. In the end, something gets accomplished. To a Finer narros, that's all that matters: be useful, a feeling shared by damaskans. Damaskans, however, believe it applies to the pursuit of mental growth while the narros prefer physical perfection.

FRINGE FANATIC

Trait: Race

Prerequisite: Pagus, must be at least 35 years of age but not older than 40.

BENEFITS

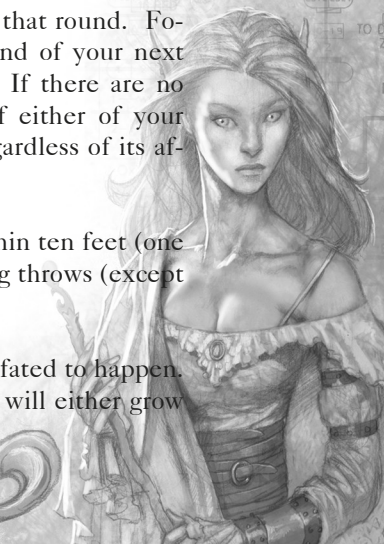
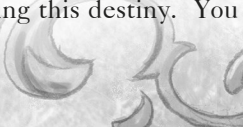
If your Wisdom is 12 or lower . . .

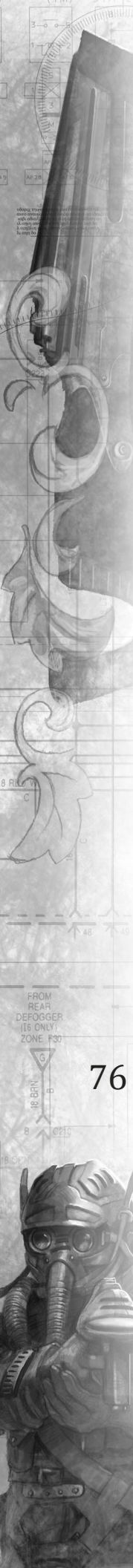
Unhinged Aggression: On the same turn you gain a standard action from Focused Aggression, you also gain a +1 trait bonus to attack and +2 trait bonus damage rolls for all attacks until the end of that round. Focused Aggression also lasts until the end of your next turn (whether you want it to or not). If there are no enemy targets in range at the start of either of your turns, you attack the nearest target, regardless of its affiliation.

If your Wisdom is 13 or higher . . .

Stalwart Conviction: All allies within ten feet (one square) gain a +1 trait bonus to all saving throws (except death saving throws).

As an elder pagus, one of two futures is fated to happen. There is no avoiding this destiny. You will either grow





wise and steadfast in your cultivating ethics, or you will go insane. With the latter, your rage possesses you more and more. Few pagus are able to manage their emotions. Pagus under the thrall of demon or dragon are killed in the unlikely event that they make it past 35. If insane, they are more a threat to their own kind than to enemies. If wise, they soon become respected leaders and spiritual guides, an equal if not greater threat. All free pagus tribes are lead by elder pagus. Unlike other races that drift into frailty, pagus continue to grow in size. A pagus has never died of old age and few ever maintain their sanity into their senility. They are often put out of their misery before becoming a threat to others. Only a handful of pagus have managed to keep their mind together, showing potential to lead their kind into an enlightened future.

GNEOLISTIC

Trait: Supernatural

Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Indeterminate Consecration: You may select cleric (or other divine class) as your chosen class. You neither have to select a deity nor are you required to specify your divine power source. You do not have to join a church, and you cannot become an ex-cleric. You can waive the deity requirement for any ability, spell, or feat. The cleric becomes as free favored class, meaning you can still select another class as your favored class and gain the benefits to both. However, you cannot cast 8th or 9th level divine spells. You can still cast lower level spells in higher spell slots (either by enhancing a spell or simply having a lower spell occupy a higher slot). You cannot cast spells with the Dead or Evil descriptor

Naturally Endowed: By default, you are tied to the white gate of Attricana. Your saturation value is 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight). As an option, you can choose to be tied to the black gate of Ixindar. If so, your corruption value becomes 20, your saturation point becomes 0, and you must have the Lawful Evil alignment. In this state, you do not disrupt technology. If bound to Ixindar, you cannot cast spells with the Good descriptor, but you can now cast spells with the Dead or Evil descriptor.

From the moment of your birth, those around you knew of your blessing. You possess a natural affinity with the power of Attricana. You can alter the very order of nature and the universe around you. You're an apotheosis of the might of chaos. You can create life, heal injuries, and even recall souls from the afterlife. No one, not even you, is sure how you came about this power. You channel the spirit of Attricana in everything you do. Some have claimed this power is bestowed solely from a divine source. Others say faith has nothing to do with

it. If all souls are siphoned from Attricana then a gneolistic is simply a life-force considerably well endowed.

A gneolistic is an exceptionally rare soul to encounter in worldly travels. Very often, a gneolistic is taken in (or captured) by a religious sect and convinced or conditioned to believe his power comes solely from the gift of God or gods. In these cases, a character's path is cleansed and rewritten by the place of worship, erasing pesky personal stains like social standing and ethnicity. They parade the gneolistic as proof of piety, convincing others to join the congregation. Even if a holy order does not locate a gneolistic early, very often the child's own family will assume such responsibilities and a village idol is born. This would often still draw the attention of said holy order, forcing the idol to convert. A church has also been known to alter its doctrine to retroactively accommodate the village's traditions in order to win over a resident gneolistic.

On a few rare exceptions, enlightened individuals have located and raised these prodigies under the umbrella of secular tutelage. A gneolistic is not a proof of divinity but another example of how Attricana's influence knows no limits. A study from Limshau revealed that a gneolistic appears one in every thousand vivicators, with vivicators appearing one in every ten thousand normal individuals. These ratios slightly improve among laudenians and chaparrans, but a larger population leaves humans with the highest number of gneolistics.

HALFMASTER

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisite: From Kannos

BENEFITS

Proficiencies: You gain proficiency with all reach weapons.

Habaukeedo: As a move action, any reach weapon in your hand can shift from being a reach weapon to a non-reach weapon with the double property. It retains all other abilities. The off-hand attack is counted as a club (1d6 damage, x2 crit, B). If the weapon is enchanted, then both ends are. If you used the weapon as a reach weapon that round, you gain no benefits from two-weapon feats or abilities. You cannot change your stance until the beginning of your next turn. You cannot use Habaukeedo if you are wearing heavy armor. You can use Habaukeedo while on a mount.

Not everyone in Kannos is privileged enough to be trained on a horse since learning to walk. As Kannos lacks fruitful mines, their only other major donation to warfare is their renowned spearmen. There are dozens of different schools in Kannos teaching a different approach to spear and lance use. Some soldiers are trained how to use massive spears that root in the ground while others learn how to tuck a lance under the shoulder and brace for a solid hit. Some launch them to distant enemies while others prefer their use as thrusting weapons

in close combat.

The most exclusive and taxing discipline is the art of habaukeedo, which involves using every inch of a polearm. This brings the weapon closer, holding it more like a quarterstaff. Like all soldiers in Kannos, halfmasters were forced to take to the field with inadequate armor, and the need to deflect incoming attacks the best they could resulted in the evolution of the art.

A halfmaster may hold the weapon out long for a decisive kill before the opponent's weapon could sneak in, but then they may switch to a tight formation when surrounded. It is thought the art of Habaukeedo derived from either the narros or from human allies in Genai. Unlike a slow and disciplined spear wall, halfmasters often leap out in a charge, running after enemy squads after the cavalry has broken them. They seldom form lines with other halfmasters, preferring to allow room for their wide range of attacks.

HERBALIST

Trait: Discipline

Prerequisite: Wisdom 14 or higher

BENEFITS

Ethnobotany: You gain Heal and Knowledge (Nature) as class skills and gain a +1 trait bonus in each.

Wildcrafting: You gain a medicine pouch (wildcrafting bag). You can spend 1 minute on one target in a healing attempt, then make a Heal check. The target recovers hit points equal to your Heal check result, but not more than the amount of hit points in your wildcrafting bag. Hit points pulled from the bag are lost and must be recovered. At 1st level, you have 20 hit points in your wildcrafting bag. Through standard adventuring, your bag recovers 5 hit points a day. The GM may also award additional hit points to the bag dependant on certain conditions (skillful Knowledge (nature) or Perception checks). You may also purchase increases at a rate of 1gp/1 hit point in certain shops. You cannot have more hit points in your wildcrafting bag than 20 + your class level x2 (so, you could have 22 at 1st level).

Passed from master to disciple, this old knowledge reappeared when the advanced technologies of MRIs and catscans fell apart in the world of magic. By using whatever is found or on hand, an herbalist can perform basic medical aid. An herbalist can recreate analgesics, sedatives, or even stimulants. They can sterilize wounds or simply determine which nearby plants are edible or poisonous. It is not uncommon for an herbalist or wildcrafter, as they are also known, to pick leaves, berries, or stones from the ground as they walk and this talent has earned some of them positions of authority in smaller or less developed communities. They are even revered in a few locations where they are given the title medicine man or shaman. A lesser accepted (and more derogatory) term is witch doctor. This is not a magical art, nor is it a pseudo-science like homeopathy. The tech-

niques the herbalist uses are tested and proven knowledge passed down through centuries of trial and error. In this new age, more items of benefit can be found on the roadside, with more impactful effects, but the wisdom hasn't changed.

INCARNATE

Trait: Supernatural

Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Descent from Harmony: Choose an Incarnate Element from the list below:

Air: As many times per day as your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier, as an immediate action, you can pass through 1 square without having to acknowledge its terrain or any creature within it. You do not provoke opportunity attacks during this move. You cannot pass through a wall.

Earth: You ignore difficult terrain if that terrain is the result of rubble, uneven stone, or earth.

Fire: Once per day, as an immediate action, if struck by a fire attack (from an enemy, an ally, or yourself), you can convert that damage inflicted to temporary hit points you gain.

Water: You have a +5 trait bonus to Swim. You can always take 10 for a Swim check, regardless of the situation. Also, once a day, you can breathe water for five minutes.

Echan Origin: You are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight). If you switch to Ixindar, you lose all Incarnate abilities until you switch back to Attricana.

Many of the fae claim an intrinsic connection with the primal elements. Impossibly graceful laudenian children, and narros youth with an intuitive understanding of stone and earth are two examples of Attricana's whimsical influence. The incarnate are those rare individuals with the ability to harness these forces and direct them. Each Incarnate generally reflects their bonded element in both personality and appearance. Chaparran Fire Incarnates can be very quick tempered and rash, even for a chaparran, whereas Earth bonded narros' stoic, reserved nature would set them apart from the majority of their race. An Air Incarnate is generally flighty, imaginative, and difficult to pin down in conversation. The Water Incarnate is subtle and usually adapts to any society he or she is living within. It can be difficult to discern an Incarnate from birth, but the telltale signs begin emerging in early childhood. Earth bonded children's voices are coarse, their skin easily calloused. Air incarnate are very light skinned, where the Fire bonded is dark, almost bronzed. Of all the incarnate, only water is easily discovered as not many

children can swim underwater for hours at a time without surfacing.

JUGGERNAUT

Trait: Combat

Prerequisites: Constitution 14 and Strength 14

BENEFITS

Expecting Trouble: You can never be caught flat-footed.

Armored Sympathy: Select one of the following:

- The check penalty for any armor you wear is reduced by 2 (min 0).
- If you are a monk, any light armor worn does not force you to lose your fast movement or flurry of blows abilities. You lose your ability to add your Wisdom bonus to AC but you still gain the AC and CMD bonuses starting at 4th level.

The juggernaut cares nothing about nature or the will of gods. They may not believe in warmongering but do know the benefits of wielding such weapons in the modern age. One must wield a blade to survive. You sleep with one eye open and seldom get a full night's rest. In the open field, you guard the casters and protect the fire. You are always close to your armor. Even in spirit, you cannot be separated. Juggernauts simply wish to maximize their potential in combat. You practice daily to hone abilities, maximizing your capacity in combat. You know that, when at the peak of your skill, you will never be out of work. A juggernaut is ready for combat at a moment's notice. You prepare your armor before sleeping, able to do it in less time than a rogue can put on his shoes.

Juggernauts are not ones for speeches or promotion. You are the heavy brute brought forward to scare the front lines of the opposition. You are the one beside kings to demonstrate the might of an army. When seen in a tavern as a possible hire, you never have to worry about being passed over. Even if your intelligence can't net you glory or gold, a few rounds in an arena will do the task nicely.

KAVALIER

Trait: Regional. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: Must be from Kannos

BENEFITS

Like rabbits up there: You are given a light horse (combat trained) horse for free. Said horse gains a +2 trait bonus to Intelligence. The animal automatically is trained for one general purpose and as many tricks as its capacity.

Grace and Lithe: You count as having a saddle on your mount even when you don't have one. If you do have a saddle, you gain a +1 trait bonus to Ride checks.

Equestrian Talent: You gain Handle Animal and

Ride as class skills and gain a +1 trait bonus in each.

There are horsemen and cavalry across the world. Some are honored and have a long lineage. It takes an especially brilliant soul to be among the chosen of the Kannos cavalry, the elite kavaliers. What distinguishes a Kannos kavalier from other mounted military is the lack of heavy armor. Kannos is rich in fertile land. Huge livestock populations begot the largest number of horses in Canam. They are weak, however, in mineral resources and must trade with the narros and their human allies in Janoah in the East. Since most farms had to survive on their own, every farmhand, stable boy, and wrangler learned to ride and control a steed the moment they could balance on two legs. By puberty, reins were an afterthought and the saddle was an indulgence rarely taken. They could only afford bows and swords. Armor – especially barding – was an extravagance few could afford.

Kannos kavaliers ride light in armor and nimble in their saddle (when they use them). Their horses are lifetime partners and often share sleeping quarters. Some traditions match a young fighter to a steed early in life. The squire and mount live their lives responsible for the other, loyal to the end. They form an unspoken bond and never leave each other's side, save for the odd tavern wench. More often than not, kavaliers prefer the company of their animals to people and often sleep in stables as horses make great alarms.

The front lines of a Kannos army are populated with such simple cavalry, offering the illusion of an inept and under equipped host until it charges. Kannos kavaliers are quick on both two feet and four. They leap upon their mounts without a stir and drive even the most skittish animals into combat without a stutter. There is no greater waste in warfare than a trained warhorse with an incompetent rider and there is very little more dangerous than a Kannos kavalier and his mount.

KINETASSANA

Trait: Racial. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: Tenenbri, Wisdom 14, Dexterity 14

BENEFITS

Snap-Draw: If you select the Quick-Draw feat, you also gain a +1 trait bonus to initiative. You can also sheathe/stow your weapon as a free action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Proprioceptive Posture: If you ready a standard action to be triggered by an enemy's move within 5-feet of you (in an adjacent square), you gain a +3 trait bonus to attack rolls until the end of that action.

The current religious movement sweeping the tenenbri nation of Vanaka has been endorsing a xenophobic stance, decrying other species save their own, and prohibiting any contact with foreigners. This is despite the natural tendency of tenenbri to be interested in companions that differ from the image of perfection their

priests claim tenenbri to be. The faction in power has convinced the masses to ostracize anyone not like them, even members of their own species that are slightly against the norm. This belief is encouraged more in cities than smaller villages and many traditional tenenbri denounce the practice. Even so, there is a small segment of underground fae that have no home to speak of. Some remain in the caves of Vanaka but many venture into the light to start anew. Tenenbri that are forced out or leave willingly because of a desire for isolation often spend years in the darkness of Vanaka, learning to hone their abilities to see without seeing.

Most tenenbri encountered north of Southam are nomadic. Some are gypsies that have gathered in a family caravan to escape their land or explore the world. A few are hermits, keeping to themselves and staying out of harm's way. When encountering such a recluse, passers are advised to leave them alone, for they may be a member of an exclusive order of drifting warriors, the kinetassana.

Kinetassana may be wise, even friendly to outsiders, able and willing to lend their skills to the innocent. They seldom travel shoulder-to-shoulder with others. Even when enticed or forced to accompany a party, the kinetassana trails behind and volunteers little.

On the surface, a kinetassana appears nonchalant, almost unaware of her surroundings. She rarely brandishes weapons openly, preferring light varieties kept hidden, exposing them only the instant they are ready to swing (often returning to its sheath a moment later). Kinetassana are nearly impossible to catch off-guard and rarely charge into combat, preferring to let enemies approach and attack. They don't play with targets during a fight. They don't dance, jump around, or tumble. They kill quickly and efficiently and do so with hardly a sound.

KNIGHT OF THE WALL

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisite: Must be from Abidan

BENEFITS

Proficiency: You are proficient with all shields.

Arm Extension: Your armor check penalty with any shield is reduced by 1.

Shield Lock: If a knight and at least two allies (but no more than four) link their shields and form a wall, their line receives an additional +1 trait bonus to AC. They also receive a +2 trait bonus to their CMDs against charges and bull rush attacks. If the wall is broken (by targets being pushed, moved or killed), forcing the wall to number less than three, the bonuses are lost. Note: Allies benefitting do not require the Knight of the Wall trait.

On the bridge Tethuss, the holy warriors of Janoah live their lives in defense of a single cause—to protect the south from the pagus hordes threatening to sweep down

the continent.

Though some of them braved the waters or pushed through the mountains, most pagus still believe the fortress of Janoah is the easiest way to cross.

The knights on the wall, standing atop the buttresses and manning the bridge, never initiate invasion. They are rarely taken from their footing. Their defensive stance turns into an offensive one and opponents find themselves facing a fortress of shields covered in spikes and blades.

This knight looks to his shield as his primary ally. By combining their efforts, many knights can link to form a fortress against attack. This practice began with the first assault across the bridge, where thousands of pagus ran across to assault the walls. The front line facing the hordes were ill equipped and the wall behind had yet to be completed. The phalanx held fast, with the front warriors standing guard with light shields on each arm while forces behind held onto long spears. The pagus could neither push nor break the wall and the battle was quickly won.

To date, few have ever bested a Janoahn knight in shield and sword combat. They are proud to stand on Tethuss and few ever leave the fortress. Some do though, venturing either across the bridge, or south from the city. The reasons may be their own, but their shields represent their honor, so are never separated from them. They avoid mounted combat and prefer to be charged rather than the ones charging. An entire industry has stemmed from this art form. Shields built and released from Janoah circulate across Canam. Even pagus were seen using them, though only the knights on the Bridge wield them properly.

KOANA STUDENT

Trait: Magic, Regional

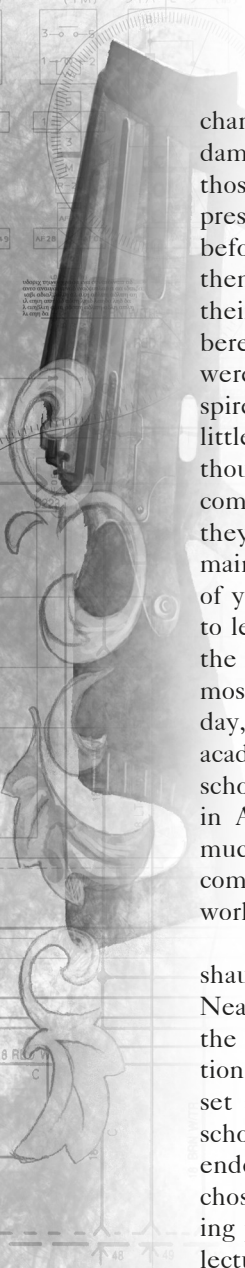
Prerequisite: From Limshau. If you're a wizard, you cannot select the Illusion or Necromancy school.

BENEFITS

Dedicated Researcher: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (arcane).

Arcane Comprehension: A spell carries a spark of life within it. Once a day, as a free action, you can force a target to re-roll a Reflex save it has passed for a spell you have cast.

It is said Limshau's rise to prominence as one of the world most respected and admired nations didn't reach a stride until it absorbed nearly 5,000 humans from Angel, thanks to Ravenar Limshau IV's "Crusade of Knowledge." Until then, all damaskans were the same across the world. It was at that point the obsessive drive to record history reached a fevered state. Damaskans had always been social creatures with a preference for learning and acquiring knowledge, but they were somewhat clumsy in their application and bookbinding was a complicated procedure few of them had mastered. The printing press was just beyond the capacity of most elves to discover on their own. The influx of mankind



changed that, which explains why, after only 500 years, damaskans in Canam look and act slightly askew from those across the Ocean. The addition of the printing press catapulted their society in a direction unheard of before with the fae. As no books or scrolls came with them when the gate opened, the damaskans only had their memory to work from and, even then, few remembered the details of their history. It was assumed they were similar to the damaskans of Damaska – towering spires filled floor to ceiling with color-coded scrolls with little else to differentiate them. Given that, it is thought the prevalence of the book totem didn't become fashionable until the damaskans gleaned what they lacked from the human immigrants. Damaskans maintain that they developed book binding thousands of years before the exodus but simply lacked the push to learn the automated press. They do admit, however, the circulation of books in the old age was reserved almost exclusively for the early damaskan wizards. Today, Limshau sports the greatest number of wizard academies in Canam, though not the largest actual schools. Larenook in Dawnamoak, the Logos Academy in Abidan, and the Elsis Tower in Laudenian are all much larger and more prestigious, though all pale in comparison to Kirjath-Sepher on the other side of the world.

There is not one school that stands out in Limshau. All of them are respected in different ways. Nearly three hundred years ago, they allied to found the Koana District—a geographical unbound organization of all the schools in the Limshau kingdom. They set a standard of quality control maintained by every school. Despite different learning techniques and totem endorsement (though the book is still overwhelmingly chosen), every Koana academy must follow strict guiding principles which includes heavy arcane study, daily lectures, and rigorous repetitive exams and workshops.

Unlike other fae schools, which try to apply a theological approach to magic, supporting a “gut intuition” and encouraging natural talent, Koana schools maintain that true wizard mastery only comes with heavy research and exercise. A Koana student is expected to remain at the school for at least 12 years, though they are encouraged to remain longer if they wish.

LAUDENIAN MAGE

Trait: Mage, Race

Prerequisites: Intelligence 14, Laudenian.

BENEFITS

Trained Since Birth: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (arcane) and Spellcraft.

Totem Synergy: If you employ a staff as your totem, you gain a +2 trait bonus to Will saves.

The arcane arts might have originated with the dragons, as all the words of power derive from their language, Pleroma, but it is the laudenians that created the modern wizard that circulates the world today. They found a

way to tap into the holy language of the oldest magical race and transplant the capacity of their written form into totems that wizards can use in the application of their art. Until then, all fae were in awe of the power of dragons and forever slaves to the whims of Attricana. Laudenians, frightened by the concept of being slaves to anything, even Attricana, tried to discover a way to control it. This path began because of a dire need to prevent the degradation of their species from the influence of magic. They hoped the words would uncover a way to control the chaotic power of the gate.

They failed in this endeavor but did discover a way to harness some of the gate's power through the use of the dragon language. They believed that by learning how the dragons direct their power by focusing on a single word and all that that means a wizard could replicate the same effect. The laudenians, somewhat ignorant to change, found the staff the most reliable totem and never supported another option. Eventually, the chaparrans would adopt the same when several of them stole the knowledge from acquiescent laudenians. It would not be until the damaskans arrived that alternative totems emerged. They embraced the book and soon after, the narros also developed a similar practice utilizing shields and weapons.

In the modern age, nearly every race uses every form of totem available except for laudenians, who still stubbornly use the staff. They have used this single implement for their totem since the dawn of their species, having claimed the original fae showed them the wisdom in the choice. Damaskans believe it is the original fae, not the laudenians, who developed the knowledge before they vanished. Laudenians refute this of course, and there is no way to prove either case. Unlike any other casters, the laudenians are known to be the most numerous in proportion to their population and the most powerful on average. They know this and make a point of reminding those who know, don't know, or don't care.

LIBRARIAN

Trait: Regional. This selection counts as two traits.

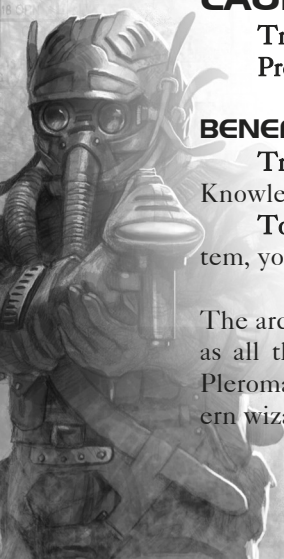
Prerequisite: From Limshau

BENEFITS

Branch Expertise: All Knowledge skills are class skills for you. Select one Knowledge skill and gain a +3 trait bonus in it. Select one different Knowledge skill and gain a +1 trait bonus in it.

From The Books: Select either one Limshau weapon or Limshau Kawabari Armor.

- The Limshau weapon becomes a monk weapon
- If you are a monk, the kawabari armor does not force you to lose your fast movement or flurry of blows abilities. You lose your ability to add your Wisdom bonus to AC but you still gain the AC and CMD bonuses starting at 4th



level.

Local Knowledge: You also gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Limshau.

Initially, the servants of Limshau, those responsible for the organization and defense of knowledge, referred to themselves simply as librarians, a title still in use today. Modern librarians carry an encyclopedic recall of every book they are exposed to the in the wing they call home. Librarians often remain in a certain wing of the city for their entire lives. Eventually they were no longer required to defend the pages as diligently when the custodians emerged. The librarians were delegated to the uninspiring duty of maintaining the treasures of the city the custodians protected. Their combat prowess dipped significantly in the waning centuries.

Like the custodians, the librarians have been often found outside of the walls of the cities, having taken on a duty to retrieve some precious bit of knowledge. Perhaps a single volume among the thousands sworn under their care had gone missing. Perhaps the final critical tome of a series had finally been located and this single loyal servant would delegate the responsibility to no other. As always, simply curiosity may also possess them to leave but this occurs more often with custodians as the librarians are settled in their daily tasks, taking enjoyment behind their desk.

Even more so than the custodians, the librarians treasure the written word and will most certainly carry several books wherever they go. They are also prone to chronicling every moment of their excursions from the walls. Though they may certainly possess some combat prowess, they would undoubtedly lack some of the physical disciplines to make the cut into the custodians. Often, the librarian has left because of a singular need. They are not as prepared for the outside world, despite having intimate knowledge of its inner workings.

MALKUT OUTCAST

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: From Baruch Malkut, human

BENEFITS

Unfortunate Origin: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Baruch Malkut.

A Little Nervous: You suffer a -1 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks against any fae.

Privileged Youth: You gain +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (arcane), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (religion) (pick one).

Know their tricks: You gain +2 trait bonus to Will saves against charm and charm-like effects.

On Edge: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Initiative.

You are dreadfully humiliated of your origin. You were raised in a world where humans have declared themselves superior, children of the true god, and as such are masters of all creatures of the Earth. You were raised under the leadership of a king blessed with immortality.

He accused others outside his realm of being heathens and heretics or worse, patsies for demons parading around in pleasant clothes and alluring skin. As judgment, these demons deserved extermination, but if they can be indentured to help the kingdom's cause to shroud the world in their greatness, so much the better. You had no option and no cause to think otherwise. You believed this was true for it came from the lips of your parents. Your teachers explained the history of the world and the slow extermination of the human race through a gradual process of corruption by whispers rather than swords.

You might have lived on a farm along with them, whip in your hand and revulsion in your heart. Then one day, or maybe over many, it changed. It is possible you always had issues with the practice. You couldn't understand how such evil could be attached to such innocence. Regardless of the shape of their ears, who were the demons that enslaved others? As a slaver, you might have been born into the career, or took to it easily in a culture that supported it, but that doesn't mean you believed in its practice. You might never have approved of the system but went along silently because of pressures from your government or family.

When you reached an age where rebellion was the norm, you might have recoiled against the business and escaped the hated reputation. Despite talents learned, you want nothing to do with your past and actively try to destroy the machine you operated within. Likewise, you might have rebelled against the system because of events that occurred late in life, when you are forced to face the sins you have committed. Perhaps you saw the eyes on an innocent fae and realized the truth of the evils you were perpetrating. But there is no room in the kingdom for those who do not absolutely support their king in his plan for the world. You are either with King Darius and his crusade against the infidels, or you side with those fated for gallows or a cross. You must swear absolute fidelity to Baruch Malkut or be counted among the enemy. Therefore, you left, abandoning your family, your holdings, and any claim to any land. Sometimes, you appear overtly friendly to fae, trying desperately to offset any accusation that that you remain loyal to that old belief. You keep said origin secret, but you know it will surface eventually. You also believe it is fate you will eventually return to face your sins and family directly, and this time you won't flee.

MYSTIC

Trait: Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Echan Origin: You are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixin-



dar (See Chapter Eight).

Lost Traditions: You gain access to the cleric's Knowledge Domain (even if you are not a cleric). See Classes in the PATHFINDER RPG for information on the Knowledge Domain. You gain both the granted powers and the domain spell for 1st level as if you were a cleric of equal level (additional spells from the domain require feats). You are not required to pick a deity. You must also choose a focus for your craft. This may include bones, rocks, leaves, entrails, a book, dice, or even a deck of cards. All your spells require a material component and require your focus in order to function.

In the history of every culture, with no exception, there have been practitioners and disciples of ancient rituals who call upon unseen forces to offer guidance when hope is fleeting or altogether lost. These conduits of wisdom employ ancient customs passed down from ancestors, tracing back an unbroken line of hundreds or thousands of years. As a mystic continuing the old ways, you utilize implements as basic as a scattering of bones to as complicated as a library of books. Every evening, you recall the teachings of your master, hoping to earn the illumination of the spirit that may grant salvation in the life beyond.

Although this may certainly be called a religion, it may also be based in the ethnic traditions of a culture. Some mystics claim their insight derives from an awareness of the world and not handed to them from a divine power. It is their own soul, the untapped potential of their spirit, which inevitably guides them. Your choice is your own but many races and cultures have their preferences. Chaparrans credit spirits for their guidance.

They study the fallen leaves off trees and the arrangements of their veins. Damaskans use bibliomancy and gain understanding through the books they read. They gain wisdom through raw knowledge but also from the patterns of words and sentences, finding further enlightenment where others find nothing. Gimfen roll dice but the type of dice and the images on their facings are unique to each sage. Laudenians have the longest and most complicated form, using both incenses and drops of water in stagnant pools as their channel. Narros shatter stones and study the fallen fragments to hear advice straight from the lips of Oaken himself.

Tenenbri, the most subtle, use their fingers to touch and feel every flaw and perfection in something to learn from it. This includes reading palms or marks upon a skull. When pagus are allowed to develop their own culture, their mystics employ animal entrails. The way the creature was killed changes the outcome of the answer. A quiet, peaceful death is required when choosing a path or seeking answers to a question while a violent death is needed in matters of war. As for humans, throughout their history, they have tried them all, from the study of flying birds to the analysis of rat feces.

These mystics have hundreds of different names.

REDCAP

Trait: Race

Prerequisite: Gimfen. This selection counts as two traits.

BENEFITS

Choose one of the following abilities:

Hip Shot: You do not provoke an opportunity attack from adjacent squares when firing ranged weapons from a crossbow or shortbow. If firing an arrow or bolt into an adjacent square, a crossbow or shortbow is counted as a melee weapon.

Bleeding Wound (Ex): You have the capacity to inflict a crippling wound on an enemy. As a *free action*, one living creature you damage with a melee attack suffers 2 bleed damage. If you (and only you) score a critical hit on a target suffering from bleeding wound, increase the damage loss by 1 (this is cumulative). Bleeding wound *does not provoke opportunity attacks*. You can use bleeding wound *as many times a day as your Dexterity or Intelligent modifier* (select one).

Before gimfen were renowned for their capacity for suppressing the disruption of technology, they were desperate to stake a claim in some area of expertise. They were a young race broken from the damaskans late after the emergence of the pagus, at a time when all the fae were coming to terms with the possibility they may face extinction at either the hands of their corrupted cousins, or from their own degraded forms. As the chaparrans were vanishing in the forest as nymphs and faeries, and the narros into the depths of the earth as ogres and trolls, gimfen emerged as a bright, bubbly, light of playfulness. They fought for many years to find a niche where they could excel. Because of their diminutive forms, several of them took to being fast, quick-strike hunters. They would squirm and wriggle through battle lines, striking targets as they passed through legs. They eventually chose the shortbow as their preferred weapon because of its versatility and compatibility to their size. It is even adorned on the Salvabrooke flag.

Gimfen, nearly as much as chaparrans, adore ranged combat, but – where chaparrans prefer it because it keeps them away from the blood of the melee – gimfen favor it because it allows them to strike anyone they want, anywhere they want. These gimfen love getting close for the strike, and whether wielding a bow or blade, don't find it a satisfying kill unless blood stains their clothes. This gave them a disturbing nickname – redcap – taken from human mythology most gimfen don't respond well to. Some hate the term because they don't wear hats. Others simply think it sullies a reputable profession as a close-combat warrior which commands as much respect as any chaparran ranger or damaskan fighter.

Regardless, the name stuck and some of the more renowned assassins and war heroes in gimfen history have been labeled as such. Gimfen that choose an honorable path prefer the term, "siddosamma", which

means “Warfueled” in the gimfen tongue. The more wicked ones embrace the redcap legend to even the extent of donning a hat.

REKII

Trait: Race

Prerequisites: Chaparran

BENEFITS

Coordinated Spotter: Whenever you hit a target with a ranged attack, select one ally in line of sight of you to gain a +1 trait bonus to attack that same creature until the start of your next turn.

Hand Signs: As a standard action, you can give one ally in light of sight a +3 trait bonus to attack rolls until the start of your next turn against one creature you have line of sight on.

Chaparrans are nearly as xenophobic as laudenians, but where the laudenians despise the company of non-laudenians, chaparrans simply prefer solitude. When they do form bonds, they swear oaths that transcend generations. A chaparran that has joined an adventuring party has learned to work within a group and has shared the key signs of her gestural language. All chaparrans possess the innate ability to communicate silently and once others pick up the important signs, a chaparran is able to pass her impressive eyesight onto others.

The rekii spots targets from a hidden position. She then passes critical information to an ally (via hand signs, animal calls, and whispers) in order to improve their accuracy or position. It's a unique gift few other chaparrans possess.

It only takes a few days of exposure among new friends for them to take full advantage of his gift. It also allows the chaparrans to maintain their oath of loyalty while also remaining away from the social circle. Chaparrans cannot stand the need of other races (especially gimfen and humans) to fill silence with the noise of conversation, and even those rekii that have elected to join with such raucous noise polluters still prefer to be on their own. Often enough, the rekii remains away from the fire and discourse; while ringing in the occasional comment, a rekii for the most part stays hidden and watchful.

SALVABROOKE SEEKER

Trait: Race, Regional

Prerequisites: From Salvabrooke, Gimfen; cannot be Lawful Good

BENEFITS

Petite Larceny: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Acrobatics and Sleight of Hand.

Quick Recovery: Choose one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Climb, or Sleight of Hand. Once a day, if you fail a roll with this skill by 5 or more, you can re-roll.

Gimfen are overeager to try anything once. They live their lives as the mirror opposite of narros. Where the narros eventually decide the path they would take for the entirety of their lives and never deviate, gimfen rarely settle. Many that grew near machinery have embraced engineering as chosen their profession, but their shops are often littered with half-completed projects and ideas only partially realized. In Salvabrooke, most citizens are shopkeepers, shop workers, or members of the small but ferocious military. Others take to thievery or careers where similar talents can be exploited. Regardless of their path, they always add a zest to their performance. Messengers run over roofs, flipping and sliding in their sprint. Tricksters are theatric and take minutes setting up their scam, entertaining their marks, and making the ruse almost welcoming in the end. These unguided individuals love the chase – the pursuit of anything, either as the target or as the arrow. If you point them, they will run. Some apply this in a respectable craft while many employ more nefarious ones.

Occasionally, they steal just for the thrill of taunting a chase, abandoning their pilfered possession around the block or even returning it and thanking the pursuer for a good chase. Some sell it back to the owner for a mild fee, claiming they are enriching the lives of those around by disturbing the order of their lives.

In the eyes of many gimfen, governments and rules are part of the corruption of the other side. As Attricana encourages its chaotic drive for life in all forms, said lives prefer the anarchy of an unpredictable existence and strive to introduce some chaos in the world around to ensure all the others remember that laws are part of a method of control and thus, part of the problem. To them, life is designed to rebel against conformities and laws need not be a requirement for civility.

These gimfen don't like being called anarchists, preferring the term seeker, as they are always searching for something they hope they never find, because the pursuit is the true purpose in life. For many of them, the chase ends when they die, hopefully a long ways away from where they started.

SKY-BORN

Trait: Regional

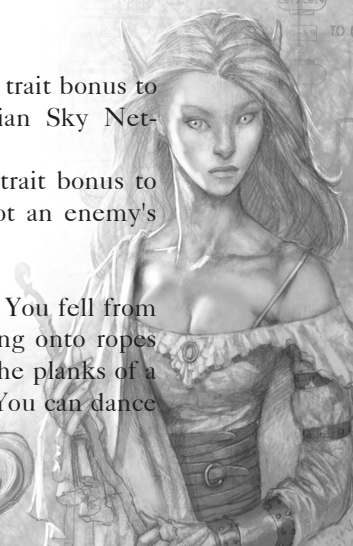
Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Network Knowledge: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Laudenian Sky Network.

No Fear of Falling: You gain a +4 trait bonus to Acrobatics when rolling against a DC, not an enemy's CMD.

You don't claim the Earth as your home. You fell from the womb and were not afraid. You clung onto ropes before learning to walk. You walked on the planks of a ship before you ever touched loose soil. You can dance



on the railing of a skyship thousands of feet up.

Like any other nomad, you have no real roots, but unlike those on the ground, you do have a home; it's just mobile. You may have a family and might have owned your own ship at one point. Some catalyst has brought you on the ground. Perhaps you've crashed. You could have been outcast by a crime. If you're a laudenian, you are most likely banished or have some need to see the world. Very often, that requires walking upon it.

SPIRIT BOND

Trait: Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisites: None

BENEFITS

Echan Origin: You are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight). If you switch to Ixindar, you lose your spirit animal. Whether you regain it if switching back is up to the animal (meaning GM).

Spirit Animal: You gain an animal companion utilizing the Druid's Nature Bond ability.

The animal that joins its spirit to another is not a normal creature. It materializes beside the youth, never venturing far, never getting lost, and always appearing in places it could never be. It finds its way into bedrooms, out of jail cells, and can find it's bonded ally from anywhere on the planet.

At first, the animal is dream-like, only appearing to the mortal. Only with time and meditation can one pull the animal into the real world. The bonded animal is thought to be either a physical manifestation of the person's soul or a spirit from the magical realm, the dream-like expanse that flows from Attricana and covers the globe.

This spirit guide has its own personality and is not a slave. It will depart forever if abused. Often enough, the spirit tags along as a loyal pet, unassuming and innocent. It appears well trained and docile unless it feels the fear of its bondmate. Although the two cannot communicate through speech, they are able to detect each other's moods and emotions. Neither spirit nor bondmate would ever abandon the other unless their partner ordered them to.

SQUIRE OF ABRAHAM

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Choose any religion, from Abidan

BENEFITS

Devout: You gain Knowledge (religion) as a class skill and gain a +1 trait bonus in it.

Skill Bonuses: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Bluff,

Diplomacy, or Intimidate.

Started Young: Select one one-handed martial weapon and one suit of armor. You are proficient in both. You can EITHER increase the max Dex bonus of the armor by 1 OR reduce the arcane spell failure chance by 20%.

Abidan is the religious nexus of Canam, a nation where its constitution demands freedom of religion for all. Unlike the nation of Trinitas on the other side of the planet, Abidan attempts to keep faith away from its government. It has not stopped a dedicated order of knights to be sworn under a single god. This order is known across the land for humility and valor. This is the Line of Abraham, and the envy of every apprentice in the kingdom. A knight fights only when necessary.

They carry a strict faith in themselves or in the religion they are associated with and swear absolute loyalty to that devotion and its tenets. They believe the shields of truth and virtue protect better than any armor forged by man. A potential squire is selected young and trained alongside a great knight for many years, well into adulthood. Some of the most respected soldiers in the Janoahn army are still awaiting approval into the line. Eventually, one is asked to take a personal crusade—to find a personal truth and to discover one's soul in the exploration of the outside world. Only when students feel the path directs them home do they finally do so, in hopes of being accepted in the order. To be of this group is not to be some church bound priest or a zealot screaming from a soapbox. This devout disciple has taken it upon herself to preach the word of god to the unbeliever while also defending the tenants of faith against the heathen and infidel. This champion emerges in several different lights. This could be a crusader to inspire the masses. She marches along the front line of an army, motivating troops and rousing faith in the cause. A crusader loves preaching the power of faith, usually reserving such displays for when potential combat occurs. Crusaders often lead charges, standing proud, commanding holy warriors into battle, and further solidifying their status among the others. Crusaders hope for the day when they control armies of their own. This champion could also be a fanatic. Fanatics think of nothing other than upholding their faith against the heathens of the world. They may even subscribe that redemption falls only to the worthy. A fanatic seldom breaks a combat stance to support an ally unless said ally shares the same faith or comes under assault. A truly noble fanatic wishes to help the needy but believes destroying one's enemy is the best way to accomplish that.

Finally, the champion could be a missionary. These followers of the faith don't consider themselves right wing extremists. They seldom enlist others for the glory of combat and rarely join an army bent for war. Surprisingly though, missionaries handle themselves almost or equally well in situations where they must protect themselves or those who need defending. Their calling forces them from the church to venture as no-

mads – with or without the assistance of other missionaries – into the wilderness of the outside world. There, they would not seek the believers but the atheists. One would appear not as the prancing paladin marching proud and tall, but as a simple follower, wise beyond years.

Missionaries frequently approach areas of need and depart without ever expressing a belief or preaching a cause. In their eyes, being loyal by the doctrine of their faith and helping those less fortunate, even to the point of raising weapons against evil, comes before attempting to preach to the potentials. They neither require conversion as a prerequisite for offering wisdom or assistance nor agreement with their beliefs as a condition for friendship and loyalty. They arrive to help first. Almost all settlements welcome the missionary. Of course, fanatics and paladins may enter claiming the same title. The missionary is well educated and survives alone in the dangers of the wild when others run screaming or die in the cold.

Regardless of the result, some squires never return, finding a calling far more important—a calling only a god could bestow. A few do return, shaped by the world into an either a broken soul bent for drunken tavern tales of better times or a noble knight of the Line of Abraham.

SWORN HAND OF VENGEANCE

Trait: Discipline

Prerequisites: None

BENEFITS

Sworn Enemy: Choose one of the following creatures: Evil dragons, boggs, humans, kodiaks, pagus, puggs, shemjaza, skeggs. Against creatures of this type, you gain a +2 trait bonus to attack rolls until the first time you hit one at the start of combat. The first target hit takes 1d6 extra damage.

Childhood can often be a wondrous time. For an unfortunate few, like yourself, it is the source of unrelenting trauma. This nightmare could have occurred while still clinging onto your mother's hand, or the mental and physical scars could have been set later. Something no one should ever have to experience recurs every evening when you close your eyes. A finger came down and destroyed everything you had. They wiped out every family member, maybe friends, or perhaps an entire village. This could have been a surgical raid or a random act of passing bloodshed. Maybe you were on hand to witness the carnage, pushed under a bed or dropped in a basket. Perhaps you arrived too late, ready for a fight, later tasked to digging graves. As the lone survivor, you think of nothing else but revenge to placate the nightly terrors.

This rage is not intended for a specific nation, king, or thug. Retaliation is unfocused, intended for an entire species. This world is populated by tremendous evil, minions of a gauntlet of shadow that stretch slowly

over the land. When violent opposition presents itself, you will act without thinking and not stop until your enemies lie dead, in hopes the nightmares will cease.

TASKIN-KADA WATCHER

Trait: Regional

Prerequisite: From Taskin-Kada

BENEFITS

Patterns in Chaos: You gain +1 trait bonus to Perception, Sense Motive, and Sleight of Hand.

Double Take: Once a day, you can re-roll a Perception, Sense Motive, and Sleight of Hand roll if you don't like your first result. You must take the second result.

Taskin-Kada, a respected city in Abidan, developed a counter-intelligence group for the express purpose of maintaining surveillance on potential enemies, and occasionally, potential allies. This gave rise to the watchers, an echelon of individuals trained in the art of stealth to rival even the assassins from Baruch Malkut.

The watchers are not spies but observers. They never steal anything other than the unaltered history revealed before their eyes. With a reputation for honesty and accuracy, the word of a watcher carries weight in an Abidan court. That reputation allowed the organization to expose corruption within a trading guild in Selavia and recover Savarice's pilfered holy blade when stolen by thieves under blessing of Darius Konig.

When the watchers are not observing within the kingdom, the majority are committed to actions external, dealing with neighbors both friendly and hostile. Dozens patrol lands north of the Tethuss Bridge, a necessary task, though it costs the most lives. The majority of them travel south, to watch the nation of Baruch Malkut. Despite the impressive distance between the two nations, and the fact that several other kingdoms lie in between, Savarice never forgot his experiences near that land and considers the rival nation the greatest threat to Canam, more so than the pagus to the north. Taskin-Kada took an especially vested interest in Baruch Malkut. With a large Jewish population present, the people of Taskin-Kada despised the use of Hebrew words as a name for one of the most malevolent nations on Earth.

As a member, you can either be tasked by a secret mission or be one that has left the order for personal reasons. Your specialty deals with espionage in other nations and you are not cut for dungeons, though you would not be frightened of the concept.

VIVICATOR

Trait: Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Skill Synergy: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Heal.

Hand of the Unspoken: You gain access to the cleric's Healing Domain (even if you are not a cleric). See Classes in the PATHFINDER RPG for information on the Healing Domain. You gain both the granted powers and the domain spell for 1st level as if you were a cleric of equal level (additional spells from the domain require feats). You are not required to pick a deity. All your spells require somatic component to function.

Naturally Endowed: By default, you are tied to the white gate of Attricana. Your saturation value is 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (See Chapter Eight). If you switch to Ixindar, you lose all Vivicator abilities until you switch back to Attricana. As an option, you can choose to be tied to the black gate of Ixindar. If so, your corruption value becomes 20, your saturation point becomes 0, and you must have the Lawful Evil alignment. In this state, you do not disrupt technology. If bound to Ixindar, you gain access to the cleric's Death Domain instead of Healing.

You gain both the granted powers and the domain spell for 1st level as if you were a cleric of equal level (additional spells from the domain require feats).

Regardless of magic, despite the position or lineage, death is still certain. Almost everyone believes, with hardly an exception that souls continue past their mortal prison. While some believe the spirit rises to an afterlife, others affirm that the soul recycles from animal to animal, only occasionally being blessed into one of higher intelligence. Some religions forbid the interrupting of this process for any reason. Forcing a spirit back to its original body interrupts the fate written for that soul when god blessed that baby emerging from the womb. This never stopped the obsessed and the mournful to attempt any course of action to bring someone back from the dead.

Those that claim they are blessed with magic from their deity cannot prove their gift came from any divine power. In the end, they are con men or take shortcuts to god via some proven magic from an ungodly source. Stories began circulating in the past centuries of aberrations of magic, more so than the already numerous oddities covering the globe. These are creatures of higher intelligence gifted with a powerful magic with apparently no source or explanation. Several monsters already flaunt powerful magic, but these are limited to less potent spells. No magical beast can spontaneously bring the dead back to life. With the greatest creatures with natural magical ability comes great size, with the greatest of the world towering over the rest. How is it then that a few humans and fewer fae have been rumored to be able to generate great magic with no source? Some of these gifted stumbled upon this talent in childhood or through puberty. Most lose control of their power, killing themselves and, unfortunately, others in the process. Some are killed by a fearful public, declaring the youths were servants of darkness. A modicum hid their powers, turning to clerical and arcane studies to master and mask their ability with the accepted arts. No one

would question how one spell is cast differently than others. This leaves a minute group that live their lives possessing a single immense power. Casting it always comes with a heavy internal price, resulting in the eventual death of the user if the ability is abused.

Despite the flamboyant possibilities, the only known ability replicated in this way is the notorious ability to heal those injured. Some even claim to bring the living from the dead. These beings blessed (or cursed) can cast said power, taking on the sacrifice in its casting or bestowing the cost on a willing other.

A few have taken to being regular healers with no sworn deity with an uncanny ability to lift those from near death. All keep this power from the public eye, offering it in private to a select few with desperate causes or deep pockets. Most aware of the legends refuse to acknowledge these aberrations exist, for a hermit with life's dedication to his god could commit as great a power as the head priest of a temple. But what of the story of the child with a gift which could only be from a god? Echalogias believe this gift is the result from magical saturation. Since more humans are emerging with this power than fae, some echalogians speculate that mankind is undergoing a similar change as the fae, but in much more positive ways. The knowledge of these beings is kept silent and the majority of the world is unaware of their existence.

Though some claim themselves gifted by a god or gods, there are others that boast the same abilities with no such faith. Despite the power to heal the diseased and raise the dead in this new world, God remains unproven.



Yok-ani? Are they good?" Aiden asked. "People certainly think so," Chen responded as he placed the book gently on the table. He respectfully slid the other to the side. "What do you think?" He unclasped the latches at either end of the new book.

"I think it was good."

"You sure it had four talons?"

"Yes."

"Good eye for detail, considering. They grow more as they age. Three to four to five." He opened the book. The heavy-stock pages were rough on the leaf, a hemp-pulp hybrid. The letters were pounded heavily into the stock. "This one talks about Yok-ani. They are quiet, reserved, renowned for wisdom, and worshipped for the humility of their power. Under their guidance, lands see no war, no famine, no grief. At least... that's the claim. Reality, well...they try their best it's told." Aiden broke from the book to look at Chen. "Read it," Chen added. "Stay if you wish."

"My brother will kill me if he finds out."

"Yes, I imagine he will."

Aiden smiled and reassured himself. He thought of Martin's shoulder punches and whatever punishment his new

guardians would inflict if he got caught. "I'll stay," he said.

"I'll make tea," said Chen as he walked to his kitchen.

"Uhh, Mister?" Aiden still wasn't ready to call him by name. "How much is true? Dragons? Elves?"

Chen looked back at the young boy. A quiver of a smile crept on his face. "All of it."

• • •

The other dragons grew to power and passed the Yok-ani in number. By the closing of the gates, only nine Yok-ani had been born (or perhaps created). None of them died by natural causes or fell by the hands of an enemy. Nine still remain today. In the five centuries since the re-opening of the gate, the Yok-ani made no attempt to increase their numbers. Although few, they are the most powerful dragons in the world, rivaled only by the remaining dragon kings, of which Shaka, a Yok-ani, is counted as a member of.

The tea was no simple drop-bag of disheveled twigs and bark. Chen had brought a kettle of scolding water, a saucer and cup, and a smaller kettle. Inside the smaller kettle was a collection of dried herbs, flowers, leaves, and honey. Chen poured the hot water in the small kettle, and then emptied the small kettle into the cup. Aiden repeated that process and emptied the larger kettle before finally speaking to the man again.

"Do you have more?"

"Tea or dragons?" Chen replied.

"About everything outside."

Chen waved to the room. "They're all on that subject."

"I want to read them all."

"There will be time for that. It is getting late."

"Then I want to see it myself."

Chen raised a brow. "A zeal for adventure got you already?"

"It's just like the books. Just like the games I play." Aiden was getting excited. "I want to see it all, everything that they said wasn't real, castles, magic, fae."

"It may look the dream, child, but it'll carry the chill of reality. And what will it prove? Even if it feels like your fantasy, you are not the storyteller." Aiden didn't appear dissuaded. "How will you survive out there? Can you wield a sword, shoot an arrow?"

"Maybe," Aiden responded in reflex before realizing that the most strenuous physical activity he had ever done was avoid a soccer ball when he was playing goalie because he didn't want to get hit in the face. Chen saw through the boy's naivety.

"I don't mean to turn you away," he said, "just understand that many people claim that world as home, and you would not be any more special out there than in here. You may wish to be a character in your own fantasy, but this is no work of fiction. It's real. You're not chosen by fate. Your parents were ordinary. No gods kissed you upon your birth. What do you do well?"

Aiden scrunched his lips, shrugged, and sighed. "I read books. Don't suppose that means much." The sudden wash of insight over his face was unmistakable. "I could do what you do."

"How?" Chen motioned to the lamps. "You've just seen that. How could you know? Maybe it's something I do natu-

rally no one else can."

"If it's all real then magic can come from books! I can learn!" he begged. "I can do that! Just give me the right books!" The wide-eyed appeal of the youth showed his commitment.

Chen reached out and grasped Aiden's wrist. He pulled the boy's sleeve to reveal the broken watch. Chen pointed to the timepiece.

"This world," he said, pointing to the east, "and that world do not mingle. What you have here doesn't work out there—no cars, no computers, no phones. Once you commit to that path, you can't come back."

"I..." Aiden trailed off. He was about to say I understand, but he didn't. Why was it that way? Why were there walls around the city? Why did the mere presence of dragon make his watch stop? Aiden remembered books about the kid that discovered he was a demigod, or an heir to a kingdom, or a member of a secret order, or a wonder child with a wand. That's what he wanted; those characters never had to give anything up. He wanted his fantasy. "I don't like this place. I prefer the world I read about."

"Why?" Chen answered.

"Because...I don't know...because it's different, because it's amazing. Because..." Aiden felt a drop run out of his nose. He sniffed it up quickly and swallowed. "Because my mother made it sound so wonderful." Aiden held back a tear.

"And I want my dreams to be real."

Chen placed his hand gently on Aiden's shoulder and a tear finally broke free from his eye. "If you run from a life, running will be your life. A fulfilling existence is defined by moving towards something, not away from it. You can read about that world for as long as you like, but I can't let you make that decision."

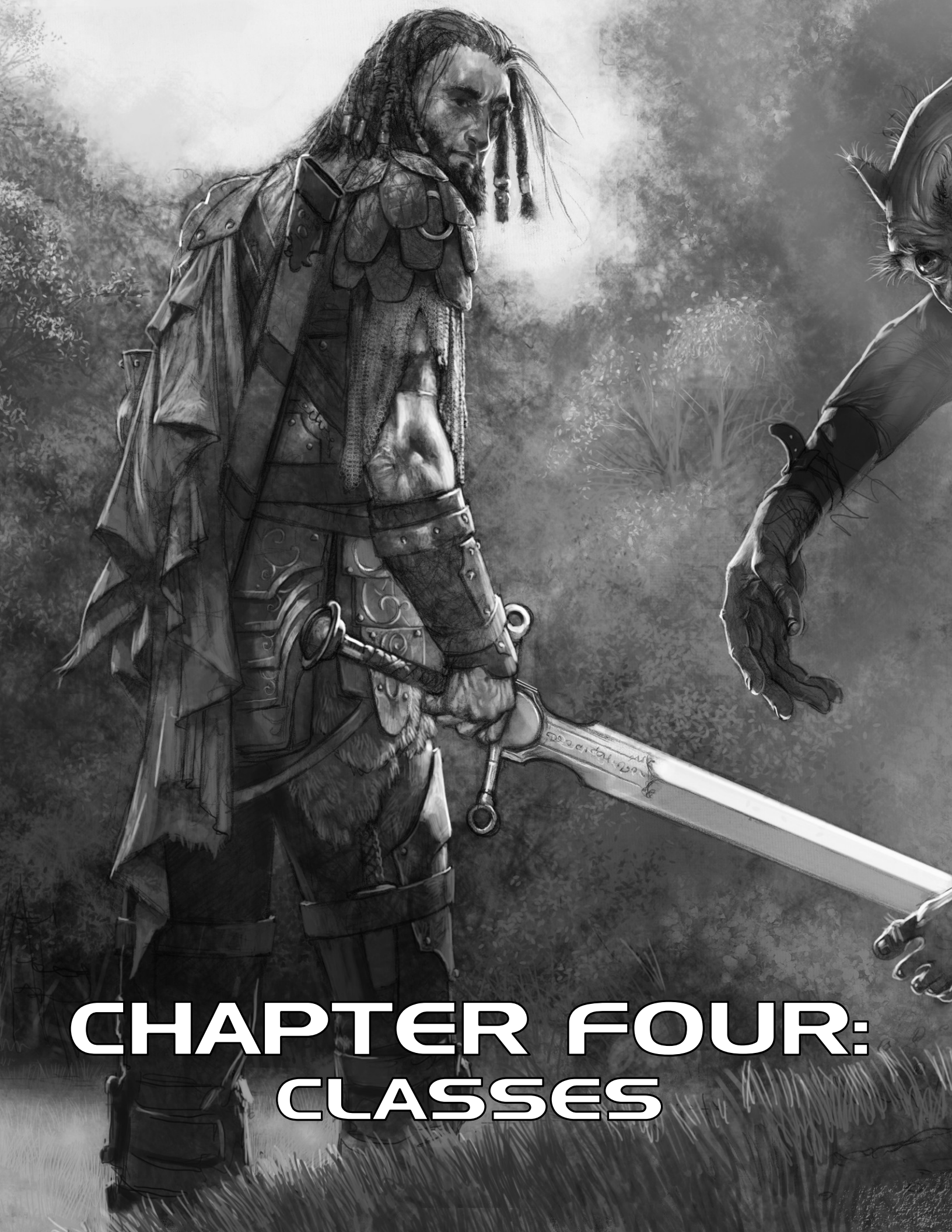
"Isn't it mine to make?"

Chen nodded. "But you need to know why you make it...and now's not that time."

Aiden's shoulders slumped and he tried to hold back in his emotions. He threw Chen's arm away and bolted for the door. He didn't look back. Aiden wanted to abandon his normal life, the one filled boring classes, imposing bullies, overbearing brothers, and callous gods, a life commonplace in the real world. He wanted to be like the characters he read about, like the computer avatar he controlled, someone of consequence, with a life ending in a happily ever after, not a number on a marble cover wedged alongside hundreds of others in a mausoleum.

Aiden slammed the gate open, and it ricocheted off the concrete wall. He was too angry and confused to be frightened of switching stations or running down streets with inadequate lighting. He darted across intersections without alerting the crosswalks and ducked into darkened paths between buildings to shortcut his return home. All the while he thought of what could be out there. He imagined the dragons, the fae, the princesses, and the possibilities that, until now, had only existed in fiction. Out there was everything he could not be in here.





CHAPTER FOUR: CLASSES



In the fantasy world of Amethyst, there are real people and there are heroes, but mostly there are real people. The tales about great warriors are often fictionalized or heavily exaggerated. This story is not about the ordinary but the exceptional. The same is true for the world of science. Players are creating those few extraordinary examples of heroism, regardless if they wield a sword or a firearm.

FANTASY CLASSES

The following classes are available from the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK** in a canon Amethyst campaign. Some classes have restrictions for selection, also if playing in a canon Amethyst campaign. **Classes Not Considered Canon:** Bard, paladin (it's offered as a prestige class), ranger (it's offered as a prestige class), and sorcerer.

Classes Not Listed In The Core Rulebook: With additional books in the **PATHFINDER** line, certain classes can be considered canon. Any class considered wild or untamed should be limited to chaparran, kodiak, or pagus. Psionics are not allowed in a canon Amethyst, neither are spellcasters other than the exceptions listed below.

BARBARIAN

(See the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK** on the barbarian).

Requirement: The barbarian is only available if you are playing as a chaparran, kodiak, or pagus.

CLERIC

(See the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK** on the cleric).

Requirement: The cleric is only available if you select the Gneolistic trait.

Spellcasting: All cleric spells in Amethyst require a somatic component. Cleric spells in Amethyst also do not require a verbal component.

DRUID

(See the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK** on the druid).

Requirement: The druid is only available if you select the Darawren trait.

Spellcasting: All druid spells in Amethyst require a material component. If one is not listed, then it's simple natural components like grass, bark, or soil (materials a druid always has on hand). Druid spells in Amethyst also do not require a somatic component, but they always require a vocal component.

Totem: The druid is actually a spellcaster similar to the wizard. The spells may be classed as divine but they follow the same rules of arcane spells. Like an arcane wizard, you must select an arcane bond, which acts as your totem. You cannot bond to a creature, only to an object. This object is required in hand for all spells. For all intensive purposes, the arcane bond and totem is the same thing and the rules regarding the bond also apply to the totem. In Amethyst, the totem is limited to a book, orb, staff, weapon, or shield. It cannot be an amulet, ring, or wand (See Wizard).

FIGHTER

(See the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK** on the fighter).



MONK

(See the *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK* on the monk).

ROGUE

(See the *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK* on the rogue).

WIZARD

(See the *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK* on the wizard).

The term wizard covers a wide spectrum of spellcasters and magic users across the world. They may wish to protect good or destroy everything around. They still, however, follow one common belief: The gates contain unlimited power and sit waiting to be harnessed. Wizards discovered long ago that certain shortcuts exist to channel energies from the gates. These came in the form of words in the ancient language of the dragons. Some take seconds to spout while others take hours, but by understanding the power of these words, a wizard can channel immense power in specific ways to create amazing affects that break every natural law of science.

Wizards all share a common desire to study the behavior of these ancient words and discover new ways to utilize their potential. A wizard's intelligence allows the recall of massive amounts of information. A wizard finds fascination in the history of the arcane, believing rules exist in a seemingly unpredictable form. It is an almost scientific study of the ways of magic.

Non-human mages revealed that certain words in vocal and written form channel immense power from the gates. This power laid with the dragons for millions of years before the fae pursued this path. These words, found in the ancient tongue of the first language ever spoken, Pleroma, connect to specific energies – akin to spells. A wizard must first understand how the word works in all ways, absorbing its meaning into his or her soul. The books of a spell caster reflect this knowledge. The bigger the library, the greater the understanding the wizard possesses of the arcane arts.

The final key relies on the power word. The mage inscribes the word on his totem and memorizes it. When the mage speaks that word, the energy channels through the totem and the spell is cast. The most common focus totem is the spellbook, however, different cultures insist on different focus totems. These words may appear mundane or extravagant, depending on the flamboyance of the wizard and the distinction of his or her totem. Obviously, an orb or a sword looks flashier than a staff or book. Each spell resembles a different symbol or sets of symbols, depending on the complexity or power from the spell.

Magic stems from one of two sources. One choice comes from Attricana, the other from Ixindar. Where Attricana is chaotic and whimsical, Ixindar is never-changing and uniform. There is little flash with Ixindar magic. It is also a corrupting force, whispering new

thoughts and ideas into its caster. It's not a healthy option for heroic characters. It does offer a variety of different abilities and powers, not the least of which is the replication of magic without disruption.

Certain high-level spells are so rare they can only be found inscribed on unique items spread around the world. Sometimes, wizards must quest for them as others would quest for magic weapons. A wizard's honor insists these items either remain in their location or be taken to Kirjath-Sepher, Limshau, or some other protected vault for storage.

ALTERATIONS

Wizards in Amethyst do undergo a few changes in the Amethyst setting. These include expanded armor and weapon use as well as the inclusion of totem magic.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: Along with all the proficiencies listed, Wizards also gain proficiency with all light armor. Since no wizard spells require somatic components, you can cast spells in armor without worrying about arcane spell failure. Wizards are also proficient with any weapon they use as their totem (if their totem is a weapon).

Arcane Bond / Totem Magic: Wizards in Amethyst do not bond to a creature (familiars); they can only bond to an object. This object is their totem, required in hand for all spells. For all intensive purposes, the arcane bond and totem is the same thing and the rules regarding the bond also apply to the totem. In Amethyst, the totem is limited to a book, orb, staff, weapon, or shield. It cannot be an amulet, ring, or wand.

Unlike wizards in Pathfinder, a wizard in Amethyst cannot cast spells without his totem, but he does gain a +4 bonus to his combat maneuver defense against being disarmed or sundered. Replacing a destroyed totem takes longer than a traditional arcane bond, as all the activation words have to be etched on it again.

Book: The most common totem on Earth is the book. It is the most powerful totem and the easiest to master. Schools dot the planet dedicated to this belief. More wizards use book totems than any other mage. Limshau employs them almost exclusively. The majority of human wizards employ books as do most damaskans. They believe that power from Attricana and Ixindar has its own rules and is not random, which means it can be eventually understood. Remember, all mages carry books, but the final Pleroma power words rest inscribed in the book wizard's totem. The advantage of a book is that it can include Pleroma trigger words and be the wizard's spellbook as well. When you cast a spell, it emanates from your hands, not your book. A few cautious wizards have even strapped their books to their belt to grab in a moment's notice while keeping their hands free otherwise.

Because book wizards study the science of magic more intently than any other wizard, you gain a +1 bonus to Knowledge (arcane).

Orb: The orb is an uncommon choice for most fae and is often found with wizards practicing the darker side of magic, the energy tied to the polar power of Ix-

indar. Occasionally, a few tenenbri have been caught using an orb, but this choice is seen predominantly with negative casters or with humans that come about their training from a less than respectable source.

Shield: Although wizards cannot use armor as a totem, they can choose a shield. The symbols usually start on the inside, but as the wizard learns more spells, they must eventually cover the front as well. It must be a Light or Heavy Shield. The narros are well regarded as the instigators of this selection and it appears in no other cultures save for the rare human village.

If you choose a shield, you gain proficiency with it but only with this specific shield (if you choose a light shield, it's only this light shield and no other light shields you find along the way). The shield can only be light steel, wooden, magnarros, coruthil, or angelite.

Like all arcane bonds, the shield may be enchanted.

Staff: Outside of the book, the staff is one of the most common totems used. It was the first totem that found circulation. Many less civilized communities capable of competent wizardry often use it. A staff also remains popular with the traveling wizard, as it's less clumsy. Staff totem mages continue to stay fashionable with many fae races including chaparrans and laudeniens, the latter using it almost exclusively. Although the book is the most favorable choice, wandering adventurers use the staff more than any other.

Weapon: Although choosing a weapon seemingly appears without penalty, the benefits are double-edged. Wizards with weapon totems often have a need to wield them in combat despite never being able to match a fighter on even ground. This does not stop a large number of wizards from using weapons (although most of these do not study the arts of the arcane with as much dedication as others). Narros and tenenbri argue about who developed it first. Narros began with the shield but claim the transition to weapon was an obvious one while the tenenbri claim they hold the sole claim on the weapon totem. Many human cultures embrace the weapon totem as well.

If you choose a weapon, you gain proficiency with the weapon but only with this specific weapon (if you choose a longsword, it's only this specific longsword and no other longswords you find along the way). The weapon can only be one of the following: Gauntlet, longsword, rapier, scimitar, quarterstaff, warhammer, greataxe, greatsword, lance, longbow, or scythe. The weapon must be composed mostly of wood and/or steel (or magnarros, coruthil, or angelite). The item may be enchanted later.

Arcane School: Certain schools are more popular than others in certain regions in the world, while one is not available at all. In Limshau, for example, most of the schools are dedicated to abjuration, evocation, transmutation, or universal. In Salvabrooke, illusion is virtually exclusive. However, there are no schools bound to Attricana in Canam that teach spells from the Necromancy school (see Chapter 8: Magic).

Spells: All arcane/wizard spells require a verbal

component and possess no somatic components (the opposite of cleric, which possess somatic but no verbal). They may still require a material component (indicated by the spell entry). As such, wizard spells provoke no arcane spell failure when wearing armor.

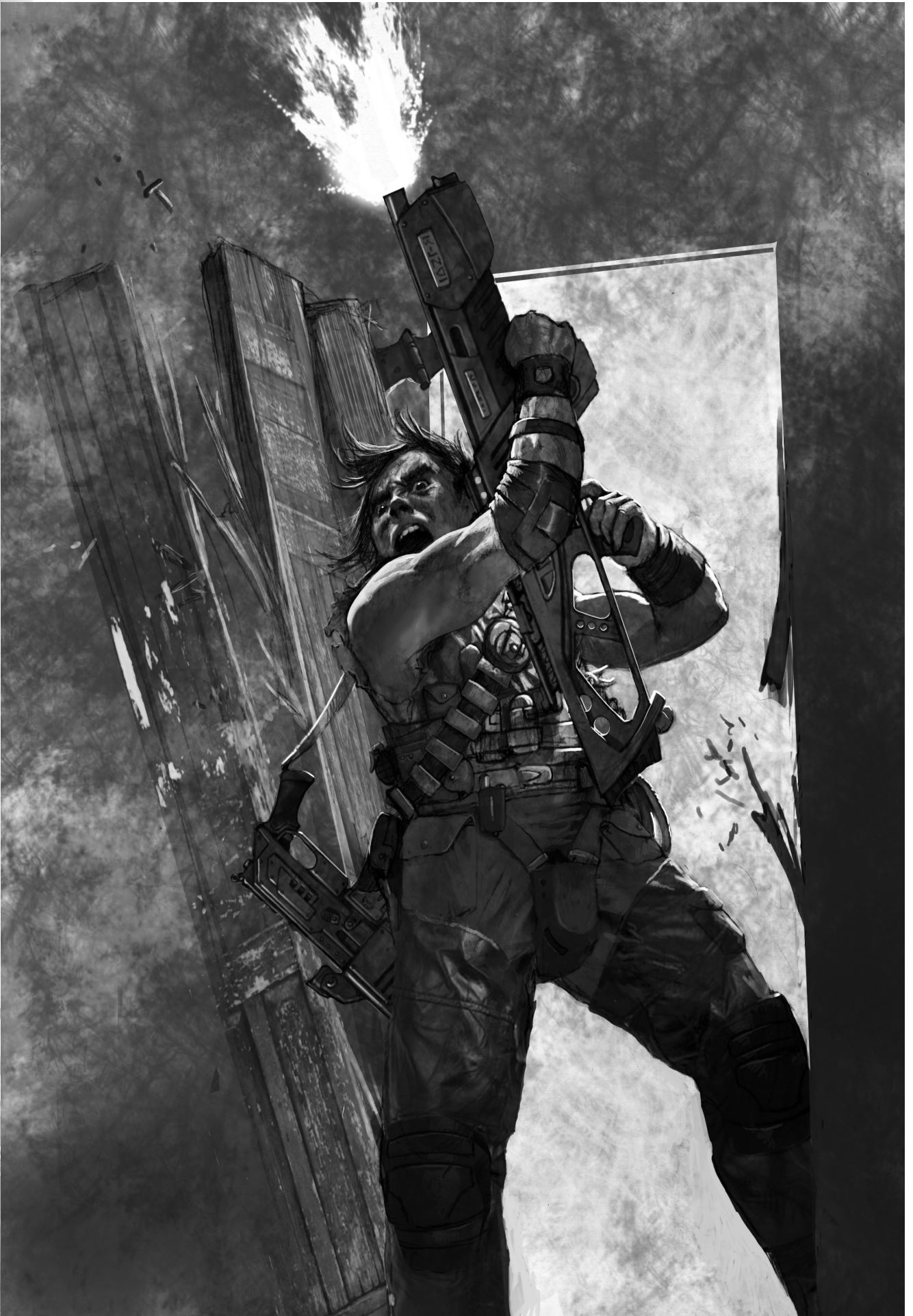
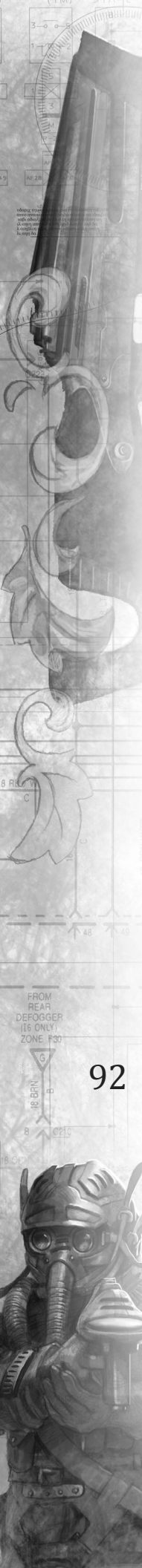
Most wizards are bound to Attricana for their spells and as such, there are limitations about what they can cast. In addition, Wizards cannot cast any 8th or 9th level spells without first acquiring the appropriate foundation anchor. All 8th and 9th level arcane spells in Amethyst are fused to these artifacts and they must be acquired first and bonded to before being able to cast the spell, regardless of the wizard's spell level (see Chapter 8: Magic).

TECHAN CLASSES

Techan classes are cut from a different cloth from traditional fantasy roles. Where one group stumbles into each other after a round of mead in a dingy tavern, the techan parties have trained together as a cohesive unit long before attempting a voyage in the wastelands. A techan party that is not in constant communication and whose members think of only themselves and not the group will meet a quick and painful end. Techans have neither healing potions nor gods to pray for blessing. They have no elemental control over water or air. They have no symbiosis or sympathy from the surrounding environment. When in open echa, they are foreigners, encroachers often unwelcome. In order to survive, they must form groups, loyal bonds that remain stalwart even in the face of overwhelming horrors.

Of course, many bastion-born take jaunts into echa without fear of reprisal, but these are not those people. Tourists stick to the main road and sleep in large caravans escorted by guns and swords. They spend most of their time in large cities, safe from the dreadful fiends of fairy tales. Those travelers are naïve to the truth. Their adventures are sanitized, pre-chewed for their consumption to swallow easily. A techan party has no such luxuries. They venture in the deep forest, into the darkest dungeons, taking on the worst of horrors for the possibility of pittance. They rescue lost vacationers, scavenge technology, and fend off the cities from the invading forces approaching from all sides. Techans don't take on these jobs for glory. They do so out of duty for the bastion they were born from, out of loyalty to another, or for the acquisition of power and wealth.

A techan party must operate as cohesive unit, remaining in contact and providing support. They can't act selfishly or abandon their comrades in need. In the middle of battle, their loyalty is not for their government or for the coins in their purse, but for the brothers and sisters alongside them in the thick of combat. In this new time in this new world, techans care nothing for gender, race, age, or religion. They don't judge their comrades based on beliefs, preferences, or vices. In the end, they are all human ... techan humans, and as members of the true human race, they must work together to push back the wave of enchantment which



GROUNDER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Fire Support, Recoil Absorption
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus Feat, Front Line Deployment
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Brotherhood
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Fire Support
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Bonus Feat
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Brotherhood
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Fire Support
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Bonus Feat
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Brotherhood
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Fire Support
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Bonus Feat
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Brotherhood
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	Fire Support
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Bonus Feat
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Brotherhood
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Fire Support
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Bonus Feat
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Brotherhood
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Fire Support
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Bonus Feat

threatens to drive out mankind's footprint forever.

GROUNDER

Grounders in the military are often soldiers, occasionally referred to as grunts. They occupy the largest ratio of the armed forces of any bastion. You stood out from the others. You have probably exhibited a natural talent that could have paved the way for officer training. For a variety of reasons, you declined. You prefer to be a member of a team rather than the leader of an army. If you are part of a mercenary company, you could have become disenfranchised, tempted by the offers of wealth, or took on a personal mission that forced you to leave the service.

Although demonstrating some natural leadership skills, your range of authority is usually limited to those brothers-in-arms you can see around you. When the firing starts, you rely on training and inherent reflexes to save yourself and the men and women around you. You have embraced this path with a profound gusto. You don't know how to handle just one weapon; you can handle them all. You don't know how to just put one on set of armor; you can wear any of them, up to the largest power armor. You are a grounder, and like the medieval knights of ancient legend (and of today), you are the first and last line of defense for the king. Your

rifle is your sword and your faith absolute—faith that the group you have joined operates as a well-oiled machine. And unlike technology, this is not a machine that can be broken by magic.

CREATING A GROUNDER

Grounders fill a variety of roles. You can be the leader or the heavy support. You can target enemies from a distance or get up close. You are only as good as the men and women next to you. The majority of your abilities require the help of others to succeed. Your power is the weapon in your hand and the strength you offer your allies as backup. On your own, you are doomed to fail. Let others deal with actual objectives.

FRONT GROUNDER

Even if you answer to another authority, when the bullets fly, you act on instinct as part of a unit. You keep your weapons light so you can move without stumbling. You will seldom employ heavy auto weapons and prefer maneuvers to frontal assaults. The majority of your abilities should be ones that assist the group as a whole rather than deliver the maximum damage to a target.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Fire Support (Ex): At 1st level, 4th level, and every three levels after, you can select a Fire Support discipline. There are two to choose from: assault or precision. By pursuing assault, you favor automatic weapons that fire multiple rounds, increasing damage at the risk of accuracy. By selecting precision, you keep your weapon firing single rounds, ensuring a hit without wasting ammunition. To select a later level discipline, you must possess all the previous levels in that discipline (see Fire Support Paths).

Recoil Absorption (Ex): At 1st level, when wielding two-handed small arms, heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons, you can use Strength in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Strength in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Bonus Feats: At 2nd level, 5th level, 7th level, 13th level, and 17th level, you gain a bonus feat in addition to those gained from normal advancement. These feats must either be combat/fighter bonus feats or firearm feats. You are counted as a fighter of equal level when selecting fighter bonus feats.

Front Line Deployment (Ex): At 2nd level, you can select one ally in line of sight as a *swift action*. Until you select another ally or until the target moves out of sight, the targeted ally gains a +1 grounder bonus to AC and Ref saves.

Brotherhood (Ex): At level 3rd level, 6th level, and every four levels after, you can select one of the following brotherhood abilities. These are abilities that serve to compliment the group you are in, rewarding teamwork over selfish ambitions.

Combat Ineffective: If an ally in line of sight is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer, you gain a +2 brotherhood bonus to AC and attack rolls against the creature that hit the ally until the creature is destroyed.

Comrades in Arms: If an ally within 10 feet of you is hit by an attack, you gain a +1 brotherhood bonus to attack rolls against the creature that made that attack until the end of your next turn.

Covering Fire: If you make a single ranged attack as a standard action, you can decide to not roll to attack. If so, you inflict no damage; instead, all allies in line of sight gain a +2 brotherhood bonus to AC and all saving throws against attacks from the target until the beginning of your next turn.

For the Common Honor: If an ally within 5 feet of you suffers a critical hit, as an immediate action you can swap locations with the ally and suffer the hit and all effects instead.

Jump in Front: If you and at least one ally are struck by an area attack no bigger than 30 feet in radius, as an immediate action you can be targeted by a number of attacks equal to the effect's radius divided by 10 (round up) and your ally/allies are pushed out of the target area.

Man Down: If you are in the same square as a dead, prone, or unconscious ally, the ally cannot be targeted by any ranged or melee attack and automatically passes all saving throws. The effect ends if the target stands, if you leave the target's square, or if the target makes an attack.

Slow is Smooth: When you use a move action to move, you can reduce your speed by 10 ft and pull one ally within 5 feet with you. You cannot run or perform a special attack that includes movement with this ability.

Snap Out of It: Once a day, you can use a standard action to remove one of the following conditions an ally suffers from: confused, cowering, dazed, exhausted, fascinated, frightened, panicked, shaken, or staggered.

You cannot suffer from the same effect if you wish to use this ability.

Toss Clip: You can spend a move action to reload any ally's weapon. The ally must be within 10 feet and you must have the proper ammunition or cell.

FIRE SUPPORT PATHS ASSAULT

1st Level: Whenever you make a ranged attack with a firearm with the auto/heavy property, you may employ that property to increase your weapon's effect. A weapon with the auto property uses 5 rounds of ammunition per attack roll and a weapon with the heavy auto property uses 10. You inflict additional damage depending on the weapon property.

Auto Property: +1 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto Property: +2 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

7th Level: Your bonus to damage improves.

Auto Property (5 shots/attack roll): +2 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto Property (10 shots/attack roll): +3 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

10th Level: Your bonus to damage improves.

Auto Property (5 shots/attack roll): +3 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto Property (10 shots/attack roll): +4 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

13th Level: Your bonus to damage when applying the Auto property improves.

Auto Property (5 shots/attack roll): +4 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto Property (10 shots/attack roll): +6 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

16th Level: Your bonus to damage when applying

the Auto property improves.

Auto Property (5 shots/attack roll): +5 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto Property (10 shots/attack roll): +8 grounder bonus to damage rolls.

PRECISION

1st Level: When wielding a two-handed small arm, you do not suffer the -2 penalty to firing while moving.

4th Level: You can spend a swift action to gain a +1 insight bonus to all ranged attack rolls with attacks where you don't apply the auto/heavy auto property.

7th Level: If you don't apply the auto/heavy auto property to your ranged attacks and score a critical hit, increase the critical multiplier by 1 (x2 > x3 > x4 > x5).

13th Level: If you don't apply the auto/heavy auto property to your ranged attacks and you score a critical hit, your base damage die increases by two steps (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

16th Level: You gain a +4 insight bonus to your attack roll when attempting to confirm a critical hit.

HEAVY GROUNDER

Your job is not to talk but to deliver maximum stopping power. You wield the heaviest weapons and the heaviest armor. You are also often the slowest. You take orders rather than give them in hopes those orders include the release of hundreds of rounds of ammunition. You will have the most powerful weapons in the entire team and you use them to keep enemies at bay, pinning them and bringing down the largest opponents in the encounter.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Overwatch (Ex): At 1st level, you are able to target large areas in the battlefield and impede enemy advancement. Select an area *20 ft radius* spread within your weapon's range as a *move action*. Until the beginning of your next turn, the area is considered *difficult terrain* to any enemy targets attempting to move through it. If an enemy enters the area, you can make single ranged attack at your highest attack bonus as an immediate action. Employing *overwatch* requires an auto/heavy auto weapon (not set to single-shot) using

ammunition equal to a single ranged attack.

4th Level: The area of effect increases to 25 ft radius spread.

8th Level: The area of effect increases to 30 ft radius spread.

13th Level: The area of effect increases to 35 ft radius spread.

Recoil Absorption (Ex): At 1st level, when wielding two-handed small arms, heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons, you can use Strength in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Strength in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Sure-Footed (Ex): At 1st level, you can select one of the following abilities.

Lumberous: You treat heavy weapons as two-handed small arms for the purposes of attack penalties while moving. This does not apply to super heavy weapons.

Imposing: If you don't move on your turn, you provide cover for all adjacent allies until the beginning of your next turn.

Burst Fire (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can make a burst fire attack. As a *full-attack action*, you can apply the auto/heavy auto property to a weapon you are wielding (which has it) and target all creatures in a *10 ft radius* spread within weapon range. All attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty.

6th level: The area increases to 15 ft radius spread.

11th level: The area increases to 20 ft radius spread.

16th level: The area increases to 25 ft radius spread.

Fire Control (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can either conserve ammunition or waste it. Select one of the following abilities.

Conserve: When making an attack employing the auto/heavy auto property, you only use 3 rounds of ammunition per attack roll instead of 5. Heavy auto weapons always fire 8 (instead of 10).

Expend: When making an attack employing the auto/heavy auto property, you use +5 rounds of ammunition per attack roll and gain a +2 class bonus to damage rolls.

Attack of Necessity (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, as a *full-attack action*, you can apply the auto/heavy auto property to a weapon you are wielding (which has it) and target all creatures in a 15 ft cone centered on you.

7th level: The area of effect increases to 20 ft cone centered on you.

12th level: The area of effect increases to 25 ft cone centered on you.

17th level: The area of effect increases to 30 ft cone centered on you.

Gaming Avatar (Ex): At 5th level, you can select one of the following abilities.

Weapon Slap: If a target hits you with an opportunity attack resulted from you making a ranged attack, you can make a melee attack, using your weapon as a

HEAVY GROUNDER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Overwatch, Recoil Absorption, Sure Footed
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Burst Fire (10 ft), Fire Control
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Attack of Necessity (15 ft)
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Overwatch
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Gaming Avatar
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Burst Fire (15 ft)
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Attack of Necessity (20 ft)
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Overwatch
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Shrapnel
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Easy Target
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Burst Fire (20 ft)
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Attack of Necessity (25 ft)
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	Overwatch
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Easy Target
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Wildfire Overwatch
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Burst Fire (25 ft)
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Attack of Necessity (30 ft)
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Creeping Overwatch
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Solid Stance
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Suppressing Fire

club, as an immediate action.

Offload: When making an attack employing the auto/heavy auto property, you use +5 rounds of ammunition per attack roll and gain a +2 circumstance bonus to damage rolls.

Shrapnel (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you hit with a ranged attack applying the auto property, one creature adjacent to the target takes damage equal to your Constitution or Intelligence modifier.

Easy Target (Ex): At 10th level, when targeting a Large or larger creature with a weapon employing the auto/heavy auto property, you gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls against the target for every size above Medium the creature is (Large +1, Huge +2, Gargantuan +3, Colossal +4). At 14th level, your damage bonus from Easy Target improves to +2 (Large +2, Huge +4, Gargantuan +6, Colossal +8).

Wildfire Overwatch (Ex): Starting at 15th level, you can use a standard action instead of a move action with overwatch and double its area of effect. If you use creeping overwatch with wildfire overwatch, you can use a move action to sustain it without having to use another standard action.

Creeping Overwatch (Ex): Starting at 18th level, if you employed overwatch on your previous turn, you can use a swift action to sustain it without having to use another move action. You can move the area of effect up to 10 feet from its previous location.

Solid Stance (Ex): Starting at 19th level, if you are wielding a heavy or super heavy weapon, and as long as you don't move during your turn, you gain a +4 bonus to your combat maneuver defense against bull rush attempts and a +1 insight bonus to AC until the start of your next turn. If you move at all before the start of your next turn, this benefit is lost.

Suppressing Fire (Ex): Starting at 20th level, when you hit a target with a ranged attack using a weapon employing the auto/heavy auto property, the target is shaken until the start of your next turn.

MARSHAL

You possess either a natural talent for leadership or have undergone extensive training to deal with stressful situations. You know the dangers that lurk in the open world and can anticipate the actions of your enemies. You began life as a basic grunt but were separated early in life, groomed and greased into an elite commander of war. You could be in a position of authority because everyone else is bound by contract to obey your commands as their employer. This is unlikely a sign of weakness because poor leadership in the field results in a short lifespan for all those involved.

You could have developed this natural talent for leadership from several sources. You may have been a natural, spotted from the rank and file of the military.



MARSHAL

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Command Presence, For the Good of the Team, Big Picture
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Command Presence
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Team Priority
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Command Presence (+5 feet)
5	+4	+1	+4	+4	Team Priority
6	+5	+2	+5	+5	Command Presence
7	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5	Team Priority
8	+7/+2	+2	+6	+6	Believing Your Own Words
9	+8/+3	+3	+6	+6	Team Priority
10	+9/+10	+3	+7	+7	Command Presence
11	+10/+5	+3	+7	+7	Team Priority
12	+11/+6/+1	+4	+8	+8	Command Presence (+5 feet)
13	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+8	Team Priority
14	+13/+8/+3	+4	+9	+9	Command Presence
15	+14/+9/+4	+5	+9	+9	Team Priority
16	+15/+10/+5	+5	+10	+10	Big Picture, No One Hits the Chief
17	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+10	Team Priority
18	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+11	+11	Command Presence
19	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+11	Team Priority
20	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+12	+12	Manifestation of Greatness

You may have gathered your respect from friends and followers on the street. Regardless, your will and words can stiffen the backs of others. You can turn the tide of battles with your tactics. Out of combat, you are often the first and last to speak. You can talk your way out of a situation or be the one to instigate a fight. In the end, the marshal points the way.

CREATING A MARSHAL

As a marshal, you often began your life training to be grounder but moved into a command position either by accident in the field when your commanding officer fell to enemy attack or by taking classes on how to be someone responsible for a team. Perhaps you have a natural talent for leadership despite being a soldier like the rest. Alternately, you might have been funding the team, so leadership is assumed. Thankfully, you are no rank amateur and have experience dealing with the expected issues of the outside world. You have to be intelligent and adaptive.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d8

CLASS SKILLS

Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (history), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Mo-

tive (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor except advanced, all medium armor exception advanced, and all heavy techan armor except advanced. You also gain proficiency with simple melee weapons, one-handed small arms, and two-handed small arms.

Command Presence (Ex): At 1st level, you can use words and actions to inspire those around you. These come in the form of auras (see Command Presence Auras). At 1st level, 2nd level, and every four levels after, you may select one of the following auras: By Example, Field Advice, Intimidating Mug, Mask of Authority, Stand as One, or Strategic Precision. All auras *radiate 10 feet*. Starting at 4th level, all your Command Presence auras have their ranges extended by 5 feet. Starting at 12th level, they increase again by 5 feet.

You can activate an aura as a *swift action*, which lasts until you end it as a swift action or until you fall unconscious. It *does not provoke opportunity attacks*. In addition, each selected aura can also be temporarily boosted. You may have multiple auras in effect.

For the Good of the Team (Ex): At 1st level, you can sacrifice your standard action on your turn to give

another ally in line of sight a standard action either as an immediate action on your turn or as an additional standard action on his turn. Likewise, you can also sacrifice your move action to give another ally a move action either as an immediate action on your turn or as an additional move action on his turn. Once per day, you can swap your initiative order with another ally.

Big Picture (Ex): At 1st level, you can spend a *standard action* to boost an ally's effectiveness. Select one ally in line of sight; he inflicts extra damage equal to your Wisdom modifier + ½ your level on his next hit. Starting at 16th level, big picture is reduced to a *move* from a standard action.

Team Presence (Ex): Starting at 3rd level and every second level after, you can select one Team Presence trait.

Boar's Head: If you take a 5-foot step, all adjacent allies can move with you.

Control the Battle Theatre: If you are not flat-footed, any adjacent allies are not as well.

Bring Me Everyone: You can use a *standard action* and pull all allies in line of sight 20 feet towards you.

Face Slap: Once a day, you can use a *move action* to render one adjacent unconscious ally no longer unconscious. If the target was unconscious from being reduced to fewer than 0 hit points, she is healed to 1 hit point.

Focus Target: All allies gain a +1 marshal bonus to damage rolls against the last opponent you hit.

Mark of the Puppeteer: Any time you or any ally hits an opponent, you can slide that opponent 5 feet, as long as the opponent is not moved into hazardous terrain (like fire or a pit).

Plan of Attack: If an ally in line of sight threatens a critical hit on an opponent, you can confirm that critical without the ally having to roll. If you do this, you do not act on your next turn. You cannot use this ability if you have been denied your action in any way or suffer from any condition (like dazed, staggered, or stunned).

Quick Patch: As many times a day as your Wisdom modifier, you can use a *full-round action* to administer aid to an ally, curing them of 2d8 damage. Each time you are able to select a *team priority ability*, you can select quick patch again, increasing the damage cured by 1d8 (max 6d8).

Reading Body Language: You gain a +4 marshal bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Perception, or Sense Motive. Each time you are able to select a team priority ability, you can select reading body language again and select a different skill.

Set An Example: You and all allies in line of sight gain a +3 marshal bonus to Survival to stay alive in any harsh environment.

Take it up a Notch: Use a *move action* to increase any *command presence* auras in effect by 10 feet until the start of your next turn. You can only use this ability once per round.

Warrior's Creed: Allies within 5 feet of you or another ally which is 5 feet from you gain a +1 marshal bonus to AC and a +1 marshal bonus to Will Saves.

Believing Your Own Words (Ex): Starting at 8th level, all your Command Presence auras that affect allies affect you as well.

No One Hits the Chief (Ex): Starting at 16th level, all allies in your line of sight gain a +2 marshal bonus to attack any creature that hits you with an attack that does not target at least one other ally.

Manifestation of Greatness (Ex): Starting at 20th level, all allies within 5 feet of you can reroll all natural 1s on attack rolls.

COMMAND PRESENCE AURAS

By Example: You don't keep back and order from a distance; you stand shoulder to shoulder with those you lead.

Effect: Allies in range gain a +2 morale bonus to Fort saves and Will saves.

Exemplary Example: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a *swift action*. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), all allies in range gain a +1 morale bonus to AC.

Stage 2: When you reach a level allowing you to select an additional command presence aura, you can instead select by example a second time. If you do, the Fort and Will bonuses increase to +3 and the bonus to AC increases to +2.

Field Advice: Using only words, your comrades recover from the most harmful of afflictions.

Effect: Allies in range cannot suffer from being shaken or staggered.

Profound Advice: Once a day, select one ally and one opponent in range as a *swift action*. Until the opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), the targeted ally is immune to one of the following conditions: fatigued, shaken, sickened, dazed, staggered, exhausted, frightened, blinded, deafened, paralyzed or stunned.

Stage 2: When you reach a level allowing you to select an additional command presence aura, you can instead select field advice a second time. If you do, allies are also immune to being dazed as well, and you can select two allies with profound advice instead of one.

Intimidating Mug: Opponents take one look at you and begin to rethink their approach.

Effect: All enemies treat the area as difficult terrain.

Menacing Mug: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a *swift action*. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), all command presence auras you have in effect (not just *intimidating mug*) increase their range by 10 ft.

Stage 2: When you reach a level allowing you to select an additional command presence aura, you can instead select intimidating mug a second time. If you do, you increase the range to 20ft, and you can use menacing mug twice a day.

Mask of Authority: Your friends believe themselves better knowing you're around.

Effect: All allies in range gain a +2 morale bonus to damage rolls.

Personification of Authority: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a *swift action*. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), if an ally in range misses with an attack roll against the target, he gains a +1 bonus on his next damage roll. This is cumulative up to +4 and is lost after he hits with an attack.

Stage 2: When you reach a level allowing you to select an additional command presence aura, you can instead select mask of authority a second time. If you do, you increase the damage bonus to +3.

Stand as One: As long as you stand, no one falls.

Effect: All allies in range gain DR1/-

Brotherhood: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a *swift action*. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), increase the DR by 2.

Stage 2: When you reach a level allowing you to select an additional command presence aura, you can instead select mask of authority a second time. If you do, you increase the base DR to DR2/-

Strategic Precision: You lead the attack, drawing allied fire to your target.

Effect: All allies in range gain a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls against the last target you hit.

Strategic Superiority: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a *swift action*. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), all allies in range can take a 5 ft. step as a *swift action* as long as the movement ends still within range of the aura.

Stage 2: When you reach a level allowing you to select an additional command presence aura, you can instead select strategic precision a second time. If you do, you increase the attack bonus to +2.

OPERATOR

The general-use operative, the jack-of-all-trades – the techan group will be hard pressed to survive without their operator. The operator is a vital member, especially as a group ventures deeper and deeper in the world of fantasy. You found the outside world fascinating, but are not one to forget the damage it did to your species and their legacy. The progress of man has faltered and you strive to get it back.

But to destroy a thing, you must understand a thing. You refuse to turn a blind eye to that world, for naivety is a sure path to death. Grounders are only good for shooting stuff. That primitive attitude is a sign of archaic military monsters. True survival deals with mankind's unique ability to adapt, to understand the ways and flaws of a system. As an expert in this world, you know how to survive in it, but more importantly, you know how to survive in it without magic.

You don't specialize in one talent but many. You are the linguist, the mechanic, the medic, and the professor rolled into one role. You understand the relationship between magic and technology and can repair the results when they clash. You have seen the types of injuries sustained on human flesh by the claws and spells of monsters and the conditions other doctors would scratch their head over. You know more about the re-

gions and monsters of the world more than any other.

Of all the members of a techan group, you are probably the only one that could survive on your own. Not that you would want to.

CREATING AN OPERATOR

The operator is the foremost authority on the outside world and its effects on man and machinery. You have studied echa and know it as well as anyone that has spent their entire life out there. Unlike others, you may not have the fevered hatred of the world of fantasy. You have been accused of being a sympathizer, but one must know an enemy in order to defeat it. You address this with two possible approaches. One is to support the group as a doctor and the other is to maintain the technological supremacy of the team as a whole.

MECHANIC OPERATOR

As a mechanic, you made your choice. You prefer air conditioning, the internet, and machines that automatically wash dishes. You wish to keep the technology of man from breaking down in the unreality of the fantasy world. You have learned enough of the chaos of outside life to know a few tricks to keep technology from going on the fritz the moment it leaves the walls of a bastion. You can keep machinery working and clear up jams when they occur.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d8

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 7 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor except advanced, all medium techan armor except advanced and all heavy techan armor except advanced. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Flash of Genius (Ex): At 1st level, while you are wielding a small arm, you can use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Shiny Red Button (Ex): At 1st level, you put a button on your firearm. You can press the button as a *free action*. You only need eight hours of work to put the button on a new firearm but only you can press it without breaking the weapon.

- If you press the button before the attack roll,



do not roll: you automatically hit.

- If you press it after you hit, the target takes additional damage equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your level + your Intelligence modifier (effectively doubling your attribute modifier if using Flash of Genius).
- You can also press it after a critical threat to confirm the critical hit.

You start at 1st level able to press the button four times a day. You gain additional uses at later levels. You can only press the button once per round.

3rd Level: You can press the shiny red button two additional times per day but only once per turn.

7th Level: You can press the shiny red button two additional times per day but only once per turn.

11th Level: You can press the shiny red button



MECHANIC OPERATOR

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Flash of Genius, Overdrive, Shiny Red Button, Tech Savant, Widget Bag
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Improved Repertoire, Midas Touch
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Shiny Red Button
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Midas Touch
5	+4	+1	+4	+4	Strained Effort
6	+5	+2	+5	+5	Disruption Suppression
7	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5	Shiny Red Button
8	+7/+2	+2	+6	+6	Boosted Clip
9	+8/+3	+3	+6	+6	Tech Savant
10	+9/+10	+3	+7	+7	Diligent Repairs
11	+10/+5	+3	+7	+7	Shiny Red Button
12	+11/+6/+1	+4	+8	+8	Midas Touch
13	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+8	The Button Beckons You
14	+13/+8/+3	+4	+9	+9	Tech Savant
15	+14/+9/+4	+5	+9	+9	Shiny Red Button
16	+15/+10/+5	+5	+10	+10	The Gum Trick
17	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+10	Tech Savant
18	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+11	+11	Midas Touch
19	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+11	Shiny Red Button
20	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+12	+12	Succumb to the Maddening Urge

two additional times per day but only once per turn.

15th Level: You can press the shiny red button two additional times per day.

19th Level: You can press the shiny red button two additional times per day.

Tech Savant (Ex): At 1st level you gain the ability to permanently modify the weapon and armor under your control. Choose two of the following *tech savant* abilities. You can only have one in effect, and they can be activated or deactivated with a *swift action*. At 9th level at 14th level, you gain one additional *tech savant* ability. At 17th level, you can empty two *tech savant* abilities simultaneously (though each must be activated separately).

Charge Shot: Each time you hit a Medium or smaller target with a ranged weapon, you push it 5 feet. If the target cannot be pushed, it is staggered until the start of your next turn. You can only push a target 5 feet per turn at 1st level, 10 feet per turn at 10th level, and 15 feet per turn at 20th level.

Constant Adjustment: Your gear gains a +3 insight bonus to disruption saves, and you can make disruption saves at the start of your turn as well as at the end. Each ally in line of sight gains a +1 insight bonus to disruption saves. At 10th level, you gain a +5 insight bonus to disruption saves, and your allies gain a +2 insight bonus to disruption saves.

Economical Plating: You gain a +1 operator bonus to AC and Ref saves. You do not grant flanking bonuses to opponents.

Improved Precision: You gain a +1 operator bonus to ranged attack rolls and a +2 operator bonus to ranged attack rolls against all creatures within 20 ft.

Modified Caliber/Output: All your ranged attacks gain a +2 operator bonus to damage rolls against targets within your weapon's first range increment. At 7th level, this increases to +3 and at 14th level, it increases to +4.

Widget Bag (Ex): At 1st level, you can use widgets to repair, modify, and create items. You keep pieces handy for on-site repairs. You have enough parts on hand for 200 uc worth of repairs. These parts cannot be sold or traded. They are useless to others. The bag weighs 5 lbs. It cannot be disrupted and the parts work with any device you attempt to repair. You can increase the size of this widget bag later by investing in more widgets. Every 500 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 7th level, the bag's weight drops by half and every additional 1,000 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 14th level, the bag's weight drops by half again and every 100,000 uc adds another 1 lb. Once invested, you do not get this value back. When you scavenge technology, the GM may award a certain value in uc of additional widgets (see Engineer). Widgets count

BONUS	ENGINEER DC
Ranged weapons	
+1 to damage	20
+2 to damage	27
+3 to damage	37
+15 to long range	20
+30 to long range	27
+50 to long range	37
Electronic Devices	
+1 skill bonus	20
+2 skill bonus	27
+3 skill bonus	37
Vehicles	
+1 to initiative & maneuver	20
+1 to maneuver & speed	25
+2 to maneuver & speed	30
Power Armor	
+1 to attack and damage with Melee weapons	25
+2 to attack and damage with Melee weapons	30
+3 to attack and damage with Melee weapons	37

against the total treasure awarded.

Overdrive (Ex): At 1st level, once a day, you can use a *standard action* to attempt to temporarily overdrive a weapon or device, offering it a quick boost at the sacrifice of its operational lifespan. This does not provoke opportunity attacks. Select one piece of equipment, make an Engineer check, and consult the following table: You can apply any one modification for which you meet or exceed the DC. The modification lasts for *5 minutes*. After the time has expired, you must make another Engineer check against the same DC or the modified item breaks, requiring repairs. If you are unable to make the Engineer check, the item immediately breaks.

Midas Touch (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, while you're wielding a firearm, its damage die increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). This stacks with any other effect that increases damage die size.

4th Level: Your damage die bonus from midas touch improves by one step.

12th Level: Your damage die bonus from midas touch improves by one step.

18th Level: Your damage die bonus from midas touch improves by one step.

Improved Repertoire (Ex): At 2nd level, you gain 1 additional class skill.

Strained Effort (Ex): Starting at 5th level, if you fail a skill check, you gain a +5 operator bonus to any saving throw until the start of your next turn.

Disruption Suppression (Ex): Starting at 6th level, select one piece of gear in your possession. As long as it remains in your possession, the item cannot be disrupted or broken.

Boosted Clip (Ex): Starting at 8th level, you can

modify one clip or cell of a weapon's ammunition (yours or an ally's). This takes *5 minutes* and you can only modify one cell/clip a day. The weapon's damage die increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10) when that clip is used.

The Button Beckons You (Ex): Starting at 13th level, you can press the shiny red button twice per turn.

Diligent Repairs (Ex): At 10th level, you can administer quick repairs to bring a disrupted piece of technology bank from the brink. As a *standard action*, target one piece of disrupted equipment within reach. Make an Engineer check at DC15+2/tech level of the target. The target gains a bonus to its disruption save equal the amount by which you beat the DC. This bonus remains until the target recovers. This action *provokes opportunity attacks*.

The Gum Trick (Ex): Starting at 16th level, *once a day* as a *move action* you can perform the Gum Trick. Select one piece of equipment. Select one of the following effects.

- A broken item is repaired and cannot be disrupted for 1 hour.
- An unbroken weapon gains a +4 bonus to damage rolls for 1 hour.
- Unbroken powered armor gains a +2 bonus to AC for 1 hour.

Succumb to the Maddening Urge (Ex): Starting at 20th level, each time you start a new day, you gain 1d4 additional uses of the shiny red button. These extra uses are gone at the end of the day.

MEDIC

You may be forced into violence, but you are primarily a medic. You consider the lives of your team members more important than any others and will always choose your allies over other injuries on the battlefield. You have no apprehension in firing upon others that threaten your team.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d8

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 7 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor except advanced, all medium techan armor except advanced and all heavy techan armor except advanced. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

MEDIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	EXPLOITS PER DAY			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Flash of Genius, Medical Expertise, Medical Exploits	1	—	—	—
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Improved Repertoire	1	—	—	—
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Intelligent Resistance	1	0	—	—
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Primary Target	1	1	—	—
5	+4	+1	+4	+4		2	1	—	—
6	+5	+2	+5	+5	Risk an Aneurysm	2	1	0	—
7	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5		2	1	1	—
8	+7/+2	+2	+6	+6	Do Science To It	2	2	1	—
9	+8/+3	+3	+6	+6	Modern Master	3	2	1	0
10	+9/+10	+3	+7	+7	Evasive Overdrive	3	2	1	1
11	+10/+5	+3	+7	+7		3	2	2	1
12	+11/+6/+1	+4	+8	+8	Weak Spot	3	3	2	1
13	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+8	Defilade	4	3	2	1
14	+13/+8/+3	+4	+9	+9		4	3	2	2
15	+14/+9/+4	+5	+9	+9	Outthink & Outwit	4	3	3	2
16	+15/+10/+5	+5	+10	+10	Foolish Endeavor	4	4	3	3
17	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+10		4	4	4	3
18	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+11	+11	Modern Master	4	4	4	4
19	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+11		4	4	4	4
20	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+12	+12	Good Thing You Have Friends	4	4	4	4

Flash of Genius (Ex): At 1st level, while you are wielding a small arm, you can use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Medical Expertise (Ex): At 1st level, you are able to aid allies in pinpointing weak spots in enemies based on your own medical knowledge. As an *immediate action*, you can target an ally up to *20 ft + 10 ft / level* away who has hit a creature with a ranged attack this turn. Add your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier as extra damage to that hit. *Medical expertise* does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Medical Exploits (Ex): A medic gains exploits he can use each day. They operate nearly identical to spells like a cleric or wizard would cast. Because they are all extraordinary, exploits require no verbal components. They require both somatic and material components. Unlike spells, medical exploits require neither contemplation nor studying each morning; you regain the use of them each day. You can use any exploit on the exploit list, provided that you can use the exploit of that level. You do not need to choose which exploits to prepare each morning. Like spellcasters, you receive bonus exploits per day if you have a high Intelligence score. When the medic table indicates that you get 0

exploits per day of a given spell level, you gain only the bonus exploits you would be entitled to based on your Intelligence score for that exploit level.

Improved Repertoire (Ex): At 2nd level, you gain 1 additional class skill.

Intelligent Resistance (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws.

Primary Target (Ex): Starting at 4th level, if you make no attacks that can inflict damage on your turn, you gain a +2 medic bonus to AC and Ref saves until the start of your next turn.

Risk an Aneurysm (Ex): Starting at 6th level, you can use a *move action* and suffer 2 points of Constitution drain in order to recover one medical exploit of any level you can cast. You must employ that exploit within 1 minute or it is lost.

Do Science To It (Ex): Starting at 8th level, you gain a +1 medic bonus to all Intelligence- and Wisdom-based class skills. In addition, you gain 1 additional class skill.

Modern Master (Ex): At 9th and 18th level, you can select one level 1 medical exploit and gain 1 free use of that exploit a day, in addition to any other exploits you cast. At 18th level, you can select the same exploit from 9th level and gain a second free use of that exploit a day.

Evasive Overdrive (Ex): Starting at 10th level, you are able to do everything in your power to avoid getting hit. You can use a move action and target one creature up to 20 ft + 10 ft/level away. You gain a +2 bonus to AC and Ref saves against the target and don't provoke opportunity attacks from the target until the beginning of your next turn. You may also move up to half your speed.

Weak Spot (Ex): Starting at 12th level, if you fail to confirm a critical hit on an opponent, you still inflict 2 points of bleed damage.

Defilade (Ex): Starting at 13th level, if an opponent fails to confirm a critical threat against you, each ally in line of sight to the opponent gains a +1 medic bonus to attack it until the start of your next turn.

Outthink & Outwit (Ex): Starting at 15th level, you are able to quickly ascertain your enemy's eye movements and body language and determine the best course of action. As a *full-round action*, you can target one creature up to 50 ft + 10 ft/level away. The target is flat-footed until the start of your next turn.

Foolish Endeavor (Ex): Starting at 16th level, whenever you miss with a ranged attack, you can take a 5-foot step as a free action. This does not count as a 5-foot step on your turn.

Good Thing You Have Friends (Ex): Starting at 20th level, you gain the ability to use allies for cover. For each adjacent ally, you gain a +1 bonus to AC and Ref saves (Max +2). If you are still hit with an attack, you can transfer all damage to any single adjacent ally regardless if the original attack roll can hit the ally or not. If the attack targets you and the ally, the ally takes both damage values, taking your damage second. If the ally is dropped below 0 hit points with the first hit, he cannot suffer your hit as well. The ally does not have to be willing.

FIRST LEVEL HEALER EXPLOITS

ANATOMY EXPERT

Level medic I

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: N/A

Target: one creature you hit with a ranged weapon and score a critical threat.

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The hit becomes a confirmed critical hit.

CLAMP THE ARTERY

Level medic I

Casting Time: 1 move action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target is healed of any damage incurred by the last hit.

Advanced: At 10th level, this exploit is reduced to a swift action.

CORTICAL REINFORCEMENT INJECTION

Level medic I

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: 1 day

Effect: The target is immune to being blinded.

Advanced: At 10th level, you can target two creatures, though each one requires a full-round action.

DIAGNOSE AND CURE

Level medic I

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: touch

Target: one living creature suffering from disease or poison

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to his next save to recover from the disease or poison. He also gains a +2 enhancement bonus against identical disease or poison attacks for the rest of the day.

EMERGENCY PATCH

Level medic I

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 2d4.

Advanced: At 10th level, you can either increase the hit point recovery to your total Heal skill modifier + 3d8 or you can target two creatures instead of one.

STANOZOLOL INJECTION

Level medic I

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: 1 hour

Effect: The target gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity (affecting attack bonuses, Reflex saves, Dexterity checks, etc). The target also receives a +10 ft bonus to speed.

Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action.

SECOND LEVEL EXPLOITS

ADRENALINE INJECTION

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 move action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target gains one additional standard action on his next turn and on his following turn.

Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a move action.

ADVANTAGEOUS SCLERODERMA INJECTION

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: touch

Target: you or one living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target grants a +2 medic bonus to the creature's natural armor bonus. This bonus increases to +4 at 8th level and +6 at 14th level.

Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a standard action.

ANGEL OF DEATH

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature with 1 hit point or less

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The creature is killed and you gain 10 temporary hit points which are lost at the end of the day

Advancement: At 15th level, you gain 15 temporary hit points.

MEDICAL MASTER

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: you and one living creature OR two living creatures

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 2d8. The target also gains a +3 inherent bonus to Fort saves for five minutes.

Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 4 creatures, but each requires a full-round action.

NATURAL HEALER

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: touch

Target: you or one living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 3d4.

Advancement: At 15th level, you increase the effect to regain hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 5d4.

QUICK RECOVERY

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: personal

Target: yourself

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: When you make an Intelligence- or Wisdom-based skill check, you may double your ability modifier for the check. If the check still fails, you

gain a +10 bonus to all saves until the end of your next turn.

Advancement: At 15th level, you increase the effect to regain hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 5d4.

SYNTHETIC STEROID

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: 1 hour.

Effect: The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength (affecting attack bonuses, damage rolls, Strength checks, etc).

Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action.

TREAT PATIENT

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: touch

Target: one creature suffering from a disease or poison

Duration: 1 day

Effect: The target suffers no effects from any disease or poison currently affecting it. The target gains a +2 bonus saves to recover from the disease or poison until the end of the day.

XANTHINE INJECTION

Level medic 2

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: 1 hour

Effect: The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Constitution (affecting hit points, Fortitude saves, Constitution checks, etc). Hit points gained this way are not temporary hit points. They go away when the target's Constitution drops back to normal; they are not lost first as temporary hit points.

Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action.

THIRD LEVEL EXPLOITS

ANALEPTIC INJECTION

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one unconscious living creature

Duration: Instantaneous / 1 day

Effect: The target wakes up. If reduced to below 0 hit points, the target is brought to 0 hit points and wakes up. If the target is above 0 hit points, it is immune to sleep effects for the rest of the day.

Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action.

AVERSION THERAPY

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: N/A

Target: One creature you hit with a ranged weapon

Duration: 1 round / Intelligence modifier

Effect: The target suffers a -2 penalty to AC and is staggered.

EPHEDRINE PSYCHOTROPIC INJECTION

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: 1 living creature

Duration: five minutes

Effect: The target recovers from any effect requiring a Will save and is immune to Will-based attacks. The target also gains DR5/-.

DELAY CONDITION

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: touch

Target: 1 living creature.

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target recovers from 1 condition it suffers from and gains a +4 bonus to saves against that condition for 5 minutes.

MINOR MEDICAL MIRACLE

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: touch

Target: one creature that has been reduced to below 0 hit points or fewer or killed in the past five minutes.

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 2d8 and is dazed for 1d4 minutes.

POUND THE CHEST

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one creature that has been reduced to below 0 hit points or fewer or killed in the previous round.

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier). The target is dazed for 1d4 rounds.

UNHEALTHY

PSYCHOSTIMULANT INJECTION

Level medic 3

Casting Time: 1 full-round action

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: 5 minutes

Effect: When making a full attack action, the target may make one extra attack with any weapon it is holding. The attack is made using the target's full base attack

bonus, plus any modifiers appropriate to the situation. The target also gains +1 injection bonus on attack rolls and a +1 dodge bonus to AC and Reflex saves. Any condition that makes the target lose its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) also makes it lose dodge bonuses. All of the target's modes of movement increase by 30 feet, to a maximum of twice the target's normal speed. This increase counts as an enhancement bonus, and it affects the target's jumping distance as normal for increased speed. After the effect expires, the target is staggered for 1 hour.

Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action.

FOURTH LEVEL EXPLOITS

EXOTIC CONCOCTION

Level medic 4

Casting Time: 5 minutes

Range: touch

Target: Up to 6 creatures

Duration: 1 hour

Effect: The target gains temporary hit points equal your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier).

Advancement: At 20th level, target gains temporary hit points equal your total Heal skill modifier +3d4.

FIELD EXPERIENCE

Level medic 4

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 20 ft

Target: Up to 6 creatures

Duration: Five minutes

Effect: The target's critical threat range increases by 1.

Advancement: At 20th level, the target's critical threat range increases by 2.

I CAN HEAR BELLS RINGING

Level medic 4

Casting Time: 1 immediate action

Range: personal

Target: yourself

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: If you are targeted by an area effect, you are moved to the nearest unoccupied space outside the area. You also gain a +5 bonus to AC and Ref saves until the end of your next turn.

MAJOR MEDICAL MIRACLE

Level medic 4

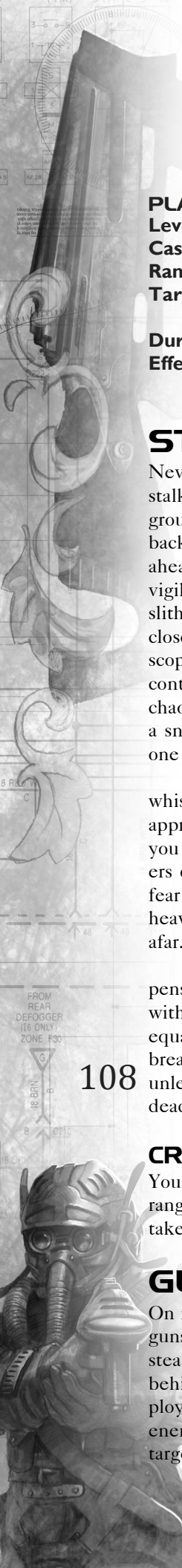
Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: touch

Target: one living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target recovers any and all of the following adverse conditions affecting the target: ability damage, blinded, confused, dazed, dazzled, deafened, diseased, exhausted, fatigued, feebleminded, insanity, nauseated, poisoned, sickened, and stunned. The



target also recovers hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier). This does not remove negative levels or restore permanently drained ability score points.

PLAYING GOD

Level medic 4

Casting Time: 5 minutes

Range: touch

Target: one ally that has been killed in the past 30 minutes.

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The target returns to life with 20 hit points, and they awaken.

STALKER

Never too close, never too far. Such is the motto of the stalker. You are as important as any member of the group, but you don't spend your travel time walking back to front with an armed comrade. You travel on ahead, away from the distractions of the others, ever vigilant against any encroachers. When on a task, you slither under bushes, stalking your prey. You strike close with the blade or pistol or at distance through the scope. Stalkers are still members of the team and can contribute to the effectiveness of the group by creating chaos in enemy lines. Nothing is more frightening than a sniper no one can see or an enemy in their ranks no one can target.

As a distant set of eyes, you can communicate, via whispers and movements, necessary information on approaching enemies. When engagements get messy, you will still join the thick of it, never abandoning others despite the ambiguity of your location. You do not fear your enemies closing in. Blades are clumsy and heavy and the pistol is deadlier at point blank than from afar.

In the anarchy of the outside world, you can compensate for every situation. If an enemy presents you with a target from over a hill, so be it, but you are equally skilled if you can see their eyes and feel their breath. You don't wish to see a magical monstrosity unless it is behind the targeting reticle of your scope or dead on the ground after you claimed it as a kill.

CREATING A STALKER

Your direction with stalker depends entirely on your range. Would you prefer to be up close and personal or take out your targets at a distance?

GUNSLINGER

On nearly the opposite side from the sniper stalker, the gunslinger is all about being up close. You use your stealth and trickery to get close to an enemy or sneak behind enemy lines and attack from a flank. You employ light weapons in this practice, slipping by fallen enemies and dancing through battle lines to find your target.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex),

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor except advanced, all medium armor except advanced, and all heavy techan armor except advanced. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Act on Instinct (Ex): You may use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for all ranged attack and damage rolls. You can also use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Bullet Ballet (Ex): At 1st level, you can make a bullet ballet attack as a *full-attack action*. When doing so you make one additional attack with any one-handed small arm as if using the Two-Weapon Fighting feat (even if you do not meet the prerequisites for the feat). At 8th level, you can make two additional attacks when he uses bullet ballet, as if using Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (even if you do not meet the prerequisites for the feat). You can only use bullet ballet with one-handed small arms.

Combat Theatrics (Ex): At 1st level, you can select one ability from the Combat Theatrics list below. You can select 1 additional ability at 6th level, 12th level, and 18th level.

Combat Virtuoso: You can take a 5-foot step as a *swift action*. This does not count as a 5-foot step that turn.

Cowboy Action: If you only wield one one-handed small arm, you gain a +1 gunslinger bonus to all attack rolls. You can also draw and holster one-handed small arms as a free action and change a clip for a one-handed small arm as a *swift action*.

Dual Wielding: If you are wielding two one-handed small arms, you gain a +2 gunslinger bonus to damage rolls within the first range increment. You also deny flanking bonuses to opponents when wielding two one-handed small arms. This damage bonus increases to +3 at 7th level, and +4 at 14th level.

Gunplay: You can spend a *move action* to gain +2 gunslinger bonus to AC until the start of your next turn.

Rapid Kill: You can choose to make a ranged attack as a *swift action* as if making a ranged attack with a standard. Swift action hits only inflict 1 point of damage and cannot inflict a critical hit. You can still apply damage bonuses from class abilities, feats and enhanced weapons.

Total Disregard: If you are wielding two one-handed small arms, you can make a bullet ballet as a *full-attack action* and make another attack at your high-

GUNSLINGER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	BULLET BALLET	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	+0/+0	Act on Instinct, Bullet Ballet, Combat Theatrics, Kata,
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	+1/+1	Gun-Fu +1, High Noon
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	+2/+2	Kata, Reflex Shot
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	+3/+3	Pure Cinema
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	+4/+4	Gun-Fu +2, Kata
6	+6/+1	+2	+5	+2	+5/+5/+0	Combat theatrics
7	+7/+2	+2	+5	+2	+6/+6/+1	Kata
8	+8/+3	+2	+6	+2	+7/+7/+2/+2	Pure Cinema
9	+9/+4	+3	+6	+3	+8/+8/+3/+3	Gun-Fu +3, Kata
10	+10/+5	+3	+7	+3	+9/+9/+4/+4	Lightning Reload
11	+11/+6/+1	+3	+7	+3	+10/+10/+5/+5/+0	Gun-Fu +4, Kata
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+4	+11/+11/+6/+6/+1	Combat theatrics, Pure Cinema (10 ft)
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+8	+4	+12/+12/+7/+7/+2	Kata
14	+14/+9/+4	+4	+9	+4	+13/+13/+8/+8/+3	Gun-Fu +4
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+9	+5	+14/+14/+9/+9/+4/+4	Kata
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+5	+15/+15/+10/+10/+5/+5/+0	Quickdraw
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	+16/+16/+11/+11/+6/+6/+1	Gun-Fu +4, Kata
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	+17/+17/+12/+12/+7/+7/+2	Combat Theatrics
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	+18/+18/+13/+13/+8/+8/+3	Kata
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	+19/+19/+14/+14/+9/+9/+4	Heroic Bloodshed, Pure Cinema (15 ft)

est attack bonus. If you use total disregard with bullet ballet, you suffer a -4 penalty to AC and all saves until the start of your next turn.

Kata (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you discover that the geometric distribution of antagonists in any gun battle is a statistically predictable element. You are a master of this talent—an adversary not to be taken lightly. As many *times per day as your Wisdom modifier*, you can take a *swift action* to make a single attack at your highest attack bonus. If the first attack misses, you may make a second attack (using extra ammunition as normal). You gain additional uses of kata at 3rd level and ever 2 levels after. Starting at *15th level*, Kata is reduced to a *free action*, though you cannot use Kata more than twice a round.

High Noon (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, when on your first turn after rolling initiative, you gain a +2 class bonus to attack rolls and a +4 class bonus to damage rolls until the end of your first turn or until you hit, whichever comes last.

Reflex Shot (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you may use a one-handed small arm with an opportunity attack.

Pure Cinema (Ex): Starting at 4th level, as a *standard action*, you can make a single attack at your high-

est bonus against every target in a 5-foot radius centered on you. At 12th level, this radius increases to 10 feet, and at 20th level, it increases to 15 feet.

Gun-Fu (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you gain a class bonus to Acrobatic checks. The bonus starts at +1, increasing to +2 at 5th level, +3 at 8th level, +4 at 11th level, +5 at 14th level, and +6 at 17th level.

Lightning Reload (Ex): Starting at 10th level, you can reload a single one-handed small arm as a swift action, or as a free action if using *cowboy action*.

Quickdraw (Ex): Starting at 16th level, if you are hit with a ranged attack, you can use Kata as an immediate action instead of a free action.

Heroic Bloodshed (Ex): Starting at 20th level, any time you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you gain an additional use of Kata which you must use before the end of this turn. You can only gain one use of Kata per round in this way.

SNIPER

You are a master of long-range fire. You take out targets well beyond the range of any of their weapons. By using gut instincts and field experience you can compensate for wind, gravity, and even the curvature of the planet.

SNIPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	Act on Instinct, Marksman's Talent
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	Battle Condition
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	Fake Echo, Sweep Terrain +1
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	Zero Your Weapon
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	Procedural Memory
6	+6/+1	+2	+5	+2	Marksman's Talent
7	+7/+2	+2	+5	+2	Battle Condition
8	+8/+3	+2	+6	+2	Sweep Terrain +2
9	+9/+4	+3	+6	+3	Boom! Head Shot
10	+10/+5	+3	+7	+3	Failure Is Not an Option
11	+11/+6/+1	+3	+7	+3	Marksman's Talent
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+4	Sweep Terrain +3
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+8	+4	Battle Condition
14	+14/+9/+4	+4	+9	+4	Penetrable Shot
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+9	+5	Sweep Terrain +4
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+5	Marksman's Talent
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	Magic Bullet
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	Sweep Terrain +5
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	Battle Condition
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	Sweep Terrain +6

Your goal is to never be in direct combat and to prevent your allies from coming to harm.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex),

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor except advanced, all medium armor except advanced, and all heavy techan armor except advanced. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Act on Instinct: You may use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for all ranged attack and damage rolls. You can also use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Marksman's Talent: At 1st level, you can use a *full-round action* to make a single ranged attack with a sniper weapon against a target 25 feet away or further. If you hit, you can employ a marksman's talent by

spending a marksman's point. Each talent can be spent as a *free action*. The number of marksman points in your marksman's pool is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your *sniper level* + your *Wisdom modifier*.

1st Level: You can only spend 1 point per full-round action.

6th Level: You can spend up to 2 points per full-round action.

11th Level: You can spend up to 3 points per full-round action.

16th Level: You can spend up to 4 points per full-round action.

Academic Kill (1 point): Inflict additional damage with a hit. At 1st level, the damage bonus is 2d6. This damage increases to 4d6 at 7th level and 6d6 at 14th level.

Assassin Psychology (1 point): Use after you hit; that hit becomes a critical threat.

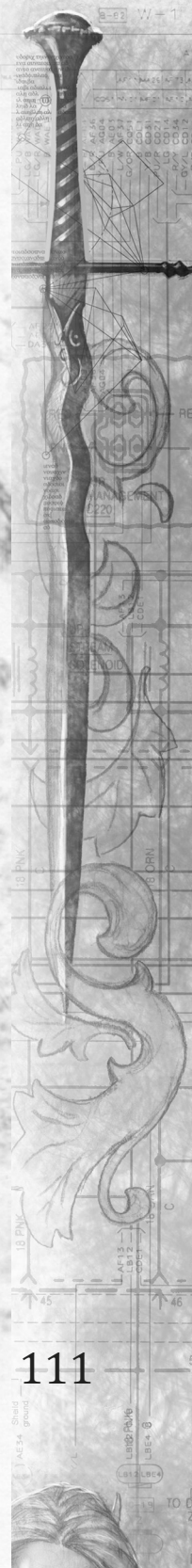
Dum-Dum (1 point): Use after you hit; the target is knocked prone.

Hydrostatic Shock (1 point): If you score a critical threat, that threat is confirmed without having to re-roll.

Pinpoint Accuracy (3 points): The target is stunned until the beginning of your next turn.

Sharpshooter (1 point): Use before making an attack roll. Do not roll to attack; you automatically hit.

Systemic Inflammation (2 points): The target hit is dazed until the beginning of your next turn.



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Weak Spot (1 point): The target hit is staggered until the beginning of your next turn.

Battle Condition: There are many disciplines when pursuing the path of a sniper. Starting at 2nd level, you gain one of the following special abilities. All *battle conditions* require a *move action* to use. You may select another *battle condition* at 7th level, 13th level, and 19th level.

Army Crawl: While prone, you can use a *move action* and move at half your speed. This provokes at-

tacks of opportunity as normal.

Ballistics Expertise: Increase the critical threat range of your next attack roll by 1. This effect is cumulative and the next attack roll can occur up to 10 rounds after using this ability.

Covert Operation: Use a *move action* and move at full speed without inflicting penalties to Stealth checks.

Dug In Like a Bug: Use a *move action* to gain cover if you are prone. This is in addition to other benefits from being prone. This effect is lost if you



move.

Lead the Target: You slow your breathing and hold the weapon steady. You have all the time in the world to make the perfect shot. Use a *move action* to target a creature in line of sight. That creature becomes your focus. You can only have one focus at a time. Your next attack roll against your focus gains a +2 bonus. Until you target another creature, move, or make an attack roll, you can continue to use *lead the target* and stack the attack bonuses (max +8). After you make the attack roll, the bonus is lost. If you accumulate at least a +6 bonus, you can reroll all natural 1s on the attack roll.

Perfect Camouflage: Use a *move action* to gain a +5 bonus to your next Stealth check.

Perfect Tracker: You are quick to aim under any circumstances. Use a *move action* and move half your speed. After you move, you either enable or maintain your proficiency bonus with weapons with the Sniper property.

Fake Echo (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, if using Stealth and making a ranged attack with a sniper weapon, the penalty to Stealth checks to maintain your obscured location is reduced by 10 (-10 instead of -20).

Sweep Terrain (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you gain a +1 class bonus to Perception. This bonus increases +2 at 8th level, +3 at 12th level, +4 at 15th level, +5 at 18th level, and +6 at 20th level.

Zero Your Weapon (Ex): Starting at 4th level, the range increments of all two-handed small arms you wield are increased by 20 ft.

Procedural Memory (Ex): Starting at 5th level, you can use a *full-round action* in order to use *marksman talent* with a ready action.

Boom! Head Shot (Ex): Starting at 9th level, once per round, if you drop an enemy more than 5 squares away to 0 hit points or fewer using a sniper weapon, all opponents in a 10 foot radius around the target are staggered until the start of your next turn. Targets staggered by this effect cannot be staggered again by this ability.

Failure Is Not An Option (Ex): Starting 10th level, if you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll with *marksman's talent*, you can re-roll.

Penetrable Shot (Ex): Starting at 14th level, once a round when making a ranged attack with a sniper weapon, you can ignore one square of blocking terrain for the purposes of line of effect and cover penalties.

Magic Bullet: Starting at 17th level, if you drop an enemy more than 25 feet away to 0 hit points or fewer using a sniper weapon, you can make a single ranged attack against one creature within 20 feet of the original target. You use no additional ammunition. You can repeat this process until you fail to drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you run out of enemies in range, or you hit three enemies.

VANGUARD

You are specialized in the application of a craft that

some people consider primitive. Despite any ranged combat skills you may have, you prefer it personal. You have practiced day and night in the perfection of the craft. There may be countless reasons why you prefer close combat over firearms. Your strengths rely on your lethality in every situation. You require no augmentation, no steel or explosives to articulate your skill. Your weapons cannot be removed. There is no scanner or sensor to identify you as a threat. You often lead a group through the door. You can suppress opponents without causing harm; remove a threat without making a sound. Firearms are a final, violent solution and most times a restrained hand is needed.

As a warrior, you've been trained from an early age by choice or by inheritance to take the role of a combatant. Your natural gifts were discovered and focused into a lifelong dedication. This is not to assume you're a warmonger, as such training comes early with the responsibility to know restraint. For many, having the skills is a means for self-discovery. This can apply in the application of hand-to-hand combat, the use of melee weapons, or in the proficiency of small-arms. You might have devoted your life to the implement of one craft or the broad use of many.

CREATING A VANGUARD

The vanguard can fill a vital role in a techan party. Being a close combat defender means the vanguard may be the only opposition from monsters wishing to close the distance to your ranged allies. Even if opponents attempt to move, you can keep with them and prevent your allies from coming to harm. You can be a direct fist and kick fighter or a wrestler. You can specialize in flips, locks, or direct blunt force trauma.

Alignment: Any

Hit Dice: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Vehicle Operation (Dex),

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor as well as light and medium fantasy armor. You may also select two techan heavy armors. You are also proficient with one-handed simple and martial melee weapons as well as all one-handed small arms and two-handed small arms. You are also proficient with all techan melee weapons including bastion exports.

Catch as Catch (Ex): At 1st level, if an adjacent opponent your size or smaller attempts to move away from you (regardless of the type of movement, except for teleportation), the target's speed is reduced by half and you are pulled along with the target. Starting at 10th level, you can target opponent's one size category larger



than you.

Unarmed but Deadly: At 1st level, you gain the feats Improved Unarmed Strike and Striker as well as one additional feat from the following: Balance and Direction, Evolution of Pankration, Game of Sticks, Striker, Swords of Grace, The Ritual of Dance and Damage, Unarmed Expanded Profile, Way of the Turn.

Martial Discipline (Ex): At 1st level, choose one of the following options:

Mobile Discipline: As a *swift action*, you can take a 5-foot step as long as the step brings you closer to an opponent. This does not count as the normal 5-foot step during a round and can be made in addition to any other movement. As long as you are wearing light armor, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against adjacent opponents. You use Dexterity in place of Strength for attack and damage rolls with melee attacks and combat maneuvers. You can also replace Strength with Dexterity for your Combat Maneuver Defense. You can also use Dexterity in place of Strength for determining prerequisites for combat feats.

Protective Discipline: As long as you are wearing medium or heavy armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC against adjacent targets. You also gain a +3 bonus to your Combat Maneuver Bonus.

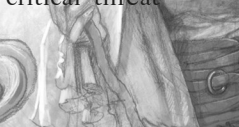
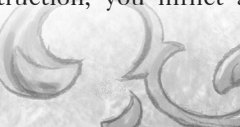
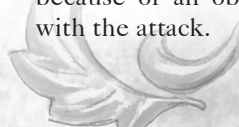
Mixed Martial Trait (Ex): At 2nd level, and every two levels after, you may select a mixed martial trait. These traits can be either abilities or continuous effects. You can only select a trait once and some traits have minimum level requirements.

Back Control: If you have an opponent in a grapple, your opponent grants you cover. Additionally, any melee attack or ranged attack that misses you by 5 or less hits your opponent instead (on attacks that don't target you both). Your opponent also suffers a -2 penalty to attack you.

Bone Breaker: You can inflict additional damage to opponents you have in a grapple equal to your Dexterity or Strength modifier.

Bulldozer: You receive no penalty to your combat maneuver bonus when performing a bull rush into multiple targets in a single round.

Devastating Body Attack (6th Level): You can perform a devastating body attack as a *standard action*. This is a single melee attack at your highest attack bonus. If you hit, the target is pushed 5 feet. When rolling damage, reroll all 1s until they come up as something other than a 1. If the target cannot be pushed because of an obstruction, you inflict a critical threat with the attack.



VANGUARD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Catch as Catch, Martial Discipline, Unarmed but Deadly
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Mixed Martial Trait, Pound for Pound
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Heroic Intervention
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Mixed Martial Trait
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	C-C-Combo Breaker
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Mixed Martial Trait
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Overreach Lunge
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Mixed Martial Trait
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Knockout Power
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Mixed Martial Trait
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Good Cardio DR1/-
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Mixed Martial Trait
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Mixed Martial Trait
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Good Cardio DR2/-
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Mixed Martial Trait
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Flawless Victory
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Mixed Martial Trait
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Good Cardio DR3/-
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Mixed Martial Trait, Permanent Injury

Fake Out (6th Level): Each time you hit an opponent your size or smaller with a melee attack, you can swap your position.

False Strike (6th Level): If you miss with your first attack roll as part of a full-round attack, take a 5-foot step, remaining adjacent to the target, and re-roll.

Full Mount (6th Level): If you are grappling a prone opponent, the target suffers a -3 penalty to attack rolls and its combat maneuver bonus.

Ground & Pound: You can perform a ground & pound attack as a *standard action*. This is a single melee attack at your highest attack bonus. If you hit, the target is knocked prone. You gain a bonus to damage against prone opponents equal to your Dexterity or Strength modifier.

Hip Throw: Hip Throw is an alternate action along with move, damage, and pin when you have an opponent in a grapple. You move any target your size or smaller as many feet as $\frac{1}{2}$ your Strength modifier \times 5. Like moving the target with you, if you attempt to throw a target into a hazardous location, the target receives a free attempt to break your grapple with a +4 bonus.

I'm the Juggernaut: If you make a bull rush, you can ignore difficult terrain. Non-creature obstructions you attempt to pass through take damage equal to $5 \times$

your Strength modifier: if this destroys the obstruction, you can pass through the obstruction.

Impossible Lock: You gain a +3 bonus to your CMD when an opponent attempts to break from a grapple.

Improved Knockout Power: The damage die of your unarmed attacks increases by one step ($1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10$).

Insult to Injury: As a *swift action*, you can inflict your Dexterity modifier or Strength modifier + $\frac{1}{2}$ your level to an adjacent prone opponent. You cannot be prone yourself.

Joint Lock: Once per grapple, you can sustain a grapple as a *free action* (if you release the grapple and then re-grapple—even if the same opponent—it counts as a new grapple).

Last Second Recovery (6th Level): Once a day, when an enemy scores a critical hit on you, you can turn that damage into temporary hit points you gain.

Pulling Guard: If you are prone, you suffer no attack penalties to melee attacks with 1-handed weapons, unarmed attacks, or combat maneuvers.

Redirection of Energy: Anytime an opponent confirms a critical hit on you with a melee attack, you gain a +2 bonus to melee attacks and automatically confirm any critical threats against that same opponent until the

end of your next turn.

Sack the Mark: You can move at your full speed while grappling an opponent.

Solid Clinch: You gain the Improved Grapple combat feat, regardless of the feat's prerequisites. You can ignore the Improved Unarmed Strike prerequisite if you select the Greater Grapple feat later.

String-Combo (6th Level): If you hit the same opponent twice in a single round, you gain a third attack at your highest attack modifier. You can only gain this ability once per round.

Rapid Strike: You can perform a *rapid strike* as a *swift action*. This is a single melee attack at your highest attack bonus. If you hit, you can only inflict half damage and cannot inflict a critical hit.

Twist Out: You gain a +4 bonus to your combat maneuver bonus when attempting to break out or reverse a grapple.

Takedown Flip: Takedown Flip is an alternate action along with move, damage, and pin when you have an opponent in a grapple. Any target your size or smaller is rendered prone. You can continue the grapple regardless if you are prone as well or not. Your opponent must break from the grapple in order to stand up.

Technical Superiority: If an opponent misses you on an attack roll, you gain a +1 insight bonus to attack that target until the end of your next turn.

Ultimate Joint Lock: Any opponent you have in a grapple is staggered until they break from the grapple.

Vicious Hook (6th Level): The critical threat range of your unarmed attacks increase by 1.

Pound for Pound (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, once per round, if you hit an opponent with a one-handed melee weapon or an unarmed attack, you gain a damage bonus equal to ½ your level.

Heroic Intervention (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, if an adjacent opponent makes an attack which does not include you, you gain a +2 bonus to attack that opponent until the end of your next turn.

C-C-Combo Breaker (Ex): Starting at 5th level, if you are hit two times or more by the same opponent in a single round, you can perform a single melee attack against the same opponent as an immediate action. If you hit, the opponent's turn ends.

Overreach Lunge (Ex): Starting at 7th level, you can increase your reach by 5 feet during your turn but suffer a -2 penalty to AC and all saves until the end of your next turn.

Knockout Power (Ex): Starting at 9th level, the damage die of your unarmed attacks increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Good Cardio (Ex): Starting at 11th level, you gain DR1/- . This damage resistance increases to DR2/- at 15th level and DR3/- at 19th level

Flawless Victory (Ex): Starting at 17th level, if you score a critical hit and the target is reduced to 30 hit points or less with the hit, it is killed.

Permanent Injury (Ex): Starting at 20th level, you

can inflict a permanent injury once per day on a target you score a critical hit on. The target takes 10 bleed damage every round until healed or killed.



Aiden returned only minutes before sunrise. The door to the apartment didn't creak. He snuck into his room and navigated around the unpacked boxes. The moon was about to fall under the crown. Aiden slipped under the sheets and closed his eyes. Despite being tired, he opened them moments later and rolled back to see Martin's still empty bed. Aiden moved his attention to the window, to the setting moon and its companion, to that one bright star floating near the lunar horn. Aiden never asked about it.

As he would read, it wasn't a star but a hole in the cosmos, a door to another place. From it flowed the chaos that shaped a new world while destroying the old one.

Aiden closed his eyes and dreamt, though not of dragons and elves, of knights and wizards. He dreamt of his mother.

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Aiden looked at the passing businessmen, politicians, policemen, and teachers. They all knew. Maybe not of magic and monsters, but they'd known enough and hadn't told him. They didn't care. They didn't want to know, to be reminded about what wasn't normal. Children played the games. They dreamt. The avatars they took on in the digital world offered them the role they could never fulfill in life. Aiden looked over his classmates and wondered how many of their dreams had been denied.

"Computer programmer!" William shouted. Aiden realized that the books given to him were old and worn for a reason. No one wrote these stories anymore. No one wanted to be reminded about what they had lost.

"Nice, Jeffery. Lara?" Mr. Leach asked. Aiden wondered why his mother had made the exception. Why did she tell him those stories, search for that rare freeware?

"An architect," Lara answered.

"Good, that's productive, Aiden?"

Weeks before, Aiden had been daydreaming of riding dragons and rescuing princess, engrossed in forgetting the world around him. Now he wanted to know everything, every why and every how. Leach didn't repeat himself; he leaned in to force Aiden's attention.

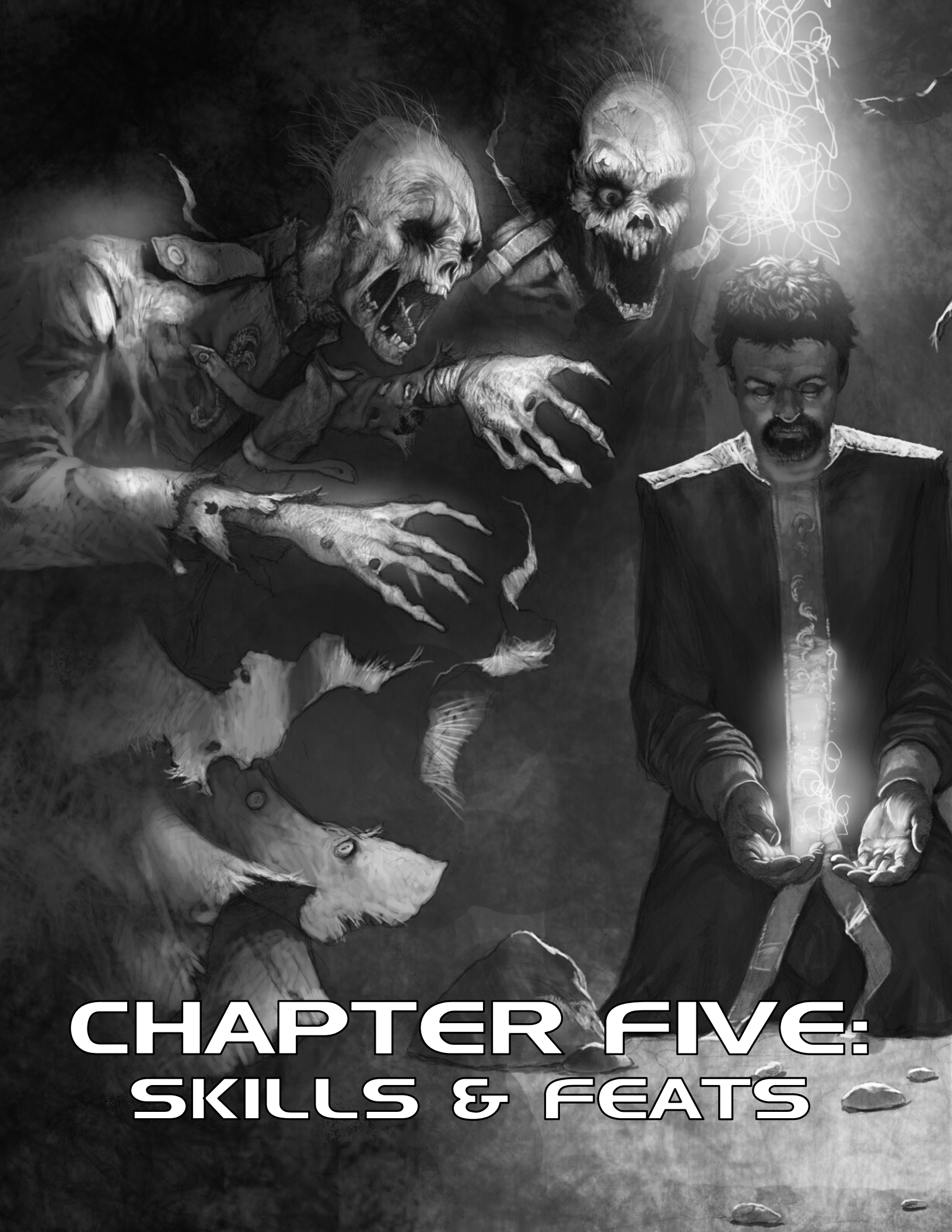
"Hmm?" Aiden responded, oblivious to the subject. The class never taught him what he really wanted to know. He learned it because society expected him to, because he was adept at it, because eventually childhood must end. But fantasies were now fact, and Aiden could learn of that without the mockery of embracing a dream.

Leach was about to scold him again, but stopped. "What do you want to do when you're older?"

"What I want?" Aiden almost mumbled.

"Yes...I mean we have an architect, programmer, doctor." He pointed to another child. "A janitor for some reason. What do you want to be?"





CHAPTER FIVE: SKILLS & FEATS



NEW SKILLS

There are no new echan (fantasy) skills, but there are three new techan skills (Demolition, Engineer, and Vehicle Operation).

DEMOLITIONS (Intelligence; Trained Only)

You can set and disarm explosives. This includes all manners of mechanical and electronic detonators. Placing an explosive for maximum effect against a structure calls for a check, as does disarming an explosive device.

Check: A successful check lets you set an explosive prematurely to combat or during it. You can also disarm explosives.

Wiring Explosives Together: DC15 for every additional explosive wired up. Additional explosives increase damage and burst (See Grenades & Explosives). Only one detonator is required per pack of wired explosives but the explosives must be all in one spot (the same square). You can string up several explosives at several locations to be triggered at the same time but each location (square) must have one detonator.

Timed Detonator: DC10 +2/tech level of detonator to set timed explosives. Timed explosives detonate at a set time and cannot be prematurely detonated. You select how many rounds or minutes (or longer) you wish for the timer to be and it explodes at the beginning or the end of your turn (your choice) as a free action.

Remote Detonator: DC15 +2/tech level of detonator to set up a wired or wireless detonator. You may detonate an explosive with a remote detonator by using a swift action. You may also detonate it as a readied action.

Triggered Explosives: DC15 +2/tech level of detonator to set up a triggered detonator. These detonate on their own as an immediate action and don't require a swift or a readied action. They go off when a target either crosses over it, or before it moves out of its burst area (see Equipment for the variety of detonators and their conditions).

Example: Kathryn Lindune wants to set off two blocks of explosives each at ten different locations, all at once. She makes them remote detonated. One remote detonator must be placed at every location but the two blocks at each location only require one detonator. Kathryn can trigger any number of detonators with a single action but each detonator triggers two blocks of explosives. She can, if she wishes, trigger all ten with a single action because they are all the same type of detonator (though they are all separate powers activations).

Proper Placement: You can carefully set the explosive in such a way to do extra damage. If you beat the DC roll by 10 or more, you gain a +2 skill bonus to damage from the explosive. If you beat the DC roll by 15 or more, you gain a +3 skill bonus to damage from the explosive. Your final Demolitions skill roll is also the DC someone other than you needs to beat to disarm your explosive.

Disarm Explosive Device: Disarming an explosive that has been set to go off requires a demolitions check. The GM can set the DC or make a Demolitions skill check of who planted the explosive. The DC to disarm is equal to the Demolition skill roll made when the explosive was set. If you fail the check, you don't disarm the explosive. If you fail by 10 or more, the explosive goes off. You don't need to roll Demolitions to disarm your own explosive.

Special: You can take 10 or 20 when using the demolitions skill in the setting of explosives, not when disarming or when in combat. The GM may allow you to take 10 in disarming if there is enough time to do so.

Expert Demolitionist: You gain a bonus to all damage rolls with planted explosives you set equal to half your ranks in Demolitions.

Creating Detonators and Explosives: If you are trained in both Demolitions and Sciences, you can attempt to recreate the explosives in the equipment section with acquired chemicals. The GM should set a DC dependant on found ingredients and on the explosives being attempted. Compounds for explosives are not generally easy to find.

If you are trained in both Demolitions and Engineer, you can build various detonators on the fly and accomplish the task much faster than if you were only trained in Engineer. If trained in both skills, the construction time is equal to the detonator's level in hours instead of days.

Action: Each Demolitions skill roll requires standard action which grants opportunity attacks.

Try Again: Failure means that the explosive fails to go off as planned. The explosives are not lost. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off as the detonator is being installed. You cannot accidentally detonate explosives when wiring them together, only when implanting the detonator. A failure with wiring explosives together means the extra wired explosives will not go off with the primary.

Saving Throw: A saving throw against an explosive you set with Demolitions has a DC of 10 + your skill ranks in Demolitions (ranks, not bonus) + your Intelligence modifier + the Tech Level of the detonator.

ENGINEER (Intelligence; Trained skill only)

This is the broad skill dealing with all applications of technology, allowing you to craft and repair technology. These include electronics, general machines, power armor, techan armor, techan weapons, and vehicles.

Action: Variable, depending on the task involved (see below).

Special—Foreign Tech Levels: The DC for all Engineer rolls are increased by +2 for every tech level.

Recovering Object Hit Points: An Engineer check may be used to recover hit points from damaged items. The repair time is 10 minutes. Make an Engineer roll. (Your Engineer Roll) – 15 – (Hit Points recovered)

The repair costs – 5 uc/tech level for every hit point recovered.

If the roll fails, the GM may roll the hit point recovery anyway to incur a cost penalty to wasted supplies.

Repairing Breaks: 10 minutes. Most repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices if they break either from an attack or from disruption. Broken items are reduced to 0 hit points if they have listed hit points. Items with listed hit points are raised to 1 hit point and may require additional work to recover lost hit points.

DC: Base DC20 +2/tech level.

Cost of repairing a break: 5% + 1%/tech level of original item.

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 an Engineer check out of combat.

Building Technology: If you have the time and the parts, but are nowhere near a bastion or a market that sells technology, you may try to build the item from scratch. You can only build items with a rated tech level (0-6). You must have the item's cost in widgets or parts (not just the uc, the widgets) on hand. The item's tech level +2 is also the time in days it takes to build the item. You need at least 6 hours of work on the item for it to be considered a day's work. You cannot speed up this process, but you can take your time. At the end of each day, you must make an Engineer roll to beat the build DC. If you beat the DC, you count the day in question towards the time required to build the item. You can take 10 on this roll. The DC is 15 + 2/tech level.

- Creating grenades takes half the time
- Vehicles take twice as long and require a facility.
- You cannot build demolitions, medical, or repair kits. You cannot build boosters or medical injections.
- Ammunition's tech level is equal to the weapon it is made for.

Try Again: If you fail, the work time is wasted (1 day) but the widgets are not.

Reverse Engineer: You can use the Engineer skill to convert found technology into widgets to be used in the creation of other technology. When you recover a piece of techan equipment, roll against the DC to acquire widgets from the technology's disassembly. Reverse engineering destroys the item being selected.

Each attempt to reverse engineer an item takes one hour.

If you succeed, you acquire one-fifth of the item's value in widgets.

DC: TL0 – 15; TL1 – 17; TL2 – 19; TL3 – 21; TL4 – 23; TL5 – 25.

Try Again: If you fail, you only acquire one-tenth of the item's value in widgets.

Special: You may take six hours instead of one hour and take 10 on the skill check.

Sabotage: You can use the Engineer skill to sabotage devices and vehicles. With this technique, you can inflict effects instantly or when certain conditions occur.

Proximity: You need to occupy the same square or a square adjacent (5-feet) to a device or vehicle.

Logical Target: You can only attempt sabotage against a target which you can disrupt or incapacitate logically. The GM can refuse a sabotage attempt if you have no way of accessing vital components in the target. The GM may also force you to spend time gaining access to said components.

Sabotage Attempt: Use a standard action to make

an Engineer check against the target. You provoke opportunity attacks if the target is a monster (i.e. robot).

DC: The base DC is 15 with modifiers depending on which effect you are attempting.

EFFECT	MODIFIER
Keep a security door closed	0
Reduce vehicle speed by 25% (round down) ¹	0
Reduce vehicle speed by 50% (round down) ¹	+5
Reduce vehicle speed by 75% (round down) ¹	+10
Reduce vehicle speed to 0 (round down)*	+15
Force a vehicle control roll	+5
Stagger a Target	+10
Blind a Target	+10
Dazed a target	+10
Immobilize a target	+15
Stun a target	+20

¹ This effect does not stack.

Duration: Effects last until the effect is repaired unless stated otherwise. Effects can be repaired by an Engineer check or with specific solutions to each problem (breaking open a door instead of fixing the sabotage).

Unique Effects: There are hundreds of different effects you can accomplish with sabotage.

Activation: The effects of the sabotage occur instantly. You can increase the DC by 3 to set a triggering condition for the sabotage.

Detection and Removal: An Engineer check is required to spot and remove sabotage. The DC is the same as the DC to instigate the sabotage.

Special: A character can take 10 on an Engineer check outside of combat.

Try Again: Assuming alarms are not triggered, you may try again, provided you have time.

REGIONAL HISTORY (Intelligence)

Regional History skills provide bonuses to basic Knowledge (history) skill checks when in context of specific areas in the world. When dealing with a Regional History roll, you add whatever ranks you have in History with your Regional History bonus.

You only gain Regional History bonuses with your trait or feats. In Canam, the various regions are as follows:

- Abidan, Apocrypha, and Azhi Dahaka
- Alpinas, Quinox and Selkirk
- Angel, Crax, Lauranoak, Torquil, and Xixion
- Baruch Malkut, Laurama, and Tranquiss
- Fargon
- Gnimfall, Mann, and York
- Kannos, the Finer Fire Pits, and Salvabrooke
- Laudenia
- Limshau, Orchis, Plicato, and Skyrose
- Sierra Madre, The Gloam

KNOWLEDGE (SCIENCES) (Intelligence)

This is the general study of the applications of the unaltered rules that govern the real world. It deals with broad studies like Biology, Astronomy, and Geography and into further specific fields of expertise like Biochemistry and Astrophysics. Given enough dedication, you could earn grants and degrees, specializing in a field of study to better your species and the natural world. Being a top mind of the profession could enable you to unravel a genome or to design and build your own superconducting supercollider.

This skill also allows the study of the differentiation between the ironclad laws of science and the malleable rules of magic. You do not have to specify a field of expertise. This skill refers to a general knowledge of science. You use this skill for general scientific observations and to discern if an effect could be natural or magical.

Special: Knowledge (sciences) can be used to replace Knowledge (nature) at a -3 penalty to the skill bonus. It does not offer a bonus if you are already trained in Nature. Science cannot be used in replacement of any other knowledge skills.

VEHICLE OPERATION (Dexterity)

You know how to drive or pilot both ground vehicles and aircraft. You can eventually learn how to control anything regardless of the complexity of the controls. Routine tasks such as ordinary driving don't require a skill check. You only make a check when experiencing unusual circumstance (such as stormy weather or a slippery surface), performing a stunt, driving at high speeds, or if trying to operate a vehicle while being attacked or attacking.

Action: Operating a vehicle can be part of a move or standard action. You can only perform one action involving a vehicle per round but you can employ several stunts during that action. This includes the same stunt multiple times (unless the stunt is not usable multiple times) or different stunts. You roll for each stunt separately. If your vehicle has carryover speed from the previous turn, you must use at least a move action this turn (you can coast at the current speed and perform no stunts). If you don't/can't take a move action, then the vehicle immediately goes into a crash.

If you perform a stunt that requires a standard action, all stunts you perform this turn are part of that standard action, and you can perform any number of standard or move action stunts as part of that action as you are able.

The vehicle operates only on your turn, and you cannot perform a vehicle move action outside of your turn. Even if you're forced to make a control roll outside of your turn, the effects of that roll do not go into effect until the start of your next turn (other effects inflicted on the vehicle can occur immediately). Even if crashing, the vehicle only slides or stops on your turn.

Fly: The skill Fly cannot be used in place of Vehi-

GENERIC STUNT	VEHICLE OPERATION DC	ACTION		
Easy Stunt	15	Depends on stunt		
Hard stunt	20	Depends on stunt		
Crazy stunt	25	Depends on stunt		
Insane stunt	30	Depends on stunt		
STUNT OR CONDITION		CONSEQUENCES	DC	ACTION
Acceleration				
Normal		None	—	Move
Aggressive		None	10	Move
Floor it		None	20	Move
Driver's attack		Control Roll	15	Depends on action
Deceleration				
Normal		None	—	Move
Aggressive		Slide	10	Move
Hard Braking		Slide	15	Move
Evasive driving				
+1 to AC & Reflex saves		Control Roll	15	Standard
+2 to AC & Reflex saves		Control Roll	20	Standard
+3 to AC & Reflex saves		Control Roll	25	Standard
+4 to AC & Reflex saves		Control Roll	30	Standard
+5 to AC & Reflex saves		Control Roll	35	Standard
Flight conditions				
Strong wind			+5	—
Raging storm			+10	—
Tornado / Hurricane			+15	—
Jump		Crash	Special	Standard
Lane change				
Normal		None	—	Move
Weaving		Control Roll	20	Move
Road conditions				
Gravel			+5	—
Rain / Snow			+10	—
Slide				
Speed < 10		Control Roll	10	Move ¹
Speed 10 – 20		Control Roll	15	Move ¹
Speed 21 – 30		Control Roll	20	Move ¹
Speed 31 – 40		Control Roll	25	Move ¹
Speed 41 – 50		Control Roll	30	Move ¹
Speed 51 – up		Control Roll	35	Move ¹
Tight Fit				
< / = Vehicle's speed rating		Crash	20	Move
> Vehicle's speed rating		Crash	25	Move
> x2 Vehicle's speed rating		Crash	30	Move
Turning				
Any degree (normal speed)		None	—	Move
45 Degree turn (up to x2)		None	—	Move
90 Degree turn (up to x2)		Slide	10	Move
45 Degree turn (more than x2)		Slide	10	Move
90 Degree turn (more than x2)		Slide	15	Move
Handbrake		Control Roll	20	Move
Drift		+10	—	
Velocity				
Fast		Control Roll	10/+2	—
Stupid fast (+1 AC/Reflex saves)		Control Roll	15/+5	—
Absurdly fast (+2 AC/Reflex saves)		Control Roll	20/+8	—

¹ If you are controlling the slide.

cle Operation for the control of Aircraft.

Try Again—Control Roll, Sliding, or Crashing: If you fail the stunt, you must suffer the consequences. This can be a control roll (a second chance to recover), a slide, or a crash. Some stunts are easy, and they neither require a skill check nor have consequences. If you're still crashing, sliding, or are otherwise out of control at the start of your turn, you still must use a move action to continue any carryover movement (unless you want to abandon all hope of regaining control).

Control Roll: A control roll occurs when you fail a Vehicle Operation check. You gain a chance to recover by rolling the same DC again. If you succeed, you do not crash and you may attempt the stunt again (if you can—some stunts can only be attempted once per turn). If you fail the control roll, you go into a crash. Control rolls can also occur for a variety of other actions not listed here. Control rolls take no action and occur as a reaction of another action (an attack from an opponent, a failed skilled roll, etc).

Crash: If you are crashing, you lose control of your vehicle and cannot perform any stunts involving your vehicle until the crash is resolved. In most crashes, you continue your remaining movement in the direction you were previously pointed. In others (like catastrophic jumps), you immediately stop your movement.

If crashing, at the start of your turn, you decelerate at your speed rating and continue to do so every turn until your movement is 0 or until you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain. When your speed reaches 0, you can regain control and use your vehicle again (if functional). If you have movement remaining when you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain, your vehicle (and you) takes damage (see **Rules Involving Vehicles**).

If you fail a control roll by 5 or more, the vehicle swerves 45 degrees in a random direction before the crash commences.

If you failed a Vehicle Operation control roll by 10 or more, the vehicle rolls as it crashes, taking 2d6 damage at the start of every turn it spends rolling.

Slide: Sliding can be either a consequence or a stunt. If you fail certain stunts, you go into a slide. In an uncontrolled slide, you move your remaining speed in the same direction before you attempted the stunt. You can attempt no other stunts until you regain control of the vehicle. At the start of your next turn, you must make a control roll (DC dependent on your sliding movement) or continue the slide. If you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain before being able to recover, the slide becomes a crash.

Note: Certain vehicles are large enough to ignore terrain conditions and/or the effects of a crash (see **Rules Involving Vehicles**).

How to Handle Speed Change: It can be somewhat confusing dealing with a speed rating rather than a fixed speed value. Here are some important rules to remember:

- If you decelerate your speed to 0, the vehicle is considered stopped.
- Your speed at the end of your turn is your

carryover speed for next turn.

- The vehicle's current speed is affected by what point in an action you perform the acceleration or deceleration maneuvers. If you change speed at the beginning of the action, the new value is your speed for this turn. If you change speed at the end of the action, your current speed is considered unchanged, but your carryover speed is set to the new value. If you change speed partway through an action, both your current speed and carryover speed are set to the new value: if you have already moved more squares on your turn than your new speed, you cannot move any further this turn.
- You cannot decelerate below 0. To move backwards, you must stop and then accelerate in reverse.

Acceleration: You increase your speed this turn.

Normal: You increase your vehicle's speed up to your vehicle's speed rating. This action is safe and does not involve a skill check.

Aggressive: You gain a +1 bonus to your speed rating and add this value to your speed.

Floor It: You gain a bonus to your speed rating equal to half your speed rating (round down). You add this value to your speed.

Action: Part of a move action, once per turn. Failure results in no acceleration this turn. You can accelerate at the end of your action to increase your carryover speed while not affecting your movement this turn.

Deceleration: You reduce your speed or attempt to stop altogether.

Normal: You decrease your vehicle's speed up to twice your vehicle's speed rating. This action is safe and does not involve a skill check.

Aggressive: You decrease your vehicle's speed up to three times your vehicle's speed rating.

Hard Braking: You decrease your vehicle's speed up to four times your vehicle's speed rating. **Action:** Part of a move action, once per turn. Failure results in no deceleration this turn and may require a control roll (GM's discretion). You can decelerate at the end of your action to reduce your carryover speed while not affecting your movement this turn.

Driver's Attack: If you want to make a non vehicle-based attack (like shooting from the window or fighting someone in the car) while controlling a vehicle, you must make a Vehicle Operation check. Regardless if you succeed or not, you can still make the attack, though you may lose control afterwards. There are still penalties while making certain attacks. Attempting melee or ranged attacks while driving suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls. If you are controlling a weapon on a turret remotely, that penalty reduces to -2 (feats can decrease this further).

Action: Via normal rules for making an attack. This is not a vehicle action, so no other stunts can be combined with it. You must have one hand on the steering wheel or you automatically fail the skill check

associated with the attack (even if using feats).

Evasive Driving: You can swerve and weave to avoid enemy fire. By performing this stunt successfully, you gain a bonus to both AC and Reflex defense. You must move at least 3 squares (15 feet) this turn in order to gain any bonus. When using evasive driving, choose the amount of the bonus you wish to gain: this sets the DC of both the Vehicle Operation check to perform the stunt and the control roll if the check fails. If you succeed at the control roll, you recover but you cannot attempt evasive driving for the remainder of this turn. You gain the bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Action: Part of a standard action. You can only make one evasive driving during this action. You cannot use evasive driving in the same action while initiating a jump.

Flight Conditions: Weather effects modify the DC of Vehicle Operation checks. All ground vehicles reduce this modifier by 5. Huge vehicles (ground or air) reduce this modifier by 5 while Gargantuan vehicles and larger (ground or air) reduce this modifier by 10 (instead of 5). Add these modifiers for all stunt DCs in these conditions.

Jump: A normal jump (DC 20) distance is the vehicle's modified speed before the jump divided by 10. A difficult jump (DC25) distance is the vehicle's modified speed before the jump divided by 5. An insane jump (DC 30) distance is the vehicle's modified speed before the jump divided by 2. After landing (successful or not), your speed is reduced by half.

Action: This is part of a standard action (all your stunts and movement for this turn which involve your vehicle must be part of a standard action instead of a move action).

Failure: If you fail by 5 or less, you make the jump, but lose control and are in a slide. If you fail by 5 or more, your vehicle rolls and crashes. If you fail by 10 or more, you drive into the ground or fall short as part of a crash, suffering damage.

Lane Change: You can attempt to slide two squares (10 feet) left or right as part of your action without having to change direction. This is a fast maneuver requiring your vehicle to have a speed of at least 5.

Normal: Initiating a lane change while moving up to twice your speed rating does not require a skill check.

Weaving: If travelling faster than three times your speed rating, a control roll is required.

Action: Part of a move action.

Road Conditions: Terrain modifies the DC of Vehicle Operation checks. Flying vehicles ignore this modifier. Huge ground vehicles reduce this modifier by 5 while Gargantuan ground vehicles and larger reduce this modifier by 10 (instead of 5). Add these modifiers for all stunt DCs in these conditions. This is not difficult terrain—terrain designated as difficult is too hazardous for most vehicles and usually results in a crash (Gargantuan vehicles can ignore difficult terrain).

Slide: If you intentionally create a slide and suc-

ceed, you have full control over the slide, can adjust the angle of the vehicle, and regain control at any time. If you are still sliding at the start of your next turn, then you must roll the control roll again to maintain control. If you fail the control roll, you continue the slide but now it becomes uncontrolled. Even though you are pointed in a different direction, you do not move in that direction unless you attempt a turn.

Action: Part of a move action if you are controlling a slide.

Tight Fit: Vehicles cannot squeeze, but there may be situations where the GM judges that there is only a small margin of error when maneuvering, such as when moving over a narrow bridge or dense forest. The DCs listed are if you are attempting the maneuver while moving up to your speed rating, faster than your speed rating, or if attempting the maneuver faster than double your speed rating. Increase the DC accordingly as the vehicle travels faster.

Action: Part of a move action.

Turning: The faster you go when you turn, the higher the DC. After you make a turn, you must move at least $\frac{1}{4}$ your current speed before turning again. Otherwise, it instantly turns into a slide. This is regardless if you turn 45 degree or a full 90.

Normal Speed: If moving your speed rating or slower, you can turn at any angle without requiring a roll.

45 Degree Turn: Your speed can be up to twice your speed rating and still not require a skill check when initiating a turn up to 45 degrees. If you attempt a turn any faster, you have to make a skill check. If you perform a 45 degree turn while your speed is equal to or greater than twice your speed rating, you lose 1 square off your current speed after the turn (1 off your carry-over speed and 1 off any remaining movement you have this turn).

90 Degree Turn: If you attempt a turn while moving faster than your normal speed, you have to make a skill check. If you perform a 90 degree turn while the vehicle's speed is greater than its speed rating, you lose half your current speed after the turn (half your carry-over speed and half any remaining movement you have this turn). For example, if your speed was 10 and you performed a turn 5 squares into your movement, your remaining movement is 2 and your carryover speed is 5.

Faster/Tighter: Adjust the DC depending on the speed and the sharpness of the turn, adding +5 for sharper turns and/or +5 for speeds in excess of the ones listed. Trying to turn at a right angle while your speed rating is five times your vehicle's rating should be difficult.

Hand Brake: Pulling the handbrake can allow you to spin the vehicle around, turning to any direction you wish, without losing too much speed. You can only attempt a hand brake turn if your speed is between 4 and 20. Any slower and you cannot make the turn. Any faster and you automatically fail the skill check. If successful, you face the new direction but your speed is reduced by half.

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
RACIAL FEATS		
Chaparran		
Chaparran Automatism	Chaparran	Swap Wisdom with Dexterity for AC
Weald Walk, Improved	Chaparran	Extend Weald Walk to 50 ft.
Weald Walk, Fortified	Chaparran, Improved Weald Walk	Travel through any wooden object
Weald Walk, Greater	Chaparran, Weald Walk Improved, Fortified Weald Walk	Jump through an intermediate tree with Weald Walk
Damaskan		
Cat Balance	Damaskan	+2 bonus to Acrobatics and gain additional abilities
Induced Acceleration	Damaskan	Do not provoke opportunity attacks while running
Neutral Monism	Improved Gravity Focus	+2 additional <i>gravity focus</i>
Gravity Focus, Greater	Damaskan, Improved Gravity Focus, Neutral Monism	Walk on ceilings; +1 <i>gravity focus</i>
Gravity Focus, Improved	Damaskan	All values with gravity focus improve
Gimfen		
Pounce Charge	Gimfen	Improved charge
Spider Dash	Gimfen	Crawl without provoking opportunity attacks
Kodiak		
Hardened Armor Use	Kodiak	Reduce armor check penalty with heavy armor by 3
Hardened Shield Use	Kodiak	Reduce armor check penalty with heavy shields by 1
Razor Sharp Claws	Kodiak	Bite and claw damage improves
Keen Claws	Slayer Claws, 21st level	19-20 critical threat range with natural weapons
Laudenian		
Cloud Body	Laudenian	Reduce fall distance; double jump distances
Slide Waltz, Improved	Laudenian	+2 uses of slide waltz
Weightless Body	Laudenian, Cloud Body	Gain reduced weight; walk on water
Narros		
Angry Regardless	Narros	+1 melee attack rolls or +2 bonus melee damage rolls.
Death Dichotomy	Narros, penultimate sacrifice	You're raised to HP if killed
Final Scream	Narros	Gain a full round action instead of standard when dying
Iron to the Core	Narros, BAB +10	Gain 15 hit points
Vigorous Surge	Narros, BAB +8	Use a move action to recover hit points
Penultimate Sacrifice	Narros, Final Scream	Remain standing and conscious for up to 3 rounds
Pagus		
Ancient Pagus	15th level, 40 years of age or older, Antediluvian	You cannot be rendered unconscious
Antediluvian	40 or older, Long in Tooth	Further race bonuses dependant on your Wisdom
Limited Options	Pagus	Swap Strength with Dexterity for melee attacks
Long in Tooth	40 or older, pagus	Gain bonuses dependant on your Wisdom
Significant Reach Advantage	Pagus	Non-reach weapon can gain reach
Steadfast, Improved	10th level, pagus	You cannot be shaken or staggered
Unyielding Presence	Pagus	Gain DRI/-

Tenenbri

Blindsight, Improved	Tenenbri	Blindsight is extended to 160 ft.
Depth of Consciousness	Improved Blindsight, tenenbri	Ignore all forms of cover and concealment
Enhanced Sonar	Tenenbri	Blindsight limitations are reduced
Micro Changes in Air Density	Tenenbri	Cannot be caught flat-footed
Piezo Scream, Improved	Tenenbri	<i>Piezo scream</i> is increased to 10 ft.
Piezo Scream, Greater	Improved Piezo Scream, tenenbri	<i>Piezo scream</i> now dazes targets instead of staggering

Tilen

Blood Surge, Addiction	Improved Blood Surge	Blood surge offers temporary hit points
Blood Surge, Archetype	Improved Blood Surge, 10 th level	<i>Blood surge</i> increases to +4d6
Blood Surge, Improved	Tilen	<i>Blood surge</i> increases to +2d6
Ghulath Traits	5 th level or lower, tilen	Gain vampiric traits
Sacrificial Heal, Improved	Sacrificial Heal	The damage inflicted on yourself is halved
Crusade of Redemption	Tilen, 10th level	Gain combat bonuses against undead
Sacrificial Heal	Tilen	Heal instead of inflict damage with <i>blood surge</i>

TRAIT FEATS

Ancient Wuxia

Iron Body	Ancient Wuxia, BAB +10	Gain DR2/-
Point and Challenge	Ancient Wuxia	Pick out one target that must attack you
Rolling Kip	Ancient Wuxia	Make an Acrobatics check to stand without a move action

Blood Royal

Aura of Fortitude	Blood Royal	Gain a 25 ft. aura which boosts Survival
Commanding Charisma	Blood Royal, Aura of Fortitude	Improved aura if you score a critical hit
Natural Motivation	Aura of Fortitude, Blood Royal, Commanding Charisma	Aura of Fortitude also heals
Bottled Beast		
Monster Uncaged	Bottled Beast	Regression improves (+3 Str, +10 hp, +10 speed)
Over the Line	Bottled Beast, Monster Uncaged, BAB +10	Regression improves (+6 Str, +15 hp, +10 speed)

Crossroad Drifter

Broad Talents	Crossroad Drifter	You are proficient with all weapons
Instinct for Danger	Crossroad Drifter, broad talents	You cannot be caught flat-footed

Custodian

Canocal Texts on Fighting	Custodian	Gain a Limshau monk weapon or a bonus to attack
Double Response	Custodian	One additional immediate action per round
Flow as Water	Custodian	Run through difficult terrain
Flurry Trap	Custodian	1/day, take two move actions when gaining surprise
Front Flip	Custodian	Treat 1 square of difficult terrain as normal terrain
Front Flip, Improved	Custodian, Front Flip, BAB +10	Treat all difficult terrain as if it was normal terrain
Limshau Weapon Mastery	Custodian, Dexterity 21	Increase 1 Limshau weapon's critical threat rating by 1
Main-Gauche	Custodian, Two Weapon Fighting, Two Weapon Defense	Shield bonus increases to +2, +3 with total defense

Reflex Path	Custodian, BAB +10	Make a melee attack and a move action with opportunity attacks
Speed Vault	Custodian	Gain climb speed if you run towards a wall
Split Slide	Custodian	Crawl or squeeze without reduced speed
Finer Miner		
Never Quit	Finer Miner	Regain additional hit points if cured
Nothing of Concern	Finer Miner, 4 ranks in Endurance	+4 Endurance checks; take 10 on all Endurance checks
Dawnamoak Kitarri		
Channel Strength	Dawnamoak kitarri, Strength 16	+1 damage to ranged fire bows in the first range increment
Expanded Black Bow Use	Dawnamoak kitarri, Strength 18, BAB +2	Increase the Strength modifier of a kitarra black bow
Unstoppable Shot	Dawnamoak kitarri, Power Attack	Attack an additional target if you kill one with an arrow
Death Hunter		
Purpose of Being	Death hunter	Kill an undead creature, gain 5 temporary hit points
Willful Strike	Death hunter, Purpose of Being	Critical threat increases against creatures vulnerable to good aligned weapons
Doppelshido		
Improved Double-Form		Reduce all penalties to two-weapon attacks by 1
Experteering Engineer		
Adaptation, Improved	Experteering Engineer, Level 3	Use Adaptation towards TL2 technology
Adaptation, Greater	Improved Adaptation, Level 7	Use Adaptation towards TL3 technology
Adaptation, Master	Greater Adaptation, 11th level	Use Adaptation towards TL4 technology
Adaptation, Quintessential	Master Adaptation, Level 16	Use Adaptation towards TL5 technology
Fargon Disciplined		
Cornerstone Ability	Fargon Disciplined, 10th level	Re-roll your first attack or force an opponent to re-roll a save
Life's Focus	Fargon Disciplined	Gain an additional bonus spell or gain +2 melee damage rolls
Free House Citizen		
Around Others	Free House Citizen	+2 to any racial skill bonuses; +1 language
Halfmaster		
Blunt Hit	Halfmaster	Push targets 5 ft. with the staff end of a pole arm
Hand Change	Halfmaster, Blunt Hit, BAB +8	Switch your Habaukeedo posture as a swift action
Transcendence Reach	Halfmaster	All reach weapons become monk weapons
Reach of Choice	Halfmaster	+1 to attack with one pole arm weapons
Herbalist		
Ayurveda	Herbalist	Heal an adjacent ally equal to a quarter of his hit points
Incarnate		
Apotheosis	Elemental Tuner, Incarnate, Embodiment of Flesh, 8 th level	Gain additional abilities based on your Incarnate Element

Elemental Tuner	Incarnate	Gain abilities based on your Incarnate Element
Embodiment of Flesh	Elemental Tuner, Incarnate	Gain additional abilities based on your Incarnate Element
Juggernaut		
Unshakeable	Juggernaut	+3 to saves against dazed, stunned, or weakened
Unstoppable	Juggernaut	+1 shield bonus to AC
Kannos Kavalier		
Spare the Horse	Kannos kavalier, Mounted Combat	When cured, your mount is healed half that amount
Saddle Use, Improved	Kannos kavalier, Mounted Combat, Superfluous Reins	+2 Reflex saves, +2 Acrobatic checks while mounted
Speed and Elegance	Kannos kavalier	Mount/dismount a steed as a swift action; no Ride checks when controlling your mount in combat
Superfluous Reins	Kannos kavalier, Mounted Combat, BAB +10	Moving half your speed is not counted as having moved
Kinetassana		
Propriocepting Strike	Kinetassana	Gain +4 initiative if an opponent is 25 ft. or closer
Propriocepting Talent	Propriocepting Strike	The first hit inflicts x2 Wisdom modifier damage
Quintessence	Propriocepting Talent	+1 d8 damage with an attack using a ready action
Knight of the Wall		
Phalanx	Knight of the Wall	Gain an attack if an opponent misses with a charge or bull rush
Shield Master	Knight of the Wall	Ignore check penalty for all shields; ignore BAB requirements for other shield-based feats
Koana Student		
Honor Roll	Koana Student, 4 ranks Knowledge (Arcana)	+2 Knowledge (arcane) and Spellcraft; 1/day re-roll a failed Knowledge (arcane) or Spellcraft skill check
Laudenian Mage		
One Word	Laudenian Mage	One spell level 3 or lower only requires a swift action
Librarian		
Advanced Curriculum	Librarian	Select <i>From the Books</i> again
Bookworm	Librarian	Gain skill bonuses against a number of monsters
Lore Specialist	Limshau Librarian, bookworm	+1 attack and a +2 damage against one creature
Malkut Outcast		
Regrettable Heritage	Malkut Outcast	+4 skill bonuses against fae
Mystic		
Avatar of the Self	Mystic, 9th level	Cast <i>find the path</i> 1/day.
Infallible Authority	Mystic, 3rd level	Cast <i>detect thoughts</i> 1/day
Of the Ancients	Mystic, True Oracle, 7th level	Cast <i>divination</i> 1/day
True Oracle	Mystic, Infallible Authority, 5th level	Cast <i>speak with dead</i> 1/day
Redcap		
Jump the Corpse	Redcap, Level 6	Take a 5-ft step in an adjacent square if you kill a target
Sky-Born		
Native Pilot	Sky-Born	+2 Acrobatics, Climb checks; +5 Acrobatics and Climb when on an airship

Wind Step	Sky-Born, Native Pilot	Do not provoke opportunity attacks for moving while balancing, jumping, or climbing
Squire of Abraham		
Rousing Speech	Squire of Abraham	One adjacent ally shares your AC
Sworn Hand of Vengeance		
Furious Retribution	Sworn Hand of Vengeance, Furious Strike, BAB +10	+3 attack rolls and +2d6 bonus to damage with the first hit against a sworn enemy
Furious Strike	Sworn Hand of Vengeance	+1d6 damage on your sworn enemy on the first hit
Taskin-Kada Watcher		
Distracting Feint	Taskin-Kada Watcher	If prone, you gain concealment
Obscure Movements	Distraction, Taskin-Kada Watcher	Use a standard action to gain total concealment
Vivicator		
Unspoken Might	Vivicator, 3rd level	Cast <i>cure moderate wounds</i> 1/day
Inner Light	Vivicator, Unspoken Might, 5th level	Cast <i>cure serious wounds</i> 1/day
Inner Light, Greater	Vivicator, Improved Inner Light, 9th level	Cast <i>touch of life</i> 1/day
Inner Light, Improved	Vivicator, Inner Light, 7th level	Cast <i>cure serious wounds</i> 1/day
Touch of Life	Vivicator, Greater Inner Light, 11th level	Can <i>heal</i> 1/day
GENERAL FEATS		
Expanded Widget Use	Must have a widget bag	Use widgets to replace thieves' tools or gain a bonus to Heal
Great Throw		+1 bonus for all non-magical thrown weapons
Improved Book Casting	Book totem	You don't have to hold your totem book in your hand
Totem Memory	Any totem, caster level 4	You may store one spell in your totem
TECHAN FEATS		
Ammunition Efficiency	Strength 14, BAB +8	+1 damage with heavy auto weapons
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Advanced)		Gain training with all types of techan advanced armor
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Heavy)		Gain training with all heavy techan armor
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Light)		Gain training with all light techan armor
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Medium)		Gain training with all medium techan armor
Bayonet Reach		Gain reach with your bayonet
Better than 20/20		+40 ft. to your range with any small arm or heavy weapon
Burst Fire		Auto or heavy auto property gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls
Crossfire		Flank 10 feet (2 squares) away from an enemy
Crossfire, Improved	Crossfire, BAB +7	Flank 15 feet (3 squares) away from an enemy
Crossfire, Master	Crossfire, Improved Crossfire, BAB +15	Flank 20 feet (4 squares) away from an enemy
Curb Stomp	BAB +6	Inflict Strength modifier damage to a prone adjacent target
Deflecting Shot		Reduce the penalty for firing against an enemy in cover by 1
Discharge Burn	BAB +9	+1 damage with 1-handed firearms against adjacent targets
Duct Tape		Gain a roll of duct tape

Fidgety Fingers	At least 6 ranks in Engineer	Building technology takes half as long
Firearm Expertise		+1 feat bonus to damage rolls
Full Automatic Adept	BAB +10	Fire ½ ammunition each time you attack
Ground Vehicle Operation		+3 Vehicle Operation when making a control roll
Gun-Something-Something		1-handed small arms are melee weapons in adjacent squares
Heavy Weapon Proficiency	BAB +1	You gain training with one heavy weapon of your choice
High Precision		Reroll one damage die that results in a 1 with auto weapons
Improvised Adaptation	At least 4 ranks in Engineer	¼ the value of the item in widgets instead of one-fifth
Learned the Hard Way	4 ranks in Demolitions	No detonation with failed Demolitions checks
Like a Widget Bag		You gain a widget bag
Meat Shield		Adjacent fallen opponents provide cover
Meat Shield, Improved	Meat Shield, 5 th level	Use <i>Meat Shield</i> with grappled opponents
Naturally Echan Defiant		+1 to disruption saves for all equipment
Natural Hunter		Wisdom in place of Dexterity for Stealth checks
Offensive Injection		+2 attack and -1 saving throws with air dart rifles
Overdrive, Improved		Roll twice and take the higher result
Proper Firing Position	Small arms (two-handed), heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons	-2 penalty to attack; +2 damage
Proximity Target	Marksman's Talent	Reduce the minimum range to 15 ft.
Rapid Reload		1/day replace a clip or cell as a free action
Rapid Reload, Improved	Rapid Reload, BAB +15	Replace a clip as a swift action instead of a move action
Recoil Absorption		Move without the penalty of firing two-handed small arms
Small Arms, One Handed	BAB +1	Gain training with all one-handed firearms
Small Arms, Two-Handed	BAB +1	Gain training with all two-handed firearms
Sniper Eyes	BAB +5	Range increments of your sniper weapons are doubled
Specialty Weapon Proficiency	BAB +1	Gain training with one specialty weapon of your choice
Super Heavy Weapons	BAB +1	Gain training with one super heavy weapon of your choice

EXPLOSIVE FEATS

A Real Tosser		Medium or smaller targets are pushed out of the area
Between the Knees		1/day, increase damage of planted explosives
Blast Vector		1/day, +20 to your next Demotions check
Explosives Attack	4 ranks in Demolitions	Targets hit suffer additional damage equal to half your level
Improved Explosives Attack	Explosives Attack, 4 ranks in Demolitions	1/day, one target suffers double damage

That Was Close	6 ranks in Demolitions	1/day, repeat a Demolitions check with a +10 bonus
Wilhelm Scream	Explosives Attack, 4 ranks in Demolitions	1/day, increase the area of effect by 5 feet. Push targets back
Explosives Specialty		Range increment with all thrown explosives increase to 15

MARTIAL TRAINING FEATS

Balance and Direction	Improved Unarmed Strike	+1 AC against melee attacks
Best on the Mat	Evolution of Pankration	+1 to your CMB while grappling
Bouncing Combo	Improved Unarmed Strike, BAB +15	Drop an enemy to 0 hp, take a move action
Earned the Belt	Evolution of Pankration, Improved Grapple, BAB +7	Move a grabbed target without a grapple check
Evolution of Pankration	Improved Unarmed Strike	If grappling and prone, you are not grappled
Game of Sticks	Improved Unarmed Strike	Quarterstaff gains the reach property
Ham Hands	Improved Unarmed Strike, BAB +8	Spend a move action to entangle a target your size
Jumping Knee	Unarmed Expanded Profile	Target suffers a bull rush as well the damage from a charge
Kayfabe Maneuver	Superior Position	Sustain a grapple and pin with a swift action
Mono E' Mono		Unarmed attack improves by one step against one opponent
Non-Lethal Intent		Inflict no damage, stun or knock a target unconscious
Superior Position		A target escaping from your grapple suffers 1d8 damage
Tag Team	Improved Unarmed Strike, BAB +6	Deal damage to an ally's adjacent enemy
The Ritual of Dance and Damage	Improved Unarmed Strike, Unarmed Expanded Profile	While unarmed, take a 10 ft. step instead of a 5
Think Big	BAB +6	Apply critical threat effects to larger targets
True Enlightenment of the Art	Improved Unarmed Strike	Gain DR5/- for 1 round
Striker		Unarmed damage improves
Unarmed Expanded Profile	Improved Unarmed Strike	Your legs become part of your unarmed attack profile
Way of the Turn	Improved Unarmed Strike	Inflict ½ damage and knock your opponent prone

VEHICLE FEATS

Aircraft Specialization	At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	+3 Vehicle Operation with aircraft
Drift King	Racing Record	Ignore the DC modification for performing a drift
Drop the Hammer	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	+15 ft. to a vehicle's speed with an acceleration stunt
Flat Out	Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization	+5 speed to one specific vehicle
Ground Vehicle Specialization	Vehicle Operation	+3 Vehicle Operation with a ground vehicle
Hit the Apex	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, +5 to Vehicle Operation when turning
Hole Shot	8 ranks in Vehicle Operation	+6 initiative if controlling a vehicle

Holding Traffic	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	Your vehicle can occupy two additional squares
Hull-Down	Vehicle Operation	1/day, your vehicle gains cover from ranged attacks
In the Fence	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, inflict additional damage to another vehicle
Jagged Edge	Racing Record	Reduce all DCs for stunt rolls by 5
Jump Start	6 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, a vehicle recovers from disruption
Jump the Crash	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	Jump from a crashing vehicle
Pushing and Shoving	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	Inflict damage on a vehicle and force a control roll
Racing Record	Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization	Don't make skill checks with certain stunts
Speed Demon	8 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, +10 bonus to Vehicle Operation
Steering Balance	Ground Vehicle Operation	Minimum distance after finishing a turn is 1/6 your speed
Thread the Needle	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, +5 bonus to AC
Traffic Offense	Ground Vehicle Operation	Increase opponent's Vehicle Operation DC by 5
Vehicle Combat	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	No penalty when firing a weapon from a moving vehicle
Vehicle Combat, Improved	10 ranks in Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Combat	No control roll if performing an attack from a vehicle
Vortex Draft	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, force an enemy vehicle to make a control roll

You can also use the handbrake to spin around 180 degrees and move in the original direction. If you succeed, your vehicle reverses its facing. You must decelerate and then accelerate in order to move in the opposite direction. Your speed is still reduced by half (half your carryover speed and half off any remaining movement you have this turn).

Drift: You can perform a drift when making up to a 90 degree turn. Your speed rating must be at least 5 to perform a drift. Drifting imposes a +10 on the DC (determined by your turn and speed). If you succeed, you do not lose any speed from the turn. You can combine a drift with a hand brake stunt. If you do, your speed is reduced by ¼ instead of ½ (see hand brake) for turns greater than 90 degrees. Drifting also raises the top speed for performing a hand brake turn to 30.

Action: Part of a move action

Velocity: Even though vehicles are listed as not being able to go faster than four times their speed rating, in actually this is only the safe upper limit. They are capable of much faster speeds if one is daring enough. If your speed this turn places it in one of the following categories, you must make a control roll at the start of each move action involving your vehicle. In addition, all stunts you make at this speed also incur a penalty to their DC (the first value is the velocity DC, the second value is the modifier to all other stunts you make at this speed). You don't add the modifier to the velocity DC, only to other stunts.

Fast: Going fast means to push your vehicle past its x4 speed rating limit but not faster than x5 its speed

rating. You suffer a +2 modifier to all other stunt DCs as well as make a DC 10 skill check (before modifiers for flight/ground conditions) at the start of every move action involving a vehicle.

Stupid Fast: If your speed score is over x5 your speed rating but not more than x7 your speed rating, you obviously think you're some kind of race car driver. You suffer a +5 modifier to all other stunt DCs as well as make a DC 15 skill check (before modifiers for flight/ground conditions) at the start of every move action. If you are going stupid fast by the end of your turn, your vehicle gains a +1 bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Absurdly Fast: If your speed is over x7 your speed rating but not more than x10 your speed rating, you obviously need to slow down. You suffer a +8 modifier to all other stunt DCs as well as make a DC 20 skill check (before modifiers for flight/ground conditions) at the start of every move action. If you are going absurdly fast by the end of your turn, your vehicle gains a +2 bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Aircraft: Aircraft that fail their control roll lose altitude equal to x2 their speed. Aircraft never fall under the effects of a crash unless they impact on something. As long as the aircraft is functional, you can attempt to regain control of it. If failing a control roll, an aircraft loses altitude (as stated) and slides. You can attempt another control roll check at the start of your next turn. Unlike vehicles, aircraft do not decelerate during a slide. The vehicle and all occupants are con-

sidered helpless if the craft impacts on the ground (the occupants suffer the effects of a coup de grace).

Working with Stunts: Many stunts require several rolls in sequence to be accomplished. There are many ways to navigate around the driving rules to accomplish what you want. Despite not having a limit on the number of stunts you can perform with an action, you still must check for each stunt in the order you designate (they don't all happen at once). Utilizing this logic, you can accomplish several combinations of maneuvers with a single action.

- Make a jump and accelerate after landing in order to maintain your speed.
- Decrease your speed after turning in order to reduce the minimum distance you have to take before turning again.
- Using tight fit, accelerating, and jumping from a narrow platform.
- Intentionally create a slide and turn that slide into drift for an extra dash of theatrics.
- Use a handbrake to spin the vehicle 180 degrees, accelerate in the original direction to maintain your original speed, and use a driver's attack.

FEATS

Note: The only alteration to existing feats resides with Item Creation feats. You are not required to be a spellcaster to acquire them, though are still required to meet the equivalent character level.

RACIAL FEATS

CHAPARRAN

CHAPARRAN AUTOMATISM

Prerequisite: Chaparran

Benefit: You can use Wisdom in place of Dexterity when determining your Dexterity bonus to AC.

WEALD WALK, FORTIFIED

Prerequisite: Chaparran, Improved Weald Walk

Benefit: You can travel through any wooden object connected to the ground when using weald walk.

WEALD WALK, GREATER

Prerequisites: Chaparran, Weald Walk Improved, Fortified Weald Walk

Benefit: You can now extend Weald Walk's range by jumping through an intermediate tree within 50 feet (10 squares) of the start point. The total distance covered cannot be more than 75 feet (15 squares) and no trees can be greater than 50 feet (10 squares) apart.

WEALD WALK, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Chaparran

Benefit: Weald Walk's range is extended to 50 feet (10

squares).

DAMASKAN

CAT BALANCE

Prerequisite: Damaskan

Benefit: You gain a +2 inherent bonus to Acrobatics. You do not lose your Dexterity bonus to AC when performing any actions that require and Acrobatics or Climb check.

INDUCED ACCELERATION

Prerequisite: Damaskan

Benefit: You do not provoke opportunity attacks while running.

NEUTRAL MONISM

Prerequisite: Improved Gravity Focus

Benefit: Whenever you charge or run, you gain a 5-foot bonus to speed. Additionally, you gain two additional uses of *gravity focus* per day.

GRAVITY FOCUS, GREATER

Prerequisites: Damaskan, Improved Gravity Focus, Neutral Monism

Benefit: In addition to the abilities featured in Improved Gravity Focus, you can now walk on ceilings. You do not provoke opportunity attacks and can move through enemy occupied squares as long as there is a ceiling within jumping distance. You gain your speed as your climb speed and are not required to use any hands while climbing while *gravity focus* is in effect. You gain one additional use of gravity focus per day.

GRAVITY FOCUS, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Damaskan

Benefit: During *gravity focus*, your base speed increases to +15 feet and you gain a +6 bonus to all Acrobatics checks. Your bonus to Reflex saves is +5. You can now walk on walls, allowing you to move across a wall, ignoring opportunity attacks and enemy occupied squares along that wall during the movement. You gain a +10 bonus to Climb checks while on the wall and you are not required to use any hands while climbing while gravity focus is in effect.

GIMFEN

POUNCE CHARGE

Prerequisite: Gimfen

Benefit: When you charge, the bonus to attack increases to +3 and you gain a bonus to damage for the attack equal to your Dexterity modifier.

SPIDER DASH

Prerequisite: Gimfen

Benefit: While prone, you can move up to 15 feet (3 squares) as a move action without provoking an opportunity attack.

KODIAK

HARDENED ARMOR USE

Prerequisites: Kodiak

Benefit: You reduce your armor check penalty with heavy armor by 3.

HARDENED SHIELD USE

Prerequisites: Kodiak

Benefit: You reduce your check penalty with a heavy shield by 1.

KEEN CLAWS

Prerequisite: Slayer Claws, 21st level

Benefit: Your claws' can score a critical hit on natural roll of 19 or 20.

RAZOR SHARP CLAWS

Prerequisite: Kodiak

Benefit: The damage from your bite and claws improve by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Special: You may select this feat up to three times to increase the damage of your bite and claws.

LAUDENIAN

SLIDE WALTZ, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Laudenian

Benefit: You gain two additional uses of *slide waltz* and the ability requires a free action instead of a swift action.

UNITED IDENTITY

Prerequisite: Laudenian

Benefit: Any of your class features or feats which refer to Charisma can instead use Intelligence or Wisdom.

CLOUD BODY

Prerequisites: Laudenian

Benefit: You reduce 20 feet from any fall distance. If you make an Acrobatics check to reduce falling damage, you roll against a DC15 to ignore the first 20 feet fallen. When you make a high jump, you jump double the distance per Acrobatics DC attempted.

WEIGHTLESS BODY

Prerequisites: Laudenian, Cloud Body

Benefit: You reduce 50 feet from any fall distance. Your weight reduces by half. If running, your weight reduces to zero, allowing you to run on any liquid or solid. You cannot walk on air or gas. You do not trigger any pressure sensitive traps while running.

NARROS

ANGRY REGARDLESS

Prerequisite: Narros

Benefit: You gain a +1 race bonus to all melee attack rolls. If you are reduced to below half hit points you lose this bonus to attack but gain a +2 race bonus to all melee damage rolls.

DEATH DICHOTOMY

Prerequisite: Narros, Penultimate Sacrifice

Benefit: Once a day, if you die after using final word, you are raised to 1 hit point at the start of your next turn and are cured of additional hit points equal to three times your Constitution modifier. Until you are restored to full hit points, you cannot use any skills, abilities, or attacks that employ Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom, and you suffer a -4 penalty to all Will saves. You also cannot cast spells.

IRON TO THE CORE

Prerequisite: Narros, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You gain +15 hit points.

VIGOROUS SURGE

Prerequisite: Narros, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: If you have any adjacent opponents, you can use a move action to recover hit points equal to your Constitution modifier.

FINAL SCREAM

Prerequisite: Narros

Benefit: If you use your Final Word ability, you gain a full round action instead of a standard action.

PENULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Prerequisites: Narros, Final Scream

Benefit: After using your Final Word ability, you remain standing and conscious. You operate as normal except you can only take a 5-foot step. You can continue to operate this way for three rounds or until dead. You may still take a free action to "say a few final words" before the end.

PAGUS

ANCIENT PAGUS

Prerequisite: 15th level, 40 years of age or older, Antediluvian

Benefit: You cannot be rendered unconscious, even if reduced to zero hit points. If your Wisdom is 12 or lower, you suffer a -4 permanent drop in Wisdom (min 1). If your Wisdom drops below 3, you gain an additional 15 hit points (even after selecting this feat). If your Wisdom is 13 or higher, you gain a +1 bonus with all Charisma-, Intelligence-, and Wisdom- skill checks. You also gain a +2 bonus to all Will saves.

ANTEDILUVIAN

Prerequisite: 40 or older, Long in Tooth

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to all melee attack rolls and double the distance of any Bull Rush you succeed at. If your Wisdom is 12 or lower, you suffer a -3 permanent drop in Wisdom (min 1). If your Wisdom drops

below 3 (even after selecting this feat), you gain DR1/-; if you gain DR from any other source, increase that DR by 1. If your Wisdom is higher than 12, you gain a +1 bonus to all saves and a +1 bonus to Initiative.

LIMITED OPTIONS

Prerequisite: Pagus

Benefit: You can use Strength in place of Dexterity or Dexterity in place of Strength for all attack and damage rolls with melee attacks.

LONG IN TOOTH

Prerequisite: 40 or older, pagus.

Benefit: If your Wisdom is 12 or lower, you suffer a -2 permanent drop in Wisdom (min 1). You also gain a +1 bonus to all melee damage rolls and a +1 bonus to AC and Reflex saves. If your Wisdom is higher than 12, you gain a +1 bonus to Will and Fort saves and a +3 bonus to Intimidate checks.

SIGNIFICANT REACH ADVANTAGE

Prerequisite: Pagus

Benefit: Any non-reach two-handed melee weapon you are wielding can gain reach.

STEADFAST, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: 10th level, pagus

Benefit: You cannot be shaken or staggered.

UNYIELDING PRESENCE

Prerequisite: Pagus

Benefit: You gain DR1/-; if you gain DR from any other source, increase that DR by 1.

TENENBRI

BLINDSIGHT, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: Your blindsight is extended to 160 feet. If you have the Enhanced Sonar feat, when your blindsight would normally be reduced to 50, it is instead reduced to 60.

DEPTH OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Prerequisites: Improved Blindsight, tenenbri

Benefit: You ignore all forms of cover and concealment against opponents. You must still have line of effect on a target.

ENHANCED SONAR

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: When your blindsight would normally be reduced to 30 feet, it is only reduced to 50.

MICRO CHANGES IN AIR DENSITY

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: You cannot be caught flat-footed, and you gain a +2 bonus to initiative.

PIEZO SCREAM, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: The range of *piezo scream* is increased to 10 feet. On a hit, it deals +1d6 damage.

PIEZO SCREAM, GREATER

Prerequisites: Improved Piezo Scream, tenenbri

Benefit: *Piezo scream* now dazes targets instead of staggering them. Thunder damage increases to 2d6 + selected attribute modifier.

TILEN

BLOOD SURGE ADDICTION

Prerequisites: Improved Blood Surge

Benefit: Instead of healing damage, hit points you gain through *blood surge* can be temporary hit points. You choose which when you use the ability. You cannot have more temporary hit points than your Constitution score.

BLOOD SURGE, ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites: Improved Blood Surge, 10th level

Benefit: The initial damage with *blood surge* increases to +4d6.

BLOOD SURGE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tilen

Benefit: The initial damage with *blood surge* increases to +2d6.

GHULATH TRAITS

Prerequisites: 5th level or lower, tilen

Benefit: You gain one of the following racial features.

Unnatural Strength—You gain a +1 bonus to all Strength-based damage rolls. This increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 10th level.

Uncanny Agility—You gain a +1 bonus to all Dexterity-based damage rolls. This increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 10th level.

Supernatural Speed—You no longer provoke opportunity attacks when leaving threatened squares.

Aberrant Attraction—You gain a climb speed of 10 ft.

Unbound—You can jump 15 feet horizontally or vertically without having to make an Acrobatics check.

Special: You may select this feat twice before 5th level.

SACRIFICIAL HEAL, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Sacrificial Heal

Benefit: When using Sacrificial Heal, the damage inflicted on yourself is halved.

CRUSADE OF REDEMPTION

Prerequisites: Tilen, 10th level

Benefit: At the same time you roll initiative, target any one undead creature in line of sight. You receive a +1 bonus to attack and a +2 bonus to damage rolls towards that creature until it is reduced to 0 hit points or lower (or five minutes). The target suffers a -2 penalty to at-

tack rolls for any attack that doesn't include you as a target. If the undead is a ghulath (vampire), once per round, you may inflict an additional +1d6 damage if striking the undead with a ranged or melee attack.

SACRIFICIAL HEAL

Prerequisite: Tilen

Benefit: While using Blood Surge, you can reverse the effect, inflicting damage upon yourself to heal a target. You can control the damage inflicted. The damage to heal rate is 1 to 1.

TRAIT FEATS

ANCIENT WUXIA

IRON BODY

Prerequisites: Ancient Wuxia, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You gain DR2/-.

POINT AND CHALLENGE

Prerequisite: Ancient Wuxia

Benefit: Once a day, you can point to a target in line of sight as a move action. Until you or the target is killed, or 1 hour passes, the target suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls which don't include you as a target. You also gain a +1 feat bonus to attack rolls against the target.

ROLLING KIP

Prerequisite: Ancient Wuxia

Benefit: If you fall prone but don't suffer any other effects, you can make a DC25 Acrobatics check as an immediate reaction to avoid the effects and stand back up instantly.

BLOOD ROYAL

AURA OF FORTITUDE

Prerequisites: Blood Royal

Benefit: You gain an Aura of Fortitude which has a 25-foot radius centered on you: Each ally gains a +10 ft. bonus to their speed for the purposes of hourly or daily travel. You and each ally gain a +2 feat bonus to all Survival checks to resist extreme weather, thirst, or hunger.

COMMANDING CHARISMA

Prerequisites: Blood Royal, Aura of Fortitude

Benefit: If you score a critical hit, each ally within your Aura of Fortitude gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls against that enemy until the start of your next turn.

NATURAL MOTIVATION

Prerequisites: Aura of Fortitude, Blood Royal, Commanding Charisma

Benefit: All allies within your Aura of Fortitude are cured of 2 hit points per round as long they are over 0 hit points and are within 20 ft of an opponent.

BOTTLED BEAST

MONSTER UNCAGED

Prerequisite: Bottled Beast

Benefit: Your *regression* ability improves to +3 to Strength based damage rolls and +10 hit points. Your speed is also increased by +10 ft. for the duration.

OVER THE LINE

Prerequisites: Bottled Beast, Monster Uncaged, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: Regression improves to +6 to Strength based damage rolls and +15 hit points. Your speed increase remains at +10 ft. for the duration. You are cured of 2 hit points every round. You also inflict double damage when using Blood Surge on anyone during *regression*.

CROSSROAD DRIFTER

BROAD TALENTS

Prerequisite: Crossroad Drifter

Benefit: You are proficient with all weapons, including improvised.

INSTINCT FOR DANGER

Prerequisites: Crossroad Drifter, broad talents

Benefit: You cannot be caught flat-footed.

CUSTODIAN

CANOCAL TEXTS ON FIGHTING

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: Select one of the following:

- Any Limshau weapon you are proficient in becomes a monk weapon. Kawabari armor does not force you to lose a monk's fast movement or flurry of blows abilities. You still lose your ability to add your Wisdom bonus to AC but you still gain the AC and CMD bonuses starting at 4th level.
- Any Limshau weapon you are proficient in gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls.

Special: You can only select this feat once.

DOUBLE RESPONSE

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: You may take one additional immediate action per round. Both are still counted as a single swift action on your turn.

FLOW AS WATER

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: You can run through difficult terrain. You don't have to run in a straight line. Once a day, you can run as a move action. You cannot move again that same round.

FLURRY TRAP

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: Once per day, if you gain surprise on an enemy, you can make two move actions along with a standard action.

FRONT FLIP

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: With every move action, you can treat 1 square of difficult terrain as if it was normal terrain.

FRONT FLIP, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Custodian, Front Flip, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You can treat all difficult terrain as if it was normal terrain.

LIMSHAU WEAPON MASTERY

Prerequisites: Custodian, Dexterity 21

Benefit: Choose one specific Limshau weapon. You increase its critical threat rating by 1. You can only select this feat once.

MAIN-GAUCHE

Prerequisites: Custodian, Two Weapon Fighting, Two Weapon Defense

Benefit: While holding a melee weapon in each hand, your shield bonus to AC increases to +2, +3 when using the total defense action.

REFLEX PATH

Prerequisite: Custodian, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: When you are granted an opportunity attack, you can make a melee attack and take a move action (you can take the move action either before or after the melee attack).

SPEED VAULT

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: If you perform a run towards a wall and move at least 2 squares (10 ft.) towards the wall, you can move along the wall as if you had a natural climb speed. If you have not cleared the wall by the end of the run, you may be required to make a Climb check to avoid falling.

SPLIT SLIDE

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: If you move at least 2 squares (10 ft.) before initiating a crawl or squeeze, all remaining movement with this action is not reduced. You fall prone as a free action before a crawl and stand up as a free action if you are able to at the end of the move.

FINER MINER

NEVER QUIT

Prerequisites: Finer Miner

Benefit: Whenever you are cured of any damage (via natural healing or magical effects), you regain additional hit points equal to twice your Constitution modifier.

NOTHING OF CONCERN

Prerequisites: Finer Miner, 4 ranks in Endurance

Benefit: You gain a +4 feat bonus to Endurance checks and may take 10 on all Endurance checks, regardless of the situation or time allotted.

DAWNAMOAK KITARRI

CHANNEL STRENGTH

Prerequisites: Dawnamoak kitarri, Strength 16

Benefit: If your target is within your bow's first range increment, you gain a +1 bonus to damage with that weapon.

EXPANDED BLACK BOW USE

Prerequisites: Dawnamoak kitarri, Strength 18, base attack bonus +2

Benefit: Increase the Strength modifier of your kitarri black bow as follows (you receive each upgrade when you reach the listed base attack bonus):

BASE ATTACK BONUS	STRENGTH MODIFIER INCREASE
+2	+2
+6	+3
+10	+4
+14	+5
+18	+6

This increase is in addition to the increases a black bow already receives with enchantment.

UNSTOPPABLE SHOT

Prerequisites: Dawnamoak kitarri, Power Attack

Benefit: If you kill a target with an arrow shot, you may make a single ranged attack against another target behind the first with the same arrow. The second target must be in range and be in a direct line through the first target from you. You roll to strike again, taking into account the new range and suffering a -2 penalty to attack and damage. This can continue until you run out of targets or your weapon runs out of range.

DEATH HUNTER

PURPOSE OF BEING

Prerequisite: Death hunter

Benefit: Each time you kill an undead creature, you gain 5 temporary hit points. You cannot have more than 10 + your level in temporary hit points gained this way.

WILLFUL STRIKE

Prerequisites: Death hunter, Purpose of Being

Benefit: When attacking creatures where good-aligned weapons bypass damage reduction, your critical threat range increases by 2.



DOPPELSHIDO

IMPROVED DOUBLE-FORM

Prerequisite: Doppelshido

Benefit: Reduce all penalties to two-weapon attacks by 1.

EXPERTEERING ENGINEER

ADAPTATION, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Experteering Engineer, Level 3

Benefit: You can now use Adaptation towards TL2 technology.

ADAPTATION, GREATER

Prerequisites: Improved Adaptation, Level 7

Benefit: You can now use Adaptation towards TL3 technology.

ADAPTATION, MASTER

Prerequisites: Greater Adaptation, 12th level

Benefit: You can now use Adaptation towards TL4 technology.

ADAPTATION, QUINTESSENTIAL

Prerequisites: Master Adaptation, Level 16

Benefit: You can now use Adaptation towards TL5 technology.

FARGON DISCIPLINED

CORNERSTONE ABILITY

Prerequisites: Fargon Disciplined, 10th level

Benefit: Select one of the two abilities:

- If you miss with your first attack of a full-round attack, you may re-roll. You must keep the second result.
- You can force one target of any spell you cast which targets more than two opponents to re-roll its save.

136 LIFE'S FOCUS

Prerequisite: Fargon Disciplined

Benefit: Select one of the two abilities:

- You count as having a +2 bonus to your relevant attribute when determining bonus spells.
- You gain a +2 bonus to melee or ranged damage rolls.

FREE HOUSE CITIZEN

AROUND OTHERS

Prerequisite: Free House Citizen

Benefit: You gain an additional +2 bonus to any racial skill bonuses. You may also choose an additional language.

HALFMASTER

BLUNT HIT

Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: If you score a hit with the staff end of a pole arm, you push the target back 5 feet (1 square).

HAND CHANGE

Prerequisites: Halfmaster, Blunt Hit, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: You can switch your Habaukeedo posture as a swift action.

TRANSCENDENT REACH

Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: **Prerequisite:** Halfmaster

Benefit: All reach weapons become monk weapons.

REACH OF CHOICE

Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: Choose a specific pole arm weapon (Glaive, Halberd, Longspear, etc.). You gain a +1 bonus to attack with that weapon.

HERBALIST

AYURVEDA

Prerequisite: Herbalist

Benefit: You chew some herbs, stir in some fluids you would rather not disclose, and pack the results in the wound for some surprising results. As many times per day as your Wisdom modifier, you can use a standard action to cure damage in an adjacent ally equal to a quarter of its hit points.

INCARNATE

APOTHEOSIS

Prerequisites: Elemental Tuner, Incarnate, Embodiment of Flesh, 8th level

Benefit: You gain the following additional abilities depending upon your Incarnate Element:

Air: You can use the Feather Fall spell as a supernatural effect once a day. (See the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK** on "Feather Fall").

Earth: If you don't move on your round, you cannot be moved by anyone else unless you allow it. This includes any forced movement and teleport.

Fire: Once per day, you can imbue fire in your melee weapon, inflicting 2 fire damage with each hit. The effect lasts five minutes.

Water: For up to one hour every day, you can move on water as if it was solid ground. Rapids or choppy water are considered difficult terrain.

ELEMENTAL TUNER

Prerequisite: Incarnate

Benefit: You gain additional abilities, depending upon your Incarnate Element.

Water: Once per day, you can gain a +10 bonus to a roll for a skill check.

Fire: You gain a +2 feat bonus to all Intimidate and Diplomacy checks. In addition, you gain a +3 feat bonus against Charm effects.

Earth: You gain a +2 feat bonus to all Climb, Survival, and Sense Motive checks. In addition, you recover 2 additional hit points with every cure effect cast or used on you.

Air: You gain a +2 feat bonus to all Bluff and Acrobatics checks, a +5 bonus to Acrobatics when making a jump.

EMBODIMENT OF FLESH

Prerequisites: Elemental Tuner, Incarnate

Benefit: You gain the following additional abilities depending upon your Incarnate Element:

Air: As many times a day as your highest attribute modifier, as a swift action, you can toss up dust and particles to grant concealment on your or an adjacent square until the end of your next turn.

Earth: If prone in terrain that is rubble, uneven stone, or earth, you do not grant flanking bonuses and gain cover.

Fire: You gain a +5 bonus to any saves against fire attacks and effects.

Water: You gain your speed as your swim speed.

JUGGERNAUT

UNSHAKEABLE

Prerequisites: Juggernaut

Benefit: Gain a +3 bonus to all saving throws against being dazed, stunned, or weakened.

UNSTOPPABLE

Prerequisites: Juggernaut

Benefit: You gain a +1 shield bonus to AC.

KANNOS KAVALIER

SPARE THE HORSE

Prerequisites: Kannos kavalier, Mounted Combat

Benefit: Any time you are cured of any damage, your mount is healed of half that amount (or vice-versa).

SADDLE USE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Kannos kavalier, Mounted Combat, Superfluous Reins, a mount with a saddle

Benefit: You don't need a saddle for your horse but if you do have one, you can stand on it, hang down one side, or ride underneath the animal if you so wish. You gain a +2 to Reflex saves while mounted and gain a +2 bonus to all Acrobatic checks while mounted. When using total defense, your dodge bonus to AC increases to +5 instead of +4.

SPEED AND ELEGANCE

Prerequisite: Kannos kavalier

Benefit: You are able to mount and dismount your steed

as a swift action without making a Ride check. You don't have to make a Ride check to control your mount during combat.

SUPERFLUOUS REINS

Prerequisites: Kannos kavalier, Mounted Combat, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You've trained your mount to act without direction. If your mount moves up to half its speed and not commit to any combat maneuver, you are not counted as having moved.

KINETASSANA

PROPRIOCEPTING STRIKE

Prerequisites: Kinetassana

Benefit: Before you roll initiative, if there is an opponent within 25 feet, you gain a +4 bonus to initiative and are considered to always have a higher bonus if your initiative roll is the same as any opponent in range.

PROPRIOCEPTING TALENT

Prerequisites: Propriocepting Strike

Benefit: The first time you hit an opponent after rolling initiative, you gain a damage bonus equal to twice your Wisdom modifier.

QUINTESSENCE

Prerequisites: Propriocepting Talent

Benefit: When you ready an action to make an attack and hit a target with that attack, add 1d8 extra damage to the hit.

KNIGHT OF THE WALL

PHALANX

Prerequisites: Knight of the Wall

Benefit: If an opponent that initiates a charge or bull rush attack against you while in a shield lock misses, you gain a melee attack as an immediate action.

SHIELD MASTER

Prerequisite: Knight of the Wall

Benefit: You ignore the check penalty for all shields. You ignore base attack bonus requirements for other shield-based feats.

KOANA STUDENT

HONOR ROLL

Prerequisites: Koana Student, 4 ranks in Knowledge (Arcana)

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Knowledge (arcane) and Spellcraft skill rolls. Once a day, you may also re-roll a failed Knowledge (arcane) or Spellcraft skill check.



LAUDENIAN MAGE

ONE WORD

Prerequisites: Laudenian Mage.

Benefit: You have memorized your favorite spell. Chose one spell from level 3 or lower; that spell now only requires a swift action to cast.

Special: Each time you select this feat, you can select another spell from level 3 or lower.

LIBRARIAN

ADVANCED CURRICULUM

Prerequisite: Librarian

Benefit: You may select your trait's *from the books* ability again, selecting the alternate feature.

BOOKWORM

Prerequisite: Librarian

Benefit: You may choose any number of creatures from the Amethyst or PATHFINDER Bestiary equal to your Intelligence modifier. You are now an expert on these creatures and pass all Knowledge checks regarding them. You also gain a +2 bonus to Perception, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks involving those creatures.

LORE SPECIALIST

Prerequisite: Limshau Librarian, bookworm

Benefit: You may choose one specific creature from your Bookworm feat. You are now a master on the subject. You receive a +1 bonus to attack and a +2 bonus to damage against the selected creature.

MALKUT OUTCAST

REGRETTABLE HERITAGE

Prerequisite: Malkut Outcast

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to Perception when searching for fae, a +4 bonus to Sense Motive checks against fae and a +4 bonus to Survival to track fae.

MYSTIC

AVATAR OF THE SELF

Prerequisites: Mystic, 9th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell *find the path* once a day. You can swap this with an additional use of *speak with dead*, *detect thoughts*, *divination*, or *comprehend languages*.

INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY

Prerequisites: Mystic, 3rd level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *detect thoughts* once a day. You can swap this with an additional use of *comprehend languages*.

OF THE ANCIENTS

Prerequisites: Mystic, True Oracle, 7th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell *divination* once a day. You can swap this with an additional use of *speak with dead*, *detect thoughts*, or *comprehend languages*.

TRUE ORACLE

Prerequisites: Mystic, Infallible Authority, 5th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell *speak with dead* once a day. You can swap this with an additional use of *detect thoughts* or *comprehend languages*.

REDCAP

JUMP THE CORPSE

Prerequisites: Redcap, Level 6

Benefit: If you kill an adjacent target with a melee weapon, you can immediately take a 5-foot step into the fallen enemy's square.

REDCAP REPUTATION

Prerequisites: Redcap, Jump the Corpse

Benefit: If you kill an adjacent enemy, you gain a +4 bonus to damage rolls against all other opponents until the end of your next turn. If you kill another target under the same circumstances before the end of the effect, the duration extends until the end of the next turn and the damage increases by another +4. This is cumulative to a maximum of +12 damage. If you pass by the end of your turn without killing a target, the effect expires.

REKII

FOCUSED SPOTTER

Prerequisite: Rekii

Benefit: If using Coordinated Spotter, the ally's ranged attack may ignore all concealment on the target.

THROUGH THE WALL, AROUND THE CORNER

Prerequisites: Focused Spotter, Rekii

Benefit: If using Coordinated Spotter the ally's ranged attack may ignore 1 square that blocks line of sight.

SALVABROOKE SEEKER

LITHE LEGWORK

Prerequisite: Salvabrooke Seeker

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks you provoke from moving.

SKY-BORN

NATIVE PILOT

Prerequisites: Sky-Born

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to all Acrobatics and Climb checks and a +5 bonus to all Acrobatics and Climb checks when on any airship. You can move your full speed when balancing.

WIND STEP

Prerequisites: Sky-Born, Native Pilot

Benefit: You do not provoke opportunity attacks for moving while balancing, jumping, or climbing.

SQUIRE OF ABRAHAM

ROUSING SPEECH

Prerequisite: Squire of Abraham

Benefit: You scream a compelling sermon on faith, courage, and fidelity, during combat. Select one ally as a swift action. As long as the target is adjacent or until you switch the ally, the ally shares your AC as long as the ally's AC is within 5 of yours.

SWORN HAND OF VENGEANCE

FURIOUS RETRIBUTION

Prerequisites: Sworn Hand of Vengeance, Furious Strike, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: With Sworn Enemy, your bonuses improve; you gain a +3 bonus to attack rolls and a +2d6 bonus to damage with the first hit.

FURIOUS STRIKE

Prerequisites: Sworn Hand of Vengeance

Benefit: With Sworn Enemy, you gain a +1d6 damage bonus on your sworn enemy on your first hit (in addition to normal extra damage).

TASKIN-KADA WATCHER

DISTRACTING FEINT

Prerequisite: Taskin-Kada Watcher

Benefit: If you are prone, you gain concealment. This lasts until you move or stand.

OBSCURE MOVEMENTS

Prerequisites: Distraction, Taskin-Kada Watcher

Benefit: You can use a standard action to gain total concealment. This lasts until you move or make an attack.

VIVICATOR

UNSPOKEN MIGHT

Prerequisite: Vivicator, 3rd level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *cure moderate wounds* once a day.

INNER LIGHT

Prerequisite: Vivicator, Unspoken Might, 5th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *cure serious wounds* once a day.

INNER LIGHT, GREATER

Prerequisites: Vivicator, Improved Inner Light, 9th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *touch of life* once a day.

INNER LIGHT, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Vivicator, Inner Light, 7th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *cure serious wounds* once a day.

TOUCH OF LIFE

Prerequisite: Vivicator, Greater Inner Light, 11th level.

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *heal* once a day.

GENERAL FANTASY FEATS

EXPANDED WIDGET USE

Prerequisite: Must have a widget bag

Benefit: You can use up 10 gp/uc of widgets from your widget bag to replace thieves' tools in gaining a +2 bonus to open a lock or disable a trap. This is used in replacement of thieves' tools and cannot be used in addition. You use 10gp/uc per attempt. If you use 50 gp/uc in one attempt, you gain a +3 bonus to open a lock or disable a trap. You may also use 50 gp/uc of widgets to gain a +2 enhancement bonus to a Heal check or Science check.

GREAT THROW

Benefit: You gain a +1 enhancement bonus for all non-magical thrown weapons (like grenades).

Special: You may select this feat again, each time increasing the enhancement bonus by 1.

IMPROVED BOOK CASTING

Prerequisite: Book totem

Benefit: You don't have to hold your totem book in your hand. It still must be on your person in some manner (strapped to your back or around your leg). Both hands are now free while casting.

TOTEM MEMORY

Prerequisites: Any totem, caster level 4

Benefit: At the beginning of the day, you may store one spell in your totem. This does not count as a use of the spell when it is cast.

TECHAN FEATS

AMMUNITION EFFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Strength 14, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: Gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls with heavy auto weapons with which you are proficient when employing the heavy auto property.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Advanced)

Benefit: You gain training with all types of techan advanced armor (power armor, battlesuits, etc.). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based skill checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Heavy)

Benefit: You gain training with all heavy techan armor (except advanced/power armor). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based skill checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Light)

Benefit: You gain training with all light techan armor (except advanced/power armor). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based skill checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Medium)

Benefit: You gain training with all medium techan armor (except advanced/power armor). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based skill checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

BAYONET REACH

Benefit: Gain reach with your bayonet (the melee weapon, not the firearm).

BETTER THAN 20/20

Benefit: Gain +40 feet to your range with any small arm or heavy weapon.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you select this feat, you gain an additional 40 feet to your range.

BURST FIRE

Benefit: When using a weapon employing an auto (not set to single-shot fire) or heavy auto property, gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls.

CROSSFIRE

Benefit: You can flank 10 feet (2 squares) away from an enemy as long as you and an ally are in a straight line through the target. You must be wielding a one- or two-handed small arm or a heavy weapon to use this feat.

CROSSFIRE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Crossfire, base attack bonus +7

Benefit: You can flank 15 feet (3 squares) away from an enemy as long as you and an ally are in a straight line through the target. You must be wielding a one- or two-handed small arm or a heavy weapon to use this feat.

CROSSFIRE, MASTER

Prerequisites: Crossfire, Improved Crossfire, base attack bonus +15

Benefit: You can flank 20 feet (4 squares) away from an enemy as long as you and an ally are in a straight line through the target. You must be wielding a one- or two-handed small arm or a heavy weapon to use this feat.

CURB STOMP

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6

Benefit: As a move action, you can inflict your Strength modifier damage to a prone target in an adjacent square.

DEFLECTING SHOT

Benefit: You reduce the penalty for firing any small arm, heavy weapon, or super heavy weapon to an enemy in cover by 1.

DISCHARGE BURN

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +9

Benefit: When firing a one-handed small arm at a target in an adjacent square, you inflict +1 damage on a hit.

DUCT TAPE

Benefit: As many times a day as your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier, you can use duct tape as a standard action. You can apply one the following effects.

- Grant a +1 feat bonus to disruption saves to one piece of gear in range.
- Grant a +1 feat bonus to your next Engineer or Heal check.
- Affix a small item (such as a flashlight or a tracker) to a weapon.
- Create one foot of rope (up to thirty feet).
- Mark up to three feet on the ground or on an object.
- Replace for handcuffs (target is restrained, DC25 to escape).
- Prevent a restrained creature from speaking.

Special: There may be hundreds of other uses for duct tape (GM's discretion).

FEATHER TRIGGER

Benefit: Any non-auto/heavy-auto weapon counts as an auto weapon in your hand. You use additional ammunition with each attack as if the weapon had the auto keyword.

FIDGETY FINGERS

Prerequisites: At least 6 ranks in Engineer

Benefit: Building technology takes half as long (minimum of one day).

FIREARM EXPERTISE

Benefit: Choose a specific weapon group and a specific weapon property (e.g., two-handed plasma, one-handed laser, heavy gauss). You gain a +1 feat bonus to damage rolls with this weapon.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each

time you select this feat, you may choose another weapon group and property.

FULLY AUTOMATIC ADEPT

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You now fire half as much ammunition each time you attack (round up). Damage is unaffected.

GROUND VEHICLE OPERATION

Benefit: Gain a +3 bonus to all Vehicle Operation skill rolls when making a control roll.

GUN-SOMETHING-SOMETHING

Benefit: You treat one-handed small arms as melee weapons when firing into adjacent squares.

HEAVY WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with one heavy weapon of your choice. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain Heavy Weapon Proficiency multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of heavy weapon.

HIGH PRECISION

Benefit: If you hit with a ranged attack with any firearm without the auto property, you can reroll one damage die that results in a 1, but you must use the second result.

IMPROVISED ADAPTATION

Prerequisites: At least 4 ranks in Engineer

Benefit: When gaining widgets from reverse engineering technology, you acquire one-quarter the value of the item in widgets instead of one-fifth. You also gain a +5 bonus to Engineer when attempting reverse engineering.

LEARNED THE HARD WAY

Prerequisite: 4 ranks in Demolitions.

Benefit: When you fail a Demolitions roll by 10 or more, you don't cause a detonation.

LIKE A WIDGET BAG

Benefit: You gain a widget bag (see the operator for details on the widget bag).

MEAT SHIELD

Benefit: If you drop a creature and you are adjacent to it by the end of the same turn it is dropped, it provides you (and only you) cover. You cannot move the target.

Special: If using a two-handed small-arm, you suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls while holding the shield. You cannot use a heavy or super heavy weapon with Meat Shield.

MEAT SHIELD, IMPROVED

Requirements: Meat Shield, 5th level

Benefits: While grappling an enemy of your size, you may spend a swift action to gain the benefit of Meat Shield.

NATURALLY ECHAN DEFIANT

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to disruption saves for all equipment in your possession.

NATURAL HUNTER

Benefit: You can use Wisdom in place of Dexterity when making Stealth checks. You can also substitute Wisdom for Dexterity when determining your bonus to Reflex saves.

OFFENSIVE INJECTION

Benefit: If you are wielding an air dart rifle, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and a hit target suffers a -1 penalty to any saves against the injection's effects.

OVERDRIVE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: *overdrive* power

Benefit: When you use *overdrive*, you can roll twice and take the higher result. At the end of combat, you gain a +5 feat bonus to your Engineer check to avoid the target gear breaking.

PROPER FIRING POSITION

Prerequisites: Proficiency with Small arms (two-handed), heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons.

Benefit: When making a ranged attack, you can take a -2 penalty to the attack roll. If the attack hits, you gain a +2 bonus to damage.

PROXIMITY TARGET

Prerequisite: Marksman's Talent

Benefit: Reduce the minimum range for attacks with Marksman's Talent to 15 feet from 25 feet.

RAPID RELOAD

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +4

Benefit: Once a day, you can replace a clip or cell as a free action instead of a move action.

RAPID RELOAD, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Rapid Reload, base attack bonus +15

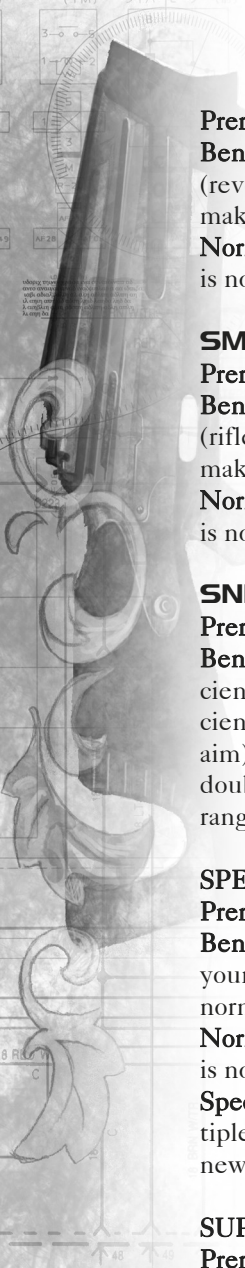
Benefit: Replace a clip as a swift action instead of a move action.

RECOIL ABSORPTION

Benefit: When wielding a two-handed small-arm, you can commit to any type of move action without suffering the -2 penalty of firing two-handed small arms while moving.

Special: This is effectively the same as the Front Grounder's 1st level Precision ability and cannot be combined with it.

SMALL ARMS, ONE-HANDED PROFICIENCY



Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with all one-handed firearms (revolvers, pistols, etc.) except specialty weapons. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

SMALL ARMS, TWO-HANDED PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with all two-handed firearms (rifles, machine guns) except specialty weapons. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

SNIPER EYES

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +5.

Benefit: When wielding a sniper weapon with a proficiency bonus and when taking advantage of the proficiency bonus of the weapon (i.e.: using a move action to aim), the ranges increment of your sniper weapon is doubled. This increase occurs after applying all other range extensions (from feats and class features).

SPECIALTY WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with one specialty weapon of your choice. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain specialty weapon proficiency multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of specialty weapon.

SUPER HEAVY WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with one super heavy weapon of your choice. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain Super Heavy Weapon Proficiency multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of super heavy weapon.

EXPLOSIVE FEATS

A REAL TOSSER

Benefit: Once a day, when you detonate explosives, all Medium or smaller targets in the affected area that are not knocked prone are pushed outside of the area of effect. If a target hits an obstruction, it takes additional damage as if it failed the save. This affects all targets in the area of effect, regardless if you hit or not.

BETWEEN THE KNEES

Benefit: Once a day, when you detonate explosives, increase the damage as if there was one additional ex-

plosive wired into the detonator. One target in the same square as the explosive takes damage as if there was two additional explosive wired into the detonator instead of one.

BLAST VECTOR

Benefit: Once a day, gain a +20 inherent bonus to your next Demotions check when planting explosives.

EXPLOSIVES ATTACK

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: When you detonate explosives, any targets hit suffer additional damage equal to half your level.

IMPROVED EXPLOSIVES ATTACK

Prerequisite: Explosives Attack at least 4 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: Once day, you can select one target in the area of effect of an explosive you plant to suffer double damage.

MASTERFUL EXPLOSIVES ATTACK

Prerequisite: Improved Explosives Attack, Explosives Attack, at least 6 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: All DCs to avoid explosives you plant increase by 2.

Special: You can select this feat up to 3 times, each time increasing the DC by 2.

THAT WAS CLOSE

Prerequisite: At least 6 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: Once a day, if you fail a demolitions roll by 10 or more, repeat the skill check with a +10 bonus to the roll.

WILHELM SCREAM

Prerequisite: Explosives Attack at least 4 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: Once a day, when you detonate explosives, increase the area of effect by 5 feet. After rolling damage, all creatures within the blast are pushed 1d6 x 5 feet beyond the area of effect and are prone. If a target hits an obstruction, it is stunned until the start of your next turn.

EXPLOSIVES SPECIALTY

Benefit: The range increment with all thrown explosives increase to 15 feet and you gain a +1 feat bonus to attack with all thrown weapons.

MARTIAL TRAINING FEATS

These feats represent expanded possibilities for unarmed combat.

Critical Threat Effects: Many of these feats employ a critical threat effect, which cannot be combined with any other critical threat effects from martial training feats. If you have several critical threat effects at your disposal via martial training feats, you must decide which one will be applied. You may employ a critical threat effect if you score a critical threat, not just if you



roll a critical hit. If you employ an effect from a critical feat, you cannot employ an effect from a Martial Training Feat. These critical effects cannot be inflicted upon vehicles or opponents larger than you. You still have to hit the target to impose a critical threat effect.

BALANCE AND DIRECTION

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in the advanced hand-to-hand skills of karate, muay thai, taekwondo, or any other martial art focused on pure foot and fist fighting. If you are unarmed or wielding only natural weapons, you gain a +1 bonus to AC against melee attacks.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat with an unarmed attack, the target is flat footed until the end of your next turn.

BEST ON THE MAT

Prerequisite: Evolution of Pankration

Benefit: You gain a +1 feat bonus to your CMB while. You also gain a +2 feat bonus to damage against grappled opponents while you are prone.

BOUNCING COMBO

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +15

Benefit: If you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you can take a move action that must be used before the end of your turn. You can only gain one move action this way per round.

EARNED THE BELT

Prerequisite: Evolution of Pankration, Improved Grapple, base attack bonus +7

Benefit: You can move a grappled target without requiring you to make a grapple check. You must still use a standard action to move the target.

EVOLUTION OF PANKRATION

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in the contact martial art of hapkido, jujutsu, sambo, or any other martial art involving pinning or submission. If you grapple a prone opponent, he is pinned instead of grappled and the target cannot stand until it escapes. If you grapple an opponent and both of you are prone, you do not gain the grappled condition.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat while sustaining a grapple against a prone opponent and inflict damage, the target is dazed for one round.

GAME OF STICKS

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in kali, jogo do pau, silambam, or any other stick based martial art. When wielding a quarterstaff, it gains the reach property.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat with a quarterstaff, the target drops one held weapon.

HAM HANDS

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: If you hit a target one size larger than you or smaller with a melee attack, you can spend a move action to entangle that target until the start of your next turn. This takes up a hand.

JUMPING KNEE

Prerequisite: Unarmed Expanded Profile

Benefit: When you hit with an unarmed attack as part of a charge, the target also suffers the effects of a bull rush as well the damage from the charge. If the target cannot be pushed because of an obstruction, it takes an additional +2 damage.

KAYFARE MANEUVER

Prerequisite: Superior Position

Benefit: You can sustain a grapple with a swift action but can only pin a target with the action.

MONO E' MONO

Benefit: Once a day, you can select one opponent in line of sight. The base damage of your unarmed attack improves by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d10) against that one opponent until it drops to 0 hit points or lower.

NON-LETHAL INTENT

Benefit: If you inflict damage equal to a quarter of the target's hit points in a single turn, you can elect to inflict no damage for that entire turn and instead stun the target until the start of your next turn. If you inflict damage equal to half of the target's hit points in a single turn, you can elect to inflict no damage for that entire turn and instead render the target unconscious for five minutes. Any further damage wakes the target up.

SWORDS OF GRACE

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in gatka, kendo, or various other defensive weapon-based martial arts. When wielding a light slashing weapon, you do not grant opponents flanking bonuses.

Critical Threat: Once a round, if you score a critical threat with a light slashing weapon, you can immediately make a melee attack against the same target. This additional attack cannot score a critical threat.

SUPERIOR POSITION

Benefit: When an enemy attempts to escape from a grapple you are sustaining, it takes 1d8 damage.

TAG TEAM

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +6

Benefit: If an ally hits an enemy adjacent to you with a melee attack, you can deal damage to that enemy equal to your Strength or Dexterity modifier as an immediate action.



THE RITUAL OF DANCE AND DAMAGE

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, Unarmed Expanded Profile

Benefit: Like many martial arts like capoeira and wushu, your combat style has become flamboyant and entertaining when not directly involved in the harming of another. While you are unarmed or wielding only natural weapons and you're in reach of an enemy, you can take a 10-foot step instead of a 5-foot step (acting like a 5-foot step in all other aspects) as long as you remain in reach of an enemy.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat with an unarmed attack, you can take a 10-foot step as free action following the hit and gain a +2 bonus to your next attack roll against any adjacent enemy.

THINK BIG

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6

Benefit: You can apply any martial combat feat critical threat effect to targets one size larger than you.

TRUE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE ART

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: This path is part of the core belief system of many martial arts, though wushu is the most obvious. As many times per day as your Wisdom modifier, as a swift action, you can gain DR5/- until the end of your next turn.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat while you have DR5/- or greater, you gain 5 + ½ your level as a bonus to your damage roll. This damage is not increased if you score a critical hit.

STRIKER

Benefit: The base damage of your unarmed attack improves by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d10).

Special: You can select this feat multiple times, each time your base damage improves by one step. You can select this feat once at 1st level, twice by 5th level, three times by 9th level, four times by 13th level, and five times by 17th level.

UNARMED EXPANDED PROFILE

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: Your legs become part of your unarmed attack profile. If you don't move on your turn (not even to take a 5-foot step), you gain a +2 bonus to all damage rolls until you the start of your next turn or until you move.

WAY OF THE TURN

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You specialize in aikido, judo, shuai jiao, or any other martial art specializing in redirecting an opponents' momentum or throwing them to the ground. When employing a melee attack, you can choose to inflict half damage and knock your opponent prone.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat, the target is dazed until the start of your next turn.

VEHICLE FEATS

AIRCRAFT SPECIALIZATION

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Gain a +3 bonus to all Vehicle Operation checks with an aircraft.

DRIFT KING

Prerequisite: Racing Record

Benefit: Ignore the DC modification for performing a drift with ground vehicles.

DROP THE HAMMER

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if you start an acceleration stunt, you gain a +15 ft (+3 square) bonus to your vehicle's speed until the end of your next turn. This bonus persists each turn as long as you accelerate with your vehicle action. You cannot decelerate.

FLAT OUT

Prerequisite: Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization.

Benefit: Select ground vehicle or aircraft. All vehicles of this type that you control gain a +5 ft. bonus to their speed.

GROUND VEHICLE SPECIALIZATION

Prerequisite: Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Gain a +3 bonus to all Vehicle Operation checks with a ground vehicle.

HIT THE APEX

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, you can gain a +5 bonus to your next Vehicle Operation check when attempting a turn. Speed decreases after concluding the turn are reduced as follows—no loss for 45 degree turns, ¼ reduction for 90 degree turns or greater.

HOLE SHOT

Prerequisite: At least 8 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: If you are controlling a vehicle when you roll initiative, you gain a +6 feat bonus to initiative.

HOLDING TRAFFIC

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: As a stunt (requiring no DC), your vehicle can occupy two additional squares in width in relation to other vehicles, but you cannot accelerate as part of the same action you do this.

HULL-DOWN

Prerequisite: Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if you finish a vehicle move and stop the vehicle this round, the vehicle gains cover from ranged attacks and area effects until the vehicle moves again.

IN THE FENCE

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, as a standard vehicle action, you can attack another vehicle. If you hit, you inflict 4d6 + your Dexterity modifier damage + your vehicle's hardness value, and the target must make a control roll (DC 10 + your Dexterity Modifier + your ranks in Vehicle Operation) or go into a slide.

Special: You regain the use of this ability if you fail to hit the target vehicle.

JAGGED EDGE

Prerequisite: Racing Record

Benefit: Select ground vehicles or aircraft. You reduce all DCs for stunt rolls by 5 with the chosen vehicle type.

JUMP START

Prerequisite: At least 6 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, one vehicle you control that suffers from disruption automatically makes its next disruption save.

JUMP THE CRASH

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if you are in a vehicle that crashes, you jump up to 20 feet from point of impact and take no damage. You may pass through enemy occupied squares. You can also make a single ranged attack at any point during the jump.

PUSHING AND SHOVING

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: As many times a day as your Dexterity modifier, you can attempt a pushing and shoving maneuver. If you are moving at least your vehicle's speed rating, as a standard vehicle action, you can commit to a vehicle attack. If you hit, you inflict 1d6 + Dexterity modifier damage + your vehicle's hardness value. Your vehicle takes half damage (employ your hardness value). An enemy vehicle reduced to half its hit points with this hit must make a vehicle control roll (DC 10 + your Dexterity Modifier + your ranks in Vehicle Operation) or enter a slide. If you hit a target vehicle with this action, you can repeat it on your next action and not have it count towards your total uses of Pushing and Shoving that day.

RACING RECORD

Prerequisite: Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization.

Benefit: Select ground vehicles or aircraft. You don't have to make stunt rolls for the following stunts with the vehicle type of your choice: Normal acceleration, aggressive acceleration, normal deceleration, aggressive deceleration, 90 degree turns (up to x2 speed), 45 degree turn (more than x2 speed), and fast velocity.

SPEED DEMON

Prerequisite: At least 8 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, you can gain a +10 bonus to your next Vehicle Operation skill roll.

STEERING BALANCE

Prerequisite: Ground Vehicle Operation

Benefit: When controlling a ground vehicle, the minimum distance you have to move after finishing a turn is 1/6 your speed (instead of 1/4).

THREAD THE NEEDLE

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if a vehicle you are controlling is struck by an attack, you can gain a +5 bonus to the vehicle's AC. If you are still hit, the vehicle's hardness increases by 10 against the attack. You also gain a +5 bonus for any control rolls you are forced to make until the end of your next turn.

TRAFFIC OFFENSE

Prerequisite: Ground Vehicle Operation

Benefit: When you impose a control roll on an enemy vehicle, increase the opponent's DC by 5. In addition, when you perform evasive maneuvers, you gain an additional +1 to AC and Reflex saves.

VEHICLE COMBAT

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: You receive no penalty when firing a weapon from a vehicle when it is in motion.

VEHICLE COMBAT, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: At least 10 ranks in Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Combat

Benefit: You do not need to make a control roll if performing an attack while operating a vehicle. You are also able to use your Intelligence or Dexterity as a bonus to AC (see Vehicles).

VORTEX DRAFT

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, you can force an opponent vehicle behind you into making a Control Roll or go into a slide. The DC is 10 + your Dexterity Modifier + your ranks in Vehicle Operation. This is part of a vehicle action. If the target fails its control roll, you gain a +15 ft (3 squares) bonus to your unmodified speed until the end of your next turn.



CHAPTER SIX: EQUIPMENT





Although Earth now resembles the ancient landscapes of fantasy, medieval it is not. The push for survival did not retard progress, even in the echan disruptions of the outside world. Those building the first cities after gate-fall, even if outside the first fledging bastions, still possessed enough talent to build insulated housing and glass windows. Basic tools, even those with moving parts, could still operate. Most of all, the knowledge from thousands of years of trial and error remained. The armor of today is lighter, stronger, and more maneuverable than the armor of legend. Swords are sharper and more balanced. Prevented from developing electricity and complicated machines based on chemicals and combustion, many survivors delved into new areas, pioneers in ulterior paths of development previously considered obsolete given the onset of the industrial revolution.

For the average traveler, their investment in defense depended on their location and the length of the voyage. Many caravans preferred hiring those with the training, already equipped for such tasks. Mercenaries often sought out the best weapons, needed to offset their lack of numbers against less equipped raiders wishing to prey on them. This is common especially in Canam, where paths and roads constantly fall under attack. When they first emerged from the north, the pagus were tribal and primitive. However, over the course of only a few decades, their attacks have grown increasingly skilled and devious. They've also been seen wearing improved armor and wielding better weapons. Simultaneously, bastions have employed their advanced expertise to weaving better clothes and forging better armor. Eventually, some of them learned the value of these exports outside their walls. Though prohibited selling their high tech weapons and technology, bastions could still sell items immune to disruption. This resulted in a torrent of new exports, boosting the economy of growing nations. The process to create these items necessitated the use of bastion knowledge and machinery, methods only replicated where the EDF was low or virtually nonexistent.

Markets sell these items for unreasonable amounts. Bastions like Angel and especially York turned this into a substantial windfall as the money turned in (gold, silver, and platinum) could be converted into raw materials. Disruption immune bastion exports found their way across the echan countryside, employed by almost every manner of individual, though often only held by human hands. Many fae, especially laudenians and chaparrans, despise these items.

THE DIVISION

The greatest distinction between technology and magic is progress. Technology improves as a civilization endeavors to better itself. The desire to advance from a primitive design encourages the development of better materials, better processes, and better machines. There has never been a point where a society was content with what it had achieved. Based in the most basic evolutionary drive, a species must expand both in knowledge and in scope in order to remain competitive against rivals. These rivals include other nations as well as other species. This compulsory habit is absent with non-evolved species like fae. Only evolved races like humans (and in this case, also kodiaks) have this biological obligation to subsume or subjugate underdeveloped people, building upon a ruined foundation of past accomplishments.

Magic does not improve. The same spells from yesteryear are the same cast today. Arcane knowledge and the ways of Pleroma passed down from the dragons in the previous age are finite. Though

occasionally new spells are uncovered, they have not improved the knowledge of the language or how it is able to alter the world when uttered. No matter how powerful magic is, it does have limits, bound within rules few people are fully aware of. Additionally, the only creatures gifted with such enlightenment about Pleroma are creatures without the biological compulsion to better their species. Therefore there has never been an attempt improve upon it. A human lifetime is too severely limited to understand all the chaotic variables associated with magic.

With this impedance, many echalogians on both sides of the magical/technological axis have predicted that eventually, science will discover how to overcome their sensitivity to magical effects. This includes developments in quantum mechanics and computers advanced enough to be able to adapt to sudden and chaotic changes to the very universe they exist in. Already, bastions like Porto and Mann have put forward proposals for creating a field that simulates a negative energy signature not unlike the energy from Ixindar. This would result in an “anti-magic field” that would render all magic within it inert. If successful, the retaking of the Earth by men and machines would be inevitable.

CURRENCY

There are two approaches to currency in a fantasy world: realistic and functional. Since many of the nations and kingdoms have neither alliances nor trading relationships, they share no common currency. Thankfully, the fae nations, long before man’s arrival, already decided that – despite what stamp was cast into the coin – the best way to ensure fair commerce was to make the value of the coin the metal it is made from. It is not unheard of travelers having coins of equal value, but from a dozen different kingdoms. As expected, the fae restricted their coins to a small branch of metals, namely gold, silver, and copper, though the last was often mixed with other alloys like brass and bronze. This was standardized amongst the gimfen, damaskans, and narros—and is believed developed by the latter. Chaparans and laudenians prefer trade to money in their own communities. Narros eventually added two more to the range, a dull silver coin made from palladium and platinum, and an ultra-rare angelite mint. In the modern world, the fae continued this practice and have endorsed a set of rules when dealing with currency.

They all still use coins that trade at the market value of the coin’s material. They are all properly stamped for authenticity and are distributed in near identical weight from other coins of equal value. The narros were responsible for this system and maintain its precision to this day.

Though each nation would issue its own currency with its own unique signature, the coin would be of equal purity and value to equivalent coins from other nations.

Humans emerged with a shattered economy. They had transitioned to banknotes and digital money, all of

which were destroyed. Human echan communities initially began under a barter system, which survived for almost a century until the first real kingdoms started to emerge. Because magic had difficulty forging valuable metals without the aid of a philosopher’s stone (the holy grail of alchemy and still only legend), most nations adopted metal currency. Limshau based their currency from the narros, which was later adopted by Kannos and Abidan. Baruch Malkut employs a banknote system for higher denominations, issuing paper with no face value to represent stored riches. Baruch shopkeepers, though encouraged to report those passing unfamiliar money, often take foreign gold as the coins can be melted and re-stamped. Despite a continued push to eliminate the exchange of this money within their borders, it still occurs. The Malkut slavers, for example, freely accept foreign coins.

ECHAN CURRENCY

For simplicity, all echan coins trade equally with each other. Many kingdoms take foreign gold, melt it, and re-stamp it with their mark. Because of this practice, the Limshau Chryso is the most widely circulated currency in Canam, followed distantly by the Narros Foot. Here are some examples of Canam currency:

Copper/Brass/Bronze Coins (=1 cp)

Abidan/Limshau/Gimfen penny
Baruch Malkut copper
Kannos kuedo
Narros copper tooth
Orchis casten
Torquil pence

Silver Coins (=1 sp)

Abidan dagot
Kannos kroenan
Baruch Malkut silver
Gimfen pebble
Limshau carmot
Orchis noman
Narros silver finger
Torquil tence

Gold Coins (=1 gp)

Abidan sovereign
Kannos kannon
Baruch Malkut dollar
Gimfen gold stone
Limshau chryso
Narros golden foot
Torquil pound

Platinum/Palladium Coins (=1 pp)

Limshau tollar
Narros pallis spirit
Unique Currency (Various)
Narros angelite opus (=500 gp)
Laudenian enchanted mark (=10,000 gp)
Gimfen pearl (=50 gp)

Quinox crystal (=5 gp)

House Antikari, Ogium, Plicato, and Solum all use various other nations' currencies. When Torquil was in its prime, it instigated a massive run of its coins, which was the dominant tender for nearly a century until the kingdom's collapse. Even after, it continued circulation for many decades and is still found today, though overwhelmed by the distribution of Limshau tender. Unique currency is just that, and as a result, is often not accepted outside of the race or region of issue. The gimfen pearl is an actual pearl but with nearly pin thin etch-work over it, making its attraction far higher than the pearl's value itself. It is often used when flamboyant purchases are made, especially in front of prospective mates. It is commonly considered a sign of arrogance if used for mediocre acquisitions. The laudenian mark is merely a glossy disk of brass but is enchanted with a permanent magical endowment, able to float near weightless. It cannot be broken or bent nor can it be picked from its owner's purse. The coins reappear in the owner's possession until willingly handed to another. Though the magic can be pulled off it and used in a constructive way, only the laudenian elder casters know how to accomplish this. The narros opus does not have enough angelite to forge an item but enough coins gathered could be employed in such a way. However, the coins are worth more in their issue than they are in their content and forging an item from the opus metal costs 10% more.

Quinox has a unique currency used in the high court and in prestigious markets. It is a small monocystal three inches across. The unbroken crystal is completely pure with no grain boundaries—a perfect crystal lattice. The ingot boules issued by the state are identical with no markings for their authenticity. None is required, as no single person within and without the House of Quinox knows how the treasury creates such perfection. Chaparrans and Laudeniens prefer a barter system, but when forced to use money they employ their neighbours' (in this case, Limshau).

Games need not employ this system of currency; just assume the gold they acquire is universal. As an optional rule, GM's are welcomed to include the currency titles above purely as flavor to a scene, or they may impose a rule system upon them, forcing players to track what kinds of money they have and its local value. If so, a few guidelines should be followed:

- Unique currency is only accepted by the race in question and they are often unwilling to trade it over to more acceptable legal tender.
- No one outside of Baruch Malkut accepts their money and no vendor in the “blessed kingdom” converts their coins or bills to foreign money.
- Banknotes are legal tender but have an accepted range from their bank. Usually, this range is within 100 miles. Outside of this, the notes are refused. Several shops in large cities refuse to deal with large monies (over 500 gp)

and will only accept banknotes from local banks. Banknotes are seldom exchanged back to coins unless given as loose change in a purchase.

- Gems and jewellery are not legal tender and must be traded for currency or banknotes.

UNIVERSAL CREDITS (UC)

It would be great to think that one could pass into the walls of a city of industry with a bag of gold and buy a laser gun. Alas, it is not that simple. Because of bastions' desperate need for resources, currency is printed on the cheapest of materials. They all commonly feature a half-plastic/half paper medium impossible to copy with more than 300 counterfeit measures including holographic imagery and computer encoding. Each has special imprinting from its home bastion. No bastion currency can be exchanged with any other bastion currency. For the sake of clarity, these moneys are given the term Universal Credits (uc), for they represent the legal tender of all bastion currency.

Various Bastion Currencies: Angel dollar, Mann credit, Sierra Madre bar, Selkirk pound, and York dollar. Although you cannot trade one bastion currency for another bastion currency, they are all considered equal in value in regards to echan currency. You may not convert uc to echan currency but you can convert echan currency to uc. This is because echan currency is worth the value of its metal, and bastions are always in the need for echan currency.

Every bastion except Mann will accept echan currency regardless of its national stamp. For this purpose 1 uc = 1 gp. There are no fractions or change and exchange banks will not accept lower value currencies unless they add up to a single uc. Banks will also not give out or return echan currency as they are smelted and put to applicable use. No bastions accept unique echan currency.

The Unfortunate Side Effect of Treasure: Alas, unlike echans, techan characters will seldom (if ever) find their technology in the lair of a dragon (or any other creature for that matter). This means techans must return to a bastion or techan merchant to re-arm and upgrade their technology or depend on a trained Engineer to build arms or armor over a long period of time. Nothing they find in field will be applicable to them (unless as widgets).

If characters gain a level in a dungeon, they won't conveniently find a higher level weapon after they slay the next big monster. In long, protracted adventures, this may create problems. Vehicles are a wise base of operations as they may hold many times over the ammunition capacity of a single techan character. This may solve the unfortunate issue of ammunition but not about the eventual need to upgrade technology. Alas, the echan wilderness is not called a wasteland by the techans for nothing. The GM has options to offset this. In the end, very little is more satisfying than returning to a bastion with your holds overflowing with gold.

TECH LEVELS

Tech levels indicate the differences between the bastions. Even the gimfen, taking pride in their machines, cannot compete with even the lowest technology of man. Some of these city-states reached pinnacles of advancement before others. Some struggled to survive while others flourished. With communications lines cut via the EDF, the bastions grew and developed separately from their brethren. After 500 years, they are not about to start sharing. Bastions would not only fight for technology but for the people possessing the knowledge to build it.

You can possess six tech levels. There are often exceptions when a bastion develops a device high then their stated tech level. Higher tech level bastions gain access to all ones below them.

Tech Level 0 / Enhancement Level 0:

Vehicles: Aircraft utilize aero-forms with jet engines or propellers. Vehicles roll on wheels but possess traction control and anti-lock brakes.

Military craft flaunt armor and tank treads. Fly by wire.

Weapons: Bolt action and flechette rounds fire from most guns. Electronically stacked projectiles and caseless ammunition. Basic energy weapons are limited to short range electric shocks.

Living: Natural healing mostly, assisted by EKGs and X-Ray machines. Surgery can cure most wounds, but recovery can last a while.

Tech Level 1 / Enhancement Level 1:

Vehicles: Ground vehicles now sport computer navigation, climate control, and electronic stability. Aircraft can now fly themselves if need be. Advanced aerospace has given way to vectored thrust and vertical-take-off aircraft.

Weapons: Computer tracking and targeting. Infrared and thermal imaging available. Firearms haven't changed but have grown more complicated with advanced reloading and higher firing rates. Advances in construction make them lighter with larger calibers.

Living: Computer diagnostic beds, MRIs, and robotic assisted surgery.

Tech Level 2 / Enhancement Level 2:

Vehicles: Vertical take-off fan craft and wingless jets keep aircraft aloft, are much more stable, and can fly rings around more primitive craft. Aircraft designs are no longer dominated by their massive aero-forms. Ground vehicles still use wheels but now mass transit magnetic vehicles appear as an alternative.

Weapons: Bolt weapons remain the choice for most but the way they fire improves. Railcannons and self-propelled projectiles as accessible choices.

Living: Rapid healing injections, designer drugs, gene therapy, and beneficial viruses. Healing time cut in half.

Tech Level 3 / Enhancement Level 3:

Vehicles: Magnetic vehicles reduce in size and now replace wheels in common transport. Fanjets shrink and become more efficient.

Weapons: The beginning of basic laser weaponry. Advanced magnetic. Prototype power armor appears.

Living: Known diseases are cured. Healing time cut a third. Nano healing is in its infancy.

Tech Level 4 / Enhancement Level 4:

Vehicles: Robotics appear beyond the role of "dumb tool." Power armor is mass produced. Wheeled traffic virtually nonexistent or, if it exists, can traverse any terrain. Ramjets shrink and provide massive thrust in small packages, revolutionizing transportation outside the magnetic-traffic.

Weapons: Laser weapons "tunable." Plasma weaponry. Bolt weapons are outdated.

Living: Nanotechnology can heal any wounds and even regenerate limbs.

Tech Level 5 / Enhancement Level 5:

Vehicles: Antigravity replaces all previous transportation.

Weapons: Disruptors, vapor rifles, disintegrator weaponry.

Living: Complete body reconstruction.

APPLICATION OF TECH LEVELS

Tech levels indicate the possible origin of a weapon as well as its damage potential. Anyone finding and using high tech gear is skittish about flaunting it in a lower bastion for fear it will be confiscated, dismantled, and reverse engineered.

An item's listed tech level is used as an enhancement bonus to its relevant application. A tech level 3 item, for example, offers a +3 bonus to its designed use. Applicable bonuses are as follows:

EQUIPMENT TL	ENHANCEMENT APPLIES TO
Weapons	Attack and Damage Rolls
Armor	AC
Gear	Relevant Skill Bonus (see description)

All tech levels bonuses are enhancement bonuses.

BATTERY CELLS

Many of the objects in this section require batteries. Batteries are not included in the item's purchase price. You cannot replace one type of battery for another type under ANY circumstances.

Battery classes: The three different types of battery cells are as follows:

Basic (B): These cells are for smaller items and cost 5 uc each. Ten cells weigh 1 lb.

Medium (M): These cells power many weapons, smaller vehicles, and larger equipment. They cost 50 uc each. One cell weighs 0.25 lb.

High (H): These cells are large, powerful, and usually reserved for huge weapons and massive energy equipment. They cost 150 uc each. One cell weighs 2 lbs.

ECHAN DISRUPTION FIELD (E.D.F.)

Magic retards the progression of technology. It breaks down lubrications. It jams gears and shorts out electronics. It overloads batteries. Almost all of humanity's post-industrial age technology is vulnerable. The more advanced the technology, the more susceptible it is. Because magic grows as more people use it, bastions are relatively safe within the confines of their walls or city limits. The moment they leave their borders and brave the outlands, their machinery and electronics begins to degrade. As technology comes into contact with higher concentrations of enchantment, it becomes prone to interference. This leads some machines to become less efficient, cease working altogether, or – in some rare cases – violently destroy themselves. Whenever technology is outside of a bastion, there is little anyone can do to impede this disruption. At best, they can slow or delay the effects for a short time.

The effects of magic against technology became referred to as disruption. It generates an EDF or Echan Disruption Field (although sometimes referred to as the Enchanted Disruption Field). Some bastions even rate an ED-I, or ED Index, which charts the hot spots in the world users of technology need to avoid. The low level EDF saturating the entire world prevents communication between the bastions and limits the lifespan of batteries, preventing most travelers from reaching any significant distance away from their home.

Optional Battery Rule: All exposed batteries will nullify in a day unless protected (via muffler bags or crates). Batteries encased in items (weapons, armor, gear) do not drain this way. Only exposed batteries do.

HOW DOES A “DISRUPTION EVENT” COME INTO PLAY?

Disruption is a constant threat, but the rules applying to it usually only occur when they are the most inconvenient. Disruption rolls occur at the end of the initiative order or after someone attempts to use technology.

At this point, the GM makes a single D20 roll to check if an item is disrupted and which tech level is affected. Situations may occur which force a disruption roll at other times.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

If in combat, and disruption occurs that round, the last one to act is the first one affected. If outside of combat, the technology that prompted to disruption roll is affected. With combat, each time a disruption roll is made, move up to the next player in the next initiative order.

When all the players have been rolled for, return to the bottom of the initiative order. Monsters using technology have their own rules and are not affected by a disruption roll.

WHAT IS AFFECTED?

The highest technology able to be affected by the disruption roll on the player in question is affected first. If the player has multiple items at the same tech level, equipment disrupts in the following order: Weapon currently in hand, gear in operation, armor being worn, and any vehicle present.

Secondary equipment disrupts in the same order. If there are multiple items of the same tech level, only one is affected.

Example: Kathryn Lindune wears TL5 power armor and wields a TL4 rail pistol and a TL5 plasma pistol. She also has operating Infrared Goggles (TL3). The GM makes a disruption roll and the result is 4. The lowest tech item on Kate that can be affected is her rail pistol. Her Infrared Goggles (TL3) are safe. Because the armor is higher tech level, it goes first. To break down the goggles, the GM would have had to roll a 3 or less on the disruption roll after already breaking down the armor and both weapons.

Because higher tech items are prone to breakdown first, it is advisable to always have a few lower tech alternatives handy.

Natural 20, Critical Collapse: If the disruption roll is a natural 20, something sinister occurs. A cataclysmic pulse courses through the unfortunate subjects of the disruption, causing more than a simple inconvenience. Every techan party member suffers a disruption event. The highest tech level item they have that is able to be disrupted and is not currently suffering disruption is affected.

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MODIFIED DISRUPTION d20 ROLL	RESULT
0 or lower ¹	Tech Levels 0 and up affected
1	Tech Levels 1 and up affected
2	Tech Levels 2 and up affected
3	Tech Levels 3 and up affected
4	Tech Levels 4 and up affected
5	Tech Levels 5 affected
6-20	No disruption effects
Natural 20	Critical Collapse

¹Tech Level 0 items are only affected if the roll is modified.

The result indicates the highest tech level items which are affected that round, if at all.

CELL	AREA	DAMAGE	REF SAVE (HALF DAMAGE)
B	Target square only	2d6	15
M	5 feet radius	3d6	15
H	10 feet radius	4d6	20

HOW IS AN ITEM AFFECTED BY DISRUPTION?

Once a player and an appropriate item are selected, the item is disrupted. The item no longer offers its tech level as a bonus to relevant abilities or skills. Any abilities the item offers cannot be used. Any other properties are inactive. Weapons jam and cannot fire. Most advanced armor stops moving, rendering the user either immobile or restrained. The effect remains until a successful DC10 save is made (a disruption save). A character with ranks in Engineer can replace the DC10 disruption save with the following Engineer check: DC15 + (2 x Tech Level of item). Affected technology makes a save each round (on the character's turn)

1st Saving Throw Failure: If the first saving throw fails, the item remains disrupted. If the item uses a battery, it loses 1d4 charges. If the item uses a battery but does not have a quantity of charges, the battery is unaffected.

2nd Saving Throw Failure: If the second saving throw fails, the item remains disrupted. If the item uses a battery, the battery is neutralized and useless. You must replace that battery.

3rd Saving Throw Failure: A third and final failed saving throw renders the item broken. It is non-functional. It must now be fixed.

If a saving throw is made before the item breaks, it resumes functioning the round the save is made.

Catastrophic Failure: If any player rolls a natural 1 on their saving throw, it is a catastrophic failure, resulting in detonation. This can only affect items with battery cells. The cell discharges. The item is broken and the wielder (and sometimes others) suffers damage.

AFTER-EFFECTS

With small groups and/or unlucky dice rolls, it is possible that a player may suffer two disruptions. Although this may be inevitable, it is important to note that an item that is currently being disrupted cannot be disrupted again. Disrupting an item currently suffering the effects does not prolong the disruption or change the results of the saving throws. After a disrupted item comes online, it is not susceptible again until all other items on the player that can be affected by the disruption suffer a disruption event (If Kate Lindune's armor and pistols have already suffered a disruption event and the disruption roll results in a 3, then the binoculars would be affected next. If the roll was a 4, then the armor would be hit again).

OFFENSIVE DISRUPTION

Other than the end of the initiative order, there may be times where a disruption roll may be forced. This occurs under high saturation points, usually coinciding with a

monster's more powerful effects. An offensive disruption check occurs the moment the action does. Another disruption roll will still be required at the end of the initiative order, regardless. Unlike normal disruption rolls, an offensive disruption roll affects only those caught in the trigger for the disruption roll. Offensive disruption also suffers a -2 penalty to its roll.

Situations to roll for an offensive disruption roll:

- If a magical creature scores a critical hit.
- If the player is hit with a "Pincher" Weapon.
- If any piece of equipment is enchanted and for every round after it is enchanted.

WHAT IS IMMUNE TO DISRUPTION?

Various techan items are immune the effects of disruption. This can be from technology which is so basic as to not cause an issue or an item which is so heavily shielded, the EDF cannot affect it.

Immune to disruption:

- Items with the immune property.
- Gimfen and their adapted technology.
- Any armor not requiring a cell for operation.
- Boosters and medical injections.
- All TL0 gear except TL0 weapons.

Immune does not mean the item can never be affected by the EDF. Enchanting any techan item causes it to break down. The golden rule is that if it is mechanical or electrical in anyway, or requires on combustion to function (from bullets to cars), magic can get at it, so it's best not inviting it in.

SHIELDING

Unlike the gimfen shielding, which makes the weapon, armor, or item clumsier, bulkier, and far uglier, techan shielding keeps the overall shape of the original object and does not add significant weight to the final design. Any techan item can be shielded. The cost of shielding depends on the original cost of the item. You cannot shield batteries or TL0 gear (though you can shield TL0 weapons).

Price: 10% of the price of the original item

Weight: + 5% in weight (round up).

Benefit: Once a day, if the item is disrupted, it immediately comes back online.

Special: If the item already has this ability, it cannot receive it again.

OUT OF COMBAT DISRUPTION

Players may only encounter disruption events out of combat when dealing with magical traps, talking with magical creatures, or if brandishing technology brazenly

through an echan landscape (forest, dungeon, city, etc.). When the situation occurs, a disruption roll may be in order, taking into account any relevant penalties. If the group is in a high magical zone (arcane library, chaparran forest, etc.), the GM may have to roll for disruption every minute or every hour, depending on factors only the GM can determine. Only take such disruptions into consideration if the players insist on wielding their weapons or operating power armor openly. Of all of these, power armor is the hardest to maintain. Thankfully, they are usually the hardest to break down and, by the time a group can afford them, there should be an operator on hand to keep the technology from disrupting.

DISRUPTION AMPLIFICATION

The basic rules above assume a low impact of disruption on your game. This is not entirely reflective of the setting but does keep the dangers of disruption low to streamline game flow and to reduce the necessity of the operator mechanic build in smaller game groups. There are two additional levels which greatly increase the dangers of disruption based on a modification of the disruption roll. All other rolls dealing with disruption (like saves and DCs) are unaffected.

Realistic Disruption: -2 to Disruption Rolls

Dangerous Levels: -4 to Disruption Rolls

Extreme Hazardous Level: -4 to Disruption Roll and Critical Collapse on a 19-20

A GM should set the modifier when a campaign begins and maintain that for the length of the game.

ECHAN WEAPONS

Most fae races remain steadfast in their traditions and techniques. A laudenian bow looks the same now as it always did. Only the damaskans continue to evolve with knowledge collected from their human allies. The weapons from Limshau revel in a newfound understanding of the forge and hammer.

Even some bastion exports found their way into echan hands, wielded as proudly as if pulled from a narros fire pit, a result of technological know-how, not magical aptitude.

BASTION EXPORTS

Some manufacturers in bastions employed advanced technology to create melee weapons of amazing quality. The materials employed were melted at exacting points, chemically combined to a perfect ratio, their edges shaved to almost an atom's sharpness. Bastion exports look plain and somewhat ordinary. Maker symbols offer some style, usually engraved in the steel itself. Bows are no longer strung animal hides around bent wood but cables wound around a mechanism of levers. Because of this niche market, echan weapons made and exported from techa fetch steep prices and rarely can buyers justify the expense. A prospective buyer can usually spot one of these rare weapons by

their extravagant cost. Alas, the greatest problem with these superior examples is their boring appearance. Often enough, they are built for effectiveness, not glory, so seldom do they strike fear in opponents when raised in anger. They won't rouse the masses when pulled from their scabbard. They are still counted as echan weapons and are not affected by disruption.

Brass Knuckles: A no fuss weapon, brass knuckles add +1 damage to unarmed melee hits (per the augment property, see later).

Carbon Crossbow: This super light crossbow was exported from York originally, but replicas have been found across Canam. The weapon is a sleek, smooth, multi-piece item of black and silver, constructed – not of steel – but of plastics and carbon fiber. This makes the weapon less clumsy than ancient designs.

Property: The carbon crossbow comes with a range finding scope, nullifying the penalty of firing into the second range increment.

Compound Longbow: Compound bows are fashioned in steel. They are bolted and adjusted by computer. Their power comes from a series of pulleys, cams, and levers. They do not warp and can be adjusted for a variety of conditions. The biggest drawback of a modern compound bow is its increased weight. This is taking into consideration that most of these bows are made from aluminum. A few rare models are constructed from magnarros or angelite. There is no shortbow variety from any bastion.

Property: A compound longbow is an exotic weapon requiring the proficiency to use properly. Other than that, it operates exactly as a composite longbow, except that its Strength rating can be adjusted between +0 and +6. It takes a full minute to adjust the compound longbow to a specific Strength rating and only someone proficient with it can do so.

LIMSHAU WEAPONS

Modern Limshau weapons were adapted from knowledge acquired from refugees leaving Angel when Ravenar left hundreds of years ago. These designs resembled those from old human eastern countries. The similar names came later to honor the new population helping to build a better life. All Limshau weapons look plain and featureless. They sport neither jewels in their pommels nor intricate weavings on their handles. The swords are extremely sharp and feature holes along the blade to lighten the weapon without sacrificing tensile strength by a significant margin. Although resembling the weapons of their namesake, the steel and forge process used results in a blade as sharp as legend but less rigid as their predecessors. This gives modern Limshau weapons a longer lifespan, making them more resistant to snapping.

Limshau Repeating Crossbow: This unique weapon found popularity recently with custodians in the outer cities. It has since found widespread circulation. This single-hand crossbow carries a strap around the user's arm, allowing the weapon to be reloaded with a single hand, making it the only crossbow that can be

WEAPON	COST	DMG (S)	DMG (M)	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	SPECIAL
MELEE WEAPONS								
Martial Light								
Brass Knuckles	5	—	+1	x2	—	½ lbs.	B	Augment
Exotic Light								
Limshau tanto	10gp	1d3	1d4	19-20/x2	10ft.	1 lbs.	P	—
Limshau wakazashi	50gp	1d4	1d6	19-20/x2	—	2 lbs.	S	—
Exotic One Handed								
Bastion longsword	315uc	—	1d8	18-20/x2	—	3 lbs.	S	—
Bastion short sword	310uc	—	1d6	18-20/x2	—	1 lbs.	P	—
Limshau katana	100gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	—	3 lbs.	S	—
Exotic Two-Handed								
Bastion greatsword	250uc	—	2d6	18-20/x2	—	5 lbs.	S	—
Limshau nagamaki	70gp	1d8	1d10	x3	—	8 lbs.	S	reach
Limshau odachi	80gp	1d10	2d6	19-20/x2	—	8 lbs.	S	reach
Limshau yari	25gp	1d6	1d8	x3	—	8 lbs.	P	brace, reach
Narros krollish	150gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x3	—	12 lbs.	S/B	reach
RANGED WEAPONS								
Exotic One-Handed								
Limshau crossbow	300gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	80ft.	5 lbs.	P	—
Exotic Two-Handed								
Compound longbow	350uc	—	1d8	x3	110ft.	5 lbs.	P	—
Carbon Crossbow	500uc	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	120ft.	6 lbs.	P	—
Kitarri Black Bow	500gp	1d8	1d10	x3	110ft.	5 lbs.	P	—

loaded and fired repeatedly with a single hand. After six shots, you must take a move action to reload the clip it.

OTHER ECHAN WEAPONS

Narros Krollish: The narros krollish was considered the standard weapon of choice for most narros serving in the military. This practice has waned in the centuries since the narros' return, only keeping the tradition within Fargon. Narros born or raised elsewhere run the risk of never picking up one. The krollish is a multi-function weapon featuring no less than three different ways to inflict damage on a target. Its business end sports both an axe and a hammer, formed from a single block of steel. That head is topped on a long staff towering over most narros wielding it.

Properties: The krollish can inflict bludgeoning or slashing damage at-will. Switching takes no action, but slashing is assumed unless you declare the switch.

Kitarri Black Bow: Legend claims that the wood inside of a kitarri black bow is partly infused with the spirit of dead chaparran. It is commonly known that when a chaparran dies, it is placed without coffin in the dirt along with a single acorn. The tree which grows requires neither light nor water. Chaparrans are able to command wood to naturally grow objects for them to use, including weapons. It was at some point where these two traditions merged, and these trees enchanted with the spirit of passed fae were used/asked to create great structures and items for the elite of chaparran society. The temples of Jibaro are thought to be such ex-

amples. Kitarri black bows are believed to be another, capable of adapting themselves to any chaparran (or other worthy spirit) wielding them. Black bows do not bond permanently to a user but they have been known to "play favorites". Being a non-chaparran and gaining the benefits of a black bow is rare, but has been known to happen.

Property: The black bow works exactly like a composite bow, starting life as +2 Strength modifier limit longbow. When it is enchanted, its Strength modifier limit increases at the same rate as its enchantment (e.g.: +2 enchantment increases its Strength modifier by 2 to +4) to a max of +7. Kitarri feats can increase this limit but someone without this feat is stuck with only the basic property.

TECHAN WEAPONS

Techan weapons are not listed by specific region. If this book went into details of every single model from every single bastion, the chapter would occupy half the book. As a result, only the broad examples are listed. However, some unique weapons are included.

A COMPROMISE IN THE SETTING

Although realistically, batteries and devices that use them are unique to each bastion, certain rules are in place to make a techan game actually fun.



- Bastion batteries are compatible with other bastion batteries.
- Buying a lower TL item from a higher TL bastion still counts as the lower TL item. Further, the item is exactly the same in mechanics (though not necessarily in looks) as if the item was purchased from a lower TL bastion. A TL2 weapon from Selkirk works and is built exactly the same way as a TL2 weapon from Mann. This applies to disruption rules, repairs, and when applying the Engineer skill to the item.

WEAPON RULES

The following rules apply to all weapons included here:

Reloading Weapons: All weapons are manual or clip-loading. Though these clips may be energy cells, they all necessitate the same time to reload. Reloading one techan weapon of any type requires a move action. Certain powers and feats may alter this rule. Reloading does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Basic Autofire (Ex): Anyone proficient in a weapon with the auto or heavy auto property can attempt an autofire attack. Doing so requires a *full-round attack*, which *provokes opportunity attacks*. The weapon being used must have the *auto* or *heavy auto* property. When initiating an autofire attack, select a *5-foot radius* area within weapon range, then make a ranged attack to each target in the area at a *-2 penalty*.

NEW WEAPON GROUPS

The weapons covered here are grouped into categories based on their general utility:

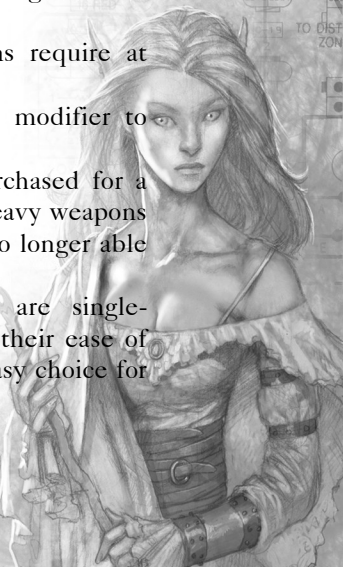
Heavy Weapons: These are large weapon systems that require a tripod, a base, a platform, or any other stable point from which to fire.

Properties: These are the properties of heavy weapons:

- Heavy weapons grant opportunity attacks if fired.
- Because of their cumbersome nature, if you move or are moved any distance you suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls with heavy weapons until the beginning of your next turn (meaning you can shoot first and then move to avoid the penalty unless you are gained a ranged attack before your next turn).
- Unless mounted, heavy weapons require at least a Strength 13 to use.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Special: These weapons may be purchased for a Large user (e.g.: advanced armor). If so, heavy weapons become two-handed weapons. They are no longer able to be used by Medium-sized users.

Small Arms, One-Handed: These are single-handed firearms which are renowned for their ease of use and compact style, making them an easy choice for those preferring stealth.



Properties: These are the properties of one-handed small arms:

- One-handed small arms do not grant opportunity attacks if fired.
- One-handed small arms cannot be wielded by Large or larger creatures (e.g., advanced armor).
- You can fire one-handed small arms while prone.
- One-handed small arms are also considered light weapons.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Small Arms, Two-Handed: These are larger, slightly clumsier weapons usually preferred for longer ranges and high stopping power. With the development of technology, the latter became less a factor, but two-handed arms have the capacity for larger clip capacities, greater accuracy, and the option of fast automatic fire.

Properties: These are the properties of two-handed small arms:

- Two-handed small arms grant opportunity attacks if fired.
- Because of their cumbersome nature, if you move more than 5 feet (1 square) or are moved more than 5 feet (1 square), you suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls with two-handed small arms until the beginning of your next turn (meaning you can shoot first and then move to avoid the penalty unless you are gained a ranged attack before your next turn).
- You can fire two-handed small arms while prone.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Special: These weapons may be purchased for a Large user (e.g.: advanced armor). If so, these become one-handed small arms. They are no longer able to be used by Medium users.

Specialty Weapons: These are weapons with a unique function and application that requires them to be trained specifically in said item. High tech levels feature more weapons that require explicit training. These include sonic weapons, pincher weaponry, and vapor rifles. There are one-handed, two-handed, and heavy specialty weapons.

Properties: Specialty weapons also count as one- or two-handed small arms, heavy weapons or super heavy weapons. Specialty weapons can only be used with a single standard action and not a full-round action.

Super Heavy Weapons: These are weapons with the potential of incredible damage but balance that with a cumbersome design. These large weapon systems require a tripod, a base, a platform, or any other stable point from which to fire.

Properties: These are the properties of one-handed small arms:

- Super heavy weapons come equipped with a tripod.

- Super heavy weapons grant opportunity attacks if fired.
- You must use a move action to plant a super heavy weapon in the ground. Once planted it cannot be moved unless you use a move action to uproot it. If you fire a non-planted super heavy weapon, you suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls with the weapon and, immediately after the attack is resolved, are pushed 5 feet (1 square) and knocked prone. If you cannot be pushed, you are stunned until the start of your next turn.
- You cannot fire super heavy weapons if you are prone.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Techan Melee Weapons: The way technology advances, when one development gains dominance, even at the expense of clearly superior competition, the less popular option is phased out. The losing side is relegated to novelty, valued only by collectors. Competing technologies don't remain competitive very long. This can be as simple as bronze versus stone weapons to as confusing as competing high definition video discs.

Once ranged weapons became the mainstay on the battlefield, close combat variations fell out of favor. This practice surged with the advancement of firearms. Not even the crossbow could survive against the encroachment of chemical propulsion. By the end of the last millennium the concept of close combat was virtually nonexistent in full scale war, reserved only for covert assassinations, sport competitions, movies, and historical recreationists. Though a knife would still be standard equipment, it was often kept in its sheath until the pistol ran out of bullets.

As expected, the concepts of laser swords and mono-molecular whips were bound to fiction and were neither developed nor considered practical in a modern military. This policy has not changed in the armed forces of bastions across the world. In the case of free companies and other technological-based organizations actively engaged in outside forces, they found themselves often squaring against foes able to reduce the effectiveness of ranged weapons. These included being invisible, being fast, or being able to ambush opponents from a concealed location. Add to that the cramped quarters of most dungeons along with the capacity of monsters to sustain significant punishment before dying and the necessity of creating advanced melee weapons became an urgency.

The issue with employing technology with close-combat weapons is the proximity that said technology must be to objects generating disruption. Firearms are tricky enough but a melee weapon must interact physically with a creature of magic in order to inflict damage. As a result, these melee weapons had to be especially insulated against magical influence. The unfortunate consequence is the absence of the aforementioned monomolecular whips and laser swords.

Disruption: Melee weapons are still effective as weapons even when they suffer disruption. If a techan melee weapon is targeted for disruption, it loses its enhancement bonus, techan properties (like pincher), and special features. It retains its capacity to attack and inflict damage.

Size: Like firearms, techan melee weapons can be enlarged for Large users (advanced armor). If purchased this way, they no longer can be used by Medium users. If used by an advanced armor, use the TL of the melee weapon when determining enhancement bonuses to attacks and damage.

Power: Like firearms, you only use a charge when you initiate an attack with a techan melee weapon which has an energy cell. Using the weapon for intimidation does not expend energy.

WEAPON PROPERTIES

Augment: An augment weapon uses your unarmed attack to determine its damage dice. The weapon grants its tech level as an enhancement bonus to your unarmed attack and damage rolls. An unarmed attack can only benefit from one augment weapon at a time.

Auto: If your weapon has the auto property, you can either fire one shot per attack roll or you can fire five shots per attack roll (firing 5 is considered employing the property). An auto weapon is not a heavy auto weapon. Heavy auto weapons (weapons with much higher firing rates) always fire 10 shots with each attack roll (save for features or feats which reduce this number). You gain bonuses by applying the 5-shot auto property via feats and class abilities.

Basic Chemical Projectiles (BCP): The first firearm after the antiquation of the arrow used chemical explosives to propel its deadly shell to its victim. Although the chemicals evolved as knowledge did, the result remained. Requiring no energy cell, standard ballistic firearms seldom broke down. As time continued, the chemicals needed became easier to locate.

Even in the largest, most advanced bastions, chemical firearms are still popular among those leaving the safety of their walls. Assault rifles, autoloaders, bolt sniper rifles, all caseless weapons, light machine guns, machine pistols, all shotguns, pocket pistols, sniper cannons, and submachine guns utilize chemical projectiles. Though the majority are TL0 and feature no advancement, several can be purchased at higher tech levels (except for those that have the immune property).

ESP Special Rule: ESP—or Electronically Stack Projectile—weapons have both an auto and a heavy auto setting, allowing you to switch between the two properties. You can switch the setting as a swift action.

Exp: Explosives have an area of effect at the point of impact of usually 5 feet or more. Additionally, if an explosive's area of effect is impeded by indestructible terrain (like in a dungeon corridor), the explosion carries over to unaffected squares. If one line of squares (at least 3 squares) is occupied by indestructible terrain,

the entire affected area shifts over to occupy the same number of free squares. If both sides of an explosion are occupied by indestructible terrain (like a narrow corridor), the blast carries up and down the corridor one square for every line of the original area obstructed.

This rule doesn't go into effect if the obstructing terrain can be damaged by the explosion. The number listed next the "Exp" entry indicates the size of the radius in feet.

Example: If an explosive detonates against a stone wall, a 5-foot radius blast shifts its area 1 square, still occupying 9 total squares. If the explosive detonates in a 1 square wide hallway, the explosion would be 1 square wide and 5 squares long (with the explosive in the middle square).

Attacking with Explosives: When using any weapon with an area of effect, you don't make a ranged attack but rather establish a Reflex DC affected targets must beat (see grenades and explosives). As such, these weapons do not have critical values.

Capacitor: Capacitor weapons resulted from plasma bottle research. It builds upon this by combining elements from both plasma and laser technologies. For the capacitor weapons, the shooter can dial up the strength of the energy burst. The weapon charges up by siphoning energy from its cell. The weapon discharges plasma energy but also uses plasma as its accelerator. Capacitors have three settings. Each additional charge scales its damage by one size, 1d6 to 1d8 to 1d10 to 1d12 to 2d8 to 2d10.

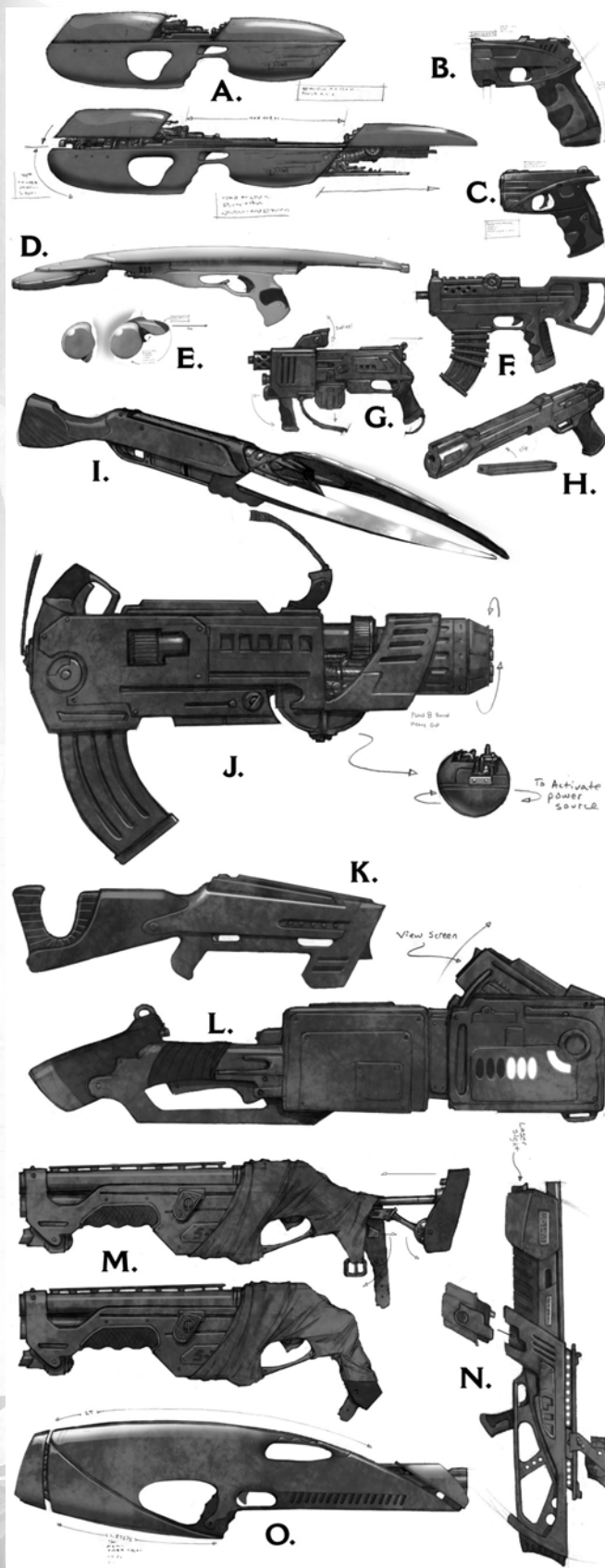
Two charges scales up the weapon to the next damage increment. Four charges move it up two increments from its base damage and eight charges move it three increments from its base damage. This may be combined with the powers that increase weapon damage as well. This increase is for a single round and multiple shots must pay the increase as well.

Example: Wielding an auto capacitor weapon that does 1d8, you can fire one shot, using one charge and doing 1d8 each. If you make a burst with that weapon, you use five shots and five charges. If you crank up the capacitor to eight charges, each shot uses eight charges, doing 2d8 each. With the burst, you use 40 charges.

Special: Capacitor weapons also all have the plasma property.

Conceal: These weapons are so small, they offer a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to conceal them.

Coil/Rail: These weapons are the most popular weapon for techan soldiers in the echan wilderness after the standard firearm. The coil and rail weapons emerged early when chemical explosives appeared unpredictable in high disruption. Magnetic fields remained constant, a welcomed blessing to those living under Earth's blanket of protection. Research teams quickly took advantage of this loophole. The process involves accelerating metal shells using magnetism. The specific process is complicated and both coil-based and rail-based technology fire their shells using different means. All magnetic accelerated weapons feature long ranges and high critical ratings. They also require



- A. Plasma Rifle
(Collapsed/Deployed)
B. Caseless Pistol
C. Pocket Pistol
D. Pulse Carbine
E. Plasma Grenade
F. Submachine Gun
G. SPP Rifle
H. Rail Pistol
I. Ion Rifle

- J. Rotary Cannon
K. Thumper Laser
Cannon
L. Vapor Rifle
M. Gauss Repeater
(Medium & Large User
Configuration)
N. Caseless Rifle
O. Pulse Capacitor Rifle

straight path from the weapon, making a single free attack on one target in direct line of attack in the weapon's range. This may only occur once per shot.

Grenade: Grenades use their own form of attack that depends on the specific grenades. Refer to grenades later.

Guided: These weapons assist in aiming after being fired and can even make a secondary attack if the first one misses.

Property: As many times per day as the weapon's enhancement +2, you can either gain a +5 bonus to attack or allow a reroll if the attack misses.

Heavy Auto: These weapons have no single shot option. They always fire ten shots per attack roll (some features and feats may reduce this).

Property: Heavy auto weapons inflict additional damage as the firer becomes more experienced using them. A heavy auto weapon inflicts a +1 bonus to damage with every hit. At 11th level, this increases to +2 damage. This is in addition to extra damage from feats and class features. You must be proficient with the weapon to gain this damage bonus.

Immune: These weapons, and they are few, cannot be disrupted because of their archaic construction. They will still suffer disruption if enchanted.

Laser: Any condensed, well-defined beam of light can be considered a laser. In history, the initial weapons concentrated radiation to a focal point, burning the target with intense heat. Later developments increased the size and potential of these beams. Often, lasers are confused with pulse plasma weapons. The largest difference is that lasers cut through while plasma splashes.

Lasers weapons give away their firer but deliver devastating damage few can resist. They can also track targets easier with subsequent damage. There are laser pistols, rifles, and thumper cannons. The laser is a neutral energy type and is not considered fire.

Property: Once a day, as a free action, if you score a critical hit, the target is blinded.

Special: If you strike successfully with a laser, every subsequent round gains a +1 inherent bonus to hit that same target. This is removed if you don't fire at the same target or if you miss that same target the following round.

Nuclear: These are directed energy weapons similar to plasma and laser guns. Where a laser inflicts condensed radiation and plasma inflicts severe heat, weapons with the nuclear property inflict damage via a high-energy beam of atoms. Upon impact, they disrupt the

changing both a clip and a cell. These weapons deliver astounding kinetic potential.

Property: Coil and Rail weapons reduce AC bonuses via cover by 2.

Rail special rule: If a rail (rail only) weapon shell kills a target with a critical hit, the shell continues on a

molecular structure of the target. Tissue damage from radiation is an often side effect. This technology has been dubbed a "dirty solution", as it emerges frequently before the advancement of high-powered lasers and plasma weapons.

Property: Once a day, as a free action, if you score a critical hit, the target is shaken.

Special: If you hit with a nuclear weapon, every subsequent hit on the same target gains a +1 bonus to damage. This is cumulative up to +3 and is lost if don't hit that same target before the end of your next turn.

Pincher: These weapons deliver an electromagnetic pulse that disrupts any item that requires a battery or an electric current to operate.

Property: Once a day, as a free, you can render a hit target stunned until the beginning of your next turn.

Special: All battery-powered technology on the target suffers a disruption roll at -2. Damage inflicted by this weapon is electricity.

Plasma: Any weapon employing ionized gas is considered a plasma weapon. This involves either using the magnetically conductive matter as a delivery device or as a weapon itself. Because magnetism is one of the few scientific constants not broken by the EDF, it became a popular choice. The plasma pulse concept deals with the energy cell firing a toroid of superheated gas inside a magnetohydrodynamic bubble that is then accelerated from the barrel in the same way a railgun fires its iron-core shell. The bubble remains solid for a significant time, or until it strikes its target, where the heat burns at an intense temperature. There are plasma pistols, rifles, and capacitor cannons.

Property: On a successful strike, you may deal the weapon's tech level in additional damage to one target of your choice up to 5 feet from the initial enemy. Once a day, you can inflict double the TL in damage to all targets up to 5 feet away.

Special: Plasma weapon damage is superheated beyond a creature's capacity to be immune or resistant to fire damage.

Shotgun: Shotguns impact with tremendous force at close range, but this stopping power diminishes rapidly further out. They are fairly distinct and few models are on the market.

Critical: If you score a critical hit, the target is knocked prone.

Special: Shotguns do +3 damage if fired at targets 10 feet or closer. Beyond their first range increment, they only deliver half damage.

Sniper: These weapons contain advanced targeting systems for long-range fire. They are available in chemical, laser, and magnetic variations.

Special: Sniper weapons list a proficiency bonus. If you are proficient with the weapon and use a move action to aim, you gain this proficiency bonus on your following ranged attack with that weapon (. The full proficiency bonus ends if you move or are moved. The effect doesn't expire otherwise (so you don't have to use a move action on every turn if you don't move or are

moved). Aiming does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Sonic: The first sonic weapon was no more than a simple high-powered oscillating pain siren generating 175 decibel (dB) acoustic waves in all directions. Newer sonic weapons utilize high frequency ultrasound to carry the painful audio waves in a straight, focused path.

This technology offers increased range with no adverse side effects for the firer. In practical uses, the sonic weapon may be downgraded to transmit a normal voice across 10x its range increment to any other target without fear of anyone else overhearing unless they are inline.

Property: Once a day, if you score a critical hit on a target, it is deafened.

Self Propelled Projectile (SPP): SPP weapons started emerging from Angel R&D and eventually found use across the world from either identical development or stolen designs. They are small rockets fired from pistols or rifles that continue to accelerate after an initial air compression push fires them from the shell. Although more expensive than traditional firearms, SPPs proved useful for engagements when range mattered. The ammunition for SPP weapons are known as sabot rounds, as the shell ejected breaks apart, and the contained self-propelled projectile ignites, breaking from its seal. All SPP weapons can fire underwater, though their range is halved. They are not common in techans hands but have definitive advantages, such as explosive warheads and guidance systems.

Property: As many times per day as the weapon's enhancement +2, you can either gain a +5 bonus to attack or allow a reroll if the attack misses.

READING THE WEAPON TABLE

Clip: The capacity of a loaded clip or cell. Check ammunition for prices.

Cell: If the weapon requires an energy cell, its type would be listed here. The ammunition the cell provides is also listed. A cell is always assumed to supply the full capacity listed when it is bought or loaded.

Price: All costs are listed in uc.

Type: Along with B for bludgeoning, P for piercing, and S for slashing, techan weapons are also offered as E for Energy for laser, nuclear, and plasma weapons. Flamethrowers specifically are listed as F for being a fire-based attack.

Tech Level (TL): The tech level where the item can be found. This affects its availability, its sensitivity to disruption, and often times, its final price. It is also applied to damage rolls and attack rolls as an enhancement bonus.

No Entry: A weapon entry of "--" indicates this entry does not apply or has unique rules. Having a blank clip or cell entry means that weapon does not require a clip or a cell. If the damage, crit, or type entry is empty, this could mean that the weapon requires unique ammunition (like a grenade) or at has unique rules. See the weapon description for more information.

ONE-HANDED SMALL WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
STARTING WEAPONS										
Autoloader	25	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	8	—	0	BCP
Break-action shot pistol	30	1d8	x3	25 ft.	3 lbs.	P	2	—	0	BCP, immune, shotgun
Dagoon	15	1d6	x2	40 ft.	3 lbs.	P	2	—	0	BCP, immune
Machine pistol	40	1d6	x2	50 ft.	3 lbs.	P	20	—	0	auto, BCP
Pocket Pistol	20	1d4	x2	40 ft.	1 lbs.	P	3	—	0	BCP, conceal, immune
Revolver	15	1d4	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	6	—	0	BCP, immune
ADVANCED WEAPONS										
Autoloader	2,000	1d6	x2	60 ft.	2 lbs.	P	8	—	1	BCP
	8,000	1d6	x2	70 ft.	2 lbs.	P	8	—	2	BCP
Machine pistol	2,000	1d6	x2	60 ft.	3 lbs.	P	20	—	1	auto, BCP
	8,000	1d6	x2	70 ft.	3 lbs.	P	20	—	2	auto, BCP
Caseless pistol	2,250	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	25	—	1	BCP
	8,500	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	30	—	2	BCP
	18,750	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	35	—	3	BCP
Light machine gun	2,350	1d4	x2	50 ft.	4 lbs.	P	40	—	1	auto, BCP
	8,700	1d4	x2	50 ft.	4 lbs.	P	45	—	2	auto, BCP
	19,050	1d4	x2	50 ft.	4 lbs.	P	50	—	3	auto, BCP
ESP pistol	8,800	1d6	x2	50 ft.	3 lbs.	P	40	—	2	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	19,600	1d6	x2	55 ft.	3 lbs.	P	40	—	3	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	34,000	1d6	x2	60 ft.	3 lbs.	P	40	—	4	auto/heavy auto, BCP
SPP pistol	8,800	1d6	x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	P	10	—	2	SPP
	32,000	1d6	x2	85 ft.	3 lbs.	P	12	—	3	SPP
	50,000	1d6	x2	90 ft.	3 lbs.	P	15	—	4	SPP
Coil pistol	34,000	1d6	19-20/x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10	M	3	coil
	58,000	1d6	19-20/x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10	M	4	coil
Nuclear Pellet Pistol	36,000	1d6	18-20/x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	E	—	M15	3	nuclear
	59,000	1d6	18-20/x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	E	—	M20	4	nuclear
	88,000	1d6	18-20/x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	E	—	M25	5	nuclear
Solid laser pistol	58,000	1d6	x3	100 ft.	3lbs.	E	—	M20	4	laser
	80,000	1d6	x3	110 ft.	3lbs.	E	—	M25	5	laser
Rail pistol	60,000	1d6	19-20/x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10	M	4	rail
	90,000	1d6	19-20/x2	120 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10	M	5	rail
Plasma pistol	98,000	1d6	19-20/x3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	E	—	M15	5	plasma
Thumper laser pistol	98,000	1d6	x3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	E	—	M30	5	auto, laser
Capacitor plasma pistol	128,000	1d6	19-20/x3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	E	—	M30	5	auto, capacitor, plasma

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Air Dart Gun: The air-dart gun resembles a standard pistol except it fires a small needle via an air compressor. The needle inflicts no damage but can deliver any number of medical injections. You may choose which injection to employ from your inventory before making the attack.

Brass Knuckles: A no fuss weapon, brass knuckles add 1 damage to unarmed melee hits.

Buzz Baton: The buzz baton is a non-collapsible truncheon with a point capable of emanating a powerful electric shock.

Capsicum Spray: This item employs a chemical irritant like capsaicin (common in some fruits, plants, and most chillies), also known as a lachrymatory agent. When a target is struck, the spray adheres a sticky, waxy liquid to the skin which is colorless and odourless. The spray contains almost pure capsaicin with a scoville rating of more than 10,000,000, double the intensity of ancient pepper spray. This increase was required to

inflict greater pain on the new magical beasts roaming the world. The exact formula changes with each bastion. Most are built with a compressed canister while others eject a breakable projectile.

Effect: If struck, the target must make a DC 15 Fort save or be sickened and staggered for 2d4 rounds. If you score a critical hit, the target fails this save. Larger targets gain a bonus to the save as follows (+2 Large, +4 Huge, +6 Gargantuan; Colossal targets are immune).

Caseless Weapons: Caseless weapons use unique clipless, caseless ammunition. A square-shaped round is the entire firing mechanism. The shell is encased inside a solid propellant coffin, connected to others, and fed as a clip. Each bullet, when fired, incinerates its case, ejecting the remnants with the bullet. This system uses no clips; no cases are used or ejected. Caseless weapons possess massive clip capacities.

Disruptor: This gun first emerged from a Porto beluga carrier from across the ocean. Since then, few people have been able to successfully reverse engineer them. Apparently someone at Porto's Tiltthe Intel-

TWO-HANDED SMALL WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
STARTING WEAPONS										
Assault rifle	50	1d8	x2	80 ft.	7 lbs.	P	50	—	0	auto, BCP
Basic sniper rifle	50	1d8	x2	100 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	—	0	BCP, sniper (+1)
Bolt rifle	45	1d8	x2	100 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	—	0	BCP, immune
Shotgun	50	1d10	x3	30 ft.	10 lbs.	P	6	—	0	BCP, shotgun
Submachine gun	65	1d6	x2	80 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	—	0	auto, BCP
ADVANCED WEAPONS										
Assault rifle	2,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	6 lbs.	P	50	—	1	auto, BCP
	8,000	1d8	x2	120 ft.	6 lbs.	P	50	—	2	auto, BCP
Shotgun	2,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	9 lbs.	P	6	—	1	BCP, shotgun
	8,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	8 lbs.	P	6	—	2	BCP, shotgun
Basic sniper rifle	2,000	1d8	x2	120 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	—	1	BCP, sniper (+1)
	8,000	1d8	x2	120 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	—	2	BCP, sniper (+1)
Machine shotgun	2,500	1d10	x3	30 ft.	15 lbs.	P	20	—	1	auto, shotgun
	9,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	15 lbs.	P	25	—	2	auto, shotgun
	20,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	15 lbs.	P	30	—	3	auto, shotgun
Submachine gun	3,000	1d6	x2	80 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	—	1	auto, BCP
	10,000	1d6	x2	85 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	—	2	auto, BCP
	25,000	1d6	x2	90 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	—	3	auto, BCP
Sniper cannon	4,000	1d10	x3	150 ft.	15 lbs.	P	6	—	1	BCP, sniper (+1)
	15,000	1d10	x3	150 ft.	14 lbs.	P	7	—	2	BCP, sniper (+1)
	28,000	1d10	x3	150 ft.	13 lbs.	P	8	—	3	BCP, sniper (+1)
Caseless rifle	4,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	10 lbs.	P	100	—	1	auto, BCP
	15,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	10 lbs.	P	120	—	2	auto, BCP
	28,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	10 lbs.	P	140	—	3	auto, BCP
ESP rifle	5,000	1d8	x2	80 ft.	10 lbs.	P	80	—	1	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	16,000	1d8	x2	80 ft.	10 lbs.	P	90	—	2	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	29,000	1d8	x2	80 ft.	10 lbs.	P	100	—	3	auto/heavy auto, BCP
SPP rifle	18,000	1d8	x2	150 ft.	14 lbs.	P	20	—	2	SPP
	32,000	1d8	x2	175 ft.	14 lbs.	P	20	—	3	SPP
	50,000	1d8	x2	200 ft.	14 lbs.	P	20	—	4	SPP
Light Coilgun	34,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	15 lbs.	P	16	M	3	coil
	58,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	13 lbs.	P	16	M	4	coil
Kinetic Flash Rifle	36,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	20 lbs.	P	50	M	3	auto, coil
	40,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	20 lbs.	P	60	M	3	auto, coil
Cyclotron Rifle	38,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	15 lbs.	E	—	M20	3	nuclear
	62,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	15 lbs.	E	—	M25	4	nuclear
	90,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	15 lbs.	E	—	M30	5	nuclear
Nuclear Pulse Rifle	42,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	20 lbs.	E	—	H80	3	auto, nuclear
	65,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	20 lbs.	E	—	H90	4	auto, nuclear
	94,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	20 lbs.	E	—	H100	5	auto, nuclear
SPP sensor gun	34,000	1d8	x3	100 ft.	16 lbs.	P	10	M	3	sniper (+2), SPP
	54,000	1d8	x3	130 ft.	14 lbs.	P	10	M	4	sniper (+2), SPP
SPP Vortex	35,000	1d8	x3	100 ft.	14 lbs.	P	70	—	3	auto, SPP
	55,000	1d8	x3	100 ft.	12 lbs.	P	70	—	3	auto, SPP
Ion rifle	25,000	1d8	x2	50 ft.	16 lbs.	E	—	M20	3	pincher
	40,000	1d8	x2	75 ft.	16 lbs.	E	—	M25	4	pincher
Sonic focus rifle	22,000	1d8	x2	50 ft.	17 lbs.	E	—	M20	3	sonic
Solid laser rifle	72,000	1d8	x3	150 ft.	15 lbs.	E	—	M20	4	laser
	98,000	1d8	x3	150 ft.	13 lbs.	E	—	M30	5	laser
Railgun	72,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	15 lbs.	P	16	M	4	rail
	98,000	1d8	19-20/x2	200 ft.	13 lbs.	P	16	M	5	rail
Ultimate sniper rifle	80,000	1d10	19-20/x3	250 ft.	18 lbs.	P	10	H	4	rail, sniper (+2)
	105,000	1d10	19-20/x3	300 ft.	17 lbs.	P	10	H	5	rail, sniper (+2)
Gauss repeater	85,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	16 lbs.	P	60	H	4	auto, rail
	110,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	16 lbs.	P	80	H	5	auto, rail
Plasma rifle	128,000	1d8	19-20/x3	150 ft.	17 lbs.	E	—	M15	5	plasma
Thumper laser rifle	135,000	1d8	x3	150 ft.	17 lbs.	E	—	H60	5	auto, laser
Pulse capacitor rifle	145,000	1d8	19-20/x3	150 ft.	17 lbs.	E	—	H80	5	auto, capacitor, plasma

HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
STARTING WEAPONS										
Machine light cannon	65	1d10	x2	100 ft.	30 lbs.	P	120	—	0	BCP, heavy auto
Rotary cannon	80	1d8	x2	100 ft.	65 lbs.	P	250	—	0	BCP, heavy auto, immune
ADVANCED WEAPONS										
Machine light cannon	2,000	1d10	x2	110 ft.	28 lbs.	P	120	—	1	BCP, heavy auto
	8,000	1d10	x2	120 ft.	25 lbs.	P	120	—	2	BCP, heavy auto
Rotary cannon	2,300	1d8	x2	150 ft.	55 lbs.	P	300	M	1	BCP, heavy auto
	8,600	1d8	x2	150 ft.	50 lbs.	P	350	M	2	BCP, heavy auto
ESP maelstrom	10,000	1d8	x2	200 ft.	55 lbs.	P	400	M	2	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	23,000	1d8	x2	200 ft.	55 lbs.	P	400	M	3	auto/heavy auto, BCP
God's Eye sniper gun	14,000	2d8	x3	300 ft.	40 lbs.	P	10	—	2	BCP, sniper (+3)
	24,000	2d8	x3	300 ft.	40 lbs.	P	10	—	3	BCP, sniper (+3)
Ion cannon	22,000	2d6	x2	200 ft.	50 lbs.	P	—	H40	3	pincher
Coil light gun	42,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	65 lbs.	P	40	H	3	coil, heavy auto
	62,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	65 lbs.	P	40	H	4	coil, heavy auto
Nuclear Particle Lance	43,000	2d6	18-20/x2	250 ft.	35 lbs.	E	—	M30	3	nuclear
	63,000	2d6	18-20/x2	250 ft.	35 lbs.	E	—	M30	4	nuclear
	90,000	2d6	18-20/x2	250 ft.	35 lbs.	E	—	M30	5	nuclear
Linear Collider	45,000	2d6	18-20/x2	200 ft.	40 lbs.	E	—	M60	3	heavy auto, nuclear
	65,000	2d6	18-20/x2	200 ft.	38 lbs.	E	—	M70	3	heavy auto, nuclear
	94,000	2d6	18-20/x2	200 ft.	35 lbs.	E	—	M80	4	heavy auto, nuclear
Sonic devastator	28,000	2d6	x2	70 ft.	50 lbs.	E	—	H40	5	sonic
Railcannon	75,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	75 lbs.	P	120	H	4	heavy auto, rail
	102,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	70 lbs.	P	120	H	5	heavy auto, rail
Solid laser cannon	80,000	2d6	x3	250 ft.	65 lbs.	E	—	H30	4	laser
	100,000	2d6	x3	250 ft.	55 lbs.	E	—	H35	5	laser
Thumper laser cannon	134,000	2d6	x3	250 ft.	60 lbs.	E	—	H200	5	heavy auto, laser
Pulse mini-gun	144,000	2d6	19-20/x3	250 ft.	100 lbs.	E	—	H200	5	heavy auto, plasma
Capacitor apocalypse	162,000	2d6	19-20/x3	250 ft.	110 lbs.	E	—	H200	5	capacitor, heavy auto, plasma

SUPER HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
Mortar	500	—	—	50 ft. ²	50 lbs.	—	1	—	1	grenade
	3,000	—	—	60 ft. ²	40 lbs.	—	1	—	2	grenade
	9,000	—	—	70 ft. ²	30 lbs.	—	1	—	3	grenade
Autocannon	100	1d8+8	x2	300 ft.	200 lbs.	P	200	—	0	auto, BCP
	2,500	1d8+8	x2	300 ft.	175 lbs.	P	200	—	1	auto, BCP
	12,000	1d8+8	x2	300 ft.	150 lbs.	P	200	—	2	auto, BCP
Volley Gun ESP	13,000	1d6+6	x2	250 ft.	350 lbs.	P	500	H	2	BCP, heavy auto
	27,000	1d6+6	x2	300 ft.	300 lbs.	P	600	H	3	BCP, heavy auto
Super-Kill Sniper	80,000	1d10+10	19-20/x3	400 ft.	150 lbs.	P	5	H	4	rail, sniper (+2)
	112,000	1d10+10	19-20/x3	500 ft.	150 lbs.	P	5	H	5	rail, sniper (+2)
Mass Driver	120,000	1d10+10	19-20/x3	300 ft.	500 lbs.	P	10	H	5	rail
Particle Beam Gun	50,000	2d6+6	18-20/x2	300 ft.	350 lbs.	E	—	H20	3	nuclear
	98,000	2d6+6	18-20/x2	300 ft.	300 lbs.	E	—	H25	4	nuclear
	162,000	2d6+6	18-20/x2	300 ft.	300 lbs.	E	—	H30	5	nuclear
Dense Plasma Focus Cannon	170,000	1d12+12	19-20/x3	300 ft.	350 lbs.	E	—	H200	5	heavy auto, plasma

¹ Grenades gain +1 to their area burst when fired from a mortar.

² Mortars cannot be fired on targets less than 50 feet away.

SPECIALTY WEAPONS (Can only be used with a standard action)

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
Air Dart Pistol	35	—	x2	20 ft.	4 lbs.	P	1	—	0	
	500	—	x2	40 ft.	4 lbs.	P	4	—	1	
	1,000	—	x2	60 ft.	4 lbs.	P	6	—	2	
	9,000	—	x2	80 ft.	4 lbs.	P	8	—	3	
	17,000	—	x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10	—	4	
	27,000	—	x2	120 ft.	4 lbs.	P	12	—	5	
Capsicum spray	20	—	x2	10 ft.	2 lbs.	—	3	—	0	
I-handed grenade launcher	60	—	x2 ¹	50 ft.	8 lbs.	—	1	—	0	grenade
	2,000	—	x2 ¹	60 ft.	7 lbs.	—	1	—	1	grenade
	18,000	—	x2 ¹	70 ft.	6 lbs.	—	1	—	2	grenade
Grenade light weapon	300	—	x2 ¹	50 ft.	10 lbs.	—	6	—	0	grenade, 2-handed
	2,600	—	x2 ¹	60 ft.	10 lbs.	—	8	—	1	grenade, 2-handed
	19,200	—	x2 ¹	70 ft.	10 lbs.	—	9	—	2	grenade, 2-handed
Electroshock gun	2,000	—	—	10 ft.	3 lbs.	—	—	B2	1	1-handed
Flamethrower	2,500	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	10	M	1	heavy weapon
	9,000	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	15	M	2	heavy weapon
	20,000	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	20	M	3	heavy weapon
	34,000	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	25	M	4	heavy weapon
	55,500	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	E	—	H30	5	heavy weapon
Net gun	1,500	—	—	25 ft.	10 lbs.	—	1	—	1	2-handed
Rocket launcher	500	2d6+6	x2 ¹	150 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	—	1	exp 5, heavy weapon
	1500	2d6+6	x2 ¹	200 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	—	2	exp 5, guided, heavy weapon
	3500	2d6+6	x2 ¹	250 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	—	3	exp 10, guided, heavy weapon
	5500	2d6+6	x2 ¹	300 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	—	4	exp 15, guided, heavy weapon
Ground heavy gun	10,000	3d6	x2 ¹	400 ft.	185 lbs.	P	1	—	2	BCP, exp 5/10, super heavy
Sonic stunner	18,000	—	—	50 ft.	5 lbs.	—	—	M10	3	2-handed
Disruptor	50,000	1d8	x2	50 ft.	10 lbs.	—	—	H20	4	1-handed
Restraintment field	50,000	—	—	50 ft.	10 lbs.	—	—	H5	4	1-handed
Plasma artillery	98,000	3d10	x2 ¹	250 ft.	110 lbs.	E	—	H4	5	exp 10/20, plasma, super heavy
Wave stunner	162,000	—	—	50 ft.	12 lbs.	E	—	H5	4	2-handed
Vapor rifle	200,000	2d6	x3	100 ft.	12 lbs.	E	—	H6	5	2-handed

¹ This weapon can only score a critical if firing directly at a target (see Grenades and Explosives).

ligica discovered that certain high-powered focused sonic waves inflict severe pain on certain targets. Prototypes, issued to test units, proved effective as an alternative to beam or shell weapons. The almost inaudible wave-rifle discharge inflicts massive damage on physical targets and on enemy combat units. However, in one incident, a test group encountered undead opponents and reported a much-elevated damage potential.

Undead: The disruptor inflicts 1d12 damage against undead instead of 1d8. The critical ranged also increases to 18-20/x3.

Special Ability: Once a day, if you score a critical hit, you can render a target staggered.

Electroshock Gun: This wand-shaped device fires air-compressed barbed darts attached to coils towards a target. Upon impact, the coils conduct a massive electrical current, disrupting superficial muscle functions. The darts can penetrate enough to attach to anything. The darts are also magnetic. The electrical pulse does not need to penetrate skin to be effective.

Firing Rate: After discharged, tension springs recoil the darts and the coils back to the gun as a free action, making it available to fire again. However, it cannot fire for 10 rounds as its capacitor needs to charge.

Range: Because of the length of coil, you cannot strike targets further than 30 feet.

Effect: Upon impact, the target must make a DC15 Fort save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. If you score a critical hit, the target fails this save. Larger targets gain a bonus to the save as follows (+2 Large, +4 Huge, +6 Gargantuan; Colossal targets are immune).

Electronic Stacked Projectile (ESP) Weapons: No longer are bullets loaded from an external clip and launched via a firing pin. Now they are loaded directly into the barrel, separated only by the propellant. The concept dates back to traditional fireworks except the stacked projectile weapon does not need to fire its entire payload when ignited. Electrical pulses launch the bullets in the proper order. Misfires are pushed out by the next round, preventing backfire. This removes the

TECHAN MELEE WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	WT.	TYPE	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
LIGHT MELEE								
Collapsible Baton	25	1d4	x2	1 lbs.	B	--	0	immune
Harmonic Blade	18,000	1d4	18-20/x3	1.5 lbs.	S	M20	2	l-handed
	32,000	1d4	18-20/x3	1.5 lbs.	S	M20	3	l-handed
	50,000	1d4	18-20/x3	1.5 lbs.	S	M20	4	l-handed
Piton-Gauntlet	2,500	--	--	4 lbs.	P	M20	1	augment
	8,800	--	--	5 lbs.	P	M25	2	augment
	18,500	--	--	5 lbs.	P	M25	3	augment
Punch Gun	45	1d4	--	2 lbs.	P	--	0	augment, BCP, clip 4
	1,850	1d4	--	2 lbs.	P	--	1	augment, BCP, clip 4
	7,000	1d4	--	2.5 lbs.	P	--	2	augment, BCP, clip 5
	17,000	1d4	--	3 lbs.	P	--	3	augment, BCP, clip 6
	32,000	1d4	--	2 lbs.	E	M10	4	augment, laser
	50,000	1d4	--	2 lbs.	E	M15	5	augment, plasma
ONE-HANDED MELEE								
Buzz Baton	32,000	1d6	x2	1 lbs.	B	H20	3	pincher
	50,000	1d6	x2	1 lbs.	B	H20	4	pincher
Power-Hooks	31,000	--	--	6 lbs.	B	H20	3	augment
	48,000	--	--	6 lbs.	B	H20	4	augment
	70,000	--	--	6 lbs.	B	H20	5	augment
Tesla Glove	25,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H15	2	augment, pincher
	41,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H20	3	augment, pincher
	62,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H25	4	augment, pincher
	85,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H30	5	augment, pincher
TWO-HANDED MELEE								
Chainsaw	1500	1d6	18-20/x3	15 lbs.	S	M20	1	
	7,500	1d6	18-20/x3	12 lbs.	S	M25	2	

need for a clip, a firing pin, or for that matter, any moving parts at all. The greatest advantage of this technology is a phenomenal firing rate, capable of discharging rounds literally as a stream of bullets.

Flamethrower: This weapon shrunk in size over many years. Though still two-handed, it no longer requires an unsafe nozzle to an even more hazardous backpack. Modern flamethrowers keep their tank mounted under the weapon stock. The tank is comprised of a relatively safe solid fuel. When combined with air, it reacts into expanding foam. A small battery compresses air in a separate chamber. The foam enters the final chamber and, when allowed to uncompress, sprays out in liquid form. A magnesium igniter at its barrel sends the superheated stream of flame to its target. Despite rumours and urban legends, neither older nor modern flamethrower tanks explode easily if ruptured or if a spark flicks nearby. If the weapon tank is ruptured, the foam would break and spray but not automatically ignite. Even older models would only burst like aerosol cans and not violently explode. Advanced versions release superheated plasma.

Property: All damage from the flamethrower is fire damage.

Attack: When you attack with the flamethrower, you target a 30 foot cone. A TL5 weapon targets a 40 foot cone.

Special: Any target hit with fire damage from a flamethrower suffers half your initial damage on the beginning of your next turn.

Grenade Launcher/Weapon: All grenade launchers and weapons can load grenades only 0.5 lbs or less.

Ground Heavy Gun: This light artillery weapon is designed to act both as a field gun for direct fire or a

howitzer for long parabolic, indirect air bursts. It has an incredible range and is able to eliminate most soft targets with a single shot.

Property: Before firing, select either direct or indirect fire. Direct Fire—exp 5 and double damage; Indirect Fire—exp 10. See grenades and explosives for setting the reflex DC.

Harmonic Blade: Beginning its life as a surgical scalpel, this device evolved quickly to accomplish the ethically opposite goal. The blade requires a built-in power source enabling it to slice or penetrate through virtually any substance. It accomplishes this by vibrating in excess of 75,000 Hz. More advanced designs translate little of this pulsation to the user's hand, though it does still occur. As a result, using a harmonic blade for more than a few minutes generates significant muscle fatigue. Because a larger blade translates more of its energy to the wielder, there has not been a practical harmonic blade longer than a few inches.

Property: If you have at least 5 ranks in Heal, you gain a +2 bonus to damage with this weapon. This weapon's damage increases to 1d6 if your target is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target has a Dexterity bonus or not) or you flank a target. The harmonic blade counts as a dagger.

Critical: If you score a critical hit, your critical threat range increases by 2 for your next attack on the same target. This is not cumulative and is lost if your next attack on the target misses.

Net Gun: If this weapon strikes a target, it is pinned. The victim needs to make a DC20 Escape Artist check to escape.

Piton-Gauntlet: These devices are not strictly speaking gauntlets, as your fingers are free to hold other

objects. The gauntlet mounts to your forearm. This weapon is effectively a captive bolt pistol. When activated, it propels a titanium rod three inches from your fist (or as much as a foot for larger models). Spring action recoil returns the rod to its housing an instant later. The ejection system utilizes compressed air containing enough pressure for five minutes. A minute is all that's required to pump the pressure back into the mechanism. The TL2 gauntlet uses a battery to maintain pressure in the system.

Property: The piton-gauntlet increases the critical threat range of your unarmed attacks by 1.

Plasma Artillery: Built on the same baseline as the ground heavy gun, the plasma artillery does suffer from its inability for parabolic fire. It more than makes up for it with damage potential.

Property: Before firing, select either direct or indirect fire. Direct Fire—exp 10 and double damage; Indirect Fire—exp 20. See grenades and explosives for setting the reflex DC.

Power-Hooks: These impressive devices are oversized augmented manipulators attached to synthetic muscles and hydraulic pumps. The entire assembly wraps around the arm and most of the shoulder. Purchasing two links the two assemblies around the back.

Property: Power-hooks increase the damage dice of unarmed attacks by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). You also gain a +2 inherent bonus to Strength ability checks (but not Strength attacks). Your hands are not free and you can wield no other weapons if using power-hooks.

Punch-Gun: Effectively an impact-triggered firearm, the punch-gun only discharges when a short relay is triggered an inch from your unarmed attack.

Property: Built into the mechanism is a firearm. This weapon only discharges when you hit with an unarmed attack. When you do so, you also automatically hit with the firearm. The extra damage is counted part of the original hit and if you score a critical hit with your unarmed attack, this damage is also counted as well. The ammunition of lower tech variations is BCP (Basic Chemical Projectile). At higher levels, the traditional firearm is replaced with a low-yield energy weapon.

Restraint Field: This pistol shaped weapon export from Mann launches a balloon-styled force field, capturing a target by warping its containment matrix around its victim and then compressing the field to restrain the target from moving.

Special: Only Large targets or smaller can be targeted. Each shot and every round holding the target uses one charge.

Effect: If struck, the target must make a DC20 Ref save or be restrained.

Sonic Stunner: Very similar to a normal sonic weapon, the sonic stunner is designed only to be non-lethal.

Property: If the target is hit, it is shaken and exhausted for one round. On a critical hit, the target is also dazed for one round.

Tesla-Glove: This unique item is equipped with

more than a half-dozen resonant transformers that conduct severe electrical shocks to a target when you impact with a physical hit.

Property: If you don't hit any target during a round, at the start of your next turn, increase the damage of your next hit with this weapon by +2. This is cumulative up to +6 damage. After you hit any target, the bonus is reduced back to 0. At the start of combat, unless you are surprised, the glove is assumed to be primed to +6 damage.

Thumpers: Along a solid light tunnel, pulses of concentrated energy run through, striking in blasts of intense radiation, making this laser variant resemble a string of beads. Thumper technology offers increased damage to basic lasers.

Vapor Rifle: No one is entirely sure who created this weapon. An import first appeared in Angel several years ago, and examples still pop up occasionally. All bastions but Mann have banned its use. Porto refused to accept responsibility of the design, claiming a rival bastion known as Moteogo developed it in reprisal to Porto and to strike fear into a subservient population currently under their control. It fires a plasma bottle similar to other pulse weapons, but the gas inside is of a particular volatile mix. When struck, the victim is literally torn apart by the massive heat and chemical reaction some compare only to fluoroantimonic acid, as molecules are torn apart upon contact. The pulse appears to simply vaporize a section of the victim, sometimes the entire body itself, leaving nothing but vapor and a clean cauterized cavity.

Property: Each time you hit with this weapon, it is a critical threat.

Wave Stunner: The most advanced stunner designed features a lethal and non-lethal setting. The non-lethal mode employs millimetre wave electromagnetic radiation that penetrates 1/64th of an inch under the skin. This causes the water molecules under the skin to vibrate, activating pain sensors, giving the subject the impression they are on fire. The lethal setting increases the potency to microwave radiation, causing the skin to actually boil, resulting in severe burns. The wielder may change its setting as a free action.

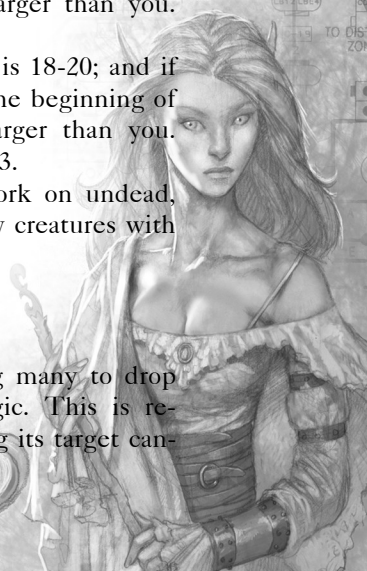
Property: Stun—No damage, and target is staggered until the beginning of your next turn and knocked prone. Immune to targets larger than you. Kill—1d8 damage.

Critical:—The critical threat range is 18-20; and if confirmed, the target is stunned until the beginning of your next turn. Immune to targets larger than you. Kill—The critical threat range is 18-20/x3.

Special: The stunner does not work on undead, incorporeal creatures, elementals, or any creatures with fire resistance.

AMMUNITION

Supplies are extremely limited, forcing many to drop gunpowder weapons in favour of magic. This is reflected in the cost. Ammunition missing its target can-



not be recovered. Prices listed are for the quantities indicated next to the entry. Each quantity listed weighs 0.25 lb. except for flame tanks (5 lb.) and rockets (2 lb.).

Note: All characters gain 2 full clips of ammunition (or cells) for all weapons when they purchase them. The only exceptions are air dart rifles and grenade launchers (which are sold without ammunition).

A NOTE ON CLIPS

It would be frustrating to micromanage one's clip usage. When purchasing ammunition, you are assumed to purchasing clips as well for the capacities you need. You are not strolling into combat with boxes of loose ammunition. You are expected to be prepared.

INJECTIONS

Injectors can be delivered manually with a melee attack or via an air dart gun. Instead of inflicting damage, you impose the injection's effect. Large or larger creatures cannot be affected by injections. If you hit the same target again with the same injection it is suffering from the previous effect, the target automatically fails its next save against the effect. Injections are an affliction and act similar to poison, only with injections, a hit target cannot avoid the initial effect. Injections do not work on undead or incorporeal creatures. Making a ranged attack with an injector does not destroy the injection if the attack misses.

DETONATOR

A vile injection, this introduces ultra disruption-sensitive nanites into a subject. These detonate in the target when they disrupt.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The first time during its turn, when the target makes an attack, it takes 2d6 damage; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

ECHAN SUPPRESSOR

This injection sourced from Mann uses the altered rules of science in echa against the subject. It only affects fae. The injection is a toxoid vaccine against epidemic parotitis (the mumps). It reacts to the altered chemistry of fae, turning their blood into a corrosive, eating the creature from the inside.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 18

Frequency: 1/round

Requirement: This injection only works against living fae without the lxindar keyword.

Effect: The target is sickened and staggered; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves; **Aftereffect:** After 2 consecutive

AMMUNITION TYPE	QUANTITY	DAMAGE APPLICATION	COST
ENERGY			
Battery cell – B	1	Various	5
Battery cell – M	1	Various	50
Battery cell – H	1	Various	150
Kinetic			
Capsicum cartridge	3	—	4
Caseless round	20	Any	4
ESP bullet	20	Any	4
Flame tank	1 tank	Any	50
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d6	10
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d8	15
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d10/2d6	20
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d10+10	30
Net cartridge	1	—	5
Rocket (TL1)	1	2d6+6	400
Rocket (TL2)	1	2d6+6	1,000
Rocket (TL3)	1	2d6+6	3,000
Rocket (TL4)	1	2d6+6	5,000
Sabot SPP	20	1d6/1d8	5
Shotgun slug	10	1d8/1d10	5
Traditional bullet/BCP	20	1d4/1d6	2
Traditional bullet/BCP	20	1d8/1d10	3
Traditional bullet/BCP	20	2d6/2d8/1d8+8	5
Traditional bullet/BCP	10	3d6	20
Heavy shell	1	3d6	20
Injections			
Detonator	1	--	50
Echan Suppressor	1	--	250
Fear	1	--	500
Narcosynthesis	1	--	50
Open Mind	1	--	1,000
Overdose	1	--	100
Paralysis	1	--	250
Pain	1	--	1,000
Sleep	1	--	1,000
Slow	1	--	25
Viral	1	--	150
Alternate Ammunition			
Angelite	--	--	x4
Armor Piercing	--	--	x2
Fae Iron	--	--	x2
High Explosive	--	--	x5
Tracer	--	--	x4
Rubber	--	--	x2
Hollow Point	--	--	x2
Silver	--	--	x4

saves, the target takes 2d4 damage.

FEAR

This batch of psychotropics will make the victim think everyone around him is a demon...unless the victim itself is a demon, in which case, it may see angels.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: The target is panicked; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

NARCOSYNTHESIS

Truth serum, multiplied by fifty.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20
Frequency: 1/minute
Effect: The target suffers a -10 penalty to Bluff checks;
Cure: 2 consecutive saves

OPEN MIND

This injection is a concoction of barbiturates, amphetamines, and LSD. When injected, the target becomes extremely susceptible to suggestion.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: The target suffers the effects of a Charm Person spell; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

OVERDOSE

This is just a collection of various drugs you had laying around.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: The target is confused; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

PAIN

This injection does not inflict pain, but rather renders the target hypersensitive to physical hits.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: Each time the target takes damage, the target suffers an additional 1d6 damage. This is not affected by a critical hit; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

PARALYSIS

This broad-spectrum of neuromuscular-blocking drugs are able to inflict nearly instant paralysis in a target.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 18
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: The target is paralyzed; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

SLEEP

This heavy dose of diazepam and various opioids may actually kill a horse.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20
Frequency: 1 minute
Effect: The target is unconscious. If the target takes any damage, it immediately wakes up; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

SLOW

This strange medley of drugs causes muscle relaxation by depressing the central nervous system.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 13
Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target moves at half speed, cannot charge or run and takes a -6 penalty to Dexterity and Strength;
Cure: 2 consecutive saves

VIRAL

It is common for doctors to inject a near-dead virus to improve a subject's immunity. This is just like that, but the opposite.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15
Frequency: 1/minute
Effect: The target is sickened. **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

ALTERNATE AMMUNITION

Certain weapons can have their standard ammunition altered with a more advanced substitute. Some variants deliver more damage while others fill a specific purpose against an enemy. Some ammunition can only be used with specific ammo types.

Rules on Alternate Ammunition: You cannot mix alternate ammunition types in the same clip. You can only use one type of alternate ammunition property per turn.

Angelite rounds: *Benefit:* Angelite rounds count as adamantite for the purposes of damage reduction; *Drawback:* none; *Use:* Any non-energy round.

Armor Piercing: *Benefit:* +1 damage on each damage die, ignore 5 of a target's hardness or resistance; *Drawback:* You cannot score a critical hit; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, gauss iron flechettes, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets, heavy shells.

Fae Iron rounds: Rare, but some bastions made limited runs of fae-iron rounds, especially more xenophobic bastions like Mann. Bastions with positive echan relations like York and Selkirk prohibit their manufacture and sale. *Benefit:* The hit counts as being both fae iron and cold iron; *Drawback:* none, though fae are not pleased with its use; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, gauss iron flechettes, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets, heavy shells.

High-Explosive: *Benefit:* +5 ft. area; *Drawback:* None; *Use:* Any weapon with an exp value.

Hollow Point: *Gain:* Increase critical threat range by 1; *Drawback:* -1 to attack roll; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets.

Rubber: *Benefit:* Medium and smaller targets are staggered until the start of your next turn. A critical hit causes the target to be dazed instead of staggered until the start of your next turn. *Drawback:* A hit inflicts no damage; larger targets are unaffected. *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, sabot SPPs, shotgun shells, traditional bullets; *Requirement:* Non-auto or non-heavy auto.



Silver: *Benefit:* The hit counts as being silver;
Drawback: None

Tracer: *Benefit:* +1 bonus to attack rolls past the first range increment; *Drawback:* -2 damage on each damage die; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, gauss iron flechettes, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets; *Requirement:* Auto or heavy auto weapons only.

GRENADES & EXPLOSIVES

Grenades: These explosives come equipped with either an impact detonator or a 1-round timer detonator (exploding at the beginning or end of your next turn—your choice—as a free action). They can be used as a grenade (thrown or in a launcher) without requiring a Demolitions check. When done so, employ a Grenade Attack instead of an Explosives Attack. A grenade can still be used with another detonator but this requires the purchase of a detonator and the use of the Demolitions skill to plant it. Select which of the two given detonators you are employing when throwing the grenade (technically, it is a single detonator but for rules purposes, they are counted as separate). Some modified grenades can be thrown but many cannot (like wire triggered).

Explosives: Explosives all require a detonator and are not equipped with one. Some explosives are not designed to be used as an explosive and may be overly sensitive as well as cumbersome. Explosives can be triggered without a Demolitions skill roll but one is required to plant a detonator.

Physical: Grenades and explosives with the physical damage type knock Medium or smaller targets prone that don't save against the Reflex DC.

Range: All grenades and explosives 2 lbs. or less can be thrown a maximum of 60 feet. Explosives heavier than 2 lbs. can be thrown a maximum of 30 feet. You cannot effectively throw any explosives larger than 5 lbs. A GM can alter these values if the thrower has a high Strength.

READING THE TABLE

Exp: All explosives have the Exp property (see Weapons). This entry indicates the area size. All targets within the radius are attacked.

Detonator: This indicates the type of detonator required to trigger the explosive: *Ignition*—requires an ignition source (a flame or another explosive); *Explosive*—requires another explosive (it will not detonate with an ignition); *Detonator*—requires an actual detonator (it will not detonate otherwise). *Note:* Grenades are equipped automatically with an impact detonator or 1-round timer detonator (choose when employing the grenade).

Symp (Sympathetic): A "yes" indicates it can be detonated if caught in the radius of another explosion. A "no" indicates it cannot but it doesn't mean it cannot be used as an explosive. You may have to wire a detonator or plant an explosive directly to it. If so, then it will detonate.

Properties: Like weapons, explosives have weapon properties.

WEAPON	DMG	TYPE	EXP	WT.	COST	TL	SYMP	DETONATOR
Grenades								
Concussion	1d4	Physical	5 ft.	½ lbs.	10	1	No	Detonator
EMP	None	None	15 ft. ¹	½ lbs.	200	3	No	Detonator
Flashbang	Special	Special	10 ft.	½ lbs.	50	1	No	Detonator
Fragmentation	1d8	Physical	10 ft.	½ lbs.	50	1	No	Detonator
	1d10	Physical	10 ft.	½ lbs.	200	2	No	Detonator
	2d6	Physical	10 ft.	½ lbs.	600	3	No	Detonator
High-Yield (HMX)	2d6	Physical	5 ft.	½ lbs.	75	1	No	Detonator
Nerve Toxin	2d8	Poison	5/10/15 ft.	½ lbs.	500	4	No	Detonator
Plasma	2d8	Fire	15 ft.	½ lbs.	2,000	5	No	Detonator
Riot	None	Poison	5/10/15 ft.	½ lbs.	75	1	No	Detonator
Smoke-Signal	None	None	0	½ lbs.	5	0	No	Detonator
Smoke-Screening	None	None	10/15/20 ft.	½ lbs.	10	0	No	Detonator
White Phosphorus	1d8	Fire	5/10/15 ft.	½ lbs.	250	1	No	Detonator
Explosives								
Auto Fuel	1d6	Fire	5 ft. ¹	1 g. / 8lbs.	5	0	Yes	Ignition
Exposed gunpowder	1d6	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	10	0	Yes	Ignition
Fertilizer / ANFO	1d6	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	10	0	No	Explosive
Jet Fuel	1d8	Fire	5 ft. ¹	1 g. / 8lbs.	10	0	Yes	Explosive
Composition L1	1d10	Physical	5 ft. ²	1 lbs.	50	2	No	Detonator
Composition L2	1d10	Physical	5 ft. ²	1 lbs.	300	3	No	Detonator
Composition L3	1d10	Physical	5 ft. ²	1 lbs.	900	4	No	Detonator
Composition L4	1d10	Physical	5 ft. ²	1 lbs.	4,000	5	No	Detonator
Nitroglycerin	1d12	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	50	0	Yes	Explosive
TNT	1d8	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	20	0	Yes	Explosive

¹This explosive only has a normal area burst effect and doesn't carry the Exp property (the area of effect cannot be moved or altered).

²The area of effect can be modified.

TL: For all explosives, the tech level is applied to damage but not attack rolls.

COMBAT WITH GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Most explosives listed can be either a grenade or a planted explosive. Grenades can be thrown or loaded into a grenade launcher and they detonate upon impact or on your next turn (beginning or ending). You select this when using the grenade. Planted explosives require a detonator and a demolitions check.

USING GRENADES

When making a grenade attack (or an attack where you throw an explosive), you pick a square in range. All targets in the blast radius must beat the Reflex DC or take full damage. Targets that make the save take half damage.

Impact Square: The explosive will inflict twice the dice of damage to any creatures in the same square as where the grenade lands (a 1d6 concussion grenade will inflict 2d6 to any creature occupying the same square as the grenade when it detonates).

Direct Attack: With grenade launchers, rocket launchers, ground heavy guns, plasma artillery systems, and any other firearm with an “exp” value, you can attempt to impact the explosive directly on the target. In this case, you make a ranged attack to the target. If you miss, you still proceed with the explosive attack. The

advantage of firing directly at a target is the potential of scoring a critical hit.

Reflex DC: The Reflex DC for half damage is determined by the following formula:

$$10 + \text{your Dexterity or Strength modifier} + \frac{1}{2} \text{ your level} + \text{the Tech Level of the explosive}$$

Some grenades like EMP and Nerve don't have Reflex saves.

USING DEMOLITIONS

When detonating an explosive, all targets in the blast radius must beat the Reflex DC or take full damage. Targets that make the save take half damage.

Ground Zero: The explosive will inflict twice the dice of damage to any creatures in the same square as where the explosive detonates (a 1d6 barrel of auto fuel will inflict 2d6 to any creature occupying the same square as fuel when it detonates).

Reflex DC: The Reflex DC for half damage is determined by the following formula:

$$10 + \text{your skill ranks in Demolitions (ranks, not bonus)} + \text{your Intelligence modifier} + \text{the Tech Level of the detonator.}$$

Opportunity Attacks: The planting of explosives grant opportunity attacks.

Additional Blocks: For every additional block of

explosive used per square or 5-foot area (all the explosives in the square wired to the attack), increase the damage by that added explosive's damage value. For every two additional blocks wired to an attack, add an additional 5 feet to the damage radius.

Expert Demolitionist: You gain a bonus to all damage rolls with planted explosives you set equal to half your ranks in Demolitions.

Triggers: You can trigger as many detonators as you wish in a turn, granted they are all remote detonation. There is no limit on the number of immediate actions for trigger detonators in a round.

Damaging Structures: Against structures or items you inflict maximum damage. This doesn't apply to non-structures caught in the same blast. In this case, separate the attacks and damage values between the structure and normal targets.

Direct Attachment: If you attach an explosive directly to a target or have explosives in the same square of a target that is unwilling or incapable to evade the attack, the target automatically fails the Reflex save and takes maximum damage (as if it was a structure)

Detonating Collateral Explosives: Explosives or explosive material caught in the area of detonated explosives have a 50% chance to go off as well. Roll for each square that contains collateral explosives and for each type of collateral explosive (referring to the explosives table). The GM may override this rule depending on each unique situation whether explosives caught in the pressure and heat of an explosion detonates. A mouldable explosive may not go up but a tank of gasoline might. If so, the collateral explosive is included in the initial power only if the collateral explosive is located in the same square as the primary explosion. If in a separate square, the collateral explosive is handled as a separate attack. Collateral explosives can be hidden in crates, in vehicle tanks, or on people (whether alive or dead). The following possible explosives cannot detonate on their own: Ammunition (All), flamethrower tanks, and warheads (rockets/missiles).

Example: If you strap an explosive to a tank of gas, the tank can be considered part of the primary explosion. Therefore, it adds damage and increases blast radius of the initial power. If caught in a separate square, it explodes as well, but is handled separately.

Proxy Detonation: If a character that sets an explosive with a timed or triggered detonator is killed, rendered unconscious or otherwise indisposed, the explosive still goes off per its conditions as if the character was alive and alert for the detonation. Further, if another character sets off a remote detonator prepared by another character, the character who set the original explosive (and rolled the Demolition skill) sets the Reflex DC. If the explosive is thrown, then choose the higher Reflex DC between the creator and the thrower.

After-effects: After an explosive or grenade is detonated, the affected squares provide cover for 1 round (until the end of the beginning of the next turn in which it is detonated).

EXPLOSIVE AND GRENADE TYPES

Composition Explosive: This soft, malleable explosive is less effective for grenade use, being more specialized for standard demolition. It can be cut, formed, wrapped, and combined with others of its type. Composition explosive is more expensive than standard explosive but effective in its capacity. It is also extremely stable.

Special: Part of the case used to transport this explosive can also be used to direct the blast upon detonation. Upon a successful Demolitions skill check, you can alter a 5-foot radius to a 10-foot cone. You must determine which area is being affected by the explosive when you set it and once set and your Demolition skill rolled, you cannot alter the explosive pattern without starting over. You cannot improve the affected area of a cone beyond 30 feet (with additional explosives).

Concussion: This light explosive uses air pressure as well as shrapnel to disrupt enemy lines. They are often employed as mines and in air bursts to break up dense collections of personnel.

Special: Targets 1 hit dice or less that fail the Reflex save are killed.

EMP: EMPs don't inflict any damage, but instead, discharge an electromagnetic burst that disrupts electronics.

Special: When detonated, all TL1 and greater technology that employs a cell suffers disruption. Vehicles suffer a -5 penalty to all Vehicle Operation skill checks for five minutes. The vehicle brakes every turn until it saves.

Flash bang: Also simply referred to as a stun grenade, a flash bang reduces the combat effectiveness of opponents by confusing and disorientating them with sudden blinding magnesium generated light and a deafening blast. The grenade body doesn't actually fragment so no shrapnel is dispersed.

Special: It won't cause permanent injury, but those hit are blinded, deafened, and staggered until the end of your next turn. They remain staggered for 1d4 turns after.

Save: The save to ignore the effects of this explosive is Will instead of Reflex.

Fragmentation: Frags are designed purely as an antipersonnel explosive by discharging dozens of plastic or steel flechettes blowing out along with fragments of the explosive's own shell. This deadly shrapnel shreds anything it touches.

Fuel, Auto/Jet: Despite what movies will have you believe, it's not easy to set jet fuel ablaze. Standard automotive fuel, however, is very different.

Special: The blast radius is also on fire for 3d6 minutes. Any target moving into an affected square on its turn or any target beginning its turn in an affected square suffer the basic damage of the fuel (1d6 or 1d8).

Nerve Toxin: A deadly and illegal weapon, this grenade expels a gas that attacks the nerve cells of a living creature. Paralysis sets in, followed quickly by

death. A potent gaseous mixture blending a batrachotoxin and taipoxin and several other agents produces a deadly gas that causes complete paralysis of all muscles by stopping the release of acetylcholine. By blocking nerve pulses to the muscles, the subject dies from asphyxiation or heart failure.

Property: Nerve toxin grenades are a gas effect that only affects living creatures. After detonation, the area continues to affect any creatures entering it for 1d4 minutes. After detonation, the nerve toxin grenade fills a 5-foot radius, area expanding an additional 5 feet each turn until reaching 15 feet.

NERVE TOXIN

Type: poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: 1 Con damage, 2d6 damage, and the target is sickened; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves; **Special:** If the target fails two consecutive times, the sickened condition is upgraded to nauseated. A target attempting to roll to save while inside the affected area suffers -4 to his roll.

Nitro-glycerine: One of the oldest explosives, nitro is not longer actively used due to its instability.

Special: Nitro-glycerine will always detonate if caught in the blast radius of another explosive, if dropped from a height of more than 5 feet, or if ignited.

Riot Grenade: Riot grenades are used usually to disperse crowds and disorientate attackers. The grenade doesn't explode but rather opens valves, releasing the compressed nerve gas. The gas replicates a smoke field, except it causes skin and eye irritation on contact, throat and nose irritation if inhaled.

Special: Riot grenades are a gas effect that only affects living creatures. After detonation, the area continues to affect any creatures entering it for 1d4 minutes. After detonation, the riot grenade fills a 5-foot radius, area expanding an additional 5 feet each turn until reaching 15 feet.

RIOT GRENADE

Type: poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target is sickened and staggered; **Cure:** 1 save; **Special:** If the target fails two consecutive times, the sickened condition is upgraded to nauseated. If the target fails three consecutive times, it is also blinded. A target attempting to roll to save while inside the affected area suffers -4 to his roll.

Smoke Grenade: There are three types of smoke grenades: screening grenades, signal grenades, and white phosphorous grenades. Most smoke grenades are employed as signalling devices, though they can also be used to screen unit movements and conceal advancement and hinder enemy fire. Signal smoke grenades cannot be used for screening, though screening grenades can be used as a signal grenade. Screening grenades either expel a hexachloroethane/zinc (HC) mixture that is also an irritant or a terephthalic acid mixture

(TA), which is harmless. Signal grenades use potassium chlorate, lactose, and a colored dye to work. Signal grenades are available in several colors, including white, red, yellow, green, and purple. The white phosphorus grenade is a smoke grenade with an explosive burst.

Rather than burning to make smoke, the phosphorous ignites in the air after spreading. The brilliant yellow flame produces phosphorus pentoxide, the smoke, as a by-product. The intense heat allows the grenade to double as an antipersonnel weapon. The heat is devastating in close quarters.

Screening Special Rule: After detonation, the smoke grenade fills a 10-foot radius, area expanding an additional 5 feet each turn until reaching 20 feet. The smoke obscures all sight, including dark/night vision.

Everyone inside or on opposite sides of the smoke from an attack are granted total concealment. Smoke grenades last for 1d4 minutes. Wind can disperse the smoke as well.

White Phosphorus Special Rules: This grenade has the same effect as the screening grenade except it also delivers damage to targets inside. Targets entering or passing through the affected area automatically suffer damage without a Reflex save (Reflex saves are only for the initial impact). White Phosphorus damage cannot not be increased by direct fire, ground zero, impact square, or a critical hit.

TNT (Trinitrotoluene): TNT is the standard explosive to which all others are compared. Although not employed in modern industry or military applications, it is still common in black market circles and in civilian use (e.g.: mining). Unlike mouldable explosive, TNT can accidentally detonate if caught in the blast of another explosion.

ARMOR

READING THE ARMOR TABLE

Tech Level (TL): The tech level of the item is applied as an enhancement bonus to AC. Only armor with power can be disrupted. Some armor is available at higher tech levels.

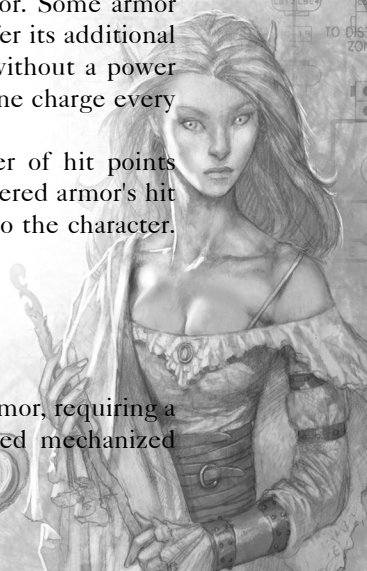
Hit Points: Powered or advanced armor are machines with their own hit point value. These are the hit points of the suit.

Cell: The power usage of the armor. Some armor operates without power but does not offer its additional benefits. Power armor cannot operate without a power cell. All armor that utilizes a cell uses one charge every hour.

Threshold: The maximum number of hit points you can transfer from an attack to a powered armor's hit points. Remaining damage is shunted to the character. This takes no action.

RULES WITH ADVANCED ARMOR

Any armor with hit points is advanced armor, requiring a specific proficiency. These are powered mechanized





units controlled by a pilot inside. While several are not much bigger than their controllers, others weigh several tons and can tower over fifteen feet. Even though these are powered armor, Large suits can still squeeze like any other creature.

Hit Points & Threshold: Despite having hit points, advanced armor also possesses a threshold, which is the maximum value of damage you can remove with each hit from the suit's hit points. If advanced armor is reduced to 0 hit points, it can no longer absorb damage, but is still functional.

Power: All powered armor uses power cells, requiring one charge per hour of use. Unlike weapons, changing a battery cell on an armor requires a full round action.

Weight: Powered armor can support their own weight, thus do not encumber the user. Their movement value is also fixed, despite any other gear the user may be carrying.

ARMOR DESCRIPTIONS

Advanced Wasteland Armor: An evolved form of the full combat warrior, the wasteland suit was designed to combat more severe threats to techa, based off of old designs used in space travel. Cooling systems maintain internal temperature in the harshest environments. A sealed helmet processes external gases.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: Gain resist cold 5 and fire 5.

Targeting: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to damage rolls with ranged weapons when firing past the first range increment.

Special: Only the targeting system works off the battery and is the only system rendered ineffective if the suit is neutralized by disruption.

Amarok: Angel developed its first powered armor after recovering a disabled Mann design some years ago.

By a miracle of engineering skill, the Angel scientists successfully circumvented Mann's failsafes. Before the armor destroyed itself, a basic understanding of compact robotic design had been gleaned. The amarok is the direct descendant of that knowledge. Because of Angel's resistance to disruption compared to Selkirk or Mann, the amarok soon became the most popular THOR design seen outside of bastion walls.

Weapon Limbs: You have neither limbs nor manipulators to hold onto external weapons. You have no threatening reach and cannot make opportunity attacks. You are equipped with three heavy weapon mounts. Because the amarok is Large, you can install super heavy weapons as heavy weapons. Likewise you can install heavy weapons or two-handed small arms in these mounts as two-handed small arms and one-handed small arms, respectfully. You suffer a -3 penalty to attack rolls against Medium or smaller adjacent targets.

LIGHT ARMOR

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
STARTING ARMOR												
Limshau Kawabari	50gp	+2	+7	0	10%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Synthetic Weave	25	+2	+6	0	5%	30ft.	20ft.	7 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Ballistics Armor	40	+3	+5	-1	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	0
ADVANCED ARMOR												
Synthetic Weave	1,000	+2	+7	0	4%	30ft.	20ft.	6 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+2	+7	0	3%	30ft.	20ft.	5 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+2	+8	0	2%	30ft.	20ft.	4 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+2	+8	0	1%	30ft.	20ft.	3 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+2	+9	0	0%	30ft.	20ft.	3 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Ballistics Armor	1,000	+3	+5	-1	14%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+3	+6	-1	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+3	+6	-1	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+3	+6	0	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+3	+6	0	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Spider-Silk Suit	25,000	+3	+6	0	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	38,000	+3	+6	0	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Skinplate	78,000	+3	+8	-1	15%	30ft.	30ft.	265 lbs.	25	2	H10	4
	90,000	+3	+8	-1	15%	30ft.	30ft.	265 lbs.	25	2	H15	5
Covenant	95,000	+3	+8	0	20%	35ft.	35ft.	450 lbs.	30	3	H15	5

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons (since you have no arms). You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading (you either have to exit the suit to reload or have an ally do it for you). Reloading takes a swift action using this system. External reloading takes a full turn of actions (move, minor, and standard).

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Large Armor: You are considered a Large creature. This does not affect your reach or damage dice.

Maneuverability: You gain your Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Nightvision: You gain Darkvision.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Mecha: You ignore penalties for difficult terrain.

Resistances: Gain resist cold 5 and fire 5.

Special: The amarok requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Apostle Motor Slave: The main front line defender of Mann, this intimidating armor requires its user to slip into a form-fitting suit that fits tight in the control area. The pilot's head fits only partially in the machine's helmet with most of the user sitting in the trunk of the armor. The pilot's arms extend to the elbows and the legs only to the knees. The apostle is banned technology and Mann threatens retribution to any sanctioned government agency employing one. It considers their use outside of Mann's walls blasphemy, claiming the knowledge was bestowed upon them from God. Although this prevents their deployment in some bas-

tions, mercenary units have no such loyalties to the fanatical city.

Amplified Strength: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability checks and skill checks.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do 1d6 damage. If you already inflict 1d6 or more damage with unarmed attacks, then increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Large Armor: The apostle is a Large armor. It has a reach.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: Gain resist fire 10, acid 10, cold 10

Regeneration: The apostle heals 1 point of damage per round from to its own hit points while the machine is active.

Sensor Net: Gain +2 enhancement bonus to Perception checks.

Weapon Mount: Gain a shoulder or arm mounted assembly, which frees up a hand. This mount acts as a hand or a brace for holding or mounting weapons.

Special: The apostle requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Aramid Combat Suit: Over the regular survival suit, the combat suit employs and blends harder materi-

MEDIUM ARMOR

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
STARTING ARMOR												
Force Body Vest	50	+4	+4	-3	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Aramid Combat Suit	150	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	0
ADVANCED ARMOR												
Force Body Vest	1,000	+4	+4	-3	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+4	+4	-3	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+4	+4	-3	15%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+4	+4	-3	10%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+4	+4	-3	10%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Aramid Combat Suit	8,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	13,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	20,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	29,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	41,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Aramid Survival Suit	17,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	15ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	25,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	15ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	34,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	15ft.	22 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	44,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	20ft.	22 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Blinder-Mail	31,000	+4	+4	-3	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	H30	4
	43,000	+4	+5	-3	25%	30ft.	30ft.	22 lbs.	—	—	H40	5
Nanotech Armor	53,000	+4	+5	-3	40%	30ft.	30ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	H5	4
	72,000	+4	+5	-3	45%	30ft.	30ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	H8	5
Gladiator	48,000	+6	+3	-3	40%	30ft.	30ft.	650 lbs.	30	5	H15	3
	76,000	+6	+3	-3	40%	30ft.	30ft.	650 lbs.	35	5	H20	4
Vulture System	52,000	+5	+3	-4	45%	30ft.	30ft.	350 lbs.	20	5	H20	4
	65,000	+5	+3	-4	45%	30ft.	30ft.	350 lbs.	25	5	H25	5
Combat Exoskeleton	96,500	+6	+3	-5	50%	30ft.	30ft.	1,950 lbs.	35	5	H10	4
	133,500	+6	+3	-4	50%	30ft.	30ft.	1,950 lbs.	45	5	H12	5

als, from rigid plates and flexible aramids. Additional layers of nylon separate staggered sheets of thin polymeric plastic.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistance: This suit has resist fire 5.

Aramid Survival Suit: Aramids initially appeared from York. It employs a combination of flexible aramid fabrics and rigid ceramic and metal plates. This suit covers the wearer completely, sealing her from the outside environment.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistances: This suit has resist fire 5 and cold 5.

Ballistics Armor: This is a light, but still somewhat clumsy, collection of ceramic and polymer plates placed strategically to withstand impacts without hampering manoeuvrability significantly.

Blinder-Mail: This resembles a lightened version of the heavier titanium carbide armor. What it offers in addition is a holographic camouflage net that can alter the physical properties of the suit to resemble nearly

any terrain it is using.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Stealth: Gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Stealth. In addition, if you don't move on your round, you gain total concealment until the beginning of your next turn.

Special: Every round you receive the benefits of the Stealth ability, you use up a battery charge.

Carbide Armor: Super strong plates of tungsten carbide are strapped inside flexible nylons shirts and pants to offer remarkable stopping power. These plates are heavy and can be clumsy on the wearer.

Combat Exoskeleton: The combat exoskeleton initially appeared in Selkirk, reverse engineered from stolen Mann technology. The suit resembles an oversized piece of medieval plate, reinforced by limbs of titanium, and amplified by synthetic muscle fibers running through the entire assembly. Though not very pretty, the Com-Ex has proved its usefulness in combat.

Amplified Strength: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability checks and skill checks.



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Defense Bonus: Gain a +2 enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

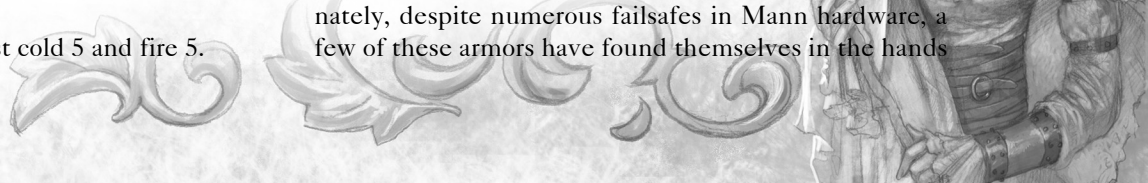
Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do base 1d6 damage. Increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Large Armor: The exoskeleton is a Large armor. It has reach.

Resistances: You gain resist cold 5 and fire 5.

Special: The combat exoskeleton requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

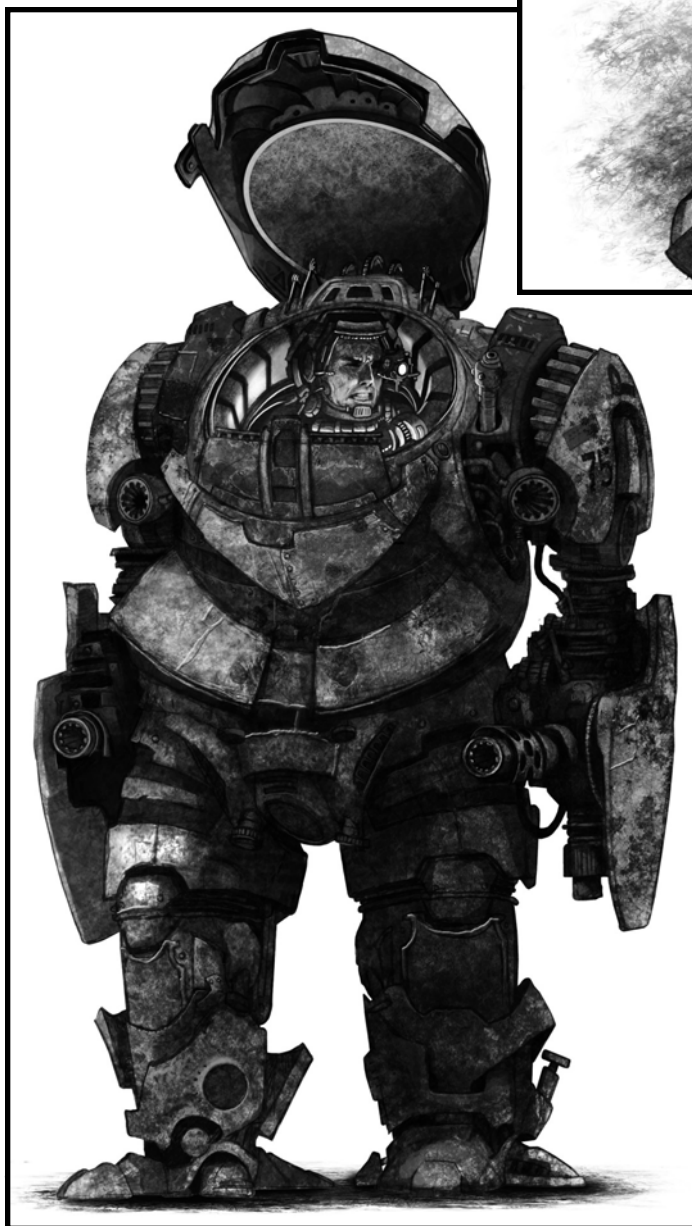
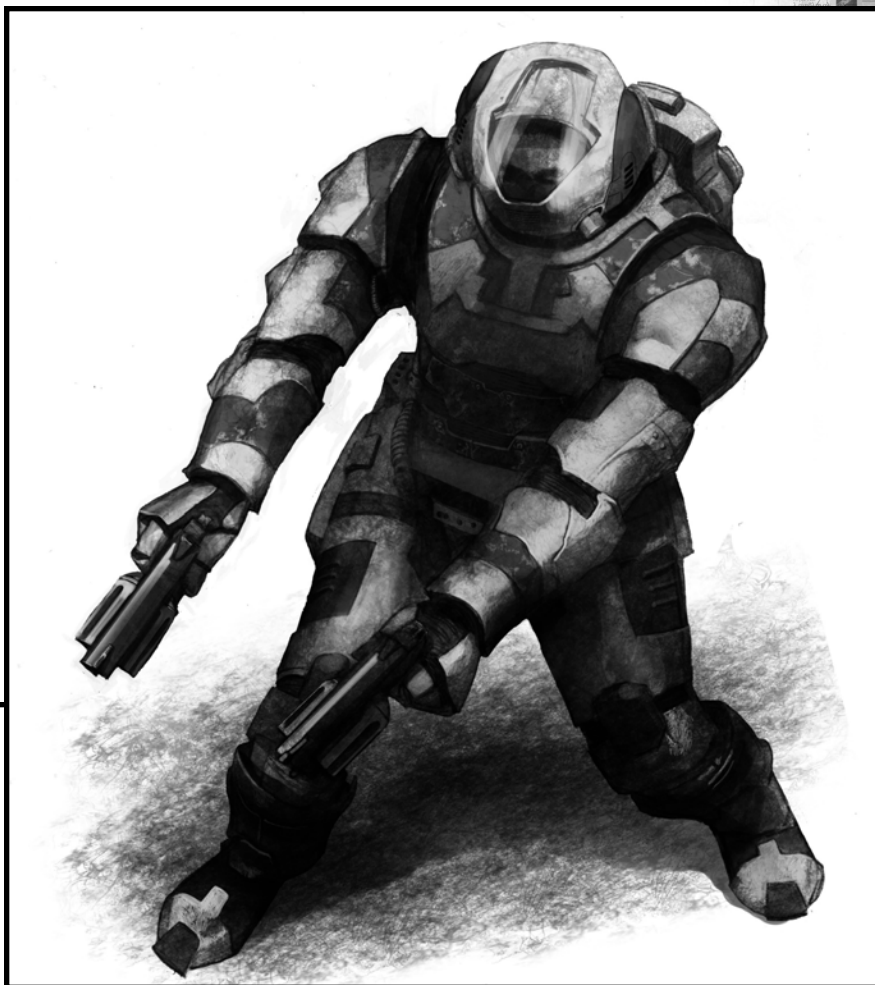
Covenant: The most advanced armor currently available in open echa, the covenant tracks its origins to a secret caste of the same name within Mann society. This organization is charged with recovering and/or eliminating dissident factions from their own civilization. They are one of the few permitted to leave Mann with the sole objective to eradicating any possibility of their technology falling in enemy hands. Unfortunately, despite numerous failsafes in Mann hardware, a few of these armors have found themselves in the hands



HEAVY ARMOR

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
STARTING ARMOR												
Flack Longcoat	200	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Carbide Armor	1,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Yowie Suit	750	+7	+0	-7	40%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	0
ADVANCED ARMOR												
Flack Longcoat	1,000	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	32 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+7	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	29 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+7	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	27 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Carbide Armor	2,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	5,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	34 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	10,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	33 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	17,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	32 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	26,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	31 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Yowie Suit	2,750	+7	+0	-7	40%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	6,750	+7	+0	-7	40%	20ft.	15ft.	33 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	12,750	+7	+0	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	32 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	21,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	31 lbs.	—	—	H20	4
	32,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	H30	5
Tactical Body Armor	9,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	14,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	22,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	29 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	31,750	+7	+2	-5	40%	20ft.	15ft.	29 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	41,750	+7	+2	-5	40%	20ft.	15ft.	28 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Advanced Wasteland	24,600	+8	+0	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	31,600	+8	+0	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	39 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	43,600	+8	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	38 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	54,600	+8	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	37 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Tech-Mail	19,750	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	29,750	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	40,750	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Full Combat Warrior	19,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	26,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	35,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	46,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Angel Amarok	50,000	+9	+0	-10	70%	30ft.	30ft.	10,000 lbs.	50	50	H10	3
	62,500	+9	+0	-7	70%	30ft.	30ft.	10,000 lbs.	60	60	H12	4
Mobile Motor Armor	99,500	+9	+1	-6	50%	30ft.	30ft.	3,950 lbs.	35	5	H10	4
	125,500	+9	+1	-5	50%	30ft.	30ft.	3,950 lbs.	45	5	H12	5
Rack Power Suit	79,000	+9	+2	-5	50%	30ft.	30ft.	4,050 lbs.	40	5	H10	4
	110,500	+9	+3	-4	50%	30ft.	30ft.	4,050 lbs.	45	5	H12	5
Tanker	78,000	+9	+1	-5	60%	30ft.	30ft.	8,000 lbs.	40	40	H10	4
	110,000	+9	+1	-5	60%	30ft.	30ft.	8,000 lbs.	50	50	H12	5
Apostle Motor Slave	141,500	+10	+0	-6	65%	30ft.	30ft.	4,850 lbs.	60	20	H15	5
Testament	175,000	+10	+0	-6	70%	30ft.	30ft.	18,000 lbs.	60	60	H10	5

MEDIUM ARMOR



HEAVY ARMOR

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of those very same adversaries.

Gravity Anchors: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Climb checks.

Gravity Drive: You suffer no damage from a fall.

Defense Bonus: You gain your Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Jump Jets: Use a move action and spend a battery charge. You can jump 20 ft. horizontally or vertically without needing to make an Acrobatics check.

Maneuverability: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatics checks.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: Gain resist fire 5, electricity 5, and acid 5.

Shadow Field: Use a move action and spend a battery charge. Gain total concealment until the end of your next turn.

Special: The Covenant requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Flack Longcoat: This clumsy but stylish piece of subtle outerwear contains a thick inner layer of flexible aramid patches able to resist cutting and piercing. It comes available in brown or black. It leaves the head vulnerable, even with the collar up.

Force Body Vest: An upgrade from basic ballistics armor, this variation is lighter, equally as resilient, and is offered in a modular configuration. This makes a proper fit to prevent stumbling.

Full Combat Warrior: The full combat suit is a mixture of aramid padding and titanium plates in water-resistant layers of nylon and metallic fibers covered by patterned camouflage. It offers an insulated backpack-mounted computer system that controls various systems on the suit.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Nightvision: You gain darkvision.

Resistance: You gain resist fire 5.

Stealth: Gain +2 enhancement bonus to Stealth checks.

Targeting: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to damage rolls with ranged weapons when firing past the first range increment.

Special: The Full Combat warrior only requires a cell for its nightvision and targeting system.

Gladiator: Originally built as a heavy lift assistant for use in the Selkirk mines, the gladiator found popularity later as a muscle augmentor for weapon applications by the defense department. This eventually led to the construction of the tanker, designed to directly fulfill that role. However, the gladiator's smaller size, kept its position as the more popular model. It has been seen both as a ranged weapon's platform as well as a close combat suit.

Firearm Stabilization: Even though you are Medium-sized, you can wield heavy weapons as if they are

two-handed small arms and super heavy weapons as if they are heavy weapons.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do base 1d6 damage. Increase the damage dice by two step (1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Defense Bonus: You gain your Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude Saves.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Maneuverability: You gain your Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to all Acrobatic checks.

Weapon Mount: You have a shoulder or arm mounted assembly, which frees up a hand. This mount acts as a hand or a brace for holding or mounting weapons.

Special: The gladiator requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Limshau Kawabari: Overlapping layers of leather pieces sewn together to form fit the user, Limshau kawabari looks as unique as it feels. A master leathersmith must individually fit each suit of Limshau leather to its owner. Limshau leather looks distinctive against other leather armors. The most obvious telltale signs are numerous belt latches over the whole body. It is only available in white or black.

Mobile Motor Armor: In the wasteland of open echa, not all treasures are enchanted. In the mad dash to traverse this dangerous environment, occasional travelers fail, leaving their bodies clutching on to the lingering threads of their failed technology, only to be found by others. There are rumours of some mercenary companies that refuse allegiance to any bastion and flaunt technology that rivals anything behind the walls. They do this by reverse engineering found relics. Some are assumed crashed between bastion states while others might have fallen from orbit. They may also have survived from the previous age, though any theory would be pure speculation. Other than the named powered armor bastions gloat, mercenary companies have produced prototypes of their own design, even selling them to other mercenary companies (though reserving the more advanced models for themselves). These unique designs are simply called the Mobile Motor Armors. No two look alike, but they all share similar properties.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves. Gain half the armor's Tech Level (rounded up) as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do base 1d6 damage. Increase the damage dice by one step (1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Large or Agile: The armor can either be Medium and agile or Large and intimidating. If Medium, the armor gains a +5 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatic checks and a +2 enhancement bonus to Climb checks. It also gains its full Tech Level to Reflex saves instead of half. If Large, the armor has a reach. Both armors can wield two-handed weapons as one-handed weapons.

Resistances: You gain resist cold 10 and fire 10.

Special: The motor mobile armor requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Nanotech Combat Armor: This advanced suit emerged with refugees from Mann, but even they admit to not developing it. They claim it was taken from a Porto craft that attempted a diplomatic mission to Mann. It's still an extremely rare item and rumours claim less than a dozen can be found in Canam. The suit uses molecule-sized machines to alter the composition of the suit depending on the impact. Usually, the combat suit remains elastic and comfortable. Anytime any impact occurs the micromachines react with a response time of less than 0.035 seconds. The impact point becomes immediately inflexible and solid, deflecting the attack.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Nano-Reaction: As many times a day as your Tech Level, you can nullify an enemy's critical hit as an immediate action.

Special: If this armor suffers disruption, the nano-reaction cannot be used until back online and the suit loses its Tech Level to AC.

Rack Power Suit: The rack resulted from Sierra Madre reverse engineering an Apostle Motor Slave. Adding their own flamboyance, the end result is smaller and more agile, though still not to the extent of their Skinplate design. The suit is large but thinner in areas to reduce weight. Its design plan was to create an anti-echan armor specialized in close combat.

Amplified Strength: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability checks and skill checks.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves. Gain half the armor's Tech Level (rounded up) as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves.

Boosters: Gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks when performing a jump.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do base 1d8 damage. Increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Large Armor: The Rack is a Large armor. It has reach.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: Gain resist fire 5, acid 5, cold 5

Special: The Rack requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Skinplate: This is a small powered armor that leaves little to the imagination. It forms itself to the curvature of the body. A buyer cannot simply purchase one off a shelf. It must be adjusted specifically to the user. It employs a combination of lightweight polymers and aramids reinforced with carbon fullerene rings. Solid limbs are made from silicon carbide ceramic which slide perfectly to allow movement via a magnetorheological fluid. The suit covers the entire body and employs a helmet that seals the suit completely.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Boosters: Gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks when performing a jump.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Manoeuvrability: You gain a +5 ft. bonus to speed (already incorporated in the table).

Resistances: Gain resist fire 5, electricity 5, acid 5.

Special: Skinplate requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Spider Silk Suit: Selkirk sold this technology to Angel, which was later stolen by Mann. Computer controlled looms weave super thin synthetic silk into an extremely flexible nylon. When struck with any attack, the spider silk resists as hard as steel but will still flex more than soft rubber. It employs several thicker pads of carbon fiber in key areas. The spider suit allows for extreme manoeuvrability.

Agility: Gain a +2 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatic checks.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistance: Gain resist electricity 5.

Synthetic Weave: The predecessor to advanced aromatic polyamides, this full body set includes thicker pads for impact damage reduction from slashing. They are, however, vulnerable to piercing attacks. Nevertheless, they are a popular basic outfit and the comfortable choice for many in the field.

Tactical Body Armor: This is a slightly detuned version of the full combat warrior armor. It offers similar protection in a lighter package. It sacrifices several of its carbide plates to make the suit less expensive for those on a budget. It does not have a computer system built in.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistance: Gain resist fire 5.

Tanker: The successor of the smaller gladiator, the impressive tanker has unfortunately not found as much recognition. Complaints have emerged criticizing the machine's size and cost compared to its cheaper cousin. Despite this, the tanker is still the preferred

model for Selkirk military in long duration trade missions with the narros. It's seldom seen outside of this role. In truth, its reputation as a weaker system is undeserving, as the tanker is considered one of the most powerful weapon platforms on the continent.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Firearm Stabilization: You can wield heavy weapons as if they are one-handed small arms and super heavy weapons as if they are two-handed small arms.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do base 1d9 damage. Increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Maneuverability: You gain your tech level as an enhancement bonus to Reflex and Fortitude defense.

Weapon Mount: You have a shoulder or arm mounted assembly, which frees up a hand. This mount acts as a hand or a brace for holding or mounting weapons.

Tech-Mail: The most advanced non-powered armor released from bastions appeared from various sources nearly at the same time. Based on medieval scale mail, tech-mail utilizes overlapping discs no bigger than gold coins interlaced together to form a durable but flexible covering. The discs, comprised of silicon, ceramic, and titanium, spread out impacts across the entire body, allowing for greater protection. The exacting pattern of the scales is proportioned perfectly to maximize protection where needed most.

Critical Defense: Your AC increases by 4 when an opponent attempts to confirm a critical threat against you.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Testament: The most dominant and imposing suit in the known world, the testament appeared only recently as Mann started to take a more vested interest in exo-bastion affairs. Often flanked by a lance of Mann military hardware, the testament isn't subtle, spotted only moments before engaging large and/or numerous targets. There has not been a report of a testament being operated by anyone not in service of the fanatical bastion. If this were to occur, Mann would stop at nothing to ensure its retrieval or elimination.

Amplified Strength: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability checks and skill checks.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with armor do base 1d8 damage. Increase the damage dice by two steps (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Gravity Drive: You suffer no damage from a fall.

Large Armor: You are considered a Large creature. You gain reach.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor

as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Nightvision: You gain Darkvision.

Regeneration: The testament heals 1 point of damage per round from to its own hit points.

Resistances: Gain resist fire 10, acid 10, cold 10.

Sensor Net: +4 enhancement bonus to Perception checks.

Phase: As a move action, spend a charge and teleport up to 25 feet.

Repair Drone: As move action, spend a charge and the armor recovers 5 of its own hit points.

Special: The testament requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Vulture-System: This basic powered suit enables flight via a set of turbines, control surfaces, and vectored thrusters. It offers only rudimentary protection for its pilot. It also suffers from a limited range for each flight.

Defense Bonus: Gain the Tech Level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Boosters: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks when performing a Jump. You never take damage from a fall if you are conscious. You always land on your feet.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Jump Jets: You gain the effects of the *Fly* spell. You can fly as many minutes a day as the suit's Tech Level.

Special: Entering and powering the suit is the same as full plate armor. If this armor disrupts, it does not go immobile. Only its abilities are nullified.

Yowie Suit: Not designed for actual combat, this clumsy but effective piece of camouflage offers some rudimentary protection. It is not terribly heavy but its overlapping layers of fake foliage renders fast movement nearly impossible. Pouches and straps conceal various other camouflage patterns which can unfold or release to alter the appearance of the suit.

Stealth: In any earth or forest terrain you gain the benefits from the suit. You do not suffer any armor check penalties to Stealth while in the suit. You also gain the Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to Stealth. In additional, if you don't move on your round, you gain concealment.

Special: Tech Level 4 and 5 suits employ holographic imaging. If you spend a battery charge and don't move on your round, you gain total concealment.

SHIELDS DESCRIPTIONS

Active Dissuasion System: The successor of the forerunner energy envelope, the ADS contains a more powerful capacitor to respond to outside attack. The resulting system did not actually offer superior protection; in fact, it was slightly worse. The ADS capacitor prevents breakdown of its energy shield by temporarily

SHIELDS

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
Janoahn Master Shield	40gp	+2	—	—	15%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Limshau Buckler	50gp	+1	—	—	—	—	—	3 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Forced Defense Shield	75	+3	—	-1	20%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Deployable Shield	11,000	*	*	*	15%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	H	3
	18,000	*	*	*	15%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Active Dissuasion System	27,550	+2	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H15	4
	38,550	+2	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H20	5
Repulsor Engine	20,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H10	4
	30,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H12	5
Kinetic Baffle	26,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H	4
	35,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H	5
Energy Envelope	50,000	+1	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	30	30	H	5

overcharging the repulse field a microsecond before impact. This maintains shield integrity, but also discharges a significant electric shock which can disable or kill nearby targets. The ADS takes two battery cells: one for its shield and one for its force feedback system.

Augmentation: Gain +2 inherent bonus to all melee damage rolls.

Backpack Mount: The energy envelope does not use up a hand.

Force Feedback: If you are hit by a melee attack, spend a battery charge and use an immediate action to inflict 4 electricity damage against the creature that hit you.

Deployable Shield: This arm-mounted device remains concealed and unobtrusive until needed. By command of its user, it instantly unfolds and slides into position to offer protection. A single energy cell is required for the deployment of the shield. While collapsed, it doesn't grant its shield bonus but it neither imposes its check nor movement penalty.

Standard Configuration: Use a swift action to deploy or collapse the shield. While deployed, the shield uses up a hand but grants a +2 shield bonus to AC (with a -2 check penalty).

Tower Configuration: Use a move action to deploy or collapse the shield. While deployed, the shield uses up a hand but grants a +4 shield bonus to AC. The maximum Dex bonus is +2, and the armor check penalty is -10 while the shield is deployed this way.

Energy Envelope: The most advanced active defense system available, the energy shield is capable of protecting its user from all incoming attacks. Because it covers its user to only a centimeter from his skin, it can defend against all outside attack. Its only drawback is its tendency to neutralize when its user makes a melee physical attack.

Backpack Mount: The energy envelope does not use up a hand.

Hit Points: The envelope has its own hit points, the same as advanced armor. These hit points cannot be repaired. The energy envelope regains all lost hit

points if it doesn't suffer damage for eight hours.

Limitation: You lose your shield bonus to AC until the start of your next turn if you are hit with a melee attack.

Forced Defense Shield: This techan invention has found use in echa, strapped to knights unaware or uncaring of its origin. It is a heavy titanium shield with grooves on its bottom, allowing for a firm root into the ground. There is also a locked slit which can open once it has been planted.

Effect: If planted into the ground, the shield remains upright and acts as cover to anyone behind it. You must be occupying the same square as the shield to receive its benefit. If you do so, you do not lose the bonus to AC against ranged attacks.

Janoahn Master Shield: Though many from the Bulwark employ the standard fare from the armories in the kingdom, the front line, and most knights and paladins sworn to the wall, guard with a more advanced shield exclusive to Abidan. The master shield is lens-shaped giving it increased rigidity. It is also wrapped with hide leather and additional steel belts for reinforcement.

Kinetic Baffle: This reactive system generates a contained energy field that only responds to high energy attacks from distant targets. It cannot react to close or massive targets and is inoperable if a target blocks its sensor net.

Backpack Mount: The energy envelope does not use up a hand.

Property: You gain the shield and enhancement bonus against ranged attacks only and only as long as no creatures are adjacent to you.

Limshau Buckler: The Limshau buckler is not a common sight but it has found popularity with some custodians. The buckler occupies a hand and is designed for offense as well as defense.

Property: Along with its bonus to AC, the buckler counts as a weapon in the application of two weapon feats and powers. As a weapon, it counts as a club. It also acts as a buckler.

ADVANCED ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

ARMOR	COST (UC)	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
Auto Reloader	4,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	H	3
Disruption Recovery	4,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	—	2
EAP Enhancement (+2)	15,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
EAP Enhancement (+4)	45,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
EAP Enhancement (+6)	100,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	4
Increased Defenses	6,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Gravity Anchors	6,000	—	—	—	—	30 lbs.	—	—	H	5
Gravity Drive	3,500	—	—	—	—	30 lbs.	—	—	H	5
Increased Armor (+1)	3,000	+8	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	2
Increased Armor (+2)	9,000	+6	-1	—	—	100 lbs.	—	—	—	2
Increased Armor (+3)	19,000	+5	-2	—	—	150 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Increased Armor (+4)	35,000	+4	-3	—	—	200 lbs.	—	—	—	4
Increased Armor (+5)	55,000	+3	-4	—	—	250 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Increased Resistances	10,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Jet Boosters	5,000	—	—	—	—	250 lbs.	—	—	H	3
Jump Jets	20,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Larger Gauntlets	9,000	—	—	—	—	100 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Maneuverability Booster	25,000	—	—	+5ft.	+5ft.	50 lbs.	—	—	—	4
Nightvision	16,000	—	—	—	—	25 lbs.	—	—	H	2
Stealth Net	9,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Structural Reinforcement, Level 1	20,000	+5	-2	—	—	250 lbs.	+20	+5	--	3
Structural Reinforcement, Level 2	40,000	+4	-3	—	—	400 lbs.	+40	+10	--	4
Structural Reinforcement, Level 3	60,000	+3	-4	—	—	250 lbs.	+60	+20	--	5
Target Analysis Software (+1)	2,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	H	2
Target Analysis Software (+3)	15,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	H	3
Target Analysis Software (+5)	25,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Targeting System	4,000	—	—	—	—	25 lbs.	—	—	H	4

Repulsor Engine: This device is less a method of resisting damage and more of a way of discouraging attack. It resonates an acoustic, magnetic, and gravitational pulse from its user, preventing or dissuading targets from delivering melee attacks.

Property: You gain the shield and enhancement bonus against opportunity attacks only.

Induce Pressure Wave: The repulsor engine requires a separate cell for the pressure wave system. Use a swift action with a battery charge and all Large or smaller adjacent creatures are pushed 1 square. A creature that cannot be pushed is stunned until the start of your next turn. Sacrifice five charges to increase the area effect to 15 feet centered on you. If you use the

pressure wave in any way, the repulsor engine is deactivated for one minute.

ADVANCED ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

These modifications are only available to advanced armors and often have requirements for their addition. There is no limit to the number of modifications you can add to your advanced armor.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading (you either have to exit the suit to reload or have an ally do it for you). Reloading

takes a swift action using this system.

Boosters: Gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks when performing a jump.

Disruption Recovery: For one additional time a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Electroactive Polymers Enhancement: The armor gains a +2, +4, or +6 enhancement bonus to both Dexterity and Strength. You only gain these bonuses while inside the suit.

Gravity Anchors: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Climb checks.

Gravity Drive: You suffer no damage from a fall.

Increased Armor: The armor gains an inherent bonus to AC between +1 and +5. These systems do impose penalties given their weight.

Increased Defenses: Gain a +1 bonus to Reflex saves or Fortitude saves (select one). The armor must already have a bonus to Reflex saves or Fortitude saves to receive this increase.

Increased Resistance: Increase one resist value the armor already has by 5.

Jump Jets: You gain the effects of the *Fly* spell. You can fly as many minutes a day as the suit's Tech Level.

Larger Gauntlets: You must already have gauntlets. Increase the damage dice of your unarmed attacks by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Manoeuvrability Booster: You gain a +5 ft. bonus to speed.

Nightvision: You gain Darkvision.

Stealth Net: Gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Stealth. In addition, if you don't move on your round, you gain total concealment until the beginning of your next turn.

Structural Reinforcement: The armor gains +20, +40, or +60 hit points. These hit points do not stack with other levels of Structural Reinforcement. Each level also offers an increase in Threshold.

Target Analysis Software: The armor offers a +1, +3, or +5 inherent bonus to your Combat Maneuver Defense.

Targeting System: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to damage rolls with ranged weapons when firing past the first range increment.

TECHAN GEAR

As many seeking adventure migrate closer to bastions, the saturation of bastion exports increase. More and more goods constructed by the simply skilled found themselves replaced by the refined exports of sophisticated manufacture. Players have the option to purchase either echan goods or their techan equivalent. The products may not last any longer or endure that much more punishment, but they are rare and do distinguish the owner.

READING TECHAN GEAR

Cell: If the item requires an energy cell, its type would be listed here. The cell capacity would also be listed. If there is no capacity listed, it is considered unimportant to track its drain and, unless the item disrupts, you don't have to replace the cell.

Price: All costs are listed in uc.

Tech Level (TL): The tech level where the item can be found. This affects its availability, its sensitivity to disruption and its final price.

COMBAT ACCESSORIES

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Bayonet Plug	20	—	—	0
Laser Sight	3,000	—	M	1
Scope, Digital	1,000	—	B20	3
Scope, Targeting	100	—	—	0
Suppressor	75	—	—	0

DETONATORS

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Friend/ Foe Trigger	300	—	BI	3
	400	—	BI	4
	500	—	BI	5
Impact Trigger	5	—	—	0
Magnetic Trigger	150	—	BI	2
	250	—	BI	3
	350	—	BI	4
	450	—	BI	5
Motion Trigger	150	—	BI	2
Pressure Trigger	50	—	—	1
	75	—	—	2
	100	—	—	3
	150	—	—	4
Radio Remote	200	—	—	5
	75	—	BI	2
	125	—	BI	3
	175	—	BI	4
Timer	250	—	BI	5
	5	—	—	0
	10	—	—	0
	20	—	—	1
Trip Trigger	40	—	—	2
	60	—	—	3
	80	—	—	4
	150	—	—	5
Wired Remote	50	—	BI	1
	25	—	BI	0

SKILL SYNERGIES

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Demolitions kit, Level 1	300	1 lbs.	—	1
Demolitions kit, Level 2	1000	1 lbs.	—	2
Demolitions kit, Level 3	5,000	1 lbs.	—	3
Medical kit, Level 1	300	1 lbs.	—	1
Medical kit, Level 2	1,000	1 lbs.	—	2
Medical kit, Level 3	5,000	1 lbs.	—	3
Medical kit, Level 4	9,000	1 lbs.	M	4
Medical kit, Level 5	15,000	1 lbs.	M	5
Repair kit, Level 1	300	1 lbs.	—	1
Repair kit, Level 2	1,000	1 lbs.	—	2
Repair kit, Level 3	5,000	1 lbs.	—	3
Repair kit, Level 4	9,000	1 lbs.	M	4
Repair kit, Level 5	15,000	1 lbs.	M	5

UNIQUE ITEMS

ITEM	COST (UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Battery Flare	2	0.5 lbs.	BI	1
Binoculars	20	1 lbs.	—	0
Light Sticks (5)	2	0.5 lbs.	—	0
Compass	1	—	—	0
Digital Audio Recorder	10	—	B	2
Digital Camera	20	—	B	2
Digital Video Camera	25	0.5 lbs.	B	2
Electric Torch	10	0.5 lbs.	—	2
Fire Extinguisher	75	2 lbs.	—	0
Gas Mask	1,000	1 lbs.	—	0
Handcuffs	5	—	—	0
ESR Pack (1 week)	4	1 lbs.	—	0
Lighter	1	—	—	0
Sleeping Bag	10	1 lbs.	—	0
Standard Techan Adventurers Kit	15	30 lbs.	—	0
Tent (2-6 person)	10	5 lbs.	—	0
Two-Way Radio (1)	30	1 lbs.	B	2
Watch, Automatic	10	—	—	1

UTILITIES

ITEM	COST (UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Anti-Echan Network	3,000	50 lbs.	M5	3
Anti-Gravity Generator	16,000	30 lbs.	H5	5
Battery Cell B (5)	5	0.5 lbs.	—	1
Battery Cell M (2)	50	0.5 lbs.	—	2
Battery Cell H (1)	150	0.5 lbs.	—	3
Big ear	3,000	2 lbs.	M20	3
Boosters	See text	—	—	1-6
Camera Ball	1,000	1 lbs.	M	3
Disruption Muffler Bag	250	2 lbs.	—	2
Disruption Muffler Crate	500	10 lbs.	—	3
Disruption Patch	5	1 lbs.	—	1
Electro Optical Sensor	10,000	2 lbs.	M10	4
Flash Goggles	2,600	0.5 lbs.	M5	2
Force Shield	16,000	10 lbs.	H20	6
Gravity Lens	9,000	2 lbs.	M	6
Grip Gloves	6,000	—	M	3
Holographic Generator	25,000	30 lbs.	H10	5
Infrared Goggles	12,000	1 lbs.	M20	3
Lie Detector	2,500	1 lbs.	M10	3
Light Bender	20,000	5 lbs.	H10	6
Metal Detector	1,500	2 lbs.	M30	3
Nano-Healer	500	--	H5	5
Rover Robot	3,000	40 lbs.	M30	3
Ultrasound Goggles	25,000	1 lbs.	H20	5

TECHAN GEAR DESCRIPTIONS

Anti-Echan Network (AEN): This York designed device exhibits a level of intelligence many other bastions don't subscribe to the lower tech city. It found circulation across the world by mercenaries and military groups. It uses a battery but utilizes the EDF to its advantage. The AEN uses poles driven into the ground or supported by tripods. They generate an electrical field connected together, transmitting back to the base system at camp. Each pole cannot be more than 50 feet (ten squares) apart from another. This network not only generates a field between the poles, but over them as well, creating a roof as long as connecting poles remain within ten squares from one another. If any magical creature (anything other than animals) break this field or touches an AEN pole, the machine reads the fluctuation in the EDF. It then sends an alert message back to the transmitter. The AEN poles receive power from the transmitter so only one battery is required. If any of the poles detect elevated disruption, it sends an alert. Breaking a connection to a pole sends an alert. If the receiver shorts

out, it breaks a connection to a backup mechanical siren, which goes off.

This prevents any non-tech force from sneaking up on the group when the network is set up. The receiver can locate where a break occurs. Each charge used maintains four poles for one day. Each additional charge per hour allows the addition of four more poles. Their only weakness is subterranean introgression, assuming approaching echans notice the network.

Effect: A DC25 Stealth check is required for an echan creature to cross the net without it going off.

Anti-Gravity Generator (Personal): The subject using this belt device is able to fly.

Property: You can the effects of a *fly* spell. The generator uses one charge upon activation and one charge every minute thereafter.

Battery Flare: A battery powered bright candle, the charge only lasts for four hours but illuminates an area 50 feet in radius.

Big Ear: This tiny device wraps around one's ear and amplifies incoming acoustic data.

Effect: Gain a +5 to Perception checks when listening. It uses one charge upon activation and an additional charge every round.

Binoculars: Ranging in size from small and concealable to large and clumsy, binoculars bring distant objects into close focus. They are sturdy, waterproof, and survive falls up to 50 feet, regardless of their capacity. If broken, they cannot be repaired.

Effect: Reduces any penalties to Perception caused by distance by 10 when in use.

Bayonet Plug: This is not a weapon but an adapter to add a melee weapon to any small arm. Only one- and two-handed small arms can be equipped with a melee weapon. One-handed small arms can be equipped with a dagger only. Two-handed small arms can be equipped with any light blade. The melee weapon cannot be enchanted. You cannot equip a specialty weapon or a heavy weapon with a bayonet.

Effect: You can swap between the mounted melee weapon and your firearm as a free action.

Camera Ball: This three inch rubber ball with a weighted flat bottom can be thrown or fired from a grenade launcher. Once it lands, it transmits audio and video input from a full 360 degree arc to as much as 500 ft. (100 squares) to a receiving monitor.

Compass: Thankfully, magnetic fields are unaltered in magical saturation. Magnetic north remains strong and true. Modern compasses diligently point to it loyally. Rumours indicate that Ixindar emanates a large magnetic field, but this power source cannot be detected from Canam.

Demolitions Kit: Needed for any decent work with explosives, the Demolitions kit includes wires, plugs, and various tools. It does not include detonators or explosives. It includes a small battery that powers a circuit tester that uses a charge every time it is employed, though that is only required for disarming explosives.

Effect: Grants the Tech Level of the kit as an inherent bonus to all Demotion checks.

Detonator: Planted explosives require a detonator to explode.

Higher Tech: Purchasing a higher tech detonator increases the Demolitions DC in its application but also increases the Reflex DC to avoid it.

Friend/Foe Trigger: This detonator can be programmed to detonate the moment a specific monster enters its blast radius. It can also be programmed to detonate for everything but specific people. There is no limit on its parameters.

Impact Trigger: After the safety is pulled, impact triggers detonate at the end of being thrown and thus can only be used as a grenade.

Magnetic Trigger: These unique detonators only function on explosive payloads 2 lbs. or less. The detonator locks on any metal object moving within 30 feet. When triggered, the detonator (and the explosive) moves up to 30 feet to attach to the target. It detonates instantly. If there is any form of cover or impedance, the detonator stops at the blocked square and detonates.

Motion Trigger: This detonator detects movement in its burst area and detonates regardless of the target.

Pressure Trigger: These trigger the moment a weight is pressed upon the detonator. They explode once weight is applied, not when it is removed. Large and larger targets automatically trigger pressure detonators upon entering a square containing one. Medium and smaller targets have a 50% chance to avoid the sensor if they enter a square with one. If the Demotion skill roll succeeds at proper placement, Medium-sized targets cannot avoid the sensor if they enter the square. The sensor can be manually adjusted to only detonate on large or larger targets.

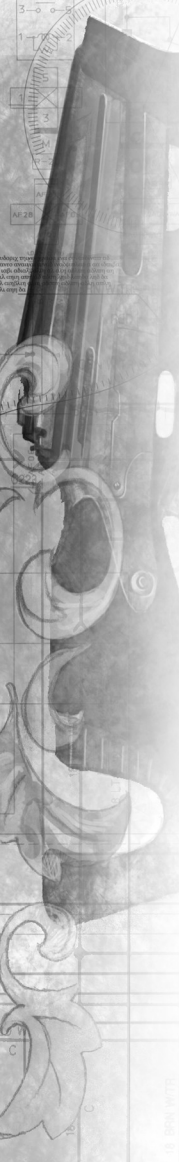
Radio Remote: Because of the EDF, radio waves are suppressed, reducing the range of radio controlled detonators. Regardless of power, all radio transmitters fail past 500 feet. Both the transmitter and receiver require batteries.

Timer: Timers utilize a mechanical clock to count-down compared to a digital timer (unpopular in echa due to disruption). Although one may purchase a RDR (red digital readout) for the same price, it instantly becomes a TL2 item. The actual detonator is usually chemical or mechanical.

Trip Trigger: This detonator requires setting up an explosive with a trip wire. You can run up to 25 feet of wire but the detonation only occurs in the square where the explosives are placed. Because the wire needs to be raised to be triggered, there is a +2 bonus to any Perception skill rolls to spot the wire.

Wired Remote: This simple form runs an electrical pulse that triggers the mechanical, chemical, or electrical detonator. Because the EDF increases the resistance of electrical wires, the maximum range of any wired detonator is 150 feet. Only one battery cell is required.

Echan Survival Rations: Modern techans count their blessings every time they eat in the wilderness. They rarely need to fish or hunt. They are not required to stalk prey, gut and clean the kill, and cook them for



hours over an open flame risking a number of contaminations when finally consumed. They simply tear open a ready-made meal and eat. The military made rations, also called techan rations or bastion rations began in Selkirk (which pioneered the modern product) as ESRs or Echan Survival Rations. They no longer carry freeze-dried meat and crackers. They now offer a full range of cuisine including chicken and beef fajitas, hamburgers, meatloaf, beefsteak, and pastas with various sauces, beef stew, and jambalaya. Six days of rations for one person weighs one pound. Each package requires little preparation and can be eaten on the go. Beverages can be ingested right from the pouch. Each ration has a shelf life of five years with a peak temperature range of 60 degrees C. Each day's worth of ration supplies, on average, 3000 calories. For reasons unclear, the narros adore ESRs and part of Selkirk's trade involves converting the imported narros food supplies into ESRs, which are then sold back to them for a profit. On the other side, laudenian and chaparran elves despise the stuff to the point of entering almost a nauseous state just by smelling the "Man food."

Disruption Muffler Bag/Crate: Though designers succeeded in creating a small container rendering its contents immune to disruption, larger attempts resulted in failure. The amount of insulation required increases proportionately to the size of the container, resulting in only slightly larger capacity for much large containers.

Effect: It protects all batteries inside from disruption. The muffler bag can carry five H cells. The crate can carry 10 H cells. There is no lifespan of the bag or crate. Two M cells will replace one H cell and two B cells replace one M cell.

Disruption Patch: A small square plastic tab the size of a bottle cap, the disruption patch is often hung from necks or from wrists. Each bastion developed their own unique approach to the patch though a common practice is a colored dye (red being the obvious choice) that breaches into the top layer of the patch when an extremely sensitive microwave thermionic diode is disrupted via enchantment. The patch detects increased disruption from localized increases in magic though one must be careful to keep the vacuum seal each patch is sold in enclosed as a patch will often naturally disrupt after a day in the open.

Effect: The patch activates if the EDF ambient penalty to all disruption rolls increase. The patch activates if placed against an enchanted item. Once use, the patch is useless.

Electro Optical Sensor (EOS): The EOS is equipped with a 360 degree motion sensor meant to detect both ground and aerial targets within 250 feet.

Effect: Targets must beat a DC30 Stealth or be detected. It sends all information to a source monitor that cannot be more than 100 feet away.

Special: It only detects movement and cannot detect incorporeal targets. One charge is used up every hour.

Electric Torch: The most common device on a techan adventurer is the flashlight or electric torch.

They do not employ fragile bulbs but instead use electronically regulated light-emitting diodes that make the end product more efficient, brighter, and more durable for the wilderness adventurer. It employs a miniature electrical generator and capacitor. By either shaking the light or winding a crank, the capacitor charges, allowing the unit to power its LED transmitter.

Effect: Illuminates a 75 foot cone from the user. It lasts 10 minutes before fading out and requiring a recharge (a full round action).

Fire Extinguisher: Centuries of development resulted in a new multipurpose chemical. It smothers the flame and cools the target. The result is a compressed container capable of putting out almost any kind of fire from combustible metals to burning oils.

Property: Standard action. Remove a fire effect from a square. Each container has 10 uses.

Flash Goggles: This simple eyewear protects the wearer from any blinding effects from bright light, whether natural, technological, or magical.

Property: Flash goggles respond to incoming illumination and darken within 0.0005 seconds. Use an immediate action to nullify a blinding effect. Each time this power is used, 1 charge is drained.

Force Shield: Mann originally developed this technology. Porto followed soon after. They never traded it with anyone and technology theft remains the probable cause of its proliferation. This item cannot be held and must be rooted in the ground. When it activates, it sends up an impenetrable force field.

Property: Use a standard action and drain a cell to create a 4 square wall that offers cover for those behind it. Those benefiting from it can make ranged attacks through it. It uses one additional charge per round in use. It must be deactivated to be moved (standard action to deactivate).

Gas Mask: This flexible and compact unit, when donned, attempts to filter all outside gasses and will protect the wearer from many airborne poisons. It will not protect the user if the environment has no proper earth atmosphere at all.

Property: You gain a +5 inherent bonus to Fortitude saves against inhaled poisons.

Gravity Lens: An ingenious invention Mann stole from Porto and Motege, the lens resembles a 10x13 photo frame with a handle on one side when unfolded from its compact package. When attached to a wall, it allows to the user to peer through it as if looking through a window. It detects secret doors, compartments, caches and so forth as well as snares and pits.

Effect: You gain a +4 inherent bonus to Disable Device checks when attempting to open a lock or disable a trap, +4 inherent bonus to Demolitions when attempting a disarm, and a +4 bonus to Perception checks when taking 10 or 20 when searching a room.

Special: This uses one charge on its activation and on every round thereafter.

Grip Gloves: This Selkirk prototype allows the user to climb walls with ease.

Property: Pass all Climb checks when climbing. A

DC of 30 is required to forcefully remove you from the wall.

Handcuffs: These high tensile steel restraints require a DC25 Strength check or Disable Device check to break.

Holographic Generator: This backpack carried device deploys its own legs when activated. The fabric of the pack conceals most of the gear. Only a reflective sphere on a pintle rises from the top. The device can make terrain look and sound like some other sort of natural terrain. Creating terrain can hide structures, equipment, and creatures within the area. The moment physical interaction occurs, the effect is nullified. This could cloak an entire party if need be.

This device is not portable and cannot be moved when activated. Theoretically, one can stage gunfire from a cloaking dome and no one can trace the location without sufficient listen checks.

Effect: Targets inside the field gain total concealment.

Special: Each hour in use exhausts a charge.

Infrared Goggles: These non-telescoping goggles still provide stereoscopic vision and allow the wearer to see in total darkness.

Effect: Grants darkvision. Each battery charge lasts one hour.

Laser Sight: Laser sights may be used in conjunction with scopes. They paint targets with precision where the weapon's fire will strike. This also doubles as a psychological device where some targets may be more open to intimidation if noticing a green target on their chest. A sniper may, if they wish, swap it for an infrared diode, which is invisible to everything except for night vision (darkvision). The standard sight uses a green diode pumped solid-state laser which is effective for the maximum range of any weapon.

Effect: Gain +1 bonus inherent bonus to attack rolls

Lie Detector: No paper, needles, or wire, this device is a simple palm-shaped item that is placed gently on the subject's body.

Effect: Gain a +4 inherent bonus to Sense Motive checks against detecting deception. Each attempt uses a charge.

Light Bender: Thought once to be the realm of magic, the bender moves light around it, effectively making itself and its wearer invisible. The device, usually a backpack stored with a remote bracelet to operate, creates a magnetic field, removing the target from sight, even from darkvision and infrared.

Property: Use a standard action and you become invisible until the end of your next turn or until you are hit by a melee or ranged attack. Each round uses a charge.

Light Sticks: Scientists battled for years to uncover a new chemical combination that provided the light of glowsticks without the danger of disruption. Oddly enough, the old style composition had a tendency of failing after only five minutes. They usually glow red, green, or blue. They don't use batteries, are cheap, and

waterproof. When activated, the chemicals mix with a fluorescent dye, giving them the illumination. Glowsticks are popular in echa and often impress many where flamboyant spellwork fails.

Effect: Illuminates a 20 foot radius for one hour.

Medical Kit: The formidable medical kit holds bandages, pills, trauma shears, ointments, and basic stitching implements for basic injuries. Larger kits have eye pads and cooling gel pads for burns. Along with wound irrigation, syringes supply help with delivering various medications. Other implements include splints, alcohol pads, an epinephrine injector, hemostatic pads, and various scalpels and scissors for emergency surgical procedures. Trained medical professionals can pull off miracles with a medical kit. More advanced models feature scanning gear with ultrasound and x-ray emitters. Diagnostic tools assist with a prognosis. Advanced kits also feature robotic probes capable of injecting short-lived nano-machines to repair internal injuries.

Property: Grants the tech level of the kit as an inherent bonus to all Heal checks.

Metal Detector: This small device extends a small probe that scans for metal objects.

Property: Grants a +5 inherent bonus on Perception to search rolls for any metals. One charge is used per attempt.

Nano-Healer: Beyond just patching holes, the nanobots enter the body via an injection gun and repair it from within. These are lower technology creations compared to some of the prototypes Porto is testing. The bots quickly run out of power after a few minutes.

Effect: Use a standard action and a battery charge against yourself or an adjacent target. When used, the target is cured of 4d8+10 hit points.

Repair kits: Electronic tool kits include diagnostic tools, a soldering gun, fine point insulated needle pliers, and wire cutters at TL1. Above that, it employs a battery for a digital multi-meter measuring ohms, amps, and volts. It also comes equipped with a variety of wires, clips, resistors, banana plugs and crocodile clips. Further advances include miniature diagnostic computers; advanced kits contain micromachines, which can reassemble entire motherboards.

Property: You are granted the Tech Level of the kit as an inherent bonus to all Engineer checks.

Rover Robot: This tiny machine resembles a small, flattened box with four large wheels. Regardless of how it lands or tumbles, it still can operate, as its wheels are larger than its body. A camera adjusts automatically regardless of which way is up. The machine rolls at a speed of 25 feet and can tread through rough terrain or even over water. It has an AC 20 and 20 hit points. It has a +15 bonus to Stealth checks. It receives instructions from an operator that cannot be more than 100 squares away. It sends back both visual and audio information. It uses one charge per minute and both the machine and the controller require batteries.

Scope, Digital: This replaces a regular targeting scope. It enables one using a Sniper weapon to reduce cover penalties by 2.

Scope, Targeting: This is a standard long-range targeting scope which can be fitted to any two-handed small arm or heavy weapon without an auto, blast, heavy auto, or sonic property. It cannot be used with specialty weapons. Attaching the targeting scope enables the weapon to become a sniper weapon with a +1 bonus.

Sleeping Bag: Sleeping bags now enclose one (or two snugly) occupant in a synthetic bag capable of protecting the occupant(s) from temperatures as cold as -50 degrees C. It resists wind and combustion (though it is still susceptible to magical fire). It is externally waterproof.

Property: While inside, you gain a +5 inherent bonus to Survival checks against cold weather.

Standard Techan Adventurers Kit: This kit includes the following: Two Battery Flares, five Chemical Light Sticks, one Compass, one Sleeping Bag, one Lighter, one Canteen (Waterskin) and one week of ESR rations.

Suppressor: These attachments muffle the flash and sonic blast of explosively propelled firearms. By slowing the expanding gases exiting the barrel, the suppressor stems the acoustical signature, but does not silence it completely. The sounds reduce as they reflect inside the lengthy metal or polymer attachment. Suppressors cannot be used on shotguns, heavy weapons, or weapons rated higher than TL3. Most weapons TL4 and above either cannot have the attachment, or more likely the attachment is worthless, as not enough noise escapes from the barrel to be suppressed in the first place. Affixing a suppressor takes a standard action.

Property: Gain a +2 inherent bonus to opposed Stealth checks when rolling against a target attempting to locate you after you have fired.

Synthetic Tent: Tents come in 2, 4, and 6 person capacities. Most tents utilize flexible poles and are available in dome, tunnel, single-hoop, and geodesic styles. It takes 5 minutes to set up and take down properly.

Property: While inside, you gain a +2 inherent bonus to Survival checks against cold weather.

Two-way Radio: Two-way radios used to employ legally available radio frequencies chosen specifically to avoid eavesdropping and interference with other machines or day-to-day electronics. Now with the expanse of the echan landscape, keeping this communicator bottled in the low bands or with reduced power is no longer required. It has a clear range of 5 miles in open echa, 20 miles within a bastion. Even basic models can withstand some punishment and water pressure.

Ultrasound Goggles: The goggles translate sonic vibrations into visual stimuli. A sound that's loud to the point of painful to the ears causes the goggles to cease being useful. The goggles transmit high frequency pulses and detect their ricochet off objects.

Property: Gain darkvision. You use a charge every hour of use. You can spend another charge to see invisible targets for one round.

Watch, Automatic: Automatic mechanical, self-

winding or perpetual motion, watches no longer require batteries or a manual wind. Modern watches employ a balance wheel that winds via the motion of the wearer's arm. This allows the watch to keep perfect time without requiring manual winding or any power source. The compact and complicated device is water resistant, shock resistant, and cannot be over-wound with abuse. They are also completely silent.

BOOSTERS

INJECTION	TL	COST (UC)
Agility level 1	1	100
Agility level 2	2	840
Agility level 3	3	82,500
Agility level 4	4	110,000
Agility level 5	5	137,500
Alertness level 1	1	100
Alertness level 2	2	840
Alertness level 3	3	82,500
Alertness level 4	4	110,000
Alertness level 5	5	137,500
Learning level 1	1	100
Learning level 2	2	840
Learning level 3	3	82,500
Learning level 4	4	110,000
Learning level 5	5	137,500
Endurance level 1	1	100
Endurance level 2	2	840
Endurance level 3	3	82,500
Endurance level 4	4	110,000
Endurance level 5	5	137,500
Regeneration level 1	5	110,000
Regeneration level 2	6	137,500
Strength level 1	1	100
Strength level 2	2	840
Strength level 3	3	82,500
Strength level 4	4	110,000
Strength level 5	5	137,500

BOOSTERS

Tech Level 1 and 2 injections are drugs

Tech Level 3 and 4 injections are viral/genetic

Tech Level 5 injections are micromachines

Drug Shot: A less popular option from micromachines or viral injections is drug therapy, which is both cumbersome and painful. The process is accomplished via a jet injector and several doses can be loaded into a gun. This is because, unlike the other two options, a drug shot is temporary. It also has side effects. Drug shots are either TL1 or TL2.

Drug Special Rule: A drug injection only lasts for one hour. Each purchase supplies five injections.

Injecting during combat: Injecting drugs during combat takes a move action and provokes opportunity attacks. Effects occur at the beginning of your next turn.

Special: Drugs are a hit/miss with echan humans. If an echan human takes a drug shot, it has a 50% chance to work.

Micromachine Booster (MM): One of the most advanced versions of the nanobot booster, these permanent micromachines are self-replicating and self-powered, tapping into the energy of the human body it is injected into. Micromachines are not sensitive to disruption due to their insulation inside the human body but will disrupt if the human becomes an echan. Micromachine boosters are TL5.

Viral/Gene Therapy: Viral Therapy can accomplish similar results but doesn't create some of the more breathtaking effects that MM injections do. These are genetically engineered viruses that rewrite a specific genetic code before terminating themselves. They were used initially as therapy to correct genetic errors, curing various hereditary diseases. Further advances allowed for beneficial viruses that could improve the human body beyond what is normally possible. Despite the controversial nature of this practice, it found use among many military circles, especially those being forced to deal with the monsters of open echa. Because echan humans have their genes rewritten by Attricana, this therapy does not work on them or other echans. Viral/Gene Therapy is either TL 3 or TL4.

Agility: This booster improves overall reaction time and swiftness.

Property: Gain the Tech Level as an inherent bonus to Dexterity and Reflex saves.

Quickstand: As many times a day as the booster's Tech Level, you may stand from prone as a swift action.

Acrobatics Talent (TL3+ only): Once a day, as a free action, you can reroll any Acrobatics check you just made. You must use the new result.

Flash (TL5 only): You gain a +5 feet bonus to speed.

Alertness: This injection boosts mental awareness, concentration, and memory recall. It sharpens the mind and prevents distraction.

Property: Gain the Tech Level as an inherent bonus to Wisdom and Will saves.

Property: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to initiative, this increases to +2 at TL4 and +3 at TL5.

Endurance: This booster improves overall health, boosts resistance to poisons and other toxins, and enhances recovery from injury.

Property: Gain the Tech Level as an inherent bonus to Constitution and Fortitude saves.

Property: You gain the Tech Level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Survival checks.

Endurance (TL4+ only): Gain the Tech Level of the booster as an inherent bonus to checks against any poison.

Learning: This booster improves memory recall and the capacity to learn new skills. You are able to do difficult equations in your head without a pencil.

Property: Gain the Tech Level as an inherent bonus to Intelligence and all Knowledge class skills you have ranks in.

Limitless: As many times a day as the booster's Tech Level, you can gain a +5 inherent bonus to your next Intelligence-based skill check.

Regeneration: Advanced micromachines buzz around inside the body, fixing injuries when they present themselves.

Property: At the beginning of each round, if you have 0 hit points or more, you are cured of 1 point of damage. At TL5, this increases to 2 points of damage.

Strength: This booster increases muscle tension and reduces tendon strain on bones. It also improves overall body chemistry by burning calories faster and more efficiently to increase energy.

Property: Gain the Tech Level as an inherent bonus to Strength and Climb checks.

Property: Gain the Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls with unarmed attacks.

SPECIAL MATERIALS

Most techan humans adept in the knowledge of chemistry were bewildered when magic refused to follow certain rules of nature. Controlled laboratory experiments confirmed that in the presence of magic (which many claim prevents controlled laboratory experiments), certain elemental properties change, some in minor ways, a few in major ways. Heavier radioactive isotopes (like Uranium 235 and 238) stop degrading while others (like Radium 226) break down more rapidly. This makes nuclear energy a hazardous technological path for bastions seeking alternative energy sources.

Chemical reactions also change. Not enough occurs to impede the continued existence of life but it does prevent the progression of natural evolution. Most scientists failed trying to explain the new rules of magic scientifically. Bastions continue to find new and unconventional applications to materials with altered capabilities. Even more frustrating is the unpredictability of magic, which takes an almost intelligent delight in suspending these rules on a whim. New chemical elements, thought previously unstable, now exist. It is assumed that if magic were to suddenly vanish, the changeover back to science would be a deadly one to life requiring these new rules to survive. These alterations to the world continue even to industry, including the construction of buildings both in echa and in techa, also in commerce, where certain rare and expensive metals, critical to the economy of particular civilizations, become worthless or dangerous when magic is removed. Not only does civilization seek silver and gold, but titanium as well. Uranium's safety has also reinvigorated its broad spectrum of applications. Traditional fantasy would have miners searching for iron and gold. Now mines like the Finer Fire Pits and Thos Thalagos also search for molybdenum, iridium, and rhodium, all of which can be extracted safely with narros expertise. The unique aspect of the new chemistry relies on compounds that never existed before. The existence of angelite and coruthil confounds scientists to this day. Because of these newfound rules, alchemy returned with

vigor.

Available Materials: From the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK, the following special materials are available in Amethyst: darkwood, dragonhide, and alchemical silver. Adamantine, cold iron, and mithril are not available.

Angelite: When the Second Hammer hit Ixindar, a virtually impenetrable stone that encased the gate was fractured. This mountain of rock blew apart and scattered across the globe. Some refer to this stone as absolute rock. Techans believe this material to have once been rhodium, the most precious metal on Earth. This made the shell around Ixindar more valuable than all the gold, platinum, and uranium on the globe combined. When infused with magic, the silver sheen of stone became harder than anything else in the world.

On cursory examination, rhodium and angelite exhibit similar properties (resistance to corrosion, amazing durability). Angelite squeezes in between rhodium and ruthenium. Despite its amazing density (12.38 g/cm³) angelite feels extremely light, over five times lighter than its other precious brothers. This has never been explained. Angelite is seldom found in mines and the largest concentration still sits in Kakodomania. Only the fragments found around the world or in mines can be refined. Demons have tried to chip off and process pieces from the original shell, but have never gotten the temperature high enough to melt. Useful fragments can be found as small as splinters and as large as houses (the only known cases that large are the heads of Ramkava).

Property: Angelite has the identical properties and costs of Adamantine in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK. An angelite weapon striking technology forces a disruption roll.

Special: Angelite radiates natural magic and cannot be used in the construction of techan equipment.

Coruthil: Narros miners found coruthil quickly, as if always present, surviving for millions of years without man ever finding it. It was never there until magic saturated the mineral. Scientists from techa believe that this influence created a new transitional metal between scandium and titanium. When magic flowed through the mineral, coruthil emerged. Narros miners were overjoyed to discover these riches were un-mined after 65 million years. When worked like steel, it becomes a wonderful material from which to create items.

TYPE OF CORUTHIL ITEM	ITEM COST MODIFIER
Ammunition	+5
Light Armor	+1,000
Medium Armor	+3,000
Heavy Armor	+5,000
Weapon	+500

Effect: Coruthil has the same hardness and thickness of normal steel. It is immune to all corrosion, natural or magical.

Fae Iron: This ore sears the flesh of ALL fae (including all core fae races, demons, and pagus) as they suffer from a severe reaction to it. Almost all fae cul-

tures have banned this ore except for Kakodomania, where it is wielded exclusively by shemjaza, despite their reaction to it (or, given their disposition, because of). Some pagus brandish these weapons insulated at the hilt. The tenenbri discovered it accidentally in mines. This often led to the narros claiming it was evidence of the tenenbri's sins against Oaken. When the pagus migration occurred, the corrupted tenenbri took the invention to their new masters.

In modern times, techans analyzed samples and determined fae iron (or "leaded iron" or "cold iron" as it's sometimes referred, though not terribly accurate) was comprised of iron with extremely low trace amounts of carbon and lead (less than 3%). These ratios are extremely specific, as are the procedures for converting the material into a malleable substance for weapons. A simple deviation of 0.5% of carbon or lead in either direction renders the unique properties of the iron listed nonexistent. No study has ever explained why this specific substance harms fae in this way. Techan humans, especially those from xenophobic cultures like Baruch Malkut, began trying to crack this ratio to arm their forces in mass with iron weapons. Fae consider those wielding a fae iron weapon racist and seldom will civilized fae races employ or even travel with those who do.

Narros reject forging weapons made from it. Even modern tenenbri refuse to touch the material and consider its discovery the greatest sin of their past. Fae iron is also extremely rare. It will never be found in any community with a fae population or in any city with good relations with fae. Even boggs and skeggs don't use fae iron purely because of the risk of personal injury.

Property: Fae iron has the identical properties and costs of cold iron in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK. The item also counts as fae iron (which all fae have an adverse reaction to).

Magnarros: Already stubborn to ignite, magnesium becomes increasingly more difficult to combust in magical fields. This caused many techan blacksmiths to try to forge swords in magnesium for a time until they discovered this property had a knack of suddenly reversing without warning, making the weapon burst in a fiery white flame in a clash. It certainly was impressive and intimidating, but eventually costly and dangerous to all, especially the wielder. A narros forge in Thos Thalagos, run by elder Magnalus Eneg, claimed to have perfected an alloy that prevents this dangerous combustion. He kept the process as a family secret until his death. He only made narros weapons and never sold to any other species. Since his passing 50 years ago, more non-narros weapons have been appearing from forges.

This knowledge was passed onto others, though remaining a narros secret. It is a point of respect and awe for a narros adventurer to wield a magnarros blade. Magnarros is a very rare silvery, glistening metal that is lighter than iron but just as hard.

Property: Magnarros has the identical properties and costs of mithril in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK.

TECHAN VEHICLES

Though the overwhelming majority of travelers in the echan wilderness (or wasteland, depending on who you ask), techan or echan, still prefer beasts of burden for their transportation, a few still favour progressive methods. Vehicles designed to operate outside of bastions look different than those traveling effortlessly inside them. They are more rugged, with armored shells designed to withstand punishment both physical and magical. Though some vehicles in cities may employ internal combustion or short-life batteries, vehicles outside mostly utilize battery power, either from disposable cells or from rechargeable ones, generating electricity from solar power. Operating vehicles are rare in the echan landscape and many wandering travelers have come across ravaged and gutted techan vehicles, seized from disruption, their crew long dead with no way to return home. It was not uncommon to see these vehicles towed along by horses like wagons when out of power or when conserving energy. All vehicles use batteries as they are far more efficient, clean, and supply rechargeable power where internal combustion requires a fuel source not easily accessible since most bastions don't sit on stockpiles of fossil fuels.

RULES INVOLVING VEHICLES

For the most part, vehicles won't be included in combat. When they do, they involve a radical departure on how movement rules work. Vehicles have acceleration rather than speed, though still called a speed rating. You retain the same movement speed from round to round (*carryover speed*) unless you take action to increase or reduce it. For example, you can't decide to end your movement after 5 squares on your turn if you have a carryover speed of 40 unless you perform a difficult stunt to decelerate your movement to 5 squares. Otherwise, you still move 40 squares this turn.

Speed: The speed rating for a vehicle is not its top speed but the safest speed it can accelerate per round. Every round, you can add to your movement from your previous round or decelerate. A vehicle's speed at the end of your turn is its "carryover speed". This sets the vehicle's speed at the start of its controller's next turn. Your vehicle has a carryover speed of 0 if the vehicle has stopped before the start of your turn. If you have any carryover speed (even if only 1), you must make a move action with your vehicle on your turn or crash. If you do not perform a maneuver, or adjust your speed, you simply move squares equal to your carryover speed from the previous turn.

Reverse movement does not count towards forward movement when calculating speed carried over from the previous round.

In open terrain, a vehicle can safely move a maximum of 4 times its Speed Rating. A vehicle cannot safely accelerate faster than its Speed Rating. A vehicle cannot safely decelerate faster than 2 times its Speed Rating. Pushing any of these rules involves a stunt.

Control: Despite the number of occupants, only

one person can control a vehicle. The vehicle operates only on that character's turn. Even if the driver is forced to make a control roll outside of his turn, the effects of that roll are deferred until the start of the target's next turn (other effects inflicted on the vehicle can occur immediately). Even if crashing, the vehicle only slides or stops on the driver's turn. You cannot perform a vehicle action outside of your turn. If you have carryover speed and you do not use an action to move, the vehicle crashes.

Armor Class: The vehicle's AC is listed in the vehicle table. If you have the Improved Vehicle Combat feat and the vehicle has a carryover speed of at least 2 and is Huge or smaller, you can add your Dexterity modifier or your Intelligence modifier to the vehicle's AC until the end of your next turn.

Fortitude Saves: Vehicles automatically pass all Fortitude saves and are immune to diseases and poisons.

Reflex Saves: A vehicle automatically fails a Reflex save unless it is moving at least 2. A vehicle's Reflex bonus is the same as the driver. The vehicle gains a bonus to Reflex saves based on vehicle modifications and evasive driving and receives a modifier (often a penalty) based on its maneuver value.

Will Saves: Vehicles automatically pass all Will saves and are immune to any mental effects.

Targeting and Cover: Creatures inside/on a vehicle receive protection depending on the situation and the attack.

Cover: Vehicles grant cover to their occupants. If an attack targeting a vehicle occupant benefitting from cover would have hit the target without the cover, the attack hits the vehicle instead.

Concealment: Creatures inside vehicles can go prone and gain concealment against opponents outside vehicles.

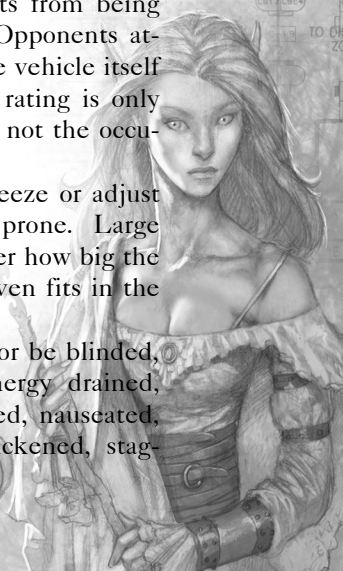
Modifiers Inside: While inside/on a vehicle, occupants suffer a -2 penalty to their Reflex saves against attacks from outside a vehicle.

Reach: Vehicles do not have reach but creatures inside still do.

Selecting Defense: Creatures inside/on a vehicle targeted by an attack from an opponent outside the vehicle may choose to use the vehicle's AC in lieu of their own. Certain vehicles prevent occupants from being targeted by disease or poison attacks. Opponents attacking a vehicle may choose to target the vehicle itself instead of occupants. A vehicle's resist rating is only effective against hits against the vehicle, not the occupants.

They're big: A vehicle cannot squeeze or adjust its occupying squares. It also cannot go prone. Large creatures cannot control vehicles no matter how big the vehicles are; whether a Large creature even fits in the vehicle is up to the GM's discretion.

Conditions: Vehicles cannot bleed or be blinded, confused, dazed, dazzled, deafened, energy drained, exhausted, fascinated, fatigued, frightened, nauseated, panicked, paralyzed, pinned, shaken, sickened, stag-



gered, or stunned. A vehicle cannot be knocked prone, rendered unconscious, or made helpless. Vehicles can still be petrified.

Character Actions: Most actions characters have access to don't apply to the vehicles they control or ride inside. Certain other actions are limited while inside or on a vehicle.

Charge: Vehicles cannot charge, though they can ram, which uses the same rules as a bull rush.

Delay/Ready Action: You can use delay or ready actions while inside a vehicle. You can also ready a vehicle action while controlling a vehicle.

Flanking: Vehicles cannot flank, though occupants can. Creatures in vehicles cannot gain the benefits of both flanking and cover.

Movement: Vehicles cannot run or take a 5-foot step. Creatures inside a vehicle can move freely inside of it. Disembarking is a move action: the creature moves to any square adjacent to the vehicle. This provokes an opportunity attack.

Driver Attack: A driver attempting melee or ranged attacks while driving suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls. The driver must also make a control roll. If the driver is controlling a weapon on a turret remotely, this penalty is reduced to -2, though he still must make a control roll if moving.

Passenger Attack: Passengers suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls while riding in a moving vehicle. If using a weapon on a weapon mount, this penalty is reduced to -1 while moving.

Total Defense: A vehicle occupant (including the driver) can use total defense inside a vehicle. The vehicle does not gain the benefits of total defense.

Using Skills: Any skill that could be negatively impacted by the motion of a vehicle (such as Heal or Engineer) suffers a penalty of -2 to -6, at the GM's discretion.

Skill versus Armor: Driving skills can also gain you temporary improvements to your AC and/or Reflex saves. See the Vehicle Operation skill.

Facing: Vehicles usually can only move in the direction they are facing. To change direction involves a turn.

Stunts: Stunts are driving achievements involving a skill checks. Failure results in a control roll, a slide, or a crash. See the Vehicle Operation skill.

Crash: A crash is a catastrophic failure in vehicle control. In most crashes, you continue your remaining movement in the direction you were previously pointed. In others (like jumps), you immediately stop your movement.

If you crash, at the start of your turn you decelerate at your speed rating if you haven't immediately struck an obstruction. If you hit difficult terrain, or you hit an obstruction (like a wall or another vehicle), your movement stops. The vehicle and all occupants inside take damage according to the vehicle's current speed.

SPEED	DAMAGE
Less than 5	No damage
5-6	1d8
7-9	2d8
10-13	3d8
14-18	4d8
19-24	5d8
25-31	6d8
32-39	7d8
40-48	8d8
49-58	9d8
59+	10d8

If there are no obstructions to crash into, you continue decelerating at your speed rating until your movement is 0 or until you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain. When a vehicle starts crashing (the moment you fail a control roll or a jump check involving a vehicle), all targets in the vehicle are staggered until the crash is resolved. If you failed a Vehicle Operation control roll by 5 or more, the vehicle swerves 45 degrees in a random direction before the crash commences.

If you failed a Vehicle Operation control roll by 10 or more, the vehicle rolls as it crashes. The vehicle takes 2d6 damage at the start of every turn it spends rolling.

Aircraft: An aircraft that fails its control roll loses altitude equal to x2 its speed. Aircraft never fall under the effects of a crash unless they impact on something.

As long as the aircraft is functional, you can attempt to regain control of it. If failing a control roll, an aircraft loses altitude and slides. You can attempt another control roll at the start of your next turn. Unlike vehicles, aircraft do not decelerate in a slide. The vehicle, as well as all targets on board, is considered helpless if the craft impacts on the ground.

Jump Failure: If you fail by 5 or less, you make the jump, but enter an uncontrolled slide. If you fail by 5 or more, your vehicle rolls. If you fail by 10 or more, you drive into the ground or fall short, instantly stopping and suffering damage.

Seatbelts: Occupants in vehicles are assumed to be strapped in when a vehicle crashes (unless they are moving around inside the vehicle). If a vehicle suffers damage from rolling or crashing, occupants strapped in suffer half the damage inflicted on the vehicle. Those not secured take full damage.

Escape: If all appears hopeless during a crash, occupants can try to escape. This involves a DC 15 Acrobatics check (DC 20 for the driver, +5 if strapped in). Because all the occupants are staggered during a crash, they each have one chance per turn to try to escape. A driver who attempts to escape no longer has any control over the vehicle. Any target failing the escape roll by 5 or less still escapes but takes damage equal to the vehicle's current speed.

Ram: Vehicles cannot charge but they can perform a ram.

RAM: STANDARD ACTION

Vehicle: You must be controlling a vehicle to attempt a ram. You can perform other vehicle stunts normally as part of this action.

Target: You can ram any creature or object you could target with a melee attack, up to one size larger than your vehicle. If you attempt to ram a larger target, you crash. You cannot target individual occupants of a vehicle (subject to GM discretion).

Movement: Before you attempt a ram, take a normal move action and end your movement adjacent to the target. You do not need to move your full speed; take note of your remaining speed.

Reflex DC: The target makes a Reflex save. The DC is 10 + your ranks in Vehicle Operation + your vehicle's Maneuver value. If the target succeeds, it avoids you and you continue moving your remaining speed.

Hit: The effect of the ram is determined by the size of the target.

VEHICLE SIZE	DAMAGE/SQUARE OF UNSPENT MOVEMENT	BONUS TO ATTACK
Medium	1d6	+4
Huge	1d8	+3
Gargantuan	1d10	+2
Colossal	1d12	+1
Colossal+	1d12	0

Your vehicles suffers ½ the damage you inflict on your target.

One Size Larger: All occupants of your vehicle are staggered until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current (not remaining) speed. The damage die for your vehicle is d8; for the target it is d6, and the target only takes half damage. You push the target 1 square and move into the vacated square. Your current speed is reduced to 0.

Same Size: All occupants of your vehicle and the target (or occupants of the target vehicle) are staggered until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current (not remaining) speed. The damage die for both your vehicle and the target is d6. You push the target a number of squares equal to 1/4 your remaining (not current) speed. Your carryover speed becomes 1/4 of your current speed.

One Size Smaller: The target (or occupants of the target vehicle) are staggered until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current (not remaining) speed. The damage die for your vehicle is d6, and the vehicle only takes half damage; for the target it is d8. You push the target a number of squares equal to 1/2 your remaining (not current) speed. Your carryover speed becomes 1/2 of your current speed.

Two or More Sizes Smaller: The target (or occupants of the target vehicle) is stunned until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take dam-

age according to your current (not remaining) speed. The damage die for the target is d10; your vehicle takes only 1 damage per die. You push the target a number of squares equal to your remaining (not current) speed -1. Your carryover speed becomes your current speed -1.

SPEED	DAMAGE
Less than 5	No damage
5-6	1 die
7-9	2 dice
10-13	3 dice
14-18	4 dice
19-24	5 dice
25-31	6 dice
32-39	7 dice
40-48	8 dice
49-58	9 dice
59+	10 dice

Colliding: If the target has carryover speed, add it to your current speed before calculating damage.

Impossible Push: If the target is not pushed or cannot be pushed, you crash instead. The target takes damage as indicated above; resolve the effects of the crash on your vehicle as normal.

If you pass through an enemy square and do not perform a ram, the target automatically avoids you.

Destroying Vehicles: Reducing a vehicle to zero hit points renders it non-functional. A vehicle reduced to its negative hit point value bursts into flame, immediately inflicting 3d6 damage to every creature that moves through or enters a square the vehicle occupied or adjacent to it for five minutes.

Ranged Weapons and Vehicles: Some vehicles have turrets. Some are open or have access ports to allow occupants to fire ranged weapons against targets outside the vehicle.

Two-Handed / Heavy Weapons: Occupants are always assumed to be moving the same distance as the vehicle if firing un-mounted two-handed or heavy weapons for purposes of penalties to attack rolls when moving with these weapons. The penalties for moving and for being inside a vehicle stack. If a two-handed small arm or heavy weapon is mounted to a vehicle's turret, the weapon is considered to be not moving and only incurs the turret penalty as listed above (-1 or -2).

Super Heavy Weapons: Super heavy weapons are too large to be fired without a mount. They are considered heavy weapons when mounted, meaning attempts to fire them while the vehicle is moving incur a -4 penalty to attack rolls.

Sniper Weapons: You cannot gain your sniper bonus for aiming if occupying a moving vehicle.

Vehicle Size: Certain ground vehicles are large enough to withstand difficult terrain and/or the effects of a crash. Depending on the topography (marsh or debris, for example), Gargantuan or larger vehicles can ignore difficult terrain for the purposes of movement penalties and crashing. The severity of the terrain may

impede even these vehicles. Trees may stop a tank but not a behemoth.

Vehicles Huge or smaller cannot enter squares labeled as difficult terrain. Depending on the situation, they may get stuck or hit an obstruction. Both situations are considered a crash.

Lighter than Air Vehicles: Blimps and thermals do not require an aeroform. They cannot lose altitude when sliding or crashing. They remain suspended in the air via a series of "lifting bags" contained inside a larger carrier. This can be another balloon or a rigid superstructure. Only by puncturing these bags can this type of vehicle crash. Each airship of this type list the number of internal lifting bags. An attack that inflicts 20 damage or more on an aircraft may puncture a balloon instead of causing damage to the craft (attacker's choice). If so, the hit inflicts no damage on the vessel.

Half of an airship's lifting bags must be punctured for an airship to be affected. Once half the lifting bags are punctured, the airship drops 20 feet (5 squares) at the start of each turn, dropping an additional 20 feet for every additional bag punctured. Every bag punctured also imposes a cumulative -1 penalty to the vessel's maneuverability. Only by destroying the vessel can it crash violently.

GROUND VEHICLES

Capacity: The standard person capacity or crew. In most cases, only one person is needed to drive the vehicle; other crewmembers serve as gunners or co-pilots. Each unused passenger slot allows the vehicle to carry an additional 200 lbs. of cargo.

Cargo Capacity: The amount of cargo the vehicle is designed to carry in pounds.

Manoeuvre: The modifier is added to any Vehicle Operation checks and Reflex saves attempted with the vehicle.

Speed [Rating]: The maximum number of feet or squares the vehicle can accelerate per round.

AC: The vehicle's AC. If you have the Improved Vehicle combat feat and the vehicle is Huge or smaller, you may add your Dexterity modifier or your Intelligence modifier to this number. A vehicle must be moving at least 2 squares for these bonuses to be in effect.

Resistance: The vehicle's resistance to various attacks. This number is the resistance to cold, fire, and sonic. Half this number (rounded down) is its hardness (resistance to physical attacks). Vehicles take full damage from other effects.

Hit Points: The vehicle's hit points.

Size: The size of the vehicle. Vehicles may be larger to fill up extra squares, but they do not have reach. Driver (s) and passengers do not threaten adjacent squares when inside a vehicle. A vehicle with the designation C+ is twice the area of colossal size.

Cost: This is the purchase price to acquire the vehicle.

Power: Each charge will last one day. Some vehicles have a full integrated drive which never runs out.

All vehicles can still short out from disruption. A vehicle requiring batteries comes with one for free.

Tech Level: The tech level is presented only for disruption purposes and does not offer any bonuses.

Weapon Mounts: Not listed under the vehicle stats, certain vehicles come equipped with mounting hardware to attach weapons. When available, the mount is able to house any class of weapon listed. One-handed small arms cannot be mounted on weapon mounts. Adding a weapon mount to a vehicle without one costs 1000 uc for a two-handed small arm and 5000 uc for a heavy weapon. A vehicle must have a listed hit point total greater than 60 to mount a heavy weapon.

STANDARD VEHICLES

4-wheel All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV): All-terrain vehicles are miniaturized motorized buggies that are seldom employed for long missions outside of a bastion. They don't offer the protection their larger cousins have. York survivalists and thrill seekers occasionally employ them on short excursions from the city. When seen in deep echa, they operate as scouts from a larger convoy.

Special: ATVs operate like mounts for the purposes of combat. Disembarking an ATV does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Armored Truck (AT): Armored trucks offer amazing resistance to outside damage without the high costs of dedicated ETVs. Tires are run-flat, and the wheels are as protected as the rest of the truck. The enclosed cabin may have open gun-hole sliders while offering cover to those inside. Since most outside techan expeditions from Angel employ ETVs, most armored trucks emerge from York.

Armament: ATs are equipped with a single turret heavy weapon mount.

Tracked Armored Personnel Carrier (APC): Slow, awkward, but reliable, the tracked armored personnel carrier design dates back to ancient man. The final model employs a half-track configuration—easy for the common driver to use as its controls match those of the common truck. Primary propulsion is delivered through a caterpillar tread replacing the rear axle while a pair of massive tires controls the steering in the front. The enclosed cabin and cargo area provide sufficient protection through heavy gauge steel. From the outside, the half-track APC appears primitive. This offers reduced disruption in echa, but the power delivery to the tracks remains steep, limiting its range. In York, where they first appeared, they found use with the military patrolling around the city.

Armament: Halftrack APCs come equipped with two turret heavy weapon mounts.

Tank: Tanks continued to evolve almost to extinction. Anti-tank weaponry became so advanced, many drivers and crew found themselves riding in crawling coffins. The advancements of armor could not match the research dedicated to their penetration. When presented with the unpredictable nature of echa, many crews were comforted by the inches of composite armor

STANDARD TECHAN VEHICLES

NAME	CAP	CARGO	MAN.	SPEED	AC	RESIST.	HP	SIZE	COST	TL	CELL
4-wheel ATV	1+1	100	-1	20 ft. / 4	15	0	20	M	900	1	M1
Armored truck	1+6	3,000	-2	20 ft. / 4	20	5	60	H	2,500	1	M1
Tracked APC	1+8	1,000	-2	15 ft. / 3	25	10	75	G	8,500	1	M1
Tank	1+3	500	-2	15 ft. / 3	27	10	100	G	10,500	2	M1
Wheeled bike	1+1	20	0	30 ft. / 6	15	0	15	M	420	1	M1
Wheeled buggy	1+1	50	0	25 ft. / 5	20	0	30	H	1,700	2	M1
Wheeled truck	1+4	1,500	-2	20 ft. / 4	18	2	30	H	8,500	1	M1

ETV-ECHAN TERRAIN VEHICLES

NAME	CAP	CARGO	MAN.	SPEED	AC	RESIST.	HP	SIZE	COST	TL	CELL
Behemoth	1+50	30,000	-5	15 ft. / 3	25	5	400	C+	212,500	3	2xH3
Land shark	1+20	5,000	-5	20 ft. / 4	25	10	200	C	162,500	2	H3
Nomad	1+10	2,000	-2	25 ft. / 5	25	10	150	C	112,500	2	H3
Nuke truck	1+10	3,000	-2	20 ft. / 4	23	10	100	G	162,500	3	H3
Panther	1	50	+1	40 ft. / 8	20	5	30	M	10,500	2	M1
Scrambler	1+3	1,500	-1	25 ft. / 5	25	10	100	H	32,500	2	H3
Wanderer	1+1	150	-1	25 ft. / 5	23	10	80	H	22,500	2	H3

separating them from the outside. Even most monsters have trouble combating the matrix of synthetic diamond tiles sandwiched between layers of steel. Add to that the self-contained environment and soon, the number of tank volunteers surged within large bastion expeditionary armies. Modern tanks offer the security and safety of solid weight. At more than 40 tons, the modern tank (namely the York Mark V Partisan and the ugly Angel TDM-001 "Toad") can still zip over the landscape despite the courage of obstacles willing to stand in its way.

Armament: Tanks contain three turret mounts for heavy weapons.

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: Tanks suffer no penalties for passing through rough terrain. Terrain behind a tank's movement is no longer difficult. Tanks may even be submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

Wheeled Vehicles: Almost all vehicles seen outside of bastions still use wheels. In case of critical disruption, they can still unlatch their drive train, hook on some beasts of burden, and convert into wagons (some remain that way). Even the most advanced bastions still employ wheeled transportation for the majority of their population. The only real exception is Selkirk, which has no roads. Despite Mann's and Sierra Madre's magnetic technology or Angel's hover vehicles, most of the population still lumbers over pavement. The most advanced variations of these are the ETVs listed later. Some expeditions can't afford such luxuries and modify city vehicles to serve their purposes outside of bastions. Because of dwindling fossil fuels, all wheeled vehicles run off battery powered electric turbines.

Bike: Though motorbike variations number in the hundreds, the ones employed in echa often rest mounted behind ETVs and larger trucks, used for

scouting and emergencies. These are durable basic machines with strong chassis and thick, large, run-flat tires with heavy treads. They don't offer any protection to the rider. Some manufacturers refer to them as enduros.

Special: Bikes operate like mounts for the purposes of combat. Disembarking a bike does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Buggy: Outside of echa, this title usually refers to semi-enclosed vehicles with a wide footprint upon the ground with tires spaced far to the corners. They are much larger than a standard car. The buggy encloses the crew in a steel and plastic frame that offers protection from a crash but not from the outside environment. The body is formed in such a way that shifting a tumbled vehicle back to its wheels is a relatively simple procedure. Thick steel roll bars prevent damage to the frame or the people inside, provided they are strapped in. These buggies, though designed for wild terrain, don't possess the lifespan or durability for extended excursions within it. Like enduro bikes, they usually supplement convoys rather than dominate them.

Truck: The wheeled truck occupies a wide range of vehicles, from the open flatbed to the all terrain 4x4. Not designed for the echan world, wheeled trucks are still employed regardless. Smaller mercenary groups use them, and York operates hundreds, shepherding people between the bastion and various military outposts surrounding the city. Like most all-terrain wheeled vehicles (save ETVs), wheeled trucks seen outside of bastions are from York.

ETVs (ECHAN TERRAIN VEHICLES)

Virtually all Wasteland All-Terrain Transports, or WATTs, come from Angel or Selkirk. They eventually migrated to simply being called ETVs, or Echan Terrain Vehicles. These models are impractical for city use, being usually too large and/or too clumsy for narrow city streets. They employ a modular design, shielded electronics, massive wheels, and grunt horse-



LAND SHARK

power. They start from the svelte and nimble bikes to the gargantuan dirt trains like the behemoth and sand shark.

Behemoth: The behemoth matches its name perfectly. This goliath lumbers over the landscape, delivering power equally to its 8x8 drivetrain. Massive steel-reinforced rubber/carbon tires supply little cushioning, relying on the beast's floating platform suspension system to keep it smooth and stable. Its eight wheels cover a foot print 40 feet wide and 60 feet long and the vehicle towers over 25 feet in height (three levels). This monster usually heralds its approach with breaking trees and snapping bushes, pushing and heaving through forest and grassland. Though at home in the arid and rocky terrain around Selkirk where it was built, in the varied landscape of the southern lands, the behemoth is somewhat overkill. The brute clumsily bullies its way through whatever stands in front. The fat and awkward TDM-001 Toad prances gracefully in comparison. When spotted outside Dianaso, the behemoth serves a broader purpose, as either a mobile base of operations for mercenary groups or as a nomadic home for families. The behemoth was not designed to be a military vessel so lacks any weapon mounts, counting on its population for defense.

Clumsy: The behemoth can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Energy: Solar cells covering the flat top of the behemoth regenerate one charge each week.

Scaled: The behemoth is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: The behemoth suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain behind a behemoth's movement is no longer difficult.

Land Shark: Also from Selkirk, this successor to the behemoth is substantially smaller but with equal power demands from a revised motor system. The 8x8 wheel system was replaced by an even more durable 4x4 tri-drive sprocket caterpillar system. In the middle of the 40-foot long vehicle is a pivot segment, allowing the vehicle enhanced mobility in tighter areas. Despite its convoluted drive system, the land shark is faster than the behemoth but not as roomy. It gained more popularity as a mobile command post for mercenary groups and military as armed variants leads most Selkirk convoys into the Pass of Dianaso. While the behemoth is wide and fat, the land shark is thin and tall. Even though only 20 feet wide, it still stands 25 feet high, as tall as its predecessor.

Armament: The land shark carries a single heavy weapon turret mount.

Clumsy: The land shark can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.



NOMAD

Energy: Solar cells covering the flat top of the land shark regenerate one charge each week. *Scaled:* The land shark is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Nomad: The final Selkirk land cruiser variant released is the smallest of the trio and by far, the most popular outside of the Dianaso pass. The nomad uses wheels like the behemoth, though only having six. It features a center pivot so the vehicle can maneuver in tighter confines like the land shark. It is the smallest at only 20 feet tall and 30 feet long. This model found use all over Canam and, along with the scrambler, is the most common ETV seen in open echa.

The nomad moves via four separate electric motors contained in each of the axles. It receives power to all of them from its contained main drive in the rear of the vehicle, snuggled next to its ample cargo hold. The cabin occupies the entirety of the forward module. Unlike the land shark and behemoth, the nomad only has two levels but an efficient design makes the nomad almost as roomy as the shark, with separated cabins and full air and waste management system. The nomad is both waterproof and self-sustaining. However, because of its smaller size, a rechargeable power system was never offered standard.

Clumsy: The nomad can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its

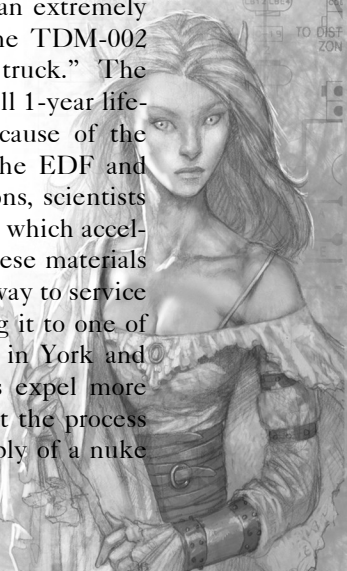
speed rating.

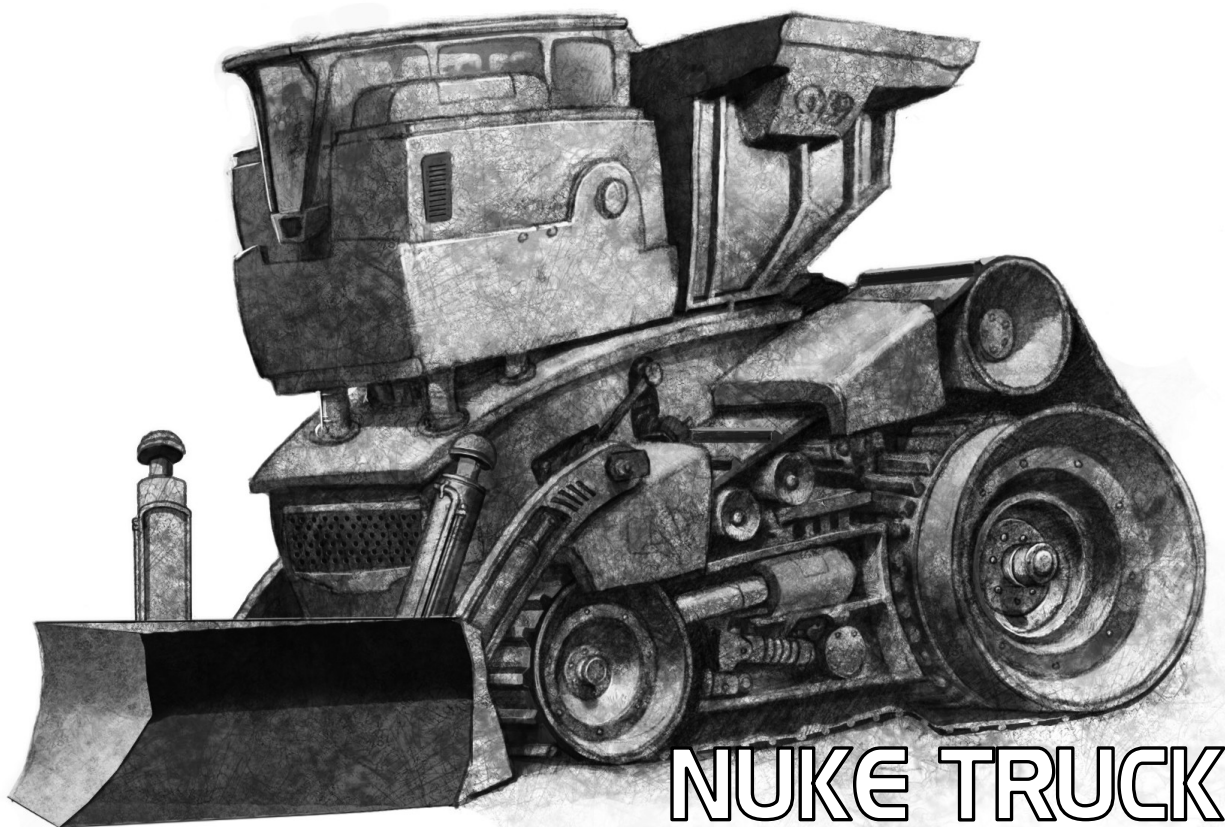
Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Scaled: The nomad is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: The nomad suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain behind a nomad's movement is no longer difficult. They may even be totally submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

"Nuke Truck" (TDM-002 Maco) : In order to combat EDF interference outside their walls, Angel R&D created a vehicle with its own shielded micro-nuclear fission power pack. The result is an extremely expensive and risky long-range carrier, the TDM-002 maco, mostly referred to as the "the nuke truck." The reactor, though miniature, does supply a full 1-year lifespan of power until needing service. Because of the reduced degradation of Uranium-235 in the EDF and its increased resistance to shedding neutrons, scientists switched to Radium 226 and Thorium 232, which accelerate their decay while in magic. Since these materials cannot be found easily in nature, the only way to service and re-supply a nuke truck involves taking it to one of only two breeder reactors in Canam, one in York and the other in Angel. The breeder reactors expel more fissionable materials than they receive, but the process is not cheap and a full service and re-supply of a nuke





truck takes a week and costs 10,000 uc. The advantages are plain to see. This makes the vehicle sustain itself indefinitely save for the service. The extensive radiation shielding virtually removes any chance of shorting out in the EDF.

Clumsy: The nuke truck makes a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Critical Mass: If a catastrophic failure occurs and it explodes, the reactor melts. This causes everything for 20 squares (100 ft.) to incinerate, suffering 10d10+100 points of fire damage. Everything for the next 20 (100 ft.) squares must make a DC 30 Reflex save or take 10d10 points of damage (save for half damage). The initial area where the truck detonates becomes a severe radioactive hazard for 20 years. EDF bottles the radiation in.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Scaled: The nuke truck is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Shielded: If a nuke truck disrupts, it gains a +4 to all saving throws.

Special: To repair or even work on an engine of this complexity imposes a -5 penalty to the Engineer skill check.

Terrain: A nuke truck suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain behind a nuke

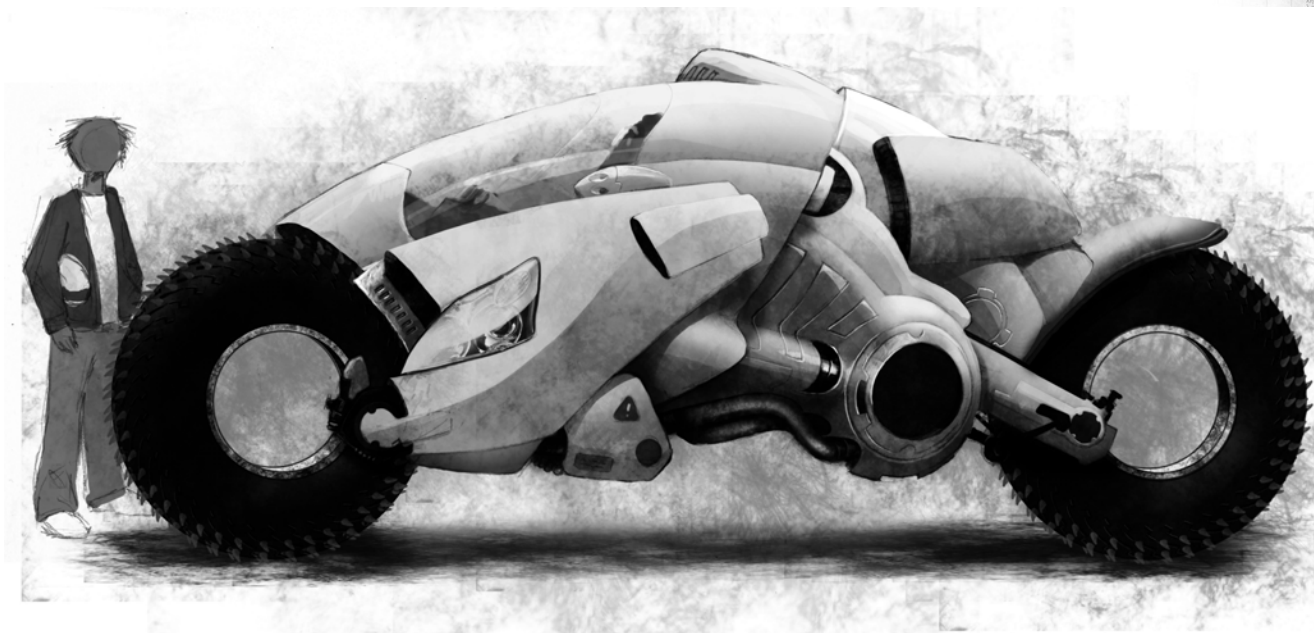
truck's movement is no longer difficult. They may even be totally submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

Panther, Verkelen Alpha-1: Angel's government-funded arms-maker dedicated to ETV and anti-echan R&D, Verkelen, started drawing plans to compete in the ETV market just under a century ago. The result, after millions of uc in development and testing, proved brilliant. The panther features a completely enclosed stretched ovoid body with two forks sticking forward and back where the spoke-less wheels are mounted. Huge computer-controlled gas shocks absorb impact by predicting upcoming terrain and adjusting accordingly.

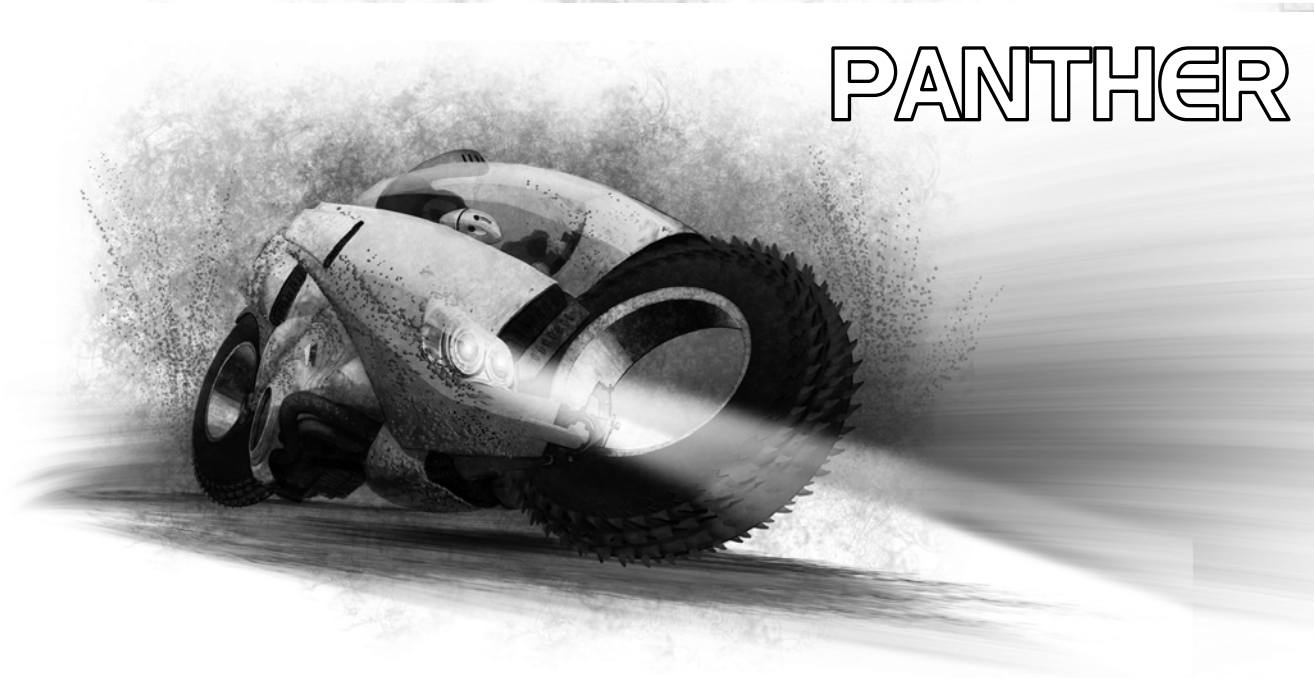
The panther features a gyroscopic stabilization control system (GSCS), preventing it from toppling over. Unless fully deactivated, the panther can never fall prone from any maneuver or attack. The computer works with the driver, allowing the bike to lean over when the vehicle intends to maneuver but sensors detect if it will result in a fall. The GSCS even allows the vehicle to adjust its angle of attack on upcoming terrain.

The panther's wheels are magnetically driven, capable of stopping and forcing its wheels into a lock. Each wheel carries enough torque to lift the entire body of the panther on one axle. The GSCS can then maintain that angle. With this ability, the panther could even climb a steep hill it has no hope of scaling by simply walking up its side.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.



PANTHER



Properties: The Panther requires a DC25 Strength check to be pushed over or moved. It can fit another medium sized creature, but all Vehicle Operation rolls in the cramped space suffer a -4 penalty.

Scaled: The panther is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

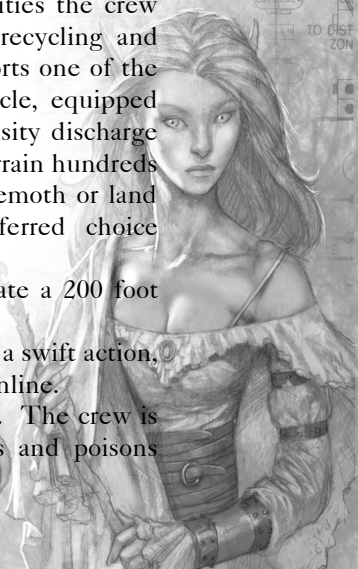
Scrambler, Verkelen Mark IV: Selkirk produces the largest ETVs in the world but at one point Angel made a play for the prize. They released two models within ten years, both large and somewhat clumsy, though in the end, nowhere near to the immensity of those from Selkirk. The most popular of all these was the scrambler ETV. This vehicle keeps the crew in a tightly sealed environment, elevated twenty feet above the ground. It rolls on six massive thick-treaded, steel-sidewall supported run-flat tires eight feet across. The

scrambler can lose up to two tires without being disabled. The multi-level cabin can hold five people in relative comfort with many of the amenities the crew enjoys at home, including full sewage recycling and kitchen as well sleeping areas. It also sports one of the largest headlight assemblies of any vehicle, equipped with twenty forward-mounted high intensity discharge lights capable of illuminating a cone of terrain hundreds of feet long. Much smaller than the behemoth or land shark, the scrambler became the preferred choice among smaller techan groups.

Lights: The scrambler can illuminate a 200 foot cone.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Scaled: The scrambler is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons





SCRAMBLER

200

until the vehicle is destroyed.

Wanderer, Verkelen Mark II: The wanderer began its life as a next generation ground interceptor for the Angel military. As time passed before a successful prototype could reach testing, advances in hover technology surpassed ground possibilities and the newly formed Crimson Starlight soon captured the public attention and the entirety of military funding. Verkelen shelved the designs and mothballed the prototype for almost a hundred years until the increase in mercenary forces and the desire for echan expeditions encouraged a revisit to the old design. The wanderer measures thirty feet long but the main body only measures eight feet across. A complex motor system involving four large axles mounted on hydraulic powered limbs is capable of raising the craft anywhere from five to fifteen feet off the ground and/or widening its wheel placement to as far as twenty feet across. Two wheels are

attached at each axle. The entire motor assembly also sits under a large swivel joint, allowing the entire cabin to rotate on its center. When traveling at any substantial speed or when committing any hazardous manoeuvres, the wanderer must widen its drivetrain or risk tumbling over.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Motor System: The motive-limbs are neither fast nor articulate, and do require a move action to shift configuration, though the action can occur while the vehicle is in motion. By default, the wheels are space twenty feet apart.

Manoeuvre: The wanderer can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Scaled: The wanderer is waterproof. The crew is

AIRCRAFT

NAME	CAP	CARGO	MAN.	SPEED	AC	RESIST.	HP	SIZE	COST	TL	CELL
Angel Hammerhead	2+2	500	-2	45 ft. / 9	20	7	60	H	15,000	2	HI
Armored Zeppelin	1+15	2,000	-6	25 ft. / 5	20	5	80	C+	63,500	2	HI5
Mann Pantokrator	1+6	1,500	-1	50 ft. / 10	20	10	100	G	162,500	4	HI
Thermal Blimp	1+4	300	-5	5 ft. / 1	18	5	50	G	22,500	0	'
Thermal Frame, Standard	1+15	1,000	-6	10 ft. / 2	20	5	100	C+	42,500	0	'
Thermal Frame, Large	1+30	2,000	-7	15 ft. / 3	21	5	150	C+	52,500	1	'
York Wasp	1	5	-2	45 ft. / 9	20	5	40	M	5,000	3	HI

¹ See text

immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Squeeze: The wanderer can squeeze.

Turrets: The wanderer comes equipped with two turret mounts for two-handed small arms.

AIRCRAFT

Generally, most techans avoid air travel outside of bastions, stemming from the susceptibility of avionics to disrupt. Techans are paranoid enough worrying about an ETV breaking down. Include the possibility of falling to one's death and most people opt for ground travel. There are noteworthy exceptions, and these all come in the form of lighter-than-air vehicles.

AIRCRAFT DESCRIPTIONS

Angel Hammerhead: This military aircraft uses fanjets to keep itself airborne and is unable to stay aloft otherwise (not equipped with an aeroform). The fanjets have a built-in redundancy that can compensate if the craft loses one of its engines. It operates as both a transport and as an attack vehicle capable of parking over a location and securing ground like a tank. It doesn't deliver the massive punch of a focus attack helicopter but can nearly equal one when accounting for maneuverability. It is equipped with a laser range finder, thermal imaging night sights, and a digital ballistic computer. Both the fuel and ammunition are compartmentalized to enhance survivability.

Armament: Two heavy weapon turrets or three two-handed small-arm turrets.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system. You must land for external reloading.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the craft is disrupted, it comes back online.

Movement Mode: The hammerhead can hover without making a skill check.

Operation: You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for any velocity (fast, stupid fast, absurdly fast).

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Sensors: Darkvision 200 ft.

Armored Zeppelin: Thankfully, along with magnetic fields, lighter than air vehicles depend on a science undisrupted by magic. Before they developed magnetic technology, Selkirk employed low-tech rigid airships filled with helium to transport themselves around the mountains. Because of its resistance to disruption, it remains a popular choice for long journeys. Even if its fanjet nacelles short out, the craft will remain airborne. Engineers later added retractable sails for emergency propulsion if the primary drive fails. Internal cells separate the helium to prevent a catastrophic collapse in case of a puncture. The craft can lose pressure from more than half of its twelve segments and still not fall.

Its ultra light polymer and metal envelope covers an internal aramid skin. The shell, wrapped around an aluminum skeleton, maintains its shape even when deflated, unlike standard balloons or blimps. This allows a greater capacity of gas and cargo. The majority of the crew lives in a pressurized segment inside the superstructure. Though several echans and techans use airships, the armored zeppelin from Selkirk is the only model employed by a bastion.

Lifting Bags: This aircraft is equipped with eight lifting bags. If deflated, you can use heated air in lieu of helium but the vessel suffers a -1 penalty to maneuverability for each bag filled this way.

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Movement Mode: The zeppelin can hover without making a skill check. In addition, the zeppelin has sails. In an emergency, you can use them to substitute normal propulsion at 1/4 of its rated speed.

Operation: You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for any velocity (fast, stupid fast, absurdly fast). The armored zeppelin cannot attempt the following stunt checks: Acceleration (aggressive and floor it), deceleration (aggressive and hard breaking), evasive driving (all DCs), or turning (90 degree--any speed).

Repair Drone: A repair drone buzzes around inside the superstructure, patching breaches in the baffles before they hemorrhage their gas. Once per minute, a repair drone can seal a single breach as a standard action (spent by the driver), using one charge in the process.

Special—Resupply Helium: If out of helium, all



ANGEL HAMMERHEAD

bastions and even some techan forts can resupply you. The price varies depending on the location but the average cost to fill a balloon is between 300-600 uc.

Mann Pantokrator: The only known Mann aircraft seen outside of the bastion's walls, the pantokrator was intentionally over-engineered to increase survivability in echa. Two pylon-mounted fanjets provide lateral movement and rudimentary lift if the vehicle's primary any-gravity module is damaged. The vessel also features visible weapon pods to increase intimidation. Its size and payload have dubbed it the "flying fortress". Increased armor makes it virtually impenetrable to ground small arms fire. The rear cargo area can hold up to six fully armed soldiers.

Armament: Two two-handed weapon turrets and one heavy weapon turret OR two heavy weapon turrets. You can swap out two heavy weapon turrets for one super heavy weapon.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before

needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system. You must land for external reloading.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the craft is disrupted, it comes back online.

Movement Mode: The pantokrator can hover without making a skill check.

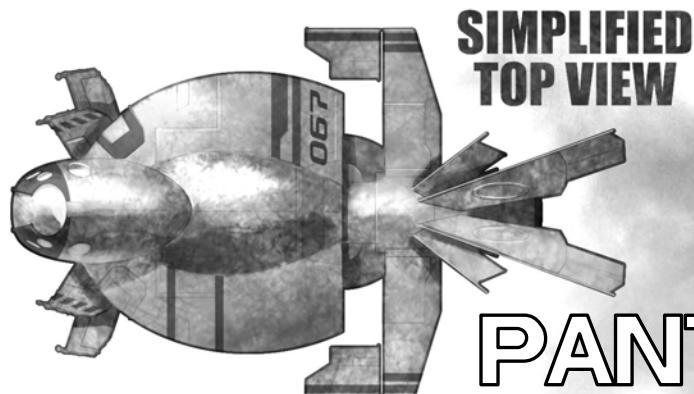
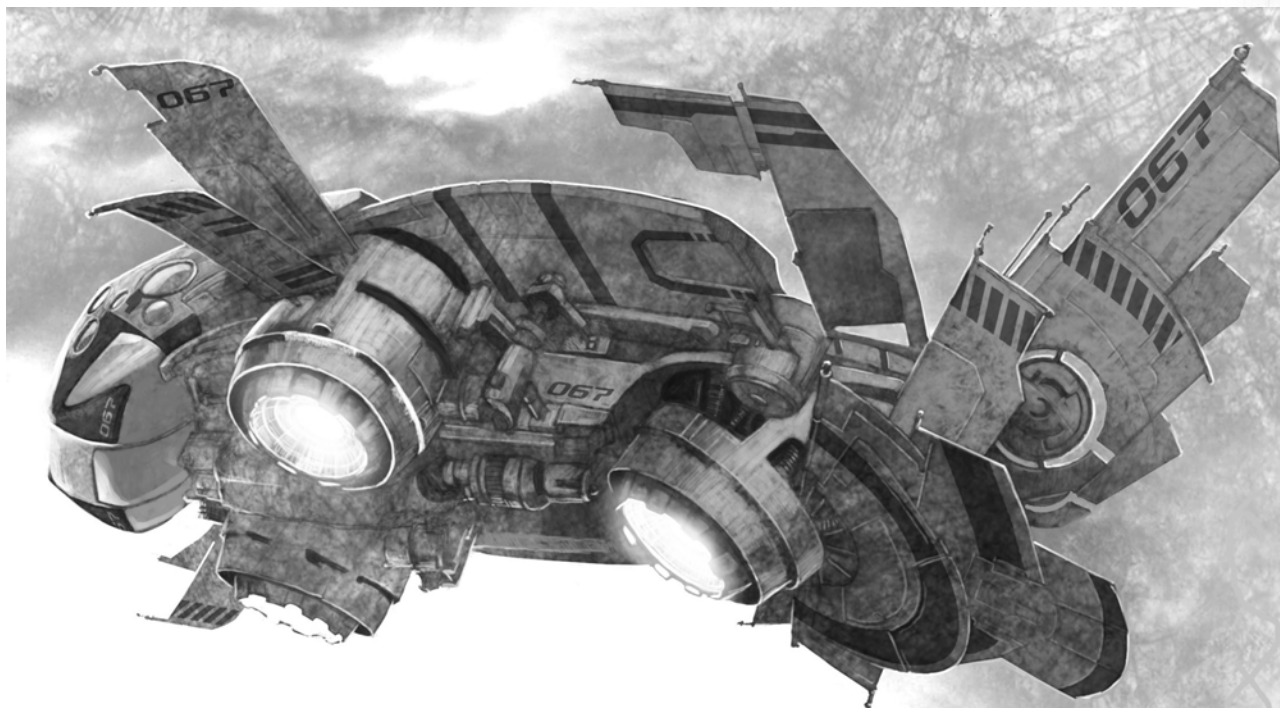
Operation: You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for any velocity (fast, stupid fast, absurdly fast).

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Regeneration: Every round, the pantokrator is cured of 3 points of damage.

Sensors: Darkvision 200 ft.

Active Camouflage Denial System: Use a move action a select a 10 foot radius area within 200 feet. All creatures in that area lose all benefits from concealment. Total concealment is reduced to basic conceal-



PANTOKRATOR

ment. Targets using concealment for stealth are detected. Invisible targets are visible.

York Wasp: The wasp is a one man aerial transport popular in the eastern bastion. It's used in law enforcement, traffic control, and military divisions assigned to urban warfare. The wasp is occasionally fitted with weapons but is mostly employed for reconnaissance. It has no room for passengers, as the craft wraps around its user.

Armament: Wasps have a single weapon turret to hold a two-handed small-arm.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapon. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system. You must land for external reloading.

Movement Mode: The wasp can hover without making a skill check.

Operation: You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for any velocity (fast, stupid fast, absurdly fast).

Pressurized: The pilot is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is de-

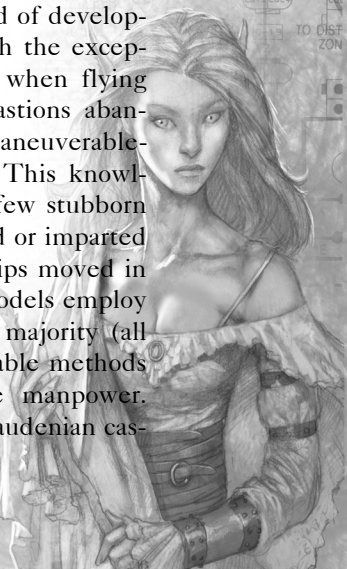
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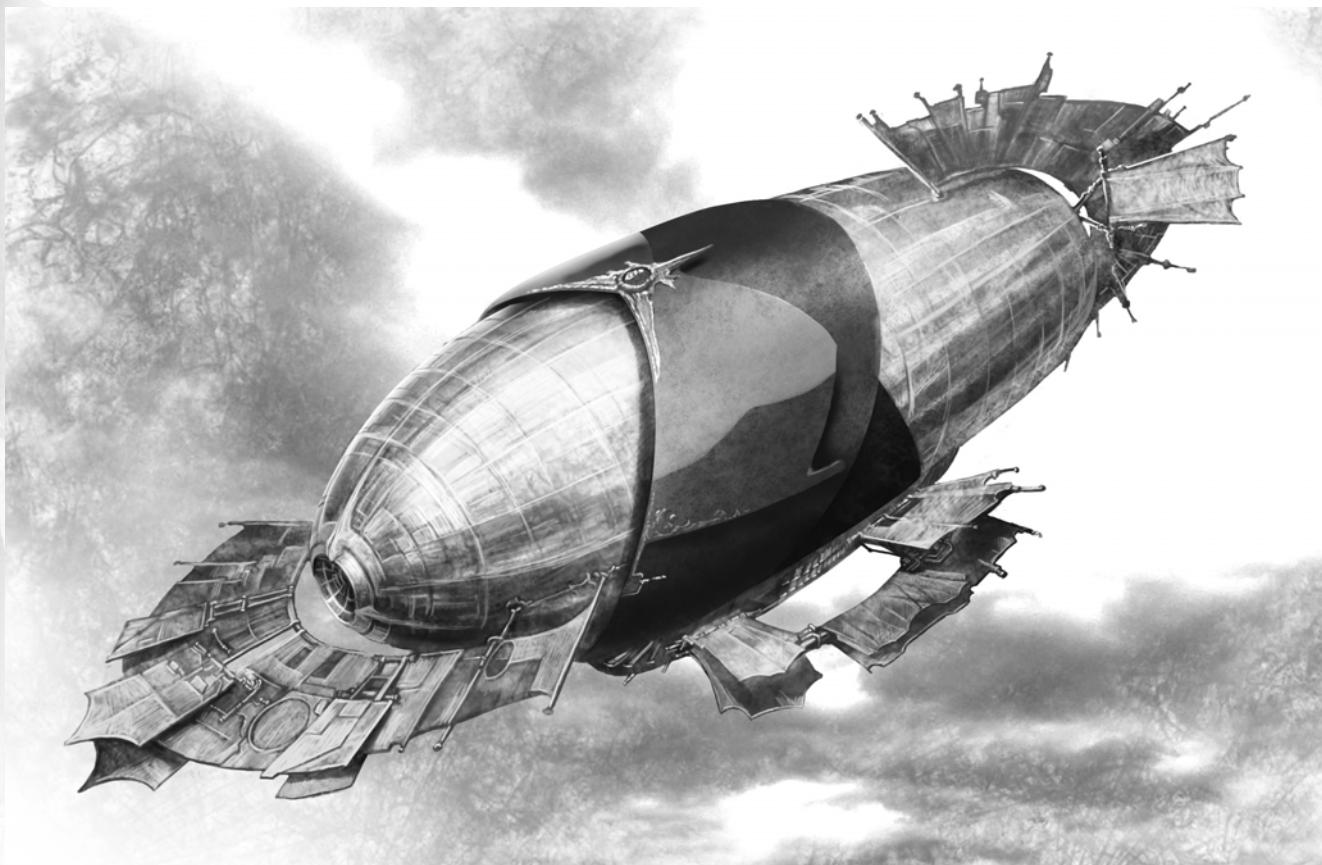
Sensors: Darkvision 100 ft. and you can see all invisible targets within 50 feet.

THERMAL AIRSHIPS

Since helium or hydrogen is hard to come by for echans or techans, designers started brainstorming alternatives. The knowledge started with the techan bastions. These cities likely passed through a period of development using lighter-than-air vehicles. With the exception of Selkirk, still employing a model when flying outside of its perimeter, all the other bastions abandoned airships in favor of faster, more maneuverable vectored thrust and rotor-lift variations. This knowledge refused to fall into antiquity and a few stubborn engineers, relics proclaiming a lost art, sold or imparted this expertise to the outside world. Airships moved in their own direction. Though a few rare models employ solar or battery powered propulsion, the majority (all those under control of echans) utilize reliable methods including wind, steam, and dependable manpower.

Despite rumors of a vast network of laudenian cas-





tles floating high above the clouds, few airships have reported seeing one.

Thermals (as they are often known) remain popular in Canam and Lauropa more than in any other region in the world, though few attempt to cross the expanse between these great lands. In Canam, they proved more popular given the continent's girth and the influx of ground-based raiders. Almost every echan city from Janoah to Gnimfall to Limshau sports mooring towers. With Gnimfall, mooring cables hang from every grind tower.

Pilots must tread carefully when plotting a course. The northeast region of Canam swarms with dragons, and airship skeletons are scattered across the Gloam to the south. The sky is still not safe but is considerably healthier in comparison to ground travel.

Thermals are broken up into two subgroups: blimps and frames. All variations gain their lift through differentials in temperature between the outside air and the gasses contained within airbladders resting inside the structure. The choice of thermal lift over lighter gas comes from access. Refining helium (the safer choice) is costly and requires techan processes to produce. The method of heating the air inside the balloon comes either from a natural heat (a coal fire for example) or from a magical one. All models are controlled by non-amplified mechanical flight control systems. This involves a series of pulleys and cables that directly transmit instructions to the control surfaces. Though ineffective on faster aircraft, the slow-moving airships utilize them without fail. Even on the larger thermal-frames, a more advanced servo-tab system allows the

shifting of these massive fins with little force-feedback. All thermals are equipped with a basic pedal-based motor system requiring simple brute constitution for acceleration. Because of this, they are limited to the normal rules of exhaustion as if traveling on foot. York and Selkirk allow the mooring of echan thermals; Angel, Mann, and Sierra Madre do not.

Rumors persist that it is possible to permanently enchant an airship. Though a basic blimp or standard frame without any propulsion or control modifications could theoretically be enchanted, the possibility of the enchantment disrupting the control surfaces may be too high. Moreover, the amount of spellwork required would be staggering. Not only would the entire craft need to be animated, but so would its propulsion system and flame. Add to that the need to make the spells permanent and the result is a procedure probably costing upwards of 3,000,000 gp not even taking into account the rarity of casters capable of accomplishing such a feat.

Lift: All thermals come with a torch to heat the air. It is either coal or propane. Usually a thermal has enough flame to keep it airborne for a week. Resupplying this simple energy source requires any small village and the cost is negligible (anywhere between 5-10 gp).

Movement Mode: All thermals can hover without requiring a skill check.

Operation: You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for any velocity (fast, stupid fast, absurdly fast). Thermals cannot attempt the following stunt checks: Acceleration (aggressive and floor it), deceleration (aggressive and hard breaking), evasive driving (all

DCs), or turning (90 degree--any speed).

Properties: The maximum altitude of any thermal is 12,375 feet. Being a lighter-than-air vehicle, thermals do not suffer from altitude loss if they fail a stunt roll.

Blimp: Blimps are hot-air ships with a non-rigid structure. Without pressure, they deflate. After cold air is pumped in and then heated, the baffles fill up and the final shape takes form. Only the passenger car or gondola is constructed rigid. Blimps are not simple balloons because of the addition of tail fins and propulsion.

Lifting Bags: This aircraft is equipped with four lifting bags.

Frame: This refers to a rigid airship--a dirigible maintaining its shape from a framework instead of internal pressure via a lifting gas. The rigid design offers the advantage of an increased lift capacity as the vessel can feature more and larger lifting bags inside the superstructure.

Unlike blimps, where the crew sits in a gondola underneath the main balloon, frames appear to only have a small cockpit with the cargo and crew compartments residing inside the balloon assembly. Some models come equipped with galleys and sleeping bays. Two sizes fly over most of Canam with the larger reserved for mercenary units, public transportation, and charter flights. Manual propulsion keeps this vehicle incredibly slow. A mechanical propulsion system is a recommended upgrade.

If using the manual system, the standard frame requires 1 additional crewmember and the large model requires an additional 3. The large variant is by no means the largest; it's just the largest public option. Gnimfall flies the Ziggurat-Ex-Mundi between the various grind towers around Canam. It can hold up to fifty gimfen in comfort (though humans find the accommodations cramped). The ZEM's advanced steam drive makes it the fastest airship known. The largest frame of all comes from Limshau, the Abecedarian. Measuring a thousand feet long and weighing 150 tons, this 120-passenger transport connects with all the smaller cities in the kingdom.

Lifting Bags: This aircraft is equipped with six lifting bags.

Properties: The larger thermal frame uses a slightly more complicated flight control system over the smaller frames and blimps, and thus, counts as a tech level 1 vehicle, though receiving a +5 bonus to all saving throws.

VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

Each higher level is a substantial increase in product quality. There is no limit on the number of different modifications you can place on a vehicle, but you can only have one each type.

Modifications: Some modifications include a tech level. The level refers to the item and does not enhance the thermal to that tech level unless stated so.

Auto-Reloader: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before

needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system.

Battery: An airship can be equipped with a battery-powered turbine. This provides the greatest propulsion increase. Being battery powered makes it the most susceptible to disruption. One charge lasts one day. The battery also powers heating coils for the air chambers.

Complete Composite Retrofit: Ultra high molecular-density polyethylene plates are bolted to the outer panels of the vehicle, removing any illusion of the transport's purpose. Additional levels occasionally replace but oftentimes compound previous levels of protection.

Level I Property: Gain a +2 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's resistance value (+2 to resist cold, fire, and thunder; +1 against weapon attacks).

Level II Property: Gain a +4 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's resistance value (+4 to resist cold, fire, and sonic; +2 hardness).

Level III Property: Gain a +6 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's resistance value (+6 to resist cold, fire, and sonic; +3 hardness).

Electronic/Physical Counter Measures (EPCM):

This is not one modification but several accomplishing similar ends. Reactive plating, adaptive camouflage, and regenerative countermeasures assist in making even an immobile vehicle harder to target with both close and ranged attacks. Reactive systems run off the vehicle's power source and any gains by this system are lost if the vehicle is disrupted.

Level I Property: Gain a +1 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Level II Property: Gain a +2 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Level III Property: Gain a +3 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Level IV Property: Gain a +4 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Electronics Flash Reprogramming: EFP involves removing the vehicle's engine control system which limits the vehicle's power output by dictating throttle response injection timing. The unit is then replaced or reprogrammed for higher and more efficient output.

Property: Gain a +5 ft/1 square enhancement bonus to speed.

Nawzl: Your customized vehicle has a slight modification you haven't told anyone else about. Once a day, as a swift action, the speed of your vehicle increases by +10 ft (+2 squares) for 1 minute.

Fly-by-wire: This system completely replaces the primitive control system with a digital fly-by-wire system common in all other techan aircraft. This turns the entire vessel into a TL2 craft, requiring an M7 cell to operate, using a charge each day of use. This is in addition to any cells required of the power source. Retrofitting the thermal with this system grants a +3 power bonus to maneuverability.

Parachute: Parachutes attach to the main cabin or cockpit of an aircraft and deploy in case of freefall. A mechanical barometric switch triggers parachutes to

MODIFICATION	COST	TL	CELL	DESCRIPTION
Nawz!	420	I	--	Temporary speed boost
Auto-Reloader	500	2	M	Reload weapons automatically
EPCM Level I	500	I	--	+I enhancement bonus to AC
Parachute	500	--	--	Emergency escape method
Weapon mount (2-handed small-arm)	500	--	--	Mount a 2-handed small arm
Electronics Flash Reprogramming	900	--	--	+5 ft. (I square) bonus to speed
Fly By Wire ²	1,700	2	M7	+3 maneuverability
Reinforced Mainframe I	900	--	--	+10 hit points
Suspension Upgrade I ¹	900	--	--	Reduce maneuverability by I
EPCM Level 2	2,500	2	--	+2 enhancement bonus to AC
Reinforced Mainframe II	2,500	--	--	+20 hit points (min 40 hit points)
Sails ²	2,500	--	--	+I inherent bonus to speed
Suspension Upgrade II ¹	2,500	--	--	Reduce maneuverability by I
Weapon Turret (heavy weapon)	2,500	--	--	Mount a heavy weapon
Reinforced Mainframe III	6,500	--	--	+30 hit points (min 80 hit points)
Weapon Turret (super heavy weapon)	6,500	--	--	Mount a super heavy weapon
Battery Turbine ²	8,500	2	M7	+4 inherent bonus to speed
Complete Composite Retrofit I	8,500	--	--	+2 enhancement bonus to resistance
Repair Drone ²	8,500	3	M3	Repair holes in balloons
Solar ²	8,500	2	M7	+2 inherent bonus to speed.
Suspension Upgrade III ¹	8,500	2	--	Reduce maneuverability by I
EPCM Level 3	12,500	3	--	+3 enhancement bonus to AC
Premiere Performance Suspension I ¹	12,500	2	--	+I enhancement bonus to maneuverability
Steam Drive ²	12,500	I	--	+3 enhancement bonus to speed
Complete Composite Retrofit II	22,500	I	--	+4 enhancement bonus to resistance
Premiere Performance Suspension II ¹	32,500	2	--	+2 enhancement bonus to maneuverability
Reinforced Mainframe IV	32,500	I	--	+50 hit points (min 100)
Premiere Performance Suspension III ¹	62,500	2	--	+3 enhancement bonus to maneuverability
EPCM Level 4	62,500	4	--	+4 enhancement bonus to AC
Visual Active Camouflage	62,500	5	--	Total concealment / invisibility
Complete Composite Retrofit III	100,000	--	--	+6 enhancement bonus to resistance
Premiere Performance Suspension IV ¹	100,000	2	--	+4 enhancement bonus to maneuverability

¹Ground vehicle only

²Thermal only

prevent a terminal crash. The vehicle must be at least 200 feet above the ground for the parachute to operate safely.

Premiere Performance Suspension: This expensive modification involves installing an intelligent active suspension system which includes computer enhanced systems like TCS (Traction Control System), ASR (Anti-Slip Regulation), and ESC (Electronically Stability Control).

Level I Property: Gain a +1 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Level II Property: Gain a +2 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Level III Property: Gain a +3 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Level IV Property: Gain a +4 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Reinforced Mainframe: This does not increase the defense of a vehicle. It reinforces the vehicle by strengthening the chassis with strut and sway bars, adding run flat tires, and replacing key components with

harder and lighter materials like carbon fiber. You cannot have more than two levels of reinforced mainframe.

Level I Property: Vehicle gains +10 hit points.

Level II Property: Vehicle gains +20 hit points. Vehicle must have at least 40 hit points for this modification.

Level III Property: Vehicle gains +30 hit points. Vehicle must have at least 80 hit points for this modification. Maneuver rating decreases by 1.

Level IV Property: Vehicle gains +50 hit points. Vehicle must have at least 100 hit points for this modification. Maneuver rating decreases by 1.

Repair Drone: A repair drone buzzes around inside the superstructure, patching breaches in the baffles before they hemorrhage their gas. The driver of the vehicle can use a standard action to make the repair drone patch one breach.

A repair drone can seal a single breach once per minute, using one charge in the process.

Sails: These pectoral and dorsal mounted sails provide a small boost in speed and can provide move-

ment in an emergency if other means are neutralized. The sails can be drawn in and unfurled in one minute. This modification can only be added onto frames, not blimps.

Solar: This extensive addition covers the entire top half of the airship structure in solar photovoltaic cells. Stored energy is then used to power the propulsion system. This uses the same system as a battery drive, shunting power to turbines, providing propulsion. The ultimate advantage comes from an unlimited lifespan, supplying energy to the heating coils and the drive system. It turns the vessel into a TL2 craft. The solar array recharges the cell at a rate of 1 charge per day.

Steam: This basic powerplant uses steam to not only power the propellers but also heat the air balloons as well. It replaces the basic standard torch with a much more powerful boiler, connected to a double-action steam engine. This requires a source of heat as well as a supply of water. The average thermal can run for four days before requiring more water, a week before requiring more coal or propane. Being a basic engine, the steam drive counts as TL1 but gains a +5 bonus to any disruption saves.

Suspension Upgrade: This modification improves maneuverability with stiffer coils and springs. Various parts of the vehicle are replaced with lighter carbon fiber and aluminum components.

Special: You must purchase every lower level in order to purchase a higher level.

Level I Property: Reduce maneuverability penalty by 1 (maximum 0).

Level II Property: Reduce maneuverability penalty by 1 (maximum 0).

Level III Property: Reduce maneuverability penalty by 1 (maximum 0).

Visual Active Camouflage System: This is an active cloaking system that can conceal a vehicle when not engaged in combat.

Property: You can use a standard action to gain concealment. This effect ends the moment you move or are moved from your square. You also gain a +4 bonus to Stealth.

Thermoptics: Once a day, as a standard Action, you become invisible for up to five minutes. If you are hit by a melee or ranged attack, you enter a square filled with water, you are hit with debris, or you fire any weapons, there is a 50% chance you become visible and the effect ends.

Weapon Mount / Turret: A vehicle must have a listed hit point total equal to or greater than 30 to mount a two-handed weapon turret, equal to or greater than 60 to mount a heavy weapon (unless stated otherwise), and equal to or greater than 100 to mount a super heavy weapon (unless stated otherwise). Most vehicles can have only one weapon mount. Even though larger weapons count as smaller weapons and can be purchased for vehicles, they still count as their original type for the purpose of weapon mounts (e.g.: A heavy weapon can be purchased configured for a larger user,

like a vehicle. The vehicle acts as a two-handed small arm when dealing with attack penalties while moving. It still counts as a heavy weapon when mounting it on a vehicle).



Aiden thought it over. He didn't care how the class would react. "I want...to be a wizard." The students looked to him. A few chuckled. William gritted his teeth. He had been warned to keep quiet. "A...wha...Aiden," the teacher stuttered. Leach could piece together in an instant what thoughts had been circling like a maelstrom in Aiden's mind."

"Yes," Aiden answered.

"Why?"

Aiden tried to think of a better answer but his mind had been fixated on the how, not the why, so no better answer slipped out. "Because I can," he said.

. . .

Martin was leaning on a railing outside of Aiden's school as his little brother ran out.

"All good?" Martin asked. Aiden nodded. Martin led his brother away. He took the responsibility seriously, checking traffic and passersby.

"Aiden!" Lara shouted from a playground. The brothers noticed and stopped. "We're playing at the grounds, wanna come?"

Aiden looked back to Martin with his doe eyes on cue. "Yeah...it's ok?" Martin answered. Aiden smiled and hobbled with his heavy bag to the girl. "Be home by 4:00," he added. "Go nowhere else!"

Aiden finally turned back and waved. "Thanks, Marty!" he shouted. Martin watched them approach the swings with other children. Aiden placed his bag on the sand. When Martin was satisfied that Aiden wasn't walking into a bully trap, he continued walking. When he was out of sight, Aiden immediately turned to Lara.

"Thanks Lara," Aiden said, picking his bag back up and strapping it to his back for the long haul.

"You are invited," she answered.

"Thanks...I know." Aiden made for a nearby path that bisected two houses and led back to a main road.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

Aiden stopped and turned back. "Better you don't know."

"You're weird, Aiden."

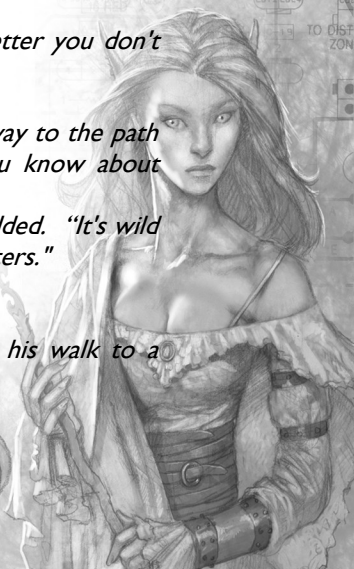
"Thanks." He smiled. He stepped away to the path but kept looking at her. "Lara? Do you know about what's beyond the city?"

"Past the wall?" she asked. Aiden nodded. "It's wild and dangerous. I heard someone say monsters."

"Dragons," Aiden corrected.


She shrugged.

Aiden nodded, turned and upgraded his walk to a run as he reached the path.





CHAPTER SEVEN: PRESTIGE



A GM is more than welcome to allow any prestige class from any publication as long as there are no setting specifics in the prestige class. Any generic prestige class is more than welcome unless the GM overrides the choice. Unlike core classes, many prestige classes here are region or race specific. The character must meet all requirements to select said class.

ECHAN PATHS ACADEMY OF LOGOS

An order of priests in Abidan, under support of their paladin king, began investigating the ties between the Pleroma language used to cast spells and its deification in the many faiths of the fae. They also wanted to examine if Pleroma and its abilities had any association with the Abrahamic religions still widespread across the world. Some priests, clerics, and rabbis denounced the practice as heresy. One noteworthy and respected cleric supporting the practice responded by saying that, "God could wink out the sun and stop the Earth from moving... throwing a lightning bolt from a wand pales in comparison." A similarly modest Jesuit complimented the remark by adding, "Wizards are priests in denial."

Very few wizards are actually religious. Since the study is based around a discipline that many have claimed as scientific, they usually prefer to explain the methods of magic through what they see and understand rather than depend on the unexplained. To wizards, the universe is still knowable, even if it appears to make no sense.

Eventually, this small community of faith-bound wizards determined that the Pleroma language was most likely written by God and then given to the dragons. While some more fundamental religious followers have classified dragons as the advocates of hell, many in Abidan, and especially those in the order, believe them to be generals of God's army, nothing short of angels that the mortals were taught to respect and fear. If so, then Pleroma is a divine language, words spoken to give the universe its form. They called it the power of logos--the ability of God to create something by speaking it. If true, then either this language had been passed down willingly as some reward for piety or those using them are breaking a commandment set in stone thousands of years ago.

Within a decade of the Abidan investigation, the Academy of Logos was formed--an elite line of Abrahamic holy men that study Pleroma not as a path to controlling the universe but as a path to becoming closer to God. They exhibit unique powers known only to them, variations on common spells with abilities the casters have professed as divine. Most wizards simply credit them with the same talent the laudenians flaunt when they're able to do similar deeds. As the Academy of Logos claims other wizards ignore god, those wizards from schools like Koana counter that those from Logos are blind to the possibilities of true enlightenment.

There is still respect between the two sides, and conflicts don't break out when they share a room. Despite possible stereotypes of fanaticism, the Academy of Logos is one of the most humble, benevolent religious sects in Canam, with fingers in humanitarian needs and missionary duties.

Hit Dice: d6

REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any good

Faith: Have a chosen deity (any)

ACADEMY OF LOGOS

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Inspiring Presence	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Act of God?	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3	+1	+1	+1	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4	+2	+1	+1	+2	Guidance	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5	+2	+2	+2	+3	Grace of God?	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6	+3	+2	+2	+3		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7	+3	+2	+2	+4	Illusion of Divinity	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8	+4	+3	+3	+4		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9	+4	+3	+3	+5		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10	+5	+3	+3	+5	Finger of God?	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

Region: From Abidan

Skills: Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, Spellcraft 4 ranks

Spells: Able to cast 3rd level arcane spells.

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcane) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: When a new Academy of Logos level is gained, you gain new spells per day as if you had also gained a level in Wizard or Cleric. You do not, however, gain other benefits a character of either class would have gained. You are not required to have levels in Cleric to gain the ability to cast divine spells. Divine spells you cast use vocal components only, not somatic, and are considered arcane spells when cast by you. If you had more than one arcane spellcasting class or more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a member of the Academy of Logos, you must decide which class you add each level of Academy of Logos for the purpose of determining spells per day. You still cannot cast 8th or 9th level divine spells, and 8th or 9th level arcane spells require the acquisition of a foundation anchor.

Inspiring Presence (Su): You gain the Inspiring Presence aura at 1st level. All allies within 25 feet of you gain a +1 bonus to initiative, a +1 bonus with all damage rolls, and a +1 bonus to all saving throws.

Act of God? (Su): At 2nd level, when you cast a

damaging area of effect spell (like fireball), any allies caught in the area are cured instead of damaged of amount inflicted. You can use *act of God?* as many times a day as your *Wisdom* modifier.

Grace of God? (Su): At 5th level, you are able to use a *move action* and select one adjacent ally with 0 hit points or higher. The ally either gains a +4 inherent bonus to AC until the end of your next turn or is healed of as many hit points as your *Wisdom* modifier. This does *not* provoke opportunity attacks.

Guidance (Su): Starting at 4th level, you can use a *swift action* and expand Inspiring Presence to 50 feet until the end of your next turn. In addition, you increase the damage bonus until the end of your next turn to +4. You can employ *guidance* as many times a day as your *Wisdom* modifier.

Illusion of Divinity (Su): At 7th level, inspiring presence improves. Allies gain a +2 bonus to initiative, a +2 bonus with all damage rolls, a +2 bonus to all saving throws, and are cured of 2 points of damage every round. If you use *guidance*, you increase the damage bonus until the end of your next turn to +5.

Finger of God? (Su): Once a day, for one spell, you can increase your caster level for arcane spells by your caster level for divine spells. This affects all variables including saving throws and damage values.

CRIMSON LEAF

Not much is known about the Salvabrooke assassin's guild, the Crimson Leaf. What marks them apart from other such guilds is that, despite being labeled a radical order against the greater good by the nation's ruling government, there is no bounty placed on their capture.

One Salvabrooke state official labeled them in private statement as being, "a humorous irritation." Despite recommendations from Limshau, Kannos, and

CRIMSON LEAF

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	Nemesis
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Nothing Else Matters (1d6)
3	+2	+1	+2	+1	Leaping Frenzy
4	+3	+1	+2	+1	Nothing Else Matters (3d6)
5	+3	+2	+3	+2	Slippery Little Bugger
6	+4	+2	+3	+2	Nothing Else Matters (5d6)
7	+5	+2	+4	+2	Purposeful and Committed
8	+6	+3	+4	+3	Nothing Else Matters (7d6)
9	+6	+3	+5	+3	Victory or Death, Hopefully Victory
10	+7	+3	+5	+3	Nothing Else Matters (9d6)

Abidan, Salvabrooke refuses to deal with them publicly or privately. This has been blamed partially on Salvabrooke's lack of any real law enforcement. There are no punishable victimless crimes in Salvabrooke and the worst the largest communities complain about are pick-pockets and the occasional confidence scam, though both are practically an infestation across the land. The fact that a criminal organization has been tolerated for so long baffles those who don't know the full details.

The Crimson Leaf actually considers itself the final word of law enforcement in Salvabrooke. They are a ruthless vigilante force of trained gimfen whose sole purpose is to protect the innocent of the land from the greater evils that aim to exploit them. Every Malkut slaver that attempts an introgression into gimfen territory becomes their target and few slaver caravans have survived the journey.

The Crimson Leaf claims a membership between 100 to 250 gimfen which travel the land and beyond, acting nonchalant and going about their lives until given a mission. Sometimes, they are given a set list of circumstances to respond to. A farmer may be minding his crops and see a crime listed on his or her response list. He would leap into action and return to his duties before anyone knew he was gone.

As a member of this group, you possess your own list of crimes to respond to. There is no jury, just an executioner. These crimes are not petty or trivial, but severe transgressions. Despite what other purposes you have in life, regardless of the mission you may be on or the job you have accepted, your duties as a Crimson Leaf always take precedence. Nothing else matters, even to the failure of your job and the abandonment of your friends.

A Crimson Leaf's Death Book usually lists several (6-10) specific crimes that, when witnessed, will cause them to strike. They must be specific and often include the following:

- Find a slaver, slaver caravan, or slaver market.
- Witness an attack against undefended innocence (children, females).
- Robbery of a family treasure worth more emotionally than monetarily. Thieves should have

values, too.

- A robbery where a life is taken.
- Any violation of flesh where one side is unwilling.

As a Leaf, you are not foolish. You employ all your skills, whether direct or stealthy, to accomplish your goals. You are also patient, willing to hold until the target's fate is certain, but when the course is set, nothing else matters.

Hit Dice: d6

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Location: Salvabrooke

Race: Gimfen

Skills: Acrobatics 6 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Slight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light armor.

Nemesis (Ex): Starting at 1st level, after you roll initiative, you can select one target in line of sight as your nemesis. If you don't select one, then the first target you hit becomes your nemesis. The critical range of all your weapons increase by 2 until you confirm a critical hit against this target.

Nothing Else Matters (Ex): At 2nd level, you can ignore everything else but the enemy you have decided to kill. The first time you hit your nemesis during combat, you can decide to add additional damage to the hit. If you do so, you suffer a -3 penalty to AC and all saves until the end of your next turn. This additional damage is not increased with a critical hit.

2nd level: +1d6 + your character level

4th level: +3d6 + your character level

6th level: +5d6 + your character level

8th level: +7d6 + your character level

10th level: +9d6 + your character level

Leaping Frenzy (Ex): At 3rd level, when you charge your nemesis, you can pass through enemy occupied squares for the charge (but not through obstructions).

Slippery Little Bugger (Ex): At 5th level, you can use a *move action* on the same turn as a full round action. You can use *slippery little bugger* as many times a day as your *Dexterity* modifier.

Purposeful and Committed (Ex): At 7th level, as long as you move more than 5 feet (1 square) on your turn and end your movement at least 5 feet (1 square) closer to your nemesis, you gain a +2 bonus to AC. Once you are adjacent to your nemesis, the +2 bonus applies only against your nemesis.

Victory or Death, Hopefully Victory (Ex): At 9th level, if you are cured of any damage, you can convert half of that healing value into a damage bonus on your next hit against your nemesis. You can only convert hit points you would have been cured of (if you have taken 10 points of damage and are cured of 20, you can only convert the 10 you would have been cured of, which would inflict 5 points of damage on the target). *You are not cured of any hit points from the healing effect.* Your nemesis also gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against you until the end of your next turn.

JANOAHN WALL CAPTAIN

As captain of the Janoahn wall, you have served selflessly for the protection of nothing short of the world. The Tethuss Bridge is the only route pagus take when attempting to cross from their lands into the south. They hate water and despise the treacheries of mountain travel. All that remains is the bridge and, as a wall captain, you direct your phalanx to maintain their shields in firm lock against whatever evil attempts to crash against it. You effortlessly guide your line to repel armies ten times the size. As a team, your group could withstand the onslaught of dragons, giants, or a pagus invasion.

You don't need religion to have a crusade and your

belief is secured in the church of the shield wall. Your devotion to this faith is unwavering and your piety in this conviction ensures its walls will never crack against any assault to its tenets. As shields are locked and weapons are brandished, you preach your choir to defend the house of blades and plates against the heathens desperate to break your line. But the walls of this church are held by the wills of men, not gods, and as long as they have conviction in themselves and their captain, this house will never crumble. You are the pastor of a devout order, your followers hanging on your words – the sage of this church of war.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feat: Shield Proficiency

Trait: Knight of the Wall

CLASS SKILLS

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (engineering) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Team Assist (Ex): Starting at 1st level, as a *free action*, you can grant the benefits of the Knight of the Wall's Shield Lock ability to a single ally within 50 feet who doesn't have it. Ally must still have a shield and be proficient with it. You can only offer the Shield Lock ability to one ally at a time.

Maintain the Line (Ex): At 3rd level, if your shield wall breaks for any reason you, can use an immediate action to relock the wall. As part of the action, you can move members of the wall up to 15 feet (3 squares) to move them back into position.

Phalanx Attack (Ex): At 2nd level, while in a

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JANOAHN WALL CAPTAIN

LEVEL	BASE				SPECIAL
	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Team Assist
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	Phalanx Attack (1)
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Maintain the Line
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	United Defense (+1)
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Stalwart Fortification
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	Phalanx Attack (2)
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	United Defense (+2)
8	+8	+4	+2	+2	Lockdown
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	United Defense (+3)
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	Phalanx Attack (3)

shield lock, when you make a full round attack, another ally in a shield lock with you can also make a single attack as an *immediate action*. At 6th level, two allies in a shield lock with you can also make a single attack as an *immediate action*. At 10th level, three allies in a shield lock with you can also make a single attack as an *immediate action*.

United Defense (Ex): At 4th level, if three or more allies are united with you in a shield wall, the entire wall gains a +1 bonus to AC. At 7th level, this bonus increases to +2 and at 9th level, it increases again to +3

Stalwart Fortification (Ex): At 5th level, once per day as a *free action*, all allies in the shield wall can set their initiative to the highest value of those involved. Unless the wall is broken, members in the wall cannot be subjected to a bull rush. Trample attacks stop before the wall. The group also cannot be knocked prone. Creatures with reach cannot reach over the wall to attack any targets behind adjacent targets. These effects stop once the wall is broken.

Lockdown: At 8th level, while in a shield lock, you may wield a two-handed weapon with one hand.

KINSHOA MASTER

"It will come to all of us. In time... Chaparrans will become plants and animals, narros will become rocks, damaskans will become memories, laudenians--clouds, gimfen--dreams...and us...we'll become the darkness."

Sharajaclypse

Most tenenbri are social creatures, but only to themselves. This road is traveled both ways as tenenbri understand well the distaste other races have for them. It appears a natural habit for tenenbri to seek isolation at some point during their lives.

The tenenbri that pursue this path of isolation eventually discover their attuned senses pick up far more than the normal world presents. The tenenbri's widespread faith in Oaken claims that the only way to truly experience God's grace is to remove all other physical senses. Temples in Vanaka have prayer chambers with stagnant pools that can be sealed from exter-

nal stimuli. Many followers have reported encountering visions that have either reaffirmed their faith or disillusioned them. After this period of isolation, the disciple is then encouraged to leave his home to contemplate on the experience, waiting for a moment of clarity. Those that depart often return to question the morals and motives of their empire. On a few rare occasions, they turn into kythix.

As a Kinshoa master, you realized that enlightenment came from the discipline to control one's body and mind. You can perceive what cannot be seen. You can taste emotions on your lips and smell the impulses of your enemies. With such perceptions about the world, nothing comes as a surprise, and you never know fear. It is said you are aware of your own death moments before your final breath. You despise deception and have left your people because the corrupted values of its government made you ill.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Race: Tenenbri

Proficiency: Any sword

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int Modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency in all simple and martial weapons and with all light armor.

Wisdom Like an Ocean (Ex): You gain a bonus to initiative. Starting at 1st level, this bonus is +2. It increases to +3 at 4th level, +4 at 7th level, and +5 at 10th level.

Bringer of Justice (Ex): At 2nd level, if you beat the initiative of all enemies and are not surprised yourself, you gain a surprise round. If you gain a surprise round by any means, you can take a full round action

KINSHOA MASTER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+1	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+2)
2	+2	+1	+0	+1	Bringer of Justice
3	+3	+2	+1	+2	Precognitive Outcome
4	+4	+2	+1	+2	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+3)
5	+5	+3	+1	+3	laodona
6	+6	+3	+2	+3	Awakening of Enlightenment
7	+7	+4	+2	+4	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+4)
8	+8	+4	+2	+4	Perfection of Form
9	+9	+5	+3	+5	laodona
10	+10	+5	+3	+5	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+5)

KNIGHT OF ABRAHAM



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instead of a single standard or move action.

Precognitive Outcome (Ex): At 3rd level, as many *times as day as your Wisdom modifier*, if you are hit with a non-critical threatening melee attack, you can use an *immediate action* to turn that hit into a miss and make a single attack against the target that triggered the attack.

Iaodona (Ex): At 5th level, you gain the following bonuses against all flat-footed targets: +2 bonus to attack rolls; +4 bonus to damage rolls, and the critical threat range of all your weapons increase by 2. At 9th level this bonus increases to a +3 bonus to attack rolls; +6 bonus to damage rolls, and the critical threat range of all your weapons increase by 3.

Awakening of Enlightenment (Ex): At 6th level, *once a day*, if an adjacent enemy scores a critical hit on you with, you nullify your enemy's attack as an *immedi-*

ate action and make an attack against the target which automatically becomes a critical hit if you hit.

Perfection of Form (Ex): At 8th level, once a day, you can enter a meditative state. After one minute has passed, you can remove one of the following conditions: Confused, dazed, deafened, shaken, staggered, or stunned.

KNIGHT OF ABRAHAM

A member of the order of Abraham stands as the iconic knight of legend, the quintessential guardian in shining armor known previously only in story and myth. Across many barriers of language and culture such valiant defenders reveal themselves through determined purpose, ironclad beliefs, and unwavering integrity. You maintain your moral fiber, especially when those morals are the

KNIGHT OF ABRAHAM

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Of Legend, Strike Down the Wicked
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	Excess Stamina (+2)
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Line in the Sand
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	Excess Stamina (+3)
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Faithful Protector
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	Excess Stamina (+4)
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	Devout Aura of Courage
8	+8	+4	+2	+2	Excess Stamina (+5)
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	Ironclad Persona
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	Last Stand

most inconvenient. You respect the laws of your faith, not necessarily the laws of where you reside. You believe in chivalry and honor, mercy and valor. You will never take the life of one unarmed. You will always prefer to protect the innocent, the poor, or the weak over the defeat of your enemies.

Courage is important, but you must temper that courage with common sense – to know when to fight and when not to. You must maintain your faith in the integrity and kindness of civilized people and/or to your God. Since a good and merciful God never asks a follower to die needlessly, you are not required to die for your faith, your lord, or even for your own honor. You only willingly die to protect others or to defeat evil in whatever forms it takes. You give to charity but not to the point of poverty. You are courteous to others, will forgive the sins of anyone if asked in sincerity, and act in humility of your own strengths and abilities. As a member of the order, you must follow these simple edicts: benevolence, faith, humility, integrity, loyalty, mercy, and patience. You must adhere to these and keep the standards you wish to uphold. Breaking any of these ideals brings upon a personal shame even if no others witness the act. You never look for an excuse to bypass your morals. You must never slay an enemy unarmed or helpless, never turn against an ally for selfish motives, and never ignore those in need.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feat: Rousing Speech

Trait: Squire of Abraham

Special: You also must return to Janoah to receive the honor.

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Of Legend (Ex): Starting at 1st level, after you and your allies roll for initiative, every ally within 25 feet of you gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls until they hit.

Strike Down the Wicked (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you bring forth all remaining might, saving nothing for your victory march. As many *times a day as your level in Knight of Abraham*, you can use a *swift action* and gain your Wisdom bonus to melee damage rolls until the end of your next turn.

Excess Stamina (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you gain a +2 bonus to Fort saves. This bonus increases to +3 at 4th level, +4 at 6th level, and +5 at 8th level.

Line in the Sand (Ex): At 3rd level, you declare your intentions with words or a firm stance of defiance against approaching evil. Whenever you hit with an opportunity attack, the target is also pinned until the start of your next turn.

Faithful Protector (Ex): At 5th level, *once per day*, you can use a *swift action* to select one creature within 10 feet as your ward. All attacks against your ward target you instead. Your ward cannot make attacks while this power is in effect. If the target ends its turn out of range or attacks an enemy, Faithful Protector stops. If you move willingly (not through a push or a slide), you can pull your ward with you.

Devout Aura of Courage (Ex): At 7th level, you gain a +4 bonus to any defense against fear-based attacks.

Ironclad Persona (Ex): At 9th level, you are immune to being shaken and staggered.

Last Stand (Ex): Starting at 10th level, when you are reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, you can elect to not fall unconscious. While below 0 hit points, you ignore being unconscious. You can take only a single standard or move action per turn while under the effects of Last Stand, and when you move you can only take a 5-foot step.

KOANA ACADEMIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	Thinks for Itself	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Living Energy (1/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3	+1	+1	+1	+1	Sense of Existence (1/day)	
4	+2	+1	+2	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5	+2	+2	+2	+2	Living Energy (2/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6	+3	+2	+3	+3	Sense of Existence (2/day)	
7	+3	+2	+3	+3		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8	+4	+3	+4	+4	Living Energy (3/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9	+4	+3	+4	+4	Sense of Existence (3/day)	
10	+5	+3	+5	+5	Loyal Embodiment	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

KOANA ACADEMIC

Upon finally graduating, the Koana apprentice is believed to have a greater comprehension of the arcane arts than equivalent graduates do from other schools. The primary push of this expertise is the understanding that all power from Attricana attempts to encourage life in every possible form, from the beautiful to the revolting. Koana teachings encourage this ideal, which is why their spells have an unusual slant for being slightly whimsical. Instead of balls of fire or lightning leaping from fingers, Koana wizards create living, semi-intelligent beings that act apparently on their own in service of their master for the brief time they exist.

They live for their creator and willingly die for them, happy that they were able to fulfill such a noble life in such a short time. The Koana professors, or academics, play with their spells with an especially creative whimsy. The spells run, dance, or fly around while normal spells accomplish their task and vanish. In the scope of the brilliance that is Attricana magic, Koana wizards know how to add gusto to their spellcraft.

Hit Dice: d6

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Thinks for Itself (Sp): Starting at 1st level, any spell with an area effect which lasts for more than one round can move its area of effect by 5 feet at the beginning of your turn until the spell expires.

Living Energy (Sp): Once a day at 2nd level, your spells remain active, thinking for themselves after you have stopped concentrating. After an evocation spell (you've cast) that targets creatures or has an area of effect expires, the spell is recast on the beginning of your next turn as a *free action*. You can move the area of effect up to 50 feet. You can use *living energy* twice at 5th level and three times at 8th level.

Sense of Existence (Sp): At 3rd level, your capacity to understand Attricana allows you to instill life in a normal spell. Once a day, as a *free action*, if a target fails a Ref save against an evocation spell you cast, at the beginning of your next turn as a free action, you can force the same target to make an identical save or suffer the effects of the same spell, regardless if the target leaves the target area or moves out of range. You cannot use *sense of existence* on the same spell you use *living energy* on. You can use *sense of existence* twice at 6th level and three times at 9th level.

Loyal Embodiment (Su): At 10th level, you can use the abilities *sense of existence* and *living energy* with the same spell.

KRYSALLIS

Chaparrans accept chaos in all its forms. Their communities are often small. They act on instinct and allow emotion and personal morality to maintain the fundamental civility of their culture over the peskiness of actual laws. They also embrace the idea of the overall fate of the fae to succumb to eventual anarchy. They believe nirvana and true heaven in the Eden promised by Berufu awaits when the fae unreservedly accept

216 REQUIREMENT

Attribute: Intelligence 16

Region: From Limshau,

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks

Special: You must also have chosen the Koana path or been invited by a Koana school to receive an honorary diploma (GM discretion).

Spells: Able to cast 3rd level spells; must have selected the Evocation school.

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (engineering) (Int), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Spellcraft (Int)

KRYSALLIS

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+1	+0	+0	+1	Totem Synergy	
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Inner Light (1/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3	+3	+1	+1	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4	+4	+1	+1	+2	Inner Light (2/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5	+5	+2	+2	+3	From Wood to Soul	
6	+6	+2	+2	+3	Inner Light (3/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7	+7	+2	+2	+4	Drawing from Paradise	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8	+8	+3	+3	+4	Inner Light (4/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9	+9	+3	+3	+5		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10	+10	+3	+3	+5	Highest Plane of the Soul	

their fate—to merge with the world around, to vanish from reality altogether.

Each further branch takes them one step closer to understanding the purpose of existence and the chaparrans hold a devout faith that their descendant races like the narrissa and sylphids are one step closer to paradise.

Many chaparrans pursue this devotion through their children, hoping they are gifted as one of these cousin races. They think of their species as a whole and don't preoccupy themselves with the lack of their own enlightenment. A few radicals have gone to burying themselves in fertile soil for years at a time, never jostling save for the donations of food from family and passers-by. Others refuse to leave their named-tree for their entire lives and make its survival and development the only priority. Others decide to reach their unity with nature by the absolute discipline of their craft.

This can come in the form of adept magic use or the perfection of melee and ranged combat, of which the latter is the most common. As one of these rare chaparrans, you begin to exhibit strange properties, mostly physical. Your hair gains the color of grass, leaves grow from the strands, and when you curl your fingers around your implement or weapon, you become one. Whether a weapon or a totem, your hand vanishes into the wood and you feel every bend and twist of the item as if it was a complete appendage. You may separate as easily but this is only the first step ... eventually, you may be able to push yourself further, to take the next step in fae evolution.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENT

Spells: Ability to cast 3rd level arcane spells

Race or Trait: Chaparran or Darawren

Totem: Longbow

CLASS SKILLS

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Totem Synergy: Starting at 1st level, you develop a spiritual connection with your totem. You gain a bonus to your spell DC sequel to the enhancement bonus of your longbow.

Spells per Day: When a new Krysallis level is gained, you gain new spells per day as if you had also gained a level in Wizard or Druid. You do not, however, gain other benefits a character of either class would have gained. You are not required to have levels in Druid to gain the ability to cast divine spells. Divine spells you cast use vocal components only, not somatic, and are considered arcane spells when cast by you. If you had more than one arcane spellcasting class or more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a Krysallis, you must decide to which class you add each level of Krysallis for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Inner Light (Su): At 2nd level, you are able to draw an inner strength only reserved for enlightened creatures. Your awareness of your own soul allows you to push yourself harder. You can infuse a spell into an arrow fired from your totem. The spell loses its target entry (regardless if touch, cone, or area); it only effects the target you hit. The target can no longer make a saving throw against the effect. You can only infuse a spell with the casting time of a full a round action or shorter. You can use *inner light* once at 2nd level, twice

at 4th level, three times at 6th level and four times at 8th level. Once a day at 6th level, if you miss with *inner light*, you regain the use of that spell at the beginning of your next turn.

From Wood to Soul (Su): At 5th level, you are able to travel to where your arrow lands. *Once a day*, use a *standard action* and pick a location in your weapon's range and fire an arrow (this can be part of an attack). Immediately after impact, you teleport to that location. If you strike a tree, wall, or even a creature, you appear adjacent to the arrow. If you miss a desired target, you can either teleport to a location 15 ft from the target or you can regain the use of *from wood to soul*.

Drawing from Paradise (Su): At 7th level, the range of any close- or medium-ranged spells are increased to the range of your longbow.

Highest Plane of the Soul (Su): At 10th level, you are closing in on the final plane and very little separates you from what you possess. Your very will pulls unseen power from an unknown capacity. *Once a day* as a *free action*, for one round, all your ranged spells requiring a standard action to cast can be made as part of a full round attack as if they were ranged attacks (allowing multiple spells to be cast based on your base attack bonus and feats. They are still spells.

MUTAHARRIK CAPTAIN

Leading the Kannos Kavalry are the Mutaharrik Captains. You've probably spent more hours on your horse than others have on their own feet. Regardless if you raised your steed from birth or bought it from a stable, as an elite from Kannos, you can prepare any animal for combat within a week. You do not afford yourself any luxuries over the men under your command. You wear the same light armor, ride a horse with no barding, and charge alongside the line rather than behind it.

You and your animal are now one combined spirit and you're no longer required to whistle for its attention or whip it to speed, requiring a few words or a nudge. It may even act on its own if needed. The elite officers of Kannos forego all other pleasantries in favor of their bond. You don't bother with wives or children. It's even been said a Captain's steed lives for the entire life of its master, dying the second its Captain does.

MUTAHARRIK CAPTAIN

BASE					
LEVEL	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Whisperer
2	+2	+1	+1	+0	High Ground
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Plow Through the Lines (+1 attack)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Equestrian Charge
5	+5	+3	+3	+1	Master Warmount
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Plow Through the Lines (+2 attacks)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Impeccable Balance
8	+8	+4	+4	+2	Mounted Specialty
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Plow Through the Lines (+3 attacks)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Unbridled Loyalty

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Feat: Mounted Combat

Trait: Kavalier or Halfmaster

Skills: Acrobatics 5 ranks, Handle Animal 5 ranks, Ride 5 ranks

Special: You must also return to Kannos for promotion. You must own a Large natural beast as a mount.

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all light armor and shields.

Whisperer (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you automatically pass any Ride checks of DC20 or less.

High Ground (Ex): At 2nd level, when attacking adjacent targets smaller than your mount, you gain an additional +1 bonus to melee attack (in addition to the +1 you already gain from higher ground). In addition, you no longer provoke opportunity attacks if you fire ranged weapons to adjacent targets smaller than your mount while on your mount.

Plow Through the Lines (Ex): At 3rd level, you can assault through an enemy's flank, slashing down at those that move away from your steed's assault. While you are on your mount and you make a charge action, you can make one additional attack against any target in range at any point during the move. It cannot be the same target as the target of your charge. At 6th level, you can make two additional attacks against any targets in range at any point during the move and at 9th level you can make three additional attacks against any targets in range at any point during the move. You cannot attack the same target multiple times.

Equestrian Charge (Ex): At 4th level, you are able to leap from your horse after a charge. You count your

mount's speed as your speed for the purposes of the jump and you do not provoke opportunity attacks passing through squares occupied by targets smaller than your mount. You count your movement beginning at the end of the charge.

Master Warmount (Ex): At 5th level, your mount can move up to half its speed, counting as a 5-foot step, and still allow you to make a full round action.

Impeccable Balance (Ex): At 7th level, you cannot drop from your horse unless your horse drops as well (or you do so willingly). This includes if you are knocked prone or reduced to below 0 hit points.

Mounted Specialty (Ex): At 8th level, select one of the following abilities

Ranged: The penalty you take when using a ranged weapon while mounted is reduced by 2. This is in addition to reductions with the Mounted Archery feat.

Melee: You gain a +2 damage bonus against adjacent targets the same size or smaller than your mount while you are mounted

Unbridled Loyalty: At 10th level, the speed of your mount is increased by 5 feet. If you are not on your mount, your mount can pass through your square, allowing you to mount it as a free action. Any remaining movement can still occur.

NARROS RAVNORRA

Despite legends and fairy tales, narros are not unkempt or dirty. They take pride in their appearance and their vocation and seldom break their disciplined lives for merriment or debauchery, lest they bring dishonor to their names. Though many narros approach this dedication towards mining and the acquisition of goods, some approach this dedication to the noble path of defending their house and the innocent. Narros soldiers all follow a strict code of honor, but a few take their discipline to an amazing degree of devotion.

All your life, you have lived alongside your blade. The crest on your shield is father and mother. Your house is an ideal you will defend to the end. You wake to don your armor and seldom remove it save for sleep or death. You refuse to take mates or father children. Your defense of the house and realm take precedence

over carnal desires. To break these oaths not only brings dishonor to you, but to the house and family as well. If such a code is broken, or if the house and/or lord is destroyed, you become a masterless ronin. Often outcast, you leave your land to either find a cause or to live by the sword. You may continue your code or do your best just to stay alive.

Many human cultures find the similarity between the narros noble warrior and the ancient samurai. Many wandering narros ronin declare themselves samurai when speaking in any human tongue. To them, it is the proper translation.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Feat: Improved Double Form

Trait: Doppelshido

CLASS SKILLS

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Hatamoto (Ex): You gain one of the following additional benefits to feats if you have them (select one at 1st level, a second at 3rd level, and the third at 5th level):

Cleave: You no longer suffer the penalty to AC if you use this feat.

Great Cleave: You no longer suffer the penalty to AC if you use this feat.

Weapon Focus: You gain a +2 inherent bonus to damage with your chosen weapons.

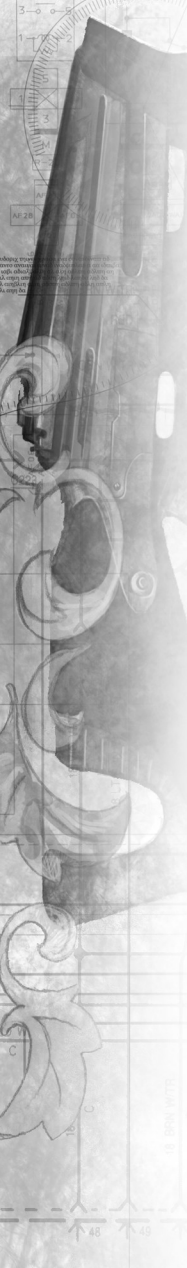
Power Attack: Your penalty to attack is reduced to by 1.

Two Weapon Defense: You gain an additional +1 bonus to AC.

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NARROS RAVNORRA

LEVEL	BASE				SPECIAL
	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Hatamoto
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Inner Spirit
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Hatamoto
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	Deceptive Posture
5	+5	+3	+2	+2	Hatamoto
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	Slice Arrows
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	Weapon Master (1/day)
8	+8	+4	+3	+3	Improved Total Defense
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	Weapon Master (2/day)
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	Path of the Warrior



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NARROS RAVNORRA

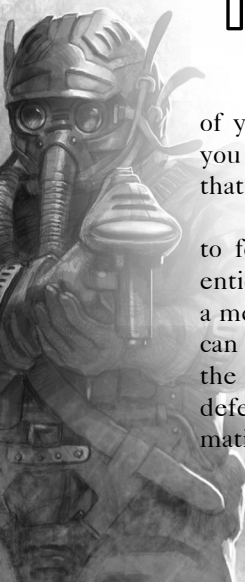
Inner Spirit (Ex): At 2nd level, on the beginning of your next turn after using the total defense action, you gain a +2 bonus to all attack rolls until the end of that turn.

Deceptive Posture (Ex): At 4th level, you're able to feign weakness, offering the illusion of cowardice, enticing an enemy to act foolish. If you are still hit with a melee attack while using the total defense action, you can make a single attack as an immediate action against the target that hit you. If you make the attack, total defense ends. If you score a critical threat, it is automatically confirmed as a critical hit.

Slice Arrows (Ex): At 6th level, as an *immediate action*, if an enemy hits you with a ranged weapon attack, you can make an attack against the enemy's attack. If you beat the enemy's attack, the enemy's attack misses.

Weapon Master (Ex): At 7th level, once a day, if you score a critical hit on an enemy with a melee attack, the critical multiplier is increased by 2 ($x2 > x3 > x4 > x5$). At 9th level, you can use *weapon master* twice a day.

Improved Total Defense (Ex): At 9th level, when making the total defense action, you also gain a +4 bo-



nus to all saves. You can also make opportunity attacks while in total defense.

Path of the Warrior (Ex): At 10th level, you are able to make your initial strike with such skill, it reveals a vulnerability in an enemy you instantly exploit for a killing blow. If you score a critical hit on a target and deal damage equal to or greater than half the target's hit points, the target dies.

ORDER OF THE CLOTH

You are a member of Baruch Malkut's inner circle—an elite order that traces their line back to the loyal guards of the king, when he traveled from Southam to stake his domain. The crusade consisted of him and a loyal retinue of brothers by oath that were referred to only as “cut from the cloth,” forsaking even their individual names. As he claimed his kingdom, Darius Konig kept his guards close, and they wished for nothing else, neither land nor titles.

Since these humble beginnings, the order has grown in number, but their reputation has never faltered. Newer members are not so enigmatic. Keeping their names and accepting claims of property and treasure, they are still as devout in the faith as their founders. They are brought in from various military channels and trained separately in isolation to be the greatest line of assassins the land has ever known.

You are not one to play fair. To be of the order is to know every cheat, every dirty play you can exploit to eliminate your target. You might have been once a bandit or a slaver or a paid assassin. Now a loyal member of the cloth, you follow the edicts of their campaign, to eliminate all who disagree with the commandments of King Darius. Any who fail to understand his wisdom will meet the fate of all heathens, regardless if their ears are pointed or not.

If you venture from your land, you do so as one on a mission for the betterment of the king's power. Your loyalty is to the king and the king only. Even other citizens of Baruch Malkut are not immune to your wrath if they don't show total piety to the true authority.

Hit Dice: d6

ORDER OF THE CLOTH

LEVEL	BASE				SPECIAL
	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	Death Grip, Sneak Attack (+1d6)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Pull to the Ground
3	+2	+1	+2	+1	Sneak Attack (+2d6)
4	+3	+1	+2	+1	No Negotiation
5	+3	+2	+3	+2	Sneak Attack (+3d6)
6	+4	+2	+3	+2	Into the Shadows
7	+5	+2	+4	+2	Sneak Attack (+4d6)
8	+6	+3	+4	+3	Cheat
9	+6	+3	+5	+3	Sneak Attack (+5d6)
10	+7	+3	+5	+3	Sand in the Eye

REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any non-good

Skills: Stealth 5 ranks, Survival 5 ranks

Special: From Baruch Malkut

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple weapons and with all light armor.

Death Grip (Ex): Starting at 1st level, while having an enemy in a grapple, you gain a bonus to damage rolls against that enemy equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Sneak Attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. The extra damage dealt increases by +1d6 every other level (2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th). If a member of the order of the cloth gets a sneak attack bonus from another source, the bonuses on damage stack.

Pull to the Ground (Ex): At 2nd level, once a day, if you sustain a grapple for three turns, at the start of the fourth, the target is helpless until the end of your turn. If you a grappling a helpless target, delivering a coup de grace can be made as part of sustaining the grapple. If the target is not killed, you must start Pull to the Ground from the beginning again.

No Negotiation (Ex): At 4th level, if you are not surprised, you gain an action before initiative is rolled.

Into the Shadows (Ex): At 6th level, if you kill an adjacent creature, you can move up to your speed as a free action.

Cheat (Ex): At 8th level, once a day, if you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll, that attack roll becomes a natural 20.

Sand in the Eye (Ex): You don't play fair. There are no rules in war. Those who think otherwise lose. At 10th level, you can use a move action to stagger an



adjacent target your size or smaller until the start of your next turn.

PALADIN

The opposite of barbarians, a paladin fights only when necessary. You carry a strict faith in yourself or in the religion you are associated with and swear absolute loyalty to that devotion and its tenets. You believe the shields of truth and virtue protect better than any armor forged by man. You need not be tied to a lord, house, or kingdom. You may wander the world, dispatching evil when encountered. Oddly enough, though trained from an early age to fight, you often avoids violence unless necessary. Even though a stereotype exists claiming a paladin egotistical and vain, the majority are far from this cliché. You remain humble, giving of yourself when needed, regardless of the strain on body and soul.

Pride is a sin not often seen in the modern paladin. When one sees arrogance and condescension in a lowly warrior or even a fully knighted lord claiming membership in a paladin order, this declaration of virtue spills from a liar's lips. You possess neither a specific creed nor a code. You maintain your moral fiber, especially when those morals are the most inconvenient. You re-

spect the laws of your faith, not necessarily the laws of where you reside. If they are in conflict, then your morals take precedence. You may not need to pray every single hour, neither does your faith require you to pray a specific way in a specific tongue. Though rare, you may follow no gods at all. You can claim you require neither the promise of eternal reward nor the threat of everlasting damnation to behave in a manner that is selfless or even "holy." Whatever power taps the shoulder of a potential paladin, it is capable of seeing into the heart and finding the goodness that resides within.

If an enemy asks for forgiveness, you must accept it unless the request is not genuine. You may appear in the most unlikely of circumstances, rising seemingly spontaneously to confront the darkness. You may emerge unexpectedly in the midst of grief and loss as an avenger and guardian, or you may wander for years or decades, drawn towards your destiny before finally manifesting your abilities. This, combined with their relative rarity, propensity to wander, and short life expectancy, has made the source of paladin abilities almost impossible to study.

Though many of them may claim divine power and declare their actions were bequeathed from a higher order, few are true paladins. If one acts commonly against his ethics on a whim or professes his

PALADIN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Virtuous Arsenal, Aura of Courage, Divine Perception
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Pure body
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Inspire Greatness
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	
8	+8	+4	+2	+2	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	Inspire Heroics
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path, Sanctified

honor justifies acts others claim criminal, chances are he is a paladin in title only.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Lawful good.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Perform 5 ranks, Knowledge (Religion) 5 ranks.

Feat: Weapon Focus (any martial or exotic weapon) OR Improved Unarmed Strike.

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill Points per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Virtuous Arsenal (Su): At 1st level, any weapon you wield becomes both lawful and good aligned for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction for as long as you wield it.

Aura of Courage (Su): At 1st level, you are immune to fear (magical or otherwise). Each ally within 10 feet you gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects. This ability functions while you are conscious but not if you are unconscious or dead.

Divine Perception (Su): At 1st level, you gain a sacred bonus to Sense Motive checks equal to your Charisma modifier.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: When a new paladin level is gained, you gain new divine spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) if you had also gained a level in the divine spellcasting class you belonged to before adding the prestige class (through the Gneolistic trait). You do not, however, gain any other benefits a character of that class would have gained. You do not

gain the ability to cast divine spells unless previously able to do so.

Exalted Path (Su): If you cannot or wish not to progress in spell casting, you may instead follow the exalted path, taking one of the abilities listed below. A character able to cast spells previously may alternate. Each ability lasts for as many *rounds as your Wisdom modifier*. Paths may be chosen in any order though several require other paths as prerequisites. You may only use each ability *once per day*. Each time you use an exalted ability, you generate a powerful lawful good aura that cannot be concealed or hidden in any way. This white radiance acts as a light spell for the duration of the ability and 1d4 rounds afterward.

To activate an exalted path ability takes a free action, however certain rules must be followed:

Paladin Level 2: You cannot operate more than one exalted ability at any time. You may prematurely end one to begin another, also as a free action, though the terminated ability still counts as a use per day.

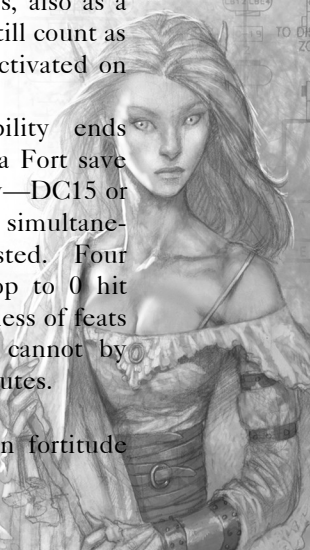
Paladin level 6: You may activate two exalted abilities at once instead of one. You may prematurely end the two together to begin others, also as a free action, though the terminated abilities still count as uses per day. The two abilities must be activated on the same round.

Paladin Level 10: You may activate four exalted abilities at once instead of two or one. You may prematurely end the four together to begin others, also as a free action, though the terminated abilities still count as uses per day. The four abilities must be activated on the same round.

Aftereffects: After an exalted ability ends (naturally or prematurely), you must make a Fort save or suffer the following effects. Single ability—DC15 or suffer fatigue until rested. Two abilities simultaneously—DC20 or suffer exhaustion until rested. Four abilities simultaneously—DC25 or you drop to 0 hit points instantly and falls unconscious regardless of feats taken or spells currently in effect. You cannot be roused from his slumbering state for 2d6 minutes.

The available exalted abilities are as follows:

Supreme Tolerance: You gain unseen fortitude



when facing certain death square in its eyes. You gain temporary hit points equal to your character level x3.

Armor of Glory: You shrug off all but the greatest blows. You gain DR 5/Evil, which increases to DR 10/Evil at 10th level. **Prerequisites:** Supreme Tolerance

Wrath of Will: You wield your weapon with remarkable skill and force never before encountered. Any weapon you wield that strikes an evil opponent automatically confirms critical threats without having to re-roll. This effect does not apply to any weapon already enchanted with a magical effect related to critical hits.

Line in the Sand: Any enemy struck by an attack of opportunity from you ends its movement within the threatened square and is knocked prone. This ability only works on opponents up to one size category larger than you.

Divine Strength: Channeling an inner light, you bring forth all remaining might of mind and muscle, saving nothing for recovery and victory march later. Your Wisdom bonus is applied to all melee damage rolls for the duration of the effect against evil opponents. **Prerequisites:** Wrath of Will.

Faithful Bodyguard: You swear loyalty to and protection of a specific person (must be a living target). Your fidelity is so absolute, you will gladly lay your life for the other. At the beginning of the ability, you can select a single ally within 10 feet. You subject yourself to all attacks in the ally's stead. If the attack hits you, you take damage normally. If it misses, it also misses the ally. You cannot change your ally for the duration of the ability. This ability expires if the target is out of range and the end of its turn.

Last Stand: Despite how much damage you receive, despite how many hit points you have left, you are alert and able to commit full-round actions. You automatically pass all Fort saves and all death effects do not take effect until Last Stand expires. After Last Stand expires, you must acknowledge the effect/s of damage and spells sustained, even if you drop stone cold dead. **Prerequisites:** Armor of Glory

Pure Body (Ex): At 3rd level, you are immune to all diseases, including supernatural and magical diseases.

Inspire Greatness (Su): At 5th level, your beaming charisma and rousing words inspires greatness in a single willing ally within 30 feet, granting him extra fighting capability. For every three character levels beyond 5th level (including past paladin level 10), you can target one additional ally with a single use of this ability. To inspire greatness in others, the ally/allies must see you and hear the stirring words of his speech. You do not gain this ability for yourself.

The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears you and for 5 rounds thereafter. A creature inspired with greatness gains a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls, and a +1 competence bonus on Fortitude saves. You may activate this ability once per day / 3 character levels. The speech requires at least a full-round action to commit.

Inspire Heroics (Su): At 9th level, you can inspire tremendous heroism in a single willing ally within 30 feet. For every three character levels beyond 9th level (including past paladin level 10), you can inspire heroics in one additional creature. To inspire greatness in others, the ally/allies must see you and hear the stirring words of your speech. You do not gain this ability for yourself.

A creature so inspired gains a +4 morale bonus on all saving throws and a +4 dodge bonus to AC. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears you and for 5 rounds thereafter. You may activate this ability once per day / 3 character levels. The speech requires at least a full-round action to commit.

Sanctified (Su): At 10th level, because of your consecrated body, you are blessed with a permanent *gentle repose* effect (per spell). You cannot be turned into any undead, regardless of your state (even if hacked into pieces). No part of your body may be used in any corrupt/necromancy spell or spell-like effect.

EX-PALADINS

If you wander from these constraints in a moment of weakness or due to a tragic conflict of circumstances, you lose all paladin abilities and will remain so until atoned. This castigation comes not from divine punishment, but from a personal choice to redeem one's self for the actions committed. You dishonor yourself by this cowardly action and seek redemption.

You must rest and seek to cleanse your soul by its stain. There is no set ritual or sacrifice, nor can one simply cast a spell and magically whisk away one's personal duty for salvation. This penance falls to the GMs discretion as the severity of the breach dictates the extent of the redemption. It should be noted that this form of atonement should only be granted once. Paladins learn their lessons quickly. Until salvation is found, you may not progress any further in levels as a paladin. You regain your abilities and advancement potential if you atone for your violations.

RANGER

Rangers are a broad classification of several types of adventurers. They are nomads, drifters, bandits, horsemen, scouts, and sentinels. Rangers connect themselves with the environment they inhabit for the time they are there. They travel light, fast, and by stealth. They survive in environments where others suffer. They know the ways of wilderness and often call home the realms avoided by other travelers. Rangers excel with the arrow. What they accomplish with the bow is nothing short of extraordinary. No one beats the ranger at ranged combat. Despite the cliché, rangers can be found everywhere on Earth, even in the largest echan cities. They find uses everywhere. However, most still wander the lands, searching for a path or party or simply, an adversary.

Hit Die: d10.



RANGER

RANGER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Track, Wild empathy, Improved Bow Combat
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Favored Terrain, Long Arc
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Dead eye (1/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Improved Bow Combat
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Improvisational Arrow
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Swift tracker, Dead Eye (2/day)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Improved Bow Combat
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Camouflage
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Dead Eye (3/day)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Bow Combat

REQUIREMENTS

Skills: Knowledge (nature) 6 ranks, Survival 6 ranks, Handle Animal 6 ranks.

Feats: Weapon Focus (any bow)

Proficiency: Any bow

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

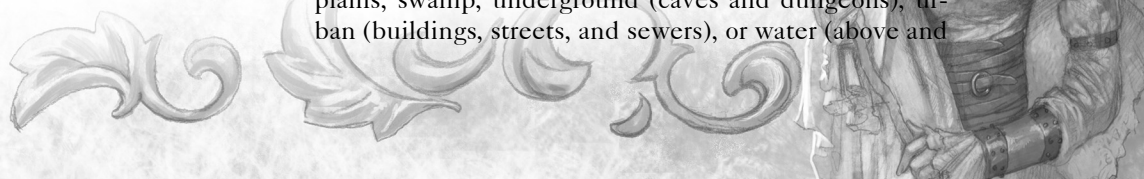
Skill Points per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Favored Terrain (Ex): At 2nd level, you may select a type of terrain from the list below. You gain a +2 bonus on initiative checks and Knowledge (geography), Perception, Stealth, and Survival skill checks when in this terrain. If you are traveling through your favored terrain, you normally leave no trail and cannot be tracked (though you may leave a trail if you choose).

Favored Terrains: Cold (ice, glaciers, snow, and tundra), desert (sand and wastelands), forest (coniferous and deciduous), jungle, mountain (including hills), plains, swamp, underground (caves and dungeons), urban (buildings, streets, and sewers), or water (above and



below the surface)

Track (Ex): You add your level to any Survival skill checks made to follow or identify tracks.

Wild Empathy (Ex): You can improve the initial attitude of an animal. This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a person. You roll 1d20 and add your ranger level and your Charisma bonus to determine the wild empathy check result. The typical domestic animal has a starting attitude of indifferent, while wild animals are usually unfriendly.

To use wild empathy, you and the animal must be within 30 feet of one another under normal visibility conditions. Generally, influencing an animal in this way takes 1 minute, but, as with influencing people, it might take more or less time. You can also use this ability to influence a magical beast with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, but you take a -4 penalty on the check.

Improved Bow Combat (Ex): At 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th level, you may choose one of the following feats. You must meet all the requirements of the feat: Deadly Aim, Far Shot, Improved Critical (Long bow or Short bow), Improved Precise Shot, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run.

When you have five of any of these feats, you may opt to choose one of the following special abilities instead. You lose all benefits of these abilities when wearing medium or heavy armor:

Greater Improved Critical: The critical rating of a longbow or shortbow increase by +1. This requires having the Improved Critical feat and is added to that ability. You may only select this ability once.

Channel Strength: You gain a +2 damage bonus with all attacks from a shortbow or longbow. You may select this ability a second time; the damage result is cumulative.

Damage Penetration: You may choose one of the following damage penetrations. All your arrows, regardless of their type, always count as this type in addition when penetrating damage resistance: Silver, Cold/Fac Iron, Angelite (adamantine), Good, or Evil. You may select this ability a second time and select another type of damage penetration.

Power Arrow: You gain the Power Attack feat exclusively with the bow.

Pass Through: If you kill a target with an arrow shot, you are able to strike another target behind but in a straight line from you to the original target with the same arrow. You roll to strike again, taking into account the new range and suffering a -4 penalty to attack. This may only occur once per arrow. If you choose this ability a second time, you gain the additional ability to continue the Pass Through effect through as many targets as your Strength bonus.

Long Arc (Ex): Once a day, starting at 2nd level, you can fire a long range arrow shot as a *full-round attack*. Select one creature at least three times your weapon's range increment away and make a single ranged attack with your longbow. You gain a +10 circumstance bonus to the attack roll. If you score a critical threat, you automatically confirm the critical hit.

Dead Eye (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you are able to automatically confirm a critical attack with an arrow shot. If you roll a critical threat, you may immediately declare it a critical hit without re-rolling. You may do use this ability once a day at 3rd, twice a day at 6th, and three times a day at 9th. You lose all benefits of this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor.

Improvisational Arrow (Ex): At 5th level, if an adjacent enemy makes an opportunity attack against you triggered by you making a ranged attack with a bow, you use the arrow as an impromptu melee weapon. Make a melee attack using any magical enhancement offered by the bow or arrow. A hit inflicts 1d6 damage. Add your Strength modifier as this is a melee attack. If you use Improvisation Arrow, your next ranged attack roll that turn suffers a -2 penalty.

Swift Tracker (Ex): At 6th level, you can move at your normal speed while following tracks without taking the normal -5 penalty. You take only a -10 penalty (instead of the normal -20) when moving at up to twice normal speed while tracking.

Camouflage (Ex): At 8th level, you can use the Stealth skill to hide in your favored terrains, even if the terrain doesn't grant cover or concealment.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex): At 10th level, while in your favored terrain, you can use the Stealth skill even while being observed.

SCHOLAR WARDEN

The Guild of Ilm, formed in 365 A.E. by Fisher Calibannis, took on the duties to administer and coordinate the external operations of custodians on the periphery of Limshau and beyond. They operated from the Limshau capital until Calibannis's death at the ripe human age of 205, where he left his power and assets to his bonded companion, Lannis Aerialiss. Lannis was responsible for the aggressive push of custodians outside of the borders of Limshau. Before, the custodians would defend the cities and the farms but never actively seek out knowledge beyond their borders. Librarians would commit to such crusades all the time, though their quests took them to private collections and other libraries to seek their prizes. The Guild of Ilm was an elite order of custodians tasked with retrieving knowledge from riskier locations, dungeons, and abandoned castles. The guild carries considerable respect in this field and has never been seriously challenged on the accuracy of their accounts. Librarians take the lackluster assignments. The Guild of Ilm sends their custodians only where a librarian's life would be in danger or if the situation itself requires a more aggressive hand. Of all the custodians in Limshau, those of Ilm are truly warrior scholars, how the nickname, "Scholar Warden" came about.

You are an elite member of the guild. You returned to the Guild's office in Warraqueen and have taken on the oath of the order. To be a member of the guild is to be nearly fanatical in the perseverance of knowledge and freethinking. Unlike other custodians,

SCHOLAR WARDEN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Instant Reflexes, Lightning Strike (1/day)
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Flow or Crash (1/day)
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Lightning Strike (2/day)
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Flow or Crash (2/day), Reject All Restrictions
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Lightning Strike (3/day)
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Flow or Crash (3/day)
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Balance of Power, Lightning Strike (4/day)
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	Flow or Crash (4/day)
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Lightning Strike (5/day)
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	Awareness has no Frontier, Flow or Crash (5/day)

you are expected to record your adventures and missions for planned documentation and publication later.

You do not quest for your own greed. You do not travel the land seeking gold or glory. You are selfless in your path to free the world from those that would suppress the truth. Words are gold; books are the real treasure, and heaven is a world without fear.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Trait: Custodian

Feats: Dodge, Mobility

Skills: Acrobatics 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Stealth (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all light armor.

Instant Reflexes (Ex): Starting at 1st level, when you ready an action, you can ready a full round action.

Lightning Strike (Ex): Once a day, starting at 1st level, you can gain a standard action as an immediate action to anything. Each time you reach an odd level past 1st (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th), you gain an additional use of Lightning Strike per day.

Flow or Crash (Ex): Become what you need to survive. Adapt, flow, slide, and prove yourself. Starting at 2nd level, you can replace your swift action on your turn with a move action. Each time you reach an even level past 2nd (4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th), you gain an additional use of Flow or Crash a day.

Reject all Restrictions (Ex): Be unbound in how you apply your skills. Take action while others slumber. Your enemy is not across the field but in your inability to break rules. At 4th level, you gain reach with all melee weapons that don't have it when making opportunity attacks.

Balance of Power (Ex): At 7th level, you can take a 5-foot step as a swift action. This does not count as a

5-foot step.

Awareness has no Frontier (Ex): Reject all styles, rules, and limitations. At 10th level, you can use two immediate actions per round and two opportunity attacks per target per round. The two immediate actions still count as a single swift action on your turn.

URMAGE

The claim on who acquired the arcane arts from dragons and placed that power on a totem may never be resolved. Laudenians have the most credible right, though chaparrans argue the original and absent first fac developed that technique and handed it over to their children. Despite this debate, laudenians are still known as some of the most powerful mages on the planet. Their upper echelons of wizards are the urmages, the first masters of arcane power. Their home tower of Elsius stands higher in the sky than any other constructed object (though not actually the tallest building). They do have proof of design for nearly two dozen spells, and a full quarter of the magic items that scatter the landscape are theirs.

Your position as an urname represents the elite, the envy of all wizards in Canam. Though not possessing the absolute book knowledge and history of every spell like one from Koana, you possess a mastery of the Pleroma language that nearly equals the dragons themselves. You can play with magic, dance it around with your whim, and even create new variations of spells no one had seen before. You can even resist the magical might of your enemies. Sure, Limshau mages know more about the history of arcane, the who's and when's.

You know the why's and how's and with that power, you can control the very fabric of the universe. You only have faith in your totem. You strive to reach that moment when you are fully adept in Pleroma, as fluent as any finite god. At this point, you may be able to understand entirely their view of the cosmos and control your fate. With the onslaught of Attricana, laudenians' days are few, with every fifth child emerging of another race. With children being born fewer and fewer, your race is petrified to fading out as your ancestors' did. But they never fully understood the influence of Attricana. Perhaps, with enough power, you can finally



URMAGE

URMAGE

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Alter Power Type	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Element Synergy (5)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Magic Recall (1/day)	
4	+3	+2	+1	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5	+3	+3	+2	+3	Attack Reflection (1/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6	+4	+3	+2	+3	Magic Recall (2/day)	
7	+5	+4	+2	+4	Superiority	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8	+6	+4	+3	+4		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9	+6	+5	+3	+5	Magic Recall (3/day)	
10	+7	+5	+3	+5	Attack Reflection (2/day), Element Synergy (10)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

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comprehend the ways of magic. Perhaps, you will stop being a slave to it and finally be its master.

Hit Dice: d6

REQUIREMENT

Race: Laudenian

Skills: Knowledge (arcane) 6 ranks, Spellcraft (6 ranks)

Spells: Able to cast 4th level arcane spells

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Knowledge (arcane), Knowledge (religion), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spell-

craft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Alter Power Type (Su): Starting at 1st level, and upon reaching a new level, you can swap any of the following keywords on your spells for any other: cold, fire, lightning, sonic.

Element Synergy (Su): At 2nd level, choose one of the following energy types: Cold, fire, lightning, or sonic. You gain resistance 5 to that element. Upon reaching a new level, you can change this resistance to a

different type. At 10th level, it increases to resistance 10.

Magic Recall (Su): At 3rd level, you can induce magic recall on a spell. If the target or all targets of a spell you cast succeed in its or their saves against the effect, you can use a *free action* to recall the spell to use again (against the same or different targets). If the spell inflicts a reduced effect for a save (like half damage), recalling the spell nullifies the save effect and the spell is effectively reset. You cannot recast the spell on the same round it is recalled. You can use magic recall *once a day at 3rd level, twice a day at 6th level and three times a day at 9th level*.

Attack Reflection (Su): At 5th level, you are able sense the flow of Attricana like a river through the battle. You see where the influence changes the world around and how it affects certain creatures. You speak a word and control the wave of energy around you, directing it where you wish. If you fail a saving throw for a spell or spell-like effect that inflicts cold, fire, lightning, or sonic damage, as an *immediate action*, you absorb the spell energy instead of taking damage. You can then cast (as part of the same action) an energy spell that targets the creature that attacked you. This spell acts as a spell of the highest level you can cast but does not occupy a slot. The target can make a Ref save for half damage. The damage inflicted is the same as the damage dealt by the triggering attack. The damage you inflict can be cold, fire, lightning, or sonic. You can use attack reflection *once a day at 5th level and twice a day at 10th level*.

Superiority (Su): At 7th level, your talents allow you to control the influence of magic, altering rules on a whim, turning the fatal to the helpful. *Once a day*, if you are hit with a spell or spell-like effect that deals cold, fire, lightning, or sonic damage, as an immediate action, you take no damage, and instead gain temporary hit points equal to the damage dealt.

TECHAN PATHS ANGEL SNIPER

The Angel outer wall is one of the greatest works of construction in the known world. A monstrous barricade surrounds the city, accented by defense towers able to see off as far as Antikari. Along with gatehouses, flanking towers prevent even the largest armies from an easy assault. The wall is not solid, being filled with an intricate network of battlements and sniper holes. Most of the bogg raiders migrating towards the wall never see their enemies. The Angel snipers take them out while still deep in the forest. As an Angel soldier, you are trained not only to deliver long range fire, but to do so to several targets. When boggs or puggs emerge to attack, they do so in overwhelming numbers. There is no time for aiming. You must take out as many of those little bastards as you can before they get too close to your city.

Angel snipers surpass all others on Earth, even those from the xenophobic city of Mann, another bastion boasting a defensive wall. Most Angel snipers carry



ANGEL SNIPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+1	Automatic Reflexes (2/day)
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Waste of Skill
3	+3	+1	+2	+2	Automatic Reflexes (3/day)
4	+4	+1	+2	+2	The Second Shooter
5	+5	+2	+3	+3	Automatic Reflexes (4/day)
6	+6	+2	+3	+3	Splintering Shrapnel
7	+7	+2	+4	+4	Automatic Reflexes (5/day)
8	+8	+3	+4	+4	Reduce Enemy Capacity
9	+9	+3	+5	+5	Automatic Reflexes (6/day)
10	+10	+3	+5	+5	Perfect Shot Placement

out their tours inside or on the walls of the bastion. Seldom do they ever leave the safety of their city. Almost every single mission outside the walls, whether in shuttle or in a scrambler, carries at least one sniper with them. Rival bastions have copied their discipline and training, but the results have never been exactly duplicated.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Trait: Bastion of Origin - Angel

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor except advanced, all medium armor except advanced, and all heavy techan armor except advanced. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Automatic Reflexes (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you can make a single ranged attack with a sniper weapon using a swift action. You can only use this ability in the same round you already hit a target with a sniper weapon. You can use Automatic Reflexes twice at 1st level, gaining an additional use every 2 levels after (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level).

Waste of Skill (Ex): At 2nd level, if you score a critical threat, you may choose to do normal damage and instead make single ranged attack with a sniper weapon as a free action. You can only use this ability once per turn.

The Second Shooter (Ex): At 4th level, you are able to fire a second bullet so quickly after the first,

your foes are convinced they have two snipers when it's really just you. Once per round, if you hit a single target two or more times with a sniper weapon in the same round, you can use a *swift action* to make another ranged attack with your sniper weapon at your highest base attack bonus. This attack deals half damage and cannot inflict a critical hit.

Splintering Shrapnel (Ex): Once a day, at 6th level, if you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or less using a ranged attack with a sniper weapon, each creature within 10 feet of the target takes damage equal to a normal non-critical hit with the same weapon.

Reduce Enemy Capacity (Ex): At 8th level, if you miss an enemy two consecutive times using a sniper weapon without attacking a different target, the enemy is staggered until the start of your next turn.

Perfect Shot Placement (Ex): At 10th level, you're able to make multiple shots without a significant reduction in accuracy. If you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or less using a sniper weapon, you can make another single ranged attack with your sniper weapon as a free action. You can only use this ability once per round.

BANNER HEAD

You may not be the leader, but everyone across the battlefield thinks you are. You stand taller and bolder than the rest. Your stare can lock upon an enemy from across a field. Your foes know well and truly if you have them in your crosshairs. You have no concept of subtlety and are known to do foolish acts in the cause of intimidation. Your allies may object but often times, these attempts work. You can make even the most fearless monsters flinch from your stare.

You are not a pretty individual. You are not one for arts and crafts. You have no hobbies. You have one job. You shoot people twice in the chest and once in the head. You do it for no other reason than the objective you have been asked to carry out. Your loyalty runs only to the men and women next to you. To them, you're the champion hero. To your foes, you are the one target they need to take down. You want them to think that. What good is war if there is no one to shoot at?

Hit Dice: d10

BANNER HEAD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Fleeting Adversary
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	The War Pose
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Adversarial Rage (+2)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Remember Me?
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Come and Get Some
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Adversarial Rage (+4)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Unexpected Response
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Adversarial Rage (+6)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Adversarial Rage (Critical)

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Fleeting Adversary (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you can use *fleeting adversary* as many times a day as your *Wisdom* modifier. As a *free action*, select one enemy within 50 feet and line of sight to you. The target is your fleeting adversary. You gain a +1 bonus to attack your fleeting adversary, and your fleeting adversary suffers a -2 to attack any other target except you. This effect ends if you drop below 0 hit points, the creature drops below 0 hit points, or line of sight is broken between you and your target. You can only have one fleeting adversary at any time.

The War Pose (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can take a -1 penalty to attack rolls for each weapon to wield two-handed small-arms as if they are one-handed small arms. They still count as two-handed small arms for purposes of provoking opportunity attacks and for movement penalties but count as one-handed small arms for purposes of abilities and feats that require them.

Adversarial Rage (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, *once per day*, you can use a *free action* to gain a damage bonus against hits on your fleeting adversary. This bonus ends if you drop below 0 hit points, your fleeting adversary drops below 0 hit points, or if you move out of line of sight. The damage bonus is +2 at 3rd level, increas-

ing to +4 at 6th level and +6 at 9th level.

Special: At 10th level, you can confirm one critical hit against your fleeting adversary without having to re-roll the attack.

Remember Me? (Ex): A few well-placed shots bring an enemy's attention back around to you. Starting at 4th level, if your fleeting adversary attacks an ally, you can make a single ranged attack as an immediate action.

Come and Get Some (Ex): *Once a day*, starting at 5th level, you can let out an impressive battle taunt. As a *move action*, target each enemy within 25 feet. You gain 3d6 + your character level in temporary hit points and all targets suffer a -2 penalty to attack anyone else until they hit you.

Unexpected Response (Ex): At 7th level, *once a day*, you can use a *free action* to use *unexpected response*. Until your fleeting adversary is reduced to 0 hit points or less, each time your fleeting adversary hits you, you gain +1 bonus to attack rolls when attacking it back. This bonus is cumulative up to +5 but is lost if you attack any other creature other than your fleeting adversary.

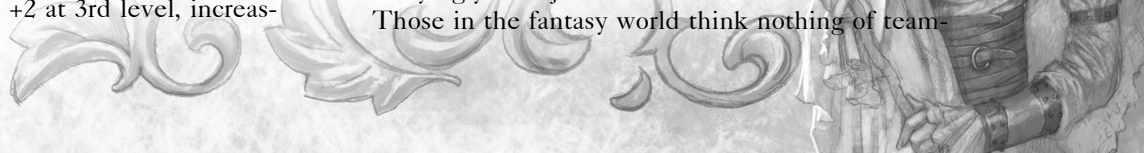
Onslaught (Ex): Your feet are planted and you wait until the enemy forces are close enough to see your eyes. They expect you to run. You don't. They realize too late your unshakable will. At 9th level, *once a day*, you can use a *move action* and target each enemy within 25 feet. Each target becomes your fleeting adversary until they are reduced to below 0 hit points.

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BROTHER OF BLOOD

Gender is not an issue. Age is not an issue. On the battlefield, every ally is a brother. You are a member of a team and you've all worked together long enough to understand each other's patterns. You know when one is hurt, regardless of where on the battlefield. You would never take risks that will endanger another brother's life. You would never step out of formation; never leave a brother's side. They must depend on you as you depend on them. If one of your own falls, nothing short of god's finger on the battlefield will stop you from carrying your injured out of combat.

Those in the fantasy world think nothing of team-



BROTHER OF BLOOD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Allied Support (2/day), More Like Family
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Army of Two
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Allied Support (3/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Better Reflexes (1/day)
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Allied Support (4/day)
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Team Effort
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Allied Support (5/day)
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Better Reflexes (2/day)
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Allied Support (6/day)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Team Effort

work. They've their own little places staked out in the combat theatre. Good for them. They probably met in a tavern yesterday. As for you and your team, you are perfectly tuned machine that is far greater than the sum of its parts.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

More Like Family (Ex): Starting at 1st level, if an opponent confirms a critical hit on an allied brother of blood, you can make a single ranged attack as an immediate action.

Allied Support (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you can use a *swift action* and target one allied brother of blood in line of sight. The targeted brother of blood gains a full-round action that must be finished before the end of your turn. Each brother of blood can benefit from allied support only once per round. You can use allied support *twice a day at 1st level, three times a day at 3rd level, four times a day at 5th level, five times a day at 7th level and six times a day at 9th level.*

Army of Two (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you grant a +2 bonus to damage rolls to each adjacent brother of blood (cumulative up to +6).

Better Reflexes (Ex): Starting at 4th level, if an allied brother of blood within 25 feet and line of sight is

hit by an attack, you can use an *immediate action* to swap places with the target; the attack hits you instead.

You can use better reflexes once a day at 4th level and twice a day at 8th level.

All as One (Ex): Starting at 6th level, all class skills for each allied brother of blood are class skills for all other allied brothers of blood.

Team Effort (Ex): All members of the team synchronize their actions to operate as one organism. Starting at 10th level, after rolling for initiative, all allied brothers of blood set their initiative to the highest value amongst them.

ECHAN GENERALIST

This whole concept of specializing is not wise when dealing with such a vast and varied landscape outside of bastions. You prefer to be an expert in many fields. You know weapons to defend yourself, foreign tongues to communicate, and the experience with unfamiliar cultures to avoid violence. Of all the techans, you're clearly the most prepared for the outside world. You studied every nation, their histories and heroes. Such a commodity is valuable and you're wealthy in such stocks. Others may be skittish around you, the way you talk about the outside world. You may be a "blinder"—a lover of echa. However, your allies know your knowledge has gotten them out of situations that normally would have ended poorly.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Engineer 6 ranks, Sciences 6 ranks, Vehicle Operation 6 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation

BROTHER OF BLOOD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Direct Experience (+2 damage)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Book Smart
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Expert Trivia
4	+3	+2	+1	+2	Direct Experience (+3 damage)
5	+4	+3	+2	+3	Muscle Memory
6	+5	+3	+2	+3	General Practitioner
7	+6	+4	+2	+4	Direct Experience (+4 damage)
8	+7	+4	+3	+4	Book Smart
9	+8	+5	+3	+5	Weakness Recognition
10	+9	+5	+3	+5	Direct Experience (+5 damage)

(Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor and all one-handed small arms.

Direct Experience (Ex): Starting at 1st level, select one creature in line of sight after rolling initiative to be your focus until you roll for initiative again. You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls against that creature until it is killed. You can only have on focus at a time. This bonus increased to +3 at 4th level, +4 at 7th level, and +5 at 10th level.

Book Smart (Ex): At 2nd level, select three class skills and gain 2 additional ranks with them. At 8th level, select three more class skills and gain 2 additional ranks with them. They cannot be the same skills as you chose at 2nd level.

Expert Trivia (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you're able to remember some vital piece of information about your target. You share that information amongst your allies. You and all allies gain a +1 class bonus to attack your focus.

Muscle Memory (Ex): Starting at 5th level, you gain muscle memory. *As many times a day as your Intelligence modifier*, you can use a *move action* and gain a +5 bonus to your next Charisma-, Intelligence-, or Wisdom-based skill check.

General Practitioner (Ex): At 6th level, you gain 1 rank in every Charisma-, Intelligence-, or Wisdom-based skill.

Weakness Recognition (Ex): At 9th level, you are able to find a soft spot in the enemy. The first time you score a critical hit against your focus, the critical damage multiplier increases by 1 (x2 > x3 > x4 > x5).

FIELD MACHINIST

You have a niche. Without you, the others don't amount to much more than a bunch of poorly equipped primitives with clubs. As a specialist in the field, you are the most experienced in echa when dealing with disruption. You are a devout follower of the technological supremacy of man and are probably the most hardline defender

of the old ways.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Engineer 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor and all one-handed small arms.

Artisan of Gears (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +1 class bonus to Engineer rolls. At 3rd level, and for every two levels after, this bonus increases by 1.

False Reading (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, as many times a day as your Intelligence modifier, you can instantly recover a disruption effect on a piece of equipment in your possession OR you can gain a +2 bonus to your next Engineer roll.

Insurance Round (Ex): Starting at 4th level, as a *swift action*, you can scale down the damage of your weapon by one step (1d4 < 1d6 < 1d8 < 1d10 < 1d12 < 2d6 < 2d8 < 2d10). This lasts until you spend a *swift action* to switch it back. While this is in effect, if the weapon is disrupted, it automatically recovers at the start of your next turn. In addition, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls with the scaled-down weapon. You can't gain this benefit with a weapon that is already disrupted.

Frantic Repair (Ex): At 6th level, *once a day*, you can use a *move action* and gain one of the following effects:

- You use 1% of the value of a broken item in widgets and the item is fixed.

FIELD MACHINIST

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	Artisans of Gears (+1)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	False Reading
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	Artisans of Gears (+2)
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	Insurance Round
5	+4	+2	+3	+3	Artisans of Gears (+3)
6	+5	+2	+3	+3	Frantic Repair
7	+6	+2	+4	+4	Artisans of Gears (+4)
8	+7	+3	+4	+4	Covered in Grease
9	+8	+3	+5	+5	Artisans of Gears (+5)
10	+9	+3	+5	+5	Works For Me

- Remove one day of work in the creation of an item. Cost of the item is unaffected. You can only remove half the days required for an item being built.

Covered in Grease (Ex): At 8th level, all technology you build receives a 10% discount in widgets for construction.

Works For Me (Ex): At 10th level, you can use a swift action to increase the damage of the ranged weapon of an adjacent ally by one category (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10) until the start of your next turn.

FIELD MEDIC

You specialize in the treatment of the injured during combat situations. You know when to keep your head low, but more importantly, when to rise in defiance to protect those under your care. You might have been a doctor back home and found a calling out in the wilderness. If so, your allies probably wonder why you've chosen this path.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Heal 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor and all one-handed small arms.

A True Healer (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +1 class bonus to Heal rolls. At 3rd level, and for every two levels after, this bonus increases by 1.

Medical Exploits (Ex): Starting at 1st level, and for every two levels after, when a new field medic level is gained, you gain new exploits per day as if you had also gained a level in medic operator. You do not, however, gain other benefits a character would have gained.

Heal Thy Self (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can use a move action to cure yourself of hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Race To The Fallen (Ex): Starting at 4th level, if an ally falls back from a heavy blow, you can race to her aid. You can move up to your speed as a move action, provoking no opportunity attacks, as long as you move towards an ally hit the previous turn.

FIELD MEDIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	EXPLOITS
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	A True Healer (+1)	+1 level for medic exploits
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Heal Thy Self	
3	+1	+1	+2	+2	A True Healer (+2)	+1 level for medic exploits
4	+2	+1	+2	+2	Race To The Fallen	
5	+2	+2	+3	+3	A True Healer (+3)	+1 level for medic exploits
6	+3	+2	+3	+3	Impromptu Surgery	
7	+3	+2	+4	+4	A True Healer (+4)	+1 level for medic exploits
8	+4	+3	+4	+4	Profound Medical Advice	
9	+4	+3	+5	+5	A True Healer (+5)	+1 level for medic exploits
10	+5	+3	+5	+5		+1 level for medic exploits

Impromptu Surgery (Ex): At 6th level, *once a day*, you can take *1 minute* and immediately end any and all of the following adverse conditions affecting one target: ability damage, blinded, confused, dazed, dazzled, deafened, diseased, exhausted, fatigued, feebleminded, insanity, nauseated, poisoned, sickened, and stunned.

This does not remove negative levels or restore permanently drained ability score points.

Profound Medical Advice (Ex): Starting at 8th level, *once a day*, when you use a medical exploit, you can increase your Heal skill by 10 with the exploit.

No Longer Civilized (Ex): If an ally succumbs to his or her injuries, you can no longer be a healer. You must be a protector. Starting at 10th level, if an ally in line of sight is reduced to 0 or less hit points, you gain your Heal skill bonus as a bonus to damage with your next hit.

INFANTRY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

You are not placed on this world to lead. You support those that have earned your loyalty. You are an infantry support specialist. You carry the largest weapons and know how to employ them effectively without endangering the lives of your allies.

Your only weakness is your speed. Being the heaviest hitter has also often made you the slowest. Your abilities are based upon lying down heavy fire and to prevent the approach of invading forces.

Hit Dice: d12

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Heavy weapons and small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Weapons Platform (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you can use a *swift action* to gain a +1 class bonus to attack rolls with heavy auto weapons until the start of your next turn.

Lawnmower Barrage (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, when you take a 5-foot step, you are still considered to have not moved, avoiding attack penalties with two-handed small arms and heavy weapons (but not super heavy weapons). At 5th level, you can plant a super heavy weapon as a swift action.

Box Barrage (Ex): At 3rd level, you are able to divide your fire among several targets, maximizing your damage potential. As a *full-round action*, select *3 areas in weapon range*. Each area has a radius of *5 feet*. The areas cannot overlap. Make a ranged attack against each creature in the target areas. You can only use a weapon with the auto or heavy auto property with box barrage.

You can use box barrage *once at 3rd level, twice at 7th level, and three times at 10th level*. At beginning of your following turn after using box barrage, you can repeat it, moving the areas up to ten feet. You can only do this once per use.

The Mean One (Ex): Starting at 6th level, all opponents in a 30-foot radius to you suffer a -2 penalty to attack any other target but you. You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus to damage rolls against any opponents in that range.

Selective Fire (Ex): Starting at 4th level, when you target areas instead of single targets with ranged weapons, you can choose which targets are affected.

Full Blitz (Ex): *Once a day*, starting at 8th level, you can use a *full-round action* to make a single ranged attack to each enemy in range you can see. If no targets are killed by this action, you regain the use of full blitz. You cannot combine this ability with Selective Fire (you must attack each enemy).

Full Focus (Ex): Starting at 10th level, if you

INFANTRY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

LEVEL	BASE				SPECIAL
	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Weapons Platform
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Lawnmower Barrage
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Box Barrage (1/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Selective Fire
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Lawnmower Barrage
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	The Mean One
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Box Barrage (2/day)
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Full Blitz
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Box Barrage (3/day)

MAN-AT-ARMS

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	This Is My Rifle
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	My Rifle Is My Best Friend
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	As a Brother (1/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Fire My Rifle True (2/day)
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	As a Brother (2/day)
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	We Are Masters Of Our Enemy
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	As a Brother (3/day)
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Fire My Rifle True (4/day)
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	As a Brother (4/day)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Inseparable Appendage

make a *full round attack* and target the same opponent with every attack, you gain 1 additional attack at your highest attack bonus against the same opponent.

MAN-AT-ARMS

You are a professional soldier. You've been so since the moment you picked up a weapon. The only thing you can depend on is your firearm. By the end of the day, it is the most reliable friend you have. Having ventured into this wasteland these outsiders call home, you dedicate most of your time to ensuring your weapon does not break or jam. War is all you know, and you're good at it. You track your line to the honored knights of a previous age, when they used swords and shield crests to display their honor. Now you have chevrons of rank and a properly oiled firearm. Outside the bastion border, the old ways have returned. You can also almost respect those embracing the old code. You could even see yourself riding a horse as a knight—a trusted and proven sword in your hand. But that wasn't your path.

You were born in a bastion, so your sword is your gun, and those with blades are your enemy. Such is the way of war.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

This Is My Rifle (Ex): Starting at 1st level, select one specific two-handed small arm: you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls with that weapon. This is your chosen weapon for all man-at-arms abilities. When reaching a new level, you can select a different weapon.

My Rifle Is My Best Friend (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, the first time you change a clip or a cell on your chosen weapon after rolling initiative requires only a *free action*.

As A Brother (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you're able to perfectly balance your weapon and fire it without strain. As a *swift action*, you can move up to your speed, suffering no attack penalties with any firearms as a result of this movement. You can use as a brother *once at 3rd level, twice at 5th level, three times at 7th level, and four times at 9th level*.

Fire My Rifle True (Ex): At 4th level, you're able to compensate for recoil with your chosen weapon. Twice a day at 4th level and four times a day at 8th level, you can re-roll one missed attack roll with your chosen weapon. You use additional ammunition with the re-roll.

We Are Masters Of Our Enemy (Ex): Starting at 6th level, if you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer using an auto weapon firing, you can make a single ranged attack as a *free action*. You can only use one round of ammunition with the follow-up attack. You can only gain one attack this way per round.

Inseparable Appendage: At 10th level, your chosen weapon becomes as much a part of you as an arm. Your chosen weapon cannot be sundered and you cannot be disarmed. You can also switch your chosen weapon to a one-handed small arm as a *free action*.

OVERSEER

You are not as combat effective as the others. The most efficient application of your skill is to remain back and coordinate the actions of your team members. You relay, through radio and the volume of your voice, instructions to your partners. From your vantage, you have a unique perspective on the battle and can maximize the arrangement of your allies for optimum firing potential. Although sometimes being present alongside allies, your talents often place you in the safety of vehicles or

OVERSEER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	Battle Sweep
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Take the Opportunity (1/day)
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	Eyes All Around
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	Take the Opportunity (2/day)
5	+4	+2	+3	+3	Reevaluate Strategy
6	+5	+2	+3	+3	Take the Opportunity (3/day)
7	+6	+2	+4	+4	Outmaneuver
8	+7	+3	+4	+4	Take the Opportunity (4/day)
9	+8	+3	+5	+5	Superior Strategic Endeavor
10	+9	+3	+5	+5	Take the Opportunity (5/day)

behind fortifications, which presents the greatest advantage for managing the team's assets. Some may accuse you of being a coward, but often times the team cannot work without you.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Bluff 6 ranks. Diplomacy 6 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, and all small arms.

Battle Sweep (Ex): Starting at 1st level, as an immediate action, if an ally rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll, you or any other ally in line of sight of the initial ally can make a ranged attack against the same target as the initial ally

Eyes All Around (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can relay enemy weaknesses to your allies, giving them opportunities to fire. If you or an ally scores a critical hit on an enemy, one ally in line of sight of the initially ally uses an immediate action to make a ranged attack.

Take the Opportunity (Ex): At 2nd level, you are able to make quick adjustments to a strategy, without giving the impression you are improvising. Use a *swift action* and target two allies in line of sight to make a full-round action on your turn as an immediate action. You can use take the opportunity once at 2nd level, twice at 4th level, three times at 6th level, four times at 8th level and five times at 10th level.

Reevaluate Strategy (Ex): Starting at 4th level, you can make a quick alteration in the plan to adjust to enemy maneuvers. As many *times a day as your Wisdom modifier*, you can use a *move action* and move each ally within 20 feet up to 20 feet. This does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Outmaneuver (Ex): Starting at 7th level, if an enemy is flanked by two or more allies, you can use a *standard action* to make that enemy flat-footed.

Superior Strategic Endeavor (Ex): At 9th level, you're able to shout out a particularly complicated plan that will work flawlessly if everyone does what they're supposed to do. Use a *full-round action* to grant all allies a +2 bonus to attack until the start of your next turn.

RECON SNIPER

You dig yourself in and become one with the terrain. You ignore wind, rain, or even wandering monsters. Nothing distracts you. An entire army could pass without noticing. Even your attack is as silent as a mosquito bite, though far deadlier.

You approach your target and wait for the perfect moment. You adjust for every possible condition, from gravity to wind. When finally squeezing the trigger, only God could stop that round from finding its target. You never miss, as your purpose is to never give a foe the benefit of a reload. When you take out your target, your single goal, you slither away to your next objective. Your foes can dissect the terrain looking for you, but you were never where they thought. As they hunt you down, you aim for your next victim.

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Stealth 6 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Stealth (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

RECON SNIPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Flawless Reputation (1/day)
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Yowie Specialization
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Flawless Reputation (2/day)
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Specter (1/day)
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Flawless Reputation (3/day)
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Psychological Warfare
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Flawless Reputation (4/day)
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	Specter (2/day)
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Flawless Reputation (5/day)
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	System Shock

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all small arms, and all weapons with the sniper property.

Flawless Reputation (Ex): *Once a day*, starting at 1st level, if you miss on an attack roll with a sniper weapon, you can turn that result into hit. At 3rd level, and at every second level after, you gain an additional use of *flawless reputation* (1/day at 1st level, 2/day at 3rd level, 3/day at 5th level, 4/day at 7th level, and 5/day at 9th level). You can also use flawless reputation if you fail to confirm a critical hit.

Yowie Specialization (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, if you use a gillie/yowie suit in its proper environment and don't move from your position, use a *move action* to become invisible until you move.

Psychological Warfare (Ex): Starting at 6th level, if you drop an enemy more than 5 squares away to 0 hit points or fewer using a sniper weapon, select one enemy in line of sight to the dropped enemy. It is staggered until the start of your next turn.

Specter (Ex): *Once a day*, starting at 4th level, you can ignore one square of terrain that blocks line of sight or provides concealment or cover. At 8th level, you can use specter twice a day.

System Shock (Ex): *Once a day*, starting at 10th level, if you score a critical hit on an opponent with a

sniper weapon, you can inflict half that hit's damage at the beginning of your next turn on the same target as a free action.

RING FIGHTER

You have the belt. You've claimed the trophy. Few others boast the record you have. You fought hard and trained hard for the respect and it is well earned. In the realm of physical training, there is no better.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Feat: Improved Unarmed Strike, Striker

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, and all simple melee weapons.

Guard Control (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain

RING FIGHTER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Guard Control
2	+2	+1	+1	+0	Grapple Discipline
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Change Guard
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Tolerance Threshold
5	+5	+3	+3	+1	Grapple Discipline
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Pressure Point
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Choke / Lock
8	+8	+4	+4	+2	Grapple Discipline
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Side Control
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Mounted Attack

a +2 bonus to all saves against being blinded, confused, dazed, pinned, shaken, staggered or stunned.

Grapple Discipline (Ex): At 2nd level, you are able to gain the upper hand in almost any close combat situation. You can either gain a +1 bonus to your combat maneuver bonus or gain a +1 bonus to your combat maneuver defense. You gain an additional +1 to either at 5th level and 8th level.

Change Guard (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, while grappling an opponent at the beginning of your turn, you can impose up to a -4 penalty to your combat maneuver defense and offer the equivalent value as a bonus to your combat maneuver bonus (or vice-versa).

Tolerance Threshold (Ex): Starting at 4th level, you cannot be shaken or staggered.

Pressure Point (Ex): Starting at 6th level, if grappling a creature, you can stagger your opponent as part of sustaining the grapple. This lasts until the start of your next turn.

Choke / Lock (Ex): Starting at 7th level, each turn you sustain a grapple, you inflict damage equal to your Strength or Dexterity modifier on the target. This does not count as an action that's part of the grapple.

Side Control (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you grapple an opponent, it is automatically pinned.

Mounted Attack (Ex): At 10th level, you gain complete control over every opponent. While grappling an opponent, it cannot attempt to break free on its first turn. You also automatically pass the first sustain attempt.

SAPPER

Combat engineers have a long and respected history. You can be a bridge builder and a bridge destroyer. You approach bombs while others turn and run. With seconds on the clock, others give up while you take it as incentive.

Hit Dice: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed)

Skills: Demolitions 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Engineer (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all medium techan armor, all heavy techan armor, and all one-handed small arms.

The Long Walk (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +1 bonus to Engineer and a +1 bonus to Demolitions checks. At 4th level, 7th level, and 10th level, you gain an additional +1 bonus to either Engineer OR Demolitions.

Render Safe Procedures (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, if you are caught in the area of an effect requiring a Ref save, you can take a 5-foot step before needing to roll.

Enhanced I.E.D. (Ex): At 3rd level, you begin putting in that little extra effort your enemy will appreciate. If you pass at the Demolitions check when planting explosives, the result gains a +5 bonus.

Slight Chemical Improvement (Ex): Starting at 5th level, when you detonate explosives you have set with a blast radius of 10 feet or more, you increase the blast radius by another 5 feet.

Proper Application (Ex): Starting at 6th level, when determining the Ref DC for explosives you set, double the Tech Level of your Detonator.

Rapid Evolution (Ex): At 8th level, you're able to judge a catastrophe a moment before it occurs. As many times a day as your Dexterity modifier, you can use a swift or an immediate action and gain a +5 bonus to all your Ref saves until the end of your next turn.

Controlled Demolition (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you beat a Demolitions DC by 10 or more, you inflict +5 damage with the explosive instead of +2. If you beat the DC by 15 or more, you gain an additional +6 damage instead of +3.

Scorched Earth (Ex): At 10th level, your explo-

SAPPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	The Long Walk
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Render Safe Procedures
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	Enhanced I.E.D.
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	The Long Walk
5	+4	+2	+3	+3	Slight Chemical Improvement
6	+5	+2	+3	+3	Proper Application
7	+6	+2	+4	+4	The Long Walk
8	+7	+3	+4	+4	Rapid Evolution
9	+8	+3	+5	+5	Controlled Demolition
10	+9	+3	+5	+5	Scorched Earth, The Long Walk

sives carry the tendency of setting off chain reactions. After you detonate an explosive, a lingering fire breaks out until the start of your next turn, dealing your Intelligence modifier in fire damage to any targets entering or starting their turn in the affected area.

SELKIRK BRAWLER

Isolated for hundreds of years, the miners of Selkirk have learned to make the most of what they had around. Their greatest asset was their brute strength and unfaltering will. Nowhere was this reflected more than in their national sport: rugby. Every union in the bastion operates a team and the seasons never technically end. There is no downtime and seldom a moment's rest. Everyone plays; everyone wins; everyone loses. The only population not on the field or on reserves for the team serves in the military. Since the entire population rotates from sports and armed services, everyone serves as well. Fairly quickly, the same approach warriors fought on the game field translated to how warriors fought on the battlefield.

Considering the massive disruption field caused by the terrain and the hidden city of Laudenia somewhere nearby, little of the Selkirk technology could operate outside of their mountain. This forced them to adapt to melee combat not unlike the echan narros they often traveled with. Although many from Selkirk still insisted on carrying heavy weapons and heavier armor, a few preferred to translate their game skills onto the combat field. When the Selkirk miners first arrived at Thos Thalagos, the narros were impressed with the great skill of the miners in unarmed combat. The Selkirks brought over another pastime the narros there quickly embraced, wrestling, which still continues today.

Oddly enough, the miners from both lands square off evenly matched. This brought more of the unarmed fighters out from Selkirk to brave the echan mountains to try their talents against the narros.

Soon after, the Selkirk brawler became a common sight on all caravans from the bastions and almost every citizen leaving the city knows a thing or two about defending themselves.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Ability: Strength 16

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Feat: Improved Unarmed Strike, Striker

Origin: From Selkirk

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Born in the Mines (Ex): At 1st level, you gain one combat feat, sometimes called a fighter bonus feat. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to grapple attempts.

Tightened Grip (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, *as many times a day as your Strength modifier*, you can sustain a grapple without requiring a sustain roll.

Head But (Ex): At 2nd level, you are able to deliver an attack directly, noggin to noggin. As many times a day as your Constitution modifier, if you sustain a grapple and inflict damage, you can inflict an additional 3d6 damage on the target you are grabbing. This damage increases to 5d6 at 4th level, 7d6 at 6th level, 9d6 at 8th level, and 11d6 at 10th level. You can only use head but once per target and only on targets your size or smaller.

Head Slam (Ex): Starting at 5th level, if you have one grappled creature in each hand, you can use a *move action* to inflict 2d6 damage on each target. You can only use head slam once per round.

Surprising Extension (Ex): At 7th level, you are able to grab enemies previously believed to be out of reach. *As many times a day as your Strength modifier*, you can increase the reach of any grapple attempt by 5-foot (1 square) until the end of your next turn.

Bear Hug (Ex): Starting at 9th level, you can maintain a grapple on a single target with two hands. You can move the grabbed target without needing to sustain the grapple. If using both hands on a grapple

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SELKIRK BRAWLER

LEVEL	BASE				SPECIAL
	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Born in the Mines
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Head But (+3d6)
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Tightened Grip
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Head But (+5d6)
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Head Slam
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Head But (+7d6)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Surprising Extension
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Head But (+9d6)
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Bear Hug
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Head But (+11d6), Neck Snap



SELKIRK BRAWLER

and attempting to inflict damage, you may double your Strength modifier.

Neck Snap (Ex): Starting at 10th level, if you are sustaining a grapple for the intent of inflicting damage and you score a critical threat, you automatically confirm the critical without needing to re-roll.

SIERRA MADRE GUNSLINGER

From the culture of Sierra Madre comes the martial gunslinger. As martial gunslinger, you believe your abilities to be naturally canny skills developed over years of hard training and discipline. You possess the capacity to be in the right place at the right time in close combat to place a perfect shot.

You prefer to offer yourself in close quarters, preventing enemies from striking from a distance. You maneuver to get close, maximizing your firing potential while reducing the capacity to be hit in return. It is not unheard to jump in the midst of an enemy squad, take

every one down at point blank range, and walk away without a scratch. To do that, you must get close, study your targets, and make every shot count. You study a scene in seconds and know exactly where to stand and in what position to offer the greatest level of defense while making your weapons lethal with a single shot.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Ability: Dexterity 16

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Origin: Must be from Sierra Madre

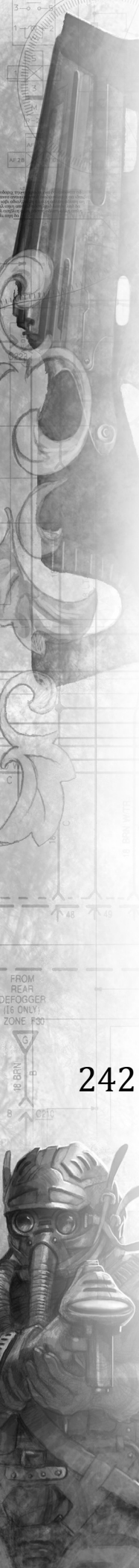
Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis),

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SIERRA MADRE GUNSLINGER

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SIERRA MADRE GUNSLINGER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Improved Reaction Time, Realistic Aiming
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Impossible Climb
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Drive'n Slide
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Parkour
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Weaver Stance
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Freerunner
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Gun Maga
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	In Your Base
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Kinetic Shot
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	Only Need One

Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Improved Reaction Time (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +2 class bonus to initiative.

Realistic Aiming (Ex): Starting at 1st level, if you commit to a *full attack action* and hit with your first ranged attack, you can elect to *ignore the next additional attack with that same action and gain additional damage equal to another hit with that same weapon*.

This additional damage does not require additional ammunition. If you have more than one additional attack, you ignore the next attack you would normally take. Further, if you have more than one additional attack, you can also elect to ignore more than one additional attack and increase the added damage. *You cannot roll for additional attacks and then choose to ignore them.* If your initial attack is a critical hit, additional damage is not increased as well. You cannot combine realistic aiming with two weapon fighting or bullet ballet.

Impossible Climb (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, if you perform a run towards a wall and move at least 2 squares (10 ft.) towards the wall, you can move along the wall as if you had a natural climb speed. If you have not cleared the wall by the end of the run, you may be required to make a Climb check to avoid falling.

Dive'n Slide (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, if you commit to a move or run, the last half of your remaining movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Parkour (Ex): Starting at 4th level, your speed cannot be reduced through difficult terrain when you run, and your speed is not reduced when balancing.

Weaver Stance (Ex): Starting at 5th level, you can wield a single one-handed small arm with two hands. If so, you suffer a -10 penalty to movement but gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Freerunner (Ex): Starting at 6th level, if you commit to a *full-round run* on your turn, on this turn and until the end of your next turn, you gain a +5 bonus to Acrobatics checks.

You can also run twice as long before making Con-

stitution checks.

Gun Maga (Ex): At 7th level, you are able to bolt across the battlefield, hardly taking a moment to aim. *Once per round*, you can move 5 feet (1 square) as a free action as long as this movement would not provoke an opportunity attack. This is not counted as your 5-foot step that turn.

In Your Base (Ex): At 8th level, you are able to duck under blades and groins and leap up behind enemy lines. *Once a day*, if you run, you do not provoke opportunity attacks and can pass through enemy occupied squares.

Kinetic Shot (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you score a critical hit on a target, the target is pushed 5 feet (1 square) and knocked prone.

Only Need One (Ex): If you employ realistic aim and score a critical threat, you can either increase your weapon's critical multiplier by 1 (x2 > x3 > x4 > x5) or automatically confirm the critical without needing to re-roll.

YORK GUN DANCER

Residents in York cope with echan encroachment daily. The natives watch as travelers walk along the main avenue from the west gates to the docks. York continuously deals with racial violence between the natives and foreign invaders from the outside, even if those refugees are humans. The income from the docks and immigrants force many to tolerate the migrating population. For the military and police, they are taught early on that most of their weapons will break down or be ineffective to most forces attacking their city. With training from those skilled in echa, the York military developed a system of analyzing enemies and determining the most sensitive place to strike with the most damage.

The gun dancer is a slang term attached to those individuals exhibiting remarkable skill in this field. There is no rank or school where one acquires the title. The nickname is affixed only to those warriors emerging with a prowess exceeding the others – a natural grasp of the skills, as if never needing to be taught.

You have been given such a moniker. You are able to examine a target in a blink and discern the perfect

YORK GUN DANCER

LEVEL	BASE				SPECIAL
	ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Faster Than Eyes Can See (1/day)
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Spastic Shot
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Faster Than Eyes Can See (2/day)
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Cowboy Kembo
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Faster Than Eyes Can See (3/day)
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Elegant Reload
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	Faster Than Eyes Can See (4/day)
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Mayhem Sonata
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	Gun Waltz

point on which to inflict the greatest harm. In addition, you have developed a harmony with the area around you, offering greater attention to your surroundings.

This allows you to avoid hits while still maintaining your concentration on the target. You rarely remain still in combat, constantly moving from cover to cover, always with a vital enemy weakness firmly locked in your crosshairs.

Hit Dice: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Ability: Dexterity 16

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Origin: Must be from York

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Faster Than Eyes Can See (Ex): Once a day, starting at 2nd level, you can reload a single one-handed small arm, taking no action to do so. This can even occur during a ranged attack. You can one additional use of faster than eyes can see at 4th level, 6th level, and 8th level.

Spastic Shot (Ex): At 3rd level, you are able to fire a second shot in the same time it takes any other person to fire one. Whenever you make a ranged attack as part of a standard or full-round action with a one-handed small arm, you gain one additional ranged attack at your highest attack bonus at a -4 penalty. This is not counted as part of two-weapon fighting, does not suffer from any other penalties, but the -4 penalty cannot be reduced with application of feats. You gain this ability only with your primary weapon.

Cowboy Kembo (Ex): Starting at 5th level, *once per round*, if you are wielding two one-handed small

arms and score a critical hit, you can make a single ranged attack with your opposite weapon against another target.

Earning The Nickname (Ex): Starting at 7th level, if you commit to a *full-attack action* and make a ranged attack against an adjacent target using a one-handed small arm, you can make one additional attack at the same attack bonus to one additional target granted a flanking bonus against you. There is no limit on the number of additional attacks you can make this way.

Elegant Reload (Ex): Starting at 7th level, while wielding two one-handed small arms, you can reload both as a single *move action*. If you have the Rapid Reload feat, you reload both weapons as a *minor action*.

Mayhem Sonata (Ex): At 9th level, you are able to perform a ballet of destruction. Once a round, while wielding two one-handed small arms, you can double your ammunition usage and double your ability bonus to damage. You can apply mayhem sonata after you hit. If you do not have enough ammunition, you cannot perform Mayhem Sonata.

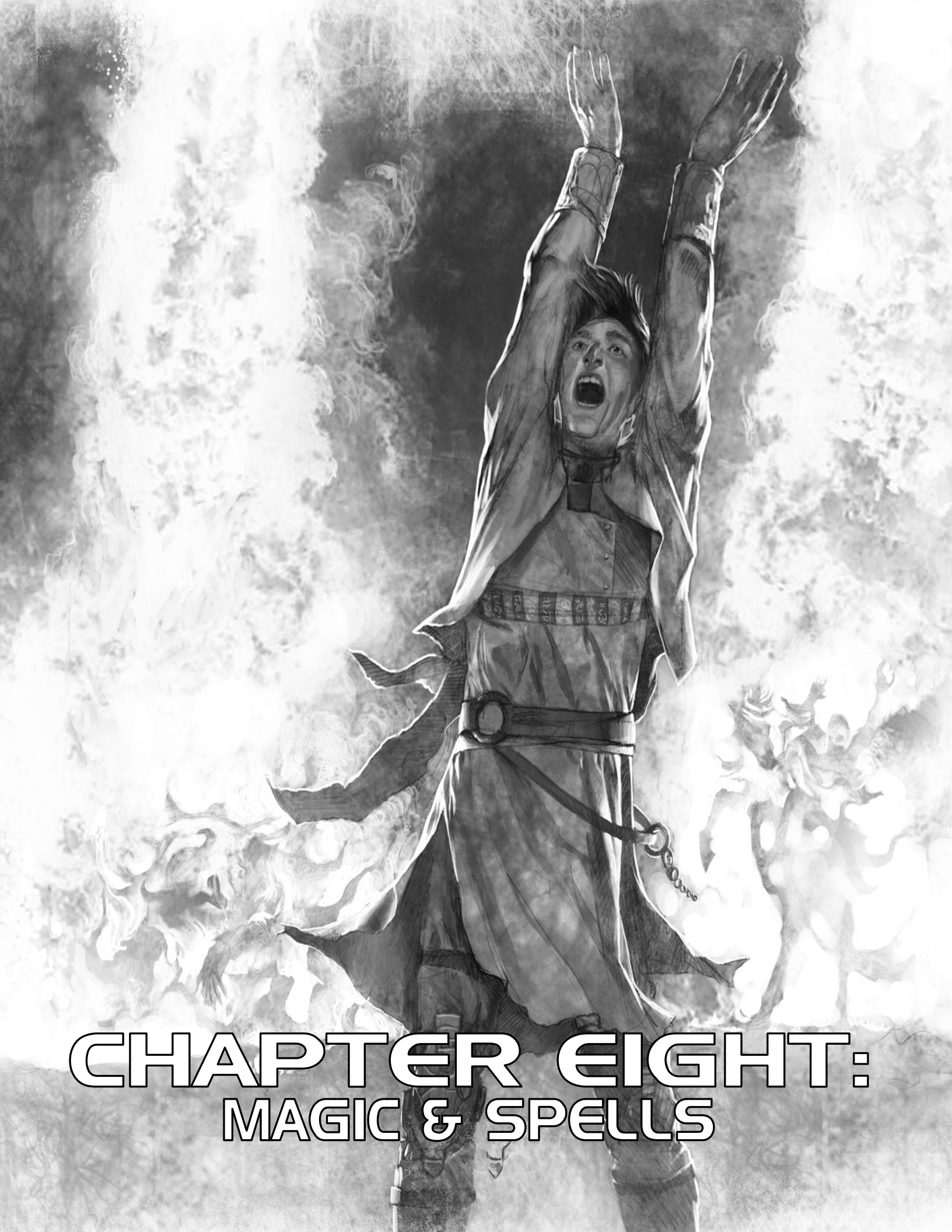
Gun Waltz (Ex): At 10th level, you are able to sa-shay and sidestep, firing at opponents and avoiding every counterattack. Any time you score a critical hit on an adjacent enemy or drop an adjacent enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you can move to any unoccupied adjacent square to the enemy as a free action. This does not provoke an opportunity attack.



YORK GUN DANCER

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CHAPTER EIGHT: MAGIC & SPELLS



Magic focuses its power through three sources:
Pleroma: The root of all spellcraft is the power to create something by calling its name. This magic is imbued in the language of dragons. All spells employ this language save for those which are cast by the naturally gifted (for players, this is found in the gneolistic, mystic, and vivicator traits). To the uneducated, this language is simply called draconic. To everyone else, it is Pleroma.

Naturally enchanted inorganic: Not only are there new elements like angelite, coruthil, and magnarros (born from previously rare minerals), there are also thousands of materials and combinations of elements that produce different results in the presence of magic. This involves alchemy as well as enchanted metallurgy. Those with the knowledge to forge items of enchantment are simply educated in the exacting ratios of alloys and ingredients required. Miscalculate by only 0.01 percent or 1 milligram, and the magical becomes lifeless.

Naturally enchanted organic: Just the same as monsters, some people possess magical abilities on their own from birth. These appear at random, though some people insist on a divine source to this gift. Both creatures wicked and wise have claimed such power. For players, this can come in the form of supernatural traits. They can offer mild magical enhancements or powerful spell-like effects to almost rival wizards.

THE GATES

Many scientists dedicating their lives to the study of Attricana prefer to endorse the theory that the white gate is a tear in the fabric of space connecting our universe to another. This other universe has rules of chemistry and physics abnormal to our own. Radiating from this tear is an unquantifiable aura where the clashing of two universes mix, resulting in the bizarre occurrences currently infecting the globe.

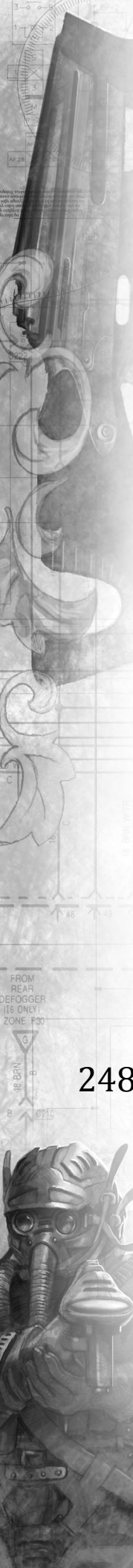
Authorities on the side of magic refute this, arguing that the white gate does lead to another world, but not another universe, as it is incomplete to stand on its own. That realm is reserved for gods and/or those who pass on through at the ends of their lives. Still another argument theorizes the white gate leads to outside our universe, to the flotsam our cosmos floats in, a literal infinity impossible to comprehend or even quantify in our reality.

Despite these arguments, laws of the universe change while in the wake of this white gate.

These changes are not always constant and often change with little to no warning. Because of this chaos, natural selection and evolution are rendered ineffective. Mutations that do occur create huge deviations that are systemic through a species, changing many suddenly the same way.

Most of these mutations could not physically exist in the scientific world. In the old age, the fae (the only ones to achieve intelligence beyond dragons) never tried to define the rules of Attricana. Since they had no concept of the previous world, there was no frame of reference to define the differences. Humanity had learned almost as much as they could know about the universe before being struck down. They were able to differentiate which rules were unchanged and which were altered.

For one, no matter how many scientific laws the white gate modifies, none are altered that would destroy life that existed before. This was an obvious boost for mankind and the other creatures walking the Earth. Many of the rules concerning biology and chemistry are amendments—additions to rules rather than deletions or whole



alterations. These allow greater variations of life without voiding existing ones. Though magic can be used to take life, these new natural laws would not destroy it on their own. In another case, magnetic fields are never affected, though other major forces of the cosmos, like gravity, are.

In locations saturated with magic via casters and monsters, the overall influence of Attricana increases. Observations have proved that more spawn races appear in regions populated by other magical creatures or in populations where magic use is prevalent. Once a great flare of magic occurs in a region, a cascade effect could follow where smaller creatures would beget larger ones. The reverse was also true. In areas where life does not exist, magic does not follow.

By this assumption, several techans have proposed moving to Antarctica. Humans not blessed with magic (unless forced upon them or if their soul is open to it) created large dead zones of lower disruption, present mostly in bastions. Magic is constant and though it can be reduced, it can never be fully suppressed. Most animals wandering the wild, despite being evolved and resistant to magical influence like man, eventually succumbed to its power. Some grew massive in size while others were able to channel great energy previously untapped. Given time, a few of them rose up into forms of rudimentary intelligence (kodiaks being a prime example).

Unlike animals, mankind has been relatively lucky. In the 500 years man has been exposed to magic, there has been virtually no major alteration to human physiology. There are reports of a few minor aberrations occurring in northern Canam and across the world in Lauropa and Slav, but overall humans seem resistant to the whims of the wave. One popular theory states that, if a race is intelligent enough to handle magic, they can prevent its total dominance. Dumber animals become slaves while smarter ones become masters. This does not entirely explain the fae, but the theory specifically mentioned evolved species as bound to this rule, which fae are not.

One group of intrepid scientists believed they found the secret to understanding the chaos from Attricana. They referred to it as the "Flow of Everything," a massive cause-and-effect chart of millions of entries of data that connect with other entries via 2 to 2000 different yes/no questions. These scientists became obsessed with explaining all the altered rules and the conditions causing one to go into effect in one moment and then do the opposite in the next. With the millions of different factors involved, all the original scientists died before ever solving even 1% of the entire system, without even discovering proof that it worked. Though descendants and newer experts have picked up the torch, modern disciples of the flow accept that even if every single altered rule is explained and connected, it would be useless to the world. One echalagian dismissed the entire escapade as pointless, as the number of factors actually needing to be observed was implausible.

This applies to the vastly overwhelming power

from Attricana. Ixindar corrupts rather than creates, allowing it to mimic many of Attricana's spells, though without its spark of life. The source of corruption has been hotly contested. Does Ixindar lead to hell or to a universe at the edge of death? If Attricana is every possible permutation, would it be also every type of dimension, and if so would Ixindar then be a doorway to nothing? If Attricana is infinity, then Ixindar would be zero. Magic from Ixindar does not disrupt. The creatures do not radiate nor do their spells. Instead, Ixindar corrupts the minds of those using the power. Almost all magic in the world is from Attricana and finding sources of Ixindar magic is difficult.

MIGRATION

Migration, a term coined by the damaskans, also known as a migration event, usually deals with a sudden and severe eruption from one of the gates. The resulting upsurge increases that gate's influence by a significant margin, almost to cataclysmic levels (regardless of which gate it is). It could also refer to any sizeable magical discharge covering a large area.

Migration events from Attricana beget a massive increase in new species, creatures impossible given the normal rules of nature. In contrast, a migration from Ixindar corrupts the life around it, turning the unbound into the slave, forcing all affected into following a single unified motivation to destroy or absorb anything not under control of Ixindar. The term migration probably began initially with the arrival of Ixindar, as it forced a million fae to leave their homes and march to the will of Mengus, becoming the first armies of pagus. Later, alternate events by Attricana would expand the term to any upswell in gate influence.

The opening of Attricana would be considered the first such migration, as it was followed shortly by the emergence of dragons, either by will of Amethyst or by Attricana creating gods out of dinosaurs. Fae would not arrive until much later, occurring slowly over thousands of years.

The aforementioned arrival of Ixindar with Mengus would be the second migration. Amethyst's final cataclysmic spell which closed Attricana and buried Ixindar would be the third, though with the gate closing after, having no aftereffect. After the fall of magic, it's return during the technological adulthood of mankind would prove the most devastating migration of all, as the sudden expulsion upon the gate's open rendered each and every machine and electronic device non-functional.

It's assumed that Ixindar's emergence produced a similar corruption. However, there's no record about which came first, Ixindar's arrival or Attricana's or how much time occurred between these two events. There is evidence that Ixindar was the initial event. The re-emergence of Attricana, while also ending the dominance of man, also contaminated the present Ixindar-bound vampires, binding them back to Attricana and turning them into tilen. Obviously, this would indicate

that Ixindar had opened first, but there still remains no information as to how long and if there was any technology left when Attricana finally opened.

The final conundrum involving migration events is their trigger. Amethyst and Mengus were directly involved with the all migration events occurring in the previous age, but with one locked inside Ixindar and the other dead, there's no information as to how Attricana reopened 500 years ago. Since then, there has not been another migration event.

PLEROMA

Pleroma is a word present in human history to denote the light above the world. To others it represents the fullness of divine power. It has also been suggested that Pleroma is the proper name for the flow of magic from Attricana, but this has never caught on. Even arcane spellcasters, renowned for their logical approach and cynical minds, use the term despite its divine connotation. To many of them, it may still be a light above our world, and to a greater extent, our universe, but there may be nothing divine or spiritual about it.

Stories dispute about how the world learned to use the words of Pleroma to channel spells. Pleroma allows individuals to direct power normally reserved for gods in myth. These words, sometimes no more than a solitary symbol spoken as a single syllable, can create life or destroy it. The words are absolute in their capacity to control the spell in a very specific way.

Some experts claim they are hallowed words fallen to the hands of mortals from God or gods creating the universe. Dragons were either the original recipients or the deified creatures themselves, blessing those under them with their teachings. A dragon seldom claims this authority, choosing to lay the credit solely on their eldest, Amethyst. The printed form of these letters focuses amazing energy and many wizards are not aware of the language's full scope.

Pleroma actually exists in three dimensions, with each letter having three views. This occasionally makes different symbols look identical when viewed at the same angle. Understanding this full language is not important for the channeling of magic, and most mages have no knowledge of the true nature of Pleroma. They know of only fifty-five letters, all that's required to cast any spell channeled through their totem. In truth, the real language contains 235. The small number of souls aware of this fact point to the impossibility of this language occurring naturally as proof of their divine origin and the existence of God. No species could ever design a language requiring three dimensions to fully comprehend. Only dragons have been able to harness greater power from the expanded language. The other theory is that the language was not naturally evolved, but rather constructed later, tied to the universe in a way no one has been able to explain. Yet another theory was put forward by Kereptis Rifts, who postulated, "As three-dimensional beings, we construct our language onto two dimensions. A naturally-evolved three-

dimensional language would then logically only emerge from a species existing in four."

Learning the true language of dragons and their written word is extremely difficult and only a few creatures with centuries to spare can claim fluency. The original Bibles of Drasago were created in the original tongue, though thankfully, they can be converted to the flat variety with a simple wave of the hand. More poetic passages lose much in the translation.

Some casters suspect even more powerful spells exist hidden in this third dimension and point to foundation anchors as proof, constructed as a receptacle for these rare and powerful spells. This may explain why one cannot copy the normal spell from an anchor as the caster must be aware of the spell's true form.

All spells drawing from Attricana appear alive when cast. They exist with enough intelligence to accomplish their task along with the drive to succeed at it. To fail would be worse than death, even if that death would occur moments later. From dancing lights to lightning leaping from fingers, every spell carries some indication that an intelligence other than the spellcaster is at work.

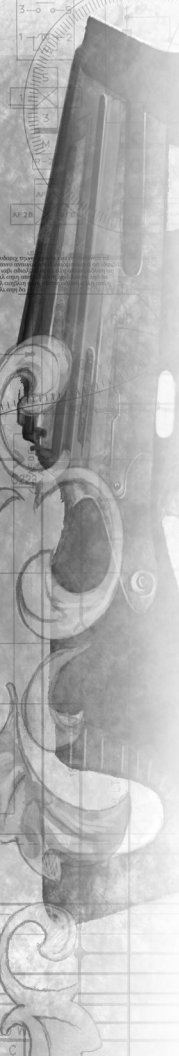
MENGUS

For as long as anyone cared to remember, Mengus has not been referred to by any other name. No mistranslation ever deviated it from an original. No creature has ever claimed to have seen Mengus and everyone accepts that she no longer possesses a physical body or the capacity to form in the real world. A few dragons suggested Amethyst and Mengus are two sides of a single metaphorical coin – a balance the world requires. Perhaps they were one god-like creature split into two, and Amethyst retained the body. Other theories speculate Amethyst shed off his darker side, explaining Mengus' lack of a physical form. The darker side was cast into space only to return later. Other theories endorse Amethyst and Mengus representing avatars of the great gates, intelligences from those realms given form. When dealing with Mengus, it is explained she either failed to take a physical body, possesses one in secret, prefers not to have one, or did and Amethyst destroyed it either upon landfall or before she arrived.

Since Amethyst was a male, it was assumed Mengus was as well even though there was no evidence of this. In the Gospel of Lazarus, page 956, paragraph 10 verse 5, Lazarus was quoted as saying, "I once allowed Mengus to peer into my soul. I do believe she flinched. Not all can be corrupted."

Lazarus never explained if this was an error on his part, but whatever the case, the gender assignment stuck. Amethyst refused to talk about the subject but insisted that Mengus is a force incapable of being destroyed by any mortal means. Amethyst also added he once possessed such power to destroy Mengus but had since lost it, implying Amethyst, as great as he was until his death, was once far stronger.

Generals and leaders of the dark armies profess to



hear Mengus's commands and speak their master's directives. The shemjaza are very much a product of their creator. They are perfect engines of destruction, reflecting the brilliance and malevolence of their designer. All known shemjaza are commanders, captains, and generals and none are to be taken lightly. The corrupted armies of pagus occupy the entirety of the ground forces. Typhox dragons, although swearing allegiance to Ixindar, refuse to take orders from these demons and continue their own selfish directions outside of the darklands.

Because Mengus could only look outward from Ixindar, when Amethyst buried the gate, the influence of it was frozen and locked inside. It is plausible Mengus wields some control or sway of the outside world, though greatly reduced. Some echalogians theorized that the great acts of human barbarism were due to the Mengus whisper and the continual fear of hell and demons emerged from her playful manipulation of mankind's nightmares.

Despite the great force of the second hammer, Ixindar is still not completely free. It appears Mengus truly cannot manifest physically in this reality, though no one is sure why. If the theory of Ixindar is correct and it strives to unify the universe in a solitary intelligence, Mengus may believe that by shepherding this process, she may control that intelligence and even merge with it, finally achieving that denied to even her, to truly become a god.

SAEQAAR

The arrival of Mengus also brought a variation of the deified language of Pleroma. This "corrupted" tongue acts in nearly identical ways, but culls its power from Ixindar rather than Attricana. It is considered a mirror of the draconic language, further reinforcing the theory that Pleroma is not the language of dragons at all. The symbols of this corrupted tongue resemble that of Pleroma, and are able to replicate similar results. However, this is only because the corrupted Pleroma is imitating the might of Attricana without the energy of chaos behind it. Ixindar does not spontaneously create anything; it must infect and convert what it finds to its side. There was no accepted name for this language, and had been simply called "corrupted" for centuries.

Later it received its own title, saeqaar, a word with no known human parallel. Since saeqaar's introduction, typhox dragons have learned to create new spells not found in Pleroma, which gave rise to the first necromancers.

Corrupted magic has no flamboyance in its casting. There is no life behind anything emanating from a corrupted spell. The spark of intelligence is an aspect of Attricana only. However, the corruption of saeqaar does allow a spell to be bottled in, preventing the eruption of magical disruption. Like all energy from Ixindar, saeqaar does not disrupt technology. Instead, it prefers to disrupt the very soul attempting to control it.

ATTRICANA SPELLS

Most spells originated from Attricana. One can be an evil caster still bound to Attricana; he just can't cast Ixindar unique spells (spells with the Death or Evil descriptor). Unique Attricana spells are those blessed enchantments exclusive to the white gate. Unique Attricana spells include all spells with a Good descriptor as well as monster summoning spells. In the case of the latter, monsters are not actually summoned—they are created at that moment by will of the spellcaster, happy to return to the chaos of Attricana once that purpose is fulfilled.

IXINDAR SPELLS

Ixindar spells include all spells without the Good descriptor or spells which summon monsters. Ixindar has many exclusive spells. These are vile spells with few redeeming qualities. Spells unique to Ixindar do have the unfortunate side effect of corrupting the caster, rendering it near impossible for a virtuous magic user to call upon the black gate without incurring its pollution. All spells with the Death or Evil descriptor are unique to Ixindar and thus are not available to casters bound to Attricana. A spellcaster tied to Ixindar has been trained in the basic works of spellcraft and is able convert the words of Pleroma into corrupt. Unlike Attricana spells, the learning of saeqaar and the casting of Ixindar spells does not make one an echan. Ixindar does not disrupt technology.

CORRUPTION

Because of Ixindar's power of influence, there can never be a good spellcaster bound to Ixindar casting corrupt spells (at least not for very long). Eventually, the corruption seeps into the soul, distorting its view, and rendering the caster wicked.

Characters with any alignment save for Lawful Evil cannot cast negative spells (those with the Death or Evil descriptors) without the risk of corruption.

Attricana is no guarantee for good and every creature born of magic, save for pagus and shemjaza, are tied to it. On the flipside, the majority of those souls born or bound to Ixindar are evil. Those that are corrupted nearly always remain that way. Those born to the darkness have been known to move away from that skewed path, but this seldom occurs with those corrupted. Casting Attricana spells or using Attricana magic can turn someone into an echan, but it won't affect alignment like Ixindar does.

Corruption Point: When you use magic tied to Ixindar, you will fall under the influence corruption. This occurs the moment you wield a corrupted weapon, cast a negative spell, or study the language of saeqaar. You start at level 1 with a corruption value of 0. These rules work the same as echan saturation points but are recording separately. You gain corruption points under the following circumstances:

- **+2:** You wield an Ixindar weapon (per minute).



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- **+2:** You wear Ixindar magic armor (per hour).
- **+2:** You benefit from Ixindar magic items in your possession (per hour).
- **+2:** You study the arcane arts of the corrupted tongue of saeqaar (per day).
- **+1:** You drink an Ixindar potion.
- **+4:** You cast a spell bound to Ixindar.

The moment you reach a corruption point of 20, you run the risk of changing alignments. At the beginning of each day, you must make DC20 Will save. This DC is increased by your corruption value – 20. If you fail,

you alignment shifts one step using the Alignment Step diagram in the **PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK**.

You shift one step close to Lawful Evil. You do not step diagonally, only down or left, as long as it is one step closer to Lawful Evil. You can choose which direction you take (for example, if Neutral Good and you fail a Will save, you can decide to become Neutral or Lawful Good. Even if already evil, corruption still takes place. The only alignment that doesn't fall under corruption is Lawful Evil itself.

The moment your alignment shifts into Lawful



Evil, your soul is bound to Ixindar. You no longer generate an EDF. Your echan saturation point is set to zero (if you had any). If you acquire saturation points, you can revert to being an echan, but this does not affect your alignment. If you gain enough saturation points to switch to being echan, your corruption value is unaffected, and switching back to Ixindar is thus quite easy.

The only way to expunge corruption points is with time (or in rare occurrences, an *atonement* spell—see later). You will lose 1 corruption point each week as long as you don't accrue any in that time. The moment you do, the time period resets. If your alignment changes before your value falls below 20, the alignment change remains. This is also true if you tie your soul to Ixindar.

Divine Magic: The only instances of divine magic in Amethyst come via certain traits. These are from individuals well endowed in a gate's influence. Although not stated in the trait, most gneolistics, mystics, and vivicators are tied to Attricana, but they are as susceptible to corruption as anyone else.

ENCHANTMENT

Some experts contest the claim that Attricana is less a source of magic and more a source of chaos. As the famous quote passed among wizards goes, "Anything you can think of thinks for itself." Attricana is about life in every possible combination, breaking rules nature declares incontrovertible. A creature or force derived from these broken rules emanates that same chaos. Since most technology requires irrefutable laws of the universe to function, machines and magic cannot co-mingle. The confusion arises as to how can Ixindar succeed at this. Where Ixindar encourages control and order, even at the expense of intelligent life—which is itself a factor of chaos—Attricana encourages nothing other than the perseverance of intelligence, even at the expense of reality. This reality can stain a creature as much as Ixindar can, but where corruption can affect one's outlook on life, all Attricana can do is turn something into another catalyst of chaos, radiating the same aura of magic as the gate itself. This created a chain reaction 500 years ago, forcing all remaining fragments of working technology into the bastions. Although all fae are slaves to magic, humans have a choice, being born via the normal rules of biology. They can choose to accept the world of magic or remain disciplines of science. There is no good or evil in this conflict. There is only opinion, and there is no wrong answer.

However, the choice is often permanent. By wielding that magic sword or by casting that spell, a human ties his soul to Attricana, becoming one with the world of magic, and disrupting technology just as an elf would.

SATURATION POINT

Saturation Point: If you are not a "radiant"—a creature tied to Attricana which radiates magic—then you are able to use technology without disruption. Only

humans, pagus, and shemjaza fall into this category. However, if you use magic enough, eventually, you'll become one with the world of enchantment, becoming a true echan in the same grade as even the fae. You gain no additional benefits but now generate an EDF. You lose your capacity to use technology. The critical saturation point is 20. You start at level 1 with a saturation point of 0. You gain saturation points under the following circumstances:

- **+1:** You wield a magic weapon (per minute).
- **+1:** You wear magic armor (per hour).
- **+1:** You benefit from magic items in your possession (per hour).
- **+1:** You study the arcane arts (per day).
- **+1:** A beneficial magical effect (including magical healing) is placed upon you.
- **+1:** You drink a potion.
- **+10:** You are brought back from the dead via a spell or spell-life effect.
- **+20:** You bond with a non-human.
- **+20:** You select a supernatural trait

The moment you reach a saturation point of 20, you now generate an EDF. Points do not immediately go away. If you do not accrue any additional points, you remove 1 from your saturation point total every week (unless bonded or selecting a supernatural trait; if so, your total can never drop below 20).

POLARITY AND DISRUPTION

Magic items, creatures, and spells cast (either from a good or evil spellcaster) from Attricana follow standard disruption rules listed in the Equipment chapter. Since casting Attricana spells makes the caster an echan, he also generates an EDF.

Magic items, creatures, and spells cast from Ixindar do NOT generate an EDF. They follow Ixindar rules which do not disrupt technology. An evil caster casting Attricana spells still creates disruption with his spell. Someone who has turned to Ixindar (intentionally or as a result of corruption) no longer generates an EDF. Unless he specifically has Ixindar-forged magic items, he may still generate (from his equipment). If possessing all Ixindar-tied magic, a corrupted individual could use it and technology side-by-side. However, since most (nearly all) corrupted creatures are echan-sourced (pagus, shemjaza, etc), they still possess a pronounced ignorance to technology and are unable to understand the science to develop their own. No pagus has ever been seen with a plasma rifle in his hand, though it is technically possible.

FOUNDATION SPELLS

Foundation spells, allegedly passed down from the dragons, laudenians, and shemjaza are spells only found on anchors scattered about the world. Because of their rarity, few casters of substantial power possess more than one or two. Only rare individuals know of them

all. They do not share this knowledge openly with anyone. Some anchors are buried for being too dangerous while others are guarded so obsessively that few have been able to successfully acquire them. Those who do are sworn to keep them secret. Anchors are considered artifacts, are thus extremely rare, and virtually impossible to destroy. Many anchors are one-of-a-kind pieces; the more powerful (i.e. 9th level), the rarer they can be. Casters can transfer a spell from an anchor without destroying it. However, unlike normal arcane spells, others cannot copy the spell from the totem. There are certain inscriptions from anchor that are implanted into memory upon study. The draconic words placed on the totem are incomplete. The caster can offer this hidden inscription to another.

Foundations spells are all spells 8th level or higher. Even if a character is able to cast 8th or 9th level spells, he is unable to unless he finds an anchor. As always, a wizard can still cast lower level spells in higher spell slots (either by enhancing a spell or simply having a lower spell occupy a higher slot) but spells exclusive to 8th or 9th level are unavailable without an anchor. This only applies to arcane spells not divine spells (8th or 9th level divine spells do not exist in *Amethyst*).

The Price: Each time a foundation spell is cast, the caster suffers 1d4 points of Constitution damage, over and above any other costs listed in the spell entry.

ANCHOR EXAMPLES

What follows is only a small list of anchor locations. There may be hundreds more forgotten or lost scattered about the world.

Antipathy: More common than other arcane spells, *antipathy* can be found in scattered places, mostly in books.

Clenched Fist: Like all hand spells, *clenched fist* was forged by the narros spellcaster, Galla Sagard at the Finer Fire Pits and all are located on one anchor, the Sacristan Stone, in Sagard's open library.

Clone: An anchor of this spell is only found at Laudenia on the stone that never touches the ground, the Feysa.

Create Greater Undead: One can be found scribed in the Kardia-Gothas, the legendary castle in the Sana Marsh.

Demand: This anchor is relatively common but the only confirmed location is the mage city of Kirjath-Sepher, across the ocean. Like all anchors there, it can be found in a book. The laudenians have also claimed to have one, though this is only a rumor.

Discern Location: The only known location of this anchor is on a section of wall in a gimfen grind tower. However, which wall and which tower is only known by a few gimfen.

Dominate Monster: Adding a few extra symbols to the spell, the laudenian mage, Nacolia Falcon, created the *dominate monster* spell, which he still keeps in his spell book. Several copies have appeared elsewhere, but he possesses the only known anchor.

Earthquake: The only confirmed anchor location is in a library in the narros city of Thos Thalagos.

Energy Drain: This anchor, found on a tapestry made from fae skin, can be found in Kardia-Gothas in the Sana Marsh. Although claims have been made that an Attricana version of this spell exists, the only confirmed anchor is the Ixindar spell.

Foresight: Inscribed in a traditional spellbook called the *The Art of Arcane Thaumaturgy*, this anchor is locked in a secret library in Kirjath-Sepher. Other copies of the book are sealed in Myre and Laudenia.

Hold Monster, Mass: This foundation spell is found in the slaver city of Najafi, supposedly burned onto the flesh of the king. Rumors pass that several other anchors exist in dungeons across the world.

Imprisonment: One anchor is hiding in an unlabeled book in Kirjath-Sepher, resistant to enchanted means of locating it. Others can be found in Laudenia and Selmana.

Incendiary Cloud: The words from this spell glow with a bright red light from a solid slab of stone in a dungeon under a volcano. Which one is not known.

Meteor Swarm: There are three known anchors for *meteor swarm* in the world, all embedded on silver-coated longswords. Lazarus in the mountain of Dracontia owns one. Another sits under lock and key in Castle Myre. The final was lost in a pagus raid against a Janoahn convoy. However, the pagus vanished on their return home.

Polar Ray: All known copies are inscribed upon crystal skulls, based upon its original. Both Myre and Laudenia own one, as does the Kuraukou Temple of Clouds. However, the original still sits inside a small keep atop a massive mountain guarded by ice dragons.

Power Word, Stun: More common than most, power words are scattered around the world. Like most anchors, Stun can be found in Kirjath-Sepher. Stun can also be found etched on a wall in the Dracontia, in a book in Mag-Farg and, like most anchors, in Castle Myre.

Protection from Spells: Anchors can be found in Kirjath-Sepher and in Dracontia, the latter inscribed on the back of Kelto the Wise. Rumors suggest it can also be found on a staff in the bottom deck of the Alkanost.

Reverse Gravity: Only three golden feathers that carry this spell exist, all emerged from the creative minds at Laudenia. They use two; the third was stolen and is currently missing.

Screen: This book was stolen from Torfin Gendron and was the first item taken into Castle Myre and locked away. However, Torfin created a backup, now lost in the mage library. Kereptis Rifts apparently also held a copy.

Symbol of Death: The only known anchors hides in books in Piotre Raczik's library and on a dragon tooth in Azhi Dahaka, guarded by one of the dragon lords.

Temporal Stasis: This anchor can be found in Laudenia, Kirjath-Sepher, and Hardstone Sig. All are in spellbooks.

Time Stop: *Time stop* can only be found on a

scepter. Rumors say the single item is held by Selman the Titan himself. He promises retribution for anyone that copies it without his permission. However, stories abound that Lazarus and Lara Alkanost have copies on similar artifacts.

Wail of the Banshee: Like almost all Necromancy spells, *wail of the banshee* can be found in Kardia-Gothas. The necromancer Evanec Madrog created an identical spell and inscribed the spell in a Laudenian's breastbone. Apparently, the tenenbri have one as well, deep in Vakai.

SPELL ALTERATIONS

The following spells have altered rules.

Alter Shape, Beast Shape, Giant Form, Plant Shape, Polymorph, Shapechange: There are numerous spells enabling you or a creature you target to change into another creature. As you will read later, many monsters available in a traditional fantasy game are not available in Amethyst. Some are canon while others are permitted even though not part of the official setting. Others still are not allowed on the basis of their existence contradicting setting elements. Many of these banned monsters are fae that have been replaced with Amethyst-like variations while others are extraplanar in origin.

When changing shape (either yours or another's), you are not as limited on which creatures you can chose. Although it wouldn't make sense to change into a goblin since they don't exist—having been replaced with boggs—there is nothing stopping you from doing so. The same goes with extraplanar creatures like archons or devils. They don't exist as real creatures in the setting but that hasn't stopped imaginative wizards from making themselves look like one.

Antimagic Field: Magical creatures that enter the field (including the caster, being echan) are wracked by pain as the altered rules of magic keeping them alive are removed. Some creatures die outright while others are severely weakened with an overpowering desire to escape the field. Magical creatures (meaning ALL echan creations from Attricana) suffer 4D6 points of damage per round. Magical creatures within the field also must make a Fort save or be *stunned* for the duration. Ciphers, pagus, shemjaza, physical undead, and dark magical items are unaffected by antimagic fields as the field suppresses Attricana magic, not Ixindar. The field does not harm techan humans. Non magical creatures without magical special abilities (supernatural, spell casting, or spell-Like) including echan humans, animals, or vermin are also unaffected. It should be noted any magical items these creatures are carrying created from Attricana will still be suppressed.

Atonement: This spell remains identical to its entry in the PHB. However, it not only removes the burden of evil acts or misdeeds from the subject, it may add or subtract saturation or corruption points. A single casting will remove 4 corruption points or add or subtract 4 saturation points. Only with a corruption value of 0 can an Atonement spell allow an alignment change

which occurred because of corruption. This spell may be forced on an unwilling subject, but it gains a Will saving throw to negate.

Comprehend Languages: Both Pleroma and saeqaar are immune to this spell.

Detect Magic: By the second round, a caster can determine if the aura originates from Attricana or Ixindar. This may help in determining if a magic item is corrupt or not.

Form of the Dragon: As with other spells enabling you to alter your shape, you are not limited to canon Amethyst dragons. There are neither chromatic nor metallic dragons in Amethyst (replaced with archon, typhox dragons, and yok-ani) but if a clever wizard wishes, she can make herself look like one. The result won't fool anyone though, especially dragons.

Summon Monster / Summon Nature's Ally: In regards to summoning spells, creatures are not pulled into existence from another dimension; rather they are created by will of its spellcaster. They do not exist until the final command is given, vanishing back into the chaos of Attricana when the spell expires. As stated before with shape-changing spells, there are several monsters not available in Amethyst, but when summoning, you are not as limited on which creatures you can chose to create.

SHAPE-CHANGING, SUMMONING AND YOU

Changing the shape of yourself or another or creating monsters via a summoning spell can result in abominations not seen upon this Earth. Virtually anything seen in any book given compatible rules can be made to appear.

As stated previously, when summoning creatures, the result is created from Attricana rather than actually summoned, sometimes possessing memories of past experiences with the caster but little more. A summoned angel (for example) would have no memories of heaven unless the spellcaster implanted them as part of the spell...which some have. This is why summoning spells are bound to Attricana—being a force of creation. An Ixindar wizard can change his shape into a devil but cannot summon one into existence.

No one has a firm answer on if creatures summoned are “born” and/or “die” in the process of the spell. Popular theories claim that each creature has a specific blueprint embedded in each spell and when cast, the spell creates the same creature each time, carrying over memories between each summoning. This is difficult to prove since these memories may be knowingly or unknowingly implanted by the caster if creating the same creature multiple times. Also, if a spell creates the same creature, then technically only one caster could create the creature at a time. Never has a wizard encountered a “busy signal” or shared memories of other wizards. Another theory claims that the creations have no real soul or personality, only a series of traits and automatic responses (i.e. artificial intelligence),

only offering the illusion of consciousness. If a summoned creature could be allowed to exist for a prolonged length of time, flaws in its personality may emerge. If this is true, then there would be no life to extinguish when the spell expired.

You are still bound to your alignment when summoning monsters, so only an evil wizard can create evil creatures and only a good wizard can create good creatures. It's important to note that a summoned creature or a creature turned into another creature is sterile for the duration of the spell. The only exception to this is if the creature employed some form of natural shape-changing ability. In this case, certain rules exist when dealing with procreation (dragons in humanoid form sire humanoid children that resemble the form the dragon took). If you create an abomination, it ends with that form.

NEW SPELLS

ION PULSE

Evocation

Level: Wizard 3

Components: —

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

Effect: Ray

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: None

An ion pulse resembles a solid white stream of light that weaves and bends to a target. The caster targets a five-foot square or a single target (like a person or a vehicle). Any technology in the square or on the target is disrupted must immediately make a disruption save. If the vehicle is larger than a square, the pulse affects the vehicle and any other technology within the square. All disruption saves must be made at a -4 penalty to the roll. All items are affected, even those that recently saved.

ION PULSE, GREATER

Evocation

Level: Wizard 4

Components: —

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (200 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

Effect: Ray

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: None

As ion pulse except the actual pulse is far greater. It still only affects a single target or a five-foot square but the disruption penalty increases to -6.

ION PULSE, MASS

Evocation

Level: Wizard 5

Components: —

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

Effect: Area 20-ft-radius spread + 5 ft. /level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: None

As ion pulse except the pulse strikes a target and expands into a larger bubble, encompassing several targets at once.

ION PULSE, MASS, GREATER

Evocation

Level: Wizard 6

Components: —

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (200 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

Effect: Area 20-ft-radius spread + 5 ft. /level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: None

As ion pulse, greater, except the pulse expands into a larger bubble, encompassing several targets at once.



David Chen held a paper bag of various fruits, purchased from Genai farms, grown under sunlight with rain fallen from clouds. The shop was still open, being tended by Chen's single employee, a fifteen-year-old Asian girl. As Chen approached the open gate with his groceries, he heard Aiden's shout behind him.

"I don't want to be what they tell me!"

Chen turned around.

"Pardon?" Chen said.

"I don't want to be like them, like my brother!"

"There are many things you can do to be different, Aiden."

"I want to be what I want!" Every sentence got louder. "Why do I have to settle for what they say I can be? I don't have to now! I don't want to be part of this! How can I go back, knowing what I know? I want magic! I want dragons! I want everything they said I couldn't have!"

Chen stepped forward. Aiden had also gotten the attention of Chen's employee, leaning in from her duties to see the commotion. "It will take a long time," Chen answered. "Not all the books were right. It'll be years before you're ready, and it doesn't always take."

"The sooner I start..."

"Even knowing what you'll have to give up. Cars?"

"Don't drive."

"Television?"

"Nothing good on anyway."

"Computers?"

"I play games with magic." Aiden had an answer for everything, he thought ahead.

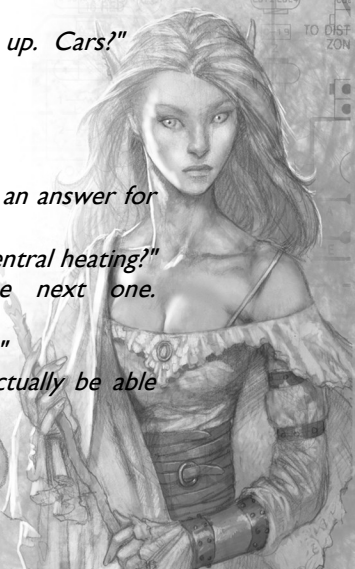
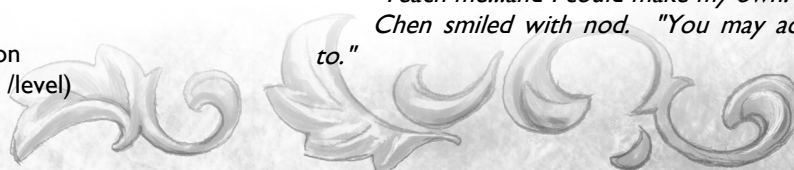
"Refrigerators?" Except that one. "Central heating?"

Chen paused and emphasized the next one.

"Electricity?"

"Teach me...and I could make my own."


Chen smiled with nod. "You may actually be able to."





CHAPTER NINE:

MAGIC ITEMS



It is important to note that few major magical items exist without a reason. Good dragons, laudenians, and titans constructed most of them. Certain magical items are rarer than others. Major wondrous items are difficult to locate and magical swords and armor above a total enhancement of +6 are rare. Artifacts as defined in the PATHFINDER core rulebook do not exist. The only artifacts in this universe are foundation anchors and the ones listed below. In all situations, their existence is not common knowledge and few individuals know of their locations.

DARK MAGIC

If Ixindar and Attricana are mirrors of each other, then there would be assumed magic items created from negative magic. These are not cursed items that are made to look like benign items but inflict harm upon the user instead of aide. Some cursed items have been made from negative power to simulate positive items in hopes to corrupt the user, but in actuality, most cursed items are created by those bound to Attricana as detect magic can easily tell an item is generating Ixindar or Attricana magic. There was a rumor passed around that Mengus created these cursed artifacts, when in truth, she created none of them. Negatively forged items are extremely rare, are often times more expensive, and carry the annoyance of corruption. They would never be willingly sold in a benign echan market. Usually the only way to acquire one is off the corpse of a pagus, shemjaza, or in the treasure pile of a typhox dragon.

Every time a good character gains benefits from a dark item (in combat or out of it), there is a chance of corruption (see the previous chapter).

Despite corruption, dark items do have some benefits. They do not generate an EDF. Items that generate an Attricana unique spell do not have Ixindar equivalent.

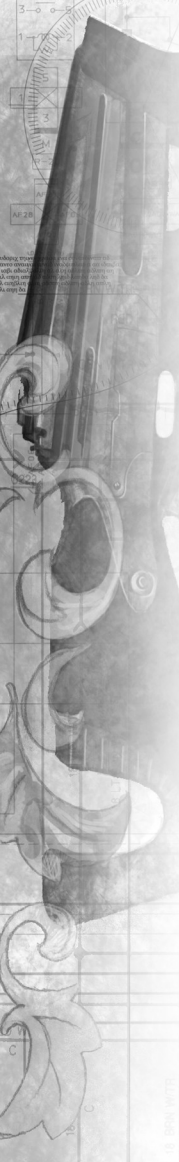
CREATING MAGIC ITEMS

Although magic items are rare in Amethyst, several limitations have been lifted to allow the introduction of powerful magic in a campaign. In a "canon" Amethyst game, magic items would be so rare, an average party would only possess one or two of them. This being a game intended to be fun, this restriction should not be endorsed.

The biggest restriction lifted is the prerequisite that you must be a spellcaster in order to forge magic items. Though this can still occur (and is required for several items), it is not mandatory for all of them.

You are still required to have skill ranks in the proper Craft skill as well as the obligatory feat, but in several circumstances, you are counted as having a caster level equal to your character level, even if unable to cast spells. The spell/s required must still be acknowledged as you'll require the spell components. The spell/s also determines if the item is bound to Attricana or Ixindar. If the spell required has the Death or Evil descriptor, then the item is bound to Ixindar. If the spell required has the Good descriptor, it is bound to Attricana. You must have a soul bound to Ixindar and be able to possess the knowledge to make Ixindar bound magic items in order to forge them (which is itself, daunting). Unless stated, spellcraft cannot be used to create magic items; only the proper Craft skill can be utilized.

Costly Components: The rarity of magic items is less about the knowledge required in their making (which is still a factor) and more the materials involved. A magic sword costing 25,000 gp may not require spellwork in this world, but said magic sword wouldn't have the weight or glamour of that significant amount of gold. The cost can



not only include the employ of skilled craftsmen or the attainment of tools required to craft the item, but also in the acquisition of rare alloys and ingredients necessary to create the specific enchantment. An item not entirely made of coruthil or magnarros (gaining the benefit of its property) may still require trace amounts of it in order complete the item. Other rare earth metals like yttrium, iridium, and osmium may be required, forcing the party to search mines or seek out obscure shops. A forged item may even need to be quenched in heavy water—where the oxygen is joined with deuterium instead of normal hydrogen, resulting in undeniably awkward questions of shop owners. This is above any spell components which must still be acquired even though no spell is cast.

Any item costing more than a 1000 gp should have such creative obstacles, forcing players to quest as much for the materials for their magic items than the quests they need their magic items for.

Item Creation Feats: You are not required to be a spellcaster to acquire item creation feats, though you are still required to meet the equivalent character level.

Magic Armor: Attempting to create magic armor requires the proper feat (Craft Arms & Armor) as well as Craft (armor). Armor does not require spells, though the caster level must be the same as your character level. Armor cannot be bought masterwork and then enchanted; the armor must be forged from the ground up as most of the enchantment comes from the combination of materials used and not any spells cast upon it.

Magic Weapons: Exactly the same as armor, attempting to create magic weapons requires the proper feat (Craft Arms & Armor) as well as Craft (bows or weapons). It does not require spells, though the caster level must be the same as your character level. A weapon cannot be bought masterwork and then enchanted; it must be constructed from the ground up as most of the enchantment comes from the combination of materials used and not any spells cast upon it. The once exception is a weapon with spell storing; this requires a spellcaster to create.

Potions: Craft (alchemy) is mandatory to make a potion, as is the Brew Potion feat. Although you are not required to be spellcaster, being a wizard helps. If a wizard, you use the wizard entries when determining spell cost, otherwise, you use Bard (increasing the brew cost of the potion. Despite which entry you use in the Potion Base Cost table, you are not limited by the class in regards to which spell you wish to imbue. So even as a Wizard, you can brew cleric potions.

Note: If you select the gneolistic trait, you cannot brew potions as a cleric. If you have the darawren trait, you are counted as being a wizard.

Rings: Craft (jewelry) is mandatory to forge a ring, as is the Forge Ring feat. In most cases, it does not require spells, though the caster level must be the same as your character level. The only time you are required to be an actual spellcaster is if forging a ring of counter-spells, spell storing, spell turning, three wishes, or wizardry. In which case, you can replace Craft (jewelry)

with Spellcraft.

Rods: The proper Craft skill (jewelry, sculptures, or weapons) is mandatory to craft a rod, as is the Craft Rod feat. In most cases, it does not require spells, though the caster level must be the same as your character level. The only time you are required to be an actual spellcaster is if crafting a metamagic rod or a rod of absorption.

Scrolls: You follow the normal rules presented in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK to scribe a scroll. You are required to be an arcane spellcaster. There cannot be a foundation spell on a scroll, thus scrolls are limited only to 1st to 7th level arcane spells.

Staves: You follow the normal rules presented in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK to craft a staff. You are required to be an arcane spellcaster. There cannot be a foundation spell stored in a staff, thus staves are limited only to 1st to 7th level arcane spells.

Wands: You follow the normal rules presented in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK to craft a wand. You are required to be an arcane spellcaster. There cannot be a foundation spell stored in a wand, thus wands are limited only to 1st to 7th level arcane spells.

Wondrous Items: These are a mixed lot of strange items and devices. You need the proper Craft skill as well as the Craft Wondrous Item feat. In most cases, you are not required to cast spells, though the caster level must be the same as your character level. The only time you are required to be an actual spellcaster is if crafting a wondrous item that interacts with spells. This includes Hand of the Mage, certain Ioun Stones, Mantle of Spell Resistance, and Robe of the Archmagi.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

Certain magic items are not present in Amethyst for obvious reasons while others go against setting canon.

Amulet of the Planes: There are no planes in Amethyst.

Apparatus of the Crab: There is no magic resembling technology in Amethyst.

Artifacts: There are no artifacts in Amethyst other than the ones listed below.

Cubic Gate: There are no planes in Amethyst.

Well of Many Worlds: There are no planes in Amethyst.

ARTIFACTS

THE BIBLE OF DRASAGO AND THE ARCHON GOSPELS

When the dragons emerged from Attricana, Lazarus (their oldest and most powerful) went about commissioning tomes of knowledge from the other dragons. He picked one representative from each class and elected them to write in their ancient language a gospel of all that they believe in and imbue it with the very power they possess. These books chronicle all their

knowledge and tell about the history of echa through their ageless eyes. To read a gospel from Drasago is to peer into the very soul of a dragon.

After one reads one (if they can), they are never the same. These books are extremely rare. Only three or four copies exist of each tome and the complete Bible of Drasago itself is owned and protected by Lazarus. Excerpts from these books have been found all over the globe. A reprinting of some passages translated into elvish can be located in Limshau and Laudenia, but they lack the magical impact of the originals. Dragons often share these books with each other though never gaining the abilities from them. If a mortal skilled in Pleroma (like a wizard) reads this book, which takes a total of 48 hours over a minimum of six days, he gains inherent bonuses dependant on the book read. Once the book is read, the knowledge will always be present to that reader without needing another language roll. The magic disappears from the pages for that reader and will never gain those abilities again if re-read. A reader can only gain the abilities of one book even if he reads them all.

The books are very large, embossed with real scales sacrificed by the writer. They are laced with platinum and silver and gilded with gold. Surprisingly, they are all quite light and will float upon water if dropped. The books are locked with fragments of a dragon's talon and cannot be opened without a key. The books cannot be destroyed by any means other than a Wish.

THE GOSPEL OF THE HOLY

**Written By Aurannis
of Dust and Greka of Babel**

Leave it to holy dragons to write such a massive book, written by two members as they couldn't agree who would write what. Greka's portion was to be enchanted and Aurannis's side was separated and published in a lone tome (see below) Greka's book requires 72 hours to read over 8 days compared to the other books. It's a long, slow read, bouncing between subject matter and diverting into boring and superfluous tangents. The holy book can be identified by the mirror-polished feather affixed to the cover. The book displays no artwork and the typeface is small and harder to translate than normal. A full quarter of the book is dedicated to the flight dynamics of holy dragons in comparison to other breeds. After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Spell-Like Abilities (7th level Caster): At will—*Speak with animals*; 3/day—*endure elements* (radius 50 ft), *fireball*, 1/day—*suggestion*.

Resistance: 10 fire

Natural Armor: +5

THE GOSPEL OF THE GUARDIAN

Written by Kelto of the Guard

Kelto, a battle champion of a thousand engagements, refuses to die despite losing an eye, two claws, and the end of his tail. His claws were severed by an unnamed

and forgotten cursed blade Kelto later destroyed. His eye was plucked and stolen as a prize when Goch and Kelto dueled over the skies of old Terrors thousands of years before the first hammer. Goch keeps it still, hanging the undamaged orb from his neck, unknowing that Kelto can still gaze through it. Healing his injury would sever the connection so Kelto keeps that lid closed.

Not even the book goes into details on how Kelto lost his tail tip. Despite these injuries, Kelto is still one of the more approachable dragons, seldom taken to pomposity. The book, marked by a bright orange/red smear of Kelto's own blood, details the arrival of the guardian dragons and their crusade to defeat the armies of darkness. They claim no royalty and such an accusation is considered insulting. Guardian dragons are warriors, champions, and knights of the oldest order. The book details many battles. The accounts are detailed, graphic, and not for the squeamish. Kelto and his guardians have seen the very darkest creations of evil. After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Armor: Any armor worn by you has its enhancement bonus increased by 1. The armor must have between a +1 and a +5 enhancement bonus to AC.

Darkvision: You gain darkvision 120 ft and blindsense 60 ft.

Natural Armor: You gain a +4 natural armor bonus.

Resistance: You gain resist lightning 10.

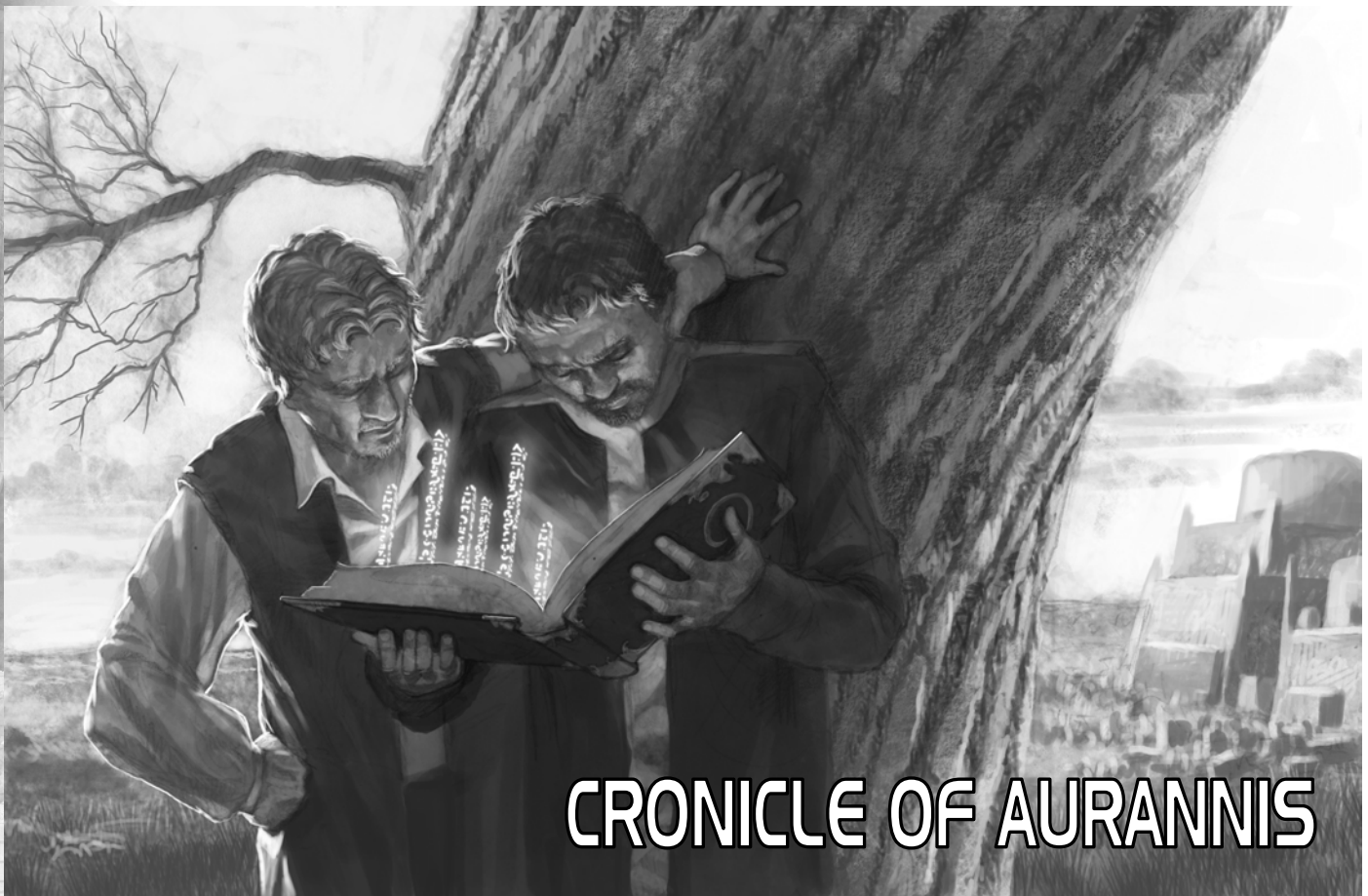
Weapons: Any sword held by you has its enhancement bonus increased by 1. The weapon must have between a +1 and a +5 enhancement bonus to AC.

THE GOSPEL OF THE NOBLE

Written by Lynissa the Essence

Lynissa's family and the responsibilities they have taken on, is far more interesting than the noble dragons by large. As nobles are considered the intellectual leaders of the dragons (the holy being the spiritual leaders), one would expect the book to detail their administration of dragon culture as well as their structure of authority. Thankfully, Lynissa intermixed this with anecdotes about her family line and their bond with the humans and elves of Akoya (in Euras), which is far more interesting. Euras possesses only one royal family of human heritage, the Lamontaes of Akoya. This endorsement came from Lynissa herself, passed down to the first Lamontae, Raymonde. The silver hair of all the royals and their offspring, despite whom they marry, encourages rumors across the land that Lynissa the Essence dipped into the royal line herself, siring a child while in human form with the king at the time. Such a pairing was not forbidden, though extremely rare and difficult to propagate. If she endorsed the Lamontae line before or after the coupling is not known but Lynissa and her dragon offspring from before the gate all live within the kingdom, swearing to its protection.

The diplomatic and noble landscape of Akoya is featured heavily. Alas, the majority of the book still details the history of the noble dragons, and their arrogance and condescension about their intelligence does



CRONICLE OF AURANNIS

show through the words.

After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Blessed Presence: All allies within 40 feet of you gain a +2 moral bonus to attack rolls and a +5 bonus to savings throws against fear effects. You do not gain these effects.

Somewhat Arrogant: You gain a +6 inherent bonus to all Will Saves.

Spell Like Effect: 1/day – *holy sword*

True Leadership: You gain a +5 inherent bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks and a +4 inherent bonus to Charisma or Wisdom (choose when finished reading).

Lazarus does not impart many secrets, he does express his dissatisfaction about knowing them. After reading the book, one truly begins to understand the mentality of dragons, the immense responsibilities they carry, and the knife-edge they balance between wisdom and corruption. Lazarus knew the world the longest, and his book speaks of times known to no others, including the stretch of time between when Amethyst called the first dragons into being and the arrival of the fae.

After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Call from Heaven: 1/week you can call an archon dragon to your aid. The dragon will arrive in 1d4 hours and be any type of archon dragon your level -3 or lower. After 1d4 hours, the dragon will leave, though it won't leave you helpless or in an unwinnable situation.

Immunities: You are immune to charm and charm-like effects,

Sanctified: Once a month, if you are killed, you are subjected to the effects of a *Resurrection* spell 1d4 hours later.

Spell-Like Effects: 1/week – *regenerate*, 1/week – *control weather*, 1/day – *righteous might*.

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THE GOSPEL OF LAZARUS

Written specifically by Lazarus, this tome does not go into any details about general dragons but more into Lazarus's own life, which is almost as old as the planet. He talks about his feelings about the world and the fall of Amethyst. This book is extremely hard to find outside of the realm of dragons.

Of all the books, the Lazarus volume is by far the most cryptic. The words and speech meander from normal vernacular to poetry with messages and meanings only revealing themselves after days, months, or years of contemplation and meditation. It is not an easy read to be sure. After appreciation of the words is finally reached, his thoughts and feelings carry through in clarity. Those finally understanding the book and its meanings often feel melancholy afterward, sharing with the author the curse of knowing too much. Though

THE CHRONICLE OF AURANNIS

The Chronicle of Aurannis is a single tome separated from the rest of the Bible of Drasago. It holds the knowledge of Amethyst, the shards of his crown, and the artifacts forged around them. It also details the history of echa, the fall of the great dragon and by what means. It mentions Gebermach and the other gospels

of Drasago. On its own, the chronicle doesn't do much but it does glow brighter when an Amethyst artifact is within 1 mile. Direction cannot be discerned.

As well as the above ability, the chronicle, when finally read (after 72 hours to read over 8 days compared to the other books) imparts a permanent mark of power on the user, offering Damage Resistance 5/magic. Afterward, the book vanishes from the user's possession and returns to Aurannis' side, where she either keeps it or sends it off again to find another reader. The book is quite well written in comparison to Greka's tome and an easier read despite the ancient tongue. Thankfully, unlike other books, there is a "Rosetta-stone" translation matrix on the back cover, though some trickery in magic has concealed unless someone knows it's there.

The matrix lists the same first page in laudenian and in damaskan. With this knowledge, one can translate the words but must still understand Pleroma to fully understand.

STAFF OF KERIF

Many of the rumors involving Kereptis Rifts are false, conflicting with other tales spoken at the same table about his greatness. Was he a savior or a scoundrel? Was he a philanthropist or a villain? Many agree he had a temper, but no one contested his power or the loyalty he gathered because of that power. He is credited with numerous discoveries and creations, some later proven inaccurate. The one item everyone agrees came from his hand was the Staff of KeRif.

When Kereptis reached Ramkava, he earned their attention with his prominence. Their behavior and triviality sickened him and he stormed away, unfulfilled. As he left, he discovered a piece of one of their heads that had broken off in an engagement with a death dragon. Rifts discovered he had gathered their attention again. After a second opportunity was used, Rifts took the shard back with him. He constructed a normal oak quarterstaff and topped it with the grayish shard of rock. The KeRif staff looks boring and only reveals its power with the testing of magic.

Beyond empowering the holder to communicate with Ramkava, the staff can do the following per a 10th level mage:

- *Know direction* (per spell) 4 times a day.¹
- *Whispering wind* (per spell) once a day.
- *Shout* (per spell) once a day.
- *Legend lore* once every two days (only if the staff has the thing at hand or is in the place of question).¹

¹ This is an ability of the stone and if the staff is broken, these abilities still work as well as the ability to call Ramkava.

THE EIGHT SHARDS OF AMETHYST

The eight are the most powerful relics on the planet. Before Amethyst died, he cast a stream of white flame

to heaven. It reflected back to drive Ixindar deep underground and solidify the Earth around it. His body went to vapor soon after. Amethyst was gone and all that remained was a great crystal of violet that shattered upon striking the rocks below. They scattered across the world, lost after the Hammer's impact. Despite a few shards surfacing throughout history, most of them remained quietly buried for millions of years. The fragments were of all different sizes and shapes – with some smaller than a pebble, others longer than a leg. Some were spherical while others held a razor's edge. One can imagine stumbling upon such a gem. It would not be fastened to rock and no amount of force and commitment could lay a scratch upon its surface. Despite their unusual properties, any that were found never received attention during the time of man before the Second Hammer. They didn't glow and revealed no magic. They were unremarkable quartz. Discarded and ignored, they stayed inconsequential for centuries.

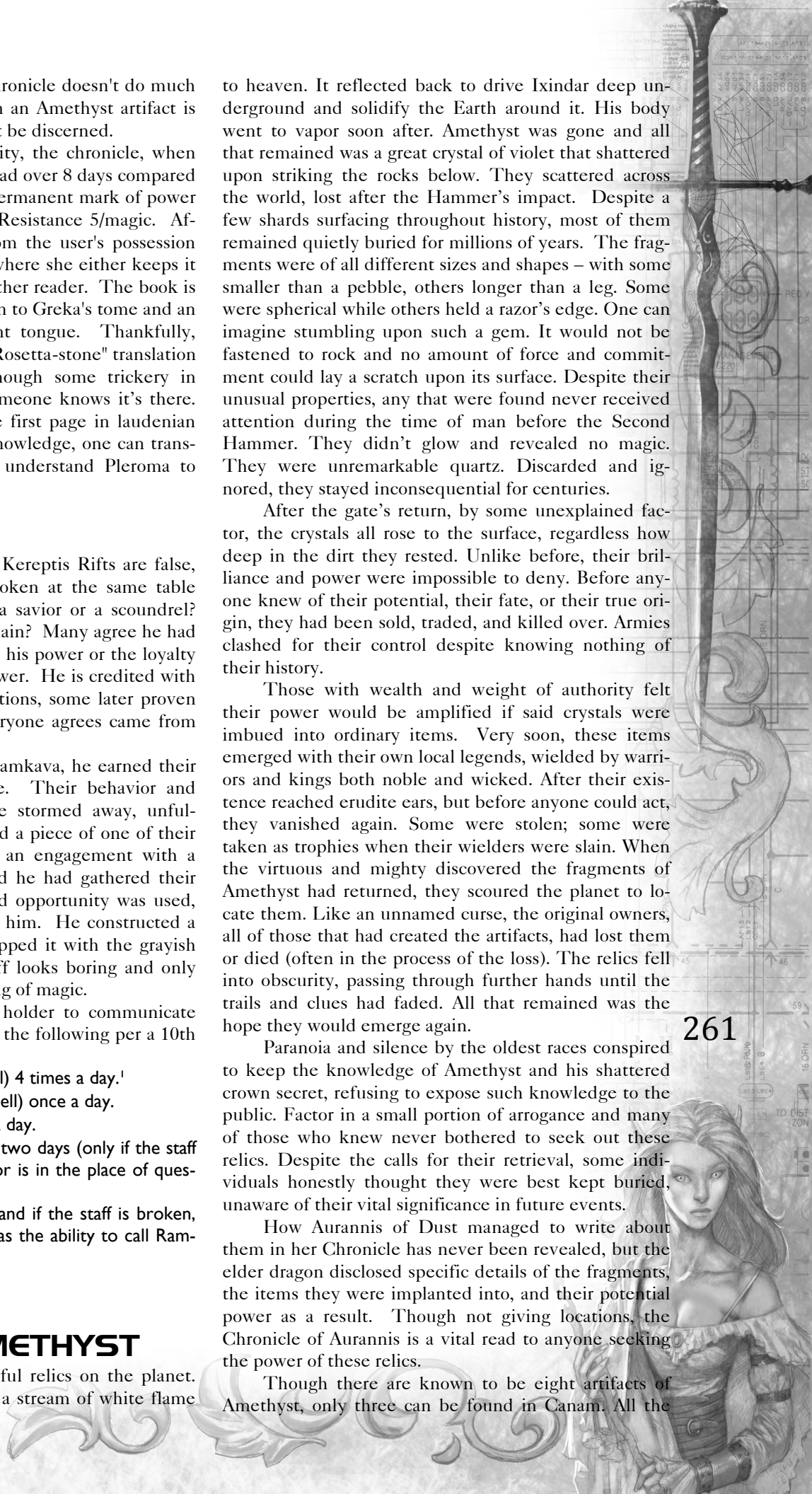
After the gate's return, by some unexplained factor, the crystals all rose to the surface, regardless how deep in the dirt they rested. Unlike before, their brilliance and power were impossible to deny. Before anyone knew of their potential, their fate, or their true origin, they had been sold, traded, and killed over. Armies clashed for their control despite knowing nothing of their history.

Those with wealth and weight of authority felt their power would be amplified if said crystals were imbued into ordinary items. Very soon, these items emerged with their own local legends, wielded by warriors and kings both noble and wicked. After their existence reached erudite ears, but before anyone could act, they vanished again. Some were stolen; some were taken as trophies when their wielders were slain. When the virtuous and mighty discovered the fragments of Amethyst had returned, they scoured the planet to locate them. Like an unnamed curse, the original owners, all of those that had created the artifacts, had lost them or died (often in the process of the loss). The relics fell into obscurity, passing through further hands until the trails and clues had faded. All that remained was the hope they would emerge again.

Paranoia and silence by the oldest races conspired to keep the knowledge of Amethyst and his shattered crown secret, refusing to expose such knowledge to the public. Factor in a small portion of arrogance and many of those who knew never bothered to seek out these relics. Despite the calls for their retrieval, some individuals honestly thought they were best kept buried, unaware of their vital significance in future events.

How Aurannis of Dust managed to write about them in her Chronicle has never been revealed, but the elder dragon disclosed specific details of the fragments, the items they were implanted into, and their potential power as a result. Though not giving locations, the Chronicle of Aurannis is a vital read to anyone seeking the power of these relics.

Though there are known to be eight artifacts of Amethyst, only three can be found in Canam. All the





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artifacts exhibit the same violet glow, growing intensely when other artifacts are brought closer. Their power increases as well, making them the few magic items that can grow along with the group questing for them. It is thought that when placed near each other, their total power would almost equal that of the original dragon. If that were to happen, perhaps he could even be reborn.

To increase in power, the gems must all be within 100 feet. Out of that range, the bonus abilities are no longer applicable. The items do not have to be wielded or carried by the same person. An evil creature carrying any Amethyst artifact loses 4 corrupted points each day and gains 2 saturation points each day.

Because of the age and the history of the artifacts, they often go by different names and many cultures worship them without knowing what they truly are. Their stats are listed with their individual abilities and whatever abilities are boosted with additional nearby fragments.

The gems CANNOT be destroyed by any means. No spell or weapon cracks them. Techans tried. One bastion, a hundred years ago, possessed one, albeit temporarily. Despite best efforts by laser and drill, the crystals were never marked.

THE AMULET, STORMCAGE, THE EYE OF GOD

The amulet of Amethyst fell originally to Torfin Gendron from across the ocean. The mighty caster stumbled upon the circular but jagged stone by accident, pulling it from the sediment of a shallow river he was walking alongside. Believing the stone a sign, he continued upriver and discovered the outcropping rock that would later be the home of Torfin's great library and school of magic, Kirjath-Sepher. He never bothered to create a great device to channel the power of the crystal. Torfin forged a simple frame and hung it from his neck.

It made him more powerful, and those years found the halls blessed with a newfound wisdom unseen in any human at that time or since. Torfin continued his work for years, as a nearby castle watched with fanatical and envious eyes. The fortress was Myre, a zealous order of knights committed to keeping magic from mortal hands. To them, magic was destined for a select few, mostly them. Wilhelm Myre believed Kirjath-Sepher to be the greatest threat to the world and had ordered his knights to raze it to ash if the keep didn't willingly hand over all magic. Torfin and his loyal refused.

To prove his piousness and dedication, Myre challenged Torfin to open combat, spell against sword, with no limits on magic wielded. Torfin agreed and the greatest open conflict of magic clashed in the Manora Vallis of Lauropa. Hundreds watched as the landscape erupted. Hours passed and the two were nearly exhausted, but neither accepted defeat. In the end, a final charge of sacrifice brought Myre close enough to impale his sword into the heart of Gendron.

Torfin's retaliation struck lightning and fire from the heavens, ending the duel, killing them both. Myre had fallen to his back. Gendron slumped forward and rested on the blade still skewered in his chest. He remained precariously standing. Though his heart had stopped, Gendron twitched his arm and dropped his head. The amulet slipped from around his neck and fell upon his hand. He lifted his palm to the sky and opened the crystal to the air where an eagle promptly swooped down to snatch it.

The order of Myre and the mages of Sepher returned with their lords' bodies, declaring no further conflict would occur that day. The crystal vanished from the minds of both armies. The bird dropped the amulet to the hands of a damaskan, Akai Lightwood, a ranger with no competence in magic. He offered it as a token to his true love, Lena Croweborn, the noble daughter of Yorsan Croweborn of the damaskan city of Kovalesa. It was an appropriate use of such an artifact. They were young and foolish, but their fidelity remained solid for centuries, producing a dozen children. One of them, Phera, grew so obsessed with finding adventure and staking a claim of glory, she sold her mother's cherished amulet for a mere pittance to a merchant in exchange for a set of chained armor and a longsword, both of lackluster enchantment. She fled south to fight the world. Despite searching for decades, Akai never found his daughter or the amulet. The merchant, with a name of no importance, was set upon by a group of boggs and murdered for his supplies. These boggs wandered west and stumbled into the eastern periphery of the bastion of Porto where they were annihilated. The amulet was found within the remains and taken back to the bastion for study. The intellectual elite of Porto poked and prodded the crystal but could not understand how it accomplished what it could. This item, unlike other ones they had studied from echa, generated little disruption in comparison to its power.

In a final attempt to unlock its secrets, they surreptitiously contacted an echan expert in another bastion, David Chen from Genai. A wandering dragon unfortunately took down the transport plane, crashing east of Angel. Its cargo scattered for dozens of miles, including the amulet, which was never recovered.

Item Slot: Neck

Saves: The amulet offers an enhancement bonus to Fort, Ref, Will saves as well as Intelligence.

On Its Own: +1 enhancement bonus

2 Total Amethyst relics: +2 enhancement bonus

3 Total Amethyst relics: +3 enhancement bonus

5 Total Amethyst relics: +4 enhancement bonus

7 Total Amethyst relics: +5 enhancement bonus

8 Total Amethyst relics: +6 enhancement bonus

Spell-Like Effect: The artifact may cast a continual light spell at will.

+3 Gems: The amulet offers spell resistance 10 + character level.

THE BRACERS / ARMS OF TRUTH / THE PRESENCE OF RHINFORGE

The great dwarven city Thos Thalagos was actually built atop the ruins of a previous smaller narros mine called Rhinforge. The historians of Thos successfully erased any evidence of this, save the minds of those few old enough to remember. Back then, the tiny village mine of Rhinforge was erupting in wealth. Storehouses had to be built to hold the treasures they had unearthed. The mine's leader, Rarikon Baxs, refused to share such treasure with neighboring camps, with plans to use the money to hire an army of swords to conquer all of Fargon, which had yet to be named at this point. It was during this time when Baxs discovered the amethyst shards, two pieces found as one, which slid apart when removed from the limestone around it. Each was long, wide and flat, just slightly shorter than a forearm.

To his amazement, Baxs realized the shards could not be cracked by any weapon in his arsenal and requested them to be set within a chest plate for his armor. This ended up not being feasible and he later had them placed within a set of forearm protectors in hopes they would improve his bowmanship. Alas, they did nothing to help his launch, but they did protect him from harm. Near invulnerable, Baxs took it as a sign to crusade, to finally take the land as his own.

To prevent the formation of a corrupted empire, all the surrounding camps banded together. They struck Rhinforge before mercenary reinforcements could arrive. The combined might broke the back of the city's lackluster militia and Baxs was forced to flee south, his hands and pockets bursting with pilfered gold. Considering him too dangerous to allow free, the commander and now ruler of the mine, Thalagos Gin, placed a hefty bounty upon Baxs' head. The despot was finally located and chased up the face of Mt. Tirocinia, an active volcano. To deny the prize of his opponents, Baxs hurled himself to the flames and was engulfed by the molten rock. Little was ever said later about Baxs and his short reign.

More than 200 years passed before the bracers resurfaced. Magic had preserved the bracers without harm and they migrated under the subterranean tides of magma. They traveled another 450 miles south to wind up under the mountain Selkirk. The need to be found overwhelmed the artifact and it burrowed itself slowly over centuries to the surface, eventually appearing intact from the back of a mining machine operated by the techan humans of the new bastion. Finding the discovery unusual, the miners brought them to their supervisor, who immediately ordered them locked in the com-



pany vault, where they remain in hiding to this day.

Initially, the weakest artifact, the bracers get powerful fast. Like the rings, they cannot be separated nor do they work if split between two people.

Basic Abilities: The bracers, on their own, offer a +2 enhancement bonus to AC or natural armor (user's choice). Every two gems nearby after add an additional +1 enhancement bonus to AC for a total of +5. At +2 gems and every 2 gems after that, the bracers offers a +2 artifact bonus to Fort and Will saving throws. The wearer is also immune to fear.

THE BUCKLE / THE BELT, BOOTS, or BRACELET OF DRAGONKIND

The only group or individual more obsessed with locating powerful magic than the Order of Myre is Darius Konig, king of Baruch Malkut. The kingdom has always been magically underprivileged. As a result, the king ordered all items of any significant power be handed over to prolocutors trained to categorize and quantify the powers of said items. Konig also de-

manded any texts speaking of such items be tendered for examination. The prized trophy he sought was the manifest of Myre, the massive tome detailing all which lay within to Myre vaults, including the items that survived from the old age of man. Konig read of such items, rarities and relics from before Attricana when man lived uncontested with nothing to fear but his own dark desires. Darius coveted these remnants and any others with the promise of power. It was in their fervent pursuit when they found an Amethyst crystal. The singular piece was brazenly worn through a belt by the noble of a small village called Eathar. He claimed the item was found on the corpse of a slain elvish princess that refused to be captured. In truth, he had stolen the buckle from Bilford Gram from Nassau. Gram accused as much when word of the item's location was revealed.

Konig denied any retribution, insisting such treasures belonged to the kingdom as a whole and to the king specifically. Bilford had owned the crystal, but had planned on giving it as a bracelet to his clandestine elvish bride, Abellis Feathertan. Bilford didn't hold the claim of its forging; that belonged to a mage from Laurama, Rhuunazodaeus. Rhuuna was not a powerful caster but did have a reputation amongst the other





chaparrans of the forest. She stumbled upon the amethyst crystal in the most fitting way for an elf, within a tree. A lightning strike during an unusually intense storm cracked an old conifer from tip to root. As Rhuuna examined the char, she found the violet crystal embedded in its bark. This specific tree predated the elves' arrival there and was dubbed the "Mending Tree" by the holy order. What made the Mending Tree so unique was its repulsion to the Tranquiss plague.

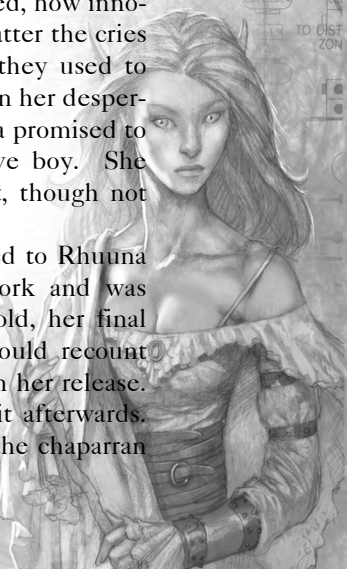
Though infected trees were already brushing branches, this centurion would not fall. However, the escalating raids from Baruch Malkut threatened its survival. One evil would chop it down; the other wished for its corruption. Knowing the purity of the tree lay in this crystal, Rhuuna took it and fled back to her village. The mending tree was dead, but the crystal took on its name initially, as the Mending Sap. Rhuuna, in order and in hope of channeling the crystal's power, affixed it to a buckle and tied it around her right wrist which always held her staff firmly in grip. She believed she could channel its energy into her knowledge of Pleroma to cure the plague. She would not have her chance.

The slaver Mikkell Foster (father of Prosten Foster) caught Rhuuna during a night raid. Rhuuna was

not at all ugly, but was older in years than most buyers were looking in their concubines. There was still value in her intelligence and that could offset the decreased value. As a housemistress, she could fetch a reasonable prize. She was stripped of her staff and her amethyst.

Mikkell had been tutoring his son to take over the family caravan in his stead and this wild-woman of the wood offered a great opportunity to test his teachings. First, Prosten had to understand the value of their stock, and despite how beautiful they looked, how innocent the pleas showed in their faces, no matter the cries for leniency, they were property. What they used to tempt man, man could use to earn profit. In her desperate attempts to barter her freedom, Rhuuna promised to offer the secrets of her spells to the naïve boy. She even told him the power of the amethyst, though not the full details of its potential.

Very little is known of what happened to Rhuuna after that. She vanished into the network and was never seen again, probably broken and sold, her final fate an echo of her promise. Prosten would recount later the extremes Rhuuna went to bargain her release. He took them all and still broke her spirit afterwards. Thinking the crystal to be a holy relic of the chaparran



religion, Prosten took it to his father, which affixed it to his belt to parade his dominance over the lesser class. It became an heirloom for the line, passing to Prosten upon his father's disappearance. Prosten shifted the buckle to his right boot, where it remained. How he lost it to Bilford Gram is less worthy of note.

Gram had already been married to Abellis at this point and had hoped to ensure no slavers would operate in view of his city. He offered a bribe to Prosten to ensure neither he nor his men would commit raids near Nassau. Prosten laughed at the pittance Bilford presented. Feigning defeat on the issue, Bilford remained as a guest for the day, taking in the meals and mead of the Foster Keep. When properly inebriated, Bilford brought up the topic of cards, in which Prosten prided his proficiency. Prosten accepted without a moment's lament. Prosten was a decent shark but had only cut his teeth on the minnows of his court who would much prefer to keep in good graces than take their master for a jaunt. Alas, Bilford sharpened his incisors at the table against his father's knights years before protocol insisted they allow the heir the hollow victory of a fixed game. When Bilford inherited his castle, his talent had honed to perfection. Lord Gram might have been butterfingers with the blade, but with chips and cards, he was no fish.

Over the course of three hours, Bilford not only tripled the money he arrived with, but trapped Prosten into dipping to his heirloom to match the stakes. Prosten nearly lost his keep. Bilford, not vindictive or seeking to bankrupt the slaver (though he had secretly wanted to) compromised. Bilford reissued the bribe, substantially increased. Painfully sober, Prosten agreed. As hostage, Bilford kept the buckle for himself.

Obviously, Bilford suspected Prosten of conspiring with Dannis Haulik of Eather to stealing the Amethyst back. When handed to the prolocutors, the buckle had shifted to a pair of steel-toed, leather boots.

Basic Abilities: Despite where the buckle is placed, the artifact offers the *haste* ability per the spell. It must be activated as a free action at the beginning of your turn and lasts at least until the beginning of your next turn. The gem offers 3 rounds of total haste per day with an additional 3 rounds for every additional gem (total: 24 rounds). The duration of the haste effect need not be consecutive rounds.

+2 Gems: *Boots*—The boots will always grip on a slippery surface, and offers a +5 artifact bonus to jump rolls and Ref saves. *The Belt*—The wearer becomes more resilient to damage, gaining a +5 artifact bonus to all Fort saves. He also gains Light fortification, giving him a 25% chance to ignore critical hit damage. *The Bracelet*—The wearer is proficient with any one-handed weapon held by the bracelet's hand. The wielder also gains a fighter base attack bonus while using a one-handed weapon.

+5 Gems: All abilities listed compound with +2 gems. *The Boots*—The wearer no longer touches the ground while moving. The boots now hover an inch off the ground. They can cross any surface (water, mud,

etc) and never leave any tracks. Jump rolls and Ref saves increase to +7. *The Belt*—The Light Fortification is replaced with Medium Fortification, giving the wearer a 75% chance to ignore critical hit damage. Fort saves increase their artifact bonus to +7. *The Bracelet*—The wearer also gains the feats Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization with the weapon in hand.

All 8 Gems: All abilities listed compound with +8 and gems. *The Boots*—The boots gain permanent *spider climb* (per spell). *The Belt*—The wearer gains DR 5/—. This compounds with any other DR the wearer might have. *The Bracelet*—The bracelet also gains Improved Critical and Greater Weapon Specialization with the weapon in hand.



Children assumed the truth until learning the virtue of doubt. They reached an age when they began to question the world around them. They turned to parents for reassurance. The goblins were never under the bed. No one snuck down the chimney to take cookies or leave presents. The disappointment that followed discovering the truth never settled. Aiden had reached that point when dreams rooted in reality replaced those impossible to achieve.

Every legend, myth, and tale his mother had narrated was a fiction that Aiden had so badly wanted to be real. He realized that every one of them held some fragment of fact. Historical accounts of modern empires, works of whimsy from when mankind ruled the planet alone. She was preparing him for the inevitable day when he would discover it for himself. There was no set time when someone was told. Like sex, it was just something picked up or stumbled through mostly be accident. The wrong book was opened, the wrong program watched. The child asked the proper questions at an improper time. Parents muddled their way through the answers.

Aiden had a dragon.

His mother had known the real world better than most, better than her husband, better than Martin. She knew more than most people about what was out there. With those books, she had told him everything.

. . .

Aiden looked up at the long flight of stairs, up the side of the crown. To call the outer wall a crown implied to Aiden that everyone behind it thought of themselves as royalty, claiming supremacy over everything they saw.

He clambered clumsily upwards, glancing occasionally to gauge the length of the climb. The steel railing didn't feel safe. The stairs were draped in darkness from the sun setting behind the wall. A gust of cool wind struck Aiden as he reached the summit.

Aiden walked to the edge of the fortification. He stood between the jagged and uneven ramparts that topped it. Aiden would only have a few minutes before the next patrol. When standing on the peak of the crown, the city appeared to expand forever, over the horizon until heat radiating from concrete and iron mountains blurred to the sky.

Skyscrapers, farms, manufacturing facilities and the last scraps of humanity's past. Aiden had seen such a view from his family's condo; anyone else would be amazed by it. But Aiden only offered it a passing glance, as much acknowledgement as traffic he wanted to cross.

He discarded one view for another, everything he knew behind him, across the wall to a towering emerald forest of wild trees. They were alive and growing as tall as the city wall, without pruning or any arboriculture. Aiden had read that it was called Cyon, a dense pack of woods that encircled most of the south and east sides of the bastion. Aiden picked up noises from the forest—calls and yells from massive lungs. None of them sounded familiar. A high pitched screech resembled something a young girl could emit, though greatly amplified. A throaty bellow shook the trees and scattered birds. It was followed by something immense under the canopy shuffling leaves, shifting branches, and snapping undergrowth.

A hawk with a span to cross an expressway lifted from a lower perch, jostled by the unseen beast brazenly bullying its way through the forest. The bird vanished back into the thick.

Aiden assumed that a jagged rock larger than Chen's store was the peak of small crag only a few kilometers from the city. He then noticed it gradually turning. The rock was not attached to the ground; it hung silently, dangling from an unseen godly string.

Aiden caught a faint whisper in the breeze, not as such carried by the wind but part of it. He leaned to the edge of the wall. The whisper was from no beast; it was comforting, tempting, an aria of the air--feminine and beautiful.

Aiden imagined everything that could be out there, all the wonders denied by science. Everything he had read about, hiding past those trees, as easy as crossing a street. Aiden made a promise to himself at that moment while standing at the edge of the wall. He would become what he had read about, what he was told he could not be. He would pass from his world to one echoing the whims of writers for thousands of years. He would have his fantasy. It would be real.

And Aiden smiled.

. . .

The outer gates of the southern wall groaned open for morning travelers. The rising spring sun brushed a graceful wave of heat across Aiden's face. He looked back at Angel's wall, perforated with sniper holes and artillery placements. He wasn't rethinking his decision, only taking in how unambiguous the boundary between the two worlds was.

Aiden had hardly spent a day away from Chen's biblio. Reading about dragons were only the beginning. Anything science denied as true, Aiden desired to learn. He remembered the story his mother had told him, of the singular focus of Willum Raenis. The character's aspirations were above his station, no higher than a princess, the exotic, a target that could never be struck. All Aiden needed to do was sacrifice his central heating, internet, and cable TV. Martin thought it was selfish, and that

Aiden's decision was like a virus that would spread to others, somehow disavowing thousands of years of progress, rejecting what mankind was most proud of--the very automation of his society.

As Aiden walked further past the gate, the level and planed pavement began to show cracks from shifting soil and snaking roots. At the edge, it had turned to rubble. The dirt felt the same as those in parks and planters in the city. The sun looked no different. Ahead was the forest. Against the barricade and under cover of shade sat hundreds of shacks and shanties populated by thousands that took pilgrimage to Angel in hopes of being blessed with admittance. If born inside, your citizenship could not be refuted. Trapped between the forest of Cyon and the city Angel, refugees scavenged the city's garbage along with fragments leftover by more successful travelers. Some eked out a simple existence selling horses or trinkets from either side of the crown. There were no fae here, not this close to a magical dead zone. The village of Genai was ignored because of a long forgotten arrangement made centuries ago with the city's original builders.

Aiden's destination was hundreds of miles away. Deep in an area his brother called a wasteland was a city populated by millions of fae, humans, and books. It had been described as much a library as a city. Aiden could further his reading, having spent Chen's biblio nearly dry of words. Aiden couldn't deny his ulterior motive, a city of fae and humans. Every pointed eared female a princess in his eyes.

Aiden had imagined unblemished naked skin riding a unicorn through an unspoiled landscape. He, the noble knight or wizard watches through the bushes, smitten. He jumps out to save the virtue of the virgin against a mob of hungry orcs, or boggs, whatever the story endorsed. She beds him against a tree in her gratitude. He follows her into the woods, taken by the fae into their flock to live for an eternity in enchanted bliss.

Despite aspirations of fancy, Aiden had proven himself an academic with enough saved and invested for the best universities. Out of high school, he would have been scooped up quickly and molded into an efficient, grounded, and functional member of society. He would do Martin, and his vision of their parents' ideals, proud. Now Aiden was nineteen and a hundred feet from all he had ever seen. Ahead lay everything he had read about. Some books were fiction, written by authors hundreds of years dead. They spoke of faeries and demons, dragons and kings. Following that, Aiden would find a book claiming to be fact which told similar tales.

Mankind possessed mythology and legends with dreams of hags, harpies, and hydras. Dragons and unicorns had adorned crests, banners, and flags for centuries before being discovered as truth. It could not be coincidence.





CHAPTER TEN: SETTINGS



ALIEN SIMILARITY

One of the greatest examples of echalogical influence—the first after the shock of how human-like fae appeared—occurred soon after the first civilized meeting. It had been widely accepted that Angel was the first city to have contact with the outside world, making sense given the age of the bastion. However, Limshau must have encountered humans before appearing in front of the Angel wall. Despite the vagueness of history, there was one known positive initial encounter between the elders in Genai and the arriving Limshau envoy, which included Ravenar Limshau III and his loyal retinue.

The human elders were modern and understanding, not obtuse and arrogant about tradition. Ravenar's group was open and thoughtful, despite the language barrier that Ravenar was quick to defeat with his astonishing skill. The Genai hosts opted for vegetarian, believing it to be the most amicable. They kept away from food gleaned from animals like cheeses and milks. They presented an assorted selection of cutlery to use. How shocking it must have been when Limshau chose the chopsticks without pause and handled them with a skill reserved for his mirrors across the table. Many said later the relationship that blossomed between humans and damaskans began in that room. Was he reading their mind? Had he been told? No. All damaskans used them. Narros and tenenbri use utensils similar to the ones they claimed the Greeks copied. Chaparrans use sticks like damaskans but theirs are actual formed pieces of wood resulting from magic, not refinement. Laudenians still insisted on their hands, though rarely are ever seen dirty. The bowl of water that sits by their plate to clean their hands would remain pure through the many washings. Gimfen were likewise, save for the magic and hygiene.

Tilen, deficient with their own culture, often adopted those they had been accepted into. Where tilen were allowed to flourish on their own, several elders (and thus often their offspring) would use a more traditional method of donning finger-tip utensils on each digit. Many other tilen, including several other elders, denounce this practice, believing it heartens a practice encouraged when the species was malevolent.

AMETHYST

Very little is known about the first dragon or how he became known by a common human name. Some claim the great Amethyst, the first dragon, awoke with intelligence before all others. He wandered lonely, waiting alongside his dumb dinosaur cousins until company replaced his melancholy. Others ascertain that Amethyst channeled the flow to his whim and created the other dragons out of his mind. Some even attest Amethyst emerged before Attricana and ignited the star to flood the world and encourage wonder.

Echalogians theorized that the influence of the previous age upon man inspired his language, which would explain the origin of the word. History recorded the word amethyst derived from the Greek words “not to intoxicate,” from a belief the mineral staved off drunkenness. Most modern humans simply believe they attached the name upon seeing the ancient drawings of the creature, glowing in beautiful violet shaded scales. Elder fae know he went by other titles. When the dragons returned, they embraced the human word, abandoning the private name. Laudenians, the oldest fae, insisted the public name for Amethyst was closer to Amesus and claimed the human name for the purple jewel was due to echalogical influence.

The Chronicle of Aurannis, on page 156, paragraph 4, refers to Amethyst with another title, translated to Amonai, though no dragon



has admitted this as factual. Throughout his long life, Amethyst ruled the planet, appointed king by those around. He never declared himself of royal blood nor sat upon any throne. The king allowed other kingdoms and supported the rise of noble lines in various other races but granted audience to the humble and disfavored in equal share. He always appeared when needed and never remained in place long enough to claim it as his own. A few began calling him the Nomad King. Most everyone else referred to him as the Dragon God.

When the Ixindar migration occurred the day Mengus arrived, many dragons saw something on Amethyst's face they had never encountered before: fear. Amethyst left for Ixindar only once on his own. He was gone only a short time. Upon his return, he swore to never go back. The war began that day.

Though only a few dozen non-dragons today remember the living god first-hand, everyone accepted the fact of his life and sacrifice. He remained a subject of legend and faith within the dragons. The religion around his birth, power, and death spread like a fire among the fae, and later, even the humans.

Amethyst never wrote any scripture or preached any gospel. He resented the deification of him or his power, though not of the dragons as a whole – a race he always tasked with shepherding all the other souls of the world. One record quoted from Amethyst, "If there is a God, then he is truly infinite, and I am as far from his eternal greatness as any other."

Although his death should lead credence to his fallibility, his final act of defiance revealed the un-

tapped might of his will.

ATTRICANA

The fae often debated and disagreed about the origin of the white gate. They believed the dragons knew more than they cared to reveal. Is it alive? How did it form? Who formed it or was its appearance happenstance? Millions of years and the fae grew no closer to answers. Many dragons claimed ignorance, but all shared one belief: Amethyst knew. Yet, the wise ancient one revealed nothing, not even to his brother of shared blood, Lazarus. Not even to his loyal mate, Jahada. The star hung from an invisible string and created the world they all embraced.

Attricana fell under heavy scrutiny when man entered the equation. Followers of science insisted on understanding this gate. More risky endeavors attempted to do the same into the blackness of Ixindar though those are only rumors recounted by travelers from the bastion of Porto. Only these accounts across the ocean offer any hope to those in Canam about attempts to stave off disruption and their way of life. As technology increases, the rate of disruption amplifies accordingly, but there rests a certain point when technology may be able to fight back. These rumors persist with no evidence and the bastions may crumble with their failing technology long before reaching this level.

The reports trickling in did support a theory that the EDF originates only from Attricana, not from Ixindar. What Ixindar ejects is far more sinister. It corrupts everything. In one sweeping move upon landfall, Ixin-

dar turned a million fae to its side. This corruption continued until its burial in the past and resumed when unearthed later.

Unfortunately, the events leading up to the uncovering of Ixindar and the eventual return of Attricana is marred in mystery. The only ones aware of said history are short-lived humans, more interested in survival than recording events, and the emerging shemjaza and pagus, not famous for their verbose conversations. It is also thought the elder tilen would possess this knowledge, but with just over a dozen left, the chances of gaining answers from them is unlikely.

Bastions seldom refer to Attricana or Ixindar by their echan names, initially preferring the simpler White and Black Gates. Eventually, as scientific observation continued, the term gate found itself replaced by the more accurate tear, which remains today. Though some experiments found limited success quantifying and understanding the processes emanating from Attricana, most from techa still find themselves dumbfounded by the bright star hanging in the night sky.

BEST TO RULE

How the majority of echa adopted an aristocracy was not sudden, nor was it unpredictable. The fault lies not with one specific nation or one specific race. Even a few bastions are run in similar ways. As Attricana opened, the entirety of the planet was unclaimed. Those few flaunting influence over land or people took this opportunity to declare what they found as theirs. Calling themselves lords was an obvious transition. This concept was not limited to humans, as most fae, even the truly noble and chivalrous ones, would make such declarations on lands they deemed acceptable to build a nation upon. Some of those claims were made on lands already populated. Generation passed onto generation, and a landowner would delegate duties to an heir. With humans, not a single new noble could trace his or her lineage past the opening gate. Some claimed a lordship from money while a few arrogantly declared their title bestowed by a higher power. Eventually, the old titles returned. They didn't bother making up new titles when there were plenty throughout history to glean from. Some houses were led by lords, others by dukes, khans, counts, marquises, landgraves, or barons. A few humans even went as far to declare themselves monarchs of the highest order, kings and queens of divine royalty. Placing their station so high was to impose their influence on neighbors or strike alliances with similar titled houses. Though fae rulers never knighted valiant warriors, they would employ royal guards of similar stature, and were referred to as knights in the human tongues.

Human landowners claimed noble titles and formed alliances with others. Eventually, one would conquer the rest and declare himself king, relinquishing his throne to none other than his first born child. They were all aristocrats, the best to rule. Several changes did occur with the new age, influenced by the new land-

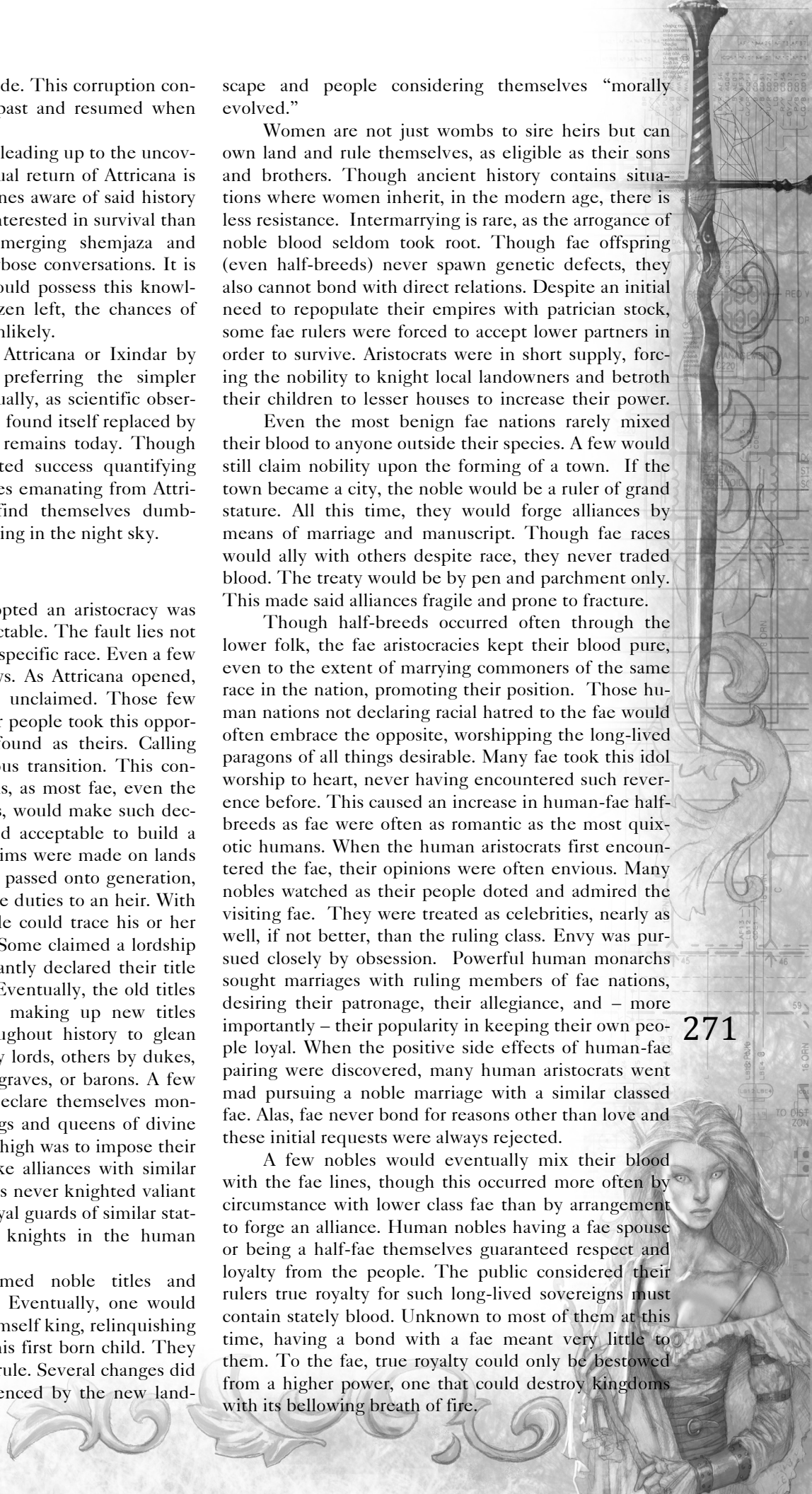
scape and people considering themselves "morally evolved."

Women are not just wombs to sire heirs but can own land and rule themselves, as eligible as their sons and brothers. Though ancient history contains situations where women inherit, in the modern age, there is less resistance. Intermarrying is rare, as the arrogance of noble blood seldom took root. Though fae offspring (even half-breeds) never spawn genetic defects, they also cannot bond with direct relations. Despite an initial need to repopulate their empires with patrician stock, some fae rulers were forced to accept lower partners in order to survive. Aristocrats were in short supply, forcing the nobility to knight local landowners and betroth their children to lesser houses to increase their power.

Even the most benign fae nations rarely mixed their blood to anyone outside their species. A few would still claim nobility upon the forming of a town. If the town became a city, the noble would be a ruler of grand stature. All this time, they would forge alliances by means of marriage and manuscript. Though fae races would ally with others despite race, they never traded blood. The treaty would be by pen and parchment only. This made said alliances fragile and prone to fracture.

Though half-breeds occurred often through the lower folk, the fae aristocracies kept their blood pure, even to the extent of marrying commoners of the same race in the nation, promoting their position. Those human nations not declaring racial hatred to the fae would often embrace the opposite, worshipping the long-lived paragons of all things desirable. Many fae took this idol worship to heart, never having encountered such reverence before. This caused an increase in human-fae half-breeds as fae were often as romantic as the most quixotic humans. When the human aristocrats first encountered the fae, their opinions were often envious. Many nobles watched as their people doted and admired the visiting fae. They were treated as celebrities, nearly as well, if not better, than the ruling class. Envy was pursued closely by obsession. Powerful human monarchs sought marriages with ruling members of fae nations, desiring their patronage, their allegiance, and – more importantly – their popularity in keeping their own people loyal. When the positive side effects of human-fae pairing were discovered, many human aristocrats went mad pursuing a noble marriage with a similar classed fae. Alas, fae never bond for reasons other than love and these initial requests were always rejected.

A few nobles would eventually mix their blood with the fae lines, though this occurred more often by circumstance with lower class fae than by arrangement to forge an alliance. Human nobles having a fae spouse or being a half-fae themselves guaranteed respect and loyalty from the people. The public considered their rulers true royalty for such long-lived sovereigns must contain stately blood. Unknown to most of them at this time, having a bond with a fae meant very little to them. To the fae, true royalty could only be bestowed from a higher power, one that could destroy kingdoms with its bellowing breath of fire.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The one attribute of man that fae find most surprising involves his capacity of adaptation beyond simple evolution. Fae adapt to their surroundings far faster than evolution ever could, pushed beyond the normal rules of science. Place them in darkness and they go blind, learning to see through sound and vibrations. Place them in water and they will grow gills and fins. Their language and their attitudes alter, and soon they even refer to themselves as a new species. Man diverges from this route. He prefers to adapt a landscape to suit his needs. Place him in darkness, and he will make a light. Place him in water and he will build a boat. He will prefer this route long before natural selection creates a mutation able to exploit his environment. Man will remain man despite creating a new culture. The lexicon will change; accents will deviate from their origin. Their diet will adapt to the food supply and the economy of their society will follow suit. Two human nations a distance apart with no means of communication may create completely different cultures. Their politics, their speech, their disposition, even their gods may change, though they will remain humans and will be so for hundreds or even thousands of years. Despite differences in skin tone and minor variations in body structure, humans are still close to being clones, with less than 1% genetic variation between them.

With fae, two identical nations will forge from identical fae. Gimfen grind towers dot the world with no communication to share information on their construction, but they are all nearly identical. The naroni language is spoken the same in Fargon as it is spoken in the Finer Fire Pits. Even Limshau and Damaska, separated by 500 hundred years, have similar beliefs and attitudes.

Meanwhile in Canam, Kannos and Abidan are separated by only a few hundred miles but have already formed distinct human cultural differences. Their accents betray their origins. Bastions are also not immune to this. Angel and York both speak English but do so with such massively different dialects as to require different regional titles. One could squirm his way in a pinch for translation if using simple words so long as he did not rely on regional slang to convey details. York adopted more of the unaltered tongue, brought over from Mann while Angel embraced a fair sized dictionary from the Asian vernacular. Meanwhile Baruch Malkut, also isolated, gleaned a vocabulary from the immigrants from Southam, forcing Spanish and Portuguese into their speech. They eventually constructed a language on their own the people were ordered to adopt.

As the speech changed, so did values and motivations. Abidan became a bright light of peaceful religious equality while Baruch Malkut focused its energy in the exploitation and slavery of a species they considered inferior in the name of the very same god as Abidan. Kannos alternatively, turned away from religion altogether. By the time the fae began encountering

human communities, several of these populations of man had already realized their survival depended on looking beyond past racial and cultural loathing to unite in a new, harsher world. Previous communities refusing to settle obsolete bigotries didn't survive long after the last migration.

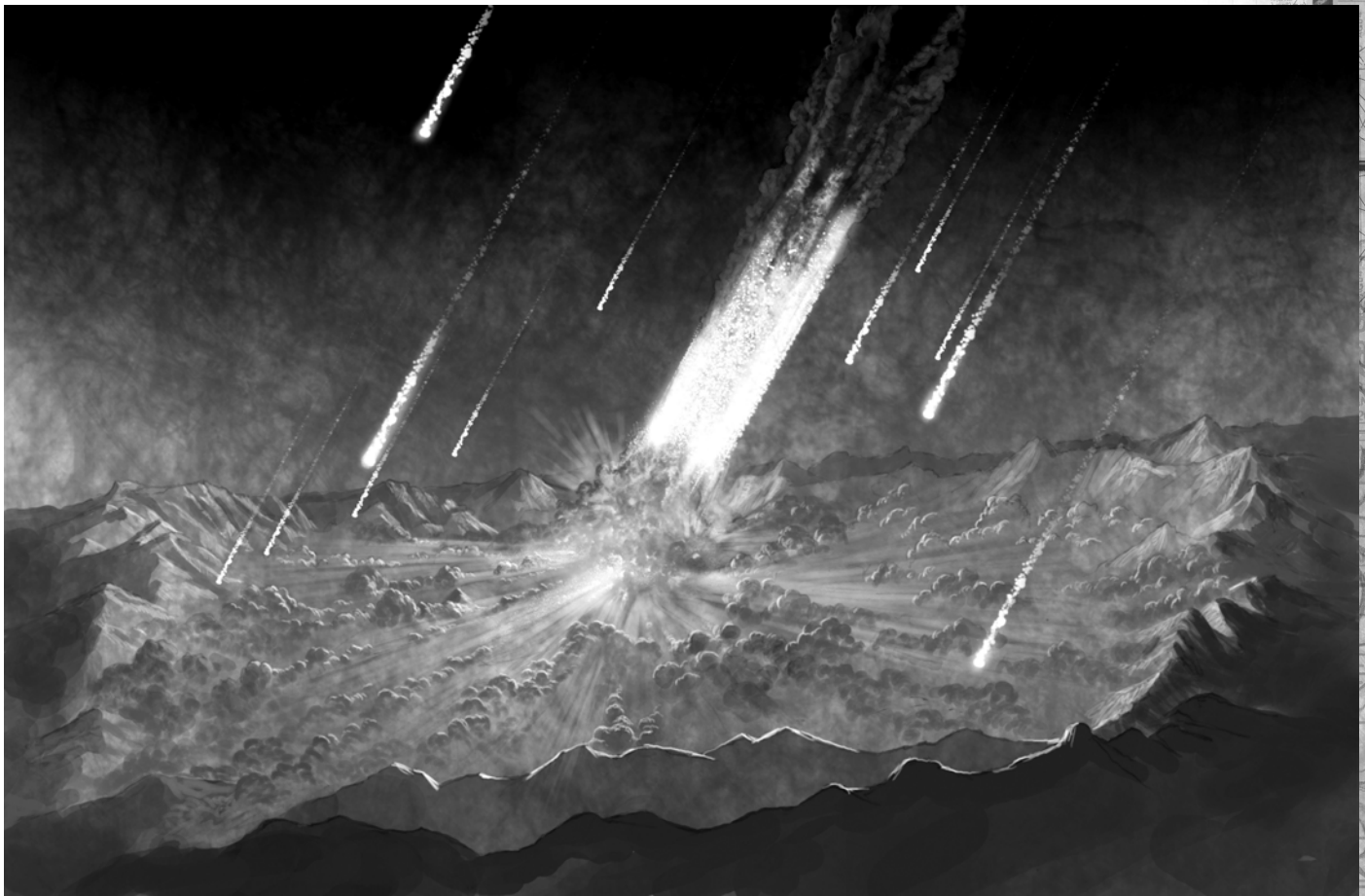
The fae discovered several different races of man, differing in only minor physical ways. They soon understood the concept of evolution and that these altered versions of man occurred slowly over hundreds of thousands of years, with recent deviations occurring more than 60,000 years ago. Despite repeated attempts, many fae could not differentiate human racial variations, mostly to the fact the majority were so subtle as to require a detailed knowledge of Earth's past social climate to fully comprehend. By this time, many modern nations of man had long forgotten about these minor ethnic distinctions. Only the major racial differentiations survived centuries of mixing and even then, man in the modern landscape regards these points of divergence as irrelevant and unimportant.

As these new nations developed, many grew tolerant of their neighbors and the various vices and viewpoints of their citizens, considered taboo or inappropriate in the past. Biases over ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion were subdued and silent. Controversial topics polarizing communities were no longer a serious concern in comparison to the essential issues of food and security. Given this, Baruch Malkut is considered an anomaly, though a large and dangerous one. Some fae and humans accuse mankind of only accepting his differences in lieu of finding new people to hate. These new people have the unfortunate distinction of not being human at all.

EARTH

The world once went by the name Terros, dating from the beginning of Amethyst's emergence (or landfall, depending on the legend) to the falling of the First Hammer, where the planet fell back under control of nature. This period of time was only a few million years, explaining the relatively normal development of reptilian and mammalian life in fossil records throughout ancient history. Further, since fae developed their culture rather slowly, they never reached a point of creating materials capable of surviving 65 million years of erosion and decay. Any other evidence disappeared when magic dissipated. Even the bodies of these new creatures fell to dust with the closing of the gates, another odd feature of those birthed by magic. After only a few years, every remnant of what magic created was gone. Everything else escaped into the gate, into a deep slumber, hoping for a chance to return.

After the Second Hammer and the return of Attricana, its influence on plate tectonics increased. Several large volcanic eruptions rocked the planet. The amplified turmoil destroyed every last fragment of mankind's presence. This process continued for nearly a century. Harsh winds washed across skies. Earthquakes ripped



the ground apart. The only evidence of this havoc was detailed in *The Final Word of Echan Influence on Geochronology* by Marikarma. In the book, Marikama explained how magic disturbed the calm status of the globe by increasing the rate of seafloor spreading. This and other influences cleaned the Earth of almost every remaining fragment of man's society.

Mankind was left to rebuild from scratch with only their acquired intelligence from millions of years of trial and error to fall back on. Though the continents had shifted slightly, and the mountains had grown taller, the planet was still closer to man's age than to that of old Terros. The planet was covered by more flowering plants. Most animals had changed, the extinction of the dinosaurs being the most obvious example. Mankind did possess an advantage over the fae with greater numbers and increased skill in material fabrication and building construction.

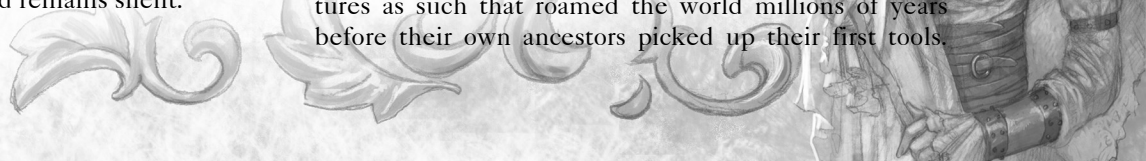
Although the volcanoes and earthquakes eventually subsided, they never reached a level of calm like mankind was blessed with the thousands of years prior. New mountains, taller and more dangerous, had sprouted. Some rivers dried to dust while others bloated. Cliffs rose higher while valleys sank deeper. Fossil fuel deposits shifted. Some sank to the crushing depths while others exploded upon the surface. It's possible that nature took back the world from man for his sins against it. But as many bastions begin repeating the same mistakes, the world around remains silent.

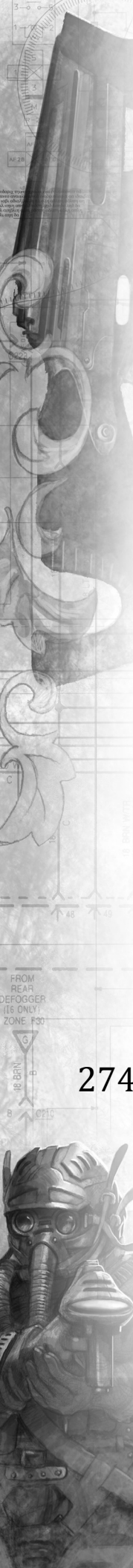
ECHALOGICAL INFLUENCE & CORPUS CONTINUITY

Neither the fae nor dragons questioned their origins or the purpose of life. If Amethyst knew, as many believed he did, he never shared such knowledge, lest he wish someone to share his withdrawn disposition. To the fae and dragons, even when Mengus arrived, the world and how it worked made perfect sense. For better or worse, they knew enough of the universe to be complacent, something an evolved species like man would never settle with.

The very appearance of man confused many fae upon their return. They discovered that without magic, suppressed rules of nature resumed their original function. Species adapt to their environment and do so much slower and less drastically than before. Not only that, but this intelligent new creature evolved from a primitive form – a social animal with bestial ways. Fae could not understand how intelligence could arise to such a level. Even the most advanced races birthed from lower life forms in the old age never developed beyond small clans of wild marauders. Added to that, these creatures resembled the fae in almost every way.

How could a species in the intervening years develop to look exactly like them? Not only that, but layered throughout their history, this species generated vast literatures professing the existence of fabled creatures as such that roamed the world millions of years before their own ancestors picked up their first tools.





For mankind, they encountered their own mystery. They barely survived the holocaust of the Second Hammer only to discover a sudden population appearing literally from nowhere. Not only that, but they coincidentally resembled creatures from fiction and legends dating back for thousands of years. Some humans believed themselves in a hell (or heaven) of their own imagination and choosing. Their deaths proved them wrong.

Both sides suddenly faced the prospect of reexamining their belief system. Echalogians appeared offering answers and using ancient literature and modern observations as proof. Two new terms entered the lexicon in an attempt to appease the masses looking for an explanation: Corpus Continuity and Echalogical Influence.

Though many attest Corpus Continuity proves the existence of God, some believe Echalogical Influence explains it all without the need for an intelligent creator. This simply refers to the manipulation or influence via the previous echan age of Terros on mankind's evolution and cultural development. Various theories persist attempting to explain why the previous age of Terros matches those of literature and legends of mankind's past. Echalogy studies both echan and techan cultures and the similarities between mankind and its recorded history against the fae, dragons, and their recorded history. This analyzes the obvious physical similarities between fae and man in conjunction with historical coincidences in their religions, legends, and mythologies. Echalogians claim much progress, ascertaining the similarities to an undefined will of creation. Studying Echagenies in techan cultures remains an uninspired field baring little progress. They admit too many coincidences exist between the time of Terros (Old Earth) and Modern Earth and are confounded with the numerous references on the world of Terros in mankind's mythology and dogma. After centuries of study, a firm scientific answer has yet to arrive. A popular theory recently accepted pointed to a remnant of magical knowledge passing through time like inherited genes. Though growing in popularity within and without bastions, the theory still has several holes.

Today, techan scientists believe natural selection and evolution is severely retarded within the influence of magic. This may explain why no intelligent life ever evolved from the various natural creatures walking the planet back then. Magic creates random massive mutations and huge deviations from the norm that quickly find some dominant species overwhelmed by freak mutations. Most of these are simply referred to as spawn races, creatures formed from magical influence rather than with evolution. The huge difference between fae races and evolved races is their fate. Evolved races like man improve over thousands and thousands of years, gaining in intelligence with successive generations. Fae emerge fully formed in their creation but slowly degrade over time, a process the fae refuse to accept.

FREE HOUSES

Canam's most distinct feature lies with its large number of independent houses. Lauropa's larger empires quickly absorbed every spare inch of land, brushing borders within decades of Attricana's opening. With Canam, more than a century passed before any nations encountered others. Those with slightly more power absorbed smaller adjacent villages, usually by oath of betrothal or by threat of violence. This was how the first houses formed and how the first instances of nobility appeared. Though much of Canan was unclaimed, villages could declare themselves free from alliance or external obligation.

Hundreds of small villages dot the land, though most are tied to a larger house. A few of these houses eventually banded by blood or necessity (or both) to form larger states. A few emerged from the reputation of a declared monarch or a rich landowner. In Canam, the largest echan nations are known to everyone that walks on dirt or pavement. These are Abidan, Baruch Malkut, Fargon, Limshau, and Kannos. As well, there are massive free city-states, nations themselves run by powerful rulers. In these cases, rulers are all fae, as the relative population banded to form a single massive community rather than break apart to claim their own territories. These are Dawnamoak, Gnimfall, Laundenia, and Salvabrooke. Areas like Apocrypha, Crax, Dagron, and Xixion are considered lawless and not under a specific ruler, and thus are not considered nations. The controlled city-states and empires account for a small portion of Canam's total landmass. This leaves hundreds of thousands of square miles of virgin landscape unclaimed. Scattered across this emptiness are the free houses.

Most free-houses control one small town and perhaps a half-dozen villages, bonded to the ruling house because of a need of protection or by forced hands. Large nations don't often rub their borders directly with each other, actually grinding often-innocent free house in between. Those closest to the large empires run the risk of bending the knee in submission to the looming shadow, benign or not. Some still refuse and brief wars have broken out. Seldom do free houses survive these encounters unless it's against another free house. The majority of the rulers of free houses (sometimes also referred to specifically as "free-lords") are human.

Their culture, relations, and diplomatic standings are varied but seldom extreme. The most notable free-houses are Antikari, Ogium, Orchis, Plicato, Quinox, Torquil and Skyrose.

GOD'S HAMMERS

Man always knew a major bolide impact would be an extinction level event, but he hoped it would not repeat until his technology reached a level to detect and defend himself.

This did not occur.

Though commonly known, the First Hammer, not referred to as such at the time, struck what was then

known as the Yucatán Peninsula. It created the Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction event, simultaneously wiping out many of the non-avian dinosaurs and planktonic organisms on the planet. It was followed by a massive environmental shift resulting in further losses over the next few thousand years. The planet never fully recovered and the impact, along with massive volcanic activity, shifted the entire ecosystem. It allowed other life-forms to prosper and permitted natural selection to evolve to mankind.

When Attricana closed initially, all the rules of nature it suppressed returned. Given enough time, perhaps the giant lizards would have been offered the opportunity to continue unabated into intelligence. The absence of magic degraded and nearly vaporized all evidence of the fae, dragons, or any other spawn species inhabiting the world. The collision, environmental aftereffects, and simply time itself, removed any surviving evidence of their existence. Though some bizarre artifacts were encountered pointing to the possibility of a hidden history of the world, these discoveries were dismissed as aberrations or hoaxes.

To the fae, this collision was nothing short of an act of God, though their god. It became known to them as the Smite of Berufu, an act to punish them for the sins of the pagus. Narros believed fae were caught in the middle of a war between their gods Oaken and Berufu while those who didn't believe in Berufu contended Oaken brought the rock from heaven for the blood spilled on his soil. Many modern translations referred to the impact as "God's Hammer" and the name stuck.

Though many did not witness Amethyst's sacrifice before the impact, those that did claimed he brought down a beam from heaven, forcing the black gate into the earth and sealing it in rock. Amethyst's death throes and the following bolide collision killed the remaining pagus and shemjaza before they could flee into their gate before sealing. The second collision, which the humans would later dub God's Hammer (as they would not connect it to the first impact until centuries later), occurred with apparently so little warning as to not warrant a single announcement.

The few surviving accounts never listed an event recording the discovery or the anticipation of the impact. Modern views believe the resident population knew nothing of the collision until it masked the sun and shook the entire planet. The bolide struck a region of land once called Eastern Siberia. By seemingly pure coincidence, this impact occurred exactly at the location of the buried Ixindar gate. Though the rock coffin sealing the tear inside could never be broken by mankind's hand given his then current level of technology, a two-mile asteroid easily succeeded. Fragments of the absolute rock scattered across the globe and Ixindar's wave of corruption flowed out like a broken dam. Though the current population of mankind never questioned the impact point, they would do so later. At the time, survivors believed the black gate occurred via the collision or was brought down by the asteroid itself. Much

later, descendants of the fae would correct this assumption. By then, everyone questioned the coincidental location of the Second Hammer's strike. Since any evidence of this collision sits in the center of Kakodomania, an answer anytime soon is unlikely.

IXINDAR

While Attricana disrupts, Ixindar corrupts. While the white encourages creation, the black converts to destruction. Many observing both phenomena agree that – despite their refusal to follow known scientific laws – they both adhere to rules they themselves never deviate from. Not even the dragons profess to know all these rules, though both argue Amethyst and Mengus knew more than they claimed. Attricana encourages random creation. It randomizes mutation, throwing logic to the wind, allowing truly amazing creatures to walk the planet. Although always deified as a virtuous light of righteousness and purity, the white gate exhibits none of these attributes. Its influence creates in equal measure some of the most heinous monstrosities to ever stain the soil or skies of this world. It also created the dragons and fae and a wondrous world around them of ravishing beauty and endless marvels.

Ixindar carries no encouragement of creation. The greatest misconception supported by many contends Ixindar is akin to hell, or to be more generic, chaos. Political propaganda from many echans and techans support this claim. They look no further than the demons emerging as proof, though only called such because of dated religious references insisting so. In certain cultures, the term demon is not portrayed negatively at all.

Yet, these creatures are labeled demons in many languages and thus must be the generals of chaos. In their dialect, as well as most fae, they are shemjaza. There is no denying their evil nature to be sure. A brief glimpse of their motivations appeared in the exceedingly rare codex *The Skin and the Ars Ordo Grimoire*.

The book, found by the wizard Kereptis Rifts, went missing from his library after his death. Though the exact contents are not known, the book supposedly detailed the fall of Mengus and her true relation to Amethyst.

A side effect of this belief is the insistence that all life must end or operate in service of order. When Ixindar corrupts, what it really does is subvert any originality in a subject. Its form of order results in degrading the real world to a constant level. This would not be the null background radiation the universe may be fated to reach but a collective consciousness possessing a power only described as absolute and divine. Another way to describe it would be that of a hive or overmind—to unify all thought and to have that thought be able to control the universe. A cosmos with one occupant would have neither emotions nor a sense of individuality. Another concept follows the idea that Attricana may be infinity while Ixindar is zero. One is everything while the other is nothing. Given this, a single consciousness in an infinite space would be zero, while a

single conscious in zero space would be infinite.

Like Attricana, Ixindar radiates a power that is synonymous with magic. Even trying to wield this power is to invite its corruption. Ixindar does not disrupt science. The corruptions from Ixindar do not generate an EDF, neither does the landscape of Kakodomania or the spells they cast. Ixindar-bound spells are extremely difficult to find (using the mirror of Pleroma, Saeqaar).

Suppressing the EDF is akin to suppressing known Attricana magic, which can stifle magical abilities and even kill magical creatures within it. Since there is no known way to suppress Ixindar magic as it does not radiate disruption (the only way anyone has been able to measure Attricana's influence is how it breaks down the rules of nature) no one is sure if closing Ixindar would destroy the shemjaza, pagus, and fallen dragons plaguing the world.

LANGUAGES

To the fae nations, human tongues are relatively easy to understand and almost all forming relationships with surrounding human cultures know at least English. Leaders of more obscure communities usually know one human tongue. Fae races carry accents similar to humans, and they are known to be as varied. A connection has never been made of how certain fae accents contain similarities to human variants of old Earth.

By a majority, fae languages sound similar to one another but different enough that a speaker could not fake one if fluent in another. Narros and pagus tongues sound more jagged and sharp, while other fae races sound more fluid and poetic. Even though sounding similar to their languages, humans have found learning any echan tongue extremely difficult.

Many languages had died following Attricana's opening. Others faded within a few generations while a few merged to create new variations. Before the gates, hundreds of languages had dotted the globe. Now, only a handful remain. Surviving vernacular soon divided into regional slangs and patois, eventually becoming recognized languages themselves with distinct lexicons, syntaxes, and phonetic pronunciations. English surfaced as the only surviving dominant language in Canam. Endangered regional tongues were assimilated into geographically-bound hybrids.

The new emerging languages resembled a mish-mash of older ones. All bastions have English as their primary language in Canam.

Techan Special Rule: An echan language requires two skill ranks in Linguistics instead of one to select.

Note: These are all the languages available in Amethyst. Tilen have no native tongue and adapt themselves into whatever society they find themselves in.

Language: This is the language name as translated into English.

Script Type: This is the system of writing the script uses. There are six variations:

Abjad: Very similar to Alphabetic, Abjad uses symbols representing consonants with little to no vowel use. This system includes some of the oldest languages still being spoken today.

Abugida: This system is similar to Alphabetic and Abjad in that it uses consonants, but it combines vowels with its consonants rather than having separate vowels.

Alphabetic: The root for many languages, this uses simple symbols representing individual consonants and vowels. This often creates a smaller spectrum of letters but added complexity may occur with a complicated vocabulary.

Featural: This is a strictly phonetic-based writing system often employing syllabic blocks. This language is not often seen but is easier to learn than most others.

Logographic: Symbols represent words and phonemes (though mostly the latter). These scripts can be extremely complex as the symbols can be intricate.

Pictographic: Symbols represent specific titles, vague concepts, or ideas. This is not considered a strong written language and is nearly impossible to translate without reference. These symbols have been known to be very extravagant.

Syllabic: Symbols represent syllables of words rather than whole words or consonants. This system can be nearly as complicated as pictographic or logographic but can convey a spoken language better.

LANGUAGE	SCRIPT TYPE	SCRIPT NAME	ECHAN
Argose	Pictographic	Argose	Yes
Chaparra	Pictographic	Faen	Yes
Damaskan	Logographic	Damaskan	Yes
English	Alphabetic	English	No
Englo-Lingo	Alphabetic	English	No
Ferran	Pictographic	Ferran	Yes
Guttoran	None	None	Yes
Ignotan	Featural	Kakkonin	Yes
Indic	Abjad	Shahmukhi	No
Laudenian	Logographic	Faen	Yes
Narroni	Featural	Narroni	No
Old Fae	Pictographic	Faen	Special
Onsespeak	Alphabetic	Terran	No
Paggin	Featural	Kakkonin	Yes
Pleroma	Logographic	Adonnic	Special
Romanic	Alphabetic	Romanic	No
Saeqaar	Logographic	Adonnic	Special
Semitic	Abjad	Aramaic	No
Sinitic	Logographic	Kanja	No
Slavic	Alphabetic	Cyrillic	No
Tenenbra	Logographic	Tenenbra	Yes

LANGUAGE DESCRIPTIONS

Argose: Argose is the primitive language of the kodiaks. Every member can speak it and, as it is often of the case, is the only language they ever learn. Argose consists of growls and mumbles other listeners may confuse as the random noises of an unintelligent animal. The specific patterns are hidden deep in the inflections of those growls, a system few outside of the attuned ears of the kodiaks could even pick up.

Chaparra: The chaparrans refused to alter their language from their roots and have been obtuse to adapt given the exposure from other cultures. Chaparrans believe their tongue is the closest to the original old language, Faena. Later chaparran branch species have an even more complicated version of this vernacular. Chaparran written form, an elegant and beautiful style known as Faen, has never been adapted or altered. It is also nearly impossible to translate unless one is chaparran. Chaparra is syllable-timed, making the speech sound like lasting poem of perfect rhythm though, unlike Laudenian, there is often hard stops with “K”s and “G”s. The written form of chaparra and laudenian are nearly identical.

Damaskan: The language used by both damaskan and limshau fae, as well as all gimfen, is the most widely known non-human tongue in the world. More humans speak Damaskan than any other fae language. Thankfully, it’s one of the easiest to learn (Narroni is still easier). Being a stress-timed language, the vocalization sounds similar to sinitic. Those fluent with the Asian tongue often find picking up Damaskan easier than English. Modern Damaskan has adapted in the last few centuries, amalgamating elements from Narroni and Sinitic into its syntax. Damaskan is very fluid language with soft sounds with few hard stops.

English: English is not really English, but a mixture of older English with fragments of French, German, and Spanish. In Angel, quite a few Sinitic phrases crept in as well. The result is the modern form now considered the lingua franca of the human race in Canam and the dialect most non-humans pick up when wishing to communicate with humans.

Englo-Lingo: This bizarre patois popped up around the eastern bastion of York and is thought to have emerged from the bastion of Mann, where it’s the national language. Englo-Lingo filtered most of the Sinitic donations that found themselves in modern English and added older French and German slang to create a bizarre phonology that shifts from three different Germanic languages every sentence. Dozens of villages on the east coast insist upon it and York accepts immigrants fluent in the tongue, making the bastion bilingual.

Ferran: A simplistic version of Damaskan, Ferran is a jagged, rough tongue used by the lower branches from the damaskans like puggs, boggs, and skeggs. It differs slightly with every village, making a proper translation from any source difficult.

Gutturor: Even harder to learn is the sharp dialect

of the narros branch species (like chiggoths and oggraks). Since they have no real culture and are extremely phobic of society, their language is chaotic and hard to define. Gutturor as a term is a misnomer since there has never been a consensus of the phonology to define it as a language. It is thought that every group has personalized the language intentionally to prevent even neighbors to relating to them easily.

Ignotan: The native language of all denizens of Kakodomania and servants of Mengus, Ignotan is a simple sounding language easy to pick up but hard to master. Its written form is perfection itself. Completely phonetic, one could learn the basics of its speech in a day. The language is complicated but every phonetic makes sense. Not a single fragment of its syntax appears out of place or culturally significant, nearly mechanical in its application. It’s not very good for poetry. All shemjaza, typhox dragons, and most pagus speak Ignotan.

Indic: This is an amalgamation of old human languages Hindu, Punjabi, and Urdu. It is not often spoken in Canam but still pops up from time to time.

Laudenian: There is a seemingly never-ending debate between the chaparrans and laudenians about which species is closer to the original fae. The laudenian language is slightly more askew from its roots, an evolution of the original that would progress into Damaskan later. Their written form, however, is closer to the chaparran system. The language flows beautifully and is extremely poetic and fluid with strong base in syllable-stress. Only laudenians speak laudenian.

Narroni: The original narros’ speech was a local patois of Laudenian. But as the narros moved further and further away, the need to create a language all their own increased. Unlike other languages, which evolve slowly, Narroni was constructed in committee and implemented instantly after it was cleared. Narroni is a manufactured language that is efficient and elegant in its simplicity. It is neither hard to learn nor hard to master. It is the simplest echan language to use and thus can be picked up easily by even techans.

Special: Narroni is not counted as an echan language.

Old Fae: Further chaparran branches continued to degrade the syntax of their parent tongue until finally, the lower species like faeries, sylphids, and dojenn began speaking in a bizarre language of songs and whispers even the chaparrans couldn’t understand. Along with the holy language of dragons, Old Fae is impossible to learn by most mortals.

Onespeak: Similar to Narroni, Onespeak is a partially manufactured language devised by Baruch Malkut and imposed on the population. Eventually, the entire phonetic landscape changed with the lower class, even though the majority of the ruling party still preferred Englo-Lingo. This language was devised to unite mankind but it ended up further isolating the kingdom from the rest of the world. Those of the lower class are tolerated to speak English but are forbidden to speak Englo-Lingo. Onespeak features a heavy Spanish and Latin

influence as well as thousands of words with no etymology.

Paggin: This language formed secretly within the pagus that lived out of control of the Shemjazu. Pagus in Kakodomania speak Ignotan only. Those in Apocrypha and Azhi Dahaka speak only Paggin unless a shemjaza strolls into their village. A pagus that speaks paggin to a shemjaza is instantly executed. Rebellious pagus consider paggin the first mark of a pagus independent culture.

Pleroma: The language of the dragons, called Adonnais in all fae languages, is considered the very first language spoken by any intelligent creature on the planet. The language and its written form are intrinsically linked with Attricana and it is thought that the dragon god Amethyst created the world of magic by speaking the correct words. This is the language all spellcasters use when casting magic but even they cannot carry a conversation with it. Only dragons are fluent and thus, only dragons may select it. The language itself is also not completely pronounceable by any creature other than a dragon, so the intensity of magic with mortals will always be limited.

Romanic: Another language seldom heard in Canam, this merging of French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish is thought to be the lingua-franca of Lauropa and the dominant language of the bastion of Porto.

Semitic: A growing dialect in Canam, this language underwent the fewest changes over the past few centuries. A descendant of Arabic, Aramaic, and Hebrew, it is a common second language to those in Abidan and its outlying villages. It is often heard in locations of religious importance.

Saeqaar: The mirror of the dragon language, this tongue has the same written form and a similar pronunciation. It is spoken entirely by typhox dragons and shemjaza for the purposes of spellcasting. It is the corrupted form of Pleroma. It is believed the idiom is exactly the same, but channeling through Ixindar instead of Attricana. Its actual name is not known, though a clumsy translation from ignotan revealed the name Saeqaar, but this has never been confirmed. There is no word for the tongue in any fae language and they refuse to create one.

Sinitic: A fast growing language in Canam, Sinitic, also called Asian, was already present when hundreds of immigrants landed on the western shores off Angel. It is the common second language in the bastion and a common tongue for hundreds of miles around, including Limshau, where it was a popular choice among damaskans when first learning a human language.

Slavic: An extremely rare language in Canam, Slavic amalgamates Belorussian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatia, Slovak, and Ukrainian. There is no village in Canam that uses it exclusively. It is thought to emerge from several echan and techan nations in the similarly named continent of Slav, including the bastion of Kriebet.

Tenenbra: The tenenrbi (a lesser seen fae in Ca-

nam) are the sole speakers of this tongue, which stands clearly as the most bizarre of any fae language. The tenenrbi have unusual vocal chords, able to speak normal "groundwalker" languages as well as the unique collection of whistles, clicks, and chirps of Tenenbra.

This strange phonetic characteristic came from their voices' capacity to double as echo-location devices. The phonology also deals with the stress level of voice, implying different meaning depending on the volume of the words. Other than Old Fae, Tenenbra is the hardest for any outsider to learn. There is no language for the branches off tenenbra. The clicks and whistles lost their lingual connection and became the grunts and groans of animals with no formed communication.

PROXIMITY OF BLOOD

In the history of all the fae and their descendant races, the highest rung of the social ladder was given to those blessed by a dragon's kiss – which is only in metaphor, as it not always involved physical contact. A benign dragon would declare the fae of noble heritage, to be one apart from the rest, exhibiting extraordinary charisma and moral fortitude. By such blessing, the dragon would swear to channel wisdom to the members of the family name, even beyond the end of its own life. The family name is taken under the wing of the dragon's, merging its title to the fae's. This is not an act done lightly or on impulse. Usually only one or two families in each major species is so exalted across the world. The laudenians have Renar Alkanost. Damaskans have Elenthos Tellurian and Ravenar Limshau. Chaparrans have Valentiarankerr, while tenenbri have Sharajaclypse. Despite some claims to the contrary, no narros or gimfen have been so christened.

This has not stopped several fae from declaring themselves king or queen or the land they control a monarchy, citing the righteousness of their conquests as proof of their royalty. No dragon needs to consecrate them as proof of their sovereignty. Even though Sharajaclypse is the only tenenbri gifted with a dragon on her crest, she is only a lord in Vanaka, ruled by Queen Karellaecrebet, residing in the capital of Vakai. A few nefarious gimfen and humans have forged such symbols upon their crest but dragons take forging their blessing seriously. Only benign, or "archon," dragons ever bestow such titles on others, reserving their endorsements to those with the charisma and benevolence to become great and wise leaders. Such titles are not given to beggars or shopkeepers, but to those already exhibiting promise, already leading others in virtue and gallantry.

Many are already leading nations, but none ever declare themselves royalty. Assuming such a position guarantees no endorsement. Though most of these fae are appointed by word from a dragon's lips, some are thought to actually have dragon blood running through their veins, inherited from bonded love between crossed species generations ago. Such pairings are known to have occurred but are infrequent, only happening when a dragon takes mortal form and falls for its

emotions and urges while in that state.

This knowledge was not known to humans and when the new world took shape, many materialistic and selfish leaders with too much power and too many men declared themselves royal only for the purposes of christening their land a kingdom. The most notable exception was King Savarice of Abidan, the only human in Canam to have ever received such endorsement from a dragon's hand. Savarice's blessing by the holy dragon, Silver River, guaranteed a stature other kingdoms could only dream of. The title did create controversy. Several great fae leaders like Thalagos Gin of Thos Thalagos and Karlis Kronas of Gnimfall expressed resentment for being overlooked and Nacolia Falcon condemned the choice, expressing that the blessing of a human devalued the practice entirely. This view was not felt by Alkanost, who immediately accepted the king, further declaring Savarice and his noble line "the first true king of men and the only leader fit to guide his species."

Ravenar Limshau agreed with the godly sanction and hoped it would rally a greater influx of immigrants to Abidan and threaten the stability of Baruch Malkut. King Darius Konig, upon hearing of the legend and of Savarice's title, snorted at the notion, arrogantly alleging that god himself, outranking any such blessing from a primitive dragon, has hallowed his noble blood. King Darius pronounced Savarice's title as blasphemy, punishable by death. If the Savarice line is eliminated, it is unlikely mankind will be fortunate to receive such an honor again for many centuries.

In the past and present, rulers of other nations, both human and not, declared themselves noble, though not royal. They called their huts houses and their castles capitals. They commanded river navies and armies of expendables. They controlled farms and rudimentary industry. They used this wealth to barter favor with royalty in hopes of signing an alliance sealed with marriage. Royalty understood that by promoting neighboring houses to nobility they could betroth their priceless progeny in order to expand their kingdom with unbreakable bonds. Thankfully, because of the necessity of expanding their control, royalty rarely if ever intermarry. Though some suspect other families of such controversy, no dragon-blessed royal family ever mixed sibling blood. The commodity of their lineage was too valuable to squander on selfish ideals.

RELIGION

A common belief in many religions claimed the Almighty wrote the rules of the universe everyone now follows. Some say the only way to hear this voice is beyond the grave. Some also say the Almighty exists in the flotsam that keeps the universe from flying apart. Others think he lives within Attricana, and/or he may be the realm itself. Some others say he is a "they", as hundreds if not thousands of spirits or gods watch us from an identical world on the other side.

There is no right or wrong answer.

With the push of magic upon the normal existence

of man, a wave of new religious movements swept globally. Religion offers hope and order in a world seemingly on the brink of destruction. It promises a plan stemmed from intelligence – that everything happens for a reason. As Earth falls more towards the realms of magic and enchantment, many more flocked to religion to answer their questions. In this age, miracles occur. Worshippers find proof of god everywhere. After more than 6 billion people died following the Second Hammer, the religions that survived found little reason to fight over conviction. All treasures in idol and land fell to dust or sank under the ground. Many smaller faiths died with their populations. When Attricana opened, newer beliefs arrived with newer populations. A few humans embraced these faiths while some fae embraced human ideology, although the latter was much rarer.

Many embraced the dragons as their focus. This is understandable given their immense power. Those not embracing dragons, those worshiping a supreme being, still wait to hear that voice aloud. God or Gods remain as quiet and as elusive as before. The majority of most religions on Earth are monotheistic (single god); few are polytheistic (multiple gods).

A large percentage of bastion populations are atheist. Outside of the walls, the percentage drops sharply, but not completely. Almost 40% of all humans in echa don't subscribe to any specific faith though almost all attribute some spirituality to the world.

FAITH EVOLVED

As mentioned, many religions of man survived, though none were unchanged. These changes came from several key influences, the most important being the arrival of the enchanted world. Although it was the foremost catalyst of this change, it was not the only one. The events leading to Attricana's opening involved a massive calamity that included (but not exclusive) the fall of the Second Hammer.

With larger religions, most of their offshoots either merged or vanished, leaving only a handful. The modern dogma of these faiths do not resemble their ancestors exactly and have all altered, even to adopting certain traditions and conventions of others. Those fundamental in their views often found themselves without allies, and in the fledging years after the Hammer, those without friends fell back into history. Modern religions began to adapt their doctrine to accommodate recent events, radical as they were.

After the invasion of magic, the ratio of religious demographics between the specific faiths and those non-religious stayed fairly constant, with a slight shifting to nonreligious. Although many new people embraced religion as an explanation of recent events, an almost equal number abandoned their faith, claiming the destruction of the world was proof of god's nonexistence.

This led several splinter religions (like the one endorsed by Baruch Malkut) to claim god created this cataclysm to punish man. Apocalyptic views of the

world snapped up fanatical followers in the first few years, believing judgment day had occurred. These fanatical views led to the first hysterical crusades by surviving men bent on destroying the nations of fae. Every major religion spawned its own fanatical cell endorsing this principle. As the centuries passed, they dwindled, leaving only a few begging for attention among the moral majority.

The only locations where the faiths of old have remained nearly unchanged are in bastions, which kept their faith as stable as possible (those that still followed it, that is). They still adapted to their environment, some in positive ways, and some in negative ways. Outside, in the open enchanted, faiths adjusted quicker and more severely. Fundamental sects rarely lasted long, with the sole exception being the right-wing view of the offshoot religion endorsed by Baruch Malkut. The Christian-based communities took the longest to accept the new world. Those that did embraced it wholly. Islam adapted much faster and more cultures rooted in that faith adapted to the new age than any other. Nearly all secular, agnostic, atheistic, and spiritual (but not religious) societies accepted the new world with few hurdles.

Modern faiths outside of echa have attempted to explain the new world in ways to maintain their original doctrine as close as possible. Large tomes were written by prominent Muslims at the time declaring the proof of Allah in the sudden appearance of spirits always hidden until then. Christianity's issue dealt with the fact that thousands of years of biblical law declared anything non-human was inferior to man and under his control. Only those hopeful of a future without war were permitted a dialogue with the fae. With nearly all of mankind struggling to survive, those optimistic of such a peace prospered, with the only notable exclusions being bastions and the xenophobic nation of Baruch Malkut.

ECHAN FAITHS

Amethyst: Amethyst, the dragon god of the old age, fell to dust when the demon armor, Gebermach, plunged the Sword of Dogurasu into the dragon's heart. Many believe his spirit lives in the Gate, waiting for the time to return. In many ways, faith in Amethyst or Attricana is interchangeable. Subtle differences appear in the symbols. Amethyst represents all things good. He believes in creation and life. He frowns on destruction and those who wish to control others. In Canam sits an ancient temple as old as the Second Hammer. Its exact location has been lost to all but a select few. Mentioned in the Gospel of Greka, the temple stands atop a mountain, surrounded by a fortress of stone. Only a few know of the significance of this temple but do refer to it as the Temple of Amethyst. Those following the faith hope to eventually locate it. Every decade or so, a crusade begins with as few as five or as many as five thousand to search the continent for this fabled temple. With little to work on, no crusade has ever succeeded.

The symbol of Amethyst is a chunk of Amethyst

rock. To pray to Amethyst, worshipers place the stone to their forehead and repeat an un-enchanted Pleroma chant four times in different directions. Many fae races worship Amethyst.

Attricana: Like Amethyst, followers of Attricana believe in creation and despise evil in all forms. Unlike other religions, Attricana does not equate intelligence. Believing in Attricana translates to believing in a creation beyond science but not necessarily with a conscious design. Attricana followers consider their faith more a study of creation, the closest thing to a science echans have. Other faiths accuse followers of Attricana as infidels, disbelievers finding a shortcut around faith to explain the new world. Worshipping Attricana proves that faith in an intelligent divinity is not required to rationalize magic.

Some right-wing religious groups have sworn to crucify followers of Attricana for betraying god's gifts. Across the ocean, an entire culture has developed with a population of Attricana endorsing atheists. When one following Attricana gains wisdom or power, he or she believes it derives from an internal source and not from a divine creator. Worshipping would be an incorrect word to even describe it. The Attricana symbol is an amulet of the white star itself. Followers do not exactly pray, but stare at the gate in the morning, studying it, and gaining wisdom from internal meditation. Being of no intelligence, Attricana is simply neutral.

Dragons: Many people worship dragons. It's not difficult to believe as dragons are the most powerful creatures on the planet. They are immortal, predating all others by millions of years. Most dragons refuse such responsibility, frowning on such beliefs. Others accept and respect such faith but remain humble to their mortal origins. A few embraced the belief and maintain active roles in the lives of their worshippers.

Evil dragons manipulate this belief to create hordes of followers to do their bidding. All dragon symbols resemble the dragon specifically being worshipped. Praying involves bowing to the symbol placed upon the ground.

Dragons are worshipped across the world.

Berufu: Many elves still worship their original faith, the creator of all things, Berufu – the mother of all fae. They believe Berufu lives in the shadow realm where the universe was formed. Attricana, to them is a source of power, but not the home of God. According to legend, Berufu released the fae to worlds through the gates. Hundreds of worlds across the universe possess their own variation of fae species. Shemjaza are fae brought into the world from the black gate and Berufu legend explains that both tap into the same resource. Mengus is no god to them and there is no dark opposite of Berufu in the faith. The concept of hell is a purely human invention.

Another variation claims Berufu was willed into existence by the god of all matter, Oaken, to be his mate. Together, they would create a species bound of both their strengths to populate the universe. Most believers of Berufu ascertain the two gods emerged bound as one united with two different personalities and of

equal strength while a few maintain Berufu to be from Oaken's divine loins but grew to equal power. Their first child was a demigod who later gave knowledge to the fae to learn technology (to the gimfen), a knowledge forbidden to them. For this sin, the demigod was stripped of its gender and name. Before this, the two gods formed the original fae. They seeded billions if not trillions of fae in Berufu's womb, only letting a fraction upon the worlds they chose. This womb is a spiritual chamber in the ethereal realm known as Otsharus echalogical transition to the Hebrew word, Otzar). Although fae may give birth to their own, the number of fae souls released from Otsharus is fixed and when it is emptied, the species will no longer expand into new worlds. Nothing is listed in the books on Berufu about mankind except one controversial excerpt that claimed every human born steals a soul from Otsharus and the reason for the fae de-evolution is due to the dwindling souls in the chamber. Oaken priests insist this is untrue. Only fanatical laudenian and tenenbri priests hold this belief. Shemjaza also use fae souls, another reason why their destruction is paramount with followers of Berufu. Oaken made the dragons but Berufu always wanted the fae to rule the world, and eventually, the universe.

The clerical symbol of Berufu is a string of white pearls wrapped around one's arm. Praying involves a wide variety of chants in one's native tongue while rubbing the pearls between open palms. This procedure takes as much as an hour every morning. Every fae descendant culture makes her look like themselves. All depictions show Berufu graceful and tall.

Ixindar: Opposite of Attricana, Ixindar believes in an ordered, uniform existence, everything under complete control. There lives no intelligent design to anything. Everything corrodes, everything falls apart, everything collapses, and everything dies. To believe in

Ixindar means to encourage a state where the universe no longer changes. Worshippers obsess about control. They don't preach their faith; they enforce it. Their homes are perfectly organized. Though they may not wish to create a world devoid of life, they do believe a perfect society involves perfect order with absolute discipline without the pesky distractions of imagination, emotions, or independent thought.

Like Attricana, Ixindar possesses no intelligence, only an ideal. Worshipping Ixindar, like Attricana, may be incorrect wording. There is no deity, more the disciplined study of the phenomenon. Though not channeling powers, some of the most loyal followers of Ixindar are scientists, thinking Ixindar possesses a uniform, constant, and stable power source to help retake the planet for techa. Many initial worshipers of Ixindar started as scientists corrupted to its obsessive cause to control everything.

The symbol for Ixindar is a simple black pearl, featureless. Being of no intelligence, Ixindar is simply evil.

Mecha / Machine God: Only the gimfen worship Mecha or Machine God. Gimfen subscribe to the idea that the knowledge of technology is passed down by a

powerful deity beyond the gate and only to a precious few. Only by worshipping the Machine God can technology be safely used alongside magic. Given that, gimfen believe that most bastions fight against the word of Mecha and can solve all their problems with simple belief in their almighty.

Gimfen contend that Mecha formed as a child from Berufu and Oaken and became so powerful that it began questioning the form of the universe. The parents forbade their child from giving precious knowledge to the fae, but it did so anyway. In response, Berufu took away Mecha's true name and Oaken robbed it of its gender. Mecha would only be a half-god. Though some devout followers have become eunuchs, this is not widely endorsed. Mecha's symbols are tools, any tools. Everything the mechanic uses is laid out in the morning and the devout thanks god for the tools and the knowledge, picking up every single item and expressing gratitude for its existence. For gimfen, known to have many tools, this sometimes takes half the morning before any work is done. Churches in gimfen communities are shops where followers can discuss their god and faith and pick up a few items at a divine discount.

Mengus: This spirit still exists beyond the black gate. Like Amethyst and Attricana, Mengus and the black gate of Ixindar are virtually interchangeable. Worshipers of Mengus itself believe in an overall plan for the world. The biggest difference between Mengus and Ixindar is that Mengus plots to combine the universe into a unifying state under her control. Those who worship hope to share in her power, to combine with a greater intelligence and be one with a god. The Mengus symbol is a collection of tentacles curling around each other. Mengus is the sole deity of all shemjaza and typhox dragons as well as any pagus under their control.

Oaken: Narros believe Oaken came before Berufu. The spirit of the Earth created Berufu to be his mate. In that regard, the narros believe Berufu to be female and Oaken male. The narros acknowledge Berufu but only as a servant. The two then went about deciding how to populate the universe. Oaken's myth claimed he arrived into this galaxy by breaking off a monstrous intelligence billions of years ago. This intelligence had no name but scattered to form all the planets of the universe magic would eventually appear on.

The greatest segment drifted into the loose particles around the Sun before the planets were formed and the matter that drifted to Oaken formed the Earth. In this regard, Oaken is not one god, but hundreds, thousands, or even millions scattered across the cosmos. Either one or all of them together created Berufu, which is only a single creature. Some speculate Oaken is a hive mind, a combined gestalt of all the fragments. They created Berufu and decided to spawn the populations of the universe. Berufu however, wanted fae and Oaken wanted dragons. Eventually, Berufu and Oaken created the Otsharus and deposited the fae across the many worlds Oaken formed. Oaken snuck dragons on a few of them as a pet project. Oaken mythos does not include Mecha except for one or two stories, all written by

Mecha disciples.

Alas, like many religions, the dogma of Berufu and Oaken differ. Both of them feature inconsistencies. Berufu does not properly explain dragon creations and Oaken never accounts for Mecha. Both of them make huge assumptions on other fae species outside of the Earth with no evidence of their existence. Oaken dogma includes Otsharus but claims the souls from this great chamber exit via the black or white gates and thus both fae, pagus, and demons all use them. Man is innocent in this and receive their souls from another power altogether.

Narros and tenenbri (the highest ratio of believers) believe that Oaken tests the fae on his soil. If they don't prove worthy, they eventually de-evolve to dust. If all the fae eventually die, Oaken will verify to Berufu that dragons were the correct choice. Oddly enough, dragons do not believe in Oaken. The narros mythology contends that Oaken never agreed on the final form of the fae and since Berufu disliked dragons, Oaken eventually created the narros as his favorite children. Tenenbri continue this belief by saying that though narros came first, tenenbri represent the new and preferred form. Narros believe the tenenbri dug too deep and were cursed. Some tenenbri actually agree with this judgment and pray to Oaken for forgiveness.

Because Oaken lives underground, he forbids digging too deep into his realm. Oaken loves picks and hammers and his symbol is each of them crossing against an unrefined rock. To pray involves kissing the soil and chanting straight into the ground, often times rising back up with dirt on one's lips.

Yok-Ani: Unlike most other dragons, yok-ani accepted and respect the faith granted them. They believe in nothing but balance. The majority believe in endorsing neither good nor evil. Both must exist in equilibrium, else the universe itself could fall apart. Many yok-ani do understand that evil, by a majority, only seeks to destroy their opposite and thus cannot be depended upon to maintain stability. Despite this belief, yok-ani are kind and benevolent. A few enforce pure neutrality as the only belief. The demands they place on their followers differ from other dragons. Most followers seldom even see a yok-ani dragon. Most of them live across the planet in the mountains of Kuraukou. One is said to live in Canam. To attempt an audience requires a disciple to infiltrate the bastion of Angel and enter the subdivision of Genai, named after the yok-ani dragon rumored to live there. The massive temple at the center marks the focus of the faith for the entire continent. Yok-ani also despise unnecessary violence and believe drawing the sword to be the final solution. Disciples must be able to speak Sinitic. The yok-ani symbol is the dragon shape, snaking around a staff or sword hilt. Praying to yok-ani involves striking the sword or staff into the ground and singing, in Sinitic, a poem declaring one's faith.

HUMAN FAITHS

It should be noted that the following pages are extremely brief summaries of extremely complex religions and belief systems. If you choose a real faith, you should research the details of the religion and make sure you understand the demands put forth. Don't insult half the world by not doing your own research.

Chinese Folk Religion: Also known as Chinese Traditional Religion, this encompasses a vast amount of practices including Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. It involves the worship of animals, deities, the sun, the moon, and the stars (although the latter has depressed somewhat in recent centuries). This also includes the worship of legends, ancestors, gods, goddesses, and demigods. In all, there are hundreds of different figures for followers to worship. These include the Jade Emperor, Cai Shen, Tu Di Gong, Hu Yi and Zau Shen. The concept states that a mirror of Earth floats beyond Heaven with a social hierarchy in which all these spirits, gods, and legends live in peace and war. In the past, they often clashed over control of what once was called China. Today, hundreds of temples dot the landscape, and the religion appears across the globe. The biggest change involves Attricana. Most believe this double Earth sits beyond this doorway. One must research a path before choosing the right deity.

Christianity: Deviations of Christianity fell apart after the Second Hammer and few branches survived. Modern Christianity is a result of a massive amalgamation of the Christian faiths when survivors rose up. The Holy Cross remains the symbol of faith with disciples following the belief of the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Details remain sketchy about the specific differences of modern Christianity and the branches of the past. Christianity falls into two major camps on modern Earth: Techan and echan Christians. Echans believe the Second Coming has occurred and this new world stands a result of a new design. They see all the proof around them with a world commonly breaking scientific laws whenever it sees fit. The existence of Ixindar places the image of Hell back into public acceptance. Many believe it falls to a new crusade to stop this evil.

The majority of modern echan Christians believe this crusade began years ago and fight to finally free the world of sin forever. As history proves, some fanatics still exist. Although the faith deviated to such an extreme, it is believed Baruch Malkut began initially as a Christian kingdom before its fall into madness. Thankfully, this is the only real exception as most other Christian kingdoms are well respected with kind and fair rulers (like Abidan). The cross symbolizes everything and its placement dominates worshipper attire. Prayers have seldom changed, and morning mass takes just under an hour with a strict progression of prayers and actions. Christianity is found the world over.

Hinduism: One of the oldest religions of man, Hinduism maintains that the soul lives eternal, undergoing a continuous circle of life, death, and rebirth. The

beliefs of Dharma, Samsara, Moksha, Jnana, Ishvara, and Karma remain unchanged. They hold Brahman as the eternal and all-powerful spirit to which everything stems and that Ishvara is the only way mankind can interpret Brahman. Several denominations of Hinduism place Vishnu or Shiva as the seat of eternal and omnipotent power. No matter the course, the faith encourages virtue and acts of good, believing that will put a soul on the road to enlightenment, and that evil acts lead to darkness.

Unlike Islam, which frowns on Idolatry, Hinduism showcases several examples, the most common being the Aum, a symbol found throughout the faith. Many others embrace the mandala and even the manji (swastika), the latter being a symbol embraced and used by Hinduism thousands of years before temporarily being connected to the evil acts of a relatively small group of fanatics long forgotten in this new time.

There exists various lifeforms in the universe at various stages of development. Their status at birth and their life is determined by their karma. Karma is more than just the sum and balance of your good and bad deeds. It is work or action and the results of that work or action. Karma is cause-and-effect on a cosmic scale. It determines what lessons you have to learn in this and other lives and what fortunes will befall you in this and future lives as a result of actions in this and previous lives. Gods and Goddesses exist, but according to certain schools of Hindu thought, they are just another form of life, higher than humans but ultimately mortal. They will eventually die (some believe many have died in the intervening millennia). Even after the fall of the Second Hammer, Hinduism remains as much a complex religion as it ever was. Most believers of Hinduism live around the outside of Western and Eastern Slav, but like many faiths, it can be found in smaller numbers everywhere there are humans.

Islam: The unaltered vision of Islam remains a major religion in many human cultures. Muslims share six basic beliefs: in the god Allah, in the books sent by Allah, in all the prophets and messengers god sends, in predestination, in Angels (or mala'ika), and in the day of qiyama (Judgment Day). Sunni and the Shi'a branches (and many others), like Christian branches, amalgamated to the modern Islam in the world of Amethyst.

They believe in the Towers of Islam (obviously related to the Five Pillars or Core beliefs of Islam), Shahadah (sole god worship), Salah (five daily prayers), Sawm (fasting during Ramadan), Zakat (giving charity), and finally Hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca), the final one still mandatory to all Muslims once during their lifetime.

When Attricana reshaped the Earth, one point of interest lies with the holy land most religions claim ownership of. The majority of this now sits under the sea, swallowed up by an act many attribute to God. The city of Urtioch (part of the kingdom of Trinitas) sits on the new coastline. Founded by migrating Muslims, the city stands as a shining beacon of religious equality.

The trek to Mecca is no longer simple or safe. The

Hajj now tests all. No longer safely nestled in city walls, by a miracle of godly proportions, the Kaaba exists atop a mountain simply called Makkah. Dangerous peaks prevent a strong civilized foothold. Every year, tens of thousands attempt the voyage. Since many modern Muslims in Canam no longer know the specific direction to Mecca, many simply point to the sunrise or directly east. In modern days, some progressive Muslims have suggested that God may one day bless the world with another prophet. Though the last one was the greatest prophet of men to unite all of mankind, this new one would strive to unite all species of Earth under a common shroud of wisdom and guidance. This belief is not popular across the world and no one is sure how such a figure declaring such a position would be greeted.


The symbol of Islam remains the lack of idols itself. By a rule, Muslims are taught to reject any teaching that focuses on idolatry. Muslims are everywhere but many live in Arkonnian and Canam. In Canam, the largest collection outside of bastions can be found in Taskin-Kada.

Judaism: Related to Islam and Christianity, Judaism, involves the worship of one, all-powerful, all-knowing, omnipotent, and everlasting god who created the universe and continues to influence its development. He created the Tora (or five books of Moses), that dictates the laws and commandments (613 in total) of the Jewish people. Following these rules and worshipping God earns merit, rewarding one in the afterlife. This afterlife exists in the Garden of Eden that many believe sits behind Attricana. What this afterlife looks like has never been defined.

Further, even though there are many rules and principles of faith, no official creed or dogma is recognized as fully binding. The common points are that God exists, is all-powerful, has no physical form, is eternal, and is singular in presence. God gave humanity purity at birth with a free will to choose his or her own path. Mankind may atone for sins through sincere acts of redemption.

Followers of Judaism must commit to prayer three times a day, although specifics differ with interpretation. They still recognize the Shabbat, the weekly day of rest, as well as all other Jewish holidays. Like all monotheisms, Judaism also operates temples in Trinitas across the ocean. In Canam, those of Jewish faith fight a constant stigma. Since Baruch Malkut uses a distorted Yiddish translation of the term "Blessed Kingdom," some incorrectly accuse the kingdom of the south as being Jewish, when they are in fact, not. These accusations usually flow from ignorant humans and not fae, who seldom ever judge a people based solely on stereotypes of faith (most fae already judged mankind on the basis of race long before they learned about their religion).

Sikhism: Sikhs follow the teachings of the Ten Gurus, dating back centuries before the Second Hammer. Over one million worshippers still live today, scattered across the planet. The followers adhere to the




thousand page-plus scripture known as the Guru Granth Sahib. Thankfully, this tome, like the Qur'an and Holy Bible, survived through the end of the last world. The book preaches a simple approach to spirituality, a message directly revealed by God (Waheguru), who is singular and all-powerful. All created by God stand equal in all ways, regardless of race, sex, or religion. After the gates opened, many Sikhs accepted the new races, being all created by God. A laudenian priest once spoke highly of the Sikhs and their faith, claiming it made more sense than the other ones. All Sikhs defend all life, especially those of fellow human beings and fae.

They also believe in reincarnation. Followers wake before the sunrise and meditate on God's name. They must live their life in peace, give to those in need, and open one's door to all. Sikhs are encouraged to form communities where everyone is equal. Sikhs are prohibited to acquire possessions based solely on greed, act illogically, or treat any intelligent species less than they would treat themselves.

Shinto: The "Way of the Gods," Shinto still survives across the world today, often worshipped alongside believers of yokani. A few have even combined the two. Once the official religion of Japan, Shinto deals with reverence and respect for nature. The religion lacks a specific dogma or a fixed way to act. One does not even need to profess a belief in Shintoism as it mirrors Buddhism in many ways. Shinto believes in family and welcomes anyone. Its only simple commandment insists on a simple life unifying one's soul with nature. Objects worshipped in Shinto are called Kami. Kami can represent fertility, peace, or more direct symbols like the Sun and Moon. There are an almost endless number of Kami, but the most powerful remains the sun-goddess Amaterasu. Some believers claimed they found a connection between the dogma of fae and of Shinto. They allege the Otsharus is the realm of the Kami, the spirits of the Kami are these unbirthed fae refusing to enter our world, and modern fae descendants are, in fact, Kami taking physical form in this world. They claim the shemjaza are also connected this way.

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RESOURCES



Before man fell from his seat of power, he managed to strip Earth of almost all non-renewable resources. He extinguished nearly all fossil fuels, forcing bastions to develop alternate sources. Gasoline was scarce. The biggest hurdle for any formed authority was location. Many centers of techa positioned themselves on the coast for obvious reasons. Some utilize the sinful energy of the atom while others embraced cleaner resources like geothermal, tidal, or solar. Only Selkirk sits on or near a mine. This left most available resources in the hands of echan cultures. The narros run the majority of mines, but some echan human settlements appeared around them as their only source of income. Other races erected communities based on their own personal needs.

The remaining resources are the common elements most took for granted years ago: Copper, silver, gold, platinum, iron, coal, etc. In the new age, new riches like angelite and coruthil have also emerged. The bastions need resources badly and some have secretly established trade agreements with outside sources.

SHEMJAZA

The greatest departure from legends, the modern commanders of the dark armies of Ixindar don't wield pitchforks or sport horns, though they do have pointed ears. This connects them to the fae, though these demons neither evolve nor devolve into other forms. This makes them comparable in features to the older fae races like laudenians and chaparrans. The fact they also resemble tilen has not helped the tilen's desire for peace with the various nations of the world. The shemjaza are usually the ones leading armies and committing secret tasks bestowed by their lords or god. Each one is worth a hundred pagus. Their appearance was uncommon in the time of Terros and unseen in Canam until only a few years ago.

What is known about them other than their similarity to the fae is that they are not a branch from them at all; arising in their own form with influence from Ixindar, in much the same way the initial fae emerged from the influence from Attricana. They stand much taller than any fae, growing in stature as their power increases and have solid black eyes with no differentiation of the pupil, iris, or sclera. They don't easily feel pain so often go out of their way to inflict it on others or, often enough, themselves. They feel nothing except for physical and emotional extremes. Everything must be pushed to an excessive limit. Some intentionally mutilate themselves to keep their sensations constant. Despite their size and the intimidating aspect of their eyes, they are described as being astoundingly attractive and charismatic. Another misconception claims them all to be sadistically evil, which is not entirely true. Though the vast majority follows the edicts of their master, a few emerged with enough independent thought to pursue their own objectives. Most of the time, this was as malevolent as or more so than their loyal cousins.

All pagus in Kakodomania are controlled by the shemjaza and the greatest commanders among them are the Kronix lords. No one bound to Attricana has ever seen one. Shemjaza still number quite few, though are by far the most dangerous servants of Mengus. No theory has ever arisen to explain their relation to the fae without a proper placement in the fae development tree. Their similarities do point to some common ground between the two domains despite their contradictory results.

TRAVEL

Most fantasy worlds in fiction present a world of expanding beauty but short distances. They detail a single island or small continent, nothing in comparison to the vastness of the real world. Travel time is a problem. All



locations in Canam will list if they possess a dragonfly service or a thermal mooring tower. The costs are doubled if transporting a creature Medium-sized or larger or if the loading and transport of said creature would be difficult.

DRAGONFLYERS

There is no mass transit in Canam. Huge distances mar travelers' attempts to engage in swift journeys. Further complications arise from swarms of raiding creatures that pose an annoyance rather than lethal danger. From across the ocean, a solution arrived from the tower of Dromos. The architects and engineers there designed and mass-produced an enchanted flying craft for use in the southern lands of Arkonnia. A lack of population and financially viable investors prevented vast distribution in their homeland.

When they reached Canam, the Dromos enchanters sold off all their stores and filled backlogs for two centuries. The dragonflyers resemble oversized ancient Asian boats referred to as "junks" with large eagle wings made from marble or limestone extending from the sides. They don't flap and appear to have no purpose other than cosmetic, but the boats cannot fly without them. Each one can hold between six and twelve people though a few larger ones have been known to hold up to a hundred. Most of them only require a single controller. They don't travel anywhere near bastions, Apocrypha, Ažhi Dahaka, or Baruch Malkut and severe winds prevent travel to or through Alpinas. They

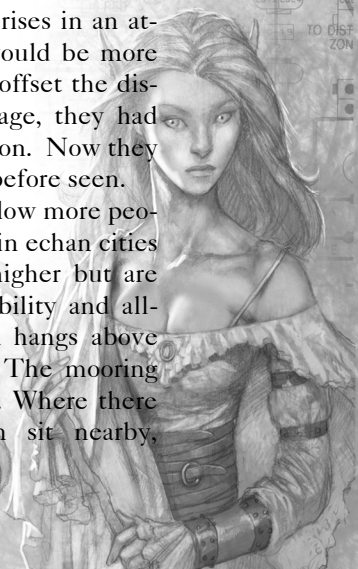
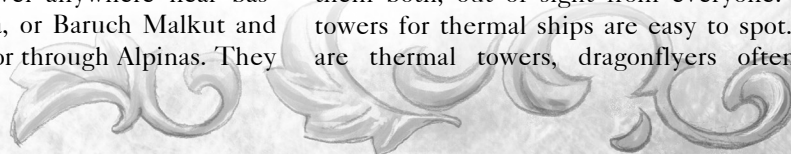
seldom accept charters to unknown destinations and often travel between the gimfen, narros, chaparran, and damaskan kingdoms. In the century since the introduction of the dragonflyer, a network has formed in the skies over Canam, though most of the traffic is still comprised of thermals.

THERMAL SHIPS

The most common aircraft by far in echa is the thermal, a slang term for all buoyant, lighter-than-air aircraft. The term refers to their common attribute of using heated air instead of helium or hydrogen to supply lift.

Before the Second Hammer, the progress of these aircraft was halted in favor of faster, mass-produced winged vehicles. With the onset of the EDF, thermals found a niche to fill in the new world. Even in areas of increased magical disruption, hot air still rises in an atmosphere. Though a helium dirigible would be more stable, advances in thermal designs have offset the disadvantages of hot air. In the previous age, they had been relegated to commercial and recreation. Now they have returned in an expanded role never before seen.

Their moderate flying altitude did allow more people to see them in use and their presence in echan cities is relatively common. Dragonflyers fly higher but are more expensive due to their maneuverability and all-out speed. The laudenian sky network hangs above them both, out of sight from everyone. The mooring towers for thermal ships are easy to spot. Where there are thermal towers, dragonflyers often sit nearby,



TRAVEL COSTS

SERVICE	COST	OVERLAND SPEED	PER DAY	PER HOUR
Dragonflyer (routine)	2 sp per mile	125 (Flight)	300 miles	12.5 miles
Dragonflyer (charter)	4 sp per mile	125 (Flight)	300 miles	12.5 miles
Thermal (coach)	1 sp per mile	100 (Flight)	240 miles	10 miles
Thermal (luxury)	2 sp per mile	100 (Flight)	240 miles	10 miles
Wavecrasher	1 sp per mile	100 (Sea)	240 miles	10 miles

though flyers are more often employed for charter bookings, leaving the thermals for city-to-city travel. Thermals rarely make themselves available for a journey without a mooring tower at the destination.

WAVECRASHERS

The single largest alteration to the planet by far was the chaos caused on oceans by tidal forces exerted by the Moon. Pushed into a closer orbit by Attricana, the swells and waves in large bodies of water increased in severity. This, along with Attricana's encouragement of ocean storms, has thrown atmospheric sciences out the window. Air currents constantly shift, making meteorology and climatology useless. Chaotic pressure systems have generated the largest oceanic storms ever recorded, separating the continents behind walls of weather.

This maelstrom is continuous through every ocean. They dissipate only slightly when approaching shore. Massive coastal docks like ones at York and Angel have installed immense breakers to halt the assault. Nations from both techa and echa tried for centuries for a safe route across the water. The only real option was to travel under it or over it. Porto Sail Gallions and Beluga carriers easily accomplished this task but the altitude required was unrealistic for thermals. This connected bastions only scarcely and kept echan communities detached. This lasted until only recently when the first wavecrasher appeared in a Canam dock.

The sea was rife with monsters. Some grew from evolved oceanic behemoths like sharks and whales while others were unique creations of Attricana, grotesque or beautiful. Some were timid while others were hostile, swallowing anything they could wrap their impressive maws around. These leviathans were initially hunted for their meat or for a prize. Short-range boats braved the weather to harpoon the mammoths and drag their hulks back to shore.

With the application of moderate magic and clever trapping, several of these goliaths were captured alive. Their wills were broken and they were trained to carry a load. This weight eventually turned into an entire vessel, built around the creature. Not a single wavecrasher looks the same, from monstrous sea turtles to whales larger than villages. The vessels dominate the waves by rolling effortlessly over or diving underneath them. Even with these audacious designs, the majority of wavecrashers seldom survive more than a dozen journeys before finally destroying the creature or the boat built around them. Some of the beasts near retirement are demoted to following coastlines, where they be-

come shorerunners. It is thought there are less than a dozen of these beasts of burden roaming the oceans.

They frequent only echan ports and rarely appear on the west coast of Canam, running exclusively across the narrow strip of Okeanos.

WAR

Many residents in Canam question why the nations of elves and civil men have not declared war on Baruch Malkut. For the past hundred years, the largest rival nations to Baruch Malkut – Kannos, Abidan, and Limshau – have weighed such options. They are not blind to the pogrom King Darius is endorsing or the thousands of humans and fae enslaved there. The issue deals with the heavy cost of such a war, fated to erupt all of Canam in fire and drag out for decades, if not centuries.

With the largest area of control, Malkut can supply provisions to its front line far longer than other nations. They have the largest standing army, though outnumbered if their three rivals were to unite under a single banner. Malkut lacks significant reach, however. They don't have the number of cavalry to rival Kannos and their siege capacity is worthless against the walls of Limshau cities. Advisors continually have to convince King Darius that an invasion would break Malkut's back. Any open attack into Limshau or any smaller houses would spark a violent response from elvish allies. The invading force would quickly find itself overrun by Limshau custodians, Kannos cavalry, and Abidan knights. The last sign of a possible offensive resulted in the mysterious disappearance of a Malkut battalion just before they exited the swamps that proliferates the kingdom. The details of the incident are not well known. Since then, Baruch Malkut shifted to defense rather than attack. They take pride in provoking neighbors, goading enemies to assault them in their territory. They do this by allowing their slave raiders (which Malkut doesn't publicly acknowledge or support) to strike deep into Laurama and House Skyrose.

Soldiers within the Malkut army are trained in guerilla tactics, using quick strikes to ambush opponents, assassinate leaders, and destroy supply lines. They perfect this practice by utilizing the swamps and marshes that permeate the entire kingdom. Even if Kannos, Limshau, and Abidan were to unite and bring in other allies from the Finer Fire Pits, Gnimfall, Laurama, and a half-dozen free houses around the land, a combined invasion into Baruch Malkut would be costly.

Armies would be slowed. Supplies would diminish. Morale would drop from unrest. As Baruch Malkut

brought their forces to bear, they would abandon their outlying villages, burn their border keeps to ash, and allow the invasion to push into their territory before revealing themselves. The order of the cloth would assassinate leaders. Raiders would burn caravans of supplies. The Malkut militia would make even the hardest victory by their enemies so sour as to ponder the logic of such a war. Every bog would be polluted with human and fae blood. Every hill would be covered with the corpses of dead soldiers. Malkut would publically assassinate captured leaders, torturing officers before sending the remains back to their lands. Slaves would be executed and driven into posts as warnings of the cost of invasion. Owners would destroy their stocks rather than release them.

The marsh gets thicker moving south, infected with various vile bugs and creatures only the Malkuts are aware of. Finally reaching the peninsula, hidden traps and stealthy thuggees would slice armies down without offering a target. Any survivors would be so demoralized as to prefer surrender and a quick death to another second in the swamps of the "blessed kingdom."

As long as they remain in their borders, Baruch Malkut is nearly intractable.

THE WILD

Canam has no specific borders between its nations. A formal treaty has not been signed among any kingdoms declaring their area of control in regards to neighbors, creating wide expanses between these territories. Dozens of villages claiming no allegiance fell between them. This is quickly changing as the house of Skyrose is being caught between Limshau and Baruch Malkut. Since Malkut refuses to acknowledge borders with rival nations, no formal map has ever been agreed upon. This creates more of a wide blur instead of a defined line. The only way to know if one enters a specific kingdom is to ask the citizens of a village.

There are no border markers or sentries on many of the trodden paths. The major roads including the Continental Cross do feature these points. The most defended checkpoints are those between the house of Skyrose and Limshau because of the nations' proximity to Baruch Malkut. This leaves tens of thousands of square miles unclaimed. Small houses exploded into larger ones as they snatched the largest patch of land they could realistically defend. Even considering this, there are still huge portions of the continent unspoken for. Many of these would dangerous locations in which to settle.

Some rumors claim the largest percentage of chaparrans are spread over the unclaimed forests in Canam. The easiest way to check if a forest is enchanted, and thus has enchanted life, is to see the variety of trees growing. If the trees are of radically different species (conifers, almond, walnut, apple, etc.) and growing in the same region without regard for light or temperature, it is a forest populated by magic.

These unchecked areas of the world feature the most dangerous life forms. Beyond chaparrans, not known for their hospitality anyway, these forests, plains, and mountains showcase the greatest ratio of magically endowed life, from dire and elemental animals to monstrous beasts of ill will.



Aiden hated the prospect of booking passage on an Echan Terrain Vehicle, but there was little hope of him making it through the forest on his own, not with boggs on the rise. On occasion, an armed caravan would arrive at the wall and pick up passengers for a price bordering extortion.

The passengers would be escorted to one of the safe primitive human havens on the other side, most of which were controlled by the free house of Antikari.

This was one of those occasions, and Aiden was unwilling to wait for a medieval wagon. He planned his departure weeks ahead; only those in the biblio knew of it. A note on a countertop was all he afforded Martin.

Martin

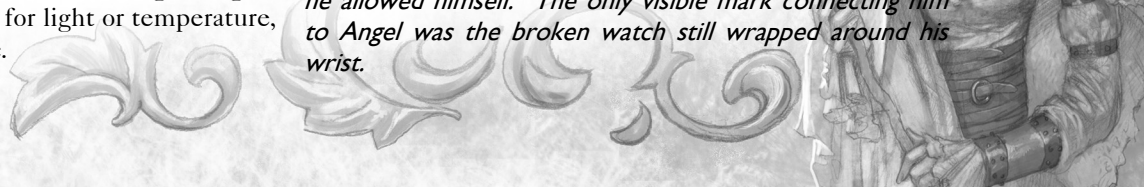
I'm not going to waste time explaining. I got my passcard and I'm leaving. I'm going to Limshau. I don't know how long I'm going to be, or where I might go from there. I know you don't understand which is why I won't bother explaining.

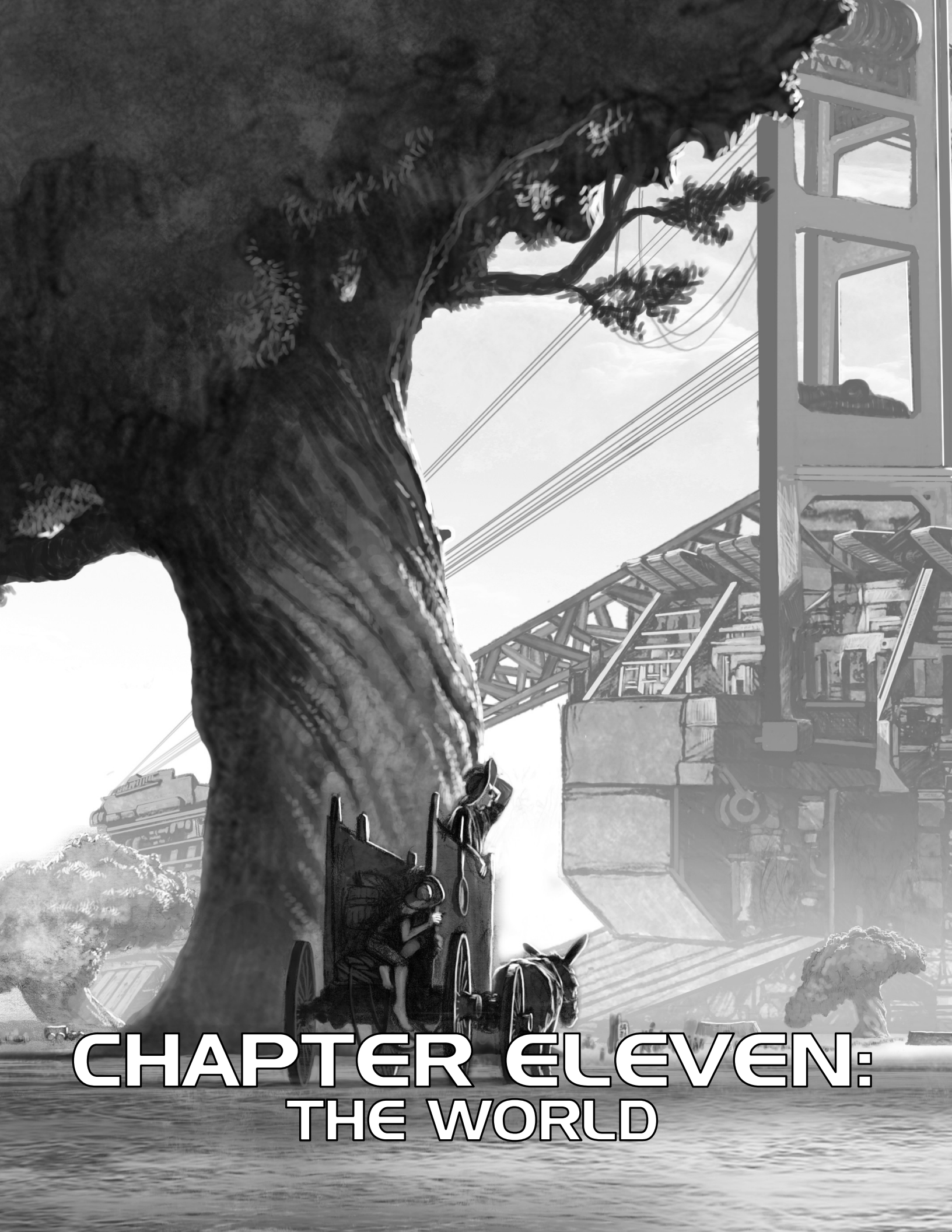
Aiden

The ETV was due to arrive in a few hours, assuming it survived the trip through Cyon. It wasn't just the boggs but the radiant magic permeating the forest that people feared. Aiden leaned against the warm concrete wall of the bastion crown, overhearing pilgrims making cases in hopes of admittance. They tried to barter their passage by claiming possession of some vital knowledge to better mankind.

Aiden was reading a book, as he often did. This one was fiction; he had checked. A sharp page corner nicked a small divot of skin from the base of his index finger, not enough to bleed. He caressed the redness, his finger skimming over the old scar on his palm from when he grabbed the broken window during Zmey's attack. Aiden still thought of the creature as Zmey, though its real name was Goetion is Lifeless. Dragons' names were like that, part name, part phrase. Aiden's finger followed the scar as it bisected every line in his palm, from life to mercury. His left had fared better with only a leathery patch at the wrist to mark the event of his mother's death.

Aiden's black button shirt and grey trousers were from Angel but a gifted Asian girl in Genai with no technology to assist her handcrafted the brown wool sweater. His longcoat was also purchased off the benches of the Genai market. Aiden hadn't changed his style of glasses since acquiring his first set. Technology had fashioned his thermal underwear and orthopedic hiking shoes, extravagances he allowed himself. The only visible mark connecting him to Angel was the broken watch still wrapped around his wrist.





CHAPTER ELEVEN: THE WORLD



The world of Amethyst may be one of fantasy, but medieval it is not. The common knowledge earned throughout human history dealing with building construction, agriculture, medication, and sanitation has survived. Even though anyone with advanced knowledge to better a technological society was allowed entry into bastions, many people outside still possessed the general knowledge developed centuries before nuclear power, computers, and antibiotics. In addition, many on the outside soon progressed on their own, rediscovering advances their protected brothers and sisters embraced years earlier. A few possessing this knowledge used it as currency to earn themselves entry into bastions. Others realized this knowledge, primitive by the standards of advanced cities, begot more power and influence on the outside.

Any knowledge beyond the basics – usually the moment electricity comes into play – is stunted by the surrounding magic. It prevents progress, forcing immigration for those wishing to pursue this path. Still, every bastion and even the free cities has sprawling villages outside their walls of people either trying to get in or pandering to those entering or leaving. Outside, the world of fantasy still shares some striking similarities with the world of the past.

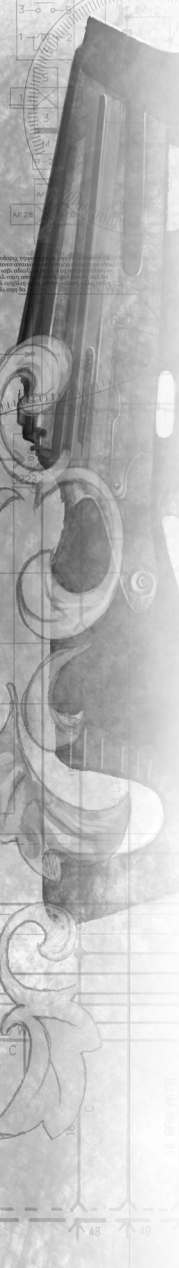
THE CHANGING EARTH

The wave of magic sweeping the globe altered nearly everything. When the enchantment saturated the world's every molecule, the planet convulsed and shuddered. The first century saw great loss of life, especially with man, already weathered and battered from the previous age. No one is sure how many humans survived the pre-gate turmoil, but many more lost their lives to the ravaging Earth. More fell victim to the monsters choosing them as prey. Finally, after a century, the planet fell back asleep. The earthquakes stopped. The winds died down. Nature swallowed up nearly every machine and nearly every building. Even the scars left by industry were overrun by plants and moving dirt.

BASTIONS

After the massive birth pains of Attricana's opening passed, the aura of enchantment finally subsided to a less chaotic level. Normality started to creep back into reality. What was left of humanity had banded together. Those still possessing technology also possessed the influence that accompanied it. Many of these initial communities could not expand or conquer others while reliant on their malfunctioning machines. The majority eventually turned to magic, forgetting their heritage and the bulk of thousands of years of technological development. For a few, they grew fast and large enough to maintain their technological footprint. These surviving cities (at least in Canam) developed because of discovered caches or ruins from Earth's past intact enough to catapult the community to prosperity. With a bastion like Sierra Madre, it could have been the discovery of the colossal cavern and easily accessible thermal power. With Mann, the entire city pre-built by unknown hands, was the catalyst to develop. Not even the natives of Selkirk know why their ancestors chose to climb a mountain and dig within it.

When the torrent of magic finally decreased, enchanted hot spots appeared over the globe. Like a weather map displaying topical zones and low and high pressure isobars, Earth displays regions of heavy and light magical saturation. In areas with roaming monsters unknown to nature or areas populated by magically endowed people, the diffusion of magic begins to alter, coalescing around these spots.



Likewise, in regions where magic is not being used or is not being radiated by the residents of said regions, this concentration drops.

Low disruption zones within bastions allowed technology to function with virtually no side effects. The EDF is always present and certain problems never cease. The more that a bastion pushes out, the larger these dead zones appear. Some bastions have placed their highest technology or R&D facilities as close to the center of their cities as possible where the EDF is lowest.

Though the term is not entirely accurate, these "dead zones" are few and extremely small. Within them, the majority of nature's rules are allowed to function. If a bastion were to collapse (and it's has been known to happen), disruption saturation would flow in with the outsiders breaching the defenses. There is no technology able to completely suppress the EDF yet. Magic flows from Attricana and cannot be curtailed until this faucet is plugged. If a shortcut was discovered, a bastion could cover itself in an invisible screen impenetrable from assault by magical means. In an absolute zero ED-field, not only would spells and magic items cease to function, but the very health of echans within the field could be threatened.

Even the inclusion of a single echan in a bastion can cause havoc as their radiated disruption shorts out technology they walk past. This is not as much of a concern in some bastions as in others. In York, a low tech freeway was built to ferry echans to the docks on the east coast. Strays are often pursued as criminals. Along this narrow road, echans can walk freely, able to mingle with techans and share a peaceful journey (though it's advised they don't linger). In Angel, an entire section of the city was partitioned for the residential echans that helped build the first walls of the bastion. Outside of this colony, and in other bastions like Selkirk, Sierra Madre, and Mann, echans are strictly forbidden. This began initially to protect technology but migrated towards bigotry with an unfortunate scientific justification.

There are rumors that the most advanced bastion on the planet, Porto, had successfully created anti-disruption fields using technology but have limited their use within certain regions of their city. They refuse to trade such advancement to anyone for any reason. Magic shrouds the Earth, blocking both low and high frequency waves. This suppresses cosmic radiation but also suppresses radio waves, preventing bastions from communicating. The rapid expansion of gas and plasma is slowed, preventing explosives from detonating or even combustion engines from running. Like human nations of ancient Earth, bastions progressed completely independently from each other, altering their beliefs, their technological profile, and even their language.

When messengers finally revealed these bastions were not alone in the world, regular communication was still unfeasible. As long as Attricana remains open, there is no way for the techans' way of life to escape the walls

of their cities.

WHO CAN ENTER?

Although it may seem that one must be an engineer or doctor to enter a bastion, this is incorrect. One only needs to possess a skill bettering those around. Bastions require talents in all fields. They need doctors, but they also carpenters, chefs, seamstresses, electricians, and farmers – anyone that can pass needed knowledge to others in order to better society. One must still rise above the norm. However, if one is lucky enough to be born inside the walls, their future has already been paved.

BASTION TECHNOLOGY

Bastions all flaunt a technological supremacy over their neighbors. Though their machines and electronics cannot survive long away from their city's borders without servicing, they still revel in such accomplishments as light bulbs, flat-panel televisions, and fuzzy-logic rice cookers. A bastion's listed tech level is only its average state of development, the level where the majority of the bastion sits at. There will always be exceptions – prototypes and limited productions one level higher. They will also commonly have obsolete and mass produced cheap technology as low as two levels under.

ANGEL

Angel emerged and grew quickly in population but not in technology. It initially bordered no rival kingdom or land contested by opposing forces. When Angel erected its first buildings hundreds of years ago, the bogg raiders emerged. They started as a major thorn in the techan's attempts to settle. Sporadic attacks and supply raids kept Angel struggling for more than fifty years until the immigrants arrived. Across the ocean, a group of islands turned into a mountainous no-man's land. Pagus had overrun the nearby mainland. Thousands upon thousands of escapees attempted to traverse the hazardous ocean. Some reached nearby islands only to be devoured by monsters. Some survived the long journey and reached the western coast of Canam, only to discover another band of humans struggling to survive.

The settlers had already wholly embraced magic as a means to survive. Needing workers desperately, the governing body of Angel made a decision controversial to this day. The techans of Angel welcomed in the settlers and offered them their own protected piece of land within the walls in exchange for a labor force. Over the next two centuries, Angel would rebuild and expand its walls three times from the sudden increase in population.

Soon, the boggs found themselves incapable of harming the massive castle-city. Occasionally, they still try. Angel's population grows each year and plans have been put in order to build a larger wall several miles out, doubling the effective mass of the world's already largest bastion. The unique aspect of Angel is not the city as much as it is Genai, the city within. Built by its



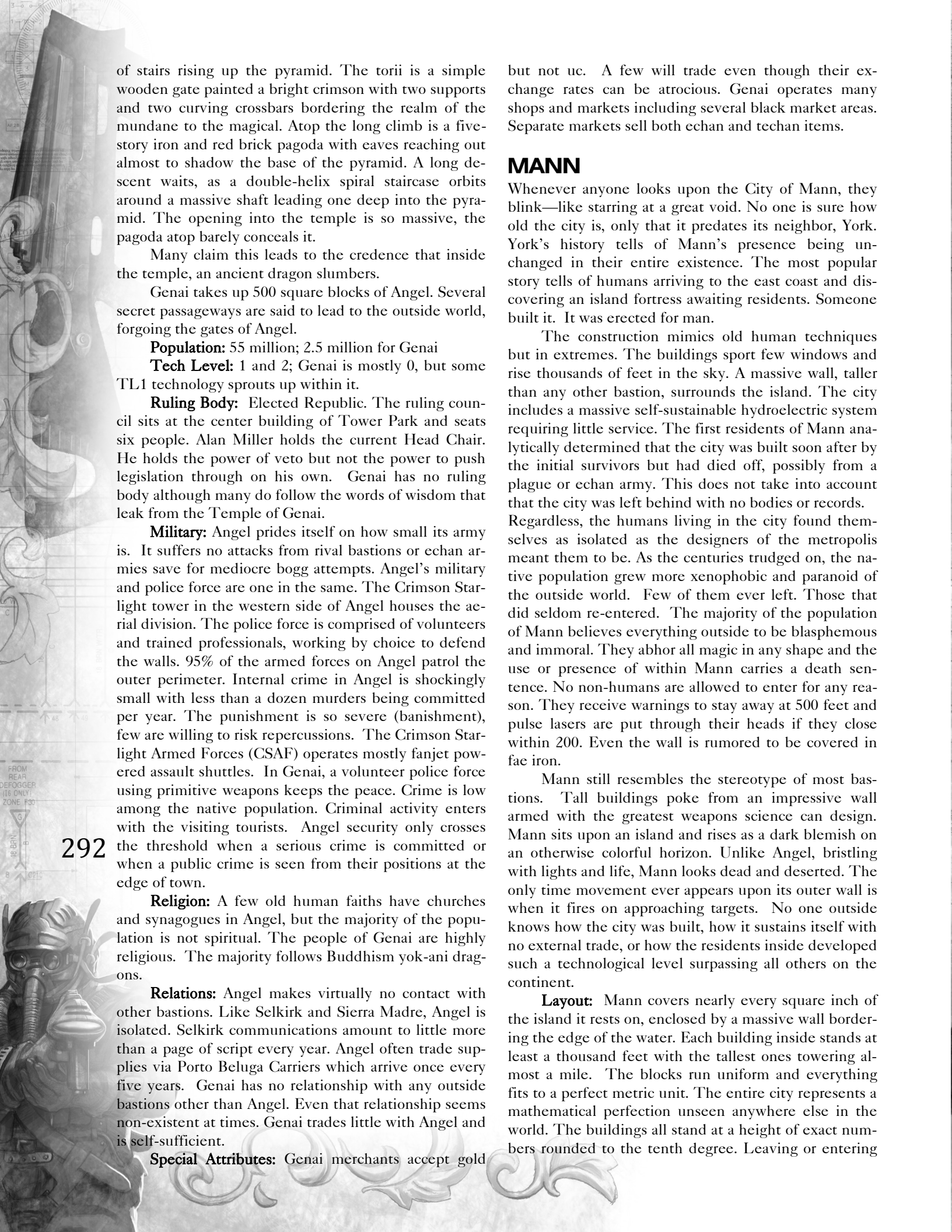
own residents, also responsible for building the wall that protects the whole, Genai cares nothing of its isolation. Citizens of Genai must have ID cards, the same as those in Angel, but several people in Genai are born, live, and die in the small town, having never left Genai (therefore never needing an ID card). Their heritage insists on recording their history as well as the names of all of those who have died in the construction of the great wall. The greatest legend of Genai is the origin of its name and the identity of its most illustrious resident. It is said the pilgrims survived the journey and were led to the land of techans under the protection of a great dragon almost as old and as wise as Amethyst himself, the yok-ani, Genai. Legends flourished and soon, the patrollers from the Angel's starlight division reported a huge temple built at the center of Genai. Only the good and righteous are allowed to enter in hopes the rumors are true and that the great dragon lives inside, out of sight from prying eyes.

Angel is the largest bastion in Canam. Its creation is synonymous with standard bastion construction and is usually the image outsiders picture when they think of the techan cities. It is one of the oldest but also one of the slowest to develop. Angel is surrounded by major deposits of magic. With Burganasis, Jibaro, Kannos, and Xixion nearby, Angel suffers from radiant disruption more than any bastion in Canam. The wall grew as a side effect of this and from the bogg attacks that never ceased. From a distance, with its massive wall and towering peaks, Angel appears to resemble an oversized fortress, hundreds of miles across.

Layout: Angel's central governing buildings stand in the center of Tower Park. The primary avenues spread out from this, intersected by thousands of circular streets. Fragments of the older walls can still be seen, circling the city like tree-rings. Genai resides in the southern corner, against the wall. Outside the city hundreds of merchants set up shops allowing visitors to buy horses or black market goods from echa or techa. Technology from Angel is especially popular.

Entering Angel from outside is not easy. Only techan humans can pass through the main door. Outsiders may have to prove their skill. Because of previous treaties with Genai, exceptions have been made for some echans on a case-by-case basis. This is usually dependant on if they know someone with clout on the inside.

Unlike Angel, organized and methodically laid out, Genai is scattered, jumbled, and cluttered. Roads split into dead ends, major walkways loop around onto themselves and buildings rise and fall weekly. Supplies were rationed to the populace so many buildings were erected with wood and concrete, topped with ceramic tiles or farms. Continuing traditional building methods, the cityscape of Genai looks a thousand years in the past. Asian influences are apparent – Genai is the last lingering shred of anything anyone remembers from what China and Japan used to be. Not a single building stands more than four stories, dwarfed by the skyscrapers around. The exception is the Great Temple of Genai at the center, reaching eight floors. A traditional torii greets those preparing to climb the massive flight



of stairs rising up the pyramid. The torii is a simple wooden gate painted a bright crimson with two supports and two curving crossbars bordering the realm of the mundane to the magical. Atop the long climb is a five-story iron and red brick pagoda with eaves reaching out almost to shadow the base of the pyramid. A long descent waits, as a double-helix spiral staircase orbits around a massive shaft leading one deep into the pyramid. The opening into the temple is so massive, the pagoda atop barely conceals it.

Many claim this leads to the credence that inside the temple, an ancient dragon slumbers.

Genai takes up 500 square blocks of Angel. Several secret passageways are said to lead to the outside world, forgoing the gates of Angel.

Population: 55 million; 2.5 million for Genai

Tech Level: 1 and 2; Genai is mostly 0, but some TL1 technology sprouts up within it.

Ruling Body: Elected Republic. The ruling council sits at the center building of Tower Park and seats six people. Alan Miller holds the current Head Chair. He holds the power of veto but not the power to push legislation through on his own. Genai has no ruling body although many do follow the words of wisdom that leak from the Temple of Genai.

Military: Angel prides itself on how small its army is. It suffers no attacks from rival bastions or echan armies save for mediocre bogg attempts. Angel's military and police force are one in the same. The Crimson Starlight tower in the western side of Angel houses the aerial division. The police force is comprised of volunteers and trained professionals, working by choice to defend the walls. 95% of the armed forces on Angel patrol the outer perimeter. Internal crime in Angel is shockingly small with less than a dozen murders being committed per year. The punishment is so severe (banishment), few are willing to risk repercussions. The Crimson Starlight Armed Forces (CSAF) operates mostly fanjet powered assault shuttles. In Genai, a volunteer police force using primitive weapons keeps the peace. Crime is low among the native population. Criminal activity enters with the visiting tourists. Angel security only crosses the threshold when a serious crime is committed or when a public crime is seen from their positions at the edge of town.

Religion: A few old human faiths have churches and synagogues in Angel, but the majority of the population is not spiritual. The people of Genai are highly religious. The majority follows Buddhism yok-ani dragons.

Relations: Angel makes virtually no contact with other bastions. Like Selkirk and Sierra Madre, Angel is isolated. Selkirk communications amount to little more than a page of script every year. Angel often trade supplies via Porto Beluga Carriers which arrive once every five years. Genai has no relationship with any outside bastions other than Angel. Even that relationship seems non-existent at times. Genai trades little with Angel and is self-sufficient.

Special Attributes: Genai merchants accept gold

but not uc. A few will trade even though their exchange rates can be atrocious. Genai operates many shops and markets including several black market areas. Separate markets sell both echan and techan items.

MANN

Whenever anyone looks upon the City of Mann, they blink—like staring at a great void. No one is sure how old the city is, only that it predates its neighbor, York. York's history tells of Mann's presence being unchanged in their entire existence. The most popular story tells of humans arriving to the east coast and discovering an island fortress awaiting residents. Someone built it. It was erected for man.

The construction mimics old human techniques but in extremes. The buildings sport few windows and rise thousands of feet in the sky. A massive wall, taller than any other bastion, surrounds the island. The city includes a massive self-sustainable hydroelectric system requiring little service. The first residents of Mann analytically determined that the city was built soon after by the initial survivors but had died off, possibly from a plague or echan army. This does not take into account that the city was left behind with no bodies or records. Regardless, the humans living in the city found themselves as isolated as the designers of the metropolis meant them to be. As the centuries trudged on, the native population grew more xenophobic and paranoid of the outside world. Few of them ever left. Those that did seldom re-entered. The majority of the population of Mann believes everything outside to be blasphemous and immoral. They abhor all magic in any shape and the use or presence of within Mann carries a death sentence. No non-humans are allowed to enter for any reason. They receive warnings to stay away at 500 feet and pulse lasers are put through their heads if they close within 200. Even the wall is rumored to be covered in fae iron.

Mann still resembles the stereotype of most bastions. Tall buildings poke from an impressive wall armed with the greatest weapons science can design. Mann sits upon an island and rises as a dark blemish on an otherwise colorful horizon. Unlike Angel, bristling with lights and life, Mann looks dead and deserted. The only time movement ever appears upon its outer wall is when it fires on approaching targets. No one outside knows how the city was built, how it sustains itself with no external trade, or how the residents inside developed such a technological level surpassing all others on the continent.

Layout: Mann covers nearly every square inch of the island it rests on, enclosed by a massive wall bordering the edge of the water. Each building inside stands at least a thousand feet with the tallest ones towering almost a mile. The blocks run uniform and everything fits to a perfect metric unit. The entire city represents a mathematical perfection unseen anywhere else in the world. The buildings all stand at a height of exact numbers rounded to the tenth degree. Leaving or entering



Mann is difficult considering there are no main doors or docks anywhere on the outer perimeter. Stories abound of infiltrators somehow pushing back the rapids and sneaking in through the hydro-pipes, but these accounts are unlikely.

Population: 12 Million

Tech Level: 5

Ruling Body: Mann's ruling body is known as "The Ghosts." They dictate all rules but no one is sure how many there are or who they are. They walk among the population as normal people but meet every day at random locations to decide policy. Their numbers have been guessed between eight and sixteen. Some class this as a theocracy since Mann's population embraces religion. When one Ghost dies, another is brought in to replace him or her. No one knows how the selection process works. The Ghosts appear in a judicial court every day to handle affairs.

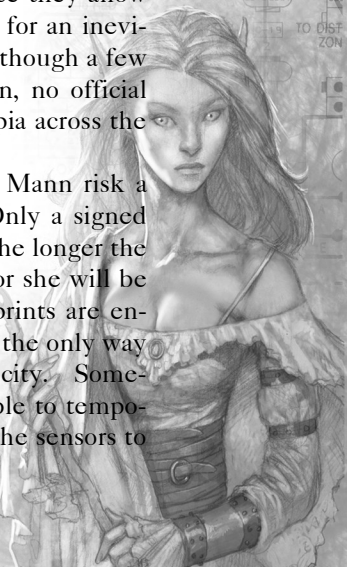
Military: The Kir protects Mann from anything that appears hostile. Designed around defense rather than assault, the Kir patrol the outer wall, tracking every moving object above, below, or on the water. The Kir dress as black as the city they live in. They are ordered to kill any echan found in the city or anyone possessing magic. They have created technological machines capable of detecting not only magical devices but magical effects as well. Behind the wall, for emergency reasons only, several large cannons have been built against York in case their neighbor falls too far into chaos. The majority of the weapons patrolling outside the walls are automated machines.

Religion: The population is almost entirely religious, though its details are known only by its residents. It is based off of an Abrahamic religion and endorses the view that the entire world of magic, without exception, is the corruption of demons trying to bring the world into a dark age of damnation. The only solution is the utter annihilation of all magic, those who use magic, and those that associate themselves with magic users.

They despise most other bastions because of their tolerance to the outside world. Though they share with Baruch Malkut their hatred for non-humans, Mann considers the southern nation just as sinful because of their endorsement of magic. The loathing is mutual.

Relations: Mann seeks no relations with any other bastions. Only Sierra Madre is more isolated, but for Mann, isolation is by choice. They refuse contact with Angel and consider York blasphemous since they allow echan to enter their limits. York prepares for an inevitable invasion that may never arrive. Even though a few Porto craft have been seen entering Mann, no official relationship has been formed with the utopia across the ocean.

Special Attributes: Those who leave Mann risk a chance of never being allowed back in. Only a signed permit from a "Ghost" can override this. The longer the resident stays outside, the less chance he or she will be allowed to return. All residents' DNA imprints are encoded in the Mann supercomputer and are the only way anyone identifies themselves within the city. Somewhere outside of Mann, there are those able to temporarily place a DNA recorder that confuses the sensors to





make someone register as someone else.

SELKIRK

Very little is known about Selkirk unless one is born there. No one remembers when or how it erected itself on such an unstable precipice. The people live in an isolated area, surrounded by mountains. Although they have access to the pass of Dianaso, to reach it requires going through a jagged section of rock. Selkirk's strength lies in its goal of continued expansion and wealth. Their loyalty is with the almighty dollar. Holding onto ancient ways, Selkirk represents a massive mining consortium. Internally known as TERMINAM – TERran MINing AMalgamated – Selkirk's entire population works in service of a corporation. Everyone works. Everyone serves. Everyone owes. Selkirk's farms, bountiful as they were initially, lacked the resources to supply the entire population when it grew past their initial estimates, so they opened negotiations with the narros to the north in Fargon. The Echan Trade Authority (ETA) was soon formed to regulate trade between the narros of Thos Thalagos and the miners of Selkirk. The narros could travel through Dianaso and never suffer a loss. They emerge at the village of Gateway, the last population before the pass and the narros to the north. The village is a stop-way point as no echan's are allowed to board the Mag-Trains to Selkirk. Supplies are traded and the two sides return.

Narros gain access to the massive gold and coruthil deposits under the Range of Rock and Selkirk acquires the foodstuffs required to survive. The ETA maintains

the trade agreement and shipments usually arrive every week. Occasionally, if supplies are critical, Selkirk will send its own carry-alls through Dianaso to Fargon. The agreement is beneficial to both sides and neither has any reason to break this profitable exchange. Outside forces disagree and some have attempted to sever this trade. Puggs attacks increase in number and aggression every year.

Selkirk smaller than all other bastions, sports no walls, and is not paranoid of its neighboring nations. Though their origins remain a mystery to even them, there is no doubt about how they survived. Under one of the richest ore deposits in the world, Selkirk maintains an extremely efficient processing facility. Before Fargon contacted them, they were threatened with food shortages and were forced to keep their population in check. Attempts to find other communities proved fruitless, though their expeditions never traveled far. After the trading relationship flourished with the narros, the city was able to prosper. The population restrictions were lifted and the following centuries proved a boom no one expected. They don't obsess over expansion or political domination like other techan nations. They only work to live and survive. Other than their paranoia over disruption, Selkirk and TERMINAM do not hold the revulsion for echans many other techans exhibit.

Since Selkirk only deals with narros (which basically look like short versions of Selkirk Miners), the population has no reason to hate them. Isolated, the city barely appears on the radar of the other bastions. A previous encounter with Angel secured a short-lived trade

agreement and promise to aid if the other fell under dire need.

Layout: Selkirk sits half inside and half outside the mountain it was built from. Large open areas sit under artificial lighting. Many of the mining levels supply minimal illumination, degenerating some members of the population to perpetual darkness for nearly their whole lives. As one climbs higher, the construction appears more thought out, brighter with larger spaces. Colors blend in and the areas are more sanitary. The vibrations of the air circulators rumble through the whole mountain, the only real sounds until one dives into the catacombs. The catacombs are thousands of miles of tunnels where automated machineries buzz. Workers follow behind and dig up the treasures found. “Mags” are the primary method of transportation – vehicles of varying size that travel along iron-core beams that criss-cross through and outside the mountain. A massive lattice of rails covers the eastern face, the side most exposed. The magnetic vehicles don’t connect to the “roads” but float alongside, allowing many vehicles to cross along a single rail. Some wealthy administrators utilize sports-car style single person speeders while the majority of the population runs on the magtracks (multi-segmented trains). One single bar travels miles from high in the mountains to Gateway below.

Population: 8 Million

Tech Level: 3

Ruling Body: The majority of the population lives within the union. The workers banded together more than two centuries ago into the four core unions: The South East Moles, The South West Rakers, The North West Boilers, and the North East Strykers. Each one competes with the other and often takes out their frustration on the field, playing a sports game reminiscent of rugby. Shop stewards lead their unions with the understanding that no one strikes or prevents the flow of goods. The supervisors monitor the lower levels of administration. The high levels of administration are run by chief superintendents, finally culminating in the main board of twelve with the president of the colony, currently Tyler Norton. The miners take up more than 95% of the population even though the majority of them don’t appear in the top fifteen levels of the city.

Military: Selkirk has no dedicated military force. The miners volunteer for service lasting three months to a year, allowing them to work on higher levels and even outside the walls. Few of them ever see action. No sizable force has ever reached Selkirk and the raids that have occurred at Gateway and on the occasional caravan have been easily driven off. The military operates a variety of hidden turrets and hard points along the outside walls. Most of the time, the military performs escort duty when carry-alls are required to travel north to Fargon.

Religion: None.

Relations: If Selkirk were to vanish off the planet, no one outside would hear of it for several years. Selkirk’s isolation works for and against it. It is the only bastion never directly attacked by any outside force

with a chance of overtaking it. A one-time conference resulted in a modest technology trade with Angel, a relationship that has since dissolved from Selkirk’s lack of communication. Selkirk has a more productive relationship with echan civilizations. The continued trade with the narros of Fargon keeps Selkirk alive. Occasionally, gimfen from the South are welcomed for their expertise and curiosity. Selkirk wishes to be more in touch with their neighbors, but their location prevents it.

SIERRA MADRE

Sierra Madre could be the oldest bastion on the planet. Some believe Madre could be older than the new age, surviving the opening of the gates. It seems unlikely considering the geological damage to the planet when the gates opened. Sierra enjoys its isolation but welcomes visitors. They appreciate their position on the planet and that most enemies pass over them without knowing a blossoming civilization exists below.

Tapped into massive geothermal energies, the population of Sierra Madre lives with unlimited power and limitless promises for the future. Unlike many bastions, gripped in fear of the outside world and the encroaching magic, the people of Sierra sleep safe at night.

Armies could walk over them, unaware of the city underneath. No army ever has. With the Gloam to the south, few people travel indirectly over this bastion. Sierra Madre, like Porto across the ocean, strives forward with reckless abandon to develop new techniques and new advancements. Clean power and virtually no crime gives the bastion a virgin mindset. Those who leave are more unprepared than any other pilgrims into echa. The majority never survive a month, dying in the wastelands between populations or fleeing back to their homes.

Like Selkirk, it is believed Sierra Madre was originally some ancient vault or military base from Earth’s past. The massive cavern the bastion was built inside formed later from magical influence, for it’s simply too massive to form naturally and not collapse. The bastion made a point to reinforce their ceiling despite showing no signs of weakening.

Being isolated from all external contact convinced the population they were the only survivors of the last age. When they emerged from their vault, they found a wilderness populated by monsters with no other refuge in sight save for the caverns behind them. A few expeditions only confirmed their fears. A frightening fog covered the south and nothing lived for nearly a hundred miles north that didn’t immediately attack upon seeing prey. If they only traveled a little further, they would have encountered some measure of civility. It would be centuries before anyone from Sierra Madre even knew of other human survivors. When finally confirmed, they expressed delight at the prospect, and then promptly returned to their city. They were self-sufficient and had no capacity for sustained trade over such long distances. Underground and out of sight, they remain safe, which no other bastion could boast. The



city continues per the status quo, hoping their solitude will continue indefinitely.

Layout: The entire city, reminiscent of Selkirk, sits completely in cover. Unlike Selkirk, which is comprised of hundreds of miles of tunnels and few exposed buildings, Sierra Madre expands throughout a single gigantic cavern. Without natural light sources, the bastion glows with a constant light of civilization. Over a controlled geothermal vent and blessed with an underground river, it continues to live off boundless energy. The presidential palace doubles as the power center and the focal point of the entire Madre militia, small that it is. Every major street expands from that center, winding through the cavern and its branches. Sierra Madre's cavity is the largest enclosed space on the planet, stretching for more than 50 miles from one end to another with nearly a dozen sub-chambers radiating from that. The center palace sits in a gigantic stone column almost a mile across which controls the entire power grid. This makes the layout vulnerable, as the Column is also a major supporting structure for most of the Bastion. Its destruction would not only cut the power of the bastion and send hazardous volcanic gas into the city; it would most likely crash more than ten square miles of roof above. The death toll would be catastrophic. Luckily, nothing short of a nuclear blast has that capacity of inflicting enough damage to compromise the stability of the column. There are few exits to the surface, most being hidden service elevators.

Population: 15 Million

Tech Level: 4

Ruling Body: Ruling Family. The Column houses the single ruling family. Not referred to as royalty but more as a Head Family, fathers pass on their duties to an heir, usually a son. If no apparent is available, then a new family takes control. The current family is the Valterras who have ruled for more than 75 years. It's unsure how long this ruling system has existed.

Military: Sierra Madre prides itself on having the best trained but smallest military, perfectly specialized in operating underground. The military standing force is less than 1000, but with massive numbers of ceiling mounted automated weaponry, to fight the Madrian's on their home turf would be suicide. There are no surface patrols.

Religion: The majority of this bastion seemed to forget about spirituality involving a higher power. Most embraced the power of the individual, channeling one's energy and maximizing their potential in society. Many embark on meditation and personal quests in order to fulfill their spirit. Madre has the fewest laws of any bastion. The common similarity is with old-age Buddhism even though the term has been lost through time with them. The updated expression they employ is "Spherist."

Relations: Sierra Madre sits below the radar of most bastions. With no exports and no communication, other bastions that know about Sierra Madre don't really care. They don't maintain any trade with any other bastions. With massive energy deposits and hardened workers, Sierra Madre could make a useful ally if anyone could find them.



YORK

York relied on old technology and old building techniques to recover the lost glory of mankind. The second largest bastion after Angel, York never constructed a wall, a strange fact considering the threat of evil dragons and pagus. They were safe due to the benevolent nature of their neighbors. With Limshau, Gnimfall, and Abidan nearby, York never had to worry about invasion and the bogg attacks that did occur where few and pathetic.

Like Angel, York relied on echan means to build their city. They accomplished this with a very formidable robotic force. A self-repairing robotic mass known as zeros run all of York's hard labor and defenses, a system designed and built by the gimfen of Gnimfall. York and the gimfen signed an agreement where York would supply the gimfen with precious raw materials and the knowledge of machinery mankind had acquired over centuries prior to the gates' openings and in exchange, the gimfen would add their technological distinctiveness to that knowledge; advancing York and helping them build a power system based on tidal energy. This required the construction of massive generators deep underground that, rumors hold, still contain gimfen technicians, living for hundreds of years without ever seeing the light of day. Many in York's hierarchy refuse to acknowledge the gimfen's connection, insisting human expertise single-handedly built the city.

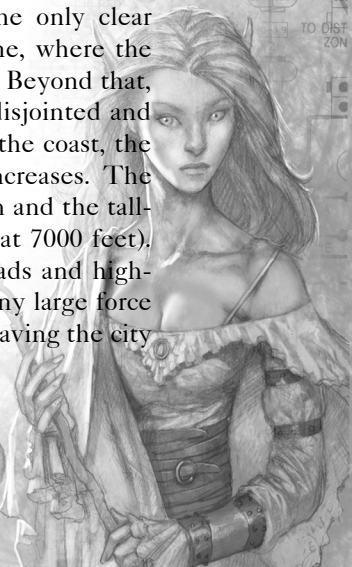
York expanded quickly but could do little to resist the constant magical influx into the city from other races and magically endowed humans. With the largest port on the east coast, York became the mouth of the vital corridor between Canam and Lauropa. As a result,

the bastion's progression became severely hindered and could not advance as quickly or as consistently as other bastions. The population still increased despite this impedance. The only notable exception to their technological footprint was the zeros. After the pagus forces were halted by the shield wall at Tethuss, all that York had to worry about were sporadic raiders and Mann. As such, York never needed to erect a physical wall, preferring a patrolled perimeter as the compromise, an easy solution given the sizable population of the city. This also permitted larger and expanding farms where Angel's expansion slowed when they slammed against their own walls. The relatively low technological level has allowed some mingling of magic and science, although relations between the two groups have never been smooth. Often enough, travelers keep to the main streets, seeking a direct line from the city limits to the main docks.

Layout: York resembles a city of Earth past. Old style construction sped development. The only clear sign of advancement sits near the coastline, where the tallest and most advanced buildings stand. Beyond that, the western half of the city is somewhat disjointed and unorganized. As one travels east towards the coast, the technological advancement of the city increases. The coast also sports the largest dock in Canam and the tallest techan structure, the tower of Shinar (at 7000 feet). Most tourists get lost in the jumble of roads and highways. Gimfen allies to the west prevent any large force from ever making it close to the bastion, leaving the city of Mann the only threat.

Population: 35 Million

Tech Level: 0-1





Ruling Body: York operates as a democracy. They elect a President who answers to a council or “High Court.” The ruling body battles constantly with the problem of crime in the city. The current President’s priority is keeping the populace stable. Another concern coming to the Council’s attention is their continued dependency on the zeros.

Military: The York Self Defense Force (YSDF) is tasked with defense of the city and is the largest standing techan army in Canam. This enrollment in the YSDF is aided by the fact that 85% of the law enforcement in the city is robotic. Zeros are only permitted within the perimeter of the city.

Religion: Various. York is the only bastion with cathedrals dedicated to echan faiths. These churches are permitted as long as no magic is committed inside the walls and no illegal acts are witnessed.

Relations: Paranoia lingers between Mann and York. Many fear armed conflicts are an eventuality. Besides Mann, York’s other relations are strong, but many bastions frown on the close connection York carries with echan neighbors. York permits limited entry of echans, mostly humans, fae, half-fae, and gimfen. Racism and crime often follows those who enter unless protection is provided. Only those trying to purchase passage across the ocean attempt entry into York.

Special Attributes: A day pass for non-humans cost 40 uc; outside humans cost 10 uc. The doors operate exchange banks. Anyone caught without a pass is kicked out.

KINGDOMS

ABIDAN

How the kingdom received its title points back to its founder, the Christian Paladin King, Vincent Savarice, who gathered the fleeing refugees from the north and personally oversaw the guard of the city until his death at the ripe age of 134. He gained this endurance not from a fae bond (he married a human woman) but from claimed divine purpose.

To understand the entire legend is to know the history of the man. Savarice fell upon the sands of eastern shores, battered and bruised from rapids and rocks. What armor remained fell off rusted or cracked. He offered the salvageable pieces of refined steel to a nearby forge under no promise of compensation. The fragments contained pieces of a symbol, a great crest of a house of prominence from across the ocean. The man cast them aside easily and watched the seals melt in the fire.

Savarice traveled north, along the shore, never lingering more than a day at any dock or village. He wished not to impose but found offers of lodging and meals wherever he went. Savarice asked nothing and kept no monies given. Vincent shone with a charismatic presence usually seen with kings of legend and the greatest followers of faith, neither of which Savarice was. He entered town upon a simple steed as a simple man. He wore tied boots and pressed leather accented with steel pads. His shield, always upon his back,

glinted little light from its matted, uneven, wrought surface—a poor defensive screen made by a farrier for ten coppers. His blade was carried from the ocean with him, though the hilt had been replaced with wrapped leather under an iron crossguard removed from a broken rapier. The blade was said to have sliced a pagus blade in twain from point to shoulder, finally breaking through the hilt to split the creature's hand.

Regardless of his attire or the opinion the people had towards his entrance, Savarice gained attention and admiration. When he talked, crowds gathered to listen. He spoke of nobility and truth. His tales told of bravery and kindness. In a land of slavery and spite, his words resonated with people praying for dignity and chivalry. Though a cross hung from his neck, Vincent never preached his faith and contended that kindness from the heart rivaled such forced by order of god. He also spoke that the sorrow of the soul when committing a sin need not come from a love of God if one knows the sin to be wicked. Savarice claimed to have seen kindness everywhere in his travels and firmly believed all would earn a place in the afterlife despite their faith or opinion on the almighty. He spoke simply of kindness of the soul and the capacity of civilized men to rise above what the animals inside told them to do.

Savarice realized he had landed north of Baruch Malkut. The villages there suffered through the fear of expansion and found solace in the words of a natural leader. People believed Savarice possessed a close proximity of blood with a kingdom across the ocean. Perhaps he was a prince or duke, both of which he denied. Savarice had sworn his name to a great castle but found the code corrupt and immoral. He cast his vow upon the earth and escaped. He fled under pursuit without rest for two months. He finally faced an expanse of ice on a northern ocean. Three arrows in his back flung his body over a cliff into the frigid waters.

Assumed dead by all, especially Savarice, Vincent crawled upon a shard of ice and felt the heat seep away with his blood. He rarely spoke of the events from when his blood froze his corpse to the ice to when he walked upon warm sands thousands of miles away. Vincent remembered little of it. He never prayed for rescue. Saving a man with three arrows in his back, frozen to ice in frigid waters was a bit much to ask of any god, yet he was saved. Maybe a dragon peeled him from the frost and healed his wounds. Maybe a boat snatched him while near death and delusional. They treated his injuries but fell upon hardships themselves, casting him to the water before sinking. The three scars itched every time Vincent tried to recollect those events.

Followers followed as followers do. Savarice accepted gracefully the honor but promised nothing in return. These few men remained at his side across the trek to the kingdom later. Their descendants continued the oath despite no obligations. During those months up the coast, the king's caravan, as some would call it later, started only as a half-dozen men and women in mismatched armor riding near-broken steeds. The first to his side was Nobah Kohein, a brave holy warrior from

another faith. They eventually shared blood in battle and became bound as brothers. Also joined was the Monster of Mauron. His real name was Davyd with no surname. After breaking the back of an opponent in a fighting tournament, the Monster refused to enter the ring again and suffered insistent whippings to convince him otherwise. Savarice stood in front of the whip and lopped the hand off the punisher when his arm came down. Vincent was later surprised to find the Monster to be beast in form but simple and kind in spirit.

Other followers carried such unique tales. The caravan clashed with slavers and defeated monsters both mythical and modern. They freed the suppressed and championed virtue and honor to those in fear. A final clash with a contract slaver caravan from Baruch Malkut brought a bounty on the heads of the would-be king and his subjects.

In one town, outside of York, Vincent would meet his future wife, Devorah Miller, a steel-eyed woman of fierce will. They would not marry for many years. Despite the tales spoken and the caravan title given later, at no point did Savarice ever seriously claim to be king. He declared no noble line but took the role of leader the same. Besides, a king needed a kingdom and Savarice had only people, though some would argue that was enough. The legend of Savarice passed through the humans and damaskans at Limshau, the gimfen of Gnimfall, and the narros of the Finer Fire Pits. His caravan had grown to the hundreds. Through this time, Savarice felt a calling. He knew a destination waited at the end of his unnamed crusade.

After several years of pilgrimage, he had traveled past all other kingdoms and approached a colossal land bridge spanning a wide rushing of water. He had found Tethuss, the only safe land route between the northeast of Canam (with Ažhi Dahaka and Apocrypha), and the rest of the continent. Every fiber that defined him told Savarice this land was to be their home. A kingdom needs resources more than faith, blind or not. Allies begot influence and friends of wealth encountered along the journey hired carpenters and engineers, miners and architects. Others brought the tools required to build a kingdom. The bulwark on the southern side of the bridge sprouted in less than a year, though it would undergo extensive renovations over the next century.

Though Savarice insisted the homes and agricultural networks of the realm be built first, his closest friends and most loyal subjects put pencil to parchment almost immediately to design a great keep for their new ruler, named after the wall.

The final rise to nobility came from an incident not connected to the bulwark. A damaskan convoy was gutted by a sizeable bogg legion. The fae hid within a forest far away from their home. A mage among their ranks whispered a message to an eagle. It flew to the nearest help it could find and carried the whisper to Vincent's ears. Savarice and his order of knights, the Line of Abraham, took it upon themselves to travel under hasted mount to the forest the elves were last seen. Knowing the boggs outnumbered the order, the knights

hoped to overwhelm them with skill and strength.

Though the line suffered losses, the fae were freed and carried back to the city for tending. Though Limshau had already taken an interest in Savarice, they had not planned to document his exploits until then. Several well-regarded librarians traveled to the city to record the many tales of courage and charisma. The historians compiled thousands of accounts and edited a year's worth of notes into a hefty book that found circulation across Canam, *Accounts from the Caravan of the King*, though Savarice still had claimed no righteous origins to his name. The book became a prized possession of many libraries and found distribution among thousands of shops and bibliotheca across Canam. Immigrants to Janoah ballooned to such an extent that communities forming nearby pledged allegiance, raising Janoahn flags as proof of their fidelity. The population grew to accommodate various religions and races.

Unlike Limshau or Kannos, Janoah and its surrounding towns maintained a very strong presence of faith. The three human monotheisms, the ones known as the Abrahamic religions, found an overwhelming presence in the kingdom. Atheists or infidels were welcomed as equal brothers, a request by their leader. A copy of this book eventually fell to a powerful holy dragon whose name was never revealed and would be further referred to as Silver River, on account of his long mane of burnished hair.

Silver River arrived dramatically at the bulwark and informed Savarice that even though his blood carried no royalty, his actions earned him such grace. The dragon claimed to speak for Lazarus and placed a seal upon Savarice's palm, which would forever render the human immune to any disease, naturally or magically cursed. Silver River then decreed since the paladin had no heritage he could recall, the holy dragons would adopt the human as its child, making Savarice's name a symbol of power and faith. Savarice became the king all knew he would be.

Within a few years, Abidan, as the kingdom was now called, expanded to encompass more towns and thousands more people. Savarice and his Line of Abraham were inundated with requests for patronage and blessings. They were offered land, wealth, and women. One of the damaskans Savarice rescued, an elite sword-master of the fairer sex, even returned after many years to offer him her soul in bond.

"You care nothing for my mind or manhood," Vincent announced enough for his line to hear. "Elves never give of this to anyone unless under total devotion of body and soul. What you offer, you cannot, nor can I accept...despite the prize."

The elf was no maiden. Her hair of obsidian fell no further than her brow, trimmed over the ears and short on the back. Vincent could still see her azure eyes despite the bow of her head. She kept stable with hardly a shuffle, retaining her balance despite the pose. Her right leg was extended ahead with only a slight bend. Her left was far back, giving her a wide poise for kneel-

ing. Her knee was not actually touching the ground; it hovered. A lesser man, or any man, would have fallen under the strain of metal on muscle. Her Limshau leather forwent the overlapping belts and clasps in exchange for various accented plates of coruthil, matted dark to match the body. She spoke softly but without stutter, as a wife would to her love.

"I offer myself not for sowing, nor do I wish to inflict distress by offering myself as wife. I swore to sword and took it as mate. My relations with men suffer my obsession with the blade. My order consents to bonding; I simply prefer solitude. I still possess the gift and wish to bestow it on my king."

"And said king feels humbled and honored, for no favor tied to the lance measures to your reward. Yet I must decline."

"You must accept," she pressed. Her eyes finally rose to meet his. She saw his awe for hearing the offer. "For human life is too short and the world needs nobility as yours. Your very will strengthens others. Keep your wife. Refuse me as concubine. All I require is acceptance of my offer and a place of loyal sword at your side."

Vincent took a moment to smirk. "Such a place awaits you regardless. Your devotion earned such title. Still, I must refuse your offer. My code insists I take you for wife if we bond, and she-as-my-love shares no one ... nor do I wish mine to be shared."

"But you just live—"

"And when my god deems my time fulfilled, he shall promote me. Until then, I shall serve to earn his grace here. Believe my words in saying your offer moves me beyond any gold or patronage ever tendered before. If you still wish to pay some tribute or prove your devotion, then take my side as a knight of the line."

"In my view, I ask too much, for the trials are taxing and the glory less a token, but I ask you the same. Will you join and stand?"

She, who would be known as Amarah Mantha, lowered her head again to pledge.

"Your highness, to the end of your life and beyond, in your name ... until the end of mine."

Historical Entry

*From Accounts from the Caravan of the King
355 A.E.*

Mantha never took a mate and remained loyal as the longest living member of the line. Decades after her king's death, she continued and pledged to serve the heirs and their youth.

Savarice, a devout holy man, also believed in logic and his teachings, although derived from old Christian books, promoted more flexibility and acceptance of new ways and theories on life. He produced eight children with Devorah until his wife's death at the hands of a bleeding brain at 65. He neither remarried nor took a concubine. He looked old but could match virtually anyone else in combat until his death, not from old age, but by hands of the Death Dragon Laban of Miserere.

Laban, critically wounded, his army wiped out, fled west and was never seen again.

To this day, the kingdom remains strong. Its current king, Claudas, prefers his knightly duties than his kingly ones, but his siblings maintain the image of complete authority and wisdom. Abidan occupies a large region of eastern Canam neighboring lands shared by the gimfen on Gnimfall, damaskans and humans of Limshau, and the narros from the Finer Fire Pits. Abidan has a strong relationship with all of them, with oaths of brotherhood with Kannos and Limshau.

Kannos and Abidan have shared noble blood but not royal and has no such bond with Limshau, despite having a more profitable and harmonious relationship with them. Abidan is strong in farmland and livestock, but is nowhere close to Kannos. They have rich mines but nothing compared to Gnimfall or Finer. Abidan is only extraordinary in the wills and dedications of its people. If war is truly inevitable in the south, despite being further away from the front line, knights from Abidan are sure to be present. Other noteworthy towns in Abidan other than the capital of Janoah include Clarvus, Pilbara, Selavia, and Taskin-Kada

BARUCH MALKUT

Almost immediately, the humans of Southam realized how dangerous their land had become. Those who stayed were almost wiped out. A few managed to find solitude with a few narros and ogre towns, but these were rare occurrences. Thousands attempted to migrate north. Many failed attempting to cross the Gloam. Others followed the shoreline by boat. Four hundred years ago, the population reached the shores of Southeast Canam. A few banded with struggling communities unable to travel farther. They held the potential to cre-

ate a prosperous civilization.

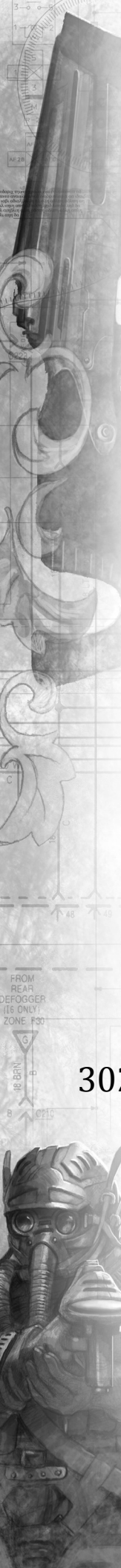
Then Darius Konig arrived.

Legend tells that Konig originated from Southam or at least near the border of the Gloam almost two centuries ago. He gained a few avid followers, captivated by his charisma and physical discipline. With life dangerous for humans, Konig and his people (the Cloth) immigrated north through the Gloam. They passed through the darkness, but only half survived the journey. Few reports tell of Koenig's disposition before the pilgrimage but man tell of the fanatic that arrived in Canam after. Konig believed himself the new prophet of God. During his people's trek along the east shoreline, he wrote the *Helios Codex*. The book does not teach followers virtue or kindness. It preaches a close-minded view of the world. According to Konig, God rejected man's old ways and brought the rapture. God deemed technology a sin no longer welcome in his kingdom. Konig preached a new path of understanding enchantment. He considered users of technology blasphemers.

As they entered the southeast of Canam, Konig and the Cloth were welcomed into the small echan town of Faustis. Koenig's numbers increased. The people there lived in the shadow of a small bastion called Sebring. Sebring resembled Angel in many ways, although smaller with less than 150,000 residents. They lacked advanced technology beyond what bastions like York possessed at the time. Even though Sebring never harmed or suppressed the people of Faustis, Konig created a feeling of fear and hatred towards the techans.

Faustis grew as zealots and fanatics flocked from surrounding villages. Sebring never realized how large this force had grown. They didn't anticipate an attack. Unprepared for the onslaught of magical bombardment,





the short walls of Sebring fell in 72 hours. The armies of Faustis, outnumbering Sebring 2-to-1, ravaged the bastion, taking no survivors and showing no mercy. One leaked story revealed that Konig demanded the city be burned to ash, with the surviving population inside. Anyone trying to escape was crucified and their bodies posted around the bastion as a message to others wanting to escape. Hundreds still tried. A few succeeded but, by the time the last flame died out three weeks later, a thousand posts circumvented the gutted bastion of Sebring. The grass grew over the damage and the crucifixes fell apart. The corpses crumbled to dust.

Unlike Milania, another fallen bastion in the east, virtually no one in Canam remembers the bastion of Sebring. This fanatical hatred spread quickly through the land. Several other towns emerged. When the land grew large enough, Konig appeared once again to the masses. He had revealed a new vision received from God. The world still belonged to magic, but it also belonged only to man. The frightening pace on which Konig swayed the masses alarmed non-humans already living in the kingdom. Half-breeds faced exiled. Pure blood fae were captured and brought south. Women and children were enslaved; the men were tossed into the ocean tides. Of all non-humans, Konig despised the tilen above all else. He believed them to still be corrupt and pointed to the dwindling human population of the Southam town of Lhamah he once visited as an example.

Less than a century later, the Blessed Kingdom claimed all the land of southeast Canam. As Konig closed his grip on new lands, his eyes turned to nearby territories like Tranquiss, Laurama, and Limshau. In the case of Limshau, a delegation was brought before Konig who had them executed on the spot. Their on-hand books were burned and the ashes sent back to the fae. The custodians of Zorahn (who sent the delegation) swore to avenge the brothers and books lost. A few small clashes occurred in the following 100 years but an official declaration of war has never been announced. The armies of Baruch have been unable to stage a successful attack on Laurama, and Tranquiss demoralizes any army that looks upon it. Konig refuses to let such a setback hold him and swears Malkut will cover Canam in his lifespan.

The greatest threat to Canam, and maybe the known world, is the growing fanaticism of the humans in Baruch Malkut. Time refused to claim Darius Konig after these years and the dictator continues his maniacal crusade against technology and non-humans, despite being more than two hundred years old. Not a stupid man, Konig has recently allowed plans to be set in motion for a traditional rail network ridden over by stream powered trains (an exception he was permitting to make). This effort will take fifty years after finally passing the initial development stage. Fearing a united front from neighboring nations, Konig hopes the rail network will ferry troops and supplies to outer towns.

Several factors prevented the kingdom from pushing deeper into Canam. Limshau first swore to Malkut

if it pushed past Zorahn, they would declare war. Laurama and Gnimfall decreed similar ultimatums. Conflicts continued along the border but only with Limshau. Through this, Limshau refused to declare official war, fearing a continent wide conflict would lead to substantial bloodshed. They hope, over the next few years or decades, as society progresses united past Baruch Malkut, the native population would overthrow the man responsible for retarding a civilization's potential. Also, as a human, Konig must be nearing his death and many believe the kingdom's fanaticism will die with him. As he counts his 200th year, no one knows how he is able to look so young. Though the kingdom is locked in its land, it continues to grow and expand with population and discovered resources. Most of its catapulting success comes from its use of a sizeable slave population.

Though Konig despised the fae, he did not oppose the enslaving of them or heretical humans. He insisted they could not breed, stating their long lives would maintain stock levels. He personally detested the idea of using fae for indentured prostitution but did not impose such restrictions on the new market. Almost all towns, save for Itinera and Nassau, use and sell slaves though the prime exports emerge from Matronis and Tobias. They hardly refer to them as elves or even slaves, preferring more dispassionate, but equally merciless terms like merchandise, property, goods, or furniture.

The result after only 100 years is one of the most profitable markets known, which helped secure the kingdom as one of the most stable and successful in the world.

Noteworthy cities in Baruch Malkut include Archytas, Faustis, Itinera, Karum, Kavus, Maskell, Matronis, Miynos, Nassau, Orlov, Sykar, Tobias, and Vallis.

DAWNAMOAK AND THE TOWERS OF JIBARO

All the trees of Dawnamoak stand many times taller than other forests. Many of them stretch more than 80 feet across at their base and tower a mile up, and yet they are still dwarfed by the Towers of Jibaro at the center. These trees are grown from the graves of the wisest elders. A fortress graces each peak, grown directly from the wood. They are Strongwood, Berustar, and Laren oak. Berustar supports the chaparran religion, with their highest priest, Sylvanakassus, governing the tower and its inhabitants. The tower Laren oak holds the chaparran scroll library with Ramankasagranthos maintaining order. This leaves Strongwood, home of the military and governing body. From here rules the highest chaparran and leader of Dawnamoak: Valentiarankerr. No one is sure how many chaparrans live in the forest but numbers guess between 35,000 and 65,000. They seldom accept outsiders unless they speak chaparra (the residents refuse to speak anything else).

Those who speak the proper language are welcomed for a short while. Spotting the great forest is easy. The fields of grass and bushes stop abruptly, re-



placed by wooden behemoths.

Although most believe the trees to be oak, the majority are actually conifers, specifically cupressaceous variants like giant sequoias and dawn redwoods. A few oaks pop up time to time. This mixed family of different tree species is a unique aspect of chaparran forests.

All the towers were grown from giant sequoias. Humans gave these names to the trees and the chaparrans don't refer to them as such. Though conifers occupy the greatest percentage, more than ten other varieties of trees can be seen growing, most not even indigenous to that section of the planet. Search hard enough and one could even find a coconut tree. A strange attribute only seen by the chaparrans of Dawnamoak is their family attachment to specific trees. Every child born is given a tree to care for. Although this is not uncommon for all chaparrans across the world, the individual ethnic colors of the fae seem to attach to specific species of trees. The chaparrans with the darkest skin tones always bond with the sequoiadendrons and they occupy the largest percentage in the great towers. The lighter tan chaparrans always choose giant pines. There are more than a dozen other connections made between the various families of chaparrans and specific species of trees.

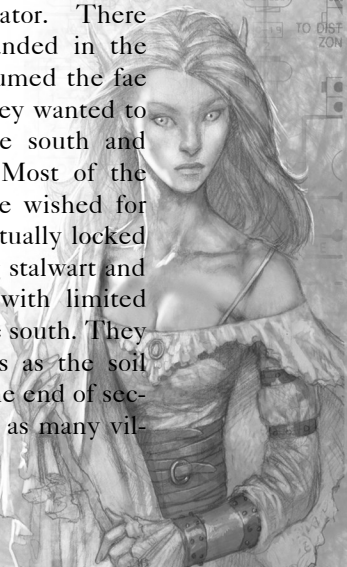
In 355 A.E., the benign human wizard Sugi Gantilanna entered the great forest in hopes of establishing a sociable relationship with the fae, something no human had ever succeeded in doing previously. Though the chaparrans of Dawnamoak still regard mankind as a whole with mistrust, Sugi struggled against the stereo-

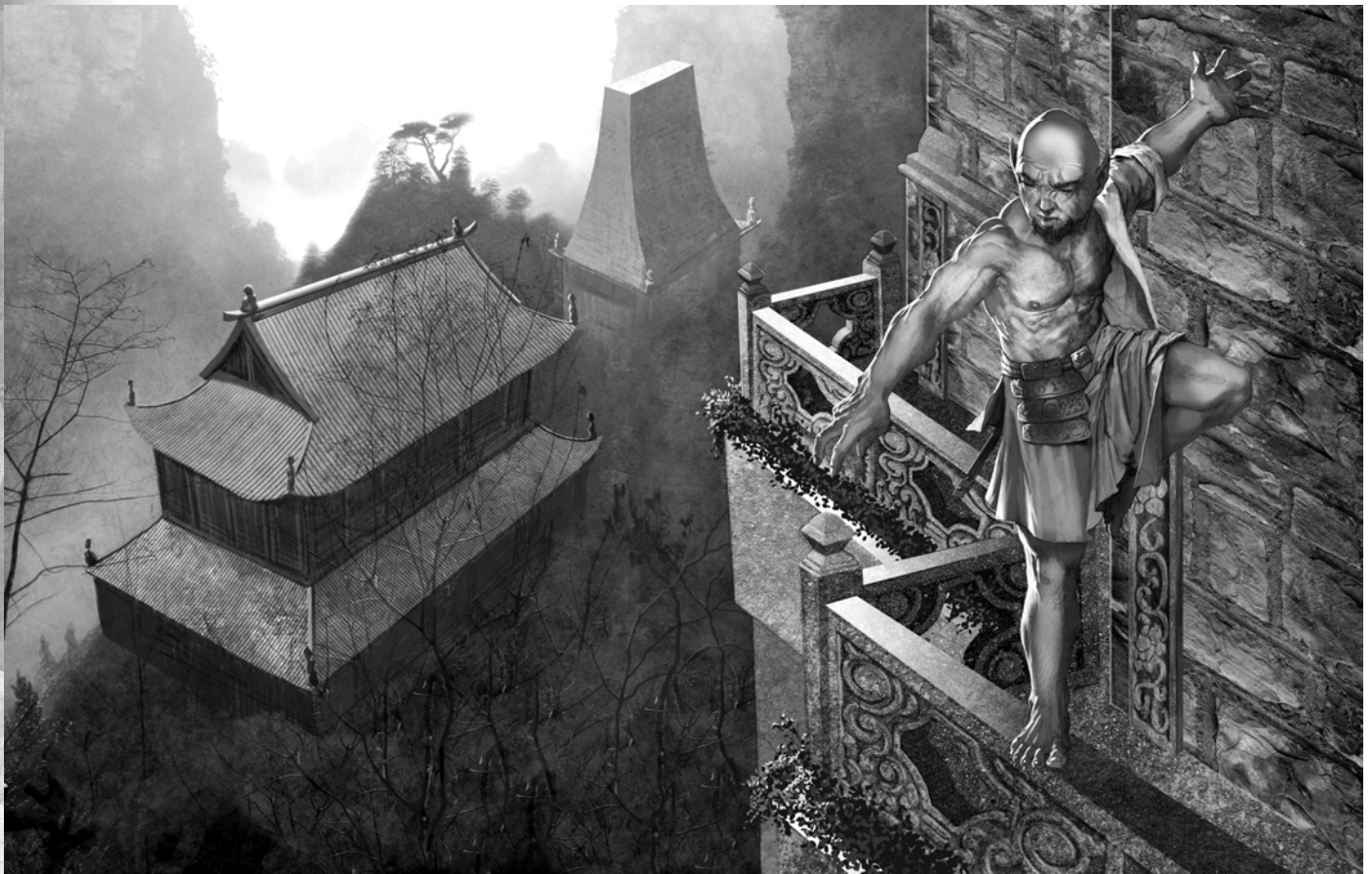
type for many months and eventually earned a place of solace. Despite sending occasional correspondence, Sugi would never leave the forest in his lifetime. During the following fifty-five years, Sugi found acceptance and a greater respect offered to him than to any human before or since.

Chaparrans become more agreeable the farther away they are encountered from their towers. Although those residing in the towers claim all forests they see as theirs, there are dozens of smaller villages hidden in the woods that claim no loyalty to them. Their beliefs can often be different than those in the capital. Noteworthy villages include Koanas, Kerrana, Ulknas, and Widdig.

FARGON

When the fae returned to the world, the majority landed within a few degrees of the equator. There were few exceptions. None of them landed in the ocean unless they wished it, so it was assumed the fae had some subconscious desire of where they wanted to arrive. Tenenbri found mountains in the south and damaskans claimed flatlands in Canam. Most of the narros fell in the north. They must have wished for isolation as they landed in an area that virtually locked them off from the rest of the world. Being stalwart and rugged, they easily could have crossed with limited casualties and joined their cousin fae to the south. They chose to remain and gladly planted roots as the soil warmed enough to accept a flagpole. By the end of second century, half a dozen cities and twice as many vil-





lages had emerged. Every city contains a monument to the thousands dead in the creation of their nation.

The harsh environment created a people of unshakable will. The narros of Fargon are the most relentless in the application of whatever path they embrace. They work hard and play even harder. Unlike those in Finer, living their lives in the mines and getting dirty with the spoils of hard labor, Fargon narros are far more spiritual, taking pleasure in a cold breeze with no other noises to distract them. They are quicker to anger and quicker to provoke.

Despite their assumed isolation, Fargon narros can be found everywhere in Canam. They find pesky obstructions like rivers and mountains a welcome challenge rather than an impediment. The mountains encouraged their desire to migrate—the real effective way to isolate narros would be to place them in the middle of a desert. Their first contact with outsiders occurred shortly after their largest and most southern city Thos Thalagos was formed. After Thalagos Gin finished erecting his castle, he sent a dozen pilgrim convoys to search for allies or treasure. Travelers east found kodiaks. West found nothing but rivers and rumors. South stumbled into a safe crossing of valleys and plateaus later called the Dianaso pass. They followed it until reaching the bastion of Selkirk. After sharing knowledge and company with the resident humans and discovering the unfortunate side-effect of their nature on technology, the pilgrims returned to Thalagos with a treasure wrapped in a trade agreement. The relationship has never faltered in the intervening centuries.

Eventually, these narros would strike war with skeggs and boggs to the east and push past Selkirk to finally encounter fellow fae in Limshau and Salvabrooke.

Narros don't dig and mine only for the sake of mining. Although they use wood, they do so only when stone cannot be employed. Narros were bitter at the lack of artifacts and ruins from the previous age. Of all the nations, the narros were obsessed with leaving their mark upon the world. Damaskans do so with their books; narros do so with their structures. Their use of magic in the construction along with 65 million years of erosion destroyed every fragment of their old empire, a mistake they intend not to repeat. Narros cities are the greatest of all the fae. They don't erect walls or grow stout trees; they boast perfection in construction. Every corner is a sharp edge. Every line is without fault. Every building is a mark of mathematical precision. Every tower is an avatar of the narros' faith in their own skill.

Narros fortified themselves and created a nation of stone. Almost every narros holds ancestry here. Their sworn enemy, the pagus, dare not approach these lands unless they arrive in the thousands in preparation for war. The only narros location larger than the cities of the north is the Finer Fire Pits. All narros mines in Fargon feature thermal mooring towers but no dragonflyer flyer posts.

Noteworthy cities in Fargon include Hardstone Sig, Mag-Farg, Majed, and Thos Thalagos.

THE FINER FIRE PITS

Over a hundred thousand narros call this gargantuan underground metropolis home. Huge deposits of coruthil and titanium awaited them when they planted their roots. They eventually etched a cavern miles across with the only exit being a single massive staircase leading to the surface. This massive construct, more than 300 feet wide, descends for almost a quarter-mile before finally reaching the Fire Pits.

A consistent and uncomfortable red glow radiates over the single massive cavern the narros continue to hollow out. Inside, ovens a dozen stories tall work overtime constructing materials and smelting precious ores.

The city grows from the walls and roof of the cavern as well as from the ground. In the dark, with only the slight glow of the smelters, the city resembles a Christmas tree turned inside out and spread across every available surface of the cave. Ugly, utilitarian box-shaped buildings grow down, up, and out. Many live out their whole lives without ever seeing the sun, against the rules dictated by the narros faith. The Fire Pits house the largest repository of narros weapons and armor. The first and current ruler, Garach Glim, after four centuries still digs alongside his people. He has shown no signs of senility or exhaustion. When asked why he made roots so far from Fargon, Garach's answer was simple. "I hate cold."

Despite the constant digging, the pits continue to be fruitful and were the most profitable narros mines in the world until a recent windfall at Thos Thalagos. Garach Glim, with his high standards, has yet to accept a bond. He enjoys his privacy despite pressures from advisors. If the pits weren't so popular, the entire system would collapse. If given a choice, most narros would prefer to remain isolated with their brothers and sisters in Fargon. The Fire Pits maintain its success because of its ethnically diverse neighbors and not despite them.

They are able to bring in goods that narros in the north envy. A narros from Finer often looks distinct from those from Fargon. While Fargon strives for perfection, Finer permits the occasional flaw.

Despite this influx, the population still has an overwhelming narros majority. This is partially from the narros apprehension of outsiders but mostly because of the insane levels of heat. The forges work nonstop and are built without adequate insulation, keeping the average temperature of the entire complex at 46 degrees Celsius, with only a 5-degree drop during the winter.

Though the resident population acclimatized to the severity, visitors are greeted by a wall of heat that hits like an ogre immediately after walking from the entrance. Some inventive merchants even took to magic to resist the effects. Though many in Fargon look down on the Finer Fire Pits, Thos Thalagos is the exception, with Thalagos himself expressing admiration for the tenacity of the narros of the Pits. He did express confusion with the name of the city, a fact shared by others. The Finer Fire Pits are a single mine, a single city, with multiple massive forges, thus earning the ti-

tle. Glim added 'Finer' not because the forges were in anyway superior, but because the name of valley the pits were dug into was called Finer Vallis by a group of local humans.

In total, twelve forges sit inside, each as large as a human castle, dwarfed inside the colossal cavern that has never fallen despite not having supports. Though finding magic items can be a chore, many mages from across the world seek out the pits – not for items or armor – but for Galla Sagard, the famous spellcaster and her well-known Open Library for Arcane magic. Galla loves entertaining visitors even though she seldom gains the opportunity to share her wisdom with other casters.

Most caravans travel through the Limshau city of Kodex before continuing north to the Pits and few other allies take alternative routes. Even Kannos, another ally enjoying a profitable relationship, transport their supplies from Warraqueen to Kodex before traveling north.

Most of the visiting population is damaskan though a few humans have appeared time and again. Many of those are either independent merchants or wanderers looking for work. Since the narros here never developed a tight bond with humans like Thos Thalagos, the Finer populace considers humans another non-narros race best avoided. The Fire Pits feature a dragonflyer flyer service but no mooring towers.

KANNOS

Kannos formed from the remnants of a failed bastion. With the capitol, Apareci, in the center, more towns flourished around, joining the larger into the kingdom surviving today. The title of Kannos was offered by the damaskans of Limshau, meaning "Iron Will" in their tongue. The king at the time enjoyed the title and the entire empire adopted the name after the outlining communities formed.

Kannos, along with Abidan and Baruch Malkut, are the three largest human-dominated echan kingdoms in Canam. Kannos and Abidan are approximately the same size, with the same strengths in numbers and weakness in magic. Both Kannos and Abidan could fit within the area of Malkut with ample spare. Unlike Abidan, mostly populated by humans, Kannos does feature some racial diversity, though not nearly as much as Limshau. Some outsiders, especially in more xenophobic communities, believe this is the reason for the notable lack of religion in Kannos. Fae, specifically damaskans, keep their faith so hidden, many humans assumed them atheists. Many damaskans in Canam herald from Limshau where most of the population declare faith in no intelligent creator.

Those that do pray, do so privately. The majority of the human population followed suit and nearly all of the humans living in Kannos claimed faith to no god or gods. Their integration along with their preponderance for atheism has made them a proclaimed enemy of Baruch Malkut but not Abidan. King Savarice of Abidan once stated in public record that faith in God is not a prerequisite for nobility and affirmed the kings of Kan-



nos were of respectable stock. Every heir taking the throne of Abidan and speaking to his or her people for the first time always acknowledged Kannos as allies worthy of friendship and loyalty. Despite recent efforts, an alliance through royal marriage has yet to occur. The only marriage bond was between Ennio Nezekin (a cousin of the queen) and Mara Duncan (daughter of the baron) 65 years ago.

Kannos is rich in land and precious materials though still don't possess the population to properly maximize its potential.

The greatest treasure within Kannos is its livestock. With rich farmland, Kannos developed a profitable breeding program initially started from a fear of isolation from migrating pagus and bogg herds. There are rabbit, pig, chicken, and cattle farms. Horses are more abundant than dogs with many children given a "young steed" the moment they learn how to walk. These horses are treated as equals within the family.

Cavaliers spend the majority of their lives training their mounts. Their bond borders on telepathic. Despite this proud line of horsemen, Kannos has yet to be involved in any major war. The largest engagements occur between lance companies and swarms of puggs threatening eastern towns. The same applies to the encroaching evil of the Sana Marsh. Kannos generals hope to involve themselves in a grand war within their lifespans. Compared to Abidan, trained in defensive warfare with the use of shield walls and castle bulwarks, Kannos prefers aggression across open fields of battle. Floods of puggs have caused some conflicts, but Kannos

kavaliers resolve this by trampling down their foes and sending them screaming back to their lands. Of all the united kingdoms of the north, Kannos places the most pressure on the others to declare war on Baruch Malkut, despite never having sustained an attack from the rival kingdom. Because Kannos is rich with land and the livestock that grazes upon it, the noble class of Kannos is reserved for those who own the most land. For any specific city, the lord in power is the one in possession of the most physical acreage. Any gold and silver one keeps is worthless unless land is bought with those coins. Even the wealthiest factory and business owners have no chance to challenge the nobility. There has never been a violent rebellion of the nobility in Kannos.

All one needs to do is make more money, purchase more land, and simply buy the aristocracy. That is, if those that own the land of the city are willing to sell. More often, an aspiring investor only needs to purchase open land from the royal charter, effectively purchasing unclaimed acres within the borders of Kannos from the crowned heads of state. Another option is to claim land on the border and request, or most likely bribe, the monarch in power to appropriate the claimed land into the charter and expand the borders of the kingdom.

This has occurred several times in Kannos' history, but not recently. The east encroaches on contested lands, south moves into the Sana Marsh and Salvabrooke, and the west creeps into the swarming mass of rampaging puggs from Xixion. Currently, there are three prospective border houses hoping to benefit from the protection of Kannos Kavalry, but the final word has



yet to be decided.

Though humans are on average weak with magic, Kannos is proud to name one of the most powerful wizards as a past resident. Kereptis Rifts claimed a keep in Sarnathi and even though Sarnathi wasn't absorbed into Kannos until after Rifts' death, Kannos still takes credit by declaring him a proud citizen under the blanket of the oligarchy. This is despite rumors that Rifts was a vile tyrant of the land and the people were happy to have seen him die. Despite this, the city of Sarnathi now cherishes the name of Kereptis Rifts as it's allowed a booming industry of tourism for those tempted by the tales of treasures in the labyrinthine and treacherous tunnels of the Kereptis Catacombs. The current owners of the most land in Apareci (the capital) as well as the majority of the kingdom, is the Nezekin family.

There has not been a significant threat to their seat of influence in 150 years.

Notable towns in Kannos include Apareci, Gollana, Jairus, Sarnathi, and Xiphos.

LAUDENIA

Laudenian arrogance refused to die when they lacked corporeal forms, and has only amplified since. They utilized their greatest magic and built a mighty city atop a mountain in the west. Away from almost every other culture and guarded by enchanted shrouds, Laudenia exists as a dream to many that have sworn to have see it. Its location is vague, floating among a hundred different mountains in the Nankani range. Laudenia looks on the surface as a city of technology, but underneath the shine of the walls flows pure magic. The city floats on air, connecting only partially to the mountain. Laudenia could break free from its moorings and float to another peak, explaining the lack of success in locating it.

The Alkanost, the massive dragon-shaped flagship the laudenian's arrived in, floats atop a river of enchanted air. They infrequently deal with other cultures save for a few fae. Laudenians commonly turn back those who do find their land without allowing entrance.

Their territory is rich and they use these assets to trade with the cultures they find agreeable, mostly the nearby narros. Even these exchanges are rare and are only used to supply the odd precious ore the laudenians don't have access to. The laudenians detect this from afar, either throwing an opaque cloud as a shell over the city or warping the minds of the travelers themselves. No evil acts are permitted within the realm of Laudenia. Those who enter must adhere to a strict code of respect for the inhabitants. Make fewer waves and a visitor's presence may go unnoticed by those who do not want her there. Those looking for rare items, both magical and not, seek out the floating city.

The council of six runs Laudenia. Renar Alkanost, the oldest fae descendant alive, still sits at the head of the council. Nacolia Falcon, the most powerful fae mage, also holds a seat. When they emerged from the gate, they found an area remote and hazardous. It was unlikely the entire city escaped to the void. Most agree

the Alkanost vessel made the journey and could be the oldest artifact in the modern world. The laudenians were the first to erect buildings and the first to claim land as their own. They ensured all surviving laudenians migrated to the same point to help in rebuilding.

Because laudenians bear the greatest casters, they never endured many of the hardships suffered by other races. Anything they wished emerged in form before their thought could finish. The city doubtless emerged right from the stone, formed smooth as marble without the need of a polish. Looms strung cloth without the impedance of hands or thought.

After the capital finally broke from the mountain responsible for its birth, the Alkanost departed to begin the long journey of exploring the skies and the wilderness underneath. During this time, the Alkanost began forming the network of floating keeps. Applying the same power that made their city, the laudenians harnessed the ambient magic found in rare stones found to disobey gravity and elevated them above the clouds.

The Alkanost laid down the foundation of an expanding empire. It suffered the odd dragon attack when it wandered too far east, struck a wall of wind traveling north or west, and possessed enough wisdom to turn back rather than brave a pass over the Gloam. The Alkanost returned three centuries later, having completed its network across Canam. Though the laudenians planned to push across the oceans, for now they remain content in their current realm. The keeps peer down from high above, never offering the hand of friendship to anyone, hardly lifting a finger for those in need. The laudenian belief professes that to help would offer false hope to others and the laudenians number too few to help regardless. They must choose their battles carefully, only rising to the call when they feel the time is suitable. That has yet to occur.

Since laudenians date back to the very first branch off the old fae, they witnessed their children alter into damaskans, then tenenbri, and then to lower forms. They realized their years were numbered. The last few thousand proposed a theory that obviously worked. The laudenians still survive today and increase in numbers, albeit gradually. They insist on refusing any bond with any non-laudenians. They claim this not out of racism or ignorance, but pure survival, for breeding with anything else than a laudenian births a non-laudenian.

They try desperately to fight off their own extinction and xenophobically detached themselves from the rest of the world. Everyone understands their ultimate fate remains unchanged, though none of them are willing to accept it. Day by day, they tour the skies and forego any responsibilities creatures of such aged wisdom possess.

The city of Laudenia shines with its own inner light. Even at night, the towers glow with a soft white shimmer. This emanates from the polished stones themselves. Never a torch needs to be sparked in the city. Inhabitants can control the light wherever they wish with the simple hand's wave. Beyond this, the glimmering white marble stone looks normal, carved to



precision to build every step, every bridge, every building, and every vase. Mortar or brick is laid meticulously with neither a chip nor mistake. Flowers and food grow from selected gardens covering the buildings that separate the roads. The buildings and their surrounding brick-walks connect via stone bridges supported by towers or ropes to other buildings. Each building in Laudenia supports itself and no centralized lifting hub to keep the city afloat. Looking down, the city appears like a spider's web with buildings at the intersections and hundreds of bridges and roads connecting them all.

The buildings range from small and fat coliseums to thin and soaring towers scaling nearly as high as the city is wide. There is no glass in any of the openings in the buildings as no rains fall or winds blow unless the council wishes it so. The gardens receive their share without a drop falling elsewhere. The city floats perfectly calm without threat or thrill. Those leaving only do so for one reason, to alleviate the unending boredom of living in a city without dangers or adventure, only responsibilities. Many find contentment in living in a society where one could sleep with windows open and doors ajar without fear of assault or theft. No pollution from noise bothers anyone over the splatter of numerous fountains and the chants of priests and the clanging of their bells in the cathedrals. The white stone construction is carved with ornament designs of waves, circles, and inscriptions many forget to admire. The many markings swirl like water through the supports and pillars, across the arches, and even through the seamless tiles of the brickwalks. Many of the designs flow towards the centre of the city web, to the tallest tower of Elsius. Through the cloud layer, it appears as a single tower around a white expanse. At the peak, the sword-like skyscraper blossoms like an oak tree to a half dozen platforms and pedestals where the council meets. Other

citizens can view the emptiness as well; the panorama offers nothing of the city, just a veil of clouds. The Alkanost docks at the top of this building, matching the city's construction.

Red fabric hangs and lies across many surfaces. As the buildings grow taller, more elaborate colors adorn them. The peaks of the greatest towers dangle tapestries of intricate designs or wave flags longer than a dragon's wingspan. Inside, the buildings reflect dozens of colors depending on the artistry of the designer, though white brick with red fabric remains the popular choice. Not a single piece of woodwork can be found in the city. As the sunlight refracts through the atmosphere and shifts the sky to different hues, the city often echoes those same changes. As the sky turns orange to red, the city's exposed stone flushes to a rosy tint. This shifting only occurs depending on the sky. During the evening the stones stay pure. With a city of such majesty, they seldom wish to show it off to anyone but themselves. A massive artificial cloud shrouds the periphery of the capital. From high, only the peak of Elsius is visible. The inhabitants appear to those they wish, usually reserving such an honor for the greatest dragons and the most powerful fae leaders.

LIMSHAU

Fae exist everywhere, and eastern Canam accommodates the oddest branch of them, the Limshau damaskans. They erected great academies and training facilities and then did something no fae expected: They invited others in – humans, narros, gimfen, anyone willing to teach their ways. This knowledge fell to the hands of Limshau librarians, the keepers of the largest libraries of Earth. The kingdom started official upon Rave-nar Limshau the III's return from Angel. His followers remaining behind had already begun building the Lim-



shau capital. The field of Serapea was vast and plentiful, and the empire grew fast upon those foundations.

When Ravenar Limshau finally returned, he brought no alliance but did lead a pilgrimage of hundreds of Angel humans as loyal followers of a new age. Damaskans were and are known for being fearless and approachable. This belief extends with their hands of friendship. They neither fear change nor the unknown.

They open their visors to their enemy in respect and expect a return courtesy, not an arrow through their slit. They welcome outsiders but will not back those unwilling to support themselves. Across the ocean, the damaskans built great cities in mountains under the watchful eyes of great dragons. Limshau enjoyed no such alliance, and when they laid their first stones, few other nations had formed around. Ravenar, the oldest damaskan and one of the oldest living fae, looked upon the new world and understood that a new path awaited him. He told his thousands of followers, both human and fae, to think of this new kingdom as the utopia all other future civilizations would look upon for reference.

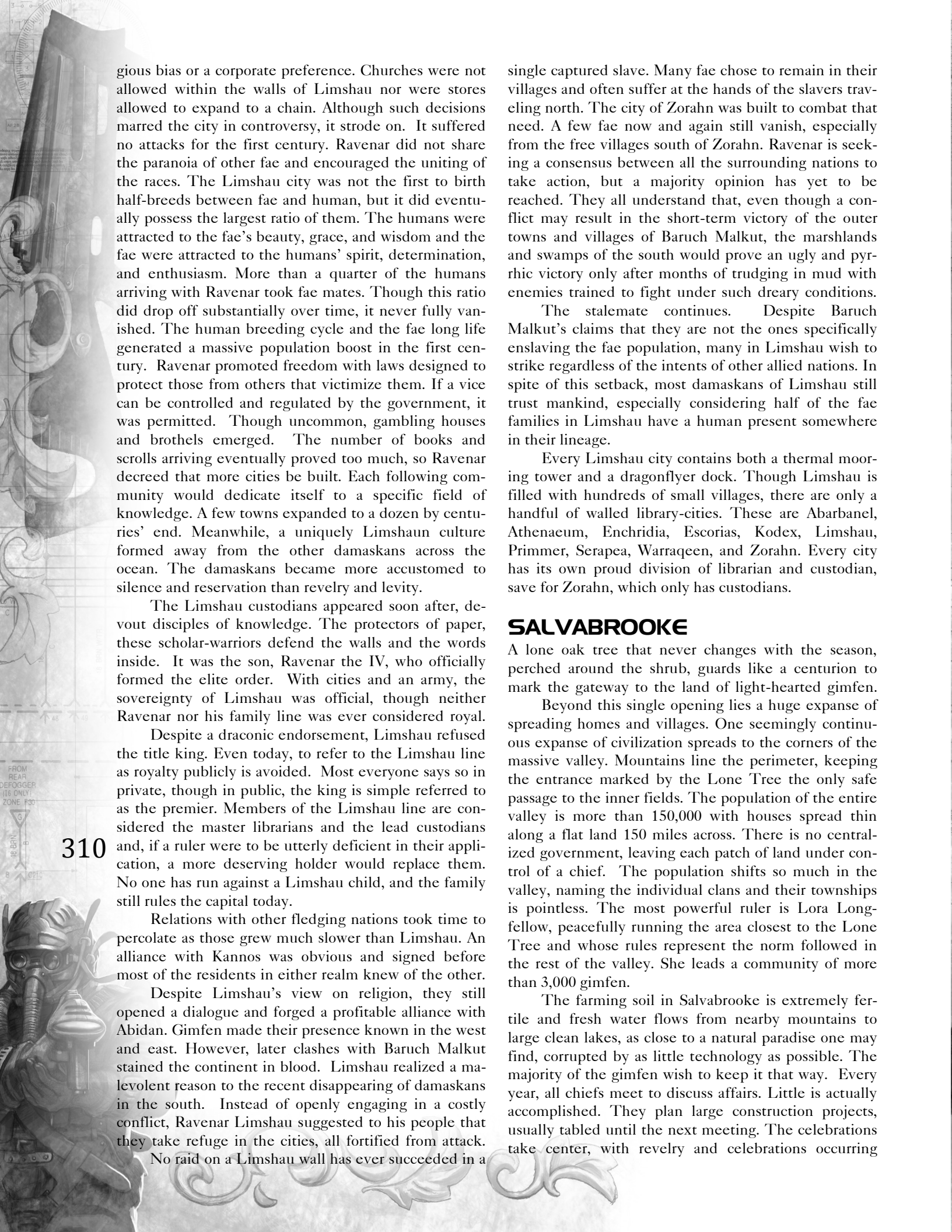
They would welcome all outsiders and respect their beliefs and laws. The realm would be bound by reason and compassion, with an eye towards knowledge, for in their eyes, knowledge separates the civilized from the barbaric. Ravenar encouraged his fae brothers to mingle freely and accept his new human friends. Although the process took time, eventually a community formed. Damaskans possess many features similar to humans, especially those of Asian descent, which most

of the pilgrims from Angel were. Those from Angel were carpenters, architects, hunters, smiths, seamstresses, bricklayers, plumbers, doctors, teachers, and civil engineers. They brought vital knowledge the damaskans absorbed as quickly. Despite the fae's superior skill in art and song and their renowned mental and physical discipline, they slacked their jaws in the face of the applicable knowledge offered by the short-lived humans. Their evolution offered them a tenacity and drive fae lacked. Together, they truly believed their new nation would set an example for others to follow. Other nations did not share this belief but Limshau succeeded all the same.

Assisted by magic and enhanced by the perseverance of its population, the town's progress was unstoppable. Dozens of kilns fired thousands of pale-white bricks every day. They were sent and laid down while still warm. The roads spread out from the center, intersected by streets and avenues. The humans made the city work and flow in precision. The fae gave it personality. They painted tiles and mosaics across plain white walls and topped the tallest buildings with the grandest sculptures. At their root, the city would be a storehouse of all knowledge. Every wall in every house would support shelves for books. Citizens were encouraged to donate works or words to the collections for all to share.

As a community, they would learn from each other and strive to create a civilization based upon the freedom of choice and speech. This belief was not permitted to be corrupted by alternate views supporting a reli-





gious bias or a corporate preference. Churches were not allowed within the walls of Limshau nor were stores allowed to expand to a chain. Although such decisions marred the city in controversy, it strode on. It suffered no attacks for the first century. Ravenar did not share the paranoia of other fae and encouraged the uniting of the races. The Limshau city was not the first to birth half-breeds between fae and human, but it did eventually possess the largest ratio of them. The humans were attracted to the fae's beauty, grace, and wisdom and the fae were attracted to the humans' spirit, determination, and enthusiasm. More than a quarter of the humans arriving with Ravenar took fae mates. Though this ratio did drop off substantially over time, it never fully vanished. The human breeding cycle and the fae long life generated a massive population boost in the first century. Ravenar promoted freedom with laws designed to protect those from others that victimize them. If a vice can be controlled and regulated by the government, it was permitted. Though uncommon, gambling houses and brothels emerged. The number of books and scrolls arriving eventually proved too much, so Ravenar decreed that more cities be built. Each following community would dedicate itself to a specific field of knowledge. A few towns expanded to a dozen by centuries' end. Meanwhile, a uniquely Limshaun culture formed away from the other damaskans across the ocean. The damaskans became more accustomed to silence and reservation than revelry and levity.

The Limshau custodians appeared soon after, devout disciples of knowledge. The protectors of paper, these scholar-warriors defend the walls and the words inside. It was the son, Ravenar the IV, who officially formed the elite order. With cities and an army, the sovereignty of Limshau was official, though neither Ravenar nor his family line was ever considered royal.

Despite a draconic endorsement, Limshau refused the title king. Even today, to refer to the Limshau line as royalty publicly is avoided. Most everyone says so in private, though in public, the king is simple referred to as the premier. Members of the Limshau line are considered the master librarians and the lead custodians and, if a ruler were to be utterly deficient in their application, a more deserving holder would replace them. No one has run against a Limshau child, and the family still rules the capital today.

Relations with other fledging nations took time to percolate as those grew much slower than Limshau. An alliance with Kannos was obvious and signed before most of the residents in either realm knew of the other.

Despite Limshau's view on religion, they still opened a dialogue and forged a profitable alliance with Abidan. Gimfen made their presence known in the west and east. However, later clashes with Baruch Malkut stained the continent in blood. Limshau realized a malevolent reason to the recent disappearing of damaskans in the south. Instead of openly engaging in a costly conflict, Ravenar Limshau suggested to his people that they take refuge in the cities, all fortified from attack.

No raid on a Limshau wall has ever succeeded in a

single captured slave. Many fae chose to remain in their villages and often suffer at the hands of the slavers traveling north. The city of Zorahn was built to combat that need. A few fae now and again still vanish, especially from the free villages south of Zorahn. Ravenar is seeking a consensus between all the surrounding nations to take action, but a majority opinion has yet to be reached. They all understand that, even though a conflict may result in the short-term victory of the outer towns and villages of Baruch Malkut, the marshlands and swamps of the south would prove an ugly and pyrrhic victory only after months of trudging in mud with enemies trained to fight under such dreary conditions.

The stalemate continues. Despite Baruch Malkut's claims that they are not the ones specifically enslaving the fae population, many in Limshau wish to strike regardless of the intents of other allied nations. In spite of this setback, most damaskans of Limshau still trust mankind, especially considering half of the fae families in Limshau have a human present somewhere in their lineage.

Every Limshau city contains both a thermal mooring tower and a dragonflyer dock. Though Limshau is filled with hundreds of small villages, there are only a handful of walled library-cities. These are Abarbanel, Athenaeum, Enchridia, Escorias, Kodex, Limshau, Primmer, Serapea, Warraqueen, and Zorahn. Every city has its own proud division of librarian and custodian, save for Zorahn, which only has custodians.

SALVABROOKE

A lone oak tree that never changes with the season, perched around the shrub, guards like a centurion to mark the gateway to the land of light-hearted gimfen.

Beyond this single opening lies a huge expanse of spreading homes and villages. One seemingly continuous expanse of civilization spreads to the corners of the massive valley. Mountains line the perimeter, keeping the entrance marked by the Lone Tree the only safe passage to the inner fields. The population of the entire valley is more than 150,000 with houses spread thin along a flat land 150 miles across. There is no centralized government, leaving each patch of land under control of a chief. The population shifts so much in the valley, naming the individual clans and their townships is pointless. The most powerful ruler is Lora Longfellow, peacefully running the area closest to the Lone Tree and whose rules represent the norm followed in the rest of the valley. She leads a community of more than 3,000 gimfen.

The farming soil in Salvabrooke is extremely fertile and fresh water flows from nearby mountains to large clean lakes, as close to a natural paradise one may find, corrupted by as little technology as possible. The majority of the gimfen wish to keep it that way. Every year, all chiefs meet to discuss affairs. Little is actually accomplished. They plan large construction projects, usually tabled until the next meeting. The celebrations take center, with revelry and celebrations occurring

every week. Gimfen welcome outsiders and treat those who enter as kings or queens with hopefully deep pockets. Despite an unfortunate epidemic of petty thieves, crime is quite low across Salvabrooke. In the larger communities, huge open markets begin business at the crack of dawn, hoping to sell various cheap and imitation trinkets to anyone interested. They adore human exports, though they often end up selling knockoffs made from their own hands. Tourists drifting through one of the many walking streets in a gimfen village should expect to be accosted by no less than a dozen different wandering merchants attempting to vend designer clothes, imitation gadgetry, or on occasion, legitimate artistic examples of gimfen culture. All prices are negotiable and assumed flexible since they're usually over-inflated. There are a few respectable places but those are not the ones harassing passing non-gimfen.

The mockery that is law enforcement attempts to keep the dishonesty in check. Most of the time, the enforcers break up the fights and shift the few homeless from the streets to maintain a positive image. Whenever techans first leave a bastion in hopes of taking in the world outside, a common first destination is Salvabrooke. It's echan enough to shock them but safe enough to keep them at ease. No one in the city mentions the shroud of darkness over the next mountain range. Salvabrooke features a thermal mooring tower and a dragonflyer flyer service.

WASTELANDS APOCRYPHA

Along with the puggs, the pagus are slowly coalescing into a larger force in Canam. They control a massive expanse of land dubbed Apocrypha by humans, Sol-lasum by many fae. Many of the pagus armies that emerged fell under the control of typhox dragons, a blind loyalty resulting in more pagus deaths at the hands of their lords than from each other or through war. The dragons are thought to be source of the pagus outbreak in Canam, brought across from Ixindar when the dragons found an unspoiled land separated from their origin by a considerable body of water. Separated from the darklands, the dragons could enslave an entire world unto their own without needing to answer directly to the motherland. The recent arrival of several shemjaza in Canam threatens to disrupt the dragons' monopoly. The pagus, by oath, must follow the orders of the generals of Kakodomania, whom outrank the dragons. So far, the only forces the arriving shemjaza in Canam have been able to gather materialize from uncontrolled bandit camps. Despite the dragons being the cause of the pagus introduction in Canam, and despite also controlling a large number of them, there is a growing majority of pagus disconnected from any outside influence. With their high breeding cycle and voracious appetite for the act, even a small forgotten village could spur multiple pilgrim camps setting to stake their own claim in less than half a century.

The greatest typhox dragons, the Ažhi seven, still

claim this region as under their control, though most of them are never seen, living out their lives in solitude within self-proclaimed kingdoms deep in the northern regions. This sub-region of Apocrypha falls under a different title: Ažhi Dahaka.

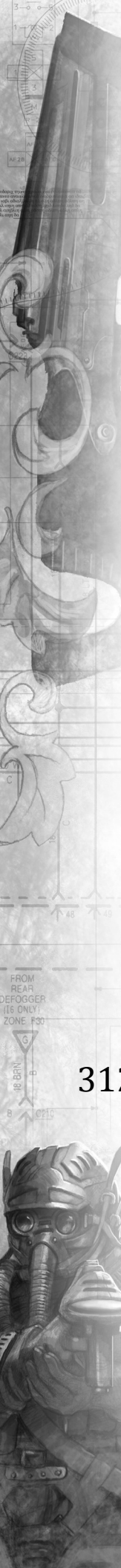
Pagus with their soul bound to Ixindar are not necessarily tied to its control. Though often turning to barbarism and malevolence, this is not always the case. A few sporadic villages attempt civility but with no sympathy from the rest of the world, they seldom live long enough to secure their own foothold on the land. With the dragons killing and enslaving them to the east, the pagus must look elsewhere to expand. Cold and water awaits them to the north. Mountains, skeggs, and kodiaks sit over the horizon in the west, leaving only the narrow pass to the south. The only viable route passes through Janoah, over the bridge of Tethuss. This great fortress of man has never fallen, even when a dragon lord once assisted in a siege. Since pagus fear the natural elements of earth (mountains, winds, water), they prefer to continue to slam against the Janoahn wall, plummeting to their deaths over the side. No army has been even able to catch the knights of Janoah off watch.

A clad line of swords and shields always await them. Pagus continue unabated. They know nothing of stealth so don't excel in the hunting of any prey with astute hearing and twitchy dispositions. Most pagus also refuse to farm, foraging what they can, scarring the landscape in their obsession. Their very footfalls salt the earth as they stride. Though a massive land with rich potential, Apocrypha will, within 500 years, no longer be able to support any life. The most known tribal leaders are Mennos, Nemis the Gatherer, Saemus, Amon the Nomad, Arrenna, and Kallis the Monster.

They lead camps named after themselves. The biggest issue with these camps lies with the pagus' short lifespans. Since even the rare ones seldom live past forty, most of the villages are short lived. Their successors seldom follow the same ethics (or lack thereof) as their parent. Many times lineage is hardly respected, and wars between the highest of influence break out the second the old leader's pulse stops. The village often tears itself apart with few survivors; or it schisms into several smaller camps. Only a few rare exceptions have allowed certain villages to survive past a generation. Most of the examples given have settled with a tepid royal line held together mostly by a loyal army in substitute of a patriotic duty to a crown made of twigs.

AŽHI DAHAKA

The northeast of Canam falls under the control of the evil typhox dragons, and their sight in the skies is not uncommon. Pagus followers give most of their own food as offerings. If they fail, they're often picked up as food themselves. The border between Apocrypha and Dahaka is marked by the shadows cast by the winged monstrosities, and thus it wavers and meanders depending on the mood of the creatures that day. The pagus



under their control are the ones able to hear their bel-
lowing roar. The biggest hurdle dragons have in an
invasion of Canam, other than their relative small num-
bers, is the lack of any centralized control of the region.

No typhox dragon assumes the authority of any
others despite victories proven by scars, age, or size.
Though they may respect the power of their elders,
they will not rally to their call, deified or not.

The seven dragon lords of Azhi maintain keeps of
varying strength across the land. They often shift from
several homes. These dragon lords are known to many
mortals and immortals through tales to frighten troops
and children. These lords are Baenis, Balaur, Goch,
Lindis, Lotan, Verkelen, and Zilant. Though they each
claim to hold the entire land under their control, they
seldom fight each other for it. The only one not known
to shift around from keep to keep is Zilant, who is far
too lazy to do anything. Baenis controls a variety of
farms, feasting on them as he sees fit. Balaur captures
free pagus to engorge his numbers and maintain the
high population of his slaves. Lindis keeps her store-
houses of treasures hidden and never lingers in any one
place for long. Of all the strongholds in Azhi, Lotan's is
the largest, built around an entire mountain with walls
as high as its peak. Lotan pressed his pagus beyond
their limits and most died in the construction, leaving a
massive citadel with few residents. Verkelen, though
despising all the other dragons, isn't strong enough to
rival Goch's influence. He maintains a high distrust for
others and never reveals his location to anyone.

Goch claims the highest honor of them all, one of
the surviving dragon kings. Though a few insist she
could never hold such an esteemed title, many of age
and wisdom believe the claim is unfortunately true.
With no fortress for her own, Goch wanders the land. A
famous story tells of Goch attacking and confiscating a
laudenian sky keep and claiming that as her only
throne. If true, it would be fitting for such a beast.

CYON

A massive forest has encircled most of the south and
east walls of Angel. Though not enchanted and tall like
chaparran controlled woods over the horizon, Cyon is
still equally massive. In their fledging first years, Angel
clear-cut most of the landscape in frantic construction.

The trees returned as dense and stout as before in
barely a generation, resulting in more felling. Yet again,
the trees began to grow. Recently, the branches began
to brush against the Angel wall. Shortly after several
new saplings poked from the soil inside the perimeter
of the same wall. At first, no one took notice. Even to-
day, few are alarmed by the occurrence. On their own,
the trees don't appear to be magical at all, but they do
radiate disruption. Other than boggs, no other races are
known to inhabit the woods. The Angel snipers, the
elite forces that operate the outer wall, pass stories that
tell otherwise. Even though Cyon is not populated with
chaparrans, every other creature native a forest has been
reported. Not just boggs but puggs, skeggs, and even

rumors of a chiggoth once. Along with the horrors, there
are tales as well of the more obscure fae anathema like
faeries, dawnlings, and sylphids. As a result, Cyon radi-
ates a massive disruption field, justifying the Angel wall
and subsequent paranoia.

DAGRON

A group of skeggs migrated from the south 250 years
ago and adapted to the bitter cold very quickly. They
grew in size and numbers. They formed several large
communities, and their disposition grew colder than
even their brothers to the south. They became the
"Bugbears of Dagron," attacking passersby and even
other skeggs without mercy. Everyone attacked is
stripped of supplies, money, turned into slaves, and
later eaten. The skeggs are not alone in their land.

Trolls and various ice monsters also rampage the
landscape. Skeggs congregated in such high numbers,
they emerged from their dungeon lairs and created
small communities on the surface, many by the en-
trances to their underground realms. Up north, frost
dragons control and rule over a small fae population.

The largest known frost dragon in Canam, a crea-
ture known only as "The Snow Devil," resides here. Its
exact location is unknown. Only two villages are be-
lieved to have survived more than a few years. One,
Lilecrog, is ruled by the despicable Numak. The other
is Silcroe, ruled by Omerogroe, resting at the en-
trance of a large dungeon where many of their treasures
lie. All the skeggs currently wage an undeclared war
against the kodiaks. It is one of the longest sustained
conflicts in Canam. Their superior numbers and greater
intelligence may have doomed the Kodiaks if it hadn't
been for the relationship that blossomed between them
and the narros of Fargon.

Though animalistic and tribal, the kodiaks prefer
to keep to themselves. They also have a devotion to
nature other races admire but skeggs do not share. The
kodiaks are emerging more often with weapons traded
to them from the narros. This may eventually cause
problems in the future if the kodiaks overwhelm their
enemies. The narros hope the trading relationship will
eventually civilize the kodiaks before their newly ac-
quired weapons are used against their benefactors.

SANA MARSH

A perpetual and permanent fog has spread for hundreds
of miles in the land once called the Kingdom of Kardia.
Legend once told of one of the first king of man in the
new age and how his arrogance and naivety reduced the
empire to eventual damnation for him and his people.

Little food grew, and those eating what was culti-
vated turned into monsters which then fed on those
remaining unspoiled. The Marsh is the single most dan-
gerous area on the continent. Beasts shuffle into the
black and vanish, waiting for an unsuspecting foe. Ru-
mors tell of a terrible evil held up in a castle once con-
trolled by King Saron Sana, gathering the power of the
marsh towards it.



The legend claims that King Saron ruled over one of the first kingdoms in Canam after the opening of Attricana, Kardia. Well older than any other surviving human realms, Kardia expanded to dozens of villages over dozens of miles. Limshau had only recently begun building the walls of its first city. Kardia used knowledge gleaned from bastions to create a stable, growing empire with no signs of decelerating. The lands were plentiful. The roads were paved or pressed. The people were safe. With the greatest technological advancement being an underground sewage system, magic grew fast and powerful. Sana himself was no follower of the enchanted arts, preferring the sword to illustrate his strength, but he neither feared nor prohibited its use.

Its encouragement allowed a firm foothold on the land. It's even said the master mage Kereptis Rifts emerged from its population before moving north. Sana, however, grew troubled over his own mortality. As the population mixed with their approaching neighbors, gimfen from Salvabrooke and elves from Dawnamoak and Limshau, the number of half-fae increased, laughing in the face of short-lived men.

Though the kingdom's fae and hybrid population was still miniscule, their exotic physique and attractive features made them popular with the crowds. Anyone with pointed ears was swooned over and doted on. They were offered money, foods, or favors for the mere chance of patronage or espousal. Unlike the bastions, afraid and xenophobic, Kardia embraced the new world, almost to a fault.

Much of the population was obsessed with magic and the races mastering it. Soon, the king discovered his own lineage threatened. He had taken a young virgin to wife years earlier and though initially happy, realized their offspring would not match the worship the rabble granted to the mere pointed-eared peasants. Sana at-

tempted to arrange a marriage with a fae maiden from Limshau. Since Limshau does not overtly support royalty, this was not possible. Instead of selecting a fae subject of lesser class within his own population or from Limshau, Sana attempted similar offers to the ruling class of both Salvabrooke and Dawnamoak. Both offers were refused.

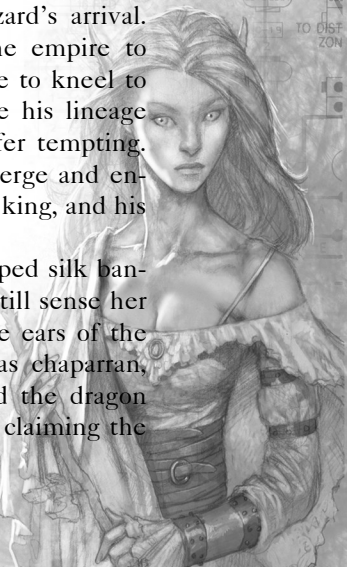
Not long after, both of Sana's young sons given to him by his innocent wife fell to a rare infection, taking them quickly and painfully.

Without heirs, Sana became paranoid about losing his lineage. He refused to abdicate his throne to any other and, approaching sixty, knew his years were numbered. No known magic could extend his life. Sana called in his servant casters to delegate them the responsibility of finding a way to extend his life or locate a mate able and willing to supply him with offspring blessed with such wonder. The casters took the crusade to save their king and kingdom.

Nearing seventy, Saron Sana approached his final days when one mage finally returned. The landing of a great dark dragon with decayed skin, perforated wings, and a near-barren skull heralded the wizard's arrival.

The creature promised to return the empire to power and vowed to force the arrogant fae to kneel to true immortality. Sana preferred to secure his lineage rather than live forever but found the offer tempting. The dragon promised offspring would emerge and enforce the will of the land and its rulers, the king, and his new bride.

Her name was Umala. A tightly wrapped silk bandage covered her eyes, though she could still sense her surroundings with ease. She possessed the ears of the fae but little else Sana could recognize as chaparran, gimfen, or damaskan. Both the mage and the dragon assured the king of the fae's noble blood, claiming the





dragon's presence as proof. Umala even possessed a great book of magic the surviving mage swore held a power gods feared to offer man. Though Saran's wife of a full generation objected to the pairing, the king agreed to the bonding. Events transpiring later fell into obscurity and bardic tales subtle and gross pervaded the legend with embellishment and exaggeration. The bonding ceremony was performed in secret and no official marriage was administered.

The public was not permitted to see the concubine of the king. Though elderly and near senility, the thrust of Sana's manhood returned. His older and faithful wife was cast aside quickly in favor of virginal pleasures. After Sana's lust was satisfied, one story claimed Sana would bellow a great exhalation of soot and smoke which would settle and float about the kingdom. A similar account, less popular but likely more accurate, claimed the mist emerged from the citizens. Innocent and faithful servants and hands of the empire fall asleep to awaken decrepit but with moments left until demise.

At the moment of their deaths, their bodies would expel a great darkness, which refused to evaporate after morning dew. More people fell to dust, replaced by the growing mist, which stuck to the living, whispering encouragement for them to remain in servitude.

Soon, Sana began encountering visions about the keep. Lingered shadows cast from nothing swayed over rooms as he walked about. They followed; they watched; they never revealed themselves. As more died, the shadows increased; the fog thickened. Sana's forgotten bride perished along with all the priests, and the loyal guards of the king. Years passed into decades, finally leaving only a few souls lingering, unable to change their fate. The fog seeped into the soil and salted the earth. Contaminated water rose from the depths. The many houses collapsed to rot and ruin,

though the main castle, Kardia-Gothas, was untouched.

The shapeless forms roamed the landscape as an army, raised from the ashes of withered corpses. A few soon spread from the dark shroud into the outer lands, encouraging others to enter the marsh with similar promises of immortality and magic, knowing protracted stays ensured another meal for the royal family.

Although Sana continued to age into centuries, he refused to die. His faculties left him, leaving nearly an empty shell of a man in refuse. Though aware of his life and his fate, Sana had no more strength to stave off his curse. His age robbed him of his vigor for life. The power of his loins held and Umala, unchanged in those years, continued to mount him and bring about the swelling of the fog, though no new shapeless emerged unless souls entered the marsh to be offered as sacrifice.

Umala eventually refused her husband's undying appetite unless new souls entered the marsh. Those daring to breach the marsh should exercise caution not to stir the attention of the mistress of Sana or her king lest they fall victim to their lust.

TRANQUISS

Twisted with evil, blackened with corruption, Tranquiss is only second after the Sana Marsh as one of the most dangerous territories of Canam. It began with the infection of a single tree but soon spread to others, then dozens, and then hundreds. The trees infected lost their leaves and the sap turned to blood. Hairs grew that drifted towards the warmth of flesh. The wood can neither be burned nor cleansed of its infection by any known magic. Even the most powerful spells only halt the spread temporarily rather than cure it. The plague known as Trendance had begun, and before anyone realized the threat, it had covered hundreds of square miles. The canopy of the central hive of the forest is so

tightly packed with long, sharp branches, no creature has ever successfully found the first tree which started the calamity. Though some believe destroying this tree would cure the entire forest, there is no evidence for this.

The infection has taken most of the natural trees and now threatens both Skepsis and Laurama. Much of Laurama has already been taken though not enough to threaten the chaparrans there. Some believe enemies of the fae created the forest in hope the growing wood would suffocate them. Beyond the living growth, several beasts call Tranquiss home, none of them actually natural animals. A few cancer dragons took residence here. One of the most notorious is Carcin of Pathos, a despicable creature known to belch living tumors that slither across the ground to attach and infect victims with their plague. Although an obvious connection can be seen between Carcin and the Tranquiss disease, the infamous dragon arrived centuries later. Not even he can pass through the dense barbs of the central canopy and must enter through one of the outer reaches. Carcin is insane and only a lingering preservation of life keeps him from blindly attacking Laurama or Limshau directly. Cancer dragons feel welcome in the pestilence of Tranquiss. They fear Skepsis. A distant and obscure legend professed the Skepsis tree is real and sits at the centre of the great forest, covered in a canopy of its cousins. Any creature to sleep under its branches would awaken cured of any ailments. Though this may seem a salvation for the tortured, and near insane, many cancer dragons are afraid of that form of freedom and prefer the pain their diseases wrack upon their bodies. Every year Tranquiss grows another few meters with no signs of retreating. The entire forest is covered in darkness, a side effect of the curse coupled with the thick overgrowth of interlocked thorn-like branches. Despite this plague and the abilities of the trees there, Tranquiss is not intelligent, though some religious authorities claim the curse itself is, for its expansion has formed a pair of claws slowly surrounding Skepsis and Laurama.

XIXION

Puggs are the fastest growing species to emerge from the gates. They broke off late from the damaskans and are considered one of the least civilized of all fae races.

They don't carry much of a culture with them, and began to populate at an alarming rate. Puggs spread across the globe quickly, though the highest concentration remains where they first appeared. Their growing armies encroach upon the bastion of Selkirk and the Pass of Dianaso. With the bastions' standard policy of non-involvement in the realms of magic, it is left to the remaining species to keep the pugg population down. Narros and damaskans took on the task of clearing out the large concentrations of their evil little cousins wherever they occurred.

As they expanded, pugg forces struck a wall with the Sana Marsh to the east. They then began to make their move against the bastion of Angel in the south.

After a siege resulted in the near total eradication of the attacking army, the puggs retreated. Passing travelers still need to contend with raiders but the puggs have not tried to make a move against an opponent nation since. This may turn out to be a sleeping lion, as their frantic reproduction continues.

Puggs do not coordinate or plan. They rage. They have no talents for strategy or stealth. They are a mass of living death – a humanoid locust swarm that ravages terrain and then moves on. The central areas of Xixion are barren and lifeless. Even the trees have been stripped of their bark and burned. Several years ago, a bevy of custodians and librarians attempted to analyze the patterns of the pugg swarms. They managed to distinguish four different masses of puggs. They all continually shift positions and are slowly approaching civilized neighbors. The librarians catalogued these with distinctive titles. Etaraki comprises of 70,000 puggs while Eletharius has 100,000 and Ephesia has 50,000. That is a mere pint in a gallon in comparison to Seelanus, which, at last count, had nearly 1,200,000 puggs.

Puggs openly attack all forces not looking like them. They are one of the most primitive races and many others fear this is the eventual fate of all fae. Puggs paint no art, write no poetry, and carve no sculptures. Their towns and villages are nothing more than huts of logs and mud.

They despise farming and prefer to hunt. If they run out of prey, they eventually turn on each other. Xixion covers a large area but no major roads cross it.



"Going out or coming in?" a child asked. She was maybe twelve, tall for her age but narrow enough to fall through a rabbit hole. She looked surprisingly fashionable, no doubt in an attempt by her family to prove they weren't indigent. Aiden was unsure why she singled him out. She spoke the true English, not one of the various patois Aiden had been warned to expect.

"Going out," Aiden answered.

"Why?" she asked.

"Why not?" Aiden closed the book. "What about you?"

*"Going in." She nudged to her mother, the woman lay-
ered in linen with a talc-covered face discussing credentials with
the outer guard. "Mom grows spiky fruit. Apparently that's
hard."*

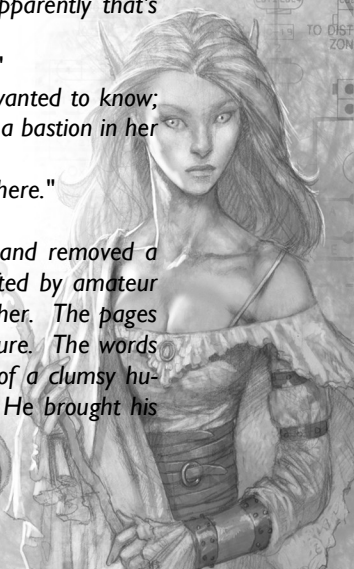
Aiden nodded. "I'm sure she'll get in then."

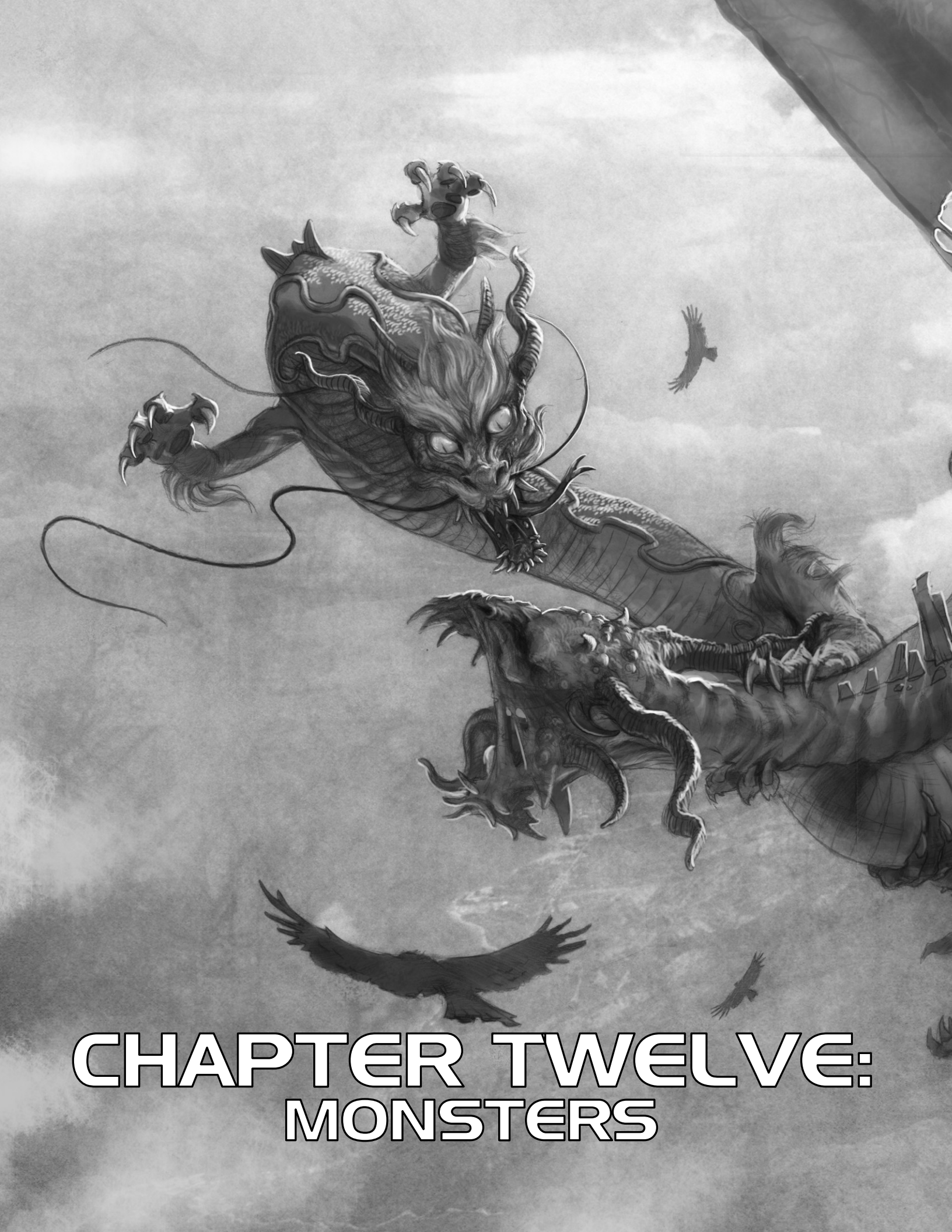
*"Why are you leaving?" she asked. She wanted to know;
it wasn't idle banter. She had never been inside a bastion in her
life. She was looking forward to frozen dinners.*

"Because there are things you can't do in there."

"Like what?"

*Aiden placed the novel between his legs and removed a
larger book from his pack. This one was crafted by amateur
hands with a badly sewn cover wrapped in leather. The pages
were rough and frayed and had a dappled texture. The words
were written with the flaws and imperfections of a clumsy hu-
man hand. Aiden held the book up edge on. He brought his
lips to the spine and whistled.*





CHAPTER TWELVE: MONSTERS



When magic flooded the world, the saturation of enchantment began to shape the animals and landscape. By way and will of its only intelligent inhabitant, Amethyst created his cousins among the resident lizards, giving birth to the dragons of legend. An indeterminate amount of time later, well after the dragon kings had spawned their own descendant races, a new species appeared without warning from the forests. These new inhabitants emerged from no previous form.

They were intelligent and beautiful, with a capability to form a civilization (while the other creations of chaos could only hunt and reproduce). Communities formed, towns were built, and cultures flourished.

The fae had emerged.

These creatures were tiny in comparison to the dragons but with a promising reproductive cycle and a near immortal lifespan. They spoke a single tongue, looked the same, and their traditions were mirrored in every civilization they founded. They were not masters over magic. They could replicate many of the effects produced by dragons but could not halt its influence over their own forms. One on day, a single village changed. All the children emerged as another species.

They resembled the original fae in only the broadest ways. This first branch was seen as a deviation or worse, an abomination. Most of these children were cast out. They didn't follow or accept the ironclad traditions of their elders. As more and more came into the world, the original fae realized a drastic shift in their species was occurring.

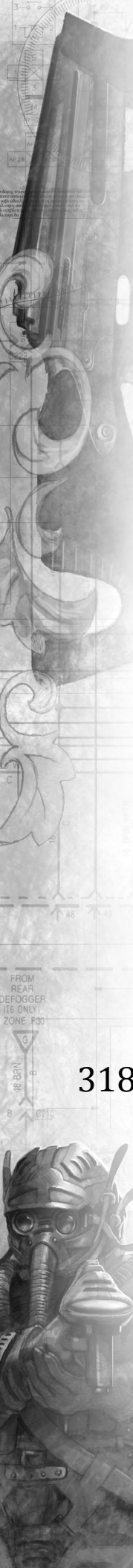
These children soon sought each other out. They shared similar beliefs and in time, they developed a culture aberrant to that of their parents. The members of this first offshoot had sprouted from the fae communities formed in plains and valleys. Before accusations could be thrown, the fae that took the forests as their home spawned their own unique subspecies. Fae in the mountains formed another.

This entire process took less than a thousand years, but by the next millennium, the original fae had nearly bred themselves to extinction and, by the following millennium, were footnotes. Three young species rose to replace them without a single scream of rebellion or a single drop of bloodshed. The oldest of these children were the laudenians. The others were chaparrans and narros. Unlike the original fae, these three branches were shorter lived and took pride in cultural distinctions from their cousin races, though identical within their own communities. Narros built underground empires and cities atop of mountains while laudenians erected vast and expanding empires in valleys. The chaparrans vanished in the dense forests that birthed them.

These new faw were settled and complacent, but in less than half the time the original fae had reigned on the planet, the laudenians suffered another deviation. This new branch was shorter, with larger ears and a frenzied desire to learn and record what they knew.

The laudenians became petrified at the prospect of vanishing like their ancestors. Believing the planet was the cause, laudenians employed their power of magic to uproot themselves and take to the sky, leaving their ground cities to their children, the damaskans.

The narros and chaparrans were not immune to this and soon started to branch their own deviations. Through this chaos, there did appear a pattern to these mutations. They emerged more often in areas bountiful with life. Chaparrans were creating branch species rapidly. At the same time the damaskans were emerging, chaparrans spawned not one, but three different distinct subspecies, each bound to a specific element of the forest (water, earth, and air). Later, these broke off even further, amalgamating animals and insect parts into



their physiology. Many of these subspecies grew smaller, more xenophobic, and were harder to categorize and define by those observing.

Another odd characteristic came from reproduction. The branches off the chaparrans produced fewer and fewer males with the youngest species produced virtually all females. The narros produced descendant races less frequently. They lasted for thousands of more years before branching to the ogres. Almost immediately after, mutations emerged with one eye and two heads. As the chaparrans branches became smaller and female, narros were becoming larger and predominantly male, with the monstrous chiggoth towering over them all. The most devolved creations became known as the fae anathema.

Building upon the foundations of the fleeing laudenians, the damaskans grew fast. They became the most populous of all fae, helped along by their increased reproduction cycle and social structure. While the chaparran anathema vanished into their woods and the narros in their mountains, the damaskan anathema were spreading quickly over the globe. The first were the skeggs and boggs, then finally the puggs, a locust swarm of replicating fairy vermin. The puggs carried no traditions. They took pride in no culture. They only ate, reproduced, and destroyed.

The damaskan branches were not entirely uncivil. A subsection of their population had vanished under the ground. They lost their sight and became the tenenbri. Not even the tenenbri know why their ancestors retreated under their cities though a clash with the emerging ogres was a likely theory. The damaskans also begot the gimfen, curious and playful creatures that took joy in the knowledge they had never spawned a feral subspecies of their own. Take into account their lack of disruption and you have a species that truly believes they are the final form of fae to inherit the planet.

Earth was, and always shall be, a dangerous place for those who venture into shadow. Across the entire world, no valley, mountain, forest, or town was immune to the influence of magic. Often where no man took root, the flow from Attricana would saturate the land, giving birth to the truly bizarre, fantastic, beautiful, or revolting. Classed together as spawn creatures, the majority of these beasts possess no culture and many never develop an intellect that can be measured or tested. A scant few broke from these primitive and primordial bonds to stake a claim as a species worthy of respect.

THE FALL

The exact date of when it happened was never recorded, though it was assumed to have been thousands of years after the emergence of the fae. Darkness washed across a starry night. There was no fire or brimstone. There was no oracle to herald the end of days.

No trumpets were blown; no seals were broken. A gloom settled with the passing wind and a million fae walked from their homes and families, following an un-denied temptation. They were no longer slaves to

whimsy, no longer products of chaos. They embraced a way that would ensure the stability of their lives – an order of things never changing; masters instead of slaves to enchantment. They were corrupted by the Fall – the arrival of Mengus. This influence could only corrupt what Attricana created, and an army of followers emerged in a single day, taking pilgrimage to the shores of a distant land, a growing expanse of black glass where the dark star settled. Of all the fae, the chaparrans were the hardest hit. These turned would not be seen again for years. The pagus began their attacks on their old brethren. Unlike the fae birthed from Attricana, those from Ixindar never changed, neither devolving nor evolving. They simply were, are, and will forever be.

While Ixindar cannot encourage spawn races, it did spontaneously birth its own mirror species to the original fae, the shemjaza. Like the old fae, these creatures were tall and beautiful in their own ways, obsessed with control and order rather than dance and play. They put forward methods of war while their opponents pondered and argued over celebration and joviality. Never before had war stained the fields of the planet. All innocence was lost. The dream was over.

FAE ANATHEMA

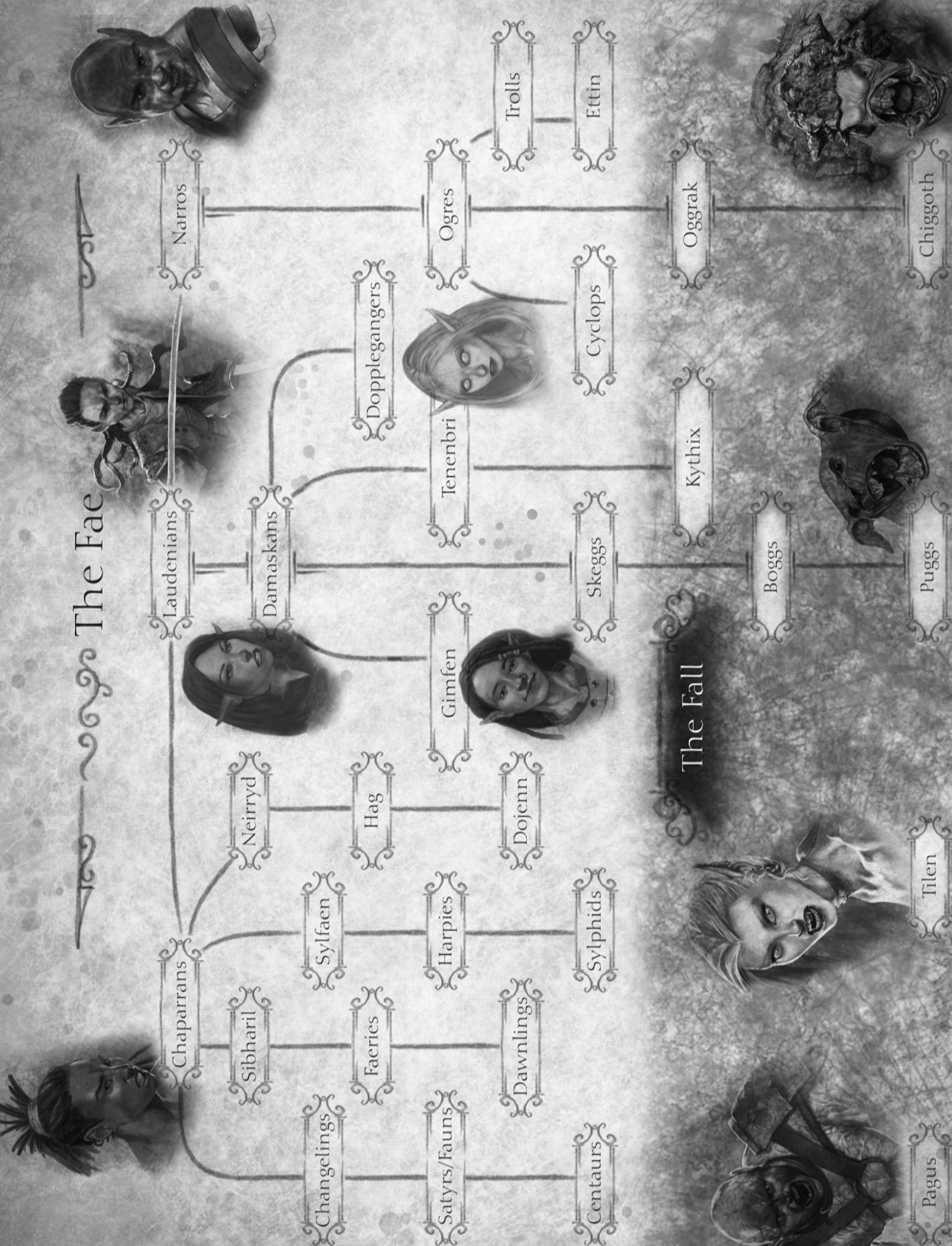
Newer fae branches emerge less civil and more fiendish than their ancestors. The chaparrans gloated about being exceptions to this rule. They believed their future awaited them in the trees, that the faeries and nariisa were a preferred fate. Then these almost angelic creatures descended into harpies and hags. Finally, the dojenn, one of the ugliest creatures on the planet, appeared from the watery depths. The narros anathema, a fate feared by even the ogres, is the dumb and massive chiggoth. For the narros, their descendants are fated to grow large and stupid; smashing down the mountain keeps the narros spent their empire's reign building. Tenenbri have pushed their dark side into the crevices of their underground labyrinths, but as these subterranean fae begin moving north, their secret has begun to move with them, the kythix.

If only the damaskans could bury their descendants in dungeons or in the depths of oceans. The skeggs were large and mean but controllable. They soon descended into the quickly reproducing boggs. If only that was the end of it ... later, the boggs found their nations pushed aside by the growing mass of puggs, an unstoppable feeding frenzy of animalistic fae.

THE FUTURE OF THE FAE

Thankfully, the chaparrans, damaskans, laudenians, and narros are all still around, though their growth has slowed. Chaparran expansion has all but stopped and laudenians have already started to decline. Narros and damaskans are fated to soon follow. The fear gripping all of them is the eventual future where all that that is left would be the cruel dojenn, the dumb and massive chiggoth, the malicious kythix, and swarms and swarms of puggs – millions of years of fae heritage sullied into

The Fae



barbarity. This does not account for the pagus – members of the unchanged armies of Ixindar. Shemjaza seldom reproduce outside of their species and their numbers are limited as they're only seen leading forces of pagus and never in armies of their own. If such a fate awaited the planet, mankind would soon be overwhelmed by evil from every side, order and chaos.

No one knows how a fae village degrades though many believe it occurs over a full generation. Every female of a village would suddenly only produce a descendant offspring regardless if they fled the village or not. On more than one occasion, although only recorded in the age of Terros, an entire village would change overnight. This event is often called a “descent.” An entire city never branches, only hamlets and settlements. A few fae villages have been found empty and left in disregard, as their new forms race to the woods in search of prey, having forgotten their history.

Damaskans, the only fae studying the phenomenon, have never monitored a descent when it occurs so have yet to assess the symptoms, if any. One strange fact which may not be connected to the phenomenon is that no half-fae has ever descended. If a human and a fae produce offspring, a descent race has never occurred. In villages where humans are present in the population, mingling blood or not, there has never been a descent. This has led to a justification of the acceptance of humans within the damaskan communities – a biological insurance policy. Laudenians created theirs by escaping to the skies; the narros simply want to wipe theirs out; tenenbri wish to ignore the problem and chaparrans think it's for the best. Throughout all of it, the gimfen laugh themselves silly, having never descended.

Then there is the tilen. With a complicated history of emergence, this young race has never branched a descendant species. Every tilen births a tilen and there has never been an exception. Further, tilen produce pure tilen even when they breed with other species, even the never-changing pagus. Since the tilen look the most like the original fae (according to their claim), their existence may be the solution the fae need to maintain their heritage and prevent the madness of a chaotic future.

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AVAILABLE MONSTERS

You are welcome to include any monsters you see fit from any source including the PATHFINDER BESTIARY. Caution is advised in your choosing as the wrong monster could suddenly upset the logic of the game, especially when more of the setting is revealed with later books. What follows is a list of the monsters from the PATHFINDER BESTIARY available in canon Amethyst. These creatures either exist in the real setting of the story or their inclusion would not break the setting's logic. If a creature is not listed, there is usually a good reason.

Some monsters included in the Amethyst bestiary may seem obviously inspired by mythology, which fits

well within the setting, and thus, may be similar to monsters in the PATHFINDER BESTIARY. Amethyst is meant to imply these are the creatures' mythology and fairy tales are based from but did not get entirely correct. Since there is no dialogue with these monsters, the English name for them is the same as their historical mirror. In that case, Amethyst does refer to them by their original name and they would use the proper entry in the PATHFINDER BESTIARY.

MONSTERS IN AMETHYST CANON

Part Of The Setting

Ant (spawn)
Ape (spawn)
Assassin Vine (spawn)
Barghest (spawn)
Basilish (spawn)
Bat (spawn)
Bear (spawn)
Beetle (spawn)
Boar (spawn)
Cat (spawn)
Centaur (fae, chaparran branch)
Centipede (spawn)
Chimera (spawn)
Cockatrice (spawn)
Crab (spawn)
Crocodile (spawn)
Cyclops (fae, narros branch)
Dog (spawn)
Dolphin (spawn)
Eagle (spawn)
Eel (spawn)
Elemental (spawn)
Elephant (spawn)
Ettin (fae, narros branch)
Familiars
Flytrap (spawn)
Frog (spawn)
Gargoyle (spawn)
Ghost
Ghoul (Ixindar)
Golem (construct)
Green Hag (fae, chaparran branch)
Griffon (spawn)
Harpy (fae, chaparran branch)
Herd Animal
Homunculus (construct)
Horse
Hydra (spawn)
Hyena (spawn)
Kraken (spawn)
Leech (spawn)
Lion (spawn)
Lizard (spawn)
Lycanthrope
Manticore (spawn)
Mantis (spawn)
Minotaur (spawn)

Night Hag (fae, chaparran branch)
 Nymph (fae, chaparran branch)
 Octopus (spawn)
 Pegasus (spawn)
 Pixie (fae, chaparran branch)
 Rat (spawn)
 Rhinoceros (spawn)
 Roc (spawn)
 Satyr (fae, chaparran branch)
 Scorpion (spawn)
 Sea Hag (fae, chaparran branch)
 Sea Serpent (spawn)
 Shadow (Ixindar)
 Shark (spawn)
 Skeleton (Ixindar)
 Slug (spawn)
 Snake (spawn)
 Spectre (Ixindar)
 Sphinx (spawn)
 Spider (spawn)
 Squid (spawn)
 Tiger (spawn)
 Treant (spawn)
 Troll (fae, narros branch)
 Unicorn (spawn)
 Wasp (spawn)
 Wight (Ixindar)
 Wolf (spawn)
 Wolverine (spawn)
 Wraith (Ixindar)
 Wyvern (Spawn)
 Yeti (spawn)
 Zombie (Ixindar)

MONSTERS

AVAILABLE IN AMETHYST

Not Canon But Does Not Break The Setting

Aboleth (spawn)
 Animated Object (construct)
 Ankheg (spawn)
 Basidirond (spawn)
 Behir (spawn)
 Black Pudding (spawn)
 Bulette (spawn)
 Cave Fisher (spawn)
 Chuul (spawn)
 Cloaker (spawn)
 Darkmantle (spawn)
 Devourer (Ixindar)
 Froghemoth (spawn)
 Gelatinous Cube (spawn)
 Gibbering Moulder (spawn)
 Girallon (spawn)
 Gorgon (spawn)
 Grey Ooze (spawn)
 Intellect Devourer (spawn)
 Iron Cobra (spawn)
 Mimic (spawn)
 Mohrg (Ixindar)
 Mummy (Ixindar)

Ochre Jelly (spawn)
 Otyugh (spawn)
 Owlbear (spawn)
 Phase Spider (spawn)
 Purple worm (spawn)
 Remorhaz (spawn)
 Retriever (construct)
 Roper (spawn)
 Rust Monster (spawn)
 Shambling Mound (spawn)
 Shocker Lizard (spawn)
 Stirge (spawn)
 Tarrasque (spawn)
 Violet Fungus (spawn)
 Worg (spawn)
 Yellow Musk Creeper (spawn)

MONSTERS

REPLACED IN AMETHYST

These Monsters Don't Exist Because There Is A Duplicate Monster Already Present In The Setting

All elves, replaced by fae

All goblinoids (bugbears, goblins, hobgoblins), replaced by boggs and skeggs

All dragons (both chromatic and metallic), replaced by archon and typhox dragons

Giants (but not the giant type), replaced by oggraks and chiggoth

Kobold, replaced with pugg

Morlock, replaced with kythix

Orc, replaced by pagus

RULE AMENDMENTS

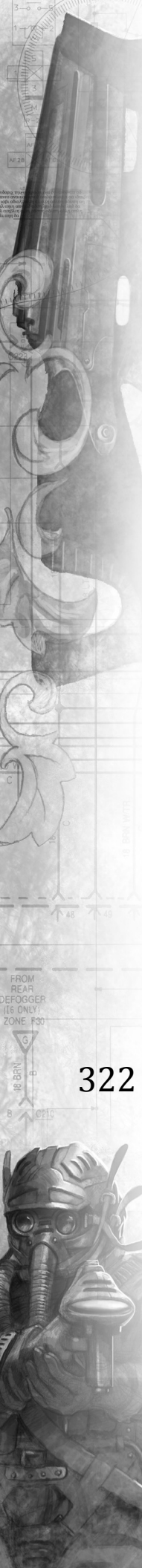
Descriptions: Many monsters in the books outside of Amethyst have an extravagant history of their origin which may conflict with Amethyst's setting. If a player inquires, be inventive.

Fae = Fey: For dealing with magic items and monster descriptors, the fey type is part of the Amethyst fac tree. However, only specific fey like nymphs and hags are canon in Amethyst.

Source: Monsters in Amethyst are fae or spawn creatures from Attricana or corrupted creatures from Ixindar. Nearly all monsters are spawn creatures. Only shapeless wild, death and fallen dragons, shemjaza, pagus, and most undead are corrupted creatures seen in Canam.

Ixindar: Ixindar represents a new monster type. An Ixindar creature does not generate an EDF. It does not alter disruption rolls. Along with the creatures listed as having the Ixindar descriptor, all undead carry it as well. This can also be extended to any creature with the Lawful Evil alignment if you wish to break from canon and include other monsters like devils.

No Outsiders: There are no outsiders, per its description in Amethyst. Outsiders banished are cast out beyond the gate. Most outsiders have their descriptor replaced with the aberration keyword. Those that don't are usually monsters which can be and have been sum-



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REAR
DEFOGGER
(16 ONLY)
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moned. Most summoned creatures aren't actually summoned—they are created at that moment to serve a purpose and then return to chaos of Attricana, content having served that purpose. As such, Ixindar magic and creatures with the Ixindar descriptor cannot summon creatures.

Extraplanar: There are no planes in Amethyst and creatures you wish to insert with that descriptor lose it. The ethereal plane is not a plane as much as it is a state.

Shapechanging / Summoning Monsters: Despite many creatures being extraplanar and/or possessing celestial or fiendish templates, many of them can still be created via a summon monster spell. These creatures don't exist in the setting and only exist when they emerge from a spellcaster's imagination. This also applies to any spells that alter a creature's shape. As result, even though a creature like an archon doesn't exist in Amethyst, one can be created and believe that it is...at least until the spell expires. It is however unlikely that a wizard would cast a spell (polymorph, summon monster, or any shapechanging spell) that would result in a creature that had been "replaced" in the setting (like elves, orcs, goblins, etc).

BOGG

Before the puggs emerged, the boggs were considered the largest growing threat in Canam. They were numerous enough to be a hazard on their own and just smart enough to realize stealth and population prevailed against enemies smarter and tougher. Although it is believed boggs came from the larger harrier skeggs,

there have been stories of boggs emerging directly from damaskan roots. Skeggs are often chiefs among boggy tribes, especially when a boggy mother has not been established. The common trait of a boggy is its perpetual smile and hideously distended mouth. With three times as many teeth as a human, the boggy can show nearly them all when it grins, and does so often. The boggs don't have pain receptors wired the same way as other creatures, taking as much pleasure from being hurt as from reproduction. This may explain their giggling laughter even when they are impaled upon an enemy's sword.

BOGG LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 20: Each boggy nest contains at least one boggy mother. This grotesquely obese female boggy is pregnant one hundred percent of the time, with an incubation period of twelve weeks. She accomplishes this with a bizarre mutation giving her between four and six uteruses. Each pregnancy gives live birth to between four and six boggy whelps or puggs.

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BOGG SCABB**CR 1/2****XP 200**

CE Small fey

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception –1**DEFENSE****AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)**hp** 10 (2d8+2)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** short sword +2 (1d6+1/19–20)**Ranged** short bow +3 (1d6/×3)**STATISTICS****Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 6**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13**Feats** Improved Initiative**Skills** Ride +10, Stealth +11, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth**Languages** Ferran**SQ** masochistic response**ECOLOGY****Environment** temperate forest and plains**Organization** gang (4–9), warband (10–16), or tribe (17+ plus 1–4 skeggs)**Treasure** NPC gear (leather armor, light wooden shield, short sword)**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Masochistic Response (Ex):** If an enemy hits a bogg scabb but doesn't kill it, the bogg scabb gains a +4 bonus on all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.**BOGG RAKE CR 1****XP 400**

CE small fey

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception –1**DEFENSE****AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)**hp** 15 (3d8+1)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** punching dagger +3 (1d4+1 plus *infliction* and *sneaky bastard*/19–20)**Ranged** blowgun +3 (1d4 plus *foul concoction*)**Special Attacks** sand in yer eye! (DC13 Ref)**STATISTICS****Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 6**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13**Feats** Improved Initiative**Skills** Ride +10, Stealth +10, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth**Languages** Ferran**SQ** masochistic response**ECOLOGY****Environment** temperate forest and plains**Organization** gang (4–9), warband (10–16), or tribe (17+ plus 1–4 skeggs)**Treasure** NPC gear (leather armor, light wooden shield, short sword)**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Foul Concoction (Ex):** The bogg rake can coat its blowdarts in poison of its own devising. It typically carries enough poison to coat 6 darts, chosen from the poisons below: *Rancid meat:* A target hit makes a DC14 Fort save or is sickened for 2d6 rounds.*Swamp weeds and spit:* The target makes a DC14 Fort save or is dazed until the beginning of the bogg spitter's next turn.*Bodily fluids:* The target suffers 1d6 damage at the beginning of its next turn.**Infliction (Ex):** If the bogg rake scores a hit with its punching dagger, it inflicts the target with putrid spit.*Type* poison, injury; *Save* Fortitude DC 12*Onset* 1 round; *Frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds*Effect* 1 Con damage and 1 Wis damage; *Cure* 1 save**Masochistic Response (Ex):** If an enemy hits a bogg rake but doesn't kill it, the bogg rake gains a +4 bonus on all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.**Sand In Yer Eye!** As a move action, the bogg rake can throw sand in an adjacent target's eyes. The target must make a DC13 Ref save or be blinded for 1 round.**Sneaky Bastard (Ex):** The bogg rake deals an additional 1d6 damage against any target denied its Dex bonus to AC.**BOGG MOTHER****CR3****XP 800**

CE Large fey

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +11**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+5 natural)**hp** 72 (6d6+48)**Fort** +15, **Ref** +3, **Will** +7**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** meaty fists +7 (1d4+4 plus *ham hands*)**Special Attacks** gnaw (2d6 acid damage AC 13, 8 hp)**STATISTICS****Str** 19, **Dex** 10, **Con** 26, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 18**Feats** Great Fortitude, Improved Great Fortitude, Toughness**Skills** Climb +9, Craft (sculpture) +11, Escape Artist +15, Handle Animal +10, Knowledge (nature) +11, Perception +11, Stealth +15, Survival +8**Languages** Common, Ferran**SQ** masochistic response, my babies**ECOLOGY****Environment** temperate forest and plains**Organization** part of a warband (with 4–9 boggs) or tribe (with 17+ boggs)**Treasure** standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gnaw (Ex): The bogg mother may attempt to gnaw on a creature it is grappling. She attempts a new combat maneuver check (as though attempting to pin the opponent). If she succeeds, she begins to gnaw on its prey, which is similar to swallow whole except the bogg mother often chews her food. The opponent takes bite damage and additional damage each round.

A creature being gnawed keeps the grappled condition, while the bogg mother does not. A gnawed creature can try to cut its way free with any light slashing or piercing weapon or it can just try to escape the grapple. If a creature being gnawed cuts its way out, the bogg mother cannot gnaw another creature until the damage is healed.

Ham Hands (Ex): When the bogg mother hits with her meaty fists, she deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals 2d4+8 damage. The bogg mother can grapple two targets at once without suffering any penalties.

Masochistic Response (Ex): If an enemy hits a bogg mother but doesn't kill it, the bogg mother gains a +4 bonus on all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

My Babies (Ex): When a bogg or skegg is killed within line of sight of the bogg mother, she can move up to 15 ft (3 squares) and makes a meaty fists attack as an immediate action. If the bogg mother is already grappling a victim, it may immediately make a gnaw attack.

DOJENN

Chaparrans were proud of their pedigree. Their descendant races were not massive ugly monsters with stone appendages or feral rodents devouring everything they

could wrap their grotesquely oversized mouths over.

Chaparrans were turning into beautiful, angelic creatures, sought after by lustful mortals. Even when taking on the attributes of their environment, these descendant races had flair – artistry – in how they expressed these features. When influencing human mythology, they were presented with respect and worship, called centaurs, nymphs, and faeries. As these species emerged, they became introverted, choosing isolation in empty forests devoid of even other fae. It was a preferred alternative over the fate of the narros. This aspiration died when the dojenn appeared. They rose from the depths of rivers, lakes, and oceans to feed upon drowning victims before the water claimed them. Dojenn are the dark reflection of everything the chaparrans had hoped to achieve.

Another noted difference between the dojenn and their cousin races is their appearance. Dojenn are one of the most feared creatures to look at in the world. They have lifeless eyes over a jaw of needle-like incisors. They can disengage their jaws and swallow creatures twice the size of their own head and have been known to do so to live prey, using their long teeth to keep food from escaping. As time progresses, these monsters are appearing more and more, migrating farther inland, following rivers deeper towards established and unsuspecting nations. They have already started attacking Baruch Malkut and York, striking during the night and pulling dock workers before an alarm can be raised. Like all fae anathema, the dojenn are fated to be the dominant legacy of the chaparrans unless something even uglier should emerge.



DOJENN LORE

A character can know the following information with a successful Knowledge (Nature) check.

DC 15: Dojenn prey on the innocent, invade the complacent, and take joy in the terror of others. They have no qualms in devouring both fae and humans, with marked preference for their own cousin races like faeries and nariisa. It has been suspected that the dojenn have eliminated several faerie branches, forcing these innocent creatures from their waters and woods.

DC 20: The dojenn are an offshoot from an earlier chaparran deviation; a merfolk-like aquatic fae species called the jeilynn. The dojenn systematically destroyed each jeilynn home, and the vast oceans now contain

DOJENN MATARK

CR 9

XP 6,400

CE Medium fey (chaotic, evil)

Init +4, Senses darkvision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 24; touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+4 Dex, +10 natural)

Hp 117 (15d6+72)

Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +6

DR 5/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

Melee harpoon +14 (5d8+5 plus grab), bite +17 (6d8+7/19-20)

Space 5 ft., Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks caustic excretion (2d4), feeder tendrils (DC 23 Ref); 3d6 damage plus grab

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 18, Con 26, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 3

Base Atk +11; CMB +17; CMD 24

Feats Ability Focus (feeder tendrils), Improved Natural Armor, Improved Grapple, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +21, Climb +14, Escape Artist +17, Perception +17, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +24, Survival +17, Swim +21

Languages Old faen

SQ feeding time

ECOLOGY

Environment swamp, underground, water

Organization solitary, pair, or cult (3-6)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Caustic Excretion (Ex): When an opponent hits the dojenn with a melee attack, the opponent takes 2d4 damage.

Feeder Tendrils (Ex): Swift action; Reflex DC 23; 3d6 damage plus grab. Up to three enemies may be entangled in the dojenns' feeder tendrils per round.

Feeding Time (Ex): The dojenn has a +2 bonus with its bite attack against any creature it is grappling.

Grab (Ex): If the dojenn hits with either a feeder tendril or its harpoon against a Large or smaller target, the dojenn can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If using the harpoon, then the weapon is not available as long as it is grabbing. The dojenn receives a +4 bonus on combat maneuver checks made to start and maintain a grapple.

little intelligent life other than scattered dojenn tribes and the occasional spawn creature. Rumors still persist some jeilynn have survived, hiding from their progeny.

DC 25: All dojenn most ever see are female. The males may still be visible as tiny parasitic creatures that attached themselves to the female's underside. A mark on how successful a female dojenn is would be to count how many atrophied worm-like males are hanging from her, as when the males attach, they merge for life.

DRAGONS

The iconic symbol of fantasy, when the world of magic swept over the globe, dragons were an assumption easily confirmed. Upon being finally seen in the skies, they were a confirmation more than a realization, the final evidence that fantasy had invaded reality.

Unlike many other fables, legends of dragons can be found in every corner of every nation in history, the symbol of both the greatest wisdom and the greatest evil. Some devoured maidens, staving off a greater appetite for villages offering the sacrifice. Some fell to lances wielded by saints or squires while others died by the hands of their own tricks, fooled by clever wizards.

Throughout the legends, dragons were either dumb lizards or keepers of great knowledge and magic. Some brought fire and disease while others water and plentiful crops. The sight of a dragon in the skies rained fear on everyone below. Their deaths heralded both ages of wisdom and despair. Their images upon coats, crests, and colors signified a country's dominance over the monster or their reverence for it.

Across the globe, they took many shapes. Some walked upon two legs, some four, or even six. Many twisted in coils with snake-like bodies through the clouds while others slumped across beds of gold, silver, and skulls like lumbering cows. Winged or not, most dragons of legend could fly.

Modern dragons were exultant over the respect they had received in their absence, regardless of the source. They were shocked at the amount of detail that had survived and the accuracy or liberties taken both condemning and glorifying them. Some were especially surprised at the singular attitudes dragons would take dependant on the nation. Rarely would dragons be represented in different lights in a single culture. This caused disagreements about their dispositions – how their bodies moved, what powers they controlled, or even how many toes they had. To many people – defacing an image of a dragon, regardless of its character – was considered insolent and unlawful. Such principles survive today. The dragon's elevation to godhood was an obvious transition to some, despite most dragons' insistence that such worship was undeserved. In one form or another, almost every dragon from human literature is represented on Earth, from the grotesque soot belching eaters of the young, to the erudite masters of fire and water. Even the aberrations with many heads and tails and legs can be found, though a somewhat rarely.

Dragons in Amethyst are not as clearly defined. As with the fae, derived from an original stock, all dragons came from Amethyst. Stories tell the great dragon commanding the surrounding dinosaurs into intelligence and draping them in the blanket of magic and enlightenment unequalled by any creature since. Magical influence halts for no creature and variations quickly followed. Initially, four dragon kings emerged. Each controlled a section of Earth. Lazarus the Pure, controller of the West and Shaka, ruler of the East, remain the only surviving dragon kings. Goch, one of the seven Azhi lords, might have been a dragon king at one point. If true, there is still no information on the fourth in any of the Bibles of Drasago. Lazarus believes, although he omitted such a conclusion in his book, that Jahada the Glass is that fourth, taken by Amethyst as a mate. Her fate remains a mystery.

Soon after the kings gained control, many more dragons emerged. The Yok-ani, born from Shaka's will, were the first, though with their slow reproductive cycle, quickly became the fewest. Even today, there are only nine. Over the rest of the world, holy, noble, and guardian dragons fell under the umbrella title, archons. Thousands of years after the fae appeared; corruption from Ixindar claimed its first victims. Goch begot the Seven Dragons of Azhi, the first fallen dragons. Soon after, more dragons of hideous disposition emerged, forming the family of typhox, including the cannibalistic death dragons and the cursed cancer dragons. Many dragons, including Lazarus, believe Mengus arrived on this world summoned from a beacon placed by Goch, and that the despoiled dragon king contained an evil not claimed by Ixindar.

CLASSIFICATIONS

There are three types of dragons in Amethyst: archon (good dragons), typhox (corrupted or cursed dragons), and neutral dragons (elemental and yok-Ani). Connected to these three types are several unique individuals of great power standing out from the rest. The dragon kings stand out away from even those. It should be noted that the majority of all "named" dragons are so powerful that they should never be used as opponents in combat.

CANCER DRAGONS

AGE CATEGORY	SPECIAL ABILITIES	CASTER LEVEL
Wyrmling	Ambient disease, Expel DC14 disease	—
Very young	Putrescence	—
Young	Proliferation	—
Juvenile	Expel DC16 disease	1st
Young adult	DR 5/magic, spell resistance	3rd
Adult	Regurgitation	5th
Mature adult	DR 10/magic, putrescence (10 ft.)	7th
Old	Expel DC18 disease	9th
Very old	DR 15/magic	11th
Ancient	Plague	13th
Wyrmling	DR 20/magic	15th
Great wyrmling	Putrescence (20 ft.)	17th

GENERAL RACIAL MODIFICATIONS

All dragons in *Amethyst* bear more than striking resemblance to dragons in literature, both modern and mythological. The background enchantment permeating through history influenced later myths and legends to describe the creatures, all the while fooling those writers into thinking they created something original. Imagination holds no bounds and many descriptions departed often from the reality of the true creatures living millions of years earlier.

Spells: Dragons cast spells as wizards, not sorcerers, with the words of Pleroma burned onto their skins, and the most powerful dragons branded with hundreds of words wrapping around their wings and arms. Only the dragon scribing them can read them, making transfer or copying impossible. All dragons have this feature, though some display them more visibly than others.

TYPHOX DRAGONS

Goch was the first fallen dragon, corrupted from within. No one is sure if Goch was corrupted by her own supremacy and immortality or by Ixindar during the first migration. Although there are hundreds of typhox dragons, only seven are called Azhi, the first corrupted dragons. After them emerged three distinct classes of dragons under the umbrella typhox. These are the fallen and death dragons, both bound to Ixindar, and the cancer dragon which is not bound to Ixindar but rather cursed by it.

CANCER DRAGONS

The ugliest of them all, cancer dragons live their lives wracked in agony. They cannot die from any disease but have no way to defend themselves from any infection. They are receptive to any ailment afflicting any creature. Acid and poison courses through their very blood, their eyes are bloodshot and ooze puss. Many archon dragons sympathize with these pathetic creatures unable to rest or even sleep. This constant suffering altered the dragon's disposition to being bitter and spiteful, wishing only to inflict their pain unto others.



The only time the misery subsides is when the creature transfers disease or poison to a victim.

CANCER DRAGON LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Cancer dragons are among the most revolting, loathsome creatures to walk the earth. Their enormous bodies are carriers for every malady known to man or fae, and the oldest of their kind have complete and utter mastery over the maledictions that afflict their enemies. A cancer dragon's breath is a disturbing mixture of bone shrapnel, diseased fluids, and gas, most part of the cancer dragon at some point before expelling them.

DC 20: It is a common misconception that cancer dragons are Ixindar-bound creatures; they are not. They were originally desert dwelling elemental dragons that were cursed by Goch. They are still Attricana-bound creatures only suffering from a curse from Ixindar. Simply being in an area where a cancer dragon is or has been is hostile to a creature's health. Vegetation withers, animals grow tumors, and the ground oozes with rot.

DC 25: Cancer dragons live in hot climates and seldom in areas that are cold or damp. Their skin carries

a natural bluish tint often marred by scars and lesions. A few cancer dragons old and near decrepit, killed enough and infected enough that they finally vanquished the pain in their bodies. They remain infectious and their blood is as toxic as ever. Avoid any attack from a cancer dragon's which can penetrate skin; an infection will surely set.

DC30: On a few rare occasions, a few sympathetic souls have used intense magic to cure a cancer dragon of their afflictions. If they survive the ordeal, the pain passes and the contagious blood purifies, allowing them to vanish and live peacefully in solitude from then on. Few cancer dragons have undergone the practice and even fewer have survived it. Those that emerge healthy find a new zeal for life. The stains of their sins remain, however, and those cancer dragons turning away from darkness have few allies on either side.



CANCER DRAGON

CE dragon (earth)

BASE STATISTICS

CR 5; **Size** Small; **Hit Dice** 6d12

Speed 40 ft.

Natural Armor +5; **Breath Weapon** cone, disease

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunities (Ex): A cancer dragon cannot suffer damage from any diseases or poisons.

Ambient Disease (Su): A cancer dragon touching food or a body of water (100 liters / age category) instantly infects it with blinding sickness. Touching the skin of a cancer dragon with direct skin infects the subject with the shakes. Increase the DCs by 1 for every age category the dragon has.

Expel Disease (Su): Cancer dragons can infect targets with various diseases with bite, breath weapon, or claw attacks. If exposed (by being in the area of hit by a direct attack), the dragon infects the target with any disease it is able to. Unlike other diseases, onset occurs INSTANTLY, regardless of the disease's entry. Targets hit or in the area of effect are infected by any disease with a Fort DC of DC14 or less. Juvenile dragons or older can infect a target with any disease with a Fort DC of DC16 or less. Old dragons or older can infect a target with any disease with a Fort DC of DC18 or less. Ancient dragons or older can infect a target with any disease with a Fort DC of DC20 or less. Once a disease has been selected, increase the Fort DC by 1 for every age category the dragon has. Each time a cancer dragon infects a target, it can select a new disease. Only juvenile or older cancer dragons can infect via bite or claw attacks.

Breath Weapon—The cancer dragon's breath weapon is cone of deadly shrapnel mixed with bodily fluids and gasses. It infects by either inhalation or injury.

Bite & Claw Attacks: A juvenile or older cancer dragon can infect targets with its bite and claw attacks with any disease that is transmitted by injury.

Plague (Su) An ancient or older cancer dragon's breath weapon does not immediately vanish once expelled. An area equal to the cone's width remains after the breath weapon concludes and lingers for 1 hour afterward. Any target passing through the area is infected with any inhaled disease DC20 or less. Once a disease has been selected, increase the Fort DC by 1 for every age category the dragon has. This disease does not need to be the same as the breath weapon.

Proliferation (Su): Young cancer dragons and older are able to infect another dragon with the same Ixindar-born blanket disease all cancer dragons suffer from. In order to infect another dragon, the target must be at least two age categories younger than cancer dragon and be hit by the cancer dragon's bite attack.

Type disease, bite attack; **Save** Fortitude DC 12 + 1/per age category

Onset 2d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect: No initial effect. After two consecutive failures, the target dragon falls into a slumber and awakens 1 day later as a cancer dragon.

Putrescence (Ex): Very young cancer dragons and older radiate a stinking cloud (per spell). The Fort DC is 10+2 per age category of the cancer dragon. Adjacent targets to the cancer dragon must make the Fort save or be nauseated. The effect lasts as long as the target remains in the cloud and for 1d4+1 rounds after. A mature adult cancer dragon radiates his stinking cloud to 10 feet and a great wyrm cancer dragon radiates his stinking cloud to 20 feet.

Regurgitation (Su): An adult or older cancer dragon can inflict 3d6 damage on itself as a swift action and decrease the time before it can use its breath weapon again by 1 round

YOUNG CANCER DRAGON CR 9

XP 6,400

CE Large dragon (earth)

Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +14

Aura putrescence 5 ft., DC 16

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+1 Dex, +13 natural, -1 size)

hp 75 (10d12+10)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

Immune disease, paralysis, poison, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +15 (2d6+7), 2 claws +14 (1d8+5), 2 wings +12 (1d6+2), tail slap +12 (1d8+7)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, disease), expel disease

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)

Feats Dazzling Display, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Appraise +14, Fly +8, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (local) +14, Perception +14, Stealth +10, Survival +14

Languages All

SQ ambient disease, proliferation

ADULT CANCER DRAGON CR 13

XP 25,600

CE Huge dragon (earth)

Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +22

Aura frightful presence (180 ft., DC 21), putrescence 5 ft., DC 22

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 8, flat-footed 28 (+23 natural, -2 size)

hp 120 (16d12+16)

Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13

DR 5/magic; **Immune** disease, paralysis, poison, sleep; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +23 (2d8+12), 2 claws +22 (2d6+8), 2 wings +20 (1d8+4), tail slap +20 (2d6+12)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone), crush, expel disease

Spells Known (CL 5th)

2nd (5/day)—*invisibility*, *resist energy*

1st (7/day)—*cause fear* (DC 13), *mage armor*, *shield*, *true strike*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read magic*,
resistance, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 16, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 36 (40 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Dazzling Display, Deadly Stroke, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Appraise +22, Fly +11, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (local) +22, Knowledge (geography) +22, Perception +22, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +11, Survival +22

Languages All

SQ ambient disease, proliferation, regurgitation

ANCIENT CANCER DRAGON CR 18

XP 153,600

CE Gargantuan dragon (earth)

Init +3; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +32

Aura frightful presence (300 ft., DC 27), putrescence 10 ft., DC 30

DEFENSE

AC 41, touch 5, flat-footed 37 (–1 Dex, +36 natural, –4 size)
hp 204 (24d12+48)

Fort +16, **Ref** +13, **Will** +19

DR 15/magic; **Immune** disease, paralysis, poison, sleep; **SR** 29

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +33 (4d6+18/19–20), 2 claws +32 (2d8+12), 2 wings +30 (2d6+6), tail slap +30 (2d8+18)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. cone), crush, expel disease, plague, tail sweep

Spells Known (CL 13th)

6th (4/day)—*circle of death* (DC 21), *eyebite* (DC 21)

5th (7/day)—*blight* (DC 20), *persistent image*, *waves of fatigue* (DC 20)

4th (7/day)—*bestow curse* (DC 19), *contagion* (DC 20), *enervation*, *stoneskin*

3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *vampiric touch*

2nd (7/day)—*darkness*, *false life*, *invisibility*, *resist energy*, *shatter*

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *true strike*, *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str 35, **Dex** 8, **Con** 14, **Int** 20, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +24; **CMB** +40; **CMD** 49 (53 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Dazzling Display, Deadly Stroke, Extend Spell, Hover, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Appraise +32, Fly +10, Intimidate +32, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Knowledge (history) +32, Knowledge (local) +32, Knowledge (geography) +32, Perception +32, Spellcraft +32, Stealth +14, Survival +32

Languages All

SQ ambient disease, proliferation, regurgitation

DEATH DRAGONS

Despite many assumptions, death dragons are not undead. They embraced Ixindar and dedicated their souls to its power, pursuing its ability to decay rather than create. When Mengus migrated her interest away from necromancy, the death dragons – until then thought to be her favored children – were outcast. They possess astounding negative energy. They can control undead and cast necrotic spells. This effect decays their flesh and rots their souls. Death dragons look thin, with barely an ounce of fat and thin muscles on bones. Even their wings are pitted and frayed. They maintain their strength and stamina through the flow of Ixindar. Anywhere death lurks in abundance, you will find them. They cannot process any food unless it has been dead at least a week.

DEATH DRAGON LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Knowledge (arcana) check.

DC 15: Death dragons will always be near areas with high concentration of undeath, as simply being near the dragon acts as a catalyst for nearby carrion or the corpses of the creatures the dragon kills to rise and obey their master.

DC 20: Of all the typhox dragons, the death dragon is the most magically adept, if only in a single form. Though the dragons did not create necromancy (that claim falls to the shemjaza), they are now, undoubtedly, the masters of it.

DEATH DRAGON

LE dragon

BASE STATISTICS

CR 3; **Size** Tiny; **Hit Dice** 4d12

Speed 60 ft.

Natural Armor +3; **Breath Weapon** line, 2d6 fire

Str 11, **Dex** 16, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

ECOLOGY

Environment marshes, swamps

Organization solitary

Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su): A death dragon's breath weapon is a flammable napalm-like phlem which is ejected as a narrow stream, sticking to unfortunate victims. Any creature which fails its save must make another save at the same DC at the beginning of its turn or suffer half dice damage. This continues with successive failures (reducing the dice damage by half each time).

Essence Siphon (Su): Any damage the death dragon inflicts with his claw attacks cures the death dragon of the same value. A death dragon can also make a single claw attack with a swift action.



DEATH DRAGONS

AGE CATEGORY	SPECIAL ABILITIES	CASTER LEVEL
Wyrmling	Essence siphon, immunity to acid	—
Very young	Grave call, swamp stride	—
Young	Grave call	—
Juvenile	Darkness, touch of Ixindar	—
Young adult	DR 5/magic, spell resistance	1st
Adult	frightful presence, grave call (30 ft.)	3rd
Mature adult	DR 10/magic	5th
Old	Grave call (<i>create undead</i>), <i>waves of fatigue</i>	7th
Very old	DR 15/magic, grave call (40 ft.)	9th
Ancient	<i>circle of death</i>	11th
Wyrm	DR 20/magic	13th
Great wyrm	Grave call (<i>create greater undead</i>)	15th

Grave Call (Su): A young dragon or older gains *grave call*: All corpses within 20 feet of the death dragon at the beginning of its turn are affected by an *animate dead* spell, requiring no action on the part of the dragon. The dragon can raise 4 HD of undead per age category. All undead raised this way fall under control of the death dragon and the dragon cannot lose control of any undead in its gravel call aura. Depending on terrain and situation, a death dragon is expected to have 2 corpses per age category nearby at the beginning of combat. And old dragon or older can employ *create undead* once a day on one corpse in its aura. An ancient dragon can employ *create greater undead* once a day on one corpse in its aura. These are separate spell-like affects and can be used as a free action. An adult death dragon's aura increases to 30 feet, and a very old death dragon's aura increases to 40 feet.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp) A black dragon gains the following spell-like abilities, usable at will upon reaching the listed age category. Juvenile—*darkness* (radius 10 feet per age category); Old—*waves of fatigue*; Ancient—*circle of death*.

Swamp Stride (Ex) A very young or older death dragon can move through bogs and quicksand without penalty at its normal speed.

Touch of Ixindar (Sp): A juvenile or older death dragon can invoke its negative nature to everything it touches. Any creature the dragon touches, including with physical attacks, must make a Will save or suffer 1 point of Strength damage. The DC is the same to avoid the dragon's breath weapon.



YOUNG DEATH DRAGON CR 7

XP 3,200

LE Medium dragon

Init +6; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +14

Aura grave call (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+2 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 52 (8d12)

Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

Immune acid, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (average)

Melee bite +13 (1d8+6), 2 claws +12 (1d6+4 + essence siphon), 2 wings +7 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, DC 17, 6d6 fire)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Fly +13, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +11, Perception +14, Stealth +16, Swim +23

Languages All

SQ essence siphon, grave call, swamp stride

ADULT DEATH DRAGON CR 11

XP 12,800

LE Large dragon

Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +24

Aura grave call (30 ft.), frightful presence (180 ft., DC 19)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 27 (+1 Dex, +18 natural, –1 size)

hp 119 (14d12+28)

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12

DR 5/magic; **Immune** acid, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +21 (2d6+10), 2 claws +20 (1d8+7 + essence siphon), 2 wings +15 (1d6+3), tail +15 (1d8+10)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (80-ft. line, DC 22, 12d6 fire),

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th)

At will—*darkness* (60-ft. radius)

Spells Known (CL 3rd)

1st (6/day)—*chill touch* (DC 13), *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mending*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Fly +12, Handle Animal +16, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Perception +24, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +17, Swim +32

Languages All

SQ essence siphon, grave call (*create undead*), swamp stride, touch of lxindar

ANCIENT DEATH DRAGON CR 16

XP 76,800

LE Huge dragon (water)

Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +34

Aura grave call (40 ft.), frightful presence (300 ft., DC 25)

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 8, flat-footed 38 (+30 natural, –2 size)

hp 209 (22d12+66)

Fort +16, **Ref** +13, **Will** +18

DR 15/magic; **Immune** acid, paralysis, sleep, **SR** 27

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +32 (2d8+16 plus 4d6 acid), 2 claws +31 (2d6+11 + essence siphon), 2 wings +29 (1d8+5), tail +29 (2d6+16)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (100-ft. line, DC 28, 20d6 fire), crush

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 22nd)

At will—*circle of death*, *darkness* (100-ft. radius), *waves of exhaustion*

Spells Known (CL 11th)

5th (4/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *wall of force*

4th (7/day)—*bestow curse* (DC20), *black tentacles*, *enervation* (DC20)

3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *hold person* (DC 19), *ray of exhaustion*, *slow* (DC 19)

2nd (7/day)—*blur*, *false life* (1d10+10), *ghoul touch* (DC18), *invisibility*, *whispering wind*

1st (7/day)—*chill touch* (DC17), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC16)

STATISTICS

Str 33, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** 22, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +22; **CMB** +35; **CMD** 45 (49 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Fly +19, Handle Animal +26, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Knowledge (history) +32, Knowledge (geography) +31, Perception +34, Spellcraft +31, Stealth +23, Swim +44

Languages All

SQ essence siphon, grave call (*create undead*), swamp stride, touch of lxindar



FALLEN DRAGONS

AGE CATEGORY	SPECIAL ABILITIES	CASTER LEVEL
Wyrmling	Betrayer's deception, fire subtype	—
Very young	Berserk response	—
Young	Daze, sibilant whispers (1 target; 50 ft)	1st
Juvenile	Frightful presence	3rd
Young adult	DR 5/magic, spell resistance	5th
Adult	Sibilant whispers (2 targets; 50 ft), <i>suggestion</i>	7th
Mature adult	DR 10/magic, sibilant whispers (2 targets; 70 ft)	9th
Old	Manipulate flames, <i>geas</i> , <i>lesser</i>	11th
Very old	DR 15/magic, wretched majesty	13th
Ancient	Sibilant whispers (2 targets; 100 ft), <i>suggestion</i> , <i>mass</i>	15th
Wyrm	DR 20/magic, sibilant whispers (3 targets; 100 ft)	17th
Great wyrm	<i>demand</i>	19th

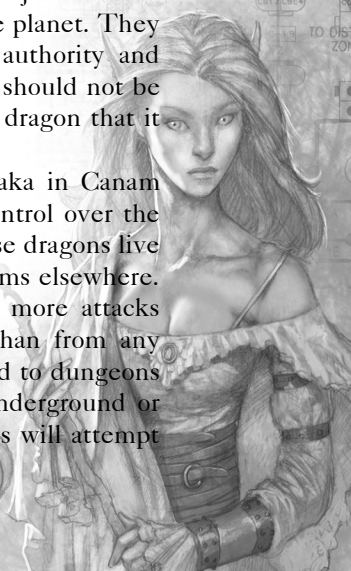
FALLEN DRAGONS

Most dragons of legend slain by brave knights or braver squires tell of fire dragons. Often referred to as red dragons in mythology, their scales are dark blood-red and they bellow smoke and flame with every breath. The closest match to them in the modern age is the fallen dragon. The fallen were the first corrupted dragons, loyal followers of their greatest, Goch. Unlike the repellent death and cancer dragons, fallen dragons are beautiful, with uniform scales and proud manes of gold or silver. Their teeth interlock without a gap or chip and they never display a stain or smudge upon their skin. They are the parallel of holy dragons, equally as ravishing to the eyes. Their voices are deep and commanding.

They refuse to sully themselves into acting like

undomesticated or uncultured monsters. They believe themselves to be fair in their actions and just in their role as the most powerful creatures on the planet. They consider themselves to be the highest authority and superior to all others – this responsibility should not be taken lightly. It is difficult to convince a dragon that it does not have a god complex.

Fallen dragons rule over Ažhi Dahaka in Canam and often fight with the shemjaza for control over the pagus. Because of this rivalry, few of these dragons live near Ixindar, preferring to stake their claims elsewhere. They strive for dominance, resulting in more attacks from fallen dragons on civilized lands than from any other typhox. They prefer controlling land to dungeons or keeps so they will rarely be found underground or hiding behind castle walls. Fallen dragons will attempt



to control everything around themselves. That which they cannot outright command, they will destroy.

FALLEN DRAGON LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (History) check.

DC 20: Pagus in Canam are almost always under the direct control of a fallen dragon, and only rarely are led by their own unbound chieftains. The fallen will usually dominate every living creature in a massive area around its lair.

DC 25: The fallen were the original typhox dragons, and have always been the most powerful. They loathe the shemjaza for some long-past transgression but will rarely face them directly, choosing more subtle means to dispatch them.

FALLEN DRAGON

LE dragon (fire)

BASE STATISTICS

CR 6; Size Small; Hit Dice 7d12

Speed 40 ft.

Natural Armor +6; **Breath Weapon** cone, 2d10 fire

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 11, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

ECOLOGY

Environment anywhere

Organization solitary

Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Berserk Response (Su): A very young and older fallen dragon gets very upset when an enemy has the audacity to inflict an injury against a living god. If an opponent scores a critical hit against the death dragon, the death dragon scores a critical hit with its next successful melee attack (against any opponent).

Betrayer's Deception (Su): As an immediate action, when an opponent scores a non-critical hit against the fallen dragon, the fallen dragon can have that attack directed to the target's closest ally, if in range.

Manipulate Flames (Su): An old or older fallen dragon can control any fire spell within 10 feet per age category of the dragon as a standard action. This ability allows it to move any fire effect in the area, as if it were the caster. This ability also allows it to reposition a stationary fire effect, although the new placement must be one allowed by the spell. Finally, for 1 round following the use of this ability, the dragon can control any new fire spell cast within its area of control, as if it were the caster. It can make all decisions allowed to the caster, including canceling the spell if it so desires.

Wretched Majesty (Su): A very old or older fallen dragon generates a negative aura over its already menacing presence. Enemies of the death dragon that begin their turn within range of the aura are shaken until the end of their turn.

Sibilant Whispers (Su): A fallen dragon's voice can enchant unfortunate people foolish enough to listen. As a standard action, a young dragon or older can target one opponent able to hear the dragon's voice. The target makes a Will save or is confused. The DC is the same as the dragon's breath weapon. At the beginning of the dragon's next turn, any target that failed the save can make another; this takes no action on the part of the dragon. A fallen dragon can only confuse one target at a time.

An adult fallen dragon or older can confuse two targets at a time and a wyrm fallen dragon can confuse three. The range of Sibilant whispers is 50 feet, increasing to 70 feet when reaching mature adult, and 100 feet when reaching ancient.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): A fallen dragon gains the following spell-like abilities, usable at will upon reaching the listed age category. Young—*Daze*; Juvenile—*detect thoughts*; Adult—*suggestion*; Old—*geas*, lesser; Ancient—*suggestion*, mass; Great wyrm—*demand*.

YOUNG FALLEN DRAGON CR 10

XP 9,600

LE Large dragon (fire)

Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; **Perception** +15

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 115 (11d12+44)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

Immune fire, paralysis, sleep

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +17 (2d6+10), 2 claws +17 (1d8+7), 2 wings +12 (1d6+3), tail slap +12 (1d8+10)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, DC 19, 6d10 fire), sibilant whispers (1 target; 50 ft)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th)

At will—*daze*

Spells Known (CL 1st)

1st (3/day)—*shield*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 30 (34 vs. trip)

Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Appraise +15, Bluff +15, Fly +9, Intimidate +15, Perception +15, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +11

Languages All

SQ Betrayer's deception, berserk response

ADULT FALLEN DRAGON CR 14

XP 38,400

LE Huge dragon (fire)

Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +23

Aura frightful presence (180 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29 (+21 natural, -2 size)

hp 212 (17d12+102)

Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +15

DR 5/magic; **Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 25

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +25 (2d8+15), 2 claws +25 (2d6+10), 2 wings +23 (1d8+5), tail slap +23 (2d6+15)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone, DC 24, 12d10 fire), crush, sibilant whispers (2 targets; 50 ft)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th)

At will—daze, detect thoughts (DC 15), suggestion (DC 16)

Spells Known (CL 7th)

3rd (5/day)—dispel magic, haste

2nd (7/day)—invisibility, resist energy, see invisibility

1st (7/day)—alarm, grease (DC 14), magic missile, shield, true strike

0 (at will)—arcane mark, light, mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation, read magic

ANCIENT FALLEN DRAGON CR 19

XP 204,800

LE Gargantuan dragon (fire)

Init +3; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +33

Aura frightful presence (300 ft., DC 27)

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 5, flatfooted 38 (-1 Dex, +33 natural, -4 size)

hp 362 (25d12+200)

Fort +22, **Ref** +13, **Will** +21

DR 15/magic; **Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 30

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +35 (4d6+21/19-20), 2 claws +35 (2d8+14), 2 wings +33 (2d6+7), tail slap +33 (2d8+21)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. cone, DC 30, 20d10 fire), crush, manipulate flames, sibilant whispers (2 targets; 100 ft), tail sweep

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 25th)

At will—daze, geas, lesser (DC 21), suggestion (DC 19), suggestion, mass (DC 22)

Spells Known (CL 15th)

7th (4/day)—Insanity (DC23), limited wish

6th (6/day)—antimagic field, contingency, greater dispel magic

5th (7/day)—dominate person (DC21), feeblemind (DC 21), teleport, wall of force

4th (7/day)—crushing despair (DC20), fear (DC 20), greater invisibility, stonkskin

3rd (7/day)—dispel magic, displacement, haste, rage (15 rounds)

2nd (7/day)—detect thoughts, hideous laughter (DC 18), misdirection, resist energy, see invisibility

1st (8/day)—alarm, hypnotism (DC 17), magic missile, shield, true strike

0 (at will)—arcane mark, bleed, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic

STATISTICS

Str 39, **Dex** 8, **Con** 27, **Int** 21, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +25; **CMB** +43; **CMD** 52 (56 vs. trip)

Feats Cleave, Critical Mastery, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Stunning Critical, Vital Strike

Skills Appraise +33, Bluff +33, Diplomacy +33, Fly +11, Intimidate +33, Knowledge (arcana) +33, Knowledge (history) +33, Perception +33, Sense Motive +33, Spellcraft +33, Stealth +15

Languages All

SQ: Betrayer's deception, berserk response

THE SEVEN DRAGONS OF AZHI

These powerful fallen dragons are all great wyrms. In canon Amethyst, these are the only great wyrm fallen dragons.

Baenis: Baenis sits bloated on his treasure, growing fatter on the rich livestock his pagus followers bring for him. Baenis is huge, but also slow and cumbersome. He stopped being able to fly long ago. He gorges on food every day with an insatiable appetite. In his prime he feasted on elves, giants, and even other dragons. Today, if his pagus don't feed him, Baenis will feast on them.

- Although Baenis cannot fly he has 1200 hit points.

Balaur: Balaur follows neither logic nor reason. It is hermaphroditic, capable of shifting its sex and preference on a whim dependant on daily desires. It only acts out of passion and instinct and never out of rationale. Balaur desires continued physical gratification and the desire for external stimulus. It craves destruction and lusts for beauty. Balaur enlists slavers to capture those of beauty of various sexes from various species and often has its way when assuming their form. Balaur is even rumored to have sent emissaries to purchase slaves from Baruch Malkut (without their knowledge of the source of funds). It lusts over the youth, the striking, and the otherwise unattainable. It cares not for emotion and prefers only personal indulgence. These slaves never live more than a year before Balaur grows bored and slays them in the most violent ways possible.

- Balaur can *shapechange* at will.
- Balaur can cast *charm monster* per spell 3/day as a 19th level mage.

Goch: Goch feeds on violence, fear, and anger. Goch, the oldest and most powerful fallen dragon, prefers to allow enemies to destroy each other. Using her unique complement of abilities, she can inspire rage and violent actions in others, corrupting them to commit the worst despicable acts. Goch is far older and powerful than the other Azhi but is often lumped in with them, a categorization she despises.

- Goch has 1080 hp.

Lindis: This fallen dragon spends every moment searching for more treasure. She ravaged narros mines, attacked wandering travelers, and ambushed mage towers. She considers the taking of wealth of higher importance to the destruction caused and Lindis will often be very selective in her attacks, even sparing the lives of her victims in exchange for all their magic and wealth, especially if her attack may blemish or damage possible loot. No matter how much Lindis acquires, it is never enough. She does not believe everything belongs to her like Verkelen, she just wants it all. She is not arrogant as Verkelen and has the most guarded lair of any dragon known. Her dungeon is littered with symbols of various magical potency with layers of multiple traps over many levels.

- Lindis' treasure horde is quadruple.

Lotan: Lotan is proud. His over-inflated ego often nets him trouble as he brazenly strides into enemy lands, where he is often forced to retreat from greater foes. Legend claims Lotan lives in a great castle, though its location is a mystery. From a bed of gold, he commands others to do his bidding. He believes himself too important to go into combat, but will if a single enemy challenges him. Several opponents have tried but none have succeeded, increasing Lotan's already bloated self-image.

Verkelen: This dragon hates all other dragons and intelligent creatures and covets all they own. Verkelen assumes the world belongs to him and takes whatever he wishes. He is the last creature anyone wishes to make deals with, as he never keeps his side of a bargain. Verkelen keeps a large cadre of creatures as personal servants.

Zilant: Zilant is a lazy beast. He wishes to do nothing but sleep and eat. He believes he has done enough for the cause of evil and wishes just to be left alone. Every single time he closes his eyes, he sleeps for a century. When he awakens, he finds quick and easy prey for a feast. His dungeon carries an array of defensive battlements, making him difficult to slay. He never initiates an attack, believing it uses far too much energy, though will still defend his lair from attack. He also sleeps with one eye open and as light as an elk. He may be too lazy to commit evil acts but finds good acts an even more waste of energy.

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HAGS

Unfortunately, the image of witch and hag are often mixed. Where one can simply be a user of magic with a connection to nature, the other carries a renowned distaste for company and personal hygiene. The wicked variety was branched from the fae around the same time as ogres but from the chaparran side. The discovery of these creatures was not made immediately, and their origin is still disputed. As a monster, these are all green hags.

Baba Yaga: Another piece of folklore, the baba yaga is classed in the same family but very close to her

chaparran cousins. She is a forest spirit almost as devoutly connected to the woods as nymphs, though not being bound to any specific location or tree. Although not pleasant to look at, one has been known to impart some wisdom to those seeking it. She might also just as well kill the one asking. The baba yaga will not immediately kill all that approach her. If the one approaching has a talent she can exploit, she may impart her wisdom at a steep cost. She may still kill regardless even after the requirements are fulfilled. Legend has it, to ensure survival when dealing with baba yaga, one must maintain proper manners, being as polite as possible, and not wince when looking upon her face.

Though folklore believes there is only one baba yaga, there are several scattered across the world, with wide berths separating them. The first common sign of their appearance is the small hut formed of natural wood that sits atop of four growing trees. One account told the trees could uproot, allowing the cabin to move on its own accord to a new location.

Banshee: Traditionally, banshees, or bean nighes, were harbingers of death, but seldom assisted in the shuffling of souls to the afterlife. They appeared as omens from the underworld or otherworld (depending on the source). Like many myths, they were corrupted by other religions to be portents of evil. In reality, they would appear as enchanted singers with melodic voices when an important chaparran was about to die. They have also appeared among other elvish nations when significant figures are near to passing. The more banshees that appear, the more eminent the death. Because of their wisdom, they are often sought after as oracles, though they seldom reveal what they know.

Their knowledge is limited to knowing the moment of someone's death, but in their opinion, a death is fate and eventual. Banshees are not sirens.

Banshees appear in various clothes in various states, with long and short hair, as ugly hags or as beautiful faeries, hidden and recluse or open and hostile. As their mythology is so varied, so are their abilities.

Good banshees can cast additional spell-like abilities: At will—*gentle repose* as a 9th level caster. They also gain a +4 to Charisma (which affects all saving throws for hag cast spells as they are all Charisma-based).

Evil banshees can cast additional spell-like abilities: 1/day—*command undead*.

All banshees can cast additional spell-like abilities: 3/day—*sound burst*, *hypnotism*, *speak with dead*; 1/day—*shout*.

Sheela-na-gig: These are often seen guarding gates and protecting areas of powerful magic. When guarding something not belonging to them, they do so out of some undisclosed obligation. Though many are twisted in how they protect their territories, not all are absolute evil, just inherently selfish. They have insatiable sexual appetites and will often change shape into just about anything to satisfy their urges. They adore appearing as beautiful creatures to trespassers, tempting them to their death.

The sheela-na-gig can cast *dominate person* 1/day as a 9th level caster. Her challenge rating increases by +1.

IRON SONS COMPANY

The Iron Sons is the largest techan free-company in Canam and possibly the world. Very few people outside of the Iron Sons' ranks knows how old the company is or who originally founded it, although it is believed that the current operating general is not its first commander or even its second.

The Iron Sons takes contracts from all bastions and – occasionally – from echan nations. They don't care who pays, and their success rate is extremely high. The Iron Sons continue to spread their fingers across the land, operating independent cells in several bastions and in nearly two dozen stationary and roaming bases across the continent. Their membership is wide, comprising of humans from every walk of life. Though many members would prefer taking assignments that allow them to act like heroes, all of them are willing to swallow that preference for a steady paycheck. Most of them have contempt for the fantasy world and believe what they are doing is patriotic for the human race.

IRON SONS LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (History) check.

DC 25: The current general of the Iron Sons is a man known only as Chauk. He has personally commanded several contracts and possesses such high-level intelligence on bastion technology and knows so many of the bastions' darker secrets, the same bastions that hire him have also posted bounties on his head. As such, he has not been seen outside of his inner circle in several years.

IRON SONS CORPSMAN

CR3

XP 400

N Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 armor)
hp 25 (5d8+5)

Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 1 rifle butt +7 (1d6+3)

Ranged 1 assault rifle +7 (1d8+3)

Special Attacks rapid fire

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13

Base Atk +4; CMB +8; CMD 20

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; Languages Common

SQ bad timing, minion

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization gang (6–12), always with a sergeant

Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bad Timing (Ex): If the corpsman misses a target by 10 or more on his attack roll, he cannot use his assault rifle on his next turn. The weapon either disrupts or has run out of ammunition.

Minion: If the corpsman suffers more damage in a single hit as his hit dice, he is killed (5d8 = 5 damage or more in a single hit kills him). As a result, the corpsman has half experience.

Rapid Fire (Ex): The corpsman makes two assault rifle attacks as a full-round action but cannot take a 5-foot step in that same round.

IRON SONS GRENAДИER

CR4

XP 1,200

N Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armor)
hp 30 (6d8+6)

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 1 rifle butt +9 (1d6+3)

Ranged 1 stub rifle +9 (1d8+3)

Special Attacks grenade attack (DC 14 Ref, 2d6+2)

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13

Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 20

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; Languages Common

SQ bad timing, linked targeting

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization pair or gang (3–6), always with a sergeant

Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grenade Attack (Ex): As a full round action, the iron sons grenadier can make a grenade attack. He selects a 10-foot area within 80 feet. All targets in the area must make a DC 14 Ref save or take 2d6+2 damage (save half). After using the grenade attack, the grenadier cannot use it again for 1d4 rounds.

Bad Timing (Ex): If the grenadier misses a target by 10 or more on his attack roll, he cannot use his assault rifle on his next turn. The weapon either disrupts or has run out of ammunition.

Linked Targeting (Ex): When the iron sons grenadier hits a target with a stub rifle attack, one other Iron Son may make a single ranged attack against the same target as an immediate action.

IRON SONS SERGEANT

CR4

XP 1,200

N Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armor)

hp 30 (6d8+6)

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 1 rifle butt +9 (1d6+3)

Ranged 1 stub rifle +9 (1d8+3)

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13

Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 20

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; Languages Common

SQ good timing, linked targeting, look into my eye

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization alone with between 6 and 12 Iron Sons

Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Good Timing (Ex): If an Iron Sons cannot attack that turn due to his *bad timing* ability, the sergeant makes a single ranged attack as an immediate action.

Linked Targeting (Ex): When the iron sons sergeant hits a target with a stub rifle attack, one other Iron Son may make a single ranged attack against the same target as an immediate action.

Look into my Eye (Ex): As a standard action, up to two Iron Sons that have been killed within the last round stand back up. They regain hit points equal to twice their hit dice. The Iron Sons Sergeant can use this ability once every 1d4 rounds.

KODIAK

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Kodiaks are one of the few spawn races to emerge in modern Earth with any semblance of a culture. They began as simple folk in the frigid north, slowly developing a social structure, farming skills, and the first signs of a spoken tongue. Their massive size encouraged a preference for violence and a brutal first encounter with the skeggs affirmed it. While a few communities have grown in size and civility, others have degraded back to feral ways, retaining enough intelligence to plot their attacks on the unsuspecting. Where a village was rooted determined its evolution.

Those kodiaks bordering near the narros forged a trading relationship, bartering animal hides for weapons and education. The narros dealing with the kodiaks also hoped their civilized neighbors would beget a safe border and an eventual host of unstoppable warriors ready to rally if the narros were called to battle.

Unfortunately, some of these kodiaks took this knowl-

edge of weapons and went to war immediately against their own brothers as well as the skeggs. After the skeggs were pushed back by the modernized mass of muscle and steel, the victors continued their blood rage until killed or until running out of food. Although they have rarely been seen south of Quinox, the rumors of their migration grow each year. They are often sought after as bodyguards, thugs, or as savage warlords on the battlefield. Regardless of their role, they stand the tallest and instill the greatest fear on those that see their eyes.

KODIAK LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 20: Kodiaks have wide, trunk torsos but are still humanoid and easily differentiated from the bears they came from. Few people can tell the males and females apart. Kodiaks don't need to hibernate but they do eat massive amounts of food, nearly four times any other creature. They have no table manners.

DC 25: Kodiaks have developed a culture in their short span of time. Little is known about the kodiak religion. They worship several gods unique to them.

KODIAK BRUTE

CR4

XP 1,200

N Medium animal (spawn)

Init +1; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 (1d6+5 plus grab), bite +10 (1d6+5)

Special Attacks iron chains +10 (1d10+5), ravenous, unstoppable onslaught

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +5; CMB +9 (+13 grapple); CMD 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Run, Skill Focus (Survival)

Skills Perception +6, Survival +7, Swim +10

Environment cold forests

Organization solitary, pair, or pack (4-8)

Treasure NPC Gear (heavy wooden shield, broken iron chains, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Iron Chains (Ex): A basic kodiak weapon, the chains have +5 feet reach and struck targets are knocked prone.

Ravenous (Ex): If an opponent scores a critical hit on the Kodiak, it will attack the nearest creature on its next turn until it is dead. If there are multiple creatures within reach, it will attack enemies before allies. While *ravenous*, the kodiak gains +4 bonus to damage rolls.

Unstoppable Onslaught (Ex): When the kodiak charges, it gains +10 speed and ignores difficult terrain. It may only make bite attacks on the charge.



Their big deities include Fressen, the maiden of winter and slumber. She attempted a mortal life with a kodiak shaman and was punished for her actions with the death of the kodiak from her own embrace. From this, she birthed Chronzia, the kodiak devil, creeping from the north in the form of a colossal glacier. Fressen returned to her realm to rejoin with her other half, her twin brother, Kwuoia, who is always silent and spends the entirety of his existence planting and growing trees.

LYCANTHROPE

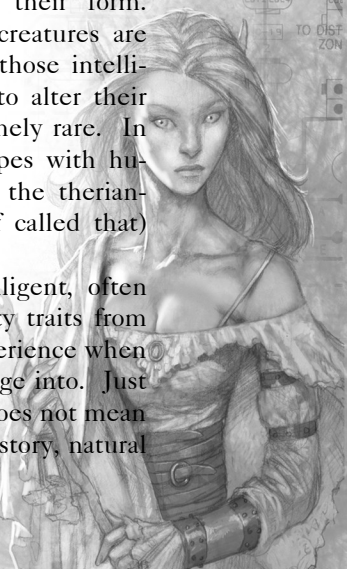
Many lycans are either fae or humans overly susceptible to magic. Lycanthropy by infection is somewhat rare. There is no lycanthrope culture, though some families have been known to remain together if formed naturally. Ones infected (by disease or spell) usually attempt to find cures while those gaining the ability naturally often accept their condition and find ways to take advantage of it.

Natural Druidic lycanthropy occurs when a druid's animal companion becomes so attuned to its master, that it actually merges (at least partially, sometimes totally). In mythology, this condition only occurs with wolves, hence the Greek-inspired name. In modern echa, it has expanded to various other creatures as well. By that argument, the actual term is therianthropy.

The lycanthrope condition has also been seen in reverse. Though magic usually creates a dire creature, on the rare occasion that a normal evolved animal is suddenly struck with such an infusion, it emerges with higher intelligence, occasionally a level equal or higher than humans or fae. Being unpredictable per definition, it's unclear what conditions allow one normal animal to enlarge to massive proportions, another animal to gain a higher intelligence, and another to not be affected at all. Some druidic beliefs claim therianthropes starting as animals occur when an already enchanted animal gifted by intelligence develops a connection with a humanoid and eventually discovers how to take their form.

Among the endowed animals, dire creatures are more common than intelligent ones and those intelligent are more common than those able to alter their form, making natural therianthropy extremely rare. In these conditions, offspring of therianthropes with humanoids are entirely dependent on who the therianthrope bonds with, with the affliction (if called that) only being passed down 50% of the time.

Natural therianthropes, though intelligent, often reveal their identity because of personality traits from their true form emerging and a lack of experience when dealing with the humanoid race they change into. Just because they turn into a human or an elf does not mean they act like them. Throughout human history, natural





and human therianthropes have been described as being tricksters, villains, wise shamans, or faithful lovers. However, they should not be confused with changelings, a branch of nymph that can assume a specific animal form. They began as fae and change to an animal shape at will. The easiest way to separate them is that therianthropes have hybrid forms and are feral while changelings are skittish and prefer their humanoid form than their animal one.

A natural therianthrope (one beginning as an animal) starts life with a neutral alignment and may then deviate to good or evil, seldom taking the lawful or chaotic path. Naturals also do not have the curse of lycanthrope.

M.A.X. (Mobile Anti-echan eXoskeleton)

The appearance of this creature is rare as few ever survive the encounter. Despite the rumors and accounts, no one knows what its goals are, where it's going, or if more than one even exists. Its arms and legs are as thick as the torsos of similar sized enemies. MAX possesses rudimentary intelligence and problem solving skills. Its

low, deep voice demands obedience and its sympathy is non-existent. Although a result of technology, no bastion in Canam has claimed its construction. It is never found with anyone else, has no marks of origin, and has never been found as wreckage to be salvaged. It seems to serve a mission and is singular in that purpose, never resting, never stopping until it has completed its objective. After which, it vanishes until another assignment is downloaded into its memory banks by its faceless masters.

M.A.X.

CR 10

XP 9,600

N Large construct (robot)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., blindsight 50 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+3 Dex, +16 natural, -1 size)
hp 101 (13d10+30)

Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4

DR 10/adamantine and bludgeoning; Immune construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 slams +19 (2d10+7 damage, and the target is pushed one square)

Ranged reliquary plasma caster +10 (2d10 +15 fire); range 100 ft; this attack bypasses all damage reduction.

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks subroutine K1.98 burrowstrike rockets, subroutine R8.2 targeting array, subroutine F93 multi-tracking coordinator, subroutine D7.1 scorched earth, subroutine Z0.0 reactor meltdown

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 33

Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (plasma caster), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +13, Perception +5, Stealth +8, Swim +12

Languages Common

SQ construct

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Construct: MAX is a machine built by person or persons unknown. It is immune to disruption (from being extremely well shielded), all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning. MAX has a built-in repair system that allows him to regenerate 10 hit points an hour unless it is below 0 hit points. MAX cannot be subjected to ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, or nonlethal damage. MAX is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless). MAX is not at risk of death from massive damage. MAX does not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Subroutine K1.98 Burrowstrike Rockets (Ex): As a swift action, MAX can make a ranged attack with his micro-rockets (+25; 1 point of damage, which ignores all damage resistance). If hit, MAX can automatically find the target, regardless of terrain, for the next 24 hours. MAX may detonate the *burrowstrike rocket* at any time as a swift action, 3d10+15 points of damage. After using K1.98, MAX cannot use it again for 2d4 rounds.

Subroutine R8.2 Targeting Array (Ex): As a full round action, MAX can make a *reliquary plasma caster* attack and gain a +3 bonus to the attack roll. The critical threat range is also increased to 19-20.

Subroutine F93 Multi-tracking Coordinator (Ex): As a full round action, MAX may make one *reliquary plasma caster* attack and one slam attack.

Subroutine D7.1 Scorched Earth (Ex): When an enemy scores a critical hit on MAX, it releases a fire attack in all directions as an immediate action. All targets within 15 feet of MAX must make a DC 19 Ref save or take 3d10 +15 damage (save for half).

Subroutine Z0.0 Reactor Meltdown (Ex): If Max is reduced to 0 hit points or less, it instantly explodes. All targets within 50 feet must make a DC 20 Ref save or suffer 5d10 + 10 damage (save for half).

MERFOLK

As these chaparran descendants lived their lives on and under the water, they eventually replaced their legs with fins and a tail. It's believed these fae branched around the same time as other nymphs, specifically water-based ones like nereids and naiads. Being so tied to nature, and thus the world that reflected the power of Attricana, they were especially vulnerable to its effects.

The elvish legends refer to them as jeilynn and are mentioned infrequently. Many modern fae didn't know the jeilynn even existed in the past, let alone the present. They kept to themselves for thousands of years. It was only their substantial consistent inclusion in human mythology that verified their existence in the previous age. Even still, there is no account that tells of how they survived to today.

In the modern world, they are virtually invisible, most likely a result from being hunted close to extinction by their children, the dojenn. If it weren't for the occasional reports from sailors claiming witness, most people would assume the jeilynn's extermination. As it stands, sailor tales are about as much as anyone can go on. The legends claim the females as beautiful as the men are revolting—as close to vicious animals before they stop being fae altogether.

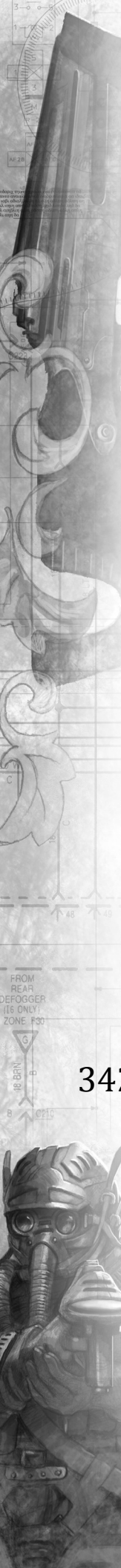
Despite many fairy tales, there has never been a factual record of a bonding between any land creature and a jeilynn. Though human sailors seem fascinated by the idea, there are obvious physical hurdles popular fiction seems to ignore on a regular basis. Though they are classed as mammals and reproduce the same as dolphins, this is as close as they come to being related to other fae or humans.

Another unfortunate misconception insinuates that eating the flesh of a jeilynn grants one immortality. This is false but has led to some barbaric attempts to test the theory.

PAGUS

The old fae found themselves easily susceptible to the influence of magic coursing through their veins. They couldn't filter how magic penetrated their souls. Before Mengus started creating shemjaza, Ixindar corrupted the existing fae to form the armies of pagus. Over a single evening, as the black star fell from the sky, a million fae walked from their homes, despoiled by the passing wave of darkness. Many of the unfortunate victims came from the chaparrans that took root in a large forest near the land later called Kakodomania. The corruption of Ixindar soaked into their hearts and poisoned their minds. They walked from their families and vanished into the night. It would be a full century before their families realized what had truly happened.

All other fae descendants have disowned this off breed. Chaparrans and narros have sworn to their annihilation. The term pagus is singular and plural. The most unfortunate side effect of the pagus' corruption is their reproductive system. Unlike other fae species, pagus females enter into season every two weeks and



gestation only takes three months. Pagus do not require pair bonding to breed. After a century, their numbers had quadrupled.

By the time the First Hammer fell thousands of years later, pagus outnumbered all other fae combined. Amethyst reduced most to ash in his death throes. When the black gate re-opened, they returned with an obsessed fervor. Ixindar lost control over most of them as the pagus spread throughout the globe. Kakodomania found itself without much of an army, forcing them to reconsider their plans or wait for their existing stocks to replenish.

Without control, the unbound pagus went wild. Raiding bands appeared across the globe. Evil dragons took them in to form their own personal guard, claiming lands in Canam for themselves. Many pagus became nomadic. Their hatred for the other fae never died and they found new enemies in this new time. Some pagus claimed freedom from Kakodomania but most followed the rules of corruption implanted in their souls hundreds of generations prior.

Oddly, every year, more and more pagus are born trying to better themselves. The farther they are raised from Ixindar, the greater the chance for redemption. This salvation occurs rarely. Those embracing this path must first escape their people and find a place of refuge to call their own. Pagus know how to forge their own weapons and beat their own armor from an early age. They are taught every facet of war and the quickest routes to success. Pagus warbands rarely fail in their goals.

The human mage Kereptis Rifts calculated that more than ten million pagus walk the Earth today. Their communities never amount larger than a few hundred before internal conflict splinters it. The pagus culture only dates back to their time on Earth, not Terros. They were not permitted to express themselves while under the influence of Ixindar. Only now have independent pagus attempted their own society. It is still rife with violence. Their culture is noteworthy for what it lacks. They have no independent writing style, they don't play music (excluding their drums), and they never dance. Since they were created for war and reproduction, the society that developed indulges in such actions.

Pagus communities have expanded their use with a festival of procreation called San Lossom ("The Founding"). This entails non-bonded pubertal and older pagus separating into two sides of males and females. High-ranking males will challenge females to single combat. The women are armed. The men are not. The men only need to disarm and disable the female while she resists with deadly force. The women usually only wield clubs but a few swords have snuck into the arena. If the man bests the woman, he has earned the right. Most often, the two retreat to a private stable, but there have been occasions when couples consummate on the arena floor.

Between four to six challenges occur this way with varying results. After the moon has risen to its fullest,

the remaining available males and females duel in a full combat brawl taking anywhere from five minutes to a full hour. Again, the men refrain from using weapons. In this situation, victors never retreat and procreation takes place there, amongst the blood and dying. Some expire from their injuries during the act. All the while, the drums beat rhythmically. Rarely do females die during this ritual. At least two to four males are not as lucky. San Lossom occurs three times a month in most free pagus villages. In villages permitting bonding, the defeated female is honor bound to bond with her mate.

Only a few pagus communities allow bonding. In the others, the female is often free of her obligations after the evening has passed and is expected to compete again at the next ritual if she is not with child. Females enjoy the competition and often compare their honor marks with others by how many times they pass through San Lossom without impregnation. Being defeated or failing to sire offspring is an insult to the male and too many failures may result in humiliation or expulsion.

Because female pagus are as large and dangerous as the males, there is no separation of gender. Females have as many rights as the males and if a female reaches the rank of chief, she is expected to never be defeated by challengers. If such a chief wishes reproduction, she risks disgrace. In such a situation, she must make any victories over her sour to discourage later challengers (inflicting a mortal wound as injuries cannot be tended to until the sunrise).

Most shemjaza and dragons discourage the pagus forming their own culture, but a few have tolerated the San Lossom as it accomplishes two tasks: weeding out the weak and ensuring continued pagus stock. Like all fae, when pagus bond, they are monogamous. In areas where bonding is outlawed, pagus are denied any long term pairing. Children are raised communally. This places a growing schism between pagus communities that allow bonding and those that don't.

Many pagus away from Kakodomania searched for leadership. While most fell under control of dragons, others elected their leaders from within. In almost all these cases, the pagus were instructed to continue their barbaric ways. Sympathizers believe that, if instructed in ways of peace and given a benign figure of respect, pagus could civilize. Evidence of this occurring has already been seen in Apocrypha.

Ixindar's corruption caused veins to expose on the bruised, cracked skin of the fae races that became pagus. They lost all their hair from head to toe and their once slender forms bulged with slabs of corded muscle. After centuries in darkness, only their ears remained the recognizable feature from the old fae, around the same length as chaparrans. The oddity of modern pagus is that some survivors of their attacks have reported pagus with round ears. There has never been an explanation for this.

Pagus are despised by every single race, even the ones that rule over them. Shemjaza think of them as cattle. All other races swear to their destruction. A small

number of individuals in positions of authority have civilized such judgments in decreeing that pagus cannot be allowed to exist as long as they continue to follow the directions of Ixindar.

PAGUS LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Pagus are militaristic to a fault. Each pagus whelp is trained harshly and vigorously from a very early age to become a vicious warrior. When in combat, the pagus are regimented and single-minded, unlike the riotous skeggs or the often solitary oggrak. The pagus take pleasure only in death, not in torture, and as such they are very quick in dispatching any opponents remaining after a battle. Pagus don't believe in much other than what they see and feel. They act with instinct and seldom with reason. Because of their skewed disposition, their intuition endorses violence and an unwavering dedication to the one they consider their leader. When pagus mark an individual as their chief, they swear untiring loyalty to that authority. For thousands of years, that fidelity was firmly tied to the forces of Kakodomania. No matter how powerful a pagus chief was, she always answered to a shemjaza, dragon, or from a claimed higher calling directly from Mengus. When freed of that authority, pagus wander wild. Uncontrolled, they follow their last directions—to kill anything that opposes Mengus. Unfortunately, pagus must be told to stop fighting and, without those instructions, their path of blood will continue unabated.

DC 20: Pagus think forward, never backward. They desire what they see and rarely plan ahead. They were created to kill and do so very efficiently. Unlike the shemjaza, pagus seldom play with their kills. They dispatch as quickly as possible, razing villages and eliminating its population before moving on. If they have carnal desires, they commit them quickly in order to resume their regular duties. Pagus are impatient and easy to rouse. They will take to war over a morning meal with no preparation from the previous night. They are decisive in action and when ordered to commit or if taking a quest by choice, pagus are narrow-minded in their fixation. They refuse distraction and have been known to refuse sleep for days in their obsession.

Crossing a pagus is unwise and in battle, opponents are warned never to leave pagus alive. If they survive, they will remember who wounded them and will think of nothing but vengeance. Pagus don't taunt opponents, and they never cheer. On the battlefield, they are silent, cold-hearted machines. They march forward and mark their targets. When a rival sees a pagus locking eyes upon him, that opponent must be ready, for that pagus is coming to kill them.

DC 25: As a pagus ages, it doesn't become weaker and decrepid as do other races. A pagus continues to grow larger and larger until the day it is killed. However, the mental health of the pagus, unless strong to begin with, degrades until little is left aside from an

insane monster. Most of these creatures are killed by the shemjaza before they can destroy the settlements they inhabit, but some are enslaved and brought from battlefield to battlefield in chains. These pagus are called the shaitar – the breakers. The pagus strong-willed enough to avoid this horrible fate find their mental agility increasing, rife with thoughts of free-will and culture. Pagus are a dominated race. The shemjaza and typhox dragons have held them under their thumbs since the fall and ruthlessly murder any pagus that begins to chafe under the yoke of Ixindar's rule. There are few pagus in Kakodomania older than twenty years of age.

PAGUS STRIFEBRINGER

CR 4

XP 600

LE Medium fey

Init +6; Senses darkvision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 armor, +3 natural)

hp 44 (8d6+16)

Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Maul +9 (1d8+6/x3)

Ranged short bow +8 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks direct approach

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14

Base Atk +4; CMB +8; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Climb +10, Escape Artist +16, Handle

Animal +6, Intimidate +12, Ride +10, Survival +10, Swim +6

Languages Common, Paggin

SQ minion

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains

Organization pair, warband (3–6), or patrol (7–11) or invasion (50–5,000)

Treasure standard (maul, scale mail, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Minion: If the pagus strifebringer suffers more damage in a single hit as his hit dice, it is killed (8d6 = 8 damage or more in a single hit). As a result, the strifebringer has half experience.

Direct Approach (Ex): The pagus strifebringer makes a charge attack as a standard action against any target in range. The pagus strifebringer does not grant opportunity attacks or flanking bonuses until the beginning of the pagus strifebringer's next turn.



PAGUS BATTLESWORN

CR 4

XP 1,200

LE Medium fey

Init +6; Senses darkvision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 armor)
hp 44 (8d6+16)

Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee maul +9 (1d8+6/x3)

Ranged short bow +8 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks brutal slam, direct approach, onslaught

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14

Base Atk +4; CMB +8; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Climb +10, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +12, Ride +10, Survival +10, Swim +6

Languages Common, Paggin

SQ focused aggression

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains

Organization pair, warband (3–6), or patrol (7–11)

Treasure standard (maul, scale mail, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brutal Slam (Ex): Instead of using *onslaught*, a pagus battlesworn may push the hit target back 10 feet and knock it prone.

Direct Approach (Ex): The pagus battlesworn makes a charge attack as a standard action against any target in range. The pagus battlesworn does not grant opportunity attacks or flanking bonuses until the beginning of the pagus battlesworn's next turn.

Focused Aggression (Ex): When the pagus battlesworn is first injured in battle, he makes (and must make) a melee attack against the enemy that triggered *focused aggression*. If the triggering attack was ranged, the pagus can replace his melee attack with a charge. The pagus gains +1 to attack and +2 to damage against that enemy until the pagus or the enemy is dead.

Onslaught (Ex): When the pagus battlesworn hits with an attack, it may move 10 feet after the attack is resolved. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

PAGUS UNBOUND CHIEFTAIN

CR 6

XP 2,400

LE Medium fey

Init +6; Senses darkvision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 armor)
hp 55 (10d6+20)

Aura unshakeable conviction (25 ft.)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee heavy flail +10/+5 (1d10+6/19-20)

Special Attacks kinetic transference

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Base Atk +6; CMB +10; CMD 24

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

Skills Acrobatics +18, Climb +12, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +16, Ride +12, Survival +10, Swim +7

Languages Common, Paggin

SQ focused aggression, unshakable conviction, war howl

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains

Organization leading a patrol (leading 7–11 other pagus), or a small invasion (with 10–100 other pagus)

Treasure standard (heavy flail, half plate, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Focused Aggression (Ex): When the pagus battlesworn is first injured in battle, he makes (and must make) a melee attack against the enemy that triggered *focused aggression*. If the triggering attack was ranged, the pagus can replace his melee attack with a charge. The pagus gains +1 to attack and +2 to damage against that enemy until the pagus or the enemy is dead.

Kinetic Transference (Ex): As a full round action, the unbound chieftain can make a single *heavy flail* attack. If the target suffers damage, it is dazed for one round.

Unshakeable Conviction (Ex): All pagus within 25 feet of the unbound chieftain are immune to fear and gain a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls for 1 round after the unbound chieftain suffers damage.

War Howl (Ex): As a swift action, all allied pagus within 15 feet of the unbound chieftain can move 15 feet. This movement provokes no opportunity attacks. Once the unbound chieftain uses *war howl*, he cannot use it again for 1d4 rounds.

PAGUS SHAITAR

CR 6

XP 2,400

LE Medium fey

Init +6; Senses darkvision; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 armor)
hp 75 (10d6+40)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee morningstar +10/+5 (1d10+6/19-20)

Special Attacks kinetic transference

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 14

Base Atk +6; CMB +11; CMD 26

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

Skills Acrobatics +18, Climb +12, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +16, Ride +12, Survival +10, Swim +7

Languages Common, Paggin

SQ fury of Ixindar, unfocused aggression

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains

Organization part of a warband (with 3–6 other pagus), or part of a patrol (with 7–11 other pagus)

Treasure standard (morningstar, half plate, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Kinetic Transference (Ex): As a full round action, the pagus shaitar can make a single *morningstar* attack. If the target suffers damage, it is knocked prone.

Fury of Ixindar (Ex): The pagus shaitar deals an additional 1d6 damage against prone foes.

Unfocused Aggression (Ex): If the pagus shaitar suffers damage, he automatically confirms any critical threats until the end of its next turn. If someone inflicts a critical hit on the pagus shaitar, the shaitar gains a +1 bonus to attack and a +2 bonus to attack rolls until it is killed (or 1 hour)

PUGG

Unlike other fae descendants like the chiggoth, kythix, and dojenn, the puggs are not difficult to find. Collectively, they are a massive, destructive organism quickly becoming a nuisance, threatening nearly every nation on Earth. In some areas, they're a random and uncontrolled pest, amounting to little more than a handful of rock-throwing, blunt-spear jabbing animals. Like canines, the possibility of domestication does exist. When raised in a culture that doesn't promote thievery or deception, puggs can sometimes be raised to live normal lives as servants.

Whenever someone hears the term “house elf,” they're actually referring to a pugg. It is an unfortunate truth that, for every fae captured or broken in the slaver markets, there are ten puggs that are processed and forgotten. Some are bred in pens though some slavers do operate routes as far as Xixion. They are never given much in the form of skills and never undergo the extent of processing other fae do.

They are trained for chores, hard labor, and occasionally cooking. They are never processed as concubines and a pugg haloed dies quickly. This aside, they still live better lives than if they had been born into a bogg or skegg encampment. In open echa, or when surrounded by other puggs, they become malicious and violent. Left on their own, there is no hope of civility. In history their likenesses have been attributed to several fantasy creatures like boggles, brownies, leprechauns, and various other malicious sprites.

PUGG LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Puggs need little to make themselves content. They only wish the freedom to eat and kill whatever they want. They believe the world is theirs to devour. They have no self control other than their full stomachs. Their bodies can process any organic substance they can wrap their jaws around, and puggs have been seen dead with huge obstructions blocking their throats.



DC 20: Puggs can be found anywhere on Earth but are especially ravenous in western Canam where they're growing at an alarming rate. Females are in season every week and incubate offspring in three, producing two to four in a litter every time. Estimates indicate that every square inch of the planet will be covered in puggs within a thousand years.

DC 25: Slavers often capture puggs to sell as house pets to human owners. The puggs often don't even realize they've been captured, as they are beaten less under human care than under the skeggs'. Pugg families have been known to wander into slaver camps and give themselves up for the promise of food, especially if they don't have numbers to overwhelm their enemy. On their own or when in small numbers, puggs are absolute cowards.

PUGG

CR 1/6

XP 65

CE Small fey

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 2 (1d8)

Fort +0, Ref +4, Will -1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee blunt spear +2 (1d4)

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 4, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB 1; CMD 14

Feats weapon focus (spear)

Skills Acrobatics +4 Perception +4, Stealth +4;

Languages Ferran

SQ bloody innumerable

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization gang (2-4), family (5-30 with 1 optional bogg mother), or tribe (31-300 with 1 optional bogg mother)

Treasure NPC gear (if any)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloody Innumerable (Ex): If the pugg and its allies outnumber their enemy 2:1, it gains a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls and melee damage rolls. If the pugg and its allies outnumber their enemy by 3:1, this bonus increases to a +3 bonus to melee attack rolls and melee damage rolls.

SATYRS

Satyrs, called scians by themselves and other fae, were represented somewhat accurately throughout human history. They began as a chaparran branch shortly after the first migration, leading eventually to centaurs.

Satyrs are not the peaceful skittish creatures the centaurs are. They are somewhat closer to the gimfen, which branched off around the same time. However, the satyr's more animalistic and feral ways overpowered them. Unlike the gimfen, which are grounded in com-

parison, satyrs are hypersexual, orgiastic, and hedonistic (it's where the term satyriasis is derived). Satyrs are incapable of bonding with any creatures, and can only breed with their own kind. Because their conception rate is low like all fae (and cannot increase because of the loss of bonding), satyrs engage in as many sexual encounters as possible. When there are no female satyrs around, they compensate with whatever they can find. They are never violent, just very charismatic in their seductions.

Satyrs seldom get involved in combat and are considered by many of the other races to be cowardly. They hide in forests the same as chaparrans and centaurs, though keeping away from both. Because of the increasing population of humans and their heightened sexual drive, many satyrs have migrated to nearby human communities to persuade passing locals.

Satyrs should not be confused with fauns, a very miniscule later branch from satyrs. Fauns are smaller, less cowardly, but equally as hedonistic, but in different ways, preferring drink and song as their pleasure of preference.

SHAPELESS WILD

Many opponents swear these creatures to be undead while others claim them as incorporeal. Shapeless wild are neither. They are born from the death throes of lost souls within the Sana Marsh but are not from the other side. They breathe but don't appear to have mouths. They have claws but don't appear to have arms. They throw no shadows as the shade they cast magically wraps around their skin, concealing their true form. Only illuminated white eyes and matted silver claws twice the length of human fingers poke from a mass of blackness. These creatures are nearly amorphous but are still alive. They serve only to protect the Marsh and follow the commands of their demon mother. They have recently been seen outside the Marsh, attempting to drag victims back to the darkness to increase their numbers.

THE SHAPELESS WILD LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (arcane) check.

DC 15: One must take the tales told by tavern drunkards with a grain of salt. Though many stories of formless beasts beyond the bogg-controlled forests are told, no one worth the price of a pint ever recounted a reliable tale. Some described the shapeless as living shadows, as if the shade they cast peeled from the walls and enveloped them. Others proclaimed them as smooth-skinned creatures with nary a hole or wrinkle in their bodies save for a pair of white eyes appearing to float in their featureless skulls. A similar story offered the addition of claws of silver sticking from black fingers. Because of the lack of definition, all one would see is a void approaching with eyes and talons whirling about. Some claimed the creatures were cursed fae, maybe tenenbri or distant nymphs, turned to shadow



while others insisted they were rejects of death, raised to inflict their rage upon the living.

DC 20: The shapeless are moving beyond their marsh and are either attacking nearby villages or reaching far beyond to entice distant rulers of similar promises of immortality as the king of Kardia-Gothas was. The Torquil town of Barbecallis is rumored to have fallen to shapeless hands, but in that case, it was because the two lords in charge of the keep had rejected the advances of the demon succubus because they had already taken each other as lovers.

SHAPELESS WILD

CR2 347

XP 600

LE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., Perception +2

Aura evergloom (25 feet)

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 22 (3d10+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

Immune disease, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks hidden ways



STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** 15, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19
Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes
Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +18, Stealth +18
Racial Modifiers +10 Stealth, +4 Acrobatics, +10 Climb
Languages None
SQ madness given form, shapeless distortion

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary, pair or band (3–6)
Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Evergloom (Su): All light within 25 feet is reduced to dim, shadow casting light.

Hidden Ways (Ex): As a full round action, the shapeless wild may move to any square within its aura, and make two claw attacks. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Shapeless Distortion (Ex): The shapeless wild never grants flanking bonuses and always has concealment.

Madness Given Form (Ex): After rolling initiative, the first attack by any enemy on the shapeless wild misses.

SKEGG

The skeggs share the boggs desire to achieve satisfaction through violence. They cannot hurt themselves to achieve this, so instead they just harm others. Since they have no talent for building large communities, they must raid for food and supplies. On their own, they attack caravans and hamlets but rarely towns or villages unless they have enslaved boggs or puggs to wear down the enemies. Skeggs are the smartest of the damaskan anathema, just intelligent enough not to rush head strong into a fight, driving the lesser castes up first. They have a love/hate relationship with the boggs, but carry nothing but disgust for pugs, which are not allotted any benefits and are treated worse under their care than even the puggs under human control.

SKEGG LORE

348 A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: The skeggs consider themselves the ruling caste of damaskan anathema and are assumed in control when present. Both skeggs and boggs look upon their descendant puggs with contempt, offering them no rights or privileges, throwing them in front of a battle line, assigning them the hardest labor, and even breeding them as a food source.

DC 25: Skeggs will not breed with boggs and will oftentimes keep a mother in chains to maintain order over a nest. Skeggs bring in basic knowledge of weapons and armor—skills worth their weight in a chained bogg mother. Pugg-drivers occasionally sell some of their stocks to human traders. These are exceptions, not rules and it's not a secret shared with other skeggs or other human slavers.

SKEGG PUGG-DRIVER

CR 2

XP 600

CE Medium fey
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 shield)
hp 15 (4d6+3)
Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee pugg prodder +5 (1d8+3) plus reach
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (with pugg prodder)
Special Attacks nice throw, boss!

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16
Feats Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Intimidate +8, Perception +8, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth
Languages Ferran
SQ rabble rouse, vicious temperament

ECOLOGY

Environment mountains
Organization gang (1 with 3–6 puggs), or mob (2 with 12–18 puggs)
Treasure NPC Gear (leather armor, heavy wooden shield, pugg prodder, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Nice Throw, Boss! (Ex): As a swift action, the skegg may throw an adjacent pugg 20 feet (4 squares). If the pugg lands in an adjacent square with an opponent, the throw becomes a charge. In either case, this movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Pugg Prodder (Ex): The skegg may attack through squares occupied by puggs.

Rabble Rouse (Ex): As a swift action, puggs within 30 feet each count as two for the purposes of the puggs' bloody innumerable ability until the end of the skegg inciters next turn. After being used, you cannot use rabble rouse for 1d4 rounds.

Vicious Temperament (Ex): When first reduced from its maximum hit points, the skegg may immediately make a melee attack as an immediate action. If the skegg hits, the attack deals an additional 1d6 damage.



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SKEGG INCITER

CR3

XP 800

CE Medium fey

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 20 (5d6+5)

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee morningstar +6 (1d8+3)

Special Attacks ambiguous ferocity, you're not finished

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 16

Feats Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Stealth +11; Racial Modifiers +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth

Languages Ferran

SQ get over there!, vicious temperament

ECOLOGY

Environment mountains

Organization gang (1 with 3–6 boggs), mob (1–2 with 1–3 skegg thugs, 4–8 boggs and 10–20 puggs)

Treasure NPC Gear (leather armor, heavy wooden shield, pug prod, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambiguous Ferocity (Ex): If the skegg inciter charges a target already engaged by an ally and uses its warclub, the thug deals an additional 5 damage with the attack.

Get Over There! (Ex): As a swift action, the skegg inciter can move one ally within 10 feet up to 10 feet (2 squares). This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Vicious Temperament (Ex): When first reduced from its maximum hit points, the skegg inciter may immediately make a melee attack as an immediate action. If the skegg hits, the attack deals an additional 1d6 damage.

You're Not Finished (Ex): When an ally within 25 feet of the skegg inciter drops to 0 hit points or less, the ally can make a single melee attack before falling. Once used, the skegg inciter cannot use *you're not finished* for 1d4 rounds.



energies keep the psyche intact, though twisted by whispers from the darkness. When Thornshroud arrived in Canam, he swayed any forces he approached. Pagus, shemjaza, and dragons wilted under his will. Instead of corralling the masses of evil behind him in an assault on Canam, this armor vanished on a mission no one else was aware of, one he wouldn't share with his subordinates. He told them it came from the highest authority, orders from the greatest voice of all.

Thornshroud takes joy in the torture and suffering of those he deems inferior. His arrogance in his own superiority has no equal. Unlike a pagus, Thornshroud wears his emotion visibly, laughing at the pain he inflicts, taking trophies of those he kills, brandishing pelts and skulls as marks of this glory. His ears are round, proof that such decadence could only come from a human. Not even he knows his own age or where on the planet he fell under the shadow of corruption.

THORNSHROUD

In the darklands, the hierarchal tree includes the pagus, the shemjaza, and the kronix lords. Typhox dragons don't place anywhere along that chain since they fled from Ixindar's grasp long ago. In Canam, the shemjaza are few but climbing higher in numbers each year. The shemjaza have their own conflicts to deal with and the dragons didn't respect their command when they initially appeared. None of this mattered when Thornshroud arrived.

Thornshroud is a construct of living armor with the head of a human grafted upon it. The head is withered and decrepit but still conscious and aware. Negative

THORNSHROUD

CR13

XP 25,600

Medium construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 30 (+3 Dex, +18 natural)

hp 129 (18d10+30)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

DR 10/adamantine; **Regeneration** 5

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee holocaust +28/+23/+18 (1d10+7/17-20)

Ranged blinding macabre +25 (2d6+6 + paralysis; 50 ft.)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; 10 ft. with *holocaust*

Special Attacks holocaust traits

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 38

SQ absolute articulation, construct, regeneration (5), riposte, structural integrity

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or gang (2-4)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Absolute Articulation (Ex): Thornshroud cannot be denied his Dex bonus to AC and never grants flanking bonuses.

Bindings Macabre (Ex): Holocaust (see *holocaust*) is able to turn into a long whip-like weapon, able to reach to targets up to 25 feet away. Targets hit suffer 2d6+6 damage and are paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. A second hit with *bindings macabre* on a paralyzed target can pull the target into an adjacent square. While *bindings macabre* is being used, *holocaust* cannot inflict strength damage (see *holocaust*). Switching between *holocaust* and *bindings macabre* takes a free action but cannot be done during a full round attack.

Construct: Thornshroud is a humanoid head grafted onto a machine, but is still counted as a construct in many ways. He is immune to disruption, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning. He cannot be subjected to ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, or nonlethal damage. He is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless). Thornshroud is not at risk of death from massive damage. Thornshroud still needs to breathe and eat, but he does not sleep.

Holocaust (Ex): Holocaust is the name of Thornshroud's negatively-infused longsword. This weapon cannot be destroyed outside of a wish spell and cannot be sundered. Each time Thornshroud hits with *Holocaust*, the target must make a DC 22 Fort save or suffer 1 point of Strength damage. If the target suffers Strength damage, Thornshroud gains 10 temporary hit points. *Holocaust* ignores all damage resistance. When needed, the weapon can turn into a long, whip-like weapon (see *bindings macabre*). *Holocaust* can attack targets up to ten feet away.

Regeneration (Ex): Thornshroud regenerates 5 points of damage every round until its hit points are reduced below 0.

Riposte (Ex): If an opponent misses thornshroud, as an immediate action, Thornshroud may take a 5-foot step and make a single *holocaust* attack.

Structural Integrity (Ex): When reduced to 0 hit points or less, thornshroud's head detaches from his body, grows four spidery legs and attempts to escape. In this form, Thornshroud has 50 hit points, a speed of 30 ft., and an AC 30.



A glowing ball of catkin lifted from the center of the book. A tail of glitter, its only appendage, dangled behind it as it danced around the tome, happy and delighted at having been called, for its life was meaningless if it had nothing to shine upon.

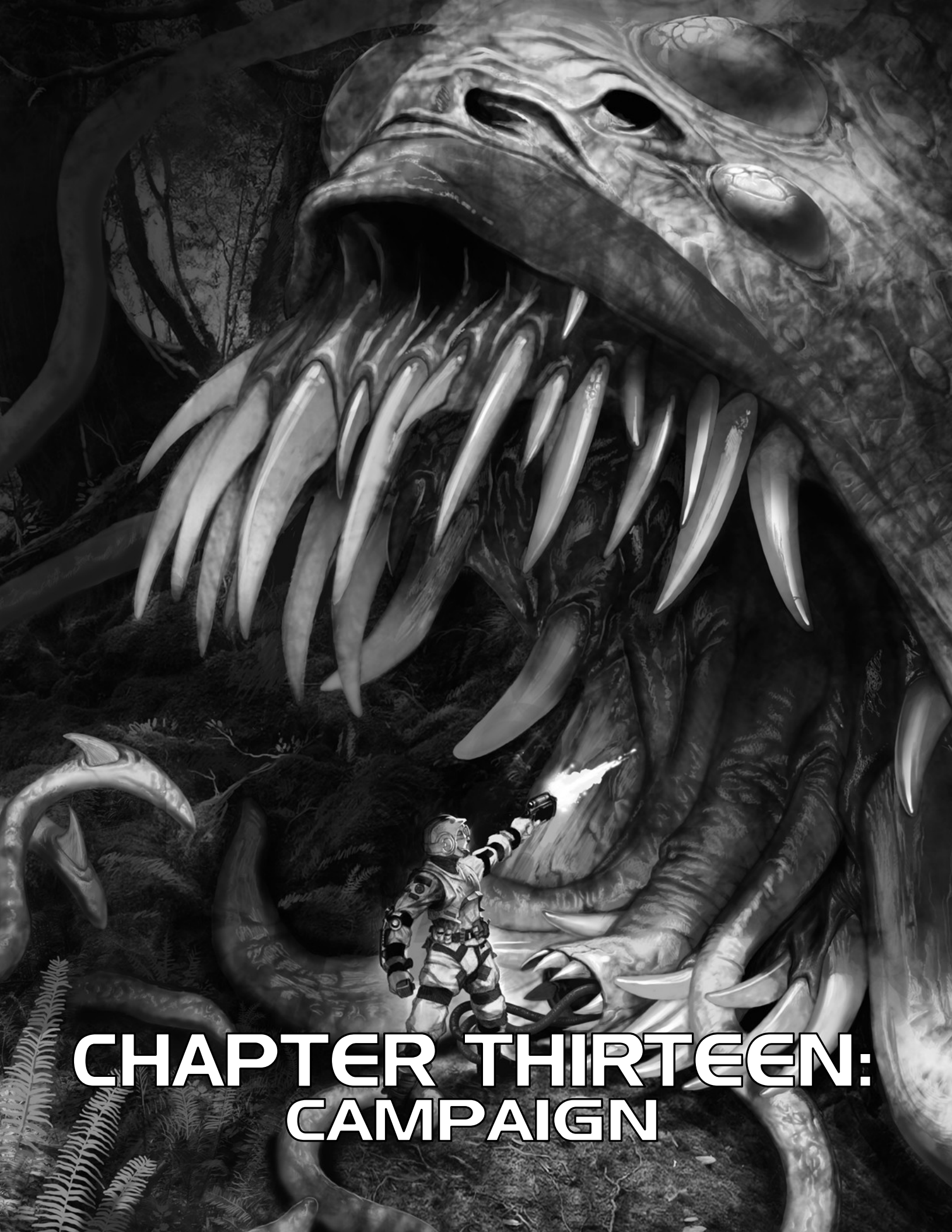
The child was taken back. She recoiled from Aiden, her bottom lip quivering. "Y-You're magic?"

Aiden shrugged. "Not really. It's a friend...a gift from my teacher." This did not alleviate the child. She stepped back, turned, and fled to her mother. The catkin fluttered beside Aiden, as confused as he was. If a parent wanted to train her child to seek life in a bastion, it began early and fear was an easy implement to wield. "I guess that's necessary," Aiden whispered. He held up the open book to the spark. It blinked and hid between the pages. Aiden slipped his spellbook back into his satchel. It was a convenient term for it, spellbook. Wizards referred to them as totems, requiring that they always be in contact with them when attempting magic. It didn't matter what Aiden called it; he had yet to cast any spells. He wasn't yet, what some people called, a radiant. All fae were born that way. For humans, it was a choice and one which Aiden was required to make if he wanted to cast any spells. He very much wanted it, but for some reason it had yet to take.


The laudanian totems were of ivory, bone, or steel. Chaparrans were always wood. Narras took to using weapons, swords and axes mostly, a few shields. The idea of wands came mostly from the whims of writers. Few casters ever needed them. They were the training wheels of sorcerers. Children used them in areas where magic was taught young. Aiden was never given such a crutch to depend on. No competent caster ever employed a wand. Hands were needed open to fiddle the fingers properly in controlling the spells cast. With one hand taken by the totem, putting a wand in the other was a colossal waste of digits.

All that was important were the words, to say the right one, the right way, and to understand its meaning. To speak the name and create it from nothing. There were other ways to harness magic, but Pleroma—the language of magic—was the most powerful and the path chosen by wizards. The spark that Chen had given Aiden was a living light drawn from nowhere, created with intelligence, and aware its life only lasted until dismissed. It knew this and didn't care, lovingly loyal to its creator or controller until discharged.

No matter how many laws of the universe the white gate modified, none of them altered in ways that destroyed life. They allowed greater variations of life without voiding existing ones. Aiden remembered what Chen had said, that anything Aiden could think of thought for itself.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN: CAMPAIGN



Nearly any basic adventure idea can switch with little effort between a techan or echan origin. Since the destinations in the quest are the same, all you would need to do is to create a new beginning. Adventures set in the *Amethyst* setting will often have alternate starting points dependant on what part of Canam you are basing the adventure. If you are playing a full story-based campaign, then the location will change week-to-week. You are invited and encouraged to include additional details depending on the specific location the players are in or traveling through.

ECHAN/TECHAN ORIGIN

A techan game or an echan game with the same locations and the same monsters can often have radically different approaches, outlooks, and outcomes. Even the characters themselves will have different motivations regardless of the details of the quest. If a techan group takes it upon themselves to venture into a dungeon and slay a dragon, are they doing it as a source of income or because that dragon threatens a bastion? Echans believe techans have no nobility—they are selfish and only act for themselves or for profit. An echan enjoys the prospect of being a hero and considers the financial rewards the side-effect of acting the champion.

Why would techans stick their neck out for the village suffering under a dragon's fiery breath? Bastions are too few and far between to be the constant threat to be saved. If running a full campaign, the clues to the next step in the story may lead them to deal with such grand threats and accepting the laurels of saving the village as a happy consequence. You should test the waters of a techan group to see where their compassions lie. Is it all about the treasure or do these players actually want to be guardians of the innocent?


Often enough, financial compensation is not always enough for a group of players. This is true with techans more than echans because every time techans enter a dungeon, they run the risk of losing money for repairing damaged technology.

Either the loot must be promised aplenty or this group must have a moral compulsion to act when the cause is right. If a child has been captured by a band of pagus, would the players risk their technology to save the youth knowing it would do nothing to help them in their overall mission? This is the reason why *Amethyst* suggests that players make heroes.

You know . . . good guys.

ECHAN/TECHAN DIFFERENCES

The biggest difference between a techan group and an echan group is the interdependency techan members have on each other. Their classes and skills must be chosen to best offset deficiencies in others. With the threats of disruption and overwhelming odds from echan encroachers, a techan group never endorses vigilantism or the splitting of a party. Techans always stay together and avoid straying too far from their base of operations, mobile or not. Bravado in a techan member will not only result in a swift death for the character but his precious gear as well. Because of the need to ensure survivability, techan players should have prior knowledge of each other. They should have a history of working together for some time, to learn each other's strengths. Unlike the clichés of fantasy, techans don't team up in a tavern to take on the world. Strategy is key and more often; a specific character is forced to take charge to coordinate the actions of oth-



ers. Contrasting fantasy, the commander probably won't be the biggest fighter but the most intelligent tactician (often a marshal), and said leader does not need to run in front of combat to prove his or her worth.

One aspect to be addressed is treasure. You must address the reality that techans will never find useable treasure in the hordes of the monsters they dispatch. Technology would be an extreme rarity and what technology found would have been disrupted and rendered useless after such long-term exposure. As a result, the group will have to either shield found magic to sell later (a difficult and time-consuming prospect) or you should drop only tangible non-magical rewards which do not lose value when sold (coins, art, jewelry, etc.). This latter option is preferred; otherwise the group will have deficient gear equal to their level as they'll receive reduced treasure for monsters they conquer.

With fighting techan monsters (Iron Sons, MAX, etc.), found technology would be a viable option unless the monster is not one that carries usable technology. Not only that, they would not be carrying gold or jewels or great works of art. In this situation, a wise option would be to award the group with an appropriate value in widgets a character with the Engineer skill can use to resupply and upgrade the group's equipment.

MIXED GROUPS

Though the game is designed to separate fantasy and technology, this does not have to carry onto the party. Mixed groups have hurdles, but this has never stopped them from trying. In this case, some justification would be necessary to explain why techans and echans would mingle. This assumes you're endorsing a canon *Ame-thyst* setting. If you chose to ignore disruption rules, there would be no difficulties other than any issues dealing with discrimination.

One is Lonely Number: In a standard group, the most common mix of techa and echa is the inclusion of a single foreigner. Perhaps techans have allowed a fantasy character in their fold to help them with diplomacy and regional expertise. Maybe a techan has fallen to the side of echa. Humans will have little issues mixing their numbers if one is an echan or techan outsider. A non-human (a fae) is a different situation entirely. If they are on a mission to ensure the dominance of a technological society, a fae would not be acquiescent to such goals as it would mean the end of their way of life. One notable exception would be if that echan was a gimfen.

A lone techan would most likely be stranded or alone by choice. This lone island of technology would have to justify why they insist on remaining with technology given the saturation of disruption around. Most techans leaving on their own from bastions are tourists looking for an escape into enchantment. They keep to the main roads like the Continental Cross, never witnessing the hardships of those living under fear of pugg or bogg attack. They travel to a secured and safe echan nation like Limshau or Salvabrooke, have a happy little adventure among the elves, and return thinking they

had gone rugged and tackled the harsh world. A techan character may be one that has gotten lost or perhaps lives freely in this world for a very good reason.

Of all the techan classes, only medic and mechanics would have a significant chance to survive on their own. Able to patch wounds and maintain their technology, they would be one of the few techans to keep their own identity and resist the urge to pick up an axe.

Splitting Treasure: As stated before, techans should not be rewarded with a lot of magical treasure. In a mixed group, this no longer applies. If the treasure is split evenly, the echans can receive the magic and the techans can take the gold.

PATTERNS OF LANDSCAPE

Where a quest leads is not as important as where it goes through. Players ignorant to the locations they pass through are missing half the fun of exploring a new setting. Many of the quests have generic locations, leaving it up to you to fill in the gaps on where this quest is located.

Abidan: Abidan is a location groups pass through and not linger in. Though not as safe as Limshau, Abidan is blessed with friendly neighbors but must contend with attacks via the Tethuss bridge when the pagus make a push. Unlike Limshau, Abidan is much more of a kingdom (as it has an actual king), so allegations of corruption have been made against several of the smaller outlining territories. Abidan's involvement in a quest is usually to serve as a climax for a large battle and is seldom a location players return to often.

Baruch Malkut: Konig's kingdom would less likely be a passing diversion and more appropriately a major element of a larger quest, if not the catalyst of the quest itself. Players following the path of heroes will encounter bandits, slavers, and other examples of human monsters. Fae attacks would be more a case of mistaken identity as chaparrans or damaskans strike out at the players mistaking them for Malkut mercenaries. Cities are not safe with dark alleys rife with thieves and assassins. Players venturing into Baruch Malkut must always be on guard against everything around them.

Bastions: Bastions are launching spots for techan groups but rarely quest goals. This can easily change as all manners of incentives are available for groups to infiltrate a bastion. If an echan party is forced to penetrate bastion defenses, it could be retrieval or a rescue mission. If a techan party is required to use stealth within a bastion, rival technology would be the obvious goal. Echans will find enemies all around while techans would only be dealt with hostility if they approach with hostile intents. The major exception would be the bastion of Mann. Angel and York are relatively safe, and Selkirk and Sierra Madre have little to no crime.

Fargon: Fargon is a relatively peaceful place as narros aren't known for being bandits or thieves. However, the constant abrasion of skegg and kodiak forces have upset the tranquility of the nation. The farther

east characters travel, the greater the threat from these rivals. Dragons and beasts of cold claim mountains the narros dare not touch. Because of Fargon's remoteness, it is unlikely it would be a location characters pass through and would rather be a destination or a starting point.

Kannos: Assaults from the Sana Marsh, with boggs and skeggs approaching from the north and waves of puggs shifting from the west, means that no caravan is safe in Kannos. All merchants have mercenaries guarding their interests. Lost merchandise needs to be reacquired. Burnt wagons are an often sight on Kannos roads, and sellswords never go hungry. The larger cities have rarely suffered attacks, but a journey through Kannos will encounter quite the number of side quests for eyes open enough for the distraction.

Limshau: Limshau is urbanized and safe. Travelers can pass from town to town with little fear of being assaulted by anything other than merchants. The walled cities are well guarded with little corruption in its bureaucracy. The outer villages near the border are a different story. Groups that move through Limshau will encounter wandering merchants and passing adventuring parties comparable to theirs. Limshau will almost certainly be a common destination on a quest because of its political position and its status as the hub of all gathered knowledge.

THE SINGLE STONE

What follows is short adventure that introduces a gaming group to the *Amethyst* setting. It involves travelling to different locations, researching the history of the setting, and fighting off some truly fiendish foes. Simultaneously, they will involve themselves in a conspiracy that may take them across the world and involve enemies singular and powerful as well as numerous and influential. They will find evil parading in the light and allies hiding in shadows.

This is an adventure for four to five players at character level 1. The player group can be of an echan or techan origin. The specific events may not change though certain obstacles along the way may. Although this adventure starts a group on the Amethyst quest, it need not force them down such a route. They may hand it off and do something else upon the conclusion. Where they go after this is for you and the group to decide.

SUMMARY

Greedy or generous, techan or echan, the group of heroes stumble upon, or are sent to investigate, the rotting carcass of a crashed transport plane. No one is sure where it came from or where it was going but apparently, its sole purpose was to transport a small item a great distance. The item is the Amethyst amulet. Little does the group know that they are not the only ones aware of this crash. A rival organization has been tasked to take the amulet for themselves and eliminate any obstacles.

A trip to Limshau may net the heroes knowledge or they may travel to their nearest bastion for guidance. Either way, their eventual destination is a decaying keep in a crumbling kingdom, where a single book holds all the answers. Any laurels earned along the way would be unintentional.

ECHAN INVOLVEMENT

The players are on their way to Limshau. They may be travelling west from the gimfen city of Gnimfall, from Kannos in the north, from the free house of Orchis in the south or from house Antikari or Plicato in the west. They have yet to arrive when they are asked to escort a merchant caravan along the Continental Cross. When a band of puggs attack and make off with a rare piece of treasure, the players will give chase and stumble upon the plane wreckage, starting their quest.

TECHAN INVOLVEMENT

Depending on which bastion the players are from, they should be around the bastion of Angel when they are hired to venture to a specific set of coordinates and investigate the crash of an aircraft from another bastion that was on its way to Angel. This may be a normal mission for this group or their first outing from the walls. The story would begin with them outside of Crax in Antikari. When they arrive at the coordinates, they find only the nose, sending them on a search for the other half the plane.

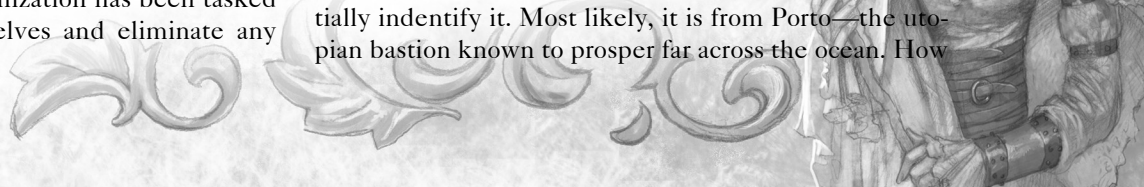
SECTION I: THE CARBON CRUCIFIX

If the players are chasing puggs, they will encounter them at the following location. If they are travelling here intentionally, then they will be ambushed. As the heroes press through the forest, read or paraphrase the following:

You push through the heavy foliage and come upon a tree stouter than the others. The sheen of its silver skin glints in a fading sunset. Only two branches reach from its peak, spreading its arms to the sky. Jagged roots have sliced into the soft dirt, an invader among its neighbors of wood.

The towering centurion left a scar of ashes and death behind it when it fell from heaven. This was not some great hammer of god cast to Earth but a machine made from the hands of men. Where once it obeyed undeniable rules to allow its flight, now a carcass rests to prove the chaos of a new age. From dirt to sky, it stands taller than most trees.

This is the tail section of a very large aircraft. Over 100 feet tall, it's still only a small section of the monstrosity it once was. Only bastion-born from York or Angel can make a single DC20 Knowledge (history) check to partially indentify it. Most likely, it is from Porto—the utopian bastion known to prosper far across the ocean. How



it got here would be an obvious question without a speedy answer. Though they have been known to send flights as far west as Angel, they rarely send more than one a decade. To find a wreck would be a rare prize indeed. Porto flaunts the greatest technology of the planet, though the chances of any of it still working by this point would be slim.

Special: A successful DC20 Perception skill check will net 300 uc in widgets from the wreckage.

ENCOUNTER: If the characters are chasing the boggs, they only have a few brief moments before reinforcements arrive. If not, the group is ambushed by a horde that has used the towering tail of the aircraft as their chief's hut.

2400 XP

- 1 Skegg Inciter
- 2 Bogg Rakes
- 4 Bogg Scabs

The chief, although a skegg and thus of superior stock, wasn't bright enough to understand the distinctiveness of his metallic keep. He stacked crates and used them to form a throne without bothering to attempt breaking them open. He might have tried but the steel reinforced plastic boxes proved too much for his simple tools. The locking mechanism is intricate and far beyond his limited intelligence.

There are three boxes, two larger ones the skegg used as armrests and one small one he used as a seat. The security on each box is a mechanical but complex disk tumbler lock, making it difficult to break. Each box carries the following statistic: AC 2, HP 100; Break DC25

BOX	LABEL	LOCK DC	CONTENTS
1-Large	Security	24	4 disruption patches, 3 sets of handcuffs
2-Large	Emergency	24	Contents of one Standard Techan Adventurers Kit
1-Small	See below	22	See Below

The small box carries the label, "Open under controlled conditions—Disruption Hazard" but no other indicators. It also appears the lock has suffered some damage and may be easier to pick. Upon opening it, read or paraphrase the following:

Your hands roll through fluttering pieces of snow that feel neither cold nor wet and refuse to melt in the warmth of your hand. You can see a faint violet glow through the packing. You reach in and curl your fingers around the light. Four pearl-colored dragon's claws are clamped around the outer edges of the unrefined almost jagged gem inset. The fingers of the lizard coil around back, not to a hand, but across to other fingers. Two golden loops could support a chain if one were so inclined to flaunt the amulet from his or her neck.

If any of the players attempt a closer look (or if you want to add in an additional DC18 Perception), read or paraphrase the following:

You notice movement within, as glints of light jolt through the imperfections in the jewel, like lightning bolts arcing from one side of the gem to the other, following the sharp angles of the stone. It reflects no light from those you cast, but it does reflect your faces perfectly in the glossy finish. It also gives off its own light; visible only when staring past the arcs of sparks, into the heart of the rock itself. This is unusual even for magic.

At night, this item glows much brighter. Though magical, no one can identify what it can do or where it came from. The heroes have found a relic of amazing power, but before they can truly exploit it or understand its power, they must know first what it is. No spell can discern any information on it.

Its oddest property is that for some reason, the item does not disrupt technology.

The skill DCs are far too high unless the group goes to a location which can offer a bonus (like a magic academy or a library). Techans will have little hope as many of those characters have neither Knowledge (religion) nor Knowledge (arcane) as a skill. In this case, a single DC20 Knowledge (history) check will reveal that Limshau is the only logical source of any answers. It permits techans if they remain inconspicuous.

Knowledge (arcana) DC22: Obviously a magical item, this relic was likely forged by a wizard of great power. The Pleroma lettering running down one side proves that. A magic jewel glows but never with an internal furnace like this one. This is a natural enchantment. Someone found it and clasped the amulet to be worn. The fingers are silver, meaning a holy dragon, so it's doubtfully cursed. Being trained in the arcane, one of the letters of Pleroma appears off. It must have come from a sword hit, a powerful one at that. Further, this is most likely created by human hands. Chaparrans would wrap it in wood. Tenenbri wouldn't be so ornate. Gimfen have no competent wizards. Damaskans have no imagination for such a design. Narros would employ some rare element along with it, magnarros or angelite. That only leaves laudenian and humanity. No way it could it be laudenian because the item would not have been lost in the first place. This leaves a human mage. And there are very few of those on this continent of any significant power.

Knowledge (religion) DC22: There is a faith based around the dragon god, Amethyst, but this is not a symbol of faith though it is obviously made to resemble one. The markings on one side are Pleroma. The dragon speak indicate it was made by a mage. The dragon god is a matter of faith and the dragonspeak is used in the study of magic that renounces god.

Knowledge (history) DC24: (The two previous skill checks must succeed) To cause a gash on a magic item of this magnitude would require a powerful weapon, enchanted itself. One would have to look for an incident where at least a competent mage faced against a swordmaster and potentially lost. There are few powerful wizards in Canam but Lauropa across the oceans sports a few: Hapura, Piotre Raczik, Torfin Gendron. Torfin died in a duel against the fanatic knight Wilhelm Myre. Interesting.

SECTION 2: BY THE BOOKS

When the heroes arrive at Limshau, read or paraphrase the following:

They call them the White Walls of Limshau—a maze of dense stone walls dozens of miles across, radiating from a central archive. It holds the combined knowledge of a hundred nations, modern and extinct. One could find the rhythmic dance rituals of the chaparrans or the spastic drum beats of the narros. Look further and one could even stumble across tomes smuggled from the human bastions. Diligently, the damaskan fae and humans of Limshau maintain their city. Ten storeys tall and virtually uniform in texture, the white walls encircle the library entire, every branch, every building. The wall twinkles in the orange sun. Slabs of waxy white marble prevent handholds. The outside coat only provides the polish and prevents outside chips. A heavier layer of granite behind offers the protection.

When the heroes pass through the gates, they must check their weapons with the storehouse. Only custodians and the militia are allowed weapons in the city. Clever deceit or sleight of hand may allow smaller weapons to cross but anything bigger than a short sword would be confiscated.

When the heroes enter the city, read or paraphrase the following:

Limshau is orderly, calm, and beautiful. Hundreds move without a shove in the streets. The various buildings blend under a unified vision of style. Footbridges pass overhead, connecting higher buildings. As you wander deeper, the city grows taller, bridges criss-cross over each other as the levels climb. A pair of custodians chat with merchants. An orange-haired gimfen stands atop his cart, selling various silks gathered from his villages in the west. A few legal tall-eared scarlet women promote their pleasures from a second level window.

A huge form eclipsing the sun bathes the street in shadow. You glance up to see the light poking above the distant wall. The silhouette climbing over shrouds the sunrise. The silvery-white skin of a 1,200-foot long airship floats with hardly a whisper. Only a small cabin hangs underneath the perfectly smooth untarnished body, with most of the crew and passengers resting comfortably inside the superstructure. Propellers bigger than men spin as the vessel slows towards the mooring

tower at the city center.

Limshau is enormous and the heroes may feel somewhat confused on where to start. A player from Limshau may make a DC15 Knowledge (history) roll to know who to ask. All others have a DC20 roll. Beyond that, they will have to wander. It should be obvious that they must start with the arcane section. Once they begin searching around the branch, they can introduce themselves to the local chief librarian, a human female named **Inara Setinga**, and the custodian assigned to this branch this week, a damaskan male, **Baelin Stonethrow**. Both will help the best they can.

Special: The heroes may attempt the previous skill checks again. They gain a +6 inherent bonus to Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion), and Knowledge (history) while researching, gaining an additional +2 from Inara and +1 by Baelin if the characters enlist their help. They may attempt a new roll every day. Succeeding on all three skill checks allows the group to read the history of the amulet. This is Stormceage, Torfin's most prized magical possession. The heroes, however, are not made aware of the amethyst's true power or history. For that, they must continue their research. Stormceage was found "as is" from Torfin. All he did was shroud it in prestige. It must have passed more hands than that.

If the players give up, or are stuck, or when they do read the history of the item, eventually, either Bailin or Inara will volunteer the following.

"There is one that may help. He's an expert on lingering legends and relics that refuse to be buried. A holy man but one with respect within in these walls. His name is Filipe Paraerra. You'll find him in the University. He teaches philosophy."

FILIFE PARAERRA

Dr. Paraerra is not an old man with worn and weary eyes, pinching his nose when his heavy glasses strain his head. Filipe is barely into his 40s, 230 lbs. of toned muscle. He is not about brute strength but total physical perfection. As an athlete, he would outrun the stoutest of knights even without their laden steel. He is also a Buddhist. When the heroes enter the class, they find thirty students of various ethnicities, ages, and races sitting with backs straight upon mats placed erratically about the room. The desks have been pushed to the walls. No one pays the heroes any mind, regardless of how they enter and how they look. They find Paraerra at the head, wrists resting on his knees, addressing the room.

"Does the pursuit of truth without finding it have purpose?" Paraerra asks slowly, almost at a whisper. "You will find evil if you chose to seek evil. You will find faith if you chose to seek faith. But do not seek truth. A drive to find a truth will lead to faith, and will be perceived only in your eyes as fact. Truth...is what you find along the way of seeking. Truth...is stumbled

upon, never fought for. The same it is with the salvation of the soul. The harmony we establish within ourselves, the love we accept, comes along the path, never at the end. Faith, belief, are yours to claim ...truth is for all of us." He looks over the group, then rubs his palms together. "This week, pick one of the following books. Have it read by the end of the month. We'll then discuss them at length, including the possibility that I may have wasted your time in the assignment. *Fear & Loathing* by Soren Kierkegaard, *Prophetic Fragments* by Cornel West, *Novum Organum* by Francis Bacon, or *The High Cost of Death* by Marikama."

The class files out, passing the heroes looks ranging from curiosity and confusion to annoyance, leaving Paraerra alone. He makes one passing glance at the heroes and says, "By your presentation, I assume you're not nihilists."

The heroes can present their information and what they have learned. If they have not solved the previous skill checks by this point, he'll answer it for them, giving the heroes any information they may need about the item. It may take him a few minutes and he would have to see the artifact, but he will be successful against all the skill checks required. Beyond this, he confirms the unique powers of this item.

It's as powerful as a foundation spell but apparently requires no sacrifice for its use. It's also possible it gains in power with its owner. The markings on the inside nearly confirm that. You have in possession a powerful relic that binds the arcane with faith, a declaration even I must acknowledge is more than a little incongruous. There could only be one other explanation but the answer isn't with me"

<Response>

"If you'll permit me a momentary indulgence, I believe I know where the answer rests."

358 <Response>

"As with everything else in Limshau, this truth rests in the pages of a book."

Although there is a library branch dedicated to the history of relics, there is also another smaller one doubling as a museum, dedicated to the study of the relics themselves. Paraerra believes what the heroes seek is there. He decides to help them look for it. The book in question is the *Chronicle of Aurannis*. The chronicle was once part of the great *Bible of Drasago*, the holy book written by dragons but was removed due to length. Unlike the other gospels, Aurannis's collection does not enchant the user if read but is still magical itself. Paraerra had flipped through it once and could have sworn to have seen a relic like this amethyst among its pages.

When the group arrives at the specific branch, Paraerra questions the librarian, an attractive damaskan elf wearing bifocals named **Chenai Pagekeeper**. She carries unfortunate news as she leads them to the location in the branch the book was kept. It's been stolen.

"I hate to say, we lost that tome recently. It even carried a marker to prevent theft but a hole was obviously found. The book was taken not more than a few days ago. Interesting that nothing else was stolen."

This is obviously not coincidence but who would take it is a mystery. If the heroes ask the significance of the heart, Filipe answers with, *"From what I remember reading, if the fragments of his heart are brought together at place of his death, he can be brought back ... and then the armies of order will have no hope against the power of Amethyst's will."*

Filipe doesn't know how many fragments there are or how powerful they have the potential to be. All of that was in the book. Limshau will also offer a 2,000 gp reward for the book's retrieval.

TO FIND THE CHRONICLE

The *Chronicle of Aurannis* was stolen by thieves under the payroll of a techan mercenary company known as the **Iron Sons**. This group has been contracted by a mysterious third party. The Iron Sons is a multi-cell organization and one of the largest and most successful free companies in the world. This cell operates out of the crumbling kingdom of Torquil, and is currently heading back to wait at the rendezvous in the abandoned keep of Zellis. There are several ways the heroes can determine this:

- Chenai remembers the last people to look at the book were a pair of techans. She knows they were techan because of the quality of clothes they wore. One also sported a badge on an arm—of a sun dipping below a line and a solid sphere of wrought iron appearing below. A techan player passing a D20 Knowledge (history) check will recognize the symbol of the Iron Sons. From there, they can inquire about where the nearest cell would be located, taking them to Torquil.
- Related above, with the knowledge that techans had taken the book, the group can search for information on known mercenary companies that operate in the area. It's doubtful even a bastion would directly involve themselves in this and would pay for outsiders, that is if the mercenary company isn't doing it for themselves. There are books that do reveal this and a DC20 Knowledge (history) check will reveal the group and Torquil as the nearest cell. Filipe will add that the Zellis

keep is the only possible location as the others are too far.

- If the heroes don't investigate themselves, they can find the lead custodian investigating this. A human, **Robin Weaver**, explains the above, including his prime suspects, but has not made the connection to Torquil as yet.
- The chronicle is large and magical and there are security features about the kingdom to prevent theft. Therefore the group must have been prepared for it. The heroes can begin their own investigation and reveal that only a few items have been known to suppress an item's natural radiance. One such item is a disruption muffler bag, which is large enough to fit a book. This means the group must be a techan group or a group that has access to technology. Since there is a check-in to enter the city, there may be records of any large groups of techan humans that have arrived in the past few days. Techans do occur, though rarely in large numbers. Limshau is too far and too enchanted for most tourists. There was a free company that had to register (as all free companies entering the city do), the Iron Sons. There were five of them. Interviewing the custodians at the check point reveals they headed west three days ago. The group can be given a description which the heroes can use to track the group west from Limshau, eventually leading them through the Continental Cross, to Antikari, and south into Torquil, where the trails goes cold until they find the Zellis keep.

Paraerra will help when he can. He will take the heroes quest to heart and provide them with accommodations while in Limshau as well as transportation assistance if they require it. He hopes the group will return the book to Limshau and receive the reward, but not before he has had a chance to read it and discover the truth within its pages.

SECTION 3: SHADOW OF TORQUIL

From Limshau to Zellis is three weeks by mount, one week by ground vehicle, and four days by air. If the heroes have a destination from the beginning (knowing they are going to Zellis), Paraerra will pay for the commission for a thermal to take them to Antikari. If they are tracking the group via ground travel, the journey is much longer but would be an opportune time to insert one or two random encounters.

THE JOURNEY

The group keeps to the Continental Cross for most of

the journey. The cross is a beaten path that connects the bastion of Angel, through house Antikari and house Orchis, and finally to Limshau. Various short spots widen out to be a gravel road but these are infrequent. The road is commonly used by thousands of people. Caravans alive and rolling as well as sacked and burned can be spotted along its route. Wandering shops sell trinkets from the backs of wagons. Some carts stay together for protection, creating nomadic markets that roam the road, never straying apart. The most well known is the Arciducha, a caravan of 35 wagons selling fine clothes, rare foods, and even protective lodging. These markets migrate between Antikari, and Gnimfall, usually staying near Limshau borders, where the road is patrolled more frequently. When the group reaches Antikari, they must break from the road and push through Crax.

ENCOUNTER: Pugg raid. Swarms of puggs storm from the forest. They emerge 10 at a time for four rounds.

1950 XP (reduced because the enemy arrives in waves)

- 40 Puggs

After three days through Crax, the group pushes through an opening into a huge valley, where they can see the majesty that once was the Zellis Keep.

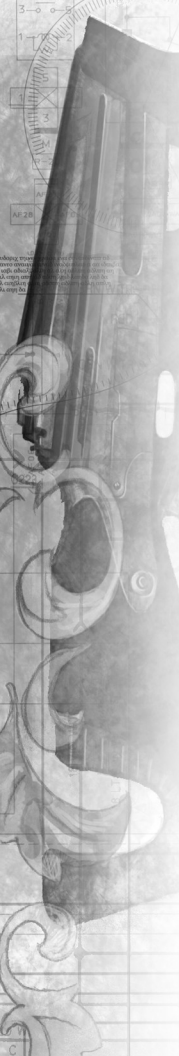
THE TOWER OF ZELLIS

Read or paraphrase the following:

The peak holds just enough room for the keep constructed atop. Many of the battlements overhanging the cliff point down rather than across. The outer walls and towers jut no angles, with a curve at every corner to deflect siege works, though no ballista or catapult or trebuchet could reach this height. Only cannon could breach these walls. Battlements circle the keep with three rows of embrasures atop each other. Hundreds of arbalests could rain straight down with gravity as their ally. Butresses from the sides of the mountain rise up to join the walls of the castle. Most likely, the same construction of the mountain catacombs was employed in the building of the fort. The blackness of the entrance is reflected in the outer wall of the keep. Huge slabs forming the wall prevent secured handholds. The construction must have taken the kingdom a king's life to complete. Those who planned its construction never lived to see its completion. Moss and weeds have crept up the sides and breached the indestructible walls. Grass pushes from arrow slits. Most of the castle atop has crumbled into ruin.

As the group reaches the base of the tower, read or paraphrase the following:

Though the wood rotted a century ago, the massive opening still remains, all three stories of it. The main door sits at the back of a thirty-foot corridor into the



side of the mountain. The lintel above, carved from polished limestone, took an army to lift into place. It stretches from the doorframe, across the ceiling, sticking out of the entrance just far enough for a pair of weathered soapstone dragons, no bigger than a man, to perch, greeting those who entered. Their wings have long since broken to stumps, the gems encrusting their eyes long since stolen. Both walls around the architrave are divided by intersecting lines, opening squares wide enough for a man to reach to either end with his fingertips. Several engravings fill a few openings. At least two show bears, one foraging on all fours, the second rearing back to ward off enemies. Another image is of a great spread-winged eagle. A few others show animals lesser known, spawn species finding form after the wave of magic swept the globe, short, squatty puggs, flightless cockatrice, and various boggs.

There is significant damage to the entrance door, having broken from all but one hinge, opening the inner chamber to the light outside. As the players enter the keep's entrance, they spot three fresh corpses. Everything of value from weapons to gear has been stripped.

A close examination (Perception DC15) reveals deep slashes across their chests, most likely from a talon rather than a knife. What remains of their clothing indicates a techan origin but anything more than that is a mystery. There is a shaft of light coming from up ahead but the passage between entrance and light is long and dark.

When the heroes reach the shaft, read or paraphrase the following:

You reach the light. Cylindrical and wide enough to fit an adult dragon, the shaft carries up through the entire mountain to an opening to the sky. There might have been glass or shutters at the top, but no longer. Unfiltered daylight glints off the embedded crystallized chips within the granite. The bouncing bands are visible through floating dust. Stone and wood beams run across the shaft, climbing up the sides all the way to the light. The sound of sporadic rain dapples to the ground level. A spiraling pathway orbits the tunnel to the top. The path is wide enough for a two horse-drawn carts abreast.

The crossing beams of wood and stone form part of a complicated pulley system, connecting by sprockets and chains to a warped wooden gondola suspended halfway up the shaft. The system was surprisingly well maintained and complicated, using the pulleys as a way to lift the gondola instead a bulky counterweight. It even appeared automatic, requiring no slaves to strain in its use. If anyone attempts to use it, the entire construction will fall apart, raining wood and steel to the base. Everyone must make a DC15 Ref save or take 1d6+4 points of damage (save half).

The collapse ricochets and reverberates through the entire mountain. Unfortunately, the heroes must

climb all the way to the keep above.

THE KEEP OF ZELLIS

Timetable: Play the climb as being a lengthy one, so the group arrives at the peak near sunset. It matters as the shapeless wild possessing the keep rise up in numbers at sundown.

AREA I: GARDENS

As the heroes reach to the top of the passage, read or paraphrase the following:

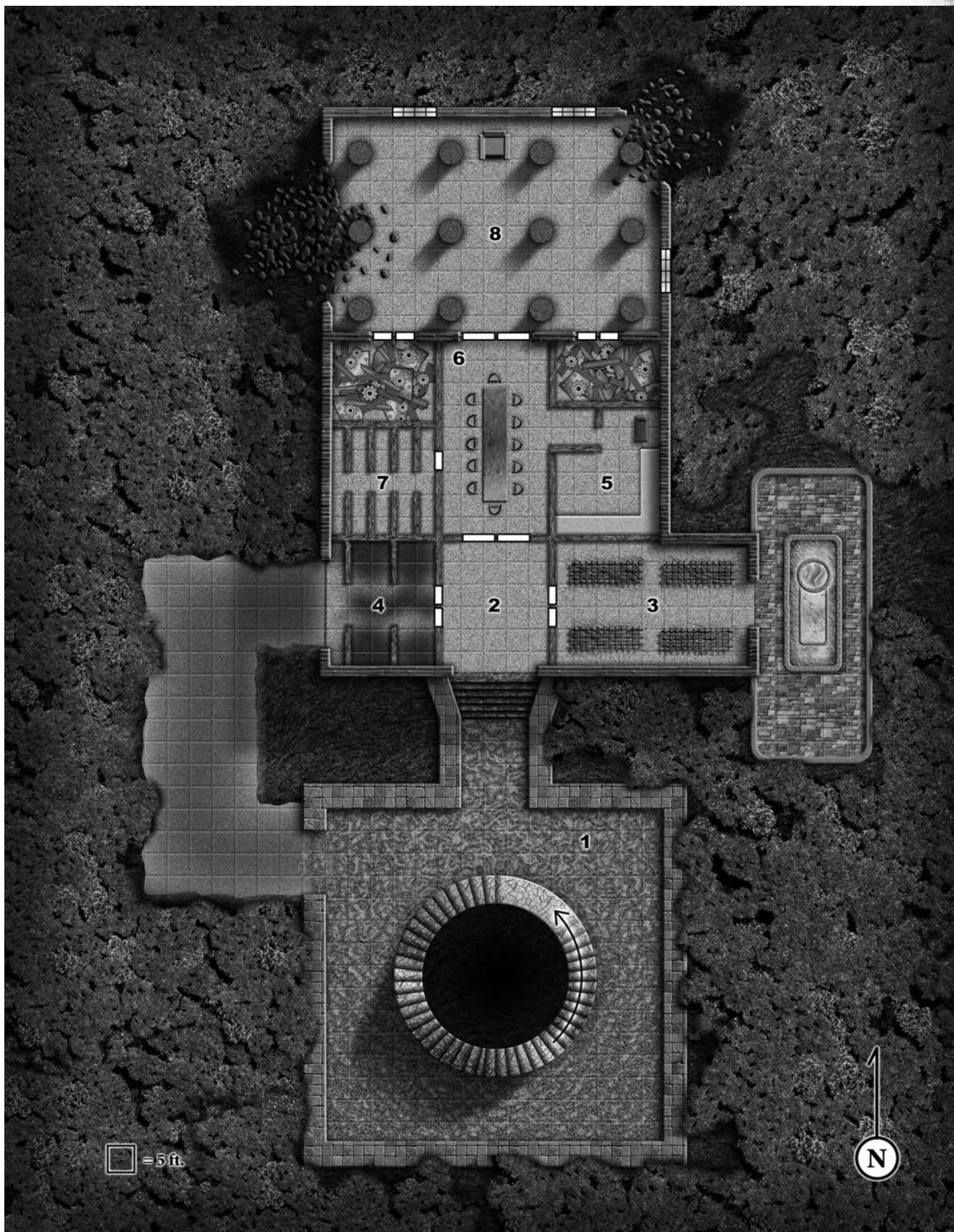
To slowly crumble through centuries is not a fate fitting for such a keep. With granite its prime ingredient, such a castle will take eons to fall to dust. The potential for recovery still lingers in its foundation. Yet, no one has come to claim its prize. The fragments of House Torquil have enough problems maintaining their keeps in the south. Other free houses are too far east. Someone taking this land would also need to act graciously to the chaparrans of Dawnamoak nearby. Even considering the costs of maintenance, it's still quite the treasure in itself, rivaling anything stolen from its coffers since the empire's collapse. The surrounding lands are plentiful and once cleared and secured, the keep could be a stout defensive post. All one would need is the ambition, the masses of loyal indentured workers, and an army large enough to daunt neighbors.

When you burst into the afternoon sun, you are greeted by a moss and weed plagued court. There had been glass covering the shaft at one point. Thick shards still jut from the sides. This beautiful court would have been covered with flowers and short grass surrounding a glass covered pit where one could peer down into the bowels of the nation. Around the perimeter of the court, which fills half the peak, several broken windmills shudder rather than spin in the breeze. Across the field, you can see what remains of the keep itself.

Your attention, however, is diverted elsewhere, as more than a dozen figures on the other side of the pit notice you and make their way around. They wear loose mail and old blades but their cloak of velvet black appears cared for. Up the path to the keep, a roar bellows like a trumpet out of the entranceway. Under the shade of the keep, you see only the massive torso of a form twice the height of any of you.

The Zellis keep is one of many abandoned castles and forts in the failed kingdom of Torquil. This one fell into darkness when a shemjaza attempted to seduce one of its two lords. Upon rejection, the demon set loose the shapeless wild upon the population. Most died in the carnage, others rose up as shapeless as they slept—a side effect of the curse the shapeless bring with them.

Cultists often follow, believing everlasting life awaits those that allow the shadow to embrace them. They are led by a necromancer, Katho Kovacs, who believes he has found a way to control the shapeless in the shemjaza's stead. Many of the shapeless are still here,



hiding until night falls. Kovacs had been waiting outside the keep for sacrifices and found them when the mercenaries from the Iron Sons arrived. Most of the Iron Sons had already fallen victim to the cultists. Their arrival is coincidental.

The beast at the entrance to the keep is a kodiak

the cultists have tortured into servitude and now guards the keep.

ENCOUNTER: The cultists are west and south of the pit. While most engage the heroes, at least one will run north to free the kodiak. The cultist requires two



rounds to free the kodiak, though he is killed immediately after by the beast (only Kovacs can control it). It enters combat the following round.

- **16 Disciples of Kovacs**

The cultists hope to take the group alive, and tie them up until night arrives. Shapeless don't attack those sleeping or restrained, preferring to let their curse produce more of their kind. As the victim sleeps, their soul is devoured by a shadow that withers the body to dust and emerges fully formed as a shapeless. The cultists wish to join this order, believing their souls are reborn as immortals. Their leader believes he can control the wild and is hoping to create an army of shapeless under his control.

All this information can be retrieved by careful interrogation of a captured cultist. These cultists are deathly loyal but are apprehensive about dying, as then they will void any chance of rebirth at the hands of the shapeless. If the fight goes badly and the disciples are unable to break the kodiak free, they will attempt to push past the kodiak and alert their master.

DISCIPLE OF KOVACS

CR 1/2

XP 200

LE Medium humanoid

Init +0; Senses Normal; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 shield)

hp 7 (1d8+2)

Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ritual weapon (morningstar) +2 (1d8+3/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8

Base Atk +0; CMB +2; CMD 12

Feats Power Attack

Skills Perception +2

Languages Common

SQ martyrdom

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, group of four, or cult 10-20, always in multiples of four.

Treasure NPC Gear (leather armor, heavy wooden shield, spear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Martyrdom (Ex): For every 4 disciples that die in combat, every other disciple of Kovacs gains +1 to attack rolls and +1 to damage rolls (cumulative).

2. GATE GUARD

Read or paraphrase the following (ignore the second paragraph if the kodiak entered combat in the first en-

counter):

The massive oak gate doors creak slightly ajar. A portcullis has long since rusted and fallen to broken bars upon a granite path. The doors do not sit at the top of the stairs but a distance underneath an overhanging round archway thirty feet up. Unlike the rest of the keep, this construction has survived time with every impost still standing. The painted white stone has flaked from weather, creating a speckled finish. Two doors, nearly equal in size of the main entrance are on your left and right.

The beast you noticed before waits for you to step closer. A tortured kodiak hurls phlegm from a tongueless scream, rough and jagged. Its grey and black fur covers every inch, right to its black claws. Still primitive, kodiaks fell victim to many superior in brains and numbers wishing to take advantage of their awesome strength. The creature had been scared and tormented, convinced by its captors that their actions were forced and proof of love and loyalty. Long since brainwashed, the creature – once proud that it could rise to its hind legs and hold onto tools with its claws – has been sullied to this barbarity.

ENCOUNTER: The kodiak can move within reach of every door but not beyond the archway. Every round it is injured; it can make a DC20 Strength check to break its chain. If it does, nothing will prevent it from trying to kill everything it sees.

3. ATRIUM

Read or paraphrase the following:

The influence of magic has had its way with the unmaintained plants of this garden. The atrium's glass roof has long since shattered and fallen to sharp fragments upon the stone floor. Four stone trellises in the room are overgrown by weeds and hanging ferns. On the opposite side of the room, it opens to the outside and you notice a moss and algae covered fountain.

The horticulturist that saw after these gardens spliced several bizarre species and had others imported from all over the world. Unmaintained for all these decades, they crossbred and basked in the chaos of Attricana and now have turned into a mass of killing writhing thorns that lash out to anyone trying to cross.

ENCOUNTER: The mass waits until the group is between the trellises before surrounding the group. There is one for each trellis. They drag victims to their trellis where they can be devoured slowly with caustic juices

XP 3200

- 4 Triffids

TRIFFID

CR 3

XP 800

N medium plant

Init +0; Senses blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +2

Immune electricity, plant traits; Resist cold 10 and fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft.

Melee slashing vines +7 (1d8+7 plus grab)

Ranged night quill +5 (1 point of damage plus special); 40 ft.

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+7)

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 10, Con 16, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 9

Base Atk +3; CMB +8 (+12 with grapple); CMD 18 (can't be tripped)

SQ camouflage

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests

Organization solitary, pair, or patch (3–6)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflage (Ex): Since a triffid looks like a normal plant when at rest, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it before it attacks for the first time. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use either of those skills instead of Perception to notice the plant.

Night Quill (Ex): The triffid's alternate weapon is a poison dart, which it can fire up to a range of 50 feet. A target hit only suffers 1 point of damage but is inflicted with triffid poison. After using *night quill*, the triffid cannot use it again for 1d4 rounds.

Type poison, injury, contact; Save Fortitude DC14

Frequency 1/round for 2 rounds

Initial Effect: 1 Con damage; Secondary Effect unconscious for 1d3 hours; Cure 1 save

The fountain beyond is open the sky, outside of the keep. It is covered in mold and moss and the water is slick and sickening. A DC20 Perception check will reveal one of the following:

Each result only occurs once.

1: A pouch with 4 gp, 10 sp, and a fingernail

2: A jade pendant worth 10 gp

3: Triffid poison, 3 uses (it inflicts with contact)

4: A leather scabbard

5: A skeleton with 4 gold teeth (1 gp each)

6: Potion of Healing (50 gp)

4: STABLES

Read or paraphrase the following:

The dozen horses the cultists had brought were once

tied safely within the stables. Their bodies have been torn apart by the dark shape that refuses to show its form despite the light coming from the open stable door beyond. The shapeless form shifts and weaves under the bands of light cast through breaks in the wall. The creature casts no shadows. Its arms seem to vanish when covered by its body. Its eyes cast their own light, reflecting off matted silver claws.

ENCOUNTER: This is a shapeless wild that has woken early. Shapeless wild don't convert basic animals, only those with high intelligence. It immediately attacks. On round three, two more rise from a pile of hay.

600 XP

- 3 Shapeless Wild

Characters checking the horses notice the particularly excessive level of violence inflicted on the poor animals. A Perception DC15 will catch the pouches and saddlebags the horses had when they were killed. In one, they find 30 sp, in another, a fine black powder used in some more nefarious rituals. There is food in two bags, although eating food off dead horses should be a concern. Further searching will find a chain of silver (2 gp), a diary detailing the obsessive desires to convert to the shadow by one Ennis Carson, and a single holy dragon scale (5 gp, though not many people will trade for it).

A Perception DC25 check will find a crushed silver and bronze goblet under one carcass. This is used often in rituals and is worth 120 gp given its current state.

There is an exit here that proceeds down a small dirt path, all the way around the keep, to the pit stairwell.

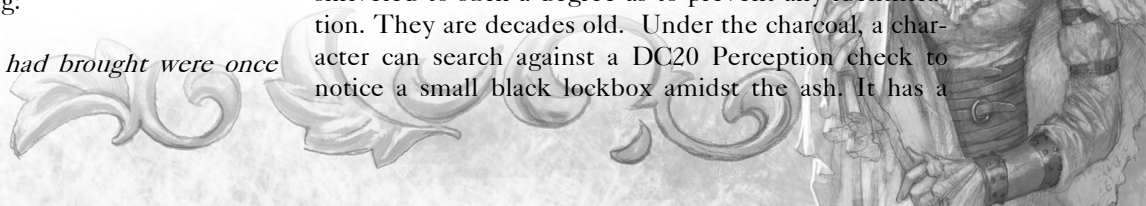
5: KITCHEN

This is the main kitchen of the banquet hall. Read or paraphrase the following:

A large stone counter coming from all the walls of this kitchen rests under a coat of dust. An open oven still has its spit and a thick layer of char and burned bone. Blackened chairs sat at either side of the spit for unlucky servants to spin. Anything else in the room has long since been stolen save for a few broken steel bowls and a hanging rack of cast iron cookware, black as oil and slicker than ice. At the far corner sits a pile of old bodies, withered and dried like raisins.

The characters will have passed the chef's office (so he could check and double-check all the food that came and went). His papers are scattered, faded, and worthless. There are eight bodies in the corner, all naked and shriveled to such a degree as to prevent any identification. They are decades old. Under the charcoal, a character can search against a DC20 Perception check to notice a small black lockbox amidst the ash. It has a

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simple lock (Disable Device DC18) and inside, the characters will find two gold wedding rings (2 gp each) and a silver pendant (10 gp).

6: BANQUET HALL

Read or paraphrase the following:

Instead of leading into a royal chamber, this keep opens directly into the banquet room. A long stained wood table extends for 25 feet down the length of the room. Worn but sturdy chairs surround the room. A large serving hatch connects the hall to the kitchen. A hallway beside the hatch leads to the clerk's office. Another door is closed on the opposite wall to the kitchen. Opposite to the entrance is an equally sized set of oak doors, leading into the receiving chamber. Anything of value has been stolen. Empty metal bars once held tapestries, as did the nails in walls once hung paintings. This makes the three bodies tied to chairs at the table all the more alarming.

The bodies are members of the techan group, Iron Sons. They are not dead, only deep asleep, suffering from the curse of the castle. They cannot be jostled in any way, not even if they are injured. When night falls, the bodies will wither and shapeless will emerge. The players can kill the techans to prevent an ambush later.

There are score marks in the floor where the table had been moved often. This area would also double as a sleeping chamber for those servants of the keep insufficient in station to be honored with a private bed.

Treasure: The techan's gear is all still here and both echan and techan players can take what they like. The techan gear is still functional. Two TL0 machine pistols (only one with a clip with 30 rounds), three battery flares, one electric torch, one lighter, two two-way radios, and 10 uc from various bastions.

If the players search the scratched boards, a DC25 Perception check will find one that is loose. Under the board is a pouch filled with 20 sp and 50 cp and a letter written in English:

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If the sun sets, stay awake, lock yourself in. Bar the doors. Light torches about the room. Avoid the darkness. The shapeless will scrape and claw to get in. By day, defend the keep. Cultists want their offering and will kill those that try to leave. Only half of us sleep every morning while others fight. If you find this, look at the light. You live as long the sun still shines. By nights fall, be somewhere else. Don't bother praying for salvation. We tried.

7: SERVANTS QUARTERS

Read or paraphrase the following the moment the characters open the door:

Echan: *Three loud bangs like thundercracks echo from the room as you open the door. Following instinct you dart from the entranceway. You noticed two hu-*

mans inside but you couldn't see what magic they were employing to startle you so. Three holes explode from the open door. This room was the servants' quarters and these poor souls have been locked within for who knows how long. They don't appear in the talking mood.

Techan: *Three loud gunshots echo from the room as you open the door. Following instinct you dart from the entranceway. You noticed two humans inside, both armed with assault rifles with an obvious intent to use them. They don't appear much better equipped than you, but you don't know how much ammunition they have. This room was the servants' quarters and these poor souls have been locked within for who knows how long. They don't appear in the talking mood.*

ENCOUNTER: These two men, David Stone and Martin Wood, represent the surviving members of the Iron Sons lance that operated a base in Torquil.

2,400 XP

- 2 Iron Sons Survivors

IRON SONS SURVIVORS

CR4

XP 1,200

N Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armor)

hp 30 (6d8+6)

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee teeth and nails +9 (1d4+3 plus grab)

Ranged 1 stub rifle (Martin) +9 (1d8+3); 50 ft.

1 shotgun (David) +9 (1d8+3 and targets hit are knocked prone); 20 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13

Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 20

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; **Languages** Common

SQ bad timing, linked targeting, shattered sanity

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization unique

Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bad Timing (Ex): If either Iron Sons misses a target by 10 or more on his attack roll, he cannot use his weapon on his next turn. The weapon either disrupts or has run out of ammunition.

Linked Targeting (Ex): When either Iron Sons hits a target with an attack, the other Iron Sons may make a single ranged attack against the same target as an immediate action.

Shattered Sanity (Ex): Iron Sons Survivors are immune to all fear effects.

If one survivor is taken alive, the following can be made with the proper skill checks.

Sense Motive (DC18): He's obviously traumatized, but more importantly, he appears sleep deprived, which doesn't help matters in the slightest. They were probably ambushed in the receiving room or banquet hall. Given that his friends have yet to turn to the shapeless, he's only been locked in here for a day or so. Perhaps these two locked the other two out when the fight became too severe and they made a decision which cost the team.

Heal (DC18): He isn't physically wounded beyond the sleep deprivation, which appears to have been going off and on for the better part of a week. The heroes are able to stabilize him, but he needs sleep to properly recover. His lucidness may only be temporary. The heroes are not properly equipped to determine the long term effects psychologically.

Diplomacy (DC18): The heroes try to talk him down; assuring him they mean no harm. The heroes' appearance must have been initially alarming, but the offer of food and water helps greatly. Seeing the light outside has also helped.

Through his frantic speech and hyperventilation, he says the following: *"It-it-it was just a j-j-job. Taking the book was ea-ca-easy. Cake walk, good money, low risk, no w-w-weapons. They said h-h-here—wasn't our idea—they said here. Ok, w-why not."*

"I don't know. The general set it up. He got the c-c-contract. Whoever they were, they c-c-c-can't handle magic for very long. They said they were c-c-c-coming here to pick up the book. I-I-I c-c-c-can't fall asleep. They t-t-took it. The magic user and his flock, p-p-p-preparing for tonight. Don't be here. G-G-G-Get out."

Survivors are not particularly combat worthy but may be good for a few rounds. If one gets involved with either the fight in the receiving room or fights back during the escape, they will be killed.

8: RECEIVING ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

How magnificent this receiving hall must have been hundreds of years ago when two great lords welcomed anyone willing to trek up the mountain to request an audience. Now only fractured brick and decayed wood remains. The two thrones, once carved from oak and gold, sit in tatters. The wood had rotted away and the gold had long since been pilfered. Only stone feet, barely a foot high embedded in the floor, remains. Tiles of jade checkered with marble had cracked with time and abuse. The thrones are not elevated. A stone table, shaped as a crescent moon, curves around the two chairs. Here, knights, businessmen, and landowners would convene to discuss affairs of the day. The room stretches a fair distance to the wooden doors at the entrance. Broken pillars occupy the remaining empty space in this dilapidated room. In front of the crescent

table, a dozen cloaked figures – the same as you killed before – silently kneel before a taller man gleaming in silver and platinum plates. His complexion is perfect, his smile charismatic. He appears as a noble, beaming with allure and chiseled features. His eyes give away his lack of virtue. This is no knight as he looks across the room to you.

"Do you grow restless, my children?" he asks. "You wish to waken anew. Cast off your mortality. All that is required is your desire. No bloodletting, no sacrifice. Just the willing. Sit with us."

When the characters refuse, he concludes, *"Shepherd must cull his flock."* He then motions his followers to attack.

"Alive if possible, let's be merciful." Of course, his brand of mercy involves forcing victims to slumber for the oncoming curse of the shapeless.

ENCOUNTER: The cultists will not attempt to kill the characters if they drop below 0 hit points. If all the characters are reduced below 0, then the cultists will stabilize and immobilize them. Characters may make a DC20 Fort save after 10 minutes to rouse before the curse sets in, but their weapons will be removed and they will still be restrained.

3800 XP

- Katho Kovacs
- 13 Disciples of Kovacs

KATHO KOVACS

CR 4

XP 1,200

LE Medium humanoid

Init +4; Senses Normal; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +4 Dex)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 short swords +6/+6 (1d6+2/19–20)

Spells Prepared (CL 5th)

3rd (2/day)—*haste*, *vampiric touch* (DC 15)

2nd (3/day)—*blindness* (DC 15), *false life*, *ghoul touch* (DC 15)

1st (4/day)—*cause fear* (DC 14), *magic missile*, *shield*, *ray of enfeeblement*

0 (4/day)—*bleed* (DC 13), *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 13

Base Atk +4; CMB +6; CMD 20

Feats Double Slice, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Climb +6, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +4;

Languages Common

SQ my will be done, nihilismancy

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ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization unique

Treasure NPC gear (studded leather armor, short swords [2], other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Nihilimancy (Su): As a swift action, Katho Kovacs kills one disciple of kovacs within 25 feet. Kovacs gains 15 temporary hit points. He can also inflict 5 hit points on himself as an immediate action to increase the damage inflicted on any opponent by any attack from himself or an ally by 5 points.

My Will be Done (Ex): If an opponent hits Katho Kovacs, Katho can direct that attack against the nearest (or next nearest) target in reach or range as an immediate action.

The cultists will rush in to attack and protect their master. There is a pile of gear and treasure in the corner of the room, pilfered by the cultists as well as the other bandits and mercenaries that have frequented this keep.

Treasure: Although there is substantial treasure here, every piece retrieved takes a standard action (this matters): one suede pouch with 50 gp, two linked gold rings worth 30 gp, four short swords in sellable condition, one random magic item worth no more than 500 gp, and the Chronicle of Aurannis.

PREDATOR AND PREY

Once the cultists are down to 3 or less or if Katho Kovacs is reduced below half his hit points, activate the following event:

All remaining natural light bleeds from the room. The shadows begin to grow long and fill the entire chamber. A few formless shapes rise from the casting blackness. Illuminated solid white eyes glint off the silver sheen off razor claws. Claws slide and dance in the blackness, making you unable to see arms or shifting legs. As they emerge from the crevices about the room, whatever light still lingers refuses to reflect off them, and they approach quickly.

Four shapeless wild emerge from each corner and go about attacking both the characters and the cultists. Every two rounds after this encounter, one more shapeless emerges. This will continue until the heroes make their escape. Kovacs will attempt escape through the rubble in the west. If he makes it to the edge without pursuit, he escapes. None of his followers will survive.

As the group passes through the banquet hall, the techans tied up emerge as shapeless and attempt to block the escape. If the shapeless in the stables aren't killed, they emerge when the players pass that door.

When the heroes emerge back into the courtyard, read or paraphrase the following:

The sun has fallen and what few stars could fight against the glare of Attricana poke out from the curtain

of night. Splinters of a few clouds thinly stretch out to the horizon. The black silhouette in the sky at first appears part of the night as it carries stars down with it.

The vessel is taller than long, longer than wide, just under the clouds and just over the trees. As a floating centurion, it dwarfs the mountains and the keep perched atop of it. The Moon and Attricana bare their light through a temporary break and the glisten of the form's metallic skin begins to twinkle. The top looks like inverted boat bigger than any ocean vessel you've seen. Underneath expands into gaping maw. The vessel is daunting in its profile—an overturned boat settling on a dragon's skull. Bumps and divots pepper the hull. No smoke escapes from the exhaust, no glow from idling engines. It hangs on wires suspended from heaven. Metal boarding ramps reach out. Too thin to sustain weight at that distance, but without supports, the bridge doesn't bow, even as the first figures cross it.

Six shapes under the shadow from the vessel scurry over, taking the keep in a record siege. The technological level of this group appears far beyond anything the characters have seen before. As their weapons dispatch the Shapeless quickly, the players should make their escape. If they approach the techans, they will be fired upon. The first shot will miss and vaporize a nearby statue. Next round, if the characters have not taken the hint, fire a real shot (+15, 3d10+6). The opponent techans have an AC of 30 and ignore any damage sustained if struck. This is not a fight the characters should have a hope in winning.

As the players race down the tunnel, at least two shapeless will emerge behind them to fight. As they reach the base of the shaft, two more shapeless will emerge below. The characters can fight or continue their escape. If the players had horses, they are still waiting outside. The shapeless will not pursue outside the keep if the heroes continue their escape. When the heroes have reached the edge of the valley, read or paraphrase the following:

The monstrosity pulls slowly away from the keep. It begins to lift to the sky, pushing through the threshold of clouds. Before the bottom jaw finally vanishes above, a small prick of light leaps from its point. It moves with precision to the keep. A brilliant flash strikes the landscape an instant before the wave of thunder reaches you. It shatters the peak and splinters the mountain as a hammer to a sand sculpture. Smoke and cinders covers what remains under the moonglow. Shards of grass fly as knives past your skin. The first trees lose their needles.

The blast is not radioactive, only a destructive concussion wave. All characters must make a DC15 Ref save or suffers 2d6+4 damage (save half). The blast continues all the way to the forest, where it strips the needles and leaves off the trees. The keep, as well most of the rock tower, has been destroyed. Dust and pebbles are all that remains. If the players have not acquired the book, they

can search the debris against a DC30 Perception check per hour to locate the book. Suffice to say, they should have acquired it already.

CONCLUSION

Even if not defeating Kovacs, the player group is rewarded for his defeat. The heroes can return to Limshau and give the book to Paraerra. He will open the book and read the following:

"Before the First Hammer, the greatest dragon—one of violet and lavender scales—gave up his soul to stop the encroaching darkness of Ixindar. It was Gebermach that wielded the demon blade Dogurasu, plunging it into the dragon's heart, ending the mortal life of an immortal soul. In his final scream of defiance, this dragon of violet and lavender scales brought down a mountain upon Ixindar and orphaned the world to science. The subsequent impact closed the world from magic. Before that instant, the crown of this dragon fell upon the ground. It was shattered, scattered, and forgotten."

"Amethyst was the living deity that forged the first world before it was our world. Before the Hammer. Before science had its reign. And there are others ... all infused into artifacts by owners since passed and forgotten. As they bond to their owners, or as they are brought closer to other fragments, their powers amplify. According to this, there are eight. They have earned names across various kingdoms."

"Amethyst opened the first gate, or maybe he was inescapably connected to it. To control them would be to control the fate of this world, and the fate of his soul. According to myth, to bring them together at the point of his death would allow one to call him back to life. And, in that moment, he could save the world. The power to open or close the gates is contained in these items. With Attricana gone, Earth would fall back to science, leaving man unhindered in his pursuit to retake it, except for Ixindar, of course. Some of techa insist the gates are connected and with one goes the other. If only that were fact. Where these artifacts rest, dark souls converge. Those bound to science wish a normal world while those bound to darkness wish only to see it burn. The luck that it fell on your hands."

"To find the other artifacts means to seek out those brought to their knees by overwhelming evil. Seek out the greatest temples, the tallest towers, and the deepest dungeons. Seek out the vaults closed tight. Seek out the obsessions that drive men mad. The answers have been recorded. Somewhere, in sometime, someone noted their presence ... for they have already all been found. And no one would give up such power willingly or without compensation regardless. Bank on greed as your enemy and ally."

LEADS

Where the players go from here is up to them and you. They may continue this quest or continue with their lives. If they choose not to take on this responsibility,

then Paraerra will offer 2,000 gp for the relic and insist that the amulet stay in the city. This would be the opportunity to plan out the campaign with some clues ... or leave the quest hanging for now to allow the players the chance to develop their characters with other adventures until the quest calls upon them again.



Aiden needed to change his money. Bastion currency was worthless plastic and paper. The bank was a wooden hut with a steel door guarded by three men wielding dull broadswords and crater-ridden faces. The man inside sat on a plush chair and looked thin enough to pass through the iron bars separating him from Aiden. A safe behind him had sunken into the dirt.

"How much?" the cashier, perhaps owner, barked.

Aiden passed his bills through the bars. "Five hundred."

"Looks like four—"

"It's five," Aiden snapped. There was no way to exchange money in the bastion. Angel would accept echan currency because of the raw materials involved, gold and silver, but they would never trade it back. The cashier counted the bills twice.

"Exchange rate isn't good this time of year."

"Exchange? There's no trade, how could there be—"

"It's not good this time of year," he interrupted. The cashier opened the safe and rattled a few bags. "What do ya want?" he continued. "Kroenan? Carmots? Tence? Torquiltence does quite well. A lot of places take it."

"Limshau currency please, carmots, chrysos—actually. Yes, tence would be good. I don't know...fifty?" Aiden had no idea.

"Want gold?"

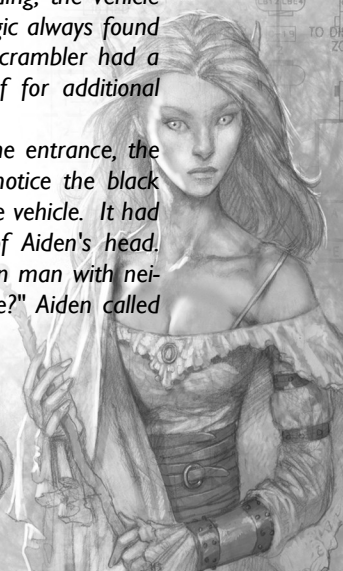
"Yes, lovely."

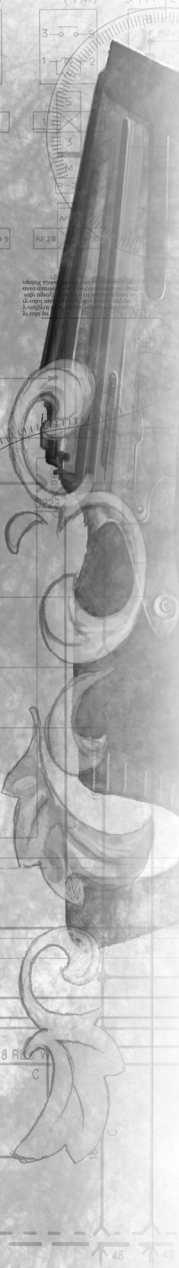
The man chuckled and tendered the coins in a bag. Aiden knew it was short but had no angle to argue.

. . .

The Echan Terrain Vehicle wasn't a simple pantherbike but a colossal scrambler, all thirty feet and forty tons of it. It rolled on six thick-treaded, steel-sidewall run-flat tires, each ten-feet across. Twenty high-intensity discharge bulbs breathed a swath of light across the clearing. The vehicle had a center pivot separating the engine cluster from the cabin, allowing it to navigate around tight spaces and keep its drive train insulated from magical disruption. Despite the layers of padding, the vehicle still needed servicing every thousand miles; magic always found a crack to work itself through. This specific scrambler had a battery of photovoltaic cells glued to the roof for additional range.

Aiden followed the other passengers to the entrance, the last to climb the steps, and the only one to notice the black wooden arrow shaft embedded in the side of the vehicle. It had caved a crater in the panel twice the size of Aiden's head. Aiden motioned to the scrambler captain, a thin man with neither a nametag nor any hair. "Uh...excuse me?" Aiden called out.





Captain Hairless looked up and followed Aiden's eyes to the arrow rooted in the plate. At first, Hairless was unsure what had drawn Aiden's attention. The arrow was obviously an annoyance that had paid him no mind when it occurred. He stepped up to Aiden's level and reached out to grab the exposed shaft.

"Oh don't worry about that," Hairless said as he strained against the arrow. "Picked it up on another run." Aiden nodded and placed a foot inside the cabin. He immediately noticed the still sharp and polished bodkin sticking an inch into the compartment. That made him uneasy. Aiden leaned out again. "Aren't these hulls armored?"

"Seven inches."

"Who?" Aiden started. He glanced inside, following the shaft through the foot-thick sandwich of kevlar, steel, carbon, titanium and plastic. "What?" The arrowhead had kept its point unbroken through the armor. "I mean. That's clean through."

Hairless moved in closer as he pulled hard against the wood. "Look..." He pulled hard and the shaft finally broke free. "Don't worry yourself, and don't scare the others. We're not going anywhere near them on this run. We'll be a minute covering this up. Gotta keep the chaos out." Aiden nodded timidly and entered the cabin.

The seats were of little comfort but a world apart from a horse's back. The crew sat on the deck above and seldom came down. Aiden didn't introduce himself to the other passengers, offering them only a nod and indirect eye-contact.

The older couple and their prepubescent child, all dressed in tatters, must have been stranded outside the wall for several years until finally affording the tickets to return to a world they tried to escape. The two adult men opposite of the cabin were obviously brothers; one lost in the music from his headphones, the other reading a tablet computer. Both looked naïve with polyester pants and rayon jackets, probably fated for Salvabrooke, the vehicle's penultimate destination. Salvabrooke was an adulterated sampling of the outside world, watered down and sanitized for ignorant outsiders, a secluded enclave with few predators and legal brothels, all run by welcoming fae.

The scrambler produced a canine-like yap, following by further anthropomorphic woofs as the engine's various electric motors activated. The growling increased in pitch to a whine and the vehicle launched with surge that tossed loose bags about the cabin. The vehicle moving quickly at the pace that technology found comfortable. It was a cumbersome machine, and when it drove, it pounded and flattened unscarred terrain, marking its path with uprooted vegetation.

The trees fell out of focus at this speed. Aiden couldn't hear anything; the vibrations in the suspension transmitted its noise through the frame of the vehicle.

The grey wall of Angel faded behind, and Aiden felt an unexpected level of anxiety wash over him. Would the dragon save his life again if he were in need? Its name was Genai, a title the city within the city took in tribute. Every time Aiden approached the pagoda atop the pyramid where Genai was rumored to reside, he was shooed away by the sentinel monks.

"If you walk from this city, from these walls, you will always be a child. You will always live in your fantasy." Martin's words came back to him as Aiden closed his eyes and imagined what and whom he would find. No dream would do it justice. No fantasy could be too extreme.

Anything he could think of was real. Why would anyone want anything else? Was the library city of Lim-shau encircled by a pristine white wall? Was there a marsh that marked the corruption of a fallen human kingdom? Were there faerie shapechangers that would marry a man if he stole their scarf?

At first Aiden thought the quick thuds outside came from loose stones on the road or tree branches scraping across the scrambler. Aiden looked out the window and made out a squatty humanoid shape with a fat head losing ground in its pursuit of the vehicle. Aiden couldn't make out much more than that given the vehicle's speed. The creature hobbled clumsily, a bundle of rock-tipped spears under its arm. Another creature appeared ahead, poking up from behind a bush, launching similar projectiles ineffectually against the reinforced hull of the vehicle. Unlike the refined arrow Aiden had seen embedded in the scrambler previously, these had no possibility of penetrating the ETV. Not even the run-flat tires could be pierced by these weapons. Nevertheless, to quell passenger concern and possibly just for the thrill, Aiden heard the high-pitched oscillating mechanical buzz of the techans' retaliatory response.

A second later, a torrent of chemically propelled projectiles sheared a path across the horizon, cutting down the fae and any other wildlife unfortunate enough to get caught between or behind the intended target. A half-dozen more shapes emerged from cover, unafraid of the gatling gun's onslaught. The fae deflected their ineffective spears off the tires and windows. The vehicle shuddered a moment and the passengers all jumped from their seats as the scrambler flattened an obstruction.

"Holy shit!" The driver's voice resonated from the top level. "Did you see that? Head came off from the jaw!" The other passengers were terrified. Aiden was still glued to the window. There were two more collisions as the fae were torn apart under the treads. One leapt up and pounded its head across the door. Aiden jolted back from the window as a bloodied hand thumped across it. Aiden still couldn't catch the details though he was pretty certain the creature had a smile that ran ear to ear.

The attack ended as quickly as it began.

"Don't worry, folks," Hairless voiced over the inter-com. "Nothing we haven't dealt with a dozen times before." The scrambler continued without incident through the remainder of Cyon.

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Several hours later, just outside the forest, Aiden heard the whining of a failed bearing. The vehicle surged then decelerated, bucking the passengers inside. A small pop echoed from the cockpit above. Clear English curses followed and the vehicle stopped. Hairless jumped down from the upper hatch and opened the lower door from

the outside.

"What's the problem?" Aiden asked. Hairless snapped open a hand-sized plastic container and pulled out a disc-shaped piece of plastic. It was red around the edge and white in the center. He placed the disc close to one of the passengers, but nothing changed, then to another with the same result. When the innocuous plastic approached Aiden, the red expanded to fill the disc. Hairless brought the sensor down and seized Aiden's collar roughly.

After being tossed to the dirt, Aiden shouted, "What the hell's the problem?!"

"Son of a bitch," Hairless snapped. He grabbed Aiden's bag and dropped it abruptly on the dry crimson soil. "You book my ride and don't bother telling me you're magic?"

"I'm not!" Aiden glanced at the other passengers. They stared back at him, confused, angry, and scared.

"That ident card even yours?" Hairless snapped as he took a step to the fallen boy.

"You can't forge those!"

"Where is it then? What you got on ya?" Aiden sat there, unable or unwilling to answer. Hairless kicked Aiden's shin. "Where is it?" Aiden fumbled in his pack and drew out his spellbook. He might have yet to turn, but the words and Chen's spark hidden inside were still enchanted. "You got to be kidding. You want to be a wizard?"

"Yes," Aiden muttered almost to a whisper.

"From a bastion?"

"Yes," Aiden answered more resolute as he got back to his feet. "What's wrong with that?"

"The hell's your problem? Are ya retarded?"

"I'm not a radiant. I haven't turned."

"Regardless, you're walking now. Back or forward, your choice. Forward's safer."

Aiden looked to a barren gravel field, the bushes and the scattering of short trees. "This isn't Antikari."

"We're at the border. Safe out of Cyon."

Aiden's eyes wandered around at the expanse. It was nearly a desert. Echa had a tendency to glorify extremes. Woods to wasteland, plains to peaks, with hardly a bush or hill to mark the transition. Aiden could see a dark patch of forest at the edge of the horizon. "There's nobody here."

"Don't care," Hairless replied as he closed the lower door and began scaling up the ladder to the upper hatch.

"Soil my machine with what you got. Should've taken a wagon."

"I didn't think it would break down. Honestly. I thought these were insulated?"

"Only from the outside. You could blow the whole works with a spell if you were stupid enough." Hairless opened the hatch and sat in the copilot's chair. He stuck his head out. "No need to be too scared. Boggs rarely migrate this far from cover. Just keep your eyes open for puggs."

"Puggs?" Rodents of the fae tree, a wingless locust swarm, a growing infestation that plagued the land. If found alone or in small numbers, puggs were no better than rabid dogs, dogs with fingers to hold any weapons

they found. Aiden had read stories. They were all true.

"Oh, don't worry," Hairless replies. "A swift kick usually kills one. You've a gun or a blade?"

"Blade," Aiden answered. It wasn't much. Minx made him carry one. It was small, off balance, not very sharp, and not worth enough to be stolen. Aiden had desired one of the untarnished swords from Chen's collection, but was given a used and blemished short sword. Brandishing it confidently against an opponent was effective if it was held right. He never really held it right.

"Know how to use it?"

"Not really," Aiden mumbled.

"Well...neither do they." Hairless went to close the door.

"Which way!" Aiden shouted.

Hairless poked his head out and pointed. "The road, eight hours. Make good progress, you'll beat nightfall." Aiden's head followed the man's point to a river of mismatched rocks that wound under a skeletal canopy of leafless trees.

"That's a road?"

"You expecting golden bricks? Just stick close to the path and pray it doesn't end." Hairless tapped his throttle and the engine belched. "At least this way, we don't have to detour. You were the only one going to Antikari."

"Glad I could help," Aiden muttered low enough to not be heard. Hairless closed the hatch and the vehicle lurched forward without giving its passengers time to prepare. The scrambler swiveled past Aiden, picking up speed after it passed, leaving a small cloud of dust in its wake.

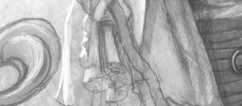
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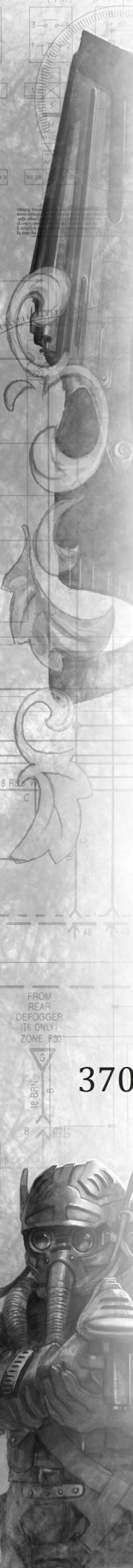
It wasn't much of a road, but someone at sometime strewn these rocks here with a purpose. The trees and bushes were pulled aside creating a path wide enough to accommodate a wagon. It was not an often used road. Aiden kept his walk brisk. He didn't pass any travelers or found any evidence that there ever had been for a hundred years. He couldn't see Angel. Even if the forest wasn't blocking his view, the city was well beyond the horizon.

Aiden wasn't sure why he had noticed the rock. It was a small round stone not unlike a million others on the path. It was smooth and grey with specks of black. It would offer a couple skips if tossed skillfully across a lake. It stood straight on a point against an ocean of flat brothers. Aiden reached down and picked it up. The bottom wasn't flat. He rolled his thumb across its surface and wondered how it found itself standing and how it could remain that way all this time. Was it chance or was it magic? Aiden placed the rock back. It immediately fell over. He tried again, but failed. Aiden finally kicked the stone casually off the path before continuing down the road.

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Aiden was not on the Continental Cross--the moderately traveled highway that bisected Canam which he had read





about. In order to save time, the scrambler crew had gone northeast and made Aiden walk south. Aiden wondered if it truly was eight hours or eight days at his pace. Night fell with no Antikari. Aiden hoped to find gas-fed fires atop of posts and the revelry of rowdy humans behind tavern walls. When he entered the forest the road began to narrow. The light from Attricana beamed down from a cloudless night. Aiden could almost read by it. It looked as any star. It warranted worship as he imagined the constellations did when people could still make most of them out. Now this single brightness reigned orphaned in the night. It was not like the other stars, unfathomably distant holes in the blanket of night. This star required no cresting backbone over the darkness to stay up. Aiden walked but every step was predicated by the dread of breaking a twig and beckoning predators. The canopy above was thickening, dimming the light as Aiden braved deeper.

The lake Aiden approached was almost inviting. He stared at its stillness, its perfectly smooth skin. It unnerved him. He felt the wind but the water refused to obey. Aiden's mouth crumpled and he swallowed. His canteen had been emptied by dusk. He approached the beach slowly and unscrewed the top off the decanter. The strap fell off his shoulder and dangled precarious close to the mirrored surface. Aiden stopped before breaking the surface. He carefully pulled the canteen back. He was positive he'd read something about this, but he couldn't recall the details. He would rather be thirsty. Aiden backed from the beach and continued alongside, following the fading path. It led him back into the dense growth.

When Aiden began his journey, he had refused any working technology. No flashlight. The perky and loyal spark that hovered around him tried to settle his nerves by shining as brightly as it could, but even that only reached a few feet. The spark was only an aide in reading and lighting candles. In a pinch, it might be able to light a fire, but that could cost its life and Aiden wasn't prepared to cast it to oblivion just yet. He still had no capacity to make one on his own. Aiden kept his pace slow but committed as Attricana became nearly completely obscured.

The vegetation started to clear, instilling some momentary hope in him that the road would return. Instead, it opened into a small clearing dominated by a jarring and unbefitting metal tree. Vines had begun winding their way through the shell. A few charred segments of titanium sat behind it. Aiden recognized it as only the tail end of some great beast. Beast, Aiden had to get out his fantasy thinking. It was an aircraft, or was rather a portion of one larger than he had ever seen back home.

Aiden's spark knew it was important and buzzed around the silver hull, delighted that it was able to cast its own reflection. The tail had opened a hole in the forest canopy when it fell, breaking apart bushes and branches on impact. Aiden could tell it wasn't an Angel aircraft. There was something too faultless about the hull, perfectly smooth, without an exposed rivet or puckered seam save where the rest of the hull was torn away. The skin was a sword-thin carbon composite, a sandwich weave beyond the likes seen in Angel. Whatever cause

befell it, a jagged opening offered Aiden cover from the elements.

He let his satchel fall aside and took a moment to eat. He unfurled the foil of an Angel nutrient supplement-500 calories of everything one might need in the wilderness, bound tightly in a pressed package of grains, nuts, and dried fruits. It was genetically engineered to maximize dietary needs without the pesky drawbacks of weight. It was supposed to be filling. It wasn't.

Still savoring the last few bites, Aiden began pushing through the fragments of debris around the crash. The faintest violet glow concealed in a broken crate caught his eye. As Aiden approached, he fell under the shadow of the steel sentinel, leaving only the purple light upon his face.

His hand rolled through fluttering pieces of snow that felt neither cold nor wet and refused to melt in the warmth of his hand. Sprinkles of the white packing foam fell onto the soil.

The item dropped to his knees; the violet light grew beyond a glint. The spark considered it competition and flew down to illuminate the stone as best it could. Aiden noticed four pearl-colored claws clamped around the outer edges of the unrefined jagged gem inset. The fingers of the lizard curled around back, not to form a hand, but to merge with other fingers. Two golden loops could support a chain if Aiden were inclined to flaunt the jewel from his neck. Such an item was jarring amongst the jagged metal and broken technology.

Aiden stared into the crystal.

He felt it staring back.

He blinked.

...

Its body was nearly that of Aiden's fist with eight pencil-thin legs longer than a forearm. Every step taken was careful and quiet, slipping over branches and sidestepping leaves. It stalked up the wool and polyester coat Aiden was using as cover as he slept. A pair of black lidless eyes floating on truncated stalks glanced over the sleeping man. Its legs inched closer to Aiden's neck. Two spidery limbs reached up and tapped each other in front of Aiden's face. Aiden, eyes still closed, turned a nose up and blew out a breath. The creature repeated the soft drum but received no response. One leg from the arachnid stretched out and hung precariously over Aiden's nose. It tapped him gently. Aiden slept soundly. Then twice again.

Three firmer pats and Aiden cracked open an eye. He failed to focus on the blurry mass in front of him. As he adjusted, he stared at the vapid eyes and short jaws and two long legs in front that tapped each other once more to gain his attention.

The scream that sprung from Aiden's throat was loud from adult lungs but pitched high from childish fear. Aiden swatted the creature to the ground and rolled to his feet, flailing arms and legs outrageously. He checked his limbs and digits, shouting as he squirmed away from the calm arachnid as it tapped its two front legs again. Aiden jolted his head around to check for an ambush. Surely, the tapping was the cue for a face-lock from a falling predator Aiden would be too distracted to notice.

There was nothing, just Aiden and the arachnid, both waiting at a distance. Aiden reached forward and quickly snatched his bag. The spark had taken the cue to rest with the rising sun. The chunk of purple stone sat by the bag. Aiden stretched a hand and took it as well, tucking it to the bottom of his pack.

Aiden walked backwards down the path. He took a moment to ensure he wasn't returning the way he entered. Aiden finally remembered the entry from that long forgotten manual and announced it as if the creature could understand. "Book of Many Bugs. Page 346. Harvestman." It tapped its legs. Aiden continued on the road. The creature matched his pace. Aiden paused and so did it, drumming its legs until starting up again to follow him.

"Get lost!" Aiden flailed an arm. It followed. "Get out of here!"

Aiden stopped, then it stopped and tapped its legs. Aiden shouted as loud as he could, stepped closer, and stomped a foot down. It jumped nearly to Aiden's face and he squealed, bolting down the road like his hair was ablaze. The spider ran surprisingly fast and kept up with him for the rest of the hour before finally giving up. As Aiden ran out of sight, the harvestman tapped its front legs again.

...

Bursting from the womb of the forest, Aiden squinted from the sun's glare. The road resumed as empty as before to a blurry horizon. Before the afternoon, he would eat three more bars and still be hungry. The plains passed to a valley. Dried grass turned to green fields. All Aiden could do was walk, and did so until coming upon the wreck.

Its steel axle had bent. The wooden spokes had splintered. Aiden circled the broken wagon with a wide berth. The horses had been torn from their harnesses, leaving bloodied bits and hair tufts on the straps. The half eaten hoof suggested a fast and messy meal by indiscriminate predators. Aiden was unsettled. The blood had the gloss of lingering moisture. A caravan had gone astray, no doubt. No wagon would chance solitude on a barren path. Aiden knew was close to Antikari. A sane captain would take the extra day and follow the continental cross, the same detour the scrambler had made. The door was pinned closed by a rock-tipped spear half Aiden's height, primitive but too large for dog-sized puggs. They had been larger monsters, from the closet rather than from under the bed.

Aiden orbited and checked the opposite door, unlocked. He almost missed the cage, half in the grass and overturned. The simple lock had broken with hammer falls with most missing their mark. Teeth indents around bars, dried spit at every corner, a dozen animals inside had molested each other for the shred of an inch of room. It hadn't been a detour. The slavers turned the moment their stocks were stuffed.

The door came loose off the hinges and fell. Aiden dropped his pack and swallowed as he leaned in. The spear had struck between the stomach and liver of the

man but caught more of the latter. The spear had jammed the body against the wagon. "Oh god," Aiden mumbled.

"Huh," the body burbled after lifting his head. Aiden shrieked and fell back onto the door. He quickly composed himself and reentered.

"Oh my god! Can you talk? Can you..." He said nothing. "Say anything?"

"Mi y'ada," he groaned. Aiden held up his palms.

"Hold that...don't move!" Frantic, Aiden paced around the wagon, unable to act, unable to freeze. He crawled back in. "I can't move you with the spear. Can't take it out either." Aiden reached for his pack and the dull blade meant for threats. He squeezed himself behind the body. He held the sword as high as he could in cramped quarters. He had hoped one slash would do it, but it only dented the spear, pushing the end further into the victim's chest. The man had lost any reserve for a scream and only choked. Aiden squirmed and tried for a harder strike, not that he had held anything back the first time. A second failed. A third cracked and the sword was wedged in the wood with a splinter holding the spear together. Aiden snapped it the rest of the way.

The man's head rolled flaccidly as Aiden pulled him onto the fallen door. He used the bloodied leather straps from the horses' harness and bound the man to the wood. Aiden swatted the man's lazy arm to finish the restraints.

"How far is Antikari?" Aiden asked. "An hour...two?" A cough was all that was afforded. "Just hold on." Aiden pulled another strap around the door and wrapped the other end around his shoulders. The man wasn't scrawny and the door was spruce. Aiden pulled a shoulder muscle lifting it up. Stones barely shuffled as he struggled for an inch. "You've got to be kidding me."

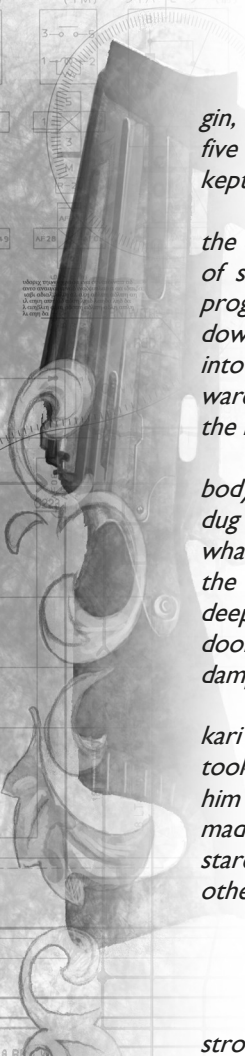
"Esta finderlohn por mia lebon," he moaned.

"Yeah, you said it." Aiden began to walk, slowly at first. Within a few steps, the gravel gave and his shoes slipped, stumbling Aiden to the ground. He punched earth, quietly cursed any eavesdropping, and raised himself and the door again. "Come on! Come on!"

Aiden got momentum and dragged the door over a trivial summit and to the base that followed. The next climb bruised his pectorals and sprained an ankle. The body slipped off at the second crest. Aiden was sure to meet another night at this pace.

"Still with me?" Aiden called out. He wanted to keep talking but was loosing breath. Every lungful of air pulled his battered diaphragm. He should have exercised more. He couldn't stomach a meal and didn't bother offering one.

The tree he caught sight of had twisted its branches through the vehicle, lifting the wreck before the ground could swallow it. Only by pure chance had it survived. Boughs had peeled it apart, crucifying the car across the span of wood. Wheels were forged soft alloy with inadequate tread for unpaved terrain. Red and black and flaking from rust, the one remaining door tapped in the wind on its last unseized hinge. A stainless exhaust refused to wither. Aiden noticed its license plate, a flake of blue on a number, another of red on the word above. From his vantage, Aiden couldn't make out the number or the ori-



gin, not that it mattered. It was a relic from a lost time, five centuries forgotten. He couldn't afford to slow and kept on.

By late afternoon, the rain started and mixed with the dry clay into a viscous mud. The door built up a layer of sludge and Aiden's boots slithered across with little progress. He grimaced through it, letting the water roll down his face. The muck had slipped over his boots and into his socks. The water had pushed into his thermal ware. The clouds were ash, a constant slate which mixed the horizon to the mud.

Aiden lost his footing nearing another summit. The body and the door slid back down the incline until Aiden dug his cleats deep and cut his hand on the strap with whatever lingering strength he had. He pushed back up the hill, dragging the door behind. Each boot slammed deep to get root. Reaching the crest, Aiden pulled the door back up to his shoulders and he stood cold and damp, a thick layer of grey running down his back.

He sighted the wagons, horses, and people of Antikari before dusk, emerging as a rising wave. The grass took a breeze and opened like a splitting river to guide him to town. A pair of aides by a wagon took notice and made for him. Aiden collapsed onto the ground. He stared at the passing clouds. He coughed and wheezed as others ran to help.

...

"Did you know him?" A monitor guard asked him. A strong accent and muddled words meant this wasn't his first language. He tried too hard to pronounce every word.

"No," Aiden answered.

"We could not have saved him."

"Yeah...I know." He didn't.

"He was already half-dead."

"Thought perhaps you'd have a healer."

"Doctor saw him. Too far gone."

"Vivicator?"

"Magic?" The guard shook his head. "One in a million, fewer with men."

"Nothing else?"

"Not more than chicken bones and blind prayer, I'm afraid. Doctors leave for the bastion when good enough." The guard said nothing more, leaving Aiden by the roadside.

Aiden's ward was a notoriously ungrateful slaver recognized for his stocks of broken puggs. He snatched his chattel in Xixion and passed the cross every six months to trade with caravans bound for Malkut. There was neither a reward nor grateful praise for his recovery. The corpse was tossed to a collective grave, a layer of lime the only consideration.

Antikari was unimportant in the world until progressive humans and fae from Limshau decided to set a road across the land, uniting its various kingdoms. The town nurtured a business of escorts and travel guides armed with allies and swords. Rising costs forced some committed pilgrims to chance the journey to Angel alone. At this late hour, gas powered lamps flickered with flame.

The continental cross was a beaten path that connected the bastion of Angel, through house Antikari and house Orchis, and finally to Limshau. Although not always safe, it was the easiest route to take with reduced risk. All Aiden needed to do was book passage and follow the single road to Limshau. He hobbled to the station, still forcing air into his lungs.

The Corrigan caravan was a string of a dozen slow moving conestogas, coaches, and carriages, laced together and towed by a group of oversized oxen. Endowed with magic, the two storey beasts never slept and seldom ate. They could pull a hundred tons for weeks before needing rest. It was what Aiden had waited his life to see, something truly unbelievable and impossible given the rules of science. It was real and alive and beautiful. The conestogas were double in height and the two monstrosities bovine dragged them like living locomotives. Aiden had read about gargantuan snails with houses formed out of their shells and flying boats with stone wings which never flapped. This would do for now.

Ten silver Limshau carmot later and he had sleeping provisions that would travel during the night. Though the caravan was slower than galloping horses, it allowed a heaven in a cushioned bed. It would not leave until morning but the bed was his now. The relief added vigor and Aiden left the bed and made for the town.

Antikari was a small house of questionable nobility in a town that ruled a dozen smaller farms. The main keep was a fenced house slightly larger than the surrounding buildings. Antikari also hated fae. Anyone approaching the town picked up that nugget of gossip. Any moral opposition to the population's xenophobic view needed restraining for those wanting to approach Angel. Travelers needed to unite as the raiders preferred smaller, less defended targets.

Most of the residents of Antikari believed anything non-human was responsible for man's fall from grace. Many of them wished to enter and live in Angel but their lack of useful knowledge prevented it.

The house baronet, Renan Torquil, inherited the keep when Stellen Antikari died from disease, leaving no heirs. Renan, his half brother and 2nd in line to Torquil, claimed the seat before any bastards or distant relations could object.

After taking in a proper meal of rice and chicken, Aiden found himself stalling at the restaurant's bathroom. The paper was rough hemp. There was no seat, no plumbing, and no cover, only a hole in the ground with a bucket of water beside it. It ran to a closed pit a few meters away. Aiden took a glance outside and then back to the task. The ring around the hole wasn't clean, with muddy boot prints and various other stains he would rather not touch with bare skin. Indoor plumbing with moving water was a blessing Aiden instantly missed. There wasn't even a handle to maintain balance. Matters beckoned him and Aiden grimaced his way through it.

...

Caravans alive and rolling as well as sacked and burned could be spotted along the Cross's route. Wandering

shops sold trinkets from the backs of wagons. Carts stayed together for protection, creating nomadic markets that roamed the roads.

A day after leaving Antikari, the Corrigan passed Arciducha--a caravan of 35 wagons that sold fine clothes, rare foods, and even protective lodging with optional vendible flesh to keep merchants and adventurers warm and satisfied. It took four minutes for the road trains to pass each other. Flowers and drinks were share through windows. The drivers passed gossip and news about the road ahead. Aiden noticed various passengers waving and smiling. None of them were techan. All were human.

For the first few days, Aiden was forced to sleep alongside a farmer with leather skin forged from fifty years in the sun. After passing the village of Nymanis, Aiden slept beside two miners that smelled of week-old cheese. As the caravan left the land of Antikari and made for the free house of Orchis, Aiden was upgraded to a wool covered bed of straw in one of the conestogas with four other humans, three from Antikari, the fourth from Plicato.

After the second week, the caravan stopped in Orchis. The "sand-castle," as it was often mocked, was spotted on the horizon, flapping into vision from the waves of heat from dried desert soil. The ruling founders preferred the term "Desert Flower." Regardless of its name, the smooth towers of the relatively small keep soared over those in Antikari or any other buildings outside of a bastion.

A mockery of a legend claimed a demigod of child-like whim packed the sand with water and sculpted the keep with his own hands. Upon completion, he ordered a dragon to fire the castle to an ironstone ceramic. An ashen glaze covered the walls. The castle was then given to the Orchis family on condition that neither the immediate family nor their direct descendants ever sleep beyond the limits of the castle. It ruled over a dozen smaller villages across seventy miles including stops along the continental cross like Archena, Kerria, and Bitterblush. The Book of Free Houses, read to Aiden when he has nine. It was true to.

It was there when Aiden switched over to a larger stagecoach. It had two floors, a hallway, and four rooms with a narrow set of stairs and drapes separating the cabins from the beasts and their reigns. The population increased the further he approached Limshau. The caravan stopped at Blackbaronne and Kendelkorne, swelling in wagons and people. Aiden began recognizing cultures and landmarks from the books he had read. Still no fae. He shared the cabin with a pleasant looking musician wielding an acoustic bass guitar marked with colorful rosettes sprinkled with damaskan elvish. Aiden was still trying to pick up the tongue. It was one of the easier of the elvish languages.

"Ou frei casa y'habit?" the man asked.

"I'm sorry," Aiden answered, "I don't speak... whatever it is your saying."

"Ou niima bastion?" Aiden was sure it was Englo-Lingo, a strange dialect no one at Angel knew.

"Yes...bastion, yes." The man plucked a few chords, evolving with each pass into a complex melody. It was far

superior to any of the synthetic tunes Aiden had heard from his youth, only matched by the ethnic songs from Genai. "It's very good."

"Muzak esta sin knacko civila est verbessern de mecha"

"Whatever you said, I'm sure you're right."

Aiden appreciated the talent the man exhibited, and the level of hygiene was a blessing considering the weeks prior. It was between a surprisingly lengthy tune when the caravan shuddered and stopped. The coach drivers were all trained to pull their breaks in chorus but the vehicles still struck each other, causing Aiden to fall onto the floor. His coach was near the front and Aiden poked his head out to see what caused the halt.

It was a dumpy figure jabbing a dead jackrabbit repeatedly with a sharpened stick. Despite the state of the prey, the predator continued to perforate the body. The creature resembled a hairless dog walking on bipedal legs. Floppy ears fell by a flattened head. The caravan was understandably cautious. One could mean thousands. A forward guard readied a crossbow shot. Despite the racket of animals and passengers, the pugg ignored the group. They couldn't allow it to live, even if it did pay them no mind. It turned sharply and uttered a scream that crossed the laugh of a monkey with the shriek of a bat.

Dozens more vermin swarmed from the trees towards the caravan. Aiden fell back into the coach and slammed the shutter down. The voices and clatter of armed guards rushed past him.

"All able bodied men to the front!" screamed Captain Rothschild as he walked by the coach. "Grab a sword. If you can hold it, you can wield it."

"Esta sang froid!" said the musician as he took the call and departed. Aiden leaned forward to follow. The screams of the innocent forced a moment of pause and Aiden froze.

The captain poked his head through the door. "Out of the room, this duties' for all," he snapped. Out of reflex, Aiden grabbed his totem book as he left. "What's that?"

"Spell book," Aiden answered.

"A mage, we've hit the fools luck." He snatched Aiden's shirt and pulled hard. "Get behind a sword and throw some fire."

"I actually--" Aiden was cut short as he was tossed onto his feet out of the coach. He fell in behind a hefty fellow draped in mail and topped with a burgonet. His weapon was a well weighted often used broadsword. It was already blessed with pugg blood. The rodents were rolling over each other to get to their prey. A few wore scraps of clothes, many were naked. Most wielded sharpened sticks though the rare pack leader gloated a rock or steel tip. The guard cleaved one on his downswing and caught another as he brought his blade back.

In history, puggs had been attributed to brownies, boggles, leprechauns, and various other sprites. They were the fastest growing species to emerge from the gates. All they cared for was breeding and eating and finding the easiest and fastest solutions to both. They painted no art, wrote no poetry, and carved no sculptures. If they

ran out of prey, they turned on each other.

"I heard right...mage?" the guard asked Aiden behind him.

"Apparently. Watch out!" Aiden shouted as a pugg dove to impale a stick into the guard's shin. It was kicked away by a spiked boot.

"Human wizard," he responded with hardly a strain, "good marks on ya. Barking storms and cackling fire, eh?" Aiden held a tuff of steel loops in his hand to ensure his cover remained in front. "I don't really follow you, no." The guard leaned back. "Well, cast something."

"I could..." Aiden had a hard enough time concentrating on his normal thoughts. To keep such a word in his mind, to recall all his knowledge of it, and in its expression, alter the physical rules of the world was out of his reach when ferocious monsters were within theirs.

"You know, I'm not good with a sword, but perhaps I should--"

The guard turned sharply back. "Are you a mage or not? Throw down the pillars, boy--"

"Holy fuck!" Aiden shouted. The guard turned back to see the blurry point of a rock-tipped spear only an instant before it drove into his eye. The lumbering corpse fell back on Aiden, pinning his legs under 300 pounds of dead flesh and steel. The pugg pulled the spear from the wound and smiled teasingly. The terrified wizard kicked and struggled under the weight. His book was still in his hand. This pugg had more than a few scraps of cloth draped over it, the chief. Aiden waited for his rescue, for that moment in every book where the hero would be saved at the last second. A dragon would be good but a well placed arrow would do.

The creature's spear drove an inch through Aiden's layers of cotton and polyester and into his leg. The pain was shockingly intense. The pugg pulled it back quickly and strolled over the corpse to aim for Aiden's face. The leather-bound spellbook had a skeleton of wood. It was heavy for its size and durable. Only a handful of pages were pierced as the book was held up as a shield. When Aiden pushed the book back, the creature fell off the guard's body.

After dislodging himself from under the armored carcass, Aiden rolled back and slammed the tome as hard as he could upon the pugg's head. He brought it down again, hearing a crack, and another, which added a blemish of blood on the cover. All his strength in a third cracked the creature's bones and snapped the spear. A fourth, fifth, eighth, twelfth, and there was little left other than broken bones and blood. Aiden kept at it up until jostled by the shout.

"Hey...sparkle boy!" shouted the captain. Aiden looked up from his kill. The remaining puggs had been driven off or killed. Three guards had fallen along with two passengers. "You done wowing it with wizardry? It's over." Aiden lifted himself from the ground, looked at the nearly destroyed book, and limped back to the carriage. As he struggled up the steps, he could hear the captain adding, "Some magic you got there."

Aiden ignored him.

...

It was hours after the caravan got moving again did a doctor see to Aiden's injury. As the healer pulled the broken layers of clothing away, they both realized how pathetic the wound was. The doctor didn't comment and went about with three stitches. Aiden didn't voice his concern if the needle or thread was sterile or if brandy was the best cleaning solution. The sutures were clumsy and the brandy hurt as much as the needle sewing his flesh. Aiden winced away the pain the best he could but a single tear still found itself rolling down his cheek. He lifted the cover of his spellbook. It was beautiful once, blind tooled with symbols from Chen that Aiden was still trying to decipher. The uneven and muddled pages were a requirement, filled with scratches and notes on the sidebars. Equations and shorthand filled every space. Sitting perfectly even and parallel were the symbols of Aiden's devotion, the words of Pleroma.

The leather cover was broken. The spine was cracked. A bushel of papers fell out as he placed the book on his lap. The spark flew out of a fallen page and whizzed around Aiden's head, around the room, before flying back to its written word on the scattered leaf. The blood had gotten through the hole and stained the first few pages. Aiden gathered the fallen notes and minor incantations and slipped them back into the broken book. After he was left alone in the coach, Aiden glanced at the abandoned guitar and realized who one of the fallen passengers was.

"Shit..."

...

Captain Rothschild called Aiden to the reigns at mid afternoon on the next day. Aiden was still nursing a mild limp as he pushed through the drapes and stepped onto the front of the road train.

"Captain?" said Aiden.

"Yes, have a seat." The captain had a cushion. Leaf springs didn't soften every rock. The vantage was impressive. Three storeys up and Aiden could just see over the crest of trees. Looking down brought him square into the ass of a cow twice the size of an elephant.

"How's the wound?" The captain emphasized the last word.

Aiden stroked the bandage he could see through the hole in his pants. "It's nothing."

The captain shook his head. "Could have told me you couldn't do magic. My fault for not knowing better. Human casters were rare enough."

"I know the words, but--"

"Not in combat. If you want a light, make a fire. That's a useful skill. Carpentry, metalwork—hell—musician, there's some value in that. Why don't you do something productive. Wizard...same spells then are the same today. Nothing changes, never gets better. Can't build on a spell, son." Aiden nodded. He didn't wish to engage in an argument, not now, not here. Aiden had practiced the basic words for years. The pain had been distracting. The creature's scream had been unsettling.

Those were good reasons but they were probably wrong.

"So which house?"

"House?"

"A peasant-born would know a blade. You've got skin as pure as a fae's ass. You were raised in sanctuary. So which house? Antikari? Torquil? You don't look in-bred."

"You need to slow down." The captain looked ahead to see the approaching dust plume, moving fast.

"Storm? Stampede, maybe?"

"I don't think so."

The captain stood up and shouted to the controller at the rear of the coach, "Full stop!"

The man at the back stood up and a chain of screams followed down the line, "Full stop!" The captain pulled on the huge brake and the coaches slowed with the animals.

"You know what that is?" Rothschild asked. "If it's a chiggoth, we're all dead."

As it rose over the hill, Aiden recognized it. It was taller than all the trees around, with eight wheels that dwarfed even the caravan's beasts of burden. The goliath lumbered over the landscape with carbon-kevlar wrapped tires, scarring the earth with deep treads. It plowed over small trees, spoiling the forest with its girth. The brute clumsily pushed and bullied its way through whatever stood in front. The scrambler Aiden had ridden in pranced gracefully in comparison. It was twice the height of the caravan and held twice the people. Its main body was lifted high over its axles, allowing it to drive over the forest rather than through it. Only leviathans like this ever made it this far from a bastion and even then, they were a rarity. It was flanked and escorted by a half dozen all-terrain bikes with enclosed cockpits and chunky tires. Aiden grimaced at the eyesore as it passed.

"What a monster!" the Captain admired.

"Aptly said," Aiden replied. Monster was related to monstrosity, an abomination, something exaggerated, perverted, a sin against nature.

"Still beautiful in its own way. Nothing to fear with that. Not a dragon or chiggoth. That's traveling in style."

"It's 2500 tons of iron and carbon driven by an energy that would vaporize this forest if it were released."

Unlike the scrambler, this vehicle couldn't generate enough power from solar cells alone. Hidden deep inside, locked in an iron shell, was the energy of the sun.

"Still beats walking," the captain replied. Aiden turned to reenter the coach. "What would you call something like that?"

"Mark 13 Behemoth," Aiden answered as he left the captain. Built from Angel, the largest of its kind. If it was a living beast of grace and power, Aiden would have thought different. He didn't recognize the irony in that. The captain turned and watched Aiden vanish into the vehicle. "Well, good luck out there, techan."

...

It was four days later when Aiden heard the shout.

"Custodians! What fortune!" Captain Rothschild shouted from outside. Aiden jumped from the bed and scratched frantically at the wood to slide open the shutter.

The parade had passed into Limshau's borders during the night.

"The anathema flee further into the west," a sharp, clear, and charismatic voice answered, a master of the language, "chasing food and from that which feeds upon them." Aiden poked out his head to see. When that failed, he went for the door.

"Yeah, they were here, 'bout two dozen. Never seen them this far," the captain replied. Still with half his layers on, Aiden threw open the doors, missed the steps, and slammed into the dirt. He flinched from the pain still in his leg. It passed quickly as he saw them, as real as every wish wanted them to be.

The damaskans noticed Aiden with their piercing almond eyes as he rounded the carriage. These two wore new clothes, pressed and clean--a common feature of the species. They abhorred getting dirty. The ears, their most distinguishing feature, tapered straight out a few inches from the sides of the skull to a sharp point. Both these guards were male. Supposedly, a female's ears were pointed higher and fluttered depending on her mood.

Their hair was dark and cut under shoulder length. Their skin was light tan. Aiden took note of their visible age, younger than himself. They wore the black kawabari and overcoat distinctive of the warrior scholars from the city of books. The kawbari Limshau armor was the uniform and signature of the custodian. Overlaying leather, both conditioned and boiled, covered nearly every inch of their bodies. The longcoat of thick split leather, ran down to the base of waist in the back, but flowed down past the knees in front. Their blades were locked and safe on their backs.

"Perhaps the speculation of a chiggoth in this region is accurate," the one custodian said.

"Either way, you here for escort?" Rothschild replied.

"No. You are three days from the city. You will find no other threats in your approach. We patrol to find the nest. We suspect it not far from your path. Have you suffered losses?"

"A few, yes."

Aiden just watched and admired the accuracy of those stories. They walked with such subtlety and lightness, they were hardly leaving impressions in the soil. Every arm movement was intended, no peculiar itches or nervous ticks, no idle hands. They stood straight and balanced without shuffling. Their very existence was a denial of common sense and if the gate above were to close, their deaths would be quick under the unforgivable wrath of logic.

"Unfortunate," the custodian said.

Other passengers had emerged from the convoy to get their glimpses. Some had seen the likes of them before. The women were smitten. The men were unsettled but unsure why.

"Should we worry over contraband?" the custodian added. Aiden noted they had no horses. They ran without a drop of water or sweat since the city and would continue to do so until nightfall.

"Never gave you reason to suspect before," the captain answered. "Still, you're in your place and welcome to

check."

"We already are."

The third custodian wore white and was orbiting the opposite side of the caravan. Aiden turned back to notice and instantly became aware of his unbuttoned undershirt, his damaged pants, his unshaven face and morning hair.

She studied every passenger, scrutinized each vehicle, and did so with only a passing glance. She looked like a human girl barely at the sunset of her teens. Aiden couldn't find a single flaw on the modest amount of exposed skin. Gentle enough to be swept away by a stiff breeze, strong enough to push the breeze back. Narrow in face but high in cheeks, her slender body floated towards him. A sharp nose led to brilliant green eyes.

Aiden's jaw became unclenched. In a beat, he was fourteen again, ogling the sketches under the bedsheets. He became ashamed by his imperfections and hygiene. The light caught her flowing straight dark hair thrown back from a head turn. Strands pulled aside to expose the ears. Her smooth, light brown skin peeked from gaps in her armor. She was close and he appreciated the perfection. The coat had round buttons that continued up from the hips to the high collar, where it was topped by a firmly secured short belt. The collar continued half way up her long neck.

She passed him and stopped as they locked eyes. He wanted that to last forever. Everything everywhere led to this instant. It was beyond anything he had imagined or prepared. She broke the moment and looked down at his arm. When she reached for and grabbed it, the adrenaline could be measured in wattage. She pulled his sleeve and revealed the watch. "Romper?" she asked

"Pardon?" Aiden answered.

"Non functional." She shared the accent of the others, a strange sort similar to Minx's, but with an emphasis on perfect pronunciation.

"Yes."

She released him. "A wizard's walk and bastion born. You have a tale."

"I do indeed." Aiden tried to form the best smile he could. His thoughts quickly migrated to remind him of the unbuttoned shirt and rumpled hair.

She tilted her head and a slight smirk to lift the spirits of the dead crept over her face. "Then the city will welcome you."

"Thank you," was all he could marshal as his brain rambled on with other distracting thoughts.

"Anything of concern, Raven" called out the lead custodian.

She answered him. "There is nothing tainted or corrupted. No advanced technology."

"Very good."

Aiden glanced at his watch. "Prohibited?" he asked.

"Not exactly," Raven answered as her smile faded.

"Unprotected power cells are unsafe in environments such as these.

Aiden attempted to impress. "Actually, I know... I've...I've read."

"Then reminding you of it was avoidable," she answered directly and stepped away. Aiden furrowed his brow, unsure how to make of that.

The lead custodian resumed his conversation with the captain. "We will leave you to your journey," the custodian said. He called out, "let us continue, Raven."

Raven started for the other two. Aiden stepped up to follow her. "Raven, nice name."

She continued walking. "It is," she replied. Fae seldom sported curves. Detractors complained of their lack of definition, that females missed many of the voluptuous aspects of women, and males the tone and muscle of stout and sturdy men. All Aiden could think was how those critics never spotted a damaskan from behind strapped in kawabari leather.

The captain offered his hand to the lead. "Thank you again." When it wasn't accepted, the captain let it drop. The two custodians approached Raven.

Aiden watched her slip away. He didn't want to follow but he couldn't let it drop.

"My name's Aiden," he finally announced.

She looked back as she walked away. "I did not ask." He had read they had no concept of deception, that their outlook and behavior was foreign to those unaware. A year visibly older or younger could mean a century. A century of traumas and delights can change a person. His hand under no conscious control finally took the initiative and flattened his hair and buttoned his shirt. They vanished into the woods, her white leather the last to fade. The passengers and guards boarded the caravan. Aiden kept his eyes on the fluttering leaves.

The captain walked back around. "Hoping for an impression?" he asked, finally jostling Aiden out of his delirium.

"I don't know. I guess yes."

"Next time don't ask a question you know the answer to." Aiden broke his stare to finally look at him.

"Don't fret, you'll see more where that one came from." He patted the disillusioned wizard on the shoulder.

"Yeah, but..." Aiden had ceased being an adult some time ago.

...no higher than a princess, an exotic, a target that could never be struck...

"You'll remember this meeting, but it's not memorable. Sorry to say." The captain climbed on top of the lead coach. Aiden brought his eyes back to the forest. He wasn't sure what the captain meant. "Hey! Get on the train," was the final snap Aiden needed to recover his adulthood. He walked up the steps, back into the coach.

"God have mercy on you in Limshau."

...

Adding to a library bequeaths unlimited freedom of all books. A rule and principle of Limshau. Aiden knew the directives put forth by the nation of knowledge. Chen told him to take a book with him and offered one from his personal collection. He handed him an unlabeled pre-gate book of some age. Gilt rosettes ran inside gauffered edges of the front and back cover of the black tome. Inside the border, more gold engravings of urns and vases tumbled around a central tapestry of ovals and squares. Aiden noted the lack of a label anywhere on the cover or

binding. The inside held a mouthful, *The Glory of Her Sacred Majesty Queen Anne in the Royal Navy*. A rare book. Chen promised the volume would yield indefinite access to whatever library he offered it to. Aiden flipped through its rough pages once or twice, never fully understanding the prose or context. Better than any currency, it would pay for Aiden's stay in Limshau for as long as it would tolerate him. Like all other late arrivals by foot, mount, or caravan, he waited outside until the main gate's opening at sunrise.

The White Walls of Limshau were a maze of dense stone walls radiating from the central archives. They held the combined knowledge of a hundred nations. After the gate re-opened, damaskans rebuilt their civilization, splitting into two empires on either side of the planet. On one side, Damasia was rebuilt to its former glory. On the opposite, the fae erected the empire of knowledge. All damaskans lived in homes made of stone, not wood. Most of their cities were built into tall mountains or next to cliffs and always facing a major river or body of water. Where they differed was that Damasian cities expanded across open fields stopped only by water and cliffs where Limshau restricted its cities by raising walls. Damasian cities scraped the sky with sharp spires, a landscape of porcupine quills. Limshau's jigsaw of flat, interlocking, and tessellating buildings allowed an unobstructed sunset.

Fae races seldom recorded anything. Their history was marred with inaccuracies, legends claimed as fact, facts discredited as myth. Damaskans brought little with them when they returned to this world and were forced to reconstruct their past from scattered memories and the occasional relic. They wouldn't volunteer their own opinion on their pages, clogging the books with judgment, sentiment, and meaningless monologue. Where humans believed any individual could stand on a box and preach prose worthy of print, damaskans remained quiet, recording events from a distance.

Ten stories and uniform in texture, the white walls encircled the library entire, thirty miles from end to end. When engineers proposed the periphery, they envisioned a flawless circle of mathematical precision. Not a single error survived the obsession of hundreds of dedicated engineers over the century of the wall's assembly. Single slabs of waxy white marble reached ground to sky. A heavier layer of granite behind offered protection. In three hundred years, the wall never suffered an attack. Like Angel, a substantial population grew outside to take advantage of those arriving and leaving.

Shops were scattered about the housings, selling hundreds of various items for the passing and departing traveler. Aiden purchased a bowl of rice pudding farmed from nearby paddy fields. The moment the dealer spotted Aiden's mechanically spun pants, the price of the bowl doubled. Aiden sat in the corner of the open-air brasserie, flipping through the bound pages of his unique currency. He barely registered the approaching figure until the shadow blocked the overhead oil lamp.

"You read," the man stated, not asked. His accent came from speaking Mulkut Onespeak for most of his life. He wore a dirtied brown longcoat of thick threads closed with every oversized leather shank buttoned. Large trav-

eling boots clobbered the floorboards. An unzipped hold-all hung from his shoulder. Aiden recognized him from earlier but tried not to notice. Throughout the sprawl, he stood upon boxes preaching the unswerving dedication of his faith. He judged passing sins and cursed those of fae blood he spotted. All the while, the symbol--a cross with circles at the points--was visible on his coat and on the small book he never opened. The pamphlets he distributed throughout the day also featured the mark. Aiden saw one palmed in the man's hand as he made conversation.

"Apparently, yes," said Aiden, refusing to look at the immigrant.

"Give this one a try." He revealed the pamphlet and dropped it on the page of Aiden's book. Badly drawn sketches with pretentious dialogue detailed the fall of man due only to their decadence and over-reliance on technology. It preached the new world existed only as a test for mankind to overcome. Only by resisting the temptations of the new world would man ascend. This included such dramatic illustrations as a proud human turning his back on the hand of friendship from a chaparran, and the man suffering a heart attack at the end proclaiming, "TAKE ME HOME!" after a lifetime of unwavering piety.

Aiden glanced at the pamphlet only a moment before raising it up between them. "Is this a voucher? Can I trade it as a token for an exorcism? A mortal sin? I heard these count two-for-one in the city's brothel."

The man was taken back, snapping. "You insult me--" "I'd prefer to tear it up, though destroying the written work in front of the white walls is an offense even I won't commit, despite the contents." Aiden tossed it back. The man caught it and pointed a finger with it still in his hand.

"This world awaits our hand to cleanse it. If you saw the scars upon our land by the claws of machines, you would agree. They live a life against God."

"That was never the reason why I left...move on."

"God will remember this conversation if you won't." Aiden looked down to continue his reading but added as a mutter, "Sure he pays attention to me."

"He attends every second of all our lives. No one can fully understand his plan--"

"Least of all some imbecile handing out repression and racism outside of the greatest repository of all knowledge."

"I am a humble servant, willing and able to share his grace and wisdom with others."

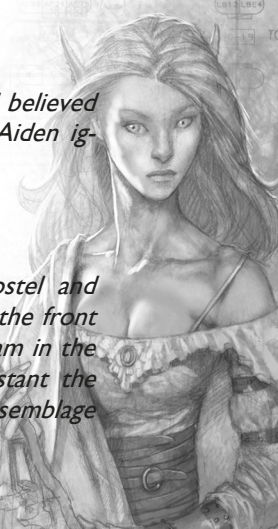
"And the fae are exempt from this?"


"By his word."

"Then spoken by an ugly god. Even when I believed in him, he was never that petty. Move...on." Aiden ignored anything else the man had to say.

...

By sunbreak, Aiden had checked from the hostel and made his way to the eastern gates. He reached the front of the line before the crowds gathered. The seam in the door was nearly invisible until it broke the instant the sun's rays drifted down the wall. The simple assemblage





of gears and pulleys moved the huge slabs of stone effortlessly. On the other side, a smaller gate of chain and iron was guarded by a handful of custodians. Two damaskans guarded either side, armed with a katana and tanto with a human custodian sitting behind a podium, brandishing a clipboard and pencil. They were dressed in the black kawabari Aiden had seen before. The human greeted him.

"Hola. Sprache?"

"English?" Aiden answered and asked.

"Lingo or Franca?"

"Franca."

"Early morning sir. You carry papers?"

"Yes." Aiden brought up the various papers proving his identity. This included the Angel Ident Card and a letter of recommendation from David Obatala Chen. The custodian stopped at the latter and didn't bother flipping through the others.

"Aiden ka-moo?" the custodian verified.

"Kae-mus."

"Just arrived or spent the night?" The guard filled out Aiden's temporary passport.

"The night."

"No aggravations, I hope?" The custodian stamped the passport and handed it back with the papers.

"Just some Malkut immigrant pandering his paranoia."

"Odd they still do after escaping that madness."

"Keeps them safe I suppose, a delusion to depend on. Thank you." Aiden retrieved the papers and made his way through the gate.

As he passed through, the custodian said to his back, "The gods may be dead but faith is no delusion. Enjoy your stay in Limshau." Aiden turned back and paused, but didn't comment.

...

Thousands moved without a shove in the streets. No one needed to control the crowds, though wagons and horses often found it difficult to press through faster than a crawl. The buildings blended together. As Aiden wandered deeper, the city grew taller.

He navigated through the narrow cobblestone streets. He pushed against the chalk walls as beasts and wagons plowed by. Various silks were danced in front of him to entice a sale. Another peddler promised increased lovemaking in a pouch filled with powdered dragon testicles. A pair of custodians chatted with a merchant. An orange-haired child-like gimfen stood atop his cart, selling various silks gathered from his villages in the north.

Gimfen came from those playful tales about helpful spirits that would lend a hand in need or work without compensation making toys in the bitter cold inside some fat man's sweatshop. The gimfen was barely four feet with the thin body and eyes of a child.

A few legal tall-eared scarlet women promoted their pleasure from a second level window. They were damaskans. Aiden made himself stop. The fae smiled and flaunted their thin subtle curves to passing eyes that viewed them. They did what they wished and needed few laws to keep them ethical. Aiden forced his eyes back on the road as the temptation was increasing as he stared.

More books rested on the shelves of Limshau libraries than anywhere else on Earth. The namesake capital was the largest of all of them. Escapees from the bastions often smuggled forbidden manuals from their home to barter into Limshau to get a head start on a new life.

Twinkling chips of granite fell across his face as a heavy cart rolled over a stone bridge above. Limshau was as a stacked city, with a lattice of stone and wooden paths above the main roads. Aiden took the lure and diverted to one of the wooden overpasses to get a look across the ocean of stone, wood, and flesh. The market ran for miles with a hundred thousand humans and fae going about their lives.

There was nothing out there, Martin had said. Aiden leaned his weight on the railing and admired the labyrinth. It reminded him of Genai—a network of mathematical imperfection. The outer walls might have been faultless but city was a delightful mess. Obstructing statues standing in intersections. Living trees peeling apart stonework to gain their roots.

Aiden heard two long high-pitched notes boom over the market. It brought up his eyes along with all those of the street. Considering the volume, Aiden had expected a colossal horn atop a citadel, coiling around the tower to a tiny mouthpiece connected to an embouchure of a broad-lunged dwarf. The notes repeated, calling out for attention from the entire city. Aiden's eyes focused on an immense silhouette climbing over the shrouded sunrise. It bathed Aiden and the market in shadow. He recognized the colossal outline of an airship, the Abecedarian—an illustration Aiden had previously seen in a book. It was real to.

The golden coat of the 1200-foot long vessel floated past the outer wall. Only a small cabin hung underneath the smooth untarnished skin with most of the crew and passengers resting comfortably inside the superstructure. Aiden took a moment to drink in the sight. Such a vessel sat on the border of disruption, relying on unbroken physics to keep itself aloft. It was a thermal, lifted by heated air. The behemoth hadn't touched more than a single wheel on the ground in 115 years. Propellers bigger than men spun as the vessel slowed towards the mooring tower. The sun appeared again behind it, turning the dirigible black. It wasn't a forty foot French horn, but it would suffice.

...

The appraiser had a desk plate announcing him as Roland Gauss. Gauss rolled his fingers over the spine of the book. He opened the cover and checked for bends, ensuring the bleed was undamaged as it folded over the front. Aiden's book was without rips, and the leaf had significant strength. Gauss was impressed. The room resembled Chen's biblio but with more collections and total works over singular novels.

"The Glory of Her Sacred Majesty Queen Anne in the Royal Navy and Her Absolute Sovereignty as Empress of the Sea, Asserted and Vindicated by Joseph Gander, amazing," the appraiser complimented. "Printed in 1703 and only once, a treatise for an age no one remembers.

You weren't brandishing this book openly, were you?"

"No," Aiden lied, and Gauss could tell.

"Good thing no one out there appreciates real treasure," Gauss answered as he examined the book. "Gold is such a distraction. How many riches wait ignored by the rabble? Chen must have faith in you to offer this as a trade."

Aiden still hadn't checked in. His pack sat across his lap, covering the hole in his pants. "You know him?" Aiden asked.

Gauss was pleasantly plump with three inches of growth across his face and a mop of chestnut hair. His teeth were straight and gleamed white across his dark beard.

"Every custodian worth his sword, every librarian worth his books knows him," Gauss said. "His life is priced more than the tomes in his collection." Gauss danced his articulate fingers across the embossed cover.

"He's invested greatly in you, my friend. You looking for passes or currency?"

"I think both."

Gauss rolled his chair across to a nearby shelf and retrieved a ledger. "Well, passes translate to more for you. Compensation will be higher. Wizardry?"

"Uh...yes." Aiden was almost apprehensive to answer.

"What I love to hear," was his legitimate jovial response. "Human mages are rare in this world. A perchance for wonders and whimsy." Gauss loved words and enjoyed their expression. "You flipped?"

"Not yet."

"Well, it's not easy. I know too well." He opened his book and began logging in the details of the transaction. "Could never manage more than a card trick myself." After filling out some initial documents, he opened a drawer and revealed a piece of hard cardstock barely bigger than a pocket photograph. "This is an access pass. Hold that." He offered it to Aiden and he accepted. Aiden's signature, which he hadn't given, and his likeness, which he hadn't offered, etched upon the surface. "Pretty clever?"

Aiden flipped it around in his hand. "Actually it is."

"Can't even be stolen now. Hand it over." Aiden did so. Gauss dropped it in his drawer and closed it.

"Check your pocket." Aiden followed and reached in, felt the card, and removed it. Aiden smiled at the real magic. Gauss opened hands and leaned back in his chair.

"Your approbations are drippings from a Christmas turkey. I do have a hand with card tricks."

"You a wizard?"

"No," Gauss laughed. "Parents forbid it. Dad recommended I pick up a serious profession like silversmith. In the end, he settled for alchemy. Not all magic comes from the spoken word. There are those naturally blessed and those that mix materials fallen from heaven." Aiden disputed the use of heaven as science had its own theories. He didn't voice those thoughts. "Don't get jealous. Pleroma is still the standard. You figure that out, kingdoms will open their legs for you."

"No pressure though."

"If it was easy, everyone would do it, and a genocide

by fools would follow."

"I thought all genocides were by the hand of fools."

"Point. Unfortunately, to master Pleroma requires intelligence, not wisdom."

"If everyone could wave a wand, there'd be anarchy," Aiden quoted his memory.

"Exactly. Thankfully for every hundred students following the arcane, usually only one emerges a wizard. If you're interested in classes, start with Dr. Paraerra. He doesn't teach spellcraft but many say you can't walk the path without him." Gauss pointed at the card in Aiden's hand. "Regardless, that will get you into any branch. With Chen's recommendation, you have the red banner. Flash it to borrow private editions from homes if you require. Trust and respect is assumed."

"Thank you."

"You were expecting...exploitation?" Guess leaned forward as he toyed.

"The trip here...was—"

"Anyone claiming a journey is half the fun lost faith in the destination." Gauss pulled out a stack of papers and signed the bottom of each. He then offered them. "Six months paid room and board. Private accommodations, you have a guest?"

"No," Aiden answered, though trailing off at the end.

"Planning on one?"

"I don't think so."

Gauss tendered the currency next. "And carmot, only currency we deal in. Four hundred remains after lodgings. Keep it in ration." He filled out a receipt. "Even a white city has shadows." Aiden looked at the paper in Gauss's hand. "We have banks," Gauss added.

"Oh--" Aiden accepted it receipt.

"Didn't think I'd hand you a stack of gold and silver in a leather pouch, did you?"

Aiden laughed it off, "Sorry, of course." He looked at the receipt as his signature and face drew themselves onto its surface. He looked back to Gauss as the realization washed over him. "You said you knew alchemy?"

"A hankering is all I'll admit."

Aiden opened his pack and pulled out the stone he found in the crash. It still glowed with its own fire, uncaring for having been ignored. "What do you imagine this is?" He offered it without worry.

Gauss looked at it over indifferent. "A glowing rock."

"Thank you," Aiden answered blankly.

"It could be sapping your life force as we speak or gifting you with foresight. Suffer from either?"

Aiden smirked. "I believe the melancholy is purely self-induced."

Gauss handed it back. "I like the clasp. Someone thought it was important. There's a religion based around purple stones. Something about a dragon god, I think. Older faith, pre-gate. Never seen one glow. Could be naturally imbued. You ever get drunk?"

"No--"

"In human mythology, amethyst would stave off drunkenness. Many of those stories had some measure of truth."

"That they did."



"I'll take it off your hands if you need extra coin. Limshau has an artifact library. I can tender a price when I know more."

Aiden casually slipped it back in his case. "I'll hold onto it for now." Aiden wasn't sure why. He trusted Gauss but preferred caution.

"Well, it's been nice having you," said Gauss. Aiden held out his hand and Gauss accepted. The appraiser turned over Aiden's hand to see the watch. "That can't be working."

"It's not."

"Well here time can stop if asked to. It's all in the wording." Gauss released Aiden's hand.

"Thank you, Mr. Gauss. It's been enlightening."

Gauss exclaimed as Aiden left, "It's Roland, and may the milk of mermaids quench your thirst."

...

Aiden stared at the toilet. It was wood and stone, but it had a seat. The chain flushed water from the large cistern above. It was primitive, using gravity fed water from towers about the city, but it was heaven compared to the past two months. The seat was hard. The stone was cold. He didn't care and neither did his bowels. The bed was cushioned with a down pillow. The white walls were more than a design aesthetic. A cool breeze flowed to every crack and corner. Aiden found a second floor room with a view of a market street. The circular stone window held no glass, only a wooden shutter to block out the noises if needed. It was never too loud and the overlapping voices in various languages reminded Aiden of traffic clatter in Angel. A pull of a similar chain ran a pump bringing clean water. The toilet and the sink was knowledge brought over by bastion-man, what the fae could never manage on their own. It wasn't stupidity but a lack of the obsessive drive to better one's life that only came from evolution. Fae found a simple solution and never attempted progress. The disruption of their very being on even the most basic mechanisms did the rest. Before men and their printing press, the fae stuck mostly with scrolls. Books for them were a luxury reserved for special editions as each had to be stitched by hand.

The sun hadn't set before Aiden shut his eyes. He slept for twelve hours. He woke without an ache and thoroughly cleaned himself in the communal showers on the lower level. Aiden felt scrawny and bare amongst the hairy, barrel-chested human men in the other stalls. The water was freezing as was everything else that morning. The city was still a slave to weather. He had a brazier and a few sconces in his room but they would do little against the cold when winter hit, mild that they were at this latitude.

There was no way to keep food cold so it was to the market for produce every morning. Aiden raced for an empty seat, fought through his deficient proficiency of the sinitic tongue the server's used, and ordered a plate of what looked like raw sewage. He tasted garlic. He didn't recall seeing garlic. Aiden felt something crunchy and hoped it was intended. He left his remaining Angel grain bars for emergencies. He knew he had to acquire a stout

stomach if he had any chance to acclimatize to echa. The caravan had helped but that was mostly bread.

By afternoon, he found the arcana wing, three blocks of libraries, stores, and schools. Aiden slammed his tattered tome of incantations and power words in front of a storekeep that specialized in totems. It jostled the spark out of the book, which quickly went back into hiding. Aiden was awaiting some castigation from the owner but only heard, "I've seen worse," as the clerk took the book and went about finding the rare components required to repair it. Later, Aiden wondered if the keeper had seen worse from many of his patrons, or just the humans, few that they were.

Before lunch, Aiden signed up for a philosophy lecture. The teacher was not some old man with worn and weary eyes pinching his nose when his heavy glasses strained his head. He was barely into his forties with dark skin with toned muscle. There were thirty other students of various ethnicities, ages, and races sitting with backs straight upon mats placed erratically about the room. Aiden had entered late and noticed the desks pushed to the walls.

"I'm Doctor Philippe Paraerra and if you have any hope of understanding this world, you have to begin with your awareness. Of how you perceive it. This class does not deal with specifics. It deals with color." Aiden furrowed his brow at the statement. Others followed. "Got you all looking crooked, didn't I?" A few laughed. "I'm serious. Color is a name we give our perception of the basics of what we see. Something is blue. Something is yellow. Something is black and something is white. In this world, what we see is interpreted by our brains. What we perceive we take instantly as reality. What we are taught we accept...as gospel, even to the extent of altering our perception of the world around it. Yellow and blue do not make green and the true color blue isn't even something our brains can handle. If you have any hopes of understanding this world, you have to accept that there are no absolutes."

"Anything is possible--" Aiden found himself whispering.

"Damned straight," Paraerra exclaimed with a clap.

It jolted Aiden as eyes focused on him. "Sorry," he said.

"Don't be. Anything IS possible. God has been replaced by the will of the very people he created. This is his parting gift, the keys to the kingdom. It's not a test. There's no virtuous morality at play, no good versus evil. For the first time, the world is malleable. Why do you think they send all wizards to me first before they put any spells in your head. You're a dreamer."

"Is that a problem?"

"No, but you're sitting near me for your stay in my class."

Aiden held up his hands in protest. "No, no, that's quite all right." Paraerra raised his hands as if preaching to god, and then firmly pointed to an open area next to him. Aiden sighed and shuffled to the position.

"Let me start with a rhetorical question. If there was no intelligent life in the universe, does the universe have meaning? We all know the adage about the tree

falling in the forest. I move beyond that by saying that if no one hears the falling tree, even though it makes a sound, the act of the fall and the sound it generates is utterly worthless. Intelligence is the universe's way of acknowledging its own existence, and a cosmos with no eyes to see it, ears to hear it, or brains to understand it...has no value. So if intelligent life is the ultimate goal of the cosmos, is there room or even a need for a greater intelligence? If there was a divine creator--a greater thought--behind everything, then that could devalue our own importance. This would lead me to say that there's meaning to the universe, but not a purpose. It may have a function, but not necessarily significance. That would transfer the responsibility onto us. We are not obligated to find purpose in our lives, but it may be something only we can seek ourselves, as no guiding light will show us the path.

"We now have the capacity to alter the universe, actually change how it functions. Only a cosmos aware of itself could control how it acts and if we're the gestalt of this consciousness, then God is only the sum of all the minds in the universe and had no capacity to think until we thought of it." Paraerra smiled. "...and I'm only four minutes into my first class."

The students laughed and Paraerra continued, "If you follow this logic any further, then the removal of god and science simultaneously allows us absolute freedom to pursue personal meaning without any obligation to the universe, which, as I said, may not have a purpose at all."

"So there would no predetermined path for anyone, by science or by God, real or not?" Aiden asked.

"There may still be a set path but one you may be only partially in control of. Think of it as...cosmic socialism."

"That sounds somewhat absurd."

"My thoughts exactly...but that's a conversation for another day."

...

As evening fell, Aiden sat at the edge of the window. The moon and Attricana were bright but a few well placed candles were still required for Aiden's reading. He didn't feel the need to flaunt the spark. He glanced at his open pack and the azure glow inside. Aiden walked over and pulled out the amethyst. He returned to the window and his book, placing the jewel on the open face. He could see the storms swirling away inside. He resumed his reading.

She was a fae. That much Aiden could easily tell. She was taking in the breeze from her larger window across the street. Second floor, the same as him. His height but half the weight, with a frame of a normal person that had been stretched. She leaned from her window to let her blonde hair dry naturally in the wind. Her neck was long and thin, uncovered by a flowing layer of silk which danced about the air. She wore nothing underneath the simple gown but nature's current refused to reveal anything by whisking away the cloth. It would only permit Aiden a glimpse of her slender legs below the knee and everything above the shoulders. As her hair dried

and lifted in the air, the strands parted to reveal her ears. Aiden didn't notice the amethyst sliding off his book until it clanged on the floor. He bolted from view of the window to snatch it back up. When he returned to his admiration, he noticed the human male entering the room behind her. He wore well pressed blues and purples, satin and linen with accents of leather. He removed his coat as she turned. She slowly embraced him. He paid generously. She placed him on the bed and walked to the window. Her's had two shutters. As she closed one, she looked across the street and met Aiden's eyes. He flinched but continued his stare. She smiled and rolled her fingers in a wave and closed the final shutter.

Aiden sat himself back on the window edge and dropped the rock back on this book. It slid down to his hand, brushing across his wrist. He stared at the storm caught within it.

Tick.

Aiden wondered if he had been so lucky to find some unique item, a mcguffin to start him on a great quest. If this was, would he take it, accept such responsibility? If it was worthy for midgets and melancholy mages, why not? But in fiction, the storyteller ensures the survivability of his characters and Aiden had no such guardian watching over him.

Tick.

Aiden didn't spot it initially. His mind was lost not on the stone but on the lingering image of the prostitute in the window. Tick. Right next to the amethyst, the gem commanded all attention. Tick. When the second hand moved again, Aiden spotted his watch. Tick, the second had moved.

Tick, again. Aiden tilted his head rather than risk shifting the watch as it rolled over to 10:04 am. He saw the hand mark off another second. Aiden mouthed a curse as he palmed the Amethyst and moved it away from his watch. The second hand stopped abruptly before 10:05. He brought the stone back alongside the mechanism. Time resumed, closing to the end of the minute.

"How is that possible?"

...

It was a wing dedicated to concepts of Pleroma—the language of dragons and the basis of all arcane wizardry. It didn't have any books on specific spells, but on the various attempts to understand the bizarre tongue and its capacity to alter the physical world when spoken by one learned in the word's meaning. It was taken up by the fae in the time of Terros—the age before man when magic held dominion. Fae needed to create totems to affix their words. They had to hold that item when the word was uttered, a condition no one was able to explain. The dragons went around this by burning the words onto their skin. It was a power few others had been able to replicate. The book was a recent and popular choice.

By mid afternoon, Aiden was the only one reading, accompanied by a librarian with eyes fixed on filing cards and a custodian that circled the halls every hour. Aiden enjoyed an apple for lunch. As he removed a second from his pack, he noticed the amethyst. He pulled it out again

and stared into the oscillating and churning storms. There was a pattern to them. The shades of violet and lavender would flow one way and then shift the next. It was intentional. Aiden closed his book, packed up, and left. If it was a mcguffin, he might as well find out now.

It was the end of his first week and Aiden wasn't getting lost as often as he used to. He still hadn't made any friends. The fae embodied some artistic idea of what beauty looked like--what God intended in his design but was always depressed in the result. The males commanded authority with chiseled features; the females were sculpted to draw the eyes of all those around.

And they ignored him.

The men would only respond if addressed. The females wouldn't look his way. Aiden would occasionally nod to a few as he walked by in some aged sense of courtesy. They never smiled, never greeted him. Aiden had read fae and humans mixed here with half-breeds walking amongst the purebloods. What was odd about fae genetics was their refusal to abide by the laws of the human genome. Blond hair would surpass black, blue eyes over brown. The fae parent filtered out genetic defects or inherited disease. Aiden began to understand the unspoken tolerance between the humans and fae. They respected each other's distance. When they mixed, they did so infrequently.

In the religious wing, Aiden located the book based on the advice given to him from Gauss. The amethyst stone was the symbol of a religious order, the oldest faith on the planet. It connected itself to a god, a dragon of violent and lavender scales with eyes to match. Beautiful and majestic, it had wings to span across a city. All it needed to do was call something's name and it became real. It was the first dragon.

After the dragons came the fae--elves, fairies, pixies and boggles. They rose from the water, walked from the trees, and fell from the sky. Monsters would emerge and be defeated over an afternoon. It was the only reality they knew off with no frame of science to tell them different. Other religions sprang up after claiming higher authorities but Amethyst was the only one whose worship and faith was not required. It lived and breathed with or without its subjects.

But the stones the followers of Amethyst used never glowed. They were smaller with no ornate clasps around them. Even if they did shine, no magical rock glowed like this, not in any books Aiden had read. It was if a vast space occupied the gem, perhaps holding a secret energy Aiden hadn't understood. If this was connected to the Amethyst god, he would have to read more on echan history. That would take a while.

...

The parade that passed by his window before sundown marked a tradition Aiden had no experience with. It was a commemoration of some damaskan accomplishment probably lost even on them. The residents looked for any excuse to break from the disciplines of daily affairs for an evening of unfocused revelry. Aiden sat on his window, bracing a foot on the edge of the circular opening. He

watched whimsical gimfen throw strips of colored paper weighted with hard candy to suppliant crowds. Custodians marched by, occasionally showcasing their martial proficiency in a choreographed engagement.

Figures crawled by clothed and painted to resemble various monsters known/believed to wander the land around the kingdom. The centerpiece of the procession featured a massive floating recreation of a great yok-ani dragon. It wasn't Genai but another of the famous nine. Aiden knew it as Shenlong-Apalala, the peaceful one, the giver of tranquility. The imitation was built from heavy paper, iron wire, and bamboo. It had an angora skin and silk threads for whiskers and lashes. The immense emerald green and ruby red construct was given life to blink its eyes, wave its whiskers, and flick its claws. It was a spell Aiden would have no hope in understanding this early in his education. The hundred poles rising from their controllers kept the animated creature inline. It didn't require them to keep it aloft. The expertly crafted reproduction danced to the rhythmic beats of a hundred drums. The dragon knew nothing else. If released, it would follow its instincts and repeat the same patterns until caught or a heavy rain broke it to pieces.

It flapped its eyes teasingly at Aiden as it crossed the window. Aiden could see its interior was completely vacant. The eyes were painted glass, yet Aiden could feel it acknowledging him. It was nearly life size as it wound its way through the streets. Passing over the imitation beasts below, each and every one settled to the ground and feigned to sleep peacefully. From the boggs and skeggs to the ogres and trolls, even to the children dressed as puggs, they all fell under the shadow of the dragon.

Occasionally the dragon would arch its head to the heavens and cough a puff of colored smoke to the sky. It prompted the lighting of fireworks which detonated brilliantly above the town. The mock dragon's intelligence was primitive enough, dancing happily at the display, believing it had caused the eruption. Aiden laughed, enjoying himself more than he had in weeks. The jubilant beast spun around and locked on him. Its hollow eyes conveyed nothing and its mouth snapped shut. It pulled its controllers across the street as its cavernous head loomed above.

Aiden's smile washed away as memories of traumatic times flooded back. He forced himself to return a smile. Even at this distance, the beast was a convincing replica. It pushed closer and brought its head over Aiden, nearly tapping the wall of the building. Aiden looked down at his open book on his lap. The amethyst crystal resting in the gutter. Aiden realized what the facsimile was really looking at. Aiden lifted the crystal to show it to the beast. It winked a paper eyelid and snaked around to resume its dance. The body slid by Aiden and he couldn't help but hold out a hand and skate his fingers across its woven body.

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"You are nervous," she observed. The bed was large with a wooden base but a thick layer of feathers wrapped in cotton. Fae bones were mostly hollow, another impossible characteristic, and she barely made an impression in

the mattress. Aiden sat on the only chair in the room. From across the street, she was stunning. Across the room, she was celestial. The light from her large window passed through her translucent cover, revealing how slender and sculpted her body was.

Aiden was gripping his knees tightly. "Yes," he said.

"First time?" Her name was Jaimee. It wasn't real. None of the names they used in any human tongues were.

"No-Yes..." The tightness in his stomach was getting worse. "Once before, she was human." It had been Minx. An inch over his height, thin and athletic from disciplined martial training, and she was older by five years. They were friends and not much else. Her father was an Angel architect that married a local flower. Minx was the only girl he could talk to about magic and she enjoyed his enthusiasm.

Obatala Chen's biblio was the universe to Aiden. He didn't live unless it was within those walls. She was nineteen to his fourteen. Their only time was there, amongst the tomes, clumsy and adorable for the short single time it lasted. She placed herself gently on top of him, his back against the books. Her long hair danced over his face.

With the dwindling candles, Aiden didn't see much. It didn't last long either. Despite the fantasies in his thoughts, her touch was a sufficient distraction. Beyond being temporarily tongue-tied, their friendship survived that single encounter.

"We are built the same." Jaimee's tone was soothing but not relaxing.

"Not exactly," Aiden replied. His life was divided by the moments before Minx and the moments after. With a frame of reference, his nightly whimsies felt all the more tangible. During his adolescence, it was the *nariisa*, referred throughout history by dozens of names. Narfs, nerieds, dryads, nymphs, regardless of legend, their name carried the insinuation. With expectations so high, Aiden was unsure this was the solution.

"Close enough...enough that matters." She smiled and leaned in. "I know how to ape human qualities."

"I noticed."

"Are you apprehensive because of what I am?"

"Yes." Aiden held up a finger. "But not in a negative way. Quite the opposite."

A few of the silk gown's buttons were unfastened, just above her waist. Her shoulders and collarbone were open to the breeze. The wind refused to reveal more, something she probably had some control over.

"Empty your mind of consequences," she said. "The price is monetary only. Personal guilt is an entirely human condition, an obsolete one not shared within these walls, by fae or humans. We cannot accept a seed unless bonded and we cannot transmit anything harmful." She was almost indifferent in her expression. He could tell that she truly didn't understand his apprehension.

"Yes...I read that." He had, years ago.

She shifted to one side of the bed. "I do not know you. I have no capacity to judge. You must be honest."

Aiden appreciated her attempts. He wondered what were the odds he would sleep across the street from one as beautiful and as understanding as this? The innocuous scar in his leg brought an itch Aiden suddenly needed to

scratch.

"It's a...fantasy." He couldn't think of a better word.

"To admire something that could never be. Like worshipping a princess from atop her tower."

She tilted her head and giggled. Aiden didn't know if it was part of the act. "Quite the pedestal you place me."

"You don't carry the distaste on the practice like my people do...where I'm from. I am perfectly fine with that." She stood, the gown's strands pulled long, making her appear taller than she really was. She was against the window, exposing every curve and accent in silhouette. She stepped closer to him, and unbuttoned another clasp.

Aiden held up his hands.

"Please...don't."

She stopped. "I do not understand."

"I can't realize my dreams this way." It had to be romantic. It had to be idealistic. She returned to the bed and drifted back to the mattress. He stood and made no attempt for the thirty carmot he had placed on the table beside her. "Thank you." He made for the door.

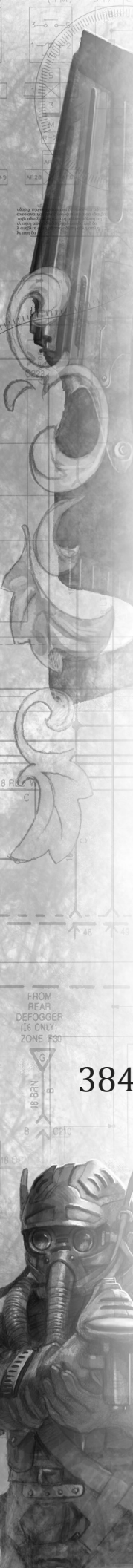
"Wait," she said to his back. He turned to her and noticed her standing. She floated towards him and brought her lips to his. The kiss was long and sweet. He could taste honey. Every other thought washed away. The world could vanish in that instant and he wouldn't care. She pulled away and whispered to him, "I wish you luck in finding your princess."

...

The Koana district was a geographically bound organization of schools catering to prospective mages. The curriculum involved long hours in study with little practical application. Introductory courses took six years and most students, even fae, never became spellcasters. Unlike other schools, which tried to apply a theological approach to magic, supporting a "gut intuition" and encouraging natural talent, Koana maintained that true masters only came from research and exercise. Aiden had considered joining but each time he held the application, he realized the courses only bequeathed the keys to longer, more rewarding classes taking another six years. Chen had already taught him the basics. It was a waste of twelve years for him to emerge only older and seasoned. Aiden wanted the pay-off now. He had access to the books but needed to determine for himself the proper arrangement for reading.

He remembered the fight with the pugg. Would his mind blank? Would he freeze when most needed? He may never need to take such a risk. He may spend the rest of his days behind these white walls. As he stared into the perfectly clear unobstructed night atop the apartment building, he realized it wasn't such a dreadful prospect. He would need a job, something that reflected his talent, something he'd want to do, something not forced by society, with as little responsibility as possible. Maybe he'd be a writer, compose a tell-all introduction to wizardry to help humans adopt the talent.

Aiden had to tolerate how cold the mornings got. He had to forget about the dozens of red dots over his skin from the multitude of bug bites. He had to forget



about the lack of hygiene at the restaurants he would frequent. The poor quality of the teeth of the people he would pass. He almost burned his spellbook with a candle one evening. He missed wireless communication. Everything he learned came from books decades or centuries old. A newsreader shouted out worthy daily events from atop a box a block down. It hardly measured to a five-minute surf on a computer in Angel, and even then it was limited to Limshau.

It had been three months. His savings wouldn't last another three. He could return to Angel. Would he take over Chen's biblio, a village forever enclosed by a cage of technology? Would he eventually snap and run back to his refrigerator and computer? What a waste of these years if he did that.

He was so sure of the choice when he made it. He would leave to be a great wizard, bringing down the pillars as the caravan guard had said. The scar itched again. He avoided the thought that a vacation was the better option. Ride the ETV free of disruption to Salvabrooke. Enjoy the hospitality of playful gimfen. Return with stories and souvenirs to share with others.

On a Saturday evening in late August, Aiden was struck by an illness he hadn't encountered before. There was no lab-tested medicine proven in test trials to ease his nausea. He began to sweat and shiver in his bed. He drifted through levels of consciousness, blurring his dreams with waking delusions. He lost the strength to move. There was no phone to call and no one checked up on him. Aiden believed it was from food--that unsightly looking falafel he should have skipped. The chicken didn't look properly stored. After that came back up, he fainted upon his bead. When memories of his mother came to him, her ghostly form passing through the walls of his apartment, Aiden couldn't help but cry.

• • •

On breaks from his studies, Aiden would divert to the artifact wing hoping a breakthrough would identify the lingering rock in his pack. He had been tempted to get it appraised. Something this rare could net him enough capital to hold off adulthood for another year. He knew this stone was important, that someone, somewhere, sought after it. Perhaps it was an heirloom for a kingdom Aiden would need to travel to. He would hand it over and in reward, ask for the hand of the princess. It always came back to that.

By now, he'd used up his leads in the artifact wing and moved into the colossal catalogue of known magic items in the world. Limshau didn't keep many of them, only records of what's, where's, and why's. The branch was two stories and five blocks. After a week, he dropped most of his arcane studies and dedicated himself on this growing obsession. No entries came close and it was alarming him, as if its absence was intentional.

"Ander Boek..."

"Are you speaking to me?" Aiden asked. His head rose from the pages. He looked across to the Limshau custodian orbiting the wing. Aiden grew accustomed to their patrols. He hardly gave them notice anymore.

"What?" replied the soft, passive voice. Aiden locked eyes with the speaker. She wore the white Limshau kawabari but hardly looked old enough to have earned the leather. It had been four months but Aiden recognized her instantly from the caravan inspection.

"What?" Aiden asked.

She raised her arm to apologize. "My apology," she said, "Continue reading." Her voice barely carried over the flapping pages from other tables. It was late. Paper screens supported by thin sticks of bamboo covered gas fed torches, diffusing their light.

"You're Raven?" he asked, unfortunately.

"You know this."

Aiden held up a finger. "Yes. That wasn't a question. That was me remembering. You addressed me."

"I apologize for interrupting sir. Continue your--"

"There's no need to apologize. Eight hours reading anything...I could have sworn I heard you say something."

Aiden closed the book on his finger.

"No more than mumbles best kept quiet. I never meant them for your ears, sir. I repeat my apology."

Aiden smiled and leaned back. "Now, you have to tell me. Curiosity will haunt me to distraction." Aiden was not going to let this moment pass without a fight.

"It truly was of no importance," she said but didn't depart. Aiden didn't flinch as he smiled back. She shook her head. "I said." She paused. "Another one."

"Another what?"

"Told you it was of no importance."

"Now you must explain it"

"Must I?"

"You have somewhere to be? Indulge me."

She leaned forward and rested her knuckles on the back of the chair in front. She appeared to gather strength to reveal some deep personal demon but only said, "Book." Aiden raised his eyebrows and waited for her to clarify. He nudged a chin forward to encourage.

"Another book."

Aiden glanced down and fluffed out his bottom lip. "It's a library--"

"I know--"

"Comes with books. Part of the appeal." Aiden tried to not sound arrogant. He balanced that fine line between conceit and charisma.

"I was making an observation at the assemblage of books you have been reading in the past few weeks--"

"Weeks?" Aiden was slightly elevated. Her eyes dropped slightly.

"And as I mentioned. I did not intend intrusion."

"Please." Aiden raised his hand. "Sorry--wait. Finish your thought."

"The books selected appear not random. You seek something specific."

"True."

"I imagine you are seeking the arcane arts. However, you avoided books explaining the Pleroma, meaning you know them already."

"Also true."

"You took out Expedition to North Tower. After, the Ars Pravus--"

Aiden raised a finger. "Don't look too much into--"

"Though you do not seem the type to want to remove my organs to extend your own life. You took out *The Seven Paths of Wisdom*, before that the *Myre Codex*, two very different tomes dealing with artifacts, both magical and otherwise. Now you keep a stack of *Ravenar III's* crusade accounts and a copy of the *Athenaeum Manifest*, both of which I have read."

"Wow." Aiden leaned forward, the charm replaced by curiosity. The charisma well dried up. "I got nothing."

"We are trained to notice such things." She pushed herself from the chair. "Have a good evening?"

"Sure you can't stay? I'd appreciate your opinion on something...related to all this."

"I am afraid not, sir." She turned and left.

Aiden leaned and bent and strained to catch her lines rounding the far corner of the aisle. They were as perfect as the day he first saw her. She had noticed him. She had remembered him. He settled back down. His mind was filled with possibilities. It was what occurred when one must visualize instead of realize. He had wished the perennial stomach knot wouldn't occur every time such an opportunity waved by unfulfilled. Rejection still stung regardless if the refuser was human or not.

Aiden saw what life did to humans after a handful of years. Would fae mindsets be so alien with decades and centuries of experience to change their outlook? Human recollection was fleeting--their brains only able to hang onto the fragments of memory. Fae ignored the menial, the minutia, and preserved anything consequential. Every loss of love, every stolen kiss, lingered for the length of their nearly endless lives. It was not hard to understand why they would keep humans at a distance. All the stories of romance, those could be the only ones. It wouldn't matter now. Aiden's discipline flopped as his mind wandered. For weeks, he'd put such thoughts out of his head.

"I will admit curiosity. Nothing more," she said, approaching from behind. He turned sharply to her. Not even the floorboards shifted or groaned to herald her advance.

She pulled the opposite chair from the table. Her movement flowed like water, nothing sudden, no jerking muscles. Nothing fell out of place. She flipped over the backrest and perched her feet atop the cushion like a predatory bird. Even her weapon, dangling from her side, came to rest without a tap. With her hollow-bones, she must have weighed less than fifty pounds. The chair didn't jostle an inch. She grabbed two pencils from a nearby container, hung out both at arm's length, and brought the ends to almost touch. Perfectly steady, the lead tips hovered point-to-point. Aiden looked amazed. Confused. He recovered and reached into his leather bag. He removed a black silk wrapping he had been keeping the stone in. He unfurled it. She looked into his hand.

"It is just a--" she started.

"No. It's not."

Raven was surprised at the relative inexpensive dark lavender, almost violet, gem resting in the clasp of four pearl-colored dragon's claws that clamped around the outer edge. The reptilian fingers were slightly embossed with letters of a foreign tongue that only glinted visible

with the reflecting light.

She looked closer and noticed the movement. Glints of light jolted through the imperfections in the jewel, like currents of electricity arcing from one side of the gem to the other. It reflected no light from the torches but did mirror her face perfectly.

"What is that?" she finally asked.

Aiden finally shifted focus from the fae he had captivated to the gem he rested on the table. He looked into it and received the azure glow upon his face. "I wish I knew."

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It didn't matter how tired he was. There was vigor in her smile that empowered him to remain awake. She was sitting properly now, laughing at his anecdote.

"I have heard of the power of the spell book but perhaps not so...literally," she responded. They hadn't left that spot for hours. She was sitting across the table, the amethyst between them. The sun was due to rise soon.

"It was my first goblin. Revenge for all those sleepless nights when it prowled under my bed." He tried to laugh but the pain of the experience was still there. He related the tale as jovially as possible but that couldn't soften his anxiety of the event.

Raven shook her head. "Human fairy tales are so unusual."

"How so, the fact we have stories that detail your existence without any connection between our worlds?"

"More that your stories always end up with some strange motivation on the part of the fairy. They are making shoes. They are spinning yarn into gold. Trading in human children. I have read these stories. I share my ancestor's confusion upon returning to the world...to discover the fictions told about them by your ancestors despite never encountering them."

"Fairy tales aside, we got a lot right."

"I suppose," her eyes diverted to the window as a cusp of glow appeared over the outer wall, "but it makes one wonder if our existence only came about from your imagination. Perhaps our history is only a fabrication we embrace to justify our lives."

"Wouldn't it be an insult to know you've been living a false life?"

Raven glanced at the thousand tomes lining the one wall beside her. "We live too long to remember every moment. Mine already has gaps. For my elders, their losses are measured in eons. Who is to say those are not the unintended mistakes of a lethargic writer?"

Aiden firmed his lips, not wishing to be argumentative. "I prefer to subscribe to echalogical influence--"

"How our history inspired your fiction through an immeasurable, ethereal thread. A term your people invented with little evidence to reinforce it--"

"If that were true." Aiden paused, realizing his escalation. He softened his reply as she turned to him. "If that were true, then it only leaves two explanations. It's all a coincidence... or it's all a lie... and I don't much like either one."

Raven nodded. "Your people prefer the latter."

"You mean techans or humanity?"

"The former. Of all humans, we know little of those still embracing their machines. What I would not give to see inside one of those cities. It would truly be a noteworthy event for a custodian."

"They would probably shoot you if you tried."

"You speak so negatively. Your city is safe. It prospers despite what surrounds it. Would you not prefer it with your people?"

"My people long for a time when the only things that frightened them were themselves and Bronze Age myths. I compared delusions and chose the one with dragons."

She offered an angelic smile. Aiden attempted to changed topics, "Did you find their mother?"

"No, the puggs are still at large. We could not locate their mother."

Aiden could tell she wasn't happy about that fact. He didn't know if it was something he should push about. He tried another approach. "I thought custodians always wore black when they leave the city. At least, that's what I read."

"It was my first outing."

"Really...ever outside Limshau?" Aiden leaned in.

"Yes. It was a test."

A year or two could mean decades for a damaskan. She was barely into her adulthood in fae years. They don't place the stigma or attraction on ages like humans but he was still not about to ask her age. His guess was under a hundred. She was the same as him, a desire to leave her world, to encounter what was only read about. He tried to stop himself from smiling. "That's..." He wanted to say amazing or wonderful or delightful but didn't want to share with her their common ground, at least not yet. "Did you pass?"

"It is not about passing. It is about finding a cause. Custodians do not leave their city unless there is reason."

"Are you...looking for one?" Aiden teased.

She obviously knew where he was going. "Actually, I am."

He nudged to the rock. "I don't suppose this counts?"

She gave it a glance. "Assuming the answer does not lie here. You believe this to have that much significance?"

He wanted to tell her about his watch but something prevented him. "All evidence points to it having some."

"And have you used up all the resources in this city? There are a hundred million books, manuscripts, and scrolls on shelves in this city."

"I have it down to the artifact wing." Aiden picked the rock and began to wrap it in a black-stained silk. "It's not some random magical rock to light rooms with." Despite him doing it for the past four hours.

"Religious?"

"Maybe, but I don't think so," Aiden replied, though still not sure. He hadn't fully eliminated the prospect. "I know the dragon Amethyst--"

"That was not his real name."

"I can't pronounce his real name and there's that one quote where he says everyone is wrong so everyone is right, so...regardless, they use tiny amethyst crystals shaped into marbles which are hung around a neck."

Raven reached for his hand to grab a tuft of the silk cover. A finger brushed over one of his, sending shivers up his arm, through his back, and into regions that prevented rational thought. She opened his hand to point at the stone. "It appears to have loops."

Aiden's mouth cracked as his mind still hung on the touch. "It's..." he tried to focus, "kinda large for any human or elf to keep around their neck."

She released his hand. "Perhaps a dragon wears it," she replied. "It is a dragon god."

He folded it back up. "I never thought of that."

"I never asked how you found it."

Aiden opened his pack and returned the amethyst.

"Before the caravan." He met her eyes, which was hard for him to do. "Where we met, I was lost between Angel and Antikari. I found it in a wreck."

"A wagon?"

"No...a techan aircraft, going to or from Angel. Maybe from another bastion. If so, it would have been a long journey." As Aiden reminded himself of the memory, the facts about it concerned him again, questions which were not pressing.

"Why would it be carried by technology?" She repeated Aiden's thought. "Why would your people care?" Aiden detached himself from studying Raven's curves. Whenever she leaned forward, she bent her back in a way to push out her middling chest. She did it unintentionally.

"I don't know...I think that's one of the reasons why I know it's important."

"You recognized it to be an aircraft."

"Yes."

She rested her elbows on the table. Aiden avoided getting too close and moved back. "Born in bastion walls but with eyes for magic," she said. "I told you there would be a tale. Seems beyond even coincidence."

"I don't subscribe to fate, if that's where you're going."

She leaned back. "If you have reached an impasse with books, perhaps we should ask an authority."

Aiden heard very well what she said. He rolled the memory around before asking, "Are you helping me?"

"Do you wish it?"

It was the most jovial smile Aiden had managed since leaving Angel, more so than the caravan, more so than seeing Limshau for the first time.

"I very much do."

...

"Ellslaanee." Aiden sat alone in his apartment. A few of the lanterns were still burning. He was tired but the strain was keeping him up. He knew there was a snake of smoke that could ease someone to sleep but Aiden wanted the pillars. Those spells that struck fear in opponents. That level of bravado fit for fiction. He remembered visuals of wizards standing on mountain peaks, commanding the waves and wind. He wanted to embrace that role. Although he could never beckon the coming of storms, he could one day create the elements of nature, gifting it with intelligence purely from his will. It was Pleroma, the language of dragons, given to the fae and

stolen by humans. Possess the word in written form in the way passed down from the first age. In its utterance bring forth all knowledge of the word. It was harder than the boosters had claimed. Chen's gift of the spark floated over the book, trying its best to help in the only way it knew how. Even creating his own had been denied to him.

"Ellslaanee." He picked up the word before leaving Angel, the third one after the sleep snake. He hadn't tested that one either. Aiden gritted his teeth and closed his eyes.

"Ellslaanee." Would it be a rolling ball of lightning or a spider with spindly legs of electricity? Would it be large or small? Maybe his uncertainty was the reason he couldn't pull it off.

"Ellslaanee." He checked the pronunciation in his totem. It was right. The word had been copied properly, every curve and angle. The ink was the right chemical composition. The exact measurements required made it appear a science, save for the last part, the part where the universe changed to obey your command.

"Ellslaanee!!"

He threw his book on the floor. A wizard was useless without a repertoire.

...

"Does the pursuit of truth without finding it have purpose?" Paraerra asked slowly, almost at a whisper. Again, the class was on the floor. Again, Aiden was sitting beside his teacher. Again, the desks were pushed back and everyone's eyes were closed. "You will find evil if you chose to seek evil. You will find faith if you chose to seek faith. But do not seek truth. A drive to find a truth will lead to faith, and will be perceived only in your eyes as fact. Truth...is what you find along the way of seeking. Truth...is stumbled upon, never fought for. The same it is with the salvation of the soul. The harmony we establish within ourselves, the love we accept, comes along the path, never at the end. Faith, belief, are yours to claim ... truth is for all of us." He opened his eyes and looked over the group. He rubbed his palms together. "This week, pick one of the following books. Have it read by the end of the month. We'll then discuss them at length, including the possibility that I may have wasted your time in the assignment. *Fear & Loathing* by Soren Kierkegaard, *Prophetic Fragments* by Cornel West, *Novum Organum* by Francis Bacon, or *The High Cost of Death* by Mari-kama."

The class departed. Aiden remained in range of Paraerra, waiting for the last student to leave before addressing the teacher.

"Doctor Paraerra?"

"Yes, Mr. Ka'moo," Paraerra joked.

"It's Camus, sir. You know that."

"I love the irony. You were late again today."

"Yes. Yes, I apologize."

"At least you're punctual with your tardiness. How can I help you?"

Aiden followed Paraerra as he filed several books into his pack and began to leave. "You mentioned a while

back that the universe is controlled by people and not God."

They left the room and walked down the white stone hallway. "One lecture, I implied such a thought. Another contradicted that. As is everything, we filter out unwanted ideas."

"But on that, would it mean there's absolute free will for the first time, right?" The long hallway had no torches and the only light came from beams of bright afternoon through round windows.

"Assuming that God existed at all. I've mentioned scientific determinism as well, another idea this new world resists. Perhaps it's through our will for free choice that we're breaking unbreakable laws."

As they exited into the courtyard, Paraerra's bicycle awaited him leaning against ivory walls of the school. It wasn't secured. "So there are still coincidences," Aiden countered, "no matter how paradoxical the events may be."

Paraerra stopped and turned to face him. "Aiden, mankind hates coincidence. We're biologically compelled to find patterns around us. Our drive to explain everything when we knew nothing was how we created God. Chance occurs every second of every day. Where are you going with this?"

"When does coincidence become inconvenient, when the odds of converging and similar events become impossible to explain with luck—like echological influence? A fantasy world nearly identical to our literature enters our world. Literally leaping off the page. Our only explanation using logic is an unproven, undetectable echo which somehow resonates through sixty million years of evolution."

"...Until minds advanced enough to understand that echo listened. Would you prefer that we're all living in a fabricated reality?" Aiden eyes fell off to stare at the dirt. "If so, would that change anything? Dreams feel real to the dreamer, so who cares for causes? You worry because a fabrication assumes a fabricator." Aiden looked at the entrance of the court and noticed Raven resting back on a bench surrounded by a modest orchard of oversized olive trees, their immense crowns looming over her. The mammoth dragon-shaped porcelain fountain at the center of the court sat between them. She admired the fluttering white blossoms in the light wind.

"When this city puts forward a vote," Paraerra continued, "the majority of people vote the same. Humans may look similar but genetically, we're practically clones. Coincidence? Of course not because we know why this is. Everything that could possibly occur in the universe will always happen at least once."

Aiden responded but kept his eyes on Raven. His lowered his tone. "Then those singled out for greatness are only what...fortunate?"

"Are we to break into the rhetoric that everyone is special. If we all were, then none of us would be. For every individual rising to greatness, a thousand others aspire for the same but fall short. You worry that you'll be the failure and not the exception?"

"My life began with a moment so unbelievable as to happen to so few."

"Have you turned?" Paraerra shifted to a direct query.

It took Aiden off guard enough to move his eyes back to his teacher. "What?"

"Have you cast a spell? Anything?" Aiden opened his mouth but couldn't muster the strength to answer. Paraerra nodded. "Unlike the fae, we're given the choice. Embrace magic or the machine. You have to want it. Cast a spell, bond with a fae, be born gifted, or depend on an item blessed with it. The moment you utter that word and create something from nothing, there's no going back. You sure this is the path you want?"

Aiden returned his eyes to the bench and saw Raven still resting on her back, enjoying the warmth of the afternoon. Aiden turned back to Paraerra. "Yes. Thank you, Doctor." He bolted off to intercept the custodian. Paraerra watched him leave but said nothing.

Raven's attention shifted as Aiden rose into view. "Greetings," she said as Aiden huffed huge lungfuls after crossing the short distance.

"Hi," he managed.

She looked past him to Paraerra still staring back.

"Pandering for extra credit?" she teased.

"It's hard to fail a course about the unimportance of the universe."

Raven threw her legs up, flipping herself quickly atop the bench, then bounced off it to the ground. "Are your studies of the arcane bearing fruit?"

"Not as much as I hoped. And you?"

"I think I have located a lead to follow."

"Fantastic, where?"

"The religious wing."

Aiden sighed. "Been there, there was nothing."

"Not a book. I talk of a man...highly regarded as an expert in the field."

"Dammit," Aiden exhaled. She looked confused at the reaction. She expected gratefulness. "Just was hoping to avoid another fanatic."

...

"To understand the legend is to know the history of the man." Mahan started. "Vincent Savarice fell upon the sands of eastern shores, battered and bruised from rapids and rocks. What armor remained had fallen off, rusted and cracked. He offered the salvageable pieces of refined steel to a nearby forge under no promise of compensation. The fragments of a prominent house crest melted in the fire...and he was proud to do so."

Mahan Faaris Varcon's tanned skin was complimented with the short stubble of a properly maintained beard. The dark hairs were thicker under the chin and lip. Strands of black hair dangled nearly to his eyes. His cloak was layered leather and edged with a thick braid. It was bulky and heavy enough to crush one of the small children around him hanging on his every word if he were careless. It faintly covered the steel breastplate wrapped in brown boiled leather. It had been sewn with care and designed with green and black ornate patterned stitches. His knees were plated. The arms were braced in similar embroidered leather but they flaunted the marks of abuse from

an archer's wrist. An untied silk scarf etched in a foreign tongue hung loose around his neck. Mahan was not a man of great muscle but his heavy brow and eyes of iron could break the spirit of a tree if he chose to stare it down. When he spoke, he did so with a careful tone. The voice was neither rough nor harsh but came from deep in the throat. Not a puff of tobacco or a drop of alcohol had spoiled it. Listeners had trouble placing the accent.

"Savarice traveled north, along the shore, never lingering more than a day at any dock or village. He wished not to impose but found offers of lodging and meals wherever he went. He asked nothing and kept no monies given. Vincent shone with the charisma of a king, of which he was not. He entered towns upon a simple steed as a simple man."

Mahan had captivated a dozen children and two dozen adults around him. He had claimed a corner of the religion wing, sitting on a table, a leg propped up on a chair. He spoke from memory and not from any page. Those attentive were a mixed group of damaskans, humans, and hybrids of the two.

"Regardless of his attire, Savarice gained attention and admiration. When he talked, crowds gathered to listen. He spoke of nobility and bravery. In a land of slavery and spite, his words resonated with people praying for dignity and chivalry. Though a cross hung from his neck, Vincent never preached his faith and contended that kindness from the heart rivaled such forced by order of God. He also spoke that the sorrow of the soul when committing a sin need not come from a love of God if one knows the sin to be wicked. Savarice claimed to have seen kindness everywhere in his travels and firmly believed all would earn a place in the afterlife despite their faith or opinion on the almighty. Savarice simply spoke of the compassion of the soul and the capacity of civilized men to rise above what the animals inside urged them to do."

"But can you not deny that Savarice endorsed his own view of the faith, questioning the doctrine of normal God-fearing Christians?" said an older voice at the back of the room--a white bearded priest half way through his life. He wore a red robe accented with yellow edges. He had a small knitted cap with a pair of wooden sticks driven through his hair. The pointed cross on his robe told of his origin.

"I believe it hits the high notes," Mahan said. "I've read the Christian bible, including your abridged version." Mahan smirked. "I take the meaning of what these books say. I pay no particular attention to the way they say it."

Raven and Aiden had entered the library half-way through Mahan's counter argument. Raven, still armed and dressed in the kawabari despite fulfilling her obligations for the day, approached a white polished limestone desk. She spoke quietly to the human librarian. The librarian required no filing system. He knew of every book in his ward. Aiden, now with a local white longcoat over his older clothes, was distracted by the growing crowd in the corner.

"But Savarice was found with three arrows in his back." White Beard said, "Who is to say he's not the fanatic?"

"Because you spoke of fear, not I, nor he," Mahan

replied, "and fear is what fanatics use to keep their followers from asking questions. You seriously think human curiosity is a sin? To be inquisitive is to be human. God would not have made us this way had he not planned for it. When we have children, we encourage their independence. We persuade them to leave home. How odd that God would not do the same." Mahan paused to swallow. "He wanted us to eat the fruit. God...was the serpent." The whispers of blasphemy were across White Beard's lips. "Man's greatest quality is his courage, for it allows all the other virtues to flow." Mahan kept his voice low. "God fearing? We should not be afraid to ask questions. We should not be afraid of this world. We should not be afraid of what we discover, of the answers that shock us. But most of all, we should not be afraid of God."

The librarian pointed towards the growing crowd. Raven nodded and motioned to Aiden in the same direction. They approached the group, which had now grown to three dozen with a few additional sets of ears listening from the mezzanine.

"But if many claim to speak for God and the words change with each voice," White Beard responded, "does that not devalue the word. Savarice has a version as does Mulingar. Konig to. Who speaks for God? Who can claim certainty?"

Mahan felt like interrupting but waited until the Beard had expelled his air before answering. "No one," Mahan said. "I listen to those that preach peace. I care not for motivations." A moment passed without even a cough from the crowd. Aiden was taller than most others, able to look over to the verbal duel.

"Given that," White Beard said, "even Savarice isn't innocent in such affairs. He's taken lives. I'm sure the generals and knights of his royal order have screamed out for God's blessing before battle."

"As is their choice but unlike Mulingar, Savarice never claimed to speak for God. If anyone believes they speak for or understand such a voice, then they are buffoons, hoping that by assuming a higher understanding, they can exert some influence over the universe itself. What egotistical presumption, like an ant praying for salvation while falling underfoot. If God is infinite, then by the mathematics of such a title, he's as far away from our understanding as a fly is to us...or as a fly is to God." Mahan knew that last statement was sure to get a rise. It did.

"But that accuses respected holy men as blasphemers. How can you claim yourself one of faith and yet denounce the words of those blessed to be our betters?" Mahan attempted to open his mouth but White Beard continued unabated. "I agree we should not fear God. He chooses those especially pious to be messengers. Should we not follow their words?"

Mahan smiled and stepped off the table. On his feet, he stood taller than Aiden had previously thought. He was not sculpted with training to be a monument to muscle but could easily handle himself.

"In the history of mankind," Mahan said, "before the hammer and after, I know of few such prophets. I'm not expecting many more...at least not from mankind. As for the others, we are all equal under God, no matter how

we pray, if we choose to do so, for if he is God, and 'he' is beyond all attributes given to us. He does not hate; he does not love; he does not care; and he does not play favorites."

"So you don't claim King Vincent or his ancestors as being sanctified?" White Beard's voice dropped to a more accepted tone. Mahan's had never shifted his since the conversation began.

"The Savarice line is royal because of a dragon's kiss. So it is recognized by those who deem such regality important. His words had earned my loyalty before I knew of his lineage, which is more than I can say for other rulers, whether they be kings or cardinals." It was another snub against the Ogium patriarch. White Beard smiled back and chuckled. It was an unexpected response which even impressed Mahan.

"Well, spoken, sir. I believe in truth as well and not always in the man speaking it. I deplore how divine scripture has been corrupted by the likes of Konig and his madness but Savarice's vision could be all the more crooked. The stain in Abidan history caused by the regicide of house Dugan was clear proof of--"

"Dugan's death was not regicide," Aiden snapped loud enough to be heard but not enough to be crass or belligerent. Mahan turned to him. White Beard turned to him. The entire crowd turned to him. Raven's eyes opened wide but she offered no other emotion. "He wasn't royalty. He committed suicide, not murder." White Beard opened his mouth to speak but Aiden cut him off after a quick breath. "And that was after the assassination of Claire Margolis with proven guilt to Dugan. Vincent was already dead at that point. David Margolis from Sclavia assaulted the keep." Accounts from the Caravan of the King, chapter ten, Aiden read when he was thirteen. That was true to. "And tell me, your ruler, the patriarch. He sits on, what does everyone around call it, the blood throne. Metaphor or literal?"

White Beard opened his mouth to retort but Mahan opened his palm and lifted it to the air. "We are discussing matters of faith, please. Not politics." He motioned to White Beard. "Continue, my brother."

White Beard bowed. "Thank you...but I feel I've said enough on the matter." He turned to leave.

"Then peace be with you," said Mahan to White Beard's back, then turned to the crowd. "I guess that will be all for now." The old walked away. The young sighed in frustration. Mahan lifted his shoulders and held up his palms to settle them. "God gave us hunger to remind us why he made food."

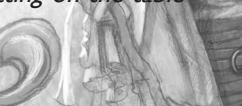
The crowds dispersed save for Aiden and Raven. White Beard walked between the two, refusing to acknowledge either's presence. Aiden's eyes followed him as the priest exited the wing. Raven turned her back to the door.

"He is the expert," she said.

Aiden was still following the priest. "I'd prefer not talk to an Ogium zealot."

"Understood and agreed. Thankfully, I was referring to the other one."

Aiden turned quickly to Mahan as he brought a small cup of tea to sip. He had returned to sitting on the table



with a foot on the chair, casually reading a book he owned, indicative from the dog-ears. He casually chewed a piece of cured squab. "Ignoring if he's fae-bonded, he can't be more than forty."

"Perhaps, like you, he reads."

"Unless he bought the armor used, I doubt it."

Aiden walked over to Mahan as casually as he could.

"Excuse me? Are you busy?"

"Just looking for God?" Mahan answered, eyes still in his book.

"Really? You find him?"

Mahan closed the book, looked up, and smiled.

"Right where I left him."

"I wondered if you had a moment to talk."

Mahan assessed him quickly. "Look at you. How long have you been out?"

"Out?"

"Bastion."

Aiden intended concealment but found the truth emerging. "Four--Five...Five months."

"That was my guess. No offense but your eyes are glazed like a baby from the womb. You're practically steeped in afterbirth." Mahan held out his hand. "And you are?"

Aiden accepted it. "Aiden, this is..." he released and motioned to the silent damaskan beside him. Raven smiled but kept both her hands interlocked behind her back and offered a bow. "Raven."

"Raven," Mahan repeated, also with a bow, "what's your real name?"

"Raven," she said.

"What's your elvish name?"

She paused. For a moment, she had almost forgotten. Ravenar Limshau III was the king's real name but his sister's husband elected to adopt the human title "Strongbow" to replace their damaskan family name of Kaixiu'Ooria. Centuries later, few in that family ever used that title. Their fourth child, a daughter, was given a damaskan name, which eventually turned into Raven, which she elected as her open name as well.

"Reivune," she finally said. Aiden never thought to ask. That might have helped.

"Ah," said Mahan as he bowed again. "Alissa menis, Reivune." His dialect and accent were near perfect but Raven didn't respond. Mahan smiled it off. "Yes, well, usually it works. Mahan Vaaris Farcon." Mahan grabbed his book but tapped Aiden's wrist with it. "Why do you wear a broken watch?"

Aiden twisted his arm to show the timepiece. "Well --"

"When did it happen?"

"10:03 am...July 9th. I was twelve."

"Where?"

"Angel."

"Should I ask?"

"I wouldn't bother." Aiden quickly shifted attention,

"What's the book?"

Mahan smiled the deflection away. "My field manual of God. My views and how the teachings of the prophet guide me. Some reference passages to the Qur'an, Torah, Bible--"

"You're Muslim?"

"Astute."

"My apologies, I didn't know."

"My fault, I left the tag in my pocket."

"So you got into a topic defending Christianity with a Christian?"

"Seemed a proficient opponent to joust with. You a follower?"

"No longer."

"Between faiths are you? Should I break out a leaflet?" Mahan joked. Raven didn't get it. "Sincerely, have you ever read any holy books, even for their literary value?"

Aiden held up his hand. "Thanks, but no. I don't read fiction anymore."

Mahan drew a pronounced smile at the remark. Aiden was unsure why he spouted such an obvious insult. It felt almost as a reflex, one he needed to suppress if requiring the man's help. Before an apology could be uttered, Mahan gave him a modest pass with, "Ohhh... rrrrrright."

Aiden quickly tried to cover his remarks without directly apologizing. "I did appreciate what you said. If God exists, it does seem foolish to attribute human qualities to him...or it."

"I only say 'he' out of habit. It's a force no one can comprehend or understand. We're as far away from understanding God's will as a germ. We're all blessed, despite the prayers you say or in what language you say them in. This goes for those pious and pagan, those human," he looked to Raven, "and those beyond."

"So we are not heathens then?" Raven asked.

"To arrogantly accuse good and thoughtful people that reject God as beyond his protection and subject to damnation is nothing short of a holocaust of the enlightened."

Raven finally smiled. She looked to Aiden, then back to Mahan. "Sanossa."

Mahan bowed. "You're welcome." He pointed to her with a bent arm and finger. "That's what I wanted to see. So hard to get a damaskan to smile. Like getting a demon to laugh." He began to pack his supplies into a pair of large leather saddlebags.

"Where are you from?" Aiden asked. "You're far too smart to be a village priest."

"Not sure if that's a compliment or an insult to village priests," Mahan answered.

"I wasn't trying to be rude."

"Didn't take it as such, my friend." Mahan closed up the bags and threw them over his shoulder. "Taskin Kada."

"From Abidan, that explains a lot."

Mahan furrowed his brow. "Does it now?"

"It explains the adoration of its past king."

"The respect is there." Mahan then added sarcastically under his breath, "Adoration...feels a bit much."

Aiden stepped closer as he changed topics. "Rumor is you're the resident expert on religious artifacts. I was wondering if you had time to look at something. Do you have somewhere to be? A flock waiting for you?"

"I'm not an Imam. Far better men and women carry

that responsibility. I have enough issues with my own direction." Mahan loosed the bags from his shoulder and let them slide to his grasp. "Some consider me a holy man but I'm no cleric, missionary perhaps."

"That denotes a mission," said Raven.

"Thus, the lack of direction."

...

"It's amethyst," said Mahan plainly upon looking at it. Aiden had rested it on the same table the crowds had gathered around earlier.

"That's amazing, good, thank you. That's all I needed." Aiden responded sarcastically.

"Not the gem, the faith. The dragon god. It's their symbol."

"I checked. Their's don't resemble this."

"Not in books but who's to say?"

"Look closer."

Mahan picked up the rock and stared at the storm within it.

"Enchanted. Also not unique...admittedly rare. I expect you found this under honorable conditions?"

"I wouldn't be so foolish to show you if it wasn't."

"Well, that's a weighted statement." Mahan placed the rock back down. "I will add it's peculiar. Those worshipping dragons don't often go to this extent. The pleroma is somewhat alarming. The symbol is a matter of faith and the dragonspeak is used in the study of magic that renounces god."

"Was that a slight in my direction?" Aiden asked. He also took note Mahan's reference to the language of dragons. Only those aware of its power referred to the written form as Pleroma.

"Heavens no." Mahan looked at the artifact again. He brought his eye close to the gem and let the light dance over his vision. He pulled it back and sighed.

"You're right on that. This is no symbol of faith, but it's made to resemble one." He placed the artifact back on the table. "The dragonspeak on the fingers indicate it was made by a mage, but they didn't enchant it. A magic jewel glows but never with such a...furnace. It would be a natural blessing. Someone found it and clasp it to be worn. The fingers are silver, meaning a holy dragon, so I doubt it's cursed. The attention to inscribing the letters tells me a wizard. The competency means a good one. So it's valuable."

"I assumed so."

"Evidently not since you paraded it so openly on the table. It's worth more than your spellbook," Mahan replied, nudging a chin to the fae, "or even her fresh off the train in Tobias." Aiden glanced at Raven, who didn't respond to the remark. "Notice the gash?" Mahan added.

Raven and Aiden leaned forward to look closer. Aiden spun the rock on its back to stare at the letters on the fingers.

"Gash?" Aiden asked.

"I know little about Pleroma," said Mahan as he pointed, "but that one looks odd."

Aiden and Raven almost tapped heads. He didn't acknowledge her. Aiden caressed the mark in question.

The draconic letters were raised but one specific had a faint recess.

"Yes, I had seen that," said Raven, "but I gave it no mind."

"That came from a sword hit, a powerful one." Mahan sat down on the chair, leaning back. "So...you would have to look for an incident where at least a competent mage faced against a swordmaster... and potentially lost.

"Sure it was a sword?"

"Perhaps an axe."

"Not a mistake in the forging?"

"No."

"Not a careless drop from a height?"

"No. To mark magic this way requires magic to do so, and I can guarantee the creator was human."

"Why do you say?" Aiden asked.

"Chaparrans would wrap it in wood. Tenenbri wouldn't be so ornate. Gimfen have no competent wizards. Damaskans have no imagination." He glanced at Raven. "Sorry, it's true."

"It is true," she replied, matter of fact.

"Narros would employ some rare element along with it, magnarros or angelite. That leaves laudenian and humanity. And it's not laudenian."

"Why?" Aiden asked.

"Because you wouldn't still have it. This leaves a human mage, and there are few of those on this continent."

Aiden was amazed at the presentation. "You are knowledgeable."

"You should see me cook."

"It could come from Lauropa," Aiden continued.

"Quite the assertion."

"It was in the shadow of a crashed aircraft from the east. Not much in that direction. I heard about bastions out that way, even beyond the ocean."

"That makes things more complicated. More wizards there than here. Hapura, Piotre Raczik, Torfin Gend..." Mahan realized it and said it again. "Torfin Gendron."

"Torfin died in a duel against the fanatic knight Wilhelm Myre," Aiden answered.

"Wield swords do they?" Mahan goaded lightly.

Aiden shook his head in amazement and grew a large smile to the cleric. Mahan, despite Aiden's opinion on religion, had impressed him greatly. "God dammit--"

"Hey," Mahan snapped. He wasn't angry, just vexed.

"Sorry."

"You're forgiven."

"This could be stormcage then?" Raven asked.

"Torfin's amulet," Mahan declared.

Aiden held the artifact to the light. "God da..." he stopped and then slipped, "darnit."

"You know that's not better."

"Sorry," Aiden replied, sheepish.

"You're forgiven."

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Aiden closed the huge steel bordered book bigger than a



church bible with a thud loud enough for everyone to hear. They sat in a new branch minutes into a new day. The wing was near empty. A single damaskan librarian read quietly in a corner. She was pure blood, slender and beautiful. Her dark hair was neatly tied behind, revealing her long neck. The horn-rimmed bifocals sitting on her sharp nose drew Aiden's initial attention. Fae had perfect eyesight. When the book slammed closed, a gust of wind threw Raven's hair back in a quick puff. Mahan sat opposite to her.

"So that answers that," said Aiden.

"Not in the slightest," answered Mahan. "Stormcage was found 'as is'. All Torfin did was shroud it in prestige. This stone was significant long before he was arrogant enough to claim it as a trophy."

Raven pushed herself back from the table and stood.

"What is it?" Aiden asked of her.

"I cannot imagine the account used an eagle as a metaphor for an aircraft. I am going to see the librarian. Perhaps there is more." She stepped away, then turned back to look at Mahan. "Did you want anything?"

"Sanossa," he replied, "Tea, local will suffice." She nodded, turned, and left. Mahan threw a hand to Aiden quickly as she walked away. "Nothing?"

"Tea with cream, I already know," Raven added without turning to face them. Aiden smirked. He moved to another smaller book nearby. He opened it and started reading.

Mahan kept both eyes on Raven until he was confident he was out of her attuned ears. He leaned towards Aiden. "Wow," he whispered a shout, emphasizing the outer letters.

Aiden looked up and nodded. "Yeah, I know." He faked nonchalance.

Mahan leaned back and muttered casually, "Doesn't say much, does she?"

Aiden looked back down to the book. "Only when it's important."

"Common among the damaskans, I've heard. Never seen a custodian that young. I mean she can't be more than a hundred."

"Ninety-five."

"How long have you known her?"

"Few weeks...a bit more."

"Shall I inquire as to the details of you two?"

Aiden glanced to Mahan and squinted slightly. His head tilted as he said, "Nothing?"

"Are you asking something?"

Aiden gathered his thoughts and repeated.

"Nothing."

"That's a lot of nothing, my friend."

"Are you probing for a prospect?"

"Certainly not. I wouldn't think of it. I keep my eyes away from those viewed by my friends. It's a big world with many options. I have never needed to betray anyone over matters of flesh." Aiden appreciated how quickly Mahan was to trust. The honesty of those outside of bastion walls was refreshing. Fae abhorred lying. Those living in their cities took to following that principle as best they could. Since Aiden returned the courtesy, he could count Mahan as a friend as quickly as Mahan had pro-

claimed it.

"Isn't fornication a sin with you?"

"A sin is an act that damages yourself, others, or the society you live in. If god is as we speak of, then why should he care what we indulge in if it doesn't go against the pillars my faith rests upon or the morals I stand by based upon the nobility of virtue. Love is what it is."

"Still seems a personal interpretation of words with a clear view on that sort of thing."

"It's poetry, my friend. Not an owner's manual. It's a product of its era and thus adapts with our growing morality. Never have I allowed its politics to corrupt my view of the Almighty." Mahan paused. "What is it?" he responded to Aiden's stare.

"I always thought there was no room for grey in this world, no balance. You're either a fanatic or an atheist, a scientist or a priest. Both extremes swear there's no compromise."

"Intolerance isn't just bound to religion. Science can never disprove god and faith can never disprove science."

"There are many that disagree."

"And god gave them freedom to do so...but I choose to ignore those people."

"But the prophets in these books do preach some pretty awful things, executions for misdemeanors."

"And there was once a time your leading scientists believed the Earth was flat. Things change."

"Not where I'm from." Aiden went quiet.

"To true, but perhaps not in the way you intended. Your city depends on rules for science and society. It grows advanced by building upon that foundation. Those cannot change. Faith is another case entirely. Out here, there is no stability. It changes on a whim as easily as we do in our dreams."

"Out here, I can be what I want to be."

"Also true. You can bend whatever rules you wish in your favor."

"Just as people bend their dogma in their favor."

Mahan paused, letting the insult drift by unacknowledged. "Point taken. I see your kind occasionally seeking adventure outside their cities, to experience a world known only in stories. Not much time passes before they realized there's no climate control, no computer networks, no digital music players, no cellular phones. The fantasy fades quickly and most run back under the sheets." Aiden didn't comment. "You starting to regret it?"

Aiden couldn't muster an honest answer. He knew the pursuit of this recent truth distracted him from remembering the reality of the past few months. He refused to acknowledge it. "Not going to say it wasn't difficult."

"But I still see delusions rooted behind those eyes. Still hoping it's a fiction you have some control over." Mahan pointed with his pupils to Raven's distant back.

"They may be exotic, but they are also costly, and those seeking courtship are not aware of the hardships to come. I hope you do not linger on this pursuit in some last desperate attempt to realize your dream. Especially considering a damaskan."

"Damaskans have the highest ratio of half-breeds."

"Seek to breed, do you?"

"Just making the argument, pairings occur--"

"There may be more half-breeds in Limshau than anywhere else but they still occupy an extremely small portion of this city. Damaskans have shields that would take a suitor years to chip away. I'm not going to dissuade you. I'm the authority on believing in something without evidence." Mahan smiled. He wanted to push the irony, but didn't. "However, there are shortcuts."

"Shortcuts?"

"Fae establish relationships through shared experiences. The more memorable the event, the more receptive they become. Did you meet her in battle? Was your initial encounter noteworthy enough to draw interest if you told it to a crowd?"

Aiden took a minute to think, realized the truth, and sighed. "Not really," he finally said.

"Shame."

...

Fae slept like horses. They required little comfort to doze. They slept either lying down or just leaning back. This allowed them to sleep contentedly on branches or cliff edges. They were easy to startle, skittish as prey in the wilderness. Mahan and Aiden were nearing collapse the first evening of research while Raven snuck in an hour on a chair before waking to assume her custodial duties. The two humans retired to their rooms with the sun on their faces. It was past noon when they resumed.

The Myre knights and the mages of Sepher returned with their lords' bodies, declaring no further conflict would occur that day. The crystal vanished from the minds of both armies. The bird dropped the amulet to the hands of a damaskan, Akai Lightwood, a ranger with no competence in magic. He offered it as a token to his true love, the noble daughter of Yorsan Croweborn, Lena of the Damaskan city of Kovalesa. It was an appropriate use of such an artifact. They were young and foolish but their fidelity remained solid for centuries, producing a dozen children, well above average.

One of them, Phera, grew so obsessed with finding adventure and staking a claim of glory, she sold her mother's cherished amulet for a pittance to a merchant in exchange for a set of mail and a longsword, both of lackluster enchantment. She fled south to fight the world. Despite Akai's decade search, he found neither his daughter nor the amulet.

The merchant, of no importance, was set upon by a group of boggs and murdered for his swag, leaving only his surviving wife to escape and relate the tale. She added that the boggs wandered west and stumbled into the eastern periphery of an unnamed bastion, where they were annihilated.

It was here the trail went cold. It was assumed the amulet was found and taken back to the bastion for study. The intellectual elite would have poked and prodded the crystal but would not understand how it accomplished what it could. Aiden was confused as to why they would put it on a transport for Canam. Transcontinental voyages were risky enough. Why would they endanger a crew for such a modest mystery? To bastion-born, this

artifact could not have meant much. He remembered his ticking watch.

Aiden stopped wondering why Mahan hung around.

The three of them only parted when other responsibilities were impossible to avoid. Raven was still a custodian--a warrior scholar bound as protector of the written word--and her patrols could not be evaded. Mahan was obligated to finish his stories to the youth. Aiden had few commitments other than to the selfish one he had taken on. It was the end of that week when the obvious finally struck him. "We're looking in the wrong era."

"Terros," Raven added. A time forgotten by even the fae, wiped clean from the globe when Attricana closed. The only surviving relics were what the fae brought with them in their return.

Mahan leaned in. He knew it had to be said. "Aiden, Torfin may be the first. Perhaps there's no one prior. He's the one that wrapped the dragon's claw and added the Pleroma. He thought it helped him with his magic...you notice that?"

Aiden laughed. "Definitely not."

"Well that makes identifying more difficult."

"It may be no one knows about it," Raven said. "It may have begun with Torfin. Even if there is a record, the books that made it from our past are few and scattered." Aiden knew what they were getting at. "Aiden," Mahan consoled, "maybe we are reaching the end of this. Perhaps you should leave it to the custodians. There would be compensation."

The stone was in the pack to Mahan's insistence. This was a weight of responsibility but Aiden couldn't help but act on it. He wasn't about to give up just yet. "This is more than Torfin's prize," he replied. "Let me show you something." He reached in to remove the stone. "I don't know what significance this has but..." He placed the stone on the table and placed his wrist alongside. Raven and Mahan moved closer. The amethyst glowed; the watch did nothing.

"Yes?" Mahan asked.

Aiden held up a finger. "Just wait...just...wait..." Raven and Mahan were unsure what to look at, the watch or the stone. The watch was an impressive feat of micro-engineering, rendered nonfunctional by the unreality of the new world. The amethyst was a solid crystal containing a storm of magic in a dimension greater than the stone's mass. Beyond these facts, nothing stood out of the ordinary.

Mahan spoke again, "What are we--"

"My watch worked," Aiden snapped. "It...made my watch...tick. It's been at 10:03... 10:03... for six years. Now it's 10:04."

"If you stare into chaos long enough," Mahan answered, "eventually you'll find an answer for everything."

"And how am I supposed to take that, coming from you?"

"Me?" Mahan was not insulted or upset, though he had a right to be. Instead, he laughed. "You mean faith." He shook his head. "Don't take me as some ignorant fundamental that finds god in places already claimed by science. There are many other easier explanations waiting for their place before you put forward some lofty pre-

sumption."

Aiden settled and wiped a hand over his face. He couldn't believe the cleric had overcome him with logic.

"I'm...sorry."

"Don't be...You do make a valid argument. Who am I to say? Perhaps it is god." Aiden had given Mahan further ammunition he was happy to fire.

"I never said--"

"Don't worry, I did it for you...how much time to do you require?"

"Just grant me a day...one day."

Raven tried the best smile she could manage. She was attempting friendship but had little experience in the matter. One does not achieve her status by pampering to the feelings of friends. "You can have as many as you want," she replied, "but what would it prove."

Aiden rolled the thought over in his head. He wondered how far he would take it. As he inhaled deeply, he wondered if he would really embark on such a responsibility if it had proven to be the step towards a quest. "Let me check the older books," he exhaled. Aiden worried that she would not remain if the stone was barely beyond the mundane. It might have been just a freak occurrence.

There was no information on what it did for Torfin. Crossing an ocean of storms to return it to the wizards of Kirjath Sepher was a mighty task. It hardly seemed worth the risk. It would be better to leave it with the custodians and have them decide its fate. He considered the excuses already forming in his mind. He wondered how far he would travel from home before getting weak in the soul. There was no quest for him here. Aiden wasn't sure if he was relieved or disheartened. Lingering questions would do exactly that and he needed to close the book on these issues.

...

Certain volumes were deemed too valuable to be exposed to the elements. They sat under glass. Though the founder of the kingdom, whose name carried with the capital, never agreed to clasp locks on books, some volumes were simply too rare to be handled. Aiden passed his eyes over Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies and a 42-line Gutenberg bible, the latter one of only three known to have survived. Only the keeper was allowed to open these books and read from their pages. It was a respected position in Limshau to sit behind the desk in the towering cathedral of old books. It was the closest approximation most damaskans had to church. Attricana was covered by a thick layer of rain-laden clouds. Night hadn't fully set, leaving a dim orange glow over the distant outer wall. The cathedral bordered on the gothic, a half-hearted tribute by an aging architect to a time where morbid equated whimsy. Inside, the circular nave carried up to the stone supports of the roof. A path orbited around the perimeter of the room, rising up storey by storey. Single displays of books sat in exhibits awaiting one's willing trek up the long climb. Like stations of the cross, oversized single-page excerpts of these books hung between the displays. It was the way of wisdom and Aiden appreciated the inadvertent irony. The

keeper sat at her alter of knowledge at the center of the nave.

Raven approached in the lead. She held her hands at her sides and bowed with her head down. "Allasennis frellissa. Reivune Kaixiu'Ooria keris vanna," she greeted her. When the keeper stood, she towered over them all. She was not damaskan. She looked almost human with subtle points to her ears covered by a healthy growth of black hair coiled into braids and running down her back. She was inches taller than even Aiden but still as thin as Raven. Her garments were white, loose, and regal. Aiden had remembered laudenians having a phobia of touching the ground, preferring their lives in the sky. They were the oldest fae, the fewest and the fading.

The keeper returned the bow with a hand to the heart. "Annia Kaixiu'Ooria, guis lore fanna."

Raven turned to the others and translated. "I told her we needed to see a catalogue or a reference of all books that date to Terros. She explained that most of those tombs were written by her people and they divulge their knowledge to no one. The ones here are exceptions, written by others."

Aiden raised a brow. "Wow. You said all of that?"

"And damasian is the easier tongue to learn. I also explained the motivation behind the request."

"We can trust her on that?" Aiden was not aware of the offense he was making in questioning the discipline of a keeper.

"There is no greater confidence I can place in any other creature on this world."

The first book they stopped on their expedition up the tower was Thalagos Monarch. The narros were all about magical things, rings and swords mostly. It was a steel spined book with a stone cover. Aiden was amazed the keeper could even open it. She had read every tome in this church, including the human volumes on the base level. The books got older as they climbed.

"Nothing with amethyst," Raven translated. "Narros do not often go for jewels. They prefer items of magic that empower their fortitude. Steel, iron, angelite, mag-narros."

The second book was the Kakodomarkia, the only Limshau book written by a demon. It talked about the rigid and compulsively complicated class structure of the perfectly ordered society of Kakodomania, the realm of black glass that emanated from the gate of Ixindar. It mentioned the dragon god Amethyst but only in reference to his mirror, the formless intelligence known only as Mengus. The keeper warned the others to avoid touching the book, a task the keeper had hardened herself to.

"Aclara gossina drasago," the keeper announced upon approaching the next exhibit, half way up the spire.

"Here are the Gospels of Drasago," Raven interpreted, "the bible written by dragons, split into five volumes. Aurannis, Greka, Kelto, Lynissa and Lazarus."

Mahan smiled as he followed behind her. "That's not exactly true. The Aurannis volume was removed by Lazarus. Greka and Aurannis were both Holy Dragons. Aurannis was the superior writer but they chose to endorse the Gospel of Greka."

Raven spun around to face him. "It is still up for

debate. I consider it canon."

"Garafara. Yanayaris soosan. Lazara Enoc janna serra." the keeper interrupted as she opened the silver encrusted book with bosses of animated tails and talons swimming around.

"Book of Lazarus, the dragon king," Raven said. "It will speak of Amethyst, the first one. She reminds that dragons prefer spheres...it dominates their religion, their culture. Everything circular, the snake eating the tail--that sort of thing. All that they create, from artwork to artifacts, were forged from nothing. So with them, the sphere would be glass, a mirror or a pearl, pure, simple. Jagged chunks of rock are not their way." Her tone dropped. "The other exhibits further up are only excerpts and images of lost books, not the books themselves."

The keeper flipped through the pages faster than any human could read. She finally closed the book after her search. "Enaser talasa."

"Sanossa," Raven expressed her gratitude. The keeper returned on her path back to the ground. She did so slowly as the feeling of cold earth unsettled her. She was anxious to help anyone that required her to climb. Raven turned back to Aiden. She attempted some mild sense of compassion. "I am sorry, but I doubt this item was created by a dragon. If it was not created by them, there are few other options."

Aiden was not relieved by the disappointment. His eyes fell off hers. Mahan voiced the unfortunate truth.

"Despite its impressive appearance, that may be all it is."

"Dammit," Aiden snapped, resting himself back onto the railing.

"It's still a rare find. Why the melancholy?"

"I'm just....I don't know." Aiden shook it off. "You're right...of course. It's just a rock."

"I believe we were all hoping for more, an adventure analogous to fiction."

Aiden gasped and arched his head, looking at but ignoring the impressive architecture of the nave's ceiling.

"You know I left my city expecting a fantasy. Adventure, sights... stuff I could only read about." His head fell back down to look at them. "Every time I turn a corner, something reminds me of what I am. In the end, it was just a rock, and I'm just a failed mage with aspirations of distinction. I guess we can't all be heroes of the age."

Raven kept her cold stare but behind it, she started to understand. Mahan stepped forward with a hand on his friend's shoulder. "I won't quote scripture Aiden, but it looks like your path is distinct already. It may just not be the story you wanted to tell."

Aiden lifted himself from the railing and opened his pack. He snatched the rock and rolled it around his palm, feigning apathy the best he could. He held it out to an accepting elvish hand. "Either way, you can have the rock. I am a poor warden for an item such as this."

Raven was going to have none of this and pushed the rock back to his palm. "No," she said. "I believe you. I think this is more important. I wanted the quest as well, a worthy obsession to claim."

Mahan stepped between the two of them. "Raven,"

he said, "there is nothing to back that. The keeper's opinion is respected. We'll take the rock to the appraisers tomorrow. You don't need a motivation if you want to go...just go. Find incentive along the way." He nudged to Aiden. "Aiden followed it through the best he could...more than anyone should ever hope. Finding stormcage is quite the feather. It's something I would be proud of. I know you were hoping for some proof of destiny."

"I don't believe in fate, Mahan," Aiden interjected.

Mahan turned to face Aiden and firmed his point with a finger. "No, but you believe you can create your own fantasy...write your own path...but this world is shared.

We have control of our choices but not always our life. I wanted this to be more. I had a lot going for it." He reached between them and grabbed the amethyst, then addressed Raven. "This isn't mediocre. As a custodian, you can write about it. Record it for prosperity and you'll be respected for your involvement in the event." He faced Aiden. "Just because it's not the target of an epic novel doesn't detract its value. In fiction, it would be a macguffin--a worthless encouragement. Maybe the novel of your life doesn't require one."

"I just don't want to be stuck in a tragedy. I don't want to flip the page and realize I'd been wasting my time."

Mahan placed a solid arm on Aiden's shoulder. "Even the seminal works of the genre wade in cliché. If this was a high fantasy you'd found yourself in, this chapter would end in some twist, a cliffhanger. It's real life, Aiden. Let this chapter end."

...

They walked slowly up the path, glancing at the hanging scrolls of oversized replicas of famous pages. There was no rush to return to monotony. "How long will you stay at Limshau?" Mahan asked Aiden.

"Not sure. Wizardry and I aren't doing so well." He wasn't inviting sympathy. Distractions of flesh and stone had proven too great. Diversion was the true enemy of arcana. One's mind had to be clear and resolute. Not that he had succeeded before finding Raven or the amethyst. He wanted to create fire and lightning, to bring down the pillars as he was goaded to do.

"Torfin was forty when he mastered the flint."

"I can't even do that."

Raven kept silent. She knew how rare human wizards were, not that elvish mages were drastically more numerous. Aiden was still struggling with the concept of Pleroma, awaiting some leap of logic that would connect the dots and shortcut him to success. The spark seemed so easy on the page but certain concepts were eluding him. He didn't know if the same consciousness reformed each time he cast it. Did the creature perish, content when the final word was spoken? Was it a newborn every time it unfolded into existence?

Mahan stopped and turned to Aiden. "You still haven't turned echan?"

"No." Aiden didn't want to extrapolate, but found himself answering anyway. "Something...prevents it. I

don't know...maybe it doesn't work for me."

"Then, have you considered the obvious alternative?" Aiden rolled his eyes and moved past. "You still have a choice, Aiden."

"What choice?"

"You can still go back."

Aiden spun around, aggravated. "Go back? Sacrifice six years of my life...for what?"

"People have lost more for less."

"Then what was no point? My mother died, Mahan? There has to be a point."

"A point or a purpose? They are the same, you understand?"

"Oh, fuck you."

"Aiden," Raven quietly but forcedly interjected.

Mahan ignored the curse and continued unabated. "You can't ask for a greater plan and curse the planner for writing it."

"I neither want nor need fate, Mahan. I'm not talking about God. I'm talking about controlling my own life. About what I choose to do. Even if this universe is a cosmic co-op, I should have some say in my life. Six years. It has to account for something."

"And you're saying it hasn't? Disregard god if you must, but not the truth." Aiden kept quiet as Mahan let a moment linger. "My home is riddled with people that would envy your fortune, even at the price of your pain. If you never cast a spell for your entire life--if you return to your bastion and fill machines with oil for the rest of your days, this was not a waste of time."

Aiden tightened his fist, resisting the urge to run away. He considered his options. He could remain and if he sold the amethyst, it could buy him years, even decades within the walls, finding permanent residence, even a room with glass in the windows. Conversely, he could squander it on a few years of global travel. Aiden turned to Raven. His elvish interest was taken back at the unexpected outburst. She couldn't hide the confusion from her eyes. He was deflated. "I suppose this would mark the end of our research."

"You would not require me any further, so that would be correct." It was not a question, just a simple, cold reply. Aiden had hoped otherwise, that she would follow him regardless of the quest. Aiden turned to continue walking, his cheeks sank when out of her sight.

"Not that we require a pretext to share time," she added. Aiden turned back to meet her smile. He almost chuckled. "Even I will not deny feeling dissatisfaction for this outcome. The temptations of adventure had taken me as well. I had hoped for a quest. If you will permit me...I will remain until you find another." Her cheeks lifted and her perfect teeth emerged. Aiden felt a weight drain from his eyes and his brow lifted with his spirit. They descended in silence.

Aiden lifted his head to catch a passing page beautifully rendered on a massive scroll. "What's that?" he asked.

The painting was epic in its scope. A snaking dragon with a full mane of white hair displayed its colors and strength to an armored opponent and the armies it led.

The frightened creatures under the dragon's shadow

showed the immensity of the beast. Its wings spanned across mountains and its body, tooth to tale, was longer than a longbow's arrowshot. The lavender and violet scales were lovingly rendered by an adoring artist. The enemy was taller than any of its followers, with every inch of it covered by interlocking and intermixing plates that slid and floated to cover any weakness. The helmet, flattened with a crown of knives, could hold the head of no creature that could suit the body. The sword stretched the armor's height, pulled back for a heavy blow.

The eyes of the serpent had caught Aiden. It reminded him of Genai's, but these matched the pigment of the creature's skin, that of amethyst. The body was like that of Genai, but with traits from western myths as well, sporting huge wings along the thin body. Aiden followed up the head to the crown of crystal that grew from the beast's head.

"The dragon god, Amethyst," Raven stated, "before the fall of the first hammer, the duel against Gebermach which ended his life and closed the gates."

Mahan stepped forward and added in whisper, "The moment when the world was orphaned by magic and handed to science to reign unchallenged."

"Never saw an image of him," Aiden said. He stared at the crown. Rising jewels behind the white mane, they looked of natural stone. Aiden stepped closer, scrutinizing the detail. Only one that had seen the battle directly could have represented the combatants so well. The image came from the eyes of another dragon. Aiden stared at the jutting stones and the strange patterns etched inside. Aiden broke his stare to reach into his pack and pull out stormcage. He stared at the stone, then to the crown. He approached the painting and lifted his prize to the air, beside the dragon god's coronet. The storms within the artifact matched those of the painting. The swirling storms, the arcs of lightning, there was nothing left for inspiration. Aiden turned back to Raven and Mahan, both slack-jawed. Mahan snapped out of it first, exposing his clean and straight teeth in the biggest smile Aiden had seen yet.

"Would you look at that?" said Mahan.

"This is a page from a book?" Aiden asked Raven.

She nodded. "Yes."

"Which one?"

They shared a look that confirmed for both of them the commitment of a crusade.

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