Mutant Chronicles

3rd Edition

Roleplaying Game

Savage Worlds Edition

Modiphius Entertainment

Official Savage Worlds Licensed Product

SOLAR SYSTEM
MAP SHOWING SIGNIFICANT ASTROLOGICAL BODIES AND NAVIGATIONAL GATES
NERO
BRUTUS
DYSNOMIA
ERIS
KUIPER BELT
URANUS
OBERON
MIRANDA
ARIEL
UMBRIEL
TITANIA
JUPITER
CALLISTO
IO
GANYMEDE
COMET HYAKUTAKE
PLUTO
CHARON
NEPTUNE
TRITON
NEREID
PROTEUS
OUTER SYSTEM
SATURN
RHEA
TITAN
DIONE
ENCELADUS
MIMAS
TETHYS
IAPETUS

EUROPA
MORGAN
KEEP GLADIUS
WITCHMOUTH
VICTORIA
PHOBOS
DEIMOS
PERIHELION 206.669.000 KM
APHELION 249.209.300 KM
MARS
ASTEROID BELT
INNER SYSTEM
DIEMANNSLAND
LUNA
APHELION 108.939.000 KM PERIHELION 107.477.000 KM
EARTH
APHELION 69.816.900 KM
PERIHELION 46.001.200 KM
MERCURY
APHELION 108.939.000 KM
PERIHELION 107.477.000 KM
VENUS
COMET HALEY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 01

WELCOME TO MUTANT CHRONICLES 8
Players 8
What is Mutant Chronicles? 8
Timeline 8
Humanity 9
The Opposition 9
The Setting 9

CHAPTER 02

MUTANT CHRONICLES FACTIONS 10
The Corporations 10
The Other Factions 10

CHAPTER 03

TIMELINE OF MUTANT CHRONICLES 13
Early History 13
The Exodus 14
Mankind's Golden Age Begins 15
Whitestar's Emergence 15
The Dark Symmetry era 16
The First Corporate War 17
The Second Corporate War 23
Second Dark Legion War 24

CHAPTER 04

CHARACTER LIFEPATH 28
Character Creation 28
Setting Rules 30
New Skills 32
New Hindrances 33
New Edges 34

CHAPTER 05

EQUIPMENT 54
Qualities 54
Corporate Variations 55
Clothing 57
Food And Drink 57
Healthcare 58
Exploration and Survival 60
Communications and Surveillance 61
Technical 63
Research 65
Combat Gear 66
Criminal Activities 68
Law Enforcement 69
Weapons 75
Handguns and Machine Pistols 80
Submachine Guns 83
Assault Rifles, Battle Rifles, Carbines 85
Sniper Rifles 88
Light Machine Guns and Squad Automatic Weapons 90
Heavy Machine Guns and Support Machine Guns 92
Shotguns 94
Flamers 95
Grenades, Missiles, and Launchers 97
Autocannons 100
Vehicular Weapons 101
Armour 101
Vehicles 106

CHAPTER 06

THE ART OF LIGHT 109
Learning the art 109
Casting Spells 110
Powers 110

CHAPTER 07

HERETICS 112
The Tainted 112
The Path to Heresy 113
The Initiation 113
Becoming a Heretic 113
Rising Through the Ranks 113
Choosing Gifts 113
Gifts of the Dark Symmetry 116
Weapons of the Dark Symmetry 124

CHAPTER 08

FREELANCERS, EMPLOYEES, AND JOBS 131
Living Outside the System 131
Life of a Freelancer 131
Missions 131
The Midnight Star 133
Life as a Corporate Employee 133
Competition 134
Differences 134
Missions 134
Employment 134

CHAPTER 09

ERAS OF PLAY 136
The Dark Legion Era 136
The Dark Symmetry Era 136

CHAPTER 10

LUNA: HUMANITY'S HEART 140
Welcome to Luna! 140
Capitol District: 'Lesser Mars' 144
Bauhaus District 145
Mishima District 146
Imperial District 148
The Perimeters 149
Industrial Zone 152
Spaceports and Ports 152
The Badlands AND Outskirts 153
Working for a Living 156
Entertainment, Media AND Fashion 156
Transportation 158
Law Enforcement 159
Crime and Punishment 160
The Hand of the Apostles 160
Corporate Secrets 162
The Underworld 163

CHAPTER 11

CAPITOL 164
Media for the Masses 167
A Chance for Redemption 169
The Settlements 171
Capitol Diplomacy 173

CHAPTER 12

BAUHAUS 174
Design And Order 174
The History Of Bauhaus 174
The Brotherhood And The Dark Legion 175
A Corporation at War 175
Bauhaus Government 176
Corporate Culture And Philosophy 177
The Settlements 179
Bauhaus Military 180
Bauhaus Security Services 183
Bauhaus Diplomacy 183

CHAPTER 13

MISHIMA 184
Loyalty. Honour. Obedience. Tradition 184
Corporate structure: techno-feudalism 184
Mishima society 184
Outside the System 185
Against the Darkness 186
The Lord Heirs 186
The Overlord 186
Founding of a Dynasty 187
Business Strategy 188
The Military 188
Law enforcement 189
The Settlements 190
Mishima Diplomacy 193

CHAPTER 14

IMPERIAL 194
Growth Through Acquisition 194
Birth of the Imperial Corporation 194
Imperial Government 195
The Clans 195
The Great Resentment 195
Business Strategy 196
The Imperial Spirit 196
Imperial Military 197
The Imperial Security Command (ISC) 198
The Settlements 200
Imperial Diplomacy 202

CHAPTER 15

CYBERTRONIC 204
The Future of Mankind 204
The Three Pillars 204
Corporate Personalities 207
Goals and Projects 208
Cybertronic Culture 210
Cybertronic Real Estate Holdings 211
Cybertronic Diplomacy 212

CHAPTER 16

WHITESTAR 214
Defenders of the Motherland 214
Technology 220
The Tsarina 220
The Military 221
Whitestar Diplomacy 222

CHAPTER 17

THE CARTEL 224
Delegations, the High Council and Security Council 224
Cooperation and Coordination 225
Operations 225
The Conspiracy 227

CHAPTER 18

THE BROTHERHOOD 228
The Calling of the CardinaL 228
The Chronicles 228
The Art 231
The Order of the Brotherhood 232
The Cathedrals 236
Brotherhood Diplomacy 236

CHAPTER 19

THE DARK SOUL & APOSTLES 239
The Dark Symmetry Awakens (2480 AD) 239
The Fall of Technology 240
Rise of the Dark Cults and the Fog of War 241

The Rise of Ilian (Year of the Cardinal 0) 244
The Rise of the Apostles 244
Sibling Rivalry 244
The Citadels 245

CHAPTER 20
THE GM'S GUIDE TO THE CHRONICLES 246
The Dark Symmetry Pool 246
Corruption 247
Willpower 251
Infections and Diseases 254
The Game Master's Role and Responsibilities 255
Styles of Game 257
the Place of the Player Characters 259
The Threat of Technology 261
Defining NPCs 264
Campaign Themes 266
Monstrous Abilities 268
Humanity 268

CHAPTER 21
A CAST OF CHARACTERS 268
The Dark Legion 272

APPENDIX 01
SETTING GLOSSARY 306

APPENDIX 02
INDEX 308

APPENDIX 03
BACKERS 312

The hot pursuit of a great story is what many players look forward to each week.

WELCOME TO MUTANT CHRONICLES

Mutant Chronicles is a dieselpunk techno-fantasy game; a setting where Earth exists under a radioactive cloud, the advanced technologies of man have turned against him, and the solar system is one-part noir, one-part occult horror. It is a place where cultures have congealed into corporations, and those corporations control most of humanity. But in the background the insidious forces of the Dark Symmetry eat away at the soul of humanity, spreading corruption.

PLAYERS

Playing ***Mutant Chronicles*** requires at least two players and can comfortably include up to five (we have often played with seven). One player is the Game Master (GM) and the other players each control a player character. The role of the GM is to set the scenes, describe environments, present interesting puzzles and encounters, and manage characters not controlled by the other players.

The other players each control one of the main characters in the ongoing story. These players are responsible for working together to face the GM's challenges, explaining how their characters are acting or responding to their environment, and encouraging their fellow players to ensure everyone at the table is having fun.

WHAT IS MUTANT CHRONICLES?

Mutant Chronicles is a dieselpunk techno-fantasy game! Let's break that down:

- **DIESELPUNK:** The awful power of the Dark Symmetry has turned the machines and advanced technologies of man against their maker. Old technologies have been dusted off and patched up to keep civilisation rolling and the lights on. Ancient ships are repaired and kept operational long after they should have been retired. A well-worn, reliable gun is your best friend. Luna City, a vast and ancient city, covers much of Earth's moon. Gargoyles fight for space with neon signs and corporate adverts in a world that is one-part noir, and one-part occult horror.

- **TECHNO-FANTASY:** A blend of dystopian cyberpunk intrigue in a larger-than-life world where the shoulder pads are big and the hair is even bigger! In the universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** mankind has fled the devastated Earth, and colonised and terraformed Luna, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and much of the Asteroid Belt. It is a world where heroes are forged and can determine the future of mankind, but where a dark, ancient, and powerful enemy from the Dark Soul threatens the very existence of humanity.

Since the early 1990s, ***Mutant Chronicles*** has spawned two editions of the roleplaying game, several miniatures games (including *Warzone* from Prodos Games), a collectable card game (*Doomtrooper*), several novels, and even a movie!

TIMELINE

Mutant Chronicles 3rd Edition expands upon the previous versions of the roleplaying game by setting the game across three distinct time periods.

The first is the new Dark Symmetry period. In this exciting time you get to play through the very first appearance of the Dark Apostles, as the Dark Symmetry quickly takes hold. This is the apex of technology. The quick-start adventure, Straffar Gattan 39, is set in the very first days of the Dark Symmetry era.

The second period in the timeline is the Dark Legion era. Fans will recognise this as the setting of the original roleplaying game and the Warzone miniatures game.

The final time period, Dark Eden, will offer a fascinating look at the height of the conflict. The previous version of the roleplaying game began to explore this period, but we will finally answer some of the questions the setting raised!

MUTANT CHRONICLES TIME PERIODS

Some sections of this book may pertain to a particular period of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe. If so they will be indicated by the following icons.

DARK SYMMETRY

DARK LEGION

DARK EDEN

HUMANITY

Humanity in the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is divided into a number of factions, and is opposed by the malevolent legions of the Dark Apostles.

THE FACTIONS

The main factions of humanity are divided into the corporations (Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima, Imperial and Cybertronic) and others (Cartel, Luna PD, Brotherhood and Whitestar). Each of these is covered in a chapter later in this book, and also features in their own source books, with the exception of Luna PD, which is covered in the ***Luna & Freelancers*** source sourcebook.

FREELANCERS

Freelancers are those who, for one reason or another, have left the service of the corporations and struck out on their own. Some do it because they became frustrated by corporate obstinacy and blindness when it comes to the threat posed by the Dark Legion; some because they were on the wrong side of political games above their pay grade; and others because they were motivated by an entrepreneurial spirit, or simply a desire for more adventure. Whatever the reason, the life of a freelancer is hard. Stripped of the safety net the corporations provide, they are dependent on 'off-the-books' work from shady corporate executives, contracts with Luna PD or the Cartel, or 'charity' work with The Brotherhood. What they lose in terms of safety is made up for in freedom. See **Chapter 08: Freelancers, Employees & Jobs**.

THE OPPOSITION

THE DARK APOSTLES

Ilian (The Mistress of the Void), Muawijhe (Lord of Visions), Semai (Lord of Spite), Algeroth (Lord of Technology), and Demnogonis (The Befouler) are the mightiest of the servants of the Dark Soul. The Dark Apostles come from an alien dimension, hell-bent on the conquest and corruption of all who stand in their way. Humanity is simply the latest victim for their legions. See **Chapter 19: The Dark Soul and Apostles**.

HERETICS

Heretics work towards the fall of humanity in service of the Dark Apostles. Not everyone who is, or becomes, a Heretic sets out to betray his race. Many who serve the Dark Apostles do so unwittingly, and would be horrified if they realised the true consequences of their actions. Most have good intentions, intentions frustrated by the harsh realities of the corporations. Whatever the reason, those with a grudge to bear are in good company and are often sought out by other like-minded people, and ever so slowly seduced and corrupted by the Dark Symmetry. Heretics often bear the dark gifts of their masters.

THE SETTING

EARTH

The universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** spans our entire solar system with one notable exception: Earth. Rendered largely lifeless, what remains is corrupted, dangerous, and unpredictable. Only the iron will of the Tsarina to hold the motherland allows the forces of Whitestar to survive here. All others have died or fled, or so the corporations believe.

LUNA CITY

Orbiting the dead planet, Luna has become the hub of humanity. Partially terraformed, grav-plated, and domed in parts, Luna is the greatest city mankind has ever known, and has engulfed almost the entire surface of the moon. It is known to locals simply as 'the City'; only off-worlders call it Luna City. All of the corporations have major facilities in the City, but only Cybertronic bases its headquarters here. In the Dark Legion time period Luna City is home to The Brotherhood Cathedral, centre of worship for the entire solar system. Luna City is officially divided into five vast sectors: The Ancient Heart, Perimeters, Industrial Districts, Spaceports, and the Outskirts. Alongside the official districts are two more: The Undercity and Spaceship Graveyard. There are plenty of hidden corners within Luna City where the Dark Symmetry can take root. Luna is covered in **Chapter 10: Luna: Humanity's Heart.**

INNER SYSTEM (VENUS, MERCURY, MARS, AND ASTEROID BELT)

Colonised by the corporations, the Inner System worlds are all largely terraformed. The lush jungles of Venus, mighty cities and plains of Mars, harsh mining colonies of Mercury, and myriad different environments in the Asteroid Belt are home to millions of people.

OUTER SYSTEM (JUPITER, SATURN, NEPTUNE, URANUS, PLUTO, AND NERO)

Never heavily colonised, when the Dark Symmetry was unleashed by Imperial Conquistadors, the Dark Legion conquered its way across most of the colonies and outposts here, leaving only a few on scattered moons. Quickly the Outer System became the heartland of the Dark Legion.

MUTANT CHRONICLES FACTIONS

THE CORPORATIONS

Huge, greedy, and duplicitous, the corporations dominate society, and the universe of ***Mutant Chronicles***. In the rush to escape the dead Earth, they swallowed up the roles of nation state and international conglomerate to form something new: corporate nation states, each with their own distinctive tone and character:

CAPITOL

Big, brash, and confident. Capitol is the epitome of the American dream, bringing together the cultures of North, Central, and Latin America. Viewing itself as the natural leader of humanity, not a view shared by the other corporations, Capitol aims to bring peace, prosperity, and a bold new future to the solar system. Unfortunately, not everyone wants a Capitolian vision of the future. You can learn more in **Chapter 11: Capitol**.

BAUHAUS

Traditional, ordered, and cultured. Bauhaus is strongly influenced by Germanic, Scandinavian, and European source cultures. Bauhaus has a strong belief in the inherent correctness of its system. Everything should have a place, and there should be a place for everything. This design aesthetic applies to everything it makes, from the smallest pistol to the greatest skyscraper. Citizens of Bauhaus pride themselves on their efficiency, a trait outsiders consider arrogance. You can learn more in **Chapter 12: Bauhaus**.

MISHIMA

Honour, duty, and sacrifice. Mishima embodies the culture of Shogunate Japan and the might of the 20th Century Japanese keiretsu corporate giants. Mishima favours the good of all above that of the individual, and is the undisputed industrial leader. It is considered polluting and myopic by outsiders. You can learn more in **Chapter 13: Mishima**.

IMPERIAL

Aggressive, proud, and expansionist. A coalition of bickering Clans with a strong British and Commonwealth accent, Imperial views itself as the underdog corporation, and will grab any chance to grow. It was Imperial's Conquistadors who unwittingly freed the Dark Legion from its ancient prison in an attempt to explore the outer reaches of the solar system. Quixotic and heedless, is what outsiders think. You can learn more in **Chapter 14: Imperial**.

CYBERTRONIC

A newcomer to the scene, appearing in the Dark Legion time period. Cybertronic was primarily formed of defectors from Bauhaus, but with smaller 'contributions' from other corporations. It embraces technology in a universe where technology cannot be trusted. Viewed with suspicion by many outsiders, Cybertronic offers a striking–and enigmatic–vision of the future. You can learn more in **Chapter 15: Cybertronic**.

THE OTHER FACTIONS

WHITESTAR

Not technically a corporation. The soldiers of Whitestar, led by the Tsarina, provide a blunt, no-nonsense counterbalance to the conspiracy and backstabbing of the corporations. From its bunkers in Siberia, its warriors range out from the icy wastes to the depths of

GOOD RELATIONSHIP | NEUTRAL RELATIONSHIP | BAD RELATIONSHIP

space to bring the Tsarina's punishment to those who abandoned the homeworld. You can learn more in **Chapter 16: Whitestar**.

THE CARTEL

Conceived as a neutral meeting and mediation space for the corporations, the Cartel is frozen in virtual deadlock, and has instead become a hotbed of espionage and intrigue. One of the few true successes that the Cartel has achieved was the creation of the Doomtroopers during the First Dark Legion War. Chosen from the best of the best, the Doomtroopers take the fight to the homelands of the Dark Apostles, knowing that they are unlikely to return. You can learn more in **Chapter 17: The Cartel**.

THE BROTHERHOOD (THE BROTHERS)

One of the few sources of social aid, the charitable works of the philanthropic Nathaniel Durand and his brothers in the Dark Symmetry time period challenge the pure capitalism of the corporations. By the time of the Dark Legion period, they have become the religious order known as The Brotherhood: self-appointed protectors of humanity from the Dark Legion. Able to tap into supernatural abilities that become known as the Arts, it is one of the few organisations capable of uniting humanity. However, its war on the Dark Symmetry can often ensnare the innocent. You can learn more in **Chapter 18: The Brotherhood**.

LUNA PD

Originally founded by Capitol in an act of civic patronage, Luna PD is one of the only true inter-corporate organisations. It brings together seconded investigators from each of the great corporations and cops recruited from the population of Luna. Underfunded and subject to conflicting corporate masters, Luna PD often hires freelancers for their unique skills and experience. You can learn more about Luna PD in **Chapter 10: Luna: Humanity's Heart.**

Capitol politicians set the standard for corruption.

THE BROTHERHOOD

THE CARTEL

LUNA PD

CAPTAIN MATHIAS GERDIN
DOOMTROOPER

Captain Matthias Gerdin is a captain in the Doomtroopers and a hardened warrior, though following a serious injury he received in battle against a herd of Razides he is mostly confined to desk-duty. His main role now is to serve as one of the commanding officers of the Doomtroopers assigning missions to the Doomtrooper teams in the fields, and occasionally still taking to the field to command a major operation. He is a well-liked officer with the Doomtroopers who serve under him trusting him because of his field experience, unlike many of his Cartel colleagues. Gerdin has an uncommon history in that he grew up with freelancer parents, never worked for any of the megacorporations, and was recruited in the field by Doomtroopers when he saw they were in trouble and lead a heroic counter-attack that saved thousands of lives. Capitol seized upon the PR-coup and quickly inducted him into the fold as if he had always been Capitolian and he was transferred directly to the Doomtroopers before anyone knew what was happening. His career in the field speaks for itself however and he is a highly decorated veteran and hero to the people.

The sound of gunfire in the street outside his office got Captain Mathias Gerdin's full-attention. Without stopping to think he grabbed the Punisher combo of sword and pistol from his desk and ran out of the office, heading unerringly towards the gun fight. The fact that he had an artificial leg neither slowed him down, nor gave him pause for thought. Captain Mathias Gerdin worked a desk most of the time these days, but he was still as Doomtrooper veteran. He burst out onto the street and quickly assessed the situation. A large number of gangers had a Luna PD patrol pinned down. In moments they would be overwhelmed. He scanned the gangers and identified the ring leaders.

In his best commanding voice he bellowed "Stand down, or be put down, by order of the Doomtroopers!" The gangers focussed their attention and rage on this new irritation, but quickly he saw the fire die in the eyes of many as they recognised him as Captain Mathias Gerdin, Doomtrooper Hero, Bane of the Dark Legion and Victor of Syria Planum. Those that were left wavered in their resolve and completely broke when he began unerringly charging towards them. The battle was over in minutes and the Luna PD officers were saved. The papers lapped up the story, just like they always did. One more victory for the great hero.

CAPTAIN GERDIN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Mysticism d4, Shooting d10, Taunt d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 13(6); **Willpower:** 7

Hindrances: Lame, Loyal, Vow (Major) – Serve the Doomtroopers, Vow (Minor – Support the Cartel)

Edges: Block, Brawny, Command, Doomtrooper Lifepath, Elan, Strong-Willed

Gear: Tortoise Mk. 1 (+6), Punisher Heavy Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 12, 3RB, Knockdown), Punisher Short Sword (Str+d6, Corrupt 0, Parry +1).

Thanks to Mathias Gerdin.

CHAPTER 03

TIMELINE OF MUTANT CHRONICLES

FOR GMS ONLY

Throughout this section you will find 'GM References' like this:

GM REF: 0.00

These references pertain to a section at the end of this chapter that contains information on the universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** that should be known only to the GM.

EARLY HISTORY

GM REF: 1.00

LATE 21ST CENTURY

As the 21st Century closes, the nations of the ruined Earth are no longer its masters. Power has shifted to the corporations. Fuelled by decades of mergers and acquisitions, these financial blocs now control the dying planet. No longer paying lip-service to nations, the corporations claim the remaining resources. While some states attempt to resist, most submit to their rule, actively supporting their new corporate masters in plundering what little Earth has left to give.

While the corporations strip mine Earth to further their own ends, the population – swollen to over 12 billion – suffers the consequences. Famine becomes commonplace as over-farming depletes oceans and farmland, while overcrowding in the cities leads to ever worsening crime. In these trying times only a corporate meal ticket can stave off hunger and illness. Millions flock to the banners of the corporations seeking their patronage in return for unquestioning loyalty.

Unwilling to concede power to the corporations, the Russian Federation – its territories and population depleted by defections to the Bauhaus corporation – slams its borders shut and consolidates its remaining power.

Huge seismic events devastate much of Asia, killing millions. Tsunamis tear across the Indian Ocean, wiping many coastal cities from existence. The corporations, now realising Earth is doomed, focus their attention on the neighbouring worlds of the solar system. Survey probes identify huge mineral deposits on Mercury, Venus, and Mars.

GM REF: 1.01

EARLY 22ND CENTURY

As conditions on Earth deteriorate, they are accompanied by a growing malaise that affects mankind. Suicide rates rise dramatically, as do instances of random violence. Little consensus can be reached as to the cause of this pandemic, though many blame the ever-worsening situation on Earth and see this as a further sign of the coming end for mankind.

The corporations, now desperate to escape, increase the pace of research. The Bauhaus corporation announces the development of the first viable terraforming system, while the Capitol corporation, having detected significant resources on the moon, launches expeditions and establishes a permanent base. Capitol intends to launch future missions to the inner worlds from this new facility, and announces its plan to begin terraforming the surface to support human life. Capitol enters negotiations with Bauhaus to lease its new terraforming systems, and agrees to use Luna as the testing grounds for this new technology. The terraforming of Luna is a success and is a monumental step towards man's expansion into the stars.

The Imperial and Mishima corporations join Bauhaus and Capitol to announce the launch of a joint venture to send terraforming machines to Mercury, Mars and Venus. Capitol provide the financial investment for the project and Bauhaus the terraforming technology. Imperial pilots and logistics enable the delivery and support of the project, while Mishima provides manpower and technical expertise.

Meanwhile, food riots on Earth break out as famine spreads, with terror continuing to rise at an unprecedented rate. The corporations, now confident that their efforts on the inner worlds will succeed, accelerate their depletion of Earth's few remaining resources with no concern for the long-term impact.

MID 22ND CENTURY

Using newly-constructed magnetic linear accelerators on Luna as a launch system, the corporations send out gravity regulators and automated atmospheric processors to Mars, Venus, and Mercury as the remaking of the inner worlds begins. Once the initial climate

realignment of the planets is complete, bioengineered life-forms are seeded into their upper atmospheres, rapidly altering the molecular chemistry of these worlds. Despite best efforts, solar radiation prevents their deployment on Mercury, so large scale tunnelling begins to carve out facilities within the rocky world's interior.

On Earth, the Russian Federation begins construction of a series of hardened underground facilities in the Siberian tundra, while its scientists research the development of alternative food sources to combat rising famine.

LATE 22ND CENTURY

Successful beyond all predictions, the terraforming on the inner worlds is complete. As the largest of the new worlds, Venus is colonised by all the corporations, though Bauhaus dominates the world's new oceans and jungles. Capitol controls the Luna moon and large parts of Mars' newly fertile southern plains. Mishima maintains the largest presence on Mercury, establishing significant underground facilities beneath the planet's transition zone. Imperial chooses not to contest the inner worlds, and extends its reach to the outer system beyond Mars to develop holdings in the mineral-rich Asteroid Belt. All of the corporations continue to develop Luna as it rapidly becomes the largest city in the solar system.

GM REF: 1.02

Earth's atmosphere becomes ever more toxic, causing the worldwide collapse of eco-systems as the planet is wracked by ever more extreme weather patterns. Continent-wide electrical storms and thick, toxic mists spread around the globe.

GM REF: 1.03

THE EXODUS

EARLY 23RD CENTURY:

Realising that the Earth is now only months from death, the corporations initiate a full programme of evacuation and the Exodus begins. As the billions left behind plead for deliverance, the corporations harvest the human race with calculated cruelty, taking only the best and the brightest and leaving the rest to perish while their transport ships disappear into the boiling skies above. Chaos surrounds the once proud space ports, with ships taking off while loyal security forces fire into vast crowds to keep them back. Numerous ships are destroyed by riots, terrorist action, or the increasingly bizarre acts of violence common across the world, including amongst the very people being carried to safety. It is

Only the richest, the brightest and the best prepare to leave.

these final events that lead the corporations to abandon many that could have been saved; several passenger ships are prevented from returning to Earth to rescue more people for fear that whatever was causing the violent outbursts might be brought back to the corporations' new homes.

GM REF: 2.00

In this chaos, the Russian Federation troops seize and strip Bauhaus' facilities and assets within reach of its territories and then withdraw to its bunkers.

Even as the planet dies around them, the remaining militaries abandoned by the corporations seek vengeance on those same corporations. Seizing control of abandoned nuclear weapons, they threaten total destruction of Luna's now great city unless the corporations return to save those they had left to die. The corporations respond to the threat with orbital bombardment of the planet below. Cities vanish in an instant, mountains crumble, and oceans boil in a nuclear holocaust. Billions of tons of fallout mix with the already toxic atmosphere to forever shroud the Earth. After they finish there is only silence from the planet below, and the corporations return to their new homes in triumph, hoping that the darkest days are now behind them.

MANKIND'S GOLDEN AGE BEGINS

MID-24TH CENTURY

The corporations, now free of Old Earth, focus their resources on expanding and consolidating their new worlds. Mishima carves deep into the core of Mercury, building great cities beneath its surface. Capitol continues to sculpt the Martian plains, which soon provide the majority of mankind with food and water. Bauhaus bioengineers introduce Earth-brought and wholly new forms of life to the jungles of Venus, while Imperial Conquistadors–hungry for new vistas–turn their attention to the cold worlds beyond the Asteroid Belt and dispatch expeditions to explore them. Meanwhile, Capitol technicians successfully tether the asteroid Eos in orbit around Mars, further stabilising the planet's environment, and establishing a naval yard on the planetoid.

Acting together, the corporations establish a system-wide communication web known as SolarCom into which their own systems–such as Imperial's ImpCom–would integrate. The hub of this new network is built in the cosmopolitan city of Luna, and relays are constructed throughout the inner system. Created alongside SolarCom are the first viable Artificial Intelligence systems. Their intelligence and capabilities rapidly increase, and these artificial minds are soon integrated into all areas of society; managing environmental systems, controlling financial markets, even guiding corporate policy. Enhanced by the brilliant AI minds, technological progress accelerates exponentially; disease is all but eradicated, nuclear fusion becomes commonplace, and the corporations build ever greater technological marvels.

The corpse of Old Earth hanging in the skies of Luna as a visible symbol of past failures fuels growing calls from a group known as the 'Homeworlders' to return to the Old Earth and terraform it, so it can once again become a living world. Seen from above it is clear that the planet is now in the grips of a nuclear winter. Thick mist and clouds cover the surface, preventing any survey of the ruins beneath. Ever keen to take charge, Capitol dispatches several hostile environment teams, but they are all lost without trace.

WHITESTAR'S EMERGENCE

EARLY 25TH CENTURY

The corporations continue to grow. Imperial develops the outer worlds, with its settlements now reaching as far as Titan orbiting Saturn.

Bauhaus announces its intention to return to Earth and commence terraforming operations. Capitol and Imperial agree to partner with it to provide technical resources and personnel to assist in the reclamation of the homeworld. Mishima refuses to help, as it believes Earth should be left as a memorial to past failure. The three corporations launch an expeditionary force to Earth with the initial intention of resuming control of Bauhaus' abandoned facilities in Old Europe. But, like the earlier Capitolian expeditions, all contact is lost within days of landing.

Several weeks later, a single communication from Earth is received from unknown parties. It simply states: "You chose to abandon the Motherland, you shall not return". The corporations–unused to being denied and stunned by the loss of the expedition–mobilise an armada in preparation for a full scale invasion of the planet below.

However, as the armada is assembled, a second message is received, claiming Earth as the dominion of the Whitestar and stating that any attempt to land will be met with massive retaliation. Believing the message to be a fake, the corporations proceed with their assault and initially meet no resistance. Confident in their military might, they quickly establish firebases in the ruins of Berlin, Washington, and London. For a few days all seems calm, but then, without warning, the bases all come under simultaneous attack from an unknown enemy in the mists. Even worse, some kind of electromagnetic pulse weapon detonated in the upper atmosphere immobilises their orbital support. Unable to resist the attacks, the corporate forces are forced to withdraw. Only later do they learn that their attacker was Whitestar. Shocked by their stunning defeat, the corporations declare the whole adventure financially unviable and establish a blockade around the Old Earth.

THE DARK SYMMETRY ERA

LATE 25TH CENTURY TO MID 26TH CENTURY

This is the setting for adventures and campaigns set in the Dark Symmetry Era time period.

Imperial, ever eager to expand its territories, launches two exploration missions to the outer system. The first mission, on board the frigate the 'H.S.S.S Harbinger' is sent to Pluto to survey the world as a potential colony. The second vessel, 'H.S.S.S The Zephyr', is sent out to explore interstellar space.

GM REF: 3.00

2480 AD / -101 YC: THE ARTEFACT DISCOVERED

The journey takes over a year, but as soon as the H.S.S.S. Harbinger reaches Pluto it immediately begins terraforming the world. Excavation for huge superconducting generators designed to tame the planet's gravity field goes well, until the fourteenth and final regulator strikes an unidentified obstruction, shattering the diamond-tipped drilling head a kilometre beneath the surface. Unsure how to proceed, the Imperial conquistadors request orders from Victoria.

They receive conflicting orders: the first, from the Imperial AI, orders them to document the obstruction's location and abort the mission pending further investigation, while the second–sent by the human board of directors–countermands the AI and orders them to investigate the nature of the obstruction.

The great artefact was not the only one discovered.

GM REF: 3.01

After extensive excavation, the Imperials recover an artefact and bring it on board the Harbinger for further study. The artefact is a large, metallic tablet made of a dark, lustrous metal of unknown alloy and engraved with an unknown language. The tablet defies analysis. Though hampered by communications interference, they manage to send a brief report back to Victoria.

Rashly determining that artefact presents no threat, the lead geologist touches it with his bare hand. He utters the phrase "She kissed me…" before dying. His death is rapid and grotesque as his body is flash frozen from within. Immediately, the Harbinger's systems begin to malfunction.

GM REF: 3.02

2481 AD / -100 YC: FINAL TRANSMISSION AND THE BIG SCREAM

Fearful that they may lose the ship's communications, the chief researcher compiles a data packet with everything they know about the tablet and transmits it to Victoria. It is the last message ever received from the Harbinger.

Shortly thereafter a transmission is sent from an unknown location on Pluto that later becomes known as the "Big Scream". As the Big Scream travels from station to station, it burns the minds of the operators, incinerates Imperial's 'ImpCom' stations, spreads to the wider SolarCom and causes power systems to overload and detonate.

Like ripples in a pond–whether from the Big Scream, or some other source–the corruption spreads through the solar system. AI systems across the Inner Worlds began manifesting strange anomalies in their operation. Initially, this is ignored or even considered an evolution in their development; however, as the anomalies become ever more severe and begin to cause fatalities, panic spreads.

Orbital and planetary craft malfunction, sometimes at the cost of all lives on board; power and logistics systems fail, sometimes for weeks at a time; thousands die from cold and starvation; transport and industrial systems fail catastrophically; and automated defence systems turn on their human masters.

Within weeks the financial credit system and data archives on Luna corrupt, causing the collapse of the interplanetary economy and causing widespread panic. SolarCom–badly damaged by the Big Scream–completely fails, plunging each colony into isolation and only further fuelling the paranoia and suspicion that the chaos is an act of deliberate sabotage. Highly advanced systems seem most susceptible to these anomalies and some people begin to realise that the disruption is spreading like a digital infection.

GM REF: 3.03

The Straffar Gatan 39 and Fall of von Hölle adventures take place during this first outbreak.

2481 AD TO 2501 AD / -100 YC TO –80 YC: THE FALL

The collapse of corporate society quickly becomes known as 'The Fall'. Many small outposts and especially orbital stations, vulnerable to technical breakdown, are lost and never recovered.

Desperate for solutions, people begin retrofitting unreliable machines with older, less technologically advanced parts in place of the digital systems people once relied upon. While successful, these modifications plunge mankind's technological progress back centuries in the space of a few months.

The corporations strive to maintain their holdings and consolidate their military machines, as each suspect The Fall was the work of rivals. Their antiquated and mothballed armadas are quickly refitted to work without digital circuitry. Basic interplanetary transport is practical again, but what was once a voyage of weeks could now take months.

As the Dark Symmetry spreads through the system, its energies begin to interact with the gravitational forces of the planets, opening rifts in the fabric of space.

2501 AD / -80 YC: DISCOVERY OF THE RIFTS

While testing a new mechanical system for docking orbital craft, the H.S.S.S. Stipend, an Imperial frigate, disappears from orbit around Ganymede. Within hours Bauhaus and Mishima radio stations on Venus receive a distress call from the vessel, now in orbit above the planet, and it is clear that the ship travelled the great distance in a fraction of the time it should have taken. Bauhaus marines board the vessel and tow it to their facilities on Venus. When Imperial also receives the transmission slightly later, it demands the Stipend's return but Bauhaus informs it that the vessel broke up in orbit; a story confirmed by both Capitol and Mishima, eager to collude in this new technology with Bauhaus.

Further exploration and testing reveals that there are a number of stable "rifts" within the Inner System, linking the planets together, but that they are few and far less stable the closer to Nero they are. Realising their strategic importance, Capitol is the first to begin construction of facilities at the Mars Rift to ensure strategic control over this new resource.

After twenty years of experimentation, and at the cost of thousands of lives, the technology required to navigate through the rifts becomes practical, though still prohibitively expensive. The Rift Drives allow a new generation of interplanetary vessels to be developed, but the limited number–and instability–of rifts limit usage to only the most vital and important ships. For everyone else, the only option is slow real-space travel, but even this is enough to help the corporations to once again tighten their grips on their territories.

Later on, the Brotherhood would come to suspect an increased risk of corruption by the Dark Symmetry from travel through the rifts. Ultimately, the Brotherhood would provide special protections, but there would always be some foolish captain willing to risk all…

Alongside the Rift Drives, real-space travel also becomes faster and more reliable. As a result, the tensions between the corporations–previously held in check by their isolation–quickly reach boiling point. Imperial, still angered at the theft of its vessel and the secrets of the new drive, rapidly militarises, eager to expand its territories while settling old scores. Mishima, Capitol, and Bauhaus–despite colluding to steal the secrets of planetary travel from Imperial–split apart as old rivalries resurface.

Fuelled by endless propaganda spewed out by their media machines, the populations of the corporations are whipped into a frenzy of corporate patriotism. In orbit above, a new generation of warships glide silently from their moorings. The corporations escalate construction of their Rift Stations–strategic defence points–fearful that their importance will make them prime targets for attack.

THE FIRST CORPORATE WAR

2530 AD / -50 YC: THE FIRST CORPORATE WAR BEGINS

A minor border dispute on Venus quickly escalates, and the First Corporate War begins–quickly spreading to all the worlds. The plains of Southern Mars are decimated as the armies of Capitol, Mishima, and Imperial battle for control of the red planet, while Venus is plunged into a series of bloody battles as Bauhaus fights to maintain its holdings on the Graveton Archipelago against incursions by Mishima and Capitol. On Mercury, Mishima launches a series of lightning strikes that cripple the militaries of its rival corporations. Mishima quickly establishes total control over the planet.

Imperial forces, blamed by many for The Fall and bitter at the theft of the first rift-capable vessel, launch major offensives on Mars and Venus, capturing territories and digging in to defend the Asteroid Belt and Outer System colonies. Across the solar system, running battles between the ships of each corporation leave drifting, lifeless hulks that will later serve a darker cause.

Forty years of war afflict the Inner System. The corporations engage in a bloody series of skirmishes and brushfire wars, but

each is unable to strike a decisive blow against its enemies, instead entrenching its position and building its forces for the inevitable final battle.

During the height of the First Corporate War, the Imperial corporation almost tears itself apart in what is later called 'The Sad Struggle', as Clan Kingsfield tries–and ultimately fails–to stage a coup and wrestle control of the corporation away from Clan Murdoch. In the end, the greatest victor is Clan Bartholomew. Clan Kingsfield is almost completely destroyed by the events, and never fully recovers.

2577 AD / -3 YC: THE BROTHERS EMERGE

On Venus, three brothers (the Guardians) – Nathaniel, Alexander and Peter–appear from the jungles preaching a new message of peace. They are already known to the lowest of the low for running food kitchens, and helping those afflicted most by corporate greed. Possessing a powerful presence, the first brother, Nathaniel Durand, condemns the corporations for their ignorance and insanity and quickly establishes a following among the desperate and war-ravaged colonies. Durand speaks of the unholy force at work behind the wars and the affliction that has crippled technology, naming it the Dark Symmetry. He appeals to politicians, religious leaders, and the people to put their weapons aside and join his battle against the Darkness.

Initially the corporations ignore Durand, but as his power and influence among the people increases, they realise the threat he presents and seek to remove him. They put pressure on the leaders of the Old Earth religions on Luna, where Durand is now preaching, to expose his mystical claims as falsehoods and destroy his power.

Durand begins to exhibit his abilities with what he describes the Art, a power he claims is the only defence against the Dark Symmetry. Durand, watched by billions, demonstrates his abilities; healing the sick, speaking into the minds of men, and astounding all. Millions flock to his cause as they see him perform his miracles, and he gives the corporations an ultimatum; end the war within six months or he will end it for them.

Although unnerved by Durand's demonstration of power, the corporations believe his ultimatum to be a hollow threat and continue their operations, though they dispatch a host of assassins to remove him once and for all.

Six months after delivering his ultimatum, and with no end to the corporate wars, Durand delivers his 'Divination Address', revealing the deepest secrets of each of the corporations. He brings forward 154 would-be assassins, charged with taking his life by the corporations, and asks each in turn to join his 'crusade'. All but ten immediately swear their allegiance to him. To their disbelief, Durand then orders the release of the ten remaining assassins. One assassin makes a final attempt to complete his mission, lunging at Durand with a concealed blade, but he is stopped mid-attack by Durand. Demonstrating the power of the Art, Durand makes the assassin vanish with a gesture.

The Conquistadors found a dead world full of ancient structures.

Billions more flock to Durand's banner. Realising they are losing the battle for popular opinion, the corporations are finally compelled to approach the negotiation table and the Treaty of Heimburg is signed, ending the First Corporate War.

With peace finally achieved, Durand's new faith begins to organise, with Luna becoming the centre of its power. Naming the new church the Brotherhood, Durand accepts the appointment as the first Cardinal.

2580 AD / 0 YC: YEAR OF THE CARDINAL

To celebrate this new beginning for humanity, the old labelling of years is abolished and replaced with a new epoch beginning in the year of the Cardinal's inauguration, to be known as the Year of the Cardinal (YC). The Cardinal forms the Curia and the Four Directorates to help prepare humanity for the coming battle against the entity he calls 'the Dark Soul', which he privately knows to be coming ever closer. To ensure greater cooperation between the corporations, and to replace the now outlawed Thinking Machines, the Cartel is established.

1 YC: BREAKING OF THE SEAL OF REPULSION

Imperial Conquistadors discover a new rift, which they believe leads directly to Nero. Although the remnants of Clan Kingfield call for the rift to be exploited in secret, aware of the Zephyr's final transmission, others within Imperial choose to bring its discovery to the attention the Cartel and the Brotherhood. Realising his visions are becoming reality, Durand condemns the plan to explore Nero and is supported by a consensus among the corporations, including Imperial.

However, unbeknownst to all, Clan Kingsfield secretly launches its own exploration vessel–The Wyvern–through the rift to Nero. The Imperial Conquistadors discover a long dead nightmare world; half machine, half biological in nature and constantly pounded by asteroids. Rising from its scarred surface is a vast complex of huge ancient structures, stretching for thousands of miles. After extensive exploration, they finally stumble upon a great citadel shrouded in crimson mist.

Exploring the citadel, the Conquistadors discover a vast portal at the centre of the structure. The portal is surrounded by a spherical cloud of crystalline fragments, suspended in the air as if frozen mid explosion. Ever curious, two of the Conquistadors reach out and touch the fragments. The expedition members are floored by a sudden force as the touch breaks the Seal of Repulsion. As the Seal is broken, the portal activates, flooding the chamber in a sickly green light. From the light steps Ilian, first of the Dark Apostles and Mistress of the Void, her lips still bloodied from her deadly 'kiss' on Pluto. From behind her, a wave of terrible, demonic beasts washes over the Conquistadors, tearing apart all but the two who touched

The great citadel led them on to its dark heart.

the crystal fragments. Those two somehow escape with their lives and manage to launch their ship from the surface, but their minds are lost and all contact with them ceases.

On Luna, a wave of terror and madness washes over the city. The people cry out in terror, cowering in the face of the Darkness, but the Cardinal stands firm against the onslaught. He draws the members of the Brotherhood to him in readiness for war. Over the next few years, many Brotherhood members succumb to madness, plagued by nightmarish visions.

Durand orders that a record of what has occurred be kept as the Dark Symmetry corrupts and warps the remaining archives mankind has salvaged from The Fall. To ensure these records cannot be corrupted, he orders they be inscribed on the walls of the cathedral itself.

8 YC: THE FIRST DARK LEGION WAR BEGINS

As humanity reels from this new stage in the war against the Darkness, great ships–seeds of what will become known as Dark Citadels–appear above the worlds of the Inner System, slamming down into them to rise above the landscape like jagged, rotten teeth. From these Dark Citadels, the armies of the Dark Legion pour forth. Creatures of nightmare, their weapons and magic destroy everything in their path as they attack with diabolical fury.

With Ilian, the first Dark Apostle, now released, the power of the Dark Symmetry increases. Those who fall in battle against the Dark Legion rise to join its ranks in a new state of un-life.

GM REF: 4.00

14 YC: ALGEROTH AND DEMONGONIS APPEAR

On Venus, the second Dark Apostle announces its arrival. Algeroth, Apostle of War lays waste to entire cities at the head of his Dark Legion. Human forces, though they put up a heroic defence, are unable to halt his advance. As Algeroth's forces annihilate all that resist them, the third Dark Apostle, Demongonis, Apostle of Disease and Corruption, makes his presence felt, as new and terrible diseases begin to infect those yet to fall.

20 YC: MUAWIJHE AND SEMAI RETURN

As the war continues, the last of the Apostles begin to work their dark magic. Muawijhe, Apostle of Madness and Insanity, and Semai, Apostle of Deceit, use their powers to turn brother against brother, and sow discontent and fear among the beleaguered populations. Huge, dark sigils appear on the Martian moons, Phobos and Deimos, and on the surface of the planet. The Brotherhood is unable, or unwilling, to explain their meaning.

GM REF: 4.01

52 YC: THE VENUSIAN CRUSADE

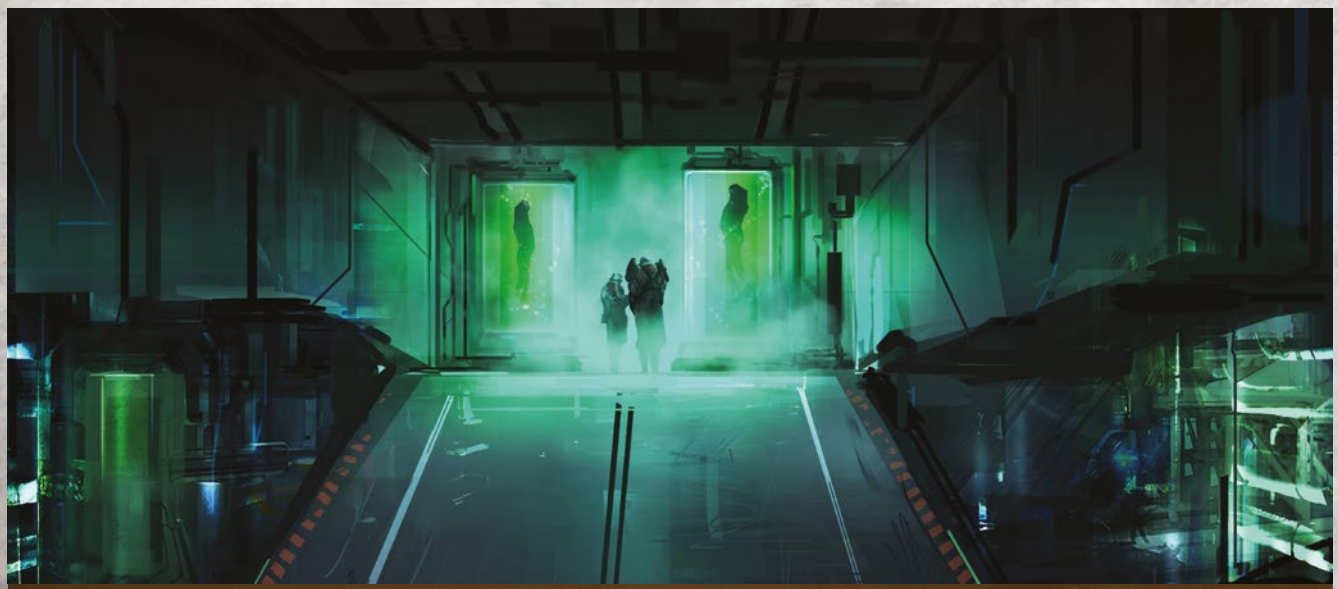
Luna, as yet untouched by the Dark Legion, is protected from the terrors by the presence of the Brotherhood and the Cardinal's faith. Though the Cardinals on the other worlds maintain their faith, they cannot resist the Dark Legion. Durand, realising that this is mankind's deciding hour, calls for all the faithful to join him in a final attempt to banish the Darkness. He instructs each corporation to gather its finest warriors and rally on Venus to face Algeroth himself.

As the corporate armies prepare to move to Venus, the blockade around Earth is suddenly broken. A fleet of vessels rises up from the surface and strikes course for Luna. Fearful of an attack, the corporations quickly scramble their available ships to intercept the fleet, only to be told by Durand to stand down: the mysterious forces of Whitestar will join the great Venusian Crusade. Massing the greatest army mankind has yet seen, Durand leads the battle against Algeroth. The two battle for days in single combat, each unable to strike the mortal blow, while the combined forces of man and the Dark Legion clash around them.

53 YC: FALL OF NATHANIEL DURAND

Finally, the Apostle of War is bested and flees to the sanctuary of his Dark Citadel, pursued by the Cardinal. Durand strikes down Algeroth, but as he prepares to finish his enemy, Algeroth whispers to him, staying his hand at the critical moment. This pause allows the demon to strike a fatal wound against the Cardinal, before suddenly and inexplicably vanishing from the battlefield. Durand struggles back to the surface, and ordains Bauhaus Commander Marshall Toth as his successor. As he dies, he whispers three words to his brothers, as they come to his aid: It is done. The remaining brothers spirit their sibling's body away.

GM REF: 4.02



Returning Nathaniel to their secret cloning lab, the brothers plan his resurrection.

Not even death can stave off the corruption of Demnogonis' Black Rot.

Their fury fuelled by the death of their beloved Cardinal, the forces of mankind crush the Dark Legion, and the routing of the forces of Darkness beings. With the battle for Venus a victory, the Whitestar fleet withdraws to Earth.

GM REF: 4.03

91 YC: THE BLACK ROT

It is another forty years before the eradication of the Dark Legion is considered complete with the last Dark Legion citadel on the Graveton Archipelago on Venus falling. Cardinal Alexander Toth dies one year after the Dark Legion is destroyed, and is succeeded by Cardinal Randolph Petrus.

A series of plagues—quickly known as The Black Rot—sweeps through the population of the solar system, spawned in part by the millions of wounded and dead left by the war with the Dark Legion. In many cases, those who succumb to the plagues return from the dead, resulting in harsh measures being employed to control their spread. In desperation, Capitol authorises the orbital bombing of its capital city on Mars, Neo Jersey, in an attempt to wipe out the Black Rot.

The Brotherhood's Second Directorate, the Inquisition, begins the task of locating and eradicating the influence of the dark cults within human society. Anyone discovered to be working with high technology or machines is branded a Heretic. In 93 YC. the Brotherhood completes its fourth cathedral on Mars.

94 YC: SALADIN STRIKES

A new Dark Citadel is discovered on Mars. A Nepharite Overlord of Algeroth, known as Saladin, claims it as his dominion. He raids human settlements from his citadel for the next six years

GM REF: 4.04

147 YC: CARDINAL NATHANIEL MAGNIFICUS

Cardinal Nathaniel Magnificus assumes the throne. The Bauhaus corporation is plunged into thirty years of civil war as the four largest noble houses vie for control of the corporation in what becomes known as the Throne Wars. This war greatly weakens the corporation, allowing rivals to gain territories on Venus.

201 YC: WARS OF ATTRITION ON MARS

Cardinal Pius Alexander II is inaugurated. The Wars of Attrition are fought on Mars as rival corporations attempt to seize Capitol controlled territories.

237 YC: THE GRAVETON SUB WARS ON VENUS

Mishima and Bauhaus fight the Graveton Sub Wars on Venus, as Mishima forces build fortresses to contest Bauhaus' island territories. After forty years of terrible losses, the two corporations are forced to call an uneasy truce, with Mishima gaining significant holdings.

GM REF: 4.05

652 YC: THE SCARAB WARS ON MARS

The Scarab Wars take place on Mars as Capitol extends the Trans-Martian Railway around the Scarab Desert and Red Rock Flats.

653 YC: WAR OF SHAME ON MARS AND CITIZENS' REVOLT.

President 'Raving' John Garcia of Capitol, convinced that many Capitol bases and generals are conspiring to bring down his corporation, launches a series of strikes against the suspected facilities. The corporation is plunged into a desperate civil war. The war ends with a Citizens' Revolt, in which the Capitol population rise against the corporation's leaders and Garcia is killed.

The Brotherhood further consolidates its power, with faithful now present in all of the corporations.

GM REF: 4.06

700 YC: THE NEW RISE OF DARK SYMMETRY

The influence of the Dark Symmetry begins to rise again, fuelling paranoia and mistrust among the corporations.

908 YC: THE NERONIAN HERESY

The Neronian Heresy shakes the Brotherhood as multiple claimants to the Cardinal's throne fight for power. The battle for control of the Brotherhood lasts three years until Durand XI's triumph (911 YC – 960 YC). Known as Durand the Mad, under the influence of the Dark Symmetry he attempts to raze the metropolis on Luna to the ground. Many lose faith in the Brotherhood as it wars amongst itself. Mishima cuts its ties to the Brotherhood as the Seven Sages of Mishima rise in eminence and the Mishima Schools of Enlightenment are formed.

GM REF: 4.07

1103 YC: BIRTH OF CYBERTRONIC

Through manipulation of the stock market and other illegal financial activities, a new corporation, Cybertronic, establishes itself. Highly secretive, this new power builds holdings in the scattered

Capitol Aero Bombers roar in to attack the Dark Citadel, unaware of Imperial's treachery .

planetoids of the asteroid belt, and the Trojan cloud that follows in Jupiter's orbital wake. Cybertronic openly defies the edicts of the Brotherhood and begins the development of advanced technology and computer systems.

Dissatisfaction grows with the Brotherhood's stance on technological progress, and many respond to Cybertronic's recruitment overtures. Cybertronic begins to construct new habitats, binding asteroids together in huge lattices, capable of housing millions. Breaking the Second Edict, it also begins terraforming Jupiter's moon Ganymede, much to the annoyance of Imperial, which has major holdings there. Outraged at Cybertronic's flagrant transgressions, the Brotherhood secretly supports Imperial's raid against Ganymede. It successfully routs Cybertronic forces and takes the Jovian moon as its own.

GM REF: 4.08

1253 YC: CYBERTRONIC ASCENDANT

Cybertronic's profits and assets have now grown to a point where it is the third wealthiest corporation. Its society is still as insular as when it was founded, but its economic power is undisputed, and the other corporations (other than Imperial) are quick to try and secure trade agreements with this enigmatic corporation.

THE SECOND CORPORATE WAR

1255 YC: THE PEACEKEEPER MASSACRE

Cardinal Durand XVII assumes leadership of the Brotherhood and attempts to embrace the corporations in a new spirit of unity. In a desperate attempt to avert another corporate war, he proposes a peace initiative and the corporations agree to meet at Peacekeeper Station on Eos to discuss the crisis. At the key moment of the meeting, known as the Calm Waters Conference, the station is annihilated in a sudden and catastrophic blast. The Brotherhood detects the Dark Symmetry at work, but the corporations refuse to accept this arcane explanation and instead blame one another for the attack. Durand XVII's plan fails as relations between the corporations deteriorate, and soon territorial disputes and other grievances boil over into open conflict. The Second Corporate War begins.

Cartel forces and covert agents use their independence and knowledge of the corporations to undermine the war effort of all factions. They force the institution of strict rules of engagement to which the corporations are compelled to adhere, or face the wrath of the Cartel's intelligence and financial resources. For the first time since the war with the Dark Legion, exploration ships venture beyond Jupiter. Some explore as far as Nero, though none return.

1262 YC: A NEW CITADEL

A new Dark Citadel is discovered on Mars by Capitol forces. The significance of this discovery is ignored as the citadel appears to be empty.

Capitol launches an airstrikes against the Dark Citadel, but the aircraft are inexplicably shot down by Imperial forces.

GM REF: 5.00

1270 YC: DEATH OF DURAND XVII

Durand XVII dies in mysterious circumstances. Cardinal Dominic assumes power and begins fortifying the Brotherhood with an iron grip. Cartel Doomtroopers launch a reconnaissance mission to investigate the Dark Citadel on Mars, and those who survive the mission report encountering the Dark Legion once again. The corporations agree to put aside their differences and field their military under the banner of the Cartel to meet this old enemy.

1271 YC: COUP WITHIN CAPITOL

Dissatisfied by what it sees as corporate mismanagement of the war after heavy losses, the Capitol military mounts a coup against the

The abominations of darkness sweep across humanity.

board. In addition to this, the Capitol propaganda machine begins to rally its people to a new cause; returning to Earth.

Later in the year, Capitol launches a series of lightning strikes against Earth. Although the initial strikes cause heavy losses, Whitestar is able to repulse attacks after a series of long and bloody battles. Spurred on by old blood ties with Whitestar, Bauhaus strikes at Capitol interests on Venus and Mars.

A successful counter-coup, mounted by resistance groups to the military junta, sweeps the Capitol leadership away and forcing the military to abandon its plans for Earth. A new corporate board is put in place and the officer corps purged of cultists by zealous Brotherhood Inquisitors.

As the Capitol military is forced to withdraw, dissidents within Whitestar mount an attack on Luna in revenge for the assault on Earth, which is repulsed at heavy cost. Hundreds of thousands lose their lives during the month long engagement, mostly from the civilian population. Meanwhile, all pretence is thrown aside as the corporations begin to settle old scores on all fronts.

SECOND DARK LEGION WAR

1291 YC: THE DARK LEGION RETURNS

After almost three decades with apparently no activity, the newly discovered Dark Citadel on Mars and many others across the worlds, begin to spew forth the armies of the Dark Apostles. Seemingly unchanged since their defeat 1,200 years before, the Dark Legion and its Apostles sweep once again across the solar system. As the corporate militaries turn their attention to the armies of Darkness, the Brothers prepare to unleash the ultimate weapon.

Thus Ends the first Chronicles.

Alistair Collins, P.I., barged the door of his office open with his shoulder, staggering a few steps in before he could halt his momentum. Raising his dim torch in one hand and his pistol in the other, he surveyed the scene. Sprawled on the floor was the body of a young blonde woman in a torn red cocktail dress. From this angle he could not see any wounds, but the large pool of dark blood she lay in told him all he needed to know. He swept his torch around the room. It was a shambles and had been the scene of one hell of a struggle. The wall nearest him was scarred with deep claw marks as if an angry bear had been let loose in the room.

'A bear standing over three metres high…,' he thought to himself. The thought was not a comforting one. This case had promised so much, but now his client – his only paying client this month – lay dead on the floor. Collins had set up his Private Detective Agency following what was officially documented as 'personnel administrative issues' – corporate doublespeak for uncovering corruption where it was not politically convenient. He had embarrassed a powerful family by revealing the rot at its heart, and corporate realities required he move on. He had lost everything that day, and had vowed he would get it all back. The heat of passion was hard to sustain and, over time, reality had set in. But he still hoped to land the big fish – the case that would make his name. Diana Gibson had looked like she would be that case.

Thanks to Alistair Collins.

Collins heard scratching on the ceiling behind him and realised that whatever had killed Diana was still here. He steeled himself, tightened his grip on his pistol, and prepared to face the killer.

MALCOLM 'MAL' CARLSSON
BAR OWNER & ROGUE

The child of a distaff nobleman of House Dante in Bauhaus, and a minor starlet of a Capitolian mother, Malcolm 'Mal' Carlsson was the child of a romantic relationship that broke all the rules and almost got his father disowned. Only his remarkable skill as a Brewmaster saved him. Mal grew up in and around the fabulous breweries of House Dante. He lived and breathed beer and quickly developed a masterful understanding of how the subtlest change in the ingredients would radically alter the end brew. By the time he became a young adult, Mal had realised that the same rules applied to people – the smallest change could cascade into major events. Putting to work the charm he learned from his mother, he learned to resolve sticky situations using only his wit, charm, and occasionally some weapon skills, and became a combination bar owner and investigator.

MALCOLM CARLSSON

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

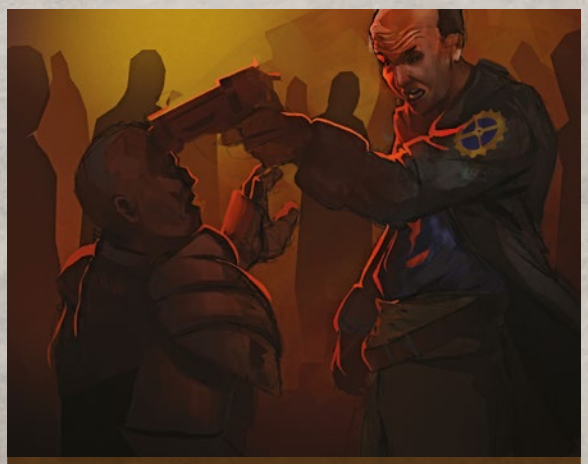
Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Bar Management) d6, Intimidation d8, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Shooting d8, Taunt d8, Technical Aptitude d6

Cha: 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Willpower:** 6

Hindrances: Heroic

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Danger Sense

Gear: Ballistic Trenchcoat (+2), Dagger (Str+d4),.74 M13 Bolter (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8+1, RoF 3, Shots 20, AP 4, Auto, 3RB).



Thanks to Martin Carlsson.

The Bauhaus Brauhaus was the finest drinking hall in Heimburg. At least Malcolm 'Mal' Carlsson considered it so – after all it was his. It looked like it was going to be another busy night, but something felt off. On the surface the mood of the patrons seemed exuberant, but there was an undercurrent of something 'off'. It was like when a batch of rotten hops found their way into a perfectly good brew; at first it looked fine but the rot was spreading under the surface. His eyes quickly took in the scene and he identified the source. A group of Bauhaus Dragoons sat round a table. Though they seemed jolly, Mal noticed they had barely touched their drinks. Even worse, they were concealing pistols under the table. One of the Dragoons was staring intently at the door. Trouble was brewing, and Mal was not going to put up with that. He looked around and gave a subtle hand gesture to his bar staff. They nodded and began spreading out. Mal swaggered across the bar straight up to the Dragoons' table.

"Evening friends. How are y'all enjoying your steins?"

The lead one, a big muscled brute, looked up at Mal and sneered. "Why don't you leave us in peace Capitoler?" The last word was delivered as an insult. Mal merely smiled.

"I'm afraid I can't do that, friend. Y'see, this here is my bar and I don't much take to people looking to settle their grudges here. Especially not a schlub whose IQ is smaller than his bootsize." The brute snarled and went for his weapon but Mal quickdrew his pistol and placed it to the Dragoon's forehead. All around him his bar staff materialised with well-aimed shotguns and pistols. It was clear the Dragoons were outgunned. They lowered their weapons. Mal gestured with his pistol towards the door.

"Good choice, gents. Now how's about your take your little war outside? And don't forget to tip your servers well on your way out."

THIS SECTION IS FOR GMs ONLY

IF YOU ARE A PLAYER STOP READING HERE

TIMELINE SECRETS

GM REF: 1.00

A great war is fought across the stars as an ancient force known as the Dark Legion consumes one civilisation after another in the wake of its homeworld Nero, which is drawn across the cosmos. Drawing every ounce of suffering from each conquest, the Dark Legion absorbs what remains into its hordes of destruction. The Dark Legion is finally stalled by an ancient race exhibiting strange mystical powers, tricked and imprisoned before it can bring its full power to bear. The Dark Legion and its homeworld are shunted into a pocket dimension, leaving only a husk in our universe. The Dark Symmetry, the all pervasive power that binds the Legion together, is trapped under a Seal on Pluto whilst the entity that controls it–the Dark Soul–is imprisoned inside another dimension under the Great Seal on a world that would become known as Earth

But even as the Dark Soul was trapped, those that defeated the Dark Legion were themselves broken, and knew they had merely bought time; time for another race to evolve, that might finally destroy the Dark Soul and its Legion once and for all. They knew it was only a matter of time before the Dark Legion returned.

GM REF: 1.01

Though trapped by the Great Seal, the Dark Soul is able to reach through minute fractures in its prison caused by the destruction and slowly corrupt and infect the dreams of mankind, spreading suffering as its power increases.

GM REF: 1.02

A small, secretive group known as the Guardians hands down secret knowledge, generation after generation. It is aware that something terrible awaits in the Solar System, and sends three of its own with Bauhaus to keep an eye on the exploration of the system. See the Mutants & Heretics supplement for more information on the Guardians and their forebears.

GM REF: 1.03

Capitol explorers on Mars discover the long eroded foundations of what must have been a series of vast structures. The ruins remain a closely guarded secret amongst the corporations, but despite countless research projects over the coming centuries, very little can be deduced about their origins.

GM REF: 2.00

The Chinese terraforming ship Hu Jing, carrying much of its elite to safety, spectacularly crashes back to Earth, flooding the Chinese mainland with toxic terraforming chemicals. These chemicals start a chain reaction that causes untold deaths. Those few who survive struggle through the wastelands to seek refuge in Russia.

GM REF: 3.00

Mishima scientists, developing cloning technology in a facility hidden deep within the jungles of Venus, suffer a string of failures that end in disaster after an uncontrolled release of engineered test subjects and genetic matter. Mixing with the still heavy levels of terraforming agents, flora and fauna begin to show signs of unprecedented mutation. The facility is abandoned, but later discovered by the three Guardians, the brothers, who will use it as a secret retreat away from prying eyes.

GM REF: 3.01

Ais, analysing centuries of data, determine that some unknown intelligent force has been working to bring down human civilisation, and that the unviable mission to Pluto and beyond was orchestrated by this same entity. Clan Murdoch records will later reveal that the second ship, the Zephyr, discovered a tenth planet before all contact was lost.

GM REF: 3.02

Mankind's first contact with the artefact breaks the ancient Seal on Pluto, which had trapped the Dark Symmetry for so many millenia. One of five great Dark Apostles, Ilian, is freed from the Dark Legion's dimensional trap, and through her control over the Dark Symmetry she is able to bestow great power on many emerging cults across the system.

GM REF: 3.03

Whitestar technology seems less susceptible to the effects of the Dark Symmetry, perhaps due to the proximity of the Great Seal on Earth and its lesser reliance on AI systems.

The Dark Apostle Ilian is brought into being once more through the breaking of the Seal on Pluto. Though she is yet to take on a material form, her power over the Dark Symmetry gives the dark cults a surge of power.

The cults manifest greater power and influence, engineering chaos in order to take control of Imperial clans, and lure them towards Nero and the release of the Dark Legion. Clan Kingsfield is the first to be seduced by the power of the Dark Symmetry.

The Dark Symmetry begins to infect logic systems, spreading quickly through the planetary web networks. Reports of strange manifestations flood in across the solar system–screens causing humans to become aggressive and cabling in facilities and ships taking on a life of its own. The three Guardians retreat to the old cloning facility on Venus with their followers and begin preparations for the dark days ahead. The seek to refine and teach others of a power they call 'the Art'.

GM REF: 4.00
Dark Legion forces strike throughout the solar system. An Imperial cybernetic facility on Cyaneus in the Asteroid Belt is overrun and the inhabitants killed, except for an experimental prototype warrior, codenamed the Immortal. With communications down he is left on the asteroid, forgotten by his creators and the Dark Legion.

GM REF: 4.01
The marks of Algeroth on the martian surface, Semai on Phobos, and Muawijhe on Deimos are placed by the Dark Legion to hinder the use of two vast, ancient weapons embedded deep inside the moons, which were used against it in the last war.

GM REF: 4.02
As Nathaniel prepares to strike the killing blow, Algeroth says a few words, which cause him to fatally pause: "We were here at the beginning, we will be here at the end".

GM REF: 4.03
Peter Durand, in the throws of madness caused by the arrival of the Dark Apostles, suffers a series of visions. He sees the true nature of the Dark Apostles and their citadels, realising they are bound to the dark dimension they were banished to and are only able to enter this reality through the portals in the Dark Citadels. See The Dark Symmetry Campaign for more information.

GM REF: 4.04
Saladin has lain in wait in a hidden citadel since the Dark Legion's defeat. Learning of a nearby, recently discovered, five million year old ruin, that might contain what he needs to open a portal for the Dark Apostles, he begins scouring the land. He is finally defeated in the ruins six years later.

GM REF: 4.05
Alexander and Peter Durand working in secret on Venus to clone Nathaniel argue about their goals. Peter believes humanity needs Nathaniel as a new figurehead, whilst Alexander believes that new technology, resistant to the Dark Symmetry, must be developed to fight the inevitable return of the Dark Legion. In the end, Alexander leaves and begins searching the system for fragments of mankind's pre-Fall technology

GM REF: 4.06
With his growing powers, Peter Durand maintains a secret presence as one of the succeeding Cardinals when possible to ensure he is in control should the Dark Legion return again.

GM REF: 4.07
Sensing he is close to cloning Nathaniel, Peter locks himself away in the Venus facility and misses the signs of corruption that spread until it is too late to stop the rise of Durand the Mad. Finally he rouses the faithful, crusades to stop the Neronian Heresy, and sets the Brotherhood back on its tracks.

GM REF: 4.08
Strange mutations begin to show amongst the population. Classified as the taint of the Dark Symmetry by the Inquisition, those afflicted by these changes choose to hide their nature.

Based on the Immortal, found on Cyaneus, Alexander Durand guides the establishment of the Cybertronic corporation with the intention of using it to create an army that can finally defeat the Dark Legion on its return.

Meanwhile, Peter succeeds at cloning his long-dead brother Nathaniel. The child Nathaniel exhibits a close attunement to the Light from an early age, and some previously unknown powers.

GM REF: 5.00
Heretics within Clan Kingsfield have mounted a secret mission to Nero. After months of search they eventually find the vast petrified remains of a strange device and somehow open a link to the dark dimension again, allowing the Dark Apostles to once again reach out into this reality. When the link is opened, the expedition is confronted by something completely unexpected and destroyed before they can alert anyone. Shortly afterwards the Dark Legion once again sets foot upon Nero.

CHARACTER LIFEPATH

While the normal *Savage Worlds* process of character creation, defined in *Savage Worlds* covers creating a basic Novice character, there are a number of additional tweaks and options available to fit into the dystopian diesel-punk of ***Mutant Chronicles***.

CHARACTER CREATION

RACE

All characters in ***Mutant Chronicles*** are Human, at least to start with, and get a free Novice level Edge, providing they meet the requirements for it.

FACTION

Heroes within ***Mutant Chronicles*** belong to one of the factions defined in Chapter 3. This choice has a bearing on your character's available Edges and Lifepath at character creation. See the sidebar for available factions.

Note: Cybertronic is not available in all periods, check with your GM before selecting this option.

FACTIONS

- **BAUHAUS**
- **CAPITOL**
- **CYBERTRONIC**
- **FREELANCER**
- **IMPERIAL**
- **MISHIMA**
- **WHITESTAR**

Fortune favours the brave and Imperial honours its fallen.

TRAITS

Define your hero's attributes in the same way you would for any other *Savage Worlds* game, with each attribute die type starting at a d4. Keep in mind that some Lifepaths require minimum starting attribute levels.

WILLPOWER

Those who face the forces of the Dark Symmetry face untold horrors and mind-shredding experiences. The Dark Symmetry can corrupt those who are weak-willed or come into contact with the horrors its creates. The Willpower statistic is a derived trait that lets you monitor your character's mental health and wellbeing.

A hero's starting Willpower is 2 plus half his Spirit die type, modified by Edges and Hindrances. As a character faces the horror of the Dark Symmetry, his Willpower may fluctuate. If a character increases his Spirit after character generation, it also increases his current Willpower by one point. Of course, over the course of play, Willpower can go down, leading to madness, corruption, and possible allegiance to the forces of Darkness previously fought.

One Lifepath option, the Heretic, introduces an already corrupted character, for further information on this approach see the "Heretic" Lifepath Edge, which requires GM approval to play.

SKILLS

Starting characters get 15 points for skills as usual and can spend them as the player sees fit. However, to qualify for certain Lifepath options, some skills need to be purchased.

EDGES AND HINDRANCES

As mentioned above, all starting characters begin play with one free Edge of their choice.

You may also take one Major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and two Minor Hindrances (worth 1 point each). If you do take any Hindrances, you can use the points gained from them for the benefits listed below:

For 2 Hindrance points you can:

- Raise an attribute one die type.
- Choose an Edge.

For 1 Hindrance point you can:

- Gain another skill point.

Hone those shooting skills or die in the field.

LIFEPATH EDGE

After purchasing all Skills, Edges and Hindrances, the character has the option to acquire a Lifepath Edge. The character has to have all the requirements for the Lifepath Edge except for any listed Hindrances. A Lifepath Edge can be purchased "for free" – it does not cost any points during character creation like normal edges. Hindrances listed as part of the Lifepath Edge are added to the character, but they do not provide any extra points, unlike normal Hindrances. Lifepath Edges also provide specialised gear as part of their listing. This gear will be replenished by the parent organisation under normal circumstances and usage, dependent on GM approval.

Lifepath Edges are special events in ***Mutant Chronicles*** that cover life-defining commitments by tying a hero to his specific faction. A character can only take one Lifepath Edge. They are normally taken during character creation, but through extraordinary circumstances and GM approval, can be granted during game play, although it uses an Advance, like normal Edges.

GEAR

The basic gear a character has varies. Some gear is issued by a Lifepath Edge, other gear is purchased at character creation. All characters start with $1500 with which to purchase additional gear, this can be modified by Edges, like Rich.

LANGUAGES

All characters start play speaking Luna Patois and the primary language of their faction. Languages by faction are:

- **Bauhaus –** Bauhaus
- **Capitol –** Capitol
- **Cybertronic –** Bauhaus
- **Freelancer –** Player choice
- **Imperial –** Imperial
- **Mishima –** Mishima
- **Whitestar –** RussoMandarin

BACKGROUND

While a Lifepath choice certainly impacts a hero's background, it does not answer every question. What kind of personality does the character have? What is his family like? If it is not defined in his Lifepath, how has he experienced the Dark Symmetry? How do they know each other?

Dark Symmetry points power the GM's characters.

SETTING RULES

The following are a series of setting rules to further define and expand the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe.

CHRONICLE POINTS

Bennies in ***Mutant Chronicles*** are called Chronicle points.

DARK SYMMETRY POOL

The GM Benny Pool is called the "Dark Symmetry Pool" and provides all the normal function of GM Bennies, but also can be used to trigger environmental hazards, misbehaving technology, or other complications. See **Chapter 20: The GM's Guide to the Chronicles** for further information.

The Dark Symmetry Pool is different than the normal GM Benny Pool found in *Savage Worlds*. Brotherhood characters can add Bennies to the Pool, in effect strengthening the enemy to reroll failed Mysticism checks. Any character can try to bargain with the Dark Symmetry and gain a reroll. See page 246 for further information.

FANATICS

Some members of the Dark Symmetry command unflinching loyalty from their minions. As a result, Wild Cards with the "Fanatics" special ability who are hit in combat have the damage redirected to an allied extra within 6" of them.

ENVIRONMENTS

The heroes of ***Mutant Chronicles*** sometimes find themselves in unusual or strange environments. While many types of environmental hazards are handled in **Chapter 4: Situational Rules** in the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook, there are a few new ones that need to be covered.

VACUUM

There is no atmosphere, pressure, or heat in the void between planets. A character exposed to vacuum likely dies very quickly as lungs explode and blood vessels burst. If a hero is not in a sealed suit capable of withstanding these environmental hazards, he must test Vigor roll every round or suffer a wound from decompression. There is a cumulative −1 penalty to this check every round after the first.

ZERO-G

In addition to the dangers of Vacuum, the absence of gravity is also a danger. Even when in a sealed environment, being exposed to a Zero-G or Low-G environment can be very challenging. Characters suffer a −2 penalty to Agility and Agility-based skill rolls until they have sufficient spacewalking experience, usually several hours, to overcome the strangeness of the environment. Additionally, a roll of

Some people fall into heresy, corrupted over time. Those people were fools, doomed to serve as mindless Dark Legionnaires. Others had their sights set much higher.

Andrew Rogers took a sip of fine red wine and looked around at his fellow diners in Pasquale's restaurant. He knew without a shadow of a doubt that he was the smartest guy in the room. Unlike the others, he had seen the writing on the wall, and knew that humanity was doomed. Just like in business, if you got in on the ground floor you got the best deal. So he sought out heretics here in Luna city. It had not taken long. Turns out they were everywhere if you knew how to look, and Andrew did. He walked in and, within a matter of days, he had negotiated his position with the so-called Dark Lord of Madness, Muawijhe. The Dark Lord had gifted him with impressive abilities and given him his own cell of heretics to do with as he pleased, and all he had asked for in return was a symbolic gesture—a moment of dark beauty. Andrew knew just how to provide that.

He looked at his fellow diners. They blabbed inconsequentially to each other about pointless trivialities, unable to see the universe as he saw it. Quietly laughing to himself, he reached down and pulled out the gasmask from his briefcase under the table, smoothly sliding it into place on his face. The scent of rubber filled his nostrils. It smelled like victory. He nodded at the unshaven waiter, who nodded back and pulled on his own gasmask, before reaching down and opening the valves on the tanks of hallucinogenic gas hidden in the food trolley. The other heretics did likewise. The gas silently filled the room.

If the diners would not see Muawijhe's truth for themselves, then Andrew Rogers was going to have to make them see it. This was going to be delightful. It took mere moments for the screaming to begin.

Thanks to Andrew Rogers.

1 on the Agility die causes the character to lose control and begin spinning. He suffers a −2 to all Trait rolls, instead of just Agility-based ones, until he makes an Agility check to recover.

Since there is nothing in space to break inertia, once a character starts moving, he moves in a straight line equal to his Strength every round until he comes in contact with a larger object or is able to begin moving in another direction.

NO POWER POINTS

The Mystics of the Brotherhood, and others who are touched by the Light or the Dark Symmetry, can create mystical effects beyond the ability of science to explain. No matter the source, it is powerful and obvious in its manifestation. When using the Art of Light or a Dark Symmetry Gift, the hero chooses the power he wants to activate and makes a Mysticism test. There is a penalty to the roll equal to the half the power's usual cost (rounded down). With a success the power activates normally. If the result is a raise, and the power has a raise effect listed, those bonuses apply.

Chapter 06: The Art of Light and **Chapter 19: The Dark Soul and the Apostles** treat Mysticism checks differently, and exact descriptions can be found in the appropriate chapter**.**

SKILL DIFFICULTIES

Savage Worlds already has modifiers built into its skill system but, to reinforce those rules; we will highlight some of the important bonuses and penalties here. An *easy* roll is +1, or +2 to the roll on top of whatever the character gets from Edges; a *difficult* roll is −1 or even −2, and an *extreme* roll is an eye-watering –4.

NEW SKILLS

All of the skills from the *Savage Worlds* core rules are available, except for those tied to Arcane Backgrounds. A few have special rules in this setting, and are noted below

GUNNERY (AGILITY)

This skill is used to operate and fire vehicular weapons. Weapons that specifically use this skill are covered in the gear section and are found in tanks, spaceships, and other large vehicles. The normal rules for Shooting apply to these weapons; however, they are large and unwieldy enough to make operation entirely different from a normal pistol or rifle. For instance, firing a heavy weapon from a moving vehicle counts as the "Unstable Platform" penalty. Range penalties apply as normal for Short/Medium/Long range. Using the Aim action provides a +2 to the next shot for a weapon operated with the Gunnery skill.

KNOWLEDGE (ESPIONAGE) (SMARTS)

This skill covers aspects of spycraft, such as setting up and running surveillance, counter-surveillance, and spy networks. It also includes tradecraft, which involves things like arranging clandestine meetings and "dead drop" transfers. Use of this skill generally determines the quality of the hero's espionage activities, or his success or failure at spotting or recognizing others' handiwork.

KNOWLEDGE (PSYCHOLOGY) (SMARTS)

This skill is important for the long-term mental well-being of those characters who find themselves squaring off against the forces of the Dark Symmetry. Not only does this skill give the hero insight into the motives and behaviour of others, it also provides a means of recovering from the mental instabilities caused by exposure to the Dark Symmetry and the horrors of war. It can be used either to shock a subject out of a temporary delusion or phobia or, over a protracted period of time, to restore the semblance of sanity to a long suffering individual. Specific rules can be found in the GM's section on page 253.

KNOWLEDGE (VARIES) (SMARTS)

There are a multitude of Knowledge skills applicable to ***Mutant Chronicles***: Astrophysics, Criminal Law, Cryptography, Cybernetics, Demolitions, History, Solar System Geography, and many others. Like in normal *Savage Worlds*, creativity here can be rewarding.

MYSTICISM (SPIRIT)

While any character can take this skill, it is of particular importance to Brotherhood characters. For a layman, this skill is knowledge of the workings of the Brotherhood, insight into the Art of Light, and general knowledge of occult and Dark Symmetry beings. Mysticism can be used to identify beings of the Dark Symmetry, the effects of Dark Gifts, and also various aspects of the Church of Light.

Heavy weaponry helps when making an entrance.

To most people, this place would be a maze. Mohawk Mike could read the tangles of trunk cabling like a subway map. Disguised as a Capitol Communications Engineer, Mike was deep in the phone switching centre somewhere inside the Pinnacle, searching through the buzzing mass of wires. The stench of ozone was thick here, and he was pretty sure this whole place was an electrical fire waiting to happen. But no one ever came here. No one except Mike.

Mike had been hired by one division within Capitol to splice in a line tap on another of the corporation's divisions. Why it needed to hire outside help was beyond him, though he was one of the best communications specialists in the Inner System. A former Radio Officer with the IDF, Mike had been seconded to the Wolfbanes to provide communications support, and had loved every minute of it. He found the cable he was looking for, and carefully spliced on a radio transmitter. The bug would send a complete feed to the receiver he had carefully hidden two floors up, after which it would be seamlessly patched into a special 'red phone' in his employer's office. Just in case things did not work out as planned, Mike also had a copy of the feed transmitted to a dead drop recorder a couple of blocks away. You can never be too careful.

Mike caught the noise of an access door quietly being opened behind him. He calmly tucked the wiretap inside the bundle of cables then reached inside his jumpsuit and pulled out a silenced pistol. Time to find out who else was in here.

Thanks to Michael Horney.

In the hands of a Mystic though, this is the skill that allows them to channel and create the arcane powers of Light. Full details on this skill and how it works can be found in the Brotherhood Lifepath Edges or in the **Chapter 06: The Art of Light**.

TECHNICAL APTITUDE (SMARTS)

This is a general skill used for all technical activities, whether it is using a computer, hacking, encryption, decryption, or operation of various technologies. While Repair is used to fix items, this is the one used to operate them in unusual ways or outside the normal day-to-day routine. Checking the bank balance with a computer terminal is not something requiring a Technical Aptitude check, but trying to hack the computer terminal and find out a different person's bank balance is definitely a Technical Aptitude check, likely difficult (–2) or very difficult (–3) to achieve.

NEW HINDRANCES

Most of the Hindrances from the *Savage Worlds* core rules are available, except for Doubting Thomas. The Dark Symmetry is very real, and those who do not believe in it are more likely to be some level of Delusional rather than Doubting.

BULLET MAGNET (MAJOR)

Some people are just in the wrong place at the wrong time, but this character seems to make a habit of it. This poor, unfortunate soul is hit by accidental fire (using the Innocent Bystander rules) on a 1–2 for single-shot weapons, and a 1–3 for shotguns or full-auto fire.

SLOW (MAJOR)

Not everyone is born with cat-like reflexes. This hero is just a little slow on the uptake, or maybe he freezes up when lead starts flying. He draws two cards in combat and acts on the worst. If he draws a Joker, he uses it normally and ignores his Hindrance for the round.

Slow characters cannot take the Quick Edge, but they can actually improve their reaction time by taking the Level Headed Edge (but not during character creation). For this soldier, Level Headed allows them to draw one card and act normally. Improved Level Headed grants them two cards and they act on the better of the two.

WEAK-WILLED (MINOR OR MAJOR)

Life is hard, people have traumatic experiences, and this character just does not have the same mental strength as others. At a minor level, the character has a –1 to Willpower and tends to scare easily. As a Major Hindrance, Willpower and Charisma suffer a –2 penalty. At either level, whenever the character gains a Quirk or a Phobia, he must make a Spirit check or be Incapacitated for 1d6 rounds (2d6 for the Major level.)

ZERO-G SENSITIVE (MINOR)

The character suffers an additional –2 to Agility and skill checks while in a Zero-G environment. He just lacks the training and capacity for operating without firm ground under his feet. This is in addition to the normal penalties for operating in this environment.

NEW EDGES

Not all of the core Edges are suitable to ***Mutant Chronicles***, as such the following are disallowed: Adept, Arcane Background, Champion, Gadgeteer, Holy/Unholy Warrior, Improved Rapid Recharge, Mentalist, Mr. Fix It, New Power, Power Points, Rapid Recharge, Soul Drain, Wizard.

BACKGROUND EDGES

MYSTICAL EXPOSURE

Requirements: Spirit d8+

Somehow this character manifested a mystical power at a young age, but was not found by the Brotherhood until too late to begin training and initiation into the Art of Light. Or perhaps the character was too wilful and stubborn to learn more. In any case, the character can manifest a single Art, chosen from any available to the Brotherhood Mystic Lifepath Edge. See the **Chapter 06: Art of Light** for more information.

COMBAT EDGES

BIG BOOM

Requirements: Veteran, Shooting d10+, Strength d8+

The character has learned how to get the maximum firepower from a weapon, and can get it to perform outside the normal specifications. When firing a fully automatic weapon that creates a blast template the hero can double the ammo use in a shot to create a second adjacent blast template.

Learn your weapon's strengths and weaknesses.

LIGHTNING CREW

Requirements: Seasoned, Command Presence, Gunnery d8+

After significant training and experience, the character has learned how to more efficiently load vehicular weapons, when commanding a gunnery crew, this character increases the Rate of Fire of vehicular weapons by 1. This Edge can only effect a single weapon once, regardless of how many characters in the Gunnery Crew have it.

NATURAL CALCULATOR

Requirements: Gunnery d8+, Smarts d8+

Whether it is natural talent, intense schooling, or just a fantastic grasp of physics, this character ignores the "Unstable platform" penalty and does not suffer a penalty for firing heavy weapons from a moving vehicle.

STRONG GRIP

Requirements: Seasoned, Fighting d6+, Strength d8+

The character imposes an additional −2 penalty on Disarm checks, and gets a +2 bonus on Strength checks to break or maintain a grapple.

WINGED VICTORY

Requirements: Gunnery d6+, Piloting d6+

A seasoned pilot capable of flying and firing at the same time, this hero can use the higher of Piloting or Gunnery when firing weapons on an airborne vehicle he is piloting.

LIFEPATH EDGES

Lifepath Edges represent a hero choosing to be affiliated with one of the major organizations within ***Mutant Chronicles***. While all players choose their hero's faction at creation, not every hero has a Lifepath Edge. These represent a commitment to a certain organisation within a faction, and come with a number of extra features, benefits, and gear, but most importantly, obligations and hindrances that are tied together.

A Lifepath Edge can be purchased "for free" – it does not cost any points during character creation like normal edges. A character is limited to a single Lifepath Edge. If a GM allows a character to take a Lifepath Edge during gameplay, which should be a very rare and story driven event, it requires an Advance like normal.

Many Lifepath Edges will list skills with a modifier as part of the Edge. The listed skills are boosted a number of die types equal to the listed bonus. For instance, the Bauhaus Merchant Captain has "Fighting+1", which means the character's Fighting die is boosted one type after taking this Edge. If the hero had a Fighting of d6 when taking Merchant Captain Lifepath Edge, it would get boosted to a d8. If the character was untrained in Fighting, it would become a d4.

EXAMPLE LIFE PATH EDGE

MERCHANT CAPTAIN

Bauhaus organises its own fleets of freighters and merchant vessels. The captains of these vessels are experienced pilots who need a fairly broad skillset. Many specialise in the transport of a particular type of freight, and develop some expertise in these items in order to better take stock of them. Many develop the skills of a negotiator. Whilst they rarely do the actual deals for the products they transport, they may be able to strike lucrative bargains when they collect the goods, or make profitable sales of add-ons when they deliver them. Some may even be tempted to further line their pockets by involving themselves in smuggling operations.

Requirements: Bauhaus Faction, Command, Noble, Persuasion d6+, Piloting d6+, Technical Aptitude d4+

Hindrances Gained: Greedy (Minor), Vow (Major – Support Bauhaus Shipping Contracts)

Equipment Gained: Duelling Sabre, Light Civilian Armour, Small Transport Freighter

Benefits: The Merchant Captain gains his own ship, which is a huge benefit, albeit the entire annual income from the Noble Edge is used for normal maintenance, permits, and operation. The freighter can never be sold or transferred to another person while the Merchant Captain is alive. He also gains Fighting+1 and Repair+1. The Merchant Captain gains a +2 to any opposed rolls when conducting business related to economic transactions.

Explanation: Any hero can be a Merchant Captain they meet the requirements of listed. Upon becoming a Merchant he gains the Greedy and Vow hindrances, gaining no points in them. He gains the listed equipment, most notably a small transport freighter. Then he increases his Fighting and Repair skills by 1 die type each. If he did not have those skills, they would become a d4. Furthermore, he gains a +2 on opposed rolls when buying, selling, or engaging in legal contracts.

Lifepath Edges that provide a benefit analogous to another Edge can stack with that Edge. For instance, the Rake is −1 to be hit in ranged combat. If the Rake later takes Dodge, the −1 from that Edge stacks with the bonus from the Lifepath Edge.

A Lifepath Edge includes some gear choices that may not be available to other starting characters, and within reason the affiliated organisation will replenish or repair lost supplies as needed.

However, as noted above, the benefits come with a cost, noted in the Hindrances below included in the Edge. Unlike normal Hindrances, these do not provide the character with any extra points at character creation. Once a hero has a Lifepath Edge, they have chosen to follow that organisation's guidelines, and behaving in a way contrary to the organisation's desires can be very detrimental to the hero's health.

LIFE PATH EDGES BY FACTION

- **BAUHAUS:** Merchant Captain, Rake, Venusian Marshal
- **BROTHERHOOD:** Inquisitor, Mortifactor, Mystic
- **CAPITOL:** Celebrity, Freedom Brigade, Politician
- **CYBERTRONIC:** Cyber-Infiltrator, Cyberscientist, Technological Archaeologist
- **FREELANCER:** Doomtrooper, Heretic, Luna PD Detective
- **IMPERIAL:** Blood Beret, Conquistador, M&A Agent
- **MISHIMA:** Corporate Samurai, Shadow Walker, Triad Enforcer
- **WHITESTAR:** Bone Hussar, Night Witch, Resector

THE THREE MUSKETEERS
TANK CREW

This Bauhaus T-32 'Wolfclaw' Jungle Battle Tank has three crew: a driver, gunner, and commander. In this case they are Corporal Christian Hansson, Corporate David Faxe, and Sergeant Derek Ng respectively, known to everyone in their company as the 'Three Musketeers'. Whether in the field, carousing back in Heimburg, or performing maintenance on their beloved tank, the three are inseparable and have been ever since they met during basic training. There is genuine admiration in the nickname, as their close bond as a team makes their tank highly effective in the field. They work perfectly as a well-oiled machine, able to tell what the others need without being told. They have seen combat in almost a hundred engagements, fighting everything from Imperial Bauhaus Bully tanks, to Mishima samurai. They have even had a few engagements against the Dark Legion. Whatever the challenge, this tank crew is up to the task.

Thanks to Christian Hansson, David Faxe, and Derek Ng

SERGEANT DEREK NG

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d4, Gunnery d8, Notice d8, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Technical Aptitude d4
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Willpower:** 6
Hindrances: Vow (Major–Serve Bauhaus Military)
Edges: Command, Command Presence, Common Bond, Lightning Crew
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (+2), Dagger (Str+d4), MP-105 (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 3, Shots 8, AP 1, 3RB).

CORPORAL DAVID FAXE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Gunnery d6, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Technical Aptitude d4
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Willpower:** 6
Hindrances: Vow (Major–Serve Bauhaus Military)
Edges: Ace, Common Bond
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (2), Heavy Wrench (Str+d6), MP-105 (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 3, Shots 8, AP 1, 3RB).

CORPORAL CHRISTIAN HANSSON

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Gunnery d8, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Technical Aptitude d4
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Willpower:** 6
Hindrances: Vow (Major–Serve Bauhaus Military)
Edges: Common Bond, Natural Calculator
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (+2), Dagger (Str+d4), MP-105 (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 3, Shots 8, AP 1, 3RB).

The terrifying, huge rotary saw blade on the front of the T-32 'Wolfclaw' Jungle Battle Tank sounded like a chainsaw on steroids as it chewed through the trees and bushes of the Venusian jungle. Though this one was fully engaged, even when powered down the Bauhaus T-32 tank exuded menace, despite its relatively small size. Painted in lurid colours on the side of the turret was a renaissance swordsman with the name d'Artagnan written underneath. The painting clashed badly with the dark greens and browns of the jungle camouflage.

Abruptly the tank drew to a halt, and the sound of servos powering down filled the air. A low mist hung in the air. The silence was quickly replaced by the usual squawking of the jungle creatures.

Sergeant Derek Ng opened his commander's hatch and stuck his head out, taking a moment to look around. Behind him was the trail of destruction left by his tank. He knew those damned Imperial Bauhaus Bully tanks were out here somewhere, and it was up to him and his crew–driver Corporal Christian Hansson and gunner Corporal David Faxe–to find them.

His tank was far better adapted to the terrain. Lighter and more manoeuvrable with a saw blade to cut through the dense foliage. But the Bullies were bigger, more heavily armed and armoured. Frankly, they were damn impressive opponents. Sergeant Ng slapped the side of the turret and his crew mates' hatches popped open.

"What do you think, lads?" asked the Sergeant. He might be officially in command, but they were a true team, and the ranks meant nothing between them.

It was David who spoke first. "That was fun!" He always did love chewing through the scenery.

"I meant about the bloody Bullies!"

"Oh, right. They are definitely out there." David sniffed the air, "I can smell their cheap Imperial grease"

"Liar," replied Christian. "No way can you smell anything above your own stench. It's getting ripe in there!" He paused for a second, his eyes quickly taking in the surroundings. "But… he is right, they are definitely out there. My gut is telling me that they will move for Hill-367, as it gives them space to manoeuvre. If we head to Hill-390 we should be able to get the drop on them. What do you reckon, Derek?"

"Sounds good to me. Let's go bag us some Imperials! David, get rolling!"

BLOOD BERET (IMPERIAL)

Arguably one of the most recognisable units battling the Dark Legion, the Blood Berets are a frequent feature of recruitment campaigns by the Imperial Defence Forces. Recruited primarily from units of the Defence Forces serving on Venus, there are a large percentage of Blood Berets from the non-Anglo Clans, giving the whole unit a truly multi-cultural feel. All Blood Berets receive additional training from the Brotherhood to prepare them for fighting the Dark Legion.

Requirements: Imperial Faction, Brawny, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+
Hindrances Gained: Loyal, Vow (Major–Serve) the Blood Berets, Vow (Minor–Support Imperial)
Equipment Gained: Mk. XLIII plasma carbine, Mk. XIV Aggressor pistol, Mk. III combat armour
Benefits: A Blood Beret gets Fighting +1, Gunnery +1, and Stealth +1.

BONE HUSSAR (WHITESTAR)

With their signature bone swords in hand, a heart full of courage, and, as often as not, a belly full of vodka, the Bone Hussars seek out ever more fearsome foes to take on in hand-to-hand combat. There can be no greater glory for one of these fanatical warriors than to die in combat, facing off against insurmountable odds without a flicker of fear. Having heard of the terrors that stalk the colonies, a few Bone Hussars have been given permission by the Tsarina to hunt them down wherever they may be. These adventurous monster hunters voyage into space to take on new, even greater challenges than those they have faced on Earth.

Requirements: Whitestar Faction, Fighting d6+, Vigour d8+
Hindrances Gained: Death Wish, Vow (Major–Support Whitestar and Hunt Down Creatures)
Equipment Gained: Pair of Bone Swords, heavy civilian armour
Benefits: The Bone Hussar ignores the –2 penalty for using a weapon in his off-hand, and gains the Liquid Courage Edge.

CELEBRITY (CAPITOL)

These are the voices, faces, bodies, and personalities that make up Capitol's high society and entertainment empire. From film to radio to art galleries and beyond, these stars wield their fame with aplomb and can even come to have high political influence at times. It would surprise many a citizen to realise how many renowned actors and artists are trained not just to smile and pose well, but also to spy on targets during premiere tours, and have the fighting skills to defend themselves if the spotlight of suspicion ever falls on them.

Requirements: Capitol Faction, Attractive, Notice d6+, Spirit d6+, Persuasion d6+, Vigor d6+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Inflated Ego), Vow (Major–Support Capitol and Make Appearances)
Equipment Gained: Fashionable Clothing, Lavish Apartment (paid for by Capitol)
Benefits: The Celebrity gains Charisma +1, Persuasion +1, and the Connections Edge for Capitol's Media Networks.

CONQUISTADOR (IMPERIAL)

Heroic explorers, spies, traders, and warriors; the Imperial Conquistadors are a class unto themselves. Issued with a Letter of Marque by the Serenity, they are free to use whatever means they require to advance Imperial's ambitions, as long as they can justify their actions to the Houses of Parliament. Many are recruited from one of the divisions of Imperial Security Command.

The typical Conquistador is confident, brash, and larger-than-life. Their equipment and vehicles are all of the highest quality and well maintained, partly to live up to their reputations as the-best-of-the-best, but also due to the more pragmatic knowledge that they often operate far from help and need reliability. When 'in civilisation' they favour exquisite suits, but when they are in deep space they are just as comfortable in armoured spacesuits.

Requirements: Imperial Faction, Piloting d6+, Survival d6+, Technical Aptitude d6+
Hindrances Gained: Arrogant, Vow (Major–Support Imperial Exploration and Trade Agenda)
Equipment Gained: P-60 Punisher Handgun, Punisher Short Sword, Fashionable Suit, Heavy civilian armour
Benefits: The Conquistador gets a Notice +1, Repair +1, and Survival+1.

CORPORATE SAMURAI (MISHIMA)

The warrior-managers of Mishima's samurai caste can be broadly split into two types: those who are soldiers through and through, and those who focus on the corporation's business affairs.

The former type are usually from lower ranking samurai families. They exist to fight for their lords and obey orders, carrying them out to the best of their ability. When not on active duty, these warriors train hard and play hard. Higher-ranking samurai must also be ready at a moment's notice to take arms when they are commanded to do so. However, they spend far more time on their business affairs: overseeing production quotas, attending meetings, and so forth.

Requirements: Mishima Faction, Noble, Agility d6+, Smarts d6+, Strength d6+
Hindrances Gained: Code of Honour, Vow (Major – Support Mishima)
Equipment Gained: Sode class light battlesuit, katana, wakizashi, shotgun assault rifle, business suit
Benefits: The Corporate Samurai is trained in many areas, and gains Fighting +1, Knowledge (Business Law) +1, Knowledge (History) +1, and gets a +1 Parry.

CYBER-INFILTRATOR (CYBERTRONIC)

These are a mix of cyber-spy, agent, and assassin, augmented with cutting edge enhancements to perform espionage and wet work for Cybertronic. Quick as a snake, and just as lethal, there is little information they cannot obtain or rival corporate execs they cannot reach. While their existence is whispered about, those whispers strike fear in to corporate employees the system over. No one wants one on their tail.

Requirements: Cybertronic Faction, Agility d8+, Investigation d6+, Stealth d6+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Reclusive), Vow (Major – Support Cybertronic Stealth Operations)
Equipment Gained: P1000 handgun, subdermal armour, cell link, EYE-tronic
Benefits: The Cyber-infiltrator gains Knowledge (Cryptography) +1, Knowledge (Espionage) +1, and Shooting +1.

CYBERSCIENTIST (CYBERTRONIC)

The best and brightest Cybertronic has to offer; their brains have been enhanced to calculate at inhuman speeds and their minds are finely tuned to the world of machines. Technical expertise is the cyberscientist's specialty. While they can repair, jury-rig, or design current technology, their real talent lies in creating the new, stunning leaps in human imagination Cybertronic is known for. Their imagination is the only limitation, and their imagination is vast and cyber enhanced.

Requirements: Cybertronic Faction, Knowledge (Cybernetics) d8+, Smarts d8+, Technical Aptitude d6+
Hindrances Gained: Curious, Vow (Major–Support Cybertronic Research)
Equipment Gained: Automed, DIANA System, CX multi-tool
Benefits: On the forefront of research, the Cyberscientist gains Knowledg e+1 in two different skills, and Technical Aptitude +1

DOOMTROOPER (FREELANCERS)

Doomtroopers are the Cartel's elite military forces, established on behalf of the Brotherhood to represent the very finest warriors that mankind could produce, regardless of corporation. Their skills and exploits are legendary, and the sacrifice of each and every Doomtrooper that falls in battle is honoured in perpetuity. Doomtroopers can be called upon to serve in a wide variety of missions and circumstances, and are given almost complete autonomy to complete their objectives–they are the best, and are trusted to take every necessary action to ensure the continued survival of humanity.

Requirements: Brawny, Agility d6+, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+
Hindrances Gained: Loyal, Vow (Major–Serve the Doomtroopers), Vow (Minor–Support the Cartel)
Equipment Gained: Any two weapons using Shooting or Fighting, Any medium suit of armour
Benefits: As someone on the front lines of the war against the Dark Symmetry, this character has seen his share of war already. He gains a +1 Willpower, Fighting +1, Mysticism +1, and Shooting +1.

FREEDOM BRIGADE (CAPITOL)

One of two paths lands people here: either they had their old citizenship stripped away by a criminal conviction, or they decided that the chance to become a Capitol citizen offered enough perks and possibilities to risk their lives. Now they just have to survive long enough to earn a new life and clean past. The Freedom Brigade gets stationed at the most Light-forsaken hellholes on Mars, and sent on the worst missions available. Its members are also pumped full of a slow neurotoxin, with the antidote only available at their commanding officer's discretion. Their gear and armour are all cast-offs from former Brigadiers, and they only get live ammo when in the field.

Requirements: Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+, Stealth d6+
Hindrances Gained: Loyal, Outsider, Wanted (Major), Vow (Major–Support Freedom Bridge)
Equipment Gained: M50 Assault Rifle, Tortoise Mk.1 Armour
Benefits: A member of the Freedom Brigade gets Fighting+1, Shooting +1, and Survival +1

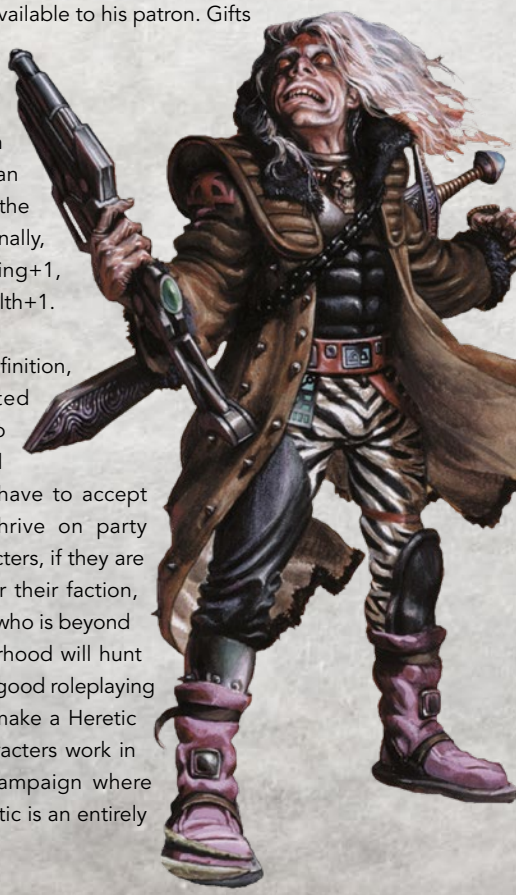
HERETIC (FREELANCER)

A Heretic is a corrupted and evil person, given over to the Dark Symmetry. You must secure the GM's express permission to play a Heretic character.

Requirements: Spirit d8+, Mysticism d6+, Stealth d6+
Hindrances Gained: Vow (Major–Support Dark Symmetry)
Equipment Gained: None
Benefits: This character is a servant of the Dark Symmetry and has willingly joined the forces of Darkness. He gets a –2 Willpower. The Heretic still tracks Dread and Willpower normally, as his humanity can be further stripped away by the dark forces; however, unlike normal heroes, when the Heretic's Willpower reaches 0 they do not cease to be a playable character.

In essence, the path of heresy and corruption is what they have already chosen, but when their Willpower reaches 0 they radiate a permanent aura that can be detected automatically by any character with a Brotherhood Lifepath Edge. Dogs and other natural animals will growl, and either attack or run away.

Any Edge or Power that works against creatures of the Dark Symmetry also works against a character with this Lifepath Edge. When a character takes this Edge, he chooses a patron from the Dark Apostles. He immediately gains a Gift from either the Universal group or from the Gifts available to his patron. Gifts are activated with the Mysticism skill, see **Chapter 07: Heretics** for further information on Dark Gifts. They can learn additional Gifts via the "New Gift" Edge. Additionally, the Heretic gains Fighting+1, Intimidation+1, and Stealth+1.



Note: A Heretic is, by definition, an evil and corrupted person. A player who chooses a Heretic, and the GM who allows it, have to accept that this person will thrive on party conflict. The other characters, if they are playing appropriately for their faction, are likely to kill a Heretic who is beyond redemption. The Brotherhood will hunt this character. Extremely good roleplaying and story is needed to make a Heretic in a group of other characters work in a sensible fashion. A campaign where every character is a Heretic is an entirely different story.

INQUISITOR (BROTHERHOOD)

Inquisitors are at the forefront of the war against Darkness. Most warriors within the Brotherhood aspire to join the ranks of the Inquisition. The stereotype of the stoic, driven Inquisitor is a popular one in Capitolian action movies, though most know that this depiction is as much propaganda as anything else. The mere mention of an Inquisitor strikes fear into the hearts of all but the most faithful, for there are few whose thoughts are entirely pure, and the Inquisition has ways of exposing secrets. Inquisitors Majoris are the most powerful of their organisation, and few can withstand their prowess, whether on the battlefield or in the interrogation room.

Requirements: Brotherhood Faction, Fighting d6+, Intimidation d6+, Mysticism d6+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Driven to Find Heretics), Poverty, Vow (Major–Support Brotherhood)
Equipment Gained: Power Controller, P60 Punisher Pistol, Punisher Sword, Inquisitorial Battledress
Benefits: A Brotherhood Inquisitor is a fearsome character; they gain Fighting+1 and get a +2 bonus when using Intimidation to interrogate someone. Additionally, they can use powers, as covered in **Chapter 06: Art of Light** (see page 109). Inquisitors start play knowing two of the powers listed below. A Brotherhood character can add a Chronicle Point to the Dark Symmetry pool to reroll on a Mysticism check.

LUNA PD DETECTIVE (FREELANCER)

Founded by Capitol, Luna PD was transferred to the Cartel at its founding. Luna PD is the only law enforcement organisation with jurisdiction over the whole of Luna, and is a true inter-corporate organisation, with cops recruited and trained at the LPD Academy working alongside investigators seconded from Capitol Security Services and the Imperial Security Corps. To a lesser extent, Bauhaus, Mishima, and even Cybertronic second assets, though these are usually only for specific operations. Luna PD is underfunded and subject to the conflicting wills of the corporations, and is often forced into hiring freelancers to supplement its investigators.

Requirements: Notice d6+, Investigation d6+, Smarts d6+
Hindrances Gained: Vow (Major–Uphold the Law), Vow (Major–Work for Luna PD)
Equipment Gained: Piranha Handgun, Heavy Civilian Armour/ Trench Coat, Radio
Benefits: As part of their training and experience, Luna PD officers get Knowledge(Criminal Law) +1, Notice +1, and Persuasion +1.

MAD AGENT (IMPERIAL)

Isc-5 Murders & Acquisitions Department (MAD) agents are a perfectly terrifying blend of ruthless killers and cold-hearted accountants. For a MAD agent, the world and everything in it neatly falls into profit and loss tables, and his job is to secure the profits and eliminate the losses. Their primary role is to find potential new assets for Imperial and acquire them in any way possible. That often requires some dirty work, and MAD agents are chosen for their 'moral flexibility'. They are not averse to using their fearsome reputation when it will give them an edge.

A typical agent wears a spotless dark blue pinstripe suit and bowler hat, and carries a sword cane or umbrella and briefcase. The briefcase always includes a badge, large calibre pistol (usually a Mk. XIV Aggressor), an adding machine, and the infamous black notebooks where the fate of entire corporations are decided.

Requirements: Imperial Faction, Intimidation d6+, Knowledge (Espionage) d6+, Persuasion d6+
Hindrances Gained: Habit (Minor–Insists) on reviewing the profit and loss for everything, Vow (Major–Improve Imperial's Profit and Loss Ratio)
Equipment Gained: Fashionable suit, Mk. XIV Aggressor pistol, sword cane, black notebook, hand crank calculator
Benefits: The M&A Agent gains Notice +1, Shooting +1, and Streetwise +1.

MERCHANT CAPTAIN (BAUHAUS)

Bauhaus organises its own fleets of freighters and merchant vessels. The captains of these vessels are experienced pilots who need a fairly broad skillset. Many specialise in the transport of a particular type of freight, and develop some expertise in these items in order to better take stock of them. Many develop the skills of a negotiator. Whilst they rarely do the actual deals for the products they transport, they may be able to strike lucrative bargains when they collect the goods, or make profitable sales of add-ons when they deliver them. Some may even be tempted to further line their pockets by involving themselves in smuggling operations.

Requirements: Bauhaus Faction, Command, Noble, Persuasion d6+, Piloting d6+, Technical Aptitude d4+
Hindrances Gained: Greedy (Minor), Vow (Major–Support Bauhaus Shipping Contracts)
Equipment Gained: Duelling Sabre, Light Civilian Armour, Small Transport Freighter
Benefits: The Merchant Captain gains his own ship, which is a huge benefit, albeit the entire annual income from the Noble Edge is used for normal maintenance, permits, and operation. The freighter can never be sold or transferred to another person while the Merchant Captain is alive. He also gains Fighting+1 and Repair+1. The Merchant Captain gains a +2 to any opposed rolls when conducting business related to economic transactions.

MORTIFACTOR (BROTHERHOOD)

Where the Inquisition and the Brotherhood's armies are its mailed fist, the Mortifactors are its concealed blade. These experts in covert operations are called in for assassinations and lightning raids, and are widely believed to be a myth, for there are few who have seen one and lived to tell of it. Each Mortifactor is skilled in the Art, giving him a considerable advantage over warriors not similarly skilled, and allowing him to reach and eliminate targets that he would not otherwise be able to overcome.

Requirements: Brotherhood Faction, Fighting d6+, Knowledge (Espionage) d6+, Mysticism d6+, Stealth d6+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Secretive), Poverty, Vow (Major–Support Brotherhood)
Equipment Gained: Quietus Armour, Mortis Sword, Piranha Pistol
Benefits: A secretive and silent assassin, the Mortifactor gains Shooting+1, +1 bonus to all Stealth, Lockpicking, and Climbing checks, and a +2 damage when striking an unaware opponent. Additionally, he can use powers, as covered in the **Chapter 06: Art of Light** (see page 109). Mortifactors start play knowing two of the powers listed below. A Brotherhood character can add a Chronicle Point to the Dark Symmetry pool to reroll on a Mysticism check.

MYSTIC (BROTHERHOOD)

At the heart of the Brotherhood are the Mystics. Found both within their own Directorate, and in support of the other three, a Brotherhood Mystic is a powerful ally and a terrifying foe. They are the most accomplished and capable spell casters amongst all of humanity. Advancement through the ranks is arduous, requiring nothing less than absolute devotion and determination, both to achieve greater levels of mastery of the Arts, and to fortify themselves against the Darkness. The greatest amongst them, the Keepers of the Art, are some of the most powerful people in the system, and their attentions are devoted wholly to matters concerning the war against darkness and the survival of humanity.

Requirements: Brotherhood Faction, Spirit d8+, Healing d6+, Mysticism d8+, Notice d6+
Hindrances Gained: Cautious, Poverty, Vow (Major–Support Brotherhood)
Equipment Gained: Power controller, armoured robes
Benefits: A true master of the Art, the Mystic gains Fighting+1, can use powers as covered in the **Chapter 06: Art of Light** (see page 109), and starts play with four powers chosen from those below. Additionally, Mystics can channel their mind and body in unusual ways. A Mystic can inflict a level of Fatigue on himself to reroll any Failure on a Trait check. A Brotherhood character can add a Chronicle Point to the Dark Symmetry pool to reroll on a Mysticism check.

NIGHT WITCH (WHITESTAR)

The Night Witches are sentinels, scouts, and velocity addicts. Piloting their custom-built jetwings on Earth or at the helm of Whitestar's jury-rigged spacecraft, the Night Witches must develop a sixth sense for the condition of their vehicles, and instinctively know just how far they can push them without something important falling off or catching fire.

Night Witches are often chosen for off-planet assignments where pilot skill will be of vital importance, including combat missions and journeys of exploration, where anything might happen.

Requirements: Whitestar Faction, Female character, Agility d8+, Pilot d6+, Repair d6+, Technical Aptitude d6+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Adrenaline Junkie), Vow (Major—Support Whitestar's agenda)
Equipment Gained: Electro-jolt, vacuum suit
Benefits: The Night Witch gains the Ace Edge, Driving +1, and Gunnery +1.

POLITICIAN (CAPTIOL)

Politicians often fancy themselves the true leaders of all things Capitol. It is true that the vast administrative machine would grind to a halt without the blood of politicians greasing the wheels. Causes would not be ratified, votes would go uncounted, and budgets would not be funded without politicians and their networks. In some ways, they are the stars of their own stories, and their exploits can be as entertaining as the latest feature film. While some decry the system as a hive of villainy and corruption (and it is), this does not negate the fact that there are those officials who can steer entire colonies to their whim and turn the tide of a battle with a well-worded speech.

Requirements: Capitol Faction, Command, Persuasion d8+, Smarts 6+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Compulsive Liar), Vow (Major—Support Capitol Agenda)
Equipment Gained: Small office, personal support staff paid by Capitol (treat as Followers Edge, but non-combatants, they work in the small office and can be called upon for information or basic tasks).
Benefits: The Politician works in front of the crowds, appealing to their desires while working behind the scenes for Capitol's agenda. He gets Charisma +1, Investigation +1, and the Connections Edge when calling in political favours from within the Capitol system.

RAKE (BAUHAUS)

There are some nobles, particularly amongst the youth, who find the exacting regime and taut manners that they are expected to adopt both arduous and dull. They would much rather enjoy all the perks of aristocracy, in particular amazing wealth and relative freedom from legal consequence. These affluent youngsters often enjoy a life of fast cars, loose companions, intoxicants, vandalism, and violent confrontation. The nobility does all in its collective power to limit the damage done by such wastrels and to see them brought to justice, knowing that the anarchists and insurrectionaries make much of their excesses. The commoners hold a noble gone bad in high contempt, and their resentments are only made worse through realising that were they to be held accountable for equivalent crimes they would no doubt face harsher punishment.

For their part, the rakes plan to straighten out and fly right once they have enjoyed themselves for a year or two. By and large, they are simply dealing with the tension that comes from realising that they will soon have to shoulder a great responsibility. Some are bad apples though, and really do abuse their privileged background in order to get away with all sorts of sociopathic behaviour.

Requirements: Bauhaus Faction, Noble, Agility d8+, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+, Taunt d4+
Hindrances Gained: Overconfident, Vow (Minor–Support parents' Bauhaus Noble House)
Equipment Gained: Duelling Sabre, Medium Civilian Armour, Expensive Clothes
Benefits: The Rake excels in getting into trouble; those who get themselves out of trouble typically turn into decent nobles for Bauhaus. They gain Fighting +1, Driving +1, and a −1 to be hit by a ranged attack.

RESECTOR (WHITESTAR)

The Resectors are explorers who scavenge for useful items in the wreckage of the old world. Adept at navigating the wilderness and urban ruins, Resectors always have an eye out for the main chance. After all, the next score could be the one that will set them up for life. Resectors can often be found braving the drifting wrecks and abandoned orbitals that were claimed by the Dark Symmetry. Moreover, although their flighty nature makes them somewhat unreliable. They are often chosen by the Tsarina for off-world missions offering a different perspective on things from her military officers.

Requirements: Whitestar Faction, Notice d6+, Stealth d6+, Vigor d6+
Hindrances Gained: Curious, Vow (Major–Support Whitestar's reclamation efforts)
Equipment Gained: Iron Hand autopistol, explorer's pick, survival kit, medkit
Benefits: The Resector gets Driving +1, Piloting +1, and a +2 on Fatigue checks against environmental hazards.

SHADOW WALKER (MISHIMA)

Industrial spies, corporate extraction specialists, and sometimes killers. Their name comes from the dreaded Shadow Walker Cult—a heretical order of assassins suppressed many years ago, or so Mishima management would have its employees believe. The more mundane shadow walkers are dangerous enough in their own right. Extensively trained in stealth, espionage, and combat, shadow walkers are the ultimate deniable assets, hired by corporate lords desperate enough to cross the boundaries of honour.

Requirements: Mishima Faction, Fighting d6+, Stealth d8+
Hindrances Gained: Quirk (Secretive), Vow (Major—Support the Shadow Walker Hierarchy)
Equipment Gained: Katana, Ronin Handgun, Heavy Civilian Armour, Three gas grenades, rebreather
Benefits: The Shadow Walker gains Climbing +1, Knowledge (Espionage) +1, and Stealth +1.

TECHNOLOGICAL ARCHAEOLOGIST (CYBERTONIC)

Archaeologists of pre-Fall technology know where to find it, how to get it, and how not to get killed while doing so. Part adventurer and part academic, their travels take them from the steaming jungles of Venus to the vast deserts of Mars. They contend with ancient security machines, rival corporations, and, sometimes, the Brotherhood, to claim their prizes. That is fine by them; danger is part of the thrill. There is little they would not do to find ancient technology.

Requirements: Cybertronic Faction, Agility d6+, Smarts d8+, Technical Aptitude d4+
Hindrances Gained: Curious, Quirk (Preserve History), Vow (Major—Support Cybertronic Agenda)
Equipment Gained: SA-SG7200I Shotgun, EYE-Tronic, SARaH system
Benefits: The Technological Archaeologist gets Knowledge (History) +1, Notice +1, and Investigation +1.

TRIAD ENFORCER (MISHIMA)

The pledged associates of the Triad crime outfits encounter all levels of Mishima society through their vice, smuggling, and extortion rackets. At the rank of enforcer, an associate is allowed a degree of autonomy from his master, having attained a high degree of trust, familiarity with the codes of his Triad, and an easy way with threatened violence.

Requirements: Mishima Faction, Fighting d6+, Stealth d6+
Hindrances Gained: Loyal, Vengeful (Minor), Vow (Major–Support the Triad Family)
Equipment Gained: Windrider SMG, Bulletproof Vest, Ostentatious Clothing
Benefits: The Triad Enforcer gets Intimidation +1, Stealth +1, and the Quick Edge.

VENUSIAN MARSHAL (BAUHAUS)

The Venusian Marshals are an elite cadre of soldiers attached to battlegroups, but they typically operate with a great degree of independence. They are outriders and scouts, expected to carry out reconnaissance missions and lightning fast attacks. To become a marshal, a Bauhaus soldier must prove himself a competent warrior, expert rider, and survivalist. A marshal's main task is to keep note of any enemy activity he observes and report back to the commanders of his battlegroup. He may also be tasked with acts of subterfuge and sabotage, and be ready to execute a fighting retreat at any given moment. A Marshals' wargear is much like that of the Venusian Rangers, from whom many of them are drawn. They can be distinguished by their characteristic heavy cloaks.

Requirements: Bauhaus Faction, Notice d4+, Riding d4+, Shooting d6+, Stealth d6+, Survival d6+, Vigor d6+
Hindrances Gained: Loyal, Vow (Major–Support Bauhaus Military)
Equipment Gained: HG-14 Shotgun, MP-105 handgun, Guardsman Mk 3 Armour, Heavy Cloak
Benefits: The Venusian Marshal gains Notice +1, Stealth +1, and Tracking +1.

POWER EDGES

CONTEMPLATIVE RECUPERATION

Requirements: Veteran, Healing power, Mysticism d10+

When the hero attempts to heal Physical Wounds or Mental Damage on himself, he can use the Mysticism skill instead of the Healing skill. He does not suffer any penalties for wounds or lack of proper equipment.

CRIMSON BULWARK

Requirements: Seasoned, *Armour* power, Mysticism d8+

The character gains +1 armour when using the *Armour* power, and it stacks with normal armour instead of replacing it. This effect is very obvious as the hero will glow with a fiery red light, making Stealth impossible.

NEW ARTS

Requirements: Novice, Brotherhood Lifepath Edge

This Edge can be taken multiple times. The hero gains access to two new Arts from those available to the chosen path of their Brotherhood character. See the **Chapter 06: Art of Light**.

NEW GIFT

Requirements: Novice, Heretic Lifepath Edge

This Edge can be taken multiple times. The Heretic is granted a new power from either the Universal group or from among those available to the Heretic's patron. See **Chapter 07: Heretics**.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

CATFALL

Requirements: Novice, Agility d10+, Acrobat

The character has learned to take advantage of wind resistance and surface conditions when making a landing. When calculating damage, he can reduce the distance fallen: Novice character reduces the falling distance by 3", a Seasoned character by 6", and so on.

COUNSELLOR

Requirements: Novice, Knowledge (Psychology) d8+

The character gets a +2 when attempting to remove Dark Influence(s) from others. The Counsellor cannot use this ability on himself.

Christian Trondman, Venusian Ranger, watched the approaching headlights of the truck as it wound its way recklessly fast up the narrow road. His informant had been right. The smugglers were using this back road to sneak their stolen shipments of weapons to an unknown third party.

"Time for action," whispered Trondman quietly to himself.

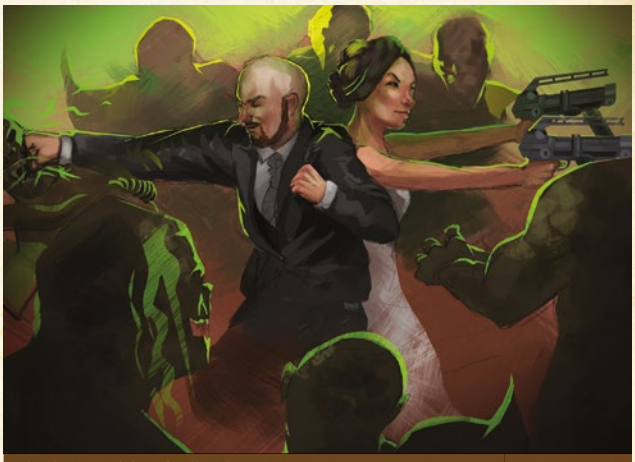
As it passed by beneath him, Trondman launched himself off the rocky outcropping and slammed on to the top of the fast-moving truck. Though he was wearing the bulky armour of a Venusian Ranger, it did not seem to slow him down at all. He rose to a crouch and moved swiftly and sure-footedly along the top of the truck, towards the driver's cab.

Heedless of the terrifying drop into the canyon, Trondman grabbed the edge of the cab and swung himself into the passenger side, smashing the glass with his armoured boots and kicking the passenger hard in the face before crashing down on him. Marshal Trondman opened the passenger door and threw out the now unconscious man. The driver looked up in surprise and fear at the replacement of his armed companion with a heavily armoured and very angry Venusian Ranger, who now pressed the barrel of his pistol to his forehead.

"Pull over, Schmidt! I think it is time you and I had a little talk about smuggling, or you can join your friend."

Thanks to Christian Trondman.

Fredrik checked the ammo count on his pistol. Only three rounds left… should have brought more. It was supposed to be a simple, elegant wedding. Fredrik and Yoki had made all the arrangements for the wedding. It was to be a simple, low-key affair just for their closes friends and family. A chance for a moment of peace in this world of troubles. But then the doors were kicked open and the necromutants burst in. Fredrik and his wife both knew what they were, their roles as special operatives for Bauhaus ensured it. He had looked at his wife, smiled and they had pulled their concealed weapons and opened up. No one—no thing—was going to ruin their special day!



Thanks to Fredrik and Yoki Oskarsoon.

EMT

Requirements: Novice, Healing d8+

This character has dealt with combat injuries either as an Emergency Medical Technician or a Field Medic in a military organisation. He only suffers a −1 penalty when not using proper equipment. Additionally, if he can reach a wounded non-Wild Card by the end of the round in which he is wounded, the EMT can make an immediate Healing roll at −2. If the roll is successful the victim is merely Shaken instead of wounded.

MISDIRECTION

Requirements: Seasoned, Stealth d6+

The character gets a +2 on opposed Stealth Checks involving Sleight of Hand, such as palming an item, picking pockets, or similar action.

NEWSMONGER

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+

The character gets a +2 bonus on Common Knowledge checks for information or history on any event within the past twenty years.

SHIP CREW

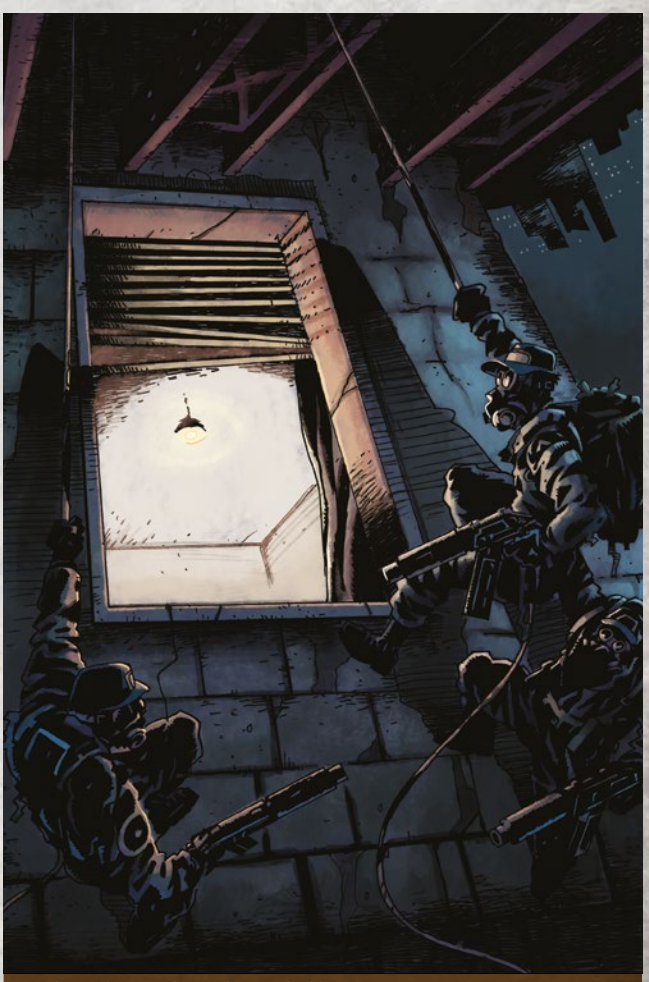
Requirements: Novice, Gunnery d6+, Repair d6+

Out in the cold hard depths of space, a quick mind and steady nerves are vital. A hero with this edge is an expert at getting the most from old ships and limited supplies. Any attempt to Jury-Rig a repair takes half the normal amount of time. Additionally, this character reduces the reload time of a ship-borne gun by one round.

SPACEWALK

Requirements: Novice, Agility d6+, Survival d6+

The character ignores the normal −2 penalty for operating in Zero-G.



Regular window assaults are character building.

A Doomtrooper must be ready to sacrifice mind, body and soul.

STRONG RIDER

Requirements: Novice, Fighting d6+, Riding d6+, Shooting d6+

The character can use the higher of Shooting or Riding when using a ranged weapon, or the higher of Fighting or Riding when using a melee weapon.

WALL CRAWLER

Requirements: Novice, Strength d8+, Acrobat

The character does not suffer penalties for climbing without proper equipment.

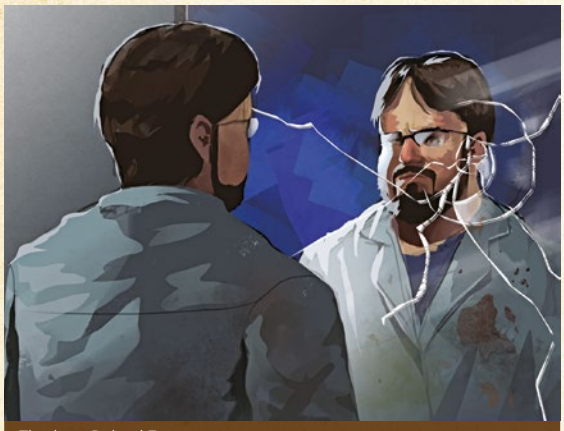
SOCIAL EDGES

BEDROOM EYES

Requirements: Novice, Attractive

The character gains a +2 on seduction attempts against those who would be romantically interested in him.

Dr Richard Errington looked into the mirror and saw the face of a dead man. His current body had suffered terminal injuries following a bike crash in the streets of Luna, and had been the ideal host for Dr Errington to continue his research. The physical damage had been easy to repair, but the neurological damage had meant the man was dead, and so Richard had no qualms about borrowing his body. He thought back to all the many bodies he had inhabited in his long life.



Thanks to Richard Errington.

Originally a high ranking researcher for Bauhaus, just before the events of the First Dark Legion War, Richard had created a revolutionary organ that acted as a backup biological store of memories and personality that could be easily transferred from one host to another. Ever the pioneer, he implanted the prototype in himself—unwilling to risk the lives of others. It was to be a medical breakthrough that would allow for terminally ill patients to have their memories and knowledge accessible to a new host. But once imprinted, it instead overrode the host's own personality with the original implantee.

Even worse, before he could improve the design, his laboratory and research were wiped out by the Dark Symmetry, leaving his own organ as the only example. As technology crumbled around him, Richard knew that he had a vital role to play as a 'living library' to preserve the rapidly dwindling scientific knowledge until such time as the Dark Legion was finally defeated. Since then, he has lived many lives in many bodies, all in the hopes that one day he may one day help save humanity.

Richard looked down at his name tag. 'Dr John Smith'. It would do.

WEIRD EDGES

AVOID CORRUPTION

Requirements: Veteran, Spirit d8+

This hero has steeled himself against the horrors of the Dark Symmetry and gains a +2 to all Willpower checks caused by its servants.

DARK KNOWLEDGE

Requirements: Novice, Mysticism d6+, Smarts d6+

This character has studied the Dark Symmetry and is familiar with its denizens. He can identify and learn one weakness of a Dark Symmetry creature, or identify a Monstrous Ability used by one of the Symmetry's human servants.

MENTAL FORTRESS

Requirements: Seasoned, Mysticism d8+, Spirit d8+

Having studied the dark powers of the solar system and steeling his mind against their horrors, this character gets a +1 Willpower.

MYSTIC WARD

Requirements: Novice, Mysticism d8+, Strong-Willed

If the character is allowed to meditate for an hour and perform a short ritual, the next time they are attacked by a supernatural power, the character can make a Mysticism test. If successful he will negate the effect on himself. If the power affects multiple characters, the extra targets do not gain any benefit from the Mystic Ward.

RUB SOME DIRT ON IT

Requirements: Novice, Survival d6+, Vigour d6+

After surviving harsh conditions and harrowing experiences, this hero has learned to ignore minor inconveniences. He can ignore one level of Fatigue.

SLAYER OF DARKNESS

Requirements: Veteran, Dark Knowledge, Mysticism d6+, Spirit d8+

The character can nominate a Servant of the Dark Symmetry and makes an opposed Spirit Check. If the character wins, they get a bonus damage die on their next attack. If the character wins with a raise, they also ignore the target's armour.

Shiryo-X, demonhunter, moved through the building in complete silence. The fortress through which he stalked his prey belonged to the Lord Heir. Artfully laid out in a series of concentric pagoda-like palaces, it was built with a precision that showed in the finely-tuned nightingale floors and perfect feng shui. Only… only the feng shui was not perfect; something had disturbed the ordered perfection of the palace. Shiryo-X knew it, could feel it deep in his bones. He had known as soon as he had arrived in the waiting room that something was wrong. Without requesting permission, he had slipped away, and now he stalked the lower levels of the palace. His sense of 'wrongness'—so hard-earned in the battlefields against the Dark Legion—guided him unerringly here.

Suddenly a hint of a shadow, a slight scent of rotting cherries, and Shiryo-X spun around—all four arms raised. He caught the horribly twisted courtier—fully possessed by the Malignant—in the air. His blades flashed and severed body parts hit the ground. The action was over in less than a second, but he could feel the heat of battle spread through him. Looking down at the corpse, Shiryo—X felt the first stirrings of fear. Such a creature could not—would not—appear alone in the fortress of a Lord Heir. He knew then that this would be a titanic battle.

Thanks to Henrik Dahlberg.

EQUIPMENT

As the heroes fight the Dark Symmetry, they will need an assortment of gear, weapons, armour, and vehicles. This chapter handles those needs.

QUALITIES

The following qualities apply to gear, weapons, armour and vehicles. For qualities not listed here, refer to the *Savage Worlds* rulebook for further details.

ITEM AND WEAPON QUALITIES

BACKLASH: A weapon with this quality can be self-destructive in unskilled or unlucky hands. Whenever a 1 is rolled on the skill die, the attacker hits himself for normal damage. In the event the Wild Die indicates a success and the skill die is a 1, the attacker rolls damage against himself and the defender.

BIOMETRIC LOCK: An item with this quality is keyed to a specific individual and only works properly for him. Getting around the security system requires a Technical Aptitude check at −4.

BROTHERHOOD: An item with this quality is generally restricted to the Brotherhood. Any costs listed are indicative of a Black Market price. Brotherhood characters can requisition these items from their superiors, assuming they have a good reason to need or use it.

CONTAGION: These weapons spread illness and plague wherever they go. If the damage from a weapon with this quality would cause the target to be Shaken or suffer 1 or more Wounds, the victim must test Vigor or also takes a level of Fatigue.

CORRUPTING: A weapon with this quality is suffused with the power of the Dark Symmetry. If the attack hits with a raise, the target must make a Willpower check.

ILLEGAL: Owning this item is illegal under normal circumstances, and likely displaying it or showing it in public will bring a strong response from the local authorities.

KNOCKDOWN: These weapons pack a punch, and can knock the target down or make them duck for cover. If the attack hits, the target must make an Agility test or is knocked prone.

One must be ready for anything on the streets of Luna.

LAUNCHER: These weapons are loaded with an explosive type. The damage listed is combined with the damage of the basic grenade type, as well as any special characteristics the grenade has. Weapons with the Launcher type use the Gunnery skill, even if they are not vehicle mounted.

SHOTGUN: These weapons are Shotguns, and follow the same rules as found in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook for weapons of that type.

VICIOUS: Weapons with this quality are exceptionally brutal and damaging, and roll a d10 instead of a d6 when the attack hits with a raise.

VEHICLE QUALITIES

ENCLOSED: Crew and passengers in a vehicle with this quality cannot use their weapons, but also are protected from enemy fire.

EXPOSED: Crew and passengers in a vehicle with this quality can use their weapons, but do not gain any benefit from the armour of the vehicle. They gain full or partial cover, dependent on their actions.

NO LIFE SUPPORT: Spacecraft with this quality do not have integral life support, and the crew must wear space suits while operating it outside of atmosphere.

RUGGED: Vehicles with this quality are designed for abuse and operating in difficult conditions. Repair checks on a vehicle with this quality get an extra +2.

WALKER: Vehicles with this quality walk on two (or more) legs and use the same rules for terrain as characters.

VTOL: These aircraft also have the Hover ability.

CORPORATE VARIATIONS

The five corporations all have their own design philosophies and methodologies, which give their products a particular style and appeal that reaches far beyond the corporations' citizens. What follows is a basic overview of the differences between the corporation's products, and whatever game effect those differences may have.

BAUHAUS

The Homebuilders have long had a reputation for quality, producing items of fine craftsmanship and enduring resilience. A Bauhauser product remains in good working order for far longer than the equivalent Capitolian or Imperial items. Bauhauser is a byword for quality engineering and precision manufacturing. All Bauhaus equipment reduces its Corruptibility by one compared to normal items of that type, but the item's Cost is doubled. These modifiers are already included in the Corruptibility and Cost of items already noted as being of Bauhaus manufacture.

CAPITOL

Capitol is a conglomerate of millions of companies, partnerships, cross-corporate alliances, and sole traders, all striving together in a vast ecosystem of products and profit. Knock-offs and unlicensed copies of other corporations' technology and reengineered hardware can be found side-by-side with licensed versions of the finest Bauhauser designs and proprietary Capitol creations. Freelance companies–and their intellectual property–are frequently purchased by the larger Capitol corporation. Further, due to its extensive reach across Luna City and beyond, the economic foundations of the solar system come from Capitol. Capitolian creations are regarded as the standard against which all else is measured–popular, but seldom exceptional. There is no modifier for Capitol equipment.

CYBERTRONIC

Cybertronic equipment seems to endure when other products fail. They maintain a high degree of technical sophistication without becoming subject to the blight of corruption, but the reasons for this remain unexplained. Cybertronic equipment has a Corruptibility rating of C, denoting an immunity to any form of Corruption.

Cybertronic items can still fall foul of mundane failures, and thus are affected normally by other forms of mishaps. Cybertronic equipment is scarce and expensive, increasing Restriction by one and doubling the item's Cost. With items that are already denoted as being of Cybertronic manufacture, the changes are already included.

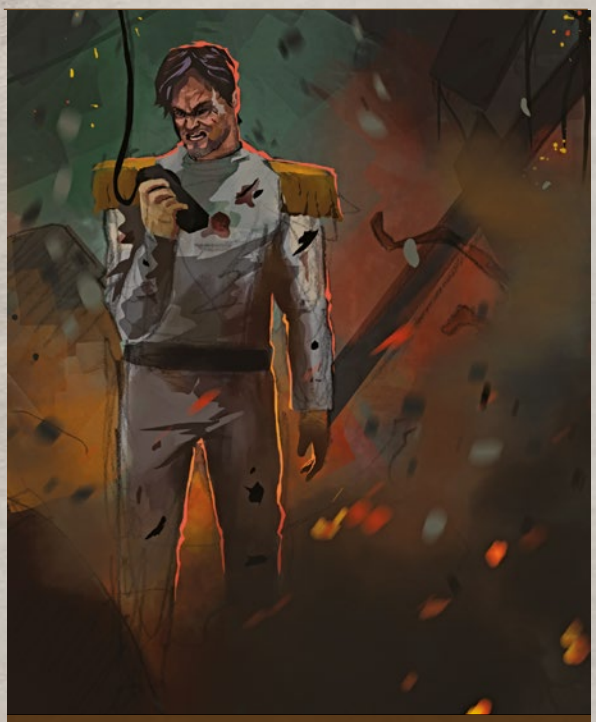
IMPERIAL

Imperial products are an eclectic mixture of the ultra-fashionable, the high-quality, and the completely ridiculous. Many of its items are built with the military in mind, giving them a bulky, rugged form. Others represent the height of elegance and refinement. The variance between the outputs of individual clans keeps Imperial from consistently rivalling Bauhaus in quality or Capitol in scale. There is no specific modifier for Imperial items. Any modifiers will be factored into individual Imperial items.

MISHIMA

The various Keiretsu–business conglomerates–that make up the Mishima corporation have a somewhat schizophrenic approach to production. Mass-produced Mishiman items have a tendency to be

ADMIRAL STEPHAN VLADIMIR BUGAJ
COMMANDER OF THE NOVGOROD



Thanks to Stephan Vladimir Bugaj.

Admiral Stephan Vladimir Bugaj is the captain of the Novgorod, a cargo hulk–like all of Whitestar's eclectic fleet–that was repurposed, refitted, and modified beyond recognition transforming it from a simple ore carrier into a fleet carrier. In addition to his own flagship, he also commands the escorts and support vessels of Squadron Novgorod.

An imposing figure, the Admiral has known combat his entire life, despite his relatively affluent (for Whitestar) upbringing. He has been forged and tempered in the furnaces of combat and has the scars to prove it. He is considered one of the Tsarina's finest tactical minds and has sworn to defend the Motherland whatever the cost.

ADMIRAL BUGAJ

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Gunnery d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6(1); **Willpower:** 6

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (Major – Serve the Tsarina)

Edges: Command, Command Presence, Inspire, Lightning Crew, Rich, Ship Crew, Spacewalk

Gear: Naval Uniform (+1), Sword (Str+d6), Ironhand Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi-Auto).

Admiral Stephan Vladimir Bugaj surveyed the scene in his bridge. Half the systems were either knocked out or on fire. Many of his crew were dead, but those that survived remained at their posts despite their injuries. The Admiral looked down at the spar that had pierced his leg and snarled. They had been caught unaware by the foul Dark Legion vessel–a twisted parody of the clean lines of a Bauhaus cruiser. The weapon they had been hit by would have destroyed a lesser vessel, but the Novgorod was no lesser vessel. It was forged from the discarded wrecks of the soft corporations, given purpose and a new life in the Motherland. The Novgorod would not meekly roll over and die for anyone.

Tearing the metal out of his leg, he stood and walked across his command deck. He grabbed the ship-wide radio and addressed his remaining crew.

"Comrades. Listen to me! Listen! The foe out there thinks we are dead. They think they have killed us! Just like the weak and decadent corporations who fled the Motherland they think we are dead. We will prove them wrong. We will fight them with our bloodied hands if we have to and we will win. For the Tsarina!" He could hear the defiant shouts from his crew throughout the ship. He had their attention. He looked down at his deck officer "Dmitri, who do we have left?"

"Squadron One is still operational, thank the Tsarina! But they are only barely armed. The attack occurred as they were being refuelled and rearmed."

"Good. Tell them to launch. They are to concentrate all of their fire on the main engines of the enemy and when they are out, if the enemy is still operational, they are to ram her."

"Yes, Admiral."

The deck officer gave the command.

lightweight and of poor quality; they are produced mainly for the vast number of Mishiman commoners, and thus fine craftsmanship is seldom a concern. However, items hand-made for Samurai and other wealthy customers tend to be of the highest quality, and Mishiman swords are amongst the finest in the system. Mishiman equipment has an Encumbrance one lower than normal for that item, but also a Corruptibility modifier one higher. Hand-made Mishiman items are a different matter, and any item already described as being of Mishiman manufacture already includes the relevant modifiers.

WHITESTAR

The hardy survivors of Earth do not produce the majority of their items–only relatively recently have they reclaimed the manufacturing capabilities needed to produce anything in large quantities. The bulk of Whitestar's products are either salvage, reclaimed mostly from old Bauhauser supply depots and fortifications from before the exodus, or homemade. After a millennium and a half–even a millennium and a half in secure storage–even the hardiest of Homebuilder designs lose their edge. Whitestar items reduce their Cost but increase their Weight. The items are bulky and cumbersome, but Whitestar is not in the business of profit, and does not deny the tools of survival to any who stand with it.

CLOTHING

Everyday street and dress clothes come in a number of styles, fabrics, and price tags. However, there are also those special occasions when just the right thing is needed to complete the ensemble. There is a bewildering array of styles and forms of clothing, and all it takes is to be incorrectly dressed for even the simplest interaction to become difficult–standing out in a crowd is a good way to get the bad kind of attention.

In game terms, clothing is represented by general categories of attire. A character possesses a selection of garments for each category of clothing he owns, enough for an outfit or two, or more for the cheaper and more widely-available categories. When purchasing a category of clothing, choose the faction for which that clothing is appropriate attire. This does not have to be the character's own faction.

Clothing cannot easily become corrupted. However, the touch of Darkness can manifest in decay, with garments becoming tarnished, stained, or growing mouldy and stagnant as the taint sets in. Malign clothing tends to snag on edges at inopportune moments, entangles easily, and is liable to constrain or even strangle the wearer.

SECOND-HAND CLOTHING

A few years out of date, occasionally-repaired, and somewhat faded, these clothes are past their best, but in good enough condition to be serviceable. Most second-hand clothes come from clothing banks operated by the Brotherhood.

BASIC CLOTHING

The standard for the majority of working class people across the system, basic outfits are clean, functional, and comfortable, and are wearable in casual and some lower-class formal circumstances.

MODEST, RESPECTABLE CLOTHING

Decent suits and other outfits from more reputable retailers, these clothes represent the standard for the middle classes and something special for less wealthy citizens.

STYLISH, FASHIONABLE CLOTHING

The standard for most of the rich and powerful, these clothes represent the leading edge of fashion, and are likely to be replaced frequently as each new fashion season begins.

BESPOKE CLOTHING

The absolute best of the best, these items are hand-made by the finest craftsmen, tailored specifically for the individual wearer. These items tend to exist beyond fashion, the choices of the rich and powerful serving to influence the styles that others imitate, and are seldom worn more than a handful of times.

FOOD AND DRINK

Everyone needs to eat, and even heroes fighting the monsters of the Dark Legion need some way to keep up their energy on the front lines.

Food & Drink comes in two broad categories. Groceries represent the routine purchases sufficient to keep a character fed and watered under normal circumstances. The second category is specific items that grant particular benefits or serve as a resource for dangerous circumstances. The category is the focus of this section–assume that a character's income outside of adventures provides appropriate groceries. Corrupted food turns foul and rancid, becoming vile and inedible. Malign food is toxic, literally becoming anathema to the life it should sustain.

SURVIVAL RATIONS

Commonplace in the military and in expeditions into the unknown, survival rations–also known as Meals Ready to Eat (MREs), field rations, and a variety of corporation-specific titles–are designed to provide sustenance in a compact form in the field. While they are not particularly palatable, and cannot properly sustain a character for more than a few days, they are useful for emergencies. Each pack provides sufficient pre-cooked food for one day, as well as sterilisation tablets and flavoured nutrient powders to mix with water.

BOTTLED WATER

Each purchase provides sufficient water for an adult human being for a day.

STIMULANTS & ENERGY SUPPLEMENTS

Millions of people use tea or coffee to wake themselves up in the morning or to keep them awake during a long shift. Nutrient bars and stimulant drinks are used similarly to keep awake those who cannot afford to sleep. A single purchase of stimulants is sufficient for six uses. Each use grants a +1 on the character's next Vigor test against (or to recover from) sleep deprivation.

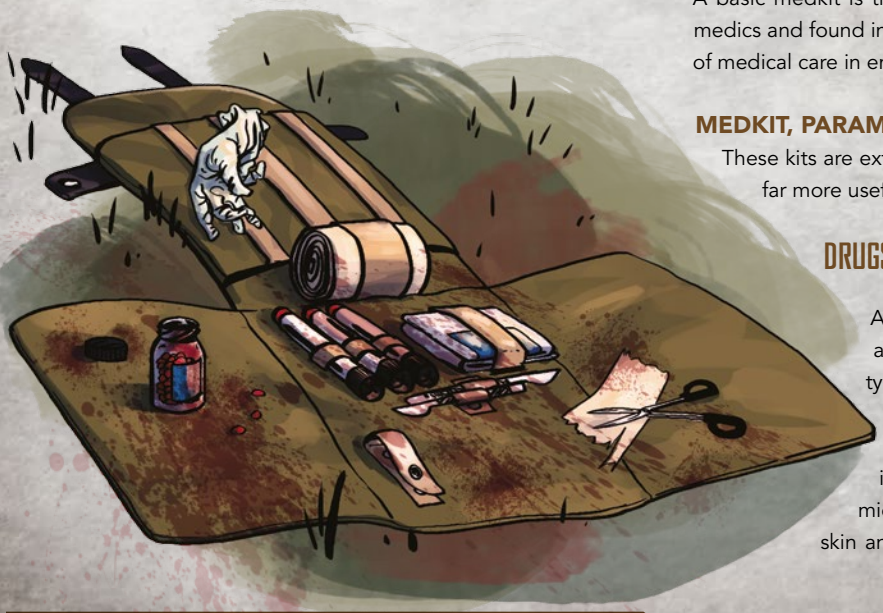
WHAT'S A WALDO?

Waldos–named for an ancient figure who devised the concept at some point in Earth's past–are artificial manipulation tools that can assist a user in performing complex or dangerous tasks. Many waldos are automated devices, while others are directed by an operator controlling them remotely. Some are both. Such devices dominated industry before the rise of the Dark Symmetry, and when paired with Expert Systems or Thinking Machines, they created completely automated employees.

Though this era has long since passed, simple Waldos can still be found in heavy industry and medicine, in spite of the dim view that the Brotherhood takes on automation.

HEALTHCARE

Healthcare is the freelancer's next consideration after firepower and armour, and modern medicine can achieve wondrous things–but like most things in the solar system, the best comes at a cost.



MEDICAL TOOLS

The treatment of illness and injury is a complex matter, and one that cannot be done without a wide range of specialised tools. Corrupted medical tools break down quickly and generally become ineffective. Malign medical tools are especially dangerous–lifepreserving drugs turn toxic, blades seem to slip and do more harm than good, and automeds become aggressive and seek to maim or kill those nearby.

AUTOMED, BASIC

Automeds are small medical waldos that assist in medical emergencies. Typically built into ambulances, or fitted to armour or environmental suits, they can provide medics with vital aid in a crisis. A basic automed counts as the tools necessary to perform a Healing check on any patient within Reach (including the wearer, if suit-mounted).

AUTOMED, HOSPITAL

Larger versions of the basic automed can be found in hospitals and other major medical facilities–excluding the Brotherhood's Sanatoria–to aid doctors in emergencies. The best hospitals have numerous examples of this technology, which go into action when a patient's vital signs drop below a particular level. A hospital automed counts as the tools necessary to perform a Healing check on any patient within Reach.

AUTOMED, SURGICAL

The most advanced, expensive, and fragile form of medical waldo, these tools are found in the best surgical suites in the system. Surgical automeds count as the tools necessary to perform a Healing check on any patient within Reach.

MEDKIT, BASIC

A basic medkit is the simple field first aid kit carried by combat medics and found in workplaces, and can provide a limited degree of medical care in emergencies.

MEDKIT, PARAMEDIC

These kits are extensive toolkits for emergency medics, and are far more useful in the right hands than basic medkits.

DRUGS

Across the solar system, medications and drugs are both important and deadly. Drugs are typically administered in one of two ways: through a medicated adhesive patch applied directly to the skin, or using an auto-injector. Auto-injectors are handy for adventurous sorts in the midst of combat–just place the device against the skin and push the button, and the mechanism does

all the work. An auto-injector takes an Action to use. Corruption in drugs manifests as the drug simply expiring–the chemicals degrade to a point where the effects are no longer guaranteed, and where side-effects and allergic reactions become more commonplace. Malign drugs may have other effects entirely–becoming potent hallucinogens, conferring different effects altogether, or even becoming highly addictive. Many people have been drawn to the service of Darkness by Symmetry-tainted medicines that warp the mind or enslave the body to a chemical only Heretics can produce.

ANTIBIOTICS

Broadly available, these medicines can be invaluable in fighting off diseases. A single dose of antibiotics grants a character +2 to a Vigor check against Disease. Antibiotics can only be prescribed by a doctor–all sales without such prescriptions are illegal.

ENERGY

A broad name for a number of adrenaline-based stimulant drugs, Energy can be found under a dozen brand names across the solar system, with each version promising bigger boosts, longer durations, or milder after-effects.

PAINKILLERS

Commonly available in convenience stores, basic painkillers are a common part of most citizen's medicine cabinets. More powerful painkillers are carefully regulated, as they can have addictive properties. Painkillers are commonly swallowed as tablets, rather than injected.

STASIS

One of a range of drugs designed for medical emergencies, this drug puts the user into a stable coma, placing his body in a state of metabolic stasis. Many are the mortally-wounded whose lives have been saved by this drug–their bodies frozen in the moments before death long enough to get them real medical care. Once applied, the user is rendered completely unconscious for an hour, during which time he will not die from any wounds he is currently suffering from (though he can still die from additional damage inflicted during that time), and the effects of poisons and diseases are halted.

STIM

A potent stimulant employed sparingly during crises, Stim forces the body into a state of alertness, waking the unconscious and sustaining the weary for several hours, at the cost of an unavoidable lethargy once the drug has run its course.

SERVICES

Fundamentally, the healthcare system of the corporations is a service industry–trained professionals plying a trade that just happens to involve the wellbeing of people. Fortunately, it helps the corporate bottom line to ensure that people have access to good healthcare, and while the specific details vary from corporation to corporation, the overwhelming majority of the population has access to a decent standard of medical care, even if they are reliant on the Brotherhood's Sanatoria for much of it.

The most common form of medical service is the local General Practitioner, or GP. These individuals–whether working for corporate medical groups or operating freelance–are scattered across the solar system, in clinics, surgeries, or practices, and attend to basic maladies and injuries. These individuals handle most routine medical treatment, though more severe cases are typically referred to a hospital.

Equally common–though far less inclined to advertise–are illicit clinics. Where GPs are licensed and regulated by either a corporate authority or by the Cartel's Department of Public Health (which is in turn overseen by the Brotherhood's own medical personnel), these illegal doctors have no such accreditation, though they may have done so in the past. They are ideal for those who need to patch up wounds from guns and knives but who do not want questions asked. Brotherhood-run free clinics–an extension of its Sanatorium services–provide another alternative. These clinics are substantially cheaper than a GP's practice or an illicit clinic–typically only ever requesting a small tithe–and they provide effective care at the cost of the scrutiny of the Inquisition should your health issue be deemed suspicious.

A hospital stay can provide more comprehensive care than any other service, but even a few days' convalescence can be prohibitively expensive. A hospital's emergency services–stabilising a critically-ill or mortally-wounded patient–are free by Cartel decree, but anything beyond that will cost money, and hospitals charge by the day.

For those suffering from trauma of the mind, psychiatric care is extremely useful. It comes in two broad varieties: routine visits to a therapist, who can provide treatment as and when they are needed, and intensive psychiatric care, where a patient is placed under the care of psychotherapists and doctors 24/7 for an extended period. The latter is reserved for those who are suffering from serious psychological trauma.

As services, these items are not subject to the rules for Corruption. While individual doctors and other practitioners may be corrupted (indeed, Demnogonis thrives when doctors are tainted by Darkness), and locations can be tainted, that is not an immediate concern here: they are adventure hooks more than anything.

EXPLORATION AND SURVIVAL

The cities are far from the only places where adventure and action can be found. There is plenty to be done in the wilderness between cities, and some of the rougher parts of the biggest cities count as a form of wilderness all of their own.

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

Getting around in the wild is seldom easy, and bringing the right tools to the situation is vital when traversing rough terrain.

CLIMBING GEAR

This kit contains all the necessary ropes and spikes to make a vertical ascent or descent possible. It counts as the tools necessary to make Climbing checks.

DIVING GEAR

A basic set of diving gear consists of a diving suit, fins or a propulsion jet, and an oxygen tank. Each component serves a distinct purpose. The diving suit protects the wearer from exposure to cold water and fins or propulsion jets provide a +1 to Swimming. The oxygen tank–and the breathing apparatus connected to it–allows the wearer to breathe in inhospitable conditions, such as underwater. The oxygen tank contains three Oxygen Loads.

A diving suit is skin-tight enough to wear underneath armour. However, the bulk of the armour still impedes effective swimming. Some suits of armour can be refitted to integrate diving gear into their structure–ideal for amphibious assault troops.

SURVIVAL GEAR

Human beings are nothing if not relentlessly adaptable, and have produced an endless supply of tools and techniques for enduring in the most inhospitable conditions.

Corrupted survival gear falters and fails, becoming dangerously unreliable at the worst moments. Malign survival gear may actively try to harm those using it.

SURVIVAL KIT

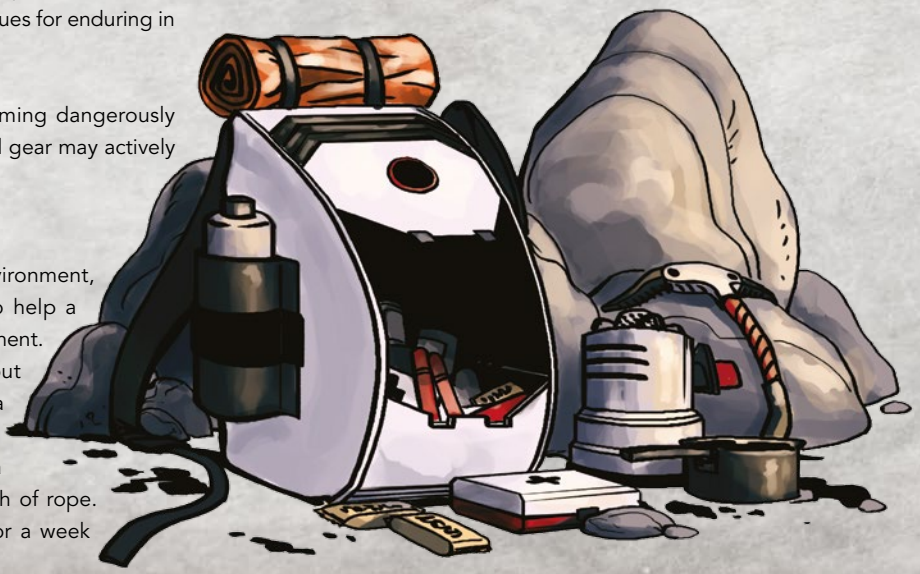
Each survival kit is tailored for a particular environment, and contains a range of tools and supplies to help a single character survive in that particular environment. Survival kits do not include food or water, but they typically contain blankets, a tarpaulin, a collapsible tent, tools to start a fire and/or a small travel heater, water purification tablets, a survival knife, a collapsible shovel, and a length of rope. A survival kit's limited supplies are sufficient for a week of constant use, and a character using a survival kit gets a +2 for Survival when building a functional shelter.

'Colonial' kits–properly known as Colonist Regional Survival Kits–are larger and better-stocked, able to support a single character for a month or two characters for two weeks.

RESPIRATORY EQUIPMENT

A respirator is a mask that covers part or all of the face for the purposes of protecting the wearer from airborne hazards. There are two main variations on this technology.

- **RESPIRATOR:** The most basic respirator uses a filter cartridge through which air is drawn. A respirator grants the wearer +2 on all Vigor tests against airborne hazards.
- **REBREATHER:** The alternative is a rebreather, which is connected to an oxygen supply and is designed to recycle exhaled air in order to prolong the supply's usefulness. A rebreather contains three Oxygen Loads. It takes two minutes to don a rebreather–the bulky and complex equipment requires some effort to fit properly.
- **VAC SUIT:** The pinnacle of respiratory equipment is a vac suit. These bulky suits are self-contained environments for surviving in the cold, harsh vacuum of space. An ordinary vac suit contains three Oxygen Loads, and additionally protects the wearer entirely from exposure to the vacuum of space. Armour can be worn with a vac suit, but the additional bulk subtracts 2 from all actions involving movement and fine manipulation. Custom-made armour compatible vac suits do not suffer this drawback, but are significantly more costly. All vac suits are supplied with a sealant gel and repair patches, to perform emergency suit repairs.



HAZARD DETECTION

All hazard detection equipment gives a character a +2 when determining the presence or absence of a hazard that is otherwise invisible to the naked eye.

- **CHEMICAL DETECTION KIT:** This kit contains a small selection of chemicals, powders, or treated papers that, when mixed with water, change colour to indicate the presence and concentration of certain harmful chemicals. It takes one minute to use a chemical detection kit to determine the presence or absence of harmful chemicals.

- **RADIATION METER:** This hand-held device used to detect the type and quantity of ionising radiation. A radiation meter can only detect radiation levels within twenty-four metres, though extremely high doses may be detectable at longer ranges, at the GM's discretion (and with an increased difficulty).

- **TOXIN AND DISEASE DETECTION KIT:** This detection kit is fundamentally very similar to a chemical kit, but designed to detect a different range of contaminants: organic poisons and diseases. It is particularly effective for detecting toxins and diseases engineered by agents of Darkness.

NAVIGATION

Crossing unfamiliar territories can be extremely perilous, and skilled explorers ensure that they have the tools to ensure they keep their bearings.

- **COMPASS:** One of the most basic navigational tools is a compass. However, the traditional magnetic compasses are largely ineffective away from Earth, as few planets have the magnetic field necessary for them to work. Instead, gyroscopic compasses–gyrocompasses–have become the dominant technology for those navigating the wilderness on Mercury, Venus, and Mars. When attempting a Survival check to navigate through an unfamiliar region, a compass grants the character +2 as he knows which direction he needs to go.

- **MAPS:** Detailed navigational maps of an area are a useful tool when moving through unfamiliar territory, though some territories may have never been mapped, or may have only been charted centuries ago. An accurate map of an area grants +2 on Survival or Knowledge (Navigation) tests to navigate that area, so long as the character has some way of determining where he is on the map. An inaccurate map does not grant this bonus.

LIGHT SOURCES

Navigation without the ability to see clearly is a foolish endeavour. Most explorers and survivalists carry with them a range of ways to generate light.

Anyone looking into an illuminated area can observe or attack objects and characters within the range of the light source without any penalties for darkness.

- **TORCH:** A simple torch, or flashlight, is a common enough item. A smaller version, called a mini-torch, can be carried much more easily–and can even be fitted to other items, such as under the barrel of a gun–but its smaller size means that the batteries have a smaller capacity. A torch or mini-torch illuminates the area within twelve metres.

- **LANTERN:** This casts light over a wide area. Street lamps are a form of lantern, and function in the same way. A lantern illuminates twenty-four metres.

- **SIGNAL FLARES:** Signal flares illuminate the area they are in, and burn brightly for up to half an hour before their fuel is exhausted.

COMMUNICATIONS AND SURVEILLANCE

Knowledge is power, and often the best way to get that knowledge is to obtain it yourself, or to talk to someone who can.

COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

TELEPHONES

While few homes can afford a telephone, most tenement buildings contain one in the lobby, almost every office contains one, and there are numerous payphones on street corners.

Telephone service is most reliable and cheapest within an individual city. The cost of these local calls is included within the standard monthly cost of the service. Contact between other cities on the same world, especially with cities run by different corporations, comes with an additional cost per call.

Contact between worlds is extremely costly, and is burdened by a signal delay of several minutes.

- **WIRED TELEPHONE:** A luxury that relatively few people indulge in. However, people running a business frequently pay for a telephone connection in their office.

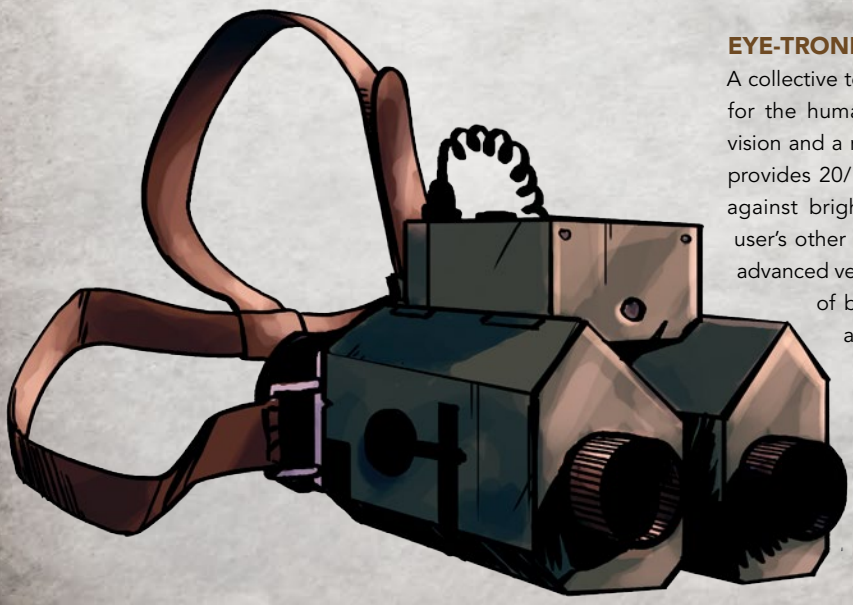
- **PAGER:** A small device used to receive short text messages, commonly carried by emergency services and security personnel so they can be contacted quickly during a crisis. Pagers run on the same infrastructure as telephones, but send simple data rather than a voice. As they only receive messages, they are extremely cheap to own.

- **CELL PHONE:** Also known as a mobile phone or mobile–is a relatively new development, recently sanctioned for use by the Brotherhood. Modern versions are bulky, simplistic affairs, capable only of making telephone calls and sending and receiving short text messages. Car phones use the same technology, but run off of the vehicle's battery rather than an internal supply.

CELLULAR LINK: Cybertronic produces a cellular link that functions identically to a cell phone, but without a need for bulky equipment. The device fits entirely within the skull, using jaw vibrations and an in-ear implant to replace the normal microphone and speaker of a conventional phone.

SHORT-WAVE RADIO: These are commonly used by emergency services personnel, but is a poor substitute for face-to-face communications, being prone to interference and vulnerable to the influence of the Dark Symmetry. As a result, short-wave radios are only used for simple exchanges of nonclassified information. They come in a variety of forms, from desk-mounted units plugged in to the power grid, to battery-operated handsets or receivers fitted to a headset or earpiece.

CRYPTO MODULE/CALIBRATOR: Cryptographic adapters, or crypto modules, are bulky devices that use a complex–but entirely mechanical–system to encrypt a message before transmission, or to decrypt a received message. Crypto modules are about the size of a briefcase and can be fitted to a phone or radio. A removable key–called a crypto calibrator–can be fitted to any compatible crypto module to set it for a particular encryption. These calibrators are carefully guarded, and made available only to a select few to ensure that messages remain secret.



SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT

Many freelance jobs require a lot of investigative work. Sometimes, special equipment is needed.

BINOCULARS AND TELESCOPES

A character using a telescope or binoculars ignores any increase in difficulty that comes from observing a target at long range. However, using binoculars or a telescope increases the difficulty of noticing something in the same zone, as it impedes peripheral vision.

CAMERA

Compact cameras and instant cameras are the most common kinds in use by investigators, allowing them to take pictures as and when needed, without requiring preparation or bulky equipment. Compact designs are easy to conceal, while instant cameras require only a few seconds to create a useful image.

Advanced cameras are more sophisticated, bulkier, and more precise instruments, able to take better-quality images and compatible with a range of attachments, such as telescopic lenses and tripods.

Video cameras are larger and bulkier than most cameras. The most advanced ones are most commonly found in the service of television news crews and filmmakers. Basic ones can be found in the hands of some investigators, though these ones cannot record sound.

Most cameras–excluding instant ones–require that the rolls of film they use be developed to produce useable photographs or movie reels. This takes several hours, and requires special chemicals and a prepared space called a darkroom. It is easiest to do in a specialist photographic store.

EYE-TRONIC (CYBERTRONIC)

A collective term for a variety of different cybernetic replacements for the human eye, the EYE-Tronic system provides enhanced vision and a number of other features. A basic EYE-Tronic implant provides 20/15 vision (better than normal eyesight), polarisation against bright light, and a heads-up display that links to the user's other implants (such as a SARaH or DIANA system). More advanced versions gain additional functions, mimicking the effects of binoculars, night vision goggles, or both. Each such additional function multiplies the cost by 4.

MEDIA KIT

Most reporters and detectives carry a variety of items for recording notes and evidence. A basic media kit usually contains an instant camera, notebooks, and anything needed to take statements and record material. An advanced media kit also includes a video camera and a tape recorder with a microphone.

MOTION DETECTOR
Motion detectors use ambient heat and air pressure to determine the presence of motion within close proximity. When used, they provide a +2 Notice when opposing the Stealth skill.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES
A character using night vision goggles ignores any penalties for darkness. However, sudden bright lights can blind the character. Some versions also serve as binoculars.

PARABOLIC MICROPHONE
This small but powerful receiver picks up sounds from a distance. It looks like a small radar dish the size of a man's hand, and is connected to a pair of headphones. A parabolic microphone can be pointed at a target within thirty six feet and in line of sight: the character can hear clearly all sounds from that area, without any penalty for distance.

SURVEILLANCE KIT
A surveillance kit includes a compact, concealable camera, a disguised tape recorder, and several concealable microphones. This grants a +2 to Knowledge (Espionage) tests when performing Surveillance operations.

TAPE RECORDER
This compact device does not have much range–the microphone can only pick up clear sound within a couple of metres–but it is invaluable for recording commentary or witness statements. Better models can be connected to larger microphones.

WIRELESS TRANSMITTER
This tiny wireless microphone can be hidden almost anywhere, and transmit the sounds it picks up to a receiver within 200 metres. This receiver is normally fitted to a set of headphones or a tape recorder.

TECHNICAL

Though technology is nowhere near as sophisticated as it once was, there is still a great need for technical work to create and maintain the technology that does exist.

MECHANICAL TOOLS

With a resurgence in mechanical solutions to technical problems–using electronics sparingly and when necessary–mechanical expertise is important, and the tools to support that expertise are commonplace across the system.

Corrupted mechanical tools tend to fail: moving parts rust shut or come loose, handles snap, and other mundane failures occur. Malign tools will slip and cause injury, and waldos are particularly dangerous when corrupted, lashing out like frenzied animals or making repairs that seem effective but which will not last.

PARTS

Parts are an abstract representation of the spare components, limited resources like solder and flux, and other elements involved in repairing a damaged machine. Most repair tools come with only a limited number of sets of Parts, which must be replenished separately.

REPAIR KIT, BASIC
This kit is considered to be the basic tools necessary to perform a Repair check, but it can only be used for one test–after this, any limited supplies it contains are depleted and the kit must be replaced or new "Parts" added.

CX-MULTITOOL
The CX-Multitool is an efficient, electrically-powered, handheld repair tool that provides all the tools of a basic repair kit in one easily managed frame. While not quite as efficient as a full tool kit, it is smaller and lighter, and counts as a basic Repair Kit without needing "Parts" to resupply it.

REPAIR KIT, ADVANCED
An advanced repair kit is a top-quality toolkit used for repairing extensive or numerous breakdowns and faults. This item is considered to be the tools necessary to grant a bonus to Repair.

REPAIR WALDO, BASIC OR SUIT-MOUNTED
Repair waldos are articulated mechanical arms that assist in repairs. Typically built in to workbenches, or fitted to armour or environmental suits, they can provide mechanics with an extra hand during complex work. A basic repair waldo counts as the tools necessary to perform a Repair check, and contains three sets of Parts. Further, it can perform a Repair check by itself on any machine within Reach by spending a set of Parts.

REPAIR WALDO, ADVANCED
Repair waldos are articulated mechanical arms that assist in repairs. Advanced repair waldos are typically built into garages or workshops. An advanced repair waldo counts as the tools necessary to perform a Repair test. Further, it can perform a Repair by itself on any machine within Reach by spending a set of Parts.

WORKSHOP, MECHANICS
A mechanics workshop is a vast and comprehensive repair kit, able to be used to manufacture Parts and perform repairs. A character using a workshop can reduce the Parts requirement for a repair to zero. If no acquisition test is made, then it takes ten minutes to manufacture each set of Parts. It also counts as all the tools necessary to perform a Repair or Technical Aptitude test to repair or

construct an object. Workshops must be set up within a home, an office, or some other suitable space that the character owns or rents.

SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT

Science goes hand-in-hand with technology, and in spite of the limitations placed on some scientific endeavours, there remain countless laboratories and research facilities open across the solar system, many of which exist for highly classified work.

Corrupted scientific equipment typically results in tools that break down and chemicals that lose their efficacy. Malign scientific equipment may generate false results to deceive or mislead, or it may cause injuries from volatile chemicals and dangerous tools. Waldos afflicted by the Darkness are particularly dangerous, as they become aggressive, cruel, or deceitful.

ANALYTICAL KIT, BASIC

A basic analytical kit is a standard tool kit suitable for performing scientific analysis in the field. This kit is considered to be the basic tools necessary to perform a Knowledge test, but it can only be used for one test.

ANALYTICAL KIT, ADVANCED

An advanced analytical kit is a top-quality toolkit used for performing scientific analysis or experiments in the field. This item is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Knowledge test.

EXPERIMENTAL WALDO

Experimental waldos are articulated mechanical arms that assist in performing experiments and scientific analysis. Typically built into workbenches, or fitted to armour or environmental suits, they can provide scientists with an extra hand during complex work, or allow a scientist to perform dangerous experiments without direct exposure. An Experimental waldo counts as the tools necessary to perform a Knowledge or Technical Aptitude test.

LABORATORY

A laboratory is a space that contains the tools necessary for a character to make a Knowledge or Investigation check. Further, if a character has already attempted to analyse something, and failed, he may use a laboratory to attempt the analysis again.

Personal laboratories tend to be small, fitted into a room within a home, an office, or some other similar space, and have a tendency to attract unwanted scrutiny from law enforcement and the Brotherhood. However, the corporations maintain extensive research and technical laboratories, which they will lease out to private individuals. Such facilities often have laboratory assistants, whose services can be obtained as well to grant a bonus on Knowledge or Investigation checks.

COMPUTING & COMPTOGRAPHY

While computers are no longer widespread, there are a few things that cannot be done without them. Simpler computers, using components less vulnerable to the Dark Symmetry, remain in service, constantly monitored for signs of corruption.

Corrupted computing equipment tends to become slow, inefficient, or inconsistent in its results. Malign computing equipment will distort and corrupt data, producing results that are not merely erroneous, but which may lead people to the wrong conclusions.

COMPTOGRAPH

Comptographs are designed to perform mathematical calculations quickly. Being purely mechanical they are remarkably resilient against corruption, and they are invaluable in the fields of science, mathematics, and finance, as they solve complex equations and formulae far more swiftly and reliably than most humans.

A comptograph grants a character a bonus on any test reliant on complex calculations, which may only be spent on reducing the amount of time the test takes to perform. Using a comptograph effectively requires a Technical Aptitude d4+.

PERSONAL COMPUTER

Use of a personal computer grants a character a +2 bonus on any test to uncover information from a large amount of data, which may only be spent on reducing the amount of time that the test takes to perform. Using a personal computer effectively requires a Technical Aptitude d4+.

AI PROGRAMMING SUITE

This highly-restricted and expensive item is a dedicated machine, which must be attached to the system housing an AI. It requires a dedicated computer or a DIANA system to act as an interface

between the character and the programming suite, and the use of an AI programming suite can benefit from the use of a Mainframe. Programming an AI is an *Extreme* (–4) Technical Aptitude check. This test takes a minimum of twelve hours.

MAINFRAME TIME

To speed up complex scientific work, a mainframe can be employed. Mainframes are massive, high-capacity computers used for processing large amounts of data with incredible precision and speed. These machines are incredibly rare and carefully guarded by the corporations, but they are not completely out of reach. For the right price or the right job, their owners are willing to lease out time–hours or days–using part of a mainframe's capacity. Using a mainframe requires at least an hour of preparation, after which it grants a character a +2 bonus towards any Knowledge test. Using a mainframe effectively requires a Technical Aptitude d6+.

RESEARCH

Research items give characters an opportunity to find the information that already exists, learning about the worlds around them with an aim to getting an advantage.

LIBRARIES AND MEDIA ACCESS

The written word is as vital to human endeavour as speech, and while it is all too easy for written records to be lost, there have always been those who strive to preserve these fragments of human knowledge and creation.

LIBRARIES

Libraries vary in size from a handful of reference books to magnificent halls of learning and record. Libraries are determined by two functions–size, and subject. The size determines the breadth and depth of the library's contents, while the subject determines the scope of those contents. Libraries come in three sizes: personal, reference, and academic. Libraries cover a variety of subjects, and each library is linked to a single Smarts-linked skill.

Libraries as a whole cannot be corrupted–the library's location may be tainted, the individual books can become defiled, and the staff can be turned from the Light, but an entire library cannot be corrupted as a piece of equipment can.

- **PERSONAL LIBRARY:** This may take up a bookshelf or a room in a home or office, or even be loaded on to a personal computer. Having access to a personal library increases the time taken for a test to gather information (based on the library's subject) to one hour, but reduces the difficulty of the test by 1. A personal library can cover any subject. A character's personal library requires routine maintenance to add new volumes to the collection.
- **REFERENCE LIBRARY:** These are significantly larger and contains a far wider range of material. Using a reference library increases the time taken for a test to gather information (based on the library's subject) to eight hours, but reduces the difficulty by 1. Reference libraries can also provide the assistance of a professional librarian at additional cost, who grants the character an additional bonus. Access to a reference library is by subscription or patronage only. Some reference libraries are maintained for the use of the public, funded by the Brotherhood or the Cartel to aid the education of the people, and are free to use, but these libraries only ever cover the Common Knowledge or generalised information, and patrons are monitored closely for signs of taint or subversive activity.
- **ACADEMIC LIBRARIES:** The best libraries are the academic libraries, typically found in universities and research institutions, and they are used for the most intensive and complex research. Using an academic library increases the time taken for a test to gather information (based on the library's subject) to one day, but reduces the difficulty of the test by 2. Academic libraries have an extensive staff, and a character can obtain up to three professional librarians to assist in his enquiries, each of whom grants the character a bonus. Access to an academic library is restricted only to specific personnel (staff and faculty of a university, staff at a research facility, etc), and often to those who have the right connections and make a sizeable donation to the institution's upkeep. Ongoing membership is not required.

CYBER ASSISTANTS AND SUBREALITY

Cybertronic has embraced the technologies that humanity abandoned more than a thousand years ago. Amongst them is the cybernet–a sophisticated network of linked computers that forms the heart of Cybertronic's information network, reminiscent of the computer networks of the ancients. From this, has grown Subreality, a consensual digital reality that links every corner of Cybertronic's electronic empire. Through specialised implants or other interface technologies, users can submerge their senses into Subreality, interacting with this computer network in ways that no human has for many generations. Access–for those outside of Cybertronic–is extremely expensive, and limited mainly to public information and entertainment nodes.

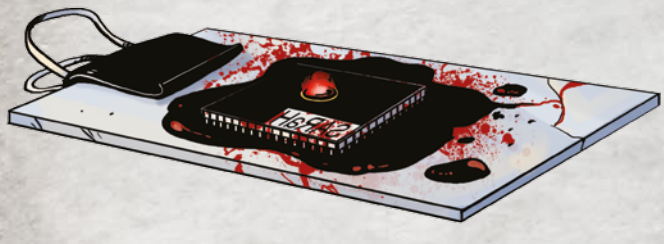
The only way to access Subreality is by using a device called a Linkcouch. The basic model of these devices is fitted with visors and haptic gloves to allow a user to interact with Subreality. Access to Subreality provides a range of digital services that replicate some of those available in the real world–libraries and media services, personal computer access, mainframe time, and communications services faster and more efficient than any mail service. These services must be purchased separately, though they are always the Cybertronic version of those services.

Cybertronic citizens, and a small proportion of the population beyond that, have gone a step further, using implants known as subreal receptors to connect their minds to Subreality directly. These implants are often connected directly to a Cyber Assistant implant, which can interface with Subreality and the user's other implants easily and efficiently. Subreal receptors are metal contacts that connect to a Linkcouch directly, removing the need for the visor and gloves. Accessing Subreality with subreal receptors functions identically to using a Linkcouch normally, but any service that grants bonus Momentum grants an additional point of Momentum due to the faster and more responsive interaction.

SARaH (CYBERTRONIC)

Advertised as a 'personal assistant in your head', a SARaH–Semi-Autonomous Advanced Reaction Heuristics–unit is connected directly to the user's spinal column and serves as a secretary, life record, and personal security system. See the **Chapter 15: Cybertronic** for more information.

In game terms, a SARaH implant is an Intuitive Expert System that assists with Knowledge skills. Further, it can contain the equivalent of up to three personal libraries within its internal storage, giving the character immediate access to them at all times. A SARaH implant can interact with the character's other implants, giving it autonomous control, and can be connected to suit-mounted waldos and control them independently. This is particularly useful with automed waldos, as the SARaH can prompt them to act when the user's life is threatened.



DIANA (CYBERTRONIC)

The natural evolution from the SARaH system, the more sophisticated DIANA implant replaces portions of the owner's brain tissue. DIANA systems are only available to Cybertronic employees. A DIANA implant is a fully-fledged thinking machine, a synthetic intelligence capable of self-determination, which is regarded as a Cybertronic employee in its own right.

COMBAT GEAR

Beyond guns and armour, there is a range of equipment useful for soldiers and others who expect to face combat.

TACTICAL GEAR

A soldier's gear is designed with his survival in mind–whether surviving in the wild, or surviving the battle.

CAMOUFLAGE KIT

A camouflage kit consists of clothing made to aid concealment in a particular environment, as well as a handful of tools and supplies to enhance the benefits, such as makeup, paints, and fabric attachments to break up the wearer's silhouette.

The basic clothing is normally sufficient for most purposes, but the supplies in the kit allow a character to spend time and effort creating something more effective. The possible environments are Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, or Urban. Wearing camouflaged equipment appropriate to the environment grants a character a +1 bonus on Stealth tests to avoid being seen. If the character is willing to spend ten minutes preparing with the kit, this increases to a +2.

HOLSTERS AND SCABBARDS

These items come in three main categories: security, tactical, and concealed. Holsters and scabbards are produced only for one-handed and unbalanced weapons; larger weapons are too bulky to be carried in such a way and signify such violence that they are unlikely to be worn as swords, knives, and pistols are. Each holster or scabbard is made specifically for a particular make and model of weapon, and cannot accommodate weapons of other types.

- **A SECURITY HOLSTER OR SCABBARD:** These are designed for security personnel and others who carry their weapons openly in urban areas. They are fitted with retention measures that make it difficult for people other than the holster's wearer to draw the weapon. A security holster or scabbard increases the difficulty to pickpocket or sleight of hand a weapon by 1.

- **A TACTICAL HOLSTER OR SCABBARD:** These are designed for use in warfare, keeping the weapon convenient and within easy reach in case of emergencies. Characters equipped with a tactical holster or scabbard can draw the weapon contained within as a Free Action instead of a normal action.

- **A CONCEALED HOLSTER OR SCABBARD:** These can only contain a one handed weapon, and are designed to fit within clothing in order to be difficult to find. When a weapon is within a concealed holster, detecting it with a Notice check has a −1 penalty. It takes an action to place a weapon in a concealed holster properly so that it gains this benefit.

CARRYING EQUIPMENT

Soldiers are required to carry a large amount of equipment with them on a routine basis, and thus corporate militaries have devised ways of making that load as easy to carry as possible. Each corporation has a different approach to the situation, but all utilise heavy-duty bags and rucksacks, and systems of straps and belts that spread a heavy load's weight evenly across the torso and serve as attachment points for other items. Variations exist that are designed

for different climes and environments, or to carry different types of equipment.

WEAPON ATTACHMENTS

Weapons in use across the solar system are produced to accept a variety of useful attachments and optional extras. Soldiers, security operatives, and freelancers alike all make use of these extras to make their armaments more versatile and flexible.

BIPODS & TRIPODS

Bipods and tripods provide stability to a large weapon. Bipods are most common on two-handed weapons, while unwieldy weapons gain more from tripods. A two-handed weapon fitted with a Bipod can be set up as an action. A weapon set up in this way confers the Aim bonus on a user if they don't move and shoot in the same round.

DISINTEGRATING BRIEFCASE

A disintegrating briefcase is built to conceal a single two handed weapon or a pair of one handed weapons. While unopened, the shielding and design means that it requires a very difficult (–2) Notice test to determine the case's true contents with a thorough search. As a Free Action, the case can be deployed, revealing the weapons for immediate access. This renders the case useless, as all that remains is the storage rack (holding the weapons) and the handle. Each case is constructed around a particular weapon or set of weapons.

SUPPORT RIG

These articulated hydraulic supports fit around the user's body via a harness, and connect to a heavy weapon, allowing it to be wielded far more easily than is normally the case. The most advanced forms of support rig are actually a type of waldo, but those are rare compared to the relatively simple hydraulic armature harnesses produced by the other corporations. In all cases, they provide additional support for ammunition as well, often including storage space for spare ammunition or helping to feed long belts of ammunition into the weapon.

A support rig attached to a two-handed weapon halves the weapon's weight, and allows the user to ignore the "snapfire" penalty. A support waldo provides the same bonus, and can additionally perform a Shooting or Gunnery check. Smaller 'gunslinger' waldos exist that provide the same benefits as a support waldo, but for one-handed, unbalanced, and two-handed weapons.

SILENCER

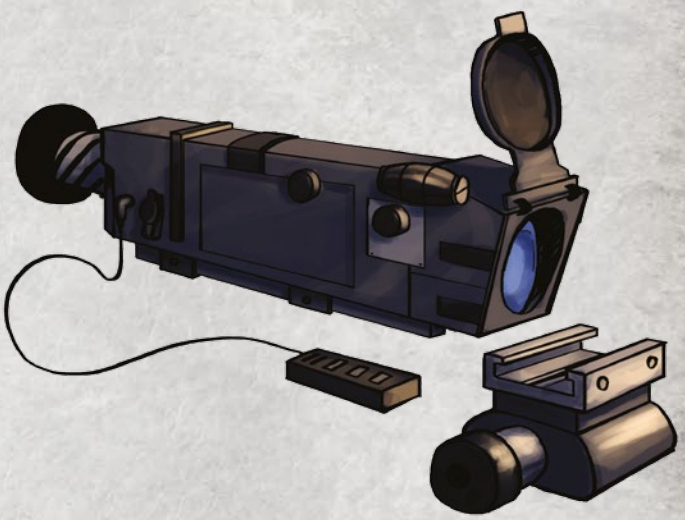
Also known as suppressors, silencers are designed to drastically reduce the sounds of gunfire. A weapon fitted with a silencer incurs a –2 penalty to Notice to hear it fire.

SIGHTS AND SCOPES

All guns are fitted with some form of sight–even if this is only the basic 'iron sights' built into the gun–but most can support a replacement or supplementary sight. A weapon can be fitted with one gunsight.

LASER SIGHT

These devices, typically fitted beneath or beside the weapon's barrel, project a low-powered laser on to the target, providing a clear indicator of where the weapon is aimed. When using a weapon fitted with a laser sight, reduce the penalty for Called Shots by 1. Laser sights are exempt from the normal 'one sight' limit, as they are fitted to the barrel rather than replacing the weapon's iron sights. A weapon can have a laser sight and one other sight.



REFLEX SIGHT

A reflex, or reflective, sight is a natural upgrade from a weapon's iron sights, giving the shooter the advantage of swifter and easier target acquisition at Short and Medium ranges. When using a weapon fitted with a reflex sight, a character gains a +3 bonus from the Aim action, instead of the normal +2.

TELESCOPIC SIGHT

These sights, broadly referred to as 'scopes', are designed for acquiring targets at long ranges. When using a weapon fitted with a telescopic sight, the character reduces the range penalty by 2. (Medium range is a 0, Long Range is a –2). A telescopic sight can also be used as a telescope.

NIGHT VISION SCOPE

Colossally expensive and vulnerable to corruption, night vision scopes are telescopic sights designed to allow the user to locate targets under the cover of darkness. The finest are manufactured by Cybertronic and packaged with the SR3500 series of sniper rifle, but all

The rain was pouring down, thick and heavy. It ran over his face and body as he hung upside down above the window. Sly–one of Luna's top cat-burglars–a 'second storey man' in street terms, did not mind the water pouring off his face. He loved the rain. The rain kept security guards in their warm guard stations, kept the streets clear of foot patrols, leaving only the occasional Luna PD or corporate police patrol car driving down the streets. On nights like these, it was as if he had the world to himself.

Returning to the job at hand, he attached the sucker end of a diamond-tipped glass cutter to the window in front of him and deftly spun it around, gently releasing a perfect circle of glass from the window. Sly was in peak physical condition, able to maintain his inverted pose almost indefinitely, but time was pressing. He reached through and up, attaching a pair of magnets connected by thin copper wire to the top two corners, thus neatly bypassing the primitive contact sensors. Really, this was too easy. Back before all the Dark Symmetry nonsense security had been far more impressive. For a moment, Sly almost thought it a shame. He grinned and pulled open the window.

The Imperial Museum of Geology, Mineralogy and Precious Stones would be missing a prized exhibit by the end of the night.

Thanks to Aaron D. Fleming.

corporations manufacture their own versions. When using a weapon fitted with a night vision scope, the character gains the benefits of a Telescopic sight and Night Vision goggles. A night vision scope can also be used in the same way as a pair of night vision binoculars.

MARKSMAN'S EYE (CYBERTRONIC)

Either an implant added to the optic nerve, or an upgrade package for an existing EYE-Tronic system, the Marksman's Eye system is designed to enhance a combatant's accuracy in the field without the use of weapon-mounted sights. The compensation software accounts for wind speed, target movement, and range, making the process of shooting significantly easier. A character fitted with a Marksman's Eye gains the benefits of a Telescopic sight. As an implant, rather than being attached to a weapon, it is exempt from the normal limit of one scope or sight on a weapon.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

Crime is endemic across the solar system, and there exists both an inextricable criminal subculture beneath the surface of human society and an extensive–if overworked–system of security and law enforcement personnel to try to stop them. The following sections list items and services that are invaluable for a variety of criminal activities.

FRAUD AND DECEPTION

Presenting yourself as something other than you are can be an invaluable way of obtaining access to somewhere, someone, or something that would normally be inaccessible.

DISGUISE KIT

A disguise kit contains three uses of Cosmetics, each of which can be spent to grant a bonus to a Stealth or Persuasion check made for a character to present himself as someone else. Attempting to impersonate someone who actually exists is significantly more difficult than a simple disguise. Further, obtaining access to particular people or places may require specific elements–clothing, identity papers, the appearance of a particular allegiance, etc. – in order to be successful. These are subject to the GM's discretion.

FAKE IDENTIFICATION

A useful tool for those who wish to avoid attention, fake identification papers come in a wide range of types and qualities. Fake identification comes in five forms–crude, basic, decent, excellent, and flawless. A character handling some element of a Fake ID must make a Notice check to determine if it is false.

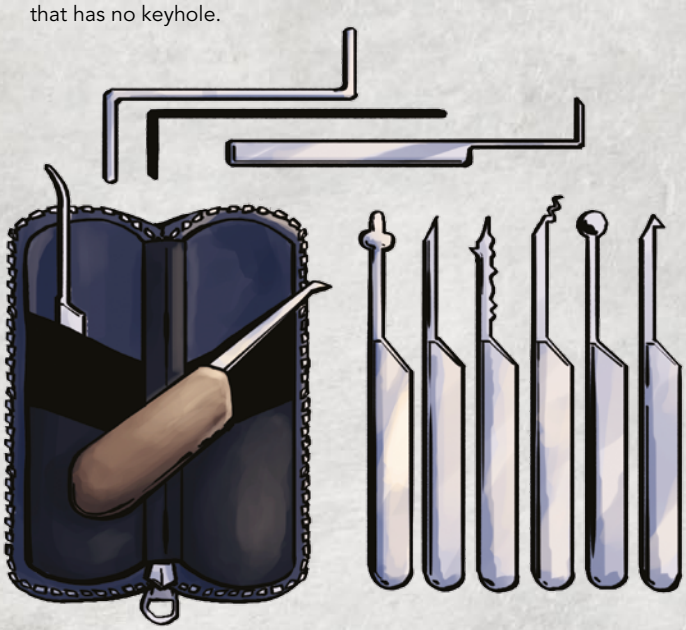
BREAKING AND ENTERING

Getting access to places you are not supposed to be, to obtain things you are not supposed to have, is a fairly common form of crime, ranging from petty burglary in low-rent districts, to complex

industrial espionage in the high-rises and skyscrapers of the corporations. All the kits in this section are regarded as 'B&E kits' – where a career provides a 'B&E kit', it will provide one of the items in this section (player's choice).

LOCK PICKING KIT

A lock picking kit is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Lockpicking test to unlock a locked door. These tools only provide a benefit when attempting to bypass locks that use keys–they are useless on combination or electronic locks, or any other kind of lock that has no keyhole.



BOLT CUTTER

Use of a pair of bolt cutters adds a +2 bonus to any test made to break chains, locks, or cables, etc.

GLASS CUTTER

A specialised tool for bypassing sealed windows safely, a glass cutter scores the surface of the glass, making it weaker and thus easier to break at that location. Use of a glass cutter allows a character to make a Lockpicking check to bypass a locked window.

SAFECRACKER KIT

These specialised tools allow a burglar to try and break into a standard combination-locked safe. The tools provide a safecracker with numerous ways to obtain access to the safe's contents, ranging from tools to help determine the combination quietly to more destructive methods. A safecracker kit is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Lockpicking test to unlock a safe or other combination lock. Destructive methods add +2 to the test, but leave obvious evidence that the safe has been tampered with. Some safes may have counter-measures against destructive tampering, which can trigger a multitude of complications for the heroes.

SABOTAGE KIT

Similar to an electrician's toolkit, a sabotage kit contains a number of tools necessary to disable or bypass elements of an electronic security system, typically at a fusebox or other major terminal. A sabotage kit is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Lockpicking test to disable or disrupt an electronic security system.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

On the other side of the law are those who enforce it. Their efforts serve to keep civilisation running in spite of the criminal element that undermines the order of society.

FORENSICS KIT, BASIC

A basic forensics kit counts as the tools necessary to make a Notice test to identify and collect forensic evidence from a crime scene, but only contains sufficient supplies (evidence containers, cotton swabs, disposable gloves, chemicals, etc.) for a single crime scene.

FORENSICS KIT, ADVANCED

Advanced forensic kits contain all of the materials in a basic kit, as well as supplies for analysing narcotic substances at the scene, and materials for gathering esoteric forms of evidence such as casts of footprints or tire treads. It also contains all the powders, sprays, brushes, adhesives, and cards to gather fingerprints. An advanced forensics kit contains all the tools necessary to make a Notice or Investigation test to identify and collect forensic evidence from a crime scene.

LIE DETECTOR

While questioning a person attached to a lie detector, the questioner gains +2 on Notice tests made to determine truthfulness. The person attached to the lie detector can attempt a difficult (–2) Persuasion test with any given question in order to control his responses and negate the benefits of the device.

RESTRAINTS

Once a perpetrator has been located, keeping them restrained and in custody is vital.

HANDCUFFS

Standard handcuffs are the most common form of restraint in use by law enforcement and security forces. Without the key, it takes a difficult (−2) Strength check or a difficult (−2) Lockpicking check to escape from the cuffs, by force or by picking the lock respectively.

PLASTIC TIES

Plastic ties are used as impromptu restraints by law enforcement agencies, as they can be carried in large quantity and applied quickly. Plastic ties cannot be removed without being cut or broken, requiring a difficult (−1) Strength check to break.

RADAR GUN

A radar gun is a hand-held type of doppler radar used to determine the speed something is traveling. When using a radar gun the character gets a +2 bonus to any checks involving determining the speed or direction of the target.

COMMON ITEMS TABLE

Items with a Corrupt value of "NA" are not able to be corrupted by the Dark Symmetry as they are completely non-technical in nature. Items with a "C" are manufactured by Cybertronic and immune to the Dark Symmetry's influence.

COMMON ITEMS

ITEM	COST	WGT	CORRUPT	NOTES
Second Hand Clothing	50	5	Na	
Basic Clothing	100	5	Na	
Modest, Respectable Clothing	200	5	Na	
Stylish, Fashionable Clothing	300	5	Na	
Bespoke Clothing	400	5	Na	
Survival Rations	30	15	Na	Per week
Bottled Water	5	1	Na	
Stimulant	10	1	Na	
Alcoholic Drink	10	1	Na	
Automed, Basic	500	2	0	Healing d4
Automed, Suit Mounted	600	2	1	Healing d4
Automed, Hospital	700	10	1	Healing d6
Automed, Surgical	1000	300	2	Healing d8
Medkit, Basic	200	2	Na	Counts as supplies for Healing skill
Medkit, Paramedic	700	8	Na	Gives a +2 bonus on Healing checks
Antibiotics	300	1	Na	7 doses, +2 next Vigor check versus Disease
Energy	1500	1	Na	1 dose, ignore Fatigue checks for 8 hours
Painkillers	100	1	Na	10 doses, Ignore 1 point of wound penalties for 8 hours
Painkillers	500	1	Na	5 doses, Ignore 2 points of wound penalties for 8 hours
Stasis	400	1	Na	4 doses, Incapacitated hero does not worsen for 1 hour
Stim	2500	1	Na	3 doses, Ignore Fatigue checks and +2 Agility checks for 4 hours
Climbing Gear	200	5	Na	
Diving Gear	300	15	0	
Diving Gear, Armoured	400	25	0	Can be combined with Armour

ITEM	COST	WGT	CORRUPT	NOTES
Oxygen	100	10	Na	Per load, Diving or Space
Survival Kit	300	10	Na	
Colonist Regional Survival Kit	500	15	Na	+2 Survival checks
Respirator	200	1	Na	
Rebreather	200	1	Na	
Vac Suit	200	20	0	
Vac Suit, Armoured	800	25	0	Can be combined with Armour
Chemical Detection Kit	400	10	0	
Radiation Meter	600	2	0	
Toxin and Disease Detection Kit	500	10	0	
Compass	75	1	Na	
Map	50	1	Na	
Torch	5	1	Na	5" radius, 4 hours
Mini-Torch	3	1	Na	5" radius, 3 hours
Lantern	25	3	0	5" radius, 8 hours
Signal Flares	30	2	Na	6 uses
Telephone, Landline	50	Na	0	Per month cost
Pager	500	1	0	$10 per month cost
Cell Phone	700	1	1	$30 per month cost
Car phone	600	Na	1	$15 per month cost, attached to car
Cellular Link	1400	1	C	$70 per month cost
Short-wave Radio	500	5	1	
Crypto Module	1000	1	2	+2 to Knowledge (Cryptography) checks when used
Crypto Calibrator	1500	1	2	+2 to Knowledge (Cryptography) or Technical Aptitude checks when used
Long-Distance Call	5	Na	0	Per minute, same planet
Interplanetary Call	100	Na	2	Per minute
Binoculars/Telescope	500	1	0	
Compact Camera	75	1	0	
Instant Camera	10	1	0	Good for 5 pictures
Advanced Camera	300	1	1	
Video Camera	300	1	1	
Photographic Development	5	Na	0	Per photograph, includes cost of film
Eye-Tronic	1200	Na	C	
Media Kit, Basic	500	6	0	
Media Kit, Advanced	1000	6	1	
Motion Detector	700	1	1	
Night Vision Goggles	1000	3	0	
Night Vision Goggles, Binocular	2500	4	0	
Parabolic Microphone	750	2	0	

ITEM	COST	WGT	CORRUPT	NOTES
Surveillance Kit	1000	10	0	+2 for Surveillance, Notice on Stakeout
Tape Recorder	100	1	0	
Wireless Transmitter	525	1	0	
Repair Kit, Basic	200	10	Na	
Cx-Multitool	500	2	Na	Counts as a repair kit
Repair Kit, Advanced	700	10	Na	+2 for Repair
Repair Waldo, Basic	600	10	1	+2 for Repair, requires "Part", has Repair d4
Repair Waldo, Basic (Suit Mounted)	600	5	1	+2 for Repair, requires "Part", has Repair d4
Repair Waldo, Advanced	1000	60	2	+4 for Repair, requires "Part", has Repair d6
Parts	50	1	0	Used for Waldo
Analytical Kit, Basic	200	10	Na	
Analytical Kit, Advanced	700	10	Na	+2 for Relevant Skill
Experimental Waldo	500	6	2	+2 for Relevant Knowledge Skill
Comptograph	600	20	1	Purchase, +2 for Relevant Knowledge Skill
Comptograph	300	20	1	Rent per month, +2 for Relevant Knowledge Skill
Personal Computer	1000	10	1	
Personal Computer	200	10	1	Rent per month
Ai Programming Suite	5000	180	3	+2 Technical Aptitude
Mainframe Time	800	Na	2	Rent per day
Linkcouch and Subreal Access	1000	300	C	Individual services cost extra
Subreal Receptors	800	0	C	Individual services cost extra
SaraH system	1500	0	C	+2 for 3 Knowledge Skills and Common Knowledge
Diana system	3000	0	C	Ai unit, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, has 8 points in Smarts-linked skills
Camouflage Kit	200	2	Na	
Concealed holster/Scabbard	50	1	Na	+2 Stealth when attempting to hide weapon
Security holster/Scabbard	50	1	Na	
Tactical holster/Scabbard	50	1	Na	
Rucksack, light	20	2	Na	
Rucksack, heavy	40	4	Na	
Tactical Webbing Waldo	300	0	1	
Bipod/Tripod	20	0	Na	
Disintegrating Briefcase	200	1	Na	
Support Rig	60	2	Na	
Support Waldo	1000	4	1	Removes Snapfire penalty from weapons
Gunslinger Waldo	800	4	1	Removes Steady Hands penalty from weapons
Silencer	200	2	Na	For one-handed weapons, does not work with Auto
Silencer	400	2	Na	For two-handed weapons, does not work with Auto
Laser Sight	100	1	0	
Reflex Sight	100	1	0	
Telescopic Sight	200	1	0	Reduces range penalty by –2

ITEM	COST	WGT	CORRUPT	NOTES
Night vision Scope	600	1	0	Removes penalty for Dim and Dark lighting
Marksman's Eye	1200	0	C	Grants user the Marksman Edge
Disguise Kit	400	4	Na	Includes 2 Cosmetics uses
Cosmetics	50	0	Na	Refills for Cosmetics kit
Fake ID, Crude	100	0	Na	−2 Stealth vs. Notice when using
Fake ID, Basic	200	0	Na	
Fake ID, Decent	400	0	Na	+1 Stealth vs. Notice when using
Fake ID, Excellent	800	0	Na	+2 Stealth vs. Notice when using
Fake ID, Flawless	1600	0	Na	+4 Stealth vs. Notice when using
Lockpicking Tools	300	0	Na	
Lockpicking Tools, Good	600	0	Na	+2 Lockpicking
Glass cutter	100	0	Na	
Bolt cutter	100	0	Na	
Safecracker Kit	400	10	Na	
Sabotage Kit	400	10	Na	
Forensics Kit, Basic	400	10	Na	
Forensics Kit, Advanced	800	10	Na	+2 Investigation or Notice when applicable
Lie Detector	600	10	0	
Radar Gun	600	5	0	
Handcuffs	300	1	Na	
Plastic Ties	100	1	Na	Pack of 10

SERVICES

ITEM	COST	SKILLS USED	NOTES
Visit to GP's practice	500	Healing d8	
Visit to Illicit Clinic	1000	Healing d8	
Visit to Brotherhood Clinic	300	Healing d6	
Hospital Stay (per day)	500	Healing d10	
Psychiatric Care Session (regular)	600	Knowledge (Psychology) d6	
Psychiatric Care Session (intensive)	1000	Knowledge (Psychology) d8	
Laboratory	600	–	Rent per month
Laboratory, Corporate	1000	–	Rent per month, provides +2 bonus for relevant Knowledge skill
Lab Assistant	300	–	Per month, reduces research time by 25%
Library, Reference	500	–	Membership per month, provides +2 bonus for Common Knowledge or Investigation
Library, Academic	1000	–	Membership per month, provides +2 bonus for Common Knowledge, Any Knowledge skill, or Investigation
Librarian Assistance	20	Investigation d6	Per day, Requires Library Membership
Forger	300	Knowledge (Espionage) d6	Per day

CAPTAIN TOM SUMMERS, DEEP SPACE RESCUE TECH

If all your systems on your spacecraft fail in the darkness of the void, then your best hope is rescue by the Deep Space Rescue ships/tugs of the Imperial Navy.

Captain Tom Summers commands the "Big Red One", a Deep Space Rescue ship based out of Victoria, rescuing stranded ships in an area that stretches from the Asteroid Belt to the outermost moons of Saturn (and sometimes beyond), deep in the heart of the Outer System. Part-astronaut, paramedic, fireman and rescue tech, Captain Tom Summers routinely leads his multi-skilled crew into risky situations to save others in danger, and will go to extreme lengths to save lives.

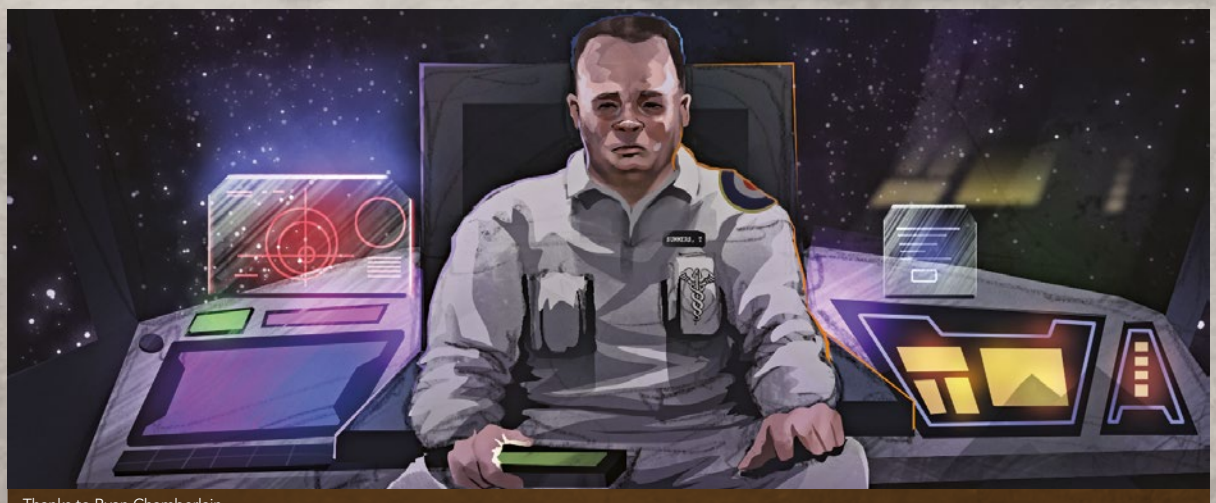
CAPTAIN SUMMERS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Gunnery d8, Healing d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Survival d6
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Willpower:** 5
Hindrances: Cautious, Heroic
Edges: EMT, Ship Crew, Spacewalk
Gear: Armoured Vac Suit (Ballistic Nylon +2), Dagger (Str+d4).

Captain Tom Summers, commander of the Big Red One, an Imperial Navy Deep Space Rescue ship, looked down at his sensor panel. At these ranges the view out the front window was just blackness, but on the sensor panel he could just make out the fading emergency signal of the stranded freighter. They were deep out in the blackness, about two million kilometres above the ecliptic of Saturn. Out this far there were no other ships, except the one they were looking for. They were essentially on their own. What the freighter was doing this far away from the main shipping lanes was a mystery, but mystery or not when his team had received the mayday signal they had scrambled and gone to full-burn to get here as quickly as possible.

Summers rotated his command chair to face his crew. They were all seasoned professionals and were concentrating hard on their tasks at hand.

"People, can I have your attention?" All eyes met his, "Thank you. As you know three days ago we received the mayday from the freighter 'Epicurus'. We know they have suffered complete power system failure, but we don't know why. Our job as always is to get in there, rescue any survivors and stabilise the vessel as best we can, or scuttle it to prevent it becoming a shipping hazard. I don't have to tell you that we are a long way from help should we run into trouble. As a precaution, I want you all armed and armoured. Just in case. We've all heard the rumours, but we are also professionals and we have a job to do." Summers smiled, "Keep your wits about you, and let's save some lives."



Thanks to Ryan Chamberlain.

WEAPONS

HANDHELD WEAPONS

Handheld weapons include anything using the Shooting or Fighting skill, albeit there is a significant difference between an Autocannon and a set of brass knuckles.

Items with a Corruption value of "NA" cannot be corrupted by the Dark Symmetry, they are completely non-technical in nature. Items with a "C" are Cybertronic, and immune to the Dark Symmetry's influence. If there is no Corruption value listed it is treated as "NA".

MELEE WEAPONS

The brutality of combat is not expressed through firearms alone. For a mixture of reasons including the regression of technology caused by the Dark Symmetry, and the threat posed by the slavering monstrosities of the Dark Legion, armed forces have turned to melee weapons in a way that they had not for centuries. Melee weaponry is typically more reliable, easier to maintain, and more resistant to the effects of the Dark Symmetry than firearms are, and a sword or dagger has the added advantage of never needing to be reloaded.

BRASS KNUCKLES

A simple piece of metal or other hard material shaped to fit around the knuckles, these are favoured by underworld thugs, and the more unscrupulous private security groups, as a way of 'enhancing' a beating. The shape and solidity allows the wearer to punch harder, both by providing a rigid striking surface, and by protecting the wearer's hand from the impact.

BATON OR CUDGEL

Constructed of metal, wood, ceramic, or dense plastic, batons are common melee weapons favoured by law enforcement for their ability to dissuade and subdue quickly, without inflicting major trauma. Crude cudgels, normally made from lengths of scrap material, or repurposed from sporting equipment, function in much the same way. Most blunt improvised weapons count as batons.

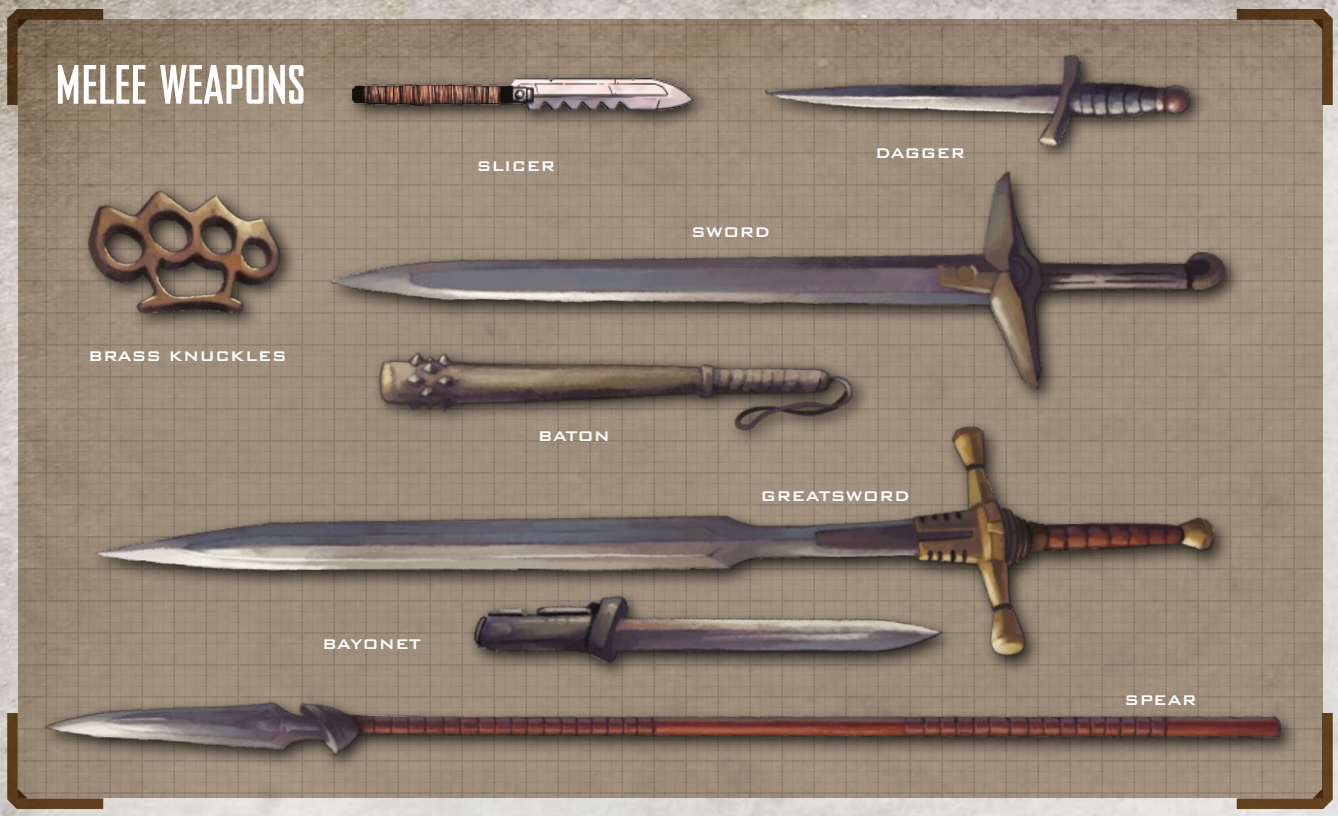
DAGGERS AND KNIVES

Common blades are available almost everywhere, and most people have easy access to one or more knives, even if they are only intended as tools. Daggers and combat knives are designed for fighting, and come in a range of styles dependent upon the corporation that manufactures them–a Mishiman tanto is a very different weapon to a Bauhauser duelling poignard, for example. In any case, the small size and agility of a knife makes them good at exploiting the weak spots in a foe's defences.

SLICER

Daggers are the weapons of soldiers and warriors. Slicers, however, are the weapon of the underworld. Collapsible blades, home-made shivs, and similar small blades are ideal for clandestine uses such as assassination. Slicers are so synonymous with street crime that there are even corporate-manufactured flick knives, switchblades, and folding knives. Most sharp improvised weapons count as slicers.

Now there is a deal few freelancers would pass up!



SWORD

Full-size swords are not the kind of weapon commonly encountered on the street. Those who own and carry swords are typically corporate nobility or military officers. Within Capitol, the distinction is less clear–as it lacks a distinct noble caste–but swords of different styles can be found both as weapons and ornaments across the system. Even those who do not commonly wield swords understand the ancient martial traditions and sense of prestige they embody.

GREATSWORD

Large blades of this sort fell out of favour for centuries, becoming little more than historical oddities or pop-culture curiosities. During the exodus from Old Earth, however, they found use again in the jungles of Venus against the monstrous creatures there. They then gained widespread popularity with the rise of the Dark Legion, where the increased size and killing power of a two-handed sword made them valuable against the larger and tougher creatures of Darkness. Different forms of greatsword exist, manufactured by different corporations.

SPEAR

One of the oldest weapons developed by mankind, a spear's length allows a wielder to engage a fearsome foe at a distance. Spears have remained evident throughout human history more because of ceremonial reasons, and because of the simplicity of both construction and design, than because of their continued usage.

BAYONET

A standard melee weapon amongst soldiers, a bayonet is a long dagger with a handle designed to fit into a matching socket on a rifle. When not mounted, it provides all the utility of a knife. When mounted, the rifle's length gives the blade reach, and allows it to be used more like a spear. It takes an action to affix or remove a bayonet from a rifle.

CHAINSWORD

Chainsaw-bladed swords, commonly called chainswords or chain rippers, are fine weapons for cutting through the servants of the Dark Legion. Many of these weapons are patterned on the old ASH-88 design produced by Campbell Superior Holdings, Inc., a manufacturer long ago bought out by Cartel Arms. It is somewhat bulkier than a conventional sword, but the increased damage it inflicts compared to a mundane blade more than makes up for the weight.

CHAIN BAYONET

Since the coming of the Dark Legion, 'chain bayonets' have become increasingly common. Strictly speaking, they are not bayonets, but rather a weaponised chainsaw fitted to a gun. These attachments give a soldier a far greater degree of close combat lethality, which can mean the difference between life and death when clashing with a necromutant. Chain Bayonets cannot be removed or affixed to a weapon in the midst of combat–the vibrations they produce mean they must be properly secured–and few can be used away from a ranged weapon.

BLADED NIGHTSTICK (BAUHAUS)

Common amongst the Etoiles Mortant and Bauhaus Law Enforcement Units, a bladed nightstick is a side-handle baton with a long blade concealed within the length. Originally intended for utility–cutting through the restraints of a crashed car, or the clothing of an injured person–it was quickly employed in a more martial manner. Some Etoiles Mortant replace the blades with larger ones that cannot retract. It does not count as an action to extend or retract the blade.

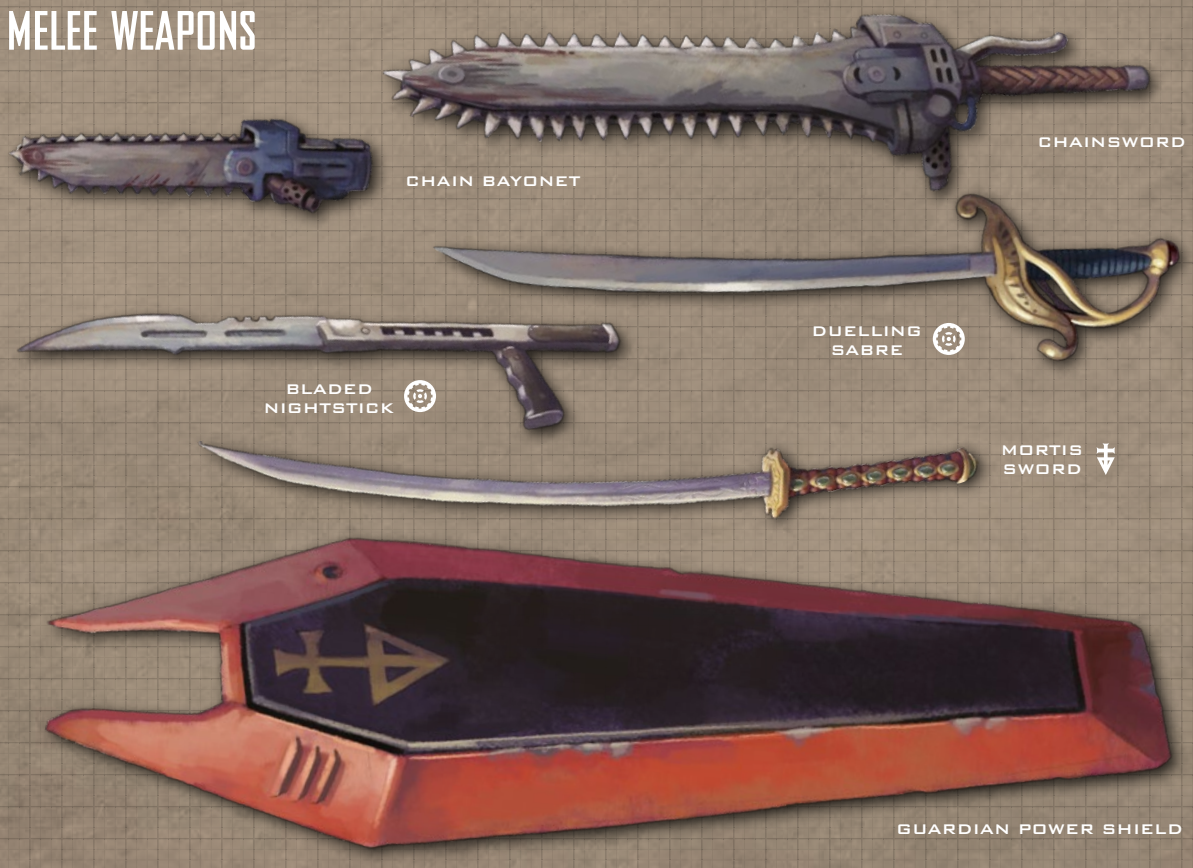
DUELLING SABRE (BAUHAUS)

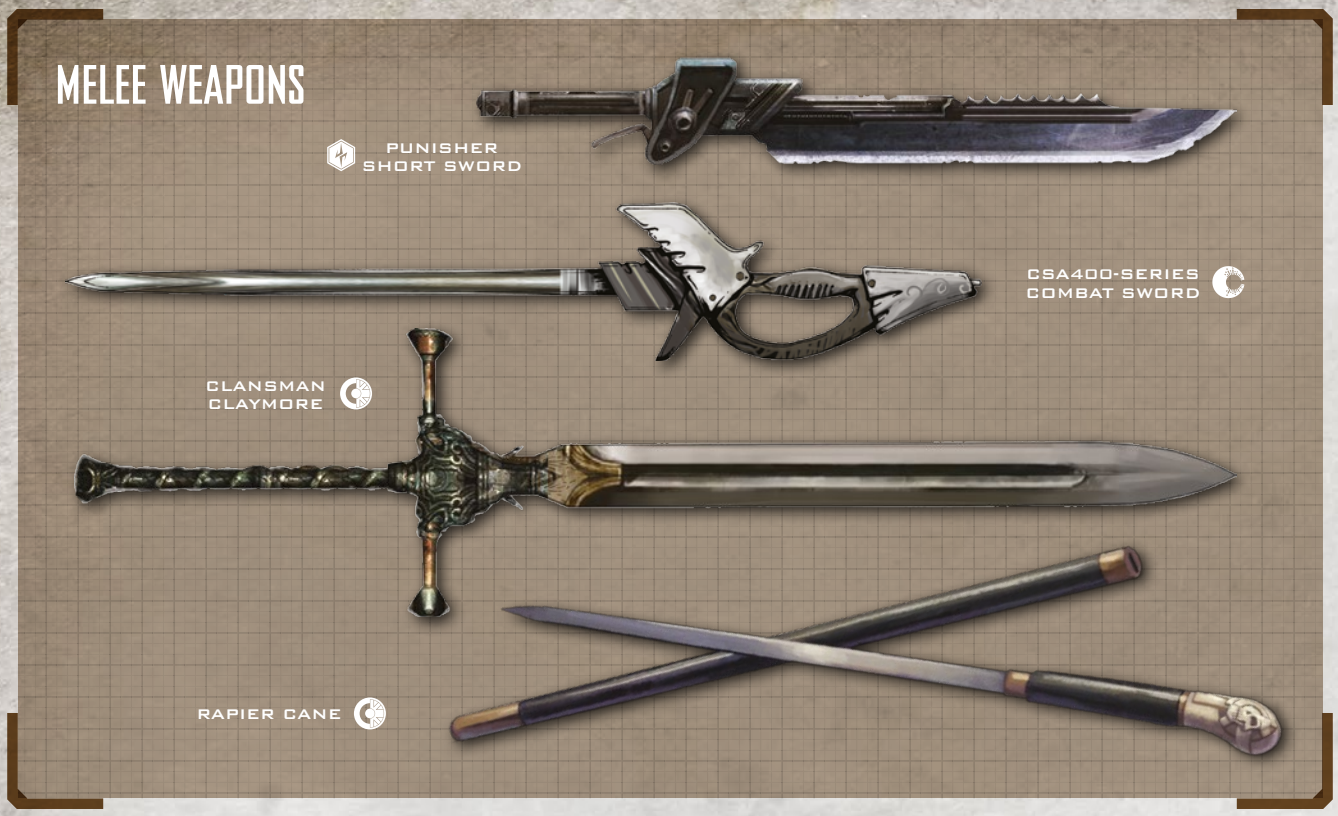
Duelling with blades is a fine art amongst the Bauhaus elite, and any Homebuilder of officer rank carries one as part of his standard dress uniform. The blades are also considered a fashion accessory for young and dashing members of the nobility. Each sabre is crafted by one of only a handful of approved and licenced swordsmiths at great expense, and the blades are of extremely fine quality–light and strong, with a keen edge suitable for both cut and thrust. When purchasing a duelling sabre, you may voluntarily increase the cost by any amount in order to enhance the craftsmanship and ornamentation of the design. This has no effect on the weapon's effectiveness, but some social circles regard a finely-wrought sword

DUELLING IN BAUHAUS SOCIETY

Nobles and citizens of officer rank have the right to invoke the Code Duello to settle disputes. Providing that the formal process is properly observed, this is quite legal. Duels are customarily fought to avenge grievous insults, and are fought with swords or pistols. Both parties must be unarmoured, and must have a second present, to witness the proceedings. Duels are fought to first blood–once the first wound is inflicted–but the participants can insist on continuing a duel beyond that, sometimes to the death. The result of the duel is a legal outcome, as binding as a judge's verdict. Duelling is not legal amongst commoners or non-commissioned military personnel. It is acceptable, though rare, for nobles and officers of other corporations to engage in duels within Bauhauser territories.

MELEE WEAPONS





to be an important fashion statement, and thus a cheap sword or an expensive one may influence certain social situations.

MORTIS SWORD (BROTHERHOOD)

Forged using techniques licenced from Mishiman swordsmiths during the Brotherhood's earliest days, these matte black double edged blades are used almost exclusively by Mortifactors. They are exceptionally sharp, lightweight, and able to be used with deadly swiftness.

GUARDIAN POWER SHIELD (BROTHERHOOD)

The Brotherhood are the primary users of power shields, made iconic by Brotherhood assault troopers and Sacred Warriors. The basic version, the Guardian, is a sturdy defensive tool able to ward the wielder from all manner of attacks. The structure of each shield is a composite of ceramics, metallic alloys, and impact-absorbent plastics. The outermost metal layer is laced with electro-charge filaments that generate a magnetic field strong enough to reinforce it against bullets.

PUNISHER SHORT SWORD (CARTEL)

These broad-bladed short swords are sturdy and rugged, and are amongst the cheapest and most widely available power swords on the market. The magnetic field generated by the blade's circuitry gives it the impact and cutting power of a larger and heavier sword.

CSA400-SERIES COMBAT SWORDS

Cybercurity constructs one form of sword, built for efficiency and utility in hand-to-hand combat. The Combat Side Arm 400 is a basic composite alloy sword, extremely sophisticated in manufacture but straightforward in function. Cybercurity manufactures a number of variants of this blade, incorporating additional technologies such as electrocharge systems, a mono-edged blade, toxin dispensers, or superheating elements.

CLANSMAN CLAYMORE (IMPERIAL)

These fearsome two-handed swords have an almost religious significance amongst the clansfolk, who often carry them into battle in place of combat knives, or even sidearms. There is no rational reason for this, but the blades are said to protect from the influence of the Dark Symmetry. They are manufactured by smiths from a number of different companies, though the finest manufactured today are made by Clan Murray through their subsidiary Lyon & Atkinson.

RAPIER CANE (IMPERIAL)

A creation of Imperial's ISC-19, this appears as an ordinary cane or walking stick. However, when the handle is twisted in a particular way, the concealed rapier can be removed, with the main body of the cane serving as a scabbard. This weapon is extremely popular with spies and diplomats. Rapier canes are popular accessories, and the canes come in a range of styles and levels of adornment.

DAISHO (MISHIMA)

The paired swords of the Daisho–literally 'big and little' – are the symbol of the samurai, and wearing these swords is the caste's exclusive privilege. The larger sword is the katana, the primary close combat weapon of the samurai. With a blade 60–70cm in length, it can be drawn quickly and easily. The smaller of the blades is the wakizashi. Its blade is 30–50cm long, and it is used as an auxiliary or off-hand weapon, or for fighting in confined spaces. It is the weapon traditionally used for ritual suicide. Samurai–whatever their daily responsibilities–carry their Daisho with them constantly, only setting the blades aside in their homes or at their lord's command.

BONESWORD (WHITESTAR)

The signature weapons of the Bone Hussars are carved from the skeletons of the creatures slain during their week-long initiation. The weapons then undergo an intensely secret process, to which even their wielders are not privy, that turns them hard as steel and makes them the bane of monsters. Whatever the transformative process is, it leaves the bonesword with an unearthly glittering sheen, and rows of barbed, arcane runes carved into the blade.

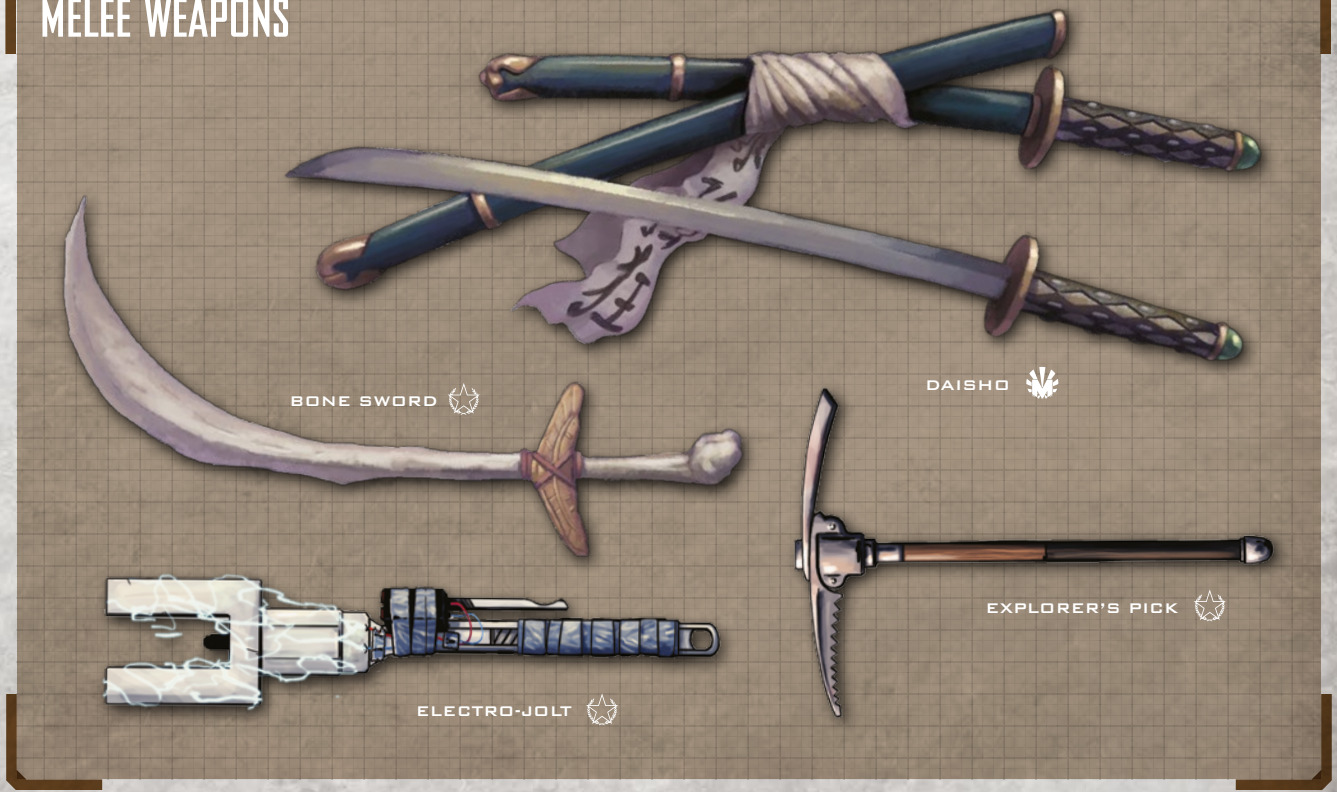
ELECTRO-JOLT (WHITESTAR)

The signature accessory of the Night Witches, the electro-jolt looks like an ordinary adjustable spanner. However, the it also stores a high-voltage charge that can be used to zap a recalcitrant machine into life, or an assailant into unconsciousness. Using an electro-jolt grants a character a +2 bonus on any Repair test to restart an engine or machine.

EXPLORER'S PICK (WHITESTAR)

Whether excavating some buried treasure, making a handhold to climb the side of an ancient tower block, or smashing the padlock off something interesting, the pick axe is the truest friend a Resector can have. For all its utility as a tool, the pick's balance makes it an unwieldy weapon. Most Resectors hold that if a mutant gets within whacking range of a pick axe, too many things have already gone wrong. An explorer's pick grants a +1 bonus on any Climbing test, and a +1 bonus on any Strength test to break an object.

MELEE WEAPONS



MELEE WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	WGT	COST	NOTES
Brass Knuckles	Str+d4	1	20	Characters wearing Brass Knuckles count as Unarmed Attackers
Baton or Cudgel	Str+d4	1	10	
Dagger	Str+d4	1	25	
Slicer	Str+d4	1	25	+2 to conceal
Sword	Str+d8	8	300	
Greatsword	Str+d10	12	400	
Spear	Str+d6	5	100	Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Bayonet	Str+d4	1	25	A bayonet affixed to a rifle increases the damage to Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Chainsword	Str+d8	10	500	Corrupt 0, Vicious, Parry +1
Chain Bayonet	Str+d4	2	100	Corrupt 0, Vicious, A bayonet affixed to a rifle increases the damage to Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Bladed Nightstick	Str+d6	4	600	Bauhaus, Can be used as a Baton or Sword
Duelling Sabre	Str+d6	4	600	Bauhaus, Parry +1
Mortis Sword	Str+d8	8	600	Brotherhood, Parry +1, Vicious
Guardian Power Shield	Str+d6	8	600	Brotherhood, Can be used to Shield Bash or act as a Large Shield, Ignore 2 points of AP
Punisher Short Sword	Str+d6	4	400	Corrupt 0, Parry +1
Csa400 Sword	Str+d6	4	1200	Cybertronic, Parry +1
Csa401 Sword	Str+d6	4	1400	Cybertronic, Parry +1, Knockdown
Csa402 Sword	Str+d6	4	1400	Cybertronic, Parry +1, Vicious
Csa403 Sword	Str+d6	4	1600	Cybertronic, Parry +1, Contagion
Csa404 Sword	Str+d6	4	1800	Cybertronic, Parry +1, Fire
Clansman Claymore	Str+d12	12	800	Parry +2, Wielder is +1 to Willpower tests while using
Rapier Cane	Str+d6	6	600	+2 to conceal, Parry +1
Katana	Str+d8	8	400	When used 2H, +2 Damage and 2 AP
Wakizashi	Str+d6	4	300	Parry +1
Bonesword	Str+d8	6	500	Wielder is +1 Willpower and +1 vs. Fear while using
Electro-Jolt	Str+d4	1	100	Knockdown
Explorer's Pick	Str+d6	6	500	Vicious, +2 Climbing Checks

HANDGUNS AND MACHINE PISTOLS

Handguns are the most commonplace and widely-available class of firearm, and are the most likely to be found in the hands of civilians. Few restrictions exist on their purchase, at least amongst citizens of the manufacturer's corporation, and their size and portability makes them ideal for law enforcement, corporate agents, and private use, without drawing undue attention.

.74 M13 'BOLTER' – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

Although advertised as the civilian version of the M15, the Bolter is not the first choice for a personal defence sidearm. Someone carrying a Bolter is either out to do major damage to someone, or expecting to encounter armoured resistance. With its .74 calibre rounds, this gun makes light work of most personal body armour. The Bolter is a weapon of choice for many paramilitary organisations, as well as law enforcement in more dangerous areas. Sherman's sales policy–and the relatively lax arms trade regulations of Capitol

ARMS MANUFACTURERS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The corporations all maintain significant weapon manufacturing capabilities, both to support their armies and to sell to consumers in aid of the Brotherhood edict to ensure the defence of Mankind. A number of the most prominent manufacturing companies–subsidiaries of their parent corporations–are presented here.

CARTEL ARMS

Consolidated from a number of smaller micro-corporations that were bought out when the Cartel formed, Cartel Arms holds the patents and licences on many popular weapon designs. Some it manufactures itself, using its own manufacturing facilities on Luna to produce small quantities of good quality items, primarily for its own forces–groups like Luna PD and the Doomtrooper corps. However, other items are licensed out to other corporations for more widespread manufacturing.

CYBERCURITY

As the name suggests, Cybercurity is the division of Cybertronic responsible for weapon design and manufacture. A fairly broad division, even by the standards of the corporations, Cybercurity handles the overwhelming majority of Cybertronic defence design and manufacturing. Cybercurity weapons are not widely available, owing to Cybertronic's tendency towards secrecy and the advanced security measures it often employs. As with all Cybertronic technology, Cybercurity weapons are advanced, reliable, sophisticated, and very expensive.

SHERMAN INC.

One of the more prolific weapons manufacturers under Capitol control, Sherman is the primary contractor to the Capitol military for personal firearms. Its weapons are popular across the system, providing a ready compromise between quality and cost.

FIELDHAUSEN ARMS

Formerly of Bauhaus, this heavy arms and vehicles manufacturer split in two, with part of the business defecting to Imperial and forming Fieldhausen Arms, while Bauhaus retained what is now Bauhaus Motors. Imperial's acquisition has resulted in many fine creations, including the Greyhound Tankette and 'Bauhaus Bully' Battle Tank, but it also manufactures a range of heavy weaponry.

L&A LYON & ATKINSON

The foremost Imperial gunsmiths, L&A produce more than eighty percent of all the Imperial Corporation's personal firearms, both those intended for military use and those sold to the public. Its design methodology is simple–maximum firepower, whatever the cost. Imperial weapons tend to favour high calibres and high rates of fire, often paid for with considerable weight and bulk. The idea of a small L&A weapon is regarded as a contradiction.

RWD

The principal manufacturer of Bauhauser small arms, Romanov Weapon Designwerks (RWD) is wholly owned by the Bauhaus Ministry of War. While it does sell outside of Bauhaus–a fine Homebuilder weapon is highly-prized in some circles–the prices are extremely high. RWD weapons are universally of high quality and high precision, and tend to use caseless ammunition, giving them high capacities and high rates of fire.

SANCTUS

The collective legal owner of all wargear designed by and produced for the Brotherhood, Sanctus refers to two specific groups within the Brotherhood–the Order of Blessed Engineers and the Order of Armourers–as well as the licenced manufacturers who mass-produce these items. Sanctus weapons are high quality, utilising Arts-inspired and Arts-crafted mechanisms to replace older, corruptible, technologies. Spreading knowledge of these mechanisms is punishable by death, preceded by extensive interrogation. To date, only three people have ever broken the Sanctus Covenant–the contractual bond of secrecy that surrounds all Brotherhood wargear.

TAMBU KEIRETSU

Tambu is the primary arms manufacturer of the Mishima corporation–the term keiretsu refers to a collective of linked or related business concerns, and is a common part of the Mishiman business model. Mishima has a reputation for cheap, often shoddy gear. In truth, this is more to do with Mishiman culture. Samurai and other wealthy customers can afford hand-crafted, high-quality goods produced by artisans and master craftsmen. Consequently, the only people likely to buy mass-produced equipment are lower-class persons, allowing manufacturing conglomerates like Tambu to skimp on quality in the name of lower prices; nobody cares about the quality of items bought by commoners.

HANDGUNS AND MACHINE PISTOLS

.74 M13 'BOLTER'

.55G M15 'IRONFIST'

.45AP NO.3 'RONIN'

P1000

PSA MK. XIV 'AGGRESSOR'

MP-105

P60 'PUNISHER'

PIRANHA HANDGUN

IRON HAND AUTOPISTOL

in general–mean that anyone with the money can obtain one of these weapons, making it the most prolific military-grade sidearm in the system.

.55G M15 'IRONFIST' – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

Originally meant for military production, Sherman has recently gained approval to launch this model commercially on Luna, albeit with the requirement of a special license and registration for any buyer. Similar to the M13, but with smaller .55 calibre (14mm) ammunition and an integrated mini grenade launcher. Still mostly seen in military circles, ex Special Forces might be seen carrying them, as well as certain unsavoury elements bent on destruction.

.45AP NO .3 'RONIN' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

The Ronin is a budget gun made for a budget world. It is lighter and slightly more accurate than comparable weapons from other corporations, but the quality and durability are vastly inferior to similar guns in a higher price class. The Ronin is the gun of the low life. Originally made for the 'expendable' Ashigaru of the Mishima corporation, the gun has found its way onto the streets of Luna. Those down on their luck, and looking to change that, often carry this weapon.

P1000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

The P1000 personal sidearm is laden with Cybertronic's most recent technological advances. With DNA sensors in the grip, the gun cannot be used by unauthorised persons. As such, illegal versions of the gun are extremely rare, though some people have managed to bypass the security system. The weapon is a fairly standard machine pistol in terms of its capabilities, though Cybertronic engineering makes it exceptionally reliable, with electronic systems that monitor barrel heat and minimise misfires. Every security or military member of Cybertronic is equipped with this gun, and the corporation's citizens often acquire one for protection.

PSA MK. XIV 'AGGRESSOR' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

The Aggressor is the standard sidearm for Imperial personnel everywhere, from battlefield units to security guards to intelligence workers. Outside the corporation, they are a rare sight, as the weight and size of Imperial armaments are not always favoured by non-Imperials. However, the bulky construction and high calibre rounds give it a punch that few other pistols can match.

MP-105 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

Possibly the best personal side arm available today, its popularity on the streets suffers due to its awkward magazine placement, as well as its steep price. Those who can afford the high price of Bauhauser quality are more likely to buy the Punisher or the Piranha. The MP-105 uses caseless ammunition; giving it a magazine capacity other guns struggle to match.

HANDGUNS AND MACHINE PISTOLS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
.74 M13 Bolter	15/30/60	2d8+1	4	3	20	1	6	450
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
.55G M15 Ironfist	15/30/60	2d6+1	2	3	20	1	6	450
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
GL-240 Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	200
Notes: Attaches to M15								
.45AP No 3 Ronin	12/24/48	2d6	–	1	8	2	3	300
Notes: Semi-Auto								
P1000	12/24/48	2d6	–	3	16	C	5	1300
Notes: 3RB, Biometric Lock								
Psa MK. XIV Aggressor	12/24/48	2d8	–	3	8	1	5	450
Notes: Min Str d6, 3RB								
MP-105	12/24/48	2d6	1	3	8	0	5	800
Notes: Auto, 3RB								
P60 Punisher	12/24/48	2d8	–	3	12	1	5	600
Notes: Min Str d6, Semi-Auto, Knockdown, 3RB								
Piranha Handgun	10/20/40	2d6	–	1	8	1	3	500
Notes: Semi-Auto, +1 Stealth to hide								
Ironhand Pistol	12/24/48	2d8	–	1	8	1	8	400
Notes: Min Str. d6, Semi-Auto								

P60 'PUNISHER' (CARTEL) ARMS (CARTEL)
This high-calibre pistol is a clear favourite for many soldiers, freelancers, and corporate agents across the system, due to its reliability and stopping power. Developed by the Brotherhood for Cartel Arms after the First Corporate Wars, it is available everywhere in the system for those who can afford it. Versions have been manufactured by each of the original four corporations. Its fearsome recoil, which is as 'punishing' as its stopping power, means that it takes considerable strength to wield one of these guns effectively. The results, however, can be spectacular.

PIRANHA HANDGUN (CARTEL) ARMS (CARTEL)
The Piranha is, without a doubt, a favourite among freelancers, cartel agents, bodyguards, and law enforcement agents. It is light, easily concealable, and widely available. But best of all, it does not require a license to carry. Its low calibre and light recoil make it easy to handle, but it lacks in stopping power and is much more expensive than most guns. Those who can afford to carry one, tend to favour its convenience.

IRON HAND AUTOPISTOL (WHITESTAR)
The original stock for these heavy handguns was sourced from the weapon cache at Zlogora. It is the standard sidearm of thousands of stronghold militias, and the favoured weapon of the Tsarina. The majority of Iron Hands in existence come from the ancient Zlogora armoury, but the Nevskiy Armaments factory has now begun to manufacture new ones in limited numbers.

SUBMACHINE GUNS

A compromise between the firepower of a rifle and the portability of a handgun, sub-machine guns and personal defence weapons are compact and potent, commonly effective at close ranges. Their increased bulk and weight allows them to maintain higher rates of fire, hold larger quantities of ammunition, and mount attachments like grenade launchers.

CAR-24 CLOSE ASSAULT RIFLE–SHERMAN (CAPITOL)
This Sherman, Inc. weapon includes a compact grenade launcher, making it extremely popular with criminals, freelancers, and soldiers who desire extra firepower. Copies of this design–most of them illegal, and many of them of poor quality–can be found across the system. In fact they are so widespread, that it can often be difficult to tell a copy from a legitimate version. Most criminals do not care, so long as it works.

NO. 4 'WINDRIDER' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

Suffering from many of the manufacturing issues that plague Mishiman firearms, the Windrider was pushed into production hastily to capitalise on the mass market success of the Ronin pistol. The biggest flaws are related to the detachable grenade launcher, which most users ignore altogether. When bought without the launcher–as has become commonplace–the weapon is a cheap and effective, if occasionally unreliable, personal defence weapon.

CAW200 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

The most well-known of Cybercurity's Close Assault Weapon line, the CAW2000 is one of the best weapons of its class. It is also one of the rarest, as it is not readily available to anyone outside of Cybertronic. Those who attempt to sell them on the black market, risk the wrath of the corporation's SWI (Security, Warfare, and Intelligence) division. Like other weapons in the class, it includes a grenade launcher. Unusually, however, its grenade launcher doubles as the mounting port for the bayonet concealed in its stock. They cannot both be used at the same time, but this is barely an inconvenience, as few people use a grenade launcher at bayonet range, or a bayonet at grenade launcher range.

SMG MK. III 'INTERCEPTOR' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

The standard-issue SMG for Imperial's military and security personnel, public perception of the Interceptor is mixed. It is amongst the most powerful weapons in its class, and its raw power and easy handling make it extremely popular amongst its proponents. However, it is heavily criticised for its considerable weight and short range.

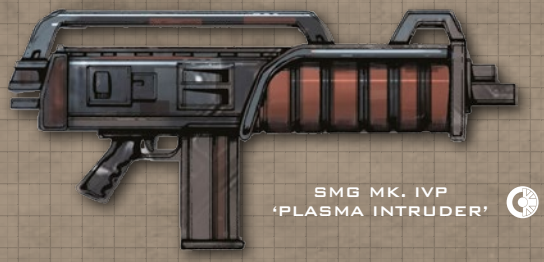
SUB-MACHINE GUNS AND PERSONAL DEFENCE WEAPONS

CAR-24 CLOSE ASSAULT RIFLE

NO. 4 'WINDRIDER'

CAW2000

SMG MK. III 'INTERCEPTOR'



SMG MK. IVP 'PLASMA INTRUDER'

MP-105GW

MP-103 'HELLBLAZER'

SUBMACHINE GUNS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
CAR-24	15/30/60	2d8	–	3	30	1	10	600
Notes: Auto, 3RB								
GL-240 Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	200
Notes: Attaches to CAR-24								
No. 4 Windrider	15/30/60	2d6	–	3	30	2	11	500
Nots: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
No. 23 Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	As Grenade	–	1	3	2	2	150
Notes: Attaches to Windrider								
CAW2000	15/30/60	2d6	–	3	30	C	8	1800
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB, Biometric Lock								
GI2000 Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	As Grenade	–	1	3	C	2	450
Notes: Attaches to CAW2000								
SMG MK. III Interceptor	15/30/60	2d8+1	–	3	24	1	13	750
Notes: Auto, 3RB								
Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	200
Notes: Attaches to Mk. III								
SMG MK. IVP Plasma	15/30/60	2d8	–	3	18	1	9	650
Notes: Semi-Auto, 3RB or Small Burst Template								
MP-105GW	15/30/60	2d6	–	3	30	0	9	1200
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
GW-105S Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	As Grenade	–	1	3	0	2	400
Notes: Attaches to MP-105GW								
MP-103 Hellblazer	15/30/60	2d8	–	3	18	0	9	100
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								

SMG MK. IVP 'PLASMA INTRUDER' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

The complaints about the bulk of the Interceptor were heard by the weapons designers of Lyon & Atkinson. The solution, reducing weight without losing firepower, was the development of plasma ammunition. Removing the grenade launcher and reducing the calibre of the ammunition also decreased the weapon's weight considerably, with only minimal loss of firepower.

MP-105GW-RWD (BAUHAUS)

The MP-105GW is essentially an ordinary MP-105, refitted with a longer barrel, a telescoping stock, and a grenade launcher. Utilising the same ammunition, and most of the same parts, means that it is easy to resupply and maintain.

MP-103 'HELLBLAZER' – RWD (BAUHAUS)

Originally designed for Doomtrooper strike teams, but never put into mass production, many design elements from the 103 project were repurposed into the MP-105. The 103 entered production on a smaller scale, catering to select groups who favoured the more robust 'Hellblazer' over the compact MP-105.

ASSAULT RIFLES, BATTLE RIFLES, CARBINES

Assault rifles are the standard weaponry for common troopers in corporate militaries, and more up-scale mercenary forces. Firing medium-calibre ammunition with a lightweight grenade launcher, these weapons are powerful and flexible tools in the right hands. Battle rifles are similar, but are larger and heavier, while carbines are shorter and more compact.

M50 ASSAULT RIFLE–GREENING, INC. (CAPITOL)

Although not the best assault rifle, the M50 is one of the most widespread weapons outside the military forces thanks to the numerous pirated copies, its sale to private security companies, and its versatility. The integrated grenade launcher has an internal magazine of six rounds, and the rifle's stock can be folded away for portability.

NO. 1 'SHOGUN'-TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

A fine example of Mishiman weapon design at its best, the Tambu Keiretsu learned from mistakes made with the Windrider SMG, and produced a weapon with a completely different internal structure. The end result is a compact, effective carbine, favoured by Ashigaru and Samurai alike, though versions made for Samurai tend to be hand-crafted masterpieces rather than the mass-produced examples employed by commoners in battle.

AR3000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

Utilising a similar internal structure to the larger SR3500 rifle, the AR3000 is easier to handle at medium ranges and fitted with an integrated grenade launcher. As with all Cybercurity weapons, the AR3000 has an anatomical grip and specialised balancing measures that allow one-handed use for sufficiently strong warriors. Using the grenade launcher requires both hands, however.

MK. XIB 'INVADER' BATTLE RIFLE– LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

The Invader battle rifle is similar in design to the Assailant SMG, but is larger and sturdier. Its grenade launcher is drum-fed, giving it considerable firing endurance at the cost of greater bulk.

MK. XLIII PLASMA CARBINE–LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

The Plasma Carbine is similar in design to the smaller Plasma Intruder SMG, also manufactured by Lyon & Atkinson, but is considerably more durable and robust. The weapon lacks a grenade launcher, as the use of plasma ammunition makes it somewhat redundant.

AG-17 'PANZERKNACKER' – RWD (BAUHAUS)

The Panzerknacker's name is derived from its outstanding armour piercing capabilities. Its primary feature is the extreme rate of fire, possible only because of the caseless ammunition. The AG-17 comes with a folding stock as standard.

ASSAULT RIFLES, BATTLE RIFLES, CARBINES

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
M50 Assault Rifle	24/48/96	2d8+2	2	3	30	1	12	600
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
M509 Grenade Launcher	15/30/60	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	400
Notes: Attaches to M509								
No 1 Shogun	24/48/96	2d8	2	3	30	2	10	550
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
No 23 Grenade Launcher	15/30/60	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	400
Notes: Attaches to No 1								
Ar3000	24/48/96	2d8+2	2	3	30	C	13	1400
Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB, Str d10+ can weild one-handed								
Gl3000	15/30/60	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	400
Notes: Attaches to AR3000 or Mk. XIb								
MK. XIb Invader	24/48/96	2d10	2	3	30	1	14	800
Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
MK. XLIII Plasma Carbine	24/48/96	2d10	2	3	20	2	14	700
Min Str d6, 3RB or SBT, Vicious								
AG-17 Panzerknacker	24/48/96	2d8+2	4	3	30	0	10	1200
Notes: Auto, 3RB								
GW-170 Grenade Launcher	15/30/60	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	400
Notes: Attaches to AG-17 or AG-19								
AS-19 Volcano	24/48/96	2d8+2	2	3	21	0	14	700
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB, Vicious								
Zhivotnoye MAT Type 2	24/48/96	2d8+2	–	3	24	0	14	600
Notes: Auto, 3RB								

ASSAULT RIFLES, BATTLE RIFLES, AND CARBINES

M50 ASSAULT RIFLE

NO. 1 'SHOGUN'

MK. XLIII
PLASMA CARBINE

AR3000

ZHIVOTNOYE
MAT TYPE 2
INFANTRY WEAPON

MK. XIB 'INVADER'
BATTLE RIFLE

AG-17
'PANZERKNACKER'

SANCTUS AC-19 'VOLCANO'
ASSAULT RIFLE

AC-19 'VOLCANO' ASSAULT RIFLE– SANCTUS (BROTHERHOOD)

The standard rifle of Brotherhood troopers, the AC-19 is chambered for 7.92mm caseless ammunition. It was the produced by Bauforce under licence from, and under supervision by, the Brotherhood's Order of Engineers. The weapon is extremely reliable, and functions flawlessly with proper maintenance. The AC-19 accommodates a number of different attachments. Most troopers use a bayonet or underslung grenade launcher, while skilled marksmen favour a highpowered scope for precision work.

ZHIVOTNOYE MAT TYPE 2 INFANTRY WEAPON (WHITESTAR)

A general-purpose assault rifle designed to be utterly reliable and capable of functioning in the most difficult of circumstances–even underwater. The weapon is more commonly known by its colloquial name, the Zhivo.

SNIPER RIFLES

Sniper rifles have a far greater effective range than assault and battle rifles. Additionally, they are more precise and capable of greater penetration. However, they are bulky, awkward to use at closer ranges, and extremely expensive due to small production runs and extremely narrow tolerances in manufacturing.

SR-50 'MANSTALKER' – GREENING, INC. (CAPITOL)

Technically little more than an extended M50, the SR-50 is a sniper's dream. In spite of the large calibre ammunition, the gun absorbs almost all recoil into the mechanism, and is fitted with an extremely effective silencer and flash suppressor, making it almost silent. The weapon, and its integrated scope, is so precise that a skilled marksman can hole a five crown piece at almost two kilometres, and it is extremely reliable. The stock collapses to make it more portable during transport.

NO. 15 'ARCHER' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

The Archer is more compact than most sniper rifles, its bullpup design shortening the weapon without shortening the barrel. A departure from the typical assembly-line production methods, it is a hand-made masterpiece weapon, with each example manufactured as a special order for an individual client. This craftsmanship, combined with the compact design, make it extremely popular with assassins and hired killers.

SR3500 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

Despite its apparent bulk, the SR3500 is a lightweight and stable weapon, constructed of shock-absorbent plastics and ceramics that help minimise recoil. Its cunning construction allows it to be sturdy and durable, without being heavy. The SR3500 is produced in such limited quantities that finding one available for sale is almost unheard of. Cybertronic citizens with roles in the SWI division are able to request the purchase of one, but this is not always granted. The weapon is fitted with a collapsible bipod and a detachable night vision scope, and has a mounting for a chain bayonet for close-quarters engagements.

SR MK. XII 'ASSAILANT' – FIELDHAUSEN ARMS (IMPERIAL)

This weapon is the primary marksman's rifle of the Imperial military. It is a powerful rifle, with the stability that comes from considerable

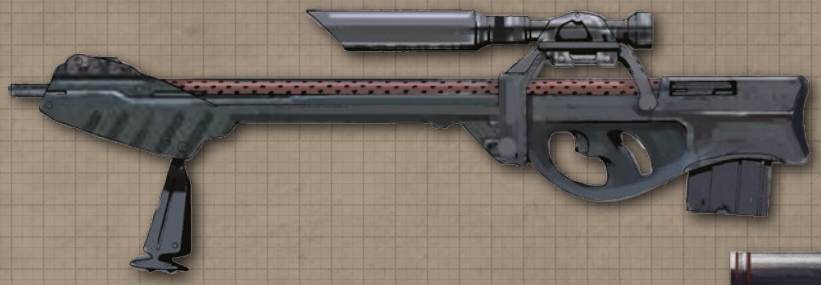
SNIPER RIFLES

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
SR-50 Manstalker	50/100/200	2d10+2	10	1	1	1	20	1000
Notes: Min Str d8, Snapfire								
15.429 pt	50/100/200	2d10	4	1	3	1	12	900
Notes: Min Str d8, Snapfire								
SR3500	50/100/200	2d10	4	3	12	C	12	2000
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB Biometric Lock, can be fitted with chain bayonet								
SR MK. XII Assailant	50/100/200	2d10+2	2	1	3	1	18	1000
Notes: Min Str d8, Snapfire								
PSG-99	50/100/200	2d10	4	3	9	0	14	1400
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, 3RB, Snapfire								
Mephisto Sniper Rifle	50/100/200	2d10	6	3	6	1	16	1400
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, 3RB, Snapfire								
Okhotnik 778	50/100/200	2d10+2	4	1	3	1	16	800
Notes: Min Str d8								

SNIPER RIFLES

SR-50 'MANSTALKER'

NO. 15 'ARCHER'

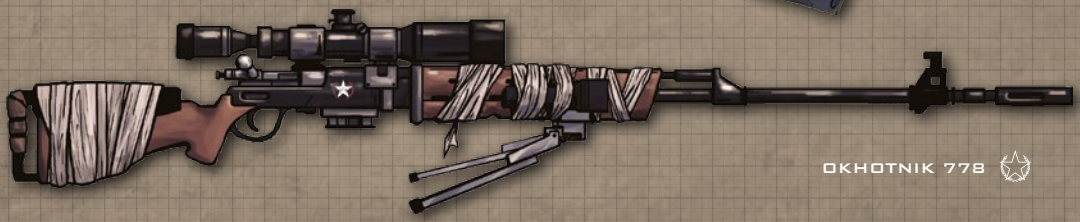


SR3500

SR MK. XII 'ASSAILANT'

PSG-99

MEPHISTO SNIPER RIFLE



OKHOTNIK 778

weight; but that same weight makes it unpopular with outsiders, who value portability as much as stopping power.

PSG-99 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

Constructed using the same techniques as other Romanov Weapons Designwerks firearms, including the angled magazine and caseless ammunition, the PSG-99 is a high-capacity, reliable, automatic sniper's rifle. It is favoured by operatives both within and outside of Bauhaus.

MEPHISTO SNIPER RIFLE–CARTEL ARMS (CARTEL)

The Mephisto was specifically designed for Doomtrooper forces and agents of the Brotherhood, and is consequently almost impossible to obtain through legitimate channels. Add to that the high cost, and you have an incredibly rare weapon. It is, however, one of the most powerful and precise rifles around, which justifies its cost.

OKHOTNIK 778 – WHITESTAR

A bolt-action rifle favoured by snipers and mutant hunters, the Okhotnik 778 is a reliable, tried and tested weapon, that packs a punch over huge distances. This gun is normally only seen above ground in the Wastelands, where its long-range accuracy is a great advantage. Two models are in circulation: those with wooden stocks, which come from the thousands uncovered decades ago in a sealed Bauhaus arms cache close to the ruins of Tiraspol; and those with metal frame stocks, which are manufactured in small quantities for Wasteland hunters in Vostmor, using a reactivated munitions factory. Both versions are equipped with telescopic sights as standard.

LIGHT MACHINE GUNS AND SQUAD AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

Light machine guns, commonly found in infantry squads to boost their firepower, are typically little more than upgraded assault rifles, built for sustained fire. Most are belt-fed, with easy-to-replace barrels to allow the operator to fire them for longer, without stopping to reload or damaging the weapon through overheating. However, this customisation comes at the cost of mobility and versatility–light machine guns are typically more cumbersome than their assault rifle counterparts are.

M606 – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

The M606 is one of the most popular light machine guns ever produced, and is a useful weapon for most combat situations. Its relatively light construction and simple design make it easy to handle, even if it is not particularly accurate. The 'trombone' gas regulator–an adjustable handle under the barrel–allows the operator to adjust the rate of fire to suit his situation.

NO. 11 'KENSAI' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

The Kensai LMG is essentially a belt-fed variant of the Shogun assault rifle. Its longer barrel and heavier construction gives it more stability for long bursts, and the rate of fire can be varied by a 'trombone' gas regulator handle. The weapon is one of the lighter LMGs on the market, though the quality of individual models does vary because of the inconsistency of Mishiman mass-production techniques.

LIGHT MACHINE GUNS AND SQUAD AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
M606	30/60/120	2d8+2	2	4	100	1	16	800
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, Snapfire								
No. 11 Kensai	30/60/120	2d8	2	4	100	2	12	700
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, Snapfire								
Tsw4000	30/60/120	2d8+2	2	4	100	C	14	1600
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, Snapfire								
Lmg MK. XIII Destroyer	30/60/120	2d10	2	4	100	1	16	800
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, Snapfire								
MG-40	30/60/120	2d10	4	5	100	0	10	1500
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, Snapfire								
AC-40 Justifier	30/60/120	2d8	2	3	100	0	14	1400
Notes: Min Str d8, Brotherhood, Auto, Snapfire, Equipped with Chainsword								
Rebrov LMG	30/60/120	2d8	2	4	100	1	15	800
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, Snapire								

LIGHT MACHINE GUNS AND SQUAD AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

TSW4000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

The Trooper Support Weapon 4000 is amongst the very finest of light machine guns. Compact construction in proprietary, lightweight materials, combined with superb manufacturing standards and cutting-edge design, make this weapon a wonder in its own right.

LMG MK. XXIII 'DESTROYER' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

As is standard amongst Lyon & Atkinson designs, the Destroyer LMG favours raw power over other considerations. This means it is unusually heavy and powerful for its class, with a terrifying recoil to match. As with most weapons produced by L&A, opinion on them is extremely divided.

MG-40 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

Essentially just a modified AG-17 with a sturdier stock, a belt-feed, and a longer barrel, the MG-40 is a typical light machine gun in most respects. The weapon utilises the same calibre and type of ammunition, but the construction is more robust in order to endure the wear of long bursts. It is a fine weapon for a range of circumstances.

AC-40 'JUSTIFIER' – SANCTUS (BROTHERHOOD)

Used almost exclusively by Inquisitors, the Justifier is a close support weapon capable of unleashing brutal firepower at short range. The internal mechanism of the Justifier is similar to that of the Volcano assault rifle. However, it does not resemble a conventional rifle: it is forearm-mounted, with a thumb-switch trigger, a broad air-cooled barrel, and an oversized chainblade, making the Justifier quite distinctive.

REBROV LIGHT MACHINE GUN (WHITESTAR)

Manufactured in bulk for Bauhaus militias, before the corporate exodus from Earth, the Rebrov is a stubby-barrelled, belt-fed light machine gun, with a built in bipod. Its short barrel means a slight reduction in accuracy, but makes it much more practical to carry around in the cramped tunnels of the Whitestar strongholds than other, comparable LMGs. The Rebrov makes up for its aiming difficulties with a high rate of fire and an outstanding reliability record.

HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND SUPPORT MACHINE GUNS

Heavy machine guns are amongst the most powerful portable automatic weapons available. To increase the effective rate of fire and keep them operating for as long as possible, they tend to have multiple rotating barrels–a 'Gatling' construction, named for a weapons designer of old Earth long before the exodus. While one barrel fires, a second barrel reloads, and a third barrel ejects an empty shell casing. This minimises wear and heat build-up on individual barrels, and allows the weapon to fire more quickly. These heavy machine guns can tear through almost any target with sufficient application of firepower.

HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND SUPPORT MACHINE GUNS

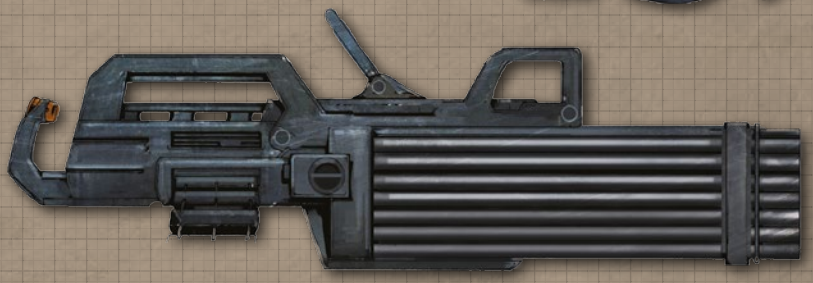
WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Improved M89	40/80/160	2d10+2	4	6	200	1	40	1000
Notes: Min Str d10, May not move and shoot, Suppresive fire only								
No 45 Dragonfire	40/80/160	2d10	4	4	200	2	21	1000
Notes: Min Str d8, May not move and shoot, Suppresive fire only								
SSW 4200P	40/80/160	2d10	6	4	200	C	24	2000
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, May not move and shoot								
HMG MK. XIXB Charger	40/80/160	2d10+2	4	6	200	1	36	1100
Notes: Min Str d10, May not move and shoot, Suppresive fire only								
MG-80	40/80/160	2d10	4	4	200	0	21	1700
Notes: Min Str d10, May not move and shoot, Suppresive fire only								
AC-41 Purifier	40/80/160	2d8+2	4	4	200	1	18	1600
Notes: Min Str d10, Brotherhood, Auto, May not move and shoot								
Purifier Flamer	Cone Template	2d6	–	1	10	1	Na	Na
Notes: Brotherhood, Attached to AC-41, Ignores Cover, Target may catch fire.								
Nova Vesna HMG	40/80/160	2d8		4	200	1	30	900
Notes: Min Str d10, Brotherhood, Auto, May not move and shoot								

HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND SUPPORT MACHINE GUNS

IMPROVED M89

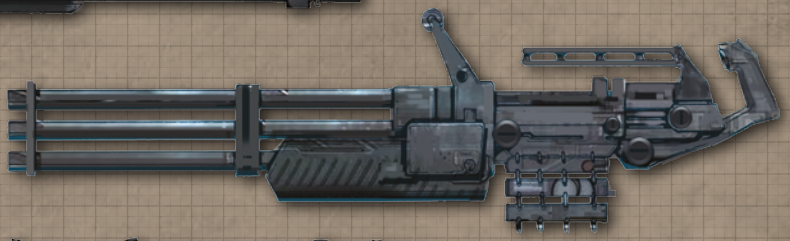
NO. 45 'DRAGONFIRE'

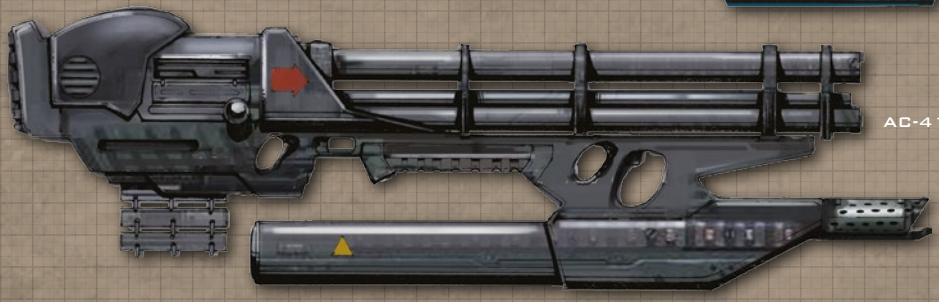
SSW4200P



HMG MK. XIXB 'CHARGER'

MG-80





AC-41 'PURIFIER'

NOVA VESNA HEAVY MACHINE GUN

IMPROVED M89 – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)
The Improved M89 is a nine-barrelled squad support weapon, originally designed for use on vehicles. The addition of a forehandle, and a shortening of the barrels, make the weapon man-portable–barely. The M89 stresses firepower over accuracy.

NO. 45 'DRAGONFIRE' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)
The Dragonfire is a unique, experimental design for a general purpose machine gun–a three-barrelled gun carried under the forearm of a powersuit. Its inaccuracy is overcome through its extreme rate of fire, ensuring that at least some shots will land on target. The barrels are tapered inwards, making the weapon slightly more compact.

SSW4200P–CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)
The Squad Support Weapon 4200 is a three-barrel weapon designed for use in a cannon pod or on a vehicle. It utilises servo-motors and electronic control systems for pin-point accuracy, firing hole-in-hole at up to 2,000 metres. The portable version (the 4200P), which is carried by infantry, is naturally only as accurate as the wielder.

HMG MK. XIXB 'CHARGER' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)
A monstrous weapon, the sixteen-barrelled Charger machine gun is not a weapon seen on the streets. Commonly mounted on vehicles, it is also the standard support weapon of Imperial's Trencher infantry, and is carried by soldiers chosen for their powerful physiques. Its extreme rate of fire and large calibre make it the single largest and heaviest infantry weapon ever made.

MG-80 – RWD (BAUHAUS)
The MG-80 is a three-barrelled heavy machine gun used for infantry support. As with most heavy machine guns, it is most effective against dense concentrations of targets, where its firepower can be used liberally and with little consideration for wasted ammunition. The weapon is too unwieldy to be easily aimed without a bipod, tripod, or vehicle mount.

AC-41 'PURIFIER' – SANCTUS (BROTHERHOOD)
The Purifier is a multirole support weapon, delivered with a detachable compact flamethrower. It has been in use by the Brotherhood's elite forces on Venus and Mars since the First Dark Legion War, and is employed by both offensive and defensive units.

NOVA VESNA HEAVY MACHINE GUN (WHITESTAR)
This heavy machine gun is found at sentry emplacements and on vehicle turrets throughout Whitestar territory–but each and every one looks different. It is the central firing mechanism that makes a Nova Vesna a Nova Vesna, and Whitestar's gunsmiths scavenge and cannibalise all kinds of barrels, stocks, loading mechanisms, sights and other parts to make each one into a working machine gun. Unusually for a heavy machine gun, very few versions of the Nova Vesna employ the Gatling design favoured by corporate gunsmiths. The single-barrelled, high-calibre design lacks the practical rate of fire of Gatling weapons, but is easier to maintain in the long-term, and each shot packs a hell of a punch.

SHOTGUNS

Shotguns, also referred to as 'close assault weapons' or CAWs, are mostly used by police and security forces, rather than militaries. They excel at defeating unarmoured foes at close ranges, typically firing a spread of pellets known as 'shot' or a heavy solid round known as a slug. Having no rifling, and firing at a low velocity, they lack range–but the effect of multiple impacts at close range is quite devastating.

Most contemporary shotguns appear to be double-barrelled, but this is not actually the case. Most shotguns have a tubular magazine, which sits below the barrel, commonly containing about a dozen shells. A true double-barrelled shotgun is significantly larger and bulkier.

M516 – COLDING ARMS (CAPITOL)
The M516S is the Capitol Security Service's standard shotgun, and is favoured by private security and law enforcement agencies, such as Luna PD. As a result, they are prolific weapons, found in the hands of law-abiding citizens and criminals alike. The M516D is a double-barrelled variant, favoured by military forces for boarding actions and close assaults.

50/50 'AIRBRUSH' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)
This double-barrelled shotgun is favoured for its light weight, large capacity, and relatively low cost. However, these advantages come at the cost of quality–misfires are common, and there are even reports of ammunition explosions. This, coupled with the heavy recoil, makes it less than popular amongst those who can afford better.

SA-SG7200I–CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)
The SG7000 series was developed for SWI agents working in urban areas. The fully-automatic SG7200 demonstrated problems uncharacteristic of Cybercurity weapons–a tendency to jam or misfire. The SA-SG7200I was developed to overcome this, stripping away the automatic fire capability to produce an extremely dependable weapon. It is rarely seen outside of Cybertronic's SWI department.

MK. XIV 'MANDIBLE' – BARTHOLOMEW & GRENDEL (IMPERIAL)
This highly successful design was soon adopted as the weapon of choice for close quarters by Imperial forces, and subsequently by other combatants across the system. Its high magazine capacity, automatic fire capability, and heavy gauge shells come at the cost of considerable weight, making it far less popular amongst street gangs and freelance operations.

SHOTGUNS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
M516S	12/24/48	1–3d6	–	1	6	1	10	600
Notes: Min Str d6, Knockdown, Shotgun								
M516D	10/20/40	1–3d8		2	6	1	10	600
Notes: Min Str d6, Knockdown, Shotgun								
50/50 Airbrush	12/24/48	1–3d6		2	8	2	8	600
Notes: Min Str d6, Knockdown, Semi-Auto, Shotgun								
Sg7000	12/24/48	1–3d6		3	12	C	8	1200
Notes: Min Str d6, Knockdown, Shotgun								
MK. XIV Mandible	12/24/48	1–3d6		3	18	1	14	700
Notes: Min Str d8, Backlash, Knockdown, Shotgun, 3RB								
HG-14	12/24/48	1–3d6		2	6	1	10	1100
Notes: Min Str d8, Knockdown, Semi-Auto, Shotgun								
HG-14 Sawn-Off	10/20/40	1–3d6		2	6	1	8	500
Notes: Min Str d6, Knockdown, Semi-Auto, Shotgun								
Bryzgi Sawn-Off	5/10/20	1–3d6		1	2	1	6	700
Notes: Min Str d6, Knockdown, Shotgun								
Zhukov 4 Tunnel Clearer	5/10/20	1–3d8		3	9	1	16	700
Notes: Min Str d8, Knockdown, Shotgun, 3RB								

HG-14 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

The conventional HG-14 shotgun is a popular weapon with freelance security forces, but its popularity comes as much from the ease with which it can be converted to the 'street' version of the weapon as anything else. Sawing off the stock, scope mount, and part of the barrel can make for a more convenient weapon for illicit activities.

BRYZGI SAWN-OFF (WHITESTAR)

Frequently described as 'a madman's weapon', this sawn-off shotgun has a barrel cut away almost to nothing, with a range so short you can smell your target's breath. Fire it in an enclosed area, however, and it is almost impossible to miss; anyone or anything in front of a bryzgi finds themselves filled with lead. Salvaged shotguns of all kinds contribute the parts to make these weapons, and the name 'bryzgi sawn-off' is a catchall term for virtually all sawn-off shotguns.

ZHUKOV 4 TUNNEL CLEARER (WHITESTAR)

The combat shotgun known to Whitestar soldiers as 'the Plumber' – because it clears unsightly blockages–is a favourite for tunnel fighting. Its beauty is in its simplicity: point its huge-bored barrels at an enclosed space full of enemies, pull the trigger, and let the plumber do the rest. On the down side, its wide-spraying field of fire makes friendly fire a distinct possibility if the shooter is not careful where he is aiming. It also has a very short range–the joke goes that to hit an enemy at long range with the Zhukov, you take a run-up and throw the gun.

FLAMERS

Flamers, or flamethrowers, unleash a spray of pressurised flammable chemicals. Ignited by a pilot light at the weapon's muzzle, these burning chemicals spread across and stick to targets. They are devastating anti-personnel weapons, but most have little effect on heavily armoured targets.

Most corporate flamers employ a version of the 'naplasma' accelerant made famous by the Cartel's 'Gehenna Puker' plasma flamer, though rarely in such heavy concentrations or at such high temperatures. Civilian models–used to clear vermin, and in certain land-management tasks in agriculture–tend to employ cheaper natural gas fuels instead.

Each corporation–and their counterparts in the Dark Legion–manufactures its own particular designs of flamer, but the specific details do not change the weapons' basic function. Civilian flamers cover civilian designs, used for utilitarian purposes and turned against enemies in times of desperation. Military Flamers are sturdier designs that use hotter-burning fuels to eliminate foes rather than vermin.

SHOTGUNS AND FLAMERS

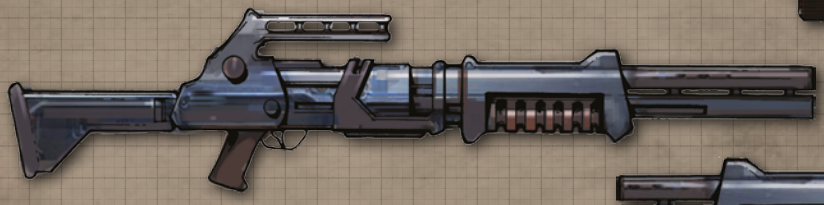
M516S

M516D

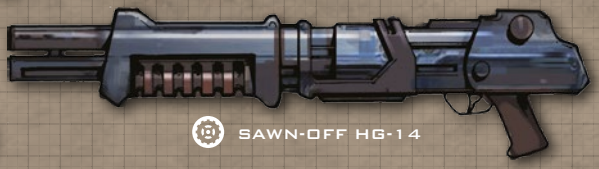
TAMBU KEIRETSU 50/50
'AIRBRUSH'

SG7000 / SA-SG7200I

MK. XIV 'MANDIBLE'



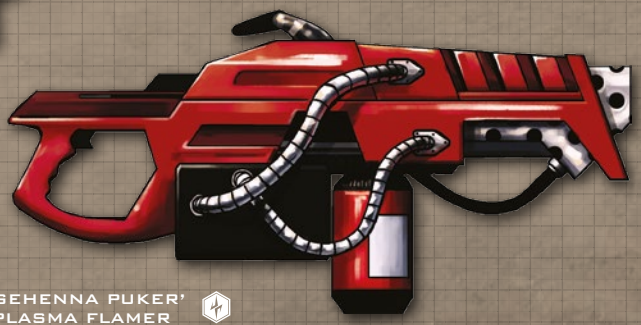
HG-14



SAWN-OFF HG-14

BRYZGI SAWN-OFF

ZHUKOV 4 TUNNEL CLEARER



CA-451 'GEHENNA PUKER'
HEAVY PLASMA FLAMER

FLAMERS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Light Flamer	Cone	2d6		1	6	1	10	900
Notes: Fire, affects least armoured area								
Flamer	Cone	3d6		1	12	1	16	1000
Notes: Min Str d6, Fire, affects least armoured area								
Ca-451 Gehenna Puker	Cone	3d8		1	12	1	50	1400
Notes: Min Str d10, Fire, affects least armoured area.								

CA-451 'GEHENNA PUKER' HEAVY PLASMA FLAMER–CARTEL ARMS

The Gehenna Puker is an enormous high-tech incinerator unit, that spews out streams of highly-concentrated plasma flame, burning everything in its path to cinders. It was designed to incinerate some of the more resilient breeds of Dark Legion creature, and has become a common sight on battlefields due to its effectiveness.

Against the Dark Legion, these weapons are used as often on the bodies of the fallen as against the enemy, immolating remains quickly to ensure that they are not reclaimed and repurposed by humanity's greatest foe.

GRENADES, MISSILES, AND LAUNCHERS

Humanity has been employing explosive devices for a long time, and this current age of warfare is no exception. Soldiers and security operatives have access to a wide range of grenades and missiles, allowing under barrel grenade launchers and rocket launchers to fulfil a variety of roles.

Rocket launchers use the Gunnery skill instead of the Shooting skill. Thrown grenades and grenade launchers use the Throwing and Shooting skills, respectively.

The typical fragmentation–or 'frag' – grenade is the most common form of portable explosive in use amongst corporate militaries. However, it is far from the only kind. Specialised charges that produce disorienting bursts of light and noise, or clouds of smoke or gas, are commonly employed by law enforcement and security agencies, and militaries develop specialist warheads for more unusual targets. The most common are listed here.

Anti-personnel grenades use a mixture of concussive force and projected shrapnel to injure and kill foes across a wide area. Different corporations employ different configurations, but the end results are much the same in any case. The Dark Legion's Black Grenades are similar, but use Symmetry-tainted shrapnel to inflict lingering wounds.

Anti-Armour grenades are compact shaped charges, designed to focus their explosive force into an armoured surface.

Incendiary grenades use pyrophoric metallic powders to produce short-lived, intense flames that can melt metal and sear the flesh of anything that gets too close.

Gas grenades expel clouds of toxic gas that incapacitate foes.

Stun grenades generate a blinding flash of light and a deafening sound to daze enemies temporarily.

Smoke grenades generate thick clouds of smoke to generate a concealing screen. Often, the smoke will be coloured, so they can double as signalling devices.

DPAT-9 'DEUCE' ROCKET LAUNCHER–FEDERATED ARMS AND MUNITIONS (CAPITOL)

The Dual-purpose, Electrically-calibrated, Unguided Chamber-fed Explosive (DEUCE) system was the first successful attempt to design a Semi-Auto, man-portable rocket launcher after the rise of the Dark Symmetry. The design is dated, but it remains a functional and effective example of the innovative efforts of Capitol's engineers.

NO 86A5 'DAIMYO' ROCKET LAUNCHER–TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

This is an extremely light and slim rocket launcher, built in keeping with the Tambu keiretsu's philosophy of cheap, lightweight, and easy-to-use firearms. The Semi-Auto Daimyo is loaded with a hanging magazine of seven rocket propelled grenades.

SSW5500 ROCKET LAUNCHER–CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

The Squad Support Weapon 5500 is an extremely simple design, considering its Cybertronic origins. The entire weapon consists of only ten parts, making it extremely simple to maintain and operate. The proportions of the weapon, intended for heavily-augmented Chasseur infantry, can be somewhat awkward to use for smaller or weaker operators.

GRENADES, MISSILES, AND LAUNCHERS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Anti-Personnel	5/10/20	3d6	–	1	1	0	1	50
Notes: MBT								
Black Grenades	5/10/20	3d6	–	1	1	Na	1	100
Notes: MBT, Illegal								
Anti-Armour	5/10/20	2d8	6	1	1	0	1	50
Notes: SBT								
Incendiary	5/10/20	3d6	2	1	1	0	1	100
Notes: Fire, SBT								
Gas	5/10/20	3d6		1	1	0	1	100
Notes: Contagion, MBT								
Stun	5/10/20	3d6		1	1	0	1	100
Notes: Knockdown, MBT								
Smoke	5/10/20	Na		1	1	0	1	50
Notes: MBT, Blocks line of sight for 3 rounds								
Dpat-9 Deuce Rocket Launcher	24/48/96	2d6	2	2	6	1	20	600
Notes: Min Str d8, Launchers, Snapfire								
No 86A5 Daimyo Rocket Launcher	24/48/96	1d6		1	7	2	16	500
Notes: Min Str d8, Launcher, Snapifre								
Ssw500 Rocket Launcher	24/48/96	2d6	2	2	5	C	50	1500
Notes: Min Str d12, Launcher, Snapfire								
Rl MK. XIIC Southpaw Rocket Launcher	24/48/96	3d6		3	9	2	40	800
Notes: Min Str d10, Launcer, May not move and fire								
Arg-17 Rocket Launcher	24/48/96	2d6		2	6	0	20	1200
Notes: Min Str d8, Launcher, SNapfire								
Pushkin Rocket Launcher	24/48/96	1d6	2	2	4	1	18	500
Notes: Min Str d6, Launcer, Snapfire								

RL MK. XIIC 'SOUTHPAW' ROCKET LAUNCHER–FIELDHAUSEN ARMS (IMPERIAL)

The most powerful of all man-portable rocket launchers, the Southpaw is a truly fearsome weapon. The bulky munitions accelerate to more than twice the speed of sound and impact with colossal force, which alone would be enough to incapacitate most light targets. However, if this proved insufficient, the Southpaw is also fully automatic, unleashing salvoes of rockets in a short space of time.

ARG-17 ROCKET LAUNCHER–RWD (BAUHAUS)

Combining a drum magazine in a bullpup configuration, the engineers at Romanov Weapon Designwerks succeeded in creating one of the most user-friendly and accurate rocket launchers available in the system. It is superb in virtually every regard, and costs as much as you might expect such quality to cost.

PUSHKIN ROCKET LAUNCHER (WHITESTAR)

Made out of repurposed plasti-steel fluid ducting, and the blasting mechanisms from industrial mining equipment, the Pushkin is a marvel of the Whitestar bricoleur's art. They make a lot of them

MISSILE LAUNCHERS

DPAT-9 'DEUCE'
ROCKET LAUNCHER

NO 86A5 'DAIMYO'
ROCKET LAUNCHER

SSW5500
ROCKET LAUNCHER

RL MK XIIC 'SOUTHPAW'
ROCKET LAUNCHER

ARG-17
ROCKET LAUNCHER

PUSHKIN ROCKET
LAUNCHER

too–nearly every stronghold militia has at least one of these lying around. Deceptively simple, the Pushkin can launch rockets armed with a variety of warheads, including anti-personnel, anti-armour, and knockout gas payloads.

AUTOCANNONS

Light autocannons, designed for use by individual combatants, date back to the First Dark Legion War, when they were developed by engineers working for the Cartel to provide the firepower needed for one warrior to take on many foes effectively. The technological base for these weapons was subsequently disseminated to the corporations, who developed their own variants. However, the original Cartel designs remain amongst the most popular. Most personal autocannons suffer at long range, due to the shorter barrels necessary to make them man-portable.

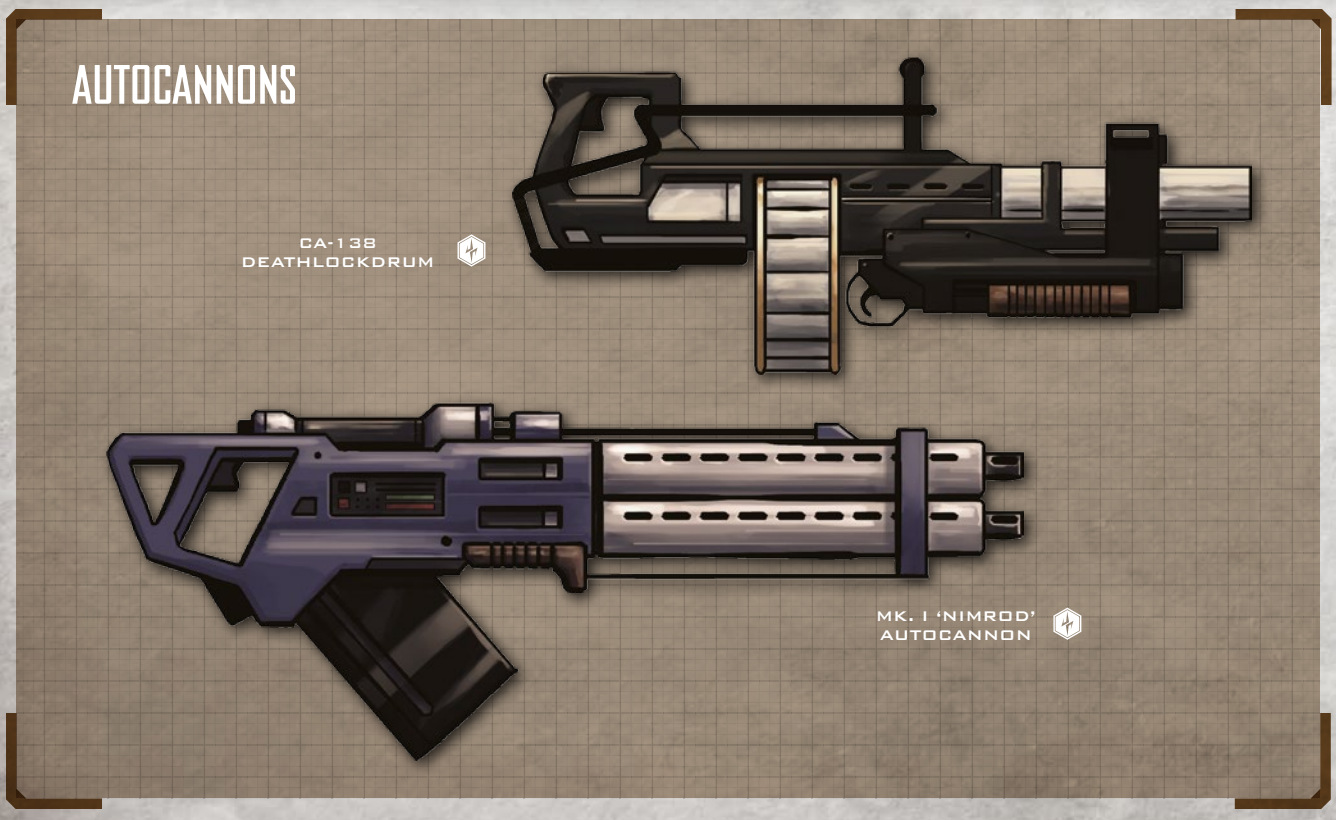
Autocannons, being the largest of man portable weapons, and typically installed on vehicles, require the Gunnery skill instead of the Shooting skill.

CA-138 DEATHLOCKDRUM–CARTEL ARMS (CARTEL)

This is a single-barrel.50 calibre autocannon with integrated grenade launcher for engaging multiple targets. This particular combination of functions makes the weapon extremely popular with troops fighting in urban areas or assaulting fortifications. While Cartel Arms is the registered designer and manufacturer, both the Homebuilder Bauforce and Imperial

AUTOCANNONS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
CA-138 Deathlockdrum	50/100/200	3d8	4	6	300	2	22	1100
Notes: Min Str d12, Auto, Snapfire, 3RB, Uses Gunnery Skill								
CA-138 GL	15/30/60	As Grenade	–	1	3	1	2	400
Notes: Attaches to CA-138 Deathlock								
Mk 1 Nimrod	50/100/200	3d10	4	6	300	2	18	1200
Notes: Min Str d10, Auto, Snapfire, 3RB, Uses Gunnery Skill								



VEHICULAR WEAPONS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Luna PD MMG	30/60/120	2d8+1		3	1	200	100	1000
Notes: Auto, 3RB								
Defence Battery	60/120/240	4d12	5	3	1	200	250	3000
Notes: Heavy Weapon								
Ship Cannons	60/120/240	5d10	20	3	1	200	250	5000
Notes: Heavy Weapon								
Anti-Ship Missiles	120/240/480	6d12	100	1	1	1	50	2000
Notes: Heavy Weapon, LBT								

Fieldhausen Arms companies manufacture their own versions.

MK. I 'NIMROD' AUTOCANNON– LYON & ATKINSON (CARTEL)

A relatively compact 20mm autocannon, the Nimrod maintains a high rate of fire using twin over-and-under barrels that alternate between firing and reloading. Manufactured by Lyon & Atkinson under an agreement with the Cartel, it is a common weapon amongst Doomtrooper gunners, who make full use of both its portability and the destruction it can inflict.

VEHICULAR WEAPONS

Vehicle mounted weapons, whether those listed here or those from the *Savage Worlds* rulebook use the Gunnery skill.

ARMOUR

The violent universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** is one where survival is as much a matter of what you wear as what you do. The corporations strive to produce armour that can protect their forces from the weapons of their enemies, and weapons that can overcome the armour of their foes. This perpetual arms race is hindered by the insidious technological corruption of the Dark Symmetry, but nothing can stop progress entirely.

Numerous forms of armour are widely-produced in fairly standard forms. These common armours are associated with no specific faction; rather, each corporation produces its own version.

BALLISTIC NYLON CLOTHING

While it is hardly the most glamorous of materials, ballistic nylon panels can be sewn into the lining of almost any item of clothing, only slightly increasing the weight while providing some protection against dangerous mishaps and acts of aggression. Garments including, or made entirely of, ballistic nylon are commonly found in factories and other places of heavy industry, as the fabric makes for sturdy protective clothing. People living under the threat of violent crime may own several such items simply for peace of mind. The rules provided represent a coverall, long coat, or complete suit containing ballistic nylon panels. Individual corporations have their own proprietary versions of ballistic nylon, such as Capitol's Impervium. Ballistic nylon can be quite warm to wear and its use in tropical environments may, at the GM's discretion, lead to difficulty modifiers.

The popular Capitol designed bullet-proof vest is perfect for law enforcement.

BULLETPROOF VEST

A sturdy vest of ballistic nylon with layers of padding and pockets to hold small plastic or ceramic plates, a bulletproof vest provides moderate protection for the torso, without being too bulky or heavy. Most people who expect the possibility of violence in their work will own a bulletproof vest, whether wearing it openly as a sign of their preparedness, or concealing it beneath other clothing.

SHOULDER PADS

At some point in the past, pauldrons, or shoulder pads, became a popular way to defend oneself. Quick to don and useful for protecting the body and face in a fight, a shoulder pad or two is a common sight on those expecting trouble, and those who want to look like they are expecting trouble. The lightest versions are impact-resistant plastics, while the heaviest versions incorporate multiple layers of military-grade ceramic composites. They are favoured among soldiers and warriors for the ease with which they can be strapped into place, and for the storage space they often conceal beneath their armoured surfaces; many military pads instead contain space for basic medkits or spare ammunition.

HARD HAT

Normally a simple plastic shell with a padded lining, hard hats provide a relatively small amount of protection, and are designed more to protect against accidental injury than gunshot wounds. Anyone working in an industrial environment will likely have access to such a hat, as will individuals who ride bicycles or motorcycles.

COMBAT HELMET

Designed to protect mostly from the concussion and shrapnel of explosives, a combat helmet is a valuable thing to have in a fight. Most suits of full combat armour include a helmet, but obtaining a simple one separately is a relatively cheap way of improving one's survival chances in battle.

BAUHAUS

As with everything that comes from a Bauhaus factory, its combat armour is sturdy, reliable, of extremely high quality, and very expensive. The corporation does not make military-grade armour widely available, but the strong military tradition within Bauhaus means that it is far from inaccessible. All Bauhaus armour is manufactured from proprietary ceramics and alloys, and lined with shock-absorbent quilting. All Hussar and Guardsmen suits can store one basic medkit without increasing their armour's encumbrance.

Bauhaus citizens can attempt to purchase the armours listed below through legal sources–normally a local quartermaster. Other characters can only try to purchase Bauhauser armour through the black market, it is not sold through legitimate channels to outsiders.

HUSSAR MK. IV

This armour is standard issue for the Bauhaus military, and is produced in sufficiently large quantities that even reserve members of the military are issued with their own personal suit. Failing to ensure that the suit is properly maintained is a serious offence. The broad shoulder pads contain a few medical supplies and some spare ammunition, while the belt contains clips for tool pouches, holsters, and similar devices. In colder climes, the armour is worn with a greatcoat, with shoulder pads worn over the coat.

HUSSAR MK. V

Distinguished from the Mk. IV by a heavier and sturdier breastplate, and more detailed embellishment, the Mk. V suit is reserved for officers, certain military orders, and the household guard of minor nobles.

GUARDSMAN MK. III

The finest personal armour manufactured by Bauhaus, outside of bespoke suits crafted by master artisans, the Guardsman Mk. III is issued to the household guard of the wealthiest nobles, and to the most elite military orders and Special Forces units. Household guardsmen wear elaborate cresthelms of their houses, while Special Forces tend to wear grim, skull-mask helms made famous by the Venusian Rangers. It is also issued to Bauhauser Doomtroopers.

CRESTHELM

More a badge of loyalty than anything else, a Cresthelm denotes particular affiliation to a particular order or noble house. It provides no additional protection compared to a normal helmet, but is intricately crafted to resemble the heads of beasts and monsters, and inlaid with precious stones and fine metalwork. It is easy to spot a wealthy nobleman by the ornate helm he wears. It is not uncommon for nobles to own a lightweight Faux Cresthelm as a fashion accessory. These cost the same as a regular Cresthelm but offer no protection.

BROTHERHOOD

As an organisation geared towards warfare, many within the Brotherhood go about their day-to-day duties clad in reinforced or armoured clothing. The threat of the Dark Symmetry is everywhere, and protecting people from that threat is the responsibility of every member of the Brotherhood, from the lowliest missionary to the Cardinal himself. Most suits of armour used by the Brotherhood have similar distinctive features: broad, rounded shoulder pads, ornate helms, and some form of mounting to carry a Book of Law.

Many are also designed to accommodate a power stabiliser for wearers who rely upon the Art, and most incorporate technological innovations developed by the Order of Engineers that distinguish it from the armour of the corporations. The most common of these advancements are the blessed hydraulics and sanctified electronics

hidden beneath the sleek outer shells. The hydraulics support the wearer's movements, allowing him to move more freely than the armour's weight and bulk might otherwise suggest, while numerous electronic systems monitor the wearer's life signs during battle, and are tied in to both an automed system and a tiny device known as a Cremator. This latter device injects the body with chemicals that incinerate the body after death, preventing the wearer's remains being turned against humanity by the twisted science and vile sorcery of the Dark Legion. Further, all Brotherhood armour that incorporate helmets include respirators.

Brotherhood-specific equipment is not available on the open market, and is illegal to sell. It is provided as required to members of the Brotherhood. Costs provided are for illegally-obtained versions Armoured Vestments Though appearing as simple robes, these vestments are layered with ballistic cloth and light ceramic plates to provide limited protection from small weapons. These robes are worn by many within the Brotherhood, and some taking to the battlefield supplement these vestments with helms, heavy shoulder pads, and other pieces of armour. Armoured vestments do not incorporate the hydraulics and electronics found in other Brotherhood armour.

BELIEVER ARMOUR

Consisting of layers of padding, ballistic cloth, and solid armoured plates, these sturdy armoured suits are functionally comparable to the combat armour worn by corporate infantry. The broad, curved shoulder pads and ornate helms are distinctive, and bear a resemblance to the armour worn by Inquisitors.

INQUISITORIAL BATTLEDRESS

Built upon a foundation of armoured vestments and heavy padding, the ceramic composite plates, distinctive peaked helm, and sloping, curved shoulder pads present an iconic silhouette. Inquisitorial battledress is resilient and highly effective at repelling most small arms fire. It is normally white with a crimson trim, but Inquisitors have great latitude for determining their personal livery, with only black reserved for Inquisitors Majoris, who can also be distinguished by the double-layered shoulder pads. Inquisitorial battledress is designed so that a power stabiliser can be worn comfortably.

QUIETUS ARMOUR

This armour is composed of close-fitting ballistic cloth and lightweight padding, overlaid with hard-wearing robes and the sealed helms and curved shoulder pads common to many Brotherhood warriors. The few rigid components are made of lightweight ceramics, and the entire suit is designed to encumber and hinder the wearer as little as possible. The long cloak–in a matte black or other dark shade, like the rest of the suit–is designed to break up the silhouette of the Mortificator, making him appear larger than he actually is, or to obfuscate his movements during an attack. Quietus Armour is provides an additional +2 to Stealth when used at night.

CAPITOL

Capitolian armour is widely available under licence to the general public, unlike the combat armour of the other corporations, though the cost of top-end body armour is such that only private security firms and the wealthy can easily afford these items. Designer body armour is as much a fashion statement as a fine suit or one-of-a-kind dress, and one more likely to keep you alive in the worst parts of Capitol's cities.

All Capitol body armour is constructed in more or less the same way. It consists of two or more layers of Impervium Ultra-weave, a proprietary ballistic fabric manufactured by Universal Textiles, between which are sandwiched layers of Adrax impact foam. Additional protection comes from ceramic plates and layers of impact-resistant plastics.

HARDBACK

Produced by Hardback Systems, this is the single most commonly seen armour on the streets of Capitolian settlements. Used primarily by Capitol's Armed Interdiction Police forces, it consists of a thick vest of overlapping layers of Impervium, a pair of shoulder pads, and an Impervium-reinforced cap. The trousers and boots also include layers of Impervium. Designer versions are also available, often costing significantly more (double or triple the price) but providing no more protection, to sate the desires of the young and rich of San Dorado.

HFMPS-93 (TORTOISE MK. 1)

Standard issue for Capitol's Light Infantry, and the warriors of the Free Marines and Freedom Brigades, the Tortoise Mk. I is available commercially, but lacking some of the supplementary systems found in the military-grade version. The armour consists of multiple layers of Impervium and Adrax, overlaid with plates of impact-resistant plastics on the torso, arms, and legs, and fitted with high-impact angular shoulder pads. The left pad contains a basic medkit, while the right pad contains webbing to carry additional ammunition. The military version also incorporates a system for monitoring the wearer's vital signs and physical condition, recording the information on the magnetic tape clipped to the soldier's dog tags–a personal 'black box recorder' of a sort. Medical supplies and ammo must be purchased separately and add to encumbrance normally.

CYBERTRONIC

The most common forms of Cybertronic armour are not armour per se. While Cybertronic does manufacture personal body armour–often incorporating sophisticated electronic systems–the bulk of the protection produced by Cybertronic is designed to go under the skin, rather than over it. The Cybertronic armours listed below are implants, and thus have no encumbrance value. However, the armour cannot be removed, and it can only be equipped through extensive surgery, which is included in the Cost.

SUBDERMAL ARMOUR

Consisting of panels of flexible neoplastic inserted between the muscle and skin, subdermal armour provides relatively light protection, but is completely invisible to both the naked eye and most forms of detection, and imposes absolutely no hindrance to the movements of the owner. Subdermal armour stacks with all other armour types including military armour.

TITANIUM PLATE IMPLANTS

Normally reserved for soldiers and security operatives, titanium plating, sometimes dubbed 'steel skin', is a combination of high-tensile metal implants and biochemical treatment that make the owner's flesh comparable to military-grade combat armour. A sixty percent loss of tactile response is the normal cost. A deadening of nerves is a natural consequence of turning one's skin to armour, though some areas of the body, such as the finger-tips, are left untreated for practical reasons.

This type is used by the elite soldiers when facing dangerous and deadly missions.

IMPERIAL

Imperial combat armour is, for the most part, straightforward and rugged gear, designed for harsh conditions. It is bulky, but cheap to manufacture and reliable enough in even extreme conditions.

MK. I LIGHT PERSONAL PROTECTION SUIT

This harness covers the entire torso, as well as providing knee and elbow caps, calf and shin guards, armoured gloves, and large single-layer shoulder pads. Each rigid piece is made of durable ceramic composites, worn over a bodysuit of ballistic nylon. It comes with a simple helmet of the same ceramic composites, which is normally fitted with a rebreather. It is relatively cheap and simple to manufacture, and is widely used both in Imperial's armed forces, and in mercenary and freelance groups outfitted by Imperial.

MK. II MEDIUM COMBAT ARMOUR

This harness uses denser, more durable ceramic composites than the Mk. I. Its shoulder pads are narrower, and have more steeply splashed edges than those of most Imperial armour, making it easy to distinguish at a glance.

MK. III HEAVY ASSAULT COMBAT ARMOUR

This is the top of the line in conventional body armour, worn exclusively by regimental officers and elite special forces soldiers. It is similar to the Mk. II, but incorporates broad twin-layer shoulder pads and thicker plating for added protection in heavy combat situations.

BALLISTIC TRENCHCOAT

Normally worn over armour, with the shoulder pads layered over the top, the ballistic trenchcoat is a common addition to almost all Imperial armour, and provides modest protection when worn in conjunction with a uniform rather than a combat harness. Many Imperial soldiers fighting in hot or humid conditions often discard the armoured bodysuit and use the trenchcoat instead, as it is less restrictive and allows air to flow around the soldier's body more freely. There is also another version of the Ballistic coat that is lined for added warmth. At the GM's discretion, possession of a Ballistic Trenchcoat may exempt the wearer from some weather related penalties.

MISHIMA

Mishiman armour is undergoing something of a revolution, with most samurai adopting heavier, power-assisted suits of armour (and correspondingly more powerful weaponry) over the unpowered armour of previous generations. As they have for centuries, less-privileged Mishimans must make do with simpler armour, if they can obtain it at all; for a long time, only samurai were permitted to wear armour.

Mishiman armour is not available on the open market, and can only be obtained illegally outside the Mishima corporation.

ARMOR

ARMOUR	FACTION	ARMOR	COST	WGT	CORRUPT	NOTES
Ballstic Nylon Clothing	Any	+2	500	8	Na	Covers arms, legs, chest
Bulletproof Vest	Any	+4	600	8	Na	Covers chest
Shoulder Pads (Light/Civilian)	Any	+1	600	6	Na	Covers arms, 50% chance to protect head
Shoulder Pads (Heavy/Civilian)	Any	+2	700	8	Na	Covers arms, 50% chance to protect head
Shoulder Pads (Light/Military)	Any	+1	700	6	Na	Covers arms, 75% chance to protect head
Shoulder Pads (Medium/Military)	Any	+2	900	8	Na	Covers arms, 75% chance to protect head
Shoulder Pads (Heavy/Military)	Any	+3	1000	10	Na	Covers arms, 75% chance to protect head
Hard Hat	Any	+1	400	2	Na	Covers head
Combat Helmet	Any	+2	600	4	Na	Covers head
Hussar MK. IV	Bauhaus	+6	1800	20	Na	Whole body protection
Hussar MK. V	Bauhaus	+8	2000	25	Na	Whole body protection
Guardsman MK. III	Bauhaus	+8	2500	35	Na	Whole body protection
Cresthelm	Bauhaus	+1	200	2	Na	Covers head
Armoured Vestments	Brotherhood	+2	1000	10	Na	Covers arms, legs, chest
Believer Armour	Brotherhood	+6	1800	20	0	Whole body protection
Inquisitorial Battledress	Brotherhood	+8	2400	35	0	Whole body protection
Quietus Armour	Brotherhood	+4	1600	15	0	Whole body protection
Hardback	Capitol	+4	1000	20	Na	Whole body protection
HFMPS-93 (Tortoise MK. 1)	Capitol	+6	1500	30	0	Whole body protection
Subdermal Armour	Cybertronic	+1	1600	0	C	Whole body protection
Titanium Plate Implants	Cybertronic	+2	2700	0	C	Whole body protection
MK. I Light Personal Protection Suit	Imperial	+6	1200	30	Na	Whole body protection
MK. II Medium Combat Armour	Imperial	+8	1600	45	Na	Whole body protection
MK. III Heavy Combat Armour	Imperial	+10	1800	50	Na	Whole body protection
Ballistic Trenchcoat	Imperial	+2	600	8	Na	Covers arms, legs, chest
Ashigaru Pads	Mishima	+4	800	10	Na	Covers arms, legs, chest
Sode Battlesuit	Mishima	+6	1000	15	Na	Covers arms, legs, chest

ASHIGARU PADS

Ashigaru peasant-soldiers employ only this lightweight armour, and no samurai would ever be seen wearing it. It consists of a light ceramic breastplate, greaves, and vambraces, overlaid on a suit of ballistic nylon padding. Most ashigaru go helmetless, wearing a simple headband, but many supplement the armour with a simple combat helmet.

SODE BATTLESUIT

For centuries, the standard armour of samurai consisted of a cunningly constructed suit of layered ceramic and metal plates, thickly padded to absorb impact. These days, it is favoured by lower-ranking samurai and by impoverished ronin who lack the contacts and resources to obtain anything better. Samurai armour of all kinds is heavily customised to suit the wearer's tastes and heritage. The suit does not contain a helmet as standard–many samurai prefer to enter battle able to look their enemies in the eye.

VEHICLES

While many of the vehicles from the *Savage Worlds* rulebook are applicable to ***Mutant Chronicles***, there are a few vehicles and spacecraft that are common or iconic. These are represented below. Vehicles here use the Driving skill, unless they are marked as an Aircraft or VTOL, in which case they use Piloting. Vehicular weapons use the Gunnery skill.

TERRESTRIAL VEHICLES

These are vehicles that are restricted to the ground or local atmosphere.

INDUSTRIAL LIFTER

A bipedal engineering vehicle, used for lifting and carrying heavy loads across workshops and warehouses.

ARMOURED SECURITY VAN

A toughened vehicle designed for carrying loads of precious cargo, like money. Similar vehicles have a refitted rear for passengers, which are used to deploy private security forces or riot police.

LUNA PD PURSUIT CAR

A high-end vehicle designed for high speed pursuits, and fitted with a pair of assault rifles below the headlights for shooting at escaping criminals. Luna PD maintains a small force of these vehicles alongside its more traditional patrol cars.

SPACECRAFT

These are vehicles capable of operating outside of local atmosphere. They use the Piloting skill exclusively, while vehicular weapons use the Gunnery skill.

SHUTTLE

One of a number of fairly common designs found across the solar system, shuttles are simple craft designed for travel to orbital stations, between asteroid-complexes, and other short-haul journeys.

FREIGHTER

These rugged designs form the bulk of each corporation's space fleet. Used for hauling large amounts of cargo between worlds, they form the backbone of interplanetary trade. The most common design is a relic of pre-Fall technology, designed by Imperial engineers and mass-produced by Capitol in the days before the rise of the Dark Symmetry. These craft are ancient, but durable and dependable enough to withstand the rigours of interplanetary travel.

VOIDFIGHTER

This voidfighter–the Mishiman Suzumebachi-class Interceptor–is one of the most commonly manufactured light combat spacecraft in the solar system. Manufactured to a high standard by the Amida keiretsu on Mars, it is heavily favoured by samurai fighter pilots for its agility and responsiveness. Due to the production numbers, it is also one of the most numerous military surplus voidfighters on the market, favoured for space defence by mercenaries and freelance freight companies.

FRIGATE

A design dating back eight centuries, the Independence-class frigate was long a mainstay of the Capitolian Navy until replaced by the more recent Freedom-class. Most of the remaining Independence frigates in service are part of the navy reserve, but a significant portion of them were decommissioned or sold off to subsidiaries, mercenaries, or freelance groups–typically with the weapons stripped out. Ex-military Independence frigates are usually armed with weapons fitted by the new owners, salvaged from derelicts, or sourced separately from another corporation.

MARSHAL KRZYSZTOF RUDNICKI
VENUSIAN RANGER

Marshal Krzysztof Rudnicki is considered one of the best trackers and investigators in the Venusian Rangers. He is assigned to the toughest cases to track down the worst villains and Heretics of the Dark Legion in Heimburg and the surrounding areas. A seasoned fighter, he is well used to having to operate without support or backup, but so far that has never stopped him from bringing in his targets, dead or alive.

Thanks to Krzysztof Rudnicki.

The Imperial Barnabus shuttle is a luxury few can afford.

A couple of years back, though, he got into a fight with the infamous Heimburg Carver, a twisted Heretic and serial killer who preyed on the young men and women of Heimburg in service of Semai, the Dark Lord of Spite. The encounter–which ended when the Carver fled–almost cost Rudnicki his life, and he spent several months recovering in hospital. The Carver came to the hospital one night to finish what it had started, but Marshal Rudnicki was prepared. Even in his weakened state, his ambush was successful–he killed the Carver and cemented his reputation as one tough Ranger.

MARSHALL RUDNICKI

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Tracking d4

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14 (8); **Willpower:** 5

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (Major–Support Bauhaus Military

Edges: Marksman, Quick Draw, Rub Some Dirt on It, Venusian Ranger Lifepath

Gear: Mk.3 Guardsman Armour (8), HG14 Shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1–3d6, RoF 2, Shots 6, Shotgun, Knockdown, Semi-Auto), MP-105 (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 3, Shots 8, AP 1, 3RB), Machete (Str+d6).

Marshal Krzysztof Rudnicki, Venusian Ranger, bent down on one knee in the alley to examine the trail of blood from the latest victim. His quarry had definitely passed this way. Marshal Rudnicki had been on the trail of 'The Heimburg Carver', a murderer who had been preying on the young men and women of Heimburg with wicked knives. So far he had killed twelve, and Rudnicki strongly suspected the killer was in league with the Dark Legion. Regardless, he had to be stopped before he killed again. The Marshal climbed to his feet, drew his heavy pistol, and made his way further into the alley, his senses alert to danger.

The Marshal sensed, rather than saw, the figure that leaped at him from the fire escape above, and rolled forwards, narrowly avoiding the deadly strike. He continued the roll, using his momentum to roll back onto his feet and spin to face his attacker. The Heimburg Carver was a very tall, stick-thin figure of a man, scarecrow-like in appearance. He held no knife, but his fingers were all long and jagged–the bones having torn through to form bone blades. Something had mutated the killer terribly, and the pain and suffering was very present in his madness-filled eyes.

Rudnicki fired twice, but the killer moved faster than humanly possible. Only one of the shots hit, and even then it was a glancing strike. Rudnicki was in the fight of his life and he knew it.

TERRESTRIAL VEHICLE

VEHICLE	ACC/TS	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST	CORRUPT	NOTES
Industrial Lifter	5/16	8(2)	1	3000	1	Walker, Exposed, Loader Claws use Fighting, 2d10, AP 2
Armoured Security Van	20/40	20(8)	1+6	60,000	1	Exposed
Luna PD Pursuit Car	20/40	16(4)	1+3	90,000	1	Exposed, 2× Front Mounted Luna PD MMG

SPACECRAFT

VEHICLE	ACC/TS	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST	CORRUPT	NOTES
Shuttle	50/700	16(4)	1+15	20M	3	Climb 2, Rugged
Freighter	30/500	20(6)	4+5	50M	3	Climb 1, Rugged, Defence Battery
Voidfighter	70/900	18(5)	2	30M	4	Climb 4, Heavy Armour, Ship Cannons, Anti-Ship Missiles (4 Reloads)
Frigate	40/800	100/70/60 (80/50/40)	6+10	2000M	3	Climb 2, Heavy Armour, Rugged, Defence Battery (3 reloads), 2× Ship Cannons, Anti-Ship Missiles (6 reloads), May swap missiles for Voidfighter Launch Bay.

The Dark Legion Black Ships smashed through the Capitol Navy over Mars.

CHAPTER 06

THE ART OF LIGHT

This section discusses the supernatural ability of the Art of the Light, which allows characters to perform a variety of amazing feats using these special talents.

LEARNING THE ART

Any study of the Art begins with innate talent, and though this talent seems to grow more widespread with each passing generation, none can tap into the energies of the Light without this talent. Perhaps, as a child, an individual was different from other children, able to perceive things that others could not. However, innate talent alone is insufficient. The Brotherhood searches for these talented individuals, gathering them at a young age to begin training them, honing talent into power through discipline and intensive study.

The Prophets, who search the future for threats and advantages, seek out these young talents, and recruit them into the Brotherhood as children. Amongst Bauhaus, Capitol, and Imperial, it is rare for a family to refuse to allow its children to join the Brotherhood, and the prospect is generally considered both an honour and, especially in the case of poorer families, an opportunity to improve social status.

Player characters do not possess any natural capability to wield the Art. This must be unlocked during character creation, by making certain choices or rolling certain events. Otherwise, a character is unable to tap into the Light and, barring some unusual circumstances, will not be able to obtain that ability. This capacity is represented by a talent, but that talent alone will provide little advantage.

Characters desiring to wield the Art must also invest in the Mysticism skill. However, to truly become specialised in the Art requires joining the Brotherhood through a Lifepath Edge. The Mystical Exposure Edge represents a manifestation of the Art in an untrained person, who will be limited to a single power. The more complex, powerful spells Brotherhood Mystics are known to require further training and effort to obtain.

All Brotherhood characters learn how to delve deeply into their reserves of inner strength, summoning power from strength of will and iron resolve. A Brotherhood character can further tap into reserves in a dangerous way, by adding Chronicle Points to the Dark Symmetry pool to reroll a Mysticism check. A true Mystic may voluntarily suffer mental damage, in the form of Fatigue levels, to reroll any Trait check. But Mystics should be warned that the forces of Darkness are watching, and keen to capitalise on such actions.

Mystic Adeline Hamwell uses the Barrier spell to block the Black Fire gift of a heretic.

POWER CONTROLLERS

Mystics are commonly equipped with a power controller: a bulky back-mounted device (Weight 20) that helps stabilise and regulate their powers. All Brotherhood Lifepath characters are granted a power controller upon the completion of their apprenticeship, though some are required by their duties to forego the protective benefits of this device if its bulk or distinctive profile would draw unwanted attentions. Power controllers reduce the casting penalty of a power by 2, to a minimum of 1.

CASTING SPELLS

Using any spell requires a Mysticism test with a penalty to the roll equal to the half the power's usual cost (rounded down). With a success the power activates normally. If the result is a raise and the power has a raise effect listed, those bonuses apply.

On a Failure any active powers fail and the caster becomes Shaken. If the caster rolls a 1 on the skill die but the Wild Die indicates a success, the power is activated successfully, but the caster becomes Shaken and other active powers fail.

Powers with a variable duration can be maintained, but each maintained spell inflicts a −1 to cast any new power.

If a character with an activated power is Shaken, suffers a wound, or takes a level of Fatigue, he has to check Spirit to maintain his active powers. Powers automatically deactivate when the caster is unconscious or asleep.

POWERS

The following powers from **Chapter 5: Powers** in the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook are available to characters in ***Mutant Chronicles***, according to the Mystical Exposure Edge or Brotherhood Lifepath Edge they have taken. These powers work as described in the *Savage Worlds* with the exception of the No Power Points Setting Rule (see *Savage Worlds* corebook) for more information.

POWERS BY LIFE PATH EDGE

Powers marked with an astrix (*) are new powers described on the next page.

INQUISITOR

Armour, Barrier, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Exorcise Dark Influence, Healing, Hymn of Durand*, Mind Reading, Smite, Stun, Warrior's Gift.*

MORTIFACTOR

Blind, Boost/Lower Trait, Confusion, Darksight, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Healing, Light/Obscure, Puppet, Quickness, Speed, Telekinesis.

MYSTIC

Armour, Banish, Barrier, Blessing, Blind, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Confusion, Damage Field, Darksight, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Divination, Exorcise Dark Influence*, Exorcise Mortality*, Farsight, Fear, Fly, Greater Healing, Healing, Hymn of Durand*, Light/Obscure, Mind Reading, Puppet, Quickness, Slumber, Smite, Speak Language, Speed, Stun, Succor, Telekinesis, Teleport, Warrior's Gift.*

NEW POWERS

BLESSING

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 hour
Trappings: White mystical glow

The Mystic imbues a person or object with a tiny fraction of the Light, enough to fortify and empower them against the agents and influences of the Dark Legion. This spell takes five minutes to cast, and provides a blessing that can be used once in the next hour; if the hour passes without the bonus being used, it is lost. The blessing grants the character a +2 on his next Trait check. If the caster succeeds with a raise, the bonus applies to the next 2 Trait checks. Also, for the next 24 hours, the target gains a +2 to all Soak Rolls, whether the Blessing is triggered or not.

EXORCISE DARK INFLUENCE

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 6 (Casting Penalty –3)
Range: Touch
Duration: Instant
Trappings: White mystical glow, angelic choir

This Art takes an hour to activate. The Mystic expunges the corrupting influence of the Dark Symmetry. This can be quite a traumatic experience for a person to face, and is highly stressful to the psyche. If an object is targeted, any effects of corruption are immediately ended. If a creature is targeted, the creature regains a point of Willpower (up to its maximum). This power can only be cast on a creature once per day.

EXORCISE MORTALITY

Rank: Legendary
Power Points: 12 (Casting Penalty –6)
Range: Touch
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Brilliant white light, angelic choir, and smells like fresh baked bread

The Mystic draws deeply on the Light, and allows it to flood into the recently deceased, renewing life and vitality. The target, who must have died within the last five minutes, is immediately restored to life. The target is unable to act in any fashion for one minute after returning to life, due to the traumatic nature of death and resurrection.

HYMN OF DURAND

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: All allies within a medium burst template centered on the caster
Duration: 3 rounds
Trappings: Bright bluish glow

The glorious light of the First Cardinal issues from the Mystic to bolster his allies. While this spell is in effect, the Brotherhood character and all allies within the medium burst template get a +2 bonus on Willpower tests. With a raise the area of effect is increased to a large burst template and the duration is doubled.

Many mystics are as unmatched with the Avenger Sword as they are with the Art.

HERETICS

We are fighting the monsters of the Dark Legion as they wash over our worlds, drowning and crushing all who stand in their way. The dark machines of war move to destroy us, and the sinister powers of the otherworldly monster in their armies kill scores upon scores of those who fight for the side of light. But we can never forget those among our own brethren who have been corrupted by the Dark Symmetry.

They are our sons, brothers, and fathers. The kind neighbour and the friendly stranger. They have been tainted by the Corruptors, Dark Magistrates, and Recruiters of the Dark Symmetry. Their souls seared by the black flames of corruption and their minds fogged by the eternal lies.

In the heart of human society they conduct their dark works, spreading their filth like a malicious cancer, eating away at the human soul from within. They are the Heretics of the Apostles, men and women who have sold their soul into eternal servitude of the Apostles. Only the piercing gaze of the Cardinal stands a chance of rooting them out and only the ever cleansing fire of the Inquisition can hope to destroy them.

– The Sixth Chronicle, The Crusades and the Inquisition, Desala Bricos

THE TAINTED

There are heroes, brave soldiers, and pure and stalwart souls in service of the Brotherhood. They stand up for what is right and confront the Darkness in the bloodied fields of battle. However, the eternal intrigues, ambition, and schemes of the corporations and the corrupting nature of the Dark Legion are a very important thematic ingredient in ***Mutant Chronicles***.

There are myriads of humans that have been tempted by the Darkness and accepted what it has to offer: influence beyond comprehension, prolonged life, and unprecedented powers. Some are lead astray, while others willingly, and with eyes wide open, give their hearts and souls to the Dark Symmetry. They become Heretics, humans with the power of the Symmetry that are just as hell-bent on the destruction of humanity as any Necromutant or other vile beast.

Characters might run across these men and women in their adventures. They might be encountered in the heart of a citadel, in a hidden cult cell, or as the friend who betrays them. In these cases they will be presented as deadly foes, the ultimate betrayers of mankind. It is, however, entirely possible that your players will want to taste the forbidden dark fruit and play as adversaries of humanity. You can also include one or two Heretics in a normal group of characters, not revealing who the traitor is.

Playing a Heretic is very different from playing a regular character. First off, to serve the Dark Legion is the ultimate betrayal of mankind. Serving the Legion also imposes a lot of risks. The more powerful a Heretic is, the greater the risk of discovery by the Brotherhood, or Luna PD if in the pre-Apostle era. The use of Dark Gifts also increases the risk of discovery.

As Heretics become corrupted they must keep to the darkness.

THE PATH TO HERESY

Heretics are not a homogenous group; they are not a bunch of inherently evil humans who have joined the ranks of the Dark Legion because it is an easy way to power. Some will undoubtedly fit this description, but many once were and, in a certain sense, still are, normal human beings who have ended up in the service of darkness through good intentions. In the end, though, they will reach the point of no return and become truly evil. It is more likely to find doubt among the lower ranks as those further up have little to no humanity left.

Most Heretics are spied upon for weeks, months, or years by a Soul Searcher, a cult spy specialising in finding new recruits. When it has been established that they are good candidates, they are approached by a Dark Magistrate, Enabler, or Corruptor, simply referred to as a Recruiter, who targeted the individual and prepared everything beforehand. Every move is thought out. By appealing to their weaknesses, fears, ambitions, or whatever they can use in order to win them over, the Recruiter leads them down the path of heresy. The one thing that is important to remember is that it has to be an active and willing choice. A human can be lured, corrupted, and manipulated into making that choice but they can't be forced by means of duress. They have to willingly give up their soul.

The Recruiters groom the chosen target. This process differs depending on the situation, circumstances, and personality of the human in question. If there is already a presence of evil and a willingness to submit to the darkness, the Recruiter might be blunt, actually giving him a display of what powers the darkness has to offer. If the one being groomed is more kind hearted and desperate, the Recruiter might appear as the good natured friend wanting to lend a helping hand in a time of need. A grooming period can take minutes or hours, or be counted in days, weeks, and months. Once a person has willingly given his soul to the darkness, the actual initiation into true Heresy begins.

THE INITIATION

In order to truly become a Heretic, the candidate has to go through the rite of initiation. He is taken to the Well of Darkness, located in the centre of cult temples or in citadels. If there is not one available, a high ranking Heretic can create one through a one hour ritual. This ritual involves first creating a round hole in the ground, about a foot deep and two feet wide. The edges are then inscribed with symbols of the Symmetry and soon it is filled with a dark purple swirling mist, which glows faintly.

The Heretic is taken to the edge of the Well and here he undergoes a short ritual where he pledges fealty to the Dark Symmetry and his Apostle if not in the pre-Apostle era. The well is a rift that can put a Heretic in direct contact with the chaotic and horrific power of the Dark Symmetry. At the end of the ritual the mist rushes into the mouth, nose, and eyes of the Heretic. This stains his soul and bestows him with his very first Dark Gift. Dark Gifts are manifestations of the Symmetry, which Heretics and other beings can use to affect and change reality and deal with their enemies. The first gift given is a Dark Symmetry gift, and not a specific Apostle Symmetry gift. He is also given his first title and rank, that of Acolyte. A high ranking Heretic is assigned to the new initiate as a guide, handler, and teacher. This guiding Heretic, known simply as a Tutor, ushers the Acolyte into his new existence and instructs him in the way of the Dark Symmetry.

BECOMING A HERETIC

Becoming a Heretic requires the approval of the Game Master as it will greatly affect the adventures he has planned. A player can then choose to allow his character become a Heretic from the very start at character creation, or during play as a result of events. Again, this is often decided in cooperation with the Game Master.

The player gets to choose one Dark Gift, though the Game Master has the final say. The Tutor should also be fleshed out by the GM as the player character will interact a lot with him. If two characters were initiated at the same time, or close to it, they might have the same Tutor. This Tutor will often assign quests and is the primary link to the Dark Legion. He will also be the one that will promote the player character when the time comes.

RISING THROUGH THE RANKS

Heretics are given quests and, if they manage to succeed with the quest without exposing their cult to danger, they will be granted higher status and more power. These quests are often broken down into two or more tasks. They consist of evil deeds meant to further the cause of the Dark Legion, and as the Heretics rise in power and rank the quests become increasingly harder. Not all Heretics have what it takes, but player characters are considered to be exceptional and will be given a lot of opportunity to become part of the upper crust of the cults.

As the Heretic completes these quests and gains experience, he becomes more involved in the cult and gains access to new Gifts via the "New Gift" edge.

CHOOSING GIFTS

There are two types of Dark Gifts; Dark Symmetry gifts and Apostle Gifts. Dark Symmetry gifts are those that any Heretic may learn and use while Apostle Gifts are only available to those worshipping the Apostle in question.

NICOLAS SZAKACS
CEO LIGARE CORP.

Nicolas Szakacs is CEO of the highly successful independent Ligare Financial Corporation based on Luna, Victoria, and with holdings in the Outer System. He is the epitome of unrestrained greed and also one of the most powerful Heretics of Semai still able to operate in society.

Ligare Corp is officially a financial investment broker but in reality it is an extremely successful asset stripper. It finds an ailing independent corporation, or struggling subsidiary of a major corporation, and swoops in to carry out a hostile takeover.

"Mr Szakacs! John Pressman from The Daily Chronicles! Now that you own the Cesare Medical Corporation, what are your plans for it?"

Nicolas Szakacs, CEO of the Ligare Corp, smiled warmly at the question from the reporter as he handed the baby he held in his arms over to a nurse.

"A good question! First let me say that it is an honour that the Ligare Corporation could come to the aid of such an esteemed medical institution as the Cesare Medical Corporation. It has served humanity unswervingly for over 400 years and has saved countless lives along the way. Its cutting edge research has produced cures to many virulent plagues, diseases and other outbreaks. Without the CMC, humanity would not have prospered anywhere near as much."

"Yes, but what are your plans?"

The smile faded from Szakacs face and his eyes hardened. The pin-stripe suited corporate executive did not like being challenged.

"We will be carrying out a root and branch review of the Cesare Medical Corporation to ensure that it is fit for purpose. There will most likely be tough decisions to be made. But like a skilled surgeon I will cut away any rot to leave a stronger body behind." Szakacs made a subtle guesture with his hand and his aide stepped in smoothly.

"I'm afraid Mr Szakacs has a very busy schedule, Mr Pressman. Perhaps Mr Szakacs could give you a more in-depth interview later?"

"Greed, to put it bluntly, is good, Mr… Pressman, is it?" The journalist furiously took notes in shorthand while Nicolas Szakacs, the inimitable CEO of the Ligare Corp, stood behind his desk, hands clasped behind his back, staring out of the window over an impressive view of Luna City. Dressed in a conservative pin-stripe suit with his hair slicked back, Szakacs was the archetype of the corporate CEO.

"Greed built all of this. It was greed that allowed us to escape the shackles of our dead mother planet." The journalist looked up, noting for the first time that the view included the dead world of Old Earth. From here it took on a sinister appearance that he had never noticed before. "Greed tore us free from her dead embrace and greed pushed us to seize the worlds and moons of our solar system."

"But didn't greed also cause us to unleash the Dark Legion?"

Szakacs turned around, his eyes were bright and almost seemed to glow in the dim light. His smile was predatory. Pressman found himself recoiling, though he did not know why. "The Dark Legion was the greatest gift humanity has ever received. With it, we will rise to new, undreamed of powers. Well I say 'we', but of course you won't be joining us."

"Wha….what?" Pressman felt someone… something… grip the back of his neck with inhuman strength. Szakacs, still smiling, reached into his desk and pulled out a pair of spiked gloves, encrusted with blood, which he pulled on.

"No, Mr Pressman. You are too good a journalist and eventually would have found out the truth. I cannot allow that. Semai cannot allow that. But comfort yourself by knowing your sacrifice further empowers the Dark Lord." Szakacs stepped forward and raised his fist…

The assets of the company are peeled away, leaving behind nothing but debt and rusting infrastructure. Szakacs is the distillation of everything the corporations aspire to: charismatic, highly intelligent, motivated, utterly ruthless and extremely greedy. He is also the perfect Heretic of Semai, sowing anger and destruction in his wake. He is a serious threat to the survival of humanity. The entire top floor of Ligare Tower is his personal domain and is off-limits to all except for his inner cadre of executive-Heretics. It is here that he performs the darkest rituals in service of Semai.

NICOLAS SZAKACS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4
Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Accounting) d8, Knowledge (Business Administration) d8, Intimidation d4, Mysticism d6, Persuasion d12, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Taunt d6, Technical Aptitude d6
Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6(2); **Willpower:** 4
Hindrances: Greedy (Major), Vow (Major–Support the Dark Symmetry)
Edges: Charismatic, Connections, Heretic Lifepath, Strong-Willed, Ultra Rich
Dark Gifts: *Obfuscation*, *Snare the Unwilling Mind*, *True Fear*
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (2), Dagger (Str+d4)

Thanks to Nicolas Szakacs.

A Heretic is never unarmed, carrying the Dark Gifts within.

GIFTS OF THE DARK SYMMETRY

USING DARK GIFTS

Using any gift is a relatively simple matter, though not one without risk. Each requires a Mysticism test, with a difficulty determined by the Dark Gift. Whenever a character (but not a non-player character) uses a Dark Gift, a Chronicle Point is added to the Dark Symmetry pool. For characters using Mysticism, the rules below apply.

To activate a Dark Gift, test Mysticism with a penalty to the roll equal to the half the power's usual cost (rounded down). With a success the, power activates normally. On a Failure, the caster takes 2d6 damage. If the caster rolls a 1 on the skill die but the Wild Die indicates a success, the power is activated successfully, but the caster suffers 2d6 damage.

Unlike Brotherhood Mystics, Heretics have no powers that require concentration or maintenance. Once activated, the Gift remains active until the duration ends, the Heretic voluntarily cancels it, or the Heretic is Incapacitated.

BLEED

As Heretics employ the powers of the Dark Symmetry, elements of the Dark Pattern they use tend to seep into the world around them, spreading the influence of the Apostles further in a variety of bizarre manners. This most often happens when a Heretic draws greedily and aggressively of his Patron's power, leaving an excess of energy beyond that needed to fuel a Dark Gift's effects. These side effects are collectively referred to as Bleed, evoking the way they trickle forth from a wounded reality.

If using a Dark Gift results in one or more raises, the extra "energy" created by the Dark Gift can generate secondary effects. These secondary effects can include a variety of functions based on the result of the roll. Each Patron's Dark Pattern has a list of generic Bleed affects used for any gift that does not have a specific Bleed affect listed.

All Bleed effects take place at the end of the Heretic's activation, once a gift's immediate effects have been resolved.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Certain non-player characters devoted to the Dark Symmetry, including more potent creatures of the Dark Legion, may have access to one or more Dark Gifts. In these cases, using the Dark Gifts is somewhat simpler and more reliable.

Creatures and non-player characters that regularly use Dark Gifts have a Mysticism skill and use it to activate their Dark Gifts, per the

rules above. However, some creatures have the Monstrous Ability "Patron Blessing", that has special rules. A character with the "Patron Blessing" ability can get temporary access to any Dark Symmetry or Patron Apostle gift by spending a Chronicle Point. After spending a Chronicle Point to gain access to the gift, if they do not have a Mysticism skill their Spirit die is used to activate a Dark Gift.

DARK SYMMETRY GIFTS

These gifts are available to all Heretics, regardless of their specific Patron. They draw upon the fundamental notions and powers that unite all the Dark Apostles, and provide a range of relatively simple effects useful to all who serve the darkness.

As these gifts are available to all Heretics, there is no specific Bleed table for them. Instead, the Heretic may choose from the Bleed effects specific to his Patron Apostle when using these gifts. The first gift any Heretic learns will be from this list, but all others can be from this list or from their specific Patron Apostle's list.

CORRUPT DEVICE

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: One device within 6"
Duration: 1 day
Trappings: Fizzle or pop of something shorting out

This gift channels the disruptive influence of the Dark Symmetry into a chosen device. It malfunctions in some way that requires a Repair roll at –2 to fix, or it will work normally at the end of the Gift's duration.

DARK CURSE

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: One creature within 6"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Screeching noise.

This gift assails the victim with Dark Symmetry energy, inflicting some baneful malady chosen by the Heretic. The caster selects a target and makes an opposed Spirit check. If the caster wins the target is Shaken. If the caster wins with a raise, the target gains a point of Dread.

OBFUSCATION

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: Self
Duration: 1 hour
Trappings: Deepening shadows

This gift conceals a part of the symmetry from those who would hunt the Heretic and acts as *Conceal Arcana* power.

SENSE WEAVES OF POWER

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: Self
Duration: 15 minutes
Trappings: Caster's eyes glow green

This gift grants the Heretic the means to perceive the wielders and effects of supernatural powers, such as other users of the Dark Symmetry, those who employ the Art, and more beside and acts as the *Detect Arcana* power

SYMMETRY BURST

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Large Burst Template centred on caster
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Swarm of flying small objects, strong wind

This gift produces a burst of power that manifests as a storm of chaotic inertia; objects move around at random for a few moments, hurled by an invisible force. All characters, except the caster, within the Area of Effect must make an Agility check. Failure results in being knocked prone. Critical failure results in being knocked prone and Shaken.

GIFTS OF ILIAN

Ilian's pattern is that of the void. Her gifts are diverse and potent, drawing deeply upon the power of the Dark Soul, and her followers are often skilled sorcerers. Even Brotherhood Mystics have been drawn to Ilian's service, entrapped by a lust for knowledge and power that the Light cannot sate. Many of Ilian's gifts rely upon the opening of rifts and portals into other places, even other dimensions, from which potent servitor-creatures or dire energies alien to our own universe can be summoned. The Bleed effects created by Ilian's servants often see the fabric of reality weakening or responding to the abuses heaped upon it. Other Bleed effects reflect Ilian's mastery of the sorcerous arts, and allow her servants to manipulate the effects of gifts in a way impossible to most Heretics.

ILIAN BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

RAISES	BLEED EFFECT
1	**TRANSDIMENSIONAL IMPEDANCE:** The area immediately around the Heretic is made treacherous by a thick rime of void-frost, a slick pool of protoplasmic slime, or some other extradimensional substance. This spreads outwards from the Heretic to cover a Small Blast Template centred on the Heretic. All creatures other than the Heretic must pass an Agility test to cross the area without slipping and falling prone. This remains for a number of hours equal to the gift's casting penalty before dissipating.
2	**VOID-CHILL:** The chill of the void is tangible in the wake of a gift's effect, causing breath to mist, frost to form, and liquids to freeze as heat is stolen away. This deep cold emanates from the Heretic, reaching out to cover a Large Blast Template centred on the Heretic. The ambient temperature within that area drops to below freezing almost instantly, inflicting a level of fatigue on any character failing a Vigor test. This sudden cold will also have a variety of environmental effects, such as freezing nearby liquids (including rain), subject to the GM's discretion. Warmth will return to the area after a number of minutes.
3+	**Spell-Weaver:** The Heretic directs excess power back into the gift, empowering it further. For every raise, the Heretic can either increase the difficulty of resisting the gift by 2 or double the gift's duration.

DARK WARD

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Self
Duration: Until triggered
Trappings: Dark shadows around caster

This gift offers protection against the powers of others, turning aside the gifts and abilities of Mystics, Sorcerers, and Magi to prove the dominance of Ilian over the sorcerous arts. The caster gains Arcane Resistance against the next Light Power used on them.

DIMENSIONAL FLENSING

Rank: Heroic
Power Points: 8 (Casting Penalty –4)
Range: All creatures within 12" of caster
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Swarms of dark energy

All creatures within range suffer caster's Spirit die+Vigor die in damage as a miniature maelstrom of rifts and microportals release a tide of short-lived, semi-corporeal creatures that harry and tear at everything within reach before they expire and dissipate. Creatures wounded by this power take a point of Dread.

HARROWING OF THE VOID

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: Touch, one creature
Duration: Varies
Trappings: Target is pulled into a nether void

If successfully cast, the caster makes a melee touch attack against the target, followed by an opposed Spirit check. The target creature is thrown into the Void for a number of turns equal to the difference between the caster's Spirit and the target's Spirit. The target can perform no action and not be targeted by any other means as long as they are trapped in the void. While trapped, the character suffers the Caster's Spirit+d8 damage and must test Willpower check at –2 every round.

The Void of Ilian is a power beyond measure.

SWIFT PORTAL

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Special
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Swirling Portal

This gift opens up a portal that warps and folds time and space in the material universe. The Heretic may step through the portal and appear anywhere within one kilometre of the original portal, bypassing all obstacles along the way. The Heretic may step through the portal as a Free Action immediately after creating it, and it closes moments after the last creature steps through. If the Heretic wants to transport multiple creatures (willing or bound) subtract 1

from the die roll for each additional creature. The distance can be doubled with a –2 penalty to the die roll.

BLEED: If the character succeeds with a raise, all characters within a Large Burst Template of the character suffer a –2 to all checks for the next round, and must test Willpower or gain a point of Dread.

TRUE CORRUPTION

Rank: Novice
Power Points: Varies (Casting Penalty (Varies))
Range: One object within 6"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Oozing black tendrils come from targeted equipment

The casting penalty of this Gift is 5 minus the Corruptibility Rating of the targeted gear. (Double this if using Power points.) If this Dark Gift is successful, the piece of equipment turns into a Twisted Marionette (see page 278) for a number of rounds equal to half the caster's Spirit die.

BLEED: If the caster succeeds with a raise, all other technological devices within a Medium Burst Template of the original target add 1 point to their Corruptibility permanently.

GIFTS OF ALGEROTH

Algeroth's pattern is that of war and the brutal industry that fuels it. He is a master of weapons, of battle, and of the dark craft of Black Technology. His influence can be felt even in the legions of his siblings–for their armies are often reliant upon creations he has bestowed upon them in exchange for some boon or favour.

ALGEROTH BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

RAISES	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**STOKE THE FIRES OF RAGE:** Algeroth imparts bloodlust and dark fury to the Heretic's surroundings, inciting anger and a violent recklessness in those nearby. All living, intelligent creatures within 6" must make a Spirit check at –2. Those who fail suffer one Dread, and will suffer an additional Dread at the end of every turn in which they do not attack another creature (friend or foe) until this effect ends. The effect lasts one round per raise.
1+	**TOUCH OF FLAME:** The fires of dark industry ignite upon the Heretic's weapons, making him deadlier in battle. On his next attack with any weapon–including natural weapons like claws–he gains the Fire quality and for every other raise rolled, adds a +1d6 to his damage.

Algeroth's gifts are brutal, aggressive, and straightforward, and are utilised primarily in the act of waging war. There are few in Algeroth's service who pursue sorcerous power, and he trades much with Ilian to this end. Fittingly, the Bleed effects created by Algeroth's servants are similarly violent and uncomplicated emanations of power.

BLACK FIRE

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: One creature within 8"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Black and red flames from caster's hand to target

By invoking this gift, the Heretic sends a blast of crackling black flame at the chosen target. This blast sears through flesh and bone, causing horrific damage, such that even survivors are seldom left intact. If the power is successfully activated, the caster makes a Shooting roll against the target. If hit, the target takes Spirit+d6 damage, with the Fire Trapping.

BLEED: If the caster's Spirit check to activate succeeds with a raise, the flames of the spell create a noxious cloud around the caster, giving them partial cover against all ranged attacks for one round.

DISTORTED ARMOR

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Self
Duration: 1 hour or 1 combat
Trappings: Caster is covered in flickering green and black armour

Calling upon the necrofoundries and black manufactories of Algeroth, this gift suffuses the Heretic's armour and clothing with necrotic ichor, forming a durable exoskeleton that protects him from harm. This crumbles away in a relatively short time, lasting for an hour but cracking and dissolving at the end of any combat it might endure. This grants the caster 2 points of armour that stacks with any other armour worn.

BLEED: If the caster succeeds with a raise, all cover within a large blast radius centred on the caster provides an additional 2 points of armour.

HEIGHTENED PROWESS

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Self
Duration: 1 hour or 1 combat
Trappings: Caster seems to grow bigger and stronger

The Heretic draws an undying vigour into his flesh, making him stronger and tougher. His muscle mass increases and his skin takes

on the greyish, deathly pallor of a corpse. This persists until fatigue sets in and dissipates the effect, and is replaced by a ravening, unnatural hunger for raw meat. The caster increases his Strength and Vigor die by 1.

PAINLESS

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: Self
Duration: 3 rounds
Trappings: Dark shadows around caster

The Heretic draws upon the deathless power of Algeroth's pattern to defy the hindrance of his injuries. His flesh becomes unfeeling, and all sensations are blocked out to aid his cause in battle. For the next three rounds the caster ignores all Wound and Fatigue penalties. This applies to penalties present at the time of casting, or new damage sustained during the duration of the power. The injuries are not cured, and at the end of the duration all penalties and injuries apply immediately. While using this power, the caster has no sense of touch.

VILE CLOUD

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Large Blast Template
Duration: 1 hour or 1 combat
Trappings: Sickly green vapours and miasma

With this gift, the Heretic creates a cloud of sickly green mist that hangs in the air regardless of the wind. The mist leaves a vile residue that stains all it touches, and stings the eyes, throat, and lungs of all those within it. The cloud emanates from the Heretic's mouth, issuing forth in a single great exhalation, spreading in all directions and filling a Large Blast Template centred on the caster. The area of effect does not move after cast, even if the caster moves out of it. Any line of sight or Notice checks through the cloud suffer a –2 penalty. Any character entering the cloud or present when it is cast must make a Vigor check or becomes Shaken. On a result of 1 on the Vigor die, the character suffers a wound.

GIFTS OF DEMNOGONIS

Demnogonis exists to spread sickness, decay, and degeneration in all forms. The Befouler is content to sit by and wait while wars rage and the dead pile up, for he can gain much from the ruin left in the wake of conflict. His followers are patient and cunning, leaving diseases hidden within unsuspecting victims, and waiting for the fruits of their labour to emerge.

Demnogonis' gifts spread and manipulate decay and rot to fulfil his mission. His mystics corrupt and inflict pestilence upon the worlds of man, and are forever in search of new plagues and new means of spreading their creations. Bleed effects produced by Demnogonis' servants are akin to additional symptoms, consequences of the pattern causing plagues to mutate and evolve.

DEMNOGONIS BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

RAISES	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**FEVER:** The target is exposed to a minor illness. The illness causes a Vigor check with a penalty equal to the number of raises rolled. (i.e. two raises makes the Vigor check a –2 penalty.) The creature gains one fatigue for a number of days equal to the number of raises rolled by the Heretic. The fatigue level can cause incapacitation. The dark hallucinations and dreams caused by the illness causes the creature to gain two Dread.
1+	**IMMUNODEFICIENCY:** The target's ability to resist disease is compromised, inflicting a –1 penalty to all Vigor tests against poisons or diseases. This lasts for one week per raise

BLACK ROT SPEW

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: 6"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: The caster spits a giant glob of black slime

The Heretic unleashes a great gobbet of black slime. This is handled as a Throwing attack with a Small Blast Template, and can deviate if the target is missed. The target and those under the template suffer Spirit+d6 damage. If the target dies, or a dead body is hit by the slime, the corpse rises the following round as a Kadaver (see page 295). Seeing a corpse rise as a Kadaver causes a Willpower check.

CONTROL SICKNESS

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: 1 creature touched
Duration: Permanent
Trappings: Spark of green electricity

This potent gift gives the Heretic control over the progress of any known disease afflicting a target. He cannot cure diseases entirely, but he can slow or speed them. The target's next Vigor check to resist a disease is modified by +/-2, at the caster's choice. However, even if the Vigor check is passed, the disease is not cured but has only gone into remission. The target counts as a "carrier" and

can suffer a relapse in the future. If the target is aware of what is happening and trying to actively resist, the caster must make a Touch attack against the target.

DARK STRAIN

Rank: Veteran
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: 1 creature touched
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Spark of yellow electricity

The Heretic spawns a short-lived, virulent disease that is violent in its effects. If the target is aware of what is happening and trying to actively resist, the caster must make a Touch attack against the target. The target must make an immediate Vigor check at –2 or suffer one level of Fatigue and make a second Vigor check at –2 at the end of the duration or take a second level of fatigue. These fatigue levels may cause incapacitation and can only be cured by convalescing in a medical facility for 1 week or through mystical means.

BLEED: If the caster's Spirit check succeeds with a raise, the disease is contagious. Everyone who comes in physical contact with the target must make a Vigor check or catch the illness and also get a level of fatigue that can only be cured through bedrest or mystical means.

SEE SICKNESS

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: Self
Duration: 1 minute
Trappings: Caster's eyes flicker green

This gift gives the Heretic a sixth sense, allowing him to perceive the flow and spread of disease within those nearby. This gift lasts one minute, and allows the Heretic to know all the diseases–including any in remission–currently afflicting any creatures within 10".

TWIST FLESH

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 living creature touched
Duration: Varies
Trappings: Target is warped and twisted like clay

This gift permits the Heretic to mould and shape flesh at a whim. It can be used in one of two ways: to inflict harm, or to alter a creature's form. If used against a creature that wants to resist, the caster must make a Touch attack against the target. When inflicting damage the gift deals Spirit+d8 damage. When altering a form, the target's physical appearance–height, weight, gender, skin tone, eye colour, hair colour, deformities, scars, and other significant physical features–can be changed, to make the target appear as someone else. Each significant change takes about five minutes to complete, so the most thorough changes can take half an hour or more. The changes will revert after an hour (or two hours with a raise), taking as long to change back as they did to occur in the first place. The transformation is agonising, inflicting a Willpower check when transforming, and another when reverting to the original form.

GIFTS OF SEMAI

Semai is discord and dissent. Semai is spite, misplaced hate, and the loathing that comes when love sours. Semai is lies and misconstrued truths. More than any other of the Dark Apostles, Semai is the force that seeks to sunder friendships and alliances, to defile the bonds that unite men, and exacerbate the differences that divide them.

Semai is cruel, spiteful, and patient, waiting and watching for the moment that allows him to inflict the greatest damage and suffering. His gifts are used to discern weaknesses and spread strife and suffering, and frequently delve into the minds of their victims, but they differ from the indiscriminate terror that Muawijhe's pattern spreads. Bleed effects produced by Semai's servants inflict doubt and engender suffering, seeping into the minds of those nearby.

SEMAI BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

RAISES	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT:** The Bringer of Discord whispers subtle falsehoods and misunderstood truths into those nearby, making cooperation difficult. For a number of rounds equal to the number of raises, any enemy within a Large Blast Template centred on the Heretic attempting to perform an action that directly aids another creature gains 1 Dread. This aura surrounds the Heretic and moves with him.
2+	**BABEL CURSE:** Any attempt at communication near the Heretic becomes prone to misunderstanding, obfuscation, and error. Within 6" the difficulty of all communication-based tests increases, as the Heretic's foes suddenly find themselves speaking different languages. This forces a Smarts test at –2 for any verbal communication in an aura around the Heretic or the message is confused or lost. This lasts for a number of minutes equal to the number of raises rolled by the Heretic.

MUDDLE THE MEMORY

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 living creature within 6"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: None visible

This gift twists and warps the memories of the victim, allowing the Heretic to sow dissent within the minds of his foes. If the caster successfully activates this power, he makes an opposed Spirit check with the target. If the Heretic wins, he may see and alter significant details of memories covering events, lasting up to half an hour for each success and raise. Altering a memory allows the Heretic to add or change an important person, object, or location within that memory, alter other significant details such as the time of day or year the event occurred, or add noteworthy details. These changes are permanent. Attempting this in combat is incredibly difficult, and the Heretic subtracts 2 from their Spirit check.

PLUCK MIND

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 living creature within 6"
Duration: 1 minute per rank of caster
Trappings: None visible

This gift permits the Heretic to sift through the thoughts that dance across the surface of the victim's mind. The surface thoughts of most people are fleeting, half-formed notions, but a skilled manipulator can guide a target's attention and thus dredge up thoughts of value. This gift lasts for a number of minutes equal to the caster's rank (Novice = 1 minute, Seasoned = 2 minutes, etc.), during which time the Heretic knows the foremost thought in the target's mind. Careful conversation and a successful Persuasion check are sufficient for the Heretic to coerce the target into thinking about a particular subject.

STIR THE DARK HEART

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 6"
Duration: 1d6 minutes
Trappings: None visible

With this gift, the Heretic can enflame and intensify a base emotion already present in the victim. Choose one of the following: Fear, Wrath, Bliss, or Despair. If the caster successfully activates the power, he makes an opposed Spirit check with the target. If the Heretic wins, the target is subjected to the emotion chosen for the next 1d6 minutes. Fear causes the target to become Panicked. Wrath causes the target attack the nearest visible creature, and if unable to do so must make a Vigor check or take a level of fatigue. Bliss causes the character to become automatically Shaken on the caster's action–this cannot cause a Wound if the target is already Shaken. Despair causes the creature to count as having the 2 of Clubs for Initiative every round.

BLEED: If the caster wins the opposed Spirit check with a raise, the unnatural passion invoked in the target unnerves those nearby. Any non-Heretic human within 6" of the target immediately makes a Fear check.

SNARE THE UNWILLING MIND

Rank: Veteran
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1"
Duration: 1 hour
Trappings: None visible

This gift bewitches the judgment of the target, clouding reason with a false sense of well-being and trust. If the caster successfully activates this power, he makes an opposed Spirit check with the target. If the caster wins the opposed check, the target regards the Heretic as a pleasant and trustworthy individual for the next hour. While this gift's effects remain, the Heretic gains a +4 for any social interactions with the target. If the Heretic takes any hostile action against the target while the gift remains in effect, the gift's effects end immediately. If this power is used in combat, the victim can immediately make a Spirit check to resist. If the Spirit check fails, the victim will cease hostilities.

TRUE FEAR

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 6"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Target shivers in fear

The Heretic gazes into the eyes of his victim, and unleashes his greatest fear. This gift requires that the Heretic be able to look unhindered into the victim's eyes–tinted or mirrored visors, glasses, or similar prevent the effect. The target must pass a Willpower test. If the target fails, he becomes terrified of the Heretic and suffers a –2 to all actions or opposed rolls involving the caster.

GIFTS OF MUAWIJHE

Muawijhe's pattern is virtually incomprehensible, extending far into both future and past, for he is the Lord of Visions and Nightmares, and is said to be utterly insane. Whether or not this is true is unknown, but he is highly unpredictable, sometimes acting without discernible motive. His influence upon man is in the form of disturbing dreams and terrifying nightmares, some of which may be prophetic in some way. His Heretics are often empowered by the kind of certainty normally found only within deranged psychopaths and those too delusional to understand what they face.

Muawijhe's gifts are focussed upon the mind, distorting and harming it in a variety of ways. The Bleed effects produced by Muawijhe's servants are somewhat distinct from those of the other Dark Apostles, as the effects are internal, with power seeping into the Heretic, rather than from him.

MUAWIJHE BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

RAISES	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**WITNESS:** The Lord of Insanity blesses the Heretic with a glimpse of the immediate future. It may make no sense at first, but it can turn failure into success if the Heretic realises its significance in time. He gains a bonus on his next Trait check equal to double the number of raises rolled.
2+	**PSYCHOTIC CERTAINTY:** The Heretic's mind is reinforced with delusions of invincibility, giving him the will to attempt anything. He is so sure of his inevitable triumph that his powers truly make him harder to harm. For the next round, the Heretic gains a bonus to Toughness equal to double the number of raises rolled.

DISTAL HORROR

Rank: Veteran
Power Points: 4 (Casting Penalty –2)
Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Trappings: A swirling purple portal forms

The Heretic uses the panic and terror of an individual to summon a Mind Render (see page 303), a creature that exists purely to incite fear and dread. The creature has one Wound for each success and raise from the caster. This horror is independent and malicious. By preference, it will target the creature whose mind it was born from, but failing this will look to uncorrupted victims before targeting Heretics. It can only be dispelled through its death.

DREAM TRANSFER

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 sleeping creature within caster's line of sight
Duration: 1 sleep cycle
Trappings: Target begins thrashing while asleep

The Heretic reaches into the mind of a sleeping creature, sculpting dreams and nightmares as if they were wet sand. The victim makes a Willpower test, failure causes a point of Dread and the victim experiences a dream as described by the Heretic. This may be a simple description but it can be used to impart messages or visions. As the victim's sleep has been disturbed by this twisted dream, he gains none of the benefits of natural rest.

LUNACY

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 living creature within 6"
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Target shrieks in fear

The Heretic grants his victim a glimpse into the mind of the Lord of Visions, overwhelming him with a torrent of madness. The victim is Shaken and must test Willpower at –2.

VEIL OF ENEMIES

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 living creature within 6"
Duration: Special
Trappings: None visible

The Heretic twists the victim's perceptions, making him unable to discern friend from foe. If the caster successfully activates this power, he makes an opposed Spirit check with the target. If the caster wins, the victim now struggles to perceive which nearby creatures are allies and which are enemies. When attempting to interact with another creature, the victim must get a success on a Notice check, with a penalty of –2 if the caster won by a raise, to see the truth and act normally. Failure means the victim sees an enemy in place of an ally, or vice versa, and quickly corrects his perceived mistake. If he was attempting to attack an enemy, he will instead attack the ally nearest to that enemy. If he was attempting to aid an ally, he will instead aid the enemy nearest to that ally. Three successful Notice tests, or taking damage from an attack, will end this effect immediately.

WAKING NIGHTMARE

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2 (Casting Penalty –1)
Range: 1 living creature within 6"
Duration: 6 rounds
Trappings: Target begins shaking

The Heretic weaves horrific visions within his victim's mind, based on the victim's own fears and nightmares. If the caster successfully activates this power, he makes an opposed Spirit check with the target. If the Heretic wins, the victim suffers a mental assault. They are shaken and suffer a –2 to all actions for the next six rounds. If the caster wins with a raise, the target must make a Willpower check also.

WEAPONS OF THE DARK SYMMETRY

The forces of the Dark Symmetry are varied and alien, and their weapons are equally unusual and dangerous. Below are some of the favored weapons of the Dark Apostles and their followers. Heretics may occasionally possess this equipment, but much of it is only found within the ranks of the dark armies and the creatures that typically carry them.

For weapon qualities listed in the description or notes, see Weapon Qualities on page 54. All weapons of the Dark Symmetry have the Illegal Quality, in addition to any others listed.

ILIAN EQUIPMENT

Most equipment that Ilian's followers produce are weapons and artefacts used to enhance or shape the Dark Symmetry.

SINARACK

The Sinarack is an ingenious weapon created by Ilian's children. It is built around the frame of a CAR-24, but it has been bonded with symmetry augmented meteoroids that landed on Nero millions of years ago. The final weapon is completely black and covered with the symbols of Ilian, and it is longer and sleeker than the original version. It is capable of firing virtually any type of bullets and each bullet fired will be infused with the corrupted ice of the void. Each bullet is traced by a glowing symmetry mist streak. Even if the bullets don't penetrate the armour, the symmetry slams into the soul of the target and puts it at risk of being corrupted.

BLADE OF ILIAN

These huge double-edged swords are only used by Nepharites and Templars. The core is carved from a red stone taken from another world and the edges are forged from a translucent symmetry crystal. As the blade is swung, the runes on the core glow and a blazing symmetry mist crackles within the crystal edges. It fumes with the icy cold of the void, and whispers from other dark worlds echo. The blade contains a small gateway that connects it to the emptiness of the void. Beyond merely cutting flesh, anyone struck will also feel the intense cold of the void, which can petrify the limbs and induce flashes of the emptiness of the void into the mind of the victim. The experience is utterly painful and terrifying.

ALGEROTH EQUIPMENT

As one might imagine, Algeroth is focused on weapons, armour, and anything else that can give aid to the war effort.

DARELECH

This is the sniper rifle used within the Dark Legion. It can be loaded with ammunition from almost any sniper rifle, and is a combination of Black Technology and necrotechnology. The barrel of the rifle is extendible, but when not extended it is quite short and easily hidden and carried. The demonic spirit within corrupts the bullets, twisting them into bullets of Black Technology and increasing their efficiency

ILLIAN WEAPONS

MELEE WEAPON	DAMAGE	WGT	COST	NOTES
Blade of Ilian	Str+d8	8	–	2 hands, Parry +1, Corrupting
Dagger of Illian	Str+d4	1	–	Ap1, Corrupting

RANGED WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Sinarack	24/46/98	2d8	2	3	30	–	10	–
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								

and armour penetration. It is equipped with a necrobionic sight capable of night and heat vision and it also tracks the target's heart rate through obstacles, allowing a skilled sniper to use its armour piercing properties and power to bring down targets hiding behind cover.

KRATACH

Kratach is the standard weapon of the Dark Legion. It can be built upon any human assault rifle frame and can be seen in the hands of myriads of dark minions. Though it has been constructed using Black Technology it is not capable of causing added damage or armour penetration. It does have the ability to corrupt human users, and it can fire virtually any ammunition including pistol, submachine gun, assault rifle, and shotgun rounds.

VALCHECK

Corrupted and reverse-engineered from the machine guns of humanity, the Valcheck is a lightweight, easy-to-use, squad support weapon. The ammunition drum, mounted flat above the weapon, is swift to change in the heat of combat, allowing it to lay down a sustained volley, even in the hands of mindless warriors like Undead Legionnaires.

BELZARACH

The Belzarach is a very large and bulky battle rifle that has such brutal recoil that an additional top handle had to be included to keep it under control. It fires large calibre ammunition that can punch through combat armour with relative ease.

NAZGAROTH

Rightly feared by soldiers across the system, the Nazgaroth is a terrifying heavy machine gun commonly seen in the hands of Razides. Each massive round is hand-engraved with runes of the Dark Symmetry, and each is able to inflict horrific damage, even to armoured targets. A sustained volley can cripple armoured vehicles, the repeated impacts shredding steel plate like tissue paper.

DESOVACH AUTO-SHOTGUN

These 12-gauge shotguns fire shells filled with shards of corrupted bone and necrotechnology-infused metal. Created by Algeroth's Tekrons, they are favoured by Immaculate Furies.

CARCASS GRENADE LAUNCHER

Resembling a carapace-encrusted growth more than an engineered weapon, these 'devices' occasionally weep blood, pus, or machine oil. Whether mounted on another weapon, or carried independently, the Carcass Launcher propels–through the twitching, writhing action of necrotised muscle–a variety of projectiles.

BLACK SHIPS

Massive, twisted, and deadly, these hideous ships glide through the cold reaches of space. The Black Ships are the largest craft available to the Dark Legion and range from 500 meters to two kilometres in length. They are created from asteroids from another dimension; huge chunks that have been mined and bombarded with the Dark Symmetry, and shaped into a massive spike. Then, through a combination of Black Technology and enormously powerful waves of symmetry, they are constructed into ships of war.

The Black Ships are flying Citadels. They contain everything that a Citadel does and house thousands of troops. The outside is covered by turrets and missile bays, but beside these, there are no visible seams or hatches, only surfaces of carved black stone with faintly glowing lines and grooves. They are propelled by pure symmetry. If need be they can be navigated into an atmosphere, albeit with some difficulty. Once inside an atmosphere they are incapable of leaving it, and will inevitably plummet towards the ground. Rather than crashing and burning, they plant themselves and grow.

Once a Black Ship has penetrated the crust of a planet, the outer stone begins to crumble and within minutes, a citadel is revealed. Within a few days, it is fully operational. These spell the doom of any human city or settlement they land close to. Luckily, they are rare, as it takes time and enormous effort to construct them. The Brotherhood speculates that the Dark Soul itself might be involved in their creation. The Cardinal has entire orders of monks, whose sole purpose is to monitor space through gigantic telescopes, sounding the alarm as soon as they spot one of the Black Ships.

When one of these behemoths comes roaring through the atmosphere the sun is blotted out by black flame. All electrical power and human communication within a radius of several kilometres is cut off or short circuits. As the ship smashes through the hard sediment the ground roils, sending giant seismic waves through the earth, and more often than not it starts a chain reaction,

ALGEROTH WEAPONS

MELEE WEAPON	DAMAGE	WGT	COST	NOTES
Sectioner Bayonet	Strd+d4	1	–	Ap 1, A bayonet affixed to a rifle increases the damage to Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands

RANGED WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Belzarach	24/46/98	2d8	2	3	1	–	3	–
Notes: Min Str d8, Auto, Snapfire, 3RB								
Carcass Grenade Launcher	10/20/40	As Grenade	–	1	1	–	3	–
Notes: Can be attached to other weapons								
Darelech	50/100/200	2d10		7	6	–	12	–
Notes: Min Str d10, Snapfire								
Desovach Auto-Shotgun	12/24/48	1-3d6	–	3	18	–	12	–
Notes: Min Str d8, Shotgun, Knockdown, slugs can 3RB								
Kratach	24/48/96	2d8	2	3	30	–	10	–
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
Nazgaroth	50/100/200	3d6	10	3	200	–	30	
Notes: Min Str d10, Heavy Weapon, Auto, 3RB, Small Burst Template								
Valcheck	12/24/48	1-3d6	–	1	6	–	8	–
Notes: Min Str d6, Shotgun								

causing massive earthquakes that have the capacity to make cities crumble into dust. Everything within two kilometres of the impact is burned to ash, as the lingering heat from its entry and the black flames of Dark Symmetry is immense.

Algeroth would like nothing more than to take full credit for these ships, but the initial moulding of the asteroids requires a control over the symmetry that only Ilian possesses. He has tried to create them all by himself but failed, and every time one of these awesome crafts leads to a major victory, he is reminded of his inferiority. This is just one of many methods Ilian uses to keep him in check without uttering a word or taking any action against him.

DEMNOGONIS EQUIPMENT

The technology of Demnogonis is simple but deadly, and is aimed at spreading infection to as many as possible. A simple scratch inflicted by one of these weapons is enough to infect someone. Much of the most sophisticated technology that Demonogonis' servants create is advanced bio-technology, taking the form of potent viruses, parasitic organisms, and weaponised carcinogens.

A Black Ship makes contact with the planetary crust, its destructive capabilities unparallel in the known universe.

A once brave soilder rises as a Kadaver, ready to devour his former brothers in arms.

THE BLACK ROT

Incapable of infecting the living, the Rot is not truly a plague by its own right. Nevertheless, the Black Rot is still one of the most dangerous sicknesses man has ever seen. It was in 91 YC, after the Second Dark Legion War, that the Black Rot first showed its nature. The Black Rot is the reason for the Law of the Ashes, which decrees that all dead bodies have to be cremated to prevent them from rising again.

Any dead body infected with the Black Rot will rise from the Dead. The speed varies greatly, from within one minute to several days, and depends on the concentration of the sickness. Minute traces, which can be found in most human worlds, take days to animate a corpse, while the concentrated dose a Torn Spewer douses corpses with will make them rise within a minute. Those who rise become Kadavers: soulless husks without any intelligence. They can do little else than attack humans with their bare hands and teeth, driven only by savage instinct.

PLAGUE GUN

This abominable weapon is carried by many of Demnogonis' troops. It is half mechanical and half organic, and has been designed with the intent of infecting enemies at the same time as it inflicts ballistic damage. The basic design is that of a normal gun, but with the addition of a disease-containing canister. The bullets are semiorganic and crafted from a slug-like alien creature. As the magazine is inserted, the living bullets absorb some of the vile fluid they are drenched with, filling up with infectious pestilence. On impact, the bullet injects the disease into the victim. It only has to touch the skin to infect the victim, as it is capable of entering his system through osmosis. The gun's structure is extremely solid and dependable. It is capable of burst fire and has a rather large clip capacity. When caught in a close combat situation the wielder can use the large hypodermic needle placed under the barrel as a bayonet. This, too, is capable of infecting the target.

CURATOR SWORD

All Curators carry this wicked blade. It has an infamous reputation, and many are those in the ranks of the human army who tremble at the mere sight of it. Standing in the frontlines watching a group of Curators in full charge swinging this terrible weapon can send grown men running, pleading for their lives.

A curator sword is shaped as a perversely large and oddly proportioned scalpel. It has a long handle with a grooved grip and a broad thin blade, and it is just as sharp as its smaller counterpart. The blade is etched with symbols that invoke the infectious symmetry pattern of Demnogonis. The sword produces an infectious secretion that enters the bloodstream of a victim the second the blade breaks the skin. Wounds inflicted by this weapon will never heal unless they are treated with the Art of Exorcism. Those who fall as a result of being killed are likely to rise as a Kadaver, as the blade is infused with the Black Rot.

PLAGUE GRENADE

These are made from a glass cylinder placed within a metal casing and wrapped in a layer of pulsating, rotten muscle tissue. Within the tube, there is an infectious sludge that 'talks' to the fleshy outer layer. The layer analyses biological creatures in its surroundings and the sludge mutates and evolves in the blink of an eye in order to be as effective as possible, making sure to adapt itself to possible inoculations and immunities. When the grenade detonates, the metal casing rips through flesh and bone causing grievous wounds, while the infectious fluid rides along the shrapnel and enters the victim's body. The shrapnel retains its infectious properties when it misses a body and poses a danger to anyone who steps on it or handles it.

DEMNOGONIS WEAPONS

MELEE WEAPON	DAMAGE	WGT	COST	NOTES
Bayonet	Str+d4	1	–	Contagion, A bayonet affixed to a rifle increases the damage to Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Curator Sword	Str+d6	6	–	Contagion, Parry +1

RANGED WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Plague Gun	24/48/96	2d8	–	3	30	–	10	–
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB								
Plague Grenade	4/8/16	2d6	–	1	1	–	1	–
Notes: Small Burst Template, Dreadful, Corrupting								

SEMAI EQUIPMENT

Semai focuses on technology that may aid in the corruption of others, or silent kills.

JAHKT

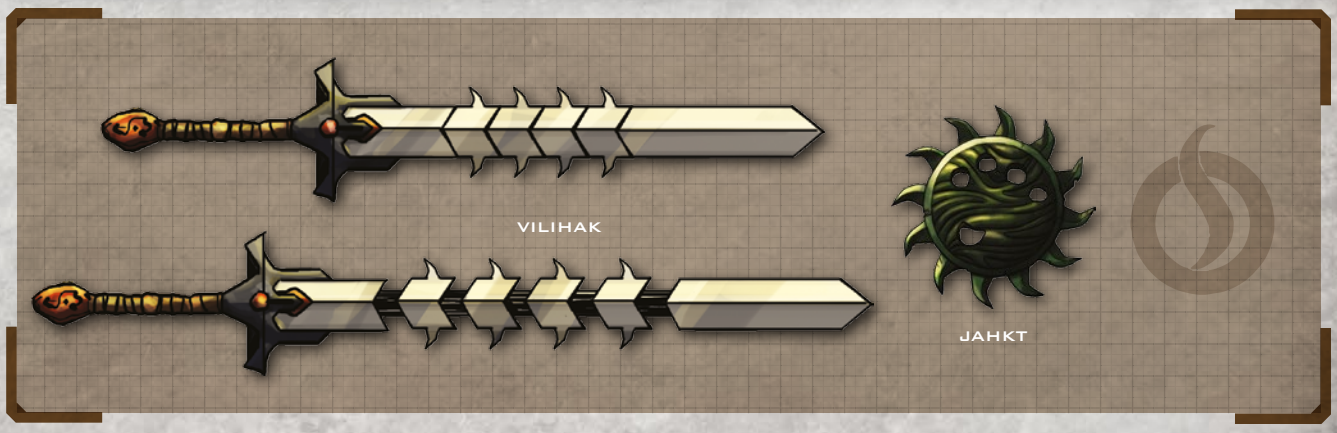
This wickedly sharp disk with serrated edges is the favourite weapon of the Callistonian Intruders. It can be held and used as a close combat weapon but it is most efficient when thrown. It whirrs as it spins through the air at incredible speed, propelled by the Dark Symmetry. Semai created this with the aid of Tekrons he was given by Algeroth. It contains a necrotechnological device that holds a vengeful, tortured blood spirit. It links with the user and when thrown it will lock on to the target, actually chasing the prey with frightening efficiency. The Jahkt always returns to the hand of the user after being thrown. The blood spirit requires its user to feed it with blood in order to uphold the link and steals a small amount every day. As Callistonian Intruders heal swiftly, it doesn't bother them.

VILIHAK

The Vilihak is an evil blade of Black Technology often wielded by the Callistonian Intruders. It has a short, broad blade lined with hooks. The user can extend the blade with a mental command, turning it into a five meter hooked whip. It can be shot straight out like a harpoon and can pierce the thickest of armour, or even be shot straight into mountainsides. A mental command can pull it back with tremendous force. The Intruders use this function to pull

SEMAI WEAPONS

MELEE WEAPON	DAMAGE	WGT	COST	NOTES
Jahkt	Str+d6	1	Na	Ap 2, Vicious, Can be thrown 5/10/20
Vilihak	Str+d8	5	Na	Ap 2, Whip form has Reach, Blade form is Parry +1



MUAWIJHE WEAPONS

MELEE WEAPON	DAMAGE	WGT	COST	NOTES
Cenarath	Str+d4	5	Na	Reach, Corrupting

RANGED WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	CORRUPT	WGT	COST
Shrieketh	24/48/96	2d8	1	3	30	–	10	–
Notes: Min Str d6, Auto, 3RB, Corrupting								
Tzoteth	Cone	2d6+2	–	1	6	–	18	–
Notes: Fire, Corrupting								

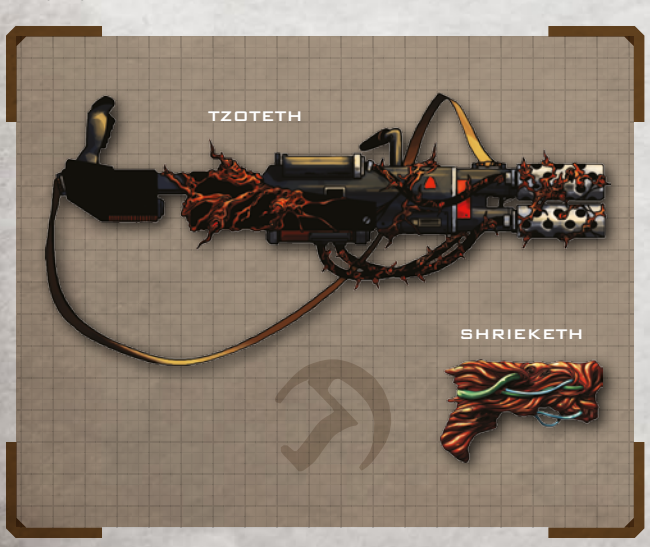
enemies towards them, or in order to get around by using it as a very effective retractable grappling hook.

MUAWIJHE EQUIPMENT

Muawijhe creates equipment that reflects his own twisted nature, and arms his legions with weapons that are often capable of shattering the mind as well as the body of his enemies.

SHRIEKETH

This is the standard weapon of the Screaming Legions, forged of nightmare stuff and the insanity of its master. Though it vaguely resembles a conventional gun, it has been fashioned out of some kind of organic material that looks like gnarled old leather. Rather than having been assembled by parts, it looks to have been created in a mould, with odd, disturbing angles and shapes. It is covered in swirling patterns, and pulsating tubes run in and out of it. It fires hooked spikes that can rip through armour. The spikes are filled with madness inducing symmetry patterns, and those hit by a spike risk being driven to insanity if not properly treated.



TZOTETH

This heavy support weapon is based on the same principle as a flamer, but instead it spews fourth gusts of living symmetry flames of insanity. Like a flood of black flame it washes over the target, crawling over the victim like some demented beast out of a nightmare. Shrill laughs and shrieks can be heard from the flames and twisted faces can be seen suffering within the swirls of fire. Those struck are ravaged with instant madness and, if their mind is weak, they will die instantly, both mind, soul, and body burned to cinders.

CENARATH

Cenarath is a horrible weapon that has two uses. It comes in the form of a long, twisted whip almost four meters long. It is made out of symmetry-infused gnarled human skin and bones, ripped from the most insane victims. When used against human enemies it tears flesh and sanity from whomever it strikes. It even has the capacity to rip through armour. As it hits it causes mental damage as well as physical damage. When used against Screaming Legionnaires by a Nepharite or Zenithian Soulslayers it does not cause damage but instead bolsters the Legionnaires. The Cenarath is the favourite weapon of the Zenithian Soulslayers.

CHAPTER 08

FREELANCERS, EMPLOYEES, AND JOBS

LIVING OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM

There are as many reasons why people are freelancers as there are freelancers, but most are those that have left corporate employment. Most freelancers have a military or security background, though more than one finance executive has found himself on the losing side of an internal political battle and been forced out.

LIFE OF A FREELANCER

A freelancer's life is his own. Freelancers are created in two ways: either they were corporate employees who left their employment to seek more opportunities or adventure, or they were born to other freelancers and grew up on the streets, never experiencing the urge to become a working stiff with the corporations.

The sad truth is that most of the first type do not survive that long on the streets. Cut from the umbilical of their corporate parent, they are cast adrift and have to rapidly learn an entire new set of skills if they are to have enough food to eat, let alone prosper. Many end up back in low-paid menial jobs in the corporations, or in one of the many homeless shelters and soup-kitchens run by the Brotherhood, or as just one more fatality statistic in a city that just does not care. Those that do survive quickly learn the four essentials:

- Get jobs and get paid.
- Your contacts network is your lifeline.
- Never let your guard down.
- A code of honour is good, but pragmatism is better.

MISSIONS

There is a huge variety in missions carried out by freelancers, but there are a few that freelancers are especially suited to. These are missions the corporations deem too sensitive or too risky to use their own personnel and assets on, especially when there are 'disposable' freelancers always available. These are some of the missions a freelancer can expect to take on:

INFILTRATION

As far as the business world is concerned, most freelancers do not exist. That makes them perfect for sending on deep cover infiltration operations. The corporation provides the freelancer with a plausible fake identity, and the freelancer gets hired by the target corporation. Once in, he goes to work gathering as much information and actionable intelligence as possible, using his acting skills to gain the confidence of his 'co-workers'. Though not technically illegal–especially as every corporation does it–it is certainly morally questionable.

ANTI-LEGION OPERATIONS

It is a simple truth that confrontations with the Dark Legion have excessive mortality rates. Intelligence is often lacking, or just plain wrong, and any agent returning from the field could have been corrupted and twisted by the Dark Symmetry, or infected with parasites or weaponised viruses. Even those who do survive never do so unscathed. It is simple corporate logic that it is better to risk ten freelancers than a single corporate agent. Of course, the flip side of this is that when you need an expert on fighting the Dark Legion you are far more likely to find it among the freelancers.

"Nicely done Mr Icepick." "Likewise, Mr Bruiser."

TRANSPORT

There is a high demand for no-questions-asked couriers in the freelancer community. Corporations and organised crime alike all have need of their services transporting stolen goods, drugs, weapons, kidnap victims, corporate secrets, and hazardous materials–including Dark Legion items. Usually there is a tight time frame, and if caught the freelancer is on his own. No connection with the hiring corporation can be found, and of course with items like these it is inevitable that there will be interested parties trying to intercept or stop the shipment as well.

INVESTIGATION

Despite the best efforts of Luna PD, the Cartel Bureaus, or the myriad of corporate security forces there are many investigations that are better suited to freelancers. Freelancers can investigate murders, missing person cases, financial irregularities, heresy, treason, and worse. There are many reasons for hiring freelancers but the most important one is that freelancers can operate independently, free from corporate oversight and meddling. This is especially valuable when the corporation is investigating its own people. Luna PD makes frequent use of freelancers for another reason: their experience. No one knows the streets like freelancers. They are used to operating on their own with little or no support from their employers, and those who have survived any substantial length of time have finely tuned instincts.

SURVEILLANCE

Just as with infiltration missions, freelancers make perfect surveillance operatives. They are able to freely follow and observe corporate personnel and are largely free from the 'tells' that mark out legitimate corporate security. Though often considered a dull assignment, most freelancers will jump at the chance for a bit of cash. Of course, sometimes a surveillance operation can morph into an investigation mission, or even a bit of wetwork.

WETWORK

Freelancers make excellent killers for hire. If a corporate executive needs an enemy or rival 'removed from the picture', and has no pull internally with his own security forces, then he will usually turn to freelancers. Although the term 'wetwork' means assassination, this mission type often includes kidnappings with the understanding that the kidnap victim will probably not be released.

EXPLORATION

Sometimes a corporation needs disposable scouts, and then it turns–as ever–to freelancers. Exploring Citadels, heretic nests, sealed sewers or mines, and abandoned spacecraft are all locations that corporations deem too risky or too mundane for their own personnel.

LIFE

The life of a freelancer is never ordinary. Freelancers have a knack for getting into trouble and sticking their noses where they do not belong, let alone the additional complications of the occasional betrayal by their former employers. Freelancers are often witnesses to crimes, such as murders, that are supposed to have no witnesses. They are set up as patsies and fall-guys for other corporate operations. They make enemies in the wrong places all the time, and frankly the Inquisition considers all freelancers to be borderline heretics. But that is life outside the system.

GETTING PAID

Perhaps the most important element in a freelancer's life is getting paid. Over the centuries, freelancers have gathered a number of unwritten rules to live by.

Cash only: and preferably in Cardinal's Crowns.

Always get an advance: depending on the freelancer's reputation this can vary between 25% and 50% up front. If possible, use an escrow account to hold the rest of the fee in trust until the assignment is complete, however that is less common.

Expenses are good, weapons are better: a savvy freelancer knows that life on the streets is tough, so anything extra–like medical cover–that you can get out of the deal is good, but ultimately, untraceable equipment and weaponry is better.

Arrange payment meetings somewhere public or secure: too many freelancers have discovered that sometimes their employers believe it is easier to have them killed than paid.

Hold something back: a freelancer's life is never simple, but wherever possible it is good to hang on to some dirt or other leverage in case the mission goes bad.

Good pay, good guns, good times.

THE MIDNIGHT STAR

The most well-known of the hundreds of freelancer hangouts in Luna, the Midnight Star in the Nines is a place that most freelancers will visit at least once. It is the prime recruiting spot in the city, and most nights it is almost as packed with corporate fixers as it is freelancers.

Although it was initially a regular bar, over the centuries the Midnight Star has expanded vertically and horizontally over several additional floors and neighbouring buildings. Shortly after the First Dark Legion War, the Midnight Star was acquired by unknown parties who realised the value in its services. 'Management' – as they are only ever known – have operated it as strictly neutral territory ever since. Despite great speculation – not to mention the odd bit of investigation – the true identity of Management has never been revealed.

The Midnight Star offers a range of services from private meeting rooms, to dead letter drops, to escrow services. All of this is in addition to the regular bar, restaurant, and club facilities on the premises.

Management keep a matchmaking database on freelancers, fixers, and corporate executives that all parties can pay to access to vet potential employers or employees. Regular 'donations' and favours owed protect the Midnight Star from raids by Luna PD, corporate security, or attacks from local gangs or organised crime. This was cemented following a raid by the Inquisition where Management threatened to destroy the whole facility rather than turn over any files. Surprisingly, the Inquisition backed down, leading to a rumour that Management held some dirt on it, and since then they have been left alone.

The Midnight Star expects – and receives – a small commission (1 Asset) from both sides on any missions negotiated on the premises. This fee rises (to 2 Assets) for access to the matchmaking service, and further still (to 3 Assets) for the escrow service. Private meeting rooms are charged by the hour (Restriction 1, Cost 1 per hour booked).

LIFE AS A CORPORATE EMPLOYEE

Those who are filled with horror at the thought of being a freelancer are most likely corporate employees.

The Big Five corporations in the Second Dark Legion War – Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima, Imperial, and Cybertronic – are all effectively corporate nations. Nations not built on the rule of democracy, but on the rule of money: plutocracies. Even the smallest – Cybertronic – has tens of millions of employees spread across many worlds.

There are upsides and downsides to working for a corporation:

On the positive side there is the reliability of being paid, and corporation employees have a career and maybe even promotion prospects. They will also have access to the corporation's resources and personnel, including backup for security or military operations. They are able to make use of corporate health services and other perks, including a pension.

But on the negative: they are subject to the whims and demands of upper management, and unless they are one of the elite few at the top, they are just a cog in the machine. Employees have no right to say 'no'. Even if they stay in line, internal corporate politics can see them forced out, so one day they might find out that the corporate pay check is not quite as reliable as they thought.

Still, as far as most corporate citizens are concerned, the corporate life is infinitely preferable to that of being a freelancer.

COMPETITION

Competition is endemic to corporations. Competition with the rivals in your department, within a division, with other corporations, and the Brotherhood.

Competition breeds corruption, jealousy, greed, ruthlessness, and plenty of back-stabbing. Those who want to survive have to learn to stay on top of it. It does not take long working in any division to discover which deals must not be mentioned, which files must remain unopened, and what people are never promoted. Employees will soon begin to notice the whispers between close colleagues, the clicks on the telephone as they make their calls, and sometimes even hidden microphones and other surveillance equipment in their offices.

Those who do not learn the rules can suddenly find their projects downgraded, budgets cut, requisitions placed on hold, and – if things go really badly – their authorisation suddenly being cancelled. At that point they have two choices: go rogue and become a freelancer, or fight back with the favours, blackmail materials, secret bank accounts, and other protections they put in place.

DIFFERENCES

Corporations have a herd mentality: similarities are lauded and differences are distrusted. Corporation employees find their friends and allies will be friendlier, but their enemies and rivals will be even more hostile. Sometimes just wearing a Capitol suit in the wrong place can get you killed, but in others it can save your life. In tough situations, internal rivalries are put aside and co-workers band together as natural allies. Having a position within the corporation garners trust and respect, because people know that those who are loyal would never willingly let their corporation down. That would be tantamount to treason.

MISSIONS

Missions for corporate personnel have a lot of similarity to the jobs freelancers take on, especially for those in corporate security or military. But the golden rule is that if a freelancer can do a job the corporation will hire a freelancer. That means employees get sent on missions that are reliant on internal knowledge, require resources far beyond what a freelancer could bring to bear, or are just too urgent. It also means that the mission is their duty and failure is not an option.

The benefits, of course, include much better equipment, access to backup and other support, and the knowledge that, in general, corporate personnel are not considered expendable. Freelancers will often handle much of the boring legwork, leaving them free to carry out the key operations.

EMPLOYMENT

The range of employment opportunities available to both corporate personnel and freelancers is vast, and each of the corporations has its own unique professions, but here is a list of some of the most common roles that are shared.

CASUAL LABOUR

The vast majority of freelancer workers are casual labourers. Working in markets, taking temporary jobs with the corporations, driving taxies, extras in movies, or working as a dockhand. The work is unreliable, and varies enormously from day-to-day, but it is possible to make a living this way.

SKILLED LABOUR

Working in a factory, machine shop, or garage these blue-collar roles require some prior knowledge and are often unionised, even if only unofficially. The work is far more regular than casual labour, and leaves very little time for jobs on the side.

OFFICE WORKER

Secretaries, clerks, low level administrators, and librarians. These jobs all require at least basic literacy and the ability to use a typewriter.

MANAGER

The lowest rung on the corporate management ladder, a manager is one of a lucky few who get to oversee a group of underlings. A white-collar occupation.

PROFESSIONAL

Lawyers, accountants, architects, and engineers. These are roles that require specialist training, and are usually very well paid. These

The young Bauhaus executive was having a difficult first day in her new role in administration on Luna. She was already running late, her arms full of papers, as she rushed down the hallway. She didn't even notice the sharply-suited business executive until she collided with him, her patpers scattering as she bounced off him as if he were made of stone. Her eyes widened in embarrassed horror as she looked up at him and, for a moment, she thought she saw an intense anger building behind his eyes before he flashed her a quick smile and bent to help her gather her fallen papers.

Thanks to Christian Thunberg.

"Oh I'm sorry, I didn't see you there," he said smoothly. "My name is Christian Thunberg. You can call me Christian. I work over in acquisitions. What's your name?" She mumbled her name and where she worked and his smile grew. "Administration, eh? How… fascinating!"

He handed her the sheath of papers he had gathered, surruptitiously scanning them as he did so. "Why don't we go and get you a drink to calm down?" She nodded enthusiastically, not even noticing Christian glancing quickly along the hall to to see if they were alone. He led her over to the lift.

He motioned for her to enter the lift first, sliding a wickedly serrated blade from a concealed sheath as he did so, and stepped in after her. The lift doors silenced her screams.

are also the most prestigious jobs a freelancer can hope to get as a good professional can work for any employer.

EXECUTIVE

Senior partners, CEOs, Chief Financial Officers and the like are all at this level. The pay is excellent, the perks amazing, but the politics can be murder.

COP

An ordinary uniformed beat cop for Luna PD, a corporate security service, or freelance security company, being a cop is a respected and feared blue-collar career.

DETECTIVE

Most detectives are the investigators for Luna PD or one of the corporate security services, but there are a quite a few private investigators licensed with Luna PD. Considered the white-collar profession of the law enforcement profession they can earn good salaries or good daily rates for freelancers.

SOLDIER

One of the traditional ways to get off the streets. Most people will qualify for some position in one of the corporate militaries. Pay is ok, rising to good when in front-line duty. Those who are really good can transfer into the special forces where the pay and respect earned is commensurately higher.

MUSCLE

Most muscle will work as bouncers for clubs, casual enforcers for criminal enterprises, repo men, or low-rent bodyguards. The pay can be good, as long as they do not ask too many questions.

ASSASSIN

Highly lucrative and highly dangerous, the life of an assassin can offer the greatest thrills for those who are morally-flexible.

ERAS OF PLAY

The ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting covers a period of human existence that spans more than a thousand years and, as might be expected, the passage of years brings with it considerable changes. This section explores the way that the game–and the rules used–may change depending on the era in which a given game of ***Mutant Chronicles*** is set.

THE DARK LEGION ERA

The traditional era of play for ***Mutant Chronicles***, the Dark Legion era takes place during the 13th Century YC (Year of the Cardinal). The Cybertronic corporation arose a few generations ago, and humanity has existed in a state of relative peace since the end of the Venusian Crusade. However, the Darkness is resurgent once more, and human avarice has come to resent the stability and peace that has reigned for more than a thousand years.

The Dark Legion marches upon the borders of human civilisation. People dismiss the threat, for many generations have passed since anyone saw the full fury of the Dark Legion at war, and the true magnitude of its terror has been consigned to legend.

The normal rules are written with this era in mind. The character creation rules assume the existence of the Brotherhood and the Cybertronic corporation, elements that do not exist in the earlier era. The technology presented in the Weapons, Armour, and Belongings chapters, as well as the Vehicles and Spacecraft chapters, assume the rugged, corruption-resistant machinery of the Dark Legion era. Computers are few and far between, communications technology is at a level roughly equivalent to mid-20th Century Earth, and the idea of artificial intelligence is one regarded with caution by most outside of Cybertronic.

DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Life in the Dark Legion era is not too difficult to imagine. People get up in the morning, go to work, come home again, socialise with friends and family, and sleep before the next day, much as people have done for centuries. People find things out by reading newspapers, watching television, listening to the radio, and via the inevitable gossip that exists within any group of people.

The credit-driven finances of ancient days are a thing of the past–the vast majority of people are paid in either their corporation's own currency, or in Cardinal's Crowns. Unless they have got a good steady job with one of the corporations, they will be paid weekly or fortnightly, cash-in-hand.

The corporations cover every aspect of life, and outside of Luna City, most people who work for the corporations find all of their needs provided for by their employer, with the alternatives from other corporations being rare at best. On Luna, where all the corporations are presented as equal, people have more options, but most stick to what is familiar unless there is a significant difference in quality. Freelancers tend to pick and choose where they shop, trying to get the best value regardless of who makes a given product.

THE DARK SYMMETRY ERA

Playing in the Dark Symmetry era is a different proposition. Many of the organisations and elements commonplace in the Second Dark Legion War do not yet exist, or at least do not exist in their 'final' form.

The first and most obvious difference is that Cybertronic does not exist. It will not emerge for many centuries, and the notion of a corporation founded upon a base of advanced technology is a bizarre one from the perspective of this era. The second big difference is the Brotherhood. While the Brothers exist and preach their message of unity and human determination, the organisation that they come to build is not the monumental force that it will become.

The Dark Symmetry era spans a tumultuous and strife-filled period of human existence. It starts with the moment known as The Fall, when Imperial Conquistadors landed upon Pluto and unwittingly unleashed the Dark Symmetry. From that moment, the worlds of humanity changed irrevocably. Technology became corrupt and unpredictable, and lashed out against humanity. The change was subtle at first, dismissed as coincidental events amongst the noise of the solar system… but that quickly changed as spaceships began to fall from the skies, communications networks became filled with hateful screams, and all hell broke loose across the worlds of mankind.

The Era continues through the chaos of these early years, as the solar system goes dark–communications systems fail, fleets of spacecraft become flying coffins–to a period even darker still. The Dark Symmetry era extends through the war between the corporations, the rise of the Brothers, the founding of the Brotherhood, and the emergence of the Dark Legion that followed it, and culminates

with the conclusion of the First Dark Legion War, decades after the defeat of Algeroth and the death of Cardinal Durand I.

Needless to say, this requires some changes from the normal rules. **Chapter 04: Character Lifepath** already mentions that characters should not be allowed to belong to the Cybertronic corporation during the Dark Symmetry era, simply because it does not exist. The same is the case with Brotherhood characters for at least the early part of this Era, and even once the Brotherhood has formed, it takes a long time to become the colossal political and spiritual force of the Dark Legion era. While Whitestar does exist at this point, their forays away from Earth are rare, and thus so are characters from Whitestar. There are a number of other, smaller, elements that differ–changes to individual factions that will impact the way characters are created and played.

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus changes little between the two eras, at least in ways that would impact character creation. Bauhaus' craftsmanship and engineering encompassed high-technology fields during this era, and House Saglieli was significantly less powerful before it tied its fortunes to the Brotherhood, but these differences have little impact upon the game's rules. They are, however, worth considering when it comes to describing a character's backstory.

The biggest difference is that Venus was utterly dominated by Bauhaus in the First Dark Legion War, to a degree it has never been able to recapture. The spread of Imperial, Capitolian, and Mishiman settlements on Venus is a direct consequence of the First Corporate Wars, and the First Dark Legion War that followed, and Bauhaus has never been able to reclaim that territory.

CAPITOL

Capitol is the exception to the changes across the era. Capitol weathers the centuries better than most, and exists relatively unchanged between the Dark Symmetry and Dark Legion eras. The natural cycles of presidents and other politicians means that Capitolian politics naturally flexes and bends with the times, and with far more ease and fluidity than those of the other corporations.

Even the rise of the Brotherhood seemed to barely influence Capitol–the Capitolian belief in freedom of expression means that religious faith is deemed an individual matter, so it went almost without comment.

IMPERIAL

Imperial, during this era, is in turmoil. The most powerful clans wage a cruel and brutal war against one another, while also seeking to expand their collective power over the rest of the solar system. By the time the First Dark Legion War begins, Imperial is battered not only from war with the other corporations, but an internal conflict that would define it for centuries to come–the Bloody Mess, known in later centuries as the Great Resentment.

Needless to say, this means that there are numerous rivalries and grudges present for Imperial characters in the Dark Symmetry era that are fresh and raw. These rivalries will not fade quickly, if ever, and they will influence the way Imperial characters interact with one another: "what side of the Mess were you on?".

Imperial's notable embrace of the Brotherhood is not yet established in this era, either–indeed, Imperial is suspicious of the Brothers during the early years of this era–and it would take many long, hard years of warfare against the Dark Legion for that bond to be forged.

The era influences a number of Imperial's clans. Clan Kingsfield remains a power in the corporation, Clan Morgan's fortunes are at their lowest due to a reliance on electronics manufacturing, Clan Dunsirn has not yet found its fortune, Clan Paladine is only just coming to power when the Bloody Mess ends, and Fieldhausen had not yet defected to Imperial from Bauhaus. All these changes should be considered when creating an Imperial character.

MISHIMA

The Mishima corporation differs a considerable amount between eras. During the Dark Symmetry era, the collapse of advanced technology only added to the strife inflicted by a succession crisis

Ilian priest from the First Dark Legion War preaching to his disciples.

and the political turmoil that followed. The Dark Symmetry crippled Mishima's electronics manufacturing business, causing dangerous instability in the internal Mishiman markets. The Panopticon AI system that the Mishimans relied upon for civil order became corrupted, driving Mercury into utter disarray. Blood flowed in the streets as increasingly-militant samurai took matters into their own hands. Yet, when the Dark Legion arrived, Mercury was furthest from the hordes.

Some of the biggest differences between the eras for Mishima are cultural. Though the Brotherhood was new, Mishima was nonetheless an ally in those early days–it would be centuries before the Mishiman people cut ties with the Brotherhood. This also means that the credo of the Seven Sages–which has become the prevailing faith in Mishiman territories by the Dark Legion era–has not yet been established. Mishiman characters in the Dark Symmetry era thus lack the spiritual trappings of their descendants in later years.

DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Daily life in the Dark Symmetry era is a mixture of mundanity and terror. The influence of the Dark Symmetry makes any interaction with technology an uncertain one, and the infrastructure of the worlds of man is built upon technology. As the years pass, this technology is torn out, bypassed, or otherwise replaced with systems that are far more reliable and resistant to the Darkness.

This fear spreads beyond technology. Communications networks are corrupted in subtle ways, and something as simple as speaking on the telephone becomes fraught with doubt and uncertainty, for the Darkness can bend and twist words and lead people to false conclusions. Bad blood springs up amongst people who might have had little reason to speak, and the divisions between the corporations are magnified and exacerbated. The worst impulses of man–fear, doubt, resentment, and envy–are given free rein.

The rule during the height of the Dark Symmetry era is that trust is a vulnerability, and paranoia is a vital survival skill. People are willing to trudge on foot for an hour or more to get to work, rather than trust in a transit system that may catastrophically fail at the worst moment. They will pass messages by hand rather than rely upon phones, radios, and text messaging services.

This change comes slowly, unevenly, and often in irrational ways–people willing to trust some technology but not others, often for entirely arbitrary reasons. Often simple disbelief makes a person unable to countenance the corruption affecting them or someone they know, while paranoia and suspicion means that people look for someone to blame for this corrupting influence–yet another reason for the divisions between the corporations.

In short, people continue to try and live their lives under the shadow of a threat they cannot properly comprehend. They try their hardest to live their lives as normally as possible, and ignore the fear. This is not unusual–humans have struggled to carry on as normal in the face of existential threats for millennia–and the resultant 'cold war mentality' shapes a civilisation under siege.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

The politics of the era change dramatically as the years pass. The early part of the Dark Symmetry era is a transition from a time of peace to the chaos of corrupted technology, and from there to the savagery of interplanetary war. Even after the corporations make peace with one another–reluctantly–this state of war does not truly end until the Dark Legion is defeated, decades after the Venusian Crusade.

Broadly, society during the Dark Symmetry era is defined by strife and warfare. The interactions between the corporations shift considerably as the era progresses, but the certainty is that there is a war on. When the First Corporate War kicks off, everyone knows someone who has gone to the front lines. This does not change as the decades pass–indeed, with each generation of new soldiers that marches forth, there is also a generation of veterans returning home, many of whom are embittered, disaffected, or otherwise resentful of their corporate masters. These disillusioned men and women provide military might to both the Brothers' forces and to Heretic cults springing up, as people seek an alternative to the corporations.

During this period of war, corporate propaganda grows more aggressive, and more militarised; the AFC's 'Joe Capitol' campaign, and the accompanying children's cartoon and action figure range, is a powerful example of pro-military rhetoric from the era.

TECHNOLOGY

The biggest differences between the Dark Symmetry era and the Dark Legion era is, of course, technology. The rise of the Dark Symmetry, and the Fall that accompanied it, had a colossal effect upon the technology of the time, and while this change took place overnight, humanity's response was far from immediate. Even centuries later, lingering elements of pre-Fall technology can still be found, isolated, forgotten, and abandoned.

Even at the end of the Dark Symmetry era, technology from before the Fall is still prevalent. This is in spite of the efforts of millions of factory workers and engineers working to strip computer systems and Thinking Machines from otherwise-serviceable devices. While the number of high-tech devices dwindles over time, there remain many such machines across the solar system.

The bulk of this technological sophistication comes in the form of computer-assistance for a wide range of common devices. The average car is fitted with a rudimentary Expert System that helps the driver control the vehicle, and similar systems can be found on a wide range of devices. Computer-assisted waldo systems, which provide an extra hand for precise or technical work like surgery, engineering, or scientific experiments, are commonplace.

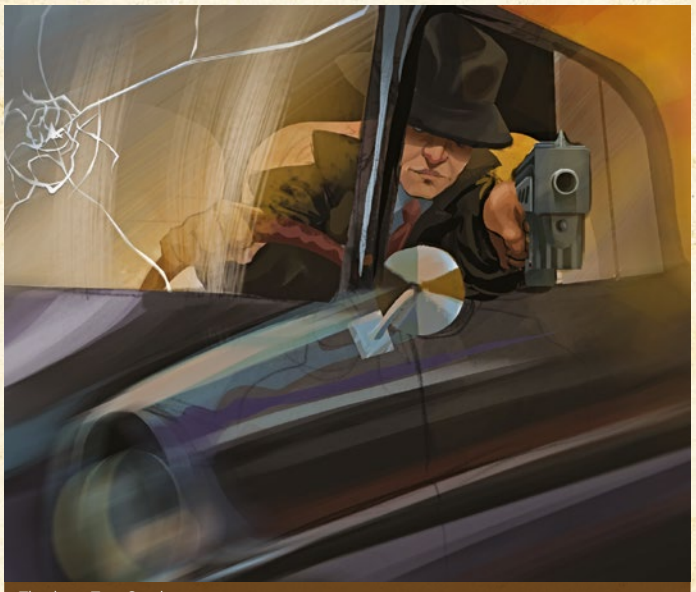
Rules for these Expert Systems can be found in **Chapter 05: Weapons, Equipment, and Gear**. An item with a Basic Expert System increases the item's Cost by two. An item with a Complex Expert System increases the item's Restriction by one, and its Cost by five. An item with an Intuitive Expert System increases the item's Restriction by two, and its Cost by ten.

Thinking Machines—also described in **Chapter 05: Weapons, Equipment, and Gear**—are also more prevalent during this era, though they are not the sort of devices that are likely to be owned. The corporations, before the Fall, employed many Thinking Machines to govern the complexities of inter-corporate finance, oversee orbital traffic, operate spacecraft, control civil movements (as was the case with the Mishiman Panopticon), and countless other complex tasks that would tax the capabilities of the most dedicated human. These are less likely to be encountered as possessions, and more often as characters—allies facing an existential threat if uncorrupted, or enemies driven insane by the Darkness if they have succumbed to corruption.

Its siren blasting and blue lights flashing, the black Luna PD Mark 7 Patrol Cruiser screamed around the corner as the wheels fought for purchases on the rain-slicked tarmac as Detective Overbey fought to retain control. He felt the car begin to aquaplane and spun the wheel in the direction of travel until he felt the tyres gain traction again and he was able to straighten out. Not many detectives in Luna PD could have made the turn at that speed, but Tom Overbey had an unusual background. A former professional race car driver-turned detective, and he was going be damned—Cardinal Preserve us—if he was going to let the bank robbers get away. They had killed three hostages and that seriously ticked Detective Overbey off.

The battered van he was pursuing had not taken the corner anywhere as smoothly and has scrapped all along the side of a building trailing sparks as it tore off sheets of metal. It was not neat, but they somehow maintained control and that meant more people were going to be put at risk. "Not on my watch!" grumbled Overbey to himself and he pulled the Sherman .74 Bolter out his shoulder holster and transferred it to his left hand sticking it out through the window, he lined up the car as best he could and took the shot. The first went wide, but the second was true and burst the rear left tyre on the van. The van driver—until now barely hanging on—finally lost control of the dead vehicle and it drifted to the kerb, clipping the front edge and spinning the vehicle onto its side. Overbey slammed the breaks and was out of the car and moving in the moment it came to a halt. One of the robbers was feebly trying to crawl out of the wreckage.

"Luna PD! Give it up, punk. You're busted."



Thanks to Tom Overbey.

CHAPTER 10

LUNA: HUMANITY'S HEART

WELCOME TO LUNA!

When humanity fled the dying Earth, Luna was its sanctuary. From humble beginnings as a tiny colony and mining base, founded by brave adventurers of Capitol, it was terraformed by the scientists of Bauhaus, and quickly settled by the colonists of Mishima and Imperial. Luna City–known as just 'Luna' – has become the largest metropolis ever to have existed, and the beating heart of humanity.

Striking out from their bases on Luna, Mishima conquered Mercury, Bauhaus rebuilt Venus in its image, Capitol staked its claim on Mars, and Imperial explored the Asteroid Field and beyond. All roads–and space lanes–start from Luna.

The scale of the city is hard to grasp. Circling the wasted Earth, the streets and buildings of Luna spread like a cancer across the Moon's surface. Ancient mines, trains, and factories burrow deep into the crust, and proud corporate skyscrapers punch through the Moon's atmosphere into the void beyond.

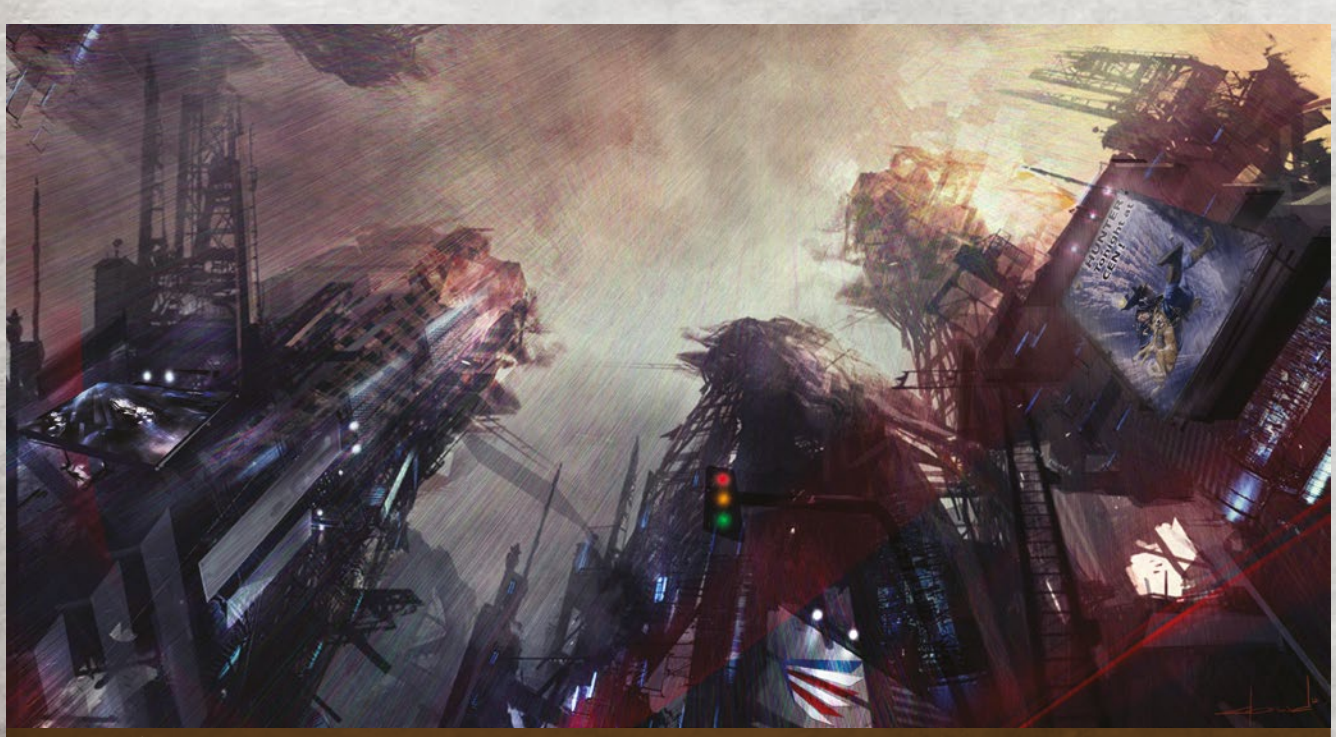
Though most buildings are built from the grey concrete and reformed regolith of the Luna surface, every neighbourhood and district in Luna nonetheless has its own architectural style and every style from throughout history is present.

In broad terms Luna is divided into the Ancient Quarters of downtown, the ever-expanding urban sprawl of the Perimeters, bustling Spaceports and Industrial Zones, the dangerous Badlands of the Armstrong Mountains and Luna plains, and the deep blue mysteries of the Lake of Testimonies.

Luna is like nowhere else in the solar system, but there are three things in particular that make Luna unique:

LUNA IS A FREE CITY: unlike cities elsewhere in the solar system that are dominated by a single corporation, Luna belongs to no one faction. Sure, some areas are secured and off-limits, but most places are open to visitors. The 'Pax Luna' enforced by the Brotherhood ensures this is the case.

Luna has evolved into unique districts and neighbourhoods that vary by social status, wealth, culture, or some other distinguishing feature. You can walk ten blocks and travel from exclusive, wealthy residences to dingy, rundown, gang-ridden hellholes. Shopping



Luna City, Capitol District.

malls butt up against business districts, and the poor get squeezed into their own ghettoes and rookeries.

Active heavy industry is forced out to the fringes, away from the more desirable property–but if you know where to look you can still find Luna's industrial past hidden just under the surface, with exclusive residences built on the foundations of mothballed factories, old robofacs, and ore processors.

EVERYONE IS HERE: Luna is home to millions of people from every culture and every part of society. More importantly, all the corporations and most of the bigger free enterprises have major offices and facilities here. It is a melting pot of cultures, which gives it a vibrancy all of its own. Luna is the bustling hub of finance and trade, where Mishiman stockbrokers can deal with Capitolian petrochemical magnates and Bauhaus nobles argue with Imperial Conquistadors.

Where there is finance and trade there is espionage, crime, and sabotage–which, in turn, requires expansive security services.

No overview of Luna would be complete without a mention of the Brotherhood. The Cathedral of the Cardinal dominates much of the Ancient Quarter, but on a more prosaic level its influence can be felt throughout the city, from the offices of the Cartel to its roadside shrines and soup kitchens.

YOU CAN BE ANYONE YOU WANT TO BE: with a city this size, it is easy to disappear and just as possible to make it big and become somebody. As long as you are not too picky there is always work to be found, new contacts to be made, and opportunities to be exploited.

OUTLOOK

Seen in cross-section, Luna is a manmade mountain that slopes gently up from the edges of the city before rising to the sudden peak of the corporate towers crammed into the Ancient Quarters on the edge of the Lake of Testimonies. Smoke and fire from the Industrial Zones and the constant roar of spacecraft launching into space from one of the spaceports fill the air.

UP AND OUT

Luna is a big city, ever growing up as well as out, and it did not take long for a very serious issue to arise: what to do with an old building when it becomes too problematic?

Demolishing high rises or skyscrapers is never easy. One of the corporations' favourite tricks is to raise the street level to start again with a fresh new façade on an old tower. This creates ever more subterranean levels, which, according to rumours, have raised the street level in the Ancient Quarters almost a quarter of a mile above its origin. Smaller subsidiary or independent factories, cheap housing, and freelance shops move into the space vacated by the big boys and life goes on… just without a view of the sky any more.

Of course, the corporations have to maintain the security of their towers, so sometimes they just fill the vacated offices and rooms with millions of litres of concrete so that some enterprising freelancer or rival cannot use that as a convenient way to bypass security. Unfortunately not all building contractors are as loyal or thorough as the corporations would like, so the sublevels hold many secret entrances and passages.

In the Perimeters, where corporate pride and image is less of a consideration, they have a simpler solution: bulldozers and explosives. Trapped between the Circle Line and the Steel Line, the Perimeters have nowhere to expand. Instead, the corps issue a mandatory purchase order and the heavy construction machinery moves in. When that is not worth the effort, the alternate approach is to find a small piece of undeveloped land, or a street that is no longer getting much traffic, and just build over it.

THE ANCIENT QUARTERS

The original Luna settlement, the Ancient Quarters, is the heart of the city, hub

LUNA DURING THE DARK SYMMETRY ERA

In broad strokes, the Luna of the Dark Symmetry era period is very similar to that of the present day.

The streets are a little closer to the original ground surface, the towers are brighter, more aircraft fill the skies, and of course there is no Cybertronic enclave or Brotherhood Cathedral. Those are the obvious differences, but what is not so readily apparent is how the day-to-day lives of people are different, and just as importantly, what the mood of society is.

People are once again gaining access to similar high tech gadgets, vehicles, and equipment to what they had back on Earth. A sense of optimism is apparent in the architecture and the people alike. As far as people are concerned, humanity has survived the worst fate that could happen to a species: the loss of its home world. The corporations have brought stability and relative peace, and nothing is beyond their reach. Even now they are exploring the outermost fringes of the solar system and perhaps one day humanity will even journey to other stars.

The psychological impact of the arrival of the Dark Legion is arguably even more profound than its physical presence. It crushes that fragile sense of optimism.

of business and culture, and seat of all influence. All of the corporations have major offices here, and right amongst them all are the Brotherhood and Cartel.

The Ancient Quarters are divided into five districts–one for each of Capitol, Mishima, Bauhaus, Imperial and the Brotherhood–and two enclaves, the first carved out of Bauhaus territory for Cybertronic and the second for the Cartel within the Brotherhood District. Although neatly separated on any map, the reality is a bit more complex with areas tending to bleed into one another. You can usually tell when you have left one district and entered another because the adverts change, the police wear different uniforms, and different fashions are prominent.

THE LAKE OF TESTIMONIES

Back in the days of the First Dark Legion War, the Lake of Testimonies had another name: Sea of Tranquillity. One of the first areas of Luna to be terraformed, the low-lying terrain proved ideal for the first open body of fresh water. It was unsurprising that the initial settlements began to cluster along the shoreline.

Following the climactic events at the end of the First Dark Legion War, the newly-formed Brotherhood began to refer to it as the Lake of Testimonies, and over time the name stuck.

The labrythinian Cathedral District.

With a city this vast and this ancient there are thousands of interesting, unique, or otherwise significant locations, but here are a few points of interest.

CATHEDRAL DISTRICT AND CARTEL ENCLAVE

BROTHERHOOD SQUARE: Following the First Dark Legion War, the area known as Luna Downtown was given over to the Brotherhood and became Brotherhood Square. Perhaps the most impressive square in Luna, and certainly the most visited by tourists, Brotherhood Square is where you will find the Cardinal's Cathedral, the Memorial to Heroes, and the Cartel Enclave.

THE CATHEDRAL: the Cardinal's Cathedral, First Cathedral, Brotherhood Cathedral–or to give it its proper name, Cardinal Durand Cathedral–is both the largest building in Luna and the largest Cathedral in the solar system. The spire is the home of the blessed Cardinal Durand XVI and a place where "gravity gives way to a state of weightlessness and pure contemplation", at least according to Brotherhood leaflets. Although most other Brotherhood facilities in this district are not open to the public, the cathedral is. Tens of thousands of worshipers and just as many tourists walk the length of its five kilometre interior, which is lined with the Inner Wall where the First Chronicle – 'The Arrival of the Darkness and the Call of the Cardinal' – is inscribed. At the rear of the cathedral is the museum, packed with some of the most religiously and culturally significant artefacts in the solar system.

THE MEMORIAL TO HEROES: visitors to the Memorial of Heroes can read the epitaphs of the brave heroes who fought and died in the First Dark Legion War. Unlike the dramatic Doomtrooper Monument, the Memorial to Heroes is arranged around a tranquil, low-key park to offer a space for contemplation and serenity. Positioned as close as it is to the Cartel Enclave, the Memorial to Heroes is a favoured spot for politicians, corporate executives, and spies to meet to discuss things off the record.

THE STONE ARCHIVES: tucked in behind the cathedral, the Stone Archives are considered the most complete repository of human knowledge available today. The Stone Archives keep a copy of every book, newspaper, advertising flyer, and civic record printed. It is rumoured that deep within the archives, behind layers of security, are vaults containing records from before the Exodus from Earth. How or who gets access to those records remains a closely guarded secret.

THE WHITESTAR BUNKER: impossible to miss, the Whitestar Bunker stands out in strong contrast to the surrounding buildings. A squat concrete construction with no windows and only a single door, the bunker has the Whitestar symbol painted above its entrance. The bunker has very few visitors, and all who do approach are challenged by the fearsome, faceless guards at the entrance, who

are clad in white armour and furs. Unsurprisingly, the bunker is at the heart of gossip and rumour—some say they steal children, others that the building is actually a tomb—but all is known for certain is that in the dead of night strange mechanical noises can be heard in the neighbouring blocks, and the ground rumbles as if a giant were walking by.

THE CARTEL ENCLAVE

Generously donated by the Brotherhood, the Cartel Enclave is the only land directly controlled by the Cartel and is neutral ground for all the corporations. Starting on one side of Brotherhood Square, the enclave contains all the essential facilities required by the Cartel to operate, including the Cartel Building, Doomtrooper Monument, and the Government Mall.

THE CARTEL BUILDING: symbolically facing the Cardinal Durand Cathedral across Brotherhood Square, the Cartel Building is the headquarters of the Cartel and the centre of both Cartel business and Luna administration. While the corporations administer their own districts, Perimeters and other facilities, the Cartel is responsible for handling city-wide functions and inter-district relations. One of the Cartel's major tools to keep the peace in Luna is the administration and operation of the Luna Police Department. The Luna PD Headquarters is housed within this slab of a tower.

GOVERNMENT MALL: a claustrophobic, vertical concrete maze of government administration buildings, museums, and civic art galleries linked by a tight web of walkways, people movers, elevators, and bridges. The Government Mall is a unique sight and there are many theories about how the mall ended up quite so confusing. Ultimately, most people feel it is simply an accurate representation of how the Cartel (dis-)functions.

THE DOOMTROOPER MONUMENT: unlike the largely forgettable civic art in the Government Mall, the Doomtrooper Monument is a piece of epic sculpture that dominates the Cartel Enclave. Celebrating the 'final' victory of humanity and the Doomtroopers in the First Dark Legion War, and commissioned at the height of the celebrations, the monument is a 200 metre tall sculpture of a fully-armoured Doomtrooper, sword held aloft while standing on a pile of Dark Legion corpses. The names of the fallen soldiers are inscribed on the plinth supporting the statue. Energetic visitors can climb all the way up the inside of the statue to see the view from the Doomtrooper's helmet.

BASTILLON PARK

Luna's biggest park, Bastillon Park is a favoured recreation spot. Discretely scattered amongst the kilometres of rolling countryside are memorials and statues celebrating past heroes and saints of the Brotherhood. Despite being in the Brotherhood District, at night Bastillon Park becomes a dangerous place to be.

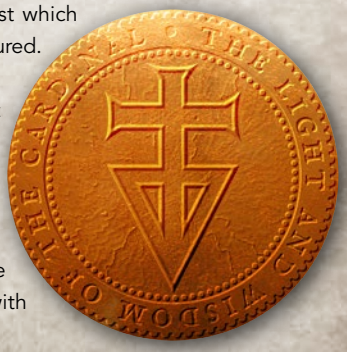
CURRENCY

Each corporation has its own currency. After the Brotherhood-backed Cardinal's Crown (Cr), the most commonly used currencies are the Capitol Dollar ($) and Imperial Sterling (£). The Bauhaus Electors Mark (BEM) is less frequently used, confined primarily to financial instruments, but is still common. Mishima has the rarely-used idiosyncratic large coins of the Gold Doubloon (GD) but carries out most internal transactions in a mix of Crowns, Dollars and Sterling. Almost never seen are the Cybertronic Piastre (¢), which are used as credit notes and are pegged at a 1:1 rate with the Cardinal's Crown. Whitestar has no currency, instead making any required external trades in gold bars or precious stones.

In the Second Dark Legion War time period, the Cardinal's Crown is the de-facto standard currency. In the First Dark Legion War, before the rise of the Brotherhood and the establishment of the Cartel, there was no standard currency. Instead a complex and fluid network of money changers existed, offering the ability to transfer your scrip from one corporate denomination to another for a fee.

Many freelance corporations were killed by currency exchange fees but some enterprising businesses made a killing in currency speculation. These speculation houses were the original exchanges, and both the Longshore Exchange and the Luna Central Exchange were independent corporations before they were bought out by Mishima and Capitol, respectively.

Despite the potential for profit, everyone realized that things had to change—the freeform exchange battlefield was damaging business and creating a substantial source of tension within the wider population. The third accord passed by the Cartel was setting the Cardinal's Crown—which had been officially recognised with the second accord—as the standard currency against which all others would be measured.



Of course, the fact that money changers usually had vast amounts of untraceable currency and were prime targets for robbery may also have had something to do with the change.

LUNA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: often mistaken by tourists as a cathedral from a distance, the Luna Memorial Hospital is one of the finest medical facilities on Luna, and is also the only one available to all regardless of wealth, privilege, or medical insurance. The 'LMH', as it is often known, is perhaps the most visible sign of the Brotherhood's unflinching support of the less fortunate in society, and consequently also the most visible reason for the love and respect the Brotherhood has from the people. With over 18,000 beds and the best care that the often overstretched staff from the Third Directorate can provide, anyone can get treated. Suspicious wounds, however, are almost always investigated further. Seated at the heart of Bastillon Park, just a short distance from Brotherhood Square, the LMH is always a hive of activity.

CAPITOL DISTRICT: 'LESSER MARS'

Lesser Mars, as the Capitol District is known, is a proud statement of Capitol's business might. Laid out on a grid pattern with the Pinnacle at the centre, it is a district of broad avenues and elegant buildings reminiscent of Manhattan of old.

THE PINNACLE: the headquarters of Capitol, the Pinnacle is a shining example of Capitolian spirit. Soaring above the ground, it would have been even taller had the Cardinal not passed an edict banning any building from being taller than two-thirds the height of the Cathedral. The Pinnacle is a glass and steel masterpiece, visible from almost anywhere in the city.

LUNA CENTRAL EXCHANGE (LUNEX): across the street from the Pinnacle, the Luna Central Exchange – or more commonly: LUNEX – is the hub of all Capitolian stock trading on Luna and one of the premier stock exchanges in the solar system. Billions of Capitol Dollars change hands daily, and every morning at 10am exactly, the interplanetary price fluctuations arrive by phone and kick off the day's trading.

DOWNSIDE RISK: the favoured hangout and club of the young professional crowd, Downside Risk blends live music, alcohol, and live stock ticker feeds from LUNEX in a potent cocktail of atmosphere.

PASQUALE'S RESTAURANT: self-described as offering "the best Archipelagic cuisine available outside Venus", Pasquale's hot, spicy dishes are legendary and a welcome break from stodgy Imperial stews or Bauhaus pasta dishes, even if they do come at a price premium.

APOLLO LANDING: the most expensive and exclusive area in Lesser Mars, Apollo Landing is a prestigious address. Residents have all their needs catered for, with legendary housekeeping services, an exquisite pool and gym, personal trainers, and some of the best chefs on Luna. Apollo Landing has become so synonymous with success in Capitol that when a person has been said to have "made an Apollo Landing" it means they have made it to the big time.

BANK OF MARS: the central bank of Capitol, the Bank of Mars functions primarily for the benefit of senior executives and the divisions and subsidiaries of Capitol and its independent allies. Although not advertised, the Bank of Mars does offer exclusive personal banking and finance services to individuals at a price.

CAPITOL ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK BROADCAST TOWER (CEN TOWER): topped by a gigantic version of the CEN 'eye' logo, this is the iconic home of the popular television and radio network. The CEN Tower is packed with studios and broadcast equipment.

SAN DORADO STATION: hub of the transport network in Lesser Mars. From San Dorado station's grand halls, platforms, and concourses it is possible to catch a train or cab to every part of Luna. The elevated Steel Line that surrounds Luna starts here, and several of the underground train lines connect here.

THE GARDEN: a high-profile venue for sporting events, the Garden hosts prize fights, team sports, and exhibition events all year long. Tickets are pricey and most events are televised, but attending an event in person at the Garden is seen as a status symbol.

THE GIANT EYE

In the Dark Symmetry era, 'The Giant Eye' is a hugely popular comedy show where a mysterious prankster called The Giant Eye misleads, befuddles, and confuses ordinary members of the public. At least, that is what it appears to be on first glance. Several commentators have noted that the 'pranks' are mean and petty and encourage enjoyment of pain and suffering in others.

That would be strange enough, but there is another mystery surrounding The Giant Eye: Capitol claims it broadcasts no such television show! Capitol has stated on many occasions that The Giant Eye is a pirate TV programme being broadcast over stolen airwaves. Who or why someone would do such a thing remains a mystery as the show abruptly disappeared near the beginning of the conflict.

By the time of the Second Dark Legion War, the Giant Eye is long gone. Or at least it was until very recently, when people in the Perimeters have reported seeing it return to their screens.

THE LUNA COMMERCE CENTRE MALL (LCC MALL): Capitol is without doubt the master of consumerism, and the Luna Commerce Centre is the distillation of that. A vast and sprawling mall, the LCC Mall offers more than 3,000 stores spread across fifteen floors. Every major chain, local chain, and boutique has a store here regardless of corporate affiliation.

THE MCCARTHY COLISEUM: an enormous, open-air sports stadium, the McCarthy Coliseum hosts big games every weekend all year long. Normal tickets are reasonable, but exclusive skyboxes cost more per game than a regular Capitolian will earn in a decade!

THEATRE ROW: though never originally planned as a cohesive venue, Theatre Row evolved organically over time into the premier selection of theatres in Luna. Visitors flock to catch the latest productions of Capitolian plays and musicals after they first run in San Dorado on Mars. Venues range in size from the huge and prestigious Colding Hall, to tiny 'off-row' bohemian arty theatres where you can catch everything from the latest indie hit to performance art and poetry recitals. Brotherhood morality plays are presented as the opening act for the more traditional plays. The current hot show is The Devil's Cat, which is based on the popular poems of the same name about anthropomorphised pets.

BAUHAUS DISTRICT

The Bauhaus District is laid out to mirror the design of the Bauhaus Cog. At the centre is Heimburg Square, and from there the major boulevards stretch out to the edges of the district–each one named for an Elector House. They are joined by four concentric circular avenues, each of which is numbered. A number of smaller streets divide up the blocks in between the boulevards and avenues. Between Romanov Boulevard and Bernheim Boulevard from 3rd Avenue to 4th Avenue is the Cybertronic Enclave, encased–and often protected–by Bauhaus, much to the consternation of Imperial.

HEIMBURG SQUARE

The focus of the Bauhaus District, Heimburg Square is the premier address and the place you will find the Bauhaus headquarters, the East-West Towers, Bernheim Palace and the Rothberg Hotel & Plaza. A brick courtyard, decorated with the flags and banners of the Elector Houses and Lesser Nobles, it is home to many impressive statues–each of which commemorates a hero of Bauhaus, the establishment of Heimburg on Venus, or some other notable event in the history of the corporation. Every Saturday is the Heimburg Market where hundreds of food stalls, artisans, craftsmen, storekeepers, and peddlers set up stalls. Accompanying the crowds are the pickpockets, conmen, counterfeiters, and muggers.

THE EAST-WEST TOWERS: occupying one entire side of Heimburg Square with Richthausen Boulevard running between them, these glorious and massive towers in the ancient Bauhaus architectural style hold within them the headquarters, major offices, and meeting rooms of Bauhaus and its major divisions. Each Elector House has its own floors, and even the most minor Lesser Noble families have their own offices.

BERNHEIM PALACE: situated at one corner of Heimburg Square between Bernheim Boulevard and Saglielli Boulevard. Unusually for

Luna City, Bauhaus District.

an Elector House palace, Bernheim Palace is open to the public. Like all such palaces, Bernheim Palace contains all the facilities required by the Elector House to manage its vast holdings throughout the solar system and business in Luna. The palace features a grand military history museum that extols the proud military heritage of Bauhaus.

ROTHBERG HOTEL & PLAZA: always striving to be superior to its long-time rival, the Imperial Fairfax Hotel, the Rothberg Hotel & Plaza was financed entirely by the Rothberg family in its dream of owning the most exclusive hotel in the solar system. It is located at the centre of the Bauhaus district on the Heimburg Square, Romanov Boulevard, Saglielli Boulevard, and Fourth Avenue. Looking across the square and down Richthausen Boulevard you can actually see the rival Fairfax Hotel. Despite their ongoing hospitality war, the two hotels are virtually identical.

ROMANOV PALACE: occupying the most attractive real estate within the Bauhaus district, the palace sits on the shore of the Lake of Testimonies on 4th Avenue, between Romanov Boulevard and Richthausen Boulevard. The Romanov Palace is an architectural gem, a work of exquisite craftsmanship in its own right. Completely closed to the public, the vast palace houses the living quarters and administration of the Romanovs, and an entire division of the Order of the Wolf—the elite guard of House Romanov. In recent years there have been several unexplained attacks and damaging fires at the palace. Rumours suggest these may have been carried out by Whitestar, but no official confirmation has ever been given.

RICHTHAUSEN PALACE: from the outside, Richthausen Palace is an enigma. Surrounded by a featureless, perimeter wall some fifteen metres high, most people have no idea what the palace looks like. Those who are given the rare privilege of entry are often surprised. Every element of the building is designed with simplicity, function, and elegance in mind. In addition to the Elector's quarters there are laboratories, design studios, and an impressive selection of workshops capable of manufacturing whatever the Richthausens design.

SAGLIELLI PALACE: Smallest of the Elector Palaces, Saglielli Palace is a non-descript bank-like office block and it is likely that most people would not even realise it was a palace if it were not for the extraordinary security measures surrounding it. House Saglielli take the threat of the Dark Legion extremely seriously and no security measure is considered excessive. No chances are taken and unwelcome visitors are killed, with their corpses being moved to an offsite secure facility for comprehensive autopsy. It is because of several 'accidents' that most people avoid the intersection of 3rd Avenue and Saglielli Boulevard.

BRIDGE OF CONFESSIONALS: spanning an inlet from the Lake of Testimonies between the Bauhaus District and the Mishima District, this arched single-span bridge is an original surviving piece of architecture from the earliest days of Luna colonisation. These days it is primarily a footbridge, but on high ceremony days and public festivals the odd cortège makes use of it.

THE CYBERTRONIC ENCLAVE

Between Romanov Boulevard and Bernheim Boulevard, from 3rd Avenue to 4th Avenue in the Bauhaus District, is the Cybertronic Enclave. In the First Dark Legion War period, this whole area was the tech hub of Bauhaus, with a massive concentration of technology focused divisions. After the events of that war the area fell into disuse as Bauhaus was never quite sure what to do with it until the appearance of Cybertronic.

THE HEADQUARTERS (CYBERTRONIC HQ): this extremely new black plastic and smoked glass tower has been constructed in the shape of a giant 'C' and is almost the entirety of the Cybertronic Enclave. A manmade chasm has been cleared around it to a depth of over one hundred metres, with only a single black plastic bridge spanning the gap. There is no public access, with Cybertronic staff instead directing visitors to the Subreal Pavilion.

THE SUBREAL PAVILION: Cybertronic's attempt at positive public relations, the black plastic cube of the Subreal Pavilion is closed almost 90% of the time by order of the Brotherhood. On those few occasions when the public is allowed inside, Cybertronic goes all-out to present itself in a positive light through a combination of museum, theatre, and lecture. The message of the Pavilion is clear: technology can be made safe and once more help mankind. Visitors also get a chance to try out the latest Cybertronic gadgets and gizmos.

MISHIMA DISTRICT

Mishima is meticulous in its design, blending architectural harmony and many ancient Japanese principles. Of most importance in the Mishima District on Luna is Wabi-Sabi, and particularly the seven Zen aesthetic principles that are part of it. These are Fukinsei: asymmetry and irregularity; Kanso: simplicity; Koko: basic and weathered; Shizen: without pretence and natural; Yugen: subtly profound grace, not obvious; Datsuzoku: unbounded by convention, free; and Seijaku: tranquillity. Each corporate building makes at least an attempt to embrace these principles even if the Brotherhood does consider them borderline heretical. Unlike the other major factions in Luna, the Mishima District is not organised around a large square, but rather around the Overlord's Palace.

THE OVERLORD'S PALACE: without doubt the finest example of Wabi-Sabi, the Overlord's Palace is an artfully constructed tiered palace set amongst landscaped and terraced grounds within concentric rings of walls and lesser palaces. The required security is discrete and cleverly concealed. A sense of calm and peacefulness pervades the entire area, and many citizens and

Luna City, Mishima District.

tourists take advantage of the guided tours of the outer terraces and grounds.

HARIMA MEDITATION GARDEN & FIRING RANGE: this beautifully landscaped facility provides exclusive sanctuary and training for Mishima personnel only.

LONGSHORE STOCK EXCHANGE (LONGSEC): centre of business activity for Mishima on Luna, the Longshore Stock Exchange, or LONGSEC, is where the vast majority of Mishima-backed stocks and futures are traded. Unlike Capitol's LUNEX, this is not a place full of shouting traders: all conversations and negotiations are carried out in whispers and passed notes and only when a deal is closed does the lead party (usually the seller) announce the result in a loud and authoritative voice.

ANCESTOR PARK: Mishima is just as proud of its honoured dead as any of the corporations, and Ancestor Park is where the memorials are collected for public viewing. Mishiman families are expected to maintain the shrines themselves and perform ritual chanting to venerate the dead, though the role usually falls to the most junior members of the family. Like everything else in Mishiman society, the hierarchy in death is just as rigidly enforced as in life, with the upper terraces being reserved for the Samurai class.

SHRINE OF NOROMUTO: hidden behind a number of faceless office blocks, the Shrine of Noromuto is dedicated to the first Mishiman settlers on Luna. Largely fallen into disuse, the shrine is cared for by a single, nameless caretaker. Though old, his frame still projects a power beyond his years and his bearing is that of a warrior, but no one knows who he is.

IMPERIAL DISTRICT

IMPERIAL PLAZA

Imperial may be one of the smallest corporations, but you would never realise that simply by visiting Imperial Plaza. Heart of Imperial pomp, ceremony, and prestige the Plaza is home to Reading Palace, the Houses of Parliament, the Fairfax Hotel and Blackhouse Underground Station.

READING PALACE: home of the Serenity, the ceremonial head of state and nominal chair of the board for the Imperial Corporation, Reading Palace also doubles as the headquarters of the Imperial Administration. A gigantic gothic slab of a building, it projects an image of antiquity, stability, and wealth–putting it slightly at odds with Imperial's sometimes quixotic reality. The outer areas of the Palace are open to the public, and observing the ceremonial 'Changing of The Serenity's Guard' is a popular pastime.

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT: opposite Reading Palace is the real heart of Imperial government. This is where the corporation is run, with the House of Commons functioning at the executive level of the corporation and House of Lords filling the role of board. Because of the often-secret nature of Imperial operations, the Houses of Parliament are strictly off limits to outsiders.

THE FAIRFAX HOTEL (THE FAIRFAX): the foremost hotel in the solar system–at least according to its own advertisements–the Fairfax Hotel is luxury personified and is arguably the place to see and be seen. The penthouse has been a favourite honeymoon suite for the Serenity's family for hundreds of years. As well as the residential facilities, the Fairfax offers the finest in Imperial dining as well as an exclusive casino.

BLACKHOUSE UNDERGROUND STATION: the largest underground station in Luna, three major subway lines all connect here: Green, North and Great Circle Lines. The Steel Line starts at San Dorado Station only two stops away. Following a spate of recent bombings by nihilists, security at Blackhouse Station has been tightened considerably and passengers are subject to random searches.

CLANSMAN CEMETERY: proud, dignified and elegant, the Clansman Cemetery is where Imperial buries its honoured and noble dead. Arranged into neat rows of marble plaques, the cemetery is open to any Imperial citizen who can afford it. Each memorial bears the crest of the deceased's Clan, his name and a short, understated account of his life. For many that is enough, but it is not unusual to find the memorials draped with the furs of fallen MacGuires, crossed with swords for fallen Gallaghers, or adorned with a single black rose for the Bartholomews. The Murdochs have gained some notoriety for insisting on shooting up their memorials, but aside from these brief bursts of gunfire the cemetery is a very peaceful place and a favoured spot for a bit of discussion on the Q.T. – Imperial slang for 'quiet'.

Luna City, Imperial District.

THE MURDOCH MUSEUM OF MAN: despite its fractious relationships with the other corporations, or possibly because of it, Imperial has managed to amass an impressive collection of artefacts from the length and breadth of human history. Many of these are housed in the Murdoch Museum of Man, where it is possible to see items brought from lost-Earth, and spacesuits like those worn by the Conquistadors exploring Pluto.

BARTHOLOMEW ESTATES: Clan Bartholomew dominates Imperial's operations and facilities on Luna, so it is no surprise the Bartholomew Estates are impressive. A grand manor house in the proud Old Earth tradition, this 'impressive pile' is a maze of offices, facilities and living quarters for the Bartholomew Clan. It is rumoured that it extends deep underground into the ancient mines of Luna and contains highly secure research facilities. What these labs are researching is unknown.

WHY NO WHITESTAR DISTRICT?

Whitestar has no district of its own on Luna, only officially having the bunker in the Cathedral District. There are many reasons for this, but essentially it comes down to three: first, Whitestar is not formally recognized as a corporation; secondly, Whitestar has no interest in being corrupted by the weakness of the fools on Luna; and lastly, as the last faction to appear on Luna all the best plots had been snapped up.

THE PERIMETERS

Surrounding the Ancient Quarters are the Perimeters. Originally just a fringe settlement, over the centuries the Perimeters have expanded until now they dwarf the ancient heart of the city. An estimated 85-90% of all Luna citizens live here. Though never officially recognized, each District in the Perimeters tends to culturally gravitate towards one of the corporations or the Brotherhood. This is not a hard rule though, and it is not unusual to find citizens of the different corporations living cheek-by-jowl with each other. Officially numbered, most Districts have picked up their own unofficial monikers. No guide to the Perimeters could possibly cover the sheer variety of locations and neighbourhoods, but here are some of the key stopping points on any tour of Luna:

DISTRICT 1: DISTRICT OF TEARS

District 1 has, over time, become strongly associated with the Brotherhood and acquired its nickname of District of Tears because of the Cardinal's Asylum of Lost Souls.

THE BLESSED VESTAL: favoured and notorious hangout of the battle-hardened and irreverent Sacred Warriors of the Brotherhood, the Blessed Vestal is normally avoided by outsiders. Even others from the Brotherhood avoid it as the bar brawls here are legendary. It is rumoured that the owner receives regular payments from the Brotherhood as the value of a stress relief valve for its warriors cannot be understated.

THE CARDINAL'S ASYLUM OF LOST SOULS: the last resort of the mentally traumatised, the depressed, and–if rumour is to be believed–the heretic. The Cardinal's Asylum of Lost Souls is a vast mental hospital and secure containment facility conveniently situated just down the highway from the Sacred Soul's Second Directorate Base and Cardinal Durand XVI Spaceport. Particularly troubled patients will often be transferred from Ryker's Mountain prison or referred from the Luna Memorial Hospital. Though officially operated by the Third Directorate, it is an open secret that the Second Directorate–the Inquisition–really calls the shots here.

DISTRICT 2: OLD TOWN

District 2, or Old Town as it is normally known, was a brave but failed attempt to create a new centre for Luna, and a home for independent corporations. Unfortunately, due to extensive interference by Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima and Imperial in forms both legal and illegal, and a lack of a common sense of unity amongst the independent corporations, it never really came together. Today Old Town is probably the Perimeter District with the fewest big corporate entanglements.

BROKEN SKYSCRAPER: nothing personifies the failed experiment of Old Town more perfectly than the broken skyscraper of the long-shuttered Veda Corporation. Forced out of business and asset-stripped by the combined efforts of Capitol and Imperial, construction of its Luna headquarters was never completed. It has become a favoured residence of freelancers and other independent citizens who have created a mini-vertical town of their own.

DISTRICT 3: TAI-SHO INDUSTRIAL PORT

Tai-Sho is a spaceport and district of heavy industry. Unlike other corporations, who make at least a token effort to separate their citizens from their heavy industry, Mishima has no such concerns and the majority of the factory workers live in, around, or in the shadow of the factories they work in. The sky here is black as night, even at midday, thick with choking black smog, and deafening with the roar of spacecraft taking off or the belching of fire from steel furnaces. You can tell a Tai-Sho resident by the thick layer of grime on his face, heavy goggles, permanently worn facemasks, and smoker's cough. Tai-Sho spaceport is the only spaceport to offer a direct flight to Mercury.

Luna City, Cherry Blossom District.

DISTRICT 4: CHERRY BLOSSOM DISTRICT

The nicer side of Mishima, the Cherry Blossom district is next to, but upwind of, the Tai-Sho District, and is home to the majority of Mishima employees, ex-Mishima freelancers, and expatriates from Mercury. The southern-most part of the district has many broad boulevards lined with cherry trees and the cherry blossom festival is one of the cultural highlights of the year.

STREET OF COFFIN CARVERS: home to Mishima-aligned independent craftsmen, the Street of Coffin Carvers is a renowned tourist destination. The artisans proudly display their craft for all to see, and frequent funeral cortèges pass down its length.

NO-QUESTIONS CAPSULE HOTEL: sometimes you need a place to stay where no one will ask who you are, or what your business is. The No-Questions Capsule Hotel is typical of such places. Providing a two-metre long, by one metre wide, by one metre high capsule to each guest, or a 'deluxe suite' which is two metres wide, the Capsule Hotel was originally designed for tired workers who missed the last train home. Many of those same workers never moved out, so now the clientele is a mix of semi-permanent residents and those who just need a bed for a night.

YAMORI TEAHOUSE: Yamori Teahouse is the quintessential Mishiman teahouse. Designed according to aesthetic and spiritual principles, this lacquered wood structure sits in a clearing surrounded by cherry trees. It is favoured by Mishiman executives as a place for negotiations to take place.

DISTRICT 5: GOTLAND

Gotland, as District 5 is known, is very strongly Bauhausian in culture. Several sections were designed in a fit of civic pride to provide the ideal residential environment. Unfortunately, several hundred years of use have seen these areas become run down and covered in less-than-elegant patchwork repairs.

EKOTRÄD: meaning 'ghost tree' in some ancient dialect, Ekoträd is a park in Gotland that was designed to be the recreational hub for the district. In addition to a small wooded area, parkland, and a boating lake, it also featured a permanent carnival and amusement park. After a string of fatal accidents during the First Dark Legion War, the park was considered too unsafe and was closed down. Now, the remains are covered by thick, tangled overgrowth, and are avoided by all but the most desperate.

DISTRICT 6: LITTLE EARTH

Little Earth originally began as a quaint attempt to hold onto the various traditions and cultures that had been rescued during the Exodus. It was an attempt to separate and maintain the dividing lines of these cultures before they were subsumed beneath the unrelenting press of the conglomeration that was rapidly evolving

into Luna City; it was a noble project that failed spectacularly. Today, it is considered to be little more than a patchwork theme park and a testament to the strange relics that were available to those who were able to dwell for a time on humanity's home.

The five main corporations seek to support and maintain the oddity that is Little Earth in diverse and circumventive ways, although they all seem to have reached an unspoken accord that prevents any one corporation from seeding its influence throughout the district. Little Earth, therefore, really has maintained its appearance as a patchwork of cross-sections from the various periods and cultures that had developed across Earth throughout the ages; from the renaissance through to the 20th Century and from all corners of the globe, Little Earth and its population strive to present the best of everything that came before.

DISTRICT 7: COLONIAL DISTRICT

At one time, almost in a parody of Little Earth, the Colonial District had established itself as a series of sideshows that housed replicas of the original colonies that had been constructed prior to Luna's terraforming. Huge museums brimmed with robots that were able to re-enact events that ranged from the Apollo Landing to the arrival of the first pioneers and colonists. The Fall brought a rapid end to the district's status as a place of entertainment however, and it has since seen its fortune change drastically.

Post-Fall Colonial District was considered to be one of the poorest districts of Luna for hundreds of years, that is until its recent revitalisation at the hands of the big five into the trendiest of hubs and hotspots for dining out, clubbing, and experiencing live theatre. No one corporation has laid a claim on the district, rather they all support it as a means of escapism for their employees. It also ensures that their employee's hard-earned cash flows directly back into their own pockets; few things come cheap in the Colonial District.

Places of interest for the affluent are the Fading Art Gallery, which provides exposure to the Lunan artists who can be considered to have 'made it', the Copernicus Platform, which — amongst other delights — provides access to the largest telescope available to the public, the Monument to Colony One, which delivers an insight into the fragmented records of the first colony that had been established upon Luna, and Luna 64, which most consider to be the trendiest club to frequent this side of Mars.

DISTRICT 8: THE SMOKES

Weakly aligned to Imperial, the Smokes are a densely packed mixture of high brick tenements, known as Rookeries, and small factories crowded around narrow cobbled streets that twist and turn with no obvious pattern. A combination of a naturally boggy environment and the pollution from the factories leaves the entire district wreathed in a low-lying bank of fog.

DISTRICT 9: THE NINES

The Nines district of the Perimeters is filled with rundown tenements and overrun with gangs. Although originally somewhat Bauhaus-influenced, the Nines is home to every culture and has a high number of freelancers and other "non-aligned" – unemployed–citizens.

CHARITY OF THE BROTHERS AND THE BROTHERHOOD

How are social welfare, public services, and healthcare provision handled in a ruthlessly capitalist state with only the weakest of central governments in the form of the Cartel? In the early days following the Exodus from Old Earth, the truth was that outside of the corporations there was no safety net. If you fell through the cracks your only option was to turn to the kindness of your neighbours or engage in crime. The irony was that for many the healthcare and social provision in prison was better than living on the streets.

It was into this gap that the Brothers stepped, shortly before the First Dark Legion War. Nathaniel Durand knew that this welfare gap was toxic to society, and would be a natural vector for the darkness to exploit. Working with his brothers he put his substantial wealth to work and set up numerous social charities that would provide a modicum of support; from soup kitchens for the destitute, to public healthcare, and the provision of a basic stipend–the 'Dole' – to those who were out of work. He worked with the last remaining people of faith and united them in common cause: that of defending humanity.

Lauded by the public, these actions were undoubtedly a stabilising factor in society. But Durand was no simple philanthropist. He had a plan and this was merely part of it. The charitable work allowed him to spread the message of the approaching darkness, to rally support in defence of humanity, and gave him the cover he needed to begin building a new and powerful faction.

During the celebrations marking the end of the First Dark Legion War, Durand formally reorganised his charities into the Brotherhood, and was proclaimed the first Cardinal. Today the Brotherhood still provides the basic support network for society.

DISEASES & MUTATIONS

It is a sad, but inevitable, truth that plagues and disease run rampant in Luna. Some are minor annoyances, such as a breakout of various sexually-transmitted diseases from the MCC, while others are far more serious, such as the recent outbreak of pneumonic plague in the Tai-Sho District that was only contained by the bravery of the Brotherhood and draconian measures applied by Mishima, which culminated in an incendiary bombing run on one of its own housing blocks. The Brotherhood puts the blame for many such outbreaks squarely on Heretic cults.

More worrying are the outbreaks of mutations that pop up, seemingly at random, across the population. The Brotherhood has officially stated that these are "Dark Stigmata" from the Dark Legion. Some observers have noticed that not all mutations are alike, and there is a world of difference between the bone rot and twisted forms of some and the seeming superhuman traits exhibited by others. Of course, these observers tend to keep such suppositions to themselves, as no one likes a visit from the Inquisition.

The Nines is also the premier smuggling route into Luna city with gun and drug runners landing in the Badlands and sneaking their product in through the district. The Nines is also a hotbed of heresy.

THE MIDNIGHT STAR: favoured hangout of freelancers–celebrating completion of a job, or on the lookout for a new one–and the corporate agents looking who hire them.

DISTRICT 10: SOUTHSIDE

Southside is a strongly blue-collar Capitolian district, jammed with factories and ancillary services to the MCC to the south, the port on the coast, and the financial sector in the Capitol District of the Ancient Quarters. Capitol has an ongoing struggle with unionisation in Southside, but despite repeated threats of moving many of the factories to San Dorado, life goes on.

INDUSTRIAL ZONE

In an attempt to separate out the heavy industrial facilities from residential and commercial districts, Capitol and Bauhaus created distinct Industrial Zones. Mishima spurned this concept, instead centralising its facilities in the Tai-Sho District, while Imperial simply nodded and carried on doing what it was already doing.

THE RING OF FIRE: the great mix of power stations, terraforming spikes, and atmospheric processors at the edge of Luna City, run in a joint venture by Bauhaus and Capitol, are known as the Ring of Fire due to the intense heat, light, and deep bass rumble that emanate from them twenty-four hours a day. Despite their industrial nature, they are also actually one of the best places to get a dose of fresh–if hot–air.

MASTERVILLE COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE (MCC): known primarily as Capitol's main spaceport and heavy industrial facility on Luna, the MCC produces Capitol branded equipment, weaponry, and vehicles day-and-night with constant launches to Mars and Venus. The MCC also has a secondary–lesser known–feature: it is home to the largest red-light district on Luna. Drunk, excited, or just plain bored Capitolians can get their fill of topless bars, sex clubs, brothels, and worse in the backstreets of the MCC.

ABANDONED ROBOTICS FACTORY #12: a former Bauhaus facility, this was mothballed and secured in the First Dark Legion War following what was euphemistically described as "a robot-related incident" that killed over 1,000 people. Recently though, nearby residents and security guards have reported seeing activity within the facility once more. No one knows who–or what–is responsible, whilst Bauhaus also denies all knowledge.

SPACEPORTS AND PORTS

Luna is the best connected place in the solar system, with no less than six active spaceports within the city. The Geoffrey R. Hazeltine Spaceport is the only officially 'open' spaceport, being serviced by vessels from all the major corporations, independent ventures, and freelance captains. The Preston Industrial Spaceport is a smaller, freight only, terminal operated by Imperial. In contrast, Bauhaus operates the more exclusive, passenger only, Richthausen Interplanetary spaceport.

The Container Yards are vast avenues and stacks of shipping containers recently arrived on Luna, bound for other worlds or simply in storage. It is said that the future of humanity can be found in these steel boxes, but that humanity's past is but a stone's throw away in the Spaceship Graveyard. Following the outbreak of the Dark Symmetry, many of the more advanced spacecraft were rendered untrustworthy, unreliable, or just plain dangerous and were scuttled, dismantled, or mothballed.

The Spaceship Graveyard is an eerie place full of the remnants of ancient times and echoes of humanity's past greatness. From time to time the corporations dispatch search teams to go and recover some asset, or strip a rusting hulk for parts needed to keep another ship running, but this is a place largely avoided by the living.

THE BADLANDS AND OUTSKIRTS

Outside the relative safety of the city are the Badlands and Outskirts. Out here a person can carve out his own kingdom, but if trouble comes knocking he is on his own.

Just north of the city, and technically in the Outskirts, is the massive Brotherhood compound of Cardinal Durand's Spaceport and the Sacred Soul's 2nd Directorate Base. A hive of Brotherhood activity, ships come and go almost constantly under the watchful gaze of the largest Inquisition facility on Luna.

BLACK ROT CEMETERY: the final resting place of the thousands–some say millions–of people who were consumed by the Black Rot during the First Legion War. The mass graves are mostly filled with ash, as the Brotherhood cremates the dead to prevent them being used by the Dark Legion, but even then the whole place has a fearsome reputation. It is said the wind never blows here, yet you can hear the screams of the dying.

RYKER'S MOUNTAIN MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON: established by Capitol, and opened to all corporations, Ryker's Mountain is officially the highest security prison on Luna. Ryker's is a squat fortress in the heart of the Armstrong Mountains, most of which is beneath the ground. "Getting a Ryker's Stamp" is slang for being sent to prison, as Ryker's tattoos identification details on all inmates.

ABANDONED MINES: Luna was originally a Capitol mining colony, and the mines continued to operate long after the city had grown up around–and over–them. Mostly mined-out now and abandoned, the mines offer sanctuary to the desperate or the deranged.

THE COPERNICUS FOREST: surrounds the long-forgotten Copernicus Terraforming Spike, which helped reshape Luna into a liveable planet. The Spike still operates, and the hot, humid air that flows from it feeds and nurtures the thick, tangled plant life of the temperate rainforest.

IMBRIUM BEACH: it was such a grand idea, a beach-front resort on the west shore of the Lake of Testimonies. It was hugely popular until the First Dark Legion War, when a combination of paranoia, corporate cutbacks, and the Dark Symmetry rang the death-knell. Now all that is left are the remnants of the resort buildings poking up from the great sand dunes.

Surrounding Luna is a network of different military bases run by the corporations. Kepler Point for Imperial, Tycho Military Test Range for Capitol, Mons Gruithuisen Military Base for Bauhaus and the now-abandoned Fort Hansteen Asteroid Defence Station. The old Hansteen Train Line runs out from a spur on the Steel Line around Luna, but no trains have run on it in centuries following horrific events during the First Dark Legion War.

Luna City, Spaceship Graveyard.

SPACE TRAVEL

Space travel is expensive, and most people might get to visit another world once or twice in their lifetimes unless sent there on business. Almost all space travel is business or military related. Ancient transports, so patched and modified as to be largely unrecognisable to their designers, cycle between the worlds, with smaller transports rushing up to join them or deliver cargo to the world as they enter orbit around Luna or one of the other worlds. These Cyclers can take cargo directly or have sufficient hangar space to accommodate other vessels within their bulk.

Only the rarest of ships will directly fly to its destination, as the cost in fuel alone can be astronomical. Most direct burns are military related, though the occasional pleasure yacht of the corporate elite will forge its own path.

TYPICAL JOURNEY TIMES:

Mercury–Venus: 5 days
Venus–Luna: 4 days
Luna–Earth: 1 day
Luna–Mars: 8 days
Mars–Asteroids: 19 days
Asteroids–Jupiter: 18 days
Jupiter–Saturn: 32 days
Saturn–Uranus: 72 days
Uranus–Neptune: 104 days
Neptune–Pluto: 212 days
Pluto–Nero: 10 days

DISTRICTS
Mishima
Cathedral & Cartel Enclave
Capitol
Bauhaus
Imperial
ARMSTRONG MOUNTAINS
PATRICIA OF TEARS
OLDTOWN
LAKE OF TESTIMONIES
THE S
A
B
C
D

THE NINES
SOUTHSIDE
GOLDLAND
TAI-SHO
DISTRICT
ANCIENT QUARTERS
THE PROMETHEAN PLAIN
MORTES
LUNA CITY LEGEND
1 Richthausen Palace
2 Sagielli Palace
3 Bdg. of Confessionals
4 Brotherhood Square
5 Memorial to Heroes
6 Brotherood Cathedral
7 The Cartel Building
8 Doomtrooper Monument
9 Apollo Landing
10 Bank of Mars
11 CEN
12 Downside Risk
13 Luna Central Exchange
14 Pasquale's Restaurant
15 San Dorado Station
16 The Garden
17 Luna Central Mall
18 The McCarthy Colliseum
19 The Pinnacle
20 Theater Row
21 Bastillion Park
22 Government Mall
23 Luna Memorial Hospital
24 The Stone Archives
25 Cybertronic HQ
26 The Subreal Pavilion
27 Bernheim Palace
28 Heimberg Square
29 Romanov Palace
30 Rothberg Hotel/Plaza
31 The East-West Towers
32 Bartholomew Estates
33 Clansman Cemetery
34 Murdoch Museum of Man
35 Blackhouse Understation
36 Houses of Parliament
37 Imperial Plaza
38 Reading Palace
39 The Fairfax Hotel
40 Ancestor Park
41 Harima Meditation Garden
42 Longshore Stock Exchange
43 Shrine of Noromuto
44 The Overlords Palace
45 Ryker's Mountain Prison
46 Abandoned Mines
47 Facility 12
48 The Hulls
49 Copernicus Forest
50 Copernicus Terraforming Spikes
51 Whitestar Bunker
52 Fort Hansteen Asteroid Defence Station
53 Roadside Shrine
54 Ibrium Beach
55 Abandoned Robotics Factory #12
56 Masterville Communications Center
57 The Ring of Fire
58 Kepler Point
59 Luna PD HQ
60 Wreckage of the Montsorreau
61 Mons Gruithuisen Military Base
62 Black Rot Cemetery
63 Cardinal Durands Spaceport
64 Sacred Soul's 2nd Directorate Base
65 Graveyard of Artifacts
66 Waterfalls
67 No Questions Capsule Hotel
68 Street of Coffin Makers
69 Yamori Teahouse
70 The Blessed Vestal
71 The Cardinal's Asylum
72 Ekoträd
73 Broken Skyscraper
74 The Midnight Star
75 Ryker's Highway
76 Eagle Point Island
77 Southern Fractures
78 Geoffrey R. Hazeltine Spaceport
79 Preston Industrial Spaceport
80 Spaceship Graveyard
81 Richthausen Interplanetary
82 Fright Railgun
83 The Container Yards
84 The Ibrium Highway
85 Luna Expressways
86 Tycho Military Test Range
87 Tai-Sho Spaceport
88 Crashed Ship
A Port Petrus
B Port Aldrin
C Port McGuire
D Freeport
E Port Sagielli
F Port Edo
G Port Light
ROUTES
Steel Line
Red Line
Green Line
Lake Train Route
Hansteen Train Line
Northern Subway Line
The Great Circle Line
Inner Circle Line
Luna Expressways
Ibrium Highway
Ryker's Highway

WORKING FOR A LIVING

A TYPICAL APARTMENT

A typical apartment in Luna is that of a factory worker in the Perimeters. The apartment is in a street-accessible tenement, usually ten or more stories with around five apartments on each floor. In addition to a single bedroom, and occasionally a guest bedroom, the apartment will have a cramped living room with a kitchenette, a bathroom, and usually a storage space. The total area of the apartment will be around fifty square metres.

The living room will have a television or radio supplied by corporate sponsors that can never be switched off, a small shrine to the Cardinal, and a worn sofa. The kitchen has just enough space to reheat takeaway food, but not much more. The bathroom will have a bath/shower unit, toilet, small sink, and medicine cabinet.

The apartment door will be reinforced, usually with jury-rigged security features such as additional locks or bolts. It may not sound like much, but these small residences are all people have, and they value them highly.

FOOD & SHOPPING

Although residents of San Dorado on Mars might argue differently, Luna is considered to have the widest selection of shops and food in the solar system. Shoppers can get everything their heart desires in the downtown shopping districts, though sometimes it can take a while as the crowds can be fearsome. If what they are looking for is, let's say, less than legal, they will find it in the Perimeters, but will need connections and introductions. No back street military weapons dealer is going to sell a Gehenna Puker flamethrower to just anyone. After all, they might be corporate security agents in disguise. Most shops will accept any of the range of currencies, though it might prove a struggle with a Cybertronic Piastre. Of course, everyone accepts the Cardinal's Crown.

When it comes to food, while the variety is there, often the demand is not. Most Luna citizens are so busy with their jobs and trying to get by that they put a higher value on filling food than fine dining. You will find fast-food joints and diners throughout the city, such as the ever popular Loony Burgers, Burgerwerks or Eat This Now!. Beyond that, though, there exists another world of fine cuisine. Often highly exclusive and with long waiting lists–unless you know the right people–these restaurants cater to a more cultured palate and offer the finest food from Luna, Mars, Venus, or Mercury.

ENTERTAINMENT, MEDIA AND FASHION

Luna can cater to every entertainment desire, from the bars and dancehalls popular with factory workers, to the cinemas, theatres, and museums preferred by the middle classes. Entertainment is a universal desire as it offers that most magic of abilities: escape from the grind. Living in the high-pressure work environment, or worrying about the ever encroaching threat of the Dark Legion, let alone the very real chance of being involved in a crime, takes its toll on a person.

Of course, the entertainment scene is a hotbed of money laundering, prostitution, and even heresy, but at least it is exciting!

COST OF LIVING

The gap between the wealthy and the impoverished is extremely large across the Solar System, and in few places is this more evident than Luna City. A typical factory worker will earn around 1,000 crowns a week, while their managers will earn at least twice that. High-flying executives can expect to earn in excess of 20,000 crowns a month, before bonuses and perks.

ENTERTAINMENT

An evening at a dancehall or a trip to a cinema will cost between twenty and thirty crowns, while an afternoon at a sporting event will cost at least fifty crowns. Theatre or opera tickets may cost 100 crowns or more. Admission to exclusive clubs can cost more than 250 crowns.

TRAVEL

Travel on the underground costs ten crowns per trip, though some journeys require several changes, each of which count as a different trip. A taxi journey will cost about ten crowns per kilometre through the Ancient Quarter, and significantly more in the Perimeters. A trip by helicopter across the city costs about 1,500 crowns.

CLOTHING

Cheap, poor-quality clothing of a kind used by most ordinary workers will seldom cost more than 200 crowns for an entire outfit. Better quality outfits–and most people are likely to own at least one nice outfit for special occasions–cost about 800 crowns. A bespoke designer outfit is likely to cost between 5,000 and 10,000 crowns.

DRESSED TO KILL

SPECIAL REPORT BY
CARTEL CONSULTANT
JONATHAN CORDINGER.

THEY SAY YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A PERSON BY HOW THEY DRESS, AND IN THE CUT-THROAT WORLD OF LUNA THAT IS TRUER THAN EVER.

BAUHAUS

As you might expect for a corporation that is synonymous with a design aesthetic, Bauhaus is the trendsetter when it comes to the latest in fashions. Daring fabrics, colours, and designs are all used to project an image of self-confidence and social standing. Exclusive lines and high price boutiques are a particular favourite. There has been a trend in recent centuries towards more accessorising, decoration, and detail. Bauhaus suits are typically two-piece, single-breasted, with narrow lapels and longer jackets than others. Dark tones and colours are preferred, with greens and dark blues being most common. A tie in the colours of your patron Elector House is de rigueur.

In the earlier times of the First Dark Legion War, Bauhaus design exemplified the design philosophy of simple elegance with advanced fabrics and materials being blended for both form and function.

CYBERTRONIC

Cybertronic employees wear a range of styles, most often Capitol or Imperial – much to the disgust of Imperial executives – but when they do dress in a 'Cybertronic way' they favour the Bauhaus designs of the First Dark Legion War period, proudly mixing both form and function. Of course, Cybertronic does not refer to this as such, and instead has coined the term 'Chip Chic'. A typical Chip Chic suit is a seamless blend of suit and uniform, usually with Nehru-style collars worn with similar collarless shirts. The suits are only available in black or charcoal grey.

CAPITOL

By far the most common suit on Luna, worn not only by corporate executives but a wide range of freelancers and security personnel, Capitol suits come in a wide range of styles and prices. Suit jackets are either single or double-breasted, with the single-breasted having narrower lapels. Standard designs are wide pinstripe, or plain blue or grey materials. Both types are normally worn with a waistcoat in a dark colour. Button-down shirts are essential, as are double cuffs and cufflinks. Ties are always worn and are usually in abstract patterns or bold colours.

Capitol styles have varied remarkably little since the First Dark Legion War; the only noticeable difference was the preference for not wearing hats. Nowadays a Capitolian business executive is expected to wear a hat – usually a Fedora, Trilby, or Derby – to work.

IMPERIAL

Imperial suits are considered very classy, and great store is placed in the tailoring of an executive's suits. A well-off executive is expected to build a relationship with a personal tailor to ensure the absolute best fit, and to have a new suit handmade at least twice a year. An Imperial suit is double breasted, three buttoned, and either a tight dark blue pinstripe, or dark green, brown, or grey. Never black. The Imperial tie is almost always in a design tied to a Clan, University, or other important social body, and shirts are usually in white, pale pink, or blue and worn without a waistcoat.

MISHIMA

The typical Mishiman dresses most similarly to Cybertronic personnel, in that they wear the fashions of other corporations – most often a black Capitol suit. However, for the most senior executives there is a Mishiman style of suit that has caught on with the ambassadorial crowd. Extremely formal, the suit has the lapels of a dinner jacket in dark-grey shades, with a buttonless concealed grey vest worn underneath. The shirt is of a tuxedo design with a winged collar, and the tie or cravat is much wider than a standard tie, and is normally either a solid colour or a striped two-colour design.

BAUHAUS

CYBERTRONIC

CAPITOL

IMPERIAL

MISHIMA

THE BROTHERHOOD

Most Luna citizens visit their local Brotherhood Cathedral regularly, or stop and listen to Mystics on the streets. They find solace provided by the strong, unwavering leadership of the Cardinal, and the knowledge that the Brotherhood is their safety net. The faith and loyalty that most people feel towards the Brotherhood is genuine and deep, as everyone knows someone who the Brotherhood helped when they were in trouble, and everyone knows that the Brotherhood is committed to protecting them from the Dark Legion.

BROADCAST TELEVISION AND RADIO

The most popular television and radio network is, without doubt, the Capitol Entertainment Network. Broadcasting from its iconic tower in the Capitol District of the Ancient Quarters, Capitol Entertainment Network shows are beamed across Luna and beyond. Its roster includes immensely popular shows such as …And Then Came an Inquisitor; Sam, Torenaga, and Stephen; The Tony Dorado Show; and of course, Live from Luna.

Of course CEN is not the only choice. The Brotherhood broadcasts an hourly radio news report and every evening the Brotherhood Truth Network televises a three-hour live mass. Every corporation has its own radio and television stations, and while none may be as popular as CEN, they are all widely followed.

NEWSPAPERS

In the world of newspapers the dominant three are The Cardinal's Times, a broadsheet issued by the Brotherhood and Imperial; The Daily Chronicles, a populist, gossip rag, produced by Capitol; and The Das Kapital, a serious financial newspaper that Bauhaus puts out.

TRANSPORTATION

TRAINS & SUBWAYS

The subways of the Underground lines are the most used form of transport on Luna. There are many lines that crisscross the city with thousands of stations, but the three major lines are the Great Circle Line, the North Line, and the Green Line. Though they are each run by the corporations, the Luna City Transit Authority (LCTA) – a subdivision of the Cartel – has nominal overall control. Security is tight because of the vital economic function the underground lines fill, but in a network this vast it is not as tight as the corporations would like. There are many abandoned or mothballed stations and hundreds of kilometres of unused subway tunnels and tracks.

Because so many people use the undergrounds – an estimated 80% of the Luna population uses them daily – the stations, tracks, and tunnels are a favourite target for criminals, terrorists, and heretic attacks. Given that a journey from the heart of the Ancient Quarter to the very outskirts of the city can take over two days – if there are no major delays along the route – crime on the subways is a very serious concern for the average citizen.

TAXIS

Though the subways cover most of the city, they cannot possibly hope to cover it all, and this is where the taxis fit in. For that last part of a journey – or the entire journey if you are rich enough – the taxis can battle through the heavy traffic on the downtown streets of the Ancient Quarter, or rush through the often-empty streets of the outer Perimeters, to get you where you need to go. Still, for short distances walking is often the best choice.

PRIVATE CARS

Private car ownership is nowhere near as common as in the ancient pre-Exodus era on Earth, as cars are expensive and most people simply do not have anywhere to keep them. That said, car ownership is still seen as a status symbol amongst the corporate elite – especially those in Capitol and Bauhaus. To accommodate these powerful people a network of elevated roads has been built in the Ancient Quarters, allowing them to drive smoothly above the streets clogged by taxi and delivery truck traffic.

Luna Metro is a sprawling maze of tunnels.

PLANES, HELICOPTERS AND VTOLS

The heyday of air travel was around the time the First Dark Legion war started. The skies of those long lost days were filled with planes, helicopters, vertical take-off and landing vehicles (VTOLs), shuttles, and starships blasting for space. The Dark Symmetry changed all that. Now the skies are quieter, but far from empty. Largely the preserve of the rich, military, or security services, you can still spot the occasional craft darting through the urban canyons of Luna. Shuttle services jet from important corporate facilities, and from one spaceport to another. Helicopters have seen a recent resurgence, though they tend to be of the helijet variety with wings also providing lift rather than just rotorblades. Cybertronic and Bauhaus are pioneering these vehicles. Zeppelins and airships have made a big comeback. Relatively simple from a technological perspective, they are reliable and cheap.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

LUNA PD

Founded by Capitol, Luna PD was transferred to the Cartel at its founding. Luna PD is the only law enforcement organisation with jurisdiction over the whole of Luna, and is a true inter-corporate organisation. Cops recruited and trained at the LPD Academy in the Government Mall work alongside investigators seconded from Capitol Security or the Imperial Security Corps. To a lesser extent, Bauhaus, Mishima, and even Cybertronic second assets, though these are usually only for specific operations. Just like the Cartel, Luna PD is under-funded and subject to the conflicting will of the corporations, and is often forced into hiring freelancers to supplement its investigators.

Luna PD divides Luna into District-sized LPD Commands containing twenty to fifty two unevenly-sized Precincts, each with its own station house and resources commanded by a Watch Commander. Each Precinct is supposed to be composed of a Patrol unit, a Criminal Investigations unit, one or more Tactical Services teams, and Technical Services, but tight budgets means that many precincts operate without a full-strength Criminal Investigations unit or Tactical Services team.

The head of Luna PD is the Police Commissioner, who is based in the LPD headquarters in the Cartel tower. He or she reports to the Cartel. The headquarters unit also has the Criminal Intelligence Division squarely focussed on engaging larger-scale organised crime that is beyond the capability of the Commands and Precincts.

CORPORATE SECURITY FORCES

Each corporation fields its own security personnel within its districts in the Ancient Quarters, or in its facilities elsewhere in the city. In

TRAVEL FOR THE RICH AND THE POOR

The sad truth is that travel varies enormously depending on the traveller's wealth. While the poor and working classes have to contend with the grim reality of the underground lines and traffic-clogged streets, the wealthier have other options.

There are several elevated monorail lines that offer exclusive transport to the wealthy. Well-appointed and fitted with televisions displaying the latest financial headlines, these trains whisk their passengers between the various corporate towers.

Even on the regular subway lines there are entire carriages for the "business class". While nowhere near as plush as the mono rails, these carriages have sufficient seating and a security guard on duty at all times.

For those wealthy citizens who want to drive there are the elevated roads of the Ancient Quarters, while beneath them the working class citizens have to push their way down sidewalks jammed with crowds and mostly-commercial traffic that barely moves at times. Access to the elevated roads is strictly controlled at guarded car-lift pillars and parking garages in the corporate towers.

Of course, the most extreme option the rich have is to fly above it all in helijets, helicopters, planes, and zeppelins, but that is another level of wealth that only the crème of society can regularly afford.

day-to-day operations the corporate security forces are just glorified security guards, and are expected to turn ongoing investigations over to Luna PD. In reality they can often be a little slow to do so, much to the annoyance of LPD Detectives. LPD has the strongest relationships with the Capitol Security Services and the Imperial Security Corps. Mishima actively obstructs investigations where possible as it hates outside interference, while Bauhaus considers Luna PD to be inferior. Cybertronic almost exclusively takes care of its own problems.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Despite what the corporate broadsheets tell you, crime in Luna is endemic throughout the entire city, though it is worst in the Perimeters. Luna PD and the corporate security services do what they can, but most are overstretched and besides, corporate priorities are more focused on security and continuity of smooth operations rather than dealing with street corner muggings.

Those arrested and charged with crimes go before the judges and juries of the Luna Courts. If a crime occurred on corporate territory, the judge assigned is employed by that corporation. For all others, the judges are selected from the general pool with one exception—hearings dealing with heresy. In that instance, only a Brotherhood judge from the Second Directorate can rule on the case. Unless the judge is from the Brotherhood, crimes of an economic nature are usually treated more seriously than those of other crimes.

PRISON

In the broadest of strokes, there are three levels of imprisonment used by the Luna courts. At the least serious level, most criminals are sent to prison-factories where they work off their debt to society on low-skilled manufacturing lines as indentured employees. For moderate offences, many corporations—such as Capitol, with its Free Marines—offer military services as an alternative to imprisonment.

For the worst of crimes, such as multiple murder or heresy, there are only two options: Ryker's Mountain Maximum Security Prison for the most dangerous criminals who are beyond reform, or The Cardinal's Asylum of Lost Souls for those deemed insane or heretical.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Early in their existence, before they had even formally founded the Brotherhood, the Brothers realized that humanity's dead were a major weakness that the Dark Symmetry could exploit with its fearsome necrobionics. When you have a foe capable of reanimating your dead and unleashing them on the unprepared living, there is only one real option: cremation. The Brotherhood dug up all the cemeteries it could find and burned the bodies interred there, depositing the ash in the Black Rot cemetery.

THIS SECTION IS FOR GMs ONLY
IF YOU ARE A PLAYER STOP READING HERE

LUNA SECRETS

For GMs reading this section: We have not placed any of these locations on the map, as they are based in Luna legend and rumour. They are here for you to use as a resource when you want to spice things up a bit. You should also feel free to move them from the locations we suggest to wherever is best for your adventures.

THE HAND OF THE APOSTLES

The agents of the Dark Apostles are busy at work in Luna. They are a fifth column spreading disease, death, panic, and distrust wherever they go. Servants of Demnogonis ensure that there are regular outbreaks of diseases in the Perimeters. Sharp-suited corporate slaves of Semai encourage others to murder and backstab their way to the top. Many gangs would be surprised to learn how much of their power comes from Algeroth, ever eager to spill more blood. Pirate radio and television stations stream programmes designed to slowly corrupt and twist the world view of citizens on behalf of Ilian. And Muawijhe? Madness is everywhere, but his personal favourites are hard at work with those least able to protect themselves: prisoners, asylum patients, and the elderly.

Luna City can be as scary and corrupt as you want to make it. Though there is plenty of open warfare, especially in the Second Dark Legion War, in earlier periods this systemic corruption was the favoured weapon of the Dark Legion. With the advent of the First Dark Legion War, the majority of people have no idea of the threat humanity faces, with just a few brave souls fighting the spreading darkness.

THE OLD CIRCLE

The top floors of one of the most prominent corporate high-rises in Old Town (District 2, in the Perimeters), which belong to a prestigious legal firm, is home to a very special corporate heresy and has been since the First Dark Legion War. Known as the 'Old Circle', this is a group of powerful corporate executives who worship Semai, the Lord of Spite, and use their influence to place members and servants in positions of authority within the corporations. The Old Circle has agents in every corporation,

DARK SYMMETRY ERA SECRETS

All of the Luna Secrets presented in this section exist in some form in the Dark Symmetry era as well, though often with different details.

For example, the Old Circle was established at the dawn of the First Dark Legion War in the legal offices of Nash, Penderghast and Lattimer. The Brothers in Arms are more recent, but the Nepharite took the crimes of the so-called 'Royal Hunt' and chose to name the group the Brothers in Arms in mockery of the Brotherhood.

You can use this as an excuse to vary the names and details of the secrets to fit your campaign. Of course, this period has some of its own, unique secrets including:

CEN'S MIRROR

The mirrored version of the Capitol Entertainment Network operates in the Capitol Entertainment Network Tower on unlisted floors in unnamed offices and studios. While it is referred to here as 'CEN's Mirror', it has no actual name, and was weaved by the Malignants and heretics of Ilian to use the power of broadcasting to weaken humanity. They are the source of the Giant Eye, operating in plain sight, in parallel with legitimate corporate activities.

and is always looking for new recruits and new opportunities to further its brutal agenda. Founded to "drink the blood of martyrs", and with membership for life, the group regularly meets to indulge in ritual cannibalism in worship of its Dark Lord. In return Semai grants each member one or more Dark Gifts, depending on how well they have served him.

BROTHERS IN ARMS

Considered urban legend by many, the ruthless killers known as the 'Brothers in Arms' are well-equipped and well-trained for a singular purpose: the hunt. They kidnap a well-known freelancer–preferably one considered a hero–take him to a District in the Perimeters unknown to the freelancer and release him with a simple goal: to survive the night while the Brothers in Arms hunt him. None have survived so far. On the rare occasion a freelancer has managed to call in allies, such as old friends in corporate security, they have been utterly eliminated by the Brothers in Arms. Worse still, their friends and families have also been murdered. On the streets it is a known maxim that if the Brothers in Arms target you, you are on your own.

While this is horrifying enough, what almost no one knows–but a few suspect–is that the Brothers worship Algeroth, and it is their Dark Lord who equips and trains them. Their leader is a Nepharite of Algeroth who has secretly constructed a small Citadel deep in the bowels of the ancient mines under Luna, and his Techrons work day and night constructing ever more fearsome weaponry. The Brothers in Arms know the subway tunnels and sewers in great detail, and use this knowledge to swiftly move around the city.

TRANQUILLITY MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY AND REHAB CENTRE

For those who are unwilling to check themselves into the Cardinal's Asylum for Lost Souls, the Tranquillity Mental Health Facility and Rehab Centre is the place to go. Popular with celebrities, executives, and politicians alike who desperately need medical attention, but would prefer not to have press attention, the TMH is little known and low key, with a startlingly high success rate. What nobody knows is that TMH is actually a citadel for Muawijhe, the Apostle of Madness, in the heart of Luna city! Patients receive "cutting edge therapies", which are actually powerful infusions of the Dark Symmetry, slowly corrupting their minds and transforming them into psychopaths capable of acting the part of normal well-adjusted members of society, but having had all their compassion and humanity stripped away. Sometime after they leave the facility–long enough to ensure no suspicion is cast–they calmly carry out an act of terror. Sometimes they are the lone sniper in a tower, others the rampaging gunman, while others will calmly strap explosives to themselves and walk into a crowded shopping mall. The patients are all genuinely cured of their depression. To suffer from depression requires humanity….

DARK CHAPELS

Ilian's weapons of choice are the Dark Chapels. The Mistress of the Void takes great pleasure in subverting the work of the Brotherhood, leading Mystics astray, corrupting missionaries, and preying on the human weaknesses of Brothers. She comes to lost souls in their dreams and slowly corrupts them. They establish

small chapels around the city that appear to be Brotherhood chapels, but instead of receiving messages of humanity and hope, the flock are slowly lead into darkness and corruption, eventually becoming hollow tools of the Dark Symmetry.

THE OLD TUNNELS

It is not often talked about or acknowledged, but Luna has a staggering homelessness problem. Millions of people live on the streets of the city, or more often beneath the streets of the city. The Brotherhood does what it can, but the scale of the problem is beyond any one organisation to address, and they reach less than one in ten of the homeless. The others have only themselves to rely on, making them the perfect prey for Demnogonis. The Dark Apostle of Corruption spreads his diseases, viruses, and twisted bacteria through the poor inhabitants. Many are forced to turn to worship of the Dark Apostles if only to save themselves from the horrific ravages of disease. Demnogonis realises that the sewers, subway tunnels, basements, mine shafts, and abandoned old street levels are the perfect vector to bring down the city.

However, Demnogonis is not alone down here. All of the Dark Apostles have substantial followings: the murderous gangs of Algeroth, maniacs of Muawijhe, the dark faithful of Ilian, and those whose hearts burn with bright vengeance, feeding Semai.

SOCIABLES

It is hard to find a soul mate in a city as vast and impersonal as Luna, and to fill that need there are hundreds of lonely hearts columns, dating agencies, and swingers clubs. Most are what they seem, but there is an undercurrent of darkness that exists in their midst.

Aside from the obvious use of these networks as cover for prostitution, the Dark Apostles also have their claws dug in deep. Demnogonis delights in using these networks to transmit horrible new sexually transmitted diseases through all levels of society, while the sexual activities that go on in an underground club run by the heretics of Muawijhe do not bear thinking about.

CHILD-EATING CARNIVALS

Travelling carnivals move through the Perimeter districts, bringing entertainment to those who cannot afford the uptown pleasures of the Ancient Quarters. The simple pleasure of a Ferris wheel or a merry go round can be a break from the grim realities of life.

It is a shame, then, that the cultists of Semai take such pleasure in using some of these carnivals as opportunities to steal children. A child gets on a ride and never gets off. No one has seen them. The parents–if any–are distraught, but, despite the best efforts of the police, the children are nowhere to be found. Days, weeks, or even months later the children's bodies are found, or they return home as if nothing happened, with no memory of the missing time.

CORPORATE SECRETS

Rules are for people, not corporations. At least as far as they are concerned. There is little that a corporation will not do if it thinks it can gain an economic advantage. Indeed, the more something is outlawed, the more attractive it becomes. Measures by the Cartel or the Brotherhood to restrict or outright ban something just drive that activity underground.

The corporations are masters at plausible deniability, and will work through labyrinthine chains of operatives, subsidiaries, freelancers, and worse to keep the worst activities at a safe distance from the mother corporation. If caught out, the corporations deny everything and go on the offensive, ruthlessly eliminating anything that can link back to them.

SECRET WEAPON LABS

These are simultaneously the best and worst held secrets of the corporations. Everyone knows that the corporations all operate secret weapon labs and testing facilities, and yet every corporation goes to extreme lengths to hide this fact. The truth is, there is a massive gap between rumour and confirmed fact, and these labs operate in that space.

Secret weaponry laboratories operating in unmarked bunkers, innocuous looking offices, secret facilities in old ruins under the city, and sometimes in facilities disguised as those of their rivals exist all over the city.

Sometimes these labs are for cutting edge prototypes too commercially sensitive to reveal until they are perfected, sometimes they are for manufacturing weaponry restricted by the Cartel, such as chemical or atomic weapons, and sometimes they are used to research weapons that are banned by edict, such as captured Dark Legion technology. All of the research requires that it be hidden from public view and remain low profile. Because of the nature of the weaponry, these facilities are extremely well defended and often equipped with self-destruct systems to ensure that nothing escapes and no links

to the owning corporation can be found in the irradiated crater left behind.

BIO-RESEARCH LABS

Similar to the Secret Weapon Labs, these are research facilities that pursue the limits of medical and biological technology, such as DNA modification, gene splicing, augmentations, and, worst of all, cloning experiments. The Brotherhood edicts are unbending on these issues, and extreme measures would be enacted against any corporation found to be breaking them.

BLACK TECH LABS

Only the insane would try and twist the necrobionics and other technologies of the Dark Legion to their own use. At least that is what most people think. Corporations are not most people, and the things that go on in these labs would horrify the civilian populace. It is not only the technology of the Dark Symmetry that gets researched, it is also the captured creatures of the Dark Legion; some to find their weaknesses, others to see what humanity could learn from them.

THINKING MACHINES

Considered almost as bad as the Dark Legion, and suspected by most as being another form of Dark Symmetry, all research on thinking machines and other artificial intelligences is strictly prohibited–at least for any organisation other than Cybertronic. But in an effort to understand what makes Cybertronic tick, and hoping to recover and understand the high-tech of the ancient past, the other corporations all have their own labs seeking answers.

THE UNDERWORLD

With the threat of the Dark Legion, Dark Symmetry, and even the covert research of the corporations, it would be easy to overlook the most common Luna secret: the underworld. The criminal underworld of organised crime flourishes in Luna city. Crime not only pays, but is estimated by corporate intelligence agencies to account for 30% of GDP within the city. That figure does not include the crime families within–and unofficially sanctioned by–the corporations, such as those within Mishima and Bauhaus. The criminal underworld fills a vital niche in the ecosystem, and a bridge between the legitimate corporations, freelancers, and at times even the Dark Legion.

THE SLAVE PENS

There is a very real and very active slave trading network throughout the solar system. Human trafficking for prostitution, slave labour, or worse is highly lucrative, and of course where there is demand you quickly find suppliers. Organised crime was quick to move into this market and 'acquire' (kidnap) unfortunates in Luna and to sell offworld and vice-versa.

The Slave Pens are a cattle market, but for humanity. Kept in cages and examined as pure stock, the poor unfortunates are dragged to the auction block and sold to the highest bidder. Occupying a set of abandoned warehouses deep in the Perimeters, the human suffering here is terrifying. The Dark Legion heretics often trade here, but as yet no Dark Apostle has seen fit to infiltrate the facility. The disturbing truth is that they see no need–the Pens are already achieving many of their goals, without the need to risk any of their resources.

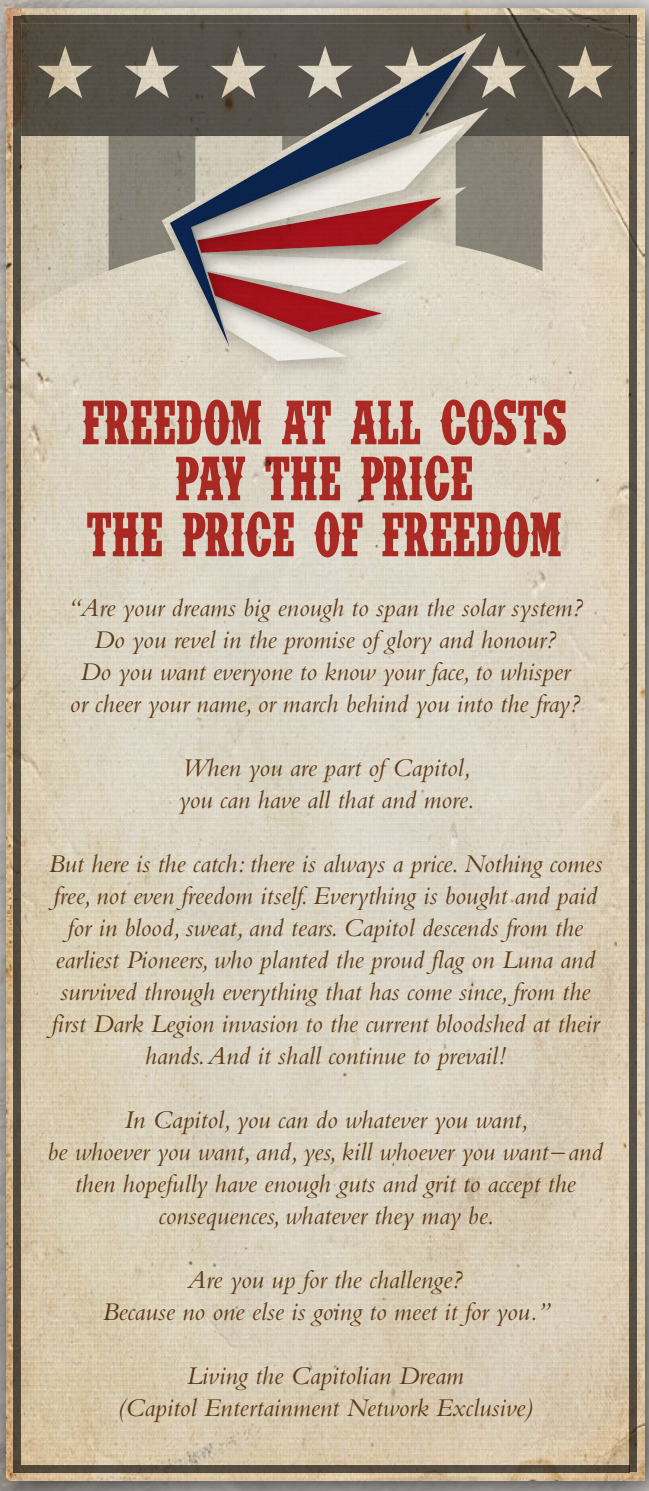
THE PIT

Underground blood sports are a fast rising demand within the populace of Luna city. The Pit is the most extreme example of this dark trend. Hidden away in an unnamed warehouse, its location is only known to regulars and the mobsters who run it. The fights take place in caged arenas between two or more opponents and the fight is to the death. The fighters are all slaves and their winnings go to line the pockets of their masters. Ultimately, their own freedom is death.

THE LUCKY CROWN

Run by a Bauhaus crime family, the Lucky Crown is the most extensive gambling racket on Luna. The golden rule is that it will take a bet on anything, from the results of sports events or wars, to the chance of the Dark Legion destroying humanity. The venue is invitation only, and most of the clientele are well-heeled corporate executives who get an illicit thrill from the betting.

CAPITOL



FREEDOM AT ALL COSTS
PAY THE PRICE
THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

"Are your dreams big enough to span the solar system?
Do you revel in the promise of glory and honour?
Do you want everyone to know your face, to whisper or cheer your name, or march behind you into the fray?

When you are part of Capitol,
you can have all that and more.

But here is the catch: there is always a price. Nothing comes free, not even freedom itself. Everything is bought and paid for in blood, sweat, and tears. Capitol descends from the earliest Pioneers, who planted the proud flag on Luna and survived through everything that has come since, from the first Dark Legion invasion to the current bloodshed at their hands. And it shall continue to prevail!

In Capitol, you can do whatever you want,
be whoever you want, and, yes, kill whoever you want—and then hopefully have enough guts and grit to accept the consequences, whatever they may be.

Are you up for the challenge?
Because no one else is going to meet it for you."

Living the Capitolian Dream
(Capitol Entertainment Network Exclusive)

CAPITOL'S HEROIC LEGACY

Capitol's history is a grand tale of heroes rising above the mud of the masses to forge a bright path through the darkness that threatens humanity. Anyone who chooses to ignore the battle Capitol has been embroiled in is either a fool or a Heretic. The fact is, throughout the centuries, Capitol has always been first and foremost when it comes to guiding humanity into greatness.

First to arrive on Luna and Mars, Capitol was first to give humanity its foothold among the stars. It was first to transform a world and mine the vastness of space. Not only that, but when treachery reared its hideous head and unleashed evil upon the worlds, Capitol was the first to ally itself with the Brotherhood and lead the march against the Dark Symmetry, in all its forms.

Now Capitol holds firm in the face of even the worst terrors. With the Light to guide the people, no enemy will remain forever. With heroes of freedom leading the march, none can stand in Capitol's way.

CAPITOL GOVERNMENT

A body is nothing without its head, and so Capitol has established a democratic institution to serve its citizens' best interests. Democracy is the cornerstone of Capitol's culture, for when people possess the ability to choose for themselves, it opens the doors wide for superior creativity and innovation—and for lasting peace. Capitol is a true manifestation of its citizens' dreams, desires, and destinies. If someone does not like the way the votes are swaying, then they must shout louder and clearer, and rally those like in mind and spirit to their side until their agenda cannot be denied.

THE PRESIDENT

The President is considered to hold the greatest amount of power within Capitol. As Chairman of the Board of Directors, the President oversees and has final say on all matters concerning corporate function, security, and financing. The President also manages the appointment of the various Directors to their Departments, including a Cartel representative.

During the Second Dark Legion War the current President is Charles William Colding, of Colding Arms, Inc. His impressive charisma more than makes up for his unfortunately frail physical presence, and he has proven effective in boosting Capitol net production by

PRESIDENT THOMAS DRAYLE III

Thomas Drayle III served as President during the First Dark Legion War, and had the unfortunate fate of being in the spotlight during one of Capitol's darkest hours. Despite his success in rallying morale and mobilizing troops to repel the invaders, rumours abound to this day of his being complicit with the enemy. As such, none of his descendants have had any success in running for political office, no matter how minor the position, and they are constantly monitored for heretical actions or associates.

THE STOCKHOLDERS

The Capitol Board of Directors holds some of the most illustrious stockholders in the corporation, including:

Abrams	– 5.2%	Berenger	– 4.7%
Gibbs	– 5.2%	Darrelmeyer	– 3.6%
Colding	– 5.2%	Irving-Jorgenson	– 3.6%
Hendryx	– 5.2%	Kell	– 3.6%
Ewing	– 5.1%	Wood	– 3.6%
Lavache	– 5.0%		

2.6% during his latest term. Each presidential term lasts six years, though much of the sixth year is devoted to re-election efforts rather than overseeing the Board. A citizen can hold up to three consecutive terms as President before legally being ineligible for another term. However, after one term of political inactivity, they can once more run for office.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is responsible for electing the President in the first place and, like any public officials, they take this duty extremely seriously. Every member of the Board comes from a distinct electoral district, and the weight his vote carries in any legislative affair is representative of the size of that district. It is then the President's task to set various Directors to oversee various General Departments. Primary ones include the General Department of Defence and Expansion (DEDE) and the General Department of Education, Law Enforcement, and Justice (DELEJ).

SHAREHOLDERS

From birth, every Capitol citizen possesses at least one personal share in Capitol stock. These shares can be bought or sold as desired, but it is this share that allows everyone to participate in the voting process–electing a Director from their district to the Board in order to determine the ultimate fate of the presidency itself. The great inspiration of Capitolian government is that any citizen can run for election, and therefore anyone could become President.

COMMERCE

Capitol thrives on the exchange of goods and services with other corporations, even those it is currently engaged in warfare or espionage with. Its citizens put in the effort and reap the rewards, as it should be. In the immortal words of Chairman Darrelmeyer, "Capitol is business. Business is Capitol." As it is a free market, the opportunity for innovation and profits runs rampant, and Capitolians are marvels at providing the perfect product at the perfect price, meeting customer demand wherever it exists. At this time, Capitol is proud to note its production of goods is at least 20% more than Mishima, its closest competitor, and its materials and products are employed in almost every imaginable industry. Capitolians measure their success in three ways: riches, fame, and connections.

RICHES

Capitol believes in the utmost sanctity of profitability. Some call Capitol decadent or shallow, but Capitolians think the naysayers are simply jealous. If a citizen possess real riches and only ever stashes it away or hands it over to some idiot with nothing more

Mitch Hunter–inspiring generations of Capitolians.

than swagger and a sword, what is the point? Wealth calls to wealth, and only by applying it will anyone further their efforts. The Capitol war machine is not run by wishful thinking. Neither is anyone going to feed themselves or climb the corporate ranks by wishing on a falling star. All the greatest ideas and plans can be laid out but, at the end of the day, if one lacks the dollars to back them up, they are worthless.

FAME

What is wealth without glory? Why would anyone ever wish to hide behind a curtain of anonymity or trudge through the streets wearing the same faces and clothes as everyone else? Every true Capitolian strives to distinguish himself–be it through skill, action, or brilliance. Renown translates into influence; just another form of power to secure a place in Capitol's echelons. This has given rise to the pre-eminence of media-driven role models who represent the best of what Capitol has to offer. Their gifts, wielded well, can ensure nothing undermines the Capitolian spirit.

CONNECTIONS

Making connections can mean the difference between being nothing and being known by everyone who matters. Just because Capitol reveres the idea of the lone wolf or self-made man, it does not meant concepts such as teamwork or camaraderie are lost on its citizens. Forming networks, making strong connections, and forging fearsome allies are all part of the effort. These people have information. They have resources. They have influence. All useful things when one wants to climb to the top.

SOCIETY IS ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE

There is no such thing as an 'average' Capitolian–they value their individuality far too much as they all come from varying cultures, builds, backgrounds, and beliefs. Diversity is the spice of existence for Capitol, which is why they accept almost everyone with open arms–except for Heretics, of course. They respect that everyone can contribute to society as a whole and believe greatness is capable of being found within anyone. It is a noble ideal, to be sure, thinking everyone deserves equal rights and equal say in how things run. Does it work, though? Most Capitolians will chorus a mighty yes.

However, combine the concept of freedom-at-all-costs with Capitol's obsession with prosperity and fame, and things can become chaotic as its citizens scramble over one another to reach the top. In fact, despite the corporate propaganda, Capitol is one of the most–if not the most–crime-ridden, violent, and corrupted corporations in existence. Those Capitolians who admit to this, claim that the dark side of their society weeds out the weak among them and gives the strong a chance to step up to their full potential. Others just see it as rife with opportunities for abuse and flailing near to anarchy at all times.

Those who live in more restrictive corporations, such as Bauhaus, tend to see Capitol as a rabid mongrel to be chained. Those lower on the strata of the same corporations, though, are known to yearn for the freedom Capitol offers.

LIVING THE LIFE

Being a Capitolian does not just mean soaking in every good thing the corporation doles out. A true citizen gives back. They make a stand for the virtues and values that set Capitol apart from the other corporations. Capitolians do not do it because they have to, like the poor, oppressed slobs in Mishima. They do it because they want to, because they recognise this freedom is worth the fight and the sacrifice! Otherwise, a citizen is just a parasite. Who else makes good parasites? Heretics. Give that a hard think over.

In Capitol, providing for its people is the name of the game. Meals may not be a seven-course affair, but food is at least plentiful. Products may not be held to such rigorous standards as Bauhaus, but at least everyone can afford the necessities. Transportation is cheap and fast. People get what they need, when they need it.

CAPITOL DOLLAR

The Capitolian monetary unit is minted in $100, $50, $20, $10, $5, and $1. It has the engraving of an eagle in flight on one side, with the value denoted on the other, plus a mark of authenticity. Used throughout Mars and the asteroid belt, it sees less circulation on Luna. 1 Capitol dollar = 7 Cardinal's crowns.

Capitol AeroFighters defending our freedom.

WHAT MATTERS MOST

These glorious cities do not just build themselves. It takes dedication, hard work, and courage. Other corporations might try to make their people conform to certain standards, or even try to spawn them in horrid breeding programs, but not Capitol. Every Capitolian knows these inherent values from birth, and it is just a question of whether they are given the opportunity to let those virtues shine that sets them apart from the common drone.

MEDIA FOR THE MASSES

A BEACON... NOT BRAINWASHING

Plenty of people point at the mega-empire of Capitol's media powerhouses and decry it as polluted propaganda. Such a sad smear attempt does nothing but fool those who are already blind to the truth. What corporation does not tailor its news and sing its own favourite tune? Capitol may dress up the truth a bit and stick it in the proper lighting, but this is not propaganda. It is a clarion call to glory! It is a point-blank barrage inspiration that drives men and women and children to happiness and hope, helping them dream of making a better life for themselves.

THE GOLDEN SCREEN

No other corporation comes close to matching Capitol's film-making industry. It is nearly, if not entirely, as massive as the corporation's whole battlefront effort–and just as essential. It represents the heart and soul of Capitol, giving people a reminder of why they are so fortunate to be part of a millennia-spanning legacy. From heart-stopping thrillers to weep-in-your-seat romances to the most enthralling epics ever seen, Capitol's movies embody the virtues that make this corporation so great.

While many Capitol citizens enjoy luxury and comfort not found in any other corporation, there is an even higher echelon of the people who all look to for guidance. The military leaders? The Board? The President? All movers and shakers in their own way; but the real power is found among the stars. Not the twinkling motes of light above the atmosphere, but the stars of stage and screen and script. Those who lend their faces and voices, bodies and souls to bring hope to the masses while drawing undying devotion from their fans.

FEATHERLIGHT BLUE

A movie star famed for playing political roles, Featherlight went on to become an actual politician, using her enormous fan base to win in a landslide. Now overseeing a variety of inter-corporation diplomatic affairs, she still finds the time to occasionally return to films. With sweeping brown hair, dark skin, and darker eyes, she dresses in a style that makes one think of a bird of prey, and her beauty is backed up by a fierce intelligence that quickly makes any opponent feel like a mouse about to be gobbled up.

CAPITOL SWORD OF HONOUR

Not so much functional as used to denote military figureheads, this ceremonial sword can only be possessed by those awarded the Chairman's Legion of Honour for outstanding valour and bravery on the field of battle. No civilian can receive this distinction, however great their accomplishments.

When it comes down to it, studios such as Union Motion Pictures and Independent are going to be as vital to winning this war as the soldiers on the front line.

THE PRICE PAID

Even the youngest child in Capitol knows freedom is not free. Every action has consequences. If someone wants everything Capitol has to offer, they are going to have to be ready to push hard and take even harder shoves back.

AN UNFORTUNATE VIOLENCE

When a society exists where so many have their needs fulfilled, it is understandable that the unfortunates who have to do without–be it because of poverty, unemployment, or their own sad mistakes in life–would get the misguided idea that they are entitled to simply take what they have not earned. This is the vilest perversion of the rights Capitol bestows on all its citizens, yet it is a depth many fall to in their most desperate moments.

The only thing others can do is be prepared to defend themselves against their own fellow humans. Just do not buy into the idea that "the best defence is a good offense"; it would not look good to start mowing down the poor or clingers-on just on the off-chance they were considering a mugging. Let them at least reach for their weapons before unleashing.

EVERYONE IS PACKING

Of course, the proliferation of violence is not helped by the equal proliferation of weapons possession in Capitol. Practically anyone on the streets likely has at least one, if not half-a-dozen, blades and burners strapped to their hide. The woman taking her two kids grocery shopping? Unfolding machete tucked under her skirt. The businessman heading to a luncheon? Machine gun in his briefcase. While it is not like picking grenades off arsenal-trees, Capitol does have a much more streamlined method of bringing firepower to the masses. After all, if every citizen is expected to defend their right to freedom, they need the strength to do so. This, though, does leave room for the schmoes who make poor choices in life, and whose perception of freedom clashes harshly with those around them.

Pack that much weaponry into a single crowded city and killing sprees are just waiting to happen. Everyone has an itchy trigger finger and is looking for an excuse to flex it before someone else beats them to it. More than one argument in a designer clothing boutique has devolved into a block-long shootout with every citizen for themselves!

CAPITOL MILITARY

Capitol believes in the inherent goodness and strength of its citizens. Therefore, as everyone plays a vital role in supporting the society, not wanting to see this corporation weaken and crumble, and it is not surprising most make choices for overall growth and prosperity. Even as the people are working towards their own ends they are also working for the common good. Even as Capitolians are formed of all creeds and kinds, they are united in their diversity. And for those who choose otherwise, well…this is balanced out by those who choose to defend the common good by force.

AIR FORCES (CAF)

Capitol believes in manoeuvrability on the battlefield. What better way to manoeuvre than overhead, out of reach of much of the enemy's armaments? Fighter pilots are revered within Capitolian society, and to become one is many a youth's dream. The Armed Forces of Capitol (AFC) spares no expense in outfitting its squadrons with the best aircraft it can manufacture (or buy) and equipping them with weapons of mass destruction. Most Capitol engagements begin with aircraft decimating enemy lines ahead of incoming ground troops.

GROUND FORCES (CGF)

The AFC's ground troops are primarily devoted to assaulting a position after a target has been softened up by air strikes. It is a difficult task, tromping through the mud and blood, and the death toll is high. The reality of this results in constantly low recruitment numbers, and ground efforts must often be backed up by the Freedom Brigades or Free Marines, populated by criminals or those seeking Capitol citizenship. Troops up to 10,000 strong are stationed at every Capitol settlement or city, forever on high alert due to the constant threat of the Dark Legion or other corporations.

RIPPER THE JACK

Career soldier of fame and fortune, Ripper has made a name for himself by having served in a wider variety of military units than any other known grunt, gaining an enormous array of fighting and technical skills that make him invaluable in almost any fighting situation. He is one of the few public war figures who actually goes back into battle time and again rather than resting on past victories. He is a favourite of frontline journalists, always ready with a quip even when bullets are flying and blood is spattering. His armour is a hodgepodge, cobbled together from different squads and units, and he can turn practically any item at hand into a deadly weapon.

NAVAL COMMAND (CNC)

While receiving a lesser focus and financial investment, the Capitol navy still rises to the challenge of warfare on the open seas. Smaller than most other corporations' water-bound forces, the CNC makes up for it by being extremely flexible, mobile, and high-impact when an engagement occurs. As such, it can often outmanoeuvre superior numbers and make single devastating strikes while minimizing losses.

SPECIAL FORCES

Unique circumstances call for unique solutions, and so Capitol has honed its most elite soldiers into a variety of specialized ranks to be dispatched when most necessary. From the Airborne Rangers to the anti-terrorist Alpha Force to the aquatic Sea Lions to the long-distance warfare experts in the Dog Soldiers, Capitol always has an ace in its pocket to pull out at just the right time.

EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

Most forces are equipped with basic armour and weaponry that is mass-produced and plentiful. The standard gear is plain, but functional, and soldiers often delight in adjusting their armour to reflect their personality or squad image. Capitol is far more eager to outfit its elite soldiers and squads with cutting-edge weapons and defences, believing they hold the key to truly turning the tide of battle. Aside from daily duty uniforms and parade dress, soldiers can also be distinguished by any medals they have been awarded. Most medals mark valour or bravery in battle, such as the Freedom Eagle or the Military Gallantry medal.

A CHANCE FOR REDEMPTION

Many want the opportunity to earn citizenship in Capitol and enjoy the freedoms it offers. At the same time, those Capitolians who have voided their rights by criminal activity may crave the chance to get their past wrongs erased and begin anew. For both, the surest, yet hardly safest method is through military service in some of the most brutal squads ever assembled.

FREEDOM BRIGADES

The Freedom Brigades are a famed fighting force known throughout the system. Never has Capitol's promise of freedom for all been more evident than in these squads. Their ranks are formed either of non-Capitolian volunteers or criminals looking to wipe their record clean. These soldiers are bound by a common drive to reforge their legacies, and only Capitol is willing to give them the chance to do so. It is a hard path, with harsh controlling measures, but most within the Brigades are zealous in their efforts to prove worthy of a brighter future.

Mitch Hunter and Big Bob at the Battle of Red Rock.

FREE MARINES

Even those who have served faithfully have the occasional slip-up. A valorous soldier may be court-martialed for an unfortunate breach in regulations, and his only way out of dishonour is to join the Free Marines. These elite are often charged with suicide missions behind enemy lines, and they are desperate enough to regain their honour to charge in, heedless of the danger. If they do not survive, at least they went out in a blaze of glory.

A new kind of policing is required in this age.

CAPITOL SECURITY FORCES

If anyone wants to claim Capitol is teetering on the edge of anarchy and absolute lawlessness, there are a number of uniformed people who would gladly adjust this opinion in a darkened alley. The law is alive and well, and any criminal elements are prosecuted to its full extent when caught. That extent all depends on who does the catching.

CAPITOL SECURITY SERVICE

Capitol Security Service provides the main patrol on the pavement these days, doing what they can to apprehend the more common criminals plaguing Capitol's law-abiding citizens. If a Capitolian feels safe enough to leave their home and take a stroll through a park, or not worry about coming home after a late night shift, it is a sure bet CSS is responsible. Is it as glamorous as dealing death on the frontlines? Maybe not, but it is just as vital–because if Capitolians cannot thrive in their own cities, how will they fare when facing the darkness on the borderlands or in the uncaring reaches of space?

APES

There are times when more drastic measures are called for. When any Capitol territory is threatened by riots or other internal uprisings, those involved are not going to listen to reason. Their blood is boiling too hot–and so the solution is to spill that blood until it cools off. That is where the Armed Interdiction Police Squads (aka "Apes") join the fracas. The name brings to mind a bunch of bare-knuckled brutes who have little regard for preserving human dignity or life, and that is pretty close to the mark. Heavily armoured and heavily armed, they are often first identified by the demonic screeching of their RAT bikes. Their ranks are filled by soldiers who proved too brutal and unable to obey their commanders to fulfil any vital function on the warfront. So they are unleashed to ply their unique brand of mindless violence when the rabble tries to make a nuisance of itself.

THE BUREAU

More devious and organized crime must answer to someone. That is the Bureau's main job and it is on the case on anything from breaking up drug rings to tracking down serial killers to cleansing corruption. The Bureau's Special Crimes division is also rumoured to spearhead the effort in discovering and eliminating those heretical agents who threaten Capitol from within.

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CORPS

The Military Intelligence Corps (MIC) does much of the covert dirty work. Its mission ranges from rival corporation espionage to undermining the Dark Legion at its core. Its members tend to veer towards the psychotic, which may make it a good thing that they often work deep within enemy territory where they must show no mercy if discovered. Many widespread terrorist activities have been blamed on the MIC, though rarely is there any evidence to support the claim.

EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The External Intelligence Agency (EIA) is MIC's main rival, also dealing with undercover work, sniffing out data from across the worlds to empower its blackmail efforts, double-agent agendas, and assassinations. Unfortunately, it has a reputation for its agents getting a bit too heady on all the secret power they wield and using it for their personal profit rather than for the good of Capitol.

Most agents do not hold to any particular uniform, using their casual clothes and appearances to blend in with the crowd, where they can get their vital data-gathering and death-delivering done. However, they always carry badges to identify themselves if the situation demands. The Bureau's distinguishing mark is an eagle with the scales of justice clutched in its talons. MIC is marked by the AFC crest with two torches crossed behind it. EIA is denoted by the Capitol eagle flared over two clasped hands.

CONSEQUENCES

While citizens have the right to make their own choices, deep down they know each comes with a price. Even Heretics have the right to align themselves with dark powers, knowing the instant their foul dealings are brought to light, they will be eradicated with all due speed and brutality. When a citizen comes before the Capitol justice system, the consequences they could face range anywhere from fines to enforced military service to imprisonment and hard labour or death.

JARL SMOOT

A reformed smuggler who headed up a massive drug-running ring on Mars, Jarl was captured when one of his operatives was exposed as a Heretic and betrayed the whole network. Jarl went through several bouts of service in the Freedom Brigades and came out the other side with a love of Capitol and a hatred of the Dark Legion. Now an investigative agent, he is constantly on the hunt for Heretics, and has been in contact with both the Cartel and the Brotherhood, freely giving them information he dug up in order to wipe out whole heretical cells. Bald and with massive, scarred fists, he wears a long leather trench coat and heavy boots for kicking down doors. Favours fighting hand-to-hand with a long blade.

THE SETTLEMENTS

MARS

Welcome to the main Capitol turf, where the corporation has staked its claim and its citizens live free. Once nothing but barren red soil, terraforming efforts have created expansive fields, forests, and even oceans – though the last remain relatively lifeless. A vast irrigation system across the northern hemisphere waters the crops necessary for the survival of all Capitolian cities on the planet. While still rocky and treacherous in places, Mars is a hardy frontier, fitting for an even hardier people.

SAN DORADO

Second only in size to Luna itself, San Dorado is Capitol's capital city, established between the Mariner Crater and the Dalien Sea. Just as Capitol is formed by a mingling of all aspects of humanity, so San Dorado cannot be pinned down by any one descriptive. It is a centre for all industries, all careers, all passions, all dangers. Crammed with rearing skyscrapers and factories that often blot out the sky with their smoke, it is bordered by hundreds of miles of oil fields – one of the corporation's largest exports, as well as the fuel for its constant military advancement.

Within San Dorado awaits an overwhelming cacophony of city life. The streets are packed with cars, and the sidewalks crowded with people funnelling to and fro, trying to mind their own business.

"THE DOUGHPITS"

After Capitol first set foot on Mars, it was only a matter of time before the Dark Legion made its presence known to torment humanity. When the first Citadel began to be constructed, Capitol made a heroic attempt to eliminate the invaders. However, internal treachery, as well as Imperial betrayal, stymied the effort long enough for the Citadel to be completed. Since then, more Citadels have arisen across the planet, threatening all things good and holy. Employing guard towers, trenches, moats, and other fortifications, Capitol has managed to surround the Citadels and keep them contained – however, the vast resources required to maintain this effort has proven an increasing money sink over the decades. Hence the name.

THE SOUTHERN LANDS

This territory was once one of the most fertile areas on Mars and had originally been claimed by Capitol. However, as they always do, Mishima, Imperial, and Bauhaus all tried to pretend they deserved to profit from it as well. The wars ignited over this territory dispute continue to flare up every so often as Capitol seeks to reclaim its rightful lands. Yet none of the other corporations are willing to give up their ill-gotten claims, even as the Dark Legion has established a presence in the region.

A Capitol Transport being prepped for a supply run to Mars.

Capitol AeroBombers over San Dorado.

LUNA

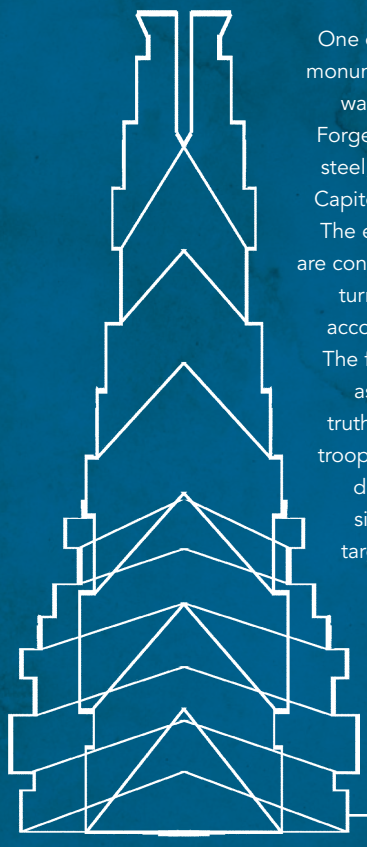
The footstep Capitol took when it guided humanity to the stars, Luna remains central to its cultural identity. While the moon is now settled by all the other corporations, Capitol remains the largest lunar presence, using it as a base of operations for its system-wide expansion.

PIONEER'S ROCK

The original Pioneer landing site on Luna, this establishment is located on the outskirts of the first off-world Capitol settlement. It has been made into a memorial to honour that first permanent step off Earth, paving the way for the colonization of the solar system. Here, one can marvel at ancient technology and relics from that bygone era and wonder at the ingenuity and grit that allowed those original explorers to found Capitol's future.

THE BORE

One of the first strip-mined sections of the moon, this deep, conical shaft has been converted into an inverted city integrated with an amusement park–after all, even in these dark times, citizens need a way to relax and enjoy themselves. The top of the cone is covered with a lattice of metal catwalks mounted with all manner of automated and manned defence systems. Further catwalk layers segment the old mine into various districts for dwellings, shopping, bunkers, and more. People can take advantage of the low-gravity for plunging bungee jumps from near the very top of the cone to the bottom, giving them a unique view of the whole city on the way down and back up.



THE PINNACLE

One of the earliest off-world monuments raised by Capitol was the Pinnacle on Luna. Forged from glass and black steel, to this day it serves as Capitol's lunar headquarters. The entirety of its 170 floors are constantly lit by spotlights, turning it into a beacon of accomplishment and pride. The first three floors appear as normal offices, but, in truth, house squads of elite troopers who stand ready to defend the edifice. Considering how tempting a target the Pinnacle makes for the Dark Legion or treacherous corps agents, this is a wise precaution.

CAPITOL DIPLOMACY

Humanity has always been a contentious lot, even in the most peaceful of times—and that is hardly a descriptive for this dark era of war. Now, while the corporations and coalitions may, at times, try to create a unified image in the face of the Dark Legion, it remains a squabbling lot behind the scenes.

IMPERIAL

Thanks to Imperial treachery during the earliest Dark Legion attacks, Capitol has never trusted this corporation. Should the opportunity arise, many within Capitol ranks would not hesitate to put Imperial out of its misery.

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus and Capitol enjoy a steady and fruitful commercial trade arrangement, though they have come to blows before over various territorial disputes. As of now, neutrality keeps things quiet between the two, but many wonder how long this will last.

MISHIMA

While it is the largest of Capitol's trading partners, Mishima is also the most ruthless. This, alongside Mishima's highly restrictive society and values, has brought the two to blows numerous times, and will do so again in the future.

CYBERTRONIC

While intrigued by the promise of Cybertronic's developing technologies, Capitol remains leery of this new corporation, though some members of the Board would certainly be willing to buy them out.

WHITESTAR

Capitol is wary of Whitestar, though the Earthbound corporation certainly seems to have its priorities straight, what with being wholly opposed to the Dark Legion. They are simply too mysterious, brutal, and withdrawn to be fully trusted.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Capitol sees itself as the foremost ally of the Brotherhood, with the majority of citizens being devout followers of the Light and decrying all things heretical. The only point of contention is in the Inquisition's sometimes overbearing methods, which oppose the Capitol way of freedom from oppression.

THE CARTEL

Capitol is the founding force of the Cartel, and continues to pledge its full and unfailing support to the effort. Capitol believes the Cartel represents one of humanity's best hopes in finally gaining a foothold in the war and driving the Dark Legion back.

LUNA PD

Capitol would like to believe Luna PD has its best interests at heart, especially as it supposedly works under its directive. However, since it is staffed by members of all corporations, there is always potential for other agendas to be at play, and so Capitol keeps a close eye on those attempting to police themselves.

FREELANCERS

Any sort of independent organisation or private company that catches Capitol's eye often is simply bought out and incorporated into the fold. Better to bring the best and brightest to work under the Capitol banner than to treat them as competition.

THE HERETICS

The Capitolian creed for dealing with heretics is simple. Find them. Burn them. Stamp them out, in whatever face or form they come. No compromise and no faltering. They are a corruptive force beyond redemption, and threaten everything humanity has fought to achieve.

CAPITOL NEEDS YOU

"Now you know the truth. Now you see the price of freedom. The question is… are you ready and willing to fight for it? The cost is high, but the prize is worth it. Nowhere else will you be able to reach your full potential. Nowhere else will you be able to reach greater glory and power.

Capitol is leading the way to victory and will be the first to plant its flag on the Dark Legion's last smouldering corpses. The other corporations will demand everything from you, and then take more, giving nothing in return. With Capitol, wealth and fame are equally available for the taking. They are given to the strong and courageous, so that they may protect and inspire the weak and cowardly. Those who rise above the masses will be forever honoured; and even if they fall in battle, they can die knowing they embodied the valour and virtues that make humanity indefatigable.

Become your best today. Join with Capitol and shine your light into a brighter future."

Living the Capitolian Dream
(Capitol Entertainment Network exclusive)

BAUHAUS

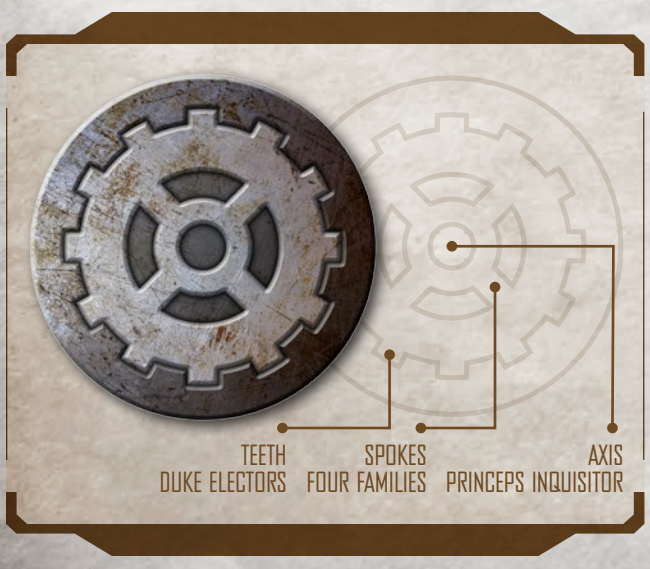
DESIGN AND ORDER

Bauhaus is the oldest of the great corporations and even its most bitter rivals in business or war accord it great respect. Throughout the solar system, people credit Bauhaus with playing a pivotal role in ensuring the continuing survival of the human race. Were it not for the effort, innovation, and spirit of the corporation, humanity might still be confined to the lost and ailing world of Earth, at the mercy of forces beyond their understanding.

The Bauhaus corporation is also commonly and colloquially known as the Homebuilders. Back in the years before the coming of the Cardinals, it was Bauhaus that first produced the terraforming technology that allowed humanity to escape Earth and establish colonies throughout the solar system.

The people of the corporation are also seen as pioneers of a more spiritual sort, for it was from within their holdings on Venus that the Cardinals first appeared and established the Brotherhood. Of all corporations, Bauhaus is closest to the brotherhood. The people of Bauhaus view themselves as the Cardinal's chosen, and the first four Cardinals were drawn from the corporation's ranks.

The symbol of the Bauhaus is a large cogwheel, with twelve teeth, four spokes, and a conspicuous hole at the point of axis. Contemplation of the symbol provides an insight into the structure of Bauhaus' leadership. Each spoke represents one of the four families of Duke Electors who govern Bauhaus' business, military, and society. The 12 teeth are representative of the Duke Electors flanked by their chief advisors and heirs apparent. A Princeps Inquisitor holds position as chairman in the centre of the wheel and so it is illustrated that Bauhaus society revolves around the Brotherhood.



As well as the pivotal role it played in the history of the colonisation of space, Bauhaus has a deserved reputation for producing goods and services of quality. Bauhaus products are invariably at the top of their range, and even the executives and managers of rival companies regard a Bauhaus brand item as a mark of reliability and worth.

The people of Bauhaus are mostly well cared for and rewarded when they display talent, hard work, or gallantry in the field. In return, the corporation expects diligent and exacting work on products and services that meet the highest standards, as well as loyal and brave service in the Bauhaus military. No matter how humble your birth, if you fight bravely and work hard, you too could join the ranks of nobility; that's the promise the corporation extends to its employees.

THE HISTORY OF BAUHAUS

Bauhaus has its roots in the corporate takeovers and mergers of the late 21st Century and originally it had its powerbase in Central Europe. Aristocratic wealth and privilege married with market forces and led to the dominance of rich Investor Houses, beginning the tradition of noble families managing the corporation's affairs. It was Bauhaus that first produced a workable model of the technology required to terraform planets. It lacked the resources needed to put the technology to practical use, and so it entered into negotiations with Capitol. These talks led to a joint venture and the terraforming of Luna. Here Bauhaus established a centralised power base; the East-West Towers.

Life on Earth became increasingly difficult due to environmental upheaval and sporadic warfare. Bauhaus withdrew to its holdings elsewhere in the solar system. It explored and seized swathes of new territory on the planet Venus, founding the city of Heimburg. Bauhaus entered into negotiations with Capitol and Imperial, and in the late 24th Century returned to Earth. The corporations planned to commence terraforming operations to make the lost world habitable once more. An expeditionary force landed in Europe with the intention of resuming control of Bauhaus's old facilities, but contact with it was lost. Subsequent attempts to establish control were abandoned in the face of unexpected resistance from the

Bauhausers fight the Dark Legion with every breath.

inhabitants of Earth, as well as manifestations of Dark Symmetry during the First Dark Legion War.

Being heavily reliant on high technology and artificial intelligence systems, Bauhaus was amongst those most disrupted by the power of the Dark Symmetry. Bauhaus scientists worked hard to reconfigure advanced technological systems using more primitive mechanisms that were less susceptible to interference from the Dark Symmetry.

Desperate to find a way of exploiting the newly opened rifts in reality, Bauhaus scientists colluded with Mishima and Capitol to steal an experimental Imperial frigate outfitted to navigate through warp rifts. Whilst this theft was never proven, it became a cause of serious bitterness between Bauhaus and Imperial, and escalating tensions between the four corporations led to the First Corporate War.

Rival corporations regarded Venus as territory to be conquered. Whilst Bauhaus fielded well equipped armies, it lacked the military organisation of Imperial or Capitol and lost a great number of border disputes and resource wars. The conflict hardened attitudes within the corporation and set in motion societal changes that would see the militarised nobility come to even greater prominence. With all of Venus at stake, Bauhaus did not play a significant role in the struggle for resources in other parts of the solar system. It entered into the Southern Martian Wars at a late stage and won the territory that would go on to become the megacity of Mundberg.

THE BROTHERHOOD AND THE DARK LEGION

In the year 2480 AD, three brothers appeared from the jungles of Venus and preached a message of peace and reconciliation. The most vocal and charismatic of the trio was Nathaniel Durand. People flocked to his new faith in droves. The Brotherhood grew, and Bauhaus was its greatest supporter. The other corporations were compelled to negotiate and the Treaty of Heimburg was signed, ending the First Corporate War.

Shortly after the establishment of the Brotherhood, a rogue band of Imperial Conquistadors broke the seals on planet Nero and unleashed Dark Legion forces. Across the solar system great citadels appeared and landed on planets and moons in order to establish beachheads and fortresses. Hundreds of these citadels descended upon Venus. From their gateways marched cohorts of Legionnaires to assault the cities of the Homebuilders. It was during the siege of Heimburg that Bauhaus moved its HQ from the East-West Towers of Luna to the beleaguered Venusian city, committing itself to the defence of its most important holding.

Whilst Durand was able to rally the corporations to Venus and push the legions back to their citadels, the victory was won at tremendous cost. Many Homebuilder settlements were razed and its people slaughtered. Of all corporations, Bauhaus suffered most from the attack, losing lands, money, and power. The Elector Dukes came to believe that if it wasn't for the assault on Venus, Bauhaus would be preeminent amongst the corporations, and such resentment was only exacerbated by opportunistic efforts on behalf of Capitol and Mishima to seize important Venusian territory whilst Bauhaus fought the forces of Algeroth.

A CORPORATION AT WAR

There was little peace for Bauhaus even after it pushed back the nightmare forces of the Dark Legion. A series of civil conflicts lasting nearly thirty years followed. Known as the Throne Wars, this internecine strife arose as the four Elector Duke families vied with one another for power. Rival corporations annexed Bauhaus holdings for their own Venusian territories whilst the Homebuilders squabbled amongst themselves.

In a few short years Bauhaus was at war once more. Mishima and Bauhaus fought the Graveton Sub Wars on Venus, as Mishima forces built great fortresses to contest Bauhaus' island territories. After forty years of terrible losses the two corporations called an uneasy truce.

In the past few centuries the Ministry of Light became strong and oppressed the battle-weary Bauhausers with its unstinting witch hunts for heretics and mutants. This is seen as an understandable

reaction to the possibility of resurgent Dark Legion activity but has also sparked a degree of resistance in the form of apocalyptic cults and anarchic movements. The four Great Houses are careful not to repeat the blunders of the Throne Wars, but still vie for power through clandestine intrigues and third party manipulations. Homebuilders resent the gains other corporations made from their mistakes and misfortunes, regarding Mishima as opportunistic, Capitol as greedy, and Imperial as reckless. Good relations between Bauhaus and Cybertronic exist but are built on poor foundations. The Brotherhood remains suspicious of Cybertronic and Bauhaus always eventually aligns its attitudes with those of the Curia.

BAUHAUS GOVERNMENT

Bauhaus hierarchy is built around the four ancient families of Duke Electors. Each of these noble houses can trace their history back to before the Age of Catastrophe. Once the ancestors of the Duke Electors were prominent military advisors to corporate management, now they are in complete control of all Bauhaus' business.

There is something of a secret struggle between the Duke Electors, for whilst they all stand visibly united against Bauhaus corporate rivals and the horrors of the Dark Legion, they are wary of affording one of their number enough power to upset the status quo. The Elector Dukes look to the Brotherhood to mediate the impact of such disputes and take painstaking care to make sure that their efforts to undermine one another are subtle and untraceable.

Beneath these four great houses exist thousands of lesser noble families, each of whom is responsible for (at the very least) a particular industrial or agricultural concern. One of the principles that Bauhaus holds dear is that any child, no matter how low born, can someday become a noble if he or she works hard enough and conducts him or herself with honour and dignity.

Bauhaus commoners and unaffiliated thralls make up the majority of the populations of the corporation's holdings. They lead humble but productive lives in the main. The Bauhaus media outlets are careful to feed them a steady diet of news informing them of how much more freedom they enjoy compared to citizens of Mishima, or how much safer they are from violent anarchy than the citizens of Capitol. On the whole this seems to satisfy those who work for Bauhaus, though seditious activity has been occurring with increasing frequency and violence in recent times.

THE FOUR ELECTOR FAMILIES

ROMANOV is the Commodore of the Army. As General of Staff, Constance Romanov is the ultimate commander of the combined armed forces of Bauhaus and his house controls the Supreme Ministry of War. Constance Romanov's spiritual advisor and closest confidant is Inquisitor Kline.

RICHTHAUSEN is the Director of Industry. The Richthausen family is the oldest and richest of the four ruling houses and its head, Grand Admiral Stanislav Richthausen, is in charge of the Supreme Ministry of Industry and is therefore responsible for Bauhaus' economy. Stanislav's chief advisor is the Mystic Constanzia Moran.

BERNHEIM is the Servant of the Populace. Field Marshal Enzo Bernheim is responsible for the well-being of Bauhaus employees and the social services. The house is heavily invested in food production, and has a majority share in Bauhaus' agricultural output. The Bernheim house also has extensive control over the publishing and media sectors. Enzo's chief advisor is Inquisitor Terrino.

SAGLIELLI is the Keeper of the Faith. Supreme Air Marshal Vittorio Saglielli has a tough and important duty. He is in charge of internal security, counter-legion measures, and the justice system. Vittorio's chief advisor is Inquisitor Tremonte.

THE NOBLE HOUSES

There are 2,694 Noble Houses currently in existence, and more are created all the time. Noble Houses control anything from a small industrial fiefdom of a few factories to an estate cleared from the Venusian Jungles.

There are ten great houses with control over particularly important industrial fiefdoms. Although lacking the political power of the four Elector Houses, they are wealthy and prestigious. Fieldhausen Motors is Bauhaus' primary producer of military equipment such as hovertanks and armoured cars. Kruger Steel controls most of the corporation's steel production. House Salavator is famed for its industrial chemicals business. Bayer-Hrothgar controls the BHM Media and Bauhaus' studio capacity for movies and television production. House Giraud manages Giraud Aerospace, who produce air and spacecraft. The secretive House Luther has numerous holdings and is known for philanthropic gestures. House Phillippe is Bauhaus' chief producer of consumer electronics. House Rotherberg dominates the Bauhaus financial services industry. House Dante controls extensive wine and brewing interests. Finally, House Matochek owns vast tracts of land and produces everything from grapes to livestock.

THE BAUHAUSERS

In Bauhaus, more than any other corporation, it is possible to describe an average guy; a "Bauhauser". The level of education, wealth, and influence is fairly equal in all levels of society, leading to a common sense of identity.

The average Bauhaus employee works in industry as an engineer, operator, or fitter. He enjoys his work simply because he feels it is important for the corporation and, in a greater sense, the Brotherhood. He receives a good salary, which is more than enough to support a spouse and two children in a city apartment.

A Bauhauser receives eight years of state education. He doesn't know much about the other corporations or, in fact, his own. He occasionally hears through BHM Media that Bauhaus has had a great military success somewhere, but whilst such news is welcome, it does not overly excite him. He is well satisfied with the city life as long as he doesn't become a victim of crime or hardship.

Above all, what Bauhaus means for the average Bauhauser is security and protection against whatever might happen. Accidents, diseases, alien invasions. He is proud to be a part of what he believes to be the best of possible societies.

Outside the East-West Towers.

CORPORATE CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

"When you need the best, buy Bauhaus," boast the brochures and advertising jingles. They don't boast unduly, for throughout the solar system the Bauhaus cogwheel is a trademark of assured quality. This is a deliberate policy of the corporation's executives, which serves two main purposes. First and foremost they wish to provide for their own with the very best. Secondly, they believe they ought to be able to compete with their rivals regardless of product or market.

The demands placed on designers and employees to perform to the highest standard are very high. Only stringently tested products are approved to leave the factories bearing the

BAUHAUS BEFORE THE FIRST DARK LEGION WAR

Bauhaus is a corporation built on tradition and heritage, and many of its Orders and institutions reach back to their founding. Since the time of the First Dark Legion War there have been some changes that are worth considering.

The Saglielli family, whose fortunes are tied to those of the Brotherhood, lacked a lot of the influence that it has now. Before the rise of the Brotherhood it was still one of the four Duke Elector houses, and still strongly associated with religious faith. However, the Bauhausers of the time were not particularly pious and largely non-committal when it came to organised religion. Saglielli's influence was derived as much from its banking interests as it was its ability to motivate the populace through religious edict.

Bauhaus embodied a spirit of technological innovation, which has become somewhat redundant since the effects of Dark Symmetry. Prior to the war many Bauhauser scientists who would later defect were still integral parts of the company, and a focus on achieving ever higher technological standards was a feature of the corporate philosophy.

Another change that has occurred in recent times is a more hostile attitude to the other merchant corporations. Before the war, Bauhaus was the undisputed master of Venus and arguably the most predominant power in the galaxy. Other corporations would be reluctant to overtly challenge Bauhaus and would deal with it in an honest manner. Covert operations and attempts to steal trade secrets might be attempted by freelance agents or those working for the other corporations.

A Venusian Ranger patrol.

seal of the Bauhaus cogwheel. It is often said that money is no object and the results speak for themselves, as all Bauhaus brand products are at least as good as the best their competitors offer.

The drawback is a premium price tag. Bauhaus products are regarded by most ordinary people as unaffordable luxuries. To provide cheaper alternatives, Bauhaus sponsors a number of smaller subsidiary companies with apparent independence. Such front organisations exist in order to produce affordable items without weakening the reputation of the central Bauhaus brand.

As with the other corporations, Bauhaus' market strategy relies on producing everything, thereby spreading the risks. The corporate empire includes just about every type of business, from crude oil refineries, gas fields, and copper mines to haute couture design studios, hospitals, bakeries, financial services, and fast-food chains. Whilst all of its business ventures have a deserved reputation for quality, if one area can be seen to truly embody the spirit of Bauhaus it would be heavy mechanical industry manufacturing heavy-duty construction vehicles, mining machinery, steel girders for skyscraper construction, and other such items. The Bauhaus military also benefits from the expertise the company demonstrates in this arena, with armoured vehicles exhibiting the height of durable and reliable design.

Occasionally a criminal enterprise will set up shop in a secret location, and produce goods bearing a forged cogwheel. A highly profitable venture, for those brave enough

to attempt it, the typical response that Bauhaus has to such bootleggers is simple: it shoots them. An entire ministry is dedicated to the location and execution of forgers–the Ministry of Fair Trade.

THE SYSTEM OF ORDERS

If you want to be someone in Bauhaus society there are two requirements: military title and membership of an Order. To outsiders, this can make the Bauhaus appear to be strictly aristocratic, but in truth the corporation does recognise merit. If a humbly born–but skilled–individual performs well, they will be provided with the opportunity to face the challenges needed to win them the necessary acclaim. This may mean that poorer Bauhausers who wish to get on in life may find room made for them in the ranks of renowned military outfits or clandestine intelligence networks–provided they have attracted the attention of a patron who thinks they would be worthy of such challenges. In contrast, a person of high birth who fails to perform rarely becomes influential, even though they no doubt have a network of friends and family who could provide them with all the opportunities they need.

There are hundreds of illustrious Orders with more or less defined purposes. They all purport to embody and preserve the Bauhaus spirit to create a community and to lobby for their vested interests. They are strictly ranked, and within Bauhaus society an individual's stack of membership cards says nearly as much about their status as their salary.

The most respected order of Bauhaus society is the High Order of Merit of Venus' Knight Templars, otherwise known simply as the High Order. Membership requirements are the rank of either General or Admiral, monthly income of 250,000 crowns or more, and nomination by at least two members of the Order's board of governors.

Another renowned order for deeds worthy of recognition is the Order of the Pauldron, whose members wear a chromed steel shoulder pad on the left shoulder. Although the bulk of the membership consists of officers, prominent scientists and diplomats have been initiated as well.

The order of Oxia Palus is a society for preventative actions against the Dark Legion. Many Inquisitors and Mystics are rumoured to be members, and the Order has earned itself a shadowy reputation for its secretive and bloody methods.

Rumours persist that there are several secret orders that operate within Bauhaus society, and wield undue and unaccountable influence over its operations. Whilst many view such rumours as unhinged conspiracy theories, the fact is that there are orders that have links to hidden parts of the government, organised crime, and cults dedicated to the understanding or worship of the Dark Symmetry.

THE SETTLEMENTS

VENUS

Venus is Bauhaus' most important stronghold and the site of its capital, Heimburg. Terraforming of the planet was successful; perhaps too successful as Venus now teems with wildlife including some of the solar system's most lethal predators and pathogens.

"You are a disgrace… to both your regiment and your father."

Lecomte turned away from the soldier and gazed out the window.

"None of this must be known to the crew upstairs." he continued, "and if it gets out, you're going to burn for it.

"Nobody fails me and lives to tell about it, so make sure this is handled with the greatest discretion. Someone is going to pay for this fiasco, mark my words."

Steiner stood in the center of the room, dirty and dishevelled. He still wore his heavy armor, marked with the signs of desperate combat and his face was a mask of exhaustion.

"We returned from Venus with only two of the 300 soldiers sent," Steiner answered the dark figure by the stained glass window. His voice mirrored his appearance. "Only one survived, sir."

Looking out over the surface of the city, Lecomte raised his hands. He spoke, and his voice strained with anger. "I lost a lot of prestige in this operation, and I hope you realize this, Steiner. Someone will have to pay for this failure, this loss of face."

Steiner hadn't realized Lecomte's game until now, too late. He had been used by this ruthless executive. Lecomte had used Steiner and his troops as a child would use his toys. The wheeling and dealing brat had sacrificed the lives of three hundred good people on a whim, solely for his personal profit. Lecomte's dirty plans had caused Steiner the loss of all his compatriots and made himself an active part of this treachery. Steiner reached his decision, cocked his submachine-gun and turned around to face Lecomte.

"Yes sir, someone will pay," Steiner mumbled as he squeezed the trigger. In a cascade of broken glass, he sent Lecomte's screaming body through the window and down to the street far, far below.

More than two thirds of the planet is covered in dense, hostile jungle, which is crossed everywhere by slow, shallow, disease-ridden rivers.

A great many Dark Legion citadels dot the planet's surface. Some are the sites of open warfare, whilst others are apparently dormant. All need constant surveillance and are a significant drain on Bauhaus' military resources.

HEIMBURG

The sprawling megacity of Heimburg is home to innumerable inhabitants and is the centre of Bauhaus' power. Here you can find the offices of all the major Ministries and sumptuous palaces belonging to the four Elector Dukes and other notable aristocrats.

Heimburg is a clean city, at least in the upper corporate districts. There the architecture is solid and imposing, throwing large, black shadows on the alleyways and boulevards. The city is also notable for its many towering memorials dedicated mainly to the glorious war dead. Only a minority of the residents are properly regarded as Homebuilders. The rest are freelancers and their employees, fortune-seekers, spies, and members of other corporations. Heimburg is one of the few areas on Venus where the Elector Houses recognise the rights of non-Homebuilders to own land, and whole quarters dominated by other corporations exist.

The population of Heimburg reside in many tiers, with lower levels purposed to house poorer workers and thralls. By ancient order no building other than the Cathedral is allowed to be more than two thirds the height of the Palace of Government, and this helps remind the general populace of their place.

LUNA AND THE EAST-WEST TOWERS

Luna is home to almost a quarter of all Homebuilders and as the fighting on Venus intensifies more and more manpower and resources are being relocated to Luna City.

The Bauhaus East-West Towers on Luna were designed to house all the central functions of the Bauhaus corporate management, as well as the departments and the ministries of the four Duke Electors. The top floors of the west tower house the Supreme Ministry of War. In the lower regions are what are commonly known as the Corridors of Advisors; the many different departments and coordination boards for freelance corporations and the more important subsidiary companies within Bauhaus. The east tower holds the board rooms of the Duke Electors, and the Ministries for economy, industry and social services.

The Duke Electors and other high officials have their own elevators to an underground level where private culverts lead directly to their respective palaces downtown. The security in the East-West Towers is strict, with armoured booths containing BLEU troopers stationed at the junctions of major corridors, near the external doors of elevators, and by every entrance to the building.

BAUHAUS ON MARS

Whilst Mars is primarily associated with Capitol holdings there is a significant Bauhaus presence on the Red Planet. Most notably the city of Mundberg close to the Martian South Pole is a Bauhaus concern. The city is built on seven islands separated by glacial rivers. It is home to the Order of the Cave Bear, which is one of Bauhaus' most celebrated military orders. Mundbergers have had to develop a strong sense of independence and self-sufficiency as they can expect little help from Venus when attacked. The other corporations look upon Mundberg with covetous eyes and Imperial forces have besieged the city a number of times.

BAUHAUS HOLDINGS DURING THE FIRST DARK LEGION WAR

Prior to the First Dark Legion War, Bauhaus was the undisputed master of Venus. Many estates and settlements that are now under the control of rival corporations would have either been wholly controlled by Bauhaus, or would have been undeveloped sites that Bauhaus had laid a claim to.

However, Bauhaus' base of operations at this time was not Heimburg. The East-West towers in Luna City would have been the near-permanent home of the four Duke Electors, and all Bauhaus' operations were ultimately planned and monitored from this point.

Bauhaus' presence on Mars was far smaller at this point, as the corporation was more or less happy to leave exploration and exploitation of the Red Planet to Capitol. It was only as Capitol sought to profit from the chaos of the First Dark Legion War by seizing Venusian territory that Bauhaus made efforts to acquire their own Martian holdings.

BAUHAUS MILITARY

Bauhaus military forces have a deserved reputation for being well equipped and trained to perfection. In comparison to the armed forces of the other corporations they may lack fire-power and strength of numbers, but they compensate with high tactical versatility and state of the art protective armour.

Lower levels of a Bauhaus city.

The armoured forces, the Dragoon Regiments, are the most respected of all the Bauhaus forces. Being promoted to the rank of Dragoon officer is regarded as one of the greatest honours that can be bestowed upon a Bauhauser.

The equipment utilised by the Bauhaus armed forces is of very high quality. Weapons and armour are optimised to combine mobility with the greatest possible effectiveness. High price tags and stringently checked manufacturing processes are limiting. With the high status of a military career tempting hordes of young men to enlist, the amount of equipment in the Bauhaus armouries is never enough to put them all in operative status. Given the core values of Bauhaus it would take significant pressure for them to consider sending ill-equipped soldiers to battle. Whilst there are downsides to this relatively slow and exacting process, a positive upshot is that most raw recruits receive superlative training before being deployed to a theatre of war.

Due to the importance of the military to the noble families, the armed forces are well regarded by Bauhaus high society. However, only those who have served as officers may be promoted to powerful positions in the corporation. Despite the aristocratic nature of Bauhaus' rulers, there is little snobbery involved in such promotions; an official with a humble background is quickly promoted to staff colonel or equivalent should he prove brave on the battlefield and canny in business. Martial honour remains important and such an individual will need to prove himself in battle before being provided a post. Gold-braced uniforms and ceremonial swords are common features in the corridors and gathering halls of the Bauhaus business empire. A commoner who eschews war will find it impossible to win influence.

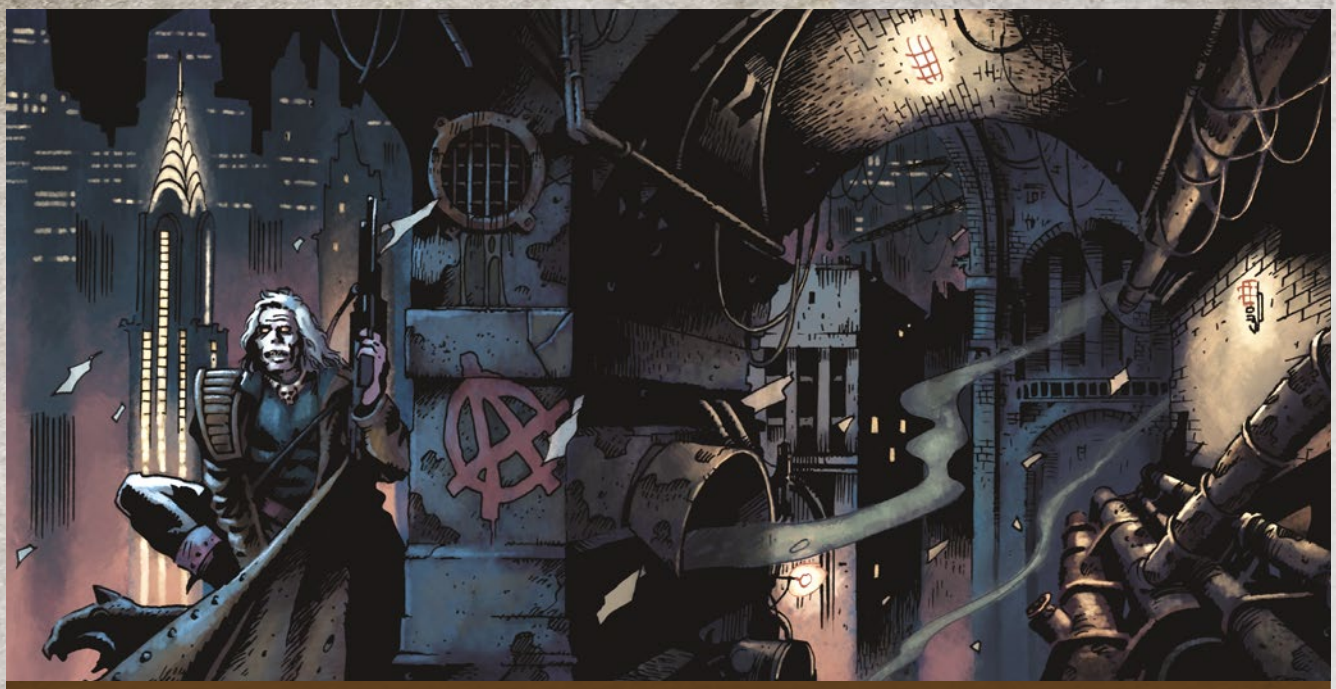
ORGANISATION

Especially talented soldiers might be enrolled at a military academy to become an officer, but most of the time officers are picked from the nobility. Only after several years in one of the unit-designated academies are they expected to join real combat. Code of honour is very important, especially among officers, and there are extremely few disciplinary problems. For example, prisoners of war are treated well, cease-fires are respected, and wounded and dead soldiers from both sides are treated with respect and taken care of after the battle.

The armed forces, falling under the jurisdiction of Duke Elector Romanov, are divided into four service branches:

ARMOURED FORCES: The Bauhaus Dragoons make up the core of the armed forces. Originally organised for battle in open terrain they have nevertheless adapted to the current main theatre of war–the Venusian jungles. They have achieved this mainly through redesigning their battle wagons, but also by implementing new tactics and organisation.

INFANTRY: The Hussars is the nickname for the more conventional ground military forces. They have lighter equipment and less training than the Dragoons, but are a good match for any regular unit of any other corporation.



The Rot runs deep down below.

AIR CAVALRY: The air cavalry provides needed support during operations as well as transportation for airlifts. This small and costly organisation is mainly equipped with large, heavily armed and armoured helicopters.

SPECIAL FORCES: Bauhaus can boast having some of the finest special forces in the system, lacking nothing in regard to equipment, training or support. They are composed of the best soldiers from the regular elite units. Renowned are the Bauhaus Blitzers, a legendary anti-armour unit used for last-ditch missions and suicide runs against other armoured forces; the Etoiles Mortants, the Dying Stars, with special training and equipment for fighting the forces of the Dark Legion; and the Venusian Rangers, whose name speaks for itself.

THE VENUSIAN RANGERS

The Venusian Rangers were initially raised as an experimental force but are now one of the most famous and trusted military units in the solar system. They are the most famed of all Bauhaus' military forces.

The Rangers are organised into divisions of around 10,000 elite troopers. They are provided with state of the art Bauhaus armour – currently, the Guardsman Mk. III Armour (see page 243) – and weaponry (Deathlockdrums and Panzerknackers). Each squadron chooses its own camouflage pattern for its armour. While some prefer the conventional jungle camo in shades of light green, brown, and grey, others stand out and keep the manufacturer's bone-white basic colour. They reason that the best of the best don't have to hide from anyone. Their protection masks, moulded into the shape of a grimacing death's head, are designed to intimidate and strike fear into their opponents.

The basic requirements for a Venusian Ranger are extraordinary endurance and physical strength combined with determination and willpower far beyond that achieved by normal men. The Rangers are hand-picked from regular elite forces, placed in a two year training camp known as "The Forge", and are then sent directly to the Venusian trenches.

THE ETOILES MORTANTS

As part of Bauhaus' program against Dark Legion infiltration on Venus, the Etoiles Mortants, or "Dying Stars", were formed as a kamikaze unit specialising in reconnaissance and sabotage of Dark Legion citadels. Achieving the apparently impossible became an everyday event for Etoiles. Their small units of well-equipped and trained soldiers have gathered much of humanity's collective military intelligence regarding the Dark Legion. Rumours have it that the Brotherhood is secretly supporting the units with seers and other powerful mystics who reinforce the task forces sent out on missions, but no one has been able to reveal the truth. Some even say that the individual members of the Etoiles are trained in the use of the Arts.

The Etoiles are most often lightly equipped, as they hold speed and stealth as priorities over firepower or armour. Many soldiers who have been sent to the Doomtrooper squads originally fought for the Etoiles. Their experience of the Dark Legion's forces and tactics

make them invaluable Doomtroopers. The badge of the Etoiles Mortants depicts a white supernova on top of a black cross.

BAUHAUS SECURITY SERVICES

BAUHAUS LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITS

The BLEU, or "the Blues" as they are usually called, are Bauhaus' one and only police force. They are renowned for their extreme efficiency and swiftness. The Blue focuses strongly on crime-prevention rather than law enforcement. It is almost impossible to move around in a Bauhaus-controlled area without running into pairs of foot-patrol Blues every five minutes; the Elector Dukes believe in saturation policing.

BLEU police officers are tall. The minimum height is 6'3", which excludes most women from service in the field. When patrolling on foot, they are normally equipped with handguns and a single tear-gas grenade. They wear light protection vests under their blue-black uniforms. They have a reputation for rough summary justice, so most residents of Bauhaus areas know not to mess with them.

Small police stations housing up to a dozen officers are located in every other block. Each such office has one riot vehicle and equipment for real combat. In addition there is one main station housing around 200 officers and twenty vehicles per square kilometre.

There is no trial by jury in Bauhaus areas. All major crimes must be reported to a Magistrate, tough souls employed by the Ministry of Justice and empowered to investigate, detain, and punish criminals.

BAUHAUS DIPLOMACY

Bauhaus is regarded as a tough but just business partner, always reliable when a deal has been closed but difficult and exacting during negotiations. Accordingly the financial and diplomatic relations between Bauhaus and other corporations are relatively good but they have a reputation for being slow to commit due to their acute attention to detail.

This demand for accuracy is sometimes seen as snobbishness, and Bauhaus negotiators have a reputation for looking down their noses at their competitors. In reality this reputation is largely undeserved. Bauhaus' agents know that part of the business of creating products of unparalleled quality is to understand exactly what it is a client wants, and make sure all plausible dependencies are accounted for before committing themselves.

CAPITOL

Relations between Bauhaus and Capitol are cool but profitable. Bauhaus buys a lot of raw materials from Capitol, and Capitol's elite have a taste for luxury goods that Bauhaus trades in return. Tensions run high over the Graveton Archipeligo, an important area of natural resources on Venus that Bauhaus lays claim to but Capitol occupies. The Elector Dukes vow that one day they will reclaim the islands, but for now their struggles with the Dark Legion prevent them from an all-out attack on Capitol's Venusian holdings.

IMPERIAL

Bauhaus and Imperial are always at war somewhere, but it's a civilised state of war in which treaties are observed and prisoners well treated. Whilst their armed forces fight, the two corporations are happy to do business. A particular bone of contention is the fact that the original Fieldhausen Motors was voluntarily subsumed by Imperial in 762 YC. Whilst Bauhaus retains rights to the clan's inventions up until the time of its defection, there is ongoing resentment over the matter. Many of newer products Fieldhausen Autowerks (as it is currently known) produces are seen as variations on Bauhaus owned designs. Winning these rogue elements of Fieldhausen back to the Bauhaus cause would be seen as a major coup.

MISHIMA

Mishima seized large swathes of Venusian territory whilst Bauhaus was concentrating on fighting Dark Legion forces, and the Homebuilders regard this as a significant grievance. Bushfire wars between the two corporations occasionally break out, but for the time being, the Dark Legion takes priority. Bauhaus also suffers more than any other corporation from Mishima's industrial espionage. Protesting about this to the Cartel has done no good, for whenever Bauhaus produces evidence of such activity, the Lord Heirs of Mishima simply pin the blame on a "rogue subordinate", who then promptly commits suicide.

CYBERTRONIC

Relations between Bauhaus and Cybertronic are respectful and cordial. Bauhausers have a high regard for Cybertronic's commitment to excellence, which they see as mirroring their own values. Bauhaus has even acted as a front for Cybertronic in dealing with the Cartel. It will moot Cybertronic ideas as its own in the knowledge that this is the only way they will be given serious consideration. But there are potential areas of conflict. Those in the circle of Duke Elector Romanov hint at suspicions regarding the degree to which Cybertronic utilises technology belonging to Bauhaus. If unaccounted theft of intellectual property has taken place, then Bauhaus will do whatever it takes to settle accounts.

THE CARTEL

The Elector Dukes regard the Cartel as a sideshow and probably a Capitolian tool. They have invested heavily in the military side of the Cartel, particularly the Doomtrooper program, and regard such efforts as time and money well spent. In other areas, their involvement with the Cartel is minimal and perfunctory.

MISHIMA

LOYALTY. HONOUR. OBEDIENCE. TRADITION.

These are the principles that bind together the Mishima Corporation. Perhaps more than any other corporation, Mishima holds fast to the cultural traditions its founders brought with them when they fled the dying Earth—traditions of honour, loyalty to the family, and sacrifice for the greater good.

FAMILY FIRST

Mishima has been a family concern since its inception. The first Overlord was the founder of the Mishima dynasty, and his descendants have ruled the corporation ever since.

This dynastic structure extends throughout Mishima culture. Mishimans have a deeply ingrained respect for their elders, which informs the preeminent place tradition holds in the culture, and the custom of following the same career path as your forebears. The family is held to come before all else, even obeying your lord. Disobedience may be punished by death, but that death brings no dishonour if it comes about in the defence of your family.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE: TECHNO-FEUDALISM

Mishima is not, strictly speaking, a single corporation. Instead, it is a mass of individual companies called keiretsu, tied by historical and contractual allegiances to the Mishima System Holdings Group, which is owned by the Mishima family. The keiretsu form subcultures within the wider Mishima society, with distinct ways of life, cuisine, and music. A number of keiretsu even have their own languages, though that of the Mishima family remains the lingua franca for business.

At the very top are the Overlord and his family. Beneath them are the great families of the samurai—the warrior and management caste—who hold powers of life and death over the commoners beneath them. Within the samurai caste, each keiretsu is headed by a daimyo, who commands the lords of lower-status samurai families. Each lord is a Mishima shareholder, and runs a particular business concern or municipal district, commanding samurai-caste executives and the commoners below. By tradition, each lordship resides with a particular family from one generation to the next.

The keiretsu are diversified conglomerates, encompassing divisions across a far-reaching portfolio of industries. They often produce enough diverse products to sustain their workforce and facilities without any need for supplies from outside their own keiretsu. Each division of a keiretsu is managed by a lower status samurai family.

Within the Mishima corporation, the keiretsu and their sub-divisions compete with one another constantly. Some outside observers say this creates a wasteful duplication of effort, but Mishima philosophy encourages competition as a means of focusing effort to achieve perfection.

MISHIMA SOCIETY

Mishima society is rigidly stratified. Every Mishima employee must pay tithes to his or her superior: a commoner to his executive, an executive to his lord, a lord to his daimyo, and the daimyo to the Lord Heir to whom he owes fealty—or, in a handful of cases, directly to the Overlord, who receives tribute from the Lord Heirs.

Even the great mass of commoners is divided into a complex array of ranks according to profession, though commoners do not pay tithes to other commoners. Every commoner is assigned a work unit at birth—usually the same one as his mother or father—which becomes

A lone warrior fights courageously against all odds.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

Being born into power is not the only way to inherit a keiretsu. Lower-ranking samurai and sometimes even commoners are brought into the keiretsu's ruling family as a reward for good service. In fact, the majority of adoptions in Mishima society are of adults who are subsequently set to inherit the chairman's title.

Curiously, such adopted heirs are the victims of a disproportionate number of homicides and unexplained deaths, which almost invariably lead to the original heirs regaining their claim.

an extended family. Outside of operational hours work units eat and socialise together, and most commoners must obtain permission from their unit managers to travel, take leave, or even to marry.

Samurai may call on their subordinates for military as well as financial support. If a subordinate cannot pay or otherwise make restitution, the superior may seize property in recompense, or assign it to another, more favoured vassal.

Each rank possesses a specific set of social privileges and taboos. Social roles are well defined: the rulers command, the soldiers obey; the management point the way, the workers make it happen. That is the way it has always been, and that is the way it will always be. Upward mobility is rare, though meritorious deeds or the favour of the powerful can bring it about. For a commoner family to rise to the samurai class is sufficiently rare for people to know their place, but just common enough to encourage ambition and hope.

Demotion from the samurai class is virtually unheard of, but potential loss of status within the class lies in wait as punishment for even the slightest failure. Association with a samurai shamed in this way carries a stigma of its own, and such a cloud can hang over a person's family, work unit, or military squadron for years. Samurai so punished frequently choose to commit ritual suicide rather than bring dishonour on their colleagues and loved ones.

OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM

Some people fall through the cracks. Ronin are masterless samurai. These rootless fighters are the product of disaster, however they came to be. Samurai most often become ronin when their lord is killed and his corporate fiefdom is wiped out with him. This may occur in a hostile takeover by a rival lord, or in battle with another corporation or the Dark Legion. A more shameful route to ronin status is to fail your master so appallingly that he chooses to dismiss you without allowing you the option of ritual suicide.

Ronin retain the privileges of samurai—they may carry two swords, wear kote armour, and request samurai hospitality, for example. They must be treated with the bare minimum of respect due to a samurai. But because they have no lord, they have no protector and no income. Many ronin become bandits, security guards, or mercenaries in order to earn a crust. As far as samurai go, they are considered the lowest of the low.

The Triads are organised criminal societies who engage in racketeering, smuggling, and any number of other activities, both legal and illegal. Fiercely insular, a Triad society becomes its members' second family. Members are marked with extensive tattoos that show their years of service and deeds of note. The structure of each Triad is unique and hidden from outsiders. Each has a dizzying array of allusive titles and degrees of mastery that

muddy the waters for investigating magistrates, with names like "Third Jade Gate" and "Great Pillar of Longshore".

AGAINST THE DARKNESS

The Order of Demon Hunters is sworn to eternal vigilance against the Dark Soul, rooting out its servants by all means necessary. Most are chosen in childhood for training on the Forbidden Isle on Mercury, where they become fanatical warriors against evil. Others come to that dark and fearful island later in life, in the wake of tragedy. Few are accepted. Fewer still survive the tests. Those that do are given knowledge of secret arts and trained to become among the best warriors in the solar system.

Demon Hunters may be commoners or samurai. Regardless, they are given the right to wear powered combat armour – usually reserved for samurai alone. By tradition, they conceal their faces behind scowling masks.

If we treat our subordinates harshly, it is only the harshness of a loving father towards his child. Dedicate yourself to the service of your Lord. Exercise righteous stewardship over those below you. Do this and know that you will never be cast aside.
– from the Sayings of Lord Yamagata

THE LORD HEIRS

Mishima System Holdings Group, the umbrella company controlled directly by the Mishima family, is divided into three divisions, one each for Mars, Mercury and Venus. These are headed by one of the three Lord Heirs, who governs all Mishima business on that planet. Each Lord Heir's dominion is virtually a corporation in its own right, separated from the others by the yawning chasm of space, and each is self-sufficient to a substantial degree.

Of the three, Lord Heir Moya of Mercury is the most senior, and viewed as most likely to be the next Overlord. His brother, Lord Heir Maru of Venus, and sister, Lord Heiress Mariko of Mars, have other plans regarding the succession. The three of them are fierce rivals, competing through hostile takeovers, industrial espionage, executive assassinations, and PR blitzes. Actual warfare has yet to break out, tempered by decorum, the expense of military space travel, and the knowledge that the family and corporation's enemies would be sure to take advantage.

LORD HEIR MOYA

Prince of Soil and Governor of Mercury, rules his planet with an iron fist. He controls a majority of Mishima's business empire. He is admired for his killer business instinct, but is followed by gossip that he is mentally unstable. His right-hand man, Lord Nozaki, is rumoured to be the power behind the throne.

LORD HEIR MARU

Prince of Water and Governor of Venus, is a military man and the youngest of the Lord Heirs. A grim figure driven by a slavish devotion to the samurai virtues, his bravery and strategic genius inspire a fanatical loyalty in his followers. Though his lands are rich in resources, Maru must devote much of his revenue to military expenditures – a necessary evil on war torn Venus. In public, he is always obedient to Moya.

LORD HEIRESS MARIKO

Princess of the Skies and Governor of Mars, is the most independent-minded of the Lord Heirs. Charismatic but cruel, she is a deadly enemy but a devoted friend. Unlike her brothers, she supports the Brotherhood and enjoys its favour in return. Mariko fills her court with Brothers and like-minded individuals, and from time to time actually listens to the spiritual advisors the Brotherhood sends to her palace on Mars.

THE OVERLORD

A frail old man on a lonely throne, the present Overlord cuts a forlorn figure amid the opulence of his great palace on Luna. Officially the only Mishima ambassador, he negotiates in the Cartel and signs off on corporation policy, but the real power lies with the Lord Heirs. Respectful to his face, the other corporations conduct formal but meaningless meetings with the Overlord while their negotiators deal directly with the Lord Heirs in secret.

In his younger years Overlord Mishima, Emperor of a Thousand Suns, the Prince of Fire, the Father Above All, was a charismatic leader and a hero to his people. Ruthless but fair in business, he expanded Mishima holdings and revenue streams, winning the respect of his peers in the other corporations. But that was a long time ago. The Overlord did not reckon on the ambition of his children, and the Lord Heirs chipped away at his authority until one day he looked around and realised he had become a relic.

Today he lives out a bitter exile on Luna, surrounded by 10,000 infighting courtiers, and the 1,000 hatamoto – Mishima's elite warriors who form the Overlord's hand-picked personal guard.

BOARDROOM STRUGGLES

For centuries control of the Mishima Corporation was vested solely in the hands of the Overlord, but within even the first of those centuries its business operations had expanded far beyond what one person could keep tabs on. Control of major subsidiaries called keiretsu was ceded to select appointees, and the techno-feudal model that Mishima employs today began to take shape. This decentralisation allowed the corporation to prosper, but the power of the Mishima family itself waxed and waned as the samurai families claimed and fought over privileges, often forcing the Overlord's hand into making those privileges hereditary. In some eras the Overlord was a virtual prisoner in the palace on Luna, the Mishima family working tirelessly behind the scenes to retain its birthright. This came to an end with the establishment of the Lord Heirs, but this has arguably served only to change the arena in which Mishima's corporate infighting occurs.

Samurai facing off against a Mercurian Maculator on Venus.

FOUNDING OF A DYNASTY

The story of Mishima begins during the Fall of Earth, when Mishima Heavy Industries was able to use its technical advantages in the fields of space and hostile environment technology as leverage in a series of unequal deals that created a business hegemony. Simply put, Mishima had the spaceships, so if you wanted to get off the planet, you gave them what they wanted. In the chaos and panic of humanity's exodus to Luna, that deal was good enough for hundreds of corporations and millions of customers, who found themselves locked into multi-generation exclusivity deals with the company, now operating as the Mishima System Holdings Group umbrella organisation.

THE SEVEN SAGES

In the time of the Neronian Heresy, the Brotherhood was torn apart by schism. For three years rival claimants to the Cardinal's mantle fought one another, a battle ultimately won by Durand XI – later known as Durand the Mad. During this time, Mishima began to cut many of its ties to the Brotherhood, as the first of the Seven Sages began to spread his message of another way of living: an older way, drawing on ancient truths of Mishima's heritage. After Yuroji, the first sage, came six more – each of these influential thinkers contributed in his or her own way to the principles that now govern the Mishima way of life.

The Seven Sages taught that wisdom, and the Art, were not the sole province of the Brotherhood. Anyone with sufficient training could master the innate energies within themselves. They founded schools of the philosophy they called the Way, and provided training to all who had sufficient self-control in the mystical discipline of ki powers.

Sufficient mastery of the Way allows a practitioner to tap an internal reservoir of energy called ki to achieve superhuman feats. Combined with training in the corporation's traditional martial arts, the result is an advantage in battle that marks out the Mishima warrior as uniquely dangerous.

The Seven Sages' doctrine greatly appealed to Mishima's elite – in particular, the samurai warrior caste saw in the Way a weapon that others could not hope to match. In the upper tiers of management, the Seven Sages supplanted the Brotherhood almost completely, though the Brotherhood has a strong following among Mishima's commoners.

Today the teachings of the Seven Sages are the blueprint for samurai life, while commoners regard the Sages as objects of veneration. Their icons and statues are found in almost every Mishima home, in ornate temples, and humble wayside shrines. There are many different beliefs about the nature of the Seven Sages. The most common is that they were beings enlightened to the cusp of godhood, if not to godhood itself, who shaped Mishiman society to serve some cosmic purpose. Others hold that they were simply great men and women, albeit with an unequalled insight into matters of deep significance. A third view hews closer to mainstream Brotherhood teaching, and considers the Sages dangerous heretics who steered the corporation away from the true path.

The Sages' philosophy is now so deeply ingrained in Mishima society that the Brotherhood is powerless to root it out. Equally, the Brotherhood is too powerful for Mishima to simply ignore. As a compromise, the corporation allows Brotherhood observers, and the Overlord and Lord Heirs each consult a spiritual advisor appointed by the Brotherhood. In return, the Brotherhood tolerates Mishima's peculiar society.

THE CHILD OVERLORD

During the Dark Symmetry period an unexpected death in the family left a teenage girl, Lady Setusko, in control of Mishima. With the former Overlord–the incumbent's uncle, Mishima Yoritomo–unable to reverse his retirement, the Mishima family was outmanoeuvred and forced to concede key executive powers to the powerful Fujiwara clan. Masterminded by the Overlord's uncle from a secluded monastery in one of the always-dark craters at Mercury's northern pole, the Mishima family began to fight back against the Fujiwara and their allies.

The subsequent boardroom struggle affected the whole corporation. Price wars wrecked markets, factories were sabotaged, and Mishima fortunes took a dive as tensions simmered just short of all-out war.

When the Mishima clan regained the upper hand, decades later, it reunited the position of Overlord with those of President and Chairman of the Board, and the Lord Heirs system was established to ensure the family maintained a strong grip on the corporation.

BUSINESS STRATEGY

Mishima has achieved its position as the second largest corporation–after Capitol–through smart, ruthless, and adaptable business strategies, coupled with an indomitable work ethic. The secret behind its rise to prominence lies chiefly in two areas: lower costs and superior design. Mishima products tend to be either expensive luxury items with ridiculously high build quality, or cheap knockoffs of other corporations' designs, offering–in theory–better value for money.

Mishima uses extensive corporate espionage to save time on research and development. By getting the inside scoop on upcoming developments, Mishima can have a cheaper, more appealing copy of a given product mere weeks after the original launches to market. Sometimes even before.

Mishima's mass-market products are usually cheaper to replace than to repair. Such disposability is usually not a problem, but it has given Mishima products a less than stellar reputation in the military industry and other markets where in-the-field repairs are important.

Paradoxically, perhaps, Mishima culture places a great premium on craftsmanship. Dedication to one's profession is held in the highest esteem and so, by extension, the products of an individual's lifetime of dedication to their craft are highly prized. Mishima aesthetics disdain excessive ornamentation, in favour of an ideal perfect fusion of form and function. The expression of craftsmanship may be realised in a tangible object that can be passed from one generation to the next, such as the legendary Mushashi blade swords, or transient experiences like a noh drama performance or an elegantly served tea in an idyllic setting.

Mishima has an ironclad reputation for always honouring a deal–and shrewdness in making those deals in the first place. Mishima legal teams excel in this area, and very rarely does anyone ever leave a meeting with a Mishima negotiator feeling sure they have got one over on their counterpart.

THE MILITARY

Like that of every corporation, the military of Mishima is a powerful elite that operates under a distinct set of rules and living conditions. Unlike those others, Mishima's military corps is also its management class. Every executive is a samurai, and every samurai is, in theory, a trained warrior ready to take up arms, fight, and die for his daimyo when called upon. In practice, while samurai executives and corporate strategists may carry the daisho paired swords that are the privilege of their rank, the martial training of their youth is often long-forgotten. The full-time warriors of Mishima serve in the professional military units.

Each of the Lord Heirs maintains their own military force. On Mercury, the military enjoys a prime position in the court of Lord Heir Moya, who lavishes the best equipment and a sizable proportion of his annual budget on his soldiery. The militaries on Venus and Mars serve a largely defensive role–and the savings in expenditure are one of the factors that enable Lord Maru and Lady Mariko to remain in contention with their older brother.

TACTICS

The motto of Mishima strategy is "destroy or defend". If a Mishima task force is unable to destroy the enemy in one fell swoop, they will hold fast where they are until reinforced–or until they die. Mishima soldiers are more than ready to die for a patch of ground; no greater glory is there than to die in the service of the corporation. Few deeds are considered more shameful than surrender to the enemy. This makes Mishima an enemy that one thinks twice about attacking.

EQUIPMENT

Mishima troops are generally lightly armed and armoured, both the regular samurai forces and the ashigaru levies drawn from the commoner stock in times when greater manpower is needed. On Mercury in particular, travelling light is a necessity. In its treacherous underground terrain, soldiers must regularly contend with flooded tunnels, narrow passages barely wide enough to squeeze through, unexpected rockfalls, and other sudden dangers. Mishima has also developed two unique weapon systems.

Warheads are semi-autonomous robots used for what would otherwise be suicide missions. Programmed with decision-making capabilities verging on true intelligence, these sophisticated machines are heavily armed and armoured, but also very rare, expensive, and difficult to repair.

Kote armour is a full-body exoskeleton that protects the wearer and provides amplified strength and mobility. Each hydraulic-enhanced kote suit comes loaded with heavy weapons and can achieve speeds comparable to that of an average family car. Kote armour is the exclusive preserve of elite units, assault regiments and wealthy nobles with a collector's sensibility for quality wargear.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Mishima corporation has no uniform code of law. Tradition dictates that everybody must obey their superiors. The Lord Heirs do have general requirements for how they wish their subordinate territories to be governed. Lord Maru, for example, strongly discourages harsh treatment of the commoners. Lord Moya, in contrast, demands that his samurai keep the common herd under strict control. That said, the Lord Heirs do not meddle in the internal management of the keiretsu. A daimyo or lord has free rein to set rules and regulations, and to enforce them as he sees fit, within his domain.

THE RISE, FALL AND RISE OF THE SAMURAI

The samurai caste was created in the early years of Mishima on Mercury. In a time of internecine warfare, many keiretsu found that they needed skilled individual fighters who could make the difference in the fierce tunnel fighting over key resources. But before they had secured those resources, they had no money to pay these hired guns. Drawing on memories of the old Earth culture, the daimyos recreated the samurai in the underworlds of Mercury. These warriors swore allegiance for life, with little reward up front. In return, they secured for their families hefty stakes in the corporation for the future, and a prosperous inheritance for their children.

The samurai grew in power with the military build-up before the First Dark Legion War, and became entrenched in the political system. They lost that power after the Supreme Commander of the united Mishima armed forces became the de facto ruler of the corporation. To successive Supreme Commanders, the samurai were a dangerous power bloc to be kept in check. The samurai were gradually disarmed, their privileges were whittled down, and eventually 90% of samurai were working desk jobs, picking up a weapon only for the annual Moon Festival festivities. When the Overlord and his family staged an "anti-coup" to regain effective control of Mishima, they did so with the backing of many prominent samurai families. The samurai then regained the privileges and status that they enjoy to this day.

Most lords rely on samurai patrols to keep order on their streets. This work is considered inglorious by the majority of samurai, so the quality of law enforcement is often low. A riot or mugging may attract the attention of a bored patrol, but non-violent criminals are often simply not pursued. A samurai will always be more interested in a case where he gets to try out his swordsmanship.

Checking up on breaches of regulations, such as health and safety codes or censorship laws, is the duty of inspectors appointed by the local lord. Investigating murders and other serious crimes falls to officials designated as magistrates. On Mercury, these functions are combined in the person of the inspector-magistrate, who is empowered to collect evidence, pass judgement, and carry out sentencing (often death) on the spot.

Officials frequently allow Triad organised crime outfits to operate, provided they keep unaffiliated criminals off their turf, make sure any violence stays in-house, and kick a percentage of their takings upstairs to the liege lord. The upshot of this situation is that Mishima areas are comparatively safe for the average person, but many outsiders see them as havens of vice.

Samurai in training outside their Lord Heir's Palace on Luna.

THE SETTLEMENTS

MERCURY

Mercury is the Mishima homeworld, a fortress planet of underground cities linked by a planet-wide system of tunnels known as the Webway. With the lone exception of Imperial's outpost at Fukido, the whole planet belongs to Mishima. Only in the capital, Longshore, may non-Mishima employees rent land.

The planet's thin atmosphere and desolate surface are hostile to human life. Only a handful of military outposts, mining facilities, and observation drones operate above ground.

Beneath the surface, the underworld cities of Mercury are brightly-lit, bustling places of industry and prosperity. The urban network spread originally from both poles, excavating new tunnels and chambers, or repurposing existing caverns, as the population expanded and new seams of mineral resources were discovered.

Longshore is Mercury's capital city, nestled in a huge surface crater near the south pole. It is covered by a centuries-old atmospheric shield that uses long-forgotten technologies to hold air but let spacecraft pass through. The city is the seat of Lord Heir Moya. It is a city that never sleeps, the corporation's leading trade port, and home to Mishima's most prestigious public buildings, including the major universities and the central stock exchange.

In the tunnels of the Webway, rocket trains blast along elevated tracks at close to the speed of sound, ferrying high-ranking aristocrats, military officials, and the Lord Heir's personal couriers from one city to another. Beneath the raised rails are the Webway roads, where pedestrians, motorcycles, cars, and freight vehicles travel in a chaotic, constant stream. Every 20 kilometres, checkpoints wait ready to bar the way at a moment's notice and inspect vehicles and identification.

Policing this planet-wide network are the maverick inspector-magistrates of the Webway Force Patrol. They pursue high-priority wrongdoers through the most dangerous parts of the Webway, along unfinished or abandoned tunnels, before they can disappear off the grid into unmapped caverns. Their high-speed patrol cars rocket along to the accompaniment of furious traditional percussion blasting from their siren arrays. Among Mercury's inspector-magistrates, the Webway Force Patrol is a breed apart, working for little glory with a high fatality rate.

FUKIDO AND THE CLOSED ZONE

Seized by the Conquistadors and Murders & Acquisition agents of Imperial in a series of ingenious, if somewhat underhanded, financial manoeuvres, Fukido is now the second largest city on Mercury. Lord Heir Moya finds this fact intensely annoying. Worryingly for him, his legal experts have identified some parts of Fukido where the original leases may force him to cede the land to Imperial in perpetuity. However, the vital geothermal power station that keeps Fukido running is not one of them. In a few years Mishima will have the power to cut off the city's lifeblood.

The area around Fukido has been blockaded, fortified, and designated the Closed Zone. Access is tightly regulated and given only to the military units stationed there, Lord Moya's trusted administrators, and the inhabitants of Suna Takoku – a small Mishima mining town that thrived near Fukido before the Imperial buyout.

Mining continues at Suna Takoku, the only official crossing point between Fukido and Mishima territory, at significantly reduced output. Half of the town's population now works in the service industry, selling refreshments, guidebooks, and other travel paraphernalia to Mishima officials passing through the town to Fukido.

THE PANOPTICON

Before the coming of the Dark Symmetry, authorities on Mercury enjoyed near perfect control over the population's movements. Passes required to move from one ward to the next, to enter a given building, or even to leave a factory were encoded on transponder chips subcutaneously implanted in every resident. Aided by a pervasive AI system called the Panopticon, administrators were able to monitor individuals or groups in real time and update their access permissions instantaneously. This enabled the corporation to grant individual access to locations and facilities as needed, or to react to accidents, riots, or other disturbances by locking off areas to all but authorised personnel.

The system made political control extremely efficient until the effects of the Dark Symmetry sent the Panopticon haywire, killing thousands and leaving entire cities in disarray. The plug was pulled, and the Panopticon was replaced with the current system of magistrate-inspectors.

PRE-IMPERIAL FUKIDO

Fukido was created by Overlord Kayi, great-grandfather of the current Overlord, by expanding an already huge natural cavern into the colossal space needed to house a subterranean city. Imperial snapped up the vast majority of ground leases as soon as they went on the market, so all but the underworld infrastructure in Fukido is Imperial-built.

In the Dark Symmetry era, the vast cavern lies empty. At its edge, the nascent mining town of Suna Takoku has started to exploit the area's mineral wealth.

VENUS

The seven provinces of Mishima Venus are the dominion of Lord Heir Maru, and the abundant resources found there fuel almost a quarter of Mishima's overall revenue. The territory is also an important strategic foothold. Lord Maru has the strongest of all the Mishima armies, though not the largest, and is the greatest strategic mind Mishima has seen in decades. His domain is surrounded on all sides by rival corporations and the menace of the Dark Legion.

Maru rules from the beautiful island city of Quan-to, built on the slopes of an extinct volcano. Hewn from the rock of the island and covered with gold leaf, Maru's Golden Palace is practically a city itself, with thousands of chambers and layers of gently curved roofs climbing to the sky. It is guarded by the elite Umi Legion, who wear the colossal Shogun-class kote suits. The volcano's caldera lake connects through a twisting channel to the sea and is the home base of Lord Maru's navy, including the megacruisers.

Shinseki Fortress is the farthest outpost of Mishima power on Venus, located in the monstrous jungle of the Venusian equator. A heavily fortified bunker complex that barely peeks above ground level, Shinseki Fortress is located to provide protection for the region's far-flung business interests. The garrison is frequently called upon by Mishima prospectors and farming operations to ride to the rescue when rival corporations or the Dark Legion move into view.

The force that responds to these cries for help is the mechanised cavalry unit called Nobue's Riders. It is led by the charismatic Nobue Jen, who scorned the life of pampered luxury set out for her as the daughter of a daimyo in favour of Venusian adventure. Adventurous and brash, she has landed her unit in hot water more than once.

Another unit attached to Shinseki Fortress is the very hush-hush Cell 514. It is a military research facility that has been based at Shinseki since its inception. Buried deep in the jungle, surrounded by a no-fly zone and a sophisticated, hidden air defence system, Cell 514 is guarded by soldiers sent directly from the retinues of Lords Maru and Moya. Reinforcements and supplies use Shinseki Fortress as a staging ground, arriving in unmarked transports, usually in the dead of night. The majority of the base's personnel are studiously uncurious about the nature of Cell 514's work.

At the other edge of Mishima territory is the island of Öchoku, hidden in the fringes of the jungle where the great southern ocean laps upon the shore. From here the notorious swamp pirates prey upon the shipping lanes. Mishima vessels are not immune to their opportunistic attacks, but the majority of their targets are those of Capitol and Bauhaus enterprises.

The swamp pirates strike swiftly and—whether successful or not—quickly retreat to the safety of the jungle. Capitol and Bauhaus make regular representations to Mishima complaining about the swamp pirates' depredations. Mishima disclaims any responsibility, and with some cause. While some of the pirates originate from Mishima, the majority are freelancers and ex-employees of the other corporations.

MARS

The Mishima territories of the red planet are the domain of Lord Heiress Mariko. She dwells in the Palace of the Skies, a huge white-walled fortress that towers over the sculpted landscape of her capital, Hosokawa. The city is part built in classical Mishima style, full of immaculate lawns, pristine raked gravel, serene temples, and elegant buildings. However, appearances can be deceptive. Many of the beautifying features of the Hosokawa's architecture conceal the entrances and viewports of the hidden fortifications that permeate the city. Hundreds of defensive emplacements, bunkers, and barracks are artfully blended into their surroundings. The broad avenues and spacious plazas also create wide open killing grounds in the event of invasion.

The reason for such extensive fortification is that Hosokawa sits at the centre of a domain constantly on edge, with its population and military stretched thin over a vast, treacherous land. Mishima's Martian holdings radiate outwards from Hosokawa in a ring of settlements that extend for over 1600 kilometres, as far as the southern polar ice cap. The corporation has ploughed resources into improving its territory here, rebuilding the canals, coaxing abundant crops from unyielding land, and aggressively founding new settlements.

All that investment would be in vain if Capitol forces were able to seize it—and they are very keen to do so. Mishima troops are in a state of constant low-intensity conflict with Capitol's frontier units. So far the conflict has remained at the level of brushfire wars and occasional raids by Capitol civilians into Mishima territory.

Mariko is arguably the least powerful of the three Lord Heirs. Her financial clout is minuscule in comparison to that wielded by her eldest brother Moya, and she lacks the military capabilities and strategic nous of her brother Maru. She is, however, the most effective diplomat of the three, and aided by her close ties to the Brotherhood, encourages the other corporations to see her as less of a threat than the other Lord Heirs. Mishima enterprises based on Mars are fewer and smaller than those on Mercury and Venus, but they enjoy direct access to key markets throughout the inner system, including Luna, San Dorado, Volksburg, and Fukido.

Life on Mars for a Mishima employee is much less restricted than on Mercury or even Venus. The governor has too much on her plate to waste time on dealing with any but the most vital matters. As a result, life here is—by Mishima standards—positively laissez-faire. The people have frequent contact with other corporations, and outsiders are commonly found living in the larger towns and cities.

The Southern Banners are a sparsely populated wilderness, bitterly contested among rival powers. To maintain a strong foothold here, Mariko has made tracts of land available to any ronin who will swear allegiance to her, in return for assuming the banner and stewardship of the land. Many of these lands are not, strictly speaking, under Mishima control. In such cases it is the new ronin bannerman's duty to make it so. Many of these ronin-turned-governors rally old comrades in arms to their banners, assembling ragtag but highly skilled armies. Almost as many ronin are attracted to South Mars on a freelance basis, wandering the badlands as guns and blades for hire.

500 kilometres north of Hosokawa is Sensomachi. Here, in a dust-choked canyon, is a military industrial city dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of Lord Heiress Mariko's armed forces. Aerospace and interplanetary transports thunder in at all times of day and night. Factories churn out vehicles and munitions. Soldiers—both samurai and the newfangled ashigaru commoner troops—train rigorously.

In the shadow of the spaceport are the Proving Grounds, where those who seek the Lord Heiress' favour duel for supremacy. Every two years the Lord Heiress permits warriors from all corporations, and those with no such ties, into the Proving Grounds to compete in the Tournament of the Skies. The winner's prize is a secret. The winner's fame is colossal.

LUNA

Mishima's presence comprises a mixture of the concerns belonging to the three Lord Heirs, and the largest concentration of employees directly loyal to the Overlord anywhere in the solar system. The Overlord guards his lunar sphere of influence jealously, constantly marshalling spies, informants, and other agents to stay on top of his children's Machiavellian politicking. Luna is all the Overlord has left, and he fears losing his grip on the Mishima enclave and his palace truly becoming a gilded cage.

The Overlord's most fanatical followers are his hatamoto—his elite personal guard. These are the finest warriors in the corporation, handpicked by the Overlord himself, and utterly devoted to him. When not on duty in parade ground finery, these stalwarts are usually to be found at the Yamori Teahouse. They go there to blow off steam with a few jugs of sake, and sometimes to pick fights with any of the Lord Heirs' hatamoto who happen to pass by. The Lord Heirs' soldiers are no less proud, and no more shy about defending the honour of their patron.

Just off the Street of Coffin Carvers, in a drab office block, are the bland and unassuming offices of the Internal Audit & Research Office. Here the officers of the "Naiken", as it is called, sort through reports and data feeds. Every so often they send out an action directive to agents in Luna or beyond. Sometimes those agents bring individuals in for questioning. These individuals are shown to a grey meeting room with a water cooler and an artificial hibiscus in a pot. Often they are never seen again. The proximity of the coffin carvers is no accident.

The chief of the Naiken answers directly to the Overlord and the agency is his eyes and ears beyond Luna. Officially, the Naiken serves the whole Mishima corporation. However, the Overlord is careful only to supply each Lord Heir with the information that suits his agenda in order to play one off against the other.

MISHIMA DIPLOMACY

The rulers of Mishima have little time for the insipid notions of foreign cultures, and the commoners are educated early and often on the unique merits of the corporation above all others. Of course, Mishima society also values politeness, so they try their best not to make these feelings obvious.

CAPITOL

Mishima is Capitol's biggest trading partner. For its part, Mishima respects the Capitolian emphasis on competition. But Capitol takes things too far—the way it abandons the elderly and poor is despicable.

BAUHAUS

Mishima and Bauhaus have common ground in their appreciation for the arts of war, the importance of honour, and the fundamental rightness of hereditary management. Both corporations are also notoriously fussy negotiators when making business deals.

IMPERIAL

The Imperials are, to Mishima eyes, somewhat uncouth. Despite that, Mishima can respect the Imperial martial spirits, love of competition, and the exaltation of clan loyalty. The status of Fukido is a major irritant for Lord Heir Moya but he does not take it personally. All divisions of Mishima trade extensively with Imperial. Politically, Imperial is kept at arm's length—just like everyone else.

CYBERTRONIC

Mishima treats the newcomers with caution, though as another faction that distances itself from the Brotherhood, it feels there is a possibility of shared agendas.

WHITESTAR

Mishima has conflicting feelings about these strange survivors of a dead world. The upper management was against the Cartel's return to Earth, preferring to leave the husk of the planet as a memorial to human folly. And then it turned out that these people were living there all along. For the time being, Mishima maintains the minimum of diplomatic relations that politeness and realpolitik demand.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Officially Mishima and the Brotherhood are in détente. Each respects the other's unique culture and way of life and acknowledges its positive contributions to the solar system. Unofficially, the Brotherhood sees Mishima as a hotbed of heresy, while Mishima wishes the Brotherhood would back off and stop trying to meddle in its internal affairs. Mishima pays lip service to the idea of cooperating with the Brotherhood, and routinely diverts its observers on meaningless "fact-finding" trips to backwaters where nothing is happening.

THE CARTEL

Another organisation to be tolerated and sidestepped. As the Overlord's power has declined, Mishima's involvement with the Cartel has become something of an embarrassment. The Overlord is the only representative allowed to make deals in Cartel sessions, but the Lord Heirs ignore these deals all the time, and everyone knows it. Only a deal brokered in secret with one of the Lord Heirs will mean that the contract counts for anything in that domain. Mishima is very willing to support Cartel military operations when its objectives coincide with Mishima's interests—especially against the Dark Legion.

Yojimbo readies for action in the Luna sewers.

CHAPTER 14

IMPERIAL

GROWTH THROUGH ACQUISITION

Despite what its adverts tell you, Imperial has no ancient proud lineage – certainly not when compared to Capitol, Bauhaus, or Mishima. A relative latecomer to the corporate field, Imperial had to fight its way tooth and claw to the top of the pile. Through a combination of driven ambition, ruthless acquisition, and more than its fair share of dirty tricks, the loose federation of smaller companies was forged into the corporation known today as 'Imperial'.

Unlike the monolithic corporate cultures of Capitol, Bauhaus, or Mishima, the constantly shifting internal structure of Imperial leaves many outside observers confused and more than a little intimidated. It is impossible to understand the complex politics of Imperial without understanding the Clans.

If there is one thing that Imperial does better than any other Corporation, it is spotting talent. Unlike its larger rivals in Bauhaus or Capitol, Imperial has mainly grown through aggressive – often military – investment and acquisition, and bringing the most outstanding independent corporations or undeveloped geographical resources into the fold.

BIRTH OF THE IMPERIAL CORPORATION

The Imperial Corporation was born during the last days of the Exodus, when the great ships of Capitol, Bauhaus, and Mishima were leaving Earth and the remaining smaller corporations were fighting for their very survival.

The extreme circumstances forced the creation of a loose coalition of smaller corporations, most of which were family-run enterprises, for mutual survival. The greater of these second tier corporations were Murdoch Security, a freelance mercenary corporation; Bartholomew Aerospace; MacGuire Electronics Corporation; and Kingsfield-Fitch Financial, a merchant bank.

Under the measured leadership of Michael Murdoch, CEO of Murdoch Security, and his closest allies; savvy Rupert Bartholomew, brilliant Rowan MacGuire, and the logistical genius Dominic Kingsfield, what started as a temporary coalition of a handful of corporations to escape the chaos on Earth was forged into an alliance of over fifty corporations. Michael Murdoch was a man of prodigious ego, with a genius for promotion as well as ruthless business expertise. He named the coalition 'Imperial' in a direct challenge to the dominance of Capitol, Bauhaus, and Mishima.

"OK guys, fifteen seconds to drop-zone… ten…eight… six… five… ," the pilot's count was slow but steady as the huge Doomlord helicopter slowed down to dropping speed, just below ten meters per second. Through the slide-doors, I could only see a rectangle of glowing flares placed by the recon squad. They had only been given five minutes to make a clearing.

"Two… one… and… GO!"

Kicking hard with my left foot, I flung myself out into the pitch-black night, crouching with my knees and head to my chest to make a smaller target. I had always liked the good old standard silk chutes better, but gliding time proved too long, and mid-air casualties too heavy. Finally, they had developed this monster, the jet chute. Lovingly called the 'pile-driver', it was just as gentle to your rib cage and as easy to carry as its namesake. But with the pile-drivers they could drop us to ninety feet, even though the manufacturer only gave guarantees for 150.

The 'Bitchin' Betty'-signal notified me to turn on the jet if I wanted to avoid being smashed to the ground. I didn't even have time to turn the damn thing off before the automatic ignition mechanism released, almost splitting my eardrum and nearly certainly breaking every single bone in my body. It stabilized vertically at thirty feet. The reflecting flames almost burned my eyebrows off before I remembered to put the goggles on. As I slowly sank to the ground, despite the blood in my mouth, the pain in the chest, the burns on my shins and the ringing in my ears,
I couldn't help loving the little marvel. The bloody thing actually worked. Again.

With this act Murdoch announced that there was a new major player on the scene. Both Michael Murdoch and Rupert Bartholomew believed in the importance of family, and were quick to put their own relatives into key positions within their businesses. The other companies, took their lead. The process of transforming the Imperial businesses into Clans had begun. In fact, within five years of the Exodus, Kingsfield-Fitch Financial, had begun referring to itself as simply 'the Kingsfield Clan', and others quickly followed suit.

This process of transformation from corporation to aristocracy rapidly accelerated. The Imperial board meetings became unofficially known as the 'Houses of Parliament', and over time the moniker stuck. Due to his calm leadership style, Murdoch was given the formal title of 'Serenity' rather than Chairman, as it was felt that the title would be more reassuring to the corporate citizens of Imperial.

IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT

Over several generations the role of the Serenity was formalised into an honorary, presidential role, while real power rested with the Parliament. Modelled on the ancient British Houses of Parliament, the Imperial Parliament is divided into two chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Every public meeting of the two Houses is a dazzling display of pomp and ceremony, of ornate military uniforms and expensive three-piece pinstripe suits.

Membership of House of Lords is restricted to the sixty-two heads of the Clans, whilst the House of Commons is home to the 620 most eminent business men and women, academics, lawyers and diplomats. Although the Serenity does not have a vote, the position is incredibly influential and is able to break deadlocks with a few well-placed words.

The process of decision making within Imperial is thoroughly Byzantine and opaque to outsiders; something that was intentionally designed into the system by the founders to provide a measure of protection against external corporate lobbying.

THE CLANS

No discussion of Imperial would be complete without a consideration of the Clans. Over the centuries of Imperial's existence, many companies and families have attained or lost the formal status of Clan through murders and acquisitions.

Though still legally possible, no new 'Charters of Clanship' have been issued in many years. Joining a Clan now is through marriage, adoption, or inheritance.

What started as business practices, habits, or administrative requirements have morphed over time into more formal strictures

Imperial Trenchers go 'over the top'.

of nobility, honour, and duty. In the common parlance of the typical Imperial citizen, this is simply known as 'chivalry'.

The truth of the matter is that breeding and a familial relationship to one of the Clans equates to a position of power and high office within the various Imperial divisions, but it also means a life of functions and social events unlike any expected of the citizens who work for them. Those of the elite who seek to buck their duties quickly find themselves blacklisted and side-lined.

In the unofficial–yet vitally important–ranking of the Clans the three most dominant are Bartholomew, Murdoch and MacGuire. These three Clans alone hold almost half of all the top positions in the executive, and publically their leaders are still as closely allied as their ancestors who founded Imperial were. Privately, however, the differences are marked, and all three are obsessed by internal politics and feuds.

THE GREAT RESENTMENT

Several generations back, at the beginning of the First Dark Legion War, the Bartholomew Clan managed to pull off an impressive coup, and seized control of the position of Serenity, which had been held continuously by Clan Murdoch and its allies since the Founding.

The resentment still burns brightly for the Murdoch and MacGuire Clans, and perceived insults by the Bartholomews, no matter how small, were seized upon to create a full-blooded feud that has spilled into acts of blackmail, kidnap, and even assassination. These attacks upon Clan Bartholomew required a response, and so the cycle of attack and counter-attack continued. However, through shared unspoken agreement, the feud was kept hidden behind closed doors.

The Kingsfield Clan sensed an opportunity to gain power, but its scheme backfired disastrously and succeeded only in almost destroying the Clan. Ironically, the downfall of the Kingsfields was a wake-up call to the other Clans and since then the fires of feud have been dampened considerably.

Now this feud is known simply as 'The Great Resentment' and is mostly restricted to political and business manoeuvring against their opponents to further their own agendas. The MacGuires and Murdochs dominate the most profitable colonies and heavy industry, while Bartholomew has an iron grip on the Imperial military and the Imperial Security Command (ISC).

One simple truth is that no matter how great the internal friction of the Great Resentment is, it is put on hold when the Clans face a challenge from a rival great corporation. The Clans might be angry, but they are not stupid.

BUSINESS STRATEGY

Imperial has stayed true to its roots. The core of its business strategy is growth and acquisition as despite how big it has become, with the exception of Cybertronic, Imperial is still the smallest of the Corporations. This singular fact is still used to justify Imperial's most controversial business strategy: conquest. It has been a long-held tenet in Imperial circles that conquest is a legitimate form of growth, and Imperial has an exceptional record in justifying its conquests.

Against smaller freelance corporations – especially those in the wilds of Mercury, Venus, or Mars – the refrain has typically been that Imperial has taken control to prevent collapse, or in retaliation for a 'terrorist attack' against Imperial property. In more recent years, with the rise of Cybertronic, Imperial has become fond of citing 'liberation' as its casus belli.

What Imperial cannot acquire through military might, it can usually obtain through acquisition, insider dealing, or hostile takeover. This is often mockingly referred to in the Bauhaus media as the 'Imperial Burden', in reference to ancient colonial arrogance, but Imperial has turned this around and embraced the term completely without irony.

The downside to conquest and acquisition is that Imperial is a sprawling, multi-faceted corporate empire without a strong definition of what an 'Imperial product' is. The area that is most arguably 'Imperial' is that of high-end arms and armour. If it is of exquisite craftsmanship and very, very expensive, then chances are it is an Imperial product.

THE IMPERIAL SPIRIT

How does Imperial, the second smallest of the Corporations, avoid conquest or takeover from its larger rivals like Capitol of Bauhaus? Simply put, it is the 'Imperial spirit'. Imperial citizens, and especially those of the noble Clans, are raised from birth to believe in the

THE BLOODY MESS

During the First Dark Legion War the events that lead to the Great Resentment have happened very recently, and it has yet to acquire its more noble-sounding moniker. Instead, the Imperial media refer to it more prosaically as "the Bloody Mess" because of the gang war elements of tit-for-tat killings, blackmailing, and "unfortunate accidents" that frequently sees Imperial being its own worst enemy. With the appointment of Justin Paladine as the new Serenity it is hoped by all the Clans not directly aligned with either the Bartholomew or Murdoch/MacGuire factions that things will settle down.

They do over time, but not before the terrible destructive influence of the Dark Symmetry is felt.

Arriving at LZ by Jet Chute.

'rightness' of their cause, the strength of their values, devotion to the Clans and family, and above all, to fight for their colours to the last. Imperial citizens view themselves as underdogs in the corporate world, and the message of "every citizen, worker, officer, or noble will do their duty" is hammered home from a young age. Of course this mentality varies amongst the different sections of society and is strongest amongst the workers and less powerful, for the nobility have their own motivations.

This culture of sacrifice is a great source of strength for the Imperial military, who will happily fight to the last man against overwhelming odds. 'Satisfaction' is a reviled concept, one considered particularly '*Bauhausian*' as Imperial cannot afford to stagnate and must continually grow to survive.

Another pillar of Imperial is that all contracts are respected as binding at all levels of society, and to be considered a contract breaker is a form of ostracisation.

IMPERIAL MILITARY

Imperial does not have the vast military power of Capitol, Bauhaus, or to a lesser extent Mishima. Instead, rather than focusing on quantity, Imperial is committed to quality. In this way it has risen above its natural tendency towards Clan patronage, and all swear allegiance to the Imperial Parliament and the Serenity. The Imperial military is divided into two branches: The Imperial Defence Forces (IDF) and the Imperial Special Forces (ISF).

OFFICERS & GENTLEMEN

There are three essential requirements to join the commissioned officer cadre of Imperial: loyalty, skill, and boldness.

Breeding is not a limitation, though many Clan nobles are expected to serve and are trained from a young age in battlefield tactics, military strategy, and diplomacy to ensure they pass the strict entrance exams. Any Imperial citizen may apply for officer school, and regardless of their background every officer is expected to be a gentleman or gentlewoman.

By edict of Parliament, all officers must face trial by fire before they are allowed to command alone in the field. In its earliest days, Imperial learned the hard way that ability on paper did not equal ability in the field, and suffered many costly setbacks at the hands of inept noble officers. To address this problem, Parliament instituted a system of patronage where senior experienced officers would take junior officers under their wing to supervise and complete their training, and take some measure of responsibility in their future performance.

It is a very serious bond, as the mentor's honour is inextricably tied to the performance of his protégé.

Working closely with the officer cadre, the Imperial non-commissioned officers (NCOs) are promoted from the ranks based on ability, experience, and esprit-de-corps. It is made explicit to all commissioned officers at an early stage that their Corporals and Sergeants are the backbone of the Imperial military, and a wise officer leaves the executive management of the unit to them. Over time most officers come to rely on their NCO's tactical opinions, while they in turn respect the officer's understanding of the wider strategic situation. This relationship creates highly-motivated and competent NCOs who are loyal to the core.

THE IMPERIAL DEFENCE FORCES (IDF)

The men and women of the Imperial Defence Forces form the regular army. Their primary role is safeguarding Imperial facilities and assets, and providing security for transport or corporate officials. Far smaller than the comparable forces of, say, Capitol or Bauhaus, the IDF relies on mobility and concentration of force, whether that be in firepower, armour, or just plain numbers at that particular moment.

DEPARTMENTS OF THE ISC

- **The Gendarmerie**
- **ISC-1: Headquarters**
- **ISC-2: Personnel Protection**
- **ISC-3: Organised Crime**
- **ISC-4: Counter-espionage**
- **ISC-5: Murders & Acquisitions**
- **ISC-6: Internal Revision**
- ~~**ISC-7: [CLASSIFIED]**~~
- **ISC-9: The Serenity's Guard**
- **ISC-10: Special Installation Security**
- **ISC-19: Technical Developments**
- **ISC-20: Juniper [CLASSIFIED]**
- **ISC-22: Foxhounds**
- **ISC-25: The Yard**

The IDF are subdivided into three branches: The Imperial Army, The Imperial Navy and Her Serenity's Imperial Air Force. Many of the Clans retain their own additional household guard, and in times of high stress these are mobilized as the Imperial Reserve.

THE IMPERIAL SPECIAL FORCES (ISF)

However motivated and brave the regular forces of the IDF are, there are many situations which require a more specialized skillset. This is where the Imperial Special Forces come in. Given highly specialized training they are hand-picked from the regular corps for very specific combat or mission types, such as Venusian jungle training, deep space operations, commando operations, or elite security forces.

Each unit in the Imperial Special Forces has its own distinct identity and culture, and many recruit only from specific locations or Clans. The most famous of these are the Blood Berets, Golden Lions, Highland Clan Warriors, and Wolfbanes.

Whatever their origins, one rule remains steadfast: when a soldier transfers from the regular army to the Imperial Special Forces they lose their seniority and rank and have to start again either as a Private or a junior officer at their starting pay. Despite this, there is never any shortage of volunteers. The honour and pride that comes from serving with one of these legendary units more than outweighs any career loss.

THE IMPERIAL SECURITY COMMAND (ISC)

ISC GENDARMERIE

The Imperial Security Command Citizen Patrols, known simply as 'the Gendarmerie', are the uniformed law enforcement patrol officers and security service of the Imperial Corporation. Considered by many to be little more than glorified security guards, the Gendarmes are the public face of security in all civilian Imperial districts and facilities.

The Gendarmes are lightly armed with semi-automatic handguns, are unarmoured, and patrol in pairs. They are not authorized to carry out actual investigations. Under-equipped, the Gendarmes are nonetheless usually enthusiastic and well turned out–more than likely hoping to get a promotion to one of the other ISC divisions.

MURDERS & ACQUISITIONS DEPARTMENT (ISC-5)

Officially known as 'Mergers & Acquisitions', everyone refers to the division as 'Murders & Acquisitions' or simply 'MAD'. MAD is tasked with field operations, sabotage, and espionage against other corporations. Its job is to find promising subdivisions, or freelance corporations, and acquire them through means both fair and foul. A typical MAD agent is a worrisome combination of accountant and assassin: cold, ruthless, and meticulous in both violence and paperwork.

THE SERENITY'S GUARD (ISC-9)

The official ceremonial guard of the Serenity, over time The Serenity's Guard has taken on an internal surveillance position: that of keeping an eye on the Clans. Operating in two complementary roles, its members are masters of observation and investigation. In their formal ceremonial dress uniform they are usually completely ignored by Clan nobles and

Sean Gallagher of the Imperial Wolfbanes.

considered part of the scenery. They listen in on supposedly private conversations. When out of uniform they are masters of stealth and surveillance, able to take on a variety of guises to continue their surveillance of key Clan nobles. Of course, as the personal guard of the Serenity and having been recruited from the Special Forces, they are all masterful fighters.

JUNIPER (ISC-20)

Juniper is an ostensibly off the books kick murder squad tasked with disrupting the operations of one corporation in particular: Cybertronic. Ever since Cybertronic appeared on the scene, Imperial has made it its mission to attack, threaten, and accuse Cybertronic personnel of heresy. The scuttlebutt in Parliament is that Imperial dislikes having its status as underdog challenged, and also fears the technological edge that Cybertronic has, which could drastically undermine sales of Imperial's high end artisan equipment. Juniper agents all have reason to hate Cybertronic, are technologically savvy, and enjoy the freedom of being corporate sponsored terrorists. Officially denied and unofficially used to threaten, the Juniper division has more than its fair share of heresy.

THE DELETED DIVISION: ISC-7 BLACKTHORNE

In the Dark Symmetry era the divisions of the ISC were primarily focused on the other corporations (Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima), though the activities of the Brothers are held in deep suspicion. As the terrible effects of the Dark Symmetry spread, many in Imperial (wrongly) hold the Brothers responsible. To address this potential new threat Imperial created a new division of the Imperial Security Command: ISC-7 Blackthorne, a covert dirty tricks unit that was tasked with investigating, undermining, and discrediting the activities of the Brothers.

ISC-7 was shockingly vulnerable to the influence of Dark Symmetry and became riddled with heretics who used Blackthorne's operations to further increase the tension between Imperial and the Brothers.

Towards the end of the first Dark Legion war, when it became clear that the Brothers were on the side of humanity, Blackthorne was disowned, effectively throwing it to the wolves. Other elements of the ISC, most notably The Serenity's Guard and Internal Revision (then known as Internal Affairs), joined with the proto-inquisitors of the Brothers and hunted down and eliminated the surviving renegades of Blackthorne. All related files were either classified at the highest level or destroyed.

History frequently repeats itself, and for Imperial this is certainly the case. The creation of ISC-20 in the Second Dark Legion War contains shocking parallels to Blackthorne. Whether this new unit will go the way of its predecessor remains to be seen, but the omens are not promising.

THE FOXHOUNDS (ISC-22)

The Foxhounds are the special strike force of the ISC combining highly trained agents as animal handlers with robotic Iron Mastiffs. They often work closely with ISC-2 Personal Protection and ISC-10 Special Installation Security. The Foxhounds are primarily an intimidation unit, and are frequently called out to potential riots as the sight of a pack of Iron Mastiffs and their fearsome jaws often calms the quickest tempers.

THE YARD (ISC-25)

The men and women of The Yard are the plain-clothed detectives of the Gendarmerie tasked with investigating crimes or following up on an incident involving the Gendarme. Since the return of the Dark Legion they have taken on an additional role: that of rooting out Dark Legion assets throughout the corporation. Yard detectives are famed for their world-weary attitude, a predilection for tea, and a dogged investigative technique that relies less on technology and more on kicking in doors, leaning on informants, and the occasional bout of making the evidence fit the crime.

IMPERIAL CONQUISTADORS

Investigators, spies, soldiers, entrepreneurs, and explorers; the Imperial Conquistadors are unique in Imperial service. Almost entirely composed of Clan nobles, the Conquistadors are officially a numberless sub-division of the ISC, but they report directly to Parliament. Their remit is simple: expanding the power of Imperial. They establish new colonies, explore unknown moons, assess potential new acquisitions of land or businesses for Imperial, and steal the research of rival corporations.

In addition to requisitioning resources and assets from the Imperial corporate divisions, the Conquistadors are able to call on resources from the Imperial Defence Forces, Imperial Specials Forces, and Imperial Security Command to achieve their missions.

Though glamorous, the Conquistadors are considered by many within the Imperial administration to be loose cannons that will get Imperial into serious trouble. But even the naysayers had no idea what the consequences would be when the Conquistadors set foot on Nero.

THE SETTLEMENTS

READING PALACE, LUNA

Luna is the largest settlement for Imperial, and the heart of the Imperial Corporation on Luna is Reading Palace. Reading Palace is a labyrinthine complex that runs along one side of Imperial Plaza. Housing both the official residence of Her Serenity and both Houses of Parliament, Reading Palace also contains the High Courts of Imperial, the Serjeant's Office, the offices of the Imperial Security Command, and all essential Imperial divisions.

A mighty gothic edifice of stone, Reading Palace is one of the most imposing buildings on Luna. Thoroughly bedecked in banners and flags, with many monuments and memorials surrounding it, Reading

Blood Berets hunting deep below the Luna streets.

Palace is something quite special, and many tourists come to see the changing of Her Serenity's Guard twice daily. Inside, the scale is no less epic, with vast pillared and vaulted halls filled with artwork; some of which is originally from Earth.

Whilst the outermost areas appear to be relaxed, security in Reading Palace is very carefully orchestrated. It follows an onion-skin approach of concentric zones that increase in security the further in you progress, requiring ever more stringent checks and permits. The most important areas, such as the top 29 floors of the palace reserved for the family of Her Serenity and the boardrooms, can only be accessed through special lifts.

FUKIDO, MERCURY: PAX IMPERIALIS?

While Luna takes pride of place as the largest settlement of the Imperial Corporation, Fukido on Mercury runs a close second. Originally a Mishima outpost (in the First Dark Legion War), Imperial businessmen, with the aid of the Murders & Acquisitions Division, managed to seize control overnight through a carefully timed series of stock short selling and other complicated financial instruments. Needless to say Mishima was less than pleased at this turn of events, especially given how expensive the outpost was to create in the first place.

Under the dominion of Imperial, Fukido has rapidly grown to attain the status of second-largest megacity on Mercury, only being eclipsed by Longshore where Imperial has much interest. The heart of Fukido is the Hieronymus Cathedral, which is only slightly smaller than the Cardinal's Cathedral on Luna.

Imperial has striven to thread the Brotherhood through all elements of life in Fukido as their presence complicates matters significantly for Mishima, forcing them to stay their hand from ordering a full invasion. This gives Fukido a unique culture all of its own. It is a place where it is common to see the robed mystics of the Brotherhood talking to Imperial executives, and Inquisitors accompany the Gendarmes if there is even the slightest hint of heresy in a crime report.

The profits gained by Imperial from Fukido are staggering and make for pleasant reading in the boardroom. The one fly in this ointment, however, is that the terms of the takeover mean that Imperial only has a one hundred year lease on the city, after which time it will officially revert to Mishiman control. If it happens at all, it is doubtful that this will be a peaceful transition.

THE IMPERIAL SERENITY

Though officially a purely ceremonial role with no voting power, in the world of noblesse oblige, nepotism, and backroom dealing of Imperial, the position of Serenity is immensely important.

Through a combination of a detailed ledger of favours owed; knowledge of sensitive information on the Clans, clan nobility and corporate executives of Imperial; and judicious applications of patronage and the occasional word in the right ear, the Serenity maintains the balance of the corporation.

Control of Her Serenity's Guard, the immense wealth of the position, and the simple fact that all Imperial soldiers and agents swear allegiance to the Serenity mean that most Imperial citizens hold the role in high esteem and regard it with great fondness.

In the Dark Legion period, the current Serenity is Victoria Paladine, a strong woman and dextrous diplomat who is master of playing the great game of corporations. Victoria Paladine has skilfully used her influence to advance the position of Imperial as a whole, while keeping the various Clans in check. Though she has no official power in Parliament, she often submits proposed bills and amendments to key politicians under a variety of pen names. Those who receive these missive are left in no doubt who the real sender is, and they are thus given due weight and proposed in Parliament. Most pass.

She is also known to be a close friend and confidante of the Brotherhood's representative to Parliament, the Serjeant Primus, and is a very vocal supporter of the Brotherhood.

The Serenity in the First Dark Legion War is Justin Paladine, a veteran of the Golden Lions and an astute businessman. He was officially elected Serenity as a healing candidate following the events of the 'Bloody Mess', later known as the Great Resentment. Justin is a strong and fair leader, and helps establish many of the features that become associated with the position of Serenity. However the MacGuires and Murdochs consider him a puppet of the Bartholomews to begin with.

Victoria Paladine in full ceremonial garments.

VENUS: WAR WORLD

Venus is a strategically important world for Imperial and, because of the strength of its three greatest foes: Bauhaus, Cybertronic and the Dark Legion, is managed on a war economy.

Over time, Imperial has acquired dozens of settlements on Venus through various methods. Many of the settlements originally belonged to Bauhaus, and that corporation was not happy to see them go. With the threat of the Dark Legion looming, all-out war was not an option, so instead there were long periods of cold war between to the two corporations interspersed with brief, bloody clashes.

The deployment of the Blood Berets as a specialist anti-Legion force did much to improve relations with Bauhaus, taking them from "hostile" to merely "suspicious", and Imperial took this window of opportunity to build more of its own settlements and strengthen its bulwark on Venus. The appearance of Cybertronic–the only corporation in a weaker position than Imperial–has given it a new focus for acquisition.

THE ASTEROID BELT: LAND OF THE THOUSAND LAIRDS

Imperial is the corporation with the largest presence in the Asteroid Belt. Often considered too small to be financially viable by Capitol, Bauhaus, or Mishima, Imperial has exploited the resources in the Asteroid Belt to an extraordinary degree, building hundreds of mines, shipping hubs, outposts, colonies, and military bases. If an asteroid is big enough to land a ship on, it will undoubtedly have an Imperial base.

The secondary benefit is also clear: because of the internally fractious nature of the Imperial Clans, the Asteroid Belt has allowed the vast majority of Clans to create their own personal demesne, carving homes and estates out of asteroids. It is for this reason that the Asteroid Belt is sometimes referred to as the Land of the Thousand Lairds. On these planetoids, the laws of the Clans trump those of Imperial, and the so-called 'Lairds' can rule however they please. The Clans come together in these ancestral homes to celebrate, scheme, train, and of course, brood over perceived slights.

The most significant asteroid is Victoria, the home of Clan Paladine. Formerly known as Pallas, Victoria is highly developed and is a city in its own right. Because Clan Paladine has for recent generations controlled the position of the Serenity, Victoria is brash with pomp and ceremony, and much of its income is derived from tourism, especially when the Serenity is in residence.

DIEMANSLAND: THE WILD FRONTIER

Diemansland started life as a penal mining colony on the asteroid of Vespa. Over time, as the mines ran dry and convicts settled there once they were released, it has become a unique place all its own. Here the outcasts, rogues, and those disowned by their own clans, can make a new start. Over time with its mix of lawless entertainment and religious fervour, Diemansland has become a prime recruiting spot for taking on explorers, colonists and soldiers.

IMPERIAL DIPLOMACY

Imperial diplomacy is all focused on one goal: Supporting its aggressive policy of expansion. This, understandably, does not make for the best relations with the other corporations. There is some compensation in Imperial's stringent open-minded and generous economic policy. The Imperial Corporation believes in the importance of free trade and rarely engages in trade wars, allowing the imports of the other corporations to freely flow into Imperial settlements.

Imperial works hard to keep its relationships with its biggest rivals relatively even.

DIEMANSLAND PENAL MINE

In the Dark Symmetry period Diemansland is the toughest prison in the solar system. Using convicts sentenced to deportation and hard labour, the mines on Diemansland never stop operation. Conditions are harsh with miners living in cramped dormitories and equipped with second hand and poorly maintained spacesuits.

Only minimal effort has gone into terraforming the asteroid and radiation poisoning and other mining-related wounds are common. Prisoners receive bonuses for exceeding their production quotas; most of these bonuses are traded for illicit drugs.

The toxic mix of enforced servitude, drugs, and often inhuman conditions are a rife breeding ground for heresy and a natural vector for the Dark Symmetry. Only two things stand between the prison and chaos: the charitable healthcare and counselling, supplied by a few overworked followers of the Brothers, and the monthly supply shuttle that brings in cheap booze, hookers, and vids in exchange for the mined ores. It is a tough world that breeds tough people.

THE CARTEL

Imperial has an innate suspicion towards the Cartel, viewing it as meddlesome, though also ripe for public relations coups. It is perhaps not surprising that Parliament's appointment to the position of principle Imperial Representative is somewhat dismissive yet also of seeming importance: the Serenity's expected heir. Lacking in any real power, and largely following their own agenda, the position is largely a public relations and ceremonial role.

When anything important needs to get resolved, this is left to the House Committee of Cartel Relations, who, while largely faceless, hold the real negotiating power.

CYBERTRONIC

Within the ever-shifting power relationships, Bauhaus and Imperial are frequently allied except when it comes to Cybertronic. Imperial just cannot understand how Bauhaus can tolerate this heretical treachery.

Imperial hates Cybertronic with a passion. It is a firmly held belief by Imperial that Cybertronic is nothing more than a new front in the war against the Dark Legion, and are completely in the thrall of the Dark Symmetry. Imperial also does not like that the appearance of Cybertronic challenges their own status as underdog. One thing is clear: when there is a choice between assaults on a Dark Legion base or a Cybertronic facility, Imperial invariably chooses to attack Cybertronic. After all, there is a profit in seizing assets from another corporation.

WHITESTAR

Imperial does not quite know what to make of Whitestar. On one hand it admires Whitestar's courage, tradition, lust for fighting the Dark Legion, and survival instincts. On the one hand, Whitestar can be foreign, barbarous, does not respect the Brotherhood, and barely seem to have even the most basic understanding of the rules of commerce. Is it a corporation or not?

The end result is that Imperial treats Whitestar with caution, handling all negotiations as if carefully defusing a live landmine.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Seeing itself as the most pious corporation, it is not surprising that Imperial and the Brotherhood have very strong connections. More recruits for the Brotherhood come from Imperial than any other corporation, and Brotherhood advisors are welcome throughout Imperial operations and settlements.

LUNA PD

Imperial is only too happy to support Luna PD. Being based on Luna, Clan Bartholomew and its closest allies work hard to support and maintain healthy relationships with Luna PD. Where these relationships fail, they do their damnedest to acquire material to blackmail and coerce officers to ensure that cases are resolved 'correctly'.

FREELANCERS

Perhaps only second to Capitol, Imperial understands – and regularly makes use of – freelancers. Imperial citizens at all levels are used to dealing with other Clans, or being the underdog in relations with the big three corporations (Capitol, Mishima and Bauhaus), so a freelancer is nothing unusual. That said, there is an innate suspicion of anyone who does not have strong familial ties to others, but that usually manifests itself simply as a somewhat patronizing tone when dealing with freelancers.

A successful Imperial acquisition.

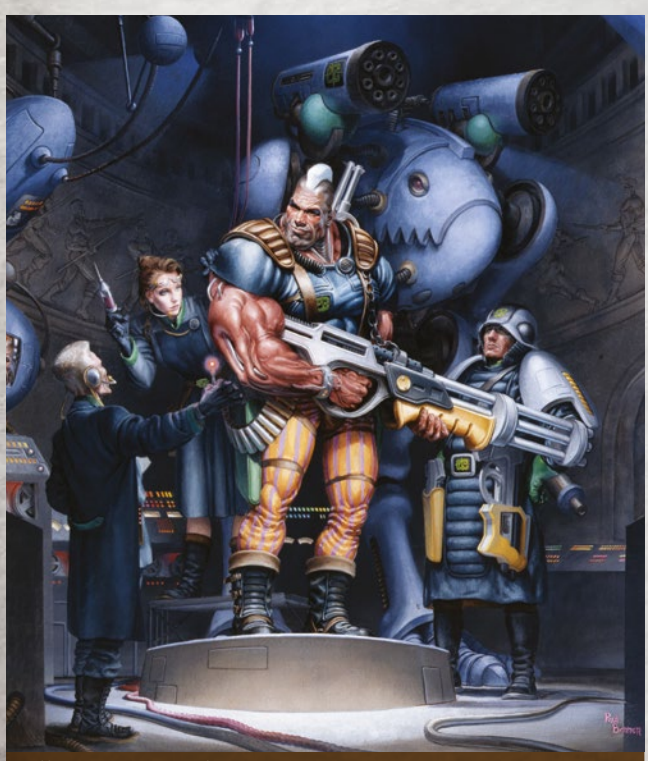
CHAPTER 15

CYBERTRONIC

THE FUTURE OF MANKIND

Cybertronic is a corporation born from, and shrouded in, mystery. From its calamitous origins on Foundation Day to current classified projects, rivals view Cybertronic's meteoric rise with suspicion. On the cutting edge of technological revolution and resurrection, Cybertronic is poised to reintroduce a level of technology and living not seen since The Fall. Rumours abound about its motives, and some suggest the Dark Symmetry is behind it.

Unlike storied rivals such as Bauhaus and Mishima, Cybertronic does not hold a lengthy pedigree dating to pre-Fall times. It is an upstart, the punk kid of the corporate world threatening to take on all comers. Where the older corporations are stepped in tradition and inflexible culture, Cybertronic is the young, lithe mammal to their dinosaurs. To be a member of Cybertronic is to be on the edge of what it means to be human. It is constantly pushing the definition of the species, much to the alarm of those around it. Only the highest level executives know the true purpose of this relentless pursuit to fuse man and machine. All others who may have found out have quickly been silenced by Cybertronic's Cyber Infiltrators.



Calibrating Vince Diamond.

BIRTH OF THE CYBERTRONIC CORPORATION

Foundation Day occurred in the 45th year of the reign of the Bald Cardinal Roland Durand XIII. That day the Seipen Stock Exchange allowed the largest start-up corporation ever seen to launch an IPO. Some 150 billion Cardinal Crowns would eventually be the valuation of the total stock. The corporation was listed as CII–Cybertronic Investment, Inc.

Never before had such an unknown swept the market completely, and stocks reacted violently in the following days. Market value briefly plunged as the new anomaly was processed by traders. What soon became clear was that the entire market had changed forever. Cybertronic was here to stay. It vaulted to the ranks of the top corporations in the span of one day. Immediately, speculation began as to who lay behind the massive usurpation of power and funds. High ranking executives in corporations from Mishima to Bauhaus were linked with the formation of Cybertronic, but the actual board of directors for CII remained elusive.

Clearly, CII must have held influence to even be allowed onto the Seipen Stock Exchange. As the market was completely blindsided by the introduction, rumours quickly followed. Those rumours continue to this day.

In a perfect storm of financial speculation, traders grabbed up every last share they could from the new corporation. How the frenzy began, or why, remains a mystery. Time has proven the traders' instincts correct, as no one who bought significant shares of CII that day has failed to become immensely wealthy. Popular theory dismisses the event as one of the many vagaries of the market, but conspiracy theorists–many sounding eerily plausible–insist the event must have been secretly orchestrated by a person or persons with vast power. Who that entity is remains a serious concern.

THE THREE PILLARS

Founded on three core principles, Cybertronic is divided into branches called Pillars. Each specialises in a different aspect of corporate business. These Pillars form the base that holds the Cybertronic organization aloft. More than mere departments, these Pillars are tenants and ideas that guide Cybertronic toward its ultimate goal. Each of the Pillars is further subdivided into four even more specialised departments, making a total of twelve. The number three and twelve appear again and again throughout Cybertronic iconography and appear to have significance beyond

the obvious association with the corporation's divisions. What that significance is remains a matter of speculation, but some in the Brotherhood have noted the numbers three and twelve are symbolic for certain ancient Earth religions.

The Three Pillars are overseen only by The Board, a shadowy collection of top executives who seem to unerringly make the right moves to push Cybertronic ahead. Indeed, the quick success of the corporation is unprecedented, further strengthening speculation that the Dark Symmetry may somehow be behind it. The Board is silent. No one has ever seen or heard from them. Their edicts come from the Cybertronic Tower, arriving as uploads to the top executives whose implants tie them directly into The Board's decisions.

Furthering the mystery, each Pillar goes by an acronym whose ostensible meaning may cover some secret, semiotic message… or so the whispers say. Possibly only The Board knows the true meaning behind this alphabet soup of subdivisions.

RDM—Research, Development, and Manufacturing

While the Three Pillars are designed as equals, it was inevitable that the R&D division would take the lead in a corporation founded on the pursuit of the very frontiers of technology. While the other two pillars may, arguably, hold more power, none hold the same prestige as RDM.

To work for RDM is to be an elite among elites. Only the brightest minds—further enhanced by brain augmentations—are accepted. It is said that top researchers must forsake their own identities and pasts for the terms of their contracts. Thereafter, they remember nothing of what they did while working for RDM. From the reverse engineering of pre-Fall technology to the invention of new, innovative products, RDM is the engine that drives the heart of Cybertronic.

It is not unknown for vast amounts of corporate resources to be suddenly reallocated by The Board and funnelled to a secret RDM project—much to the chagrin of the other two Pillars. Yet there are few complaints. Cybertronic employees, also known as "Cybers," are uncannily loyal. Whether this is by the strength of their character, Cybertronic's unparalleled recruitment process, or some other method of compulsion is unknown. In the darker Freelancer bars of Luna, it is said The Board has the ability to kill any employee by remote through the magic of their technological superiority. Such ideas are not entertained in polite company.

AEM—Administration, Economic, and Management

The Administration, Economic, and Management division is the most conventionally corporate of the Three Pillars. The public face of Cybertronic, AEM has the greatest day-to-day dealings with the public. Ostensibly, it is less secretive than the other two Pillars, but privately one finds that there is a sharp division between what AEM makes public and what top AEM executives actually know.

More than just PR, AEM is the financial heart of Cybertronic. Its analysts and forecasters are legendary among the corporations. Founding Day is said to have been the work of some of these brilliant minds. It has also been suggested that Cybertronic's unique ability to spot and take advantage of coming trends is due to its use of advanced AI. AEM ascribes its success to nothing more extraordinary than the level of talent that Cybertronic is able to attract.

Administration and day-to-day functions of Cybertronic are all handled by AEM. It is the Pillar which most attracts defectors from rival corporations, as the culture is more familiar than the other two Pillars.

SWI—Security, Warfare and Intelligence

"No one is as secure as Cybertronic," goes the saying. If that's true, it's because of the Security, Warfare, and Intelligence Pillar. Like a pyramid, each side rests on the other two. Like any structure, one side is always just a little bit stronger. For Cybertronic, that side is SWI.

The technological advantage possessed by Cybertronic is most evident in its covert abilities. There is little that SWI does not see and hear. In fact, if citizens knew to just what extent their lives

were monitored, a backlash against the corporation might ensue. Yet SWI has mastered the subtle art of gathering intelligence while being discreet. Where other corporations clumsily leave the footprint of their military and intelligence capabilities in their wake, SWI moves with the lightest of feet. Entire operations, with system-wide consequences, have been successfully launched with none the wiser.

The most prominent subdivisions of SWI are Military Conflict and Resolution (MCR) and Internal and External Security (IES). The former employs soldiers outfitted with the latest cybernetic enhancements, known as Mirrormen, as well as android Attila killing machines and devastating robotic minions. Battles between Cybertronic and other corporations often leave human soldiers shocked by the merciless, fearless nature by which the cyborg or robot will pursue their missions.

IES, on the other hand, employs what are considered by the Cartel to be the best covert agents. These cyber-enhanced spies and assassins can outperform the mere organics of other corporations.

THE TWELVE DIVISIONS

Divisions are purposefully gnomic to persons outside Cybertronic. The following chart provides a layman's perspective of each of the Three Pillar's subdivisions and what they do.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND MANUFACTURING (RDM)
This Pillar drives the technological superiority Cybertronic holds through innovation of new technology and acquisition of pre-Fall artefacts.

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ARD)
Finds ancient technology and develops new technology. The most important RDM subdivision.

EXECUTION, PRODUCTION, AND DISTRIBUTION (EPD)
Responsible for actually making the products Cybertronic offers. Once it's beyond prototype, it goes to EPD.

LEGISLATION AND APPLIED JUSTICE (LAJ)
The legal arm of Cybertronic. It polices all Cybertronic facilities and monitors all employees not under the aegis of IES.

ENGINEERING, DEVELOPMENT, AND APPLICATION (EDA)
The nature and purpose of this division is an Executive Level secret.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND PUBLICITY (ETP)
As the PR branch of Cybertronic, ETP is the most frequent public face of the corporation. It is responsible for spinning corporate directives, particularly those relating to AI and controversial pre-Fall technology.

CYBERNETICS RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION (CRI)
This division is specifically tasked only with cybernetic enhancement and replacement technology. Any tech in this field falls under its purview.

ADMINISTRATION, ECONOMICS, AND MANAGEMENT (AEM)
The workhorse and face of Cybertronic. This is as close to "normal" corporate culture as Cybertronic gets.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (ABC)
A labyrinthine organization whose true purpose may be to obfuscate the inner workings of the rest of the organization. If so, why does it not fall under SWI?

FINANCE AND ECONOMIC FORECASTING (FEF)
The branch responsible for the unprecedented successes in spotting trends, manipulating the Stock Market and securing ever-greater holdings for Cybertronic. Rivals claim it possesses the gift of precognition.

SECURITY, WARFARE, AND INTELLIGENCE (SWI)
The unparalleled technological giant in corporate battlespace whether conventional or asymmetrical.

MILITARY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION (MCR)
The military might of Cybertronic. Powered by powerful cyborgs and robots.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SECURITY (IES)
The intelligence and espionage division of Cybertronic. It has no equal in any other corporation. The Cartel keeps a close eye on it, but does IES keep a closer eye on the Cartel?

ANALYTICAL PROCESSING AND HYPOTHESES (APH)
This division is allegedly responsible for processing the intelligence acquired by IES, but no confirmation of its existence has been obtained.

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND COLLATING (IGC)
Few employees are found in this division and all are extremely secretive. The name of the division seems to suggest overlap or even redundancy with other divisions. Is this merely a diversionary tactic, or does this division actually exist?

Trained in subreality, they can spend virtual years practicing missions and techniques while mere weeks pass in real time. These men and women have no identities of their own. They are cyphers, their pasts wiped forever upon joining the elite ranks of IES Field Agents. Occasionally, one of these agents suffers a psyche collapse due to the loss of his persona and goes rogue. IES terminates such agents before they reach full psychosis, but internal intel from other corps suggests these agents may simply be trying to find who they used to be. IES will give a promising agent everything, but first they take everything away.

These spies and assassins are feared by the Cartel, as they threaten to unbalance the current positions of each corp. The technological edge, so long seen as heretical, has returned with a vengeance. Cybertronic, led by IES, is showing just what that forbidden fruit can do for intelligence gathering when properly applied.

WHY HASN'T CYBERTRONIC WON?

Given the unquestioned technological superiority of Cybertronic, it is difficult to understand why it does not dominate the other corporations. Analysts have theorised that while its soldiers may be more than a match for the other corps', it does not field as many of them.

This is true. Cybertronic's army is a fluid, rapid response force. It does not fight conventionally. Robotic units are also prone to becoming expendable and would seem more easily replaceable. This has led many to believe that Cybertronic is holding back. But why? For what reason would any corporation refuse to dominate? Perhaps it is part of Cybertronic's long term strategy. Perhaps it is because the Dark Legion truly is behind it, and the time is not yet right to strike. The rest of the corporations hold their breath, waiting for the day Cybertronic unleashes the full measure of its might.

CORPORATE PERSONALITIES

While Cybertronic is perhaps the most secretive of all the corporations, even it has well known figures within its structure. Curiously, the very top level executives remain unknown.

SAM VERANASE

The head of the PR division of ETP, Veranase is a master spin doctor. His blond hair, square jaw, and good looks have given him the nickname "the four colour hero" based on ancient Earth entertainment known as comic books. He's slick, never without a glib line, and a professional liar. The worst part is he's naturally charismatic… or perhaps not so naturally. Speculation runs from Veranase being a series of clones to an advanced AI running a SARaH in the brain of the former actor. In any case, you will not find a more charming, congenial, and good-looking man. Don't turn your back on him.

DR. ATTICUS JAMF

Formerly the foremost R&D man at Bauhaus, Dr. Jamf was recruited by Cybertronic. Recruited is perhaps a euphemism, as Dr. Jamf was abducted from a Bauhaus facility during a corporate extraction. It is arguable whether Dr. Jamf helped engineer the defection or not. Regardless, he seems happy in his current position and frequently appears in commercials and PR with Sam Veranase.

At Bauhaus, what Dr. Jamf was working on is said to have been of vital interest to Cybertronic's current projects, but as Bauhaus has been unable to replicate anything like the new Cybertronic chip and logic gate, this seems unlikely. While Jamf is a brilliant mind in the field of pre-Fall technology, Cybertronic already had plenty of leaders in that field. Its motive in acquiring Jamf is still unknown.

VINCE DIAMOND

The chasseur has become something of a celebrity through Cybertronic entertainment and subreality sim-stim. Vince Diamond is, according to Cybertronic, the future of the human-machine soldier. Aware that The Brotherhood's stance on much of its augmentation is seen as heretical, Cybertronic has gone to great lengths to "humanise" the inherently inhuman. Vince Diamond is the poster boy for that project. A lean, mean killing machine, he is also likeable, quirky, and possesses the ego of a sports star.

The well-to-do can run recordings of his "actual" combat missions on subreality, while children all over are familiar with his exploits. Vince Diamond action figures have been a hit for many years. Vince himself may be more or less than he appears. His persona is no doubt carefully crafted by Veranase and others.

DR. DIANA

Dr. Diana is not a single individual but a series of clone field medics. Appearing as a beautiful, dark haired woman, her looks are the only soft thing about her. Dr. Dianas are not known for their bedside manner, but they are known for their proficiency in fixing wounds that would otherwise surely be fatal.

The Dr. Diana program is cloaked in secrecy. How they are cloned and given sentience–if indeed they possess it–is unknown. Intel confirms that the cybernetic integrations in Cybertronic soldiers help facilitate Dr. Diana's tasks. Where another corporate solider might need anaesthetic and antibiotics to remove a limb, Diana can tap into a Cybertronic soldier's systems and turn off pain receptors while boosting his immune system. Dr. Diana has a field success rate impossible for mere human surgeons.

Another drive, another day.

THE IMMORTAL

The Immortal is a cybernetic warrior lost during the Venusian Crusade. Recovered by Cybertronic, The Immortal is a soldier from aeons past. None remember the small Freelancer corporation for which he worked, but it is clear they specialised in technological enhancement of the human body–much like Cybertronic.

Naturally, the connection is not coincidental. What Cybertronic recovered from the Immortal must necessarily serve as the foundation of its edge. Further, The Immortal is said to be one of the corporation's founders. He may even remain on The Board. Legends surround his exploits during the Venusian Crusade and the long, dark gulfs of time he survived since. What is he? Who is he? Few can say, but he is very near the centre of Cybertronic's success. There are few soldiers who would want to get close enough to him to find out more.

GOALS AND PROJECTS

For a corporation shrouded in secrecy, assessing its current direction can be difficult. While Cybertronic's multiple lines of products suggest some of its current technological focus, the Cartel can only speculate about its ultimate goals. Technology is at the forefront of everything Cybertronic does, and this has caused it to fall under suspicion from The Brotherhood as well as the Cartel. Internal documents, forecasts by independent organisations, and market analysis have yielded the following projects as being of the highest priority.

THE AUGMENTATION AND EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN SPECIES

Cybertronic's motto, 'The Future of Mankind', says it all. The company is dedicated to the constant improvement of its cybernetic gear. This equipment sets the company and its personnel apart. Every employee is equipped with a brain interface of varying capabilities, which wires them directly into subreality as necessary.

Soldiers of Cybertronic are equipped with the latest combat enhancements, making them among the most feared in the corporate armies. Not only are reflexes and strength enhanced, but brain interfaces allow the instantaneous delivery of strategy, reconnaissance, and battlespace conditions.

It is suspected that all of the above only hint at the true goal of Cybertronic's enhancement projects: the evolution of the human species. Where companies like Mishima are rumoured to be conducting genetic experiments on Venus, Cybertronic seems to have gone in the opposite direction. Its fusion of man and machine is alarming to some and inspirational to others. Yet everyone knows how The Dark Symmetry infiltrated pre-Fall AIs. Such uses in the human brain would seem only to open Cybertronic employees to corruption by dark forces. Still, no evidence of such corruption has been found. In fact, there is less infiltration in Cybertronic than anywhere else.

The PR department, via Sam Veranase, has been very vocal about Cybertronic's motto as being more of an ad slogan than a prescription for the human species. Detractors do not agree, and the Cartel carefully monitors cybernetic enhancements. The difficulty, of course, is trying to surveil a corporation whose security and technological capabilities exceed all others. Among Cartel analysts it is generally agreed that a larger operation is at work to push humanity toward a new evolutionary track. The purpose behind this is unknown, but is a cause for great concern.

SUBREALITY

What started as the internal virtual reality used by Cybertronic employees in The Tower has, in recent years, gone into consumer production. Wealthy early adopters are already wearing subreality units and experiencing the entertainment to be found inside worlds undreamt of. While current units are prohibitively expensive, plans are being made to build cheaper units that will appeal to the masses.

Given Cybertronic's known employee dependence on certain drugs that enhance performance, this new form of entertainment is cause for concern. While users of subreality claim it is the best entertainment they've ever experienced, The Brotherhood is wary that widespread use could weaken and corrupt the minds of the youth toward possible influence by The Dark Symmetry.

Sam Varanase has been quick and consistent in his dismissal of such allegations as "The same sort of thing the older generation has already been suspect of". One can hardly argue with sales. The Cybertronic Subreality Module has been selling amazingly well for the past four quarters, and the anticipated roll-out of a consumer grade version has seen its stock rise. While it may be nothing more than the entertainment device Cybertronic peddles it as, the Cartel remains concerned that the true nature of subreality has yet to be revealed.

RECOVERY OF PRE-FALL TECHNOLOGY

The basis of all Cybertronic's technological innovation is believed to be the reverse engineering of technology that predates, and in some cases helped usher in, The Fall. Throughout the solar system, Cybertronic archaeologists and spies seek out storehouses of such lost technology. It is upon the shoulders of its predecessors that Cybertronic now stands.

Excavations, both secret and otherwise, are currently in operation on most human inhabited worlds. It is even believed that Cybertronic agents may be searching Earth for such technology. In any event, the pursuit of lost technology is a top priority for Cybertronic. Its recovery teams are no mere scientists though, as engagements with them by rival corporations have proven. These are lethal, trained soldiers as well as academics.

The speed with which such technology has been not only recovered but reimplemented is alarming. It was, after all, the weakness of these machines, as well as man's reliance on them, which nearly brought about mankind's demise. What perverse purpose could a corporation have for re-opening this bottle and loosing its genie? Is mere profit and materialistic conquest their end, or is there something darker and more arcane behind Cybertronic?

CARTEL
INTELLIGENCE COMMUNIQUÉ

To: Diogenes
From: Hypatia

DECODED BY PROXIMA MACHINE

After three months working for Cybertronic, I have gained only a few confederate ears. There is much suspicion here. Even among the ground level employees of The Tower, strange rumours abound. I have proven my worth to my immediate superiors and have gained access to IES.

Corporate gossip is at a minimum. The sort of intelligence one could glean from the cafeteria or after work hang outs is not present in Cybertronic. It is as if each member of the corporation has taken their vow with the utmost fidelity. I have instead tried a work-around by engaging with some of the technicians related to ancillary aspects of the project–techs are always chattier.

Their consensus, and this is all gossip, suggests that Cybertronic did in fact intercept a message from Nero some while ago. As best I can determine, special enhancements and handpicked individuals are being prepared for a mission to Nero itself. The goal is the recovery of something found there, though I cannot say what it is. As a side note, it appears these agents are being trained in some form of computer program called subreality. I will try to discover more.

This may be my last communication to you. I have been accepted into the next tier of IES, and my mind will be wiped. We can only hope that the implant we put in will work, but after seeing the technological wonders of Cybertronic, I am doubtful.

Know that I am faithful to the Cartel today, and to you, my love. Perhaps we will meet again. I can only hope I recognise you when we do. I am afraid. This corporation fills me with fear. Please don't let my sacrifice be in vain, and please excuse the breach of protocol in using my real name below. I wanted you to see it one last time from my own hand.

Yours always,

Sarah

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Of all the technological wonders Cybertronic offers, none are as impressive, or as disconcerting, as its new artificial intelligences. It was the betrayal of the AIs that led to the loss of the high technology of ancient times. Now Cybertronic has reintroduced the very engineers of that defeat though, to its credit, none have shown any predilection for corruption.

Current AI is divided into three subtypes. The first two are integrated with the human mind and/or cybernetics, while the third is autonomous. Part of the success of Cybertronic's new AIs seem to lie in the way in which the corporation treats them. No longer are they the slaves of mankind, but have become instead its partners. While this has, for the time being, seemed to prevent any corruption, what might come from free willed AI should they decide mankind are not their partners but their enemies?

SARAH–SEMI-AUTONOMOUS ADVANCED REACTION HEURISTICS

Wired directly into the spinal column of certain Cybertronic employees, the host no longer adapts to the implant, but instead the implant becomes an integrated part of the person. This is accomplished through proprietary technology known as the Central Spinal Trunk, or CST. The CST is the foundation of all advanced integrated AI and cybernetics. In layman's terms, Cybertronic is wiring AIs directly into the human nervous system.

SARaHs grew out of cybernetic limb replacement technologies, but have become something much more. The wiring and logic gates needed to replace a limb pale in intelligence compared to a SARaH. The current generation of SARaHs are based on recovered pre-Fall technology but have been enhanced. A SARaH serves the role of personal secretary, keeper of secrets, paramedic, and security system. A SARaH can alert the authorities if you are in danger, implement first aid immediately by using your own body's systems and related cybernetics, as well as record all sensory information and then wipe it from the SARaH core at the end of each night. Having a SARaH is like having a friend who lives inside you. In times of emergency, SARaH can even move you autonomously out of danger if your mind is incapacitated. Approximately 2% of Luna citizens have already applied for a SARaH implantation.

DIANA–DIRECTLY INTEGRATED NEURAL ARCHITECTURE

A DIANA is the next step up from a SARaH. Implantation of a DIANA requires removal of actual brain tissue. The amount necessary is a closely guarded Cybertronic secret. As yet, DIANAs are not available to the public.

Where SARaH is an assistant who can record your life, DIANAs are like having another entity sharing your brain with you. Cybertronic considers the host and the DIANA separate employees. A DIANA can be programmed with specialty skills the host would not otherwise possess. They have their own personas and base of knowledge and are rumoured to be directly linked to The Board. This has not been confirmed.

DIANAs are fully sentient beings. Unlike SARaHs, which mimic sentience, DIANAs actually are self aware. Having a DIANA is like having a split personality. Reports of Acquired Personality Bifurcation have been collected but not confirmed. It appears that in some cases the host is unable to absorb the alien intelligence into his psyche and a psychotic breakdown results. This has led to speculation that some DIANAs have tried to assert dominance over their hosts. As with most things Cybertronic, none of this has been confirmed and remains in the realm of conjecture.

As sentient creatures, DIANAs are a growing concern for the Cartel and rival corporations. Ultimately who, if anyone, are their masters? If they truly are free willed, who can say whether they may align themselves with The Dark Symmetry if given the chance? They should be treated as a new life form. It is not known how they will evolve, or what they will want when they do.

XANDER–ACRONYM UNKNOWN

XANDER is an AI that can only be inferred via reports and intelligence collection. What is consistently mentioned in various reports suggest the XANDER is a very experimental AI reserved for top level Cybertronic executives. XANDERs appear to report, or be linked directly, to The Board. The capabilities of a XANDER are unknown, but must be assumed to be greater than a DIANA.

Intelligence analysts have suggested that XANDERs may in fact be some sort of hive mind. As a distributed entity across an unknown number of executive minds, the true capabilities would be unknowable to outside parties. It is even possible that the XANDER implant may replace the host persona given Cybertronic's liberal use of mind wiping and mnemonic erasure techniques.

CYBERTRONIC CULTURE

Cybertronic is not like other corporations. Where the direction of a company can often be seen to follow the vision of its executives, Cybertronic makes decisions more like a hive mind. Its entire structure is not unlike that of a wasps' nest with cells sectioned off from others, yet all the while the work somehow gets done. The Board is nominally in charge, but no one has ever seen them.

Secrecy is the Cybertronic way. The company constantly surprises with new releases, technological innovations and acquisitions. Often employees of smaller companies find themselves having been absorbed a month before without realising it. The degree to which such actions are possible to keep secret would have previously been

thought impossible. Not so for Cybertronic. It functions like a single unit and with the discipline of an army. Few employees think to reveal their secrets or live to tell them.

Constantly moving, Cybertronic is like the shark of old Earth. It is a predator in an ocean of slower, more static prey. Actively acquiring pre-Fall tech seems just as important as the vast recruitment of top executives from other corporations. Cybertronic takes what it wants, and it matters little from whom it takes it.

Nevertheless, such naked aggression is tempered by uncontested success and a PR machine second to none. Some say this is due more to the intel Cybertronic has on important people, kept as blackmail against any overt actions against Cybertronic. The public, by and large, welcome the new products and the promise of a return to the technological glory days so long lost. With the vast masses of eager consumers on their side, it is difficult for anyone to upend the goodwill that washes over the company. Yet goodwill can be fickle, and it is a foolish corporation that is not prepared for a backlash. Cybertronic has risen quickly. It would be well reminded that it could fall equally fast.

The watchful eye of The Brotherhood.

To be a cyber is to become a cypher. At the highest levels of the company, your life is truly no longer your own. The chasseurs and curaissiers, with their mirror-finished chrome armour, serve as a metaphor: what you see in Cybertronic is a reflection of yourself. The company itself is an enigma wrapped in a riddle wrapped in the circuitry of our species' ancient dreams as toolmakers.

CYBERTRONIC REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS

The vast holdings of Cybertronic cannot be readily summed up in a short précis. However, below you will find some of the jewels in their crown.

THE TOWER

Located in Luna, Cybertronic Tower—known simply as 'The Tower' – is a gigantic stele sheathed in mirrored steel. Looming above the city, the Tower casts no shadow. Light is caught by one side and filtered through the other. No doubt the display of such technology is a PR coup for the company.

Surrounding The Tower is a moat, recalling ancient earth defences and the single nod to anything not on the cutting edge of technology you will find on the outside, or readily accessible inside, of The Tower. Once past the moat, visitors will find a single chrome pyramid suspended by magnetism over a crystal clear pond. Beyond the fountain lies a thirty foot tall entrance designed to elicit awe in the visitor.

Inside, the very walls are alive. Black and glossy, they leap to life with commercials, propaganda and virtual guides. The atrium raises some thirty stories into the vanishing point. Plants and fountains litter the main lobby, but there is curious, cold logic to their placement, as if the natural world was not Cybertronic's forte.

Those entering The Tower are constantly monitored without their knowledge. The hulking Mirrormen present throughout the ten accessible levels give pause to anyone thinking of causing a stir. Past the first ten levels, only Cybertronic employees may pass. Visitors must, of course, have a pass, and are fitted with a temporary tracking device. Employees often refer to The Tower as The Monolith, though no one knows why. It is said that on the top twelve floors, the marble tile is inlaid with ten ancient Earth religious symbols. From what culture, or what they look like, is unknown.

CYBEROPOLIS

A closed city on Mars, Cyberopolis is a self-sustaining ecology. The city provides everything its citizens need from power to food. The city is not accessible by the public in any way. Visitors are simply not permitted. If you live in Cyberopolis, you never know anyone outside. You live and die within the geodesic dome that encloses the city. Who can say what kind of life those inside lead?

GANYMEDE BASE

An isolated research facility located on this Jovian moon, Ganymede Base is home to several theories. The techs that come here are all mind-wiped going in and going out, so no reliable intelligence is available. Conjecture alone has outlined the purpose of the facility. Some say it covers a citadel of one of the Apostles. Others suggest radical cloning experiments are going on there. Still others claim that the base was built over an ancient city that Cybertronic is now plundering for pre-Fall treasures. As is often the case with Cybertronic, the truth remains elusive.

CERES BASE

Located on the asteroid of the same name, Ceres Base is the location where The Immortal was discovered. The mission that recovered him seems to have had no other intent, suggesting the corporation gained ancient intelligence in order to find him. The current base is widely believed to be recovering further pre-Fall artefacts from the asteroid. The base is well guarded and, thus far, unpenetrated by outside agents.

CYBERTRONIC DIPLOMACY

As the new kid on the block, Cybertronic has made few friends. Viewed as an upstart at best, the other corporations and factions look on Cybertronic warily. Cybertronic, for its part, seems immune to the treatment. However, over the course of its relatively brief history, general tendencies in dealing with the other major players have become apparent. Below is an aggregate of analysts' best guesses at what official Cybertronic policy looks like regarding each faction.

MISHIMA

Of all the corporations, Cybertronic has the least respect for Mishima. At last year's Cartel Conference on Advertising, a Cybertronic manager declined to stand and give fealty to the Overlord as befits tradition. The incident quickly escalated into a firefight, and Cybertronic chasseurs arrived on scene. The entire facility was destroyed. Relations between the two corporations have been understandably cold since.

Cybertronic functions on the cusp of what is possible. Mishima, steeped in tradition and respect for the past, represents the opposite of that corporate philosophy. If Cybertronic is "The Future of Mankind", it views Mishima as the venerable, senile past.

CAPITOL

On Founding Day, Capitol lost the fewest personnel and properties to Cybertronic. As such, it was not as immediately resentful of the new corporation. Capitol's pursuit of profit above all else allows little room for lasting enmity. Cybertronic, for its part, seems fine with this relationship. Ironically, Dr. Simon Sullivan, formerly of Capitol, first put forth a controversial theory regarding corporate defections to Cybertronic. His theory suggests a memetic mind virus infects those who leave their parent corporation for Cybertronic. Dr. Sullivan, not long after voicing his theory, defected to Cybertronic himself.

Cybertronic can recreate, rebuild or reconstruct.

Such defections notwithstanding, relations between Cybertronic and Capitol are neutral and sometimes even friendly. As everyone knows, however, the smart enemy approaches you with a smile.

Cybertronic maintains its side of relations with Capitol, and trade between the two is open. Whether Cybertronic sees Capitol as kindred spirit–both having risen from nothing–is not certain, but Cybertronic certainly seems to favour it over other rivals.

IMPERIAL

On Founding Day, Clan St. John-Ross, almost to a man, defected to Cybertronic. The clan's holdings on Luna currently comprise a significant portion of Cybertronic's HQ. As if this was not enough, Imperial likewise lost billions to the Cybertronic stock frenzy. It is no wonder that Imperial is the vocal and constant enemy of Cybertronic.

Imperial employs a total trade embargo with Cybertronic. Given the long and violent history of the corporations, such embargoes would seem common. They are not. The length and animosity of this embargo is as unique in corporate history as the rise of Cybertronic itself. What lies behind this hate? Simply put–Imperial is convinced that Cybertronic is a front organisation for the Dark Apostles.

Cybertronic dismisses this as foolish paranoia publicly, but its PR machine has done little to actively refute specifics. Instead, it paints such theories as madness and those who peddle them as sad and confused. Thus far, the strategy has largely worked. While many are suspicious, profits have not been harmed. One wonders if Cybertronic might not actively encourage such rumours. If so, what might they be hiding? What secret could be greater or more terrible than being in league with The Dark Symmetry?

THE CARTEL

Cybertronic was eager, even jingoistic, in its submission of troops to fight the Dark Legion in the last war. Those troops matched even the best the Blood Berets had to offer, and their effort was not forgotten. The Cartel was happy to accept this much needed addition to the Doomtrooper's fight, and has publicly stated so.

Privately, the Cartel remain suspicious of Cybertronic. The corporation's influence at the Security Council remains strong, but its influence is sandbagged elsewhere. The Cartel remains unconvinced of Cybertronic's commitment of loyalty and actively spies on them.

Cybertronic is alleged to be using its technological resources to not only spy on the Cartel, but to gain powerful influence over Cartel executives. The result is a kind of Cold War between the two entities, a war of the shadows where information and influence are more valuable than any flag planted on a field of battle. The Cartel is accustomed to having its Doomtroopers and internal intelligence as leverage against others. With Cybertronic, it may have met its match.

BAUHAUS

Cybertronic took more new employees from Bauhaus than any other corporation. Given that Cybertronic began as a Bauhaus offshoot, this is not surprising. What is surprising is the continual defection of Bauhaus corporate executives to this day–even to the point of their actively seeking recruitment.

Cybertronic's commitment to excellence continues to fuel respect from Bauhaus. The two corporations maintain friendly relations. The relationship is symbiotic. Bauhaus supplies the vast majority of raw materials Cybertronic needs, while Bauhaus receives technological products from Cybertronic. This allows Bauhaus a privileged position when it comes to technological superiority over all other corporations, other than Cybertronic itself.

In return for this, Bauhaus often acts as a puppet in the Cartel to push Cybertronic agendas. This had led some to believe the two corporations are more closely, and possibly illegally, tied than most realise.

Yet all is not rosy behind closed doors. Bauhaus takes Cybertronic seriously as a threat, and higher ups believe previous Bauhaus executives may have been responsible for Founding Day. These two outwardly friendly corporations still maintain a great rivalry where the unvarnished, spin free worlds of espionage and business meet.

Cybertronic does not consider Bauhaus an equal threat, believing it has its rival well in hand. Whether this is official policy or a mere ploy on the part of Cybertronic is unclear.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Cybertronic's pursuit of pre-Fall technology and human cybernetic enhancement are too much for The Brotherhood. At the same time, Cybertronic has a devoted following of consumers and cybernetically enhanced humans. To openly war with Cybertronic, whether theologically or conventionally, could lead to a system-wide civil war.

This is not to say that The Brotherhood does not pursue all clandestine options available to it. Its enmity for what Cybertronic represents is well known. Curiously, Cybertronic is unconcerned by this dogma despite the vast numbers who listen to the Cardinal's gospel.

THE DARK LEGION

None can say what moves the inhuman minds of these monsters, but thus far they have not had success infecting Cybertronic to the degree they have other corporations. This only serves to bolster theories that the two are somehow in league. The truth has yet to be revealed. Once it is, the true nature of the corporation may become clear.

WHITESTAR

DEFENDERS OF THE MOTHERLAND

On and beneath the surface of the Earth, in ancient nuclear bunkers, metro tunnels, and abandoned nuclear facilities, the people of Whitestar carve out a precarious existence in a hostile, monster-filled world. Under the charismatic leadership of the Tsarina, across a vast territory ranging from deforested mountains to great poisoned lakes and blighted arctic wastes, Whitestar's tough, stoic populace maintains an undimmed pride in its traditions and its beloved Motherland. Its uncomplaining, mend-and-make-do attitude is a key ingredient in its continued survival.

The great exodus, in which the corporations took humanity to Luna and beyond, was undertaken on the basis of a dying Earth. Drained of its natural resources and indelibly scarred by war, the cradle of humanity had nothing left to give. The only hope for human life lay on other worlds. The corporations chose the people they considered to be the most valuable and discarded the rest—the vast majority of humanity was left behind to die out.

It was certainly true that the energy and resource demands of the corporations at the time were unsustainable without expansion into the solar system, and the planet's ecosystem appeared to be going into meltdown. Unpredictable, inexplicable climactic phenomena caused havoc. At times, electrical storms covered entire continents and drowned the cities of mankind with torrential acid rain that hissed and burned as it splashed onto the ground below. The atmosphere became infected with strange toxic mists, and above parched farmlands crying out for water, the boiling skies yielded not one drop of rain for years at a time.

The Tsarina leads from the front with her Bone Hussars.

The manner in which the corporations left the planet helped make their analysts' predictions a self-fulfilling prophecy. They became more ruthless than ever in tearing what ores and energy sources remained from the earth in their haste to get away. The botched launch of the Oktokki heavy transport set off a chain reaction of devastating explosions on the launch pad that caused the colossal exodus craft to explode in the lower atmosphere, raining burning wreckage across a wide area. Terraforming agents from the Oktokki's cargo hold, and those of nearby exodus ships yet to launch, escaped, billowing into the Earth's atmosphere.

THE CORPORATIONS RETURN

Shortly before the Dark Symmetry emerged, corporation technology had advanced the point where regenerating Earth's ecology via terraforming appeared to be a viable prospect. Bauhaus, Capitol, and Imperial pooled their resources and expertise to carry out this project. They invited Mishima to take part but Mishima declined, stating that the home world should be left as it was; an eternal memorial to the consequences of humanity's hubris and carelessness.

Bauhaus, Capitol, and Imperial were not swayed by this argument. Though the Earth had been stripped bare at the time of the Great Exodus as far as was then possible, advances in science meant that the corporations now had the capacity to leach even more value from the planet as it stood, let alone what riches could be obtained once the ecosystem had been regenerated. With the countless wrecked ships and other technology left behind it was just too tempting a prospect. The three sent a joint expeditionary force to Earth. Almost immediately, all contact with it was lost. From somewhere in the Caucasus, a centuries-old relay station sent a narrow-beam transmission to the central Bauhaus listening array on Luna: "You chose to abandon the Motherland. You shall not return."

Not only had some unknown enemy wiped out the elite soldiers sent to explore the Earth's surface conditions, but that force apparently had the means to know where to send its vaguely worded warning. How long had these mysterious Earth-dwellers been watching the worlds of humanity, with no one suspecting they were there? As it turned out, the initial expedition had landed in the middle of a nest of mutant predators. Whitestar interceptors had tracked the corporations' landing craft and raced to the scene, but arrived too late to save them.

Whitestar found no survivors of the first expedition to Earth.

Throwing the concept of the sunk-cost fallacy to the wind, the three corporations immediately set about planning an even larger expedition to Earth, with more soldiers who would be more heavily armed. It would be an overwhelming force, which nothing and nobody could resist. Once again, the corporations' faculties of foresight proved lacking when it came to the subject of planet Earth.

The corporations, stunned by the destruction of their terraforming expedition, mobilised a massive armada into orbit around the Earth, in readiness for an invasion of the planet.

On Luna, a message was received from the surface stating that the Earth was under the dominion of 'the White Star' and that any attempt to land would invite retaliation. Assuming the message to be a bluff by some group of ragtag survivors, the corporations launched their assault and met with no resistance. Confident in their military might, they quickly established firebases in the ruins of Berlin, Washington DC, and London.

Reconnaissance missions from the newly established firebases found no sign of human habitation, but they quickly discovered the fate of the previous expedition. At the site of the initial beachhead, the bodies of the corporations' finest soldiers lay scattered.

Before they could take stock of this discovery's ramifications, each base came under attack from an unknown enemy lurking in the mist. Without warning, Whitestar forces launch a coordinated subterranean assault on the corporate firebases, overwhelming them with thousands of ground troops who burst through the ground in great burrowing war machines. In unison with the assault, a single missile streaked into orbit, detonating in the stratosphere and temporarily crippling the remaining corporate fleet with a massive EM pulse. The corporate ground forces were surrounded and outnumbered, their technology crippled by the pulse. They had no choice but to surrender to Marshall Kirov, who issued a stark ultimatum: withdraw from Earth orbit and make no further attempt to approach the planet's surface, or a full nuclear launch would be initiated against Luna.

The corporations, shocked by the emergence of Whitestar and their unexpected defeat, withdrew from the planet. They established a blockade around the planet in the years that followed. Whitestar made no attempt to break it.

Hundreds of thousands waiting to board vast transports were killed by the debris and millions were fatally infected by the terraforming agents, rendering huge swathes of eastern and central Asia all but uninhabitable. Those that survived in the infected areas, and their descendants, underwent alarming mutations.

But not everyone with access to the corridors of power had given up on their home planet. While the corporations packed for a hurried departure, the loosely aligned groups that would come to be known as Whitestar were busy making preparations to stay. Unwilling to abandon their beloved homelands, and with the backing of government elements, they set up extensive networks of subterranean shelters that would enable them to remain in safety until the worst of the chaos outside had blown over. While the rich and powerful families of Eurasia joined Bauhaus and headed off-planet, the proud people of Whitestar got on with the business of surviving. As civilisation collapsed, Whitestar seized the empty military and scientific facilities left behind by Bauhaus, and incorporated them into its shelter network.

Today Whitestar lives in territory under tenuous control, carved out of an environment thoroughly hostile to humanity. Between the harsh, unforgiving elements of Earth's still chaotic climate and the hideous creatures that have terrorized the surface since the nuclear winter that followed the corporations' orbital nuclear bombardment of the planet, the Whitestar way of life demands constant vigilance and determination to survive.

Whitestar is exclusively focused on Earth and the well-being of its people and homeland. Any interest the Whitestar leadership takes in events off-planet are framed entirely in terms of the impact they may have on Earth. Whitestar is able to project power into space to a degree, but has yet to mount any significant military space expeditions, choosing to keep its cards close to its chest. Even though it may have the capacity to do so, Whitestar's leadership has no interest in acquiring territory elsewhere.

However, Whitestar personnel may be found in small numbers abroad. Luna is home to the Whitestar embassy, established some time after the First Dark Legion War (though no one can remember when it first appeared); a huge slab-like bunker that serves as the nation's official point of contact with the Brotherhood and, via the Cartel, the corporations. The embassy is served by over a thousand officials, soldiers, and technical staff, most of whom live within the embassy's fortified walls. Visiting diplomats and functionaries are permitted access only to the two storeys of the embassy that sit above surface. The layout and contents of the subsurface levels remain shrouded in mystery.

The second largest group of Whitestar travellers off-world is to be found in the Asteroid Belt and the fringes of the solar system, where the scavengers and seekers of lost lore, known as Resectors, are drawn by the stories of treasures left behind in old orbitals or outposts that were abandoned when the Dark Symmetry first took root. Growing up in Whitestar territory is fine preparation for living among the hardy folk of the asteroids. For their part, the locals find the Whitestar travellers strange but amicable visitors.

THE SETTLEMENTS

Whitestar territory is divided into strongholds: self-governing regions based around a central bunker or other fortified emplacement. This redoubt, called the krepost, is the local place of refuge, military headquarters, meeting place, and trading post. Not all strongholds are created equal. The smallest are home to ten souls or fewer, and must rely on support from larger strongholds nearby or on scavenging from the area around them in order to survive. The majority of strongholds have a population in the hundreds, enabling them to maintain some level of industry and agriculture. Nearly all agriculture is done underground, which accounts for the prevalence of mushrooms in modern Whitestar cuisine.

The greatest strongholds approach the size and stature of genuine cities. The great northwestern stronghold of Nova Zembla was built in the metro tunnels of two great cities, now joined underground by Whitestar's extensive earth-boring project into a huge, sprawling subterranean metropolis with a population of over a million.

MUTUAL SUPPORT

Every stronghold is responsible for organising its own defensive measures. In times of need it may call upon its neighbours, or even call for aid from further afield. Whitestar operates on firmly held principles of solidarity, on which basis the larger strongholds are expected to help out the smaller outposts when they are attacked. Even from a purely selfish perspective, the last thing a major stronghold needs is a brood of mutants nesting nearby, threatening its own trade and livelihood.

Similarly, one stronghold will help out another with food, equipment, or other supplies if it can spare them, provided that there is genuine need.

CENTRAL COMMAND: ZLOGORA

If Whitestar had a capital city—and because it is a federation of self-governing strongholds, it does not—that capital would be Zlogora. Buried deep beneath a mountain in the southern Urals, this is where the leaders of Whitestar meet to hold their most important

Whitestar soldiers know nothing but the constant fight for survival.

summits, and where the Tsarina consults her State Council. The city began life as a secret nuclear weapons facility, and expanded to become a place of permanent residence following the Whitestar takeover. Many key elements of Whitestar's nuclear arsenal are still kept at Zlogora, and it is the nerve centre of Whitestar's Dead Hand defence system.

Officially, Zlogora is directly ruled by the Tsarina. When she is away from the stronghold, it is ruled by the Army Council, an appointed group of nine Streltsy officers. The Council is currently led by General Georgy Konstantinovich Borodin, a tousle-bearded man who resembles a grumpy bear in both appearance and demeanour. He is a veteran of many campaigns fighting alongside the Tsarina, and he is utterly devoted to her.

The Central Keep was the original military facility and is now the site of the Tsarina's military headquarters. The civilian areas of the stronghold were excavated outwards from there and now extend for over 100 kilometres in all directions beneath the neighbouring mountains. The Central Keep is blast-proof and able to remain completely self-sufficient for years at a time, accommodating up to 20,000 people. An underground lake provides all the drinking water the keep needs, and 120 huge fuel tanks store enough reserves to keep its power station running. A TV and radio station allows the Tsarina to address the nation at any time.

The rest of the stronghold is not nearly so well equipped, but nonetheless remains a mighty redoubt for the millions who live there. In the event of power failure, the people of the outer stronghold can still communicate with the Central Keep by means of the stronghold's omnipresent pneumatic tube system, which relays message capsules throughout the complex using compressed air. The inhabitants often use the tube system to send small items to each other, although they are only supposed to send messages using the official paper slips.

THE TWIN CITIES: NOVA ZEMBLA

Whitestar's largest stronghold is a vast subterranean conurbation that stretches over 750 kilometres between its two principal centres: the sea port of Petropol in the northwest and Belokamen in the southeast. During the long nuclear winter that rendered the surface world uninhabitable, hundreds of thousands took refuge in the metro systems of the cities that were to become the two hubs of Nova Zembla. After decades of excavation the cities joined up, and the resulting conglomeration gained its present name.

Nova Zembla protrudes above ground frequently, where gun turrets and watch towers form Whitestar's principal line of defence for its western border. Whitestar territory extends many hundreds of kilometres further westward than the official district limits of Nova Zembla but in the event of all-out war or an evacuation, all Whitestar personnel in the western provinces know that it is the place to seek shelter and regroup.

Below ground, the dimly-lit tunnels and manmade caves of Nova Zembla are the home and workplace of over 9,000,000 people, making it Whitestar's largest population centre, and possibly the whole

Earth's, by a wide margin. Unlike most strongholds, Nova Zembla has enough manpower and diversity of industry to be completely self-sufficient, with a degree of belt-tightening, if necessary.

Despite their official union, Petropol and Belokamen maintain a healthy rivalry with one another. This leads to frequent deadlocks in the Nova Zembla council of elders, as Petropol mayor Arkady Ouromov and his Belokamen counterpart Sergei Grischenko often find themselves at loggerheads. At the grass roots level, this spirited competition manifests as sporting rivalries, off-colour jokes, and the occasional pub brawl.

THE GATEWAY TO SPACE: KOSMOGRAD & URGAMAL

Whitestar's principal spaceport is part of the Urgamal stronghold, deep in the Central Desert, far from the frontiers, and with the trackless sands of the desert guarding it to the south. Opened to offworlders nearly two years ago, this is where all authorised visitors first enter Whitestar territory. Their first glimpse of Whitestar is not much to look at. Above ground, the Kosmograd spaceport is nothing more than a dozen launchpads joined by the spaceport's internal rail lines, and the sparse, corroded gantries that support ships setting up for launch.

It is beneath the ground that things really get going. Under the spaceport the city of Urgamal is a bustling hive of travel and trade. Merchants flock here in great numbers to bid on items brought back by daring Resectors who venture into space or across the ruined Earth in search of unique salvage. Resectors flock here from around Whitestar territory too, hoping to trade their relatively mundane salvage for enough cash to buy passage off the planet, or to repair their craft for another journey through the wastelands. Many of them run out of money before they can get a berth, and wind up living permanently in Urgamal.

Urgamal's security is handled directly by the Streltsy; it is too valuable for the Tsarina to leave its defence to a squabbling council of local elders. The Streltsy garrison plays no part in the administration of the stronghold, but cracks down hard on any sign of danger to the spaceport.

EXPANDING THE NETWORK

Ever since they first took refuge beneath the ground, the people of Whitestar have been building outwards. Whitestar has a huge fleet of tunnelling machines, large and small, that work constantly to expand the living space of the population, and to seek out new seams of mineral resources. The military has 'mole units' of its own, which use great burrowing war machines to seize the element of surprise by bursting up from the earth when the enemy least expects it. Rail links are vital to transportation around the Whitestar lands – most are underground, for safety. Where rivers or other terrain features mean an underground line is not possible, the trains travel on the surface, heavily armed and armoured. Despite decades of work, many strongholds are not linked to any others by a tunnel connection. These are the most vulnerable to mutant or raider attacks. Furthermore, the network as it stands is not a unified whole. Each web of tunnels is centred on the largest stronghold in the region, but gaps exist between the tunnel clusters. You cannot, for example, travel by tunnel all the way from Nova Zembla to Zlogora.

THE WASTELANDS

The Whitestar strongholds are pin points of light in a benighted world. The Wastelands are the darkness between them. Only the brave or desperate venture into this shattered landscape. Punishing storms howl across the wastes with a wearying regularity and among the burnt out ruins of the old civilisation, radiation and chemical spills still pose a threat to the unwary. The creatures of the Wastelands are an even greater threat; decades of mutation caused by nuclear fallout and particulate matter in the atmosphere derived from dispersed terraforming agents has created fearsome monsters and sinister, creeping menaces.

THE DEAD HAND OF WHITESTAR

Would-be enemies of Whitestar should be aware of two core precepts on which Whitestar military doctrine is founded. One is that they would rather die than surrender their beloved Motherland. The second is that if you attack the Motherland there will be revenge, no matter what happens. The Dead Hand system shows that second principle in action. It is an automated 'fail-deadly' control system for Whitestar's nuclear arsenal, designed to provide Whitestar with an unkillable second strike capacity that will launch retaliatory strikes even if the entirety of the Whitestar leadership, or indeed the entire Whitestar population, is wiped out.

If an attack of sufficient magnitude is detected by the Dead Hand sensors located across Whitestar territory, the system sends a green-light signal to the missile silos. Precisely what constitutes 'sufficient magnitude' is a question of great interest to the corporations, particularly Bauhaus, which surmise correctly that it would be on the top of the hit list. While it is almost certain that overpressure from a nuclear strike of any kind would be enough to trigger the Dead Hand, it is possible that nerve agents or conventional bombardment could also set it off. The details of the triggers, and precisely what locations Whitestar's nukes are aimed at, are the subject of intensive investigation by the corporations' espionage divisions.

A dull nocturnal glow signals the presence of the slimy lichen called Adskiy Sliz, which slowly pools and creeps among the remains of abandoned factories and towns. Inhaling its spores leads to infection and then death. It is believed that its grey-green striations on the skin are the first stage in creating the Hollow Men: shambling humanoid figures with innards like straw, who live for nothing. They pay no heed to humans or other creatures, but cluster together in the old towns and cities. Sometimes, it is said, they simply appear within a bunker and make everyone else become like them. "The Hollow Men got them," people say, when a distant Whitestar outpost falls off the grid.

Whitestar cremates those who die from the Adskiy Sliz, just in case.

More directly predatory are the Wasteland Monsters, a catch-all term for a wide variety of deadly mutants that hunt and kill throughout the Wastelands. From the stealthy, catlike Kleshnya to the ogrish, hulking Blood Giants, these fearsome creatures are a constant danger to any traveller in the wilderness. No matter how many 'district clearance' operations the stronghold militias mount to eliminate the monsters in the hope of establishing settlements above ground and rebuilding some form of agriculture, there are always more to replace those that are slain. Some daring Whitestar zoologists have begun to track specific monsters in the hopes of discovering their breeding grounds, aiming to cut off their predations at the source.

ZONES OF CORRUPTION

Springing up softly overnight, like the pale grey mushrooms that flourish in the Wastelands, Zones of Corruption radiate outward from some as yet unknown place in the far white north. The Zones are perfect circles kilometres across where the very laws of physics seem to be in flux. Inside the Zones gravity can change direction and intensity from one footstep to the next. At night, the pale blue flames of Saint Alex's Fire lick along the rooftops of abandoned towns. A city bus can crumble into ash at a touch, while for the ancient car parked next to it time seems to stand still, the bodywork as trim and gleamingly new as the day it was built. People that spend time in a Zone of Corruption frequently come back changed in some ineffable manner, and pass on strange new traits to their children. Technology cannot be trusted here, for the Dark Symmetry is stronger here than anywhere else on Earth.

Official Whitestar missions enter the Zones to map their extent, recover valuable relics of the past ages, and to bring back for study the Type 1 Prototypes–highly advanced artefacts that seem to be found only in the Zones. These items, which range from powerful weapons to inert, seemingly purposeless devices that modern science cannot explain, are always found in ancient Bauhaus locations, whether deep below ground in secure research facilities or in the burnt-out remains of luxury dwellings. Bauhaus claims no knowledge of these items, which contemporary technology cannot

The Dead Hand of Whitestar is feared by Bauhaus most of all.

reproduce and the Brotherhood insists must be the work of the Dark Symmetry, even though they show no manifestations of that dread curse. The Zones attract unofficial visitors too. Resectors greedy for new swag seek out the prototypes, which an astute scavenger may trade for a fortune. Wary of the connection between the Dark Symmetry and the Zones, the Tsarina has declared all Type 1 discoveries as contraband, subject to immediate confiscation by her authorities when discovered. Despite tight controls, a small but thriving black market continues.

Some people simply feel compelled to enter the Zones, as if moved by some occult hand to seek out the answer to a question that cannot be expressed in words. Only another person who has felt the same burning in their heart can truly understand the compulsion.

TECHNOLOGY

Whitestar is a nation built on painted-over rust, goes the old mechanics' joke. This is an exaggeration, but Whitestar certainly is a nation built on hammered-together leftovers of Earth's fallen civilisations. Even now, Whitestar is only beginning to establish sustainable industry and agriculture, and is still very much reliant on reclaiming parts, equipment, and even pre-Fall food stores in order to sustain its people. Fortunately, the wealthy, wasteful merchant houses that ruled and then destroyed the Earth in centuries gone by left plenty of stuff lying around.

Whitestar has no capacity to make its own vehicles from scratch, nor to produce weapons, communication devices, or other technically advanced material on an industrial basis. As a result, Whitestar technology is entirely put together from pre-existing parts. Uncharitable observers call this 'cobbled together'. Historically minded Whitestar mechanics have revived the old term bricolage—the art of creating new works from diverse things at hand.

At its best, Whitestar technology functions at a standard comparable to corporation tech, and is far less susceptible to the Dark Symmetry thanks to its use of comparably primitive components. However, Whitestar equipment frequently functions less reliably than corporate technology, and it is prone to break down at precisely the worst possible moment.

THE TSARINA

After Whitestar retreated to the massive network of underground bunkers and redoubts that had been constructed during those last, chaotic years before the corporations departed, a new leader emerged from obscurity. Claiming to be a descendant of the great Tsars of old Russia, Alexandra Romanova, supported by elements of the Russian military and the Orthodox church, proclaimed herself Tsarina and quickly established her authority. United under her banner, the people set about reclaiming technology and resources from the fallen world above.

The Tsarina's mobile HQ bears a 1000 of her elite soldiers.

Time and time again the Tsarina, accompanied by her fearsome warriors, has been the saviour of Whitestar. Her actions inspire greatness in her people, leading always from the front and striding into battle with her great sword swinging left and right. Her elite Night Hussar bodyguards compete to confront the most fearsome foes whilst the thousands of Whitestar warriors charge forth ready to die for her, shouting "V boy za zarinu!" – "Fight for the Tsarina!"

The Tsarina has rescued her people from the brink of disaster countless times. It is her intervention, whether methodically planning defences, leading expeditions of discovery, or riding to battle mutant incursions, that has allowed Whitestar to slowly but surely rebuild its society, perched precariously between the ruthless elements and the terrifying beasts of Earth's untamed nuclear winter.

ZOLOTOY GLAZ: A FORTRESS ON RAILS

The Tsarina travels far and wide throughout the Whitestar territories. Constantly on the move, she rarely tarries longer than a few days in one place. Her mobile HQ is the armoured train Zolotoy Glaz. This moving fortress carries the Tsarina, her State Council, and a thousand of her elite soldiers from one stronghold to the next, above or below ground. Though not every part of Whitestar territory is connected to it, the extensive rail network remains the most reliable and fastest method of travel to any emergency site or theatre of war.

THE MILITARY

Every Whitestar stronghold is expected to maintain a militia for defensive purposes. These forces are also deployed as security troops when necessary, and may be called upon to support the Tsarina's army when they are conducting operations in the stronghold's locality. Numerically speaking, these militias, whose soldiers are often part-timers, form the bulk of Whitestar personnel under arms.

Whitestar's true military strength is the Tsarina's personal army, the Streltsy. Headquartered in the White Fortress close to Zlogora, the Streltsy ranges far and wide across Whitestar land, patrolling as rapid reaction forces in the Wastelands or as small groups of troubleshooters for strongholds in need.

BONE HUSSARS

Cast from his home bunker at an early age, a would-be Bone Hussar must survive seven days and seven nights alone in the icy wastes. Faced with the mutated horrors of the nuclear winter, in order to live through that week of terror he must make the hunter the hunted. Using only the weapons he can find or make from the ruins around him, he must kill again and again to survive. When he finally returns, the bones of his victims are forged through a special process into one of the Bone Hussar's famous swords, now the only weapon he will ever wield in battle. These boneswords are as strong and sharp as steel, and deal death with particular venom to the creatures of the Dark Legion.

Living to serve their Tsarina, the Bone Hussars patrol the lands around the Whitestar strongholds at night. When battle is joined, the Bone Hussars are ever eager to be at the vanguard, even leaping clear over the heads of their brothers in arms, competing to take on the most deadly foes where the fighting is thickest. Afterwards, they like nothing better than to recount their glorious deeds over many bottles of the best vodka.

NIGHT WITCHES

The Night Witches are Whitestar's notorious daredevil pilot corps. These audacious women cobble together scavenged parts to create their jetwings: mindbogglingly fast aircraft that are essentially engines with a seat and just enough wingspan to make them fly. Racing across the icy wastes, the famous high-pitched scream of their ancient engines heralds their arrival. They patrol the lands around the bunkers from the air and are also often found among Whitestar's off-planet ranks. They pilot the salvaged spacecraft that Whitestar uses for its missions away from Earth.

Whether in the air or in the vacuum of space, Night Witches must be both pilot and mechanic, making in-flight repairs and nursing along the ageing wrecks they fly to coax just that little more from them before they fall apart completely.

THE NAMELESS

Out on the fringes of Whitestar territory, where the questionable security of the strongholds' security zones fades away, the Nameless keep watch. These soldiers, informally known as the Suicide Brigades, sign away their lives to serve as soldiers in exchange for ensuring that a loved one will be supported by the Tsarina for life. The Nameless are orphans or outcasts with nowhere else to go, or leave behind a 'widow' to collect the service pensions that are paid out as if they were already dead. The volunteers are stripped of their names and identities, and subjected to experimental genetic therapy at the Tsarina's research facility in Nova Zembla. They join knowing that their bodies will be changed and improved, but that at any time the treatments they undergo may take their lives.

The volunteers join the ranks of the Nameless with a single injection that initiates their core augmentations. They are handed a needle gun primed with a cocktail of mutation agents and must pull the trigger themselves. The final decision, after all, is theirs.

Bone Hussar's fight alone against the greatest odds.

On the northern frontier, the Brigades patrol the Tsarina's Wall, guarding against the horrors that stream southward from where the Zones of Corruption propagate. The wall's central bastion is Camp Korsakov, a fortress occupying the hulk of an abandoned Bauhaus armoured vehicle. The megatank has not moved in centuries, and its ten great caterpillar tracks rusted solid decades ago. When Camp Korsakov was a functioning vehicle, it had a crew of over a hundred. Today it is manned by a few dozen Nameless at best, its long-range weapon systems long since stolen or removed by the Nameless to point northward against the mutant hordes.

On Whitestar's other frontiers, the Nameless have nothing as substantial as the Tsarina's Wall. They keep watch in lonely outposts among deserted gun emplacements and military installations left behind from the corporations' pre-exodus wars. At the western extremity of the Whitestar territory, the rusting harbour of Mertvaya Voda sits at the shore of the Poison Sea. Here the Nameless are stationed in the wreck of the Ustinov, whose still functional turrets and missile launchers keep watch over the corroded tankers and container ships that sit listing at anchor, and the wild and lawless lands beyond. Out to sea, nothing stirs—for now.

RESECTORS

Exploring the ruins of Earth's old civilisations is a high-priority mission for Whitestar. Useful technology and supplies are to be found there, and the Tsarina is particularly keen to reconstruct the history of what happened during the corporations' chaotic final years on Earth. Precisely what the Tsarina is looking for is yet to be disclosed. To the average Resector, all that matters is that she pays handsomely for relics that promise to reveal the secrets of the past.

The Resectors are fearless explorers who brave the Wastelands to bring back anything of use in the bunkers. It takes bravery, perception, and acumen to be a successful Resector. Every item they pick up is another one weighing them down when they need to flee some mutant menace on the way home. The trick is knowing which ones they can afford to drop in order to get away.

Since Whitestar re-established contact with the corporations some Resectors have travelled into space, where they turn their scavenging skills to exploring the drifting wrecks and orbital stations that were abandoned after the emergence of the Dark Symmetry. It is dangerous work, but relatively free of mutant predators.

WHITESTAR DIPLOMACY

After the embarrassing defeat of the Cartel mission to Earth, a period of great mistrust followed before Whitestar was brought round to being more or less an ally of the Brotherhood and, by extension, the Cartel. Today Whitestar has an embassy on Luna and is allied with the corporations in the fight against the Dark Legion.

It has little truck with corporate politics, however, and believes that the corporations' constant jockeying for profit only plays into the hands of the Dark Legion. Whitestar's 'shut up and get on with it' culture is at odds with a great deal of what the corporations value.

There remains a deep resentment among Whitestar for those who abandoned the home world and brought about the nuclear winter. Bauhaus in particular is looked upon as a nation of traitors who ruined its motherland in order to save its own hide.

BAUHAUS

As far as Whitestar is concerned, Bauhaus are traitors, particularly those of House Romanov, who turned tail and ran when the Motherland needed them most. Whitestar representatives tolerate Bauhaus personnel when they must, as part of the Cartel, but look upon them with contempt. Bauhaus employees are guaranteed a frosty reception on Whitestar territory, which may thaw with time. Members of House Romanov can expect Whitestar people who know their origins to refuse to even speak to them. Pushing the point will most likely lead to a physical confrontation.

CAPITOL

Whitestar does not really understand Capitol, and continues to resent its involvement in the abortive re-invasion of Earth. Whitestar's culture emphasises solidarity and cooperation in all things, with every individual given the freedom to choose his own path in life. The corporation is founded on competition and constant struggle for profit and power. In a world where the Dark Legion threatens humanity's very existence, Whitestar citizens find it baffling that anyone would care who has the most arbitrarily-valued currency or flashiest-sounding management position.

CYBERTRONIC

Whitestar has little contact with Cybertronic, and its low-tech culture has little to interest the corporation.

Resectors constantly explore the old world to feed the new.

IMPERIAL

Whitestar is suspicious of Imperial intentions, knowing its history of conquest and involvement in the invasion of Earth alongside Bauhaus and Capitol. That said, the no-nonsense Imperial culture is something that Whitestar finds it easy to identify with.

MISHIMA

Whitestar looks favourably on Mishima, the only corporation at the time to warn against, and not take part in, the attack on Earth. Mishima has not made effusive overtures of friendship, however, and the two parties have little to offer one another in practical terms. As a result, they merely regard one another with a kind of aloof respect.

THE CARTEL

Despite sixty percent of the membership being former enemies of Whitestar, the Tsarina has aligned herself with the Cartel in the interests of presenting a united front against the Dark Legion. Whitestar makes as many of its personnel available for Cartel missions against the Dark Legion as possible. However, this is Whitestar's only involvement. It has only observer status in Cartel council meetings, and does not trouble itself with the pointless bickering in which the traitor corporations engage.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The organisation that brought Whitestar to the table with the Cartel, the Brotherhood is Whitestar's only true off-planet ally. The Brotherhood more or less accepts that it cannot extend its socio-political control to Earth at the present time, though the occasional undercover agent does travel to Whitestar periodically to check up on things, as do numerous ambassadors. On Luna, the Brotherhood is Whitestar's first point of contact with the colonies. It is rare for Whitestar to bring any matter before the Cartel parliament or any of the corporations without first discussing it with the Brotherhood. Some Whitestar Orthodox priests have joined the Brotherhood, seeing a holy war against the Dark Legion as a natural extension of their priesthood.

RELATIONS WITH THE TRIBES

Beyond Whitestar's borders live numerous nomadic tribes, bandit clans, and sedentary inhabitants of the ruined cities. Smaller, more isolated outposts with less access to the major strongholds will sometimes trade with these outsiders. More often, a band of raiders will assault a border stronghold in the hope of making away with Whitestar equipment and supplies.

Outsiders with items of great value to trade, such as gemstones or ancient technologies, make the arduous trek to major strongholds such as Nova Zembla in order to get a better price. Such visitors are watched carefully but by no means forbidden, and those who become regular visitors often settle down in a stronghold and become part of Whitestar.

THE CARTEL

After the Exodus from Old Earth and the collapse of the nation state, the corporations were free to pursue growth and acted without restraint, frequently engaging in armed conflict with each other over the most trivial of matters.

It took the terrifying events of the First Dark Legion War to bring the corporations together in a tenuous truce. The realisation of the magnitude of the threat posed by the Dark Symmetry was the catalyst that brought the corporations together in common purpose. That was the birth of the Cartel. The corporations may not trust—or even like—each other, but they are all united in their desire to survive.

The Cartel serves two primary functions: first, to coordinate operations against the Dark Legion; and second to maintain the fragile peace between the corporations. With the official backing of the Brotherhood, the Cartel offered a ray of hope in turbulent times. The Cartel's success and effectiveness has been mixed. On the battlefield there have been undeniable successes against the Dark Legion, but despite the laudable goals, it has completely failed to keep the peace between the corporations and is often entirely paralysed by corporate infighting.

To the person on the street, the most recognisable symbol of the Cartel is the Doomtroopers. Recruited from the finest warriors from the corporations, they take the battle to the heart of Dark Legion territory.

DELEGATIONS, THE HIGH COUNCIL AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Cartel is organised into five delegations, one from each of Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima, Imperial and Cybertronic. Each delegation is huge and includes thousands of politicians, diplomats, experts, advisors, and administrators. Their role is to pursue the agendas of their corporation within the Cartel.

THE HIGH COUNCIL AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The senior representatives of each corporation meet in the High Council. It is here that all corporate treaties are negotiated and agreed. The High Council has final authority on all matters except security. For those, a single representative from each corporation sits on the Security Council. It is the Security Council that has direct authority of the Doomtroopers and the Bureau of Internal Investigations.

THE CIC AND CCC: the High Council has a number of committees set up to examine key issues facing humanity and to facilitate cooperation by the corporations on these issues, but the two most prominent are the Investigations Committee (CIC) and the Cooperation Committee (CCC). The CIC is focused on the investigation and rooting out of all security threats to humanity, from the common street corner criminal, to the highly motivated and dangerous heretic terrorist cells. It is to the CIC that the Luna Police Department Commissioner and the Director of the Bureau of External Investigations answer.

The CCC's role is to standardise and coordinate operations and trading between the corporations. One key element in this is the regulation of all free-trade between the corporations, particularly in stocks, shares, futures, and other financial instruments. The Cartel Securities Executive (CSE) is the agency set up to investigate and enforce this free-trade, and has personnel on every stock trading floor in the solar system, as well as independent investigators who examine other transactions and deals. The Commissioner of the CSE answers to the CCC.

THE FLIC

The Freelancing Independent Corporations' Committee, known as the FLIC, is a small yet vital part of the Cartel, which is focused on legal issues. The FLIC is the voice of the independent corporations, and is composed of a few hundred negotiators who lobby on their behalf. At least that is the theory, but in practice the FLIC is firmly under the thumb of the Big Five.

The FLIC is advised of any impending system-wide or planetary agreements before they come into force so that they may table amendments or comments, but in reality they very rarely do. In return this rubber-stamp legitimises the agreements and allows the big corporations to claim that they act in the best interest of all of humanity.

One area the FLIC does have full official authority is over 'non-aligned personnel', known to the rest of us as freelancers. This in turn gives the Cartel agents authority over freelancers.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood has its own delegation to the Cartel, though their role is different. Their delegates are officially titled Observers, and are given free access to the committees within the Cartel. Though they

have no voting power themselves, their opinions carry much weight and are not ignored lightly. The Brotherhood is aware that there are one or more secret organisations within the Cartel, and they are actively trying to infiltrate their agents and gain more direct control of the Cartel.

COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

CAPITOL

As it was with the colonisation of Luna and the founding of Luna PD, Capitol was the original instigators of the Cartel, and is still its primary benefactor and supporter. Without doubt, Capitol is the corporation that most cares about the existence of the Cartel, and views it as highly strategic. As such, Capitol is most likely to abide by Cartel decisions and regulations passed by the High Council or Security Council, and it enthusiastically enforces Cartel regulations even within the territory of other corporations.

IMPERIAL

What the Brotherhood likes, Imperial likes, and so Imperial spends substantial time and effort in keeping the Cartel fully functioning and operational. Its primary delegate is the heir to the position of Serenity within Imperial, though he–Marcus Paladine–is more of a spokesperson and figurehead than a negotiator. Imperial is a difficult corporation to negotiate with through Cartel channels because of the ever-changing power dynamics between the Clans. Every Clan wants its input before any decisions are made. Within the High Council and Security Council, Imperial–along with Bauhaus–provides a counterweight against Capitol.

BAUHAUS

Neither the senior management, nor the Elector Houses of Bauhaus are very impressed with the Cartel, but they have no particular desire to change it. Instead they focus on using the Cartel to train their brightest executives, administrators, and diplomats in the realities of inter-corporate relations. Just like Imperial, Bauhaus can be difficult to negotiate with via the Cartel as the Elector Houses and lesser nobles all want a say in any decision making.

MISHIMA

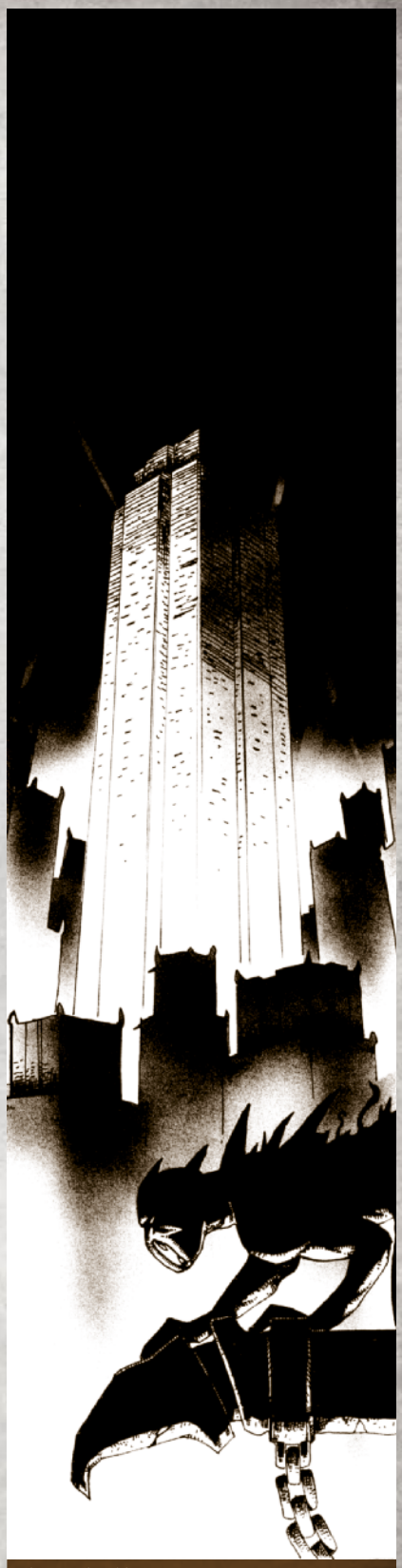
It says a lot about Mishima's attitude towards the Cartel that its representation is split between the politically-neutered Overlord and his son, Lord Heir Moya; ensuring effective disruption within the delegation. Lord Moya's men make all the important decisions in the Security Council, while the Overlord is allowed to attend the High Council. However, as the Overlord has virtually no power over his Lord Heirs, he is little more than a figurehead. Of course the other corporations are fully aware of this situation and are happy to exploit it.

CYBERTRONIC

Feared, hated, or simply avoided, the Cybertronic delegation is isolated within the Cartel and struggles to operate effectively. Its limited influence within the High Council and Security Council is further weakened by the ongoing espionage war being waged against it by Imperial and the Brotherhood. When it comes to the most important decisions in the High Council or Security Council though, Cybertronic has learned to marshal its forces to ensure its influence is heard. For all other decisions, Cybertronic is content to mostly operate via Bauhaus channels instead.

OPERATIONS

As one of its two primary roles, the Cartel provides neutral ground where the corporations can cooperate and work out their differences without resorting to armed conflict or espionage.



The Cartel Building on Luna.

THE DOOMTROOPERS

Designed for one simple purpose: to take the battle to the heart of the Dark Legion. The Doomtroopers are the most iconic combat force in the solar system. The Doomtroopers are a pure combat unit; there are no Doomtrooper support or logistics personnel. All such functions are provided by the Cartel, or whichever corporation is most relevant to the current operation, leaving the Doomtroopers free to concentrate on destroying the Dark Legion.

On the field they operate in units of two Doomtroopers. These super-soldiers are trained in all aspects of combat, and one specialises in close combat whilst the other is a support weapons specialist. They are selected from the finest soldiers in the solar system. Once recruited they leave the employ of their corporation, and are given extensive additional training in anti-Legion warfare by serving Doomtroopers, as well as receiving special blessings from the Brotherhood that raise their combat abilities to superhuman levels. Once training is complete, their loyalty is no longer to their original corporation but to humanity. They know that once they have joined the Doomtroopers they will never leave. A few may live to retire in secure facilities operated by the Inquisition, but almost all die in the field.

EQUIPMENT

Because of the variety of missions they carry out, their exact armaments and equipment vary on a mission-by-mission basis. All of the equipment and weapons used by the Doomtroopers are specially manufactured by the corporations in close cooperation with the Doomtroopers themselves. The level of technology available to them is state of the art and far superior to any standard designs available. In fact much of the equipment they use are unique prototypes. Their ranged weaponry is the best that Capitol, Bauhaus, and Imperial make, and their close combat weapons are crafted by Imperial and Mishima swordsmiths.

Their armour is manufactured by the finest Bauhaus and Imperial artisans, and made of the latest plastics and light-weight ceramics that have been further enhanced by use of the energy-absorbing and dispersing materials provided by Cybertronic. It is rumoured that the blessings the Doomtroopers receive allow them to use equipment that would otherwise be susceptible to corruption by the Dark Symmetry.

MISSION

The variety of missions that the Doomtroopers carry out is as varied as their own backgrounds, but one rule is sacrosanct: Doomtroopers are never used to settle disagreements between the corporations or the Brotherhood. They have one foe and one foe only: the Dark Legion. Used in commando-style operations, Doomtroopers are the masters of small-scale, asymmetrical warfare, and are just as comfortable fighting in the plains of Mars, the jungles of Venus, or deep below the surface of Luna. Doomtroopers can be sent on a mission with as few as just a single pair, or as many as twenty troopers. The most dangerous missions that a Doomtrooper can undertake is a commando raid on a Citadel, though clearing out a nest of heretics beneath the busy streets of Luna ranks almost as high.

Initially the Cartel was composed of just the corporate delegations, but as it grew, the limitations of these politically-aligned groups became more and more self-evident. Communications between rival delegations stymied operations, disrupted talks, and actually increased the amount of armed conflict between the corporations.

In an attempt to correct this, the Brotherhood put forward a plan that would see the Cartel able to hire its own personnel. Securing the support of both Capitol and Imperial for this measure, and the grudging acceptance of the others, the plan was put into action. Capitol transferred over control of Luna PD, and the Cartel Securities Executive and Bureaus were established. A core of Cartel personnel was installed in each department within the Cartel. The delegations still hold great sway, as the senior-most positions are held by the delegations. However, as most of the day-to-day operations within the Cartel are now politically neutral, some headway has been made. Whether this will continue to be successful remains to be seen.

On the Cartel's military role, the picture is much rosier, or at least it is to outsiders. It is generally agreed that the Doomtroopers have been a true success. Much of this is put down to their lack of bureaucracy as they answer directly to the Security Council, but the singular focus of their original agenda is also considered key.

THE BUREAUS

Luna PD and the CSE are not the only security forces the Cartel has. The Cartel was given permission to hire and equip its own paramilitary security force authorised to resolve security matters. Of course, the Cartel frequently terms many of its operations as security matters. These forces are hired from freelancers or independent corporate personnel to keep them independent from the big corporations. Their roles range from protecting Cartel facilities to conventional military operations. There are even rumours of some Cartel

units being used as death squads by rogue elements within the Cartel. Most of these are simply labelled as "Cartel Security Bureaus" but two units in particular have established their own reputations.

THE BUREAU FOR EXTERNAL INVESTIGATION (BEI)

Working closely alongside other law enforcement agencies, most notably Luna PD, BEI investigates any matters not involving Cartel officials, especially those that span multiple jurisdictions. Investigations can include sting operations against heretics or other agents of the Dark Legion, hunting down pirates, catching kidnappers, or large-scale organised crime beyond the ability of Luna PD to investigate.

THE BUREAU FOR INTERNAL INVESTIGATION (BII)

Rooting out corruption and heresy within the Cartel, the BII investigates cases where there is the involvement of a Cartel official or internal policies. As one of its main targets are heretics within the Cartel, the BII work very closely with the Inquisition.

THE CONSPIRACY

In an organisation with as many players involved as the Cartel it is perhaps unsurprising that there is a strong element of corruption within its ranks. Freed from direct oversight of their corporate masters, it is easy for an administrator with a nebulous budget to start thinking they are above the law and begin siphoning off funds for their own personal use. Entire departments have fallen into criminality or corruption, or been turned by organised crime, rival corporations, or even the Dark Legion.

There are known to be conspiracies acting within the Cartel that fund black operations, ranging from death squads to prostitution and people trafficking rings, and as fast as the BII stamps them out, new ones spring up.

These types of corruption are doggedly pursued by the agents of the BII, the Inquisition, and others. But there are rumours of another type of conspiracy: a conspiracy of light.

Fed up with the political stymieing within the Cartel in the face of the threat of the Dark Legion, it is rumoured that there is an off-the-books conspiracy within the Cartel dedicated to destroying the Dark Legion. This is a laudable goal, so why the conspiracy? There are two reasons: firstly, the conspiracy can act without the oversight and meddling of the corporations. Secondly—and more importantly—it is willing to use resources that others would balk at; namely renegade heretics, those who formerly served the Dark Apostles but, for one reason or another, have turned against the Dark Legion and now seek their destruction.

As far as wider society is concerned, and especially the Inquisition, once you have turned to the Dark Symmetry there is no coming back; so this conspiracy plays the most dangerous game. Although, for obvious reasons, it has no official name, the name most usually associated with it is 'the Foundry'.

Doomtroopers fighting their way through Algeroth's hordes.

THE BROTHERHOOD

THE CALLING OF THE CARDINAL

The Brotherhood exists to fulfil a single, all-encompassing mission: to seek out and eradicate the Darkness that surrounds and pervades mankind. This is the Calling of the Cardinal, and it is the ideology and policy of the Brotherhood, to which all else is a secondary consideration. Anything that bars or hinders the Calling in any way, whether knowingly or not, is dealt with swiftly, efficiently, and with extreme prejudice.

That is not to say that the Brotherhood consists of nothing but merciless zealots. The organisation's origins and the heart of its success can be found in charitable works; in simple acts of benevolence performed on an interplanetary scale, giving succour to the needy and the desperate, and in turn earning their thanks and their devotion. However, even this can be traced back to opposition against the Darkness, for those who lack and suffer are amongst the most vulnerable to the insidious influence of the Dark Symmetry. To bolster the lot of the unfortunate is to deny the enemy its greatest source of recruits.

Where most people–both those within the corporations and those living lives of precarious independence–see first and foremost the sermons and the charity of the Brotherhood, everyone knows that this is merely one facet of the system's dominant religion. The spiritual and arcane might of the Brotherhood's mystics and Inquisitors is well-known, if not in particular detail, and these powerful men and women are lauded and feared in equal measure. All are glad for an Inquisitor's unkind inquiries, but there are few of sufficient purity and piety to not feel a shiver of dread at the prospect of meeting one.

None will dispute that humanity is at war, though they may try to press on in spite of it, seeking the comforting routines of work or duty rather than confront the terror directly. The Brotherhood exists at the forefront of this war, fighting it on every conceivable level–from the streets and soup-kitchens of Luna, to the jungles of Venus and the plains of Mars, and everywhere else in between.

THE CHRONICLES

The Dark Soul twists and distorts all that it touches, leaving nothing untainted by its presence–even the thought and memories of man and the legacies of those who came before. Determined to safeguard the remnants of the past, the Brotherhood has taken action, engraving extensive histories of mankind upon the walls of the cathedrals. Each cathedral contains a single one of these histories, dubbed Chronicles, which is kept under heavy guard. Visitors to the Chronicles, and there are many, are watched carefully and searched before being allowed access. Each Chronicle covers a single section of the history of the war against the Darkness.

NECESSARY ORIGINS

The Brotherhood only exists because mankind's very survival is at stake, and its origins can be found in an era of strife and discord. Humanity had fled the cradle of Earth, leaving an irradiated,

FAITH AND THE BROTHERHOOD

Human spirituality is a question with as many answers as there are people. The Brotherhood, contrary to appearances, is not truly a religion. It bears many of the trappings of one, and many of its traditions and titles are drawn from millennia-old faiths. In truth, while much of their prominence is eclipsed by the Brotherhood, the religions of Old Earth remain in some form or another, for faith is a potent and enduring thing. The Brotherhood has no quarrel with proponents of these ancient beliefs, and silently encourages their persistence as yet another means of fortifying man against the darkness. However, while men of faith are welcomed in the Brotherhood, no person is beyond corruption, and more than once the Inquisition has been compelled to purge a heretic cell that has hidden itself behind the guise of legitimate religion.

Dominick Durand preaches in the Luna Cathedral surrounded by his personal guard.

THE BROTHERS

As the Dark Symmetry spread across the system, so too did word of the Brothers. Using their wealth to establish soup kitchens, hospices, and shelters on Luna, Venus, and Mars, these wealthy Bauhauser siblings found themselves the subject of news pieces on television, radio, and in print. However, the attention wasn't all positive – corporate investigations into their benevolent activities were numerous and invasive, as they saw a threat to the loyalty of their workforces and thus the productivity that ensured their profits and territories.

In spite of these intrusions, the Brothers' influence spread, and their sermons found their way onto televisions and radios across the system even as anarchy spread and computerised systems failed.

toxic wasteland in its wake. Ever eager to push outwards for new opportunities, driven by ambition and hubris, explorers stumbled upon things long hidden, things that had been dormant for untold ages, whose power emerged and wrought terrible harm upon all that humanity had created.

Amongst all this, came Nathaniel Durand, and his brothers Alexander and Peter. Originally the scions of a noble family within Bauhaus, the Durand brothers emerged from the jungles of Venus during this age of terror. Few could deny Nathaniel's majestic presence, and he spoke at length of the unnatural, unholy force that was the source of the malignant presence afflicting mankind, crippling technology, and setting brother against brother. He urged executives, religious leaders, and policy-makers to unite and join his battle against the encroaching darkness.

To begin with, Durand was ignored by those in power. But as his sway amongst the common populace grew, his word spreading to those overlooked and abandoned by the corporations through acts of charity and benevolence, the corporations began to grow concerned. They sought to remove him, lobbying the churches on Luna to decry his words as false. Durand retaliated by demonstrating his powers, performing miracles by healing the sick and reading minds. Millions more flocked to his banner, yet the corporations remained adamant in their refusal to acquiesce.

Durand gave an ultimatum – cease all inter-corporate hostilities within six months, or he would end them. Wary of his power, the corporations' leaders nonetheless regarded his threat as an empty one, and continued to battle, despatching assassins to eliminate Durand. Six months later, with no end in sight to the corporate wars, Durand delivered a sermon, known to history as his 'Divination' address. The secrets and strategies of the corporations were laid bare in front of the system's media, essentially halting the corporations' ability to wage war against one another effectively. Then, the assassins who had been hired to slay him, one-hundred-and-fifty-four in all, were brought forward and asked to join Durand's crusade. All but ten kneeled before him, demonstrating their new allegiance, and the remaining ten were released. One took the chance to try to complete his mission, and vanished in a blaze of light as Durand's power was unleashed.

Overwhelmed by public opinion, and crippled by Durand's address, the corporations capitulated. The Treaty of Heimburg marked the end of the corporate wars. In the aftermath, Durand's power and authority was consolidated upon Luna, and the Brotherhood was formed. Durand was named Cardinal, and history remembers that year as the first Year of the Cardinal; a new beginning for humanity.

PREPARING FOR WAR

The Cardinal got to work immediately, establishing the structure of the Brotherhood and setting in motion the fortification of mankind. This began with the Edict of Thoth, a series of declarations condemning the use of artificial intelligences, cybernetic enhancement of humans, genetic engineering, and a range of other technologies deemed too vulnerable to the influences of the Dark Symmetry.

Costly as it was, the corporations had little choice but to accede to these demands, and subsequently submitted to the formation of an

Ours is a duty to record the Chronicles.

inter-corporate organisation to facilitate trade, cooperation, and a united military and peacekeeping effort–the Cartel. Amidst all this, Imperial conquistadors pushed to the edges of the system, against the warnings and dire prophecies of the Cardinal.

The Imperial expedition–details of which are uncertain, for there are few survivors, none of them sane–changed the creeping menace of the Dark Symmetry into an oncoming storm of destruction. Brotherhood Prophets and Chroniclers fell to madness in their hundreds as a result of a wave of nightmarish visions. As the darkness twisted archives and records dating back to the exodus from Earth, the Cardinal ordered the first Chronicle inscribed upon the walls of Luna's cathedral, a permanent record of what came before, untouched by the warping influence of the darkness.

This had been the work of the first Apostle: Ilian, Mistress of the Dark Symmetry. Soon after, the second appeared upon Venus, laying waste to cities at the head of what became known as the Dark Legion. Little could be done to halt the advance of Algeroth, Apostle of War. In his wake, as the dead festered and decomposed where they were slain, came Demnogonis, Lord of Plagues. His diseases afflicted those yet to fall in battle. Then, as all seemed hopeless, Muawijhe, Speaker of Madness, and Semai, Bringer of Discord, seeded mankind with madness and betrayal.

RETRIBUTION

Luna, untouched by the onslaught of the Dark Legion, held strong against the terror thanks to the Cardinal's presence. Though the Brotherhood had spread across the system, none but those on Luna could withstand the power of the Dark Apostles. It seemed as if humanity had reached its darkest and most crucial hour. The Cardinal commanded each corporation to rally its greatest warriors and send them to Venus under his command–as he planned to confront Algeroth personally.

The greatest and most desperate army mankind had yet seen swept towards Venus, and the counter-attack began. The battle raged for days, with the Cardinal and Algeroth at the centre of it all, trading blows tirelessly and unleashing inconceivable power. At its height, the Cardinal seemed poised to strike down Algeroth, but his hand was stayed by the words whispered to him by the Apostle. Algeroth used the moment of opportunity to deal a mortal blow to the Cardinal, and then vanished, sending the Dark Legion into disarray. Cardinal Durand appointed his successor and passed a message to his brothers with his final breath, and his now-lifeless body was spirited away. Driven by a desire for revenge, the forces of a united mankind now sought to crush the Dark Legion once and for all.

PEACE, OF A SORT

Four decades passed before the Dark Legion's defeat was considered complete. However, its influence is not entirely gone–with neo-plagues left in the dead and wounded and psychological traumas lingering in those who fought. Nonetheless, the corporations and the Brotherhood finally turned from a war footing to one of rebuilding and cautious progress. The Inquisition set about its task of seeking out the influence of dark cults and other lingering remnants of the Dark Symmetry's taint, and those found working with condemned technology were branded heretics–as too great was the risk to mankind to dabble in things that make civilisation vulnerable to corruption.

Amidst all this, remnants of the Dark Legion began to return, Nepharites and scattered forces lingering within ruined or previously-undiscovered Citadels. However, they could do little to challenge the corporations in this state, and the system entered a new golden age. However, with prosperity came complacency.

The Brotherhood grew in power, gaining a solid presence within each of the corporations and quelling even the tiniest traces of dark cults. The corporations turned inwards, focussing on internal matters and business. Generations passed, and in time, the threat of the Dark Legion was largely forgotten–none who had lived through such times still lived, and the influence of the Dark Symmetry was a terror that belonged to old stories even as it thrived on the strife of internecine squabbles.

HERESY, THE RISE OF CYBERTRONIC, & THE SECOND CORPORATE WAR

A little over nine centuries after the Brotherhood was founded, it faced an unprecedented crisis. Multiple claimants to the Cardinal's throne clashed, dividing the organisation for a number of years in a conflict known subsequently as the Neronian Heresy, which culminated in the triumph and coronation of Cardinal Durand XI. His reign was to be characterised by madness. The strife that resulted from the Heresy and Durand XI's reign saw faith in the Brotherhood's mission decline heavily, and the entire Mishima Corporation cut ties with the Cardinal, instead pursuing its own spiritual path.

With the war against the Darkness seeming to become increasingly irrelevant, even those dependent upon the Brotherhood's charity for survival found themselves questioning the need for war. The corporations began more openly venturing into long-forbidden fields of research and development, ignoring edicts and dictates almost a thousand years old. This reached a peak almost two hundred years after Mishima's break from Brotherhood oversight, when a series of unforeseen and shocking manipulations of the stock markets led to the overnight appearance of Cybertronic, whose very existence as a corporation founded upon advanced technology and cybernetic enhancement is in open defiance of the Brotherhood's edicts. This led to a new era of conflict and strife, as the corporations assailed one another with every economic tool they possessed and with military assets if finance alone could not achieve the desired goals.

In spite of efforts by successive Cardinals to maintain peace and unity, all that the Brotherhood could achieve was to hinder this new wave of corporate wars, using the Cartel to sanction those who breached strict new rules of engagement. Still, nothing seemed able to halt the corporations' conflicts, or their continued explorations into matters once regarded as forbidden.

THE ART

Under the guidance of the first Cardinal, the first members of the Brotherhood learned to tap into mystical powers beyond the understanding of common folk. Said to be ancient powers long lost to mankind, these earliest Mystics, and those who followed in their footsteps, have devoted their lives to understanding and controlling this hidden force.

The dark shape of Inquisitor Thorsen slid down from the opening in the sewer outlet. He was dressed in his heavy combat armour and carried his 'Hammer' - the trusted Punisher automatic pistol. It had taken him several hours to reach this far down into the catacombs and mazes under the city, but he knew that he was on the right track. The only diversions had been mutants, and he had let the Hammer fall mightily on them.

Silently he dropped to the floor of the room. It was dark, and the only sound was that of dripping water. Inquisitor Thorsen concentrated and let his feelings reach out to the far comers of the empty hall, searching for a sign of life - or death.

Then the wall at the far end suddenly lit up, and Thorsen was bathed in a sickly green light, his ears ringing with an insane laughter. His mind reeled back, and he instinctively erected a protective shield. Thorsen did all of this without moving an inch, never showing surprise or alarm.

He felt the shield shudder as something struck it, but it held fast, and Thorsen was unharmed.

He let his eyes fall on the creature standing ten or twenty meters away from him.

It was tall, as tall as Thorsen, but it was not as heavily armoured. It had broad shoulders with long, thin arms and hooked claws for hands. The armour was covered with writhing patterns, forever changing shape and colour, like worms or maggots. From the creature's head sprouted fat worms, moving to a rhythm Thorsen couldn't hear, reaching out toward him, beckoning him closer. It was a Nepharite, one of Muawijhe's lieutenants.

Thorsen felt a surge of satisfaction. He had been right. The Nepharite regarded Thorsen with an insane calm, a coldness that froze the air between them. Its features were twisted in a demented grin. As Thorsen watched, the Nepharite took two steps forward, bringing out a large, hooked sword from behind. The sword seemed to quiver as it was turned toward the Inquisitor. Thorsen could faintly hear a screaming wind from far dimensions.

Even though Inquisitor Thorsen knew it would be pointless, he brought up his Hammer and let it deliver three mighty thunderclaps. The Hammer's explosions filled the room with noise and the smell of cordite, but the shots were also followed by the laughter of the beast. The bullets had struck it in the chest, but it was unharmed.

With care, Thorsen holstered his pistol, never letting his eyes stray from the hideous apparition. He brought his hands to the sword sheathed on his back. The steel sang as it was removed from the scabbard, and the runes on the blade glowed. It shone with a clear, white light. Then Thorsen reached up and removed the clasps on his great helmet, revealing his dark and weathered features. As the helmet fell to the floor, the Nepharite took a step backward, regarding Thorsen with a puzzled face. The Inquisitor was smiling. This would be a battle long remembered.

Generations have been spent studying this fundamental force, yet precious little has been uncovered. It is known that it can be controlled by men and women of pure thought and soul, and that it can be shaped into many different forms, both for offence and protection. In addition, it is not only in battle that this power is valuable.

Mystics who have devoted their lives to the Art of Premonition have achieved powers of perception far beyond those of ordinary people. These Mystics spy into other times and places, searching for the slightest traces of Darkness. They gaze deep into the heart of the enemy, trying to discern their attacks and their weaknesses. These Mystics also look upon the past, scribing the events that shaped the modern age, free from the insidious corruption wrought by the Dark Symmetry.

THE ORDER OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood is a heavily-structured organisation, with every element ultimately subject to the rule of the Cardinal. Beneath him, sit the Curia, who govern the Four Directorates and all matters under the Brotherhood's control in the Cardinal's name.

THE CARDINAL

The Brotherhood is led by a worldly and spiritual leader, the Cardinal. His power and enlightenment are beyond question, and he has been given the authority to rule the Brotherhood until he is called to the Light. His Calling, and the final goal of every one of his predecessors and successors, is the absolute purgation of all infestations of evil within the solar system, be they the Dark Legion, the influence of the Dark Symmetry, or other cesspits of plague and degeneration. The eternal Calling is carried from Cardinal to Cardinal, and it will be their eternal mission until it has succeeded.

The powers invested in the Cardinal give him an insight into the spiritual world unmatched by any other living being. The Cardinal is the Brotherhood's absolute authority in all matters – he is supreme commander of all Brotherhood military forces, the High Inquisitor, the wisest and most powerful Keeper of the Arts, and the foremost preacher of the Word. In short, the Cardinal is singular, a being of personal, mystical, and political might unequalled by any person within the system.

Each Cardinal is selected from amongst the ranks of the Curia, in a vote guided by the precognitive visions of the greatest Prophets. Only when the darkness clouds the future is this insufficient to make the wisest decision. At present, the Cardinal is Durand XVII, a good-hearted, thoughtful, and quiet man whose advanced age gives him the kind of perspective possessed only by those who have seen a lifetime of strife.

THE CURIA

Directly beneath the Cardinal is the Curia. This council consists of the most highly-esteemed and powerful brothers, appointed personally by the Cardinal to govern elements of the Brotherhood's sphere of influence – whether particular matters of doctrine, individual elements of the organisation, distinct locations, or a variety of other matters. Those given a place on the Curia remain members for life. The Curia governs the four Directorates and answers only to the Cardinal.

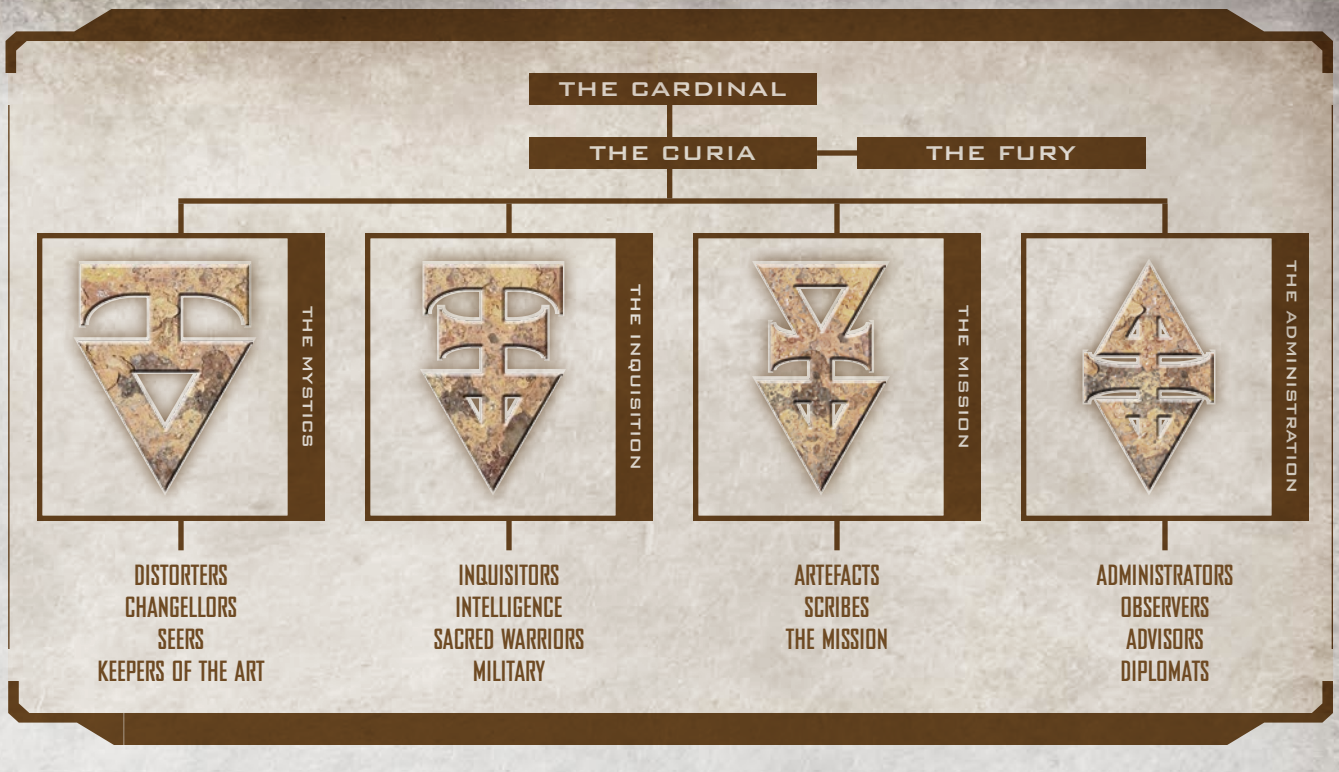
THE FURY

The elite guard of the Cardinal and the Curia alike, the Fury are the finest troops available to the Brotherhood, selected from amongst the mightiest and most devout of the Sacred Warriors and equipped with the best weapons and armour. The Fury are personally responsible for the physical well-being of their charges.

THE MYSTICS

The First Directorate is easily the most powerful. It consists entirely of Mystics – men and women who have dedicated their lives to the study and use of The Art in order to further the Mission of the Brotherhood. Because of the fact that they alone are able to command all the Aspects of the Art, Mystics are easily the most personally powerful individuals in all of humanity.

The directorate is divided into four cells, each of which is divided into two sub-cells. This gives the Mystics a straightforward chain of



command and helps ensure that all know who has responsibility for whom. Individuals are often cross-assigned from their own sub-cells to other cells or even other directorates, and a few are even loaned to the corporations—though these Mystics' loyalties are never in doubt. If the Cardinal calls upon them, they serve without hesitation.

The four cells of the Mystics are Distorters, Changellors, Seers, and Keepers of the Art.

DISTORTERS

Distorters use the Art to influence and manipulate reality. They typically concentrate on the Arts of Kinetics, Exorcism, Elements, and Mentalism. This permits them the means to heal people, attack others, bend the elements to their will, and heighten their mundane capabilities. There are two broad groups among the Distorters—healers, who focus on Exorcism, and warriors, who employ all the other Aspects favoured by the Distorters. These Mystics are those most commonly seen walking battlefields and supporting the Inquisitors, while the healers are commonly found serving in Cathedral Sanatoriums, honing skills that spell the difference between life and death for millions.

CHANGELLORS

Changellors are devoted to taking advantage of the secrets of the mind. They dedicate themselves to the Aspects of Changeling, Manipulation, Exorcism, and Mentalism. They specialise in delving into the minds of themselves and those around them. The two types of Changellors have duties as different as night and day. Interrogators work deep in the bowels of the Cathedrals questioning particularly stubborn suspects for the Inquisition. Sometimes, Inquisitors need to know something immediately, and have either exhausted their own abilities or don't have the time to waste. Few subjects can resist the skilful probing of an interrogator. Liaison Changellors use their skills to work with members of the Fourth Directorate who operate within the Cell of Diplomats. It is their job to assist these ambassadors and secretaries with their unique skills and powers. Some liaisons dabble in the Aspect of Premonition as well, finding that precognitive perceptions are invaluable in that line of work.

SEERS

Seer prophets gaze into the far and near future in an effort to determine what fate is in store for the Brotherhood and humanity as a whole. Seer chroniclers perform similar tasks but focus on the past, unlocking the secrets of what has already been. In both cases, the further away from the present day the Seer attempts to perceive, the more difficult it is to get clear or meaningful results. Apprentices of these fields act as scribes, making transcripts of all that their teachers see. They also busy themselves with creating complete records of current events to ensure that future generations of Mystics have an effective frame of reference.

KEEPERS OF THE ART

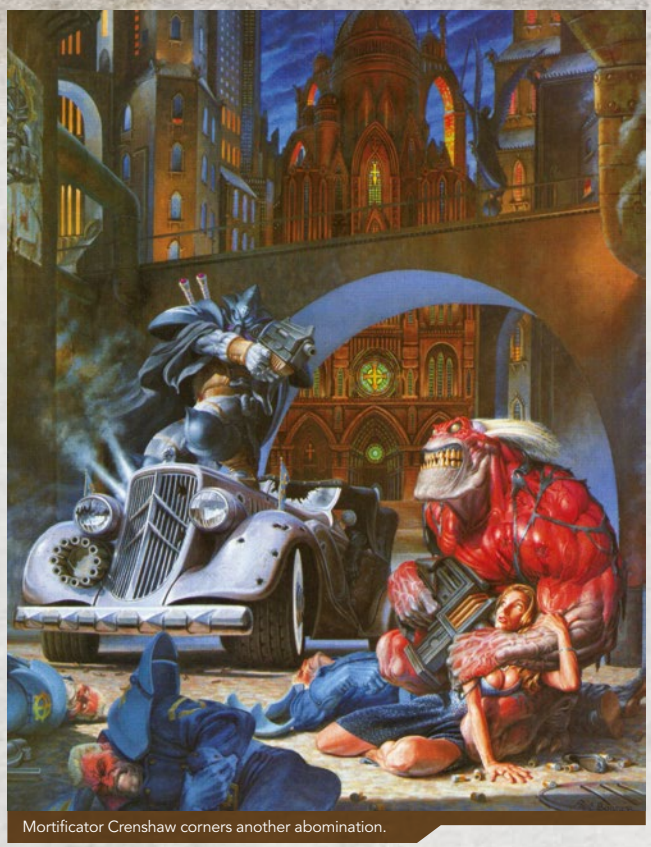
The most powerful users of the Art are assigned to the Cell of Keepers. This cell is composed entirely of Keepers of the Art, and represents the greatest concentration of mystical power outside of

the Curia. Amongst them, the researchers are devoted to unlocking the secrets of the Art itself: they discovered the Aspects of the Art, and they developed the power stabilisers that Mystics rely upon. The engineers are prominent and renowned, talented individuals whose skill in the Arts is matched only by their creativity, and it is their efforts that bring to fruition all that the researchers devise.

THE INQUISITION

Where the First Directorate holds the most power of any part of the Brotherhood, it is the Second that commands the most fear. Few people ever see a Mystic, let alone a Keeper of the Art, in person, but the influence of the Inquisition is everywhere. Inquisitors are recurring characters in the media, an iconic element of Bauhauser operas, Capitolian action movies and far more besides, yet their presence is not merely felt within fiction. Their presence on the streets of cities across the system, striding with purpose to some investigation or purge, or simply standing vigil, is one that inspires a curious mixture of fear and gratitude. None wish to linger beneath the gaze of an Inquisitor, but few want to consider existence without these grim sentinels of the Light.

The Inquisition is divided into four cells: Inquisitors, Intelligence, Sacred Warriors, and Military. These have their own hierarchies and divisions, with rigid chains of command that would not be out of place in the corporate armies.



Mortificator Crenshaw corners another abomination.

INQUISITORS

The term Inquisitor being applied simultaneously to any within the Second Directorate and to those within this cell in particular—is perhaps the most visible in daily life. Most who exist within this cell are Inquisitors or Revisors, though as Revisors operate in secret their activities are not known to the public. Still, without the investigative work of Revisors, the Inquisitors would have a far more difficult job uncovering the influence of darkness.

The cell of Inquisitors is further divided into internal and external investigations. Internal investigations seek out corruption that has wormed its way into the Brotherhood. External investigations monitor everyone else for the threats of corruption and heresy. Most ordinary people have seen or interacted with external investigations in some way, but have little contact with their internal investigation counterparts. Internal investigations is relatively small and obscure—infiltration of the Brotherhood is rare, but very damaging to the Mission and to public perception—but extremely active and very unforgiving.

INTELLIGENCE

The cell of Intelligence is one of the most efficient and widespread intelligence agencies in the system. Consisting primarily of Revisors, these exceptional spies have one advantage that corporate intelligence forces do not—the Art—and they exploit this extensively. To most Revisors, this is the ideal assignment, the ultimate expression of their profession. They liaise regularly with, and monitor the operations of, the sub-cell of internal investigations—when a Brother within internal investigations falls to darkness, the results can be disastrous. They in turn are monitored by internal investigations, ensuring that the darkness cannot easily take root without fear of discovery.

SACRED WARRIORS

Sacred Warriors are a cell apart from the rest of the Second Directorate. These warriors, trained and devoted purely to combating the Dark Legion, answer only to the head of the Inquisition, and above him the Curia and the Cardinal. This places them outside the usual chain of command, which suits them just fine. As the Brotherhood's elite forces, the Sacred Warriors are not required to waste their time with lesser duties.

MILITARY

The final cell is that of the Military. These members of the Brotherhood charge fearlessly into battle whenever evil manifests. Inquisitors and Mystics are often called to support the military, and there are few who cannot be called up to serve in an emergency—the Sacred Warriors are one exception, as they are an army all their own, while Revisors in deep cover operations are the other major group excluded from a call-to-arms. The Military is broken into

numerous distinct formations and units, combined as required to confront different threats. One in particular stands out as unique: the sub-cell of the Air. Consisting primarily of Archangel Pilots operating Icarus Jetfighters, it provides sophisticated air support for Brotherhood forces, utilising the Art to operate craft that would baffle and overwhelm the skills of all but the most proficient pilots. The other sub-cells include combat-ready Inquisitors and Mystics, graceful and deadly Valkyries, and stealthy Mortifactors, as well as vast numbers of common troopers.

THE MISSION

The Third Directorate is the largest of the Directorates. Where the others require some noteworthy talent, particularly talent in the Art, anyone can join The Mission. Most people can find work within the Brotherhood that will challenge and reward them, and the Brotherhood seldom turns away those who wish to serve. The Mission is divided into three main cells, and dozens of sub-cells within that.

ARTEFACTS

The Cell of Artefacts is responsible for locating, reclaiming, and cataloguing artefacts of all kinds from across the system. Some of these are elements of forgotten or distorted history, particularly pre-Brotherhood history, while others are the tools and trappings of the Enemy that cannot be destroyed for one reason or another. All these artefacts are stored under the highest security, in deep vaults within fortified Cathedral Armouries.

SCRIBES

The Cell of Scribes serves to maintain the word of the Brotherhood, and in turn allow the Brotherhood to maintain and document the history of man, secure from the corruption of the Dark Symmetry. All those documents the Brotherhood must produce–including copies of the Book of Law, which every Brother must keep upon their person (excluding, obviously, Revisors working undercover) – are the duty of the Cell of Scribes, as is the collection and cataloguing of every published work produced within the system.

THE MISSION

The Cell of the Mission is the most diverse and widespread, for it encompasses any task or role not covered in some way by another Cell. The many visible sub-cells include those of chroniclers, servers, preachers, recruiters, doctors, armourers, and bankers.

CHRONICLERS are responsible for the Brotherhood's media output–television networks, radio stations, and a widely-circulated newspaper known as the Chronicle, which collectively form a media machine that challenges that of Capitol in sheer scale.

SERVERS provide a unified service industry within the Brotherhood, providing food and custodial services and any other kind of general labour needed to ensure the Brotherhood continues to function.

PREACHERS form a highly visible presence, standing on street corners and other places where people congregate, shouting out the Cardinal's message to all who will listen, and many who won't.

RECRUITERS deal with the constant stream of potential new Brothers and Sisters, and seek out those of specialised skill or innate talent to bring them into the fold.

DOCTORS supplement the efforts of Mystics skilled in the Aspect of Exorcism with good, old-fashioned medical expertise, and are responsible for the many free clinics the Brotherhood operates.

ARMOURERS maintain, customise, and distribute the armaments employed by the Brotherhood's armed forces.

BANKERS operate the Brotherhood's financial services, monitoring and controlling the flow of money as a neutral party between the corporations and serving as a way for the common people to borrow and save without recourse to those same corporations.

THE ADMINISTRATION

Hidden from public view, the Administration is the fourth and least visible of the Directorates. The Brotherhood, like any massive organisation, requires a great deal of effort and skill to keep it running smoothly. It consists of four Cells: Administrators, Observers, Diplomats, and Advisors. Each of these has its own distinct role to play, but their combined efforts ensure that the road to salvation and survival is a smooth one.

ADMINISTRATORS

The Administrators' largest duty is to handle internal security for important individuals within the Brotherhood, as well as that of official guests. In spite of their otherwise-benign name, the Administrators are more similar to a private security company than any sort of administrative body–these men and women are not soldiers, but they are no less proficient in matters of defence and no less dedicated to their duties. In addition to providing personal protection, they investigate threats and analyse physical risks on their charges' behalf, liaising extensively with the Second Directorate.

OBSERVERS

The Cell of Observers has a straightforward role: it moves amongst other major organisations to ensure that the presence of the Darkness is never felt. Overtly or covertly, its members are found in most places where business is done, and regarded as neutral witnesses by most.

ADVISORS

Salvation is a fine and noble goal, but survival is not merely a matter of battle. The Cell of Advisors operates on this principle, handling the resources–the goods and money–of the Brotherhood to ensure

that it is adequately provisioned and that all its needs are catered for. They are hardly glamorous or glorified individuals, but Advisors are extremely necessary, buying and selling with the Brotherhood's wealth to ensure that it continues to exist for another year.

DIPLOMATS

In contrast, some of the most glamorous Brotherhood jobs are within the Cell of Diplomats. These people act to ensure that the Brotherhood and the major organisations cooperate as well as possible, smoothing down political disputes and orchestrating the unity that the Brotherhood stands for. Many Diplomats are skilled in the Art, while others request the skills of Mystics or Inquisitors, as these supernatural powers can be invaluable during the most difficult of diplomatic meetings.

THE CATHEDRALS

There are eight Cathedrals in the system, and each bears a sacred Chronicle engraved upon marble walls. No matter the city they are in, the Cathedrals are the tallest, most majestic buildings for hundreds of miles around. Each is unique, but they do share a number of common elements.

Each Cathedral is modelled upon the original and greatest of them all: the Cardinal Durand Cathedral in Luna City. Each has a Great Chamber in which mass is said, confessionals in which to hear the sins of the congregation, interrogation cells to question suspected heretics, and archives in which to gather the vast mass of knowledge the Brotherhood has accumulated over the centuries.

Beyond these constants are a vast array of training quarters, barracks, and a wide range of other facilities, with each Cathedral serving almost as a town in its own right, possessing internal and external transit links, hospitals, schools, and myriad professional offices.

GREAT CHAMBER

Each Great Chamber is a colossal, cavernous hall with room for many tens of thousands of people, sufficient to accommodate the teeming throngs attending mass on a weekly basis. Mass is daily, held in early evening, and broadcast live on television and radio for all those who cannot attend. On Luna, the Cardinal says the mass once a week, but the rest of the week, and for all the other Cathedrals, other senior brethren lead the congregation.

CONFESSIONALS

As a source of spiritual absolution for the masses, and a source of intelligence for the Brotherhood, confessionals are essential. Attended by missionaries, countless thousands of penitents come seeking forgiveness each day, most of whom depart after paying a modest fine.

Occasionally, a sin will be confessed that cannot be ignored – often because it ties into ongoing Inquisitorial investigations – and the Missionary will notify a contingent of Inquisitors to monitor the penitent. In extreme cases, a penitent may end up in an interrogation mere minutes after entering the confessional.

INTERROGATION CELLS

The setting of many an interrogation scene in countless television dramas and movies, the granite walls and steel furnishings of these cells is a familiar, chilling sight across the system. Being in one is an entirely different matter. As much as they seem like torture chambers, officially the Brotherhood does not condone such techniques, favouring the Art as a means of delving into the minds of suspects.

THE SANATORIUM

The Brotherhood tends to the well-being of all who believe in the Mission. The Sanatorium in each Cathedral turns this notion into truth, serving as more than a mere hospital to those who believe. Staffed by both traditional doctors and Mystics skilled in Exorcism, each Sanatorium is dedicated to the restoration of body and mind, and where conventional medicine fails, the Art can achieve miracles.

THE CARDINAL'S BANK

While the branch on Luna is largest and grandest, each Cathedral provides financial services on the Brotherhood's behalf. It serves primarily as a merchant bank, handling the trade between corporations, but maintains significant retail and savings interests, providing people with an alternative to the corporations' own financial institutions.

BROTHERHOOD DIPLOMACY

As an organisation with the salvation of all mankind as its driving goal, the Brotherhood is necessarily tied to the other major organisations in the system. The Cartel's existence is in part because of the Brotherhood's intervention, but it is far from the only method they have to unite mankind.

BAUHAUS

With the first Cardinal having been the scion of a noble Bauhaus family, it should come as little surprise that the Brotherhood and Bauhaus have always had strong ties, and they are firm allies for the most part. The Brotherhood's policy of charity and public service goes hand-in-hand with Bauhaus' universal healthcare and educational programs, and every Bauhauser man wanting to maintain their social standing is seen at Brotherhood sermons on a weekly basis. However, the corporation's insular nature and suspicion of outsiders means it does not embrace unity readily, and

Bauhaus' worrying reluctance to act against Cybertronic in spite of Brotherhood condemnation has cooled relations somewhat.

Much of the Brotherhood's arsenal is manufactured by Bauhaus subsidiaries. Similarly, many of the various orders that permeate Bauhaus society have strong ties to the Brotherhood, united in devotion to the Cardinal's vision.

CAPITOL

While far from perfect, the relationship between Capitol and the Brotherhood is a friendly one. Most Capitolian citizens are regular Cathedral-goers, and the Brotherhood's presence can be felt across the corporation's holdings. However, Capitol's commitment to personal liberty and individual freedoms has often clashed with the responsibilities of the Second Directorate – Inquisitors are often seen as infringing the rights of Capitolian citizens. To alleviate this, Inquisitors are deputised into Capitol's own intelligence agencies to give them jurisdiction, and the Brotherhood appoints Inquisitors more sympathetic to Capitolian beliefs where possible.

As much as both have attempted to minimise the problems, the freedoms and "live and let live" ideology that pervade Capitolian society makes it a potential breeding ground for heresy, one that Inquisitors seldom have an easy time investigating.

CYBERTRONIC

Given that it exists in direct contradiction to several of the Brotherhood's earliest edicts, it should come as little surprise that Cybertronic and the Brotherhood are hostile to one another. However, this hostility has remained political – as much as Cybertronic is suspected to be a pawn of the Darkness, there is no proof, and starting a war over this suspicion would reignite inter-corporate hostilities and leave humanity vulnerable to the Dark Legion.

Cybertronic's policy of isolationism makes it difficult for the Second Directorate to monitor effectively, and the corporation's support of the Cartel's Doomtrooper program – a valuable asset against the Dark Legion – makes them a potent force in system politics, meaning that the Brotherhood has to tread carefully around what it regards as an insidious threat.

IMPERIAL

According to official policy, the disparate clans of Imperial are devoted allies of the Brotherhood. The truth is more complex. Imperial is, by and large, a staunch enemy of the darkness, but the corporation's aggression and reckless greed are problematic. In spite of Brotherhood condemnation, Imperial pushed deeper and deeper into the outer system and is believed to have stirred the emergent Dark Symmetry. Further, numerous Imperial Clans have been accused of using their devotion to the Cardinal's Mission to justify attacks against other corporate holdings, particularly those of Cybertronic, though the truth of these accusations is tied up in trials and Cartel meetings and cannot be officially proven.

Imperial's warlike nature is a particular concern for the Brotherhood. While supportive of Imperial's military might, the fact that it is regularly employed against other corporations – often without justification – and the fact that Clans have been known to war against one another, opens it up to corruption in a way that the Brotherhood cannot tolerate.

MISHIMA

Officially, the Brotherhood respects the customs and heritage of the Mishima Corporation, and acknowledges it as one of the great powers of the system. Unofficially, Mishima and the Brotherhood have not seen eye-to-eye in a very long time. Mishima is regarded as a hotbed of heretics and deviants dating back to the best-forgotten Neronian Heresy. The Brotherhood are highly suspicious of both the supernatural powers that some Mishimans demonstrate, and the corporation's trading partnership with Cybertronic.

In turn, Mishima seem to have adopted resentment of Brotherhood operations as a policy, and the tendency to make a show of civility to Brotherhood advisors and then completely ignore them is particularly infuriating.

The Arts are truly powerful in the hands of a Mystic.

CHAPTER 19

THE DARK SOUL & APOSTLES

THE DARK SYMMETRY AWAKENS (2480 AD)

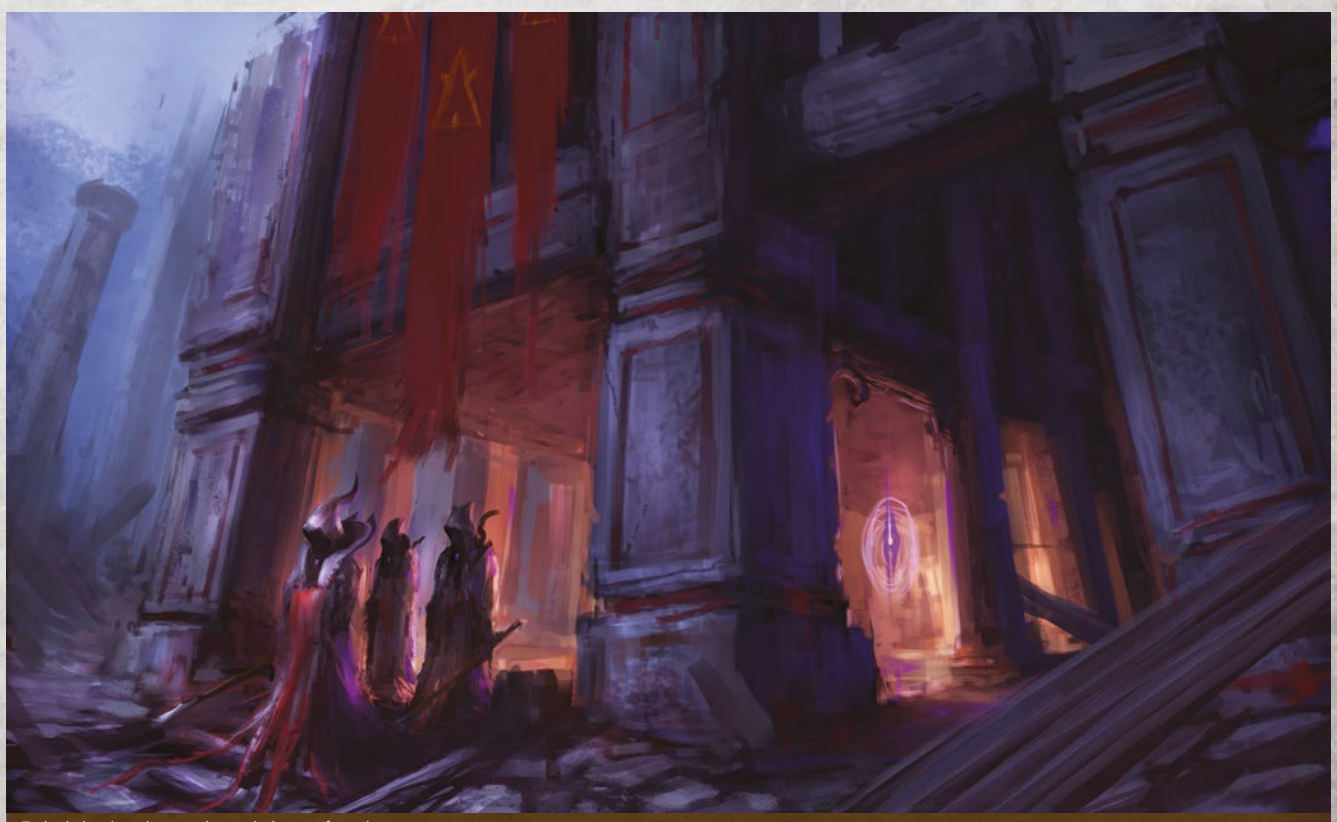
The first known contact humanity had with the Darkness was on Pluto in 2480 AD. It was this year that Imperial sent out two vessels: the Harbinger aimed to survey Pluto in order to determine its suitability for colonisation and terrforming, and the exploratory ship the Zephyr was sent beyond the solar system to explore interstellar space.

Upon arrival, the Imperial conquistadors quickly determined that the planet could be terraformed and immediately began setting up their massive gravitational regulators. These huge, superconducting machines were used to stabilize the gravity, creating a gravity of Earth norm that would allow terraforming to begin. They set up a combined mining centre and laboratory. Drilling and installing the regulators took time but the operation ran smoothly.

After drilling to make room for the fourteenth and final gravitational regulator, their diamond drill tip shattered as it struck an unknown object one kilometre beneath the planet's surface. As it was unheard of for such a high-powered and shatter-proof drill to fail, their curiosity was piqued and they decided to investigate.

To their surprise they sumbled upon a huge underground network of tunnels and chambers. Bizarre glyphs lined the crumbling walls and there was no doubt that this was the remnants of an advanced alien civilisation. Awestruck, they proceeded further down. At the bottom they saw parts of the object that broke the drill tip. Unsure of how to continue, the team reported back to their leaders in Victoria.

The Imperial AI instructed them to document the location of the find and leave the object alone. At this point the AI classified it as an artefact. It also determined that the most prudent thing to do was to abort the mission pending a thorough investigation of the find. But the drill team received a second set of orders from its leaders, who had analyzed the AI's report. They ordered them to proceed and excavate the artefact.



Early dark cultists leaving their unholy site of worship.

A tribute to a Semai Nepharite carved into the foundation of defiled cathedral.

After digging for several days they unearthed a giant tablet bearing strange symbols. It shone like polished metal and all scans and metallurgic analysis gave inconclusive results, stating that it was a material of unknown origin. Setting up a system of cranes, they managed to haul it to the base of operations on the surface where they continued to investigate it. These further scans determine that it is free of any measurable radiation, toxins, or other harmful properties. One thing that struck the team as odd, and somewhat disconcerting, was the fact that the ship's communication system seemed to become increasingly unstable. There was, however, no evidence that these malfunctions were in any way linked to the artefact. As the artefact was determined to be completely safe, one team member touched it with his bare hands during the investigation.

He was violently brought to his knees, kneeling in front of the artefact. His hands clung to the surface as if stuck in place by a painful electric current, the whole event looking like a morbid act of worship. The skin on his face began to freeze and crack, his eyes turning stark white, and within seconds the skin violently cracks open in a spray of icy blood. As he fell back, clawing at his face, he uttered three words with his near frozen lips: "She kissed me…"

The team rushed the dying man to the infirmary on the Harbinger only to find that all communication–and computer systems–had begun to suffer severe malfunctions. Fearing that they would shortly be unable to communicate, or even be able to leave the planet, the head researcher made a decision, sending all scans and materials they had gathered on the artefact, as well as the dying man's last words, back to Victoria. This was the last transmission the Harbinger sent out.

Around the same time, clan Murdock received a distorted message from the Zephyr. The crew reported that they found a planet beyond the solar system rich with minerals and resources, and suitable for terraforming. They named the world Nero. The crew reported that they were on the approach to land. After that, all communications went out and the Zephyr was never heard from again.

THE FALL OF TECHNOLOGY

The Fall of Technology, in most cases called The Fall, was the event when technology first began to malfunction and become dangerously corrupted. After the Steel Tablet on Pluto was disturbed, the influence of the Dark Symmetry was set free and immediately began to affect advanced technology.

At the beginning, the seemingly sporadic malfunctioning of AI systems across the inner worlds were considered to be a series of inconsequential flukes. But soon people began to realise that something much more dangerous and sinister was at work. As the anomalies increased in frequency and severity, the panic began to spread.

Before long the malfunctions turned deadly, the technology in space stations, colonies, and spaceships failing in such a way that people began to die. Life support went offline, leaving thousands to die of suffocation, exposure, and starvation. Automated shuttles veered off course and crashed, while automated defence systems annihilated the very people they were meant to protect.

Slowly but surely this corruption spread. It affected everything from simple records to hospitals, criminal databases, and the stock market. During the months that passed

settlements and cities were plunged deeper into anarchy. In the end the entire financial system on Luna had been corrupted and distorted beyond retrieval and the entire economic system was wiped out. Money became useless and the communications system suffered a complete blackout. Revolt took hold in the inner worlds, and the lack of communication between the now isolated colonies fuelled an already deep-seated paranoia. Some believed that the events were a deliberate act of sabotage.

In order to avoid a complete disaster and the collapse of civilisation, mankind scurried to make massive technological overhauls. They ripped out the AI cores, advanced circuit boards, and logical triggers, reengineering all these critical systems, and replacing them with basic electrical ones. This was a time consuming process, and many long distance ships were lost as criminal strip crews formed and plundered malfunctioning ships. However, many of these teams disappeared, never returning from their illegal excursions. Though it was a disaster, those cunning and savvy enough were able to make money off it, and soon the title Freelancer became familiar to all. These men and women balanced on a knife edge between legal and illegal, and little does anyone know that people such as them will be destined to make a difference in the centuries to come.

After some years humanity stabilised, but all the technological achievements and the entire technological progress of mankind was set back three hundred years.

The paranoia still lingered, with corporations rebuilding their machines of war and restructuring their military operations fuelled by the fear that The Fall was the work of one of their rivals. Each corporation was prepared to do everything in their power to maintain control of their holdings and refit their now defunct armadas to run using the most basic electrical and mechanical systems. Crew sizes increased enormously as automated systems were replaced by those needing manual operation, and the loss of advanced computers severely decreased fuel efficiency as advanced reactors were downgraded to much less advanced propulsion systems. Trips that could previously have been completed within days or weeks would now take months, and there was no longer anything routine or safe about interplanetary travel.

Rumours began to spread of technology displaying animation and intent. These rumours spoke of whole machines, or clustered parts, being bound together and taking on a sinister life of their own–rumours that would later be confirmed as a horrifying reality. Odd disappearances and deaths began to occur throughout the solar system. Witnesses gone mad proclaimed that evil flowed through technology, twisting the minds and bodies of men and women into beings of pure malice.

While the Dark Symmetry was able to take control of machines it also seemed to be so powerful that it could affect gravitational forces and energies. This led to a new way of travelling between the planets (see Discovery of the Rifts, page 17).

RISE OF THE DARK CULTS AND THE FOG OF WAR

As the Dark Symmetry rippled through the solar system, the very fabric of space and time began to corrupt. During a trial run of a mechanical docking system performed by Imperial, a frigate, The Stipend, disappeared from its orbit around Ganymede. Within hours communication relays owned by Mishima and Bauhaus on Venus received a distress call from the vessel, now in orbit around Venus.

It was obvious that the vessel had travelled a great distance in a short amount of time, and the rival corporations immediately realised it could provide valuable research data. With this in mind

THE DARK SOUL

There is one powerful entity behind it all. It has no physical form and, beyond the Apostles and a few chosen and privileged Nepharites, no one has ever communicated with it or even experienced its presence. This power is called the Dark Soul and is also referred to as the Great Darkness. It is from this source that all the Apostles and the Dark Symmetry comes.

The Dark Soul exists outside our plane of existence and its inner workings, what it wants and its methods, are unfathomable to humans. The only thing that is certain is that it will destroy or corrupt all life. It has a relentlessness and patience that only a higher entity can possess; it knows that time is on its side. In fact, time is its greatest ally, for the Dark Soul is eternal.

THE DARK PATTERNS

The Dark Symmetry is an energy, a kind of force that surrounds the entities of the Dark Legion like a sickening and ominous aura. It is from this complex, yet primal, weave of energy that the Legion draws its power. It is the gate and link to the Dark Soul. Everyone from the Apostles, the Nepharites, and the ritual priests of the Dark Cults draw their energy from this force in order to fuel their evil deeds and powers. Heretics and lesser beings are given the dark blessing by higher entities, and this initiates them in the use of the Dark Symmetry.

As mentioned, each Apostle represents a certain aspect as this aspect is intimately tied to the very nature of the Apostle and her mission. As each and every minion of the Apostles is directly influenced, or even partly created from, their master's symmetry pattern, they are shaped by it. This leads to a radical difference between the minions of the Apostles, as their powers, outlook, methods, and appearance are all a reflection of their masters. Not only do they serve the will of the Apostles, in a sense they are their will.

ILIAN

The Mistress of the Void is the most powerful of the Apostles. She is the true embodiment of the Dark Symmetry and the first born of the Dark Soul. Her control and influence over it in its raw form is unmatched. Through this she is, in her own way, the one that is closest to the Dark Soul and with the guidance and power of her master at her back there is nothing she cannot accomplish.

Ilian, though capable of overt displays of awesome power, prefers to work in the shadows. Her servants infiltrate the very heart of human civilisation, breaking down and tearing at that which they trust to protect them. Due to her insight into the Symmetry, her followers are capable of summoning forth denizens from twisted and depraved dimensions and bolstering the onslaught of the other Apostles through the direction of raw Dark Symmetry. The Mistress of the Void is the gatekeeper of the hideous dimensions.

ILIAN

ALGEROTH

DEMNOGONIS

SEMAI

MUAWIJHE

ALGEROTH

The black and searing flames of pure destruction are spun by the pattern that surrounds the Apostle of War. He inspires his troops to fight and tear asunder all of mankind. He inspires the construction of Black Technology, unfathomably horrid weapons, and machines of war.

The legions of Algeroth are seldom subtle. They are the annihilators, harbingers of death and destruction. His witchmasters can open gates to dimensions of eternal conflict and bring forth living machines of war, and his Tekrons can corrupt technology or create twisted biotechnology, or even force unholy spirits into dead flesh to mould it into destructive necrotechnology. His minions can even implant it into humans and other creatures, merging it with their bodies. Algeroth is therefore also known as the Lord of Black Technology. This makes him the second most powerful Apostle after Ilian as he, and only he, has the knowledge to forge such weapons and machines.

DEMNOGONIS

The Befouler can at times appear to be the least powerful and least controlled Apostle, but looks can be deceiving. He has the power to infect, rot, and control purification. A gust of wind that gently caresses the ravaged battlefield may carry deadly and directed sickness.

Demnogonis' followers try to rot humanity from the inside. They infiltrate hospitals and the medical tents on the battlefields, contaminating the blood supplies and fouling the instruments. With but a drop of dark diseases they can bring an entire city to its knees by contaminating its water supply. The pattern of Demnogonis allows for the creation of bizarre parasites, microorganisms twisted by dark sickness. The sporadic twisting of humans and animals living in squalor is also his domain, and more than a

few cities are unknowing hosts to legions of these armies of decay living behind its walls and beneath its streets.

SEMAI

Not only is he the Lord of Spite, he is also referred to as the Master of the Dark Sight, the Eternal Liar, and the Great Perverted. He watches and learns, he plants the seeds of distrust and envy, turning brother against brother. He turns trust into suspicion, hope into despair, and love into hate. He, as Ilian, corrupts man from within.

The mystics and minions of Semai are patient as they observe the ebb and flow of darkness and light. When the time is right, they strike. They are masters of the prophecies, foreseeing what their enemies will do. Thousands have been manipulated into failing even before they had a chance to execute their carefully laid plans, and when the plan fails, the Lord of Spite makes sure to fuel the paranoia, making allies turn on each other in rage. Often when his minions have performed their duties well, no one even knows that the Lord of Spite or any Dark Apostle had a hand in it.

MUAWIJHE

This Apostle is called the Lord of Visions for a reason. He weaves the Symmetry into threads of madness and sickening dreams, tendrils of insanity that ensnare the minds of millions. They stretch across the empty reaches of space and into the very heart of the worlds of man.

His followers and minions can induce terrible visions, warping the minds of their victims. They can sunder thoughts and distort senses, and even possess the ability to walk between worlds, shifting from one reality to another. This power, in combination with their mind rending patterned Symmetry, can even allow them to manifest the nightmares and paranoid visions of their victims, giving a true form to fear.

Bauhaus towed it back to its facilities. Imperial demanded the return of The Stipend, but Bauhaus claimed it had crashed and burned, leaving nothing behind and Mishima and Capitol, both wishing to reap the rewards of the research, backed the cover story. After two decades of research and the loss of thousands of lives, the rift travel technology was perfected. Capital was the first of the corporations to construct rift facilities and, using them, science vessels were sent out to locate more rifts.

Imperial, having learned of the theft of its ship, also managed to master the rift technology and began to mobilise its military machine, ready to settle old scores. Capitol, Bauhaus, and Mishima parted ways as greed and corporate patriotism drove a wedge between them, fragmenting their former alliance.

With planetary travel becoming safer and faster, the grip on corporate holdings tightened as did the general sense of corporate patriotism among the civilian population. But as tensions rose, and as the number of strategic rift stations increased, so did paranoia. Ultimately, a minor border dispute on Venus lit the fuse of the First Corporate War and as humanity turned against each other the Dark Symmetry began to move among them; hiding behind avarice, feeding the paranoia and swaying humanity by manipulating its fears. The Dark Cults were on the rise.

Some sixty years passed from the time of the Awakening of the Dark Symmetry to the Rise of the Apostles. It was a time of great change and turmoil. The last forty of those years were plagued by the corporate war and it was during that time that the first Heretics appeared and formed the Dark Cults.

When the cults first rose The Brotherhood had not been formed, so there were no forces of light standing against the darkness. As the Apostles had not yet manifested, the Heretics of this era were not as powerful as those that came later, nor did they have as much aid from the creatures of the Dark Legion. The few creatures that did come into existence at this time were an anomaly, or had to be brought forth via exhausting and obscure rituals. The cults also had very limited access to dark technology, only using human technology imbued with the Dark Symmetry. Nevertheless, these cults were dangerous and worked to usher in the era of darkness, wishing for the corruption and utter destruction of mankind.

Before the time of the First Corporate War, they moved slowly, using The Fall of Technology and the uncertainty in caused to recruit new members. When war finally broke out, they could speed up their recruiting process and stage more overt operations, hiding them behind the ongoing conflict.

The cults worked by infiltrating corporations, the political scene, and law enforcement. Most worked through subtle means but some were more direct, spreading horror through atrocious crimes such as serial killings, and ensuring they were high profile enough to attract a great deal of media attention. There were also cults who used forbidden technology, installing systems all over the cities and hoping they would become hopelessly corrupted and merge with other, more simple, systems.

Before the rise of the Apostles, and the forming of the Brotherhood, the cults generally operated in isolated cells, but as the time of the Rise of the Apostles approached they became more focused, powerful, and organised. When the Apostles finally arrived distinct cults formed, each focused on worshipping one of the Apostles. Each Apostle bestows different powers to its members, and each Apostle cult has very different strategies.

THE RISE OF ILIAN (YEAR OF THE CARDINAL 0)

The Dark Symmetry is the fuel and cohesive source of power that drives and animates the Dark Legion. The five Dark Apostles are manifestations of various aspects of the Symmetry. When the Steel Tablet on Pluto was disturbed, the essence of the first Dark Apostle was released; Ilian, The Mistress of the Void, the first born of the Dark Soul. Though her essence was released she was incapable of taking physical form. However, her knowledge of the Symmetry allowed her to direct its ebb and flow, and thus she was the instigator of The Fall.

Some sixty years after the Fall, after forty years of the now ending Corporate War, and at the appointment of the first Cardinal Durand, Ilian, manifested. Against the will and law of the Brotherhood, the Cartel, and also going against its own corporation, the Imperial clan Kingsfield launched a secret mission to the planet Nero, by exploiting one of the rifts.

As they arrived, the Imperial conquistadors laid eyes on Nero; a world of living nightmares beyond comprehension. From contaminated soil, putrid and corrupt, a great citadel protruded like a cancerous tumour. The gargantuan edifice was half mechanical and half biological, the two aspects fused together in a way that defied logic.

Driven by a mix of bravery, ambition, and pure folly the Kingsfield conquistadors decided to venture inside and explore the building.

Though seemingly empty, the explorers came across a massive portal at its very centre, surrounded by a faintly glowing and near imperceptible field. Believing it to be nothing more than light hitting dust particles, they passed through. However, the circle of light was, in fact, the last seal keeping the Darkness at bay, and in crossing it the conquistadors broke the Seal of Repulsion, freeing the physical manifestation of Ilian.

Beautiful and terrifying, lips still stained with blood from her first kiss with humanity decades ago, the Mistress of the Void stepped out of the light; the first wave of the Dark Legion tumbling forth in her wake. These atrocious beings from horrifying worlds unseen, demonic nightmares made flesh, tore through the conquistadors, rending their flesh and bones to shreds and splinters.

Twelve men and women went in but only two escaped. They fled to their ship and manage to get off the planet, but they are nothing but husks, their minds left in tatters. Since the awakening of the Symmetry the Dark Cults had risen and worked in the shadows, amassing resources, but with the arrival of Ilian their powers increased and soon Ilian's brothers, the four remaining Apostles arrived. They are Algeroth The Apostle of War, Demnogonis The Befouler, Muawijhe The Lord of Visions, and Semai The Lord of Spite. Each one gave rise to a Dark Cult of its own, and as Ilian stepped forth a wave of fear, madness, and terror rolled across Luna.

THE RISE OF THE APOSTLES

At this point it became clear that war was coming and that the Darkness would spare no one. Ilian's influence over the Dark Symmetry made all those who fell in battle on the dark fields rise again in a horrid state of unlife. These undead legions joined the dark ranks and turned their weapons against their former brothers in arms. Massive dark ships appeared in orbit above the inner worlds, before falling from the sky to protrude from the ground like broken and infected splinters of black bone. This was the arrival of the first citadels, and from them the unholy and repugnantly evil minions of the Apostles marched.

On Venus the second Apostle, Algeroth, The Apostle of War, proclaimed his arrival. He marched out of his citadel at the head of his legions, decimating cities and human forces. The human soldiers laid down their lives in heroic attempts to protect their world, but to no avail.

As the battle raged on, the power of the third Apostle, Demnogonis The Befouler, made itself known. Wounds became infected immediately, worms feasting on the still living flesh, and terrible waves of sickness swept across the battlefields, infecting those who were still holding off the darkness.

Soon afterwards the two remaining Apostles, Muawijhe The Lord of Visions and Semai The Lord of Spite, joined the battle. Muawijhe drove the human forces insane, making them unable to distinguish between their vile visions and the reality around them, and Semai turned brother against brother, spreading irrational jealousy and sickening envy. While all this destructive chaos was at work, gigantic symbols appeared on the moons of Mars, Deimos and Phobos. No one knew why or how this had come to pass. All the Apostles had now arrived and the war had begun in earnest. Even in places where the war had not reached due to the protection of the Brotherhood, such as Luna, the powers of the Apostles were still felt. The cults grew stronger and rumours of creatures roaming the dark allies began to surface.

SIBLING RIVALRY

Even though all of them draw power from the very same source, the Dark Symmetry, and serve the same master, the Dark Soul, there is a rivalry between the five Apostles. The Dark Soul is their overlord and ultimate master in all things, but besides him they answer to no one but themselves. The Apostles are extremes made manifest and as such is not so strange that they have strong wills that, at times, counteract one another.

A citadel of Ilian being materialized through dark gateway powers on Mars.

Ilian is the first and most powerful of them all and her role as the gatekeeper of the symmetry allows her to control her brothers to a certain extent. However, Algeroth, with his unique ability to forge technology out of symmetry patterns, combined with the massive war machine he controls, is extremely powerful as well, and is regarded as the second in command. However, he seems discontent in his role and openly defies and crosses his sister whenever he gets a chance. Semai often gives him support in his defiance. Demnogonis and Muawijhe are wary, not wanting to lean one way or the other as they fear an all out conflict between Ilian and Algeroth, but they seem to be planning something together.

Ilian is well aware of all this plotting, defiance, and scheming. She has chosen not to act against her lesser kin, at least for now. She is staying her hand as she and her brothers have to answer to the Dark Soul, and the ultimate goal is to destroy mankind and blot out the last remaining light in the solar system.

THE CITADELS

These towering monstrosities are pivotal to the war and corruption efforts of the Dark Legion. In order to raise a citadel quickly and accurately both the power of Ilian and Algeroth has to be combined. When a spot for a new citadel has been chosen, the Tekrons of Algeroth and their slave labourers swarm in and begin to construct the foundation. At the same time the ritual masters and dark priests of Ilian begin to infuse the process with the Dark Symmetry. Twisted, illogical in design to the human mind, and utterly terrifying, these horrors stand ready just days after construction has begun, their black metal surfaces adorned with symbols of the Dark Symmetry.

Citadels serve several functions. Their symbolic value alone is immense as they reflect aspects of the citadel on Nero and serve as powerful icons that unmistakably shows that an area has been claimed by the Dark Legion. They are also military bases, laboratories, temples, prisons, torture chambers, production units, archives, and gates to other worlds and dimensions.

Most citadels are ruled by a Nepharite overlord. He is the high commander and controls all the forces within its walls, as well as all those outside in the surrounding domain. Citadel forces defend their domain fiercely and are also used to launch offensive operations in order to crush any opposition, or to expand the reach and influence of the Overlord. A very important function of the citadels is to bolster the ranks of the Dark Legion. Humans who have fallen are dragged back to the citadel in order to be twisted and raised from the dead so that they may become soldiers in servitude of the overlord.

Those Nepharites who can control the Dark Symmetry are capable of using the citadels as gateways to bring in horrid denizens from dimensions and worlds beyond. The less gifted are often given the aid of Ilian, who can add to the power through the nexus a citadel provides. These gateways are also used to link the citadels, which allows the overlords to communicate with one another and the Apostles directly, no matter the distance.

CHAPTER 20

THE GM'S GUIDE TO THE CHRONICLES

This chapter covers the important rules and techniques to bring the uniqueness of ***Mutant Chronicles*** into the game. While many of the setting rules covered in Chapter 4 handle the player-facing aspect of the setting, there are a few changes and tricks in store for *Savage Worlds* the GM can employ. This chapter focuses on those, specifically Corruption and the Dark Symmetry pool.

THE DARK SYMMETRY POOL

The Dark Symmetry Pool is the collection of Bennies for use by the GM. It follows all of the normal rules for GM Bennies, as outlined in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook. However, it also has the following rules outlined below.

Chronicle Points can be added to the Dark Symmetry pool by the actions of characters with a Brotherhood Lifepath Edge or the Heretic Lifepath Edge. Brotherhood heroes can reroll failed Mysticism checks by adding a Chronicle Point to the Dark Symmetry Pool. Any time a character with the Heretic Lifepath Edge activates a Dark Gift, add a Chronicle Point to the Dark Symmetry pool.

Additionally, any character can attempt to bargain with the Dark Symmetry. After a failed Trait test, but before results are applied, the character can offer to let the GM add a Chronicle Point to the Dark Symmetry pool in exchange for a reroll. If the GM agrees, the hero gets to reroll but must take the second result, even if it is worse. The Dark Symmetry pool increases by one, and the hero who just bargained with the Dark Symmetry has to make a Willpower test and will acquire Dread as normal for failure. If the GM does not accept the Chronicle Point, the hero does not get a re-roll, but can spend a Chronicle Point from his own pool. If the GM agrees and the second roll is worse, the hero can spend a Chronicle Point from his own pool to re-roll again, but cannot offer a second bargain with the Dark Symmetry.

GM Chronicle Points can be used for normal NPC Trait check rerolls. They can also be used as follows:

- Equipment Corruption checks (see below)
- To give Dark Gifts to NPCs with the "Patron Blessing" monstrous ability

Activated by the Dark Symmetry, a Twisted Marionette bursts to life!

- They can be used to generate Complications for the characters whenever a character undertakes an action where the Wild Die indicates a success but the skill die indicates a failure. Example Complications include: Dropping the weapon used in the attack, Falling Prone, Using extra ammunition, Losing Cover bonuses to enemy attacks, suffering a −2 penalty to Parry from being off-balance, being unnecessarily noisy, having batteries fail, or any other creative explanation for why it worked but caused the heroes a different problem.

- Impose an additional −2 penalty to any Trait test. A GM Chronicle Point spent in this fashion must be done before the Trait check is applied, but can be combined with Equipment Corruption, as below. Penalties created by this method stack with all other penalties for the Trait test, and can be used to trigger Complications after the roll, as noted above. A maximum of one Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry pool can be spent in this manner per Trait test.

- Certain special effects for Extras or Environmental hazards, such as Venusian Fever or Infected Wounds.

CORRUPTION

This section explains how ion is an ever-present threat in the world of ***Mutant Chronicles***, and how Corruption affects equipment, locations, and people.

The influence of the Dark Symmetry is a pervasive and insidious threat, one that can befoul technology, taint the material world, and defile the souls of humanity. There are different avenues by which Corruption can take root, depending on the type of target being Corrupted.

Technology is the most vulnerable to Corruption, often falling swiftly and at the worst possible moments. The most sophisticated devices are the most vulnerable, with artificial intelligences, electronic and computerised systems, and similarly advanced technologies being particularly vulnerable to distortion and influence by the Dark Symmetry. Many creatures of Darkness and Heretics have the ability to taint technology. Corrupted technology tends to malfunction in ways that seem almost malicious–radios distort the meaning of a message, guns misfire in ways that cause harm to the wielder or his allies, computers produce misleading information, and so forth. Corrupted technology spreads discord, and hinders those who would oppose the Dark Soul.

Locations are more difficult to Corrupt, requiring time and effort; extensive dark rituals or the presence of powerful servants of the Dark Soul are typically required to taint a place, and while the effects are far more subtle than those of Corrupted technology, they are often necessary to create places of power for Heretic cults and other agents of Darkness. People find themselves ill at ease in Corrupted places, suffering from night terrors and horrific visions, and a feeling that the place is actively hostile. At the greatest extents, Corrupted places take on a vicious life of their own.

People are a trickier matter. Some are nigh on impossible to subvert, while those in the throes of fear and despair have a way of allowing the Darkness in. Darkness within the souls of humanity is a plague of the mind, manifesting as hatred and distrust, and emerging in moments of weakness. Corrupted people tend to lash out, unprovoked, and regard those around them as enemies.

EQUIPMENT AND CORRUPTION

Before a character attempts a skill test using a piece of equipment, be it a Driving, Repair, Shooting, Technical Aptitude, or any other roll interacting with technology, the GM can check for Corruption. If the GM spends a Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry pool, the result will be tainted by Corruption in some way if the final result from the skill die is less than or equal to the equipment's reliability rating. The player can spend a Chronicle Point to reroll the result, but the risk of Corruption due to the Dark Symmetry's presence remains.

CORRUPTIBILITY RATING TABLE

RATING	EFFECT
1	Basic tech (landline phones, grenades, very basic cars, door locks)
2	Complex tech (police radios, normal cars, automeds, trains, lifts, TVs)
3	Very advanced or very sophisticated tech (computers, surgical automeds, sports cars, lab equipment, high–end weaponry, space ships)
4	A.I. colony, city, corporate or planetary control systems*

*In the early days of the Dark Symmetry, the major corporate management AIs were able to resist the effect of the Dark Symmetry for a time. How they managed to hold out is not known, but more common city and space station AIs succumbed very quickly.

EXAMPLE

Jane is hacking at a security firewall (Corruptibility 2) and is going to make a Technical Aptitude check. The check is very difficult, and has a −2 penalty to the roll. The GM spends a Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry pool to indicate there is a chance of Corruption. Jane's player rolls a 3 on her skill die and a 2 on her Wild Die. This is a failure, even before the −2 penalty for being very difficult, so Jane's player spends a Chronicle Point. On the reroll Jane gets a 4 on her skill die and, thanks to an Ace, a 9 on the Wild Die. Subtracting 2 for the Very Difficult check from both rolls leaves Jane with a 2 on the skill die and a 7 on the Wild Die. Therefore, she is

successful in hacking the firewall, but the 2 on the skill die is equal to the Corruptibility of the firewall, and therefore some Corruption takes place. Perhaps the firewall grants her access, but modifies all the data she downloads, or maybe it infects her previously unCorrupted computer.

LOCATIONS AND CORRUPTION

A Heretic character—whether a player character who knows one or more Dark Gifts or a non-player character—can perform a ritual that takes four hours to complete. The Heretic makes a Mysticism check, as if attempting to use a Dark Gift. The basic difficulty of this check is a −2, but can be modified based on the state of the building. A dilapidated and mouldy building is easier to Corrupt than a normal office building. Conversely, a Brotherhood cathedral is nigh on impossible, likely a −6 or more to the roll. A location cannot be more than half a mile in radius, or taller than ten storeys, and the Corruption is normally contained within the walls of a structure (so you have to be inside a tainted building to discern its Corruption).

Creatures with the Dark Presence monstrous ability can perform this ritual in an hour instead—their power is far greater, and their influence far more pervasive.

The high ranking Algeroth Heretic Kinsey is brimming with corruption.

PEOPLE AND CORRUPTION

Living creatures are susceptible to Corruption, noted as the erosion of Willpower and an influx of odd behaviours and a twisting of the personality. Full information on Corruption involving living creatures can be found in the Willpower section, see page 251 below.

THE EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

Once Corruption has taken hold, it can manifest in a variety of ways.

EQUIPMENT

When a device suffers from Corruption, see Equipment and Corruption, page 247 above. Generally the Corruption remains in place until the device is repaired or the Corruption is purged. This usually manifests in the device failing to work in some fundamental way and will require a Repair, Technical Aptitude, or other Trait test that could be used to correct the defect. In some cases it is as simple as replacing the power supplies or batteries.

However, in the event that the attempt to repair or purge the device fails, the device develops a Malign personality. This will cause guns to randomly misfire, hitting innocent bystanders on a 1-3, radios may pick up strange stations, static or garbling may occur on communications requirement, or any number of creative and detrimental other effects the GM can devise can come into play.

Some GMs may want to roll the repair check in secret, creating a level of suspense concerning the reliability, and repair, of gear in the heroes' possession.

THE APOSTLES AND DEFILED TECHNOLOGY

The influence of the Dark Apostles on technology is something that all humanity is unpleasantly familiar with; the taint of Darkness upon machines is well documented in the Chronicles, and a nightmare of generations past.

Whenever a technological device is subjected to Corruption, determine whether or not one of the Dark Apostles is responsible, typically through a servant or subservient creature's action of Dark Gift. These effects last for as long as the Corruption is present upon the device.

If a piece of equipment is Corrupted through the use of a Dark Symmetry Chronicle Point, then this applies only if a servant of a particular Apostle has affected the reliability of the equipment. These effects last only until the Corruption effect is active.

ILLIAN: the device becomes suffused with the sorcerous power of the Mistress of Dark Symmetry. The object becomes a magnet for mystical energies, making whoever holds the device more vulnerable to their influence. Any living creature holding the device suffers a −2 penalty to all contested rolls involving a Dark Gift.

BROTHER JEREMY QUALLS
BROTHERHOOD ARTIFICER

From the start of his apprenticeship, Brother Qualls' talent for the Art was clear. He began with the Aspect of Mentalism, using it to aid his research and his rise through the Brotherhood. He demonstrated an aptitude for the way that the energies of the Light interact with crude matter, and as he expanded his studies to the Aspect of Kinetics, his understanding of materials grew. Having mastered these disciplines, he sought to craft his own Symbol of Light, the rite of passage towards becoming a Keeper of the Art. Highly regarded for his insights and skills, he serves as a researcher within the Cell of the Keepers, and he has created many valuable items for his fellow Keepers, as well as for other servants of the Brotherhood.

BROTHER JEREMY QUALLS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Mysticism d10, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Technical Aptitude d8

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Willpower:** 8

Hindrances: Cautious, Poverty, Vow (Major—Serve the Brotherhood)

Edges: Avoid Corruption, Mental Fortress, Mystic Lifepat

Powers: *Banish*, *Blessing*, *Contempt*, *Detect/Conceal Arcana*, *Dispel*, *Exorcise Dark Influence*, *Healing*, *Succo*

Gear: Armoured Vestments (+2), Power Controller, Punisher Short Sword (Str+d6, Corrupt 0, Parry +1), Piranha Handgun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 8, Double-Tap, +1 Stealth to Hide).

Thanks to Jeremy Qualls.

The flicker of candlelight was the only illumination in the windowless chamber as Brother Qualls rose from his studies. Two men approached cautiously; through the oppressive gloom, Qualls could see their timid faces. Their nervousness and the blue of their robes marked them as Brothers of the Cell of Artefacts, bearing some malign item to be studied and analysed.

Both men were visibly weary, their faces gaunt with fatigue. One carried a small leather box wrapped with copper wire. "Blessed Brother," he softly murmured, "Here is the item you called for."

The box was handed over carefully and deliberately, and the Missionaries scurried away. Brother Qualls returned to his desk, and unwound the copper binding from the box. Within was a tiny, thimble-sized silver bell.

The fragile form of the item concealed its horrific nature. Brother Qualls quickly closed the box, and inserted it into a large rune-etched cylinder fastened to the floor. Within a few moments, the soothing power of the Light flowed through the device. The runes were a new form of ward against the Darkness, an experimental method of protection. Success here might see their patterns replicated elsewhere.

Like a trapped animal, the Darkness within the artefact began to fight back. A wave of gloom seeped from the box, stifling the light of the candles. Wreathed in unnatural darkness, Brother Qualls felt his skin crawl in revulsion. Reacting on instinct, Brother Qualls allowed his training to take over, and he reached for the amulet around his neck. Energy discharged with a brilliant burst of light, and the air hummed with power. The vanes of Brother Qualls' power stabiliser glowed red-hot for a moment, siphoning off power that would have torn his body asunder.

The spell was undoubtedly effective. A wet, tumorous mass filled the inside of the glass cylinder. Brother Qualls sighed—the runes weren't yet strong enough—and reached for another request form.

ALGEROTH: the device becomes vicious and bloodthirsty. If the device is a weapon, then it gains the Backlash and Vicious qualities. If the device is not a weapon, then the machine malfunctions in a dangerous way and inflicts 2d6 damage, ignoring armour, on the character using the device.

DEMNOGONIS: the device becomes tainted and polluted with the vile essence of the Befouler. Any character coming in contact with the device has to make a Vigor test at −2 or suffer a level of Fatigue.

SEMAI: the device becomes cruel and spiteful, acting with greater malice and encouraging betrayal and deceit. If the object is a weapon, whenever a character makes an attack while there is an ally within Reach of his target, the attack automatically hits an ally if the character misses his intended target. If the device is not a weapon, any failed trait test using the object will inflict 2d6 damage on an adjacent ally.

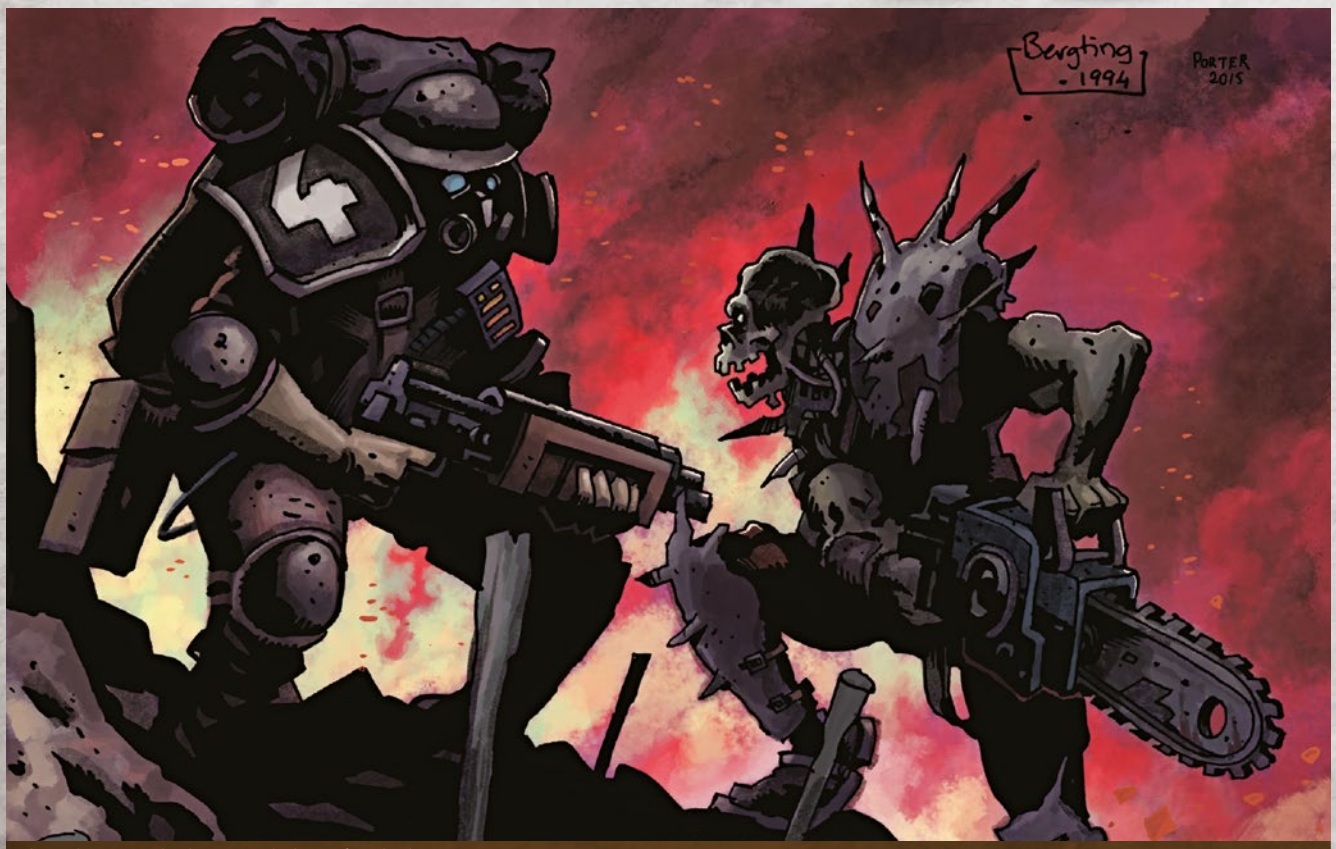
MUAWIJHE: the device becomes twisted by madness, inspiring delusions and hallucinations. Whoever wields the device is afflicted by maddening visions, striking at the worst possible moment. Whenever the character fails a Trait test involving the device, the character has to test Willpower or suffer a point of dread from the sudden mental assault.

LOCATIONS

Generally, a Tainted location gives Heretics a bonus to all future Dark Gifts rolls, inflicts a penalty on all Mysticism checks by Brotherhood characters, and adds to the Corruptibility of any technological devices within them.

There are multiple stages to Corruption. Each Corruption attempt, see Locations and Corruption on page 248, increases the Stage by 1. The current Corruption Stage is the modifier to Heretics, Mysticism checks, and Corruptibility. For instance, a location that is at Stage 2 of Corruption gives a +2 to Heretics using Dark Gifts, −2 on all Mysticism checks by Brotherhood characters, and +2 to the Corruptibility of all equipment within it.

Brotherhood characters can purge Corruption from a location. This process takes twelve hours and requires a Mysticism check, with the appropriate modifiers as outlined above. Just as a Corruption attempt can only increase the Stage by 1, an attempt to purge Corruption can only decrease the Stage by 1, regardless of the check result.



The Dark Legion strikes horror into the heart of mankind.

TAINTED LOCATIONS TABLE	
STAGE	EFFECT
0	Nothing
1	**TAINTED:** No specific penalties other than those described above
2	**MALIGN PRESENCE:** Characters double any Dread gained within this location
3	**VILE ANIMUS:** Characters double any Dread gained within this location and suffer a –1 penalty to all Willpower tests.

THE APOSTLES AND TAINTED LOCATIONS

There are three stages to the Corruption of a location. It is not a quick process to Corrupt a place, and each individual Corruption roll is sufficient only to move that location to the next stage.

Whenever a location is subjected to Corruption, determine whether or not one of the Dark Apostles is responsible for the Corruption. Typically the Patron of the Heretic or creature that defiled the location will indicate the source of Corruption.

ILIAN: the location is suffused with the energies of the Mistress of Dark Symmetry. The location gets a number of Chronicle Points equal to the Corruption Stage. These Chronicle Points can be spent on any Dark Symmetry creature within the location. Player character Heretics, can spend these Chronicle Points if they are within the location.

ALGEROTH: the location becomes hardened, fortified against those who would intrude upon it, a fortress for the servants of the Warmonger. Heretics and creatures of the Dark Legion within an area tainted by Algeroth gain a bonus to cover equal to the Corruption Stage. Any attempts to force entry through any locked door or window have a penalty equal to the Corruption Stage.

DEMNOGONIS: the location festers, accumulating a foulness that makes it ideal for the cultivation of disease. Non-Heretics within the area suffer a penalty to Vigor equal to the stage of Corruption.

SEMAI: the location is wreathed in lies and deception, aiding cultists in their subversive work. Within the location, all Heretics gain a bonus to Gambling, Intimidation, Persuasion, Stealth, and Taunt equal to the stage of Corruption.

MUAWIJHE: the location becomes twisted and haunted. Within that location, fears are deepened and reality becomes deformed, eating away at the resolve of those who set foot inside. Within the location, non-Heretics suffer an additional penalty to Willpower tests equal to the Corruption Stage.

WILLPOWER

The heroes' frequent brushes with the Dark Symmetry, the macabre, and the unexplainable, will gradually (or, on occasion, not so gradually) erode their Willpower to resist the Darkness threatening humanity. The following are quick and simple rules to handle the gradual corruption that threatens those who battle the forces of Darkness. The rules are not designed to accurately measure the mental health of an individual, but instead mirror such situations in a cinematic and pulpy manner. Poor mental health is a problem grappled with by many; these rules are not intended to trivialise the effects of such on the lives of sufferers, but to make the game more fun and enjoyable.

THE WILLPOWER STAT

All human characters have a derived stat called Willpower. This is calculated by dividing the character's Spirit die by two and adding two, just as Toughness is calculated from Vigor and Parry is calculated from Fighting. This can be further adjusted by certain Edges and Hindrances.

INCREASING WILLPOWER

The only way to increase a hero's Willpower is to raise his Spirit die or take an Edge that increases it; once a point of Willpower has been lost then there is no other way of recovering it.

LOSING WILLPOWER

A hero's Willpower drops permanently by 1 when his Dread equals or exceeds his Sanity.

ZERO WILLPOWER

If a hero's Willpower drops to zero or less, he is irrecoverably lost to the Dark Symmetry. The corruption that seeks to destroy all life has claimed him, and there can be no salvation. He becomes an non-player character under the Game Master's control and will probably know enough about his former life to become a serious hindrance to his erstwhile allies.

The exception to this is a character with the Heretic Lifepath Edge. A Heretic still tracks Dread and Willpower normally, as his humanity can be further stripped away by the dark forces; however, unlike normal heroes, when the Heretic's Willpower reaches 0 he does not cease to be a playable character. The path of heresy and corruption is what he has already chosen, but when his Willpower reaches 0 he radiates a permanent aura that can be detected automatically by any character with a Brotherhood Lifepath Edge. Dogs and other natural animals will growl and either attack or run away. The Heretic cannot hide from what he has become, and Brotherhood forces and normal law enforcement will actively hunt him. A Heretic with Willpower 0 is best hiding in a citadel, or far from society.

WILLPOWER TESTS

Willpower Tests are a Spirit test, typically with various modifiers due to the creature, Gift, or location. Any Fear or Terror test is a Willpower Test, and in addition to the normal effects for Fear, Nausea, and Terror (see **Chapter 4: Situational Rules – Fear** in the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook) failure will inflict one of more points of Dread. Most creatures of the Dark Symmetry have the ability to inflict Fear or Terror on their opponents. Either by simply seeing such a creature or through the activation of a Dark Gift or Monstrous Ability, the forces of Darkness can corrupt those around them. Some Gifts or Monstrous Abilities are so powerful they inflict Dread automatically, or may inflict multiple points of Dread at once. The entry for particular creatures or Gifts will indicate if they inflict multiple points of Dread, if nothing is specified only one point of Dread is inflicted.

DREAD

By itself, Dread is not incredibly dangerous. It might be a little more paranoia or fear in the hero's behaviour, or perhaps looking over his shoulder a little more often. However, once a character's Dread equals his Willpower stat, he develops a Dark Influence Trait. His Dread resets to zero, but his Willpower is permanently reduced by one. The character must also roll on the Dark Influence table, and can possibly gain an additional Dark Influence from a Patron Apostle.

The first time a hero develops a certain Dark Influence, it counts as the Quirk minor Hindrance. It is foible, noticeable, but not dangerous yet. The second time the hero gets the same result it is upgraded to a major version of the Quirk Hindrance for purposes of removing the behaviour, but it still counts as Quirk for purposes of gameplay.

If the hero gets the same result a third time on the Dark Influence table, it remains a Quirk major Hindrance, but an additional Hindrance applies to the character. The additional Hindrance can never be removed, even if the Quirk is healed through the Recovery process detailed below. If the character already has the listed hindrance, their Willpower is reduced another point. For example, if a hero has Overconfident and gets a third Superbia result on the Dark Influence table, he loses an additional point of Willpower instead of getting Overconfident a second time.

ADDITIONAL HINDRANCES:

LUXURIA – Greed (Major): Character wants to accumulate whatever they feel is of value.

GULA – Phobia (Major – Self-Centred): Character suffers a penalty when acting in someone else's interests or defence.

AVARITA – Greed (Major): Character wants to accumulate money.

DARK INFLUENCE TABLE

D20	DARK INFLUENCE
1-2	**LUXURIA:** The character's base desires, be they for food, for glory, for power, or for ruder things, intensifies. The character's desires overwhelm his other priorities, and he disregards his responsibilities in order to pursue those desires.
3-4	**GULA:** The character now has little regard for the interests of others, indulging in his desires and consuming resources excessively, even to the point of wastefulness.
5-6	**AVARITIA:** The pursuit of wealth and possessions grows dominant in the character's mind, and he will stop at nothing, regarding no laws or conventions in order to possess everything he can.
7-8	**ACEDIA:** The character has little will to strive, regarding all effort as without meaning and all endeavour as without worth. He will not readily act where inaction is easier.
9-10	**IRA:** The character's fury is unchecked, his hatred and disgust going unfocussed and undirected. Grudges come easily, and violence seems always the quickest and easiest way to resolve problems
11-12	**INVIDIA:** The character feels dismay at the triumphs and advantages of others, silently desiring their downfall and his elevation at their expense. They cannot abide the joy and success of others, and can feel joy only in the knowledge that they alone are triumphant.
13-14	**SUPERBIA:** The character's sense of self is elevated to extreme proportions, regarding himself as greater than all others. He becomes dismissive of others, regards himself as immune to their failings, and above the judgement of all others. It is amongst the most dangerous of Dark Influences, for those in the throes of it seldom believe themselves to be vulnerable to corruption.
15-16	**ANY TWO:** Roll twice on this table, re-rolling results above 14.
17-18	**ANY THREE:** Roll three times on this table, rerolling results above 14
19-20	**ANY FOUR:** Roll four times on this table, re-rolling results above 14.

ACEDIA – Phobia (Major – Listless): Character suffers a penalty when performing an action when doing nothing is a feasible option.

IRA – Bloodthirsty: Character rages and murders easily.

INVIDIA – Vengeful (Major): Character wants revenge on those more successful than himself.

SUPERBIA – Overconfident: Character believes he is better than everyone and everything else.

THE APOSTLES AND CORRUPTED SOULS

The Dark Apostles' influence upon the souls of humanity is undeniable, and each expresses this influence differently. Whenever a hero's Dread equals his Willpower stat, and thus triggers a Dark Influence roll, if the last point of Dread gained was caused by a specific Apostle's servant – either a Heretic's Gifts or a Creature – the then the following applies, based on the Apostle:

ILIAN: the character gains the Superbia Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Ilian's taint is cold and harsh, leaving mortals uncaring for others unless their deeds benefit the tainted.

ALGEROTH: the character gains the Ira Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Algeroth's taint enflames rage and hatred in mortal souls.

DEMNOGONIS: the character gains the Acedia Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Demnogonis' taint drives mortals to despair, yielding utterly to the inevitability of decay and the hopelessness of resistance.

SEMAI: the character gains the Invidia Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Semai's taint breeds suspicion and jealousy in mortal souls.

MUAWIJHE: the character re-rolls the Dark Influence he is suffering from each hour when out of combat, or each round when in combat (the stress of combat can be overwhelming). Ignore results for Quirks the hero already has, or any result of 14 or higher on the Dark Influence table. Muawijhe's taint is erratic, leading the tainted to be unpredictable. Example: A hero's last point of Dread is caused by a Heretic of Muawijhe. The hero rolls on the Dark Influence table and gains Gula, which counts as a Quirk (minor) for the hero. When he rolls randomly to see what the effect of Muawijhe's Dark Influence is, if he rolls Gula then it has no effect.

LOSING DREAD

There are three ways of losing Dread, but it is impossible to reduce Dread below zero. In other words, a hero cannot save up negative Dread points to act as a buffer against future horrific encounters.

As long as a hero is away from a stressful situation and is getting enough sleep, food, and relaxation, he can attempt to make a Spirit roll every five days. Each success and raise made on this roll reduces the number of Dread points by one. Time really is a healer.

The other way is to talk things over with either a doctor or a friend who is prepared to provide therapy. This is not just a short chat, but must be a session of at least four hours or more. At the end of the therapy session, the listener providing the therapy makes a Knowledge (Psychology) roll. Each success and raise made on this roll reduces the patient's number of Dread points by one. If the therapist rolls a one on his Knowledge (Psychology) skill die then, unfortunately, the therapy session has not gone at all well and the character gains rather than loses a point of Dread.

Finally, as part of the reward for successfully completing a mission or scenario, the heroes may be given a free chance of decreasing their Dread with a Spirit roll (sometimes with bonuses to the roll). Each success and raise decreases Dread by one.

BECOMING JADED

After encountering a particular type of creature, a character should not have to make a Willpower test every time he sees another one in that particular mission. If the heroes are battling hordes of Kadavers, each character should only have to roll the first time they encounter that type of undead – not every time. However, the Game Master can impose a further Willpower test if a hero encounters the same creature in a particularly different or frightening situation. For example, having fought off several waves of Kadavers, the heroes return to their base, only to discover everyone there has also been turned into one as well, thereby threatening the heroes when they thought they were safe. In this case, the Game Master is justified in asking for a second Willpower test.

Unfortunately it is impossible for a hero to become jaded by repeated exposure to Wild Card creatures of the Dark Symmetry or those imposing a Willpower test penalty of –2 or more. No matter how many times someone encounters an Ezoghoul, they can invoke Dread in all who oppose them.

RECOVERING FROM MENTAL AFFLICTIONS

Now that the terrible effects of being exposed to both the ravages of the war and the Dark Symmetry are covered, recovery is also possible, in some cases.

The only way to recover from the indefinite mental and physical disorders detailed in the Dark Influence Table is to spend time with a person who is skilled in Psychology. This takes time and will not be a quick fix under most circumstances. The afflicted investigator must attend regular meetings with a therapist. Each of these

meetings must be at least an hour long, as well as being quiet and undisturbed. Furthermore, there can be no more than two meetings a week as this becomes counter-productive.

After a number of sessions equal to fifteen minus the patient's Spirit die, the therapist can make a Knowledge (Psychology) roll with a −2 modifier if the Dark Influence is a minor Hindrance, and a −4 penalty if the Hindrance is major. On a success, the Dark Influence is cured, although the lowered Willpower Stat never recovers.

On a failure, the time has been wasted, and the process must start again. It is possible to both reduce Dread and attempt to cure afflictions in the same therapy session, but it should be remembered that lost Willpower cannot be regained in this way and removing Dread requires a far longer therapy session.

INFECTIONS AND DISEASES

With Demnogonis the Dark Apostle specialising in illness and disease, and the various diseases of a more natural form plaguing humanity, a more in-depth look at how they function in *Savage Worlds* is included here.

INFECTED WOUNDS

Any wound has a chance of becoming infected. Usually this is of no concern, but sometimes it leads to something much worse. Whenever a character or suffers a Wound from a servant of Demnogonis or the GM spends a Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry Pool, the character has to make a Vigor check with normal penalties. If the hero fails this Vigor test, they take a level of Fatigue from infection. The level of Fatigue will be recover with five days of bed rest and medical attention, or through normal means.

INFLUENZA

Also known as 'the flu', Influenza has afflicted mankind for millennia in a variety of forms, and while it is frequently a minor inconvenience – it is estimated that, system-wide, more than a billion people contract the virus each year – resulting in a little more than a week of lethargy and fever, it can be deadly under some circumstances. While most heroes can typically force their way through a bout of the flu, but whenever they suffer a level of Fatigue from Exhaustion or environmental effects, they need to make a Vigor check. If they fail, they will contract a stronger than normal case of the flu, and suffer a −1 penalty to all rolls for twenty four hours.

Use a Repercussion to cause a jam at the worst moment.

VENUSIAN FEVER

One of the nastiest pestilences found on Venus, Venusian Fever, also known as Jungle Fever, is something of a mystery. Some claim that it is spread by insect bite, by contaminated water, or by airborne spores. Whatever the cause, the result is deadly. The GM can spend a Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry pool while a character is on Venus to have the character test for Venusian Fever. The character must test Vigor at −1. If the test fails, the character suffers a level of Fatigue and must check again in eight hours. The character must continue to test every eight hours until they pass a Vigor test or become Incapacitated. Curing Venusian Fever through normal medical means incurs an additional −2 penalty to Healing checks.

BLACK ROT

Incapable of infecting the living, the Rot is not truly a plague by its own right. Nevertheless, the Black Rot is still one of the most dangerous sicknesses man has ever seen. It was in 91 YC, after the Second Dark Legion War, that the Black Rot first showed its nature. The Black Rot is the reason for the Law of the Ashes, which decrees that all dead bodies have to be cremated to prevent them from rising again. Any dead body infected with the Black Rot will rise from the dead. The speed varies greatly, from within one minute to several days, and depends on the concentration of the sickness. Minute traces, which can be found in most human worlds, take days to animate a corpse, while the concentrated dose a Torn Spewer douses corpses with will make them rise within a minute. Those who rise become Kadavers: soulless husks without any intelligence. They can do little else than attack humans with their bare hands and teeth, driven only by savage instinct.

THE GAME MASTER'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the GM is equal parts narrator, cast member, and referee. The GM is still a player in most regards—he is there to enjoy himself as much as everyone else is—but he also has a number of significant responsibilities. ***Mutant Chronicles*** is a collaborative game, and the GM is the one responsible for framing scenes, adjudicating the rules, and trying to ensure that all the players' characters get a chance to shine.

The GM's responsibilities take numerous forms, and he is consequently both the most active and most passive player at the table—he is the most active because he must remain aware of everything going on, and respond to everything the players do, but he is the most passive because it is the players' decisions that drive the game most often.

Over the course of a game, the GM should try and link past events and plans for the future together to create a sense of continuity, which is important for making adventures feel like they take place in worlds that respond to the players' decisions. This kind of extended narrative is called a campaign, which turns a single game into a single chapter in a longer story.

GAME MASTERING 101

Given the importance of the GM's role, it is vital that he prepare for the game accordingly. While some players are comfortable just turning up for a session and getting on with the game, it takes practice and experience for a GM to be able to run a game comfortably without preparation. It is important that the GM is comfortable with these important elements of his role:

- **KNOW THE RULES:** The GM should endeavour to be as familiar as possible with the rules for the situations that might come up in play.

- **KNOW THE PLOT:** The player characters are often confronted with the machinations of scheming corporate agents, vile Heretics, and unholy creatures of Darkness. It is essential that the GM provides these plots and schemes to give the players something to for their characters to confront. He must develop broad settings and specific locales, characters to serve as allies, rivals, enemies, and bystanders, and the dangerous agendas and perilous plots for the player characters to stop. ***Mutant Chronicles*** is a group effort, so the GM should always leave room for the players to make their mark and be ready to adapt to whatever impact their decisions have upon the game.

- **BE PREPARED:** in many groups, the GM is the one who is responsible for making the game run smoothly. This may include providing pencils and paper, dice, or other useful gaming aids—though some players may want to provide their own. Some GMs may prefer to hold on to characters sheets between sessions, ensuring that they are all in one place. Keeping track of the little details such as these helps keep the game moving.

THE GAME MASTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Being the GM requires a different approach to being a player, best summed up by the list of responsibilities that follows. These should guide the way to run a game of ***Mutant Chronicles***.

PRESENTING PROBLEMS

It is the GM's first responsibility to present the problems, perils, and challenges that the players encounter. Problems can manifest in a wide range of ways—it could be something as overt as a battle, or as subtle as a conspiracy. Problems can range in size from the incidental to the monumental—a broken light bulb can complicate a firefight or investigation, while a worlds-spanning conspiracy could influence and encompass dozens of more immediate challenges.

SCENE FRAMING TRICKS

There are a few tried and true ways for the GM to vary his scene framing to produce different effects and feelings. Using them separately, or in conjunction with one another, can give the GM a wider range of ways to present new scenes.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Sometimes a scene will begin without a clear idea of why a character is there. This is common at the start of adventures, particularly when framing the first scene. The simple trick of asking the player why his character is there can both inform the situation and provide ideas and context the GM may never have thought of.

FRAMING AFTER ARRIVAL

The GM does not need to frame a scene with the characters walking in the front door–that is likely to get boring fast. A lot of the time, what the characters want to achieve is already known when the scene is established, so it is sometimes useful to skip past the 'empty space' of the scene. Instead of describing the characters arriving, describing them already there (they arrived a while ago, and are in the middle of their business) or leaving (they have done what they wanted to do, and are on their way out).

IN MEDIA RES

This is a phrase meaning "in the middle of things". Occasionally starting a scene in the middle of the action–during a chase, a gunfight, or an intense interrogation, for example–is an interesting way to shake things up. Particularly in conjunction with "Why Are You Here?", described above, starting an adventure in the middle of the action can kick things off in a powerful and memorable way.

Among the greatest tools in the GM's arsenal for presenting problems are the Dark Symmetry Points (DSP) and Repercussions. They allow the GM to bring immediate challenges and difficulties into play, turning what may seem like a straightforward scene into something more dynamic and complex. Having a character's gun jam when he is blazing away at a squad of Necromutants is often enough to change the flow of a fight with very little effort.

LET THE PLAYERS BE AWESOME

To both balance and feed the first responsibility, the second is that the player characters should be presented positively–they are the heroes, the main characters of the story. Each player should have ample opportunity for his character to shine. It is important to remember that, while the GM may be responsible for setting up the threats, challenges, and monsters the player characters will face, he is not the players' adversary; he is one player amongst many, albeit one with a different role to play. The GM cannot 'win' the game by beating the players, and such a victory would be hollow considering the vast array of threats at a GM's disposal and the freedom he has to employ them.

Every problem presented to the players is an opportunity for their characters to demonstrate some aspect of themselves–their strengths, their flaws, their preferences. A bar brawl is a chance for the ex-Blood Beret to crack some skulls. An uncooperative guard or informant is a great chance for the wealthy or persuasive characters to show off his talents.

Problems should not stop the characters–if they stop, then the game may stop too. They should give the characters something to do now, that could lead to something else. Interesting complications in a character's life are conducive to an ongoing game, and give the players ways to interact with the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***.

FRAMING SCENES

One of the biggest responsibilities the GM has is also one of his most valuable tools. Framing a scene–laying out the basic context of what is going on, who is involved, and where and when it is happening–gives the players a good starting point for describing their own actions, whatever those actions may be. While the GM is responsible for framing scenes, this can be guided by the players: a player chooses where he wants to go next, and the next scene is established based on that intent. A scene should be framed quickly–a few sentences is usually enough.

The easiest part of framing a scene is determining time and place. These don't have to be exact–general or relative terms are good here–but it is necessary to have some vague idea of the where and when of a scene taking place. Being able to define the timing of a scene in this manner, especially if it isn't really relevant to the story, is useful; the parts of the adventure that can be waved past, moving swiftly to the next important scene, much like in a movie or TV show.

The next important part of defining a scene is determining who is present. This mainly covers NPCs–if the scene is an office building at night, there may be a few security personnel and a couple of janitors around–but can also include player characters if the group has chosen to move around separately rather than together.

Finally, determine what is happening in the scene. This may have nothing to do with what the player characters are doing, or it may be directly linked, as the situation demands. Turning up to a diner in the Perimeters where a murder has just happened presents a different set of circumstances to that same diner during a normal lunch shift. In general, something is always going on everywhere.

The world is full of noise, light, and motion, and this should be conveyed when setting a scene.

DECIDE HOW NPCS RESPOND AND INTERACT

Once everything else is in place, the GM needs to make choices on behalf of the NPCs present in the scene. This will vary considerably based on who the NPCs are and what they are doing–a criminal in a gunfight has a different range of possible actions to a politician in a press conference. Half of this responsibility is being able to interpret the situation an NPC is in, to determine the right kind of choices available. The other half is knowing who the NPCs are, so the GM can determine what kinds of actions they are likely to take.

BRINGING IN THE RULES

An important part of the GM's responsibilities is determining when the rules are needed to determine the outcome of a situation. A lot of the time, this will be obvious–once the bullets start flying, the combat rules are necessary–but there are occasions when there is a choice to be made. The rules exist as a guide and a framework to give the GM and the group the means to resolve risky or difficult actions, and should be able to handle a wide range of circumstances if employed with a little common sense and imagination.

It is important to remember, however, that the GM does not have to adhere perfectly to the rules. Sometimes, a strange situation may occur that does not quite fit to any of the rules as written. At other times, the GM may not remember the precise rule for a situation. Whatever the situation, it is far preferable to improvise something on the spot and keep the gaming moving, rather than bring everything to a halt while the GM searches the rulebook for an answer. The rules exist to support the game, but keeping the game going is more important than sticking strictly to them.

STYLES OF GAME

The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are diverse, and the stories that can be told within this setting are many and varied. Just as importantly, different players will have their own ideas about the kind of games they want to play–some will want to delve deeply in to the intrigues and conspiracies of the corporate world, while others may feel more comfortable mowing down Undead Legionnaires with the biggest gun they can find.

Regardless, the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is one filled with grand peril, explosive action, and larger-than-life characters, and the games being played should reflect that. While there may be billions of people across the solar system in mundane office or factory jobs, they are not the ones whose lives we want to play out.

Described below are a handful of approaches that suit the style and themes of ***Mutant Chronicles*** particularly well. Typically used in combination with one another, they take full advantage of the setting.

CHARACTER DRAMA

A game focussed on character drama pushes the threats and perils of the worlds into the background–the focus of the game is on the characters' lives and the lives of those around them. In a character-focussed game, the players are encouraged to come up with NPCs their characters know, to help the GM populate the world with people who matter–for good or ill–to the players' lives. Games of this sort may focus on the characters as a group–if they are particularly strongly tied to one another–or to one character at a time, giving individuals a chance in the spotlight.

Character drama comes from the challenges the characters face, and the consequences of their actions–whether positive or negative. However, if the focus is on the characters first and foremost, it frees the GM to bring in a range of smaller threats, with each problem the characters face serving more to highlight or challenge some aspect of their lives than as part of an ongoing problem. This kind of style is often described as "monster of the week", where the specific details of that week's adversary or situation are less important than the impact it has upon the group.

A character's faction, contacts, rivals, and enemies are important elements in a drama-focussed game, as are his traits and weaknesses. The GM is encouraged to use Repercussions and Dark Symmetry points for dramatic reveals and personal complications, and to use threats and situations that play on the character's flaws, threaten their loved ones, and strike against their fears and weaknesses.

ACTION AND HEROICS

Big guns, shambling zombies, twisted Heretics, bizarre mutants, and extradimensional horrors. These things are part and parcel of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** experience, and an action-focussed game draws heavily upon these ideas. Action games are full of explosions and spectacle, with running battles and big set piece scenes. The challenges in an action game are the enemies the characters face–whether these are human adversaries, or the more monstrous creatures of the Dark Legion. Characters like Blood Berets and Doomtroopers are ideally suited for this kind of game, as is anyone else with a decent spread of combat skills.

An action game focusses a lot on the combat rules, so a GM running this kind of game should expect to use these rules every session. Characters will agonise over weapon choices, hunt down the best armour, and make every effort to stay alive in spite of the hail of bullets coming their way. Action games are also a good place to focus upon heroism and sacrifice: battles against overwhelming odds, desperate objectives, and forlorn hopes are the stuff a good war story is made of. It is also worth remembering that the Dark Legion is not the only foe out there–the corporations wage war against one another too, treating the battlefield as just another

business venture. Battling Samurai in the caverns of Mercury in the name of a few percentage points of stock price is a hollow thing, and has a very different tone to the high action of gunning down Necromutants with a heavy machine gun.

Whatever else happens, it is valuable in action games to think carefully about battlefields. Well-defined zones with cover, obstacles, and interesting terrain can make all the difference in an action scene, as will be described later in this book. Intelligent foes will use the battlefield carefully and cleverly, making them more of a challenge to overcome, and the use of tactics and strategies can turn an action game from a shooting gallery to something far more interesting.

CREEPING HORROR

There is a lot out there to fear. ***Mutant Chronicles*** contains a wide range of fearsome creatures and unnerving situations, and focussing on this aspect of the game can be particularly rewarding. Horror games can be difficult to run at times–it is as much about scaring the players as scaring their characters–but the end result of a good horror game is a memory that players will cherish years later. Playing up uncertainty and the threat of the unknown is vital: the unknown is always far more terrifying than that which can be measured and quantified.

The adventure, *Straffar Gatan 39*, is a good example of a horror-style game, where the characters' unfamiliarity with the situation and the supernatural nature of the enemy are played up to create an escalating tension. With every new discovery, the feeling of a growing threat increases, until the climax of the story when the threat is finally revealed. Pacing–the timing of scenes and the arrival of new events and information–is of considerable importance in a horror game. Too slow, and the threat may seem dragged out, but too fast and it may not allow the players the opportunity to get into the game properly.

A form of horror that serves as a good alternative, is survival horror. By limiting the availability of important resources like ammunition, Medkits, and similar items, placing characters in an isolated environment (limiting outside help, and restricting their ability to retreat to safety), and presenting foes that are numerous, monstrous, and implacable, the horror develops in a different way–hiding from the monsters and finding ways to survive the persistent peril are valuable. Dark Symmetry points and Repercussions are ideal tools for the GM to populate the game with threats and amplify the peril in survival horror games.

HARDBOILED INVESTIGATORS

The mean streets of Luna City are ideal surroundings for a hardboiled detective. With law and order controlled by the corporations, there are a lot of people who fall through the gaps, meaning that private

Ask for a skill test when the risk of failure is meaningful.

investigators and freelance security personnel are often the only recourse to solve a lot of crimes and delve in to dangerous matters. Investigations are an eclectic mixture of social encounters and research, and in many cases may involve a good deal of action as well. Investigations tend to be a very human style of game, focussed much more on the people of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** worlds than on the monsters that lurk in the darkness, but it is entirely possible to introduce monstrous adversaries in an investigation. Perhaps the murder suspect they are looking for is a powerful Heretic, or worse?

As a theme, investigation ties well to the other themes, using it as a means to bring characters from one situation to the next. A character's enquiries may take him to a dank, monster-filled sewer, or to a corporate office filled with false smiles and betrayal. An investigation may be tinged with horror, punctuated with action, or rife with intrigue.

The use of Dark Symmetry points and Repercussions to create setbacks and complications in an investigation requires a careful hand. Stopping an investigation dead, or leaving too many false leads, can frustrate players and halt the game, but complications and setbacks used carefully can push the game in different directions and keep things interesting while the investigation moves forward.

MERCILESS BOARDROOMS

The politics of the major factions are ruthless and deadly, and as a result, are an ideal subject for adventure. Politics and conspiracies are the hallmarks of intrigue, and intrigue focussed games can make for some very interesting games. It can be difficult to run an intrigue game–it often takes a delicate touch to convincingly present a conspiracy or the interplay of politics without making it seem too obvious or become bogged down too much in minutia.

Intrigue games are social games, reliant much more on skills like Persuade and Education than Ranged Weapons and Acrobatics. An intrigue-driven game may also involve investigative work, or if the characters interfere with the wrong people (which is inevitable sooner or later), may even result in combat. Intrigue tends to rely on the GM having decent notes or a good memory for the different individuals and factions involved in a given situation, and an intrigue game with three or four different factions involved can be far more interesting than one with only two interested parties… though too many factions and individuals can make for a confusing mess.

Complications representing social faux pas and the use of Dark Symmetry points to generate unfortunate revelations are valuable tools for a GM running intrigue games. Characters who like to talk their way out of–or into–trouble can be as vulnerable to the wrong words at the wrong moment as combat-focussed characters are to bullets and blades.

THE PLACE OF THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting is a big place, and there is a lot going on. It is important to try to find a place for the player characters in these worlds, to give them a starting point and a context for their adventures. Broadly speaking, there are four main ways to do business in the solar system, and only two of those are applicable to most people.

FREELANCE WORK

The 'freelancer' is almost the iconic ***Mutant Chronicles*** player character. Whether raised outside of the corporations, or choosing to step out of the corporate world later in life, freelance characters allow for the most eclectic groups and diverse campaigns. A group of freelancers could be or do just about anything, and often will if it means a decent payday.

Freelancers are employed for all kinds of reasons that lead to adventure. Private individuals–rich and poor–hire freelancers to do the things they cannot, like delivering important packages or investigating disappearances or murders. The corporations hire freelancers to do the things they cannot–or will not–pay an employee to do, which could be almost anything. The Brotherhood hires freelancers to do things that it cannot be seen to do. Heretics employ freelancers to avoid drawing attention to themselves.

In short, there is never a shortage of work to be done for a freelancer. Most of it is dangerous, some of it is illegal, and none of it is reliable or consistent. Freelancing is the ideal setup for a ***Mutant Chronicles*** game because it allows an eclectic group of players to be put in almost any situation on any world in the solar system… and all for the simple reason that they need the cash.

The problems with a freelance-focussed game are much the same as the advantages–freelancers are disposable assets for basically anyone who can afford them, but they are also outsiders, which means that they are only trusted as far as they are useful. It is difficult for a group of freelancers to progress far from where they started, and difficult to get them involved in bigger adventures because they are not regarded as trustworthy or reliable.

THE CARTEL

Cartel-focussed campaigns tend to sit half way between freelance games and corporate games. As a neutral organisation at the heart of corporate politics, it is powerful and independent, and brings with it a lot of important jobs. It hires a lot of freelancers–particularly at the bottom, with groups like Luna PD–but it also has more than a few corporate employees on secondment. Getting involved with the Cartel is a good way to extend the reach of a group of freelancers, or to get a corporate character involved with 'outsiders'. Given Brotherhood involvement in the Cartel, it also allows Mystics and Inquisitors to get involved.

It also has Doomtroopers, the appeal of which to combat-focussed characters should never be underestimated.

THE CORPORATIONS

Corporate-focussed campaigns are not, in theory, much different from freelance ones. The jobs are much the same–because whether they use their own employees for it, or hire some freelancers, the work still needs to get done. The differences are more in terms of style and feel. Within a corporation, a character has a billion natural allies ready and waiting (and more than a few rivals and competitors). He has a steady income for his time and effort, and the prospect of being promoted to bigger and better things. He has a support network to call upon when things get bad. The problem is that when the rewards are higher, so are the consequences; if the job was not important, they would have hired a freelancer to do it. Furthermore,

The interrogator shone the light into Simon Jones' eyes. Simon was a good-looking man, his toned and well-muscled physique hinting at his ex-military career. Currently he was tied to a plain metal chair, his arms bound behind his back and his clothes stained with his own blood and sweat, though none from the face – the interrogators wanted to make sure other people would not be able to see the punishment he had taken. Simon was pleased they had managed at least a little restraint.

They had been at this for hours, attempting to torture the whereabouts of his latest client out of him, but Simon had survived far worse in the field from Bauhaus military interrogators. These guys were amateurs in comparison. The only weapon they had was brute force and persistence.

"What time is it?" he asked, intentionally making his voice sound broken and weak.

"Twelve fifteen," replied the interrogator, "Why?"

Simon smiled, pulled his arms free of the bonds he had loosened almost an hour ago, and in one smooth move launched himself forward, pulled the pistol out of the his interrogator's belt and squeezed off four rounds into the man's chest. As the interrogator collapsed, Simon stood up, brushed himself down, and helped himself to the dead man's keys, cash and wallet. Looking down, he answered the dead man's now meaningless question:

"Because her flight to Victoria took off fifteen minutes ago. Because I no longer have to play this charade."

He opened the wallet, pulled out the man's identity card and grinned.

Thanks to Simon Jones.

just as being in a corporation brings allies and support it also comes with enemies: a Cybertronic employee in an Imperial part of town is liable to be shot and dumped in the sewers without much justification.

Another complication with a corporation-focussed game is that it is likely to narrow the character options further. You are unlikely to find a Samurai, a Venusian Ranger, and a Free Marine working together on behalf of their corporations, so a corporate campaign will typically limit characters to those from that particular corporation.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood campaign is a much more narrowly focussed game than the corporate campaign. Characters can easily have diverse origins, but their training and their affiliations are dominated by the Cardinal's Calling, and their objectives are all aimed at the defeat of the Darkness and the salvation of mankind.

One of the bigger challenges facing a GM looking at a Brotherhood campaign is that multiple characters are likely to possess access to the Arts. This capability can be a shock to an unwary GM. However, the activities of the Brotherhood are diverse enough in practice to provide this sort of game with a lot of options and directions; tracking down artefacts or investigating the visions of a Prophet are quite different to an out-and-out raid against a Heretic stronghold or an assault on a Citadel.

HERETICS

Similarly, Heretics have a lot of diverse objectives and goals, all to a single end–power for themselves and the entities they are devoted to. While some Heretics may turn their backs on Darkness and wield their ill-gotten powers and dark knowledge against their former brethren, the majority of Heretic campaigns will set a small group of twisted individuals against the forces of order and civilisation.

The challenges of a Heretic campaign are typically the short life-span of the characters; a Heretic is perpetually hunted, and their activities and very presence regarded as the greatest sins it is possible for a human being to commit. Further, 'evil' campaigns have a tendency to self-destruct into a parody of depravity, where the characters betray one another ("because they're evil") long before the authorities catch up with them. With the right group, however, the constant feeling of being on the run from the law can produce a great game, and some players may enjoy exploring the reasons why a person might embrace the Darkness.

THE THREAT OF TECHNOLOGY

The technology of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is something that requires particular consideration. The form that technology takes with any setting underpins the style and tone of the game, influencing the way stories play out, and shaping the kinds of stories that can be told. A setting based upon the mythology of Ancient Greece lacks the technologies that we–as players–take for granted in our daily lives. It impacts the decisions that characters can make, the way they travel and communicate, and the way stories are told. Similarly, a far-future setting with advanced robotics, faster-than-light travel, and artificial intelligences, changes the way characters will interact with the worlds around them.

Mutant Chronicles is a setting where technology is both asset and liability. The tools humanity has developed are invaluable to the pursuit of both progress and profit, but they are a pale shadow of what mankind once achieved. Worse, those tools are as valuable to the Dark Soul as they are to mankind, a means by which the darkness can seep into and defile the spirit of humanity. Nevertheless, technology impacts the lives of every person in the solar system, shaping the way people go about their daily business.

25TH CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

The technology of humanity before the First Corporate War and the rise of the Dark Symmetry was both more and less advanced than that which came before. Civilisation on Earth had risen to great heights, and then collapsed under its own weight. The infrastructure hastily established on Luna, Mercury, Venus, and Mars could not hope to match that which had been present on Earth, and the baseline level of technology regressed by over a century, even as corporate scientists and engineers laboured to ensure that humanity would survive.

Yet, even as humanity fled Earth for new worlds, progress continued. The science of terraforming had been carefully nurtured and developed, its secrets kept secure to allow mankind to exist on other worlds. These secrets had made worlds beyond Earth habitable, and such treasured knowledge was too valuable to be allowed to slip away. Artificial intelligence emerged from a renaissance in computing led by Mishima in the early 22nd Century. Space travel had become very necessary, allowing humanity to travel to other worlds in the solar system in hours or days rather than weeks or years. Nuclear fusion powered cities and spaceships alike. Medical advances almost eradicated disease and infirmity, extending the average human lifespan to a little over 130 years.

Technology in 2480 – shortly before the Imperial expedition to Pluto–broadly and superficially resembles technology in the 1980s and 1990s, but the technology at the heart of civilisation is far more advanced, even if many of those advances do not reach the majority of people. Computing is widespread in the workplace, but not in the home, and while city and planet-wide communications networks exist, connected to a number of AI systems, they are a far cry from the internet of the early 21st Century, connecting offices and the homes of the wealthy and powerful. These systems are mainly used to govern the business of the corporations; vast amounts of financial data flow through the AI-run networks every minute, processed and analysed to inform the corporation's executives of the most effective business decisions. Other AIs control security, such as Mishima's Panopticon system on Mercury, or handle orbital control and interplanetary shipping.

Communication across the solar system is little different to computing–the most advanced forms are reserved for the richest and most powerful, with a much lower baseline level available to everyone else. Wired telephones are the standard in most places–a rugged basis for the communications infrastructure–but the wealthy and the well-connected have basic mobile phones. Those with emergency responsibilities–doctors, security personnel, and others–tend to have simple pagers to let them know when they are needed.

So much of this would come crashing down in the cataclysms that followed.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE 13TH CENTURY YC

More than 1,200 years have passed since the rise of the Darkness. In that time, technology has changed little; progress slowing to a crawl for fear that the Dark Symmetry would infect and pervert devices that are more advanced than the 'safe' baseline established.

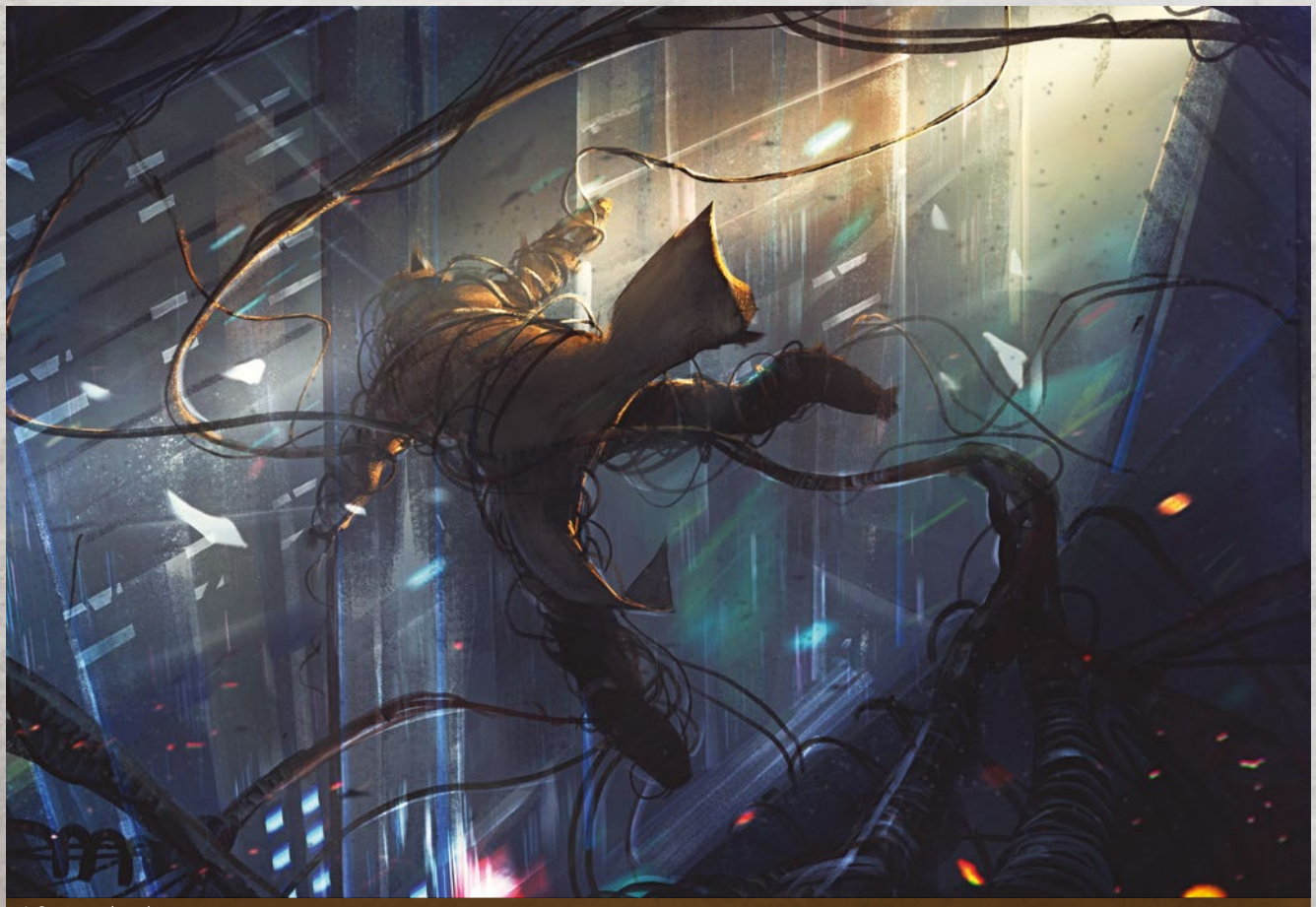
In the wake of the emergence of the Dark Symmetry, advanced technology rebelled against humanity, spreading discord and causing immense destruction. Media broadcasts were infiltrated by subversive signals and nightmarish notions, distorting broadcasts or creating entirely new ones. AI systems were driven insane–at least as much as an artificial mind can be made insane–and began spreading lies and misinformation to those who had come to trust them implicitly. Spacecraft and aircraft fell from the skies, while cars

and trucks rebelled against their drivers. Computer-assisted weapon systems, such as the rudimentary AI-assist systems in 'smart' rifles, turned against their wielders.

In a natural reaction to this rebellion, mankind sought to eliminate the threat. The technologies identified as being vulnerable to Darkness were cast away, every trace of them destroyed. The development of thinking machines–artificial intelligences and any other computers capable of sapient thought–was outlawed by Brotherhood edict. Nothing is immune to corruption–even the simplest devices, even the stone of buildings, can be tainted–but some things are more susceptible to this threat than others.

Nearly thirteen centuries after the founding of the Brotherhood, sophisticated electronics–anything employing transistors or integrated circuitry, essentially–are rare, as their systems are more vulnerable to Darkness than simpler designs. This heavily restricts the availability of portable electronic devices, and even the smallest examples tend to be heavy and bulky. The most complex computers are massive, unwieldy devices that take up huge rooms, and are designed only to perform straightforward tasks. Mechanical comptographs are far more commonplace. In general, technology bears a strong resemblance to that of the mid-20th Century–late 1940s, early 1950s–and has remained in this state for generations. Even disposable, cheap, mass-market items are designed to be durable, rugged, and require minimal maintenance, as the more durable a device, the less susceptible it is to the corruption of the Dark Symmetry.

Yet, in the last century or so, things have changed. The threat of the Darkness has become a distant memory, a grim tale of wars long ago. Humans have once again begun to experiment with technologies that are more sophisticated. Cybertronic is at the heart of this, creating new AIs and complex computer networks. Access to the workings of Cybertronic's technology is limited–even those who use Cybertronic-made components in their own machines, such as Mishima and its powered armour, barely know how these devices work–but they seem to have found a way around the risk of corruption. The Brotherhood maintains a surprisingly high technological base, employing the Art to develop sophisticated devices without reliance on the circuits and transistors of ancient electronics, but these are kept strictly within the organisation.



A Castigator launching at its prey.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE DARK SYMMETRY

The interplay between the technology that the characters use and the Dark Symmetry that opposes them is a significant part of the tone and theme of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting, and thus it is an important narrative tool for the GM to master. The rules for Corrupting technology can be found on page 247, but that is not the main consideration for this section. Rather, this section is concerned with how and when to employ those rules as a means of enhancing the game and producing a more exciting and memorable experience.

Broadly speaking, the main way that technology may become corrupted is through exposure to corrupted creatures or places. Certain creatures and characters may have powers–particularly Dark Gifts–that allow them to corrupt nearby machinery immediately. These foes are a particular terror for heavily-armed warriors, who may find their weapons suddenly non-functional or even malicious, or hear their radios whisper dark secrets and murmurs of betrayal. However, while these creatures–Heretics of Ilian and entities like Twisted Marionettes being common examples–are a very obvious source of technological corruption, which they can employ as a weapon, they are far from the only source.

The influence of the Dark Symmetry is pervasive, but it is not equally strong everywhere. Corruption of any sort is highly unlikely within secured and sanctified areas such as a Cathedral, for example, while it is far more likely when moving through a tainted place or fighting creatures influenced by the Darkness. The practice of receiving blessings and spiritual protection before fighting the Dark Legion is not superstition, but pragmatism; when battling the forces of Darkness, the threat of corruption in all forms is no less real than the threat of blades and bullets.

It is important not to overuse Corruption. The threat of it should remain a very real possibility, and the fear of it should give characters (and their players) pause, but overused it can cause more frustration and annoyance than fear. The occasional, carefully-timed use can have more impact than a repeated onslaught, and influencing some small or incidental piece of technology–a household appliance, a soldier's radio, the lights in a building–can often have a far greater impact than Corrupting something dangerous like a gun.

Regardless of what has been affected, cultivating paranoia, isolating characters from one another, and inspiring doubt are good uses of corruption. It plays well in to the horror aspects of the setting (an inability to trust your equipment), it can influence an intrigue-based game (doubt and dissent fuelled by corruption), complicate an investigative game (adding uncertainty to evidence), or produce an additional tactical wrinkle to a combat-focussed game. Being directly obstructive, particularly if corruption is overused, is likely to make players frustrated, and generate an adversarial feeling, which can cause problems.

ADVENTURES WITH TECHNOLOGY

Just as it can complicate the characters' lives, technology can be invaluable for spurring adventures on. The Dark Symmetry forever changed how humanity interacts with and regards technology. It laid waste to the progress and development of generations of scientists and engineers, and turned mankind's creations against their creators. The solar system is littered with the debris of human progress. In spite of every endeavour to destroy dangerous machines and corruptible technologies, there are caches of deadly technology scattered across the worlds of humanity.

Conversely, there are parts of the infrastructure of every city on every planet and asteroid inhabited by humans that are built upon jury-rigged technology. The cataclysmic effects of the rise of the Dark Symmetry forced the corporations to work around systems that had been compromised and corrupted, tearing out the parts that could be removed and circumventing those that could not. In spite of the best efforts of everyone involved, centuries-old remnants of technology still sit at the heart of humanity's cities. Some of these remnants are carefully maintained, preserved as best as anyone can to keep things moving. Others are long-forgotten.

These circumstances–to give only two examples–mean that technology can be a driving force in adventures, rather than merely a tool for the characters in those adventures. The threat of ancient technologies, corrupted or merely damaged, can propel an adventure forward. Similarly, old technologies failing could create the circumstances of other adventures–old parts of old cities falling to desolation because the infrastructure that supports them is decrepit technology from before the Dark Legion.

ANCIENT TECHNOLOGY

Legends persist of the technological achievements of the ancient world, the technologies of Earth from before the Exodus. These legends are variously regarded as cautionary tales of an era long past, or as examples of the grand achievements of mankind. They are, for obvious reasons, most prevalent amongst Whitestar, and the various tribes that survive upon or beneath the surface of Earth.

At its peak, Earth in ancient days was awash with technology. The sum of all human knowledge and creativity was available for all to access, and even children carried powerful computers in their daily lives. People regarded the world through electronic eyes, and spoke to one another across a vast network of computers that linked people and homes. It is even said that the clouds themselves were filled with information, and that the very sky buzzed with signals. These devices were not the hardy mechanisms of the modern world, but tablets of glass and plastic that danced at man's touch and heeded his words. Others still responded to his gestures as an orchestra does those of a conductor.

Amidst this abundance of computers–even common appliances and road vehicles now contained sophisticated computers connected to the great network–came other strides. Man's understanding of the universe grew deeper and more comprehensive as gifted scientists studied the fundamental essence of physical law, utilising colossally powerful computers and vast particle accelerators to test their hypotheses. Electrical power–necessary in this technology-filled world–was a matter of increasing concern, and great strides forward were made in the generation and storage of electricity. In all regards, the technology of Earth in the 21st and early 22nd Centuries was a marvel, representing achievements seldom equalled.

Not everyone regards these achievements fondly. Those who heed the Brotherhood's word regard the preponderance of technology as recklessness: placing so great a dependence upon machines, even without knowledge of the threat that would befall mankind, is seen as foolhardy. Others chafe at the notion that technology–rather than the corrupting influence of the Darkness–is responsible for the cataclysms that befell humanity, and generations have sought to find a way to fortify complex technology against the Dark Symmetry.

While remnants of ancient technology are vanishingly rare on the worlds ruled by the corporations, the ruins of Earth are littered with them. The blasted, skeletal ruins of ancient cities contain scraps and fragments of the technology that used to fill them. Most are destroyed beyond hope of repair, their inner workings barely even recognisable due to centuries of corrosion in a hostile environment. Occasionally, something that still works, or which can be effectively reverse-engineered, is found. The technology base of Whitestar is built upon caches of such devices recovered from across the world. Most of these devices are little different to the technology of the corporations–most advanced devices are delicate, and ill-suited to enduring the passage of centuries–but occasional examples, often found in sealed Bauhauser labs, are highly advanced; almost impossibly so.

DEFINING NPCS

When creating NPCs for players to interact with, it is important to define some idea of who they are as people. This does not have to be a complex psychological profile; a few simple descriptive words will suffice. The more significant the NPC, the more description is needed.

An NPC's personality, attitude, and priorities will make a difference in how player characters interact with them. This takes the form of bonus Momentum–seldom more than one or two points–granted either to the NPC's test (if it would help them resist) or to the player character's test (if it would make them more compliant).

The first factor to consider is a simple one–faction. Broadly speaking, most people in the solar system are well-disposed to people of the same corporation, and slow to trust those of a rival corporation. Freelancers and others outside the corporations avoid most of this prejudice, due mainly to the fact that they are almost universally regarded as flighty and untrustworthy.

The NPC Faction Table provides an at-a-glance way to determine the alliances and rivalries among the various factions. Where a plus (+) is listed, the interaction grants one bonus Momentum to the character attempting the Social Conflict, because his origin and heritage is well-regarded by the NPC. Where a minus (–) is listed, the NPC gains one bonus Momentum instead, as they are naturally reluctant to trust the character talking to them. Freelancers and others outside the corporations are excluded from the table, as their neutrality and mercenary nature tend to override most corporate prejudice. The Brotherhood is a distinct faction on this table as well; characters who have joined the Brotherhood ignore their original faction for this purpose–their role in the Cardinal's Calling overrides their heritage for social purposes. Obviously, there will be some variation within this, as the factions are not entirely homogenous, but this is a good starting point.

When dealing with an NPC of the same faction, social standing becomes important. Different corporations regard social status differently, but most tend to adhere to a simple rule–the higher a character's status, the more weight his words carry. If the NPC being addressed is of lower social status than the player character (and the player character's status is known or otherwise obvious), the player character gains one bonus Momentum on some Persuade, Command, or Lifestyle tests. The reverse is also true–a high-born NPC gains one bonus Momentum when resisting the Persuade, Command, or Lifestyle tests of a low-born player character.

The precise effects do vary somewhat by faction, as explained on the table opposite. Where a plus (+) is listed, the higher status character (whether player character or NPC) gains one bonus Momentum. Where a minus (–) is listed, the lower status character gains one bonus Momentum instead–social rank is not always an advantage. Capitol's egalitarian, fame-obsessed society regards the famous as persuasive, while those societies with social classes tend to ingrain a natural deference in their lower orders.

NPCS ARE PEOPLE TOO

Often, the easiest way to create NPCs is to draw from the familiar. The world is already full of ordinary people going about their business, any of whom can serve as inspiration for NPCs. Important characters–characters who are necessarily more detailed–require more thought, and it may not be as easy to base them on random people in the street. Inspiration can come from movies, TV shows, books, friends, colleagues, family members… anywhere that provides a source of detailed personalities. If an NPC is based on someone that the players know, however, try not to be too cruel with the depiction.

BROTHER REMIVICH FAYOMINOV
INQUISITOR

Inquisitor Remivich Fayominov was born to a devout Bauhaus father and a renegade Whitestar mother–a Night Witch of the Tsarina who defected to the Brotherhood following a spiritual vision she received that prophesised that her child would be a powerful force for good in the Brotherhood.

His mother trained him as a child and when his natural aptitude for the Art was discovered he was welcomed into the embrace of the Brotherhood. Remivich – 'Remi' to his close friends–was blessed by the ability to sense truth unerringly. Whether it was a legacy from his mother, or merely a natural aptitude for reading micro-expressions has never been clear, but his talents were recognised and he began training as an Inquisitor. Now a seasoned veteran, Remi is one of the Brotherhood's finest investigators in the war against the Dark Legion.

"Oh Griff is gonna like you. You are mean! Come on, follow me mate."

Inquisitor Remivich Fayominov – 'Remi' to his friends followed the Tarin heretic into the sewers without hesitation, he subtly encouraged the heretic to keep talking as they journeyed through the maze of tunnels towards the secret lair of the heretic cell. "Yeah, you is going to like Griff. He is crazy man! Ain't no one messing with him anymore. They say he has been all the way to Mars man, seen the truth inside Saladin's citadel. The Dark Legion is all misunderstood man, they ain't here to conquer us, they're here to help us. It's them Brothers that's holding us back, man. Anyway, best stop with my chin-wagging. We're here." The heretic activated a secret door in the sewer wall. Remi nodded and smiled.

"Thanks, Tarin. You have been most helpful." The heretic never saw the taser coming and Remi shackled him once he had slipped to the floor. He reached inside his cloak and pulled out the powerful encrypted radio. "Manticore, this is Eagle. I've found the location of the heretic base and am going in. Send backup, just in case. I've left one heretic shackled at the entrance." He put away the radio and pulled out his Punisher heavy pistol.

"Cardinal, be with me." He whispered to himself as he stepped through the portal. The heretic cell would never know what hit them.

BROTHER FAYOMINOV

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Mysticism d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14(8); **Willpower:**

Hindrances: Quirk (Driven to Find Heretics), Poverty, Vow (Major – Support Brotherhood)

Edges: Alertness, Crimson Bulwark, Danger Sense, Inquisitor Lifepath, Strong-Wille

Powers: *Armor*, *Boost/Lower Trait*, *Detect/Conceal Arcana*, *Exorcise Dark Influence*, *Mind Reading*, *Warrior's Gif*

Gear: Inquisitorial Battle Dress (8), Power Controller, Punisher Heavy Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 12, 3RB, Knockdown), Punisher Short Sword (Str+d6, Corrupt 0, Parry +1).

Thanks to Remi Fayomi.

THE BROTHERHOOD AND LEVELS OF PERFECTION

The Brotherhood has a distinct way of handling social interaction. All Brothers are made equal, according to the Book of Law, but those who bear the power of Light are especially revered. In simple terms, while there are no social classes within the Brotherhood, Mystics are regarded more highly.

This is quantified by the Levels of Perfection, the guide by which a Brother's power in the Light is measured. In game terms, a Brotherhood character's Level of Perfection is equal to the number of Arts talents (including the Mystic talent) that the character has – thus determining the character's breadth and depth of understanding. For NPCs, who are unlikely to have Arts talents listed, their Level of Perfection is equal to half the number of Spells they know, rounded down.

A Brotherhood character with a higher Level of Perfection gains one bonus Momentum on Persuade and Command tests – such characters are naturally regarded with the greatest respect. Obviously, the Cardinal has the highest Level of Perfection, followed closely by the members of the Curia.

Of course, no NPC needs to be a carbon copy of another person–real or fictional. NPCs that are amalgams of several people can often be just as convincing.

An NPC's actions will be informed not only by their personality, but also by their responsibilities, and by their connections to the rest of the world around them. While the GM does not have to define every single aspect of an NPC's life, it is useful to keep in mind that NPCs are people, and thus can be influenced by all manner of factors that may not be entirely obvious.

In any case, think of how different people would react to different approaches–an aggressive person is less likely to be charmed, but may be more susceptible to subtle persuasions that use his worldview against him, while a cunning person may respond far better to flattery than to tricks. If the personality–no matter how basic–that an NPC possesses would suggest a bonus or penalty to the particular approach the players are using, award a point of bonus Momentum to whichever side of the Social Conflict has the advantage. Even in combat, an NPC's personality can shine through–while a Necromutant will fight to the death and maybe even beyond, humans seldom want to die, and thus may surrender or flee when sufficiently threatened.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

When running a campaign, it often helps to keep the 'bigger picture' of that campaign in mind. A campaign becomes more rewarding and more engrossing for those involved when it draws upon the themes and ideas that best define and illustrate the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***. Similarly, linking adventures in to an ongoing campaign allows a group to delve more deeply into their characters' exploits than a single adventure can, and allows those characters to be explored and enjoyed for longer. A well-run campaign can last for months, even years, and it will be remembered fondly for far longer.

When planning a game of ***Mutant Chronicles***, whether for a short adventure lasting a few hours, or an epic campaign spanning months or more of play, the GM should remember a number of important concepts. These themes serve to illustrate how to depict the ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting in games, and the many conflicts that drive it.

CORPORATION VERSUS CORPORATION

While large-scale conflicts are perhaps a little beyond the normal scope of a campaign, there are countless behind-the-scenes operations each and every day. The player characters, as employees of a corporation, may find themselves on espionage missions, surgical military strikes against manufacturing or military installations, or high-powered negotiations for military, industrial, or economic concessions. They may also infiltrate the other corporations, working to sabotage its operations from within or simply to gather information.

EMPLOYEE VERSUS CORPORATION

The heroes are small cogs in colossal machines, and each is trying to claw his way up to the top of the heap. Along the way, they have to make allies, overcome foes and other obstacles, protect their interests from betrayal, and ultimately learn their employer's secrets. It is a ruthless, deadly world out there, and anyone above the characters has already learned this hard truth.

CORPORATION VERSUS DARK LEGION

The Dark Legion is friend to no one, and the corporations that normally clash with one another so ferociously will gladly join forces when they face the threat of Darkness. However, the threat is not confined to the battlefield: corruption reaches everywhere, and even the highest ranks of a corporation can be touched by the Darkness, using the power of the mighty corporations to further the ends of the Dark Apostles.

BROTHERHOOD VERSUS DARK LEGION

Darkness is everywhere in the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***, and it must be stopped at all costs. Abominations stalk the jungles of Venus and the plains of Mars, where the Brotherhood may join forces with corporate militaries, or strike alone in secret against the enemy

Characters are up against the mighty Corporations as much as the Dark Legion.

of humanity. Sometimes, however, the Darkness is less obvious, and it is up to the player characters to root out the corrupted wherever they may hide: on the streets, in corporate boardrooms, or even working to defile the Brotherhood.

FREELANCER VERSUS FREELANCER

It is tough on the streets, and sometimes there are not enough jobs to go around. Maybe the crew down the street keeps stealing the characters' work, or maybe they want to find out what their new competitor's angle is. Freelancers are often territorial, especially when their operations grow in size, so a new operator in town is a sure sign of trouble.

FREELANCER VERSUS CORPORATION

There are few places as dangerous to be as in the crosshairs of a corporation–only a Nepharite's Citadel is definitively worse. The power of the corporations seems infinite when brought to bear upon a lowly freelancer, and their employees are many and devoted. If the freelancer screwed up an important job, he might expect to lose a few contacts or to get blacklisted by the corporation. However, if he seriously messed up, then life promises to become very unpleasant, or very brief.

FREELANCER VERSUS BROTHERHOOD

When the Inquisition catches the scent of Darkness, it pursues it like a bloodhound. Maybe a job was done for the wrong crowd, maybe they missed High Mass last week, or maybe they were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Whatever the case, the Brotherhood is eager to ask the difficult questions, even if the characters do not have any answers. The options are to run or to fight back… and neither of those choices are particularly pleasant.

FREELANCER VERSUS DARK LEGION

The freelancers have found a nest of corruption all by themselves, and it needs to be dealt with now–no time to tip off the Brotherhood. Alternatively, the Darkness may have taken a grim interest in the characters' lives, with Heretics endeavouring to entice and recruit them. This can be a tale of extreme personal horror or complex intrigue: in either case, the characters may never truly know who the enemy really is.

HUMANITY VERSUS THE UNKNOWN

Almost thirteen centuries have passed since the Thinking Machines fell to madness and corruption and humanity was almost driven back to its primitive roots. Ancient ruins in the Venusian jungles and Martian deserts were reclaimed by the wilderness. Imperial outposts and bases long-abandoned litter the asteroid belt. Military compounds, laboratories, and forgotten technology more than a millennium old await discovery in the unexplored regions of humanity's domain. The prize for a rich find can be tremendous, but the cost of uncovering such legendary treasures is too great for all but the most courageous–or foolhardy–to risk.

DARK LEGION VERSUS DARK LEGION

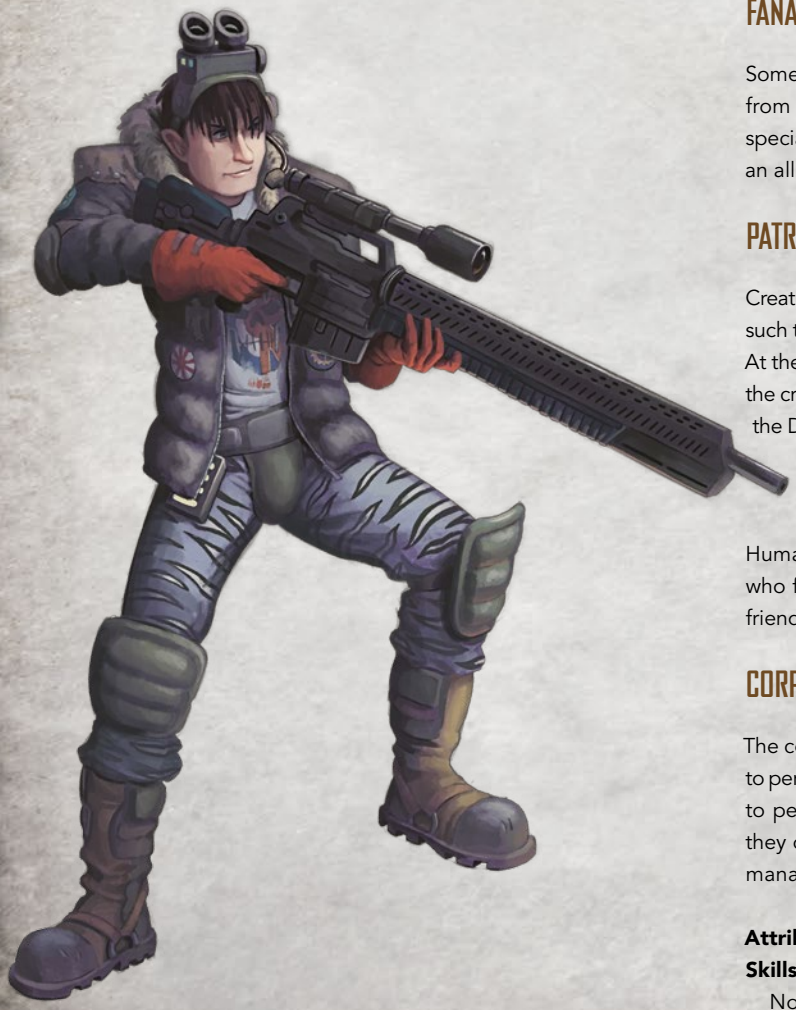
The Darkness is not some monolithic force. The Dark Apostles clash amongst one another almost as frequently as they terrorise mankind. The nature of these conflicts is often bizarre or shaped by a twisted agenda: followers of Muawijhe spreading madness that threatens to expose the delicate, pestilential works of Demnogonis. Bloodthirsty devotees of Algeroth may wreak havoc that compromises the works of a cult to Ilian. Semai's legions may simply choose to engineer discord amongst the creatures of his dark siblings. Beyond even that, repentant Heretics may turn their Darkness-given powers against the beings that corrupted them, fighting for humanity even as they are hunted by the Brotherhood themselves.

CHAPTER 21

A CAST OF CHARACTERS

The ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is vast and varied. Use the Monstrous Abilities, Guidelines, and samples below as the heroes encounter the extras, villains, and monsters that will make their Chronicle memorable. The ☠ indicates that this type of character is always a Wild Card.

Extras, villains, and everyone else encountered, are generated using the normal rules found in the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook. The monstrous abilities found in **Chapter 7: Bestiary** of the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook are referenced by several creatures here and can be used when creating the inhabitants of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe.



A typical freelancer is waiting for the go sign.

MONSTROUS ABILITIES

DARK PRESENCE

The creatures of the Dark Symmetry are alien and horrifying, but some among them radiate terror and corruption in their wake. A creature with the Dark Presence monstrous ability causes Terror and inflicts an addition penalty on Willpower tests equal to its Dark Presence rating. They can also more easily defile locations, as noted in the Corruption section. For instance, a creature with Dark Presence 2 causes a Terror check with a –2 penalty, and also reduce all Willpower tests by 2 for any being with line of sight.

FANATICS

Some members of the Dark Symmetry command unflinching loyalty from their minions. As a result, Wild Cards with the "Fanatics" special ability who are hit in combat have the damage redirected to an allied extra within 6" of them.

PATRON BLESSING

Creatures with this ability have the favor of their Patron Apostle, and as such they are occasionally granted extra abilities beyond those listed. At the start of combat, the GM may spend a Chronicle Point to grant the creature any Gift of the Dark Symmetry (see page 116) from either the Dark Symmetry or the specific Patron Apostle's available choices.

HUMANITY

Humanity is varied and diverse, this is a small sample of those who frequent the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe and can be used as friends, foes, or something in between.

CORPORATE AGENT

The corporations employ countless specialist agents and operatives to perform a variety of specialised tasks. They are routinely called upon to perform clandestine or underhanded tasks for their employers; they operate under the guise of legitimate business activities, with managerial or executive titles to legitimise their employment.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Espionage) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Taunt d8, Technical Aptitude d6

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1); **Willpower:** 6
Hindrances: Vow (Major—Serve Corporate Leadership)
Edges: Charismatic
Gear: Light Military Shoulder Pads (+1, 75% chance to protect head), Dagger (Str+d4), Piranha Handgun (Range 10/20/40, Dmage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi-Auto, +1 to Hide).

Corporate agents solve all those problems a boardroom meeting cannot.

GANGER

Criminal gangs are rife across the system, particularly in the depths of the cities. Luna City and San Dorado both have problems with gang warfare, and the members of the dispossessed underclasses of each corporation often find themselves embroiled in criminal activities.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Shooting d8, Taunt d6, Technical Aptitude d4
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (2); **Willpower:** 5
Hindrances: Wanted (Minor)
Edges: Brawny
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (+2), Dagger (Str+d4), Ironhand Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi-Auto).

CORPORATE SECURITY

Each corporation maintains an extensive civil security force. These forces provide widespread security for corporate assets, as well as serving as law enforcement. Typically better armed than criminal elements and mercenary forces, corporate security teams can be formidable opposition if crossed.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Willpower:** 5
Hindrances: None
Edges: Marksman
Gear: Heavy Civilian Shoulder Pads (2, 50% chance to protect head), Cudgel (Str+d4), Punisher Heavy Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 12, 3RB, Knockdown).

Even the average citizens have been hardened in this world.

HIRED KILLER

One of two professions as old as civilisation itself, murder-for-hire is still thriving in the modern age. Professional killers remain in high demand across the system, and the services they provide are available to anyone who knows where to ask. Most of these skilled professionals are freelance and their activities entirely deniable, though the corporations maintain their own clandestine operations.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Espionage) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Technical Aptitude d6
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Willpower:** 5
Hindrances: Greed (Major)
Edges: Block, Marksman
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing and Heavy Civilian Shoulder Pads (+2, 50% chance to protect head), Dagger (Str+d4), Silenced Punisher Heavy Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 12, 3RB, Knockdown), No 15. Archer Sniper Rifle (Range 50/100/200, Damage 2d10, RoF 1, Shots 3, 2H, Snapfire, AP4).

FREELANCER

Broadly speaking, "freelancer" applies to a particular class of people who perform work for hire on an ad-hoc basis, while existing outside of the corporations. There are freelancers of many varieties, employed short-term for all manner of distinct roles. However, the term "Freelancer" conjures the image of a particular type of individual—the independent mercenary, the unaffiliated investigator, the all-round "tough guy" who will get a dirty job done for the right number of Crowns.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Choose One) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6, Technical Aptitude d6
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Willpower:** 5
Hindrances: Greed (Minor)
Edges: Rub Some Dirt on It
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing and Light Military Shoulder Pads (+2, 75% chance to protect head), Dagger (Str+d4), M13 Bolter (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8+1, RoF 3, Shots 20, AP4, Auto, 3RB).

SOLDIER

All the corporations, as well as the Brotherhood, maintain strong armed forces both as defence against aggressive actions by their rivals and as a means to combat the Dark Legion. These soldiers are, broadly-speaking, essentially the same regardless of faction—there are differences, but such distinctions tend to become irrelevant in the mud and grime of conflict.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Shooting d8, Survival d4, Technical Aptitude d4
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 13 (6); **Willpower:** 5
Hindrances: Vow (Major—Serve Military)
Edges: Brawny

Luna PD Marshal Zebulon "Zeb" Court roared down Ryker's Highway on his jet bike barely a metre above the black tarmac. His face was flushed by the excitement of the pursuit. His Capitol-issue, Luna PD shoulder pads provided some protection from the dirt flung up by his quarry and his long brown duster billowed out behind him like a cloak revealing the twin holsters—one on each hip—for his .45 Widowmaker pistols. Zeb glanced down at the speedo—he was doing just under two hundred kilometres an hour.

Ahead, fleeing as fast as they could, were a group of bandits in an open top jeep. He'd been on their trail for several days, and had finally found them in a bar in Freeport. They had seen his badge, duster and pistols and run for the hills. Literally in this case as they were rushing towards the Armstrong Mountains. He could see the driver shout something at his comrades and the biggest one—who he recognised as the thug called 'Plug' who was built like a brick shithouse'—whipped the cover off a light machine gun and stood up as he prepared to shoot the Marshal.

"Oh hell, no." muttered Zeb to himself. Taking his right hand off the handlebars of his bike he pulled one of his Widowmakers in a smooth move while pressing harder on the accelerator pedal. The bike roared like a demon and shot off, rapidly closing the gap. Taking aim he fired off two shots. The first went wide but the second hit Plug squarely between the eyes. Zeb holstered his pistol and roared alongside. Setting his bike to autopilot and praying it would work properly today—his bike had been acting up like so much technology recently—he climbed up onto the seat and prepared to leap onto the fast moving jeep.

ZEBULON COURT
LUNA PD DETECTIVE

Detective Zebulon Court grew up in the Badlands of Luna, out beyond the city walls on the Southern Coast of Lake of Testimonies just off Ryker's Highway. His father was a seasoned tracker and hunter in great demand by nobility and executives for their hunting trips. He made it a point to take the young Zebulon hunting on a number of worlds, passing his skills to his son at a young age. Zebulon's talents were noted on a hunting trip with a group of Capitol military officers and he was offered a military scholarship. His father was sad to see him go but the opportunity was just too great to ignore. Zebulon served with distinction as a scout and tracker and earned his place as a Sergeant in the Airborne Rangers. His military career came to an abrupt end when an assassination turned bad and his unit faced a whole battalion of hostiles. Zebulon and his team fought to the last man and, despite the overwhelming enemy force held on long enough for an extraction. The entire event was caught on camera by an embedded Capitol news team and Zebulon became an instant hero with his trademark twin Widowmaker pistols. The military transferred Zebulon to public relations duties once he had recovered from the wounds sustained, but Zebulon never wanted to be simply a figurehead. Realising that his career in frontline military was over, he used his new fame to request a temporary transfer to Luna PD and was made a detective.

Now he puts his tracking skills to use hunting down criminals and despite missing the thrill of the frontline, Zebulon has found that he is making a difference. His public persona gives people hope and his skills see to it that his successful closure rate is the highest in his division. Zebulon had meant the transfer to be temporary until the publicity had died down and he could return to military service, but now he is not so sure.

ZEBULON COURT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Criminal Law) d4, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Survival d8, Tracking d10
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Willpower:** 6
Hindrances: Vow (Major – Uphold the Law), Vow (Major–Work for Luna PD)
Edges: Ambidextrous, Luna PD Lifepath, Quick Draw, Two-Fisted
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Suit (2), Medium Military Shoulder Pads (2, 75% change to protect head), Hunting Knife (Str+d4), Two Widowmaker Pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi-Automatic.

Thanks to David Pike.

Gear: HFMPS-93 Body Armour (6), Bayonet (Str+d4, A bayonet affixed to a rifle increases the damage to Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), M50 Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8+2, RoF 3, Shots 30, 2H, AP2, 3RB, Auto), M509 Grenade Launcher (Range 15/30/60, As Grenade, RoF 1, Shots 3).

REPORTER, HERETIC OF SEMAI

Cultists of Semai are a continual problem for civilisation. They infiltrate places where they are able to uncover secrets and spread discord, and are skilled at persuading others of their good intentions, while simultaneously twisting the beliefs and intentions of everyone else around them.

The example Heretic of Semai presented here could be a journalist or television personality—ideal positions for someone desiring to twist truths and distort public perceptions.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Mysticism d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Technical Aptitude d6
Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1); **Willpower:** 4
Hindrances: Vow (Major—Support the Dark Symmetry)
Edges: Charismatic, Heretic Lifepath Edge, Newsmonger
Dark Gifts: *Muddle the Memory*, *Obfuscation*
Gear: Light Civilian Shoulder Pads (1, 50% chance to protect head), Dagger (Str+d4), MP-105 Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 3, Shots 8, AP1, 3RB).

DOCTOR, HERETIC OF DEMNOGONIS

Demnogonis' agents often work their way into the medical profession and scientific community. Their skills and position allow them to subvert research into cures, sabotage the healing work of others, and spread diseases.

The example Heretic of Demnogonis presented here could be a paramedic or nurse, or a doctor or surgeon—all such individuals are well-placed to spread the Befouler's gifts and do his work.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d8, Intimidation d4, Mysticism d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Technical Aptitude d6
Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Willpower:** 4
Hindrances: Vow (Major—Support the Dark Symmetry)
Edges: EMT, Healer, Heretic Lifepath Edge
Dark Gifts: *Control Sickness*, *Obfuscation*
Gear: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (2), Dagger (Str+d4).

THE DARK LEGION

The forces of the Dark Symmetry are ferocious and implacable, and like many facets of the universe, take on aspects of their Patron Apostle. Creatures marked with the Wild Card symbols are always encountered as a Wild Card. Those without the Wild Card symbol are Extras, but can be promoted to Wild Card status to make longer and deadlier fights.

THE LEGIONS

Many of the creatures of the Dark Legion are souls that have been corrupted, twisted, and enslaved by the Dark Symmetry and its technology. Some are more willing—creatures from dimensions of pain and war who allow the Symmetry to take them. In a sense, all are part of the Dark Soul, infused with its power and influence.

Those from other worlds are often in a position of power, serving as generals on the front, as special guards, or directly under the Apostles. Razides, Ezoghouls and Ilian's Templar Guards are examples of powerful creatures that are wholly or partly from other dimensions and distant worlds. They are here to destroy humanity; this is why the Apostles called them forth.

The Nepharites are immensely powerful and each has sworn eternal fealty to the Apostles. They stand in the forefront, leading the Dark Legion into battle. Their masters have twisted these creatures utterly, and the very nature of the Apostles has corrupted these servants to the core of their being.

The Apostles natures suffuse their minions, and each one of the dark siblings has dominion over creatures unique to them. Even their Nepharites differ greatly from one another. However, the bulk of the Dark Legion is composed of doomed souls: prisoners twisted into unholy entities, or dead enemy soldiers from countless wars, resurrected and cursed with a second existence, each suffering a mockery of real life. Numbering in the millions, they rally to the feet of the Apostles, ready to march blindly into battle. Fearless, relentless, and without hesitation, these soldiers of darkness charge over the battlefields, crushing all human opposition.

THE NEPHARITES

Nepharites handle the most important missions and hold positions of power. They serve directly under the Apostles and are, in a way, an extension of their will and malice. Each Nepharite is the sworn enemy of humanity.

These are the most powerful creatures in the Dark Legion, save for the Apostles. They are organised according to a strict hierarchy. At the top are the Nepharite Overlords who are rulers of their own

citadels and answer only to their Apostle. Under these mighty monstrosities, there are Nepharites that serve as generals and commanders. They are the high officers of the Dark Legion.

As the Nepharites are a reflection of their Apostle, the power they wield, as well as their physical prowess, varies accordingly. Some, such as those who serve Ilian, are great witchmasters and spellsmiths who weave raw symmetry with extremely destructive results. The Nepharites of Algeroth are much less proficient at this, but have made the symmetry manifest in their bodies, transforming them into lumbering and near indestructible hulks.

Nepharites are ambitious, extremely proficient, and unquestionably loyal. Their hideous and monstrous exteriors hide a cunning and intelligence beyond that of mere men. For the most part these beings are trusted implicitly by the Apostles and allowed to act autonomously, but occasionally they too are doubted and pulled into the rivalries between their masters.

Even though their appearance varies to a certain extent there are physical aspects that are always the same, or at least very similar. Nepharites are tall and surrounded by an aura of malevolent power. Their skulls seems to be pierced by metal spikes or dark, hornlike protrusions. Often they have other metallic objects that penetrate their skin from within. They have black or red eyes with no pupils and possess a terrifying unblinking stare. Their faces are a morbid travesty of a human visage, a mockery of mankind.

Only those most attuned to their Apostle can ever hope to become an Overlord, and this makes the Overlords quite unique. As they amass power and insight, they grow closer to their Apostle, simultaneously becoming even more corrupted. As they develop, their appearance changes, slowly morphing into ever more grotesque forms that reveal and reflect their corruption and individual malice. At times, some are even reborn into new bodies.

ILIAN'S SERVANTS

She came out from the empty void, from the formless nothingness. As the world shifted when evil entered it, the Cardinal stirred in his sleep. He felt that the world had changed; a new force of destruction was growing. Soon ominous signs were brought before him. The seventh star in the seventh constellation had grown dark, suddenly eclipsed, and no light could find its way to our world from the shining beacon, the Guardian of the Gate.

A cold shadow fell over all of mankind. Men and women grew fearful and children awoke screaming in the night, their dreams turned into nightmares. Darkness and madness washed over humanity, as it followed at the heels of Ilian.

Many were the prophets who told about the Mistress of the Void as she whispered to them in their dreams. Walking the hidden and shadowed path of the Art, she steals into our minds, probing into the dark recesses of our souls. For a while she waited, watched, and learned. Every step she took into our world planned and anticipated.

The Mistress of the Void opened doorways to other dimensions and through these doorways, the watchers of the Dark symmetry were summoned. These beings from beyond brought with them the knowledge of the dark weave. Thus, it came to be that the Mistress of the Void became the eternal keeper of profane secrets.

–The Second Chronicle: Ilian and the Dark Symmetry, by Plinius Varro

When Ilian walks the Wyld she often assumes the form of the Huntress of the Wyld.

The first and foremost of the Apostles, Ilian is the bringer of darkness, and the first born of the Dark Soul. As the guardian and keeper of the Dark Symmetry, she wields power of unprecedented magnitude. She is the most powerful of all the Apostles and keeps an ever watchful eye over her lesser siblings, partly to aid them in their work and partly for her own sake as they plot and scheme. As her brothers grow stronger her control of them lessens, and she constantly struggles to maintain control lest they usurp her.

Yet, for every life that the Dark Legion claims, Ilian grows stronger as well. For every man, woman, and child that falls, Ilian rejoices as she drinks in the essence of death and defeat. Upon every inch of land the Dark Legion lays waste to and conquers, her cold shadow falls. From there it spreads and seeps into all of the worlds of mankind. Ilian is a creature of immense beauty and horror. She moves with a seductive grace but it does nothing to dim her malicious nature, rather it augments it to terrible levels. She is slim and tall, standing over two and a half meters. Her skin is preternaturally pale, bordering on luminescent and is a stark contrast to her waist length obsidian hair, which flows as if it possessed a life of its own. She is wrapped in shadows adorned with her mark.

To a Nepharite of Ilian, a weapon is secondary to the Dark Symmetry powers they wield.

Ilian uses her power to open gateways to other realms, and from these places, she brings forth creatures of immeasurable power. She bends them to her will, sending them out as generals among the lesser spawns of darkness who cast themselves down before them in complete obedience.

The twisted abominations in her armies are few, powerful, and usually concentrated at her citadels. Every so often, her lieutenants take part in battles fought by the other Apostles, lending the power of raw symmetry to the troops. However, they also observe, reporting back to their mistress so she can keep track of the prowess and activities of her brothers.

WITCH NEPHARITE

No other Nepharites have such immense insight into the symmetry as those in the ranks of Ilian's legions. They are powerful wielders of the Dark Arts as well as skilled warriors. They open portals to other planes of existence and summon forth monstrous entities to bolster the ranks of the Dark Legion. Ilian sends them out to advise and observe the other Apostles. As always, she does it partly to help and partly to keep a close eye on her brothers.

These Nepharites dress in simple garments: black tunics adorned with the symbols of the symmetry and the Mistress of the Void. The heavy plate armour they wear over their tunics is forged in the fires of the symmetry and covered in the eternal ice of the void. They are among the tallest Nepharites and stand imposing, gaunt, and twisted.

Their bodies are wrapped in hooked icy chains of the void, which the Nepