NUMENÉRA™

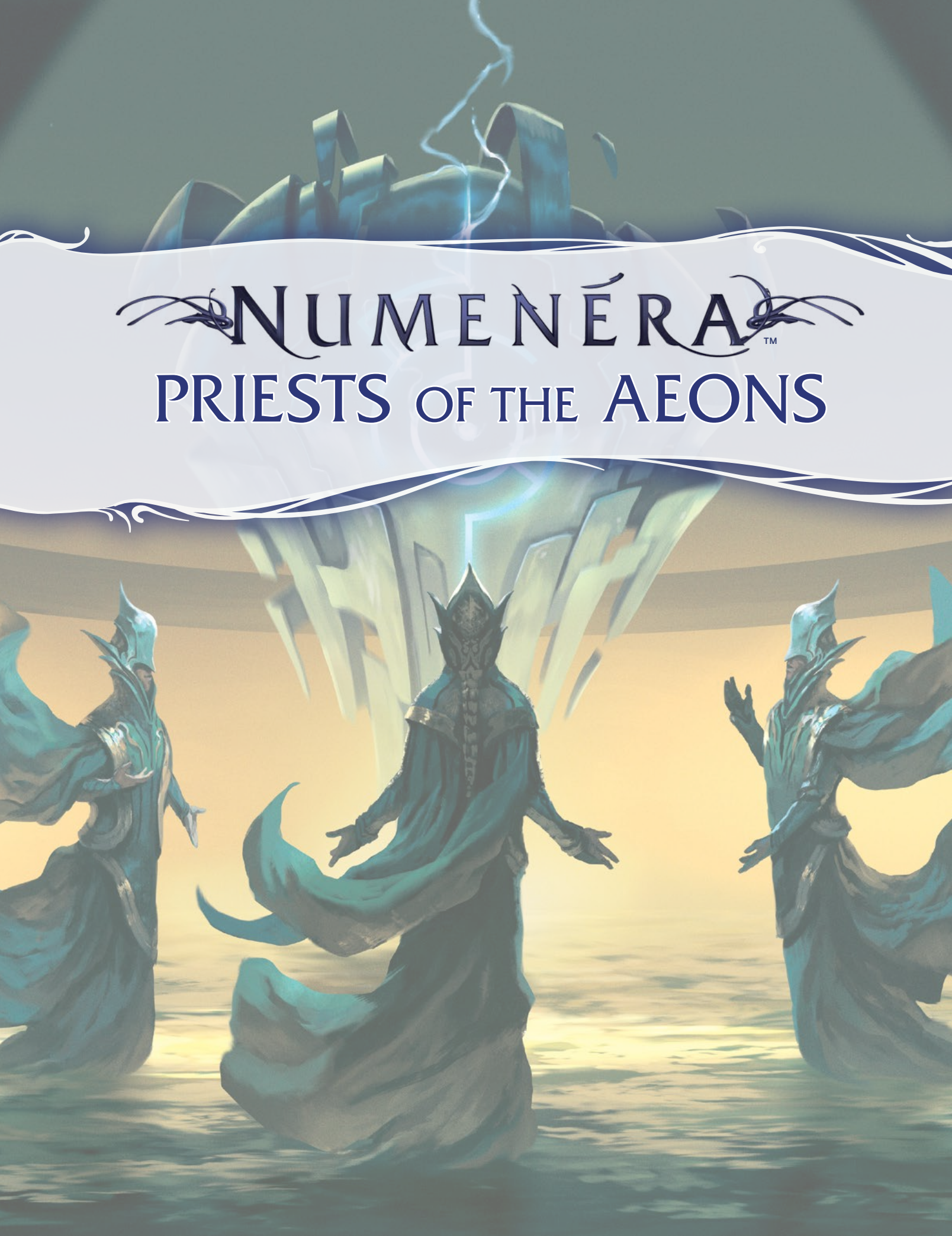
PRIESTS of the AEONS



By Sean K. Reynolds






NUMENÉRA™
PRIESTS OF THE AEONS

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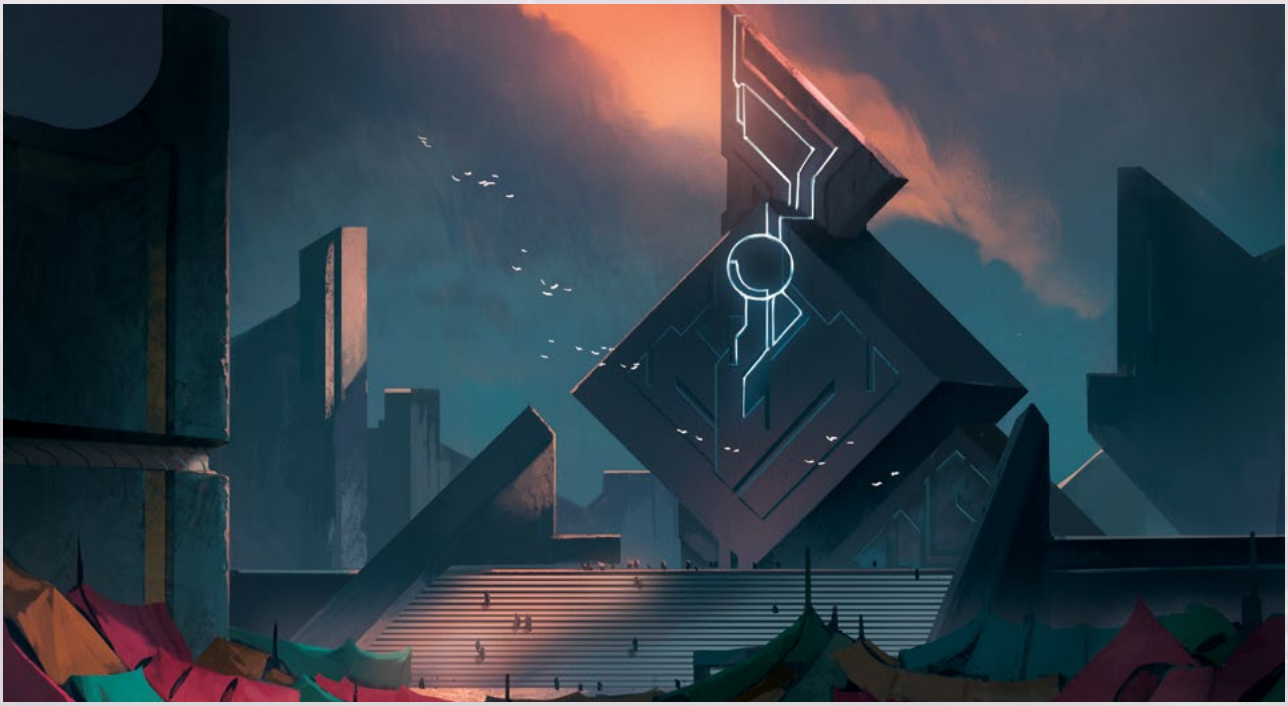


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Calaval's Parable of the Imager and the Spider

"As you can see, today I have brought an imager artifact and a glass cage containing a spider and its web. As I bring the imager closer to the spider so I can record her appearance, the spider moves down her web to evade me.

"It is not that the spider was running away because she doesn't want me to record her image. She ran because something large was coming too close to her and she thought it might harm her. The spider can't understand my motivation because she can't comprehend what an imager is or how it might work. Perhaps more important, even if she could understand what an imager is and how it works, she can't comprehend why anyone would want to record her likeness—or the likeness of anything. Not only does her limited existence make that concept foreign to her experience, it makes it inconceivable.

"For that matter, she probably can just barely comprehend me, a human, at all. She normally interacts with flies, gnats, other spiders, and similar tiny things. She might be preyed upon by birds, toads, and other creatures of that size. But to the spider, something my size is more of an indistinct, impersonal phenomenon or object—like a sunrise, a rainstorm, or a mountain—rather than a creature.

"If I put the imager in her cage, the spider could crawl over it. She could use the imager to anchor her web. She could judge that the imager is far too large and heavy to be suspended in her web. But given her whole life spent next to it, she couldn't begin to guess why the imager was created or who created it. Frankly, we probably might be projecting too many human sensibilities onto her to think that she even understands that the imager is any different from a brick, a rock, or the branch of a tree. Given a hundred generations of spiders living near that imager on the ground, they'd never be able to understand a bit of it beyond their own context.

"That, in a nutshell, is what it is like for humans trying to understand the numenera. We—you students, the Aeon Priests, and even I—are the spider. The numenera is the imager in the cage. We can't hope to fully understand the numenera, for it was created by means and purposes that we cannot possibly begin to fathom. Comparing the minds of the prior worlds to human minds is like comparing human minds to spider minds. Given a hundred human generations of study, we won't be able to understand how a density nodule or a phase changer works, because that knowledge is beyond the scope of what the human mind can understand.

"Even the greatest human minds only have the barest hint of what the numenera was intended to be. We only scratch the surface of its purpose and possibilities. Our greatest wrights don't understand how the pieces function—they only know that putting them together in a certain way accomplishes a desired effect, like a spider using an imager to anchor her web so she can catch a fly.

"What I am telling you is that you will never fully understand the numenera. Your brain can't really understand all the principles of dimensions and time and energy. If you try, you will fail, much like if you try to jump over the moon, your leg muscles will fail you. Through no fault of your own, you will fail. With training, your brain may get glimpses of how a parallel dimension relates to our own, or the math underlying the progression of time, or how to quantify the massive network of free energy that surrounds us even now—in the same way that training your legs may allow you to jump higher than anyone has ever done before. And you should be proud of these accomplishments.

"Maybe someday, thousands of years from now, humanity will mutate or evolve or make some sort of psychic breakthrough, and we'll grow into something greater than we are now. And that is when we'll take our first steps toward true understanding of the numenera, like the great civilizations before us.

"Until then, we study the numenera. We examine it and test it. We build with it, simple things and complex things, all of which are based on a limited understanding and probably are orthogonal to its true purpose. We are the spider, and we will use our knowledge and skill to construct webs . . . beautiful, powerful, amazing webs that will allow us to survive and thrive in this strange, dangerous world that was left for us."

INTRODUCTION: THE STEWARDS OF TRUTH

Aeon Priests and the Order of Truth play an important role in the Ninth World setting, but they are still a very mysterious organization. What they actually know about the numenera is a bit of an enigma, not only to the people in the world, but to the players and even the gamemasters as well. This deliberate choice made it possible for individual GMs to steer their Numenera campaigns to fit the stories they wanted to tell. Some GMs might want to depict Aeon Priests as hoarding knowledge or keeping dangerous information locked away from people who can't be trusted to use it. Other GMs want the Order of Truth to be mad scientists on the bleeding edge of understanding how to use the remnants of the prior worlds to create fantastic and impossible things. Many use them as plot devices, providing necessary technology to allow for a particular kind of session, such as a heist, an exploration, a conquest, or a tale of survival.

All of these ideas are valid.

We've described the Order of Truth with a broad set of goals: study the numenera, try to learn how it works, and advise and teach others how to use it. The Steadfast is a large place, communication is slow and infrequent between settlements, and individuals have a great deal of leeway to work on their own projects despite specific



Numenera Discovery *Numenera Destiny*

Throughout this book, you'll see page references to various items accompanied by these two symbols. These are page references to *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny*, respectively, where you can find additional details about that rule, ability, creature, or concept. Often, it will be necessary to look up the referenced item to find information you need for character creation and gameplay. Other times, it's not necessary to look up the item, but doing so can deepen your experience and understanding of the game and the setting.

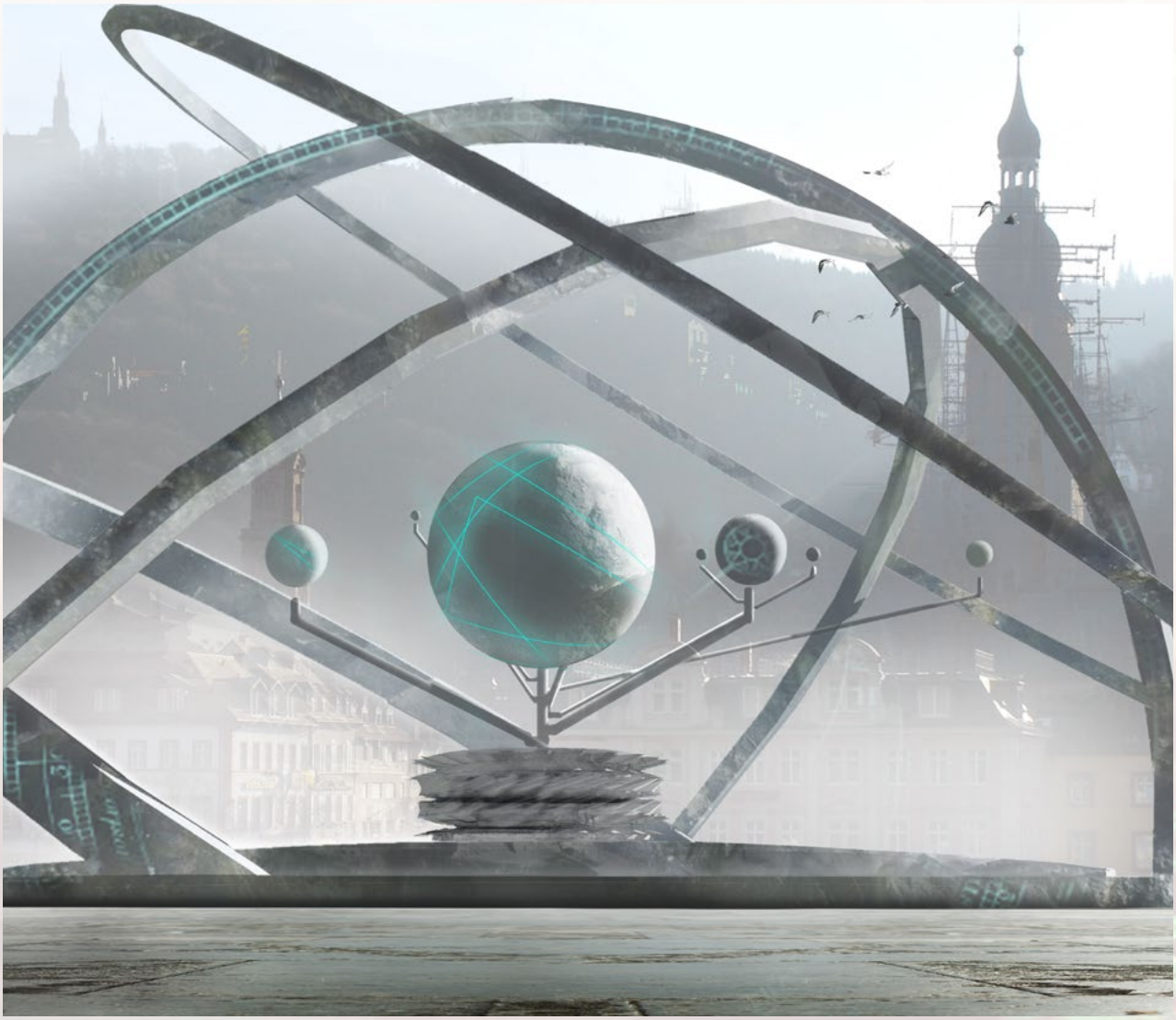


The Catechism of Lore:
All glory to the originators of truth and understanding.
Praise to the innovators of steel and synth.
Praise to the shapers of flesh, of bone, and of mind.
Glory to those who re-sculpted the sustaining earth and the life-giving sun.
Praise to the senders of signals, who even now whisper into machine ears and give life to the inanimate. Praise to those who traveled to the stars, and the realms beyond the stars.
All glory to the originators of truth and understanding.

direction from the geographically distant Amber Pope. The order is made up of many individuals of different ages, backgrounds, and regions of origin, and they all have their own biases, interests, and agendas. This book follows this precedent by presenting the order in broad strokes, but allows for local variances based on politics, personal vendettas, and the knowledge that nobody is scrutinizing everything that they do. Even the items they cobble and craft are highly variable because there are dozens of places to train, hundreds of topics to research, and thousands of ruins from the past that provide their own unique shape to each priest's work.

In other words, everything in this book is merely a guideline for an idealized concept of the Order of Truth, and the GM is free to change anything presented here if it makes their home campaign more fun. Groups of Aeon Priests can be corrupt, greedy, petty, vengeful, altruistic, half mad, or anything that suits the narrative the GM and players are creating.

Although much of this book is intended for players' eyes (such as the descriptor, focus, and equipment chapters), much of it has secrets that only the GMs should see. The GM should decide what parts the players shouldn't read to prevent them from seeing spoilers. (Of course, if players end up seeing information they shouldn't, and the clave they read about turns out to be very different in the game, that might mean what they "heard" was just rumors, or perhaps those Aeon Priests are not what they seem.)



PART 1:
CHARACTERS



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CHAPTER 1

CHARACTER ASPECTS

Even the typical Aeon Priest probably isn't a nano. Most of them are just scholars of the numenera—people with a lot of book learning and hands-on experience experimenting with cyphers, but no unusual abilities like esoteries.

When most people think of the Order of Truth, they think of an Aeon Priest nano—wearing a cowled robe, tinkering with cyphers, and reading obscure books. Many people assume that all true members of the order are nanos of some kind, and their guards are just hirelings. Those people are quite wrong—the order includes warriors, scouts, builders, fast-talkers, leaders, explorers, and many other kinds of people in various important roles, all of whom strongly believe in the principles of the order. PCs of all stripes can be useful to the order as employees and allies, or even join the order and advance through the ranks to take a prominent role in its internal politics and research. This part of the book talks about player options (descriptors, foci, and equipment) that relate to or originate from the Order of Truth.

DESCRIPTOR

Your descriptor defines your character and flavors everything you do. With that in mind, Chapter 2 gives descriptors from *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny* that are especially suited for the Order of Truth, whether your backstory is that you are a current member or you're an outsider trying to join them. It also presents five new descriptors suitable for members of the Order of Truth (or their allies) who get into dangerous situations and explore old ruins: Academic, Inventive, Meticulous, Reluctant, and Trustworthy.

FOCI & ALTERNATIVE FOCI ABILITIES

Chapter 3 has new focus options for characters and is divided into two major sections. The first introduces four new foci: Fell From Another World, Siphons Power, Steps Into the Outside, and Travels Through Time. Each of these is strange and exotic, and perhaps has a strong tie to the Order of Truth—for example, the PC was found, raised, and trained by Aeon Priests to learn how to use their unusual gifts.

The second section presents a new tier 3 ability choice for every focus in *Numenera Discovery*, *Numenera Destiny*, and this book. The idea behind this concept is that if anyone knows how to tinker with the unique abilities of a PC, it's an Aeon Priest. These alternative abilities are the result of a PC going to a clave and asking to be experimented upon.

EQUIPMENT

Chapter 4 presents new special equipment—unusual items discovered, repurposed, or crafted by the Order of Truth that have made their way into many cities and towns in the Steadfast, or perhaps are available only from the Aeon Priests in one specific town. If you're looking for an injection that'll let you grow bone claws from your fingers, an all-in-one device that acts as any light tool, or a flexible cable to put around your tent and scream at intruders, this is the place to find it.



CHAPTER 2

DESCRIPTOR

Numenera Discovery and *Numenera Destiny* provide dozens of descriptors suitable for creating many kinds of characters. The descriptors in this chapter give more options for characters who want to associate with or be a part of the Order of Truth and its focus on learning the secrets of numenera and advancing the knowledge available to the people of the Ninth World.

ACADEMIC

You have studied, and you have a knack for explaining things to other people in ways that make the lessons stick. You know many things and are an expert on a few topics, such as history, biology, geography, the numenera, nature, or any other area of study. Academic characters typically carry a few books around with them and spend their spare time reading.

You gain the following benefits:

Smart: +2 to your Intellect Pool.

Skill: You're trained in two areas of knowledge of your choice.

Instruction: In your idle time, you talk a lot about subjects you're skilled in, teaching with clever explanations and insightful examples that are easy to remember. If you spend one minute reminding your allies of a previous lesson, for the next ten minutes, those who paid attention then and now are trained in a task you choose that's related to that lesson, as long as it's not an attack or defense task.

Inability: People often think you're boring and a pushover. Any task involving persuasion or intimidation is hindered.

The following descriptors from other Numenera books are especially appropriate for a character associated with the Order of Truth. This is not to say that other descriptors are not useable—they're just less likely. There's no reason why a Graceful or Stealthy character wouldn't be of use to the order, and even a Rugged or Vicious character probably has an unusual backstory explaining how they came to be accepted by the Aeon Priests as a trusted ally.



***Numenera Discovery*:** Charming, Clever, Intelligent, Learned, Mystical/Mechanical, Strong-Willed

***Numenera Destiny*:** Articulate, Beneficent, Civic, Committed, Confident, Cultured, Curious, Empirical, Gregarious, Imaginative, Loyal, Obsessive, Optimistic, Organized

***Numenera Character Options*:** Inquisitive, Mad, Perceptive, Wealthy, Weird. (Location-based descriptors: Bazian, Iscobean.)

***Numenera Character Options 2*:** Deliberate, Devout, Gregarious, Obsessive, Resourceful. (Location-based descriptors: Elychnious.)

Graceful, page 54

Rugged, page 56

Stealthy, page 56

Vicious, page 54

Commonplace structures like walls and bridges don't require plans, but having a plan eases the assessed difficulty.

Commonplace plans, page 124

Free level of Effort, page 103

Additional Equipment: You have two additional books on topics of your choice.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. One of the other PCs asked you to teach them about something you know.
2. You need money to help support your school or another teacher.
3. You see the task as an opportunity to show that your knowledge is practical as well as theoretical.
4. You don't have any students at the moment and are looking for new opportunities.



INVENTIVE

You're creative about making things with your hands and building things nobody has ever seen before. When you have a free minute, you're probably thinking about how to invent something or sketch an idea for your latest creation. Most of your concepts will never see the light of day, but with the right materials, some time, and elbow grease, you're willing to aim big and build bigger. Usually you like to plan out a lot of details for your inventions, but every now and then you just have to bolt, screw, or weld some things together and see if it works.

You gain the following benefits:

Smart: +2 to your Intellect Pool.

Skill: You're trained in one crafting skill (stonemasonry, woodworking, crafting numenera, and so on).

Inventor: You immediately learn one new plan to create any object of up to level 3 plus your tier, and another every time you gain a new tier. This plan is probably for a craft you are skilled in, but doesn't have to be (sometimes inspiration leads your inventiveness in unexpected directions).

Imaginative Solution: When you apply a level of Effort to any crafting task, you gain a free level of Effort.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Your building skills are the right tool for this job.
2. You need money and supplies for your next invention.
3. Something weird you find is sure to get your creative juices flowing.
4. Someone isn't happy about your last invention, and you want to put some distance between you and them.

METICULOUS

You have an almost obsessive attention to detail and have a hard time letting go of nagging unanswered questions. This makes you very good at collecting and processing data, but also a little frustrating for people who don't think like you do. You aren't necessarily an organized person—how you remember things might be convoluted and your bag might be a jumble of loose items, but your system works for you. You probably don't like it when people use imprecise language (including using words like "thing" when a more accurate or descriptive word or phrase will do), and your stories are littered with extra details that are irrelevant but apparently necessary (such as describing the eye color of a town guard who interrupted your attempt to steal an important artifact from a vault).

You gain the following benefits:

Painstaking: +4 to your Intellect Pool.

Skill: You're trained in perception, memory, and one area of knowledge of your choice.

Comprehensive Study: You usually can figure out which part of a book you've read has the information you're looking for. When using a book or similar reference you've already read as an asset on a task, it takes you about one-third as long as normal to do so.

Inability: Your pedantic nature and comments tend to get on people's nerves. Persuasion tasks are hindered.

Additional Equipment: You have two books on topics of your choice.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You noticed the other PCs were about to leave without some of their equipment.
2. The other PCs asked you to look over their plan to make sure they didn't miss anything important.
3. This all was your idea, and you hand-picked the other PCs because of what they can do.
4. You think you'll be able to find answers to some lingering questions that have been bothering you for a while.



RELUCTANT

You expected your life to go a very different way, perhaps something relaxing, sedentary, and studious, but you've been pushed or dragged into dangerous situations with strange people, and despite some success you're not quite sure this is what you're supposed to be doing. You're not cowardly or weak (although others might think you are), but you feel like you're in over your head or out of your element all the time. You'll keep faking it as best you can, but you're looking forward to the next opportunity for rest, relaxation, and normal activities.

Using a book as an asset on a task usually requires you to spend half an hour on the task or twice as long as normal, whichever is greater.

Book, page 98

You gain the following benefits:

Bookish: +2 to your Intellect Pool.

Skill: You're trained in four nonphysical, noncombat skills of your choice.

Taking It Slow: You can use one action thinking about what you want to do on your next turn, and then when you take that action, you gain an asset on the task. If the task is one you have an inability in, you ignore the inability for that task. You can use this ability one time, although it is renewed each time you make a recovery roll.

Inability: You're just not a fighter. Initiative and all physical attacks are hindered.

Inability: You're not the outdoorsy type. Climbing, jumping, running, and swimming tasks are hindered.

Additional Equipment: You have one portable object that reminds you of the comforts of your old life, such as a book, a box of your favorite tea, or a family portrait.



Free level of Effort, page 103

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You got involved as a favor to someone whom you owed a debt.
2. You were in the right (wrong?) place at the right (wrong?) time.
3. While avoiding an entirely different situation, you walked into your current situation.
4. One of the other PCs dragged you into it.

TRUSTWORTHY

You are an honest person, and others can tell that you can be trusted to do the fair and right thing, even if that is a hard choice to make. You probably have a personal code or sense of rules that was taught to you by someone you respect—or that you created on your own after others let you down too many times. Willpower allows you to push through when things get grey and you're tempted to betray your own or someone else's confidence in you. When you give your word, you keep it.

You gain the following benefits:

Unwavering: +2 to your Intellect Pool.

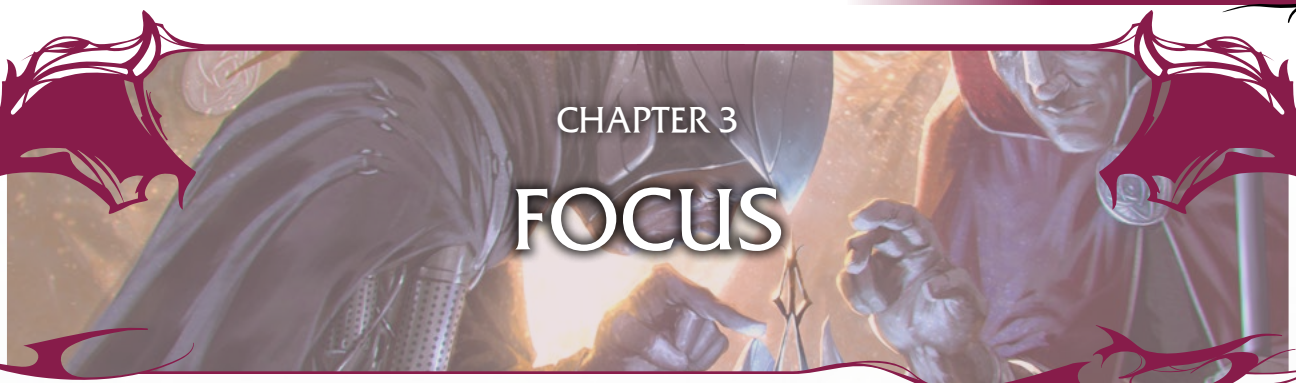
Skill: You are trained in persuasion and intimidation tasks where your trustworthiness is a factor.

Inability: Your desire to be trustworthy makes it difficult for you to lie or be misleading. Any task involving deception is hindered.

Determination: When you apply a level of Effort on an Intellect task, you get a free level of Effort on that task.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. The PCs' goals align with your personal beliefs.
2. You heard about what the other PCs are involved in, and helping them is the right thing to do.
3. One of the other PCs invited you, hearing of your trustworthiness.
4. You suspect that one PC or someone they're working with isn't on the level, and you want to make sure the others don't get swindled.



CHAPTER 3

FOCUS

The new foci in this chapter are additional options for PCs. However, unlike those presented in *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny*, the GM may decide that some of these choices are limited to characters who belong to the Order of Truth. The assumption is that those restricted foci represent training by experts in the order to create truly exceptional people who will contribute greatly toward the organization's goals. Such individuals were likely born into the order or recruited at a very early age by someone with a keen eye for potential.

FELL FROM ANOTHER WORLD

You were not born of the Ninth World. Yet now you find yourself living in a place layered by the ruins of prior civilizations, peopled mostly by oddly ignorant yet strangely potent and sometimes compassionate humans. This magnificent spectacle may have been what drew you, though it's more likely it was an accident of fate that brought you to this alien planet. Whether you came from another world, another dimension, or another time, you must make the best of it and try to succeed. Even if you seek to find your homeworld or want to make a new life for yourself on Earth, you must cultivate friends, knowledge, and experience to survive in the present. Because that's what humans do. You arrived with an exotic companion creature from your home, although it seems to have run off—hopefully it'll turn up again soon.

Some aliens look incredibly strange, while some look exactly like humans. Most fall somewhere in between. Any type is equally as likely to have fallen from another world.

Connection: Choose one of the following.

1. Pick one other PC. This character freaks out your exotic companion. Sometimes your companion hides when this character is too near. Other times it acts as a creature of +1 level for a short period.

2. Pick one other PC. This person thinks you're an abhuman. You might be fine with that.

3. Pick one other PC. You once joked that you could read their mind. Whether they found that exciting or utterly terrifying is up to them.

4. Pick one other PC. This was the character who first found you after you fell from another world and were hurt, confused, and afraid. They helped you get on your feet.

Minor Effect Suggestions: Your latent power for telekinesis sporadically kicks in, making your foe drop its weapon.

Major Effect Suggestions: Your latent power for telepathy kicks in stronger than ever, mind-jolting your foe so that it loses its next turn.

Tier 1: Uncanny. You unsettle humans and other creatures that haven't met a person of your heritage before. You can capitalize on that reaction and use it as an asset in most social interactions, whether you're able to persuade someone because they give undue credence to your oddness, intimidate someone for the same reason, or deceive someone who can't read your tells. Enabler.

It is possible that a PC born or recruited into the order may have washed out of the rigorous training schedule and now goes their own way. Whether that PC hopes to prove their worthiness to the order or seeks revenge against a system that failed them is a choice for the player to make.

Fell From Another World GM intrusions: *Prejudice against nonhumans makes life difficult. An NPC of the character's same species arrives and causes trouble for the character.*



Alien Knowledge. You're trained in one esoteric knowledge skill; that skill could be the numenera or something related to higher math, the history of your world, the mechanics of time travel, crafting installations, and so on. Enabler.

Tier 2: Exotic Companion. You finally locate your missing companion, which also hails from your home. It might be an animate glop of ooze, a tiny duplicate of yourself, a glimmer of hard light that follows you around, an insectlike creature that you keep in your extra stomach, or some other perfectly normal companion for your world, but one that draws occasional comments in the Ninth World. You and the GM must work out the details.

Your companion is a level 2 NPC who is completely devoted to you. You'll probably make rolls for your companion when it takes actions. A companion in combat usually doesn't make separate attacks, but helps you with yours. On your action, if the companion is next to you, it serves as an asset for one attack you make on your turn. If the companion dies, you gain a new one after at least two weeks and some effort on your part to find, reanimate, or regrow one. Enabler.

Tier 3: Ability Choice. Choose either Alien Intuition or Alien Telepathy as your tier 3 ability.

Alien Intuition (4 Intellect points). You have a few senses that many on this world lack, and sometimes those senses tell you things that others miss. You can ask the GM one question and get a general short answer if you succeed on an Intellect roll against a difficulty assigned by the GM. The more obscure the answer, the more difficult the task. Action.

Alien Telepathy (3 Intellect points). Your species' latent ability for telepathy manifests, allowing you to read the surface thoughts of a creature or thinking machine within short range, even if the target doesn't want you to. You must be able to see your target. Once you have established contact, you can read the target's thoughts for up to one minute. If you also have the Mind Reading special ability (or a similar ability) from your type, you can use this ability at long range, and you don't need to be able to

see the target (but you do have to know that the target is within range). Action to initiate.

Tier 4: Constant Contact. If you've used Alien Intuition to ask a question about a particular creature or Alien Telepathy to read a creature's surface thoughts, you retain a light trace of contact with that creature. This trace allows you to attempt to learn the direction and general distance that the creature is from you, a task with a difficulty equal to the level of the creature. You retain this trace only for the most recent creature you gained an intuition about or whose surface thoughts you read. Action.

Enhanced Companion. The base level for your companion rises to 3. Enabler.

Tier 5: Telekinetic Grasp (4+ Intellect points). Your species' latent ability for telekinesis manifests. You can target a creature or object (up to twice your size) within short range. The target is caught in your telekinetic grip, and you can move it up to a short distance in any direction each round that you retain your hold. A creature in your grip can take actions, but it can't move under its own power. Each round after the initial attack, you must spend an additional 2 Intellect points to keep your grip on the target; otherwise you drop it. Action to initiate.

Tier 6: Ability Choice. Choose Homeworld Bridge or Otherworldly Aggression as your tier 6 ability.

Homeworld Bridge (8+ Intellect points). Your species' latent ability for long-distance teleportation manifests. You instantaneously transmit yourself to your homeworld or home reality (if it still exists) or back to the Ninth World, returning to the exact spot you left. You can use this ability to travel to other worlds besides your homeworld, though this requires additional levels of Effort (as determined by the GM). You can choose to use Effort to bring other people with you; each level of Effort used in this way affects up to three additional targets. You must touch any additional targets. Action.

Otherworldly Aggression (5 Intellect points). Your species' latent ability to defend itself (or feed itself) manifests, allowing you to unfold a previously hidden limb or tentacle with razor-sharp claws, a telescoping second mouth, tendrils that generate lethal amounts of poison or electricity, or something else; work with your GM to determine the exact nature of your change. When you attack with this melee weapon, you can do so once as part of a normal action, even if that other action is also an attack using whatever means you normally would. This attack inflicts 2 points of damage that ignores Armor. Enabler.

SIPHONS POWER

You are an energy vampire, draining power from machines or living creatures and feeding upon it. Perhaps you take great joy in this ability, or perhaps you grudgingly accept it as a boon to yourself and your companions and use it only when you must. Either way, you are likely feared and unwelcome in many communities for your dangerous powers. You might try to conceal your true nature, dressing so that you don't attract attention and give yourself away, or perhaps you flaunt it, using the rumors to your advantage, wearing black clothing and embodying a sinister countenance.

Although most people assume that energy vampires are usually nanos, other character types can benefit as much or more from the ability to siphon energy into their bodies.

Connection: Choose one of the following.

1. Pick one other PC. This character is immune to your powers for some inexplicable reason.

2. Pick one other PC. This character appears to think of you as some kind of monster.

3. Pick one other PC with a living or machine companion. This character seems convinced that you're going to use their companion for your own ill-gotten purposes.

4. Pick one other PC. You believe they can help you control and understand your abilities, if you can get them to talk about it.

When using Telekinetic Grasp, if you have a type ability that also grants you telekinesis, you can target two creatures as the base effect when you use either ability.

Siphons Power GM intrusions: *Sometimes power drained from another source carries with it something unwanted—compulsions, afflictions, or alien thoughts. Siphoned power can overload the character, causing feedback.*

The GM decides if a target you want to drain is protected in some way, hindering your attack, or doesn't have any power you can tap.

You might be able to use Unraveling Consumption to drain energy from a creature that has been dead for no more than ten minutes, but at best this could restore points equal to the creature's level.

Minor Effect Suggestions: When draining a target, you gain 1 additional point to restore your Speed Pool and Might Pool.

Major Effect Suggestions: When draining a target, you gain 3 additional points to divide among your Speed Pool and Might Pool.

Tier 1: Drain Machine (3+ Intellect points). You can drain the power from objects of the numenera that you touch. If the target is an automaton, you inflict 3 points of damage and restore 3 points to your Might or Speed Pool. If the target is an object, you restore points to your Might or Speed Pool equal to the level of the target. If the target is a cypher or iotum, it is fully drained and useless. Artifacts, installations, and similar devices must immediately check for depletion (items with a depletion of "—" are either immune to this ability or have a depletion of 1 in 1d10 when drained with this ability). Action.

Tier 2: Drain Creature (3+ Intellect points). You can drain energy from a living creature you touch, inflicting 3 points of damage and restoring 3 points to your Might or Speed Pool. Action.

Tier 3: Ability Choice. Choose either Distance Drain or Unraveling Consumption as your tier 3 ability.

Distance Drain. Your Drain Machine and Drain Creature abilities work on a target within short range. Enabler.

Unraveling Consumption. You can drain energy from a living creature by touching it and concentrating for a minute or more. Each minute you spend in contact with and concentrating on the creature deals it 1 point of damage (ignores Armor) and restores 1 point to your Might or Speed Pool. Because of the extended contact required for this ability, normally you can use it only on a willing or helpless creature. If the creature takes enough damage to knock it unconscious or kill it, it crumbles into ash, dust, or some other inert material. Action to initiate, one minute to complete.

Tier 4: Store Energy. When you drain energy with your focus abilities, you can store some of it for later in a Siphon Pool. You



can spend points from your Siphon Pool as if they were from your Might or Speed Pool, or use an action to spend them to restore an equal number of points to your Might or Speed Pool. Your Siphon Pool can safely store up to 3 points; each point beyond that hinders all of your tasks by one step. Enabler.

Tier 5: Share the Power. When you drain energy, you can transfer it to another creature, restoring points to their Might or Speed Pools (or health for an NPC) instead of your own. You can spend points from your Siphon Pool in the same way. You must touch the creature you want to heal, unless you have the Distance Drain ability, in which case they can be up to a short distance away. Enabler.

Tier 6: Ability Choice. Choose either Explosive Release or Sun Siphon as your tier 6 ability.

Explosive Release (6 Intellect points). You can amplify the energy stored in your Siphon Pool and release it in a massive blast that affects either one target within short range or everything within immediate range. If you choose a single target, it takes 2 points of damage for every point in your Siphon Pool. If you choose an area, everything in the area (except you) takes 1 point of damage per point in your Siphon Pool (or half that if your attack fails against them). This drains your Siphon Pool to 0 points. Action.

Sun Siphon. Your Siphon Pool's safe limit increases by 3 points. If you spend an hour in sunlight (or an hour in contact with a suitable powerful energy source), you automatically fill your Siphon Pool to its safe limit. You can't refill your Siphon Pool this way again until after your next ten-hour recovery roll. Enabler.



STEPS INTO THE OUTSIDE

Exploration is in your blood, but the places you want to go do not exist in reality—at least, not in this reality. You know there are far more than three dimensions. With practice and help (through drugs, a special device, an inborn talent, or a combination of all of these), you can perceive these other dimensions and even change your phase to touch them. If you train enough, you'll be able to travel to them.

As an explorer, you carry a pack filled with all manner of supplies, just in case you become stranded in another dimension longer than you wish.

Delves and Jacks are most drawn to this focus.

Connection: Choose one of the following.

1. Pick one other PC. You are fairly certain that this character doesn't believe that your abilities are real.

2. Pick one other PC. You believe this character hails from an alternate dimension. Whether you ask them about it is up to you.

3. Pick one other PC. Whenever this character is near, your abilities seem to take longer to activate and become more difficult.

4. Pick one other PC. If they are near you, they gain the benefit of any ability you use on yourself if you choose to spend 1 more Intellect point.

Additional Equipment: Explorer's pack.

Minor Effect Suggestions: You restore 2 points to your Intellect Pool.

Major Effect Suggestions: After a brief glimpse of several potential parallel worlds branching off from where you stand now, you learn something relevant to your current situation.

Tier 1: Dimensional Creeping (2 Intellect points). By shifting yourself partially into another dimension, you can slowly pass through physical barriers at a rate of 4 inches (10 cm) per minute (minimum of one minute to pass through any barrier). You can't act (other than moving) or perceive anything until you pass entirely through the barrier. You can't pass through energy barriers. Action.

Steps Into the Outside GM intrusions: *Something in another dimension takes a bite out of a flickering character. A character fails to snap back to the starting dimension after using Dimensional Survey. The character steps into the wrong dimension after using Into the Outside.*

Characters who can make their own way into alternate dimensions are useful companions. They can get past barriers, see alternate timelines, and bypass weird regions that might otherwise trap intruders in a dangerous plane of existence.



When you use Flicker to flash through other dimensions, a particularly strong image of one of them is enough to let you travel there using Dimensional Survey or Into the Outside.

Tier 2: Glimpse the Outside (2 Intellect points). You gain a brief glimpse of several potential parallel worlds branching off from where you are. That glimpse lets you see the results of several different actions you might take, allowing you to learn a bit more about a creature or object you can see. You get an asset on one task in the next minute involving that creature or object. Action.

Dimensional Lore. You are trained in tasks related to knowledge about other dimensions. Enabler.

Tier 3: Ability Choice. Choose either Dimensional Blast or Flicker as your tier 3 ability.

Dimensional Blast (3 Intellect points). You blast a foe within short range with transdimensional energy, inflicting 2 points of Speed damage (ignores Armor) and hindering the target for one round. Action.

Flicker (4 Intellect points). For one minute, you flicker in and out of random adjacent dimensions. At the end of your turn every round, there is a 50 percent chance that you vanish into another dimension until the end of your next turn—to everyone else, you cease to exist for a few moments. From your perspective, you flash through several other dimensions, some of which are much like your home dimension, but others might be strange and disturbing. Action.

Tier 4: Dimensional Survey (5+ Intellect points). You step into an alternate dimension and can remain there for up to one hour. Returning to your previous dimension is difficult and jarring, inflicting 4 points of damage (ignores Armor) because your control over interdimensional superficies isn't perfect. You must know that the destination dimension exists; the GM decides if you have enough information to confirm its existence and the level of difficulty required to reach it. You have little control over where you appear in that dimension, but it is generally a safe place. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to bring other people with you or extend the duration; each level of Effort used in this way affects up to three additional targets (you must touch them) or adds ten minutes to your time in the other dimension. Action.

Tier 5: Untouchable (6 Intellect points). You change your phase state for the next minute so that you can't affect or be affected by normal matter or energy. Only mental attacks and special transdimensional energies, devices, or abilities can affect you, but likewise you can't attack, touch, or otherwise affect anything. Action to initiate.

Tier 6: Ability Choice. Choose either Dimensional Rift or Into the Outside as your tier 6 ability.

Dimensional Rift (5+ Intellect points). You create a swirling rift of destabilized transdimensional energy within short range. Any creature of up to level 2 that is within immediate range of the rift must resist being pulled through it into a random dimension. (Unless they have the ability to travel dimensions, they are probably lost there forever.) The rift closes after it pulls one creature through it or at the start of your next turn, whichever happens first. For each additional level of Effort you apply, you can attempt to affect a target of 1 level higher. Action.

Into the Outside (7+ Intellect points). You step into an alternate dimension. You must know that the destination dimension exists; the GM decides if you have enough information to confirm its existence and the level of difficulty required to reach it. You have little control over where you appear in that dimension, but it is generally a safe place. Unlike Flicker and Dimensional Survey, you do not automatically bounce back to your dimension of origin; to return, you must use this ability again. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to bring other people with you or extend the duration; each level of Effort used in this way affects up to three additional targets (you must touch them) or adds ten minutes to your time in the other dimension. Action.

TRAVELS THROUGH TIME

You have the unusual ability to travel through time in a way others can never dream of. You have likely experienced jumps where time seems to have passed but you have no memory of what happened. You probably also suffer from déjà vu, sensing that you have been in a situation or witnessed an event before and are now experiencing it all over again. You have begun to realize the extent of your powers, and you work to master them so that perhaps one day you can travel farther into the future or deeper into the past.

Travels Through Time GM intrusions: *Moving through time creates countless possibilities for paradoxes to occur, both small and large. As reality flows in to correct these snarls in time, certain events the character experienced may become rewritten. Other people might remember events differently than the time traveler does.*



Time travel poses many risks. Often, you have no clear sense about what the future might hold or what might have been happening in the spot where you appear when you travel to the past. Death waits for the bold and the incautious.

Worse than mishap, you must guard against paradox. When you change an event in the past, you could inadvertently cause the future to be rewritten. On the other hand, cosmic forces may move to correct paradoxes by changing circumstances to accommodate the revision, causing your memories to become false ones when the world you know changes to adapt to your meddling. Of course, if you attempt anything too radical, the universe might write you out of existence so that your efforts to change the past never occur.

You likely wear clothing and have personal effects in a range of styles, choosing items from many different periods. This eclectic approach to your possessions may give you a shabby appearance or make you look strange and alien to others in the present.

Any type of character can have this focus, though its power is extraordinarily rare. Check with your GM before choosing it; they may understandably decide that mucking with time isn't for their campaign.

Connection: Choose one of the following.

1. Pick one other PC. You are either a distant ancestor or a descendant of that character. They serve as a focal point for your travel and anchor you to the present.

2. Pick one other PC. For some reason, when you use your Anticipation power to look ahead, you specifically see how their future might unfold. You can choose whether or not to tell them what you see.

3. Pick one other PC. You secretly believe that they can also travel through time, since you once fought a person who looked exactly like them, but older.

4. Pick one other PC. You once stepped forward in time to save them from death, but they don't know it. You can choose whether or not to tell them.

Additional Equipment: You have two additional oddities. You think one of them

FOR THE GM: MANAGING TIME TRAVEL

Although time travel offers plenty of grist for the storytelling mill, it also brings plenty of complications. If a player chooses this focus and you allow it, you need to decide whether the character can change history by traveling through time (at least, once they advance to a high-enough tier).

The easiest way to manage time travel is to say that the PC jumps to a different timeline when they move forward or backward through time. Anything they do while displaced in time only affects events on that timeline.

The point the PC left becomes a nexus of many timelines. A character returning to that point might find themselves in their original timeline, in which case nothing they altered in the past affects their present or future, or they might be in a different timeline, where their past actions have had a great effect on the current world.

The biggest benefit of the multiple timelines approach is that it sidesteps the problems of paradoxes. Whenever a paradox would occur, the characters create another timeline instead. So if a PC goes back in time to a point before they are born and kills their young grandparent, they erase themselves from *that* timeline but not from their *own* timeline. Thus, the character would continue to exist in the (main) campaign timeline.

You can also use other methods for managing time travel, allowing characters to change past events to create a new future, paradoxes be damned. Or you might have the PCs merely observe, unable to interact with anything outside of the point you decide is the present.

If a PC's choice at sixth tier is restricted to the Call Through Time ability, many of the issues discussed here never come into play.

"Obscure" is a relative term—the datasphere might not know how a murden acquired a specific artifact, but someone using See History on that artifact would have an easy time sensing that event.

can track time, and you believe you can interpret its symbols well enough to know approximately how far forward or backward in time you travel.

Temporal Abilities: If you perform esoteries or have similar abilities, time appears to slow down when you use them. You and everything around you moves in slow motion for a moment, and then time snaps back into place. The temporal distortion changes nothing about the effects of your esoteries except for the appearance of the world around you.

Minor Effect Suggestions: One creature you choose within short range either acts first or acts last during the next round.

Major Effect Suggestions: You step a few moments into the future. To other characters, it looks as if you disappear. At the start of the next round, you reappear and you have an asset for any task you perform during that round.

Tier 1: Anticipation (1 Intellect point). You look ahead to see how your actions might unfold. The first task you perform before the end of the next round gains an asset. Action.

Tier 2: See History (4 Intellect points). You touch an object, read the subtle echoes of its existence through time, and ask the GM a question about the object's past and get a general answer. The answers are often in the form of brief images or sensations rather than specific answers in the Truth. The GM assigns a level to the question, so the more obscure the answer, the more difficult the task. Generally, knowledge that you could find by looking somewhere other than your current location is level 1, and obscure knowledge of the past is level 7. After you use this ability, you have an asset on identifying the object. Action. .

Tier 3: Ability Choice. Choose either Temporal Acceleration or Time Loop as your tier 3 ability.

Temporal Acceleration (5 Intellect points). You or one willing creature you touch moves more quickly through time. The effect lasts for one minute. Everything moves more slowly for the affected character, while to all others, the character seems to move at preternatural speed. The character has an asset on all tasks until the effect ends. After the effect ends, the target is exhausted and disoriented by the experience, hindering all tasks for one hour. Action.

Time Loop (4 Intellect points). You call yourself from a few moments in the future to help you in the present. On the round you use this ability, your future self appears anywhere you choose within immediate range and takes an action. On the second round, you and your future self both take actions, and your future self's action is eased. On the third round, you and your future self both disappear. On the fourth round, you catch up to your future self, reappear wherever your future self initially appeared in the first round, and can take your actions normally.

In effect, Time Loop lets "you" take an action on the round you use it, two actions on the second round, zero actions on the third round, and back to normal after that.

Your future self shares your stats, so any damage that either of you takes applies to the same stat Pools. If your future self is killed, you and your future self disappear in the third round (as normal) and you reappear, dead, in the fourth round. Neither you nor your future self can use Time Loop again until you reappear as your future self in the fourth round. Action.

Tier 4: Temporal Dislocation (7 Intellect points). You disappear and travel up to one hour into the future or the past. While dislocated in time, you perceive events as they transpire from your position using your normal senses, but you can't interact with or change anything. If you project yourself

into the past, you remain there for one hour, at which point you've caught up to the present (to anyone with you in the present, you only seem to flicker out of existence for a moment). If you project yourself into the future, you remain there until the present catches up to you (to anyone with you in the present, you vanish for one hour and reappear in the place you left). Action.

Tier 5: Time Doppelganger (6+ Intellect points). A perfect copy of you appears within an immediate distance. This doppelganger is probably a version of you from another timeline or the past. The doppelganger is a level 5 NPC with 15 health. It has your mind and memories, and you control it as if it were you in another body. In effect, while this ability is active, you have two bodies.

If the doppelganger uses any of your abilities that cost points, those points come from your Pools (including spending Effort). Controlling two bodies at once is difficult and distracting; while this ability is active, all tasks performed by you or the doppelganger are hindered. The doppelganger has no equipment other than simple clothing.

It remains for up to one minute, but disappears if killed or if you use an action to dismiss it. If the doppelganger is killed, you take 5 points of damage that ignore Armor, and you lose your next action. If you are killed while the doppelganger is present, you live on as the doppelganger (it becomes your character instead of being an NPC that disappears). In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the duration of this ability; each level of Effort used in this way adds one minute to the doppelganger's existence.

If you also have this ability from your type or another source, you may use either ability, the doppelganger is 1 level higher, and it has 3 additional health. Action.

Tier 6: Ability Choice. Choose either Call Through Time or Time Travel as your tier 6 ability.

Call Through Time (6+ Intellect points). You call a creature or person of up to level 3 from the recent past, and it appears next to you. You can choose a creature that you've previously encountered (even if it is now dead), or (no more than once per day) you can allow the GM to determine the creature randomly. If you call a random creature, it has a 10 percent chance of being a creature of up to level 5. The creature has no memory of anything before being called by you, though it can speak and has the general knowledge a creature of its type should possess. The time-shifted creature does your bidding for as long as you concentrate on it, but you must use your action each turn to direct it; otherwise it returns to the past.

In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to call a more powerful creature; each level of Effort used in this way increases the creature's level by 1. For example, applying one level of Effort calls a specific creature of up to level 4 or a random creature with a 10 percent chance of being up to level 6. Action.

Time Travel (10+ Intellect points). You and up to three willing creatures you choose within immediate range travel to a point in time that you specify when you use this ability. The point in time must be within ten years of the present. For each level of Effort applied, you can travel ten more years or bring three more creatures with you. When you appear in the new moment in time, you do so in the same position you were in when you used this ability. Upon arriving at your temporal destination, you and the other time travelers are stunned for one minute. In order to return to your original time, you must use this ability again. Action.



ALTERNATIVE ABILITIES FOR EXISTING FOCI

The Order of Truth has the greatest knowledge about the numenera. Given the thousands of Aeon Priests alive today, not to mention those who lived in previous centuries, odds are one of them has performed research on just about any topic the PCs might think of, including special character abilities such as those granted by a character's focus (although the specific thing they studied may have been part of an automaton, a biomechanical creature, or a mutation in some kind of beast).

This section gives an alternative tier 3 ability for every focus in *Numenera Discovery*, *Numenera Destiny*, and this book. PCs with friendly connections to the Order of Truth can find someone with the proper information about how to gain these abilities, although this might require locating the specific semblage or priest who has this data and can perform what is likely to be an experimental procedure on the PC.

Instead of having the PC track down an Aeon Priest with the right information, the GM can just let any PC select one of these alternative focus abilities, broadening their options without requiring the intervention of the Order of Truth.

Semblage, page 100

ABSORBS ENERGY

Tier 3: Energy Shielding. You automatically absorb some energy from attacks of pure energy (electricity, fire, radiation, transdimensional, and so on) and immediately disperse it in a harmless flare of light, which gives you +2 points of Armor that protect only against energy sources. Because this energy is not stored, you cannot use it for any of your focus abilities requiring stored energy. Enabler.

ACTS WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE

Tier 3: Unexpected Advantage. When trying to evade harm or a bad situation (such as a Speed defense roll, initiative roll, or lying to escape blame), you can use an asset on the task. Once you use this ability, it is not available again until after you make a one-hour or ten-hour recovery roll. Enabler.

ADJURES THE LEVIATHAN

Tier 3: Think Like a Beast. You become trained in two of the following tasks: initiative, perception, stealth, or tracking. Enabler.

AUGMENTS FLESH WITH GRAFTS

Tier 3: Creature Grafting. Your biology is especially suited to grafting flesh from other creatures. You gain an asset on all attempts to graft part of a creature (instead of a cypher or artifact) to yourself. If the attempt fails, you can try to graft it a second time before the creature's body part is ruined. Enabler.

BATTLES AUTOMATONS

Tier 3: Expert Dismantling. You become trained in salvaging numenera. If you salvage an automaton you have fought, you can either shorten the salvaging time to one minute or salvage it without needing tools. Enabler.

BEARS A HALO OF FIRE

Tier 3: Brilliant Flame (2 Intellect points). While your Shroud of Flame is active, you can increase its intensity so that it is blindingly bright. Make an attack against a target within short range. If successful, the attack deals no damage, but the target is blinded for one round. If you make an attack with a focus ability (such as Hurl Flame or Fiery Hand of Doom) or another ability altered by your focus (such as a fiery Onslaught), you can use Brilliant Flame as part of that attack, which has its normal effect plus blindness for one round, but the attack is hindered. Enabler.

BRANDISHES AN EXOTIC SHIELD

Tier 3: Shield Slide (2 Speed points). You use your shield to help you get to a foe (this might mean sliding on your shield or using it to repel opponents in your way). You move a short distance and then make a melee attack with the shield against that foe. Action.

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Absorbs Energy, page 55

Acts Without Consequence, page 57

Adjures the Leviathan, page 58

Augments Flesh With Grafts, page 59

Battles Automatons, page 61

Brandishes an Exotic Shield, page 63

Commonplace items don't require plans, but such plans can be useful in crafting them.

Detonation, page 277

Commands Mental Powers, page 60

Debilitated, page 110

Controls Beasts, page 62

Controls Gravity, page 63

Crafts Illusions, page 65

Breaks Down Walls, page 64

Builds Tomorrow, page 66

Plan, page 135

Commonplace weapons, page 129–130

Commonplace plans, page 124

"Obscure" is a relative term—the datasphere might not know the entry code to a door panel, but someone using Object Reading on it would have an easy time sensing the code, especially if it was used many times.

BREAKS DOWN WALLS

Tier 3: Unchained Force. You have two assets on any roll to resist or break out of something that would hold you in place, such as webbing, paralytic poison, chains, being grabbed, or even a mental command to remain still. Enabler.

BUILDS TOMORROW

Tier 3: Cognizant Defense. If you know a plan for building an automaton, commonplace weapon, numenera device, or installation, you have an asset on defense rolls against it. For example, if you know a plan for building a fire detonation, you have an asset on defense rolls against fire detonations; if you know a plan for building a crossbow, you have an asset on defense rolls against crossbows. Enabler.

COMMANDS MENTAL POWERS

Tier 3: Object Reading (3 Intellect points). You can read the subtle psychic impressions that minds leave on objects. You can extend your senses up to a short distance in any direction and ask the GM a very simple, general question about that area, such as "Did Kellim the Glaive pass through here?" or "How did this creature die?" The answers are often in the form of brief images or sensations rather than specific answers in the Truth.

The GM assigns a level to the question, so the more obscure the answer, the more difficult the task. Generally, knowledge that you could find by looking somewhere other than your current location is level 1, and obscure knowledge of the past is level 7. If the answer you seek is not in the area, you receive no information. After you use this ability, you have an asset on identifying the object. Action.



CONTROLS BEASTS

Tier 3: Enrage Companion (3+ Intellect points). With a touch and a whispered word, you can trigger a biological response in your beast companion, causing it to fly into a bone-ripping rage for up to one minute. During this period, treat the creature as 2 levels higher, and it inflicts an additional 2 points of damage each round. However, after this extreme effort, the companion becomes debilitated for one day. Each level of Effort you apply adds 1 to the temporary level of the creature (to a maximum of level 10), the amount of damage it deals each round, and the number of days it is debilitated. Action to initiate.

CONTROLS GRAVITY

Tier 3: Gravity Jump (4 Intellect points). You focus your power on one target within long range, moving it in a straight line up to a long distance. You can slow it down as it approaches its destination so it arrives safely or let it hit hard (inflicting half as much damage as a fall of that distance). This ability lacks the fine control to move things with much accuracy (comparable to trying to hit a target on the ground by dropping things from a tall building), so in most situations you can't use it to make ranged attacks unless the target is so large that being off by a few feet still would hit it. The target you want to move can be no bigger than approximately your size and weight. In addition, when you gain the Flight ability at tier 5, you and all creatures flying with you can fly at up to double speed. Action.

CRAFTS ILLUSIONS

Tier 3: Distorting Illusion (3+ Intellect points). You cover yourself with overlapping and blurred illusory images for one minute that make it hard to see exactly where you are. You gain an asset on Speed defense tasks. For each additional level of Effort applied, you can cover another creature with similar images (all affected creatures must stay within sight of you or lose their illusions). Action.

DANCES WITH DARK MATTER

Tier 3: Dark Matter Hands (3 Intellect points). Ribbons of dark matter follow and anticipate the movement of your limbs, aiding your movement tasks. Your balancing, climbing, jumping, swimming, and other movement tasks are eased for one minute. Enabler.

DEFENDS THE GATE

Tier 3: Improved Rally. You can use your Rally to Me ability as part of your attack action. If you decide to use your action just on Rally to Me, allies affected by it gain the asset on any two attack or defense tasks within the next hour that you suggest. Enabler.

DEFENDS THE WEAK

Tier 3: Race to Intervene. You can move up to an immediate distance to draw the attack meant for someone else, or up to a short distance as part of your action to take the attack or stand guard. Action or enabler.

DESCENDS FROM NOBILITY

Tier 3: Mentor's Inspiration (2 Intellect points). You sometimes are able to recall an insightful comment or lesson from someone who mentored you long in the past. You gain a free level of Effort on your next task with a skill that you are trained or specialized in. Once this ability is used, you can't use it again until after you make a ten-hour recovery roll. Action.



EMERGED FROM THE OBELISK

Tier 3: Crystal Shard. Any time a physical attack inflicts 4 or more points of damage on you, a jagged shard breaks off from your body and moves up to an immediate distance toward the source of that attack. If you make a ranged attack roll against the source of the attack, the shard inflicts 1 point of damage to it. Incoming damage absorbed by your Armor does not count toward the minimum damage needed to create the shard. Enabler.

EMPLOYS MAGNETISM

Tier 3: Fine Magnetic Control. Your magnetic manipulation is very accurate even at microscopic scales. You gain an asset on all crafting tasks involving metal materials and iotum (including crafting numenera tasks). By concentrating for about ten minutes, you can pull loose tiny particles of metal out of the area (such as from drit or even blowing in the wind) into a pile of metallic powder that counts as 1 unit of metal materials. You gain an asset on defense tasks against particulate threats involving metal (such as clouds of rust dust and the iron wind). Enabler.

ENTERTAINS

Tier 3: Personal Encouragement. You direct your creative energy at one creature within short range for at least ten minutes, speaking, singing, or otherwise performing solely for their benefit (even if others are present). At the end of this time, you grant that creature 1d6 points to one Pool (if the target is an NPC, it recovers 1d6 health). You can't use this ability on the same creature again until they've made a recovery roll (if the target is an NPC, you can't use this ability on it until it rests for ten hours). Action to initiate.

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Stand guard, page 121

Free level of Effort, page 103

Iron wind, page 135

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EXISTS PARTIALLY OUT OF PHASE

Tier 3: Partial Phasing. When you are out of phase, you can make or keep parts of your body in phase so you can interact with physical things in a limited fashion. For example, you reach through a door and use your semi-tangible hand to unlock it from the far side, reach into a machine and unplug one of its interior components, or reach into a person's body to pull out a deeply embedded metal slug or parasite. This usually counts as an asset on relevant tasks (such as an attempt to disable a machine or perform surgery on a creature), but the GM might decide that it makes an impossible task merely difficult and hinder the task (such as unlocking a door from the other side). Enabler.



EXPLORES DARK PLACES

Tier 3: Safe Exit. When you use your action to move away from danger (a foe, hazard, trap, and so on), your Speed defense rolls are eased until your next turn. If you have an ability that lets you move and take some other action, you do not gain this benefit if you do anything other than move. Enabler.

EXPLORES YESTERDAY

Tier 3: Wrest From Chance. If you roll a natural 1 on a d20, you can reroll the die. If you reroll, you avoid a GM intrusion—unless you roll a second 1—and might succeed on your task. Once you use this ability, it is not available again until after you make a ten-hour recovery roll. Enabler.

FELL FROM ANOTHER WORLD

Tier 3: Psychic Suggestion (4 Intellect points). Your species' latent telepathy is more assertive than passive. You can attempt to make a target take the action you indicate on its next turn. If the action would cause direct harm to the target or its allies, your mental attack is hindered. Action.

FIGHTS WITH A HORDE

Tier 3: Enhance Mind. When the follower from your Nucleus of a Horde ability is near you and working with you to accomplish tasks that depend on intelligence or force of will—such as figuring out how to disable a device, treating a wound, or realizing that someone is lying—your follower provides an asset on those tasks, even if those aren't their modifications. Enabler.

FIGHTS WITH PANACHE

Tier 3: Daring Dodge. When you would descend a step on the damage track, you can attempt a Speed task to resist, with a difficulty equal to the level of the foe or effect that harmed you. If successful, you don't descend the step and you regain 1 point in any Pool that is bereft of points. You can't use this ability again until after your next ten-hour recovery roll. Enabler.

FOCUSES MIND OVER MATTER

Tier 3: Fire and Ice (2+ Intellect points). By speeding up or slowing down the air and nanoparticles around you, for the next ten minutes you gain +1 Armor against cold or heat damage (choose which one when you use this ability). You can instead use this ability to telekinetically vibrate or still an object, making it very hot or cold to the touch for the next ten minutes. The object must be an area about 1 foot (30 cm) square or something you can hold in one hand. The area or object inflicts 2 points of heat or cold damage to anyone other than you who touches, holds, or is hit by it. Action.

FUSES FLESH AND STEEL

Tier 3: Skill Augmentation. Your mechanisms have been upgraded to enhance your physical performance. Choose two physical skills, such as balancing, climbing, escaping, jumping, or lockpicking. When you apply Effort on those skills, you get a free level of Effort on the task. Enabler.

FUSES MIND AND MACHINE

Tier 3: Machine Crafting. Because of the mechanical components linked to your mind, you have a unique understanding of how intelligent machines operate. You are trained in crafting numenera, and you have an asset on all crafting subtasks to create automatons. Enabler.

HOWLS AT THE MOON

Tier 3: Spawn (3+ Intellect points). As you change into your beast form, another creature appears an immediate distance away and attacks what you attack. This creature might be your beast form's mate or offspring, or a parasitic entity associated with it, but in any case it is as dangerous and hostile as you are. This spawn is a level 4 creature (with a target number of 12 and 12 health) that inflicts 4 points of damage each round. Each level of Effort you apply adds 1 to the temporary level of the spawn (to a maximum of level 10) and its damage inflicted. If you revert to your normal form, there is a 50 percent chance each round that the spawn vanishes. If the spawn is killed, you cannot use this ability again until the next time you are due for an involuntary transformation, at which time a new spawn creature appears when you transform. Enabler.

HUNTS

Tier 3: Danger Instinct (3 Speed points). If you are attacked by surprise, whether by a creature, a device, or simply an environmental hazard (such as a tree falling on you), you can move an immediate distance before the attack occurs. If moving prevents the attack, you are safe. If the attack can still potentially affect you—for example, if the attacking creature can move to keep pace, or if the attack fills an area too big to escape—the ability offers no benefit. If you also have the Danger Instinct special ability from your type, you can move a short distance instead of an immediate distance, and if the attack can still potentially affect you, you gain an asset on your defense task against it. Enabler.

Focuses Mind Over Matter, page 73

Fuses Flesh and Steel, page 74

Free level of Effort, page 103

Howls at the Moon, page 76

Hunts, page 77

Fuses Mind and Machine, page 79



Lives in the Wilderness, page 78

Masters Defense, page 80

Hunts Abhumans, page 81

Imparts Wisdom, page 82

Leads, page 83

Learns From Adversity, page 85

Follower, page 17

Razorcat: *level 5; health 24*

When you use Fortuitous Beast, the GM may decide that there are no suitable creatures nearby (such as if you're in a sealed room), in which case the ability doesn't work and you don't spend points from your Pool.

HUNTS ABHUMANS

Tier 3: Abhuman Form (2+ Intellect points). You alter your face, features, coloration, and even your body for one hour, disguising yourself as an abhuman. You can't perfectly duplicate a specific abhuman, but you can be accurate enough to fool someone who knows that abhuman casually, such as another member of its tribe. You have an asset in all tasks involving this disguise. You must apply a level of Effort to impersonate an abhuman species with a radically different body type than your own (such as a six-limbed or quadrupedal abhuman if you are human). Action.

IMPARTS WISDOM

Tier 3: Redistribute Energy (5 Intellect points). By using specific exercises, breathing techniques, and meditative practices, you can improve your body's or mind's performance for certain tasks. Choose one noncombat skill, such as balancing, climbing, persuasion, or philosophy. For the next ten minutes, when you apply Effort on that skill, you get a free level of Effort on the task. Action to initiate, one minute to complete.



LEADS

Tier 3: Never a Martyr. Being a leader makes you a target, especially in combat situations where eliminating you can demoralize your entire team. Thus, you've trained yourself to react quickly to danger. You gain +3 to your Speed Pool. Enabler.

LEARNS FROM ADVERSITY

Tier 3: Student of Experience. You gain a level 2 follower, likely someone who wants you to teach them what you have learned. One of their modifications must be for initiative or perception. Enabler.

LIVES IN THE WILDERNESS

Tier 3: Fortuitous Beast (3+ Intellect points). A level 4 natural beast living nearby arrives and remains nearby for one minute, acting in some way appropriate to its nature that is helpful to you. (In some cases, a group of weaker beasts may appear instead of one more powerful beast.) A razorcat might leap out of the darkness and attack your foe. A swarm of curious ravens might land, causing a distraction or bringing you something just out of reach. A few deer might run through the area (perhaps fleeing a predator), crashing through barriers or knocking over foes. After one minute, the beast leaves the area. Each level of Effort you apply increases the level of the beast (to a maximum of level 10). Enabler.

MASTERS DEFENSE

Tier 3: Dodge and Shift (3+ Speed points). If a melee attack misses you, you can immediately move an immediate distance, but no more than once per turn. If you apply an additional level of Effort, you can move a short distance instead of an immediate distance. Enabler.

MASTERS WEAPONRY

Tier 3: Power Strike (3+ Might points). If you successfully attack a target, you knock it prone in addition to inflicting damage. The target must be your size or smaller. You can knock down a target larger than you if you apply a level of Effort to do so (rather than to ease the attack). Enabler.

METES OUT JUSTICE

Tier 3: Assist All the Innocent. You assist everyone within immediate range whom you have designated as innocent, giving them an asset on a specific physical task to keep them out of or escape danger, such as climbing out of a flooding ravine, taking a safe path through a burning building, or jumping over a pit. Enabler.

MOVES LIKE A CAT

Tier 3: Quick Recovery. In addition to your normal recovery rolls each day, you can—at any time between ten-hour rests—recover 1d6 + 3 points to your Speed Pool. Action.

MURDERS

Tier 3: Murderous Precision. Your attacks are incredibly accurate when you have decided to kill. When you apply Effort for accuracy on an attack, you get a free level of Effort on the attack task. However, if the attack reduces the foe's health to 0, it dies—you cannot choose to only incapacitate it. Enabler.

NEEDS NO WEAPONS

Tier 3: Endurance Training. As a side effect of training yourself to hit harder, you have become tougher. You gain +3 to your Might Pool. Enabler.

NEVER SAYS DIE

Tier 3: Built Up Immunity. You are especially resistant to dangerous substances and pathogens, perhaps because of immunity-stimulating implants or because you've exposed yourself to small doses of them over time. You gain an asset on defense rolls against diseases and poisons. Enabler.

POSSESSES A SHARD OF THE SUN

Tier 3: Solar Shield (4 Intellect points). You make your flesh, clothing, and equipment glow brightly for one minute, making it difficult for foes to look directly at you, illuminating everything within short range and giving you an asset on Speed defense tasks against foes within short range. Action.

RADIATES VITALITY

Tier 3: Disruptive Stimulation (3 Might points). You touch a creature as you oscillate your biomorphic field, supercharging them with a confusing and intoxicating amount of vital energy. For the next minute, all of their tasks are hindered. Action.

Masters Weaponry, page 80

Prone, page 113

Murders, page 82

Free level of Effort, page 103

Metes Out Justice, page 86

Moves Like a Cat, page 87

Needs No Weapons, page 88

Never Says Die, page 89

Possesses a Shard of the Sun, page 90

Radiates Vitality, page 92



Rages, page 83

Rides the Lightning, page 83

Illumination, page 114

Speaks With a Silver Tongue, page 85

Sees Beyond, page 94

Shepherds the Community, page 96

Follower, page 17

Shreds the Walls of the World, page 97

Siphons Power, page 15

Steps Into the Outside, page 17

RAGES

Tier 3: Menacing Eye. You gain an asset on intimidation, perception, and smashing tasks. When you are in a state of frenzy, you gain an additional asset on these tasks. Enabler.

RIDES THE LIGHTNING

Tier 3: Electrical Sense. You can sense subtle electrical differences between the air, liquids, and solids, allowing you to "see" without using your eyes. Treat all levels of illumination as one category better. You can "see" up to a short distance through fog, smoke, and other obscuring phenomena. Some things, such as automatons and devices powered by electricity, may be especially apparent to you, negating all penalties from poor illumination and visibility. This sense usually cannot perceive visual illusions or out-of-phase targets. Enabler.

SEES BEYOND

Tier 3: Limited Precognition (4 Intellect points). You see glimpses of the future for the next minute. You gain an asset on Speed defense tasks and on tasks to avoid traps and ambushes, as long as there is a visual cue that your future self could see (for example, you don't get the asset if your future self is in darkness). Enabler.

SHEPHERDS THE COMMUNITY

Tier 3: Protégé. You gain a level 2 follower, someone who is as invested in the community as you are and can continue your efforts when you are away. One of their modifications must be for intimidation or persuasion. Enabler.

SHREDS THE WALLS OF THE WORLD

Tier 3: Warping Phase. Your phasing attacks momentarily create a bubble of dimensional distortion that warps your opponents. When using a phasing ability that harms another creature, instead of applying Effort to increase the ability's damage, each level of Effort you apply hinders all of the affected creature's actions for one round (two levels hinder it for two rounds, and so on). Enabler.

SIPHONS POWER

Tier 3: Haunting Eyes. Your abilities subtly enhance your appearance in unusual ways that can be appealing or spooky. You are trained in persuasion and intimidation tasks. Enabler.

SPEAKS WITH A SILVER TONGUE

Tier 3: Convincing Boast (3+ Intellect points). With a few precise words and strong conviction in your voice, you momentarily convince one foe within short range who can understand you that they have no chance of defeating you, which hinders all of their defenses against you for one minute. For each level of Effort you use with this ability, you can affect an additional foe. Enabler.

STEPS INTO THE OUTSIDE

Tier 3: Recharge Cypher. By concentrating a flux of interdimensional energies, you recharge a cypher that was used in the past ten minutes, allowing it to be used again. To do this, you must touch the cypher, spend 1 XP, and succeed at an understanding numenera roll (difficulty equal to the level of the cypher, but your dimensional knowledge training applies). Otherwise, the cypher remains spent and useless. Some cyphers (particularly pills and injections) cannot be recharged in this way. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to recharge a cypher that was used more than ten minutes ago;



each level of Effort used in this way extends the time period by ten minutes. Action.

TALKS TO MACHINES

Tier 3: Machine Crafter. Instead of rolling dice to determine success, you can choose to automatically succeed on a machine crafting task you're trained in. The task must be difficulty 4 or lower. If you are able to reduce the assessed difficulty of a machine crafting task to 4 or lower, this ability also applies to each subtask, assuming nothing interrupts you during the ensuing time to build. If you have the Expert Crafter special ability from your type, you can choose to automatically succeed on machine crafting tasks of difficulty 5 or lower. Enabler.

THUNDERS

Tier 3: Sonic Push (3+ Intellect points). You can create a controlled burst of sound to move an object or creature within short range. You can move the target an immediate distance in any direction you wish, or up to a short distance directly away from you. You must be able to see the target, which must be your size or smaller and must not be affixed to anything. The movement is quick, and the force is too crude to be manipulated. For example, you can't use this ability to pull a lever or close a fully open door. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the size of the target (one level of Effort means it can be double your size, two levels mean it can be triple your size, and so on). Action.

TRAVELS THROUGH TIME

Tier 3: Time Blade (3 Intellect points). You create a knife made out of a sharp fragment of time; it resembles a piece of glass that flickers like a candle. This is a light weapon that inflicts 2 points of damage (ignores Armor). It vanishes one round after it leaves your possession, or after one hour has passed.

Talks to Machines, page 86

Crafting, page 117

Thunders, page 99

Travels Through Time, page 19

Some immortal or otherwise very long-lived beings might not take damage from a time blade.

Wears a Sheen of Ice, page 87

Difficult terrain, page 117

Wields Power With Precision, page 89

Wields Two Weapons at Once, page 90

Making attacks, page 24

Works the Back Alleys, page 90

Normally on ranged attacks, you can spend points only from your Speed Pool.

Touches the Sky, page 101

Wields Words Like Weapons, page 103

Works Miracles, page 92

Helping, page 118

Draw the attack, page 118

TOUCHES THE SKY

Tier 3: Storm Shield. Your wind armor also crackles with electricity. This doesn't harm you, but it automatically inflicts 1 point of damage on anyone who tries to touch you or strike you with a melee attack. Electricity from another source can still hurt you. While the shield is active, you gain +2 Armor that protects only against damage from electricity from another source. Enabler.

WEARS A SHEEN OF ICE

Tier 3: Ice Slick (3+ Intellect points). You cover the floor, ground, or other generally flat surface within short range with a layer of slippery ice about a short distance across. This ice counts as difficult terrain for everyone but you. The ice is strong enough to support a person's weight (allowing you to walk across a stream, for example) but breaks or melts about one minute after you leave the area. For each additional level of Effort applied, you can cover another area about a short distance across. Action.

WIELDS POWER WITH PRECISION

Tier 3: Accomplished Exertion. Focusing your concentration on your esoteries always gives you exceptional results. When you apply Effort on any of your esoteries, you get a free level of Effort for doing so. Enabler.

WIELDS TWO WEAPONS AT ONCE

Tier 3: Dual Thrower. You have practiced using your favorite melee weapons in unusual ways and can throw them as easily and precisely as you make melee strikes. When you make attacks with abilities from this focus, you can use your weapons to make melee attacks or thrown ranged attacks (up to short range), and you can spend points from either your Might Pool or your Speed Pool on those ranged attacks. Enabler.

WIELDS WORDS LIKE WEAPONS

Tier 3: Knowledge. It's a lot easier to tell truths and lies about a subject you actually understand. You are trained in two areas of knowledge of your choice. Enabler.

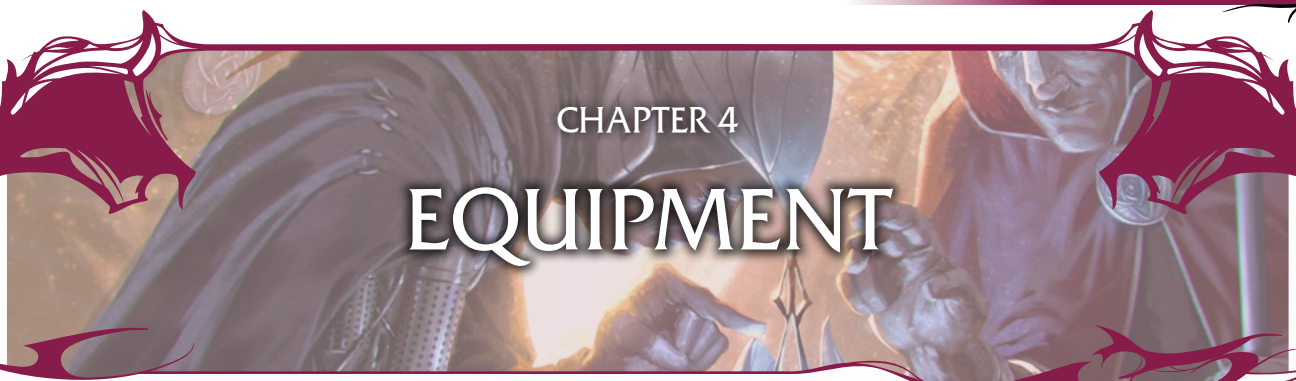
WORKS THE BACK ALLEYS

Tier 3: Criminal Flexibility. You aren't just a petty thief or burglar—you've done some strange jobs, worked with unusual people, and are good at echoing someone else's expertise. At the beginning of each day, choose one task (other than attacks or defense) that one of your companions is skilled in. For the rest of that day, you're trained in that task. You can't use this ability with a skill you're already trained in to become specialized. If you have the Flex Skill ability from your type, you can use that and this ability to become specialized in a skill one of your companions has. Enabler.

WORKS MIRACLES

Tier 3: Defending Martyr. Your powers aid others and protect you in subtle ways. When you use your action to help another creature's defense, it provides two assets to the task instead of one. When you draw the attack from a foe, your defenses are hindered by one step instead of two. Enabler.





CHAPTER 4

EQUIPMENT

The Order of Truth has people all over the world devoting years to figuring out the remnants of the past and how to use them in the present. Many of those remnants are cyphers, artifacts, or oddities, but this chapter describes useful general equipment—stuff that makes everyday lives easier and doesn't bear risks or strange side effects like the more powerful pieces of the numenera. The discovery or creation of these items originated in just one semblage or clave, but they eventually made their way to other places in trade caravans or brought by Aeon Priests to share with their peers. Unlike the equipment described in *Numenera Discovery* (which presumably can be found almost anywhere), it is likely that these items are available only from the Aeon Priests or someone they traded them to.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Common	Price
Fireproof rope (50 feet/15 m)	5 shins
Multitool	25 shins
Synth burner	20 shins

Uncommon	Price
Blood poisoner	5 shins
Bone accelerator	15 shins
Caterpillar slippers	10 shins
Fishing hand	5 shins
Grasping anemone	5–20 shins
Picture skin	10 shins
Scream cable	30 shins
Shell tent	15 shins
Water recycler	5 shins

Rare	Price
Feather tool	5 shins
Organ wasps	25 shins
Sleep cocoon	20 shins

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

These items follow the guidelines for availability of special equipment as described in *Numenera Discovery*.

Special Equipment, page 98

Blood Poisoner: This pair of dermal patches adds a level 4 Speed poison to the wearer's blood and a counter-agent that protects the wearer from that poison. Any creature that bites the user or otherwise ingests some of its blood is affected by the poison. After about an hour, the chemicals break down and the user's blood returns to normal (sometimes the timing is imperfect and the wearer takes one or more rounds of damage from the Speed poison). The patches are good for one use.

Bone Accelerator: This needle-thin device is injected under the skin and activated by pinching it, which makes it release engineered cells that cause rapid bone growth. If used on a large broken bone (such as a femur) or a group of small broken bones (such as a wrist or fingers), it completely heals the break in a matter of seconds. If the bone in the area is intact, the cells create bony spikes that erupt from the skin that can be used as light weapons that inflict 1 additional point of damage. The device is good for one use, and it completely dissolves within the body after a few months whether or not it is used.

Caterpillar Slippers: This pair of soft shoes resembles two fat green caterpillars the size of human feet. When worn, the



shoes carefully grip with dozens of tiny hooklike feet. This provides an asset on climbing tasks, walking on slippery surfaces, and other tasks where the hooks can engage with a solid surface. The slippers are at least partly alive and die after about a year, or less if they aren't exposed to sunlight for a few minutes each week.

Feather Tool: This is a tool with a handle that has been hollowed out and plugged with a precise amount of floatstone, just enough to almost completely cancel its weight. This doesn't affect the item's usefulness or other properties, but it is less of a burden to carry, it won't hurt if you drop it on your foot, and it floats on water.

Floatstone, page 98

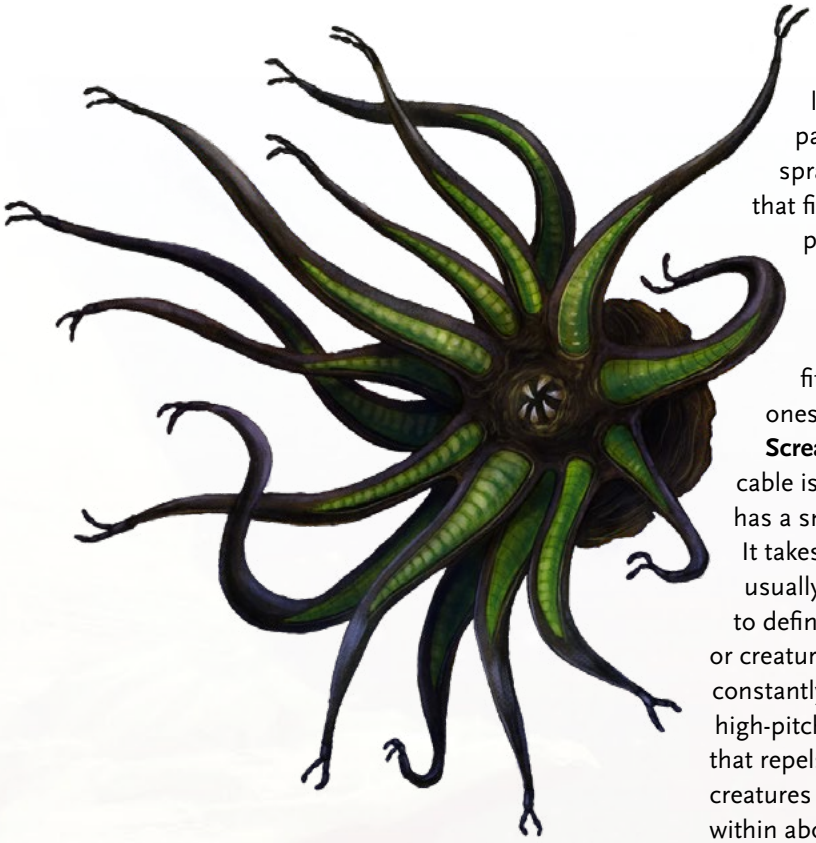
Someone who knows how to craft feather tools could do the same thing for a weapon. This wouldn't affect its range, damage, or anything but its weight, but otherwise has the same benefits of a feather tool.

Fireproof Rope: This rope is made of flexible synth fibers tied together with incredibly dense and complex knots. The rope has 5 Armor against fire and otherwise works like normal rope. (Usually, the supplier of this item also has fireproof thread and fireproof twine, which are just thinner ropes of the same material.)

Fishing Hand: This looks like a hollowed-out claw or forelimb of some kind of sea creature. When worn on the hand, it can project a strong filament with a synth fob on the end. The fob emits pheromones that attract fish. When the fob touches flesh, it extends barbed spikes to hook whatever touched it and attempts to reel in the filament (the wearer can also retract the filament at will). The filament is strong enough to hold about 30 pounds (13.6 kg) off the ground. The hand provides an asset to fishing tasks.

Grasping Anemone: This looks like an ovoid made of rubbery synth with a hole through the middle and hundreds of flexible tendrils covering the exterior edge. The tendrils automatically extend outward and hold themselves rigid against any firm surface, making the anemone useful for holding things in place, for wedging into crevices to use as anchors for climbing, or even as wheel coatings for terrestrial vehicles. Pressing on the right spot along the edge makes the ring retract nearby tendrils. These items are available in many sizes, from a hand span across (often used as a children's toy) to as wide as a human's arm. The anemone provides an asset to tasks where its gripping and stability are useful (on a vehicle, this includes moving over rubble, navigating steep inclines, and making sharp turns).

Multitool: This metal and synth rod is about 1 foot (30 cm) long. Buttons on the base cause the other end to fold out into a



change color to create an image of whatever is in front of them, like a mirror. Activating a control panel on the side of the frame sprays the skin with a puff of sour gas that fixes the colors in place, creating a permanent picture of whatever was shown at the time. A typical frame is about 1 foot (30 cm) square, but there are smaller versions that fit in a human's palm and larger ones that are nearly as big as a human.

Scream Cable: This stiff but flexible cable is about 30 feet (10 m) long and has a small device attached to one end. It takes about one minute to set it up, usually by placing it on the ground to define an area with no large objects or creatures nearby. The activated cable constantly creates an ultrasound tone, too high-pitched for most humans to hear, that repels most tiny insects and annoys creatures who can hear it. If anything comes within about 1 foot (30 cm) of the cable, it emits a rapid pulse of loud sounds in the human range, which is enough to wake anyone sleeping within a long distance of it.

Scream cable GM intrusion: *The sound of a passive scream cable attracts a dangerous creature that can hear it.*

Bag of light tools, page 98

screwdriver, tongs, small hammer, small pry bar, lockpicks, and several other tools that modern humans haven't figured out yet. The multitool can be used as any tool included in a bag of light tools, but it usually takes a round or two to press the right button and bring out the correct extension.

Organ Wasps: This is a small jar of flying biomechanical insects. A person puts their finger through a hole in the top of the jar to allow the insects to sample their genes. When released, the insects fly out and scatter for about a mile, sniffing living creatures in the area until they find a close genetic match for the sampled creature. When it finds a match, a wasp transmits its location to a panel on the jar. Released wasps die after about two hours. Aeon Priests who specialize in surgery use the wasps to find matches for transplanting organs, but regular people use them to check paternity and find lost relatives.



Picture Skin: This synth frame holds a stretched piece of animal skin covered with thousands of tiny scales. The scales

Shell tent: *level 2*

Shell Tent: In its collapsed form, this looks like an oddly shaped flat piece of faceted synth as big as a large book. When the correct spot is pressed, it unlocks and can be unfolded over two rounds into a rigid small shelter the size of a one-person tent. Most of these items create a shelter that is a simple dome or other rounded geometric shape, but some look more like the shell of a giant animal, such as a turtle, beetle, or crab. The unfolded tent is strong enough to repel hail, small falling branches, and other casual damage that would tear or flatten a canvas tent. Folding the tent back into its collapsed form takes about one minute.

Sleep Cocoon: This bedroll resembles a large woven spiderweb pressed into a flat blanket shape. It slowly releases hormones and other regenerative chemicals into anyone wrapped in it, promoting rest and healing. A creature who makes a ten-hour recovery roll while wrapped in the cocoon adds +2 to their roll.

Most people use scrap synth in a burner, but merchants who sell burners often include a small assortment of synth chunks that burn with specific colors.

Synth Burner: When assembled, this looks like a metal bowl surrounded by inward-pointing metal spikes in a large synth frame. It takes two rounds to assemble and set up this device and an action to activate it. The burner uses any kind of synth as fuel, which is placed in the bowl and creates a cold, brilliant light that is brighter than a bonfire and can be seen for miles. Different kinds of synth create different colors of flame. A hand-sized chunk of synth burns for about one hour, leaving behind tarry ash. Removing or covering the synth in the bowl immediately extinguishes it. Looking directly at the light within short range requires a creature to make a Might defense roll or be blinded for one minute.

Water Recycler: This translucent synth bag is about one-third full of tiny pink spores. When water-based liquid is added to the bag, some of the spores hatch into fingernail-length worms that spend the next hour consuming impurities in the liquid and binding themselves to the bag's inner surface before dying, leaving drinkable (if odd-smelling) water. Even salt water or urine can be processed this way. The bag contains enough spores to process about 10 gallons (38 liters) of water-based liquid, enough for one person to survive for ten days if they're careful and ration it.



PART 2:
RESOURCES



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Chapter 8: Other Resources 82

CHAPTER 5

DEVICES OF THE NUMENERA

Cyphers and artifacts are the technological lifeblood of the Ninth World setting, and nobody understands them and knows how to use them better than the Order of Truth. This section of the book presents new treasures for the PCs to find and create, as well as guidelines for other kinds of resources the Aeon Priests may be able to provide to worthy or influential PCs.

CYPHERS

Chapter 6 expands the cyphers presented in *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny*. Most of them are the outcome of exploration, research, and crafting by Aeon Priests. Some of them have two possible effects, developed as the order's nanos and wrights push the boundaries of what a cypher can do.

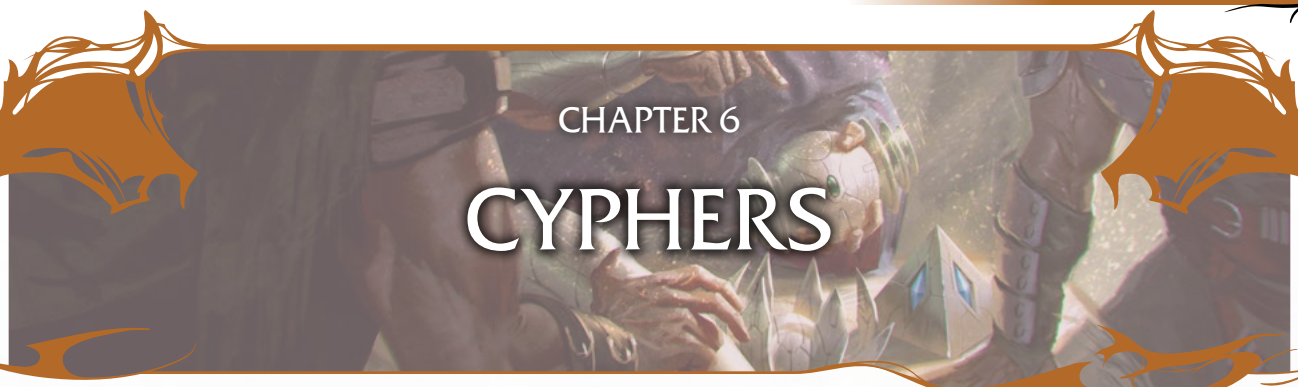
ARTIFACTS

As with the new cyphers, the new artifacts in chapter 7 are the result of research and development by the Order of Truth. In particular, this chapter introduces a new category of artifact: the focusing suit. These are crafted by a person (usually an Aeon Priest) who has extensively studied a type of numenera similar to the abilities from a character's focus. Each focusing suit is custom-built for a particular PC to augment their focus abilities, with the more powerful suits augmenting more and more abilities. Having a focusing suit made is usually the result of a close relationship with a clave or semblage and the investment of a lot of iotum into that character.

OTHER RESOURCES

Chapter 8 looks at other kinds of resources available to Aeon Priests and, through them, to PCs. Explorers bring them cyphers and artifacts to trade and identify, and the priests are often looking for hardy folks to try out their prototype devices. Wrights and other crafters seek out plan seeds and plans, swapping schematics stored in holographic gems or etched onto exotic types of synth. Experimental vehicles need test pilots. Installations deplete and need exotic iotum so they can be repaired. And of course, the Aeon Priests themselves are knowledgeable resources, people who may interact with the PCs over months or years, developing bonds of friendship or rivalry. They are people with personalities, desires, quirks, and even pets, and this chapter suggests ways to make these almost-anonymous scholars interesting people that the PCs want to interact with.





CHAPTER 6

CYPHERS

The cyphers in this chapter add to the assortment presented in other Numenera books. Most of these are the outcome of exploration, research, and crafting by Aeon Priests, and they either have a function that helps promote and maintain the safety of a community or are used in the Order of Truth's delves into ruins for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the numenera.

These offer the same cypher dangers for those who surpass their cypher limit as the cyphers described in *Numenera Discovery*, and the rules for finding, identifying, and using them as well as their various forms are also consistent with the introductory material in *Numenera Discovery*.

BONDED AND FASHIONED ITEMS

Because of the Aeon Priests' expertise with the numenera, the items they use and trade to outsiders are usually bonded or fashioned items. These items have been modified or crafted so that—unlike cyphers salvaged from a ruin, which often look like junk or incomprehensible pieces patched together—they have markings in the Truth indicating how to use them, and they have a shape that makes it easier to recognize their purpose and function. Ray emitters and detonations look like weapons, viewing devices are incorporated into goggles or helmets, defensive nodules have diagrams or attachments that look like shields, and so on. In most cases, the priests mark the item with the symbol of the Order of Truth, not only to let people know that the item has been tested by the organization, but also so the order can identify items that have been stolen from them.

Depending on the crafting skill and the aesthetic sense of the Aeon Priest who

CYPHER TABLE

d100	Cypher
01–04	Alertness stimulant
05–08	Arm bifurcator
09–12	Body duplicator
13–16	Detonation, soap
17–20	Detonation, sobriety
21–23	Detonation, sonic decoy
24–27	Device stabilizer
28–30	Diagnostic graft
31–34	Extradimensional limb
35–37	Fleshy head disguise
38–41	Glue emitter
42–44	Iotum tracker
45–48	Midnight field
49–51	Object micronizer
52–55	Otherspace stasis chamber skeleton key
56–58	Personal telekinesis field
59–62	Phasing detector
63–66	Precognitive focus inducer
67–70	Puppeteering sleeves
71–73	Synthrope dispenser
74–77	Time skipper
78–81	Troglit creche
82–85	Ventriloquist
86–89	Voicebox graft
90–93	Wasp drone
94–96	Water spigot
97–00	Waterproofing spray

Cypher dangers, page 272

Finding and identifying cyphers, page 274

Using cyphers, page 274

Cypher forms, page 274

Bonded and fashioned items, page 271

Unless they had a strong hatred of Aeon Priests, even an uncouth bandit leader would prefer the look of an item bonded or fashioned by the Order of Truth to that of a typical scavenged item.

works on a salvaged item, these alterations might be as simple as gluing or strapping on a synth or wooden handle so it's easier to tell which end to point at an enemy, or as complicated as building a sheath out of various materials with labeled holes and handcrafted dials in key places so the user can activate and adjust the item's functions. An item actually crafted by an Aeon Priest or one of their wrights looks better and more impressive than an equivalent item from an outsider because there is a certain amount of extra pride from being a part of the organization, and the crafters want their work to stand out. Because of the scattered and isolated nature of semblages and claves, there is no unified aesthetic for bonded and fashioned items from the order (such as "They are all red" or "They all have wing-like protrusions"), but they still have a general look and feel of quality and ease of use that anyone of human intelligence can recognize.

ALERTNESS STIMULANT

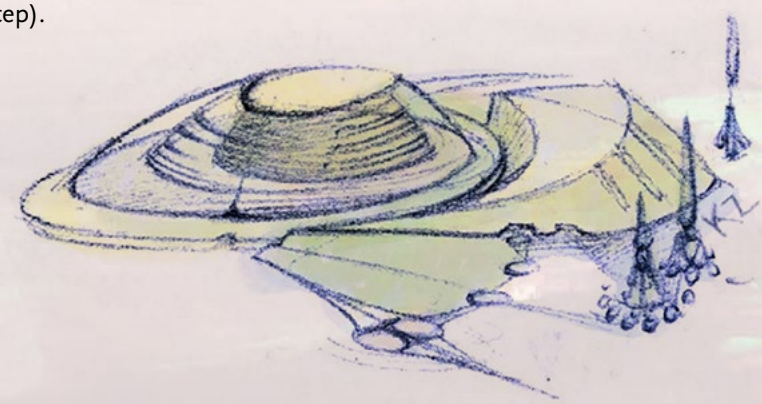
Level: 1d6
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid, chewable resin
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, amulet, headband, crystal worn on temple
Effect: Keeps the user awake and alert for a number of days equal to the cypher's level, negating the need for sleep. The user can still choose to sleep while affected by this cypher. Defense rolls to resist being forced to sleep or rendered unconscious (such as from mental attacks or drugs) are eased by two steps. After the cypher's effect ends, all of the user's actions are hindered by one step for each night they didn't sleep (each full night of sleep reduces this hindrance by one step).

ARM BIFURCATOR

Level: 1d6 + 3
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, adhesive patch, bracelet
Effect: Splits the user's forearms lengthwise from the elbow through the hand, turning their two limbs and hands into four for one hour per cypher level. The divided limbs are complete (including thumbs) and function just like the original ones, although the user's actions with the divided limbs are hindered until they can spend a few minutes practicing. If used in tandem, the extra limbs provide an asset on physical actions with the user's other hands, but they don't provide additional actions (although the GM may allow the user to do additional things in a round that aren't actions, such as writing, giving hand signals, carrying something, and so on).

BODY DUPLICATOR

Level: 1d6 + 1
Internal: Pill
Usable: Small handheld device
Effect: Synthesizes a duplicate of your body. This duplicate isn't alive—it's just inert tissue—but is based on your DNA, so any modifications you have (such as cybernetics, scars, and so on) are not present on the duplicate. Because it is genetically identical to you, its tissue can be grafted onto or swapped for yours (such as for an organ transplant) with no immune response. The duplicate takes about one hour to grow (or just a few minutes if the cypher level is 6 or higher). It decays at the normal rate for a dead body.



DETONATION, SOAP

Level: 1d6 + 2
Wearable: Wristband projector (long range)
Usable: Explosive device (thrown, short range) or handheld projector (long range)
Effect: Explodes in an immediate radius and fills the area with a slippery foam similar to soap bubbles. Vision in the area is obscured as if by a dense mist. PCs who try to stand in or move through the area must use a Speed-based action to do so, or they fall down or remain prone (crawling eases the task of moving through the foam). NPCs can stand in or escape the area if their level is higher than the cypher level; otherwise they must remain prone in the area. The foam is not flammable and will smother fires.

DETONATION, SOBRIETY

Level: 1d6
Usable: Explosive device or synth sphere (thrown, short range), handheld projector (long range)
Effect: Detonates in a short radius in a burst of green energy that neutralizes the effects of alcohol and similar intoxicants, as if the affected creatures had spent one hour per cypher level abstaining in order to sober up.

DETONATION, SONIC DECOY

Level: 1d6
Usable: Explosive device or synth sphere (thrown, short range), handheld projector (long range)
Effect: Plays a loud prerecorded sound upon impact. Most of these cyphers have two or three prerecorded sounds (such as beastly roars, machines grinding, and an explosion with roaring fire) and the user chooses which one to activate. Some also have the ability to record a new noise. The cypher repeats the chosen recording for one minute per cypher level. Prerecorded sounds are about as loud as a ravage bear, but a user-recorded sound is exactly as loud as what the user recorded.

DEVICE STABILIZER

Level: 1d6
Usable: Small handheld device, crystal nodule affixed to cypher
Effect: When attached to a cypher of its level or lower, the stabilizer prevents that cypher from being used up when activated if the user succeeds on an understanding numenera roll (difficulty equal to the level of the attached cypher). A successful roll uses up the device stabilizer instead of the cypher it is attached to; a failed roll means the cypher is spent and useless. Some cyphers (particularly pills and injections) cannot be stabilized in this way.

Mist, page 114

Some sobriety detonations affect other drugs instead of intoxicants like alcohol. Some have the opposite effect on nonhumans.



Abykos, page 224

Pandimensional: existing on multiple levels of reality at once.

A careful user with an extradimensional limb could attack an opponent with a phased weapon, turning the limb and weapon solid at just the right moment to bypass the foe's Armor, but the attack would be hindered by two steps because the user would be harmed if their flesh turned solid inside the opponent.

A human wearing a fleshy head disguise of a ravage bear makes for an interesting costume but won't be mistaken for a natural ravage bear because the creatures are quadrupeds.

Fleshy head disguise GM intrusion: *Part of the model melts early for a few moments before looking normal again.*

DIAGNOSTIC GRAFT

Level: 1d6 + 1
Internal: Pill
Usable: Small spherical or ovoid device
Effect: When swallowed, the cypher embeds itself in the user's body cavity and unleashes microfilaments that connect to various organs. The cypher monitors the user's body for diseases, parasites, poisons, and contaminants. When it detects such things, it indicates their presence with a pattern of lights (visible through the user's skin), sounds, or vibrations that show the location of the problem and the nature of the threat. The user must make a level 3 Intellect defense roll to correctly interpret the signals (such as "brain parasite," "lung cancer," "blood venom," or "stomach fungus"). The alarm repeats every hour unless the user acknowledges it with a firm tap, and it repeats each day until the threat is ended. Once the graft attaches, the effect is permanent, and this device no longer counts against the number of cyphers that a PC can bear. At level 6 and higher, the graft can also be activated to neutralize an internal threat if it is of a lower level than the cypher, but thereafter the graft works only as a detector, like the lower-level varieties.



EXTRADIMENSIONAL LIMB

Level: 1d6
Wearable: Glove, boot, adhesive patch
Usable: Injection
Effect: For ten minutes per cypher level, the user's affected limb becomes pandimensional, able to touch and affect extradimensional and out-of-phase creatures and objects as if they were completely solid or insubstantial (whichever the user prefers). For example, if the user's hand is out of phase, they could punch an abykos (whether the creature is solid, partially solid, or insubstantial), reach through a solid wall, or pick up an extradimensional object. For cyphers of level 1 to 4, this pandimensional state extends just beyond the user's flesh (including clothing and armor on that limb, a small object that can be held in a closed fist, and so on). For cyphers of level 5 or higher, the pandimensional field reaches about 6 inches (15 cm) farther, allowing the user to also affect a small weapon or tool held in that limb.

FLESHY HEAD DISGUISE

Level: 1d6 + 1
Internal: Pill
Wearable: Adhesive patch
Usable: Small handheld device
Effect: Scans a creature designated by the user and creates a lifelike fleshy model of that creature's head that can be worn as a full-head prosthetic mask. The model has muscles, nerves, and blood vessels that react to the wearer's face and head movements, including speech, facial expressions, blushing, and blinking, but does so with the copied creature's appearance (including scars and retinal scans). The worn model counts as two assets on disguise tasks to pretend to be the copied creature, although if the wearer has a very different shape than the copied creature, it is unlikely that anyone will believe it. The model lasts for one hour per cypher level, after which it melts into harmless goo.

GLUE EMITTER

Level: 1d6
Internal: Subdermal implant
Wearable: Ring, wristband, pair of gloves
Usable: Handheld device
Effect: This cypher has two modes. The default mode produces a liquid glue that hardens after a preset time (anywhere from one round to one minute) into a hard, permanent synth bond. The hardened glue has a level equal to the cypher level. The glue won't stick to or bond with the cypher itself. The cypher can produce a line of glue that is 1 inch (2.5 cm) in diameter and about 50 feet (15 m) long, enough to affix a 10-foot (3 m) square panel to a wall or seal shut a couple of human-sized doors. Ten minutes after the cypher is first activated, the remaining glue clogs it up and makes it unusable.

In burst mode, the cypher acts much like a web detonation cypher, except the rapidly cured glue lasts only about ten minutes before degrading.



IOTUM TRACKER

Level: 1d6 + 2
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, amulet, headband, crystal worn on temple
Usable: Small handheld device, crystal
Effect: The user learns the direction and distance to the nearest unit of iotum of a specified kind. The user must have on hand at least 1 unit of the kind of iotum desired. If the user has no iotum, the cypher searches for the highest-level iotum within very long range.

Iotum, page 107

MIDNIGHT FIELD

Level: 1d6 + 1
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, amulet
Usable: Crystal nodule affixed to armor
Effect: This cypher has two modes. In the default mode, it surrounds the user in a skintight field of absolute blackness, darker than black paint or a cloudy night under a new moon, that lasts ten minutes per cypher level. In dim light, the user is trained in stealth tasks. In very dim light or darkness, the user is specialized in stealth tasks. Because the user appears completely black (without any highlights), viewing them is slightly disorienting, and attacks against them are hindered. The field allows a small amount of light to reach the user's eyes (otherwise, they'd be blind), and at best the user can see as if in dim light.

In cloud mode, the cypher bursts in an immediate radius, creating a cloud of darkness that lasts one minute per cypher level. The darkness is enough to obscure bright lights brought into it, but very bright light sources (such as a miniaturized star or a portal to a dimension of light) are only slightly diminished.

Web detonation, page 278

Dim light and very dim light, page 114



Otherspace: a small artificial dimension (and access to it) or a portal to a natural alternate dimension.

Most creatures trapped in otherspaces are dangerous beasts or people. A few otherspaces contain people wishing to leave the "past" behind and wait for a more interesting future, or those who have a fatal disease or injury that could not be cured at the time they were put into stasis.

A personal telekinesis field is useful for moving small objects around under your clothes so they can't be found, manipulating your equipment when your hands are being watched, and other subtle tasks.

A micronized cypher still counts toward a character's cypher limit.

OBJECT MICRONIZER

Level: 1d6 + 4
Wearable: Glove
Usable: Small handheld device, crystal nodule
Effect: Shrinks an object that the user can hold in one hand to about one-tenth its original size in all dimensions (length, width, height) and about a thousandth of its original mass. Most micronized commonplace items (weapons, tools, and so on) aren't usable, but if the object is a cypher or artifact, it still functions, although wearable cyphers might pose a problem. If activating the normal-sized device requires manipulating switches or other controls, doing so for a micronized device is a difficulty 4 Speed roll (failure means the item doesn't activate but isn't used up or depleted). The shrinking lasts a number of hours equal to the micronizer's level, after which the item returns to its normal size.

OTHERSPACE STASIS CHAMBER SKELETON KEY

Level: 1d6 + 3
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, amulet, headband, bracelet
Usable: Small handheld device
Effect: Releases a creature imprisoned in an otherspace linked to the cypher. The creature appears up to a short distance away and is hindered on the round it appears because it is recovering from the stasis effect. The creature is not under the user's control, and the cypher does not grant any way to communicate with it or return it to the otherspace. Depending on the creature's nature, it is likely to fight or flee. The level of the released creature is often equal to the cypher level, but about half of these cyphers release a creature whose level is equal to the cypher level minus 2.

PERSONAL TELEKINESIS FIELD

Level: 1d6
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, amulet, headband, crystal worn on temple
Effect: Surrounds the user with a thin cloud of nanites that respond to the user's thoughts, allowing them to exert fine and precise force on objects within about 1 inch (2.5 cm). The user can move objects, push against objects, and so on, using their Intellect Pool as their Might Pool and Speed Pool, and using their Intellect Edge as Might Edge and Speed Edge. Although this power allows for very fine control (the user can tie or untie laces, activate a specific switch on a cypher, brush their hair, and so on), the limited reach of the field makes it difficult to use it directly as an attack—throwing a dagger with it would generate only as much strength as a short, quick flip with a hand. The user can't use this telekinesis on their own body. The cloud of nanites lasts for ten minutes per cypher level.

PHASING DETECTOR

Level: 1d6
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid
Wearable: Contact lenses, eyeglasses, or goggles
Usable: Small handheld device, crystal
Effect: Enhances the user's perception of extradimensional and out-of-phase creatures and objects. For the next 28 hours, the user has an asset (or two assets if the cypher is level 5 or higher) to perceive and interact with these creatures and objects, including attacking and defending against them.

PRECOGNITIVE FOCUS INDUCER

Level: 1d6
Internal: Pill, ingestible liquid
Wearable: Temporary tattoo, amulet, headband, crystal worn on temple
Usable: Small handheld device, crystal
Effect: This device interfaces with future versions of the user, granting them access to an ability the present user hasn't learned yet. For the next hour, the user gains the focus ability from their next higher tier (up to a maximum tier equal to the cypher's level), as if they had selected that ability as an advancement. If the ability costs Pool points to use, the character must spend them to activate the ability. If the next higher tier grants more than one ability, the user gains both abilities. If the tier allows a choice of different abilities, randomly determine which one it grants. If the user already has one of the abilities of that tier, the cypher grants the other ability from that tier, or an unselected ability from a lower tier. For example, a tier 2 Nano with the Commands Mental Powers focus who uses a level 3 version of this cypher would gain either the Psychic Burst ability or the Psychic Suggestion ability.

PUPPETEERING SLEEVES

Level: 1d6 + 4
Wearable: Pair of sleeves, linked bands, or fine wire or mesh that encircles the wearer's arms
Effect: Allows the wearer to record physical actions for up to one minute per cypher level and perform those actions at will for up to one hour per cypher level. For example, the wearer could watch someone tie a complex knot, reassemble a dismantled device, stylishly flip a dagger from one hand to the other, and perform a complicated secret handshake, all within the recording period, then repeat any of those actions at will within the performance period. Because the repeated action is based on the wearer's perception of the recorded task, it isn't always perfect (the GM may decide that the task is hindered). Performing a recorded action costs as many Pool points as the original action does.

SYNTHROPE DISPENSER

Level: 1d6
Internal: Ingestible liquid
Wearable: Wrist-mounted projector
Usable: Handheld device
Effect: Creates a rope made of clear flexible synth, up to a total of 20 feet (6 m) per cypher level. (If the cypher is an ingestible liquid, the rope is pulled out of the drinker's mouth.) The rope is actually a twisted hollow cylinder and, if cut, the ends can be sealed with heat to create clear synth bags that are about 1 foot (30 cm) wide and as long as desired.

The GM may allow the wearer of puppeteering sleeves to copy fighting moves and other purely physical abilities if they don't rely on nanotechnology, psychic ability, extradimensional power, and so on. Essentially, anything that a normal human could do with proper training can potentially be copied.

If the GM is using alternative focus abilities from chapter 3, those may be options as well for a precognitive focus inducer.

Because the future is changeable, it is possible for two different uses of a precognitive focus inducer to grant two different abilities from the same tier. In game terms, this cypher is a fun way to allow a player to test upcoming focus abilities and choose the ones they like the best.

Commands Mental Powers, page 60

Psychic Burst, page 60

Psychic Suggestion, page 60

TIME SKIPPER

Because the time-skipping character reappears in the same spot despite the world orbiting through space, stellar and galactic movement, and so on, there must be something that compensates for these shifts. If a time skipper is used on a spacecraft, it may not be so reliable.

Level: 1d6 + 4
Internal: Pill
Wearable: Adhesive patch, amulet, bracelet, headband
Usable: Small handheld device
Effect: Skips the user forward in time in the same physical spot they left. To them, no time passes. To all others, the user vanishes in a flash and returns later in another flash. Most cyphers (levels 5 to 7) send the user forward a few minutes in time, some (levels 8 or 9) skip forward a couple of hours, and a few (level 10) skip multiple days.

TROGLIT CRECHE

Level: 1d6 + 2
Usable: Small handheld device, canister
Effect: Synthesizes and releases a batch of 1d6 pigeon-sized creatures called troglits that wander the area in search of food. Troglits are slow, harmless, and omnivorous. They may have features of any kind of animal family (mammal, bird, reptile, fish, insect, and so on) and can subsist on scrub grass, bark, manure, and other organic materials that humans can't eat. After one day of eating its fill, a troglit grows to twice its original size and gives birth to 1d6 immature troglits. Troglits are palatable and nutritious. They are genetically programmed to become sterile after a number of days equal to the cypher level after the initial batch, no matter what generation they are (so all troglits from a level 3 cypher become sterile three days after the cypher is activated).

Troglit: *level 1*

Aeon Priests believe that troglits were created to be temporary pets or emergency food sources.

Troglit creche GM intrusion: *The sterilization gene is faulty in this batch and they continue to reproduce.*



VENTRILOQUIST

Level: 1d6
Wearable: Disk that adheres to throat, tiny nodule held in mouth
Usable: Small handheld device, injector
Effect: When activated, the cypher splits into two pieces. One is placed or thrown somewhere, and the other remains attached to the user. At any time, the user can speak normally, project their voice through the other piece of the cypher (up to very long range), or both. The remote piece sounds exactly like the user, and the sound is as loud as the user's actual voice (twice as loud if the cypher is level 3 or higher). The effect lasts for one hour per cypher level.

VOICEBOX GRAFT

Level: 1d6 + 1
Usable: Small metallic disk
Effect: When applied to a living creature's head, the disk immediately unleashes microfilaments that enter the brain. Within five minutes, the device reacts to the creature's ability to communicate and make concepts, translating those impulses into audible words in a specific language keyed to the graft. The graft gives the creature a vocabulary of ten words per cypher level, although very simple creatures might be able to use far fewer. Typical words in a creature's vocabulary are: hunger, hunt, food, danger, predator, prey, left, right, up, down, move, stop, fast, slow, cold, hot, pain, fear. If a creature is capable of learning vocal commands or pet tricks, those words are suitable additions to its spoken vocabulary. At cypher level 4 and higher, the graft has a limited machine intelligence that adds some syntax to the creature's words so it is easier to understand.

WASP DRONE

Level: 1d6
Usable: Fingertip-sized winged insect built of synth and biological elements
Effect: This voice-controlled cyberbug travels to a designated area the user can see within a very long distance (if the user has line of sight to a particular creature, they can designate that creature as well). The bug flies to that area, moving a long distance each round, and makes a nuisance of itself, attacking creatures randomly (if the user designated a creature, it attacks only that creature). The cyberbug is a creature whose level equals the cypher's level, and it inflicts 1 point of Speed damage. The bug dies after ten minutes of activity or after it makes one successful attack (two attacks if the cypher level is 5 or higher).

WATER SPIGOT

Level: 1d6 + 2
Wearable: Glove
Usable: Handheld device
Effect: This cypher has two modes. In the default mode, it produces a constant stream of water, anywhere from 1 to 3 gallons (about 4 to 11 liters) per minute. This ends when it has released about 100 gallons (380 liters) of water per cypher level. The water may be fresh, salt, brackish, or contaminated with some other substance (such as sewage or pollutants).

In burst mode, the device sprays a jet of high-velocity water up to a long distance away, using about 100 gallons of the cypher's capacity in one round. The jet inflicts 1 point of damage and may knock the target prone or move it away from the user. The jet can be used as a rapid-fire weapon, allowing characters with the Spray fighting move (or similar abilities) to make up to three attempts to hit a target. After the initial burst, the remainder of the cypher's water pours out at the default mode rate.

WATERPROOFING SPRAY

Level: 1d6 + 4
Usable: Spray canister
Effect: An object sprayed by this cypher repels water as if protected by an incredibly thin and specialized force field. The object has Armor against water-based attacks (such as acid, sprayed venom, or electricity conducted through water) equal to the cypher's level for 28 hours.

Repelling water may have other benefits, such as increasing a boat's speed by reducing drag on the hull, making it possible to easily wipe off mud or paint from clothing, preventing short-outs in electrical equipment, and so on.

A typical kitchen faucet with a standard aerator can release about 2.2 gallons (8.3 liters) per minute.

The water from a water spigot cypher might be pulled from a nearby source, fabricated by nanites, or diverted from another dimension.



Remember that carrying too many cyphers can have disastrous, interesting, or exciting consequences for characters. Try to give them opportunities to use their cyphers regularly and often.



CHAPTER 7

ARTIFACTS

Finding, identifying, and using artifacts, page 289

Artifact quirks, page 290

The artifacts in this chapter add to the assortment presented in other Numenera books. Most of these are the outcome of exploration, research, and crafting by Aeon Priests, and they either have a function that helps promote and maintain the safety of a community or are used in the Order of Truth's delves into ruins for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the numenera. The methods for finding, identifying, and using artifacts from *Numenera Discovery* remain relevant for the artifacts presented here. The artifacts here may also possess quirks—despite their expertise, even the Aeon Priests can't avoid unexpected side effects from using the numenera. As explained in chapter 6, items used by the Order of Truth are more likely to be bonded or fashioned.

Bonded and fashioned items, page 39

ARTIFACT TABLE

d100	Artifact
01–04	Aggression eye
05–08	Bread sprayer
09–12	Burrowing boots
13–16	Cypher stabilizing suit
17–20	Evolution bud
21–24	External skeleton
25–28	Extradimensional viewer
29–32	Flesh ink pen
33–36	Glowbrand
37–40	Interface sleeves
41–44	Lacewing shirt
45–48	Living conceptualization sheath
49–52	Midnight suit
53–56	Motion stabilizer
57–60	Net arrow
61–64	Reflective shield
65–68	Repeating blade
69–72	Retaliation implant
73–76	Shapestone sprayer
77–80	Smoke ink pen
81–84	Synchronized orrery
85–88	Synth ink pen
89–92	Temporal duplicator
93–96	Toolbox blade
97–00	Vision relayer

SIFTING TREASURE FROM TRASH

Aeon Priests are experts at the numenera—best at understanding, salvaging, and crafting. That means they are better at recognizing the valuable pieces of the numenera, things that others would leave behind as too strange to work with or dismiss outright as useless chaff. Therefore, many of the items the Order of Truth uses look really strange, even in a world where weird is commonplace. Instead of a synth helmet with crystals and metal spikes, a wearable item might look like a living crustacean that wraps itself around the user's head, or a blob of translucent breathable liquid held in place by a nanite-generated electrical field linked to a necklace or forehead applique. Putting bizarre items in the hands of Aeon Priests makes the Order of Truth stand out as a group that best understands the mystifying technology of the prior worlds.

AGGRESSION EYE

Level: 1d6

Form: Artificial eye made of glass, metal, crystal, or synth

Effect: To use this device, the user must press it into an empty eye socket and hold it there for at least one minute while filaments plug into the user's brain. Once the eye is properly installed, the user can see through it as if it were a normal eye. The eye automatically scans each creature within immediate range (short range if the artifact is level 5 or higher) and provides targeting suggestions based on the creature's vulnerabilities and injuries, easing attacks against them. Because the eye is constantly feeding the user information about potential threats and ways to attack everyone it sees, pleasant social interactions are hindered for the user. Removing the eye takes an action and moves the user one step down the damage track.

Depletion: 1 in 1d6 (check each month)

BREAD SPRAYER

Level: 1d6

Form: Metal or synth canister with a long tube

Effect: This device has two modes of operation. The default mode dispenses a hand-width cylinder of brown dough-like material, up to 10 feet (3 m) each round per artifact level, which cooks itself into a bland sort of hard-crusted bread after about one minute. By building up multiple layers, the user can create larger structures such as walls and doorways, but it is still just hard bread (a level 1 material). The bread is filling and nutritious as bread goes, but not something a human could live on for an extended period.

When operated in burst mode, the tube dispenses a high-volume slurry of the dough in an immediate area, which instantly flash-bakes itself into hard bread, inflicting heat damage equal to the artifact level and trapping things inside a thick mass of level 2 bread. Unlike a web detonation cypher, the material created by this artifact is permanent, but (like regular bread) it might be eaten by animals, softened by water or other liquids, and so on.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 per hour of use in default mode (burst mode counts as an hour of use in default mode)

BURROWING BOOTS

Level: 1d6 + 1

Form: Oversized boots connected by wires up to a belt with a metal box attached with dial controls

Effect: The wearer can descend into the ground or back up to the surface at a rate of 20 feet (6 m) per round, as long as the level of the material through which they are passing is equal to or less than the artifact's level. Using the complex controls, the wearer can either leave behind a narrow, smooth-sided tunnel, or leave no tunnel at all as the material closes up again behind them. The boots do not allow the user to move through empty air, so if the wearer breaks into a pocket or other open space, they might fall. By default, the wearer moves straight up or down, but the burrowing path can be adjusted up to 15 degrees from vertical.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each hour of use)



Web detonation, page 278

CYPHER STABILIZING SUIT

Level: 1d6 + 1
Form: Synth garment with many ports and plugs
Effect: This artifact can be connected to up to four cyphers of its level or lower, using its built-in ports and weird connectors. If a connected cypher is activated, instead of the cypher being used up, it remains functional, but the artifact makes a depletion roll. (If the artifact depletes, the cypher is still usable.) Some cyphers (particularly pills and injections) cannot be connected to the suit or recharged in this way.
Depletion: 1 in 1d6

EVOLUTION BUD

Level: 1d6 + 4
Form: Organic pod, almost like a small, hemispherical bit of fruit. Once grafted to a host, it takes on the appearance of the host's flesh.
Effect: The pod grafts onto any living host (usually near the brain or spine) and injects chemicals that cause the creature to develop a new mutation over the course of the next 28 hours. If the user later reproduces, their children also develop the ability after passing through adolescence. Each bud provides a specific mutation, usually a beneficial mutation.
Depletion: Automatic

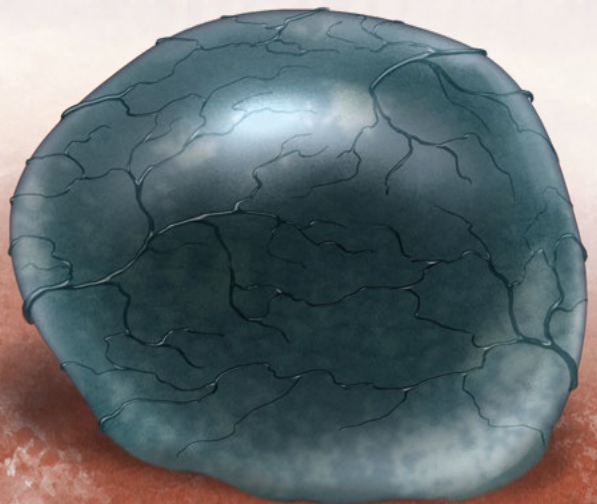
Beneficial mutations, page 398

EXTERNAL SKELETON

Level: 1d6 +1
Form: Metallic rods hinged to resemble human frame
Effect: Wearer adds 2 to their Might Edge for one hour, but all Speed tasks are hindered for that period of time.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20

EXTRADIMENSIONAL VIEWER

Level: 1d6 + 2
Form: Lightweight synth helmet with crystal or glass lenses
Effect: Creates a personal holographic environment (with images and sound) that shows everything in a nearby dimension out to short range (long range if the artifact is level 6 or higher). These images override what the user sees in their current dimension, making them effectively blind to anything not in the viewed dimension. The artifact includes a limited machine intelligence that automatically adjusts to view the most appropriate nearby dimension when there are multiple options (such as showing an otherspace structure rather than an empty parallel dimension), but it can be manually adjusted as an understanding numenera task.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each hour of use)



FLESH INK PEN

Level: 1d6
Form: Synth or glass stylus
Effect: When used like a pencil, the artifact creates lines of thin living tissue on surfaces, which can be built up like a lattice to create three-dimensional structures. The pen can create one type of tissue per artifact level from the following list: epithelial (skin and internal linings), cartilage, bone, fat, nerve, and vascular. This tissue doesn't provoke an immune response in most creatures, so the user could repair damaged tissue, craft a replacement blood vessel, and so on, either directly on a living subject or separately for later surgical attachment. The artifact is an asset for appropriate healing, surgery, and biological crafting tasks.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each hour of use)

GLOWBRAND

Level: 1d6
Form: Adhesive patch that gently sticks to flesh, metal, and synth
Effect: This device illuminates everything in short range with soft light. Tapping it in a specific sequence turns it on or off. A different sequence of taps makes it shine bright enough to illuminate everything within long range for one hour, but this requires a depletion roll.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each day of use)

INTERFACE SLEEVES

Level: 1d6
Form: Pair of connected synth sleeves with ports and plugs
Effect: If the artifact is attached to a device, it gives helpful feedback (visual, auditory, and tactile) about using the device. This grants the wearer an asset on understanding numenera tasks to identify and operate the attached device.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20

LACEWING SHIRT

Level: 1d6 + 4
Form: Shirt-like garment made of overlapping synth scales
Effect: When activated, the scales on the artifact expand into hundreds of lacy bright green wings, granting the user the ability to fly a long distance each round for a number of minutes equal to the artifact level. The user steers by adjusting the angle of their arms and cannot use their arms for anything else while flying or they'll fall.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20

LIVING CONCEPTUALIZATION SHEATH

Level: 1d6 + 1
Form: When not affixed to a creature, this looks like a mass of heavy fabric. On a creature, it looks like heavy, leathery flesh.
Effect: When worn over normal skin, this organic material adheres and conforms to the creature's body shape. The wearer is trained in Intellect defense tasks. Further, they add 2 to their Intellect Edge. However, they cannot wear armor over the living sheath because it's too bulky.
Depletion: 1 in 1d100 (check each day of use)

A biological is a partially or completely living biological construct crafted for a specific purpose (as compared to a cypher, artifact, installation, or vehicle, which is generally a machine rather than a living thing). For more details, see Building Tomorrow, *page 14.*



MIDNIGHT SUIT

Level: 1d6 + 1
Form: Ball of black synth or container of black smart fluid
Effect: When activated, this suit surrounds the wearer in a skintight field of absolute blackness, darker than black paint or a cloudy night under a new moon. In dim light, the wearer is trained in stealth tasks. In very dim light or darkness, the wearer is specialized in stealth tasks. Because the user appears completely black (without any highlights), viewing them is slightly disorienting, and attacks against them are hindered. The field allows a small amount of light to reach the wearer's eyes (otherwise they'd be blind), and at best the wearer can see as if in dim light. The wearer can make the suit create an immobile cloud of darkness in an immediate radius that lasts for one minute, but this requires a depletion roll. The cloud of darkness is enough to obscure bright lights brought into it, but very bright light sources (such as a miniaturized star or a portal to a dimension of light) are only slightly diminished.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each minute of use)

Dim light and very dim light, page 114

Slugspitter, page 301



MOTION STABILIZER

Level: 1d6 + 2
Form: Belt, shirt, harness, or full-body synth suit
Effect: The artifact provides two assets to tasks resisting sudden and unwanted motion, such as falling or being knocked prone or pushed backward. It recognizes when the wearer is initiating these movements (including tumbling, running, swinging from ropes, and so on) and does not hamper these actions.
Depletion: —

NET ARROW

Level: 1d6
Form: Arrow with a tiny metallic device attached to it
Effect: The arrow releases a net of exceptionally strong fibers when it strikes something, entangling the target so it can't move or physically act (and inflicting 1 point of damage instead of normal damage). The net works best on targets no larger than a human. Against larger targets, the attack is hindered by one or more steps.
Depletion: Automatic

REFLECTIVE SHIELD

Level: 1d6 + 2
Form: Wristband or armband with a small metallic device attached
Effect: When a physical projectile such as an arrow, a thrown knife, a slug from a slugspitter, or a similar projectile comes within 4 inches (10 cm) of the wearer's body, a powerful energy field activates automatically and attempts to reverse the projectile's course. This hinders the attack against the wearer. If the projectile misses, it returns along its course and attacks whatever made the attack. The wearer makes an unmodified attack against the original attacker (do not use any of the wearer's or the original attacker's modifications in this attack). On a hit, the attacker takes damage from the projectile.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20

REPEATING BLADE

Level: 1d6 + 1
Form: Sword or similar bladed weapon with devices affixed to the blade and hilt
Effect: This weapon functions as a normal dagger or sword (or, rarely, an axe or a cleaver). However, if the wielder successfully strikes a target with the blade, the weapon gains a spatial fix on the target. On subsequent rounds, attacks made with the weapon against that target are eased.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check per target)

RETALIATION IMPLANT

Level: 1d6
Form: Subdermal implant
Effect: Anyone striking the implanted creature triggers a small burst of electricity that inflicts 1 point of damage (2 points if the artifact is level 4 or higher, or 3 points if the artifact is level 6 or higher). No action or roll is required by the implanted creature. If the artifact would deplete, the wearer can prevent that depletion by allowing the artifact to drain power from their body, hindering all actions for the next 28 hours.
Depletion: 1 in 1d10 (check each use)

SHAPESTONE SPRAYER

Level: 1d6
Form: Metal or synth canister with a long tube
Effect: This device has two modes of operation. The default mode dispenses a hand-width cylinder of grey dough-like material, up to 10 feet (3 m) long each round per artifact level, which hardens into shapestone after a minute. While soft, the dough can be sculpted or smoothed by hand or with tools, such as to patch a crack or create a simple relief sculpture. By building up multiple layers, the user can create larger structures such as walls and doorways.

When operated in burst mode, the tube dispenses a high-volume slurry of the dough in an immediate area, which instantly hardens into shapestone, trapping things inside it. PCs caught in the area must use a Might-based action to get out, with the difficulty determined by the artifact level. NPCs break free if their level is higher than the artifact level. Unlike a web detonation cypher, the material created by this artifact is permanent.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 per hour of use in default mode (burst mode counts as an hour of use in default mode)

SMOKE INK PEN

Level: 1d6
Form: Synth or glass stylus
Effect: When used like a pencil, the artifact creates lines of durable black or white smoke on surfaces or in midair, allowing the user to write or draw just about anywhere. The smoke remains in place unless disturbed, such as by physical contact or a breeze. The smoke is more fragile than a human hair (a level 0 material), and even a large dense scribble can't support more than a pebble's weight. If the artifact is level 4 or higher, it can also produce thick strands of smoke that are a level 1 material.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each hour of use)



Web detonation, page 278

Shapestone, page 93

SYNCHRONIZED ORRERY

Level: 1d6
Form: Glass or synth disk
Effect: When activated, this device connects to the datasphere or directly to satellites in the night and creates an image or hologram of the solar system at that exact moment, showing the location of itself, the sun, Urvanas, Earth, the moon, Naharrai, and a band indicating the Phaeton Halo. If the artifact is level 4 or higher, it also shows smaller stellar objects (up to about half the size of the moon), and if it is level 6 or higher, it shows anything down to about a mile in diameter. Because of the scale involved, the artifact doesn't show any surface details of the planets or moons (for example, it doesn't show the shape of continents on Earth). It provides two assets to astronomy tasks and tasks to navigate through the void (such as flying a starcraft from Earth to Urvanas). Outside of Earth's solar system, it displays only gibberish.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each day of use)

If a synchronized orrery could be connected to another star system's data network, presumably it could be reconfigured to show the local planets and moons. An advanced orrery might be configured for use in multiple systems and update itself automatically when it arrives.

SYNTH INK PEN

Level: 1d6
Form: Synth or glass stylus
Effect: When used like a pencil, the artifact creates lines of thin synth on surfaces, which can be built up like a lattice to create three-dimensional structures. A single strand of fabricated synth is flexible but sturdy for its thickness, and multiple strands together are about the equivalent strength and flexibility of soft wood (a level 1 material). Most of these pens can create three or four different colors of synth. If the artifact is level 4 or higher, it can also produce thin strands of soft metal, allowing a skilled user to create complex objects (like circuit boards) by mixing synth and metal strands. The artifact is an asset for appropriate crafting tasks.
Depletion: 1 in 1d100 (check each hour of use)



Bag of light tools and bag of heavy tools, page 98

TEMPORAL DUPLICATOR

Level: 1d6 + 2
Form: Odd-fitting metallic helmet that has a metal box attachment with dial controls
Effect: Two additional versions of the user appear at the beginning of the user's next turn. The user and both duplicates can each take an action. The duplicates persist until the beginning of the user's next turn, and then they disappear back into the timestream. If either of the two duplicates takes damage or is otherwise hurt, that same damage and any other condition transfers to the user when the duplicates disappear.
Depletion: 1 in 1d10

TOOLBOX BLADE

Level: 1d6
Form: Sword, axe, or other medium or heavy weapon
Effect: This weapon has a set of subtle controls that allow it to transform into or extrude any typical metal or synth tool from a bag of light tools (also from a bag of heavy tools if the artifact is level 4 or higher). Extruded tools remain connected to the artifact by a thin flexible cable about 10 feet (3 m) long. If the cable is destroyed, the artifact can still become or extrude that tool, but the first time it does so requires a depletion roll. If left alone for a few hours, the artifact returns to its weapon configuration. If the artifact depletes, it can still be used as a regular weapon.
Depletion: 1 in 1d100 (check each day the tools are used)

VISION RELAYER

Level: 1d6 + 2
Form: Two disks that adhere to two different creatures' heads
Effect: One disk is affixed to the user, and one is affixed to another living creature. When activated, for the next ten minutes the wearer can see what the other creature is seeing. The wearer can switch between their own sight and the linked creature's sight once per round (this is not an action).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20



FOCUSING SUITS

A focusing suit is a specific kind of artifact: a full-body garment that augments certain abilities from a character's focus. Most are made of a mix of durable cloth, synth, and metal, but some are made of flexible glass, crystal, smart fluid, or more exotic materials. Most of them are unique creations and originate from the Aeon Priests as rewards or custom crafting to suit the needs of explorer PCs. The rest are created by PC Wrights for their own use or for their allies. For example, Vodrin is a Nano who Bears a Halo of Fire, and after they provide valuable materials to a semblage, the Order of Truth might craft a focusing suit that augments Vodrin's fiery powers. In other words, these items shouldn't be random discoveries in a ruin, but specific rewards or creations meant for particular PCs, made by people who know what the PCs can do.

A focusing suit is meant to be worn by a creature who has the focus the suit augments and does nothing if worn by a creature who doesn't have that focus. The level of the artifact determines what tiers of focus abilities it augments (a level 4 suit affects a tier 1 ability, a level 5 suit affects a tier 2 ability, and so on). All focusing suit abilities based on artifact level are cumulative (a level 5 focusing suit also does everything that a level 4 focusing suit does). A focusing suit normally augments only one focus ability at each tier.

The listed augmentations for a focusing suit are *added* effects for the listed abilities, not *replacements* for them. For example, the Bears a Halo of Fire suit increases the wearer's Shroud of Flame damage by +1 point (it changes the wearer's shroud damage from 2 points to 3 points). Sometimes this augmentation applies to only certain ways the ability can be used and doesn't affect its normal use (focusing suit augmentation don't make the ability worse than normal). For example, the Controls Beasts suit increases the range of Soothe the Savage to long range (and hinders the attempt if used at that range), but it still works at short range without being hindered, just like the unmodified

Character focus, page 58

Alternative focus options, page 23

Modifications for effect, page 123

Plans, page 135

Bonded and fashioned items, page 271

Absorbs Energy, page 55

ability. Unless otherwise stated, the suit's augmentations do not change whether an ability is an action or an enabler.

A Wright or other character with the craft numenera skill can alter or upgrade a focusing suit, increasing its level and therefore augmenting a new tier's abilities. The modification for effect rules cover altering a focusing suit's tier abilities (such as changing what tier 3 focus ability it augments or adding an augmentation for a different tier 3 focus ability). The GM should treat a specific kind of focusing suit of levels 4 through 6 (tiers 1 through 3) as its own plan, treat a suit of levels 7 and 8 (tiers 4 and 5) as its own plan, and treat a suit of level 9 (tier 6) as its own plan. The GM should allow the character to salvage or incorporate a lower-level suit as part of crafting a new suit from the new, higher-level plan.

Modifying a suit so it augments two focus abilities from the same tier (such as for a character who has two tier 3 focus abilities) is separate from the modification to increase the suit's level. Those are two different modifications.

For example, Thonas is a first-tier Clever Wright who Employs Magnetism. She knows the plan for making a focusing suit (Employs Magnetism), which allows her to build a level 4, 5, or 6 suit. She builds a level 4 suit. Eventually she reaches tier 2 and modifies the suit into a level 5 suit, and then modifies it again at tier 3 to make it a level 6 suit. If she wants to make a level 7 suit, she'll need to develop a plan for the level 7 suit. Once she builds that level 7 suit (probably involving many pieces from her original suit), she could modify it into a level 8 suit. If she wants to make a level 9 suit, she'll need to develop a new plan for that.

The suit only augments focus abilities the wearer has. For example, if a character Commands Mental Powers and at tier 3 chooses Psychic Burst instead of Psychic Suggestion, a focusing suit that augments Psychic Suggestion does nothing for them. (Of course, the suit could be modified to change which tier 3 ability it modifies, or the second tier 3 ability could be added to it as a modification.)

These artifact descriptions include augmentation possibilities for the alternative focus options in chapter 3 of this book. This assumes that whoever crafted the suit for the character either had the opportunity to study the character's exotic (alternative) focus abilities or is the person or group responsible for giving the PC those abilities in the first place. In other words, a focusing suit wouldn't spontaneously end up augmenting an alternative focus ability unless there was a character on hand who had that ability.

Because these suits are created by knowledgeable people of the Ninth World for use by the PCs, they're usually bonded or fashioned items crafted to look appropriate to the character's focus. For example, a focusing suit for the Bears a Halo of Fire focus probably doesn't look like a jumble of mismatched pieces wired together. It might be a suit of smooth synthcloth, dyed an orange or red color, decorated with sensors and decorations that look like flames or stars, with a rigid cowl sculpted to look like fire.

FOCUSING SUIT (ABSORBS ENERGY)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with metal disks and threads in prominent places

Effect: When worn by someone with the Absorbs Energy focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Release Energy inflicts +1 point of damage if the foe is within immediate range.

Level 5: Energize Object allows you to have two energized objects at once, but each inflicts only 1 point of energy damage instead of 3 points.

Level 6: Absorb Pure Energy works on a source up to an immediate distance away. Improved Absorb Kinetic Energy lets you store up to 3 points of energy from any source, but all of your tasks are hindered if you are storing more than 2.

Level 7: Overcharge Energy makes Release Energy inflict +1 point of damage if

the foe is within short range instead of immediate range.

Level 8: Energize Creature lets you spend an additional level of Effort to affect creatures within short range.

Level 9: Energize Crowd lets you spend an additional level of Effort to affect creatures within long range. Overcharge Device lets you spend an additional level of Effort to affect a device within short range.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (ACTS WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Acts Without Consequence focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Blameless also gives you an asset on the chosen skill.

Level 5: Get Away gives you an asset on stealth tasks for one round.

Level 6: Goad lets you apply a level of Effort to ease your Speed defense tasks against that creature's attacks until the next round. Seize Opportunity lets you take your normal action next round, but it and the immediate action are hindered by two steps.

Level 7: Uncanny Luck lets you restore 1 point to one of your Pools instead of having a minor effect or major effect.

Level 8: Invisibility lingers on you for one round after you reveal your presence or position, blurring your outline and giving you an asset on Speed defense rolls.

Level 9: No Fate lets you change a failed task to a natural 10; once you use this ability, it is not available again until after you make a ten-hour recovery roll. Twist of Fate gives you a reroll (hindered by two steps) if the second roll is a natural 1.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (ADJURES THE LEVIATHAN)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth, synth, and perhaps fur, scales, or leather, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Adjures the Leviathan focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Adjure Creature lasts an additional minute if you use it on just one creature, but all of its actions during that second minute are hindered as it struggles to break free.

Level 5: Your captured creature inflicts +1 point of damage with its attack (or adds +1 damage to your attack when it aids your attack).

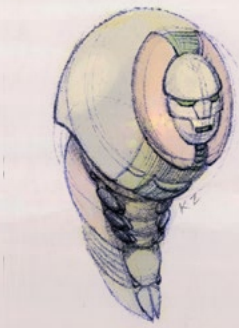
Level 6: Enrage Creature allows it to attack two creatures as its action, inflicting 3 points of damage with each attack. Vigor of the Leviathan adds +1 to your recovery rolls.

Level 7: Duo allows you to use a level 3 tamed creature as a mount. While you're mounted on it, the creature can move and you can attack on your turn, which provides an asset to your attack. The mount acts on your turn. Enabler.

Level 8: Lash of the Tamer lets you apply a second level of Effort to affect a creature within long range, but its attack is hindered.

Level 9: Become the Leviathan gives you a free level of Effort on melee attacks in creature form when you apply at least one level of Effort on them. Menagerie lets you capture one creature of up to level 4 instead of multiple creatures.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)



Adjures the Leviathan, page 58

Acts Without Consequence, page 57

Free level of Effort, page 103

Augments Flesh With Grafts, page 59

FOCUSING SUIT (AUGMENTS FLESH WITH GRAFTS)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sealable openings to allow surgical access to key areas

Effect: When worn by someone with the Augments Flesh With Grafts focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: When you successfully graft a cypher to yourself, you restore 2 points to your Might or Speed Pool.

Level 5: Augment Graft lets you change a grafted cypher's depletion to 1 in 20 but it functions at one level lower than normal (its level can't be increased by applying Effort to this ability).

Level 6: Hardy increases your Might Pool by +2; you gain an asset on your surgery roll to recharge a graft.

Level 7: When you successfully graft an artifact to yourself, you restore 10 points to your Might or Speed Pool.

Level 8: Faster Grafting lets you spend three levels of Effort to surgically add or remove a graft in one round.

Level 9: Defensive Augmentation adds +3 to your Might or Speed Pool. Transhuman Organs adds +1 to each of your three stat Pools.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Battles Automatons, page 61

FOCUSING SUIT (BATTLES AUTOMATONS)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Battles Automatons focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Machine Vulnerabilities inflicts +1 point of damage against automatons and animate machines within immediate range.

Level 5: Machine Hunting gives you an asset on spotting automatons and animate machines.

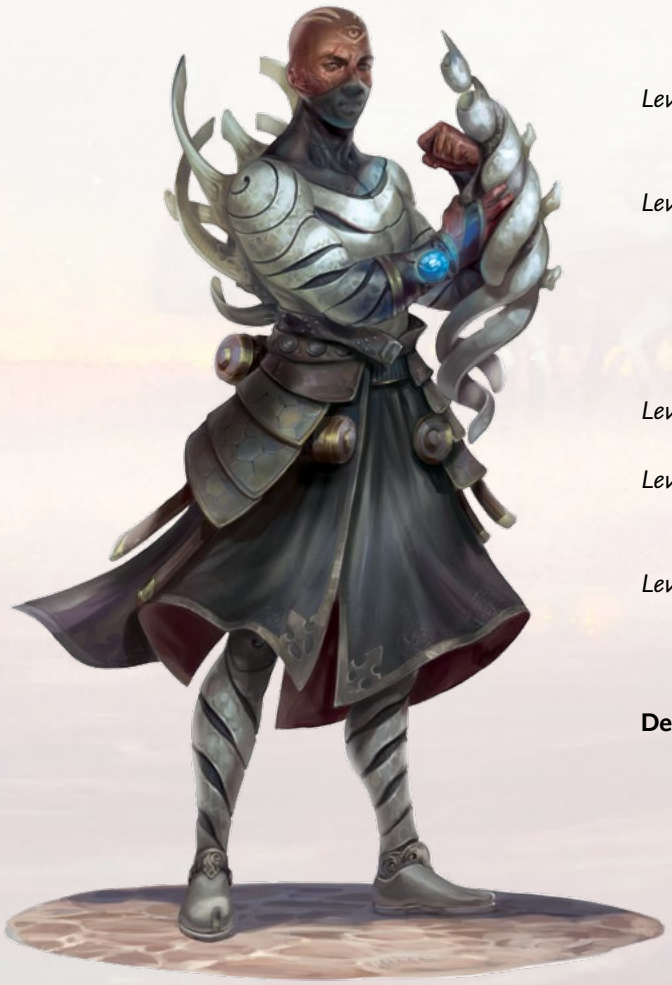
Level 6: Disable Mechanisms can be used with a ranged attack up to short range, but the attack is hindered. Surprise Attack lets you choose to have a minor effect on a natural 17 or 18 rather than dealing extra damage.

Level 7: Pierce Metal Hides lets you ignore +1 Armor on an automaton.

Level 8: Drain Power can be used with a ranged attack up to short range, but the attack is hindered.

Level 9: Blind Machine is eased. Deactivate Mechanisms can be used with a ranged attack up to short range, but the attack is hindered.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)





FOCUSING SUIT (BEARS A HALO OF FIRE)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of synth-leather and metal mesh, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Bears a Halo of Fire focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Shroud of Flame inflicts +1 point of damage.

Level 5: Hurl Flame and Fiery Power inflict +1 point of damage.

Level 6: Fiery Hand of Doom can move up to a very long distance away and inflicts +1 point of damage. Wings of Fire allows you to move up to a short distance each round.

Level 7: Flameblade inflicts +1 point of damage if the foe is within immediate range.

Level 8: Each tendril from Fire Tendrils inflicts +1 point of damage.

Level 9: You can command your Fire Servant within very long range and it inflicts +2 points of damage. Inferno Trail inflicts +2 points of damage to any creature that passes through it and +1 point of damage per round to creatures it sets on fire.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (BRANDISHES AN EXOTIC SHIELD)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, perhaps with elements of similar materials as the character's shield

Effect: When worn by someone with the Brandishes an Exotic Shield focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Force Bash lets you apply levels of Effort to increase the duration of the hindrance; each level of Effort applied increases the duration by one round.

Level 5: Enveloping Shield increases the force field's Armor by +1 for one round if you use your action to defend.

Bears a Halo of Fire, page 58

Brandishes an Exotic Shield, page 63

Defend, page 119

Breaks Down Walls, page 64

Level 6: Healing Pulse adds +1 to the recovery rolls for every affected creature. Throw Force Shield lets you throw the shield up to a long distance, but the attack is hindered by two steps.

Level 7: Energized Shield inflicts 1 point of damage to any creature that hits you with a part of its body (such as a claw, bite, or unarmed attack).

Level 8: Force Wall lets you shape the force wall into a hemisphere with a radius of 6 feet (2 m) that conforms to the space available.

Level 9: Bouncing Shield lets you apply a level of Effort to this ability to affect a fourth target, but the attack against the fourth target is hindered. Shield Burst inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)



FOCUSING SUIT (BREAKS DOWN WALLS)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth, synth, and metal, covering most of the wearer's body and head, reinforced with metal on the head, hands, and feet

Effect: When worn by someone with the Breaks Down Walls focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Breaker lets you study an object as an action to gain an asset on later actions to damage it.

Level 5: Field of Destruction gives you +1 Armor if you immediately destroy the object.

Level 6: Break Through reduces the damage you take from succeeding or failing by 1 point. Machine Vulnerabilities inflicts +1 point of damage against automatons and animate machines within immediate range.

Level 7: Force to Reckon With lets you leave a hole in a force field you break through, or allow it to close behind you (your choice each time you break through a force field).

Level 8: Jump Attack gives you an asset on the jump attack if you first break through an object blocking the path between you and your foe.

Level 9: Break the Ranks lets you apply a level of Effort to this ability to affect a fifth target, but the attack against the fifth target is hindered. Destroyer is eased.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (BUILDS TOMORROW)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, synth, and leather, covering most of the wearer's body and covered in sturdy pockets and loops
Effect: When worn by someone with the Builds Tomorrow focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Seeds of a Plan lets you choose an additional plan of up to level 1 plus your tier, immediately and each time you advance a tier.
Level 5: Customize Creation reduces the XP cost of one of the types of customization (such as "concealed") for installations by 1.
Level 6: Disable Machine can be used with a ranged attack up to short range, but the attack is hindered. Improvised Repair gives an artifact a new depletion chance of 1 in 1d10 or gives an installation an additional 1d10 days of operation.
Level 7: Fast Builder lets you spend 1 XP to lower the assessed difficulty for creating a complex object or structure by another 1.
Level 8: Dual Customization reduces the XP cost of a second type of customization (such as "improved") by 1; you must choose whether this applies to artifacts, automatons, installations, or vehicles.
Level 9: Deluxe Custom Options reduces the XP cost of one of the types of deluxe customization (such as "transport") for objects or structures by 1; you must choose whether this applies to artifacts, automatons, installations, or vehicles. Triple Customization reduces the XP cost of a third type of customization (such as "guarding") by 1; you must choose whether this applies to artifacts, automatons, installations, or vehicles.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (COMMANDS MENTAL POWERS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering much of the wearer's upper body and head, with crystals and large concentric circles at various points
Effect: When worn by someone with the Commands Mental Powers focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Telepathic works out to long range.
Level 5: Mind Reading works out to long range (or very long range if you also have this ability from your type).
Level 6: Psychic Burst inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target. Psychic Suggestion is eased.
Level 7: Use Senses of Others lasts for an hour, and using it on an unwilling target is eased.
Level 8: Precognition lasts for one hour.
Level 9: Mind Control works on a creature within immediate range, but is hindered if you are unable to touch it. Telepathic Network connects up to twenty people for 0 Intellect points, and large networks last for one hour.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (CONTROLS BEASTS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, leather, and synth, resembling scales or fur and covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Controls Beasts focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Your beast companion inflicts +1 point of damage with its attack (or adds +1 damage to your attack when it aids your attack).
Level 5: Soothe the Savage can calm a beast within long range, but the attempt is hindered if the beast is more than a short distance away.
Level 6: Your attacks while on your mount inflict +1 point of damage. Stronger Together works out to a short distance instead of immediate.

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Commands Mental Powers, page 60

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Level 7: Beast Eyes works up to 10 miles (16 km) from you. Your beast companion inflicts +1 point of damage with its attack (or adds +1 damage to your attack when it aids your attack).

Level 8: Beast Call allows you to maintain control of the summoned creature or creatures as long as you use your action at least every other round to do so.

Level 9: As If One Creature works up to a short distance away. Control the Savage can control a beast within long range, but the attempt is hindered if the beast is more than a short distance away. Your beast companion inflicts +1 point of damage with its attack (or adds +1 damage to your attack when it aids your attack).

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Controls Gravity, page 63

FOCUSING SUIT (CONTROLS GRAVITY)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body and head, with geometric patterns on the hands and head

Effect: When worn by someone with the Controls Gravity focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Hover lasts for twenty minutes (or an hour if you also have this ability from your type).

Level 5: Lessening Gravity's Pull also gives you +1 to your Might Edge.

Level 6: Define Down's area can be within short range of you. Gravity Cleave inflicts +1 point of damage if the foe is within immediate range.

Level 7: Field of Gravity lasts for an additional round.

Level 8: Flight affects one additional creature (no additional level of Effort required).

Level 9: Improved Gravity Cleave inflicts +1 point of damage if the foe is within short range. Weight of the World affects an additional creature (no additional level of Effort required).

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Dances With Dark Matter, page 69

FOCUSING SUIT (CRAFTS ILLUSIONS)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of shimmering cloth, covering most of the wearer's body, subtly shifting colors as it moves

Effect: When worn by someone with the Crafts Illusions focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Minor Illusion can create and maintain an illusion up to a short distance away.

Level 5: Disguise illusions on other creatures don't disappear until one minute after the creature moves out of your sight.

Level 6: Cast Illusion extends the range of creating and maintaining your illusions to anywhere within long range that you can perceive. Major Illusion can create and maintain an illusion up to a short distance away.

Level 7: Illusory Selves creates one additional illusion, and every level of Effort you apply creates another one.

Level 8: Terrifying Image is eased.

Level 9: Grandiose Illusion can create and maintain an illusion that has its closest edge up to a very long distance away. Permanent Illusion can fit within a 20-foot (6 m) cube.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (DANCES WITH DARK MATTER)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sensors and reinforcements on the limbs

Effect: When worn by someone with the Dances With Dark Matter focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Ribbons of Dark Matter doesn't hinder your actions or slow your movement.

Level 5: Void Wings lets you apply one level of Effort to this ability to increase the distance you move by one range category (short to long, long to very long, or very long to 1,000 feet [300 m]).

Level 6: Dark Matter Shroud lets you create a harmless shroud that gives you +1 Armor but doesn't harm anyone who tries to touch or strike you. Dark Matter Strike works out to very long range but eases your attack by only one step.

Level 7: Dark Matter Shell enhances your silhouette to look like something frightening; if you apply a level of Effort to any intimidation task, you can apply an additional free level of Effort to that same task.

Level 8: Windwracked Traveler allows you to apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase your speed; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases your flying speed by 5 miles (8 km) per hour.

Level 9: Dark Matter Structure allows you to apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase the size of the structure; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases its area by one 10-foot (3 m) cube. Embrace the Night is eased.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (DEFENDS THE GATE)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of synth, leather, and metal, covering most of the wearer's body and head

Effect: When worn by someone with the Defends the Gate focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Rally to Me affects allied creatures who move within short range of you.

Level 5: Mind for Might restores an additional +1 to your Might or Intellect Pool when you use all points from a recovery roll on that Pool.

Level 6: Fortification Builder lets you spend 1 XP to lower the assessed difficulty for creating a wall or fortification by another 1, to a minimum of difficulty 1. Train Defenders lets you train five additional level 2 followers.

Level 7: Living Buttress increases your Might Pool by +2.

Level 8: Reinforcing Field lasts an additional hour.

Level 9: Generate Force Field lets you apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase the size of the force field; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases its area by one plane of force 30 feet (9 m) to a side. Rout Horde lets you apply levels of Effort to this ability to reduce the horde's rank for the purpose of determining if it can retreat without taking damage; every two levels of Effort applied for this purpose treats the horde's rank as 1 lower.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (DEFENDS THE WEAK)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of synth, leather, and metal, covering most of the wearer's body and head

Effect: When worn by someone with the Defends the Weak focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Warding Shield increases the shield's Armor by +1 for one round if you use your action to defend.

Level 5: Insight gives you an asset on tasks to recognize deception.

Level 6: Dual Wards lets your wards move up to an immediate distance from you, regardless of their distance from each other. True Guardian applies if you use your action to defend.

Level 7: Willing Sacrifice lets you take more than one attack per round provided that all the attacks were meant for one or more targets within immediate range of you.

Level 8: Taunt Foe is eased.

Level 9: Resuscitate works on creatures that have been dead for up to five minutes. You can use it on creatures who have been dead for longer than that, but the difficulty of the task increases by 1 for each minute beyond five that they have been dead. True Defender lets your wards move up to a short distance from you, regardless of their distance from each other.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Free level of Effort, page 103

Defends the Weak, page 72

Defends the Gate, page 71

Defend, page 119

Descends From Nobility, page 73

FOCUSING SUIT (DESCENDS FROM NOBILITY)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and leather, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Descends From Nobility focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Privileged Nobility gives you an asset on persuasion tasks when claiming the rewards of this ability.
Level 5: Trained Interlocutor gives you a free level of Effort when you apply a level of Effort to persuasion.
Level 6: Command allows you to maintain control of the creature or creatures as long as you use your action at least every other round to give it a command. Noble's Courage has a base level of 5.
Level 7: Retinue gives you an additional level 2 follower.
Level 8: Asserting Your Privilege lets you apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase the duration of the hindering; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases its duration by one round.
Level 9: Font of Inspiration works out to short range. Mind of a Ruler also tells you one significant flaw in the plan.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Employs Magnetism, page 67

FOCUSING SUIT (EMPLOYS MAGNETISM)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth threaded with metal wires, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Employs Magnetism focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Move Metal increases its Might Pool by +2.
Level 5: Repel Metal grants you +1 Armor against any incoming attack that uses metal.
Level 6: Destroy Metal works up to long range, but is hindered if the target is farther away than short range. Guide Bolt works up to long range for your attacks and short range for your ally's attacks.
Level 7: Magnetic Field lasts an additional round.
Level 8: Command Metal works out to long range and tasks to craft with it are eased, but attacks with it are hindered if the target is farther away than short range.
Level 9: Diamagnetism can affect an additional object within short range. Iron Punch works out to long range, but is hindered if the target is farther away than short range.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Emerged From the Obelisk, page 75

FOCUSING SUIT (EMERGED FROM THE OBELISK)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, synth, and crystal, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Emerged From the Obelisk focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Crystalline Body increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 5: Amber Levitation lasts for two minutes.
Level 6: Inhabit Crystal restores 1 point to your Might or Speed Pool when you leave the crystal. Immovable increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 7: Crystal Lens is eased against targets within short range.
Level 8: Resonant Frequency lets you create a vibration that detonates in just 1d6 rounds.
Level 9: Resonant Quake lets you create a weaker quake that inflicts only 4 points of damage and doesn't daze you for activating this ability. Return to the Obelisk restores 3 points to your Might or Speed Pool when you exit the destination crystal.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (ENTERTAINS)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth, covering most of the wearer's body, changing colors in response to the wearer's mood and voice

Effect: When worn by someone with the Entertains focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Levity adds +1 to recovery rolls of friends and comrades.

Level 5: Inspiration eases a second task per day for each of your friends.

Level 6: Knowledge gives you training in a third area of knowledge. Multitalented increases your Speed and Intellect Pools by +1 each.

Level 7: Calm is eased.

Level 8: Able Assistance works on an additional creature.

Level 9: Master Entertainer eases a third task per day (by two steps) for each of your friends. Vindictive Performance affects one additional creature.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (EXISTS PARTIALLY OUT OF PHASE)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of sheer cloth and stronglass, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Exists Partially Out of Phase focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Walk Through Walls lets you move up to 2 inches (5 cm) per round through physical barriers.

Level 5: Defensive Phasing gives you a free level of Effort when you apply a level of Effort to Speed defense.

Level 6: Phased Attack also hinders your target for one round. Phase Door works out to very long range, and you can pass through one barrier if the destination object is within short range.

Level 7: Ghost lets you pass through energy barriers up to 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick as your action, but doing so ends that use of the ability.

Level 8: Untouchable allows you to attack, touch, or otherwise affect things, but tasks for doing any of those things are hindered by three steps.

Level 9: Enhanced Phase Attack lets you touch another person so that the attack they make on this turn ignores their foe's armor, and any attack made with this ability hinders the foe for one round. Phase Foe can affect a target of one level higher than normal.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (EXPLORES DARK PLACES)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of dark cloth and leather, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Explores Dark Places focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Superb Explorer gives you an asset to searching tasks.

Level 5: Superb Infiltrator gives you an asset to tinkering with devices. Eyes Adjusted eases defense rolls against blinding attacks by two steps.

Level 6: Nightstrike also hinders your target for one round. Slippery Customer lets you move an immediate distance after escaping from bonds, moving through a tight space, and performing other contortionist tasks.

Level 7: Resilient adds +1 to your recovery rolls.

Level 8: Dark Explorer gives you an asset on sneaking tasks while in dim or no light.

Level 9: Blinding Attack can be used without a light source, but the attack is hindered by two steps. Embraced by Darkness allows you to attack, touch, or otherwise affect things, but tasks for doing any of those things are hindered by three steps.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Entertains, page 68

Explores Dark Places, page 71

Exists Partially Out of Phase, page 69

Free level of Effort, page 103

Explores Yesterday, page 77

FOCUSING SUIT (EXPLORES YESTERDAY)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, synth, and leather, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Explores Yesterday focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Trained Excavator gives you an asset on salvaging numenera tasks.
Level 5: Resilient adds +2 to your recovery rolls.
Level 6: Fellow Explorer gives your follower +3 health. Weapon Master gives you a +1 bonus to damage with a second kind of weapon you can use.
Level 7: Got a Feeling extends up to 5 miles (8 km).
Level 8: Maneuvering Adept lets you ignore or countermand the GM intrusion for rolling a natural 1 on a climbing, jumping, or balancing roll.
Level 9: Incredible Recovery restores 1 point to each of your Pools that have zero points. Quick Hands can be used twice per round, but the second attack is hindered.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Fell From Another World, page 13



FOCUSING SUIT (FELL FROM ANOTHER WORLD)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Fell From Another World focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Alien Knowledge gives you an asset on the chosen skill.
Level 5: Your exotic companion inflicts +1 point of damage with its attack (or adds +1 damage to your attack when it aids your attack).
Level 6: Alien Intuition is eased. Mind Reading works out to long range (or very long range if you also have this ability from your type).
Level 7: Constant Contact is eased.
Level 8: Telekinetic Grasp hinders your target's actions.
Level 9: Homeworld Bridge can carry an additional creature (no additional level of Effort required). Otherworldly Aggression inflicts +1 point of damage.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (FIGHTS WITH A HORDE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and metal, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Fights With a Horde focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Teamwork lets you affect allies who have been away from you for up to 56 hours.
Level 5: Nucleus of a Horde gives your follower +5 health.
Level 6: Enhance Dexterity works if your follower is within short range. Enhance Strength works if your follower is within short range.
Level 7: Growing Horde gives you an additional level 3 follower.
Level 8: Horde Tactics increases your single-creature Might Pool by +2.
Level 9: Advance Rank increases the health of any horde you fight with by +3. Charging Horde inflicts +2 points of damage to one affected target.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (FIGHTS WITH PANACHE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and soft leather, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Fights With Panache focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Attack Flourish affects a second creature.
Level 5: Quick Block lets you use your one-action recovery roll as part of a successful Speed defense roll against a melee attack.
Level 6: Acrobatic Attack lets you choose to have a major effect on a roll of natural 19 rather than a minor effect or dealing extra damage. A successful Flamboyant Boast lets you choose one ally within short range who gains an asset to their next task if used within a round or two.
Level 7: Mobile Fighter allows you, as part of your attack, to move through all difficult terrain at normal speed as if such tasks were routine (difficulty 0).
Level 8: Block for Another provides another asset to the ally's Speed defense tasks.
Level 9: Agile Wit lets you use your Speed Edge or Intellect Edge (whichever is better) when using points from your Intellect Pool on Speed tasks. Return to Sender can be used twice per round, but the second immediate melee attack each round is hindered.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (FOCUSES MIND OVER MATTER)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with a prominent crystal or glass on the head
Effect: When worn by someone with the Focuses Mind Over Matter focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Deflect Attacks adds +1 to your Speed Edge for the next ten minutes.
Level 5: Telekinesis increases its Might Pool by +3.
Level 6: Cloak of Opportunity lets you increase the Armor it provides by +1 for the next minute, but that use of the ability ends afterward. Enhance Strength gives you a free level of Effort on brute force tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.
Level 7: Apportation lets you reroll once when summoning a random object and use either result.
Level 8: Psychokinetic Attack is eased.
Level 9: Improved Apportation lets you call a specific creature up to level 4. Reshape Matter works up to short range, but is hindered if the target is farther away than touch range.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Fights With a Horde, page 78

Difficult terrain, page 117

Focuses Mind Over Matter, page 73

Free level of Effort, page 103

Major effect, page 105

Fuses Flesh and Steel, page 74

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Fuses Mind and Machine, page 79

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FOCUSING SUIT (FUSES FLESH AND STEEL)

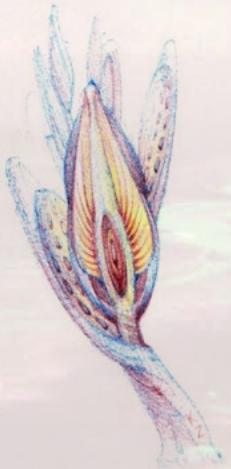
Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of flexible synth and metal, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Fuses Flesh and Steel focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Enhanced Body increases your Might and Speed Pools by +1 point each.
Level 5: Interface works out to short range.
Level 6: Sensing Package gives you an asset to perception and searching tasks. Weaponization builds a second light or medium weapon into your body, or the one weapon can be a large weapon.
Level 7: Fusion lets you choose one fused cypher that doesn't count toward your cypher limit.
Level 8: Deep Reserves increases the amount you can transfer between pools by +5 and increases the rate to 2 points per round.
Level 9: Power Surge also restores 1 point each to your Might and Speed Pools. Ultra Enhancement increases all three of your stat Pools by +2 each.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (FUSES MIND AND MACHINE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body and head
Effect: When worn by someone with the Fuses Mind and Machine focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Mechanical Assistance increases your Intellect Pool by +2.
Level 5: Network Tap inflicts 1 less point of Intellect damage on you on a failed roll.
Level 6: Action Processor lasts for twenty minutes. Machine Telepathy works out to long range, but is hindered if the target is farther away than short range.
Level 7: Processing Power increases your Intellect Pool by +2.
Level 8: See the Future lasts for fifteen minutes.
Level 9: Machine Enhancement lets you choose to have a minor effect on a roll of natural 17 or 18 rather than dealing extra damage. Reboot adds +2 to the Intellect Pool recovery roll from this ability.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (HOWLS AT THE MOON)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of various elastic materials, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Howls at the Moon focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Beast Form increases your Might and Speed Pools by +1 each.
Level 5: Controlled Change lets you use your one-action recovery roll as part of changing into or out of your beast form.
Level 6: Bigger adds +2 points of damage to your beast form's attacks. Greater Beast Form increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 7: Greater Controlled Change lets you use your ten-minute recovery roll as part of changing into or out of your beast form.
Level 8: Enhanced Beast Form increases your Might and Speed Pools by +2 each.
Level 9: Lethal gives you a free level of Effort on melee attacks in beast form when you apply at least one level of Effort on them. Perfect Control lets you use your one-hour or ten-hour recovery rolls as part of changing into or out of your beast form.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)



FOCUSING SUIT (HUNTS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, leather, and fur, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Hunts focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Stalker gives you a free level of Effort on movement tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.
Level 5: Quarry lets you immediately select a new quarry for free if you defeat or capture your current quarry (this is not an action).
Level 6: Horde Fighting adds +1 damage to your attacks when two or more foes are attacking you at once in melee. Sprint and Grab is eased.
Level 7: Surprise Attack lets you choose to have a minor effect on a roll of natural 17 or 18 rather than dealing extra damage.
Level 8: Hunter's Drive gives you a free level of Effort on all tasks involving your quarry when you apply at least one level of Effort on them (combined with Stalker, this gives you two free levels of Effort on movement tasks involving your quarry).
Level 9: Master Combatant adds +1 damage to your attacks with the chosen type of weapon. Multiple Quarry lets you select a fourth quarry creature.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (HUNTS ABHUMANS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and leather, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Hunts Abhumans focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Tracker and Hunter gives you an asset on tracking abhumans.
Level 5: Abhuman Sense works out to very long range.
Level 6: Answering Attack can be used twice per round, but the second time each round the attack is hindered by an additional step. Horde Fighting adds +1 damage to your attacks when two or more foes are attacking you at once in melee.
Level 7: Improved Abhuman Fighter inflicts +1 point of damage against abhumans within immediate range.
Level 8: Abhuman Slayer lets you choose to have a minor effect on a roll of natural 17 or 18 rather than dealing extra damage.
Level 9: Abhuman Anathema restores 2 points to your Might Pool whenever you defeat an abhuman. Master Combatant adds +1 damage to your attacks with the chosen type of weapon.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (IMPARTS WISDOM)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Imparts Wisdom focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Philosophy gives you an asset on one of the two knowledge skills.
Level 5: Imparting the Path lets you affect allies who have been away from you for up to 56 hours.
Level 6: Genius increases your Intellect Pool by +2. Soothe Mind and Body adds +1 to your recovery rolls and +1 to the number of points restored with healing tasks.
Level 7: Inspire Action works out to long range even if the ally can't see or understand you particularly well, but their additional immediate action is hindered.
Level 8: Change the Paradigm is eased.
Level 9: Impart Understanding lets you ease a task and provide an asset to a friend for that same task. Undo gives an asset to the creature if it attempts the same action that was just undone.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

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Imparts Wisdom, page 82

Hunts Abhumans, page 81

Leads, page 83

FOCUSING SUIT (LEADS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and leather, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Leads focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Natural Charisma gives you an asset on intimidation.
Level 5: Lead From the Front increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 6: Command can work on a creature within long range, but the attempt is hindered if the creature is more than a short distance away. Improved Follower gives your follower +3 health.
Level 7: Captivate or Inspire is eased when you use it to captivate.
Level 8: Confidence gives you +2 points to divide among your stat Pools.
Level 9: Band of Followers gives you an additional level 3 follower. Mind of a Leader also tells you one significant flaw in the plan.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Lives in the Wilderness, page 78

Learns From Adversity, page 85

FOCUSING SUIT (LEARNS FROM ADVERSITY)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, leather, and synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Learns From Adversity focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Toughened Up increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 5: Mental Fortitude increases your Intellect Pool by +2.
Level 6: Know Their Faults lets you use it on a creature you haven't seen (as long as you have studied its tracks, its lair, things it has killed, and so on); this always requires a roll and the roll is hindered by two steps. Tall Tale hinders the target by an additional step on the round after you use it.
Level 7: Seize Opportunity lets you take your normal action next round, but it and the immediate action are hindered by two steps.
Level 8: Twist of Fate gives you a reroll (hindered by two steps) if the second roll is a natural 1.
Level 9: Exploit Advantage lets you choose to have a minor effect on a roll of natural 17 or 18 rather than dealing extra damage. Lethal Ploy can instantly kill a level 3 target, but the attack roll is hindered (additional levels of Effort can be applied to the non-hindered base level of 2 or the hindered level of 3).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (LIVES IN THE WILDERNESS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of durable cloth, leather, and furs, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Lives in the Wilderness focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Wilderness Life gives you training in a third skill from its list. Wild Hardiness increases your Speed Pool by +2.
Level 5: Living off the Land takes you half as long to find food and water for yourself or a group, and makes you specialized in resisting natural poisons.
Level 6: Animal Senses and Sensibilities makes you specialized in listening. Wilderness Encouragement grants the target +3 Pool points.
Level 7: Wilderness Awareness extends up to 5 miles (8 km).
Level 8: The Wild Is on Your Side is eased.
Level 9: One With the Wild works out to very long range, and your recovery rolls affected by it increase by +3 Pool points. Wild Camouflage lasts for twenty minutes.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (MASTERS DEFENSE)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of synth, leather, and metal, covering most of the wearer's body

Effect: When worn by someone with the Masters Defense focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Shield Master lets you add +1 to your Armor, but on any round you do this, your attacks are hindered.

Level 5: Sturdy gives you a free level of Effort on all Might defense tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.

Level 6: Dodge and Resist gives you a second reroll that is hindered (you take the best of the three rolls). Dodge and Respond can be used twice per round, but the second use in each round is hindered.

Level 7: Tower of Will gives you +1 Armor against mental attacks.

Level 8: Nothing but Defend lets you use it as part of the same action to help an ally defend against an attack.

Level 9: Defense Master adds +2 to the damage of your attacks made with this ability. Wear It Well increases your Armor by +1 against an attack when you apply at least one level of Effort on your Might or Speed defense roll against that attack.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (MASTERS WEAPONRY)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and flexible synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with metal reinforcements and stark designs on the arms and hands

Effect: When worn by someone with the Masters Weaponry focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Weapon Master adds +1 point of damage to your attacks with your chosen weapon.

Level 5: Weapon Defense gives you a free level of Effort on all Speed defense tasks when you are holding your chosen weapon and apply at least one level of Effort on Speed defense.

Level 6: Disarming Strike is eased. Rapid Attack can be used twice per round, but the second attack is hindered.

Level 7: Never Fumble gives you a reroll (hindered by two steps) if you roll a natural 1 when attacking with your chosen weapon.

Level 8: Extreme Mastery gives you a second reroll that is hindered (you take the best of the three rolls).

Level 9: Damage Dealer adds +1 damage to your attacks with your chosen weapon. Death Dealer can instantly kill a level 4 target, but the attack roll is hindered. Master Combatant adds +1 damage to your attacks with the chosen type of weapon.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Masters Defense, page 80

Free level of Effort, page 103

Helping, page 118

Masters Weaponry, page 80



Metes Out Justice, page 86

FOCUSING SUIT (METES OUT JUSTICE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and metal, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Metes Out Justice focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Designation works out to short range.
Level 5: Improved Designation works out to short range.
Level 6: Defend All the Innocent lets you protect one of your designated innocents even if they are up to short range away (if there is more than one of them, choose one each round). Punish the Guilty inflicts +1 point of damage if the foe is within immediate range.
Level 7: Greater Designation lets you include up to three creatures who are farther than immediate range but still within short range.
Level 8: Punish All the Guilty lets you apply a level of Effort to this ability to affect a sixth target, but the attack against the sixth target is hindered.
Level 9: Damn the Guilty works out to long range, but the extra damage is only +1 if the target is farther away than short range. Inspire the Innocent adds +2 to the recovery rolls from this ability.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Murders, page 82

Moves Like a Cat, page 87

FOCUSING SUIT (MOVES LIKE A CAT)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, leather, or synth, covering most of the wearer's body but very flexible at the joints
Effect: When worn by someone with the Moves Like a Cat focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Reflexes increases your Speed Pool by +2.
Level 5: Movement gives you an asset on climbing tasks.
Level 6: Greater Reflexes increases your Speed Pool by +2. Hard to Pin Down gives you an asset on escaping tasks.
Level 7: Quick Strike lets you choose to hinder your attack in order to hinder the target for an additional round.
Level 8: Phenomenal Reflexes increases your Speed Pool by +2.
Level 9: Burst of Action lets you take a third action, but all three actions are hindered by two steps. Deep Resources increases your Speed Pool by +3.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (MURDERS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth in intimidating colors and patterns, covering most of the wearer's body and face
Effect: When worn by someone with the Murders focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Surprise Attack lets you choose to have a minor effect on a roll of natural 17 or 18 rather than dealing extra damage.
Level 5: Quick Death can be used in two subsequent rounds, but the second attack is hindered.
Level 6: Awareness works out to very long range. Poison Crafter gives you training in defense rolls against poison.
Level 7: Better Surprise Attack lets you choose to have a major effect on a roll of natural 19 rather than a minor effect or dealing extra damage.
Level 8: Slayer can instantly kill a level 4 target, but the attack roll is hindered.
Level 9: Escape Plan allows you to use a hiding place up to a short distance away. Murderer can instantly kill a level 5 target, but the attack roll is hindered (additional levels of Effort can be applied to the non-hindered base level of 4 or the hindered level of 5).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (NEEDS NO WEAPONS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and leather, covering most of the wearer's body, leaving parts of the hands and feet exposed
Effect: When worn by someone with the Needs No Weapons focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Flesh of Stone increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 5: Advantage to Disadvantage inflicts +1 point of damage.
Level 6: Dazing Attack lets you choose to hinder your attack in order to hinder the target for an additional round. Moving Like Water increases your Speed Pool by +2.
Level 7: Deflect Attacks gives you an asset on Speed defense against melee attacks for the next round.
Level 8: Stun Attack eases the stun attempt.
Level 9: Master of Style increases your Might and Speed Pools by +1. Whirling Assault eases one of the attack rolls you make with it.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (NEVER SAYS DIE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, reinforced in the torso
Effect: When worn by someone with the Never Says Die focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Rapid Recovery adds +1 to your recovery rolls.
Level 5: Ignore the Pain lets you use your one-action recovery roll immediately when you are hit by an effect that would knock you unconscious or move you a step down the damage track (this is not an action).
Level 6: Blood Fever adds +1 point of damage to your attacks when you have no points in one or two Pools. Hidden Reserves adds +2 to your one-action recovery rolls.
Level 7: Outlast the Foe recovers 1 point to your Might and Speed Pools if you have been in combat for five full rounds.
Level 8: Not Dead Yet lets you recover from being debilitated after a one-hour recovery roll.
Level 9: Final Defiance is eased. Ignore Affliction lasts for two hours.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (POSSESSES A SHARD OF THE SUN)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth, crystal, or synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Possesses a Shard of the Sun focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Illuminating Touch lets your touched object shed light to illuminate everything in long range.
Level 5: Dazzling Sunburst lets you apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase the duration of the hindering; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases its duration by one round.
Level 6: Burning Light inflicts +1 point of damage if the foe is within immediate range. Sculpt Light allows you to apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase the size of the object; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases its size by an amount equal to your size.
Level 7: When you use Mote of Sunlight, the mote can travel up to 1,000 feet (300 m) from you.
Level 8: Invisibility lingers on you for one round after you reveal your presence or position, blurring your outline and giving you an asset on Speed defense rolls.
Level 9: Living Light lets you travel to an open space that you can see up to 1 mile (1.5 km) away. Improved Sculpt Light allows you to apply levels of Effort to this ability to increase the size of the structure; each level of Effort applied for this purpose increases its area by one 10-foot (3 m) cube.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Needs No Weapons, page 88

Possesses a Shard of the Sun, page 90

Never Says Die, page 89

Radiates Vitality, page 92

FOCUSING SUIT (RADIATES VITALITY)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Radiates Vitality focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Mighty increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 5: Extra Recovery adds +2 to the recovery roll from this ability.
Level 6: Detect Life lets you apply two additional levels of Effort to increase the range of detection to very long. Empathy lets you apply two additional levels of Effort to increase its range to long.
Level 7: Biomorphic Healing adds +2 to the recovery roll from this ability.
Level 8: Regenerate can apply its 2-point penalty to your Speed Pool instead of your Intellect Pool.
Level 9: Biomorphic Detonation inflicts +2 points of damage to one affected creature. Regenerate Other is eased.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Rages, page 83

FOCUSING SUIT (RAGES)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sensors at critical muscle and organ locations
Effect: When worn by someone with the Rages focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Frenzy gives you an asset on Intellect defense tasks while your frenzy lasts.
Level 5: Mobile Fighter gives you a free level of Effort on all climbing and jumping tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.
Level 6: Ignore the Pain lets you use your one-action recovery roll immediately when you take damage in a state of frenzy (this is not an action). Power Strike is eased. Unarmored Fighter gives you a free level of Effort on all Speed defense tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.
Level 7: Greater Frenzy gives you two assets on Intellect defense tasks while your frenzy lasts.
Level 8: Attack and Attack Again eases your extra attack roll from a major effect.
Level 9: Not Dead Yet lets you recover from being debilitated after a one-hour recovery roll. Tough and Fast increases your Might and Speed Pools by +3 each.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Free level of Effort, page 103



FOCUSING SUIT (RIDES THE LIGHTNING)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with metal conduits running throughout

Effect: When worn by someone with the Rides the Lightning focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Shock adds +2 points of electricity damage to the attack with your hands. You can add +2 points of electricity damage to a Shock attack with a weapon, but doing so ends this use of the ability.

Level 5: Bolt Rider works out to very long range.

Level 6: Drain Charge lets you drain +1 point per round. Electric Armor inflicts +1 point of damage and provides +1 point of Armor against electricity.

Level 7: Bolts of Power inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target.

Level 8: Electrical Flight lets you carry one creature with you, but that creature takes 3 points of electricity damage each round that you carry them.

Level 9: Flash Across the Miles lets you carry one creature with you, but that creature takes 10 points of electricity damage from the trip. Wall of Lightning allows you to spend levels of Effort on the wall, with each level of Effort increasing the wall level by +1 and inflicting +2 points of damage.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Rides the Lightning, page 83

FOCUSING SUIT (SEES BEYOND)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sensors and filaments augmenting the head and neck

Effect: When worn by someone with the Sees Beyond focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: See the Unseen increases your Intellect Pool by +2.

Sees Beyond, page 94



Shreds the Walls of the World, page 97

Level 5: See Through Matter lasts for two rounds.
Level 6: Find the Hidden lets you remain in contact with the object for an additional hour. Sensor lets you create a sensor up to short range away.
Level 7: Remote Viewing lasts twice as long.
Level 8: See Through Time lasts an additional round after you stop concentrating.
Level 9: Mental Projection increases the base distance you can travel by 1 mile (1.5 km). Total Awareness gives you an asset to recognize ambushes, betrayals, and similar sudden changes in circumstances.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Shepherds the Community, page 96

FOCUSING SUIT (SHEPHERDS THE COMMUNITY)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Shepherds the Community focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Community Activist gives you an asset on intimidation tasks about topics that directly relate to the community.
Level 5: Community Protector increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 6: Community Advocate increases the community's health by +1. Shepherd's Fury, when active, lets you choose to have a major effect on a roll of natural 19 rather than a minor effect or dealing extra damage.
Level 7: Inexhaustible Shepherd increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 8: Unassailable increases your Speed Pool by +2.
Level 9: Master Combatant adds +1 damage to your attacks with the chosen type of weapon. Protective Wall lets you apply a level of Effort to this ability to affect a sixth target, but the attack against the sixth target is hindered.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Siphons Power, page 15

FOCUSING SUIT (SHREDS THE WALLS OF THE WORLD)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sensors on the legs and arms
Effect: When worn by someone with the Shreds the Walls of the World focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Phase Sprint lets you apply a level of Effort to enhance your phasing; you move only up to a short distance, but you gain another asset to your Speed defense tasks until the beginning of your next turn.
Level 5: Scratch Existence inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target.
Level 6: Invisible Phasing lets your invisibility linger for one round after you reveal your presence or position, blurring your outline and giving you an asset on Speed defense rolls. Walk Through Walls lets you move up to 2 inches (5 cm) per round through physical barriers.
Level 7: Phase Detonation inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target.
Level 8: Very Long Sprinting lets you apply a level of Effort to enhance the phasing from your Phase Sprint; you move only up to a long distance, but you gain another asset to your Speed defense tasks until the beginning of your next turn.
Level 9: Shred Existence inflicts +2 points of damage against one affected target. Untouchable While Moving gives you two assets on Speed defense tasks on the round in which you end the effect by not moving.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (SIPHONS POWER)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with metal devices in the hands and torso
Effect: When worn by someone with the Siphons Power focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Drain Machine costs 1 less Intellect point.
Level 5: Drain Creature costs 1 less Intellect point.
Level 6: Distance Drain works out to long range, but is hindered if the target is farther away than short range. Unraveling Consumption takes only half a minute to start draining the creature, inflicts +1 point of damage per minute, and restores 1 additional point to you each minute.
Level 7: Store Energy increases the safe limit of your Siphon Pool by +1 point.
Level 8: Share the Power lets you divide the amount healed between yourself and an additional target.
Level 9: Explosive Release inflicts +2 points of damage when used on a creature, or inflicts +2 points of damage to one affected creature when used on an area. Sun Siphon lets you use it once to refill your Siphon Pool after a one-hour recovery roll (in addition to being able to use it after your ten-hour recovery roll).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (SPEAKS WITH A SILVER TONGUE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth in pleasing colors, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Speaks With a Silver Tongue focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Poetic License lets you speak, understand, and write two additional languages other than the Truth.
Level 5: A Smile and a Word gives you a minor effect on a roll of natural 18 and a major effect on a natural 19 or 20 on actions involving interactions.
Level 6: Verbal Misdirection affects one additional creature (no additional level of Effort required). Play to the Crowd works out to long range.
Level 7: Castigate hinders the target by two steps on the round after they lose their action.
Level 8: Stay the Course adds +2 to the recovery rolls from this ability.
Level 9: Entrancing Speech works out to very long range, but is hindered against targets that are farther away than short range. Command allows you to maintain control of the creature or creatures as long as you use your action at least every other round to give it a command.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (STEPS INTO THE OUTSIDE)

Steps Into the Outside, page 17

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of synth and strange materials, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Steps Into the Outside focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Dimensional Creeping lets you move up to 1 inch (2.5 cm) per round through physical barriers.
Level 5: Glimpse the Outside gives you an asset on a second task involving that creature or object in the next minute.
Level 6: Dimensional Blast works out to long range, but is hindered if the target is farther away than short range. Flicker lets you override the result of the random chance to vanish (either forcing yourself to stay or forcing yourself to go), but you take 1 point of Intellect damage (ignores Armor) each time you do so.
Level 7: Dimensional Survey can carry an additional creature (no additional level of Effort required).
Level 8: Untouchable allows you to attack, touch, or otherwise affect things, but tasks for doing any of those things are hindered by three steps.
Level 9: Dimensional Rift can pull in a level 3 target, but the attack roll is hindered (additional levels of Effort can be applied to the non-hindered base level of 2 or the hindered level of 3). Into the Outside can carry an additional creature (no additional level of Effort required).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Speaks With a Silver Tongue, page 85

Talks to Machines, page 86

FOCUSING SUIT (TALKS TO MACHINES)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, and sensors adorning the head and arms
Effect: When worn by someone with the Talks to Machines focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Distant Activation works out to long range.
Level 5: Coaxing Power lets you spend levels of Effort to boost the machine's power further, with each level of Effort making it operate at 1 level higher than normal for one minute.
Level 6: Command Machine is eased. Intelligent Interface eases communications with reluctant machines and automatons within short range.
Level 7: Your machine companion inflicts +1 point of damage with its attack (or adds +1 damage to your attack when it aids your attack).
Level 8: Information Gathering extends up to 5 miles (8 km).
Level 9: Improved Machine Companion gives you both choices for your companion (flight and can carry an additional cypher). Control Machine can control a machine within long range, but the attempt is hindered if the machine is more than a short distance away.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Thunders, page 99



FOCUSING SUIT (THUNDERS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and metal, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Thunders focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Thunder Beam inflicts +1 point of damage on the first round if the foe is within immediate range.
Level 5: Sound Conversion Barrier increases your Might Pool by +2.
Level 6: Echolocation works out to long range, but is hindered beyond short range. Nullify Sound has a weaker effect at greater than immediate distance but not more than short distance; sound-based tasks are hindered by two steps in that range.
Level 7: Shattering Shout inflicts +1 point of damage when used on a creature, or inflicts +1 point of damage to one affected creature when used on an object.
Level 8: Subsonic Rumble lasts for one additional minute, but during the second minute the targets are hindered by only one step.
Level 9: Earthquake can last twice as long, though doing so makes it inflict only half as much damage. Lethal Vibration inflicts +2 points of damage.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (TOUCHES THE SKY)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of leather and metal, covering most of the wearer's body, with metal filaments running throughout
Effect: When worn by someone with the Touches the Sky focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Hover lasts for twenty minutes (or an hour if you also have this ability from your type).
Level 5: Wind Armor provides +1 Armor against physical projectile weapons.
Level 6: Lightning Discharge inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target. Storm Seed takes half as long to seed.
Level 7: Windrider lasts one extra minute.
Level 8: Cold Burst inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target.
Level 9: Control Weather lets you create dramatic weather effects for an additional minute after activating it. Wind Chariot can carry an additional creature (no additional level of Effort required).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (TRAVELS THROUGH TIME)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sensors on the head connecting to crystalline lenses over the eyes
Effect: When worn by someone with the Travels Through Time focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Anticipation lets you save the asset for a task in the second round after you use this ability.
Level 5: See History is eased.
Level 6: Temporal Acceleration lets you apply a level of Effort to add one minute to the accelerated duration, but the affected creature is hindered by an additional step for one hour after the effect ends. Time Loop eases your future self's action by an additional step.
Level 7: Temporal Dislocation gives you an asset on one task relating to something you saw while dislocated in time, which you must use within ten minutes of the ability ending.
Level 8: Time Doppelganger hinders your action or the doppelganger's action each round, but not both (50 percent chance of either, check each round).
Level 9: Call Through Time lets you call a specific creature up to level 4. Time Travel affects one additional creature (no additional level of Effort required).
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (WEARS A SHEEN OF ICE)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of insulated cloth and furs, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Wears a Sheen of Ice focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Ice Armor lets you create a thicker coat of ice, which adds +1 to your Armor (and +2 to your Armor against cold damage), but hinders all of your actions.
Level 5: Frost Touch adds +2 points of cold damage to the attack with your hands. You can add +2 points of cold damage to a Frost Touch attack with a weapon, but doing so ends this use of the ability.
Level 6: Freezing Touch hinders the target on the round after they are immobile. Ice Creation creates objects that last twice as long after you stop touching them.
Level 7: Resilient Ice Armor gives you +1 Armor against Intellect damage.
Level 8: Cold Burst inflicts +1 point of damage against one affected target.
Level 9: Ice Storm is eased. Winter Gauntlets hinders targets who are frozen in place.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

Touches the Sky, page 101

Wears a Sheen of Ice, page 87

Travels Through Time, page 19

Wields Power With Precision, page 89

Wields Two Weapons at Once, page 90

Free level of Effort, page 103

FOCUSING SUIT (WIELDS POWER WITH PRECISION)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with sensors on the head, chest, and hands

Effect: When worn by someone with the Wields Power With Precision focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Genius increases your Intellect Pool by +2 points.

Level 5: Training and Precision gives you a free level of Effort on one esotery when you apply at least one level of Effort on using that esotery (the specific esotery is built into the suit and chosen by the GM).

Level 6: Enhanced Esoteries lets your long-distance esoteries work out to very long range, but the task is hindered if the target is more than a long distance away. Versatile Mind lets you use your Intellect Pool in place of your Might Pool for Might defense rolls, but the task is hindered.

Level 7: Greater Repertoire also gives you an additional esotery of second tier or lower (the specific esotery is built into the suit and chosen by the GM).

Level 8: Greater Training gives you a free level of Effort on one esotery when you apply at least one level of Effort on using that esotery (the specific esotery is built into the suit and chosen by the GM).

Level 9: Enhanced Esoteries lets your touch-range esoteries work out to short range, but the task is hindered if the target is more than an immediate distance away. Supra-Genius increases your Intellect Pool by +5 points.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (WIELDS TWO WEAPONS AT ONCE)

Level: 1d6 + 3

Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, reinforced at the hands and with energy channels along the arms

Effect: When worn by someone with the Wields Two Weapons at Once focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:

Level 4: Dual Light Wield adds +1 point of damage to your attacks with one of the two weapons you attack with on your turn (choose before you make the attack rolls).

Level 5: Double Strike gives you a free level of Effort on the attack roll when you apply at least one level of Effort on it.

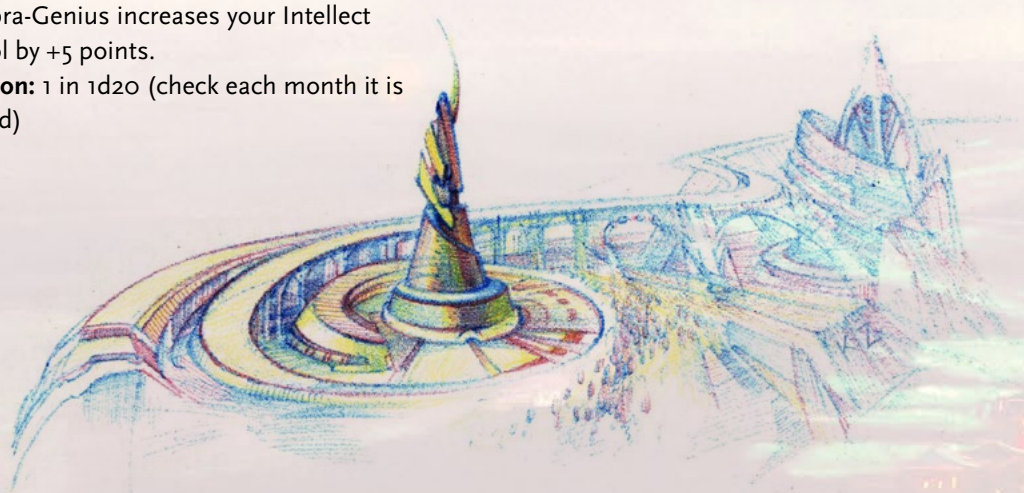
Level 6: Dual Medium Wield adds +1 point of damage to your attacks with one of the two weapons you attack with on your turn (choose before you make the attack rolls). Precise Cut adds +1 point of damage when you hit with both of your weapons in the same attack action.

Level 7: Dual Defense gives you a free level of Effort on your Speed defense roll when you apply at least one level of Effort on it.

Level 8: Dual Distraction can be used on two opponents in each round that you attack.

Level 9: Disarming Attack is eased. Whirling Dervish adds +1 damage to three of your attacks in that round (choose before you make the attack rolls).

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)



FOCUSING SUIT (WIELDS WORDS LIKE WEAPONS)

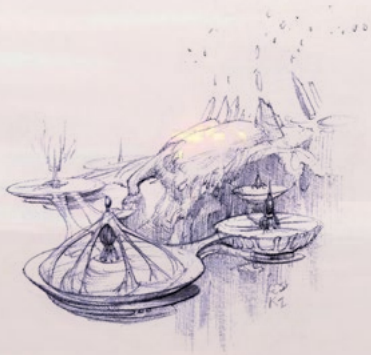
Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Wields Words Like Weapons focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Misdirect Blame can affect a second creature, but the attempt against both targets is hindered.
Level 5: Negotiate gives you an asset on the persuasion or deception task if you are able to speak for at least a full minute before the decision is made.
Level 6: Command allows you to maintain control of the creature or creatures as long as you use your action at least every other round to give it a command. Keen Mind increases your Intellect Pool by +2.
Level 7: Interruption lasts for a second round, during which the target is hindered.
Level 8: Community Negotiator increases your Intellect Pool by +2.
Level 9: Break Their Mind inflicts +2 points of damage. Explains the Ineffable lets you affect allies who have been away from you for up to 56 hours.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (WORKS THE BACK ALLEYS)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of dark cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body, with subtle urban blending patterns
Effect: When worn by someone with the Works the Back Alleys focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Thief gives you a free level of Effort on all sneaking tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.
Level 5: Underworld Contacts eases positive social interactions with your underworld contacts.
Level 6: Pull a Fast One lets you reroll one of the tasks it gives you an asset on, and you take the better of the two results, but the second roll is hindered. Guild Training lets your long-distance type abilities work out to very long range, but the task is hindered if the target is more than a long distance away.
Level 7: Master Thief gives you a free level of Effort on its tasks when you apply at least one level of Effort on them.
Level 8: Dirty Fighter hinders your target by two steps on the first round after you use it.
Level 9: Alley Rat is eased. All-Out Con also adds an asset to the task.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)

FOCUSING SUIT (WORKS MIRACLES)

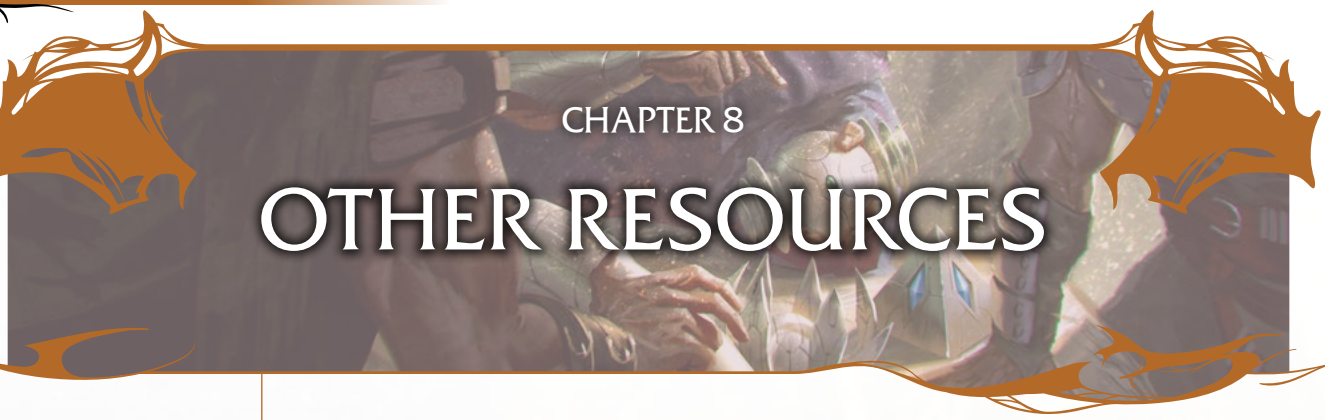
Level: 1d6 + 3
Form: Full suit of cloth and synth, covering most of the wearer's body
Effect: When worn by someone with the Works Miracles focus, this suit augments the following abilities, based on the artifact's level:
Level 4: Healing Touch restores +2 points.
Level 5: Alleviate is eased.
Level 6: Font of Healing restores +2 points per person. Miraculous Health is eased.
Level 7: Inspiration works out to long range, but the creature's immediate extra action is hindered.
Level 8: Undo gives an asset to the creature if it attempts the same action that was just undone.
Level 9: Greater Healing Touch works out to short range, but you restore only one of the creature's pools. Restore Life can restore to life a creature of level 4 as the ability's base level.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check each month it is used)



Wields Words Like Weapons, page 103

Works Miracles, page 92

Works the Back Alleys, page 90



CHAPTER 8

OTHER RESOURCES

Aeon Priests study the numenera so they can increase their understanding and work to improve the welfare of humanity in the Ninth World. Their knowledge isn't just theoretical, it's practical: they want to know how to build things that make lives better and shape the world so that people can be safe and prosperous. From the perspective of the campaign narrative, the main way that they do this is putting numenera in the hands of PCs in the form of cyphers, artifacts, and so on. This chapter talks about various resources the Aeon Priests can offer PCs and their role in the game, with an eye toward keeping the numenera used by the Order of Truth fresh and interesting in the minds of the GM and players.

THEORETICALLY, THEY HAVE ANYTHING

Although chapters 6 and 7 of this book present new cyphers and artifacts that are likely to be found in the hands of Aeon Priests, those are just supplements to all of the other such items in the game, and any numenera item from any book could theoretically be something the Order of Truth has. What items are present in each Numenera campaign and who has them are up to the GM. Even a numenera device found in an adventure that takes place on a satellite orbiting the sun could instead (or additionally) be something found or created by the Aeon Priests in Qi or any other semblage or clave—its supposed origin in that remote location might just be one instance of a particular kind of prior-world technology left behind in multiple areas. In short, the GM shouldn't let the subject matter of a book limit what happens in their campaign, and if anyone on Earth is likely to have something, it's a group of Aeon Priests.

Rejuvenator, page 286

Chiurgeon sphere, page 294

Skill boost, page 286

Skill bud, page 301

List of Artifact Quirks, page 290

CYPHERS

Cyphers are a cheap, expendable commodity that the Aeon Priests use as tools, experiments, bribes, gifts, and rewards. A working cypher might be a stepping stone toward creating a permanent item with a similar effect, such as a rejuvenator being the first step toward making a chiurgeon sphere or the chemicals in a skill boost cypher being improved into a skill bud artifact. If a clave or semblage has a large supply (a relative term) of one kind of cypher, that probably means they're doing research on that kind of numenera and how to improve it, or that their work has paid off and they have perfected a plan for creating that kind of item.

From a GM's perspective, cyphers from an Aeon Priest should be effective and useful, but perhaps with a small drawback (representing more research needed to work out the problems in the design). The List of Artifact Quirks is an excellent source of cypher drawbacks—any time the Aeon Priests hand out experimental cyphers, especially if they give more than one of a particular kind, roll on that table just to make it interesting. When the PCs later return to those Aeon Priests, have the priests ask them how the items

worked and whether the drawbacks caused any problems; this reinforces the idea that although the Order of Truth is very knowledgeable about the numenera, they are still only scratching the surface of how it works. The PCs should get used to the role of "field testers" for these items, but once these tests are completed, it's an appropriate reward to give the PCs a fully functional version of that cypher that lacks drawbacks or quirks.

From a player's perspective, cyphers should be treated as experimental abilities that they should try to use in creative ways. The Aeon Priests expect the PCs to think up new and weird ways the items can be useful, just as humans have been doing for generations, and just as curious humans did before "Aeon Priest" was a title and profession. Ingenuity has allowed humans to use inexplicable pieces of the numenera in ways they weren't meant to be used but are nonetheless effective, so continuing this experimentation with items from the Order of Truth (whether these items are scavenged from ruins or built from scratch out of iotum) is continuing a very human legacy.

ARTIFACTS

In the context of resources available from the Order of Truth, artifacts are essentially just cyphers that can be used multiple times before being consumed. This edges them closer to working like type or focus abilities, which the character can use for the rest of the campaign.

This long-term utility of artifacts allows the GM to "preview" some kinds of abilities without making them a permanent addition to a character and having to deal with the consequences of that ability for the rest of the campaign. Artifacts can also be used to temporarily compensate for a weakness or missing ability in a group of PCs. For example, if PCs exploring a multidimensional ruin are having difficulty defeating pandimensional threats like abykoses, allowing them to find a multidimensional blade might be the way to finish that adventure without causing too much player frustration.

Artifacts likewise allow a player to preview an ability and decide if they want to choose a type or focus ability that relies on that artifact or even duplicates its functions. For example, if a Nano PC finds a chameleon cloak (which eases stealth tasks by two steps), the player has time to decide whether to keep the cloak and enjoy its stealth bonus, learn an esotery like Invisibility so they no longer need the cloak (perhaps giving it to another clumsy PC), or do neither because sneaking around isn't that important to the character.

Chameleon cloak, page 293

Invisibility, page 42

The key is to treat the Aeon Priests like the intelligent, resourceful people they are. Assuming that the PCs are upfront about their abilities (whether they do this in character, in a side discussion, or just by confirming some of the stories the priests have heard about them), the Aeon Priests should be able to salvage, cobble, or craft useful artifacts for the characters. Even if the PCs are humble or secretive about what they can do, the priests can use their eyes, abilities like Scan, and their extensive knowledge of mutations and nanobots to make a decent guess about what sort of item would be useful to a particular character, such as a ranged weapon for a PC carrying a very nice bow or a force field for someone who looks weak and scrawny.

Scan, page 40

Many of these last-minute, just-happened-to-have-one artifacts are probably prototypes that were assembled quickly using a few shortcuts. Depending on the circumstances, the item might have more than one artifact quirk or altered parameters (such as a lower than normal range for a weapon of its type). The item might also have a much higher depletion rate than normal, perhaps because the power pack is half empty, the wiring used to connect it isn't as good as it should be, or the materials to make the casing are especially fragile. Some very delicate items or those using tiny amounts of rare materials might have a depletion of "automatic"—meaning the PCs only have one shot at using the artifact for its intended purpose. Again, the Aeon Priests should be aware of this and (assuming they're voluntarily helping the PCs) should be upfront about these

Abykos, page 224

Multidimensional blade, page 298



limitations. It's one thing to give a PC a shield against radiation, but another if you know it will last for only a couple of minutes, especially if the Aeon Priests are supposed to be on the PCs' side and want them to succeed at the task.

Hover frame, page 175

VEHICLES

Vehicles occupy a fun and unique space between artifacts and installations. In terms of game mechanics, they're reusable items like artifacts, but they operate on a larger scale like installations. In terms of the setting, they tend to have a more narrative role like an installation (in that they're mainly used to move the story from one location to another), but like artifacts, they can have interesting abilities that let the PCs overcome obstacles such as distance, dangerous terrain, heavy cargo, dimensional boundaries, or a powerful enemy force.

Fiery ascender, page 173

Because of their size, numenera vehicles also give the GM lots of room for really creative customization in terms of appearance—like bonded and fashioned artifacts, but on a wilder scale. Humans tend to anthropomorphize their vehicles, especially ones they've built or restored, and a group of Aeon Priests with a prototype vehicle are quite likely to give it an inspirational name and a striking paint job. A hover frame is a useful vehicle, but it's more interesting and memorable for the players if the one they're using is painted with bright blue lightning bolts, has a glowing symbol of the Order of Truth on the front end, and has a comfortable leather chair for the pilot. A plain cylindrical fiery ascender is functional, but it's more exciting to see one launch into space if the priests have painted flames on the base, added moons and comets along its length, and covered the outside of the passenger pod with eyes.

Bonded and fashioned items, page 39

Once the first tests are done and the priests know a vehicle won't explode if started, they are probably going to modify its appearance to suit their own aesthetics and areas of study. They may be adapting technology from a nonhuman species, but they're making a vehicle for humans and

want to put a uniquely human stamp on it. The vehicle plans in *Numenera Destiny* are meant to be generic examples of what that kind of vehicle might look like, but they certainly don't all look like that, and (depending on what resources the builders have) each probably has a unique appearance. A jet frame is a fine vehicle, but it's even better if it is painted with orange and red flames, has a toothy fish motif, and is called "Red Racer." A snowskimmer is handy for travel in icy lands, but it would be ten times better if it were painted white, had a ravage bear sculpted on the front, and was named "Winter's Growl." These elements make a vehicle more than just an object—they make it like a character who is part of the story being told as the campaign unfolds.

In some cases, a vehicle might be too complex for the PCs to use on their own, requiring that a skilled pilot accompany them on the adventure. Or the Aeon Priests might not fully trust the PCs with the valuable and expensive vehicle, so they send one of their own to make sure it comes home in one piece. Sometimes this pilot or chaperone is a nervous Aeon Priest with only a few days' worth of practice driving the experimental vehicle around the clave, but it gives a reason for an NPC to be present in the story. Having the NPC along for the adventure allows the GM to have in-character dialogue with the players, use exposition to give more information about local sights, and make the trip a more memorable part of the campaign. If the priest NPC isn't the sort of person who would explore a dangerous ruin, they can stay outside and be ready to leave if the PCs come running out, get captured and give the PCs another challenge in the form of a rescue, or be incapacitated or killed and force the PCs to sloppily drive the vehicle back themselves. GM intrusions aren't always things that directly affect the characters; they can happen to important NPCs and impact the PCs indirectly.

INSTALLATIONS

The main limiting factor for installations is that they are fixed in place—once built, they can't be moved. Therefore, PCs asking to borrow or trade for an installation controlled by Aeon Priests are probably asking for permission to use the installation one or more times.

If the installation is controlled by the priests and it never depletes or has a low probability of depletion per use, they probably are willing to allow their PC friends or allies to use it. A small donation or token of thanks, such as a cypher or two, is always appreciated, as the priests can make use of these goods for their other work or trade them for needed resources. If the installation depletes, the priests can ask the PCs to provide materials to repair it or perform some other task that benefits the semblage or the community, such as exploring a ruin, dealing with a dangerous beast, or negotiating with an NPC they haven't been able to come to terms with.

The higher the chance of depletion, the more the priests will expect an upfront fee as compensation for using the installation. For machines prone to depletion failure, the priests may have a set price for each use and a penalty for depletion, as they've had to repair or rebuild the item many times and know exactly what materials are needed. For high-level, high-depletion installations, the use price might be a powerful cypher, and the depletion penalty might be an artifact, perhaps with abilities similar to the installation, which allows the priests to temporarily compensate for the loss of the installation.

Of course, all of the above assumes that the PCs are on good standing with the semblage or clave that has the installation they want to use. A suspicious group of Aeon Priests would probably double the fees when dealing with unknown PCs, and would allow access only if they felt it somehow promoted the ideals of the Order of Truth. For example, a group of shady-looking, sick PCs who show up with a person bearing the mark of the Convergence probably won't be given permission to use the semblage's enhanced automender to cure whatever

Vehicle plans, page 170

Jet frame, page 175

Snowskimmer, page 177

The Convergence, page 216

Enhanced automender, page 154

disease is afflicting them, no matter how much they're willing to pay.

As with artifacts, the GM should keep in mind that an installation's stats are meant to describe a typical example of that sort of installation, and they are free to alter those stats if it suits the campaign. For example, if the PCs have a sick companion and travel to a semblage that's known to have an enhanced automender, the priests might know that the installation is so rickety and patched together that it has only one use left (its depletion is "automatic"). In exchange for allowing the PCs to cure their friend, the priests might require the explorers to search a nearby ruin and bring back a rare kind of iotum—perhaps something to extend the functionality of the automender a bit longer, or perhaps for an entirely different project the priests are working on.

An alternative perspective is an adventure where the Aeon Priests want the PCs to finish building or repairing an existing installation, usually one in a dangerous location. Assuming that a few extra uses of the installation aren't likely to deplete it, the priests probably don't care if the PCs make use of it for their own benefit.

For example, if there is a failing mechanized turret watching over a mountain pass that keeps a horde of abhumans from swarming into a village, the priests might send the PCs there with the necessary parts to make the repairs, requiring stealth and caution so the abhumans don't realize that the turret is temporarily nonfunctional while the PCs are working on it. The maintenance might be as easy as plugging in replacement iotum or as complicated as having to make crafting subtasks. If the PCs make use of the turret by leading a dangerous creature into its field of fire, the Aeon Priests wouldn't object to that (and it's actually a good test to make sure the installation is working properly).

In all other respects, an installation is basically like an artifact or vehicle that can't move from where it is built. Any advice presented in the artifact and vehicle sections of this chapter applies to installations as well.

In the Ninth World, "normal" birds, cats, and similar creatures aren't like anything found in the 21st century, but we use contemporary words for animals based on familiar roles and physiology. People one billion years in the future have weird animals as pets, like hand-sized eels that swim through the air, slow-moving crystalline blobs that sing soothing tunes, tiny automatons programmed to listen and respond with affection, and so on.

Mechanized turret, page 168

PETS

Studying, research, and experimenting with the numenera can be very lonely work. Like most people, Aeon Priests need time alone (away from other people) to think, recharge their mental energy, and play. Small animals help take care of this need. Pets listen without judgment, offer companionship and affection, and keep their human friends healthier. It is not uncommon for an Aeon Priest's living quarters to be the home of a bird, cat, rodent, tank of fish, snake, or a more exotic animal like a large beetle or spider. In a walled semblage or other facility with a secure fence, these pets—and larger domesticated animals such as seskii—might be seen eating, playing, and sleeping. People in town may come to recognize Aeon Priests as much by their pet companions as by their cowled robes, and they might direct strangers wanting to speak to an Aeon Priest to "look for someone with an orange bird on their shoulder," so ubiquitous is this companionship. An Aeon Priest who develops a close friendship with or appreciation for a PC might give that character a pet as a gift—perhaps a littermate or offspring of one the priest has.

Although not every aspect of a character has to play into the larger campaign narrative, having pets that were given as gifts can create positive and negative opportunities later. A pet might make a noise right before burglars break into a character's home or a predator enters a campsite. A sick pet might require a special medicine. An unusual pet might be seen as a good or bad omen by a superstitious influential NPC, or it might have some religious significance that the PCs aren't aware of. A pet might be the natural predator of a pest the PCs encounter (such as a bird pet that eats the parasitic worms trying to bore their way into a PC's skin), or its scent might attract the attention of a nearby creature that would love to make it a quick snack. Its ancestors may have been engineered to maintain a particular kind of installation or iotum, or it may have a dormant trait to tear apart technology made by its ancient masters' enemies. Any real-world advantage or complication of having a pet could become a story seed in a Numenera campaign.

To randomly determine what kind of pet an Aeon Priest has, roll once or twice on the Pet Type and Pet Quirk tables. Combine the features determined by the results of the rolls into an interesting local creature. For example, if the roll results are "fish," "spider," and "smoking," the pet might have a fishlike body with multiple hairy legs and float around in a bubble of smoke, or it might be a spiderlike creature with fish fins that shoots out puffs of smoke instead of webs. If the results seem redundant, double down or reverse the results; if the rolls are "bird" and "winged," give it four wings, and if they are "worm" and "eyeless," give it little eyes all over its body. A pet might have adaptations that allow it to be carried about by its guardian (such as a fish that can levitate and breathe air, or create a firm bubble of water around itself); otherwise, it might stay in a safe environment in the priest's living quarters (like an aquarium).

PET TYPE TABLE

d100	Pet Type
01–02	Ant
03–05	Bee
06–08	Beetle
09–14	Bird
15–21	Canine
22–24	Centipede
25–27	Crab
28	Energy being
29–35	Feline
36–38	Ferret
39–41	Fish
42–44	Frog
45–46	Fungus
47–49	Laak
50–54	Lizard
55	Lump
56–58	Mantis
59–60	Octopus
61–63	Pig
64–65	Plant
66–67	Primate
68–69	Rabbit
70–71	Roach
72–76	Rodent
77–80	Seskii
81	Shanu
82	Slime
83–84	Snail
85–89	Snake
90–92	Spider
93	Thuman
94–96	Toad
97–98	Turtle
99–00	Worm

AND STILL MORE

Aeon Priests have access to troves of valuable things that aren't functional numenera. Books on various topics, documents that need to be translated, half-finished plans, cures and advice for dealing with afflictions and harmful mutations, and training are all things that PCs might seek from the Order of Truth. If the characters are looking for an object or an answer, talking to an Aeon Priest is often the place to go to get what they want—or the starting point of a journey that will take them to what they want.

PET QUIRK TABLE

d100	Pet Quirk
01–06	Color-changing
07–08	Cybernetic
09–13	Empathic
14–16	Eyeless
17–24	Feathered
25–28	Flaming
29–36	Furry
37–40	Glowing
41–44	Levitating
45–48	Mechanical
49–50	Phasing
51–57	Scaly
58–60	Smoking
61–65	Sound-imitating
66–68	Sparking
69–73	Sparkling
74–76	Symbiotic
77–82	Toothy
83–86	Transparent
87–94	Vivid
95–00	Winged

If one of the pet type roll results is a specific type of creature such as a seskii or thuman, you probably don't need to roll another pet type unless you think the priest might have altered their pet. For all random pets, if a combination doesn't make sense, ignore it or roll again.

Seskii, page 252

Thuman, page 256

Shanu are tiny monkey-like creatures that can telepathically enhance the actions of their guardian.

Shanu: *level 2; health 8; inflicts 1 point of damage with bite; regenerate 1 health per hour; for more details, see* The Ninth World Bestiary, *page 113*

Thuman, page 256

High Father Calaval's personal journal was later transcribed and annotated by his grandniece, Doroa of the Silent Song.

THUMANS

A thuman is a large hound-like creature with an almost-human face. Loyal to its master, gentle except when its master is threatened, a thuman is a trusted companion and treated more like a friend, ally, or member of the family than a pet.

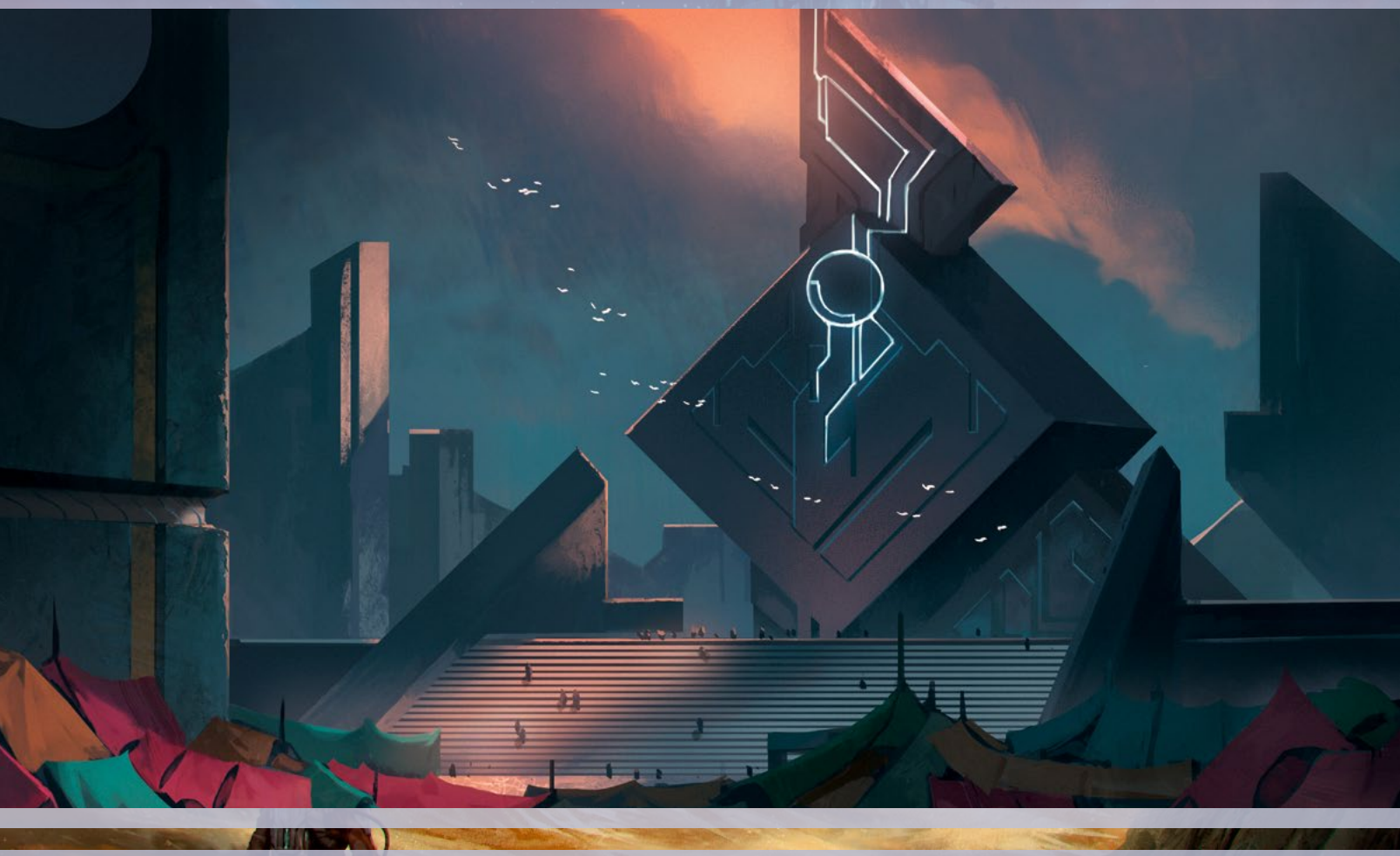
Aeon Priests have connections to thumans dating back hundreds of years. Even Calaval himself had a thuman companion named Feddik, whose tragic end was described in Calaval's personal journal. Although individual members of the Order of Truth aren't gifted with any special insight about these intelligent creatures, there is something about thumans that draws Aeon Priests. Children of Aeon Priests hear tales of Calaval and his thuman and dream of having one of their own, and often the first thuman an Aeon Priest's family gets is named Feddik, after the one in the stories.

Thuman breeders consult with Aeon Priests about nutrition, training, and veterinary care. In larger settlements, the breeder may be part of the semblage or clave, their family business integrating more closely with the order over time.

Thumans of all ages can make close connections with people, but the bonding is easiest and fastest if the creature is a pup when it meets its intended guardian. Thumans mourn when their masters die, and some with especially close bonds have been known to lose their will to live afterward. Fortunately, most are able to grieve for a time and then find comfort with their master's family or a close friend of the master. In many cities, it is customary to bring a "houseless" thuman—one whose master is dead and who has no suitable person to bond with—to a breeder so the creature can spend its remaining years among others of its kind and with people who know how to care for its specific needs.



PART 3:
INFRASTRUCTURE



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CHAPTER 9

INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE ORDER

Long-term tasks, page 324

The Order of Truth is a religion, philosophy, career, political organization, and academic think tank. Any one of those reasons is enough to draw allies and create enemies, and the order has its share of both. From the most novice Aeon Priest to the most cynical and worldly senior advisor of the Amber Pope, the connections between people drive the machine of the order forward, dragging all of humanity out of barbarism and toward a safer and smarter civilization. This section addresses various aspects of the order and how these things relate to the PCs and a Numenera campaign.

IDEOLOGY

Chapter 10 discusses the Order of Truth as a religion—which is how many people in the Steadfast treat it—and as a philosophy of studying and understanding based on concepts called the four pillars: skepticism, observation, theory, and experimentation. It also discusses each of the pillars, the driving need to create based on what they've learned, the importance of honest research and evaluation, dealing with those who reject the order's principles, and the role of PCs in the order's goals.

HIERARCHY AND MEMBERSHIP

Chapter 11 gives an overview of the leadership structure for the order from individual groups of Aeon Priests, to the bishops who hold more clout within the organization, to the archbishops who oversee activity in one of the nine kingdoms or a vague area outside the Steadfast, to the Amber Pope. It also explains the years-long process for a talented youth to join the order (as well as ways for exceptional PCs to shortcut that process), benefits and rewards for those who officially become part of the order, and long-term tasks available to members.

ARCHBISHOPS OF THE ORDER

Chapter 12 takes a high-level look at the thirteen archbishops of the Order of Truth. In addition to their level, history, abilities, and physical description, the chapter addresses current problems each archbishop is dealing with—opportunities for the PCs to make a change in the world.

SPLINTER AND HERETICAL GROUPS

Chapter 13 describes several splinter groups (allied with the order but having a different intent or purpose) and heretical organizations (skewed from or opposed to the order), presented like those in *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny*.

SAMPLE SEMBLAGES

Chapter 14 presents four semblages that can be dropped into any campaign in almost any community (or they can be used as claves with no changes needed). Each write-up covers the specific kind of numenera researched there, details on the leaders and significant members, specific benefits and resources available to anyone allying with the group, and several plot hooks.

CHAPTER 10

IDEOLOGY

Most people in the Ninth World view the Order of Truth as a religion—a worldview that reveres the numenera and all of the supernatural things it can do. But religion is such a broad term, encompassing many concepts that are very different from how the order operates and what its followers actually think. A tribe of margr worshipping an ancient intelligent machine is technically a religion, as is Wyrfall's devotion to divine water spirits, and the bloody faith of Lhauric, but they have little in common with the Order of Truth. The order is an organization that has the trappings of a religion and is often presented as a religion to outsiders, but is actually a method of understanding how the universe works, grounded in observation and evidence rather than faith.

THE ORDER AS A RELIGION

The Order of Truth, with its quasi-religious veneration of the past and the understanding its inhabitants had of the forces of the universe, is likely the most widespread religious organization in the Ninth World. Informally, the members of the Order of Truth have been called Aeon Priests for hundreds of years, mainly because what they study is so beyond the understanding of a typical farmer or merchant that it may as well be supernatural, and the supernatural is the purview of priests and sorcerers. This gave a slight advantage to the early minds who tried to understand and master the numenera, and those who accepted this moniker found acceptance from villagers who believed their knowledge would help improve their lives.

When Calaval organized the scattered groups of Aeon Priests into the Order of Truth, he continued to use this religious terminology (even though he was not a religious person), and it is now ingrained in the organization.

Most people outside the order treat it like a religion. They are not members of the order, but rather "adherents"—in an actual religion, they would be considered lay members of the faith, respectful toward and believing in its tenets, but not part of the organization's hierarchy. In their eyes, the order is focused on worshipping the past and the ancients who created the fantastic devices and strange discoveries that fill the Ninth World. And over the last century or so, the order has done little to discourage this idea. People who join the group may keep this religious perspective for years or decades, although those whose work involves researching and experimenting with the numenera are more likely to set aside their faith-based mindset and view the order as a purely nonreligious organization.

Under the current Amber Pope, Durranet VI, the Aeon Priests have discovered that the people of the Steadfast are more likely to respect, admire, and obey the Order of Truth if they think of it as a religion. An angry mob might be willing to turn on a group of strange Aeon Priests, but they are much less likely to do so if they believe the priests are backed by a supernatural entity as well as the numenera. Likewise, a semblage or clave is more likely to get support from a community if the local villagers believe the Aeon Priests there are part of a religious directive to help people rather than acting out of altruism.

In larger cities, the order has begun

Religion, page 132

Wyrfall, page 154

Lhauric, page 192

Whether the PCs treat the Order of Truth like a religion or a secular organization has no impact on their relationship with the group.

Durranet VI, page 187



holding quasi-religious services to encourage this idea. They ritualize their teachings so people come to believe that respecting and understanding the numenera is the key to advancing humanity into the future. They praise the past and those who lived in it (meaning those who have studied and used the numenera, as well as the prior civilizations that created it and left it behind for modern people to discover) for their intelligence and understanding. The Catechism of Lore has gained popularity among these religious ceremonies, even though it originated within the order as a completely secular quotation.

Other parts of this book may refer to the Order of Truth as a religion, even though it isn't actually one. For readers of this book and people in the Ninth World, the difference is almost irrelevant.

The Amber Papacy is structured like a priesthood and calls its members "priests." Those outside the order have little insight about the various rankings within the group, and most people are content to think of it as just having "regular" priests and the Amber Pope, and anything more precise than that isn't worth dwelling on. In some communities, it is becoming common to ask an Aeon Priest for a blessing, and

Hierarchy, page 100

THE CATECHISM OF LORE

All glory to the originators of truth and understanding.

Praise to the innovators of steel and synth.

Praise to the shapers of flesh, of bone, and of mind.

Glory to those who re-sculpted the sustaining earth and the life-giving sun.

Praise to the senders of signals, who even now whisper into machine ears and give life to the inanimate.

Praise to those who traveled to the stars, and the realms beyond the stars.

All glory to the originators of truth and understanding.

priests who agree to do so are careful not to promise anything, although they may accompany the "blessing" with a cosmetic display of the numenera (such as a glow or warm sensation) to let the supplicant know their request is taken seriously.

THE ORDER AS A PHILOSOPHY

The Order of Truth is a method of understanding the universe and how things work. Its members venerate intellect, understanding, and the wonders that arise from such things: science, technology, and the numenera. There are four key pillars of this philosophy: skepticism (especially toward putative knowledge and the supernatural), observation of data, crafting theories, and experimentation, all of which lead to a better understanding of the truth. Although presented as a series of steps, the four pillars are a group of principles the order believes in. Not all of the steps are required for every pursuit, nor do they have to be performed in a specific sequence every time.

SKEPTICISM

Students of the numenera are expected to maintain a healthy level of skepticism about any piece of information, particularly if it hasn't been verified by the Order of Truth, and especially so about claims that rely on supernatural explanations. If a villager says that a rock at the center of the village heals people who touch it, an Aeon Priest doesn't just accept that news as fact. If a villager claims that a plague was caused by the local goddess who is upset about inferior offerings left at her shrine, an Aeon Priest expects more evidence to support this connection.

In order to believe something, an Aeon Priest must first seek empirical evidence—that which can be experienced by the senses. Using the examples of a healing stone in the village and an offended plague-causing goddess, they would look for proof of injuries that were cured by the stone, find other examples of bad things happening after items were left at the shrine, and so on. Faith-based or anecdotal evidence is insufficient or at least very suspect.

Of course, Aeon Priests aren't automatons driven by pure logic, and this level of skepticism isn't applied to unimportant or everyday things that don't need to be doubted with such scrutiny. An Aeon Priest doesn't get dressed in the morning skeptical of whether their pants are actually made of cloth, eat breakfast while being skeptical that their food is actually nutritious, or go about their daily tasks skeptical of whether the people they see today are the same people they saw the day before. Such existentialist questions are for philosophers, and although in some cases this level of skepticism has led to advancements in understanding (such as discovering that a bad-tasting breakfast fruit eaten in Qi to ward off headaches actually has no medicinal properties), most Aeon Priests focus their skepticism on their work and the numenera, and allow themselves a normal life of clothing, food, and interpersonal relationships.

Because most people of the Ninth World don't understand the numenera and treat it as a catch-all for anything they don't understand, a large portion of an Aeon Priest's skepticism is directed at ignorant claims of the numenera being responsible for just about anything. Of course, because of the legacy of technology left behind by prior civilizations, in many cases the reason why something happens is actually due to the numenera, but that answer isn't sufficient for an Aeon Priest—it's just the start of a line of study that leads to observation and experimentation.

For example, a farmer might wonder why it rains for exactly four minutes at one hour after sundown in their village. The answer might be the numenera, specifically that there is a weather-controlling device buried under the village, and that's enough of an answer as far as the farmer is concerned. But the local Aeon Priest who discovers this device wants to learn how it works, if it can be adjusted to provide more rain when needed, and perhaps if it can be modified to repel unwanted weather conditions.

The four pillars are intentionally similar to the precepts of the modern scientific method, although the existence of numenera incomprehensible to human minds makes it difficult or impossible to rigorously apply the pillars the way modern scientists do.

This skepticism is normal for PCs looking for a numenera explanation for the weird phenomena they encounter.

"Day 37, sunrise. Active holographic symbols on the device: snake, star, left-facing semicircle. Three white lights. A loud chime instead of the normal buzzing noise. (Same as noise on day 33.) Spider test subject survived for approximately one minute."

—Red Tooth Artifact Journal, Thelem of Qi

Gaians, page 134

Recorder headband, page 300

These types of observations and notes are the sorts of things that PCs do when using the understanding numenera skill to figure out how to use an unfamiliar device, just faster and usually under more dangerous conditions.

Although Aeon Priests are essentially the scientists of the Ninth World, this book uses the common (non-scientific) definition of "theory," which is a proposed explanation for a phenomenon. A modern-day scientist would call that proposal a "hypothesis," and only use "theory" or "scientific theory" to mean an explanation that has been thoroughly tested enough to be considered verified and accurate, such as cell theory, gravitation, and evolution.

The Aeon Priests are careful to recognize and reject purely supernatural claims that can't be verified by evidence. For example, the Gaians who live north of the Steadfast believe that a limitless number of supernatural spirits inhabit humans, creatures, objects, locations, and even concepts. The Order of Truth knows that many reports of ghosts or spirits are actually caused by nanotechnology or ultraterrestrials, but they have not found any evidence to support the Gaian claim that there are spirits in *everything*, or that this general belief can be supported by the influence of nanites and extradimensional beings everywhere, so the order rejects this concept as ridiculous. Many beliefs like this exist, and most of them are completely harmless, but this sort of primitive thinking often leads to taboos and odd cultural restrictions that end up making life more difficult for people.

OBSERVATION

Evidence might be something an Aeon Priest can directly observe, such as watching a wound close and heal at incredible speed, or watching a shrine produce a black mist that infects anyone it touches with pus-filled boils. Depending on the nature of the evidence, the priest might require special tools or instruments to perceive it, such as a telescope to see the green stripe appear or disappear on the moon, a precise set of scales to measure how much weight a material gains or loses in a chemical reaction, or a cypher or artifact that detects weak points in interdimensional barriers, but these are still things the priest can verify using their own (augmented) senses.

The Order of Truth teaches that human memory is fallible, and human perceptions can be skewed or unreliable (especially if stressed or fatigued). This means that recording one's observations is of critical importance, especially as many experiments need to be performed over and over again to test various outcomes, and expecting one person to memorize hundreds or thousands of results is a recipe for bad data. Furthermore, many priests work as part of a team, and they all expect to share their information with the rest of the order, so writing it down as it is observed is essential to having accurate and verifiable results. An Aeon Priest's journal might be pages and pages of data written in a way (rows, columns, and symbols) to make it easier to compare information to find anomalous results. Devices such as a recorder headband can be invaluable for storing results in a format that can be reviewed later, when the priest might discover additional details missed during the live event.

THEORY

Once an Aeon Priest has collected a sufficient amount of data, they will come up with a theory—a proposed explanation for their observations. That theory might be as simple as "This is an electricity ray emitter" or as complex as "This installation alters the dimensional resonance of creatures and objects within it until they match one of six specific states, each of which corresponds to a nearby limited dimension, transporting the targets to that dimension for approximately seventeen minutes, after which the altered resonance reverts to its normal state and brings the targets back to this dimension."

The theory may or may not have additional notes explaining how the priest came to those conclusions—specific information about understanding or

HOW MUCH DO AEON PRIESTS KNOW?

The numenera encompasses a phenomenal range of technological achievements and understanding, everything from what modern humans know about science to the farthest reaches of superscience that would seem like magic to a 21st-century human. The typical person of the Ninth World lives a pseudo-medieval existence, but overall the Aeon Priests have a reasonable grasp of general science, with individual semblages and claves having more specialized and advanced knowledge relating to their research.

For example, a typical Aeon Priest has at least a basic understanding of algebra, human anatomy, biology, physics, chemistry, medicine, industrial arts, and astronomy (approximately that of a junior high or high school student, depending on their interests and talent). That same Aeon Priest has an advanced understanding of at least one specialized area of knowledge relating to who they studied with and what kind of work their semblage or clave performs (ranging from undergraduate college to grad school to a doctorate).

Another way to look at the "lower" end of the numenera (technology that 21st-century humans understand, use, and create) is to think of them as understanding numenera tasks with a difficulty of 1 through 3. With training, many of these tasks are routine for modern humans. Assets and applying Effort can make even a difficulty 3 task routine, allowing a skilled human to program a supercomputer, perform heart surgery, treat a genetic disease, or calculate the trajectory of an interplanetary spacecraft. But the higher difficulties are completely beyond the grasp of most people, and even the most brilliant human minds can only brush their fingers against the lowest-hanging fruits of the truly weird things that are typical numenera.

The intent of the setting is that players don't need to play dumb about common scientific concepts. Their characters know about germs, and that touching a sick person can get you sick. They know that Earth is a planet and there are other planets far away in the sky, with the stars even farther than that. They know that living creatures have genes, that we inherit our genes from our parents, and that they can be changed and modified for better or worse. They know that nanomachines exist, are so small as to be invisible, and are capable of accomplishing incredible things. An especially ignorant or backwater character might have superstitions or misconceptions about these concepts, but Aeon Priests know better and try to explain these ideas to outsiders in ways they can understand.



These kinds of notes are exactly the sort of thing that PCs do "in the field" once they've figured out how to use a particular piece of the numenera.

manipulating the object or phenomenon being observed, such as how to choose which limited dimension the installation sends things to. It may include diagrams or suggestions about how to make the item more intuitively useful, such as adding a synth handle, barrel, and trigger to the ray emitter so it looks more like a weapon and less like a sphere, or listing what set of symbols on the installation's control panel correspond to each of its six linked dimensions.

Of course, some of the numenera is so strange that humans can't hope to fully understand it. Instead, they observe what they are able to observe and at least try to determine if there is a pattern for their observations, even if they can't figure out a "why" for that pattern (perhaps due to events or effects outside their perception, such as a transmission from an orbiting satellite, chronal disruption, or interference from another dimension).

EXPERIMENTATION

What follows the theory is testing and more testing, potentially by other Aeon Priests or authorized delegates of the Order of Truth. Testing something simple like an artifact that is believed to be a ray emitter is a straightforward process where they check to see if the item functions as expected (effect, range, duration, power level, and so on) and note any contradictory data (such as if the item shoots fire instead of electricity 5 percent of the time) or odd side effects (hair loss, telepathic interference, and so on), but otherwise the experiments are just a matter of confirming what the priests already know.

A complex device or one with weird functions, like a dimension-shifting installation, requires a lot more testing, with many variable parameters. The priests try to see if the device works the same way on glass, stone, synth, wood, and metal. They do experiments to see if it affects living tissue differently than inorganic materials, if it affects a corpse the same way it affects a living body, and if it affects an intelligent



creature differently than it affects a beast. They may test the influence of sunlight and moonlight, areas of unusual gravity or magnetism, or in a vacuum. If they have the means to create an experiment to test some aspect of the device's abilities, they'll usually do so.

Regardless of what the experiments are, the goal is to see whether the theory is supported or contradicted by the results. If the testing contradicts the theory, they revise the theory to accommodate those results. If the testing supports the theory, they note that the theory has been rigorously tested and try to apply what they've learned to other questions about the numenera.

It is important to note that in many cases, the Aeon Priests don't know *how* the numenera functions—they just have a practical understanding of the *results*. They may not know if the ray emitter is drawing energy from another dimension and projecting it, or if the device contains a miniature nuclear fission reactor as its power source. All they know is that it shoots electricity when you press the right sequence of buttons. If they salvage it for parts, they may not know how the io within it was providing power to the artifact; they just know (from experience and testing) that io are a power source used in most numenera devices. Aeon Priests are tinkerers who take weird artifacts found by explorers and turn them into usable devices. They understand (or perhaps misunderstand) just enough of the old technologies to get the bits and pieces to perform handy tasks, but it's often more like cramming pieces of a puzzle into a desired shape than understanding what image the puzzle-maker wanted the completed puzzle to show.

CREATION

The goal of the Order of Truth isn't just to acquire knowledge by studying the numenera, but to apply that knowledge in ways that make life better for the people of the Ninth World. Aeon Priests don't hoard information—they use what they know to help others. Turning knowledge into practical application is the creation pillar of the Order of Truth.

There's a difference between studying something so you can understand it (observation) and trying to do something with the knowledge (creation). In game terms, it's the difference between being skilled in understanding numenera and skilled in crafting numenera. Aeon Priests include both types of people (and it's possible for one person to be skilled in both areas, of course), and they usually work together as a team toward a common goal.

LIMITATIONS TO SHARING KNOWLEDGE

What the Order of Truth can accomplish with its knowledge is limited by two main factors: communication delays and a shortage of resources. Settlements in the Ninth World are very isolated, and most people never go more than a few miles from home in their entire lifetime, so sharing news and information is slow and difficult. Aeon Priests work to overcome these obstacles, but even so, one semblage might not hear from another for a year or more, so an important discovery might take a decade to travel from one end of the Steadfast to the other. If applying that knowledge requires special technology or certain materials, it takes additional time for the priests to gather those materials and make it happen.

Fortunately, many significant advancements in knowledge only require changing human habits and not additional technology. For example, Aeon Priests know that sickness is caused by germs and viruses rather than "demons" or "bad air," and most communities practice reasonably good hygiene to prevent spreading illness. Likewise, they know that proper nutrition during pregnancy helps prevent birth defects, and they advise expectant mothers about local foods that can provide the necessary vitamins and minerals.

Io, page 111



For PCs, the physical objects made by Aeon Priests—cyphers, artifacts, and so on—are usually the most interesting things, but the priests can provide other valuable services like remedies, information about strange locations, and identifying weird objects.

Creation isn't always about building a physical thing; sometimes it is a way of communicating an important idea, and often it is a mix of both. To use a modern Earth example, malaria is a disease spread from infected mosquitos to humans and from infected humans to mosquitos. Combatting the spread of malaria involves educating people about how to avoid becoming infected by mosquitos (by using insect repellent on people, nets in homes, and insecticides where mosquitos spawn) and inventing medication to treat symptoms and eradicate infections. Together, these two methods (information and technology) reduce the incidence of malaria. For a semblage working on a cure for a malaria-like disease in the Ninth World, Aeon Priests would use the understanding numenera skill to find low-technology ways to prevent infection, the crafting numenera skill to create medicines to cure the afflicted (perhaps with assistance from the medicine skill), and the persuasion skill to convince people that these methods are the best way to reduce the spread of the disease.

DEDICATION TO TRUTH

The fact that it is called the Order of Truth shows how important actual truth—verified and indisputable fact—is to the Aeon Priests. The order is not a place for those who would exaggerate or falsify their results for personal glory or enrichment.

An Aeon Priest who spreads lies within the order about what they accomplished would eventually be discovered when other researchers could not duplicate their claims, and the fraudulent priest would be cast out of the group in shame. Even the threat of such an accusation is cause for concern, which leads many Aeon Priests to be incredibly cautious with their work, testing and retesting supposedly successful experiments for years before sharing what they've discovered with the rest of the order. It certainly doesn't help that most researchers are working with forces they don't fully understand and are subject to factors they might not be aware of, so they are always careful to share their available data and couch their success in context.

"It is far too common for people to study the numenera for the sake of power. We in the Order of Truth study it for the sake of understanding, and the intent of using it to preserve and advance civilization. It is the noblest of goals, and our benign actions wear down the edges of barbarism like waves polishing pebbles on the shores of history."

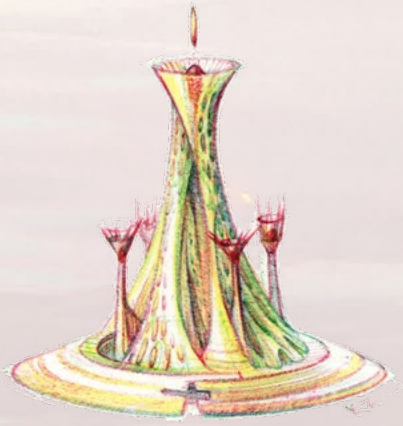
—Kastaru of Shallamas

The Order of Truth has a reputation to uphold: that their goal is to achieve a better understanding of the numenera and make use of that knowledge in ways that work. Therefore, they are always on the lookout for those who claim to be Aeon Priests (either in name or style of clothing) and peddle false cures or miracles. However, this is more about protecting the generally favorable impression of Aeon Priests as reliable students of the numenera than it is about protecting customers from swindlers. They'd stop a false Aeon Priest from selling pills that supposedly make you stronger (but actually do nothing), but they probably wouldn't do a thing if that same person didn't claim any connection to the order.

WHAT PLAYER CHARACTERS DO

Most of the day-to-day work by Aeon Priests is slow, tedious, and boring, and can take months or years to produce any interesting or useful results. Fortunately, those things are what NPCs do. The PCs get asked to help with the exciting things, usually as part of the observation and experimentation stages. The following are a few examples of ways Aeon Priests might ask PCs to get involved in their research, relying on the characters' special skills and resilience to obtain results that might be difficult to test or verify in the safety of a semblage.

- Wear an experimental piece of equipment for a period of time and write down anything strange that happens. (The device might have its own sensors to detect and record data that the PCs can't perceive, or to compare to their observations.)
- Enter a specific location bearing a container of biological or chemical samples and return the container so it can be studied. (The PCs may also be given a recording device to monitor the samples over time.)
- Test a piece of equipment, an automaton, or a biological in an extreme environment (zero gravity, underwater, in another dimension, and so on).
- Test the functional range of a piece of equipment to see if it works in a low orbit, at the bottom of the ocean, beyond an adjacent dimension, or the like.
- Test a new weapon or armor against a particular kind of creature (perhaps the armor has nonlethal capabilities or is intended to be safe against one kind of creature but not another).
- Test an artifact with a known side effect to see if it's too dangerous or impractical to use over a long period of time.
- Be a test subject for an experimental substance to determine the correct dosage, to see how it's affected by human metabolism (as compared to previous animal subjects), or merely because the PC's other abilities mean they're more likely to survive the test.



CHAPTER 11

HIERARCHY AND MEMBERSHIP

The Order of Truth extends its grasp into all of the nine kingdoms and even into the Beyond, but it was once just numerous scattered groups of Aeon Priests with no unified cause or purpose except the study of the numenera. Although these separate groups were united by Calaval hundreds of years ago, slow communication between cities means that individual semblages and claves operate almost independently from each other and have a great amount of autonomy outside of direct orders from the Amber Pope and the archbishops. This chapter explains the overall hierarchy of the order, how a person becomes an Aeon Priest, and additional benefits of joining the organization.

How Much Do Aeon Priests Know?, page 95

HIERARCHY OF THE ORDER

This section explains the formal and informal rankings within the Order of Truth and its various offices. As most PC interactions happen with the rank-and-file members of the order—Aeon Priests working in semblages and claves—this discussion begins at the lowest levels of the organization.

PRIESTS, SEMBLAGES, AND TENURE

The typical Aeon Priest is a scholar, one who studies the numenera with the goal of learning more about it. They are more than capable of working alone, and many villages in the Steadfast and the Beyond have only one Aeon Priest living there (if they have any at all). When not studying or researching, the priests use their knowledge to help the people of their community, whether that is teaching, tinkering with useful cyphers, advising the community leaders about crops, treating wounds, combating harmful superstitions, or something similar. The solitary Aeon Priest may find one or two exceptional students in a lifetime and train them to become Aeon Priests as well, passing on their resources, knowledge, and history to the next generation.

If there is more than one Aeon Priest active in a community, they may work independently or decide to collaborate as peers. This informal association may be temporary or permanent. They may meet and work at the home of a specific priest, rotate this hosting among all interested parties, or make use of an external space such as a separate building. This arrangement isn't technically a semblage, although it is often referred to as one by those outside the order. That is as much of a misnomer as calling two like-minded carpenters who share a workshop a "carpenter's guild," even if they're working together on a large project.

What makes a group of Aeon Priests a true semblage is the demarcation of their shared space. Traditionally, a semblage is a cloistered area or monastery—an area that is not accessible to the public, contains living and work quarters for the priests, and is surrounded by a fence, wall, or other obstacle. It doesn't need to be a formal declaration to be considered a semblage; a house surrounded by a secure fence is sufficient.

The purpose of closing off the semblage from the rest of the community is three-fold. First, it is meant to be a place of learning, and isolation (from rowdy townsfolk, idle

gossip, and so on) contributes to the quiet atmosphere necessary for study. Second, sometimes the priests conduct dangerous experiments with the numenera, and the barricades protect people in the community from getting injured in case an experiment goes wrong. Third, the semblage tends to have valuable assets (oddities, cyphers, and iotum) that the priests don't want stolen or used by dangerous people. A semblage doesn't have to be within the bounds of a community; many began as a campsite outside an interesting ruin near a village, and grew over time into a place people could live while studying the numenera at the site.

Depending on how many priests live at a semblage, how useful their work is to the community, and how prosperous the community is, the semblage might be self-sufficient and include support staff (guards, gardeners, cooks, laborers, and so on), it may rely on charity from the community (such as donations of food or clothing), or it might operate like a business (selling cyphers, oddities, and services to buy food and materials).

Semblages usually either govern themselves like a council where all members get a vote on decisions, or use a more centralized structure where the group is led by a small number of people (or just one) who have the authority to make decisions for the entire group. The leadership of the semblage may change over time, either by votes or by elevating members through tenure (academic experience based on time and accomplishments in studying numenera).

Members of a semblage are free to leave and pursue their own studies (either by joining another one or by working independently). As communities tend to be isolated by areas that are dangerous to travel through, a priest who leaves their semblage normally ends up remaining in the area, working alone or perhaps attempting to recruit other like-minded scholars to their banner.

Aeon Priests thrive on sharing knowledge, and most books of the numenera were written by priests with the intent of sharing what they know with other members of their order and the world at large. Travelers who move from community to community know to bring a book of the numenera with them, for the local Aeon Priests will often trade it for one of theirs (covering slightly different specialties) plus an oddity or cypher, just for the opportunity to learn what other semblages are working on. Through journals, books, and word of mouth, exceptional Aeon Priests earn the respect of their peers, and their names become the talk of larger and more influential semblages and gatherings of the order.

"Clave" specifically means a cloistered group of Aeon Priests in the Beyond. "Semblage" means much the same as "clave" except it is in the Steadfast, and therefore has much stronger ties to the Order of Truth and the Amber Pope than the isolated groups in the Beyond. Other than a semblage's connection to the order and a better track record of adhering to its principles, there is little difference between a clave and a semblage, and people outside the order often use the terms interchangeably.



Just as Numenera Discovery *and* Numenera Destiny *use the word "pope" because of its association with religion in medieval Europe, this book uses "bishop" in the same context because it conveys the right idea, even though it isn't the actual word used by Ninth Worlders.*

Durkhal, page 144

BISHOPS

Exceptional Aeon Priests who get noticed in capital cities of the Steadfast may be nominated to be made a bishop of the order. The nominator writes a letter about the priest with a listing of their accolades and accomplishments, and a summary of their knowledge, and submits it to the nominator's superior within the order (usually the local archbishop). If approved, the new bishop is informed of the promotion and given a small gift, usually in the form of iotum and cyphers relevant to their work. This gift is sometimes delivered by an Aeon Priest who wishes to join the new bishop's semblage and contribute to their work.

The title conveys some authority in that a person of similar tenure and achievements who is a bishop outranks someone who is not. However, unless the bishop lives in a city with a large population of Aeon Priests, odds are they'll continue to live and work in their current semblage and therefore have the same authority they held before the promotion.

A bishop has additional responsibilities beyond those of a regular Aeon Priest. One common task is that they may be called upon to represent the interests of semblages in a geographical area to a larger community, such as a collection of village semblages near a large city. Their main obligation is that they may be called to join the council of bishops and vote to ordain an archbishop or the Amber Pope.



Aeon Cavalier: A knight pledged to exterminate enemies of the order (page 184).

Fenderal: A knight pledged to defend important individuals and sites of the order (page 188).

Tertiary: A devotee of the Order of Truth who is not an Aeon Priest.

NON-PRIESTLY TITLES

The Order of Truth has special titles for people who aren't Aeon Priests but who serve the order in an exceptional way that deserves recognition, such as semblage guards and members of the martial orders that protect important sites like the Durkhal. In addition to regular military ranks (lieutenant, captain, and general), these titles include Aeon Cavalier, fenderal, and tertiary. The archbishops and the Amber Pope have specialized titles reserved for their own use, given as recognition for great deeds or service, and may be awarded to any ally of the order whether or not the recipient is an Aeon Priest. These usually bear some historical significance to the order and are carefully named so as not to impinge on the authority of secular leaders outside of the order.

ARCHBISHOPS

Directly subordinate to the Amber Pope are thirteen archbishops, each with years of experience studying the numenera and dealing with the casual politics of the order. Each archbishop is responsible for all Aeon Priests and the interests of the order in a large territory, such as one of the nine kingdoms of the Steadfast. They act as proxies for the Amber Pope and advise him on matters concerning their region.

The archbishops are chosen by the Amber Pope from the members of the order. Usually they are chosen from the ranks of bishops, but any Aeon Priest is a potential candidate (a non-bishop must be promoted to bishop before being made an archbishop). Archbishops serve at the discretion of the Amber Pope. Technically when a new pope takes office the archbishops must petition to retain their ranks, but in the past century it has become custom that they remain archbishops unless the new pope specifically instructs them to step down. They can be demoted or retired by the pope or the council of bishops in the same way that the council can remove a pope. Archbishops do not serve on the council of bishops, but they may advise it if asked.

The hierarchy of archbishops and the council of bishops are relevant mainly within the Durkhal, the Citadel of the Conduit, and the Fortress of the High Father—locations under the control of the Order of Truth that are not part of a community's semblage or clave. In these places, the Amber Pope has the authority of a king or queen and the bishops are roughly the equivalent of nobles.

The thirteen archbishops include one for each of the nine kingdoms, plus one each for the Southern Lands, the Western Seas, the Lands of the Dawn, and the Beyond (meaning the lands between the Steadfast and the Lands of the Dawn). For the specific roster of archbishops and their current concerns, see chapter 12.

THE AMBER PAPACY

The head of the Order of Truth is the Amber Pope. Even to those outside the order, this position looms large, and the pope is the face—as remote and impersonal as that may be—of the order to almost everyone. Their word is all but law within the order, and it carries tremendous social weight among secular organizations (out of either respect or fear of what the order might do if its resources were turned upon them).

When there is a vacancy in the office, a council of bishops and advisors meets in the Durkhal in Qi to discuss possible candidates. The council is required to meet within fifty days of the start of the vacancy. It must put forth at least three suitable candidates within ten days of the end of the first period (it is permissible for members of the council to be nominated). The final vote for a successor must be held within forty days after the suitable candidates are chosen. Each semblage or clave gets one vote, delivered by hand or transmitted using numenera.

Once the vote has determined a winner by a two-thirds majority, the senior member of the council asks the winner if they accept the honor of leading the order. If the candidate says yes, the council declares them the new Amber Pope, they are given the accoutrements of office, and announcements are sent out to all the claves and semblages. If the candidate says no, that vote is discarded, the candidate's name is removed from the pool, and the voting begins again.

Unlike a coronation for a kingdom or a significant religious rite, there is no official requirement for a coronation ceremony—the new Amber Pope starts as soon as they are ready. Traditionally, friends and family of the new pope pay for a small public celebration in Qi (sponsored in part by wealthy people of the city seeking influence and favors), but that is not an officially sanctioned function of the order.

Some popes choose a regnal name for themselves when they accept the office. They most often do this to pay homage to an inspirational Aeon Priest or Amber Pope of the past, but vanity has been known to

Qi, page 144

Citadel of the Conduit: *A secret fortress that lies in a parallel dimension and can be accessed by any high-ranking Aeon Priest.*

Fortress of the High Father: *The fortress that guards the Amber Monolith.*

Lands of the Dawn: A strange and unfamiliar region on the northeast part of the Ninth World supercontinent, accessed by a portal in Thaemor called the Great Reach. See Ninth World Guidebook, *page 181.*

The Southern Lands: Guran, Matheunis, Nihliesh, and other city-states and settlements south of the Steadfast.

The current pope, Durranet VI, was lucky to be elected in a brief window of time where all the lands of the Steadfast were at peace, and he plans to keep it that way—thus his radical crusade against the Gaians, which distracts the local rulers from making war with each other.

Amber Pope Durranet VI, page 187

play a role in this decision. If using a regnal name from a previous pope, the new pope increments an ordinal number after it (thus, Durranet VI is the sixth Amber Pope to use that name).

The position of Amber Pope is a lifetime appointment, although at any time the pope may resign and return to their prior rank and duties if they so choose. The council of bishops may remove a sitting Amber Pope from office, although this has rarely been done, primarily when an aging pope refuses to step down or if gross incompetence or misdeeds come to light (as was done with Acumen II). This vote requires a two-thirds majority among the council, and by custom doing so excludes all members of the council from consideration for the papacy for the next five years.

It is important to note that the Order of Truth doesn't consider the Amber Pope to have any supernatural authority or favor in achieving that position. The pope is an exceptionally talented and intelligent human, but is still just a human, not an agent of the divine or chosen by creatures of past civilizations. The Amber Pope is fallible and can be wrong, even about a theory of the numenera, and their ideas can be challenged through normal channels.

Theory, page 94

Iron wind, page 135

Although the pope can excommunicate an Aeon Priest for transgressions against the order and strip them of their official raiment and equipment (such as cyphers and artifacts), the office doesn't give the pope the authority to have anyone imprisoned or executed—such things are the purview of secular authorities such as national, city, and town governments. For example, a priest who used their numenera knowledge to murder someone would probably be cast out of the order and handed over to the local authorities for a trial.

The greatest Amber Popes have wielded their power carefully with an eye on the future as well as the present. Usually their personal goals for the order are slowed by external conflicts like wars between the nine kingdoms or natural disasters that require significant resources afterward, like hurricanes and the iron wind.



Apprentice: *level 1*

JOINING THE ORDER

Joining the ranks of the Aeon Priests requires years of formal training. This usually starts at a young age (anywhere from ten to thirteen for most communities) when a priest or semblage takes on a potential applicant as an apprentice. The apprentice learns the philosophy of the Order of Truth, names of important people in the order, and a basic understanding of fundamentals—arithmetic, anatomy, names of stars and planets, writing, and useful

skills for a semblage such as mending clothes, cooking, and cleaning. Initially they receive very little training in the handling and understanding of the numenera, but over the term of their apprenticeship they are taught increasingly more (in game terms, this is like training away inability in a skill).

After three to five years (depending on the capabilities of the student), the apprentice takes a series of day-long tests to assess whether they have retained a sufficient amount of what they have been taught. If the apprentice fails, they are given an opportunity to study more and try again. Each semblage has different criteria for deciding whether an apprentice is unqualified beyond hope of making progress (there is no stigma in or punishment for this, as this level of numenera knowledge is simply beyond the understanding of most people). An apprentice who passes the tests graduates to become a journeyman, swears an oath to uphold the tenets of the order, and is given a pin or amulet with the symbol of truth.

An Aeon Journeyman is a person who has proven to have a reasonable understanding of the numenera—enough to contribute to the order in some way. They continue to work on their training and studying to learn where their talents are and how to best use them for the order (in game terms, this is like becoming trained in one of the three numenera skills or another skill suitable for their interests). They perform many jobs in a semblage, including taking notes, keeping tabs on the local community, supervising apprentices, and assisting other members with their work. Depending on their skills and interests, they go on to serve the order in some capacity, whether as an Aeon Priest or one of the many nanos, explorers, wrights, diplomats, or guards who perform the important work that keeps the order moving forward.

A PC who wants to join the Order of Truth is the exception to the normal training process, as most starting PCs are already adults. Even campaigns that use long-term play usually don't skip past several years of time, so a PC joining the Order of Truth typically follows a different path. Because much of an apprentice's and journeyman's numenera training is (in game terms) to get rid of the default inability in one or more of the three numenera skills (crafting, salvaging, and understanding) and then to actually become trained in one of those skills, a character who is already trained in one of the numenera skills is technically years ahead of an apprentice and has already mastered one or more skills that they'd learn as a journeyman.

If the PC is on good standing with a semblage, they can ask its leaders for permission to take the apprentice-level tests in order to qualify as a journeyman. The semblage's leader accepts or refuses based on their understanding of whether the PC has the right heart and mindset for the order and will act in accordance with its principles. If the leader agrees, the PC is allowed to take the test. Under these circumstances, the tests are a little harder than those given to apprentices, as the order wants to make it difficult for outsiders (who have not been screened for personality defects over several years of observation) to quickly join the order and become privy to its secrets. A smaller semblage might not

INTERREGNUM

When the office of Amber Pope is vacant, the council is in charge of decisions affecting the entire order, but they are forbidden from adding, changing, or removing any laws governing the order.

In the few dozen times the order has needed a new Amber Pope, only three winners of the council's vote are known to have refused the honor.

There is no rule forbidding a nonhuman from being elected Amber Pope, but all popes in the order's records have been humans—or at least appeared human.

The first Amber Pope, Calaval I, appointed himself to that position after uniting the Aeon Priests in the Steadfast by demonstrating his knowledge of the numenera. All of his successors were elected.

Aeon Journeyman, page 185

Long-term play, page 324

"Of course it is difficult to join the Order. We have to know that they understand the challenges we face and the responsibilities we bear. There are many nanos in the world who have the talent to be an Aeon Priest but lack the discipline to be counted as our peer."

—Uloq, Archbishop of Iscobal

have the resources to perform this sort of high-end testing and can tell the PC to try a larger one in a different community (this isn't something they'd ask an apprentice to do, but PC explorers tend to be well traveled, so this isn't out of the ordinary).

This multiday testing process is a numenera task (crafting, salvaging, or understanding) with a difficulty of 7. Like a crafting numenera task, this test requires the PCs to succeed at multiple subtasks in order to achieve total success, starting at difficulty 1 and ending at difficulty 7. The PC's relevant numenera skill reduces the difficulty of each of these tasks (likely making the first one or two routine tasks with no roll needed). Because applying Effort is something characters do in the moment, not over the course of several days, the PC cannot apply Effort to these subtasks. Assets (such as a book about the numenera) do apply.

Multiple successes for crafting subtasks, page 118

If the PC fails, the semblage requires them to wait a month or more before taking the test again, starting over with the first subtask. This represents the time and inconvenience for the priests to set up the testing, and also acts to deter people who are not serious about joining the order. Failing the test a second time usually means the semblage doesn't allow them to try again (but the PC could ask a different semblage).

Some wealthy people pay Aeon Priests to educate their children for a year or more so they have a good grasp of the numenera.

If the PC passes the test, they must swear an oath to uphold the tenets of the order, and then are named a journeyman and given a pin or amulet with the order's symbol. The semblage strongly encourages the new journeyman to spend several weeks studying the philosophy of the order and other academic topics that an apprentice would know, mainly so the PC's knowledge is reasonably complete.

If the journeyman PC wants to advance further and gain the title of Aeon Priest or some other rank in the order, there are long-term play options to do so. Otherwise they remain a journeyman—a respectable rank. Many outside the order don't understand or care about the difference between "a journeyman of the Order of Truth" and "an Aeon Priest," but Aeon Priests (and other members who have completed their training) surely do.

Technically a glaive, explorer, or other role or career within the order would be considered a "master" level of training to a professional or crafting guild, although members of the order don't often use that broad title, insisting on specific names for specific roles.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

The following is a partial list of the sorts of benefits a PC member of the order may gain. Some of these abilities may be selected in place of a skill, and others require spending several months of intense study or strange experiments at the hands of the Aeon Priests. All of them require the PC to be at least a journeyman, and some require a master-level rank within the order. Although in some cases the source of the ability might be extensive physical or mental training, for others it may be a special implant, a tiny device, the means to manipulate nanomachines, a mutagenic chemical treatment, or other reality-shaping processes.

The PC must find a semblage or other knowledgeable member of the order who can provide the materials or perform the procedure to give them the ability they want, which might mean a journey to a specific semblage or even a larger facility



such as the Durkhal. Chapter 14 presents several Aeon Priest communities that provide unique opportunities for learning strange abilities that are available there and nowhere else. The variant focus abilities in chapter 3 are also examples of new abilities available to friends of the order (and don't require membership).

Esotery: In lieu of taking a new skill, any journeyman can learn one esotery that a first-tier Nano can use. If the esotery costs points from a Pool, the character must spend points as they would for any of their other type or focus abilities.

Citadel of the Conduit: This secret fortress lies in a parallel dimension. Opening a doorway to the Citadel requires a person with a specific kind of nanobot in their bloodstream, activated by thinking a precise combination of thoughts. Replicating one dose of the nanomachines requires 1 unit of philosophine and 1 unit of psiranium, so this injection is normally limited to bishops and other high-ranking individuals, but any master-level member of the order can get the treatment if they bring these rare materials to a major facility of the order. The doorway can be opened only within Qi and a small area outside of it, and it works much like the Teleportation esotery in terms of Intellect cost and applying levels of Effort.

There are three places in the Citadel where a person can pass through a dimensional portal and reappear in Qi. Because the distances between these Citadel locations don't correspond to the distances between their destinations in Qi, it is possible to use the fortress as a shortcut to parts of the city.

Libraries: Large semblages (and guarded locations like the Citadel of the Conduit) have vast collections of books, journals, and papers on many topics written by Aeon Priests and other numenera scholars. Anyone of journeyman rank or higher is permitted to enter these libraries and study the materials there. Anyone of master rank is permitted to borrow a small number

Teleportation, page 43

Philosophine, page 115

Psiranium, page 113

Plan seed, page 136

Battle cart, page 170

Long-term tasks, page 324

Book, page 98

Inability, page 101

of books at the same time, although the borrower is not allowed to take them outside the settlement (and some libraries use tracking devices to warn them about books going too far away). Using the library as a resource counts as using a book. If the PC is willing to devote four hours to the task (or three times as long as normal, whichever is greater), the library provides two assets to the roll instead of one.



Plan Seeds and Plans: The order's vaults have many strange items that contain plan seeds, unfinished notes and diagrams from over many decades, and small collections of complete plans. A Wright or other crafting character trying to find a specific kind of plan seed or plan (such as a plan for a battle cart) can use the Research a Plan long-term task described in the next section to try to find such a plan seed or plan.

LONG-TERM TASKS

The following long-term tasks are available to any journeyman or higher member of the order in good standing. For some of these, the GM may require the PC to spend time at a specific semblage that has the proper tools or resources. The GM may also allow characters to perform certain long-term tasks that normally are available only for a character of a different type (such as a Jack performing a Glaive long-term task), but these should be decided on a case-by-case basis and depend on the abilities of the PC and the nature of the local semblage.

Memory Enhancement (3 months): By practicing strict and repetitive memory exercises, taking brain-altering drugs, and undergoing extended periods of introspective sensory deprivation, the PC's ability to memorize and retain information is greatly increased. They become trained in all actions that involve remembering or memorizing things.

Overcome an Inability (1 month): Many PCs have an inability in one or more skills (crafting numenera, salvaging numenera, and understanding numenera are common inabilities). By engaging in intensive study every day with one or more Aeon Priests, or by reading the teaching materials the priests use to educate apprentices, the character can attempt to gain training in a skill they have an inability in. If the character succeeds at a difficulty 4 roll with that skill, they succeed, and their inability in that skill is canceled out; if they fail, they can try this long-term task again. A character can focus on only one inability in any given month in this manner. A character can successfully overcome an inability only once between

exploration or other instances of normal play. The character cannot use this long-term task to overcome an inability in a weapon skill or defense skill. For example, a Glaive could intensely study the crafting numenera skill every day for a month, and if they succeed, they cancel out their inability in that skill.

Rejuvenation (1 month): Exotic health treatments, infusion with damage-cleansing nanobots, and injections of genetically engineered copies of a person's own cells combine to make the subject feel 1d20 years younger and extend their lifespan by 1d20 years. The procedure doesn't always work; each time the character undergoes treatment, they must make a difficulty 1 Might defense roll and a difficulty 1 Intellect defense roll, with failure of either meaning that the treatment works this time but won't ever work again. Each time the character has the treatment again, the difficulty of each roll increases by 1. Preparing the treatment requires bio-circuitry, neurofilament plexus, and pluripotent mass.

Research a Plan (1 month): Wrights are able to use the Find or Develop a Specific Plan long-term task, but Research a Plan is available to characters of all types. Any character with access to the Order of Truth's libraries and archives can spend one month focusing their attention on researching a plan. This is an Intellect task with a difficulty equal to the level of the plan sought. Training in numenera modifies the difficulty, and the task is also hindered by two steps. If the character is just trying to find any plan seed rather than a specific plan, the task is hindered by one step instead of two.

Truth by Touch (1 month): The PC is surgically implanted with a device or organ that creates smart nanobots that can reprogram a creature's brain tissue, then spends the next few weeks learning how to activate and transmit the nanobots to others. If the character spends 6 Intellect points and makes skin-to-skin contact with a living creature capable of using human-style language, the nanobots enter the creature's body and begin building new neural connections in their brain. Within five minutes, the touched creature can understand and speak the Truth. (This has no effect if the creature can already understand the Truth.) Once the creature is infected with these nanobots, the changes to its mind are permanent. The touched creature cannot infect others with the nanobots (this requires a surgical implantation like the PC had).

The Order of Truth uses this surgical implantation procedure for its explorers who are likely to encounter remote settlements that have their own language, facilitating peaceful communication and interaction.

Bio-circuitry, page 112

Find or Develop a Specific Plan, page 331

Plan Seed Kind Table, page 137

Neurofilament plexus, pluripotent mass: page 126



CHAPTER 12

ARCHBISHOPS OF THE ORDER

Many of the story hooks in this chapter originated in the setting chapters of Numenera Discovery *and expand upon the information presented there.*

In addition to their listed abilities, the archbishops have access to many useful cyphers and a defensive artifact or two.

Nine Rival Kings, page 136

Ancuan, page 160

Durkhal, page 144

Vidian Ostref: *level 5, persuasion as level 6, understanding numenera as level 8; wields a ray weapon that inflicts +3 points of damage against nonliving matter*

Cloudcrystal Skyfields, page 169

Draolis, page 144

Nadret Lann: *level 6, perception and understanding numenera as level 7; uses an artifact that inflicts 6 points of damage and sometimes painfully reshapes the target's body into a cat-sized aneen-like creature*

This chapter explains the territories of the archbishops, lists the important members of the Order of Truth in these locations, and gives some local plot developments that the GM can use as hooks for stories involving the PCs and the order.

THE STEADFAST

The Steadfast is the "home" region of the Ninth World setting and of the Order of Truth. From the high chamber in the Durkhal, the Amber Pope weaves threads of money, influence, innuendo, and materials to hundreds of settlements and political leaders, maintaining the overall goal of increasing knowledge and understanding so that the world doesn't collapse into barbarism and anarchy. The Amber Pope gives directions to the archbishops (often without explaining why) and guides the decisions they hand down to the bishops and semblages, which often include specific messages to local leaders that hint about or promise numenera of great interest to them. Communities facing a famine are told of advancements in food production, those experiencing raids are given defensive cyphers with hints of more to come, and those itching for war are shown the benefits of diplomacy or steered toward the hostile folk beyond the Cloudcrystal Skyfields. The Amber Pope's influence is felt most strongly in the Steadfast, protecting institutions of knowledge and frequently intervening on a local level to promote the philosophy of the order.

ARCHBISHOPS OF THE STEADFAST

Other than the Amber Pope, the nine archbishops of the Steadfast hold more political power than any person in the order. They are effectively peers of the Nine Rival Kings, and the Amber Pope trusts them to wield their influence carefully.

ANCUAN

Archbishop Vidian Ostref was a member of the semblage that activated the mysterious device that obliterated the inorganic parts of Ishlav. Like everyone present at the time of the incident, he enjoys very fine health and is quite spry for a man pushing sixty years. He took over the semblage when his predecessor retired and was selected to be archbishop just three years ago. He is on good terms with the king, but the local tradition that forbids most people from living near the palace gives him an excuse to stay in his beloved Ishlav. His current priorities are having explorers survey Scorpion's Reach, recover a kidnapped team of researchers held by the Jaekels of Aras Island, and negotiate with the leaders of Rarrow for permission to study the nature of Hidden Rarrow. Two of his adult children are members of the Redfleets of Kaparin, but they are not on good terms with the archbishop because they insisted on selling him artifacts they found instead of just giving them to him for research.

DRAOLIS

As the capital city of Qi is also the site of the Durkhal, archbishop Nadret Lann is in a unique position of having his direct superior in the order present in the same



city. However, Durranet VI has a hands-off approach to local governance, so Nadret feels he can't let anything slide when it comes to his duties as archbishop of Draolis. The archbishop was born in Iscobal but grew up in Qi, and is an ordinary-looking man who wears many devices in the forms of rings with mechanical eyes. He frequently clashes with the Council of Spheres over investing in research that he thinks would help the city but the plutocrats insist is unprofitable. He is also weighing whether to send another expedition to the Fourth Mark (the last one claims to have barely pierced the upper chamber using phasing numenera), where to find resources to build or repair more of the Zhev that protect the city, whether it is better to cure or quarantine the plague in Beoth (Bishop Malegran is a personal friend of Nadret's), and how to divert iotum headed to the windrider manufacturers at Castle Aventur.

GHAN

The king of Ghan enjoys the prosperity that peace has brought and is quick to thank Archbishop Chetena for the order's role in preventing war. The Aeon Priest is tall and thin, with wild greying hair. She and her glaive wife Thafti are skilled sailors and are both quite respected by the people of the City of Bridges. From her semblage in the Coral Palace she keeps an eye out for numenera that will enhance sea trade, maintains frequent correspondence with the Angulan Knights in Ledon, and negotiates with Archbishop Nadret about the possibility of borrowing their metal-cutting numenera for use in Omar and the Scarred Monoliths. Chetena is aware of the value of Ghan to the Amber Pope's plans and is quick to use her influence and agents to crush anything that might disrupt trade or peace with its neighbors. Her semblage has built a device that can detect and raise sunken ships, and she is looking for explorers willing to go on the sea and test it.

Ghan, page 141

Chetena: *level 6, sailing and crafting numenera as level 7; wears an artifact that lets her swim a long distance as an action; psychokinetic sonic blast inflicts 7 points of damage*

Thafti: *level 4, ranged attacks and sailing as level 5*



Tnoust: *level 5, understanding numenera as level 6; Armor 3 from implanted force field device; inflicts 6 points of damage with implanted ray emitter*

Uloq: *level 6, intimidation, persuasion, and understanding numenera as level 7; staff-like artifact inflicts 7 points of Intellect damage or causes catatonia*

Malevich, page 150

Iscobal, page 153

ISCOBAL

Mindful of the many factions squabbling for power in this land, the Amber Pope chose Uloq, born and raised in Qi, to be archbishop here, to avoid having any obvious bias toward any of the local families. Uloq is aware that the Pytharon Empire is looking to reclaim its old territory here, and he tries to get the nobles to present a unified front so the nation doesn't look like easy pickings, but the going is hard because meeting with representatives from one faction is easily misinterpreted as conspiring against a different one. The semblage researching dreams in Dynafel (a favored cause of the deposed dead queen) adds to these rumors, so Uloq has to firmly state that the order's stance is neutral, and that anyone acting against a semblage will be dealt with swiftly and so perfectly that the instigators' bodies will never be found. In a show of openness and good faith, the archbishop requires all semblages in the country to send written reports of their progress to his office in Mulen every season, and he provides copies to any noble house that requests them. Uloq looks old and bent, but thanks to rejuvenation procedures he is quite healthy for a man in his eighties. Still, he presents himself as a frail old man so his opponents underestimate him. His research interests involve salvaging numenera from buildings in Rachar and finding ways to repel or destroy the yellow swarms attacking Dynafel.

MALEVICH

This suffering land is the home of Archbishop Tnoust. Direct, serious, and prone to terse gestures with her hands, she relies on a hand-picked group of bishops to facilitate her own research and implement her instructions for promoting truth in Malevich's isolated settlements. She is on friendly terms with Regent Ellabon (some say the two are lovers) as well as the mysterious expert Quanon that lives in Stirthal, frequently consulting with them about matters of state or the numenera. As the archbishop of the Beyond (who lives in Thriest) insulted her a few years ago, she retaliates by slowing the flow of money and iotum to the semblage there, knowing that eventually he'll apologize or resign. Her main projects are finding ways to increase crop productivity in starving villages, sending flying vehicles to explore the Voil Chasm, keeping an eye on the otherdimensional counterpart of Yenth (and its weird technology), and debating the morals of using a plague to wipe out the countless abhuman raiders conscripted by warlords. Tnoust has had a brief exchange of messages with the bandit king Polele and is trying to convince him to march his troops against the Gaians, but he is discouraged by the long journey.

MILAVE

Of all of the nine kingdoms, this is the most politically precarious, and Archbishop Slemtar was chosen because she is a wise nano, a skilled diplomat, and a liar capable of incredibly subtle nuance. Housed with the semblage in Orrila, she carefully encourages representatives of the states to keep peace, build a protective wall around Orrila, and share any news of threats and plots (particularly from Pytharon). She is easily recognized by her flowing movements and her Aeon Priest cowled robe of white and gold. Some petty nobles suspect that she is informing or supplying warlord Tarvesh with numenera; it is public knowledge that she survived two assassination attempts by turning her opponents into dust with a touch of her hand, which deters casual attempts on her life. She makes a point to meet peaceably with leaders of all of Milave's states, carefully preserving her and the order's stance of neutrality, but urging all of them to work together for the sake of the country. Most of her work with the local semblages has to do with building and maintaining the machines that help harvest crops, but rumor has it that the Aeon Priests might be adding combat functions to the automatons to help repel invaders.

NAVARENE

The archbishop of Navarene is Graldu, a nervous young man who prefers reading books and painting landscapes to administering the local needs of the order. He is the grandnephew of Queen Armalu, and his elevation to this role is a bit of clever politicking by the Amber Pope. The other rulers of the Steadfast were initially alarmed and claimed favoritism, but they soon saw the wisdom of it. The queen wants the order to require the other kingdoms to pay for troops in Navarene's defensive bastions against the Gaians, but with one of her kin as archbishop in Shallamas, she can't push him too hard or she risks alienating her extended family (which includes most of the noble houses in Navarene). Graldu is in over his head and relies on a trio of bishops (chosen for him by the Amber Pope) to help keep things running smoothly and push back against the queen. The three bishops have their hands in many projects, such as improving the Dark Smoker tree-cutting machine in the Westwood, recharging the sonic fences of Charmonde, improving food transportation into Bodrov, and protecting the neutrality of the order's land around the Amber Monolith.

THE PYTHARON EMPIRE

The expansionist inclinations of the royalty have Archbishop Iijeo playing a slow, defensive game of obstruction and diversion from the semblage in Rarmon.



Milave, page 158

Slemtar: *level 5; understanding numenera as level 6; Intellect defense, persuasion, and lying as level 7; Armor 2; dermal nanobots allow her to disintegrate by touch, inflicting 8 points of damage*

The Pytharon Empire, page 156

Navarene, page 137

Iijeo: *level 4, persuasion and understanding numenera as level 6; implanted artifact lets him take two actions per round for three rounds in a row*

Graldu: *level 3, understanding numenera and painting as level 4; has a defensive artifact that transports him to a specific safe location if struck*

Thaemor, page 148

To keep the empress from poking at Milave and Iscobal, he encourages her to fortify the southern border against retaliation for slave raids in those lands. He withholds resources that might go to numenera construction in the empire, citing distance from the vaults in Navarene and Draolis making it difficult to reliably transport useful materials. He refuses to help build the new connection between the Twinned Cities, claiming that he cannot do so without showing favoritism to one of the siblings who rules those settlements. The empress has not refuted these excuses, but among the court she is known to call Iijeo "the Snake" for his careful words, and her patience for the archbishop—already in short supply because of her youth and ambition—is thinning. Iijeo is a small, humble-looking man with a network of crisscrossing scars on his neck, arms, and hands.

Bosst: *level 4, crafting numenera as level 5, understanding numenera as level 6; antigravity weapon sends target a short or long distance into the air*



The Beyond, page 169

Jshang: *level 4, understanding numenera and singing as level 5; projectile device shoots bursts of living poisonous needles that inflict 5 points of damage in an immediate area*

THAEMOR

The changeover in leadership of this small land recently taught the Order of Truth two hard lessons: they do not have the luxury of staying out of politics, and overconfidence with the numenera can lead to death. Archbishop Bosst was a young child when the crafted numenera installation called the Eyren mistakenly infected the royal family with a disease and killed them all. She grew up in Auspar under the rule of the mysterious Holiva the First, has seen the madness in his eyes, and knows that his insanity will bring doom to her country and perhaps start a war with its neighboring lands. The archbishop sends frequent updates to the Amber Pope, but her orders are to wait until it appears that the insane king of Thaemor is about to take direct action that jeopardizes the peace. Bosst is a physically strong woman with a gaunt face creased with worry lines. She and her fellow priests are not assassins, but she feels that she has the capability for it, even if it marks her as a murderer or traitor in the eyes of some people.

ARCHBISHOPS OF OTHER LANDS

The Amber Pope is fully aware that his reach extends only throughout the Steadfast, and that the claves in other lands may at most pay lip service to his authority. However, should something happen outside the Steadfast that requires the attention or intervention of the Order of Truth, the papacy needs someone to respond, so the Amber Pope has promoted archbishops to fill those roles. These offices are largely ceremonial in nature and do not carry the full authority of a similar rank in the Steadfast. In most cases the person holding the office is a bishop, who goes about their normal duties for months or years without anything happening that requires an archbishop's attention.

THE BEYOND

Archbishop Jshang lives in the city of Thriest in Malevich, has never been to the Beyond, and has no interest in trying to govern what



he calls "the wild and savage lands filled with undisciplined hordes of abhumans and a few half-mad Aeon Priests willing to risk their lives sifting the ruins for trinkets." Jshang is abnormally tall and traditionally attractive. He is vain, painting his face in hypnotizing patterns of gold and oiling his hair into elaborate spikes resembling a crown of spider's legs. In his semblage he has a fairly accurate map of the Beyond that shows large locations and features like the inland seas, the Ba-Adenu Forest, Errid Kaloum, Picalah, Seshar, and the Clock of Kala, but anything smaller than those features (such as settlements like Enthait or points of interest like the Orgorek) are either approximated or absent. Jshang is frustrated to be living in a city with such a crumbling infrastructure as Thriest, but a careless insult to Archbishop Tnoust of Malevich put him on the losing end of a power struggle. He is too proud to apologize, and his Aeon Priest underlings have to scrounge because of it.

THE SOUTHERN LANDS

The archbishop of the Southern Lands is nominally responsible for the Aeon Priests who live in Guran, Nihliesh, and the tiny settlements that eke out a meager existence between various city-states. The office is currently vacant, as its previous holder retired recently and no candidates from the Steadfast have expressed interest in it. The Amber Pope has received messages through Iijeo, archbishop of Pytharon, that the leader of Guran wants to exchange news and lore (and perhaps a shipment of light-producing baubles) with the Steadfast, but other Aeon Priests in the area feel there are more knowledgeable people in Guran who would be more suited for this role—perhaps as a means to leverage themselves to greater influence in the city. Explorers with connections to the Order of Truth are encouraged to investigate and come back with an assessment of the situation.

The Western Seas, page 165

THE WESTERN SEAS

Technically the domain of Archbishop Wuhuhyohl, the region known as the Western Seas includes the islands off the coast of the Steadfast, the distant archipelago called the Rayskel Cays, and any exploring beneath the surface. This young Aeon Priest has had genetic modifications to give her armored scaly skin and gill-like protrusions on her neck that allow her to breathe water as easily as air. She is on good terms with the archbishop of Ghan, the Redfleets of Kaparin, and the Canonicate leaders of Taracal, and she has made peaceful conflict with intelligent octopi in the shallows near the coast (these creatures have been hesitant to speak of their realm or trade information with her or anyone).

Wuhuhyohl: *level 5, sailing, salvaging numenera, swimming, and understanding numenera as level 6; artifact weapon creates shockwaves in an immediate radius that inflict 5 points of damage and stun creatures for one round*

Rayskel Cays: An archipelago far to the west of the Steadfast, consisting of five major islands and hundreds of smaller ones. See Ninth World Guidebook, *page 155.*

Lands of the Dawn: A strange and unfamiliar region on the northeast part of the Ninth World supercontinent, accessed by a portal in Thaemor called the Great Reach. See Ninth World Guidebook, *page 181.*

Fessk: *level 4, salvaging numenera and Speed defense as level 5; artifact creates webs of acidic strands that inflict 4 points of damage and bind the target*

THE LANDS OF THE DAWN

With the return of explorers from the newly discovered region far to the northeast, beyond the Beyond, the Aeon Priests are eager to learn what scholars of the numenera there know. Initially the Amber Pope planned to put these lands under the eye of the archbishop of the Beyond, but when their size and number of civilized species became apparent, he decided to name Fessk as the archbishop of the Lands of the Dawn. Only a few Aeon Priests have traveled there as part of various expeditions, and Fessk is eager for news. Her skin is dotted with tiny white acid scars, some of which cover places where she was surgically implanted with devices. Fessk grew up in Thaemor and trained with Archbishop Bosst, and the two colleagues secretly plan to use their proximity and knowledge to deliver their land from its mad ruler.

DURRANET'S CRUSADE

The Gaian threat to the north is an example of an enigmatic order from the Amber Pope. Durranet VI claims that the Gaians are a cult, have spies in the Steadfast, and plan to invade the nine kingdoms. It is true that nine years ago groups of Gaian explorers crossed the Skyfields and entered the northern part of Navarene, but no others in the order admit to seeing the evidence that convinced the Amber Pope that they were enemies of truth requiring a holy war to stop them.

Some members wonder what the Gaians did or said that was so antithetical to truth that the very mention of it had to be suppressed, but most accept the Amber Pope's decree, lacking any reason to challenge it. In any case, the people of the Steadfast who are eager for bloodshed now have a place to channel their fire, although the dangers of the Cloudcrystal Skyfields deter most armies. Those who rattle their cyphers at rival countries in the Steadfast risk being called cowards, for why break peace with a neighbor over old grievances when there is an active enemy bringing heresy, enslavement, and death to all in the Steadfast?

It is important to note that the Order of Truth has not sent anyone to spy on the Gaians, but nobles, politicians, and other independent parties have taken it upon themselves to send people north to see what the Gaians are up to. Strangely, they have found little to suggest that the people to the north intend to invade the Steadfast, which likely means the Gaians are very subtle in their efforts and therefore not to be trusted.

If the crusade means peace in the Steadfast through the end of Durranet's time as Amber Pope, it will be a great triumph, despite the loss of lives along the border. If the simmering feuds in the nine kingdoms erupt anyway, the Gaians' deaths will have been for nothing and Durranet will have tarnished the legacy of the Order of Truth for a generation.

CHAPTER 13

SPLINTER AND HERETICAL GROUPS

This chapter describes several splinter and heretical groups of the Order of Truth. In this context, a splinter group is one that has a different intent or focus than the original group, but still considers itself to be allies with (or at least not enemies with) the original group, capable of working together. A heretical group is one whose goals are skewed from or in opposition to that of the original group, and as such will lead to conflict, either immediately or eventually. The Order of Healing is an example of a splinter group, and the Convergence is an example of a heretical group.

KNIGHTS OF DURRANET

Founded shortly after Amber Pope Durranet VI called for a crusade against the Gaians, this military academy uses knowledge of the numenera and extensive physical training to create exceptional scouts, spies, and officers. Their teachings emphasize honor, cooperation, loyalty to the Steadfast, and military strategy. The nine countries of the Steadfast send their best and brightest applicants to the academy in Yenth, and it is a matter of prestige to be accepted (the knighthood accepts only a few dozen candidates every year). Its graduates usually end up close friends with each other, despite different social statuses and countries of origin. The knighthood has the full support of the Amber Pope, and he has directed the Order of Truth to send Aeon Priests to instruct the knights about numenera that may be useful to their cause.

The knighthood does not educate common soldiers; its goal is to prepare highly trained agents and leaders for key roles in the countries of the Steadfast so they can protect it against external threats. Academy graduates include master spies, strategists, members of noble and royal houses, and more than one general, all of whom have a loyalty to the Steadfast that is comparable to their affection for their homeland. They have been taught to see that a Gaian attack on Navarene or Ghan is an attack on Thaemor and Iscobal, an attack from the Beyond on Malevich or Pytharon is an attack on Draolis and Milave, and so on—toppling one of the nine kingdoms would lead to an attack on the next. This philosophy sometimes puts its graduates at odds with the rulers of their countries. For example, the regent of Malevich might see an attack on Thaemor as an opportunity to claim some of that kingdom's territory, but the Knights of Durranet know that such an act would begin a series of reactions and betrayals that would plunge the entire region into war, making it easy pickings for abhumans and eventually turning it into a lawless wild place like the Beyond.

MEMBERS OF NOTE

The Knights of Durranet come from many countries and have no common uniform—they dress according to their station and office in their homeland. Some live for months or years as spies and have to conceal their true identities, so a recognizable outfit or tattoo would give them away. Those who can show their history with the knighthood proudly display a metal ring set with a square-cut amber

The spies of the knighthood have seen firsthand that the Gaians aren't actively planning for war against the Steadfast. Some believe this shows how devious the Gaians are, but some are beginning to suspect that the Amber Pope's crusade is a way to encourage peace among the nine kingdoms by directing aggressive actions northward. A few suspect the papacy has less noble reasons for the crusade. Whether these knowledgeable knights will decide to continue supporting the crusade remains to be seen.

Order of Healing, page 247

Convergence, page 216

Yenth, page 152

A common rumor in Yenth is that the Amber Pope supports the knighthood not only because of the Gaians, but also because he is guarding against the humanlike ultraterrestrials from the other side of the city's extradimensional portal.

stone, a gift given to each graduate. In circumstances where a flag or banner is displayed, such as an army led by a knight officer, they sometimes fly a smaller banner underneath their country's banner, with an amber-colored square on a field of grey.

Headmaster Joru: This wiry, muscular glaive has close-cropped hair, a booming voice, and starlike tattoos across her brow. She always wears a strange artifact on her left arm that can synthesize poisons and several volatile substances from her own blood. She is skilled at hand-to-hand combat as well as small weapons, improvised weapons, and swords. Hard and serious, she doesn't coddle her students and is happy to show them the door if they complain that their training (which they volunteered for) is too difficult.

Headmaster Joru: *level 6, melee attacks as level 7; artifact can create level 6 poisons and detonations at the cost of the wearer's health or Might Pool*

Shallamas, page 139



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Symbol: Metal ring with a square-cut amber stone, or an amber square on a field of grey

Motto: The champions of the Steadfast will defend it against all enemies

Badge of Membership: Metal ring set with a square-cut amber stone

Member Benefits: In lieu of taking a new skill, a knight can choose one fighting move, trick of the trade, or precept that a first-tier Glaive, Jack, or Arkus can use, and the knight can access its ability (after paying its cost). The rationale behind this power might be physical training or some kind of implanted device.

THE CHIMES OF TRUTH

This splinter group of the Order of Truth arose only a few years ago from the frustration of trying to share news and numenera breakthroughs with remote and isolated settlements in Navarene and the rest of the Steadfast. What good is a cure for a plague if nobody in an infected village knows about it? If the iron wind or a horde of abhumans strikes a village, how can the survivors warn other villages that the threat is heading their way? The world is a large place, and the Chimes of Truth want to make it a smaller place by creating and protecting ways to communicate across long distances. Centered in Shallamas, the members tinker with cyphers and artifacts that send and receive messages, study telepathic nanos and other exceptional individuals to understand how these abilities work, and endorse traders, explorers, and mappers who can carry news and the faction's talking devices to those in need.

Initially the Chimes tried using devices that were physically wired together to send and receive messages, but they found that method to be impractical over long distances (such as between villages), as the connections were vulnerable to abhuman sabotage, lazy salvagers, and random strange events in the wilderness. Now

they focus their efforts on transmitting messages through the air or telepathically. Ideally they would be able to make use of the datasphere or a satellite for this purpose, but they haven't been able to develop a reliable connection, and instead have been working on a plan for farspeaking pylons and gathering supplies to build one in Shallamas and one in Bodrov. Their goal is to use those two installations to demonstrate the effectiveness of their work to the city leaders, who in theory will then provide additional resources so they can build a third installation in Charmonde, allowing instant communication between all of Navarene's major cities.

The members of the Chimes are allies of the Order of Truth and consider themselves under the jurisdiction of the Amber Pope. They are on good terms with the League, which has similar goals and comparable methods. Because the Chimes are openly allied with the order, its enemies are their enemies as well, particularly the Convergence (which would use the Chimes' knowledge and communication network for personal gain) and the Jagged Dream (which opposes peaceful communication in an attempt to stoke the flames of war).

MEMBERS OF NOTE

The fifty or so members of this organization are called "chimers," a name suggested by the founder as a joke that gained enough traction among them to stick. They dress like their counterparts in the Order of Truth (cowled robes for Aeon Priests, functional garb for guards and such), but they wear their own badge, the symbol of truth, or both. They tend to use sonic and telepathic devices and are familiar with methods to neutralize these threats from opponents.

Uhlish: This broad-shouldered, middle-aged woman is easily recognized for the white lightning-like marks radiating from her temples to her jawline—a side effect of the prototype telepathy-inducing procedure that she helped to create. Polite and personable, she is comfortable talking to nobles, priests, or peasants with appropriate language and a light sense of humor.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Symbol: Three cylindrical chimes hanging from a horizontal bar

Motto: Carry the message of truth and understanding forward so it is heard and remembered

Badge of Membership: A metal amulet incorporating three tiny chimes

Member Benefits: In lieu of taking a new skill, members can undergo training and special treatments that grant them +3 to Armor against sound-based attacks or +3 to Armor against mental attacks that inflict Intellect damage. Another option in lieu of taking a new skill is psychic training augmented by an injection of

Farspeaking pylon, page 158

The League, page 248

Bodrov, page 138

Convergence, page 216

Jagged Dream, page 218



Uhlish: *level 5, diplomacy and understanding numenera as level 6*

Telepathic, page 60

Psychic communique, page 285

Sonic hole, page 287

Telepathy implant, page 287

Clock of Kala, page 206

nanobots, which gives the member the Telepathic esotery (the character must pay the normal cost for using the esotery). The injection creates a white lightning-like pattern on the recipient's skin about 25 percent of the time (much less often than occurred during the initial attempts). Members with this esotery can contact each other out to long range instead of short range. If provided with the correct materials by a member, the group can build (or provide the plans for) common kinds of sonic and telepathic cyphers and artifacts such as psychic communiques, telepathy implants, and sonic holes.

THE SAGUS ORDER

In the city of Sagus Cliffs, in a part of the world called Greater Garravia that lies southeast of the Clock of Kala, lives a clave of Aeon Priests who venerate the numenera and the pursuit of knowledge. However, these priests do not use their knowledge to help others, but to benefit themselves and serve the interests of their city and country. They still call themselves Aeon Priests, though they do not know of or recognize the authority of the Amber Pope. The priests in Sagus Cliffs care little about what scholars outside their city do or think. Their outlook and philosophy are much like those of the Aeon Priests of the Steadfast before Calaval united them into the Order of Truth. Despite these differences, both organizations—separated by the vast land that they both call "the Beyond"—are quite interested in whatever exotic knowledge their distant counterparts have discovered.

The few people in the Steadfast who know of these priests call them the Sagus Order to differentiate them from the Order of Truth. The Amber Papacy denies any connection between the two organizations. The Sagus Order is an example of what Aeon Priests would have been like before the Amber Papacy—somewhat amoral and without the overarching goal of benefitting civilization.

The priests of the Sagus Order use and maintain the Levy Machine, a numenera installation that creates biological humanoid automatons called levies that keep peace within the city of Sagus Cliffs. The machine extracts chemicals and bodily substances from people, which manifest as a thick grey sludge, and uses this raw material to create the levies. As the levies last only about a year before decaying, the priests are always on the lookout for more donations. To become a citizen of Sagus Cliffs requires making a one-time donation to the Levy Machine (which is rumored to take a year off of the donor's life).

Because the Sagus Protectorate experiences a lot of dangerous weather and sees an unusually high amount of influence from transdimensional sources (including a nearby interdimensional creature-city called the Bloom), the Sagus Order has extensive experience and data relating to these things. Their work with the Levy Machine and its automaton soldiers likewise makes them experts on the creation and maintenance of biological constructs. PCs dealing with an insurmountable problem relating to weather, ultraterrestrials, or biologicals may find answers in the Tower of Truth, the headquarters of the Sagus Order. Likewise, the order might send agents into the Steadfast, giving PCs the opportunity to join this organization and experiment with some of the darker, stranger, selfish aspects of the numenera.

MEMBERS OF NOTE

Sagus Order priests wear dark-colored, cowled robes with a lighter colored design on the shoulders and upper chest. They're mostly focused on their research and the duties of providing levies to the city, and prefer to deal with visitors quickly. They are practical people and eager to trade their stockpile of cyphers for services such as expeditions. In combat, they use cyphers or artifacts to defend themselves and call nearby levies to attack their opponents.

Min: Tall and thin, this man's face is decorated with thin oily lines that look like letters in an unknown language. He dresses only in black and is the nominal leader of this group of Aeon Priests, handling all interactions with the city government and personally maintaining the Levy Machine.

Salimeri: This tall, stately woman is easily exasperated by beings of lesser intelligence and anyone she considers "imperfect," and prone to make unkind generalizations about them. She has questions about various prior-world ruins near the city, and believes that the knowledge to be found there will help her achieve a higher status within the order.

Min: *level 6, diplomacy as level 7*

Salimeri: *level 5, understanding numenera as level 6*

Biological: A partially or completely living biological construct crafted for a specific purpose.

Levy: *level 6; Armor 3*

For more information on the Sagus Protectorate, Sagus Cliffs, and the Bloom, see Torment: Tides of Numenera—The Explorer's Guide.

Beleazar: This man is thin, frequently fidgets, and is easily startled. His area of interest is biological creatures that have synth parts, and although his knowledge is extensive in that area, it mostly stems from dissecting dead specimens. There are many questions about living organisms (and how they interface with machines) that he can't answer.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Symbol: Square entwined in four-lobe design

Motto: Glory to the originators of truth and understanding, and may their lessons bring us to greatness

Badge of Membership: Pin, amulet, or tattoo of symbol

Member Benefits: In lieu of taking a new skill, members can undergo a procedure that grants them +2 to Armor against interdimensional effects and creatures from other dimensions. Members who can select a follower are able to select an inferior levy as a follower; the levy will degenerate back into goo after about a year and will attempt to return to Sagus Cliffs before this time so it can be recycled (allowing the member to select another inferior levy as a replacement). The organization may rent additional levies to members in good standing, typically at the cost of a useful level 4 artifact for each biological needed.

OTHER NOTABLE ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations have a connection with the Order of Truth. Although they are not technically splinter groups, and in some cases they are rivals or enemies of the order, their origin, membership, or allegiance ties back to the Order of Truth in some way. Note that organizations described in *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny* fit into one or more of these categories, such as the Angulan Knights, the Convergence, and the Order of Healing.

Spoiler Alert: The following section contains sensitive information that PCs should discover during gameplay (spoilers for published adventures and secrets the GM may want to use in a Numenera campaign). If you are a player, you should skip reading the rest of this chapter.

CABAL OF WHISPERS

This group is a network of shady traders, excommunicated Aeon Priests, spies, and other ne'er-do-wells who harness numenera (which they call "dark magic" and "demon binding") to gain power for themselves. They have a strong presence in many large cities, including Charmonde in Navarene.

Beleazar: *level 5, understanding biological and cybernetic numenera as level 6*

Sagus Order priest: *level 5; calls groups of levies to defend; otherwise see Aeon Priest,* Numenera Discovery, *page 264*

Inferior levy: *level 4; Armor 2*

Angulan Knights, page 217

Convergence, page 216

Order of Healing, page 247



"It is disappointing that the rigorous criteria we use to test applicants to the order still sometimes fail to weed out people of inferior quality, who then go on to betray our goals or use our knowledge for their own personal benefit."
—Jshang, archbishop of the Beyond

Extortion, protection rackets, and fencing stolen goods are the mainstays of the Cabal of Whispers. Other opportunities are also exploited, depending on whether they're judged to be worth the investment. Much of the numenera they use is dangerous, such as having severe side effects or indiscriminately affecting innocent people, and the Order of Truth tries to stamp out their operations whenever the cabalists are discovered. Unfortunately, as many of its members used to be part of the order, the Cabal has a slight advantage in knowing their enemy's tactics and abilities.

For more information on the Cabal, see *Numenera Character Options 2*, page 84.

COUNCIL OF KRAIN

Just under two centuries ago, a series of open wars in the Steadfast convinced some Aeon Priests that the way to end conflict in the region was for the Order of Truth to take on more power and authority. They wanted to use their knowledge and the numenera to force peace treaties between the leaders of the nearby countries, threatening to withdraw their support (and the technological power at their disposal) if their demands were not met. The head of this faction was a charismatic older man named Krain, and other influential Aeon Priests who agreed with this philosophy pushed their agenda upon some of the weaker countries of the Steadfast, who agreed to slightly unfavorable terms. Bolstered by these successes and enjoying the power and influence they had achieved, Krain and his supporters pooled their resources to create and demonstrate bizarre and subtle numenera weapons and shields in the hopes of gaining leverage, not only against the stronger countries, but also against others in the order who preferred a gentler approach to politics.

Krain died of natural causes before seeing his group achieve its full potential, but his protégé Gorets was later chosen to be the Amber Pope, taking the name Acumen II. Unfortunately, he had made questionable choices in his ascent to power, and more to hold onto his office, and he was removed from his seat by the order when these things were discovered. Gorets died in disgrace, and his offenses stained the other followers of Krain (none of whom held any significant office after that). The faction faded into obscurity, but their knowledge of numenera war implements was said to be extensive and dangerous.

For more information on Acumen II and one of his crimes, see *Slaves of the Machine God*.

THE ORDER OF FLAGELLANTS AND AUSTERITIES

This heretical group of zealots originated as a hermetic and monastic cloister of Aeon Priests who dedicated themselves to study and contemplation of the numenera. A century ago they changed their focus after becoming infected with a self-replicating computing lattice that links their psyches together, and now they seek to cleanse the world of "sins" such as cybernetics, nanomachines, and reliance on the numenera. Obviously this puts them at odds with Aeon Priests (and people in general), and those outside the group now refer to them as the Scourges. Individual members can be kind and peaceful, but in groups it is easy to trigger a reflexive hostile response that is reinforced through their psychic network, creating a gang of adrenaline-fueled maniacs willing to break cyphers and tear out numenera implants with their bare hands—which also exposes their foes to infection by the same lattice that links Scourges together. Fortunately,

the lattice originated in Greater Garravia, and there have not yet been any reports of infected individuals in the Steadfast.

For more information on the Order of Flagellants and Austerities, see *Torment: Tides of Numenera—The Explorer's Guide*, page 109.

THE PACT OF JARASH

An Aeon Priest named Jarash was a naturalist who studied and documented the strange creatures of the Ninth World. Originally he worked alone, but over time his essays and papers spread by hand and by word of mouth through the Order of Truth and far beyond, drawing like-minded people who wanted to study, explore, and catalogue with him. The group became known as the Claw of Wisdom and published a bestiary of known creatures. When one member accidentally called an enormous creature to their headquarters, Jarash made a pact with it, offering himself to spare the others, and the beast left, never to return. The surviving members renamed their group the Pact of Jarash to honor him and opened their doors to new members.

The organization remains on good terms with the Order of Truth. The two groups share information, and Pact members respect the decrees of the Amber Pope.

For more information on the Pact, see *Numenera Character Options 2*, page 90.

ORSTENIA'S CLAVE

About a century ago, an Aeon Priest named Orstenia Myal came to prominence within the Order of Truth. She was blessed with great insight about the numenera, especially in the construction of automatons, and there was talk that she was Calaval himself returned in a new form. Her admirers suggested that she should be the next Amber Pope, but she disappeared suddenly and mysteriously, and was never heard from again. Rumors persisted that she was crafting some great work in a remote location or researching the numenera in a dimension of the mind, or that she had transcended human limitations and joined with the datasphere. Ambitious and talented Aeon Priests wondered how to contact her and join her hidden clave, help her research, and benefit from her success and reputation. Some put together expeditions to track down where she might have gone, but none were successful and some never returned.

After a few years with no news, her would-be followers gave up on these hopes, and her legacy was forgotten. About once a decade, a student or historian in the Order of Truth finds references to her in an old book and people talk about her for a short time, but nothing comes of it except wild speculation of what she might have accomplished if she had remained in the Steadfast.

For more information on Orstenia Myal, her goals, and where she actually went, see *Slaves of the Machine God*.



CHAPTER 14

SAMPLE SEMBLAGES

Numenera Discovery and *Numenera Destiny* present countries and small communities to use in a campaign, most of which include Aeon Priests working together on strange projects. This chapter presents four sample semblages without specifying what communities they are associated with, allowing the GM to place them anywhere they want in a Numenera campaign. The GM can also use them as claves, with no changes needed.

Each sample semblage has suggestions for how those Aeon Priests might interact with and influence their associated community, but the specific details are left to the GM. Therefore, none of these semblages appear on a Ninth World map. Their goals and resources mean they can be located anywhere the GM wants to place them, whether a walled-off compound in a city like Qi, at the heart of a tiny village in the Steadfast, or working in complete isolation in the Beyond. Likewise, the GM can decide where the group's loyalties (or its leaders' loyalties) lie, whether with the Order of Truth itself, a faction within the order, a splinter group, or even a rival organization such as the Convergence.

Splinter and Heretical Groups, Chapter 13, page 117



Convergence, page 216



Plans, page 135

Each sample semblage has a specific list of needs and problems, which can be opportunities for the PCs to interact with the Aeon Priests there. In other words, these are interesting locations for use in a Numenera campaign. The GM should keep in mind that some (perhaps many) semblages and claves are self-reliant and don't require help from knowledgeable explorers—which makes them uninteresting for a campaign narrative, and therefore this book won't waste space describing them. (They might be good for trading and identifying numenera the PCs bring back to civilization, but they don't have an impact on what the PCs do next.)

Each sample semblage has the following statistics:

Population: This includes the number of affiliated Aeon Priests and anyone else critical to the work done there (including apprentices and guards, but not local people hired to do labor or other simple tasks).

Members of Note: The names of any notable NPCs, such as the leader and the ones most likely to interact or travel with the PCs. Individual entries for these NPCs can be found later in the description.

Areas of Research: A short summary of what sort of work is done there, such as "breeding better livestock" or "curing disease."

Resources Available: In addition to any cyphers, artifacts, iotum, or other resources the Aeon Priests have available for sale or trade, this section includes unique numenera or services that only this location or its members can provide. Further details about these resources appear later in the description. If the semblage lists a cypher or artifact as available, the priests probably can teach the PCs the plan for how to craft it.

Resources Needed: A short list of materials the semblage needs to continue or expand its work, such as skilled labor, specific iotum, certain cyphers, expertise in a particular field of study, test subjects, or explorers willing to undertake a dangerous expedition. Further details about these needs (if necessary) appear later in the description.

Member Benefits: As with the organizations in *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny*, this section describes any specific benefits available to anyone allied with the semblage (this is usually in addition to the general benefits from joining the Order of Truth).

The Weird: This section gives two or more ways to bring the semblage into the campaign narrative with the PCs.

SEMBLAGES OVERVIEW

These semblages are all part of the Order of Truth, so any member of the order should treat them as an ally (although not necessarily trusting them so much as to spill all of their secrets and hand over all of their resources). The GM may treat each semblage as a small organization, requiring PCs to take specific steps to join that group.

Batayei: An erratic portal to the future (or an alternate timeline) spits out useful items, but failing to send those items back in the future-present causes deadly temporal feedback.

Toreesh: The priests control a powerful installation that can heal wounds and increase intelligence, but it has an odd side effect.

Ugran: The priests have created a gas that controls moods, and some of them are testing it on local villagers without their knowledge.

Yex: A complex numenera device can make unpredictable alterations to livestock on a genetic level, with positive, negative, and strange results.

BATAYEI

Batayei is a semblage of three Aeon Priests and a handful of apprentices dealing with an erratically functioning portal that connects to alternate timelines, a dimension where time runs backward, or some combination of the two. Initially they appreciated the information and numenera that their future counterparts were able to provide, but now the portal has grown beyond their control and is at risk of causing destructive temporal distortions.

BATAYEI STATS

Population: 7

Members of Note: Karstrene, Otsmit, Rellin

Areas of Research: Dimensional apertures, time travel

Resources Available: Mastesh pinpoint portal, phase changer, phase disruptor, time dilation nodule (offensive and defensive)

Resources Needed: quantium, thaum dust, philosophine, cosmic foam, branar lens, orthogonalium fiber, hyperfrustrum compressor

Member Benefits: Anyone allied with the semblage can study its library of knowledge about dimensions and dimensional travel, which includes maps of many adjacent dimensions and descriptions of many ultraterrestrials. Assuming that the portal-creating device is repaired or stabilized, anyone in good standing with the semblage can use it to receive information, a cypher, or an artifact from their future or alternate selves, but they must remain nearby (at the time of the future portal) so they can respond to the call from their past selves. Anyone who violates this rule is banned from the semblage, as the priests can't risk starting the entire chain reaction of timeshatters again.

Phase changer, page 284

Phase disruptor, page 284

Time dilation nodule, page 288

Quantium, page 112

Thaum dust, page 112

Philosophine, page 115

Cosmic foam, page 115

Branar lens, orthogonalium fiber, hyperfrustrum compressor: page 126

BATAYEI OVERVIEW

A few months ago, the three priests of Batayei reassembled a prior-world installation they found dismantled in a nearby ruin. Activating it created a transdimensional portal to somewhere else, a place in which apparent duplicates of the priests greeted them and handed over a cypher that one of the Batayei priests was carrying. The cypher was more powerful than the version from the present, but none of the people on either side of the portal could explain how it had been modified, only that the duplicate priests remembered receiving it a few hours ago through the very same portal.

NEW IOTUM FROM BUILDING TOMORROW

The Numenera book *Building Tomorrow* introduces a dozen additional types of iotum, most of which are used in plans to create living crafted entities called biologicals. The following is a short summary of these iotum. For more details, including their io values, specifics about their special uses, and plans requiring these iotum, see *Building Tomorrow*, chapter 6.

Immorcell colony (level 1): A cluster of "immortal" cells that don't age in their current state. Used as a base material in most biological crafting. Can be used to aid healing tasks.

Branar lens (level 2): A circular synth disc that generates strange particles and monitors their behavior to provide information about neighboring dimensions. Used as a beacon, transmitter, or even a lure, projecting a clear signal into a specific dimension or across several nearby dimensions.

Cognitive weave (level 2): A cluster of tangled threads connected by narrow neural fibers wrapped in a moist elastic gel. Acts as a very simple brain that can be programmed for specific tasks, much like a limited automaton. Can be used to help train beasts and for healing tasks to repair Intellect and nerve damage.

Mother marrow (level 2): A vivid red or green paste sandwiched between layers of beige or grey synth. Used to build bones, carapaces, and other hard internal and external structures. Can be used to heal broken bones or create temporary armor.

Optogenetic muscle (level 2): Striated red and white fibers stretched across a metal frame. Used to create muscle tissue for biological creations. Can be used to temporarily augment a creature's strength or heal muscle-related injuries.

Metabolic vesicle (level 3): A pillow-like mass of thin layers of specialized cells wrapped in a protective waxy coating. Used to give biological creations the ability to eat food to produce the energy they require to function. Can be used to treat diseases or poison, or process organic material into a human-edible slurry.

Allophene nodule (level 4): A narrow-aperture synth torus with a pumping and filtering mechanism. Used to adapt a biological creation to extreme environments. Can be used to treat damage from extreme environments.

Orthogonalium fiber (level 4): A tall, flexible synth conduit filled with hairy gold and red threads that radiate heat or cold. Used to protect a crafting project from being knocked off course or expelled from its intended dimensional location. Can be used to restrain phasing or pandimensional creatures.

Fecundity matrix (level 5): A starfish-like synth assembly containing pockets of specialized cells. Used to give a biological construct the ability to reproduce sexually or asexually. Can be used to sustain an egg or similar immature specimen.

Pluripotent mass (level 5): A cylindrical cluster of glass tubes filled with dormant cells. Used as an adaptive base material for most advanced biological crafting. Can be used to clone creatures.

Hyperfrustrum compressor (level 6): A series of hollow synth or glass tubes connected at each end by a smooth metal sphere. Used to simplify travel to other dimensions and times.

Neurofilament plexus (level 8): A mass of branching nerves resembling an internally glowing brain with blurry edges. Used like cognitive weave to create biological creatures with human-level intelligence. Can be used to help train beasts and for healing tasks to repair Intellect and nerve damage.







All six priests concurred that the portal connected the present to a point a few hours in the future, and that the three priests on the near (past) side of the portal should follow through with the far (future) priests' half of the actions and conversation in a few hours' time to avoid creating a paradox or split timeline. The three priests waited a few hours for their past selves to initiate the portal (which they did), handed over the unmodified cypher to their past selves, explained the situation to their past selves, and therefore safely closed the time loop. Pleased with their results, they continued with their experiments, adjusting the device's controls to reach farther and farther into the future, until they had successfully reached a point about seven weeks ahead of the present, and continued to receive information and upgraded technology from their older counterparts.

Unfortunately, the priests of Batayei didn't fully understand the machine or the forces they were dealing with. Sometimes they'd create a portal and their future counterparts would be slightly different in ways that couldn't be accounted for by the passage of time—different gender, different abilities, different appearances, and so on. Sometimes their future selves would give them items the priests didn't have in the past, sending them scrambling before the deadline to find where those items were so they could close the time loop without a paradox. Some items they could not find and were unable to send back to their past selves, causing what they dubbed a timeshatter—a reality-shattering effect that cut flesh and bone like synthsteel knives. In one incident, a priest named Elfor vanished when the portal opened, replaced immediately by a different person named Rellin—one who remembered the other priests but was a complete stranger to them, and whose future counterpart already existed on the other side of the portal.

Because of these setbacks, the priests decided to stop their experiments for a while until they could discover the source of the errors. However, the machine began to activate on its own, creating portals at random intervals and to random

points in the future (but still within about seven weeks of the present), often with complete strangers offering news and items to the past. Attempts to harm the machine generated time ripples that immediately repaired it, sometimes in a more powerful configuration. Now the priests are scrambling to find a way to permanently deactivate the machine before the timeshatters kill everyone in town and expand to obliterate the Ninth World.

So far, the timeshatters and strange temporal effects have been limited to the boundaries of the semblage itself, and nobody in town seems to be aware that there is any problem. In the rare cases where townsfolk ask for the missing priest (who vanished and was replaced by a new person), the other members of the semblage say that Elfor left to explore a numenera ruin. But as the unexpected portals become more frequent and the materials sent from the future become more exotic and hard to find, the priests are aware that they are running out of time and putting countless lives at risk.

Karstrene: *level 3, understanding numenera as level 4*

Otsmit: *level 4, understanding numenera as level 5*

Rellin: *level 4, understanding numenera as level 6*

MASTESH PINPOINT PORTAL (CYPHER)

Level: 1d6 + 3
Usable: Complex device
Effect: Creates a momentary miniature portal resembling that created by the Mastesh Device. A random cypher carried by the user falls out of the portal and is +1 level higher than the current version of the cypher carried by the user (or +2 levels higher if the pinpoint portal cypher is level 8 or higher). At some point in the near future (anywhere from ten minutes to several hours), a similar portal will appear adjacent to the user, who must send the original cypher back through it within one round. Otherwise, the portal collapses and creates a timeshatter that inflicts 10 points of damage (ignores Armor) to everyone within immediate distance and destroys the original cypher.



MEMBERS OF NOTE

Karstrene: The youngest member of this semblage is a tall, thin young man with wild hair and a cheerful disposition. He responds to questions he can't answer with an accepting shrug and defers to his colleagues, both of whom are older and more experienced than he. When idle, he fiddles with a white angular oddity that produces lights and sounds.

Otsmit: The leader of this group is a remarkably handsome man, with a sharp beard, strong hands, and a piercing gaze, but now he always looks tired and is developing worry lines on his brow. He is very observant and was the first to notice small differences in their counterparts across the portal, in particular a different configuration of his facial hair. Otsmit is very intelligent but now realizes he is over his head and messing with forces he can't control.

Rellin: This woman is a researcher from beyond the portal who appeared after a previous member, Elfor, vanished during

a portal incident. She is short, with long hair and a square build, prone to telling rambling stories about cooking. Where she comes from, there was no Elfor, and she had been working with Karstrene and Otsmit for years, so she likes and trusts them, but the other two Aeon Priests remember their missing colleague and are still adjusting to her presence.

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Dimensional Knowledge: The priests are familiar with most kinds of dimension-spanning cyphers and artifacts. All tasks to identify these things or ultraterrestrials are eased by two steps. They have a collection of notes on rumors and stories about numenera ruins that connect to other dimensions, and can give directions to the general area of these known locations.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The Mastesh Device: This prior-world machine is in several pieces, altogether taking up about as much space as four large beds. The parts are connected by cables, conduits, and a patchwork mess of synth and metal, most of which are of recent construction. When activated, the machine vibrates noisily and creates a space within a close distance of the device that begins to distort like pieces of jagged glass flowing upward out of a drain. The center of this distortion resolves into a portal a few hours into the future that lasts for up to one minute. Under normal conditions, the future counterparts of the people present are waiting on the far side of the portal, and both sides can communicate through audio and images (such as speech or holding up signs) before the portal closes on its own. After creating a portal, the machine cannot be used for the next twenty to thirty hours.

RESOURCES NEEDED

Exotic Iotum: The priests have used up most of their iotum supplies that relate to time and dimensions, and they welcome the opportunities to trade for more. It isn't entirely clear if the Mastesh Device is connecting to the future, another dimension, a parallel timeline, or something

USING THE MASTESH PORTAL

Creatures from the future side of the portal can send one or two objects no larger than 1 foot (30 cm) square back into the past. If the object is a cypher or artifact, its level increases by 1 (to a maximum of level 10); this means that the characters in the past now have the original item and the improved item in their possession. The portal then closes and the device shudders and stops. A few hours later, the machine starts up on its own and creates a distortion like pieces of jagged glass flowing down a drain, which resolves into an aperture into the past at the time it was activated. If the original, unmodified item is sent through the portal, the time loop is safely ended and the portal closes without any problems. If the original item isn't sent through, or has been damaged, used, or modified, the glasslike distortion of the portal momentarily expands in a destructive wave called a timeshatter, inflicting 10 points of damage (ignores Armor) to everyone in the past and present within a short distance of the portal. Deviations from the safe procedure (including not having the same people present on both sides of the portal, or expanding the reach of the portal beyond a few days) increase the timeshatter's damage, its affected area, and the likelihood that the machine starts to activate on its own.

Touching the portal is harmful to organic creatures, inflicting 5 points of damage (ignores Armor). Passing through the portal causes immediate death; the priests haven't tested this, but they were told it was so by a set of future selves. Automatons are not harmed but are not upgraded like cyphers or artifacts.

stranger, so the priests don't know what sort of adjustments to make and therefore what materials they need.

A New Perspective: Although the Aeon Priests aren't quite grasping at straws, they've reached the limit of their understanding and are growing desperate for ways to attempt to fix this problem. They appreciate any offers of help from qualified and knowledgeable people, especially if their expertise relates to dimensions and time. A PC with the ability to travel to or view other dimensions (whether using an item or a character ability) could provide enough insight to give the priests a clear direction for their efforts.

Plan seed, page 136

THE WEIRD

A Call to Action: The priests contact the PCs through the datasphere, telepathically, or with a remote-messaging device, desperately asking them to come to their semblage within a certain time period and bring specific cyphers or artifacts (items the PCs may or may not have at the time of the message). If the PCs go to Batayei, the priests explain the portal problem—the PCs were on the other side of an unexpected portal, and the items the priests asked for are the lower-level counterparts of the upgraded items the future characters gave them. The PCs must decide whether to remain in the area for a while so they're available when the portal opens (which might be days or weeks, depending on their travel time to the semblage). If they decide to help but don't have the items in question, they must find or craft them in time to send them through the portal into the past.

A New You: If a player has been considering switching characters or is unsatisfied with their focus, the Batayei portal might be the in-game explanation for making that change, especially if that player and the GM are the only ones who know about the plan to swap or modify the character. Under these circumstances, the PCs visit the semblage, an unexpected portal opens, the original PC vanishes, and a different version of that character on the other side of the portal becomes the new PC. Alternatively, the new PC might be an imposter and the other characters have to figure out how to find and retrieve the original (who might be trapped in an extradimensional prison, lost in a fold of spacetime, or saved as a "backup" in a quantum matrix).

Hidden Codes: At least one group of future people the priests have communicated with on the other side of the portal assure them that there is a solution to the erratic portals, but some sort of interference is distorting their attempts to explain what to do. Rellin theorizes that the answers have been embedded in the cyphers those individuals sent back through the portal—a coded message, much like a plan seed, stored in a form that the portal doesn't distort. However, Rellin hasn't been able to discover the message, and decoding it might be very difficult (requiring knowledge from the datasphere or the assistance of an intelligent machine).

TOREESH

Toreesh is a semblage of a dozen researchers and support staff who control a powerful healing artifact they call the Incubator. Having unlocked most of its secrets, they are generous in using it on themselves and the townsfolk living nearby, but a strange side effect means that other people are hesitant to use it except when in mortal peril.

TOREESH OVERVIEW

The priests of Toreesh have spent two decades figuring out how to use an artifact called the Incubator that can heal broken flesh and improve how organic minds work. Discovered by a genius nano named Zayos, the Incubator scans a creature for damage and automatically repairs it. If given the proper iotum as seed material, it can even upgrade a creature's brain, perhaps because its model of an ideal healthy brain is based on Zayos's own mind and lesser minds seem damaged or crippled by comparison.

Zayos discovered the Incubator in a ruin far away, and recognized that it could be used to mend flesh if the proper codes were

TOREESH STATS

Population: 12
Members of Note: Zayim, Dogrou
Areas of Research: Healing, genetics, surgery
Resources Available: Automender plan, catholicon, rejuvenator
Resources Needed: Cognitive weave, immorcell colony, neurofilament plexus
Member Benefits: Anyone in good standing with the semblage can use the Incubator for healing at no cost, and can donate 14 units of cognitive weave or 1 unit of neurofilament plexus to have the Incubator augment their intelligence.

entered on its glass panels. He brought it to this semblage for further study, as he had passed through the outlying settlement before and heard tales of their knowledge and useful cyphers. After months of tinkering and experimentation, Zayos and the priests were able to activate it, not realizing that the machine had sampled tissue from its finder and used that information as a baseline for making repairs in the organic parts of anything placed within it.

Initial uses of the Incubator created minor changes in the appearance of the people it healed, making them look slightly like Zayos, which the priests assumed was a minor quirk. Successive uses on the same people increased these changes, with some repeat users looking like close relatives or near-duplicates of the nano explorer—which Zayos found rather embarrassing. Multiple uses also made it apparent that the Incubator was increasing the target's intelligence, which led to several uninjured members of the semblage deliberately using it on themselves and creating a group of priests who looked very much alike, adding to Zayos's embarrassment.

Zayos died a few years ago of old age (as there is only so much the Incubator can do to repair multiple systemic organ failures, especially using the genes of the very person whose affliction they're treating), but his son is part of the semblage and

Automender, page 154

Catholicon, page 276

Rejuvenator, page 286

Cognitive weave, immorcell colony, neurofilament plexus: page 126



Zayos was a man of average height and medium-dark skin, thick-limbed and slightly paunchy, with hazel eyes, a gap between his front teeth, and hair that turned a dark blond color (instead of grey) as he aged.

Lowered intelligence or cognitive development problems caused by an infection, genetic damage, or gestational contaminants are examples of things the Incubator can cure as part of its healing function.

Zayim: *level 3, understanding numenera as level 5*

Dogrou: *level 4, healing as level 5, understanding numenera as level 6*

Book, page 98

his daughter lives in town. As long as their supply of iotum remains secure, the semblage will continue to use the Incubator on anyone who needs healing. The materials for increasing intelligence are much rarer, so they limit this use to those who can pay for it. However, they have found that the Incubator's healing function can treat brain injuries and mental deficiencies caused by fetal or childhood development problems, so there are Zayos-imprinted children in the community who are essentially normal despite earlier limitations.

After twenty years of people being healed by the Incubator, the priests and townsfolk have grown used to having multiple people with Zayos's appearance, whom the locals call "the imprinted." The imprinted usually adorn themselves with unique jewelry, tattoos, and other identifying marks so that other people can tell them apart. A visitor to the town might see many similar faces and, rather than blame the numenera, assume that one family has a prolific number of offspring with a strong family resemblance to each other—which, in a way, is technically true.



MEMBERS OF NOTE

Zayim: This ambitious young man is the only son of Zayos and feels slightly resentful when people assume he is one of the imprinted. He considers himself superior to most people in town, and proudly wears his Aeon Priest garb and a crystal medallion he inherited from his father. He acts as if leading the semblage is his birthright (although that is not at all certain) and believes that he'll be the one to discover how to adjust or reverse imprinting with the Incubator. He is taller than his father was and weaves metallic ribbons into his hair. He is not imprinted (and it might have little effect on him in any case).

Dogrou: The current leader of Toreesh is a short woman with one green eye and one dark yellow eye. Tiny lights create circular patterns under the skin of her face and hands (including one on her forehead resembling a third eye). She is a skilled healer and insists that the other priests learn other ways to heal (such as herbal medicine and surgery) rather than relying on the Incubator to do the hard work for them. She is married to someone outside the semblage (a marriage of convenience and friendship with a farmer who grows many kinds of useful plants), and although she isn't an exceptional leader, she is liked and respected by her peers and the townsfolk. She is not imprinted.

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Healing: The priests have extensive notes about diagnosing and treating maladies and injuries, which all apprentices to the semblage are required to learn and copy. They have an asset on all healing tasks and also sell books of this knowledge.

Genetics: The priests have a good understanding of genetics and heredity, although they lack the technology to observe or manipulate genes (other than the Incubator). They have an asset on any task involving understanding these topics.

Surgery: The semblage spends much of its time working on improving surgical techniques, including invasive ones like appendectomies and removing tumors. Any healing task performed within the semblage gains an asset if it involves surgery of any kind.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The Incubator: This is a coffin-sized synth device covered in metal dials, glass screens, and apertures for tubes connected to small tanks of iotum, sugar water, and strange substances. When a creature is inside and the Incubator is activated, it heals them as if it were an enhanced automender.

If at least 14 units of cognitive weave or 1 unit of neurofilament plexus is fed into the device, it also permanently increases the creature's Intellect Pool by 1 point. After about five of these augmentations, the Incubator can no longer add to that creature's Intellect Pool, but the other healing effects still work.

The Incubator is imprinted with the genetic code of Zayos, the nano who first got it to work, and the Aeon Priests here have been unable to reverse or change that imprinting (which may not be possible at all). Using the Incubator is essentially replacing flesh in a creature with new tissue created from Zayos's genetic profile, so each time the Incubator is used—whether for healing or augmenting intelligence—the creature's appearance changes to more closely resemble him, much like if he were one of the creature's recent ancestors. After one use, the creature has a familial resemblance to Zayos. By the fourth or fifth use, they look almost identical to him.

For humans, this genetic imprinting usually doesn't affect any of the recipient's abilities (not even fertility, if a woman), but the changes are passed down to their offspring. For nonhumans (whether visitants, ultraterrestrials, or beasts such as gallen) it can have disastrous effects, creating a level 5 genetic disease in the creature from incompatible tissue, which even the Incubator can't cure (using it again makes the disease worse). Because of this imprinting disease, the Aeon Priests of Toreesh refuse to use it on anything other than humans except in extreme circumstances.

RESOURCES NEEDED

Organic Iotum: The machine is efficient in using the target creature's own flesh when possible, so it needs only a few units of immorcell colony every year to keep functioning. Cognitive weave and neurofilament plexus are still precious commodities, and the semblage is eager to trade for these materials.

Genetic Data: The priests have accepted the imprinting side effect on themselves, but they would like to find a way to repair or alter the Incubator so the imprinting doesn't occur. They are interested in any sort of numenera that enhances understanding of biological systems, connects to the datasphere, or stores genetic information from other humans.

THE WEIRD

The Shielded: Rarely, the Incubator doesn't change a person's appearance, even after multiple uses. The priests call these people "the shielded" and believe their ability to resist the imprinting effect might be the key to preventing it in others or reversing it entirely. Unfortunately, the only common factor among the shielded that the priests have been able to find so far is they have more skin moles than most other people in town. The priests haven't been able to test how to spread this immunity.

Variant Iotum: The semblage has acquired other kinds of organic iotum (particularly mother marrow and optogenetic muscle) and some of the priests want to see what using these materials as part of the healing process would do. So far, Dogrou has forbidden testing this on humans, citing ethical concerns and fearing that they might create inhuman monsters, but it is possible that a curious priest might defy her order and try it on themselves or a willing subject.

Automender, enhanced, page 154

Augmenting an NPC or other creature with the Incubator makes them smarter, but as NPCs don't have Pools, the effects of this augmentation should be determined by the GM on a case-by-case basis.

Mother marrow, optogenetic muscle: page 126

UGRAN

Ugran is a semblage of eight Aeon Priests and a few apprentices and guards who have been experimenting with a crystalline artifact that emits strange gases when stimulated with electricity. The gases affect minds in different ways, and the priests have been secretly testing their effects on villagers. Some of the priests have also started using the gases on other priests with differing opinions, and the semblage is at risk of turning away from the principles of the Order of Truth and becoming a place driven by greed and power.

UGRAN OVERVIEW

The priests of Ugran have spent decades examining and cataloguing unusual mineral structures discovered in a nearby mine (actually a buried crystalline prior-world ruin), saving those with cypher-like properties for research and trade. Last year the miners discovered a head-sized red spiky crystal that thrummed with power, and since then the priests have focused all of their efforts on figuring out what this device, dubbed the Heart of Ugran, can do.

Recently the priests had a breakthrough, finding that applying an electrical current to various spikes on the Heart made it emit colored gases. After the priests built a way to siphon and contain these gases, they began studying their composition and effects, and found that one of them (a pale yellow gas they call icterine) creates feelings of relaxation and calm. Their initial tests were on volunteer apprentices and guards, and after extensively testing the icterine gas to see if it was addictive or poisonous (it isn't), they subtly began using it on villagers to calm angry drunkards and defuse arguments before they became violent. The village elders quickly learned to call on the priests when things got out of hand.

UGRAN STATS

Population: 20
Members of Note: Hallem, Tharit, Leem, Cowm, Darit
Areas of Research: Mining, crystals, gas properties
Resources Available: Gas bomb, filtration mask
Resources Needed: Cognitive weave, psiranium
Member Benefits: Members can propose nondestructive experiments for the Heart of Ugran or any other devices that appear to have a resonant connection to it. The semblage is in charge of the mine and can grant salvaging rights to visitors. Members can browse their books cataloguing the hundreds of crystals found in the ruin (which include detailed descriptions of cyphers, artifacts, and oddities found there) and request specific materials or plans related to crafting crystalline devices. Members can also buy or trade samples of gas from the Heart and use them for their own experiments and crafting.

Gas bomb, page 280

Psiranium, page 113

Cognitive weave, page 126

GM intrusion: *The gas has a very different effect on a nonhuman creature (such as a visitant or beast companion), such as causing choking, hallucinations, or rage. See the gas bomb cypher for other ideas.*

FILTRATION MASK (ARTIFACT)

Level: 1d6
Form: Snug lower face mask with crystals along the jaw and chin
Effect: This artifact eases defense rolls against gas attacks by two steps (or provides immunity if the artifact is level 5 or higher).
Depletion: 1 in 1d10 (check each hour of use)

ICTERINE SPRAYER (CYPHER)

Level: 1d6
Wearable: Wrist-mounted gas sprayer
Effect: Sprays one creature in immediate range with a puff of icterine gas. A living target that breathes becomes calm and relaxed. For the next hour, in order to take any hostile action, the creature must succeed on an Intellect task with a difficulty equal to the cypher's level (though it can still defend itself and take non-hostile actions such as fleeing or calling for help). The creature also becomes more suggestible during this time, and attempts to persuade them are eased by two steps.



Unfortunately, one priest discovered that icterine gas also tends to make people very suggestible. He and the two other priests he shared this secret with have been subtly using it in the village to earn extra shins, curry favors, and seduce people. The trio knows that they'll eventually be caught and punished by the other priests, so they are planning to use icterine gas on the semblage's leaders to take over the group and ultimately the entire village, which will give them all the time they need to find ways to exploit and abuse the other gases from the Heart.

MEMBERS OF NOTE

Hallem: This man is in his late fifties, with a wild beard and bowed legs. With his tone and manner of speech, he could easily be mistaken for a prospector or mining foreman, but he is actually a very thorough scholar of the numenera. Hallem is pleased that they've found a good use for icterine gas, and he has been focusing his time on figuring out what the other gases produced by the Heart of Ugran can do.

Tharit: This woman has distinctive green hair, a plump figure, a kind face, and lots of polished crystal and stone jewelry. She enjoys working with her hands, including making jewelry and crafting elaborate sweet pastries using a secret family recipe. She is a pacifist and hopes to find a way to use the Heart's various gases to protect the village from internal and external threats.

Leem: Lean and somewhat attractive but a little awkward, this young man is personable but gives the impression that he's trying too hard to be likeable. He has tested the side effects of icterine gas enough to be confident in its results and reliability, and he brought Cowm and Darit into his confidence to help cover for his activities (and because he doesn't think he can take over the semblage on his own). Leem doesn't want to hurt anybody—he just thinks the world owes him, and that icterine gas is the world's way of giving him the key to get his due.

Cowm: Big, quiet, and homely, this young man spends much of his free time acting like Leem's bodyguard. He is intelligent and

Depending on when the PCs arrive at Ugran, the usurpers might be biding their time, in the middle of taking over, or finished with their plans. If the PCs return to Ugran at a later date, they may find a different group in charge and have a very different reception.

Tharit: *level 4, understanding numenera as level 5*

Leem: *level 3, persuasion and understanding numenera as level 4*

Hallem: *level 4, understanding numenera as level 5*

Cowm: *level 3, Might defense and intimidation as level 4*

"Anyone who knows anything knows that book learning is only the beginning. You have to get your hands dirty and experiment. It's like a priest who prays for the hungry but doesn't actually give them any food; words aren't as useful as doing the work."

—Hallem

enjoys the work of the semblage, but he is somewhat lazy and sticks around mainly because it's easier than being a laborer in the mines. He likes Leem's plan because controlling the villagers (many of whom made fun of him when he was growing up) means he'll have to do even less work.

Darit: *level 3, understanding numenera as level 4*

Darit: Soft-faced and awkward, seemingly all elbows and knees, Darit inherited their greenish hair from their mother, Tharit. Reasonably smart but lacking initiative, they became an Aeon Priest to make their mother happy. Darit tends to do what Leem suggests, but isn't fully on board with the big plan, worrying that their friend might push things beyond the scope of what they can control. Darit doesn't want things to get violent.

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Crystal Knowledge: The priests have examined many crystal-based artifacts and cyphers, so they have an asset on identifying and understanding any device or creature that is made of crystal or relies on pieces of crystal (including organic creatures with crystalline parts, like seskii).

What these other gases might be used for is up to the GM. They might be poisons, catalysts for crafting (easing certain crafting tasks when used as part of plans), embryonic life stages of gaseous creatures, or even base materials for creating certain kinds of iotum.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The Heart of Ugran: This head-sized red spiky crystal may be an artifact, a remnant of an automaton or creature, or something stranger. It constantly creates a low vibration that can be felt when touched and can be heard a few feet away. The dozen or so spiky protrusions jut outward in all directions and appear to be the same material as the central part. It does not react to sound, temperature, water, or physical force (it is at least as strong as stone crystal and has withstood being accidentally dropped from a height of several feet).

Running an electrical current across its surface (usually by attaching wires to different spikes) produces gentle jets of different-colored gases from a spike other than the one connected to the electrical current. Each activation produces about 1 gallon (4 liters) of gas, and the Heart needs about one day before it can create that gas again. About half of the discovered gases don't seem to have any effect at all, but the others produced have been identified as follows:

Aquamarine: Earthy and savory. Makes green plants wither but no effect on human flesh.

Black: Familiar but unidentifiable floral scent. Etches geometric patterns in most organic materials.

Clear: Faintly of urine. Makes stale air breathable again.

Deep violet: Scentless. Produces auditory hallucinations similar to knocking on a wooden door.

Icterine: Scentless. Creates calm and relaxation. (Hidden side effect of suggestibility.)

Jade: Scentless. Quickly decomposes in open air into a smelly, tarry sludge that causes choking and coughing.

Jade #2: Citrus. Creates mild numbness in the limbs and a feeling of fullness in the stomach.

Orange: Metallic. Burns brightly.

Scarlet: Sweet. Leaves a lingering wet residue.

Yellow: Acrid. Acidic, particularly against metal.

Amperage is the flow of electric charge. Voltage is the difference in electrical potential between two points. Of course, people in the Ninth World don't use these exact terms, but the Aeon Priests understand the difference. Using a water analogy, amperage is how much water flows through a pipe over time, and voltage is the difference in the pressure of the water at each end of the pipe.

RESOURCES NEEDED

Electricity: The semblage has a few devices that can produce small amounts of electricity, but they believe that stronger sources (higher amperage, higher voltage, or both) would let them unlock other

functions of the Heart. Any cypher or artifact that produces a lot of electricity is potentially useful for this purpose, either in its original form or as something the priests can modify to their specific needs. A character who Rides the Lightning or has similar electricity-based abilities may be useful as well.

Gas Storage: The semblage needs to safely store large volumes of gas for their research. They have about fifty containers of glass, synth, and metal that can be sealed without any gas escaping, but they've exhausted their local resources and want to buy or trade for other suitable containers. (Given the many varieties of numenera, other gas storage containers might be made of exotic materials, but the priests would need to test them, and for now they are focusing on reliable conventional materials.)

THE WEIRD

Pieces of a Whole: Most of the crystalline pieces mined from the nearby ruin are apparently lifeless and without any abilities, but some of them are cyphers, and a few are artifacts with as-yet unidentified powers. Some of these light up, make noise, or display other signs of activity when brought near the Heart of Ugran, but so far the priests have been unable to determine if they are supposed to fit together physically or be connected in some way—especially as these Heart-reactive pieces were found in different parts of the ruin than where the Heart was found. The crystalline ruin includes baubles and treasures in many colors, and being a similar color to the Heart doesn't seem to be a requirement for a device to react to it. Are these scattered parts of a disassembled machine? Discrete and dissected organs of a crystal-based lifeform? Extrusions from a multidimensional entity? The priests are proceeding cautiously and focusing on the properties of the Heart for now, but they are not averse to other experimentation if it can be done safely without depleting the Heart.

The Glittering Crust: One major hazard in the mine is pockets of glittering gas full of tiny crystals that are too small for the human eye to see. Breathing this gas infects a person with a disease the miners call the glittering crust, which coats their lungs with self-replicating crystals that cause shortness of breath, suffocation, and death within a few hours as the crystals grow to cover the throat, mouth, and nose. The priests have treatments to slow and stop the progress of this affliction, but not to reverse it, so anyone infected is rushed to the semblage as soon as possible. Depending on how early the disease is treated, victims might be lightly or moderately impaired for the rest of their lives. Most miners wear layers of cloth over their faces to protect against the crust, and they keep an eye out for the telltale sparkle of the dangerous gas.

Rides the Lightning, page 83



YEX

Yex is a semblage of a dozen Aeon Priests and an equal number of ranch hands who also serve as guards when needed. Out of a handful of artifacts and chemical procedures, they have built an installation called the Womb Tank to manipulate the genes of livestock, which they hope will lead to creating hardier and meatier animals. Their experiments have had some success, but not without some unusual side effects, and they're looking for more numenera and genetic material so they can produce better results.

YEX STATS

Population: 24
Members of Note: Glendemo
Areas of Research: Animal husbandry, genetics and inheritance
Resources Available: Gene sampler, ray emitter (paralysis)
Resources Needed: Immorcell colony, mother marrow, neurofilament plexus, optogenetic muscle, smart tissue
Member Benefits: Anyone allied with the semblage can use the Womb Tank, consult with any of the Aeon Priests on various topics, and review their journals about the work done here. They can buy or trade gallen, aneen, and other kinds of livestock at very reasonable rates. Although the priests mainly work with common livestock, their research can be used for most purely biological creatures, including beast companions (like from the Controls Beasts focus) and even humans or humanlike creatures. In lieu of gaining a new skill, members can petition Glendemo for permission to use the Womb Tank on themselves; if they succeed at a level 6 Intellect task, the machine gives them either one beneficial mutation and two cosmetic mutations, or one distinctive mutation and one cosmetic mutation (equal chances of either result).

Ray emitter (paralysis), page 285

Smart tissue, page 113

Immorcell colony, mother marrow, neurofilament plexus, optogenetic muscle: page 126

Controls Beasts, page 62

Beneficial mutations, page 398

Cosmetic mutations, page 402

Distinctive mutations, page 400

YEX OVERVIEW

The Aeon Priests of Yex have spent two generations studying trait inheritance in animals and trying to create better livestock for the people of their village. A few years ago, a traveling explorer traded them some numenera parts in exchange for supplies, and one of the priests managed to get those objects patched together into an erratically functioning installation that allows them more direct control over their livestock breeding experiments and accelerated how quickly each engineered fetus reaches maturity. They have been manipulating all of the possible controls on their installation (called the Womb Tank) and filling many journals with detailed notes on the results. Having leapfrogged their research and achievements dramatically, they are no longer satisfied with the small successes they managed in the past and are instead pushing their machine and supplies to the limit in an attempt to create super-livestock. Of course, there have been a few setbacks and side effects, but the priests are undaunted, and they feel they are on the cusp of a discovery that will enact a great positive change for the people of the Ninth World.

In the years before the Womb Tank, the semblage's breeding experiments had created wooly gallen with thick hair that helped protect them in the winter, burly gallen that provided slightly more meat than normal, and pox-free gallen that were very resistant to a common lung illness that killed many calves each

GENE SAMPLER (CYPHER)

Level: 1d6
Usable: Small handheld device
Effect: The device takes a sample of a touched creature's tissue and blood and safely preserves it for one month per cypher level. The cypher doesn't provide any inherent ability to use this material, but a knowledgeable person can extract the sample and use it to study or duplicate the touched creature's genes.

season. Descendants of these specimens are common in the village as well as in feral herds. With the advent of the Womb Tank, the priests have improved upon their earlier successes and have been breeding their winter gallen, meaty gallen (which produce about 10 percent more meat per animal), and sturdy gallen into the local domesticated population. They terminate and burn any hideous or dangerous animals before villagers see them.

MEMBERS OF NOTE

Glendemo: The leader of this semblage is a man in his late sixties, with close-cropped hair and a slight limp (in his youth, an angry gallen bull broke his left ankle and it healed poorly). Despite his declining health, he is not afraid to do hard work or get his hands dirty, and he is as likely to be found shoveling manure out of a pen as poring over journals full of Womb Tank data. Glendemo is soft-spoken but quietly intense, and he believes his colleagues are creating a future without hunger.

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Animal Husbandry: The priests have decades of experience in studying and documenting how to raise animals for meat, leather, eggs, and similar goods. Although their main focus is gallen, their knowledge applies just as well to most conventional animals of the Ninth World, including seskii, thumans, and other purely organic creatures. Any explorer whose pet or beast companion is sick, diseased, poisoned, or injured would be well served by the ranchers of Yex, and they can also answer questions and give advice about dealing with animals in the wild, such as unusually aggressive predators, insect infestations, and diseases carried by animals (such as malaria and rabies).

Genetics and Inheritance: The scholars of Yex understand genes, gene expression, and inheritance better than typical Aeon Priests. Their ability to directly manipulate genes is limited to the settings on the Womb Tank, but they may be able to identify the source of mutations, genetic diseases, and other gene-based abilities; suggest ways to suppress, augment, or otherwise treat these effects; and determine the likelihood that they'll be passed on to the next generation.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The Womb Tank: This complex patchwork device looks like a group of clear synth spheres about 7 feet (2 m) in diameter, attached to several numenera devices and containers of strange-looking fluids. Any of the resident priests will eagerly explain the installation to someone knowledgeable about the numenera, pointing out that a sample of animal tissue goes in the tank, the strange fluids are added in specific proportions for proper nutrition, and there are three primary devices where the user can alter specific settings. The priests have been able to determine that the first

Winter gallen: *level 2, resists cold as level 3*

Sturdy gallen: *level 2, resists disease and poison as level 3*

Glendemo: *level 4, biology and genetics as level 6*





Given the number of settings and the time it takes for each tissue to grow, the priests could try a new combination every week for four years and still not be done testing all of the more than 1,500 possible permutations of the Womb Tank.

device has ten settings (which in their journals they've noted by letter codes), the second has seventeen settings (which they've numbered), and the third has nine (which they've identified by the shapes on the device, such as circle, chair, fish, and so on). By adjusting the three devices, the installation affects the development of the tissue in the tank, presumably by changing, activating, or suppressing certain genes. After about a week, the tissue has matured enough that it can survive on its own and it is removed from the tank, much like a newborn calf.

Unfortunately, the priests don't know what the different settings signify, so they are methodically working their way through each one in order and noting the results. Repeating the same settings twice usually results in the exact same outcome (they attribute slight differences to variances in the original tissue sample, external temperature changes that altered the tank temperature, and so on), so the priests are confident that eventually they'll figure out which combination gives them exactly the sort of animal traits they want. However, they also know that some traits don't become evident until the animal reaches maturity, so they have to continue to monitor the animals to see what traits become evident (typically two years for a gallen).

The Womb Tank can also alter a mature creature that fits in the cylinder, but this still requires a week of time, sedation (to keep it still), and a breathing tube for the changes to be fully impressed into the target's genes.

RESOURCES NEEDED

Organic Iotum: The semblage's weekly experiments mean their rickety machine is often on the verge of depleting, and the priests have to use a lot of iotum to repair and maintain it, so they are always on the lookout for a new supply. They also need more common materials like sugar, salt, milk fat, and so on and can usually acquire them in the village, but a surplus is always welcome.

Fresh Genes: The priests would like to broaden their pool of animal genetic

samples in the hopes of discovering additional properties that remain latent in their own animals. They will trade oddities, cyphers, and meats to anyone who can provide them with live animals or new samples (perhaps by using a gene sampler). Likewise, they'd like to find traders or explorers willing to start a livestock exchange with another village, or at least transport a few of their successful breeds so that other people can benefit from their work.

THE WEIRD

Musical Moos: One of the experiments with the Womb Tank created a gallen that was more muscular than average (which the priests thought would be useful from a food-per-animal perspective), but upon maturity its vocalizations changed to a five-note arrangement. Even stranger, other gallen who heard it also began mooing in a musical way—apparently the musical mooing was a latent trait in most of the experiments, activated by the auditory stimulus of the instigating specimen. The original specimen was quickly isolated in an attempt to stop this phenomenon, but it spread to enough of the animals that most of the village's gallen now sing five- or seven-note tunes at each other, which can be heard well outside the village.

Weird Breeds: Some of the tank-grown animals of Yex turn out very strange. The most horrific and dangerous ones are destroyed (though they are described in the priests' journals), but some of the odder, harmless examples may still roam the fields around the village. In addition to various harmful mutations, distinctive mutations, and cosmetic mutations, the priests' notes include descriptions of the more unusual results of their experimentation (see The Strange Animals of Yex).

THE STRANGE ANIMALS OF YEX

The following are verbatim notes about some of the gene-manipulated livestock of Yex, written in the Aeon Priests' journals.

- Mimics human speech (doesn't appear to understand, just copying)
- Humanlike fingers growing from armpits (human gene contamination?)
- Cannibal
- Self-cannibal
- Weightless (drifted into the sky at age 41 days)
- Looks at you like it understands what you're thinking (mind reader?)
- Melted into fleshy goo (was still alive, poor thing)
- Swelled up and exploded into a cloud of stinking mist
- Spoke in an unknown language, then collapsed and died
- Its face looked like the face of whoever was looking at it, which turned out to be a psychic projection that ended when the animal was put down
- Eyes projected harmless (?) rays of darkness
- Back grew pustules that erupted into dead miniature versions of itself
- Sheds its hide like a snake, but in thin, brittle ribbons
- Can make a full rotation of its head
- Attracts a high number of moths (not a predation situation)
- Eyes swell up to three times normal size when agitated
- Grows large nodules of fatty tissue
- Vocalizations sound like a crying baby
- Smells and tastes like citrus fruit

As the Yex journals document every combination that's been tested so far and the results, it would be easy for an unscrupulous person to deliberately use tested settings to create monstrous, dangerous creatures. Such a person would need to take over Yex or steal the Womb Tank, of course.

Harmful mutations, page 398

Distinctive mutations, page 400

Cosmetic mutations, page 402



OTHER SEMBLAGE AND CLAVE IDEAS

The following are ideas for other semblages or claves that GMs can expand upon for their own campaigns. These might be separate places that the PCs discover, additional aspects of research happening in a known place, or a new discovery at a known place that leads to more opportunities and study.

Decaying Mind Data: The priests have a way to upload their minds into something like a data orb, and they make a practice of doing this before a priest dies. This allows them to speak to deceased members of the semblage and get firsthand accounts of their research and knowledge. However, one priest who was added to the collective a few years ago had started to suffer from dementia, and this has begun to corrupt all of the stored minds in the device. The PCs can use their expertise and the numenera to try to stop or reverse this corruption, which might entail uploading themselves into the device and battling representations of the devouring affliction.

Iron wind, page 135

Tamed iron, page 114



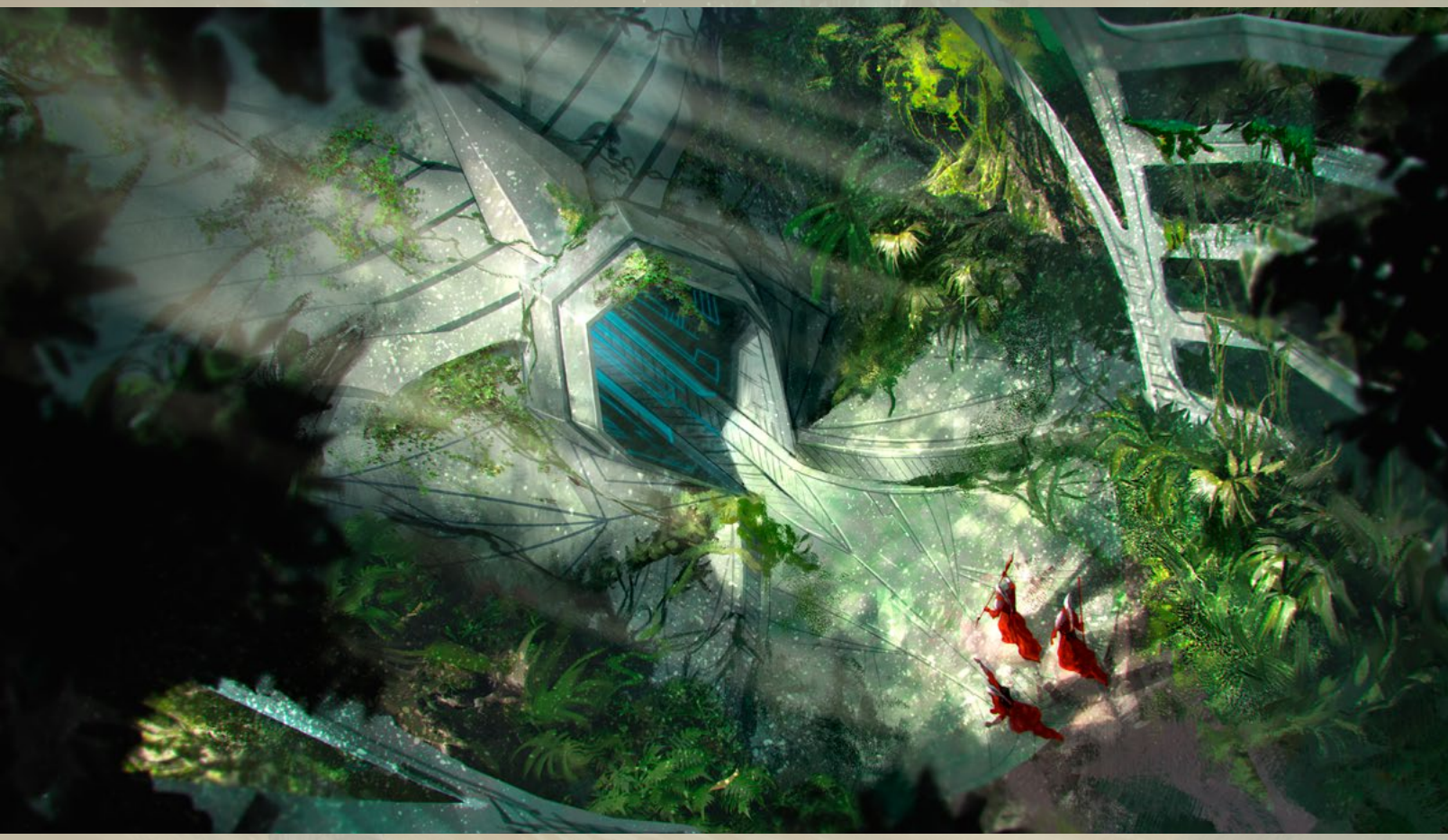
The Horror of Broken Bones: The priests have found a precise sound frequency that cuts bone but doesn't harm other materials. As a tool, it can precisely cut or sculpt bone without breaking the skin, allowing infection-free repairs of badly healed breaks and malformed limbs. If used as a weapon, it can easily disable humans and similar creatures, even through walls, without harming automatons and other creatures without bones (like sharks).

The People of the Green: The priests are working on fusing animal and plant genes to create animals that can supplement their food needs with sunlight, allowing resources to last longer and sustaining more domesticated animals in the same amount of grazing land. Current side effects include massive autoimmune shock triggered by various plant factors, being attacked by insects that normally eat only plants, and unpleasant tastes and textures in the animal meats.

Tuning the Iron Wind: Certain kinds of atmospheric nanobots are found to react to musical tones, attracting, repulsing, activating, or deactivating in response to the auditory signals. The priests hope this might be a path to defending settlements against the iron wind, but they would need a brave or foolish person to test it (or at least a sample of tamed iron to try it on).

The Flesh Lenses: A semblage has created a device that lets them look inside a person's body, as if the flesh and bone were invisible. They think they'll be able to use this device to diagnose diseases, gain a better understanding of how living organs work, and monitor fetuses for mutations and birth defects. Sometimes the creature's body parts remain invisible for days afterward, and local villagers are still trying to adjust to the corpse-like people walking around after being examined and healed by the priests.

PART 4:
ADVENTURES



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CHAPTER 15

ADVENTURES OVERVIEW

Part 4: Adventures presents new adventure material focusing on the Order of Truth and the actions of various groups of Aeon Priests.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Chapter 16 has seven adventure seeds that a GM can use as scenarios on the side or expand into full adventures.

Master of Time: Aeon Priests have reassembled or reactivated a device that can alter time and probability, but the hostile machine intelligence within it is using its powers to eliminate threats against it.

The Agris Hand: A floating three-fingered golden hand the size of an adult human has appeared near a settlement and is randomly killing people with blasts of energy, despite all attempts by Aeon Priests to move or repel it.

The Fire That Does Not Burn: Aeon Priests used a numenera device to extinguish a fire in town, but the effect continues to suppress all flames in the area.

Born of the Flesh: A strange curse makes people's limbs break off, then grow tendrils and attack other creatures.

Never Sleep: Something is giving everyone horrible, disruptive nightmares for days, and the local Aeon Priests have been using drugs to stay awake long enough to figure it out.

The Redding Clock: An ancient installation projects holographic symbols in the air, changing them at a specific rate that seems to be counting toward something, but sometimes jumping ahead—like it did just as the PCs arrived.

The Singing Spheres of Azom: Villagers find metal spheres that make musical tones, and Aeon Priests study the spheres to learn how to activate different effects.

COMPLETE ADVENTURES

Chapters 17 and 18 are complete adventures suitable for one or more full sessions of play.

Into the Amber Monolith: A group of Aeon Priests found a short-term doorway into the Amber Monolith, but they were ambushed and fled deeper into the structure. Now they need to be rescued before they run out of air in a sealed chamber.

Cerulean Hate: A telepathic god from a prior world awakens and begins possessing and killing people in town while the local Aeon Priests struggle to counter its attacks and find its hidden temple.



CHAPTER 16

ADVENTURE SEEDS

This chapter consists of seven short-length scenarios or adventure seeds that the GM can use as the basis of an encounter or game session. They are light on specific details to allow the GM to associate them with any clave or semblage (or any settlement that has an active group of Aeon Priests), which makes it easy to fit them into any campaign, regardless of where it takes place in the Ninth World.

To add more dangerous and exotic flavor to a scenario, have a nearby ruin surrounded by a numenera wasteland—an area littered with burned-out cyphers, cast-off pieces of consumed iotum, radioactive and poisonous minerals, nearly depleted power cells, and miscellaneous junk. Thousands of years of sunlight and erosion can turn these materials into an inherently hazardous environment that inflicts damage, causes mutations, hinders actions, or has even stranger effects. A wasteland has a level, a "hot zone" area where the effects are strong, and a weaker "warm zone" surrounding that area. Every hour a creature spends in a hot zone, it must make a defense roll (usually Might) against the level of the wasteland or suffer a harmful effect from the contamination there. The warm zone is safer—a creature only needs to roll once every five hours.

MASTER OF TIME

A group of Aeon Priests has reassembled or reactivated a machine that can alter time and probability, but it is also the source of a hostile machine intelligence that uses its abilities to eliminate threats and any nearby creatures it thinks aren't worthy enough to be its slaves.

DETAILS

The semblage found or was given parts of a device that they believed would allow them to look into the past, future, and alternate timelines. After acquiring several units of iotum that have abilities relevant to those functions (such as kaon dots and philosophine), the priests were able to repair the device and activate it. KOROS, the machine intelligence lurking in the device, bided its time and watched what the priests used it for—simple experiments examining recent events, future possible events, and alternative outcomes such as rolling dice. Disgusted by these simple creatures using its powerful technology for trivial observations, KOROS asserted control over its functions, disabled the priests, and extended its awareness into the nearby community. It has been using its powers to eliminate villagers who might be able to harm it, as well as "undesirable" ones who it considers useless for its plans.

KOROS is aware of multiple parallel timelines and can shift everything within a very long distance between these timelines. This allows it to take advantage of slightly different outcomes of ordinary events, in particular focusing on harmful outcomes of routine occurrences. For example, someone eating a meal might choke on a piece of



Kaon dot, page 113

Philosophine, page 115

KOROS: *level 7, understanding time and probability as level 8; Armor 1; tachyon ray causes paralysis for one minute or inflicts 7 points of damage on a creature in short range*

For more information on numenera wastelands, see Building Tomorrow, *page 156*

food instead of swallowing normally and die before anyone can help them. A mugger's bludgeon might rupture a blood vessel and cause someone to bleed to death instead of merely knocking them out. A swimmer's foot might get caught between two rocks, trapping them underwater so they drown instead of pulling free and getting safely back to shore.

KOROS can speak the Truth and several other languages, listening and speaking anywhere within the range of its senses.

SALIENT POINTS:

- In game terms, KOROS's ability to shift timelines is a GM intrusion. It uses them to make commonplace things suddenly turn deadly, and the presence of the competent PCs draws its attention. KOROS is intelligent enough to know that the PCs are likely to help each other, so it uses its abilities selectively, waiting for them to be alone and more vulnerable.
- This means the PCs are likely to acquire many XP in a short amount of time. Because KOROS is relentless, they'll probably need to spend a lot of XP on rerolls to keep themselves alive, and the GM should make sure the PCs don't exceed the 10 XP limit.
- When KOROS shifts the timeline, the affected creature gets a visual echo of the original timeline version of themselves performing the unaltered task, but that image quickly erodes into fractal fragments before vanishing entirely.
- KOROS can shift timelines about once per minute, and there are other people in the community that it is trying to eliminate, so there is a limit to how often it targets the PCs. But its attacks on the characters become more frequent the closer they get to its location and being able to shut it down.
- Character abilities, cyphers, artifacts, and iotum relating to spacetime will be especially useful in resisting KOROS's attacks. The GM should allow for creative uses of these things outside the existing scope of their descriptions, such as using a kaon dot to create a shield against timeline-shifting instead of using it to put a creature in stasis.
- Depending on how long KOROS has been active, there may be dozens or even hundreds of dead people in the community who were killed by "accidents." The survivors are terrified and have been unable to get through to the Aeon Priests for help. A few saw the echoes happening right before a person got hurt, but they can't explain the visual disturbances.
- It's likely that KOROS killed most of the Aeon Priests in the semblage, but it may have kept one or two alive (perhaps paralyzed with its tachyon ray) for some future plan.

Spending experience points, page 125

STARTING POINT

The PCs arrive at the settlement and find that many people are frozen in time and others have been experiencing deadly incidents of bad luck. (Alternatively, the PCs are in the settlement when the attack begins.)

THE WRAP-UP

It's unlikely that the PCs can talk KOROS into a peaceful resolution, but they might be able to disable it in such a way that the machine intelligence is nonfunctional but the time-altering abilities still work. If so, they may be able to reverse some of the more recent timeline shifts, restoring to life some people who were killed. KOROS itself would be a good salvage source for time- and probability-related iotum.

THE AGRIS HAND

A floating three-fingered golden hand the size of an adult human has appeared near a settlement and is randomly killing people with blasts of energy, despite all attempts by Aeon Priests to move or repel it.

DETAILS

With a ripple in the air and a brief rumble, the floating hand appeared out of nowhere, a very long distance from a village. The thing clearly isn't human or based on a

human shape, as evidenced by its metallic golden skin, three fingers, too many knuckles, and multiple black shiny eyes all over its surface. At first it remained where it appeared, but within a day it had moved to near the outer perimeter of buildings, hovering less than a long distance in the air. Anyone nearby could feel the pressure of its gaze, both as a constant psychic feeling of being glared at and as a physical pressure on the body like being under a heavy blanket. The Aeon Priests attempted to communicate with it, but nothing worked.

After a few days, the Agris Hand started vanishing from sight for a few minutes at a time (although it was merely invisible, as the pressure sensation continued when it couldn't be seen). After a few more days, it started shooting at people and animals once or twice a day with a hairy golden energy beam, crushing anything it struck as if by a giant boulder. The Aeon Priests tried to repel it, but none of their attempts worked—in fact, they only prompted it to retaliate with more crushing beams—nor have they been able to lead it away.



SALIENT POINTS:

- The hand doesn't respond to voices or machine data transmissions, but it might be reachable by telepathy. Its intelligence is strange and misuses some words, as if it is being poorly translated even through a direct mental link.
- It appears to be a living thing and not an automaton. Magnification reveals vein-like tubes near its surface that pulse regularly, as if it has a heartbeat. It hasn't eaten anything and doesn't appear to have any orifices other than the solid black eyes.
- The Aeon Priests aren't sure if it is an independent creature, the limb of a larger entity, or some kind of extrusion from another dimension. The air on its back side is heavily distorted by a hairy glow, making it impossible to see if the hand connects to anything or disappears into a portal.
- Even when firing at villagers and simple animals, the hand doesn't always hit. It's unclear if these are targeting errors or if it deliberately chooses when to make a near miss. So far, everything it has crushed with its energy beam has been at least the size of a small adult.
- Small flying creatures such as birds avoid getting closer than a short distance, and the hand doesn't react to them if they're farther away. Other than the few times it retaliated when attacked, there is no apparent connection between the creatures it has killed.
- The hand might be waiting for something to arrive or appear (which may be an object or the proper communication signal), trying to find something buried underneath the settlement, or attempting to connect to an otherspace in the area.

Agris Hand: *level 6, perception as level 8; Armor 2 (including against electricity and fire); flies a long distance each round; crushing telekinetic beam inflicts 10 points of damage on a creature in long range*

Otherspace: A small artificial dimension or a portal to a natural alternate dimension.

STARTING POINT

The PCs may arrive at the settlement to find it under attack by the hand or already be there when it first appears, giving them the opportunity to react to the above timeline. The hand might single out one character for multiple attacks, giving the PCs a personal reason to stop it. The hand may instead appear outside a ruin the PCs are exploring and follow them back to civilization, only then starting to attack.

THE WRAP-UP

The Agris Hand can be salvaged for cyphers, powerful organic iotum, a strong energy source, or a lot of io. If it is part of a larger creature or device, the rest of it may appear later, or the hand's destruction might allow immediate access to it, whether or not the totality has sufficient awareness of the damage to the hand.

THE FIRE THAT DOES NOT BURN

To extinguish a dangerous fire sweeping through a settlement, the Aeon Priests activated something in a nearby ruin that snuffed the flames, but since that time no other fires will burn in the area.

DETAILS

When a kitchen fire spread to several nearby homes and threatened to engulf the town, one of the local Aeon Priests used a cypher to suppress the flames and stop them from spreading. The priest thought the cypher would work like fireproofing spray and protect the area he was spraying, but instead it created a ripple of subtle energy from a nearby ruin that turned all of the flames to a pale grey color that gave off no heat, so they were easily extinguished. At first the town celebrated this as a success, but they soon realized that the ruin's power was ongoing instead of instantaneous, and it continued to cool any fires they made. This situation makes it impossible to cook, forge metal, and do many other tasks necessary for civilization. As the effect encompasses an area about 2 miles (3 km) across, the people would have to rebuild their entire town farther away, which they lack the resources to do, especially before winter comes. If the effect isn't reversed, many people will freeze to death in the next few months.

Fireproofing spray, page 279

SALIENT POINTS:

- All fires in the affected area turn pale grey, give off no heat, and tend to burn out after a few seconds. This isn't enough to prevent instant fires from burning (like a fire detonation) and matchsticks still work, but the flames don't last long. This is the case whether the fuel is wood, wax, oil, synth, or other common flammables.
- When in dim light or darkness, careful observation of people in the area reveals pale flickering lights in the back of their throats, as if these harmless flames were in their lungs. (The flames are present at all times but are usually too faint to be seen.)
- Living creatures in the area have a hard time catching their breath. Calm activities are still possible, but anything more strenuous than a brisk walk, including combat and running, is hindered. Knowledgeable townsfolk compare it to hiking a trail over a mountain—it feels like you can't get enough air (but unlike at high altitudes, the air pressure seems to be normal).
- The ruin's power doesn't seem to affect other things that create heat, like exercise, electricity, and some chemical reactions that don't need air, so it may be possible to help the townsfolk by building electricity-based heating and cooking devices to replace their wood-burning stoves, but there may be specialized professions (such as blacksmithing) that can't easily make this change.
- The Aeon Priests can explain to the PCs that fire consumes a vital element from the air, and when that element is gone, the fire goes out. Breathing uses that same vital element, which is why a person trapped in a small cave will suffocate. Because people aren't suffocating in town (they're just

hampered a bit), some aspect of the vital element must be present, but something is preventing it from being fully used.

- The device the priests used to trigger the reaction was just a cypher, and they expected it to have a short radius. Apparently it was connected in some way to a more powerful device in the ruin, which had a much greater effect. Inspecting the cypher indicates that it had a small amount of fire-suppression ability on its own, but it also transmitted a signal to the ruin, which reinforced the effect.
- Years ago, the Aeon Priests examined the outermost part of the ruin, finding it guarded by strange acid-spraying stone creatures that were beyond their ability to defeat. The priests don't know where the problem device might be located.

STARTING POINT

The PCs may start during the initial fire in the town, contributing their abilities to help contain it. The ruin's power affects them just like everyone else and definitely impacts fire-based abilities like those from the Bears a Halo of Fire focus.

THE WRAP-UP

Deactivating, destroying, or salvaging the specific device in the ruin should end the effect in the entire town. Otherwise, the PCs may have to use their abilities to come up with alternative ways to help the townsfolk, such as by helping them relocate outside the area.

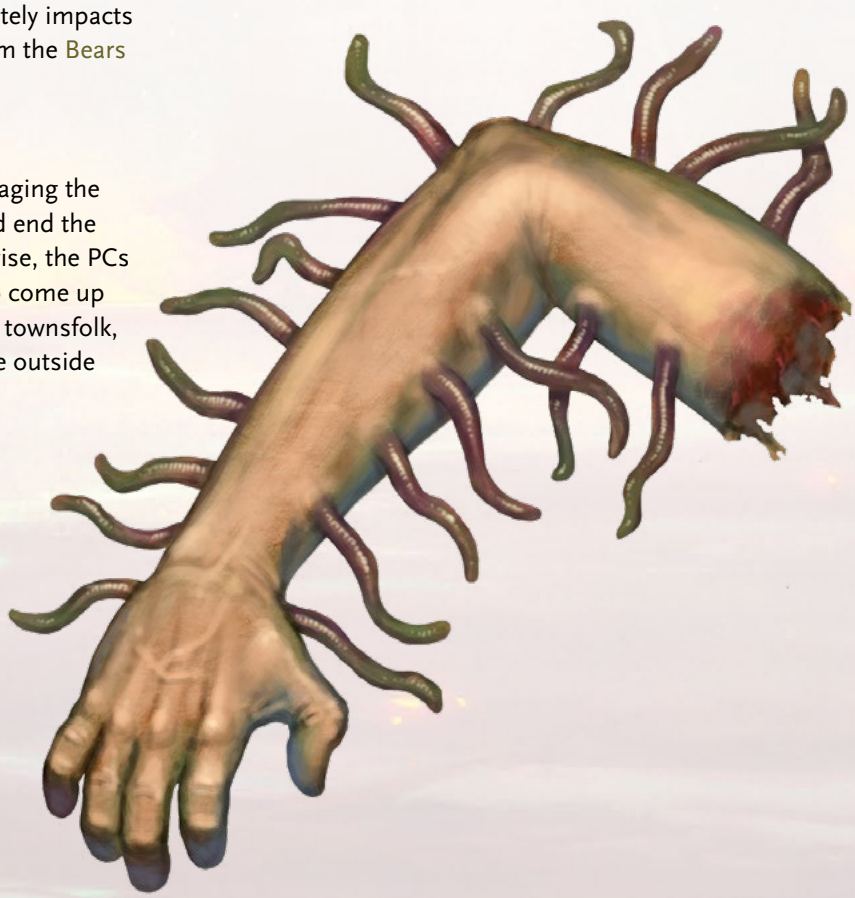
BORN OF THE FLESH

Limbs of people in this village tend to snap off in response to moderate injuries, and then transform into clusters of thin tendrils that roll about and attack other creatures.

DETAILS

A fight in a bar turned unexpectedly and shockingly violent when one patron struck another on the arm with a chair leg and their opponent's arm fell off as if smashed by a tree. In the chaos of everyone's startled reaction, nobody noticed that the lost limb (which had rolled into a corner) sprouted tendrils and began attacking other nearby people. The Aeon Priests examined everyone's injuries, but it was only after other people started losing limbs from routine bumps and cuts—and those limbs then transformed and attacked others—that they realized they had a communicable epidemic on their hands. The priests have tried to quarantine as many people as possible, but new cases are developing independently of wounds from existing victims.

Bears a Halo of Fire, page 58



Midnight Stone Effect Table, page 116

SALIENT POINTS:

- The first people affected by the Breaking Curse all live or work close to a nearby body of water (such as a river, pond, or lake).
- The source of the Breaking Curse is a parasite. In its free form, it is a hair-thin worm the length of a fingernail, and in a few minutes of idle time it can painlessly bore through the skin or soft tissue like the inside of a human's mouth. It works its way through the bloodstream and reproduces in its host's muscle tissue, severing the infested limb as a protective measure when the host is attacked (like a lizard dropping its tail, but in reverse).
- The tendril transformation of the severed limb is an unexpected side effect of the infestation, as the parasites consume the limb, grow to an unusually large size, and move about like a swarm. The parasite swarm has the intellect of a beast, but if enough swarms gather, they may develop a collective intelligence that's comparable to that of a low-functioning human.

Parasite swarm: *level 2, melee attacks and stealth as level 3; injured foes are infected by parasites*

- People attacked by the tendril beasts usually get the Breaking Curse within a few days.
- Someone who has lost a limb to the Breaking Curse becomes increasingly vulnerable to it affecting their other limbs.

Pluripotent mass, page 126

- In game terms, an infected PC losing a limb is a GM intrusion. It could happen to an NPC as a major effect, or whenever the GM decides it is appropriate for the story, without being a GM intrusion. An NPC who has already lost a limb to the curse can lose another as a minor effect.

Major and minor effects, page 105

- Losing a limb to the Breaking Curse is just as painful as getting it cut or smashed off with a weapon, although the wound doesn't bleed. (For a PC, this usually means moving down one step on the damage track.)
- Resistance to disease works on the Breaking Curse, as does numenera that cures diseases, such as a catholicon or enhanced automender. (A person who lost a limb and then is cured is no more likely to lose another limb than a person who was never infected.) Once the Aeon Priests are made aware of this, they (correctly) speculate that some kind of parasite is responsible.

Catholicon, page 276

Enhanced automender, page 154

- The limb loss is similar to one of the possible effects of midnight stones, and the parasites might originate from or have been altered by a midnight stone in the water.

STARTING POINT

The first person to suffer the Breaking Curse might be an NPC (even an Aeon Priest) and carry it for days or weeks before a significant injury triggers the loss of a limb, which makes it harder to track the cause. If a PC is one of the first people to get the curse, it will be discovered more quickly (as PCs tend to get into fights and other dangerous circumstances) and makes the problem an immediate concern for the entire group of characters.

THE WRAP-UP

Depending on how long it takes the PCs to resolve the Breaking Curse, there are probably many people with missing limbs who have to adapt to their new situation. The Aeon Priests might have a way to salvage pluripotent mass from the corpses of the parasite swarms and invent a way to use 1 unit of that iotum to regrow a severed limb (instead of using 4 units to clone an entire creature). Alternatively, this might prompt an expedition to a ruin for salvaging materials to make prosthetic limbs out of numenera. Midnight stones may be an important part of either solution.



NEVER SLEEP

Everyone in town has been experiencing horrible, disruptive nightmares for days, and the Aeon Priests have been keeping themselves awake with stimulants so they can find the source and stop it.

DETAILS

At first it was just a few people in town who had really bad nightmares one night, but on the next night there were more, and even more the night after, until soon everyone was having terrifying dreams that made them thrash in their sleep and wake up screaming. Because the Aeon Priests were also affected, they compared their personal experiences with each other and realized this was no common occurrence. They suggested herbal remedies, exercise, and meditation, none of which worked. Sedatives helped victims fall asleep but made it harder for them to wake up from the nightmares, which made the overall experience worse. The Aeon Priests have been using a supply of stimulants to stay awake so they can work on solving this problem, but their supply is limited and soon they will face the penalties of sleep deprivation. Meanwhile, the suffering townsfolk have become aware that the Aeon Priests don't seem to be having nightmares, and some believe the priests are saving a cure for themselves.

SALIENT POINTS:

- The nightmares are completely subjective (not everyone is having nightmares about the same thing), so even if caused by one source, it doesn't appear to be a message or have a specific goal.
- The nightmares only affect creatures of near-human intelligence (pets and livestock are not affected). It took about three days for everyone in the settlement to start experiencing them.
- After a day or two without sleep, affected people have all their tasks hindered by one or two steps. After several days, everyone is hindered by two steps. After a few more days, people become violent and manic, and they experience hallucinations. Unless they get some uninterrupted sleep, they'll eventually become catatonic and die.
- Nightmares start anywhere from one minute after sleep begins to an hour after (with shorter intervals for people who've been suffering from them longer), and they usually jolt the person awake within a minute. A person who has a nightmare is hindered by an additional step for about an hour afterward.
- After a day without sleep, a PC must make a difficulty 5 Intellect task to use a ten-hour rest without falling asleep. If they fail, they have a nightmare and the rest is ruined (which doesn't use the rest). Taking a one-hour rest without falling asleep is a difficulty 4 Intellect task, and a ten-minute rest is a difficulty 3 Intellect task.
- The Aeon Priests have several theories about the cause, including sounds too low and deep for people to hear, a psychic entity that is in pain but unable to reach people's conscious state, gas leaking from local rock formations, poisoning from contaminated food, a brain infection, and side effects of a pest-killing spray they used on crops a few weeks ago. (Depending on what the GM decides is the cause of the nightmares, defenses against sound, telepathy, poison, and so on can lessen the symptoms and buy more time.) Depending on the cause, newly arriving people might have nightmares within a day, not have them for a while, or not have them at all.
- The Aeon Priests have a dwindling supply of stimulants but are willing to share them with the PCs (enough to keep all of the PCs awake for about three more days). The stimulants ease Intellect tasks to remain awake by three steps. Alertness stimulant would also be effective here.

Alertness stimulant, page 40

STARTING POINT

One or more PCs experience nightmares on the first night of the affliction (depending on the cause of the nightmares, this might affect a PC especially sensitive to such things, giving the players a clue to the phenomenon's origin) and have to try to keep their minds together while the town starts to fall apart. Alternatively, the PCs arrive in town after the nightmares have been going on for a few days and can be the well-rested voice of reason as they help the overextended Aeon Priests figure out a solution.

THE WRAP-UP

The origin of the nightmares suggests what conclusion and aftermath are appropriate. If the cause is chemical or parasitic, removing the contaminants should do the trick (and could potentially be used for nefarious purposes later). If the cause is psychic, finding and helping (or defeating) the creature responsible can lead to other exploration and salvage opportunities. If the cause is sonic, proper countermeasures can end the nightmares and inspire future crafting plans. Regardless of the cause, affected people will need some time to recover and may be vulnerable to other things, whether a horde of abhumans, severe weather, or a dangerous numenera effect.

THE REDDING CLOCK

An ancient installation projects holographic symbols in the air, changing them at a specific rate that seems to be counting toward something, but sometimes jumping ahead—like it did when the PCs arrived.

DETAILS

Decades ago, this installation was in an uninhabited area, just a synth and metal intermittent wall about a long distance in diameter, circling a central pylon of the same material, with a magenta hologram of symbols floating above the entire area. After the location was discovered by the Order of Truth, the priests incorporated it into their buildings, as it was durable and ignored



them if they didn't attempt to harm its surface, and a small village grew up around it. The villagers call the installation the Redding Clock, and for the most part they ignore it except as a nighttime light source (it illuminates the streets almost as well as lamps). The eight openings in the wall have sturdy wood and synth gates (held against the wall by weight and pressure instead of being hammered into it), which can easily be shut to keep out most dangerous creatures.

The Aeon Priests have not been able to determine the installation's purpose, but they know it has sensors and transmitters that keep it in communication with other devices high above the earth's surface. For now it seems to be waiting, content to send and receive daily bursts of coded information, and counting time until an unknown future event. They can't tell if it can predict the future or if it is just updating its countdown projection as it obtains new data about its purpose (such as the position of other objects orbiting the sun or numenera in its vicinity that it needs to build something).

SALIENT POINTS:

- The Aeon Priests have translated the symbols and believe they are a base-8 number system with one primary section counting down toward zero and several secondary countdowns that have already reached zero or will do so before the primary one does, which at the start of the adventure is in approximately seven months and six days. However, a few times (since the Aeon Priests started keeping records, at least) the primary countdown has leaped forward several weeks, usually prompted by strange lights high in the sky (satellite activity?) or the arrival of powerful numenera in the village. The most recent jump is the largest on record (about ninety days) and coincided with the arrival of the PCs.
- A side effect of the installation is that damaged or broken objects slowly heal over time if the pieces remain together. A cracked glass jar or a bent metal nail returns to normal in about a day, an object with minor damage recovers in a few days, and an object with major damage is repaired in a week or two. All tasks to repair objects are eased. Materials derived from living things (like cloth, leather, wood, and some kinds of synth) are unaffected. The outer wall of the installation acts much like a cleansing arch (with no depletion).
- When the structure is damaged, several holograms animate, "possess" physical objects on the ground, and attack whoever is responsible, acting much like a carnivorous color (the installation can animate dozens of these things at a time, although it may need time to recharge after the first twenty or so). Until the threat is ended, the holographic symbols in the air change from magenta to burgundy. The villagers and priests are careful enough that there haven't been any attacks in years, but they're quick to warn the PCs of the consequences of harming the Redding Clock, describing the attacks in vivid detail.
- The priests theorize that the end of the Clock's countdown will be a significant scientific or cultural discovery, such as unlocking a vault of useful technology, creating a permanent connection to the datasphere to answer questions, or calling a vehicle to take people to see the wonders of the stars. The villagers have their own theories, which tend to be wild fantasy stories like the pylon spitting out a flood of shins, gentle weather and good crops for seven years, or the birth of a savior who can heal the sick and turn back the iron wind. Oddly enough, nobody in town thinks the Clock is counting down to something dangerous.

Minor and major object damage, page 116

Redding Clock: *level 6*

Cleansing arch, page 155

Carnivorous color: *level 3, stealth and attacks as level 5; health 12; Armor 2 (depends on what material the creature is inhabiting); telepathic intelligence-eating attack inflicts 4 points of Intellect damage (ignores Armor) within immediate range; for more details, see* Ninth World Bestiary 2, *page 32*

STARTING POINT

When the PCs arrive at the village, the holographic symbols floating in the air pause, shudder, and alter their sequence. The villagers pay this no heed, but the local Aeon Priests make note of it and try to find the cause, suspecting that the arrival of the PCs has something to do with it. If the PCs have been to the village before, the priests suggest that the reaction was triggered by something they brought with them, rather than something inherent in the characters (it's also possible that an internal change prompted the alteration to the countdown, such as learning a significant new type or focus ability). The priests recalculate the endpoint of the countdown, list a few theories about what it might mean, and ask the PCs to stick around for the countdown to end—or at least promise to return before that time. (This gives the PCs some opportunities to enjoy long-term play in the small community.)

Long-term play, page 324

THE WRAP-UP

If the PCs remain in the village or come back when the countdown ends, they get to witness whatever the Redding Clock was waiting for. In addition to the practical ideas of the priests and the wild hopes of the other villagers, other possibilities include:

- releasing creatures from stasis so they can colonize Earth at the right time
- unleashing a war machine (from underground or space) that heads off in the direction of an ancient enemy that most likely doesn't exist anymore
- activating a terraforming protocol that reworks the area into an environment more suitable for a known species (such as varjellen) or alien visitors
- creating a two-way portal to another settlement, world, or dimension

It's also possible that in the hundreds of thousands of years since the Redding Clock was built, whatever it was supposed to do has broken down or been destroyed, so the countdown results in a disappointing quiet or a catastrophic crash (such as a derelict spacecraft pulled to the surface without living crew to pilot it, or a portal connecting to a world that has lost its atmosphere).

THE SINGING SPHERES OF AZOM

People in the village of Azom have been finding metal spheres that make musical tones, and the Aeon Priests are studying the spheres to learn how to activate different effects.

DETAILS

Safe access to a new part of a ruin reveals a strange wall or control surface that squeezes out metal spheres, with a few lying about from prior extrusions. The pace seems to be increasing now that the area is open again. A little casual testing by the Aeon Priests shows that the spheres can be activated like cyphers. Because the priests don't find any side effects, they allow the safe "mining" of these cypher-spheres to proceed, and the village begins to experience some prosperity as just about every family ends up with a cypher that can help make work easier in some way.

SALIENT POINTS:

- A typical sphere is about the size of a grapefruit (varying about 10 percent for each) and is fairly smooth except for a few areas that have bumps or dimples the size of a grain of sand. It is made of greenish or bluish metal that is about as hard and heavy as steel, but isn't steel (the metal is unfamiliar to the Aeon Priests but reacts much like steel, except that it is only faintly magnetic). It weighs about 9 pounds (4 kg), with the center of mass slightly toward one side.
- The spheres react to squeezing, temperature changes, and impacts by producing musical tones. The correct sequence of six tones makes the sphere collapse like an empty waterskin and produce a one-time effect like a cypher. Like any cypher, the effect can be determined by using the understanding numenera skill, and the same six tones work for all of the spheres (the trick is finding what stimuli and parts of the spheres create the desired tones).
- The part of the ruin extruding the spheres looks and feels organic (like a hard sap, resin, or wax) instead of



artificial. Some villagers wonder if the spheres are actually eggs, but they don't appear to contain anything resembling a growing creature and there haven't been any hostile adult sphere-beasts attacking the town, so this idea soon was forgotten.

- Eventually the spheres become very common in the village, and the number of consumed spheres grows high enough that something unusual happens. Perhaps they are spraying the village with tiny or invisible spores that have been cross-pollinating each other, and now the fertilized spores combine into a village-sized slime mold that begins feeding on things. The spheres may be organic waste from a quasi-biological process in the ruin, and enough of it has been dispersed throughout the village to become toxic. The large number of spheres might attract a callerail, disassembler, or sarrak for reasons appropriate to that kind of creature. The spheres might be parts manufactured for use in another area of the ruin that is about to explode or release a flood of toxic foam. Individual spheres might be specialized cells in a large-scale distributed organism, and the "death" of the spent spheres might trigger an immune reaction in the organism that targets what is attacking its cells (the villagers and PCs).

The spheres are not eggs with a vengeful parent nearby. That would be a horribly overused cliché.

STARTING POINT

The PCs arrive at the village wanting to trade or buy cyphers, which puts these spheres in their hands. Alternatively, the PCs first discover the spheres while exploring a ruin, and after they clear out all the dangerous creatures, it becomes a safe place for locals to mine cyphers as income. While the PCs are in town, the spheres reach their tipping point and the next, weirder phase of their presence occurs—which may not immediately be attributed to the spheres.

THE WRAP-UP

Once the PCs have dealt with the immediate threat, they'll need to work with the Aeon Priests to see if something needs to be done about the ruin, such as sealing off the room or connecting iotum to the manufacturing wall so it can replenish what was destroyed. Regardless, dealing with the cypher-spheres (both used and intact) is a separate matter and may require its own set of follow-up actions.

Callerail, page 228

Disassembler, page 233

Sarrak, page 250

CHAPTER 17

INTO THE AMBER MONOLITH

"Into the Amber Monolith" is a race against time as the PCs have to track down and rescue Aeon Priest explorers lost in a ruin. It takes place at the Amber Monolith in Navarene, coincidentally while the PCs are at the order's fortress (under the monolith) on some other business.

BACKGROUND

The Amber Monolith is a mysterious object 2,000 feet (600 m) tall that floats 500 feet (150 m) above a fortress of the Order of Truth. A man named Calaval once explored it and discovered knowledge that not only made him the greatest of Aeon Priests but also allowed him to unite numenera scholars in the Steadfast and found the Order of Truth. Nobody has been able to get inside the monolith since Calaval re-entered it 400 years ago and was never seen again. His journals tell of dark passages, strenuous climbs, and dangerous apelike beasts that mix flesh, synth, and metal.

SYNOPSIS

A pair of Aeon Priest researchers named Jazner and Moeri have discovered and opened a doorway into the Amber Monolith—supposedly the first entrance the order has found in over a hundred years. Not knowing how long the doorway would remain visible and open, they quickly got permission to go inside and look around (accompanied by a delve named Varis and a glaive named Shrobin to help guide and protect them), but they had to run away from some dangerous creatures, got lost, and now are trapped in a sealed room with no way out, facing suffocation. Moeri was able to use a cypher to send a psychic message outside giving approximate directions to where they're trapped, but the message was distorted and unclear, so the Order of Truth is sending in multiple teams to spread out and search more areas. The PCs are to be one of three teams sent to find and rescue the lost explorers before they suffocate—and be a part of history.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

Because of the time constraints and the location, this adventure assumes the PCs are on good-enough terms with the Order of Truth that they'd be allowed to visit the fortress underneath the monolith (built and protected by the order). If that's the case, starting the adventure just requires a member of the Order of Truth—one the



"Please help! We're trapped in [distorted] running out of air. We got attacked by [distorted]. They killed Shrobin but we got away. [distorted] shaft up, to the liquid light, then north and up, past Shrobin, to the spheres, up two more times. Watch for ambushes. Hurry!"

—Moeri

PCs trust—asking them to help on a time-sensitive mission to save the lives of people trapped in a dangerous ruin. If the PCs don't already have a friendly contact with the Order of Truth in the area, the person who approaches them is an elderly Aeon Priest named Toris who quickly explains the situation and asks them to come to the Amber Monolith immediately.

The characters might wonder or ask why the order let this group go in if they weren't prepared for the danger. Toris answers that the controls on the inside of the panel seemed to indicate a countdown, and nobody knew how long the hatch would remain open or even visible. After all, High Father Calaval described one entrance in his journal, and after 400 years of looking exactly where he said it was supposed to be, they still haven't been able to find it, so discovering this one was a once-in-many-lifetimes opportunity. Jazner and Moeri opened it and they deserved a first look, and Varis and Shrobin are competent explorers who volunteered to help them.

Toris: *level 3, understanding numenera as level 4, research as level 5*

CONDITIONS INSIDE THE MONOLITH

Even though the Amber Monolith is an iconic image associated with the Order of Truth, it is a prior-world structure built by people that weren't human, and has been (mostly) sealed for thousands of years, so the interior environment isn't entirely comfortable for humans. The following features are common to all internal parts of the monolith in this adventure, and the GM should remind the PCs of them frequently to reinforce the claustrophobic, mysterious, and deadly nature of the site. Just because the Aeon Priests have a fortress underneath the monolith doesn't mean it is a safe place to be.

Warmth, Humidity, and Staleness: The air is approximately 80° F (26° C), just warm enough to be uncomfortable but not debilitating. It is pretty humid, so humans (who use evaporative cooling to regulate body temperature) tend to feel warmer than normal. The air feels like a room or cave that has been closed up for a long time, but has sufficient oxygen for people to breathe normally. These three factors combined mean that characters become winded (hindered in all tasks) after ten minutes of mild exertion (like walking) or one minute of heavy exertion (like climbing, combat, or running). Continued exertion without resting hinders the character by additional steps. Resting quietly for one minute (or using a one-action recovery roll) removes one step of this hindrance.

Darkness: Unless otherwise stated, the areas inside the monolith are dark. The tops of ladder shafts sometimes have dim light at the hatches. All of the howling navargas in this adventure can see in the dark as if in dim light or better.

Vibration: The rings orbiting the monolith and the machines at its heart mean there is a constant subtle vibration conducted through the walls and floor. In the lower half of the monolith (closer to these mechanisms), the vibrations are strong enough to be heard, and about half of that section is as loud as a room full of people talking (stealth tasks are eased because the background noise covers the sounds of movement).

Inhuman Proportions: Whatever built the monolith was a slightly different size and shape than a human, just enough to make common things look and feel a little weird. Doorways are shorter and wider than the PCs are used to, wearable items don't quite fit right, control panels assume a wider reach, and so on.

Dead Ends: The howling navargas enter and exit some rooms through concealed wall panels connected to cramped tunnels that (after a short or long distance) end in a closed door that can't be triggered without a biological key built into the navargas' genes. Figuring out how to extract and use that key would take several hours.

Darkness and very dim light, page 114

Toris (on behalf of the Order of Truth) provides each PC with 100 feet (30 m) of rope, some food and water, a small canister of compressed breathable air (enough for a person to breathe for an hour), a scrap of paper with Moeri's message on it, four minor glowglobes, and a painting kit to mark directions. He also gives each PC enough cyphers to reach their cypher limit, or he can trade PC cyphers for level 6 rejuvenator cyphers (as many as the PCs decide to swap). Finally, Toris lends them a level 4 recorder headband and asks them to record as much as they can of the interior of the Amber Monolith, just in case the order can't get in again after this.

Minor glowglobe, page 97

Rejuvenator, page 286

Recorder headband, page 300

Toris explains that the first room beyond the hatch has three vertical exits, but the start of Moeri's message was distorted and the order doesn't know which path they took, so they're sending teams to explore each of them. One team is the PCs, and the other two teams are members of the order who were available on short notice, have suitable experience, and should be tough enough to handle whatever dangers are inside. The PCs will be the first group to go in. Toris lets them decide which path to explore, or sends them to the south hatch if they don't care.

The PCs might know people on the other two teams, either as friends or as rivals.

The mapped areas in this adventure correspond to the path the players choose. No matter which hatch they use, that's the one that leads to the encounter locations and the trapped explorers.

Amber Monolith: *level 8*

The PCs climb to the top of a tower in the order's fortress, passing two other small groups getting their gear ready. On the flat top of the tower, the PCs and Toris climb onto a square metallic slab about 10 feet (3 m) square and 1 foot (30 cm) thick. Toris uses a wired device to pilot the slab, making it rise into the air and slowly ascend 500 feet up to the hatch on the side of the immense floating structure.

GM intrusion suggestion: *A howling navarga crawls out of an access hatch beneath the PCs just as they start climbing.*

Because time is of the essence, Toris asks the PCs not to dawdle while they're inside, and focus on getting to the stranded team before they run out of air. In particular, they suggest that the PCs not take time to salvage, especially if their target is a working device that might still function and give the order some insight about the Amber Monolith's purpose.

Initial cost, page 106

ENCOUNTER 1: THREE PATHS

Over the noise of the wind at this height, Toris says the PCs should climb through the horizontal hatch into the passageway, which is a straight shot into a large room with the three hatches, where some fortress guards await.

READ ALOUD

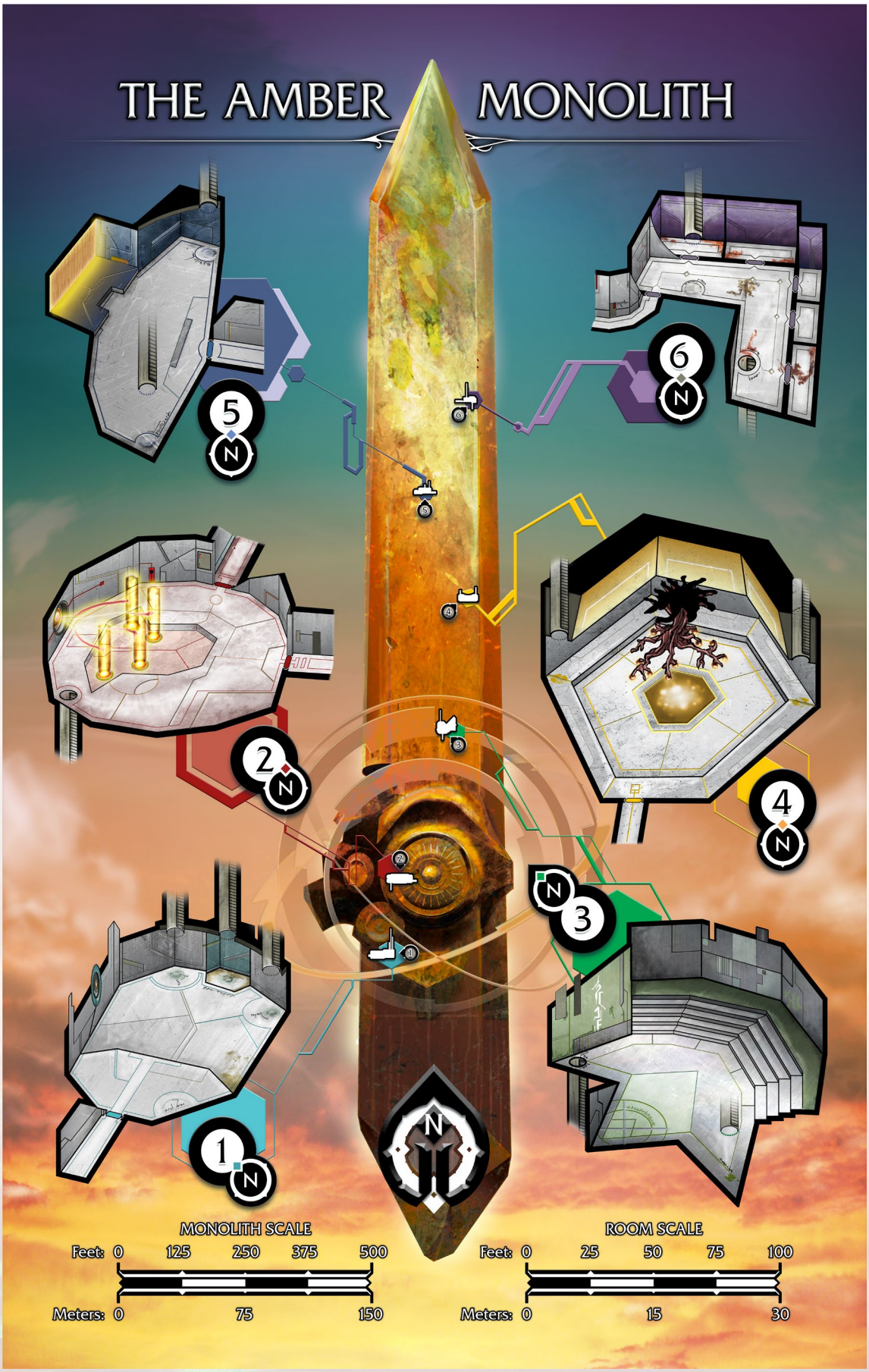
Once you're through the hatch and your eyes adjust to the dark interior, you can move single-file deeper into the structure. A sustained vibration thrums through the floor, not quite audible. After a few long strides the hallway opens into a large room lit by lanterns. A dozen guards from the Order of Truth stand alert, watching all corners for trouble. It's warm and humid here, and the air feels stale.

An officer points out the three hatches in the ceiling along the east wall. "We are keeping this area secure for the arrival of the rescue teams. Those are your three options. Good luck, and may the ancient makers bless you with insight."

All three hatches are hanging open; if closed, they could be spun clockwise to latch them in place. Each leads to a narrow vertical shaft with a metal ladder built into the side. Based on a very faint light at the top,two of the climbs are more than 100 feet (30 m), and the southern one might be a little bit shorter. From down here, it's not possible to tell which way the first explorers went.

Ladder GM intrusion suggestion: *One of the rungs bends or the PC's hand slips, requiring a balancing or Speed defense roll to avoid falling.*

Ladders: Many of the connections between areas are through vertical shafts with ladders. A PC with a normal amount of armor and gear can comfortably climb about 3 to 6 feet (1 to 2 m) per round, or about 50 feet (15 m) per minute. A character can double their climbing speed for one minute by spending an initial cost of 3 Might points.


THE AMBER MONOLITH
5
N
6
N
2
N
4
N
N
3
1
N
N
MONOLITH SCALE
Feet: 0 125 250 375 500
Meters: 0 75 150
ROOM SCALE
Feet: 0 25 50 75 100
Meters: 0 15 30

Glimmer, page 43

ENCOUNTER 2: LIQUID LIGHT

The hatch in the roof of the shaft spins counterclockwise to unlatch, opening into area 2 (this is the standard hatch configuration in the adventure). Remember that the PCs are probably winded from climbing in the heat, humidity, and stale air.

READ ALOUD

The hatch opens and a warm light pours in, erratically cycling brighter and darker every few seconds. The room is almost round, with four clear pipe-like structures in the center that are moving brightly colored liquid up and down. On one wall, something like a lens focuses beams of light at the pipes, scattering light throughout the room and causing the shifts in brightness. There are closed doors to the north and east. The vibrations you feel in this room are much stronger than what you felt in the first room with the guards, but you don't know if it has to do with the pipes or with being closer to the mechanisms outside orbiting the monolith.

Doors: *level 6; after a few successful attempts, opening doors is eased by two steps*

GM intrusion: *While the PCs are distracted by the liquid light, a howling navarga emerges from a hidden panel and attacks. Howling navarga, page 181.*

The "pipes" are actually very weak force fields specifically calibrated to contain the liquid, but permeable to other materials (such as weapons or hands). The liquid is the source of the light (the lens is doing *something* to the liquid, but the liquid glows even without the focused light from the lens). The light is usually a brilliant amber color, but every minute or so it shifts to a pale jade green and back again. The liquid is sticky, like honey, clinging to anything except the force fields, and the force fields "wipe off" the liquid from anything stuck into the "pipe." Shutting off or salvaging the pipe mechanism allows the liquid light to start spilling all over the floor, change to the pale jade color, then fade away. Fiddling with the lens or blocking its light doesn't seem to do anything except slow down the liquid light's movement.

The liquid is a form of data transmission or storage (an understanding numenera roll or using something like the Scan esotery reveals this), but it's not clear how the PCs are supposed to interface with it. The first time a person puts their head into the pipe, they have a 25 percent chance of recovering 1d6 points for their Intellect Pool, a 25 percent chance of experiencing a glimmer, and a 50 percent chance of being stunned for one minute as their senses are overwhelmed by thousands of overlapping images and sounds.

Doors: The doors here (and all doors in this adventure) are a full-size interface panel that awakens by touch. In most cases, opening a door causes it to slide into the wall, and it closes automatically one round later.

Moeri's message suggests the PCs should go north out of this room.

ENCOUNTER 3: SHROBIN'S END

Leaving area 2 takes the PCs through a winding passage for about 100 feet (30 m), through a closed door, and then to another shaft going up, which leads to area 3. The hatch at the top of the shaft leading to this room is open, but the room is dark. The PCs are probably winded after climbing the ladder, so they'll be at a disadvantage during this encounter.

READ ALOUD

The hatch's opening is in a northern corner of an oddly shaped room with a stair-stepped area along the eastern side. In the southern corner are two large apelike creatures, their mouths and hands bloody. Near them is some scattered equipment and a dead, partially eaten human body in armor underneath an open hatch in the ceiling. The vibration is now loud enough to hear, and loud enough to make normal conversation difficult.

Howling navarga: *level 6; regain 2 points of health as long as it has at least 1 health*

Scan, page 40

The apelike creatures are howling navargas. They've eaten most of the soft parts of the body (which once was Shrobin the glaive) but are still aggressive and will attack the PCs as soon as they notice them.

Because Shrobin has been partially eaten, only someone who knew him when he was alive could recognize him at this point, but the PCs can determine that the body



belonged to a tall, muscular, bearded man in leather and synth armor. The body has a nice-looking axe and shield and two random cyphers. There's an expired minor glowglobe nearby, a few damaged heavy tools, and another random cypher. These are from Varis's bag, which she dropped while climbing the ladder, and the bag broke open at the bottom of the shaft and scattered the tools here. The bag is at the bottom of the shaft and has her name written on it.

Anyone who inspects the scene for an idea of what happened can tell (based on the bloody footprints on the ground and the position of the body) that this person probably sacrificed himself to buy time for people trying to escape up the shaft.

The stair-stepped area has no interesting physical features, but a PC moving around in that area triggers intermittent holographic projections of lines and amorphous abstract shapes, accompanied by asynchronous musical tones that sound like deep wind instruments.

ENCOUNTER 4: SPHERES

The shaft up from area 3 connects to one end of a winding passageway (smart PCs will take a moment to rest there and recover from the climb). Two doors slow the characters' progress along the way. After the second door, the hallway suddenly veers north and ends in a door that leads to the following room (another good time for a rest).

READ ALOUD

The constant noise of the previous room has faded to a thrum you can feel but not hear. Growing out of the ceiling like a strange inverted tree is a coppery metal apparatus with dozens of branches, and most branches have one or more metallic amber spheres resting on them like carefully balanced fruit.

The western ceiling hatch is open; the eastern one is closed. Taking the open hatch up eventually leads to area 5.

The spheres range from about 1 inch (2.5 cm) to 6 inches (15 cm) across. Touching

"In the light, he saw the ape-thing, with metal plates and fleshy parts integrated into a cobbled whole. There was nothing beautiful, careful, or elegant about the thing's construction. Even its organic portions did not seem to exist in any sort of natural relationship."

—the Sacred Chronicle of High Father Calaval

one causes a momentary distortion on the surface, then the sphere changes to show an image of something else as if it were a mirror reflecting another location. Each sphere always shows a specific location, but making a difficulty 8 understanding numenera roll allows the person touching it to rotate the image to a different perspective (like turning a camera on a tripod). These appear to be live images showing the present, not recordings. Some of the available scenes are:

Obelisk of the Water God, page 140

Clock of Kala, page 206

- the northeastern side of the Amber Monolith
- the southwestern side of the Obelisk of the Water God
- the southern end of this room (no physical object can be found where the sphere seems to be looking from)
- somewhere in the ocean
- near the Clock of Kala
- a landscape covered in ice
- an underwater city of ruined glass towers
- a room in the Amber Monolith that the PCs haven't seen, with seven howling navargas leaping around a complicated machine on a pedestal
- a view of a coastline from many miles in the air
- unrecognizable rocky terrain with the image half obscured by lava

The GM should add other locations the PCs have visited, but only if they had some relevance in a prior age—there should have been a reason why the sphere was assigned to watch that location a million years ago. If a PC touches a sphere and sees this room, afterward they should start to feel like they are being watched (whether this is all in their head or the presence of a psychic or extradimensional entity is up to the GM).

Datasphere obelisk, page 156

ENCOUNTER 5: LOREWORMS

Another long climb up leads to a hallway (a good time to rest). The hallway winds clockwise and ends in a "vanishing" door: instead of sliding open, the door just ceases to exist for about a round, allowing a creature to move right through the doorway. The door then reappears one round later (unless obstructed). This is the first time the PCs have encountered a door like this here, so it should be startling or at least make them aware that something strange is happening. Opening a vanishing door is the same difficulty as a regular door.

READ ALOUD

The door vanishes, revealing a dimly lit room with a large western alcove. The far wall of the alcove is entirely taken up by a faceted interface panel with small yellow numbers moving across it and providing the light in the room. A pair of holographic serpentine creatures with branching hairs all over their bodies fly about, but pause as if startled when the door opens, momentarily transforming into a cube and a pyramid before reverting to their animal shapes.

Unless a PC immediately moves through the opening, the vanishing door reappears, blocking their view of the room. Other room features that weren't immediately apparent are the two hatches in the ceiling (the north one is open) and a synth box on the ground that glows with similar yellow lights as the screen.

The large interface panel is much like a datasphere obelisk, allowing a person to ask a question of the datasphere if they succeed on an Intellect task equal to the difficulty of the question. Moeri, Jazner, and Varis stopped here to try it, but they were scared

by a navarga that appeared in the hallway behind them, and they fled up the north hatch.

The two flying holograms are loreworms, living energy beings with a natural connection to the datasphere. They sensed someone using the large panel here and came to investigate, but by the time they arrived, the people were gone, so they've been amusing themselves by chasing each other and the symbols on the panel. Curious but a little insane, they wait to see what the PCs do before deciding to stay or flee through the datasphere.

The synth box contains 1 unit of a very potent and valuable iotum called a data orb—perhaps a spare left behind when the panel was built, or perhaps a defective one prone to malfunction.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE SURVIVORS

The shaft from area 5 is another long climb, making the PCs winded.

READ ALOUD

The hatch opens into the floor of a long room with a sharp turn. On the opposite wall are several glass control panels with symbols sliding across them. Near the panels are several synth doors, each with a narrow vertical window in the middle.

After being discovered and chased up a ladder yet again by a howling navarga, Moeri's team reached this room and had just opened the vanishing door to the southwest room when another pair of navargas arrived. Lacking an escape route and seeing no alternative, Varis pushed her companions into one of the small side rooms, which unfortunately don't have control panels on the inside and are airtight. The door reappeared, trapping them there, and they've slowly been running out of air. Moeri used his cypher to send a message about their location and then they all sat down to wait to be rescued. Jazner is sitting in a place where he can look through the window and see anyone standing in the room (easy, if the PCs bring light with them). When he spots a PC, he waves to them, then cautiously points to the west end of the room, pantomiming claws and teeth.

The two navargas are waiting in the western part of this room, lightly sleeping. They'll awaken if there's any significant noise and rush to attack. The hatch near them leads up to more places the PCs can explore (not described in this adventure).

The panels control the doors to the side rooms and can spray various liquids or gaseous substances into the corresponding room. Most of these are harmless or irritating, and one option refreshes the air in the room for another ten hours, but some of these substances inflict 7 points of Might or Speed damage or might cause random cosmetic mutations. If a PC opens the panel to the southernmost side room, the trapped explorers can come out, but they're woozy from being low on air (hindered by two steps, improving by one step each minute that they're out of the room). If there's still a fight happening, they'll help the PCs as best they can. Otherwise, they're eager to leave the Amber Monolith.

Moeri: This man is very tall and paunchy, with a hunched posture and wild hair. He had the foresight to bring some hard alcohol with him, so he's quite drunk at this point (hindered by one step), sprawled on the floor and mumbling to himself. He was friends with Shrobin and isn't taking the man's death (or their current predicament) well. Navigating him down all the ladders while drunk will be a challenge.

Jazner: This man is of medium height and has a sort of apple shape, and is dressed in a comfortable but very stylish black and grey outfit. He's been forcing himself to stay calm and breathe slowly to conserve air, but as soon as he's rescued he starts talking rapidly, taking credit for leading the three of them away from the howling navargas and finding their hiding spot.

Varis: This woman is short, with long black hair, and wears durable coveralls. She tends to be quiet except for unexpected sarcastic outbursts. If given her equipment, she checks to see if any of it is missing before thanking the PCs.

Loreworm: *level 4; page 182*

Howling navarga: *level 6; carnivorous hair inflicts an additional +1 point of damage*



Data orb, page 115



Cosmetic mutations, page 402

GM intrusion: *If the PCs spent too much time salvaging earlier in the adventure, one or more of the survivors is unconscious from insufficient oxygen and needs emergency healing.*

GM intrusion: *Another navarga appears, attracted by the noise of combat or a broadcast signal from the others.*

Moeri: *level 4; lying, Speed defense, and stealth as level 5*

Jazner: *level 4, understanding numenera as level 5*

Varis: *level 3, salvaging numenera and Speed defense as level 4*

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have freed the trapped explorers, they need to get them back to area 1 and out of the Amber Monolith. The NPCs avoid looking at Shrobin's corpse as they pass through area 3, but Moeri asks the PCs to be sure his friend's body gets a proper burial on the ground. Toris gets the recorder headband from the PCs so the order can review what they saw. If they tell Toris about the loose data orb they found, he is likely to tell them to keep it as thanks for their help—especially if they also mention the connection to the datasphere in area 5.

The GM might decide that one or both of the other rescue teams run into trouble and need the PCs' help, giving the characters a chance to explore more of the Amber Monolith (this requires the GM to create additional areas to explore).

Whether or not this particular entrance remains depends on the GM's plans for the campaign. Is this a short window of time for the Aeon Priests to gain some insight into the Amber Monolith or the fate of Calaval? Will they find the chamber he described that took him to the citadel so high in the sky it could only be seen with a telescope? Will they find the secrets he was looking for? Or will the PCs need to go on a journey to another world to learn these things? What the PCs and the Order of Truth discover here might change the world.

XP Awards: The PCs each earn 1 XP for entering the Amber Monolith—an achievement that few people can honestly claim. They each gain 1 XP if they use the recorder headband to record at least three areas in the monolith or at least three hours of footage, 1 XP if they bring out any of the survivors, and an additional 1 XP if they get all three out safely.



CHAPTER 18

CERULEAN HATE

"Cerulean Hate" is an adventure about community, paranoia, and mistaken intentions. It could be set anywhere in the Ninth World that has a group of Aeon Priests working together in a settlement, whether that is a semblage, clave, or other collective.

BACKGROUND

Many things from the prior worlds are worshiped as gods. Some are creatures, some are machines, and some are beings from other worlds or dimensions. Some of them were very dangerous and have been waiting many ages to be remembered, worshiped, and feared once again.

SYNOPSIS

The local Aeon Priests have discovered a vault deep underground that contains a node of psychic energy, like a battery of pure mental power. By tapping into this battery, they've been able to build devices that allow them to communicate telepathically with each other, increasing the speed of their discussion and improving their work. They plan to expand their research into creating a device that can read a person's mind and determine if they're lying, which the priests would use to help the community solve crimes and punish the guilty.

Unfortunately, the node is not an inanimate thing, but rather a malevolent psychic entity from a prior world called Cerulean Hate that used to be worshipped as a god. By tapping into its power, the Aeon Priests have awoken Cerulean Hate, and it is reaching out with its abilities to investigate what has happened in the millennia since it began sleeping. Initially it can only read surface thoughts and scan its environment, but soon it grows stronger and can temporarily control weak minds (although this possession quickly fries the host's brain) and begins to brag to the Aeon Priests about how it will soon be powerful enough to leave its temple, take over the entire settlement, and extend its will out into the world.

Cerulean Hate's temple deep in the earth is some kind of regeneration chamber that lies beyond a nearly invulnerable door. The presence of three inhuman skeletons there lead the priests to believe that its worshippers intended to feed or heal it, but were prevented from doing so when the chamber was sealed. The Aeon Priests need the PCs' help to get through the door (requiring destructive power, phasing abilities, or something else) so they can disperse the psychic entity or at least make it sleep again.

Once they get through the door, the PCs and the Aeon Priests realize that Cerulean Hate has been lying to them—the "temple" isn't a regeneration chamber, it's a prison, and recent events have damaged the numenera components keeping the entity trapped there. The adventure then becomes a race against the clock and a battle with telepathic manifestations as the PCs try to find the materials to patch the locks and keep the psychic god imprisoned.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

It's easiest to start this adventure in a settlement where the PCs can meet with Aeon Priests in a clave or semblage, but the first adventure hook can point wandering characters toward an appropriate settlement.

Public Channel: If the PCs aren't near a settlement, but there is a PC in the group who has a telepathic ability (such as the Commands Mental Powers focus), now and then that PC overhears snippets of conversation about the numenera between unknown people, always accompanied by a blue halo around the edges of their vision. With some concentration (and perhaps some Effort), they can better discern the direction these messages are coming from, allowing the PCs to navigate to the community where the adventure takes place and to the Aeon Priests there, who turn out to be the source of the messages.

Commands Mental Powers, page 60

New in Town: If the PCs are new to this community, early on they should have a friendly encounter with a personable local Aeon Priest. If the conversation goes well, the priest says they can always use the help of explorers willing to undertake dangerous expeditions, and invites the PCs to come to the semblage to discuss things.

Long-term play, page 324

This Place Again: If the adventure takes place in a community that the PCs are already familiar with, the Aeon Priests reach out to them with a job offer. While discussing the terms, the PCs realize the priests are communicating telepathically with each other (something they weren't doing before) or the priests volunteer that information.

The Aeon Priests have implanted themselves with artifacts they've built called cerulean nodes, allowing them to communicate telepathically with each other. If the PCs are on especially good terms with the priests, they'll give one of these artifacts to any PC who wants one. Otherwise, the priests volunteer to include a set of them as part of the payment for the job.

They explain that they've been able to tap into a buried psychic battery from a prior world, allowing them to amplify the natural telepathic channels in intelligent minds, and the cerulean nodes focus that telepathy in such a way that everyone with the artifact can talk to each other. The battery is deep underground, like a well full of water, and currently the artifacts can talk to each other only when they're close to the battery, but the priests hope to improve upon that soon by building installations around the community to amplify the signal and increase its range. In addition to easing communication between people, the priests want to use the cerulean power to build a lie detector, which they'll use to help determine if someone accused of a crime is guilty or innocent.

The work the priests are offering is a run-of-the-mill salvage operation in a ruin a few days away (alternatively, it could be a short adventure from this book, from another book, or one the GM creates). The details of that aren't relevant to this adventure—it's just a reason to advance the timeline by a few days. If the PCs have their own reasons to spend a few days in town, such as recovering from wounds, doing some crafting, or other long-term play options, no side job is needed, and this adventure can advance to the first encounter.

THE AEON PRIESTS

If the PCs are new to this community and the GM doesn't have any Aeon Priest NPCs in mind, here are a few that are appropriate for use in this adventure.

Alemm: A tall and wiry glaive who is more of a spy and sniper than an in-your-face combatant. Uses a dangerous-looking needler crafted by Korin, and is very fond of using sleep poison to quickly disable opponents without killing them.

Alemm: *level 4, needler attacks and stealth as level 5; inflicts 5 points of damage plus level 5 poison that puts the target to sleep for ten minutes or until awoken by a violent action or an extremely loud noise*

Needler, page 299

Delvek: A smart and confident Aeon Priest with a very attractive face and a bit of a swagger. Delvek is focused on the local community and how the semblage's work can help keep the peace.

Delvek: *level 4, persuasion and understanding numenera as level 5*

Korin: A loud and lanky wright with squinty eyes and wild hair surrounding their face. Likes eating crunchy fruits.

Korin: *level 4, crafting and understanding numenera as level 5*

Obis: An unassuming-looking priest with red wavy lines on their cheeks. Began manifesting mild psychic powers as a

Obis: *level 4, mental force bolt attacks and understanding numenera as level 5*

teenager, and is the primary researcher on telepathy and psychokinesis.

Woro: A younger Aeon Priest with unusually large hands and eyes. Has a knack for taking things apart and putting them back together again.

ENCOUNTER 1: HAUNTED CHILD

After a few days have passed since the meetup with the Aeon Priests, the PCs are in town, relaxing or perhaps taking care of errands. Suddenly, a man rushes out of a small house holding a child in his arms. The child is about five years old and is limp. "Please help! My son had some sort of fit, he started saying strange things and then passed out!" The boy's name is Tor, and he is unconscious but doesn't appear to have any injuries.

It is a difficulty 5 task to determine that Tor has suffered some kind of brain trauma, like a seizure, concussion, or asphyxiation. Tor's father, Gott, is obviously and sincerely worried about the boy (there's no deception or sense of guilt) and wants to take him to a chiurgeon, but he allows the PCs to help if it

Woro: *level 4, salvaging and understanding numenera as level 5*

Tor: *level 1*

Gott: *level 2, tinsmithing and cooking as level 3*

CERULEAN NODE (ARTIFACT)

Level: 4
Form: Small metallic disk
Effect: When applied to a creature's head, the disk immediately unleashes microfilaments that enter the brain. Within five minutes, the creature gains the ability to communicate telepathically with anyone in long range who also has a cerulean node. Similar to using the Telepathic Network focus ability, everyone in the network can "overhear" anything said in the network, communicating this way doesn't require an action, it doesn't cost Intellect points, and it's as easy as speaking out loud. The communication is accompanied by a blue halo around the edge of the wearer's vision (this is harmless, like wearing tinted goggles, but can be distracting if you aren't expecting it).

The artifact relies on a specific psychic power battery, external to any of the devices in the network. If the wearer is more than 1 mile (1.5 km) from the battery, they have to spend 1 Intellect point to access the network for ten minutes and can telepathically speak with it only out to a short distance.

Removing the artifact requires one hour of surgery and inflicts 2 points of Intellect damage on the wearer. Alternatively, it can be pried out as an action by anyone with a set of light or heavy tools, inflicting 10 points of Intellect damage.

Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check per month)



Telepathic Network, page 62

CERULEAN HATE, STAGE 1

During all of Encounter 1, Cerulean Hate can only affect people with very low willpower or damaged minds, like old people with dementia or most children, and only if they're awake. A typical adult human's willpower is more than sufficient to keep out Cerulean Hate's probing mental fingers. In game terms, resisting Cerulean Hate's mind control is difficulty 1, which means anyone who can apply a level of Effort is automatically successful (it feels like successfully fighting off a headache). Any creature that resists this probing is immune to it for the next day or so.

Over the next few days, Cerulean Hate grows stronger. Its telepathic presence is automatically damaging to anyone it looks through or possesses. Right now it is weak enough that this inflicts only a small amount of Intellect damage to its host, but as it grows stronger, this damage increases until its energy is enough to kill a healthy person in seconds. As Cerulean Hate learns how human minds work, it can choose to mitigate this damage to preserve useful hosts for a longer period of time, but it doesn't place any value on human lives and usually doesn't care if it burns out its hosts—as a creature once worshipped as a god, it considers the sacrifice of mortal lives to be something it is owed. (It isn't actually a god, just a powerful energy being, but the distinction is mostly irrelevant.)

For the rest of this adventure, make note of what stage Cerulean Hate's power level has reached, which is explained in blue boxes like this one (and matches the corresponding encounter number for the adventure).

Rolm: *level 2, Intellect defense as level 1, interacting with animals as level 3*

seems like they know what they're doing.

Any sort of healing used on Tor that restores 2 health or shifts a creature one step up on the damage track rouses him, leaving him groggy but apparently unharmed. He has no memory of what happened or why he passed out. Anyone who has any healing abilities knows the boy should rest and be monitored for the next day to make sure there is no lasting damage. Once Gott knows Tor is going to be all right, he calms down enough to think more about what just happened and answer questions about it.

Gott is a tinsmith and was working in his shop on some cups to sell. Tor was in the next room playing with toys, when Gott suddenly heard the boy speaking words he couldn't understand, possibly in a different language, followed by a weird noise that sounded sort of like a laugh that wasn't his normal laugh. Gott walked over to Tor's room just in time to see his son pass out, at which point he picked him up and ran outside.

What Gott and the PCs don't know at this point is that the "psychic battery" deep underground is actually an intelligent being known as Cerulean Hate, which is starting to wake up and is reaching out with its telepathy to examine the surroundings through the eyes of creatures with human-level intellects (like Tor). As it continues to do so, it will learn the local language (the Truth) and perfect its ability to talk through its telepathic slaves. Unfortunately, this contact is dangerous for humans, and many more people are going to be hurt or killed as it sizes up its environment and threats (see the box "Cerulean Hate, Stage 1").

Later that day, more incidents like the one that befell Tor happen to other people in town—weird speech and strange outbursts followed by unconsciousness. All of the affected people are children, elderly people who have gone senile, or (in one case) an adult farmhand named Rolm known to be a simpleton. All of them survive, although how well they fare afterward depends on what sort of healing care they receive and how soon after the episode they get it. They either can't remember what happened or

can't articulate it, other than one moment they were acting normally and the next they were waking up with head pain.

After two or three days of this (with the total number of victims reaching twenty or so), move on to Encounter 2: The God Speaks.

XP Awards: The PCs each earn 1 XP if they talk to Gott, Tor, and at least a few other victims of these attacks.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE GOD SPEAKS

This part of the adventure begins about two or three days after the weird incident with the child, Tor. By this point, townsfolk are becoming worried about whatever is harming their children and elders, and the Aeon Priests and local authorities are trying to root out the cause and find a solution (hopefully with the help of the PCs, if they are available). Around this time, every living intelligent creature in town (except those shielded against telepathy) starts noticing a quiet sort of thought on the fringe of their mind at all times: the name "Cerulean Hate," with a sense of malevolence and a deep blue color.

Cerulean Hate is now using its power to possess adults, which gives it more mobility. The lethal effects of its possession limit how much it can do with a particular body before it dies, but a typical specimen lasts about a minute, giving it time to taunt and threaten townsfolk. Although it gains no sustenance or benefit from sowing fear and indiscriminate murder, it does this anyway because it is an evil thing and enjoys seeing others suffer. It might amuse itself by burning out a host body in front of the body's family (its examination of the people in town has shown it that humans have family units with close emotional bonds), making its host attack someone, or moving a host to a dangerous place like a rooftop and yelling threats as the host falls to their death. There is no common connection between the possessed targets—some are farmers, some are crafters, and so on, from all over town.

CERULEAN HATE, STAGE 2

At the start of Encounter 2, Cerulean Hate fully understands the Truth and is strong enough to mentally dominate any typical NPC resident in the town (up to level 3 or so). It can control only one person at a time, only if they're awake, and only to just beyond the edge of town. It can use this ability five to ten times each day, depending on how much the hosts struggle and how far a chosen host is from the entity's location underground.

It tests its growing power several times per day by attempting to control more powerful minds (such as an Aeon Priest or a PC), but can't actually manage to do so. As with the previous stage, a person who resists its possession attempt is immune to it for the next day or so.

When Cerulean Hate dominates a host, the psychic entity can speak and hear through them, and its power manifests as a blue halo around the victim's head and a blue light in their eyes. When it speaks, there is an odd inhuman reverberation in its voice despite using a human voice box. Its presence in a person's mind inflicts 1 point of Intellect damage per round. If its host is an NPC, reaching 0 health from this means they fall unconscious and die in the next round from a massive brain hemorrhage (although extreme measures might be able to save them if used immediately). If Cerulean Hate abandons a host before this damage kills it, the host can recover but may suffer lingering side effects, ranging from something like a severe hangover to a mild stroke or concussion, depending on how much damage was done.

The following phrases are typical for it during this part of the adventure:

- "Too long I have slept, and the world has forgotten me. When I am healed, they will learn to fear me again."
- "My slaves built my temple to regenerate my strength. Soon I shall be as powerful as I once was, and I shall rule these lands."
- "I look forward to snuffing out the lives of the unworthy. You will be sacrifices to my greatness."
- "All this time I have been under your feet, dreaming of slaves dying by the thousands for my glory."
- "Your vessels are inferior to all of my previous slaves. So quickly your minds burn into ash."

Anyone who hears Cerulean Hate speak through a host recognizes it as the same entity pushing its name at the edges of their mind.

Over the course of the next few days, the encounters with Cerulean Hate are enough to let the townsfolk (led by the efforts of the Aeon Priests and the PCs) realize that it doesn't possess anyone who is asleep, and if a possessed host is knocked unconscious (whether by violence, drugs such as sleeping poison, or a mental attack) the entity leaves them and doesn't immediately return once the person is awake again. The PCs can't attack Cerulean Hate at this stage (even mental attacks against a host can't do more than drive it out and annoy it), so they need to focus on saving people and figuring out a plan to stop it, as the possession kills the victim unless it is somehow interrupted.

If they haven't figured it out already, the PCs should have enough clues to realize that the psychic battery relates somehow to Cerulean Hate. The priests started using its power shortly before the attacks started happening, users of the networking artifacts see blue auras like those that happen to possessed people, and the entity's own words suggest that its "temple" is underneath the town—just like the psychic battery. (Of course, the PCs may have used other abilities, such as asking the datasphere, to learn this.) The priests think the best thing to do is find the temple—presumably a numenera installation built to sustain and heal the entity—and kill Cerulean Hate before it reaches its full power, perhaps by destroying the devices that are healing it.

Meanwhile, the priests start working on a limited-duration cypher that works like a poison brain implant, which should protect against this attack or expel Cerulean Hate from a host. They do this in secret, without telling the townsfolk, but they do inform the PCs. The priests don't have enough of the right kinds of iotum to make more than three cyphers, which they plan to keep in reserve in case one of them (or a PC) gets controlled. The PCs may want to help craft the cyphers, work on figuring out how to get down to the psychic battery (which presumably is deep underground, perhaps a hundred feet or more), patrol the town to intervene in incidents of possession, or all of the above.

When the PCs find a way to get down to the temple, or after three or four days of these attacks (with five to ten possessed victims each day, with some surviving due to other people assisting them), move on to Encounter 3: The Inhuman Tomb.

XP Awards: The PCs each earn 1 XP if they help figure out how to rescue a possessed person before the victim is killed, 1 XP if they make the connection between the psychic battery and Cerulean Hate (without help from the Aeon Priests), and 1 XP if they help craft defenses against the entity's possession ability.

A character with a poison brain implant is immune to Cerulean Hate's possession attempts, but they can still hear the quiet thoughts of its name throughout town.

Poison brain implant, page 299

GM intrusion: *Cerulean Hate attempts to control a PC, which feels like the start of a migraine headache accompanied by a blue aura on the edge of their vision (which only the target can see). The PC must make a level 3 Intellect defense roll or fall unconscious for one minute. (The entity can't quite manage to control the PC, but its attempt is still harmful.)*



CERULEAN HATE, STAGE 3

At the start of Encounter 3, Cerulean Hate's possession attempt is a level 4 Intellect-based attack, meaning it can attempt to command any of the Aeon Priests (whether or not it succeeds is a story element) or even a PC. Because the PCs and priests know how to interrupt this control, it is not a death sentence, but the priests suggest not going anywhere alone just in case Cerulean Hate attacks and the victim needs someone to save them by knocking them out.

The entity can sometimes control two creatures at the same time, but the attack against the second creature is hindered and lasts only a couple of rounds.

Its presence in its host's mind inflicts 5 points of Intellect damage per round. If the host is a PC (or a significant NPC with unusual abilities), they can attempt another Intellect defense roll each round to break free (success also means they're immune to this attack for a day or so, just as if an external force ended the possession). If the host is wearing a cerulean node, this damage is shared among other nearby creatures in the node, as the mental link between them conducts the dangerous mental energy like metal conducting electricity. The damage is shared as equally as possible, with any excess happening to the targeted host (so if there are three linked creatures near the host, they each take 1 point of Intellect damage and the host takes 2). Cerulean Hate sees this as an advantage because it extends the usefulness of a chosen host, and it gleefully uses a networked host's mouth to thank everyone nearby in the network for this gift.

In all other aspects, its abilities are the same as in Stage 2.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE INHUMAN TOMB

This part of the adventure starts with the PCs finding a way to get to the underground temple, or (after a few days in the previous encounter) the Aeon Priests finding a way to do so. Meanwhile, Cerulean Hate continues to possess and kill people, gloating and bragging about itself as it terrorizes the town, using phrases like these:

- "It has been so long since I have savored a fresh sacrifice. I am almost inclined to spare some of you."
- "My full power has almost returned. I can sense your thoughts and your fear."
- "Grovel before your new god!"
- "You call it 'the numenera.' Your ignorance disappoints me."

GM intrusion: *Cerulean Hate attempts to control a PC, who must make a level 4 Intellect defense roll or become possessed.*

The priests and community leaders agree that anyone able to leave town and camp at least a mile away should do so, as the entity seems able to reach only so far, but this is clearly a temporary measure as its power grows. Depending on the size of the community, this may be a huge undertaking, and exposes the townsfolk to whatever dangers wait out there. Some people foolishly decide to hide in their homes, thinking that Cerulean Hate won't notice them, or try their own defenses against its psychic attacks—ineffective methods such as special herbal teas, wearing cyphers or oddities on their heads, prayer, intoxication, and so on. The GM can use these people as side encounters so the PCs have the opportunity to persuade, intimidate, or strong-arm these reluctant people out of town to wait until it's safe to come home.

Cerulean node, page 167

When the PCs or the Aeon Priests determine where the temple is underground, they find the top of a vertical metal shaft that has been filled with loose earth, drit, and gravel to a depth of more than 30 feet (10 m). The last 10 feet (3 m) of the shaft has been blocked off with large chunks of shapestone, and at the bottom is a door connecting to a space surrounded by a force field. If the PCs don't have a way to dig through or bypass this obstacle, the Aeon Priests (particularly Korin the wright) can throw together some parts to make a

It doesn't matter where in town the GM locates the top of the shaft. Behind the wall of the semblage, under a shop, or in the cellar of a defensive tower are all suitable places. It was buried ages ago and any modern building in that spot was constructed without anyone knowing the shaft was down there.

Shapestone, page 93

digging machine, disintegration ray, phase changer, phase disruptor, or a large amount of living solvent to get the PCs to the base of the shaft (area 1), or perhaps directly to the temple antechamber (area 2).

Phase changer, page 284

Phase disruptor, page 284

Living solvent, page 282

1. BASE OF THE SHAFT

READ ALOUD

At the bottom of the shaft is a metal door and a battered synth panel. The remnants of paint—mostly worn away by time and contact with the loose material in the shaft—depict a blue cloud with multiple white eyes, surrounded by writing in an unknown language. The mental presence of Cerulean Hate is stronger here—not painful, but louder and more insistent than the vague name-thought you have been experiencing for the past few days.

Depending on how the PCs get here (phasing, digging, and so on), this area might be partially blocked by debris, but they should have enough room for one person at a time to stand here and manipulate the door and panel. The synth panel controls the metal door. The panel is old and jammed with dust and drit, so it takes several rounds to bring the panel to life and activate it, followed by several rounds of the door grinding its way open.

Area 2 GM intrusion: *The oxygen-starved air is too poor for one PC, who must make a level 3 Might defense roll or faint for one minute and be light-headed (hindered in all actions) for the next hour.*

Thaum dust, page 112

The dead humanoids in area 2 are from one of many species of extraterrestrials or visitants that lived on Earth in a prior age. What kind of creature they are, and if any of them are still living in the Ninth World, is up to the GM.

Metal door: *level 5*

Area 1 GM intrusion: *Debris in the shaft shifts, requiring quick effort to get through the door or stabilize it before the area is partially or completely buried again.*

Numenera device and force field: *level 7*

Major damage: attacking objects, page 116

2. TEMPLE ANTECHAMBER

READ ALOUD

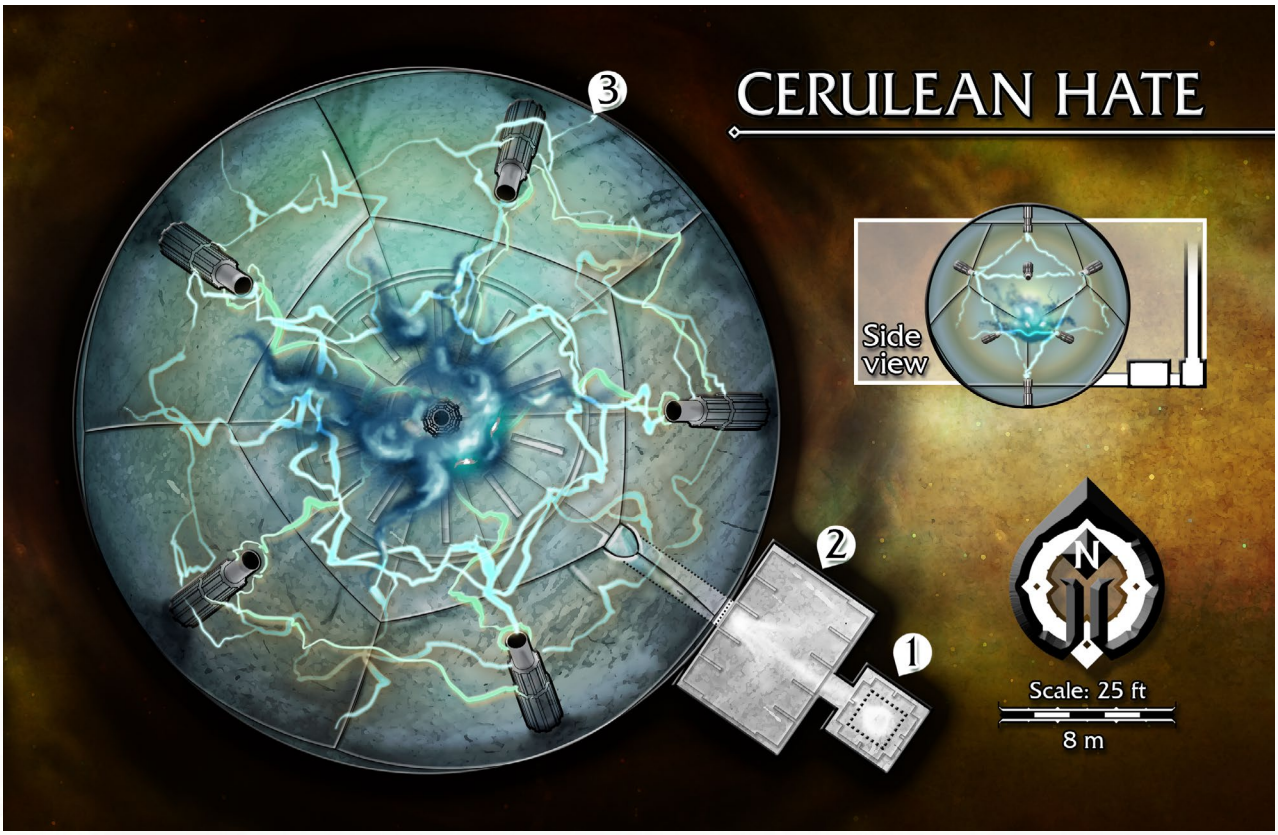
The room beyond the door smells of dead air that has been sealed away for a hundred human lifetimes. Pale yellow lights embedded in the synth walls reveal a small room with a complex-looking numenera device embedded in the north wall and a small metal door on the west wall. Two bodies in strange clothing are slumped against the south wall, arms linked, with a metal box, a tan synth bag, and a coil of synth rope on the floor nearby. Everything is covered with a layer of dust.

The bodies are humanoid but not human. Their flesh has shriveled and mummified in the dry sealed air of this room, but it's still apparent that they have too many fingers (six on each hand for one creature, seven for the other), their eyes are positioned high on the skull, they have multiple earholes, and their teeth are in an unfamiliar configuration. Their pale brown clothing is made of soft synth fibers with a similar black repetitive pattern or insignia on the left shoulder. They don't have any visible wounds and look like they just lay down and died here. The metal box contains some unfamiliar items that probably correspond to light tools. The synth bag holds one clear crystalline sphere (like a geode, but transparent), which is a containment device for 1 unit of thaum dust. The synth rope is unremarkable except that it's made of synth instead of plant fibers.

A simple control opens or closes the door, which swings open into this room. While the force field protecting the temple is on, the doorway is blocked by an opaque screen of hard blue force, and nothing can be seen, heard, or sensed through it. The complex numenera device is maintaining and controlling the force field. Turning it off or on again requires about ten minutes of work and three separate level 7 understanding numenera rolls. Attacking the device enough to give it major damage takes a few rounds (depending on how good the PCs are at breaking things) and disables the force field. Salvaging the device takes about fifteen minutes and permanently disables the force field (no chance of repairing it; it would need to be rebuilt).

See the flowchart on page 175 for the paths that this part of the adventure might take. Once the PCs deactivate the force field, they're in Node A of the flowchart, and the GM should move on to Encounter 4: The Temple.

XP Awards: The PCs each earn 1 XP if they get to the base of the shaft and the room with the mysterious bodies, and an additional 1 XP if they do so with little or no help from the Aeon Priests.



ENCOUNTER 4: THE TEMPLE

Cerulean Hate is a liar. This location isn't a temple where it was worshipped, but a prison its enemies built when they realized they couldn't kill it. Within the protective sphere of the force field are several machines that draw power from Cerulean Hate and use that to create an energy matrix that holds the entity in this room and forces it into something like sleep. Sometimes the entity manages to rouse itself for short periods of time, and during these bouts of wakefulness it metaphorically rattles the bars and picks at the locks. Over tens of thousands of years, these small actions have added up and its chains are now failing. Even if it freed itself from these restraints, the force field would keep it here for a few more decades until it slowly bore a hole through the field, but its words and actions convinced the PCs and Aeon Priests to come down here and disable the field. Now the entity just needs a short while to finish breaking the matrix-generating devices, and then it is free to leave. It's not sure if it can taunt the PCs into destroying the machines, but it's going to try.

When the force field is deactivated and the small door is open, read the following text.

READ ALOUD

Beyond the doorway is a large spherical room made of synth, metal, and glass. Twelve pillars of the same materials extend from the walls, floor, and ceiling. In the center of the room is an ovoid area of glowing blue smoke with multiple white sparks moving around inside. Surrounding it is a web of lightning, with bursts moving from it to the pillars and back again. You can't help but associate this image with the presence in your mind—this is Cerulean Hate, the murderous psychic god. Its mental voice weighs upon you like a shout. "Fools! You would attack me in my own temple, just as my machines are feeding me the last bit of energy I need? It seems that you have a death wish!"

The door in area 2 opens up near the bottom curved surface of area 3.

At this point, the action jumps to Node B in the flowchart.

GM intrusion: *An Aeon Priest moves into the room to sabotage one of the pillars, thinking that will slow down the entity's healing. Alternatively, Cerulean Hate possesses one of the priests (which spreads its Intellect damage to any networked PCs in the area) and says through them, "This weak-minded animal was going to destroy one of my lightning projectors. I will not allow you to do that."*

CERULEAN HATE, STAGE 4

At the start of Encounter 4, Cerulean Hate's possession attempt is a level 5 Intellect-based attack, meaning that if it attempts to command any of the Aeon Priests, it is probably successful, barring the use of countermeasures.

It can control two creatures at the same time, but the attack against the second creature is hindered.

Cerulean Hate is able to telekinetically manipulate objects within a short distance of itself and generate short-lived constructs of pure psionic energy.

If freed, Cerulean Hate eventually grows to its full power as a level 9 creature—it is meant to be something the PCs can't kill during this adventure. Its attacks and abilities are given levels so the PCs have difficulty numbers to roll against, but any direct attacks against the entity should generally fail, and the PCs should use the chaining devices to restrain it again. If the PCs manage to hit Cerulean Hate despite its high level, their attack should affect it, but the entity retaliates strongly against the character responsible, perhaps with a possession attempt, with the intent of taking them out of the battle.

In all other aspects, Cerulean Hate's abilities are the same as in Stage 3.

NODE B

Before any PCs enter area 3, Cerulean Hate uses its telekinesis to tear off the small door in area 2 and hurl it at one of the PCs. However, this hurled door attack is a ruse, as the entity's true intent is to permanently disable the force field device in area 2 so it can't be trapped here after it disables the chaining devices. The thrown door bounces off of something (either a PC or one of the walls) and hits the force field control panel, destroying it. Proceed to Node C in the flowchart.

Hurled door: *level 5; inflicts 5 points of damage*

GM intrusion: *If the characters are short on XP, or if the players tend to be suspicious and might wonder why the door coincidentally crashes into the force field device, treat Cerulean Hate's sabotage of the force field as a GM intrusion.*

NODE C

Once the force field device is broken, Cerulean Hate's goal is to finish disabling the twelve pillars that are draining its power and creating the imprisoning web. It can do that on its own with a few more days of work (Node F), but because it has tricked the PCs into taking down the force field, it tries to get them to destroy its chains too (Node D). It does this by continuing to lie and taunt them about the pillars, implying that the machines are healing it.

"You are in the presence of a god. My machines are almost finished revitalizing me. Cower, mortals!"

If any PCs move into the room to try disabling a pillar, jump to Node D. If the group decides to retreat and discuss what to do, jump to Node F.

NODE D

Cerulean Hate has tricked a PC or an Aeon Priest into entering its temple (prison) to try to destroy the twelve machines that are healing it (imprisoning it). The spherical room has an unusual gravitational quality, but the PCs probably won't notice this until they go into the room—making ranged attacks into the room don't reveal it.

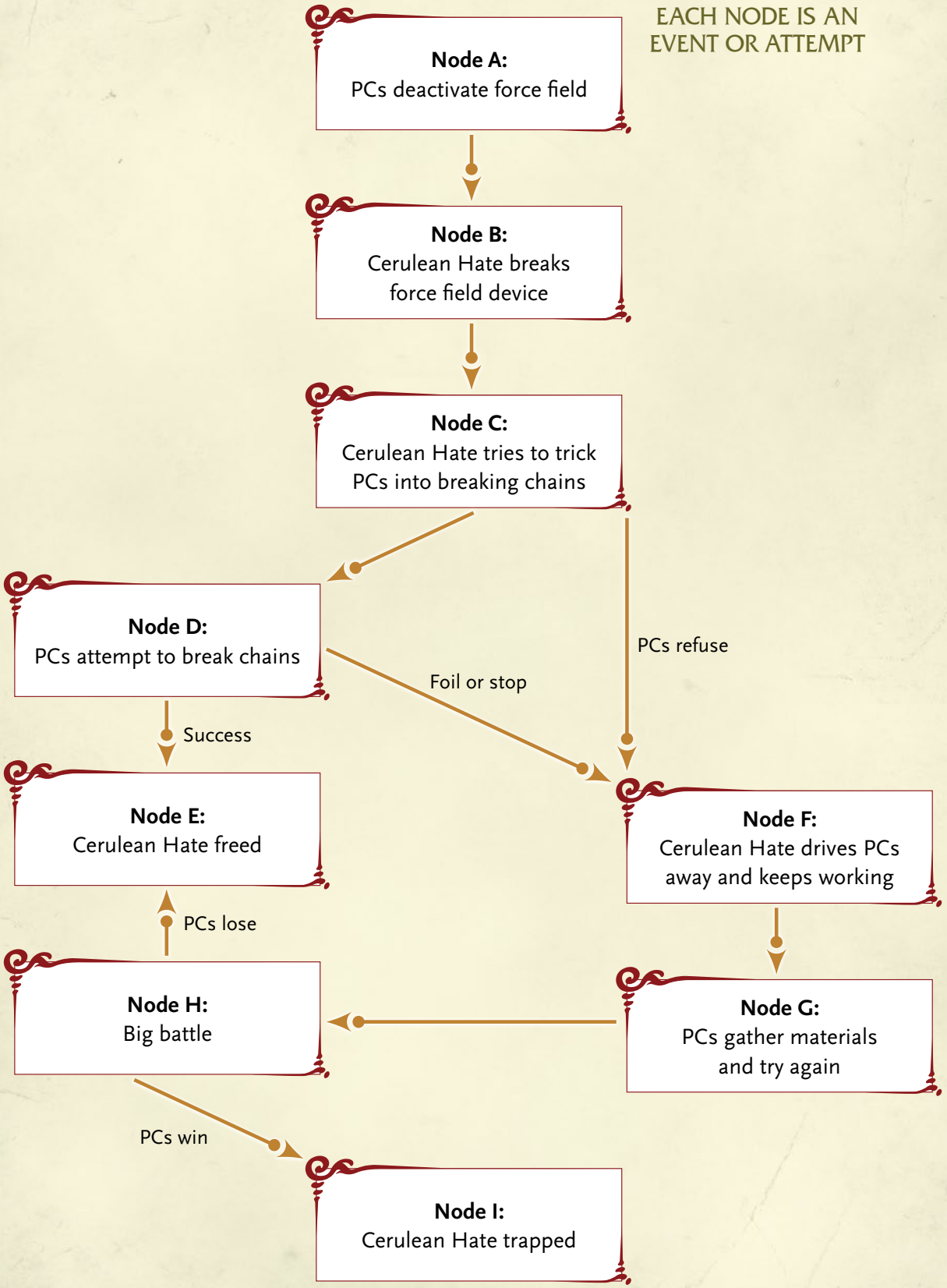
3. TEMPLE SPHERE

READ ALOUD

Stepping into the room gives you a very brief moment of vertigo, for "down" in this place seems to be toward the nearest floor. You feel like you could walk along the walls and ceiling of this room as if it were flat. The crackling energy web is louder than a burning building, but at this distance the overbearing mental voice of Cerulean Hate feels even louder than that.

The room is about a short distance across, but having to follow the curved walls means that a nonflying character takes two normal moves (a short distance each) to go from one side to the other. The twelve pillars are regularly spaced in three dimensions (as if each one is at the center of a face of a room-sized d12), and each is a short distance from any of the five nearest pillars.

CERULEAN HATE EVENT FLOWCHART





Pillar: *level 6*

Energy burst: *level 6; inflicts 6 points of electricity damage*

Quantium's ability to move the user one round back in time might be the key to reversing a bad decision by the PCs in this room. Quantium, synthsteel, and thaum dust, page 112.

Minor and major damage, page 116

Looking at a pillar up close reveals a dark glass control panel, with similar controls to the one in areas 1 and 2. The bursts of energy going to and from the web aren't harmful to anyone using the pillar unless a person deliberately tries to touch a burst. Most of the pillars emit or receive bursts at the same time, but a few of them intermittently miss this common cue (these few are ones that have been subtly sabotaged by Cerulean Hate over the millennia). The malfunctioning pillars have minor damage and are effectively one level lower than the intact pillars.

If a pillar moves down the object damage track enough that it has major damage, it completely stops emitting or absorbing electrical bursts. If three pillars reach this state, the web collapses and Cerulean Hate is free (jump to Node E).

A character who uses the understanding numenera skill to examine the pillars (an action) realizes that this device doesn't seem to be transmitting energy to Cerulean Hate—more like it is siphoning energy from the entity and using that energy to build and maintain the web, which is some kind of barricade. This should be enough of a clue for the PCs to realize they've been deceived, and that they need to fix the pillars instead of destroying them. This room isn't a temple to Cerulean Hate, but a prison for it.

A PC will need to inspect each damaged pillar to determine what materials are needed to repair it: 1 unit of quantium, synthsteel, or thaum dust, depending on the pillar. Just like when crafting with these materials, iotum that can be used in place of one of these types (or in place of any type) can be used for the repairs. The adventure assumes three pillars are in need of repair, but that number may be higher or lower if there are more or fewer PCs in the group who have any skill with the numenera.

If the PCs have the necessary materials on hand, they can attempt the repairs (jump to Node H). Otherwise they have to acquire the materials and return to the temple before the entity frees itself (jump to Node G).

"I am FREE! Never again shall vermin like you bind me! Watch as I tear these devices apart, just as I will strip the flesh from your bones! I will show you such pain that you will thank me when I finally decide to end your torment."

NODE E

Once three or more pillars have major damage, the energy web thins out and collapses into nothing. The newly freed Cerulean Hate roars in triumph and spends two rounds using telekinetic blasts to destroy a total of four more pillars, just to prevent anyone from using this area to imprison it ever again. This gives the PCs two rounds to escape, perform some heroic action that banishes or contains the entity, or do something else like reverse time to prevent this from happening.

Once Cerulean Hate is done with its freedom tantrum, it starts killing anyone it can see. If it has no prey in sight, it flies up the shaft and searches the town for people to kill, then searches outside the town for more (probably finding the displaced townsfolk camped nearby). After a few weeks, it increases in power to level 8, and level 9 after a few months. What happens next is up to the PCs—and they are indirectly responsible for anyone killed by this creature.

NODE F

The PCs decide to leave Cerulean Hate's temple, perhaps to consider their options. If they return to the temple and attempt to destroy the "healing" machines, jump to Node D. If they decide to gather materials to repair the damaged imprisoning machines, jump to Node G.

When the PCs leave, Cerulean Hate mocks them. "Flee, cowards! Every moment I spend crushing a feeble mind in this town is one more moment that you may use to slink away and draw another breath!" While the PCs are away, it keeps making slow progress on its chains, and it continues to murder a few townsfolk every day by possessing them until their minds melt.

NODE G

The PCs have decided to gather the materials they need and then return to the temple to repair the damaged pillars. If they examined the bodies in area 2, they should have at least 1 unit of thaum dust. Where they get the other materials depends on their equipment and skills. If there is a Wright PC, they may already have some or all of the necessary iotum. If the PCs are familiar with salvaging for iotum, they can attempt to salvage some of their items for specific iotum, or use an installation in town as their target (as the town is basically abandoned at this point, nobody is around to object to them looting a public piece of infrastructure). Any surviving Aeon Priests who are with the PCs volunteer items from their semblage, or may even have one or more of the needed iotum.

When the PCs return to the temple to repair the pillars with the iotum, jump to Node H.

NODE H

The PCs go to the temple to fix the damaged pillars and fully imprison Cerulean Hate again. This plays out much like Node D, except the entity knows the PCs no longer believe its lies, so it attacks to prevent them from repairing the damage to its chains. The entity is still weakened and its powers are limited—it cannot move from its place at the center of the room, and it can only possess people, fire telekinetic bolts, or create short-lived psychic energy automatons to physically challenge the PCs (these look like spindly floating clouds of glowing blue smoke vaguely in the shapes of spiders).

Fortunately for the entity, the energy web holding it in place also protects it against most attacks. It and its automatons are energy beings without hard physical forms or metabolism, so they are immune to biological attacks like disease and poison.

Newly freed Cerulean Hate: *level 7, mental attacks and Intellect defense as level 8; health 30; heals 1 health every round; fly a short distance each round as an action; telekinetic blast inflicts 8 points of damage or mental onslaught inflicts 8 points of Intellect damage; create level 6 psychic energy automaton that lasts for one minute*

Weakened Cerulean Hate: *level 5, Intellect defense as level 6; Armor 5 against all damage from energy web; health 30; heals 1 health every round; possess a creature as an action; telekinetic blast inflicts 5 points of damage; create a level 5 psychic energy automaton that lasts for one minute*

Psychic energy automaton: *level 5; dissipates automatically after one minute*

"I was already a god when your kind were learning to sift through garbage for food. You insult me with your very presence, like maggots on a feast. The satisfaction of crushing your pathetic little minds is barely worth the effort."

Cerulean Hate is aware of the PCs as they approach and will create one or two psychic energy automatons just before they enter the temple.

Repairing a damaged pillar is a difficulty 6 Intellect task that takes about one minute (ten actions), so abilities that allow PCs to take extra actions each round (such as using thaum dust, Inspiration, or Inspire Action) are quite useful here. Completing the repair consumes the iotum used for the repair. Other PCs and the Aeon Priests can help anyone performing the repairs or draw attacks from Cerulean Hate and its automatons to buy more time.

During this battle, the entity continues to mentally shout at and berate the PCs, calling them verminous minds who are unworthy of its presence and insisting "You will beg me for a quick death." Each pillar the PCs repair makes Cerulean Hate more angry and desperate.

If the PCs retreat after finishing only some of the repairs, jump to Node F. If they succeed at all the repairs, jump to Node I.

Repair minor effect suggestion: *The action counts as two or even three rounds' worth of repair on that pillar.*

Repair major effect suggestion: *The action activates an auto-repair function in the pillar that immediately completes the repair.*

GM intrusion: *Cerulean Hate takes over an Aeon Priest, who attacks another PC or interferes with a repair attempt.*

Inspiration, page 92

Inspire Action, page 12



NODE I

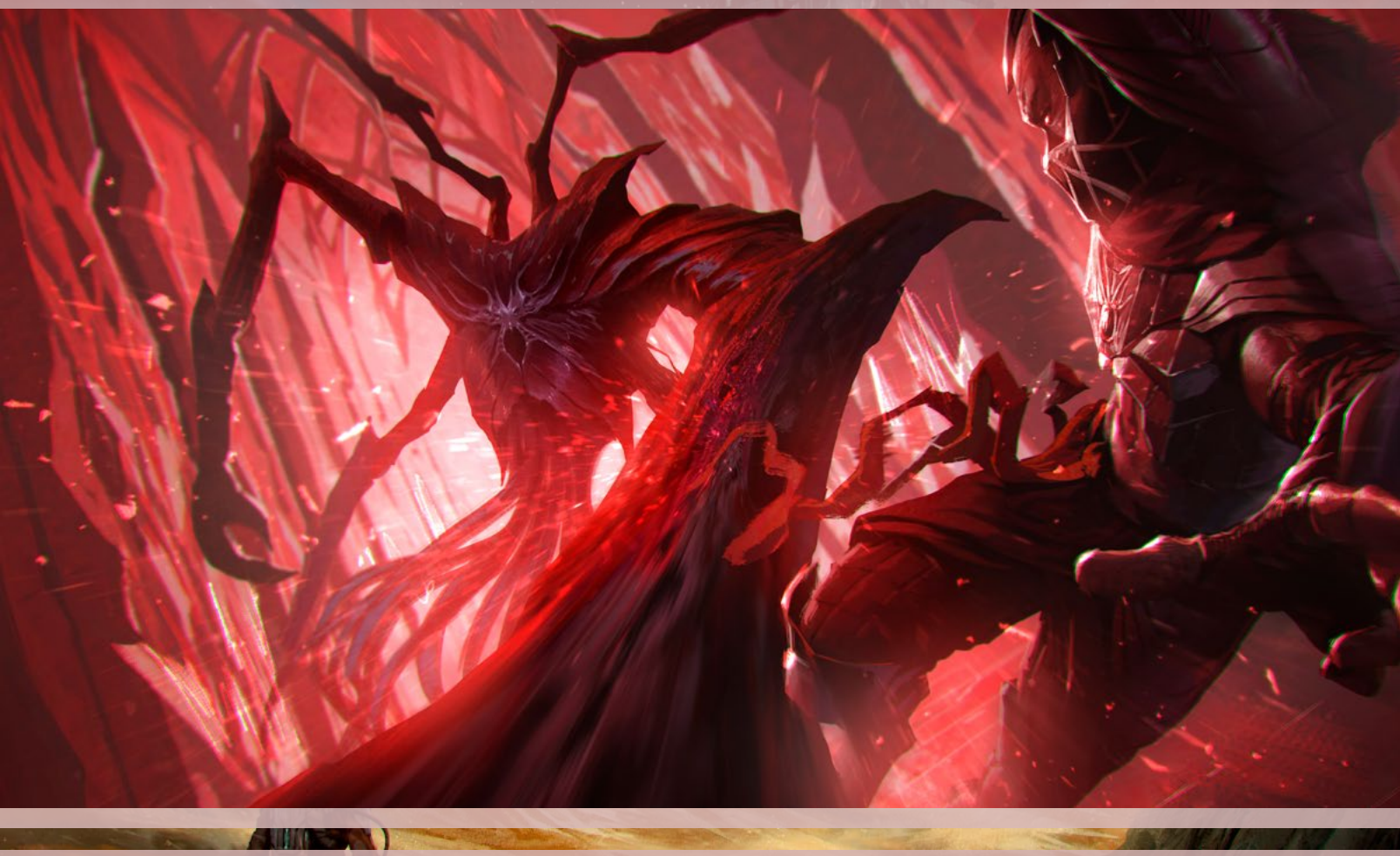
When the last repair is completed, all of the repaired pillars hum and then start to emit and absorb energy bursts in sync with the intact pillars. Cerulean Hate has only a few seconds to scream in the PCs' minds before the web is restored to full power, at which point the entity is completely bound, which utterly silences it. Any psychic automatons disperse, anything being held by its telekinesis falls, and anyone possessed by it falls unconscious (but is free). For the first time in many days, its angry mental presence is gone from their minds. Cerulean Hate is still visible at the center of the energy web, but its form is compressed to the size of a human head and its glowing white "eyes" have vanished. It is blind, deaf, and shut off from the rest of the world.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Now that it is safe to be in town again, someone should inform the refugees in the tent city that they can come back to their homes. The townsfolk need to bury and mourn their dead. The Aeon Priests do their best to minister to those injured by Cerulean Hate, and deal with the guilt for whatever role they had—true or imagined—in the entity's awakening. The town leaders are grateful to the PCs and offer them gifts and sanctuary. The PCs may decide to rest here for a while and pursue some long-term activities.

XP Awards: The PCs each earn 1 XP if they realize that the pillars aren't healing devices before they damage any of the pillars. They each gain 2 XP if they successfully repair the pillars and restore Cerulean Hate's prison. They also gain 1 XP if they imprison the entity without any of the Aeon Priests dying in the final conflict.

PART 5:
CREATURES AND CHARACTERS



Chapter 19: Using Creatures and NPCs 180
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CHAPTER 19

USING CREATURES AND NPCs

Understanding the Listings, page 222

The creatures in this section are associated with the Order of Truth, but most of them predate the order and have merely been adopted by the organization, so GMs are free to use a creature however and wherever they want.

Chapter 20 describes three new creatures: the howling navarga, loreworm, and sigmureth. They are useful to GMs as foes, guards, nuisances, sources of information, or pets, and some PCs may find them useful as companion creatures as well.

Chapter 21 describes six new NPCs that are or were part of the Order of Truth: clave guard, Aeon Journeyman, heretic priest, order administrator, fenderal of the order, and the Amber Pope himself. It also lists NPCs from other books who have prominent roles or significant connections to the order.

The most important element of each creature is its level. You use the level to determine the target number a PC must reach to attack or defend against the opponent. In each entry, the difficulty number for the creature is listed in parentheses after its level. The target number is three times the level.

A creature's target number is usually also its health, which is the amount of damage it can sustain before it is dead or incapacitated. For easy reference, the entries always list a creature's health, even when it's the normal amount for a creature of its level. For more detailed information on level, health, combat, and other elements, see the Understanding the Listings section in *Numenera Discovery*.

CREATURES BY LEVEL

Sigmureth	2
Loreworm	4
Howling navarga	6



CHAPTER 20
CREATURES

HOWLING NAVARGA 6 (18)

Howling navargas are shambling apelike creatures larger than a human, mixing flesh, metal, and synth in a combination unique to each individual. Most are found in internal spaces within the Amber Monolith, hibernating indefinitely and awakening when other creatures get too close, but a few seem to have escaped that place (perhaps through a malfunctioning teleportation device) and now roam remote parts of northern Navarene. They are not quiet creatures; their hoots and howls—used to startle prey and challenge—can be heard a mile away.

Navargas are dual-sexed biomechanical entities. When two compatible specimens meet, they might exchange genes and nanomachines, impregnating both and guarding both sets of offspring until they can fend for themselves (at about a year of age).

Motive: Standing vigil, hungers for flesh
Environment: Ruins
Health: 20
Damage Inflicted: 7 points
Armor: 2
Movement: Short
Modifications: Breaks objects, climbs, and tracks as level 7
Combat: A howling navarga attacks foes with its huge fists and can make two attacks as a single action.

It can bite and grab a victim instead of using its fists. If this attack hits, it inflicts damage that turn and automatically on the creature's turn every round thereafter. The grabbed victim cannot take physical actions unless it first breaks free with a Might or Speed defense roll. A navarga can see in darkness as if dim light and see in anything brighter than darkness as normal illumination. It can track using a combination of sound, scent, and infrared as level 7.

The mechanical or organic modules within a navarga's body provide an additional ability, such as one of the following options.

Carnivorous hair: The creature's hairs are hollow tentacles ending in tiny mouths that latch on to flesh and drain blood. A hit from the creature's fists, bite, or grab inflicts 1 additional point of damage. Hitting the navarga with an unarmed attack inflicts 1 point of damage on the attacker.

Force punch: As an action, the creature can emit a blast of force up to long range, inflicting 8 points of damage.

Repair: The creature's organic and mechanical components repair at high speed. It regains 2 points of health each round as long as it has at least 1 health.

Interaction: A howling navarga programmed to defend an area is single-minded in its determination and can't be reasoned or bargained with. It will pursue to a certain distance but won't leave its programmed area for too long.

Use: Navargas are aggressive and powerful predators that don't tolerate other carnivores larger than a seskii in their territory.

Loot: A dead howling navarga can be salvaged for 1d2 cyphers, 1d2 oddities, and 1d6 shins.

GM intrusion: *A navarga reacts to an attack from a PC, deactivating one of its existing modules and immediately activating one that's more effective against its foe.*

LOREWORM 4 (12)

Loreworms look like holographic flying serpentine creatures covered in hundreds of branching hairs. From time to time, especially when frightened or startled, they momentarily change into a holographic cube or pyramid shape. Loreworms are a type of energy life form that is native to or strongly connected to the datasphere, but usually exists out of phase. Curious, bored, and slightly insane, they entertain themselves by swimming through the datasphere and relaying obscure information to those who provide them with food.

Datasphere, page 355

Loreworms can sense when creatures or devices access the datasphere and will track these requests to their source, suddenly manifesting out of nowhere to interrogate the querent or attack. Groups of them frequently stop by installations with permanent datasphere connections, challenging each other with strange questions and races to distant parts of the world.

Philethis, page 247

Loreworms dislike and avoid philethis. If questioned about them, they refuse to answer or immediately attack.

Motive: Hungers for cyphers

Environment: Ruins and any location with a strong connection to the datasphere

Health: 12

Damage Inflicted: 4 points

Movement: Long

Modifications: Stealth and defense as level 5 due to phasing. Obscure trivia as level 6.

Combat: Every other round, a loreworm can directly attack the mind of one creature within immediate range, inflicting 3 points of Intellect damage (ignores Armor). It can make this attack against other creatures accessing the datasphere, but it has to be aware of their presence and "near" the information the visitor is accessing. A loreworm that attacks within the datasphere usually tries to follow the visitor so it can continue attacking in the physical world.

Loreworms can navigate through the datasphere at incredible speeds to appear in another part of the world that is connected to the datasphere. Moving up to 10 miles (16 km) away takes one round, 100 miles (160 km) takes two rounds, and anywhere else in the world takes three rounds.

Knowing the Unknown, page 43

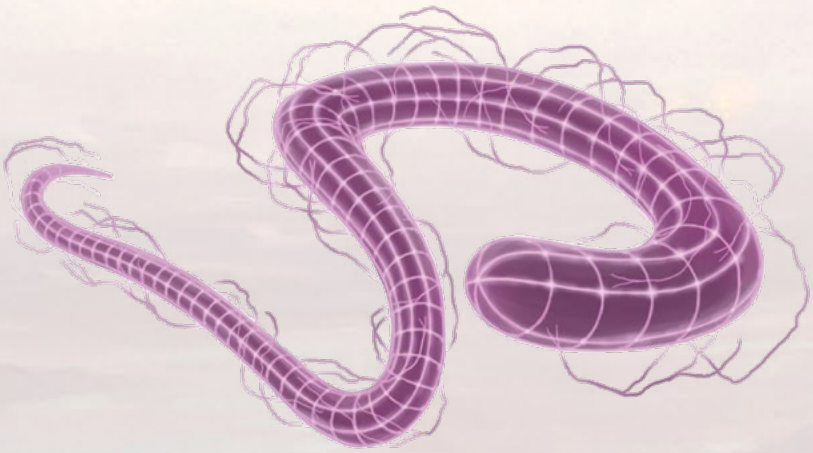
Interaction: Loreworms are proud of their ability to find information, but they insist on being paid one cypher for each question they answer. A PC can ask a loreworm to search for a general answer, which works like using the Knowing the Unknown esotery. The loreworm returns rounds or minutes later when it finds the answer.

Plan seed, page 136

GM intrusion: *A loreworm forms a link with a PC who has the ability to access the datasphere. This probably has benefits and drawbacks for the PC.*

Use: Loreworms are useful to characters who need information but don't have any special abilities to help them find it.

Loot: A destroyed loreworm leaves behind no physical remains, but it might transform into a fixed image of something important, such as an access code, a map, or a plan seed for a cypher.



SIGMURETH 2 (6)

Sigmureths are ovoid yellow slug-like creatures about 3 feet (1 m) long and 6 inches (15 cm) high at their thickest point. They can extend and retract simple eyestalks and feeler tentacles around their perimeter and have a brain-like cluster of flat crystalline organs in their midsection. They bond, almost like pets, to larger creatures that feed them. They can use their tentacles to connect to recording devices and copy information they find there into their crystal memory storage or add their own recordings to external devices. Explorers use sigmureths to copy information stored in ruins to bring it back to Aeon Priests for further study.

Sigmureths are simple creatures no smarter than fish. They don't understand the recordings they transfer, and if their crystalline storage ever fills up, they randomly delete some of their current data to make room for more. They can reproduce asexually or sexually. Dozens of young hatch from thumbnail-sized eggs, each bearing corrupted fragments of the recordings their parent or parents had at the time of conception. They can hibernate in a cocoon for more than a hundred years when they get too dry or too little food.

Motive: Hungers for companionship and dead plant material
Environment: Anywhere except deserts and other dry locations
Health: 6
Damage Inflicted: 2 points
Armor: 1
Movement: Immediate
Modifications: Speed defense as level 1 due to slowness. Stealth tasks as level 3 due to size.
Combat: Sigmureths can extend a rough tongue-like feeding organ to slash at predators. If a creature tries to eat a sigmureth, it can inflate and harden the outer layer of its skin; in this shape it cannot attack or move but its Armor increases by +1.
Interaction: Sigmureths react favorably to creatures that offer them food. Repeat feedings from the same creature tends to form a loyal bond. If a bonded sigmureth is allowed to grab onto its owner's arm, waist, or shoulders, it reacts to the owner's verbal and physical cues to interface with recording devices, transferring about a minute of video or a hundred images per minute of interfacing. When hungry, it displays random stored images on its crystalline organs.

A sigmureth without a companion gets lonely and seeks out numenera it can "trade" images with, which might be an installation, vehicle, artifact, or cypher.

Use: A dead Aeon Priest is found in a ruin with a hibernating sigmureth pet; the creature's memory has useful information about the ruin or perhaps a plan seed.

An Aeon Priest's sigmureth died unexpectedly, but not before it laid eggs. The fragmented data stored in the offspring's memory must be collected and sorted before it is lost forever.

Loot: A dead sigmureth can be salvaged for a cypher or two, or perhaps even a damaged imager or recorder headband containing some of its "memories."

Imager, page 297

Recorder headband, page 300

GM intrusion: *The sigmureth displays something horrifying or very intriguing to a character, who is distracted for one round and can take no actions.*



CHAPTER 21

NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

As described in *Numenera Discovery*, nonplayer characters (NPCs) don't follow the same rules as PCs. NPCs can have whatever abilities the GM thinks will make for an interesting encounter. Even someone described as a "nano" or "wright" may have unusual abilities that don't match any of the powers listed for the Nano and Wright types. Among members of the Order of Truth, this is even more true, as these scholars of the numenera are always finding ways to alter existing abilities or unlock new ones, whether using genetic splicing, mutagenic compounds, or experimental nanobots.

Aeon Priest, page 264

Alternative focus abilities, page 23

Aeon Cavalier: *level 6, Speed defense as level 7; health 29; Armor 3; inflicts 8 points of damage with melee or ranged weapon; uses cyphers and artifact Armor for additional effects; for more details, see* Ninth World Bestiary 2, *page 187*

As usual, when running a game on the fly, it's easiest to give an NPC a level and use that level and its target number to derive the mechanics. Keep in mind that most people associated with a clave or semblage are just regular folks with no exceptional abilities, and therefore are level 1 or 2 NPCs with a modification that raises the effective level in their area of expertise by one or two more steps. Even a typical Aeon Priest in a tiny village might just be a scholar with a modification for the understanding numenera skill, rather than a nano with esoteries.

This chapter provides basic stats for several kinds of NPCs commonly associated with the Order of Truth. It doesn't include the sorts of characters that *may* be associated with the order, such as chiurgeons, explorers, and wrights, but it's easy to quickly customize them to fit in—just give them a good selection of cyphers or an unusual offensive, defensive, or utilitarian ability appropriate to their type.

Explorer, page 265

Chiurgeon, page 284

Wright, page 286

The following table includes the NPCs in this chapter as well as a few from other sourcebooks.

NPCs BY LEVEL

Clave guard	2
Aeon Journeyman	2
Heretic priest	3
Order administrator	4
Aeon Priest	5
Aeon Cavalier	6
Fenderal of the order	6
Durranet VI, Amber Pope	6



AEON JOURNEYMAN 2 (6)

An Aeon Journeyman is a person working on their training and studying as part of the Order of Truth. Many of them go on to become Aeon Priests, but others become the nanos, explorers, wrights, diplomats, guards, and other skilled people who perform the important work that keeps the order moving forward. The journeyman's role is to learn where their talents are and how to best use them for the order. They perform many jobs in a semblage, including taking notes, keeping tabs on the local community, and general housekeeping.

Motive: Understanding the numenera, learning useful skills

Health: 6

Damage Inflicted: 2 points

Movement: Short

Modifications: Understanding numenera and Intellect defense as level 3

Combat: Journeymen usually use simple weapons such as knives and clubs unless they have some training in better weapons. Each also carries one useful cypher. They follow the orders of the Aeon Priests and the clave guards, but (as they are often the youngest and least experienced members of the semblage) they are more likely to panic or flee if threatened. Each journeyman also has one exceptional ability related to their current training and talents:

Chiurgeon: Can use an action to heal an adjacent creature for 1 point of health (or restore 1 point to a Pool of the journeyman's choice).

Diplomat: Positive social interaction and resisting trickery as level 3.

Explorer: Perception and stealth as level 3.

Guard: Wears armor that provides +1 Armor.

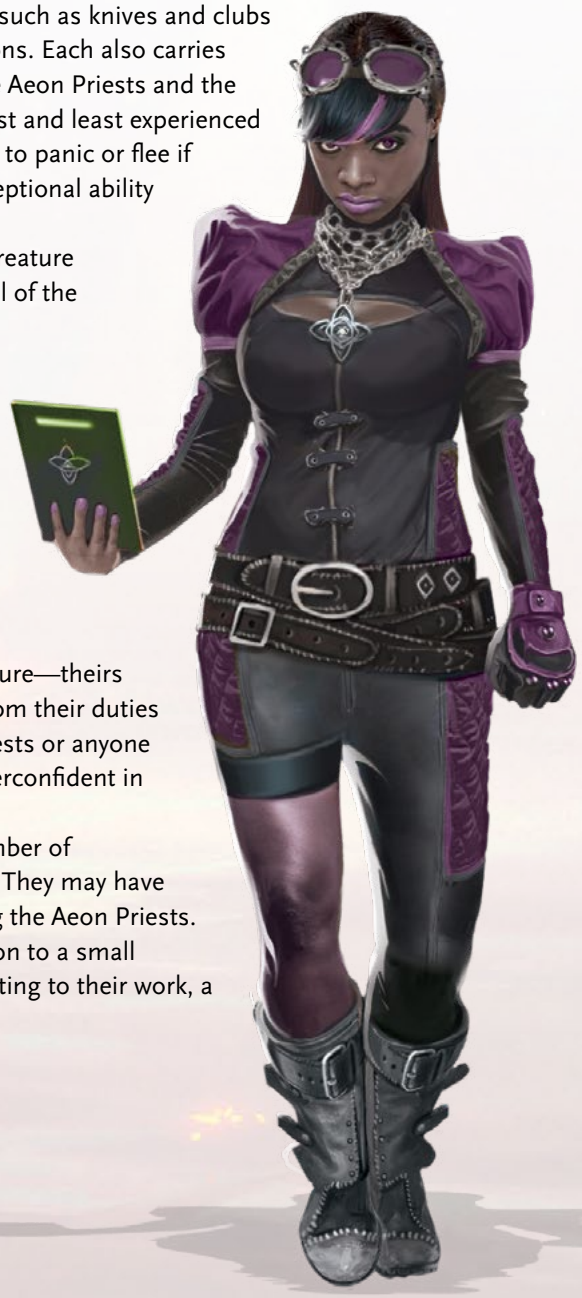
Nano: Can create a force blast up to short range that inflicts 3 points of damage, or scan a creature within short range to determine one weakness or special ability.

Wright: Can repair numenera objects as level 3.

Interaction: Journeymen are full of hope for the future—theirs and the world's. They're also frequently tired from their duties and eager to prove themselves to the Aeon Priests or anyone with knowledge or experience. They may be overconfident in front of townsfolk, earning some resentment.

Use: Most semblages and claves have a small number of journeymen helping to keep the place running. They may have family connections to people in town or among the Aeon Priests.

Loot: A typical journeyman has 1d6 shins in addition to a small weapon or tool, a few pieces of useful gear relating to their work, a cypher, and an oddity.



CLAVE GUARD 2 (6)

A clave guard is a trained defender of a clave or semblage, loyal to the Aeon Priests and familiar with the numenera. The guard's role is to keep the clave or semblage and its priests safe from threats, which might include angry townsfolk, malfunctioning automatons, or hostile beasts. If the greater community is threatened, the Aeon Priests may send the clave guards to help, but their primary duty is service to the Order of Truth. When not actively guarding, they may lend a hand to the Aeon Priests for mundane tasks such as moving heavy equipment, building walls, cooking, and so on.

Motive: Protecting the Aeon Priests and their projects; following orders

Health: 8

Damage Inflicted: 3 points

Armor: 2

Movement: Short

Modifications: Perception and Intellect defense as level 3

Combat: Clave guards are typically armed with higher-quality versions of whatever melee and ranged weapons are common for guards and soldiers in the community. They are straightforward in combat, follow orders given to them by the Aeon Priests, and know how best to use the one or two cyphers they've been given.



Interaction: Clave guards are used to seeing weird experiments and deflecting questions from curious townsfolk, and they don't easily bow to pressure from visitors. They don't let anyone into restricted areas (such as the clave or semblage) without permission from the Aeon Priests and assume that anyone in their territory without an escort is trespassing. Unlike town guards, they usually can't be bribed—they believe in the Order of Truth, often with a religious sort of loyalty, and wouldn't betray a priest's trust.

Use: Except in very small communities, every semblage or clave has at least one clave guard on hand to prevent people from disturbing the Aeon Priests while they work. Clave guards may socialize with town guards, local soldiers, and Aeon Priests, giving them a unique role as a social bridge between the semblage and the community at large.

Loot: A typical clave guard has 2d6 shins in addition to weapons, medium armor, basic gear, a cypher or two, and an interesting oddity.

DURRANET VI, THE AMBER POPE 6 (18)

Durranet is a wise human who has great knowledge of the numenera and a comprehensive understanding of human psychology, history, and politics. He knows that human passions and greed often lead to suffering for all people, and he is willing to take radical measures to prevent the Steadfast from tearing itself apart in war. He uses his influence and the reach of his advisors to keep the nine kingdoms out of war, hoping that a numenera breakthrough by the Order of Truth will increase compassion, reduce scarcity-driven conflicts, and save lives.

Motive: Keeping the peace, knowledge

Health: 24

Damage Inflicted: 6 points

Armor: 3

Movement: Short

Modifications: Intellect defense and attacks made with esoteries as level 7. Diplomacy, knowledge (history, psychology, and other fields), persuasion, resisting trickery, and understanding numenera as level 7.

Combat: Durranet's esoteries and equipment are mainly used to keep him out of harm's way or escape a dangerous situation. They grant him his Armor and resistance to Intellect-based attacks. His peaked cap is an artifact that prevents most people from remembering details about specific encounters with him. He can make a force or fire blast attack at long range. As an action, he can use any of the following abilities:

Command: The target follows his verbal commands for up to one minute, as long as they can see him.

Daze the Crowd: All actions taken by designated targets within an immediate area are hindered for ten minutes.

Fly: For one hour, he can move through the air as effortlessly as walking.

Jaunt: He instantly moves to a known location within 5 miles (8 km).

Know: Once per hour, he can tap into the datasphere and get a general answer about one question.

Override Numenera: He activates or asserts control over a cypher or artifact within short range so it obeys him for one minute. The creature using the object can attempt to regain control on its turn once each round.

Paralyze: One target within short range is held motionless for two rounds, unable to take any physical actions.

Scan: He can scan a target creature or object and ascertain one valuable bit of information or secret about it.

Durranet usually carries one or more useful artifacts and is always accompanied by at least one Aeon Priest or a fenderal who has additional powerful devices and would lay down their life for him.

Interaction: Durranet has a persona of being passionate in his speeches but aloof in personal interactions. His office is a heavy burden, but he believes he is the most qualified person for it at this time, and intends to hold it until a worthy successor appears or his mind and body begin to fail him. He allows himself only brief moments of candor with people he trusts or those whom he believes (based on his shrewd eye and good sense for evaluating people) could understand or empathize with his responsibilities.

Use: Durranet has had to make some ruthless choices (such as encouraging rumors of war with the Gaians) to keep the peace in the Steadfast. Unless the PCs become enthralled in high-stakes politics, they are unlikely to see him as anything but a remote figure.

Loot: Durranet carries custom-made metal tokens that he awards to people he deems worthy of a favor. He usually has 1d6 oddities and 1d6 + 2 cyphers in addition to the equipment listed above.

These game stats for Durranet can be used for any other Amber Pope or similar top-ranked Aeon Priest in the Order of Truth.

Fenderal of the order, page 188

Aeon Priest, page 264

Exceptionally successful PCs working for the Order of Truth might gain the trust of the Amber Pope and be let into his confidence about certain plans that require skill and discretion. PCs who believe the Gaian invasion is a false rumor might turn against Durranet (regardless of their allegiance to the order or the Amber Pope), with his downfall being the capstone of a political or military campaign.

GM intrusion: *The Amber Pope produces a cypher or an esotery for precisely the need at hand—a shield against attacks, an attack that capitalizes on a foe's exact weakness, a means of teleporting away, something that teleports additional forces to help him, or whatever is needed.*

FENDERAL OF THE ORDER 6 (18)

"Fenderal" is meant to sound like "general" and "defender," connoting their high rank and purpose.

A fenderal of the order is dedicated to protecting important individuals and sites. They wield incredible martial skill and an arsenal of numenera devices to quickly contain or eliminate threats. A squad of fenderals protects the Amber Pope at all times, most major figures in the order have one as a personal bodyguard, and locations such as the Fortress of the High Father are watched over by fenderals commanding captains of the guard and clave guards. Unlike an Aeon Cavalier, a fenderal's role is to guard and protect, not actively seek out enemies of the order.

Fortress of the High Father, page 103

Clave guard, page 186

Motive: Exploration, adventure

Health: 28

Damage Inflicted: 10 points

Armor: 3

Movement: Short

Modifications: Attacks and Might defense as level 7. Speed defense as level 7 (8 with shield).

Combat: A fenderal can make a single attack with their weapon for 10 points of damage, or they can instead attack two different foes as a single action, inflicting 8 points of damage with each attack. Each fenderal also has something unique thanks to their equipment or training:

d100	Ability
01–10	Speed or Intellect defense as level 8.
11–20	Fenderal has Armor 5 against one type of energy (cold, electricity, or fire).
21–30	Fenderal can draw the attack of a foe without hindering their defenses.
31–40	Fenderal has a retaliation nodule on their armor that inflicts 2 points of electricity damage to anyone striking them.
41–50	Fenderal has a cypher affixed to their weapon that inflicts 2 additional points of cold, electricity, or fire damage.
51–60	Fenderal has a cypher that creates a force field around them or an ally, adding +2 to Armor.
61–70	Fenderal has a cypher that allows them to fly through the air at normal speed.
71–80	Fenderal has five random level 6 detonation cyphers.
81–85	Using a cypher attached to their armor, the fenderal can fire four long-range energy blasts that inflict 5 points of damage (each on different targets or all on the same target).
86–90	Fenderal can make a special melee attack against a foe. The attack is hindered, but if it hits, the target takes damage and is stunned for one round.
91–00	Fenderal's shield is enhanced by numenera and provides an additional asset on their Speed defense.

Captain of the guard, page 284

Draw the attack, page 118

Interaction: Fenderals are fiercely loyal to the Order of Truth and have no patience for anyone wasting their time or trying to distract them from their duties. They are allowed to use lethal force if they feel it is necessary, and they make threats about that to convince enemies to surrender.

Use: A fenderal can be a physical or social obstacle preventing the PCs from getting to someone or something important to the order. To someone trusted by the order, a federal is a fierce ally and protector.

Loot: Most fenderals of the order carry 1d20 + 20 shins, one or two additional cyphers, and an oddity.

Aeon Cavalier: *level 6, Speed defense as level 7; health 29; Armor 3; inflicts 8 points of damage with melee or ranged weapon; uses cyphers and artifact Armor for additional effects; for more details, see* Ninth World Bestiary 2, *page 187*

GM intrusion: *One or more captains of the guard or Aeon Priests arrives to assist the fenderal.*

HERETIC PRIEST 3 (9)

Heretic priests are former members of the Order of Truth who were exiled from the organization after they were discovered using their knowledge for crimes or selfish purposes. Because they still remember their order training, they are clever, dangerous, and versatile opponents. They often bear a grudge against Aeon Priests in good standing, claiming they are the innocent victims of political disagreements. In a community where there are no Aeon Priests, heretic priests may set themselves up as authorities of the numenera or even pretend to be Aeon Priests.

Motive: Greed, power, finding the numenera

Health: 15

Damage Inflicted: 3 points

Movement: Short

Modifications: Deception and resisting mental effects as level 4

Combat: Heretic priests use force blasts, bolts of cold or electricity, and other esotery-derived attacks with long range.

A heretic priest can do one of the following: make one creature within long range flee for one minute via a psychic esotery or device, turn invisible for one minute via a distortion field, or gain 4 Armor for ten minutes via a force field.

Interaction: Heretic priests pretend to be members of the Order of Truth when it suits them and they can get away with it; otherwise, they present themselves as knowledgeable nanos. They are often hiding something, such as a scheme or something they stole from the order. Lacking the resources and connections they once enjoyed, they make deals or alliances with people they think can be of use to them.

Use: Several heretic priests may band together under a more powerful scholar of the numenera, forming a clave-like group.

Loot: A heretic priest typically has 2d6 shins, a weapon, 1d6 cyphers, an oddity, and other miscellaneous gear. One in six might have an artifact.

GM intrusion: *The heretic priest uses a cypher that is especially helpful in the current situation.*



ORDER ADMINISTRATOR 4 (12)

Order administrators are the diplomats and educators of the Order of Truth. They train new priests, make sure the internal bureaucracy runs smoothly, and work as liaisons to local governments to keep the peace. Their power is in persuasion and influence, not blasts of energy and force fields, but they have had some training in the numenera, are well equipped, and are very knowledgeable about what their devices can do. They are usually accompanied by apprentices, journeymen, diplomats, guards, or other people appropriate to their daily work.

Rank, page 297

Motive: Keeping the peace, knowledge
Environment: In most communities of rank 3 and higher
Health: 12
Damage Inflicted: 4 points
Movement: Short
Modifications: Interaction, resisting trickery, and resisting mental effects as level 6
Combat: An administrator tries to prevent combat from starting and may flee if personally threatened, but they can also attack with a short-range weapon or cypher.

An administrator can do one of the following: ease an ally's social interactions for ten minutes, hinder an enemy's social interactions or defenses for ten minutes, calm a person so they no longer want to attack for the next ten minutes, or give an ally an action immediately on the administrator's turn.

Interaction: Administrators are intelligent, articulate, patient, and experienced in dealing with people who are ignorant or have opposing viewpoints. They are well connected and respected in the order.

Use: The PCs need someone to speak to a leader about a problem on their behalf, but the administrator may not agree that the discussion aligns with the goals of the Order of Truth.

Loot: An administrator typically has 2d6 shins, 1d6 cyphers, one or two oddities to be used as gifts, and other miscellaneous gear related to teaching or government.



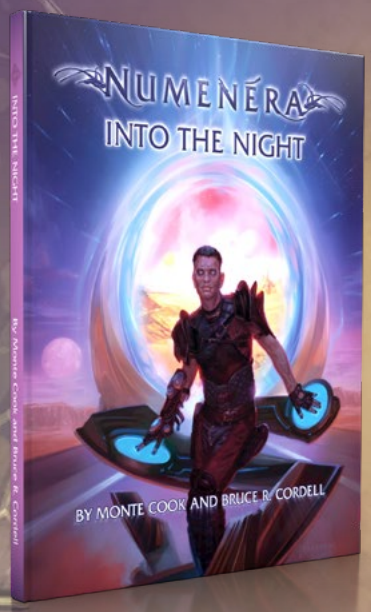
GM intrusion: *The administrator produces a cypher that eases all of their interaction or knowledge tasks by two steps for one hour.*

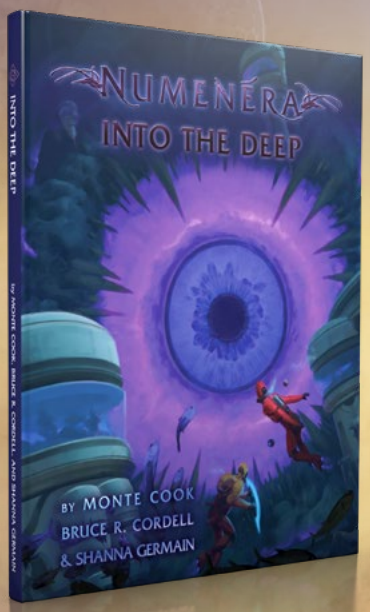
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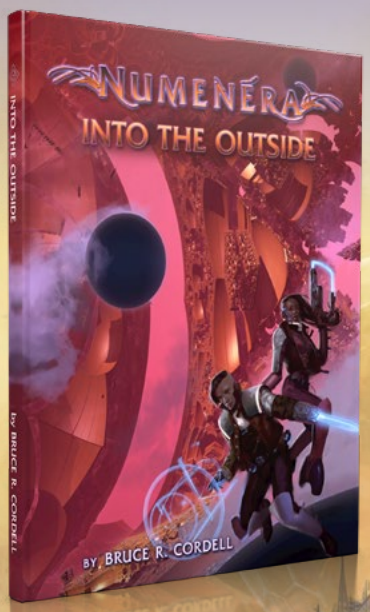
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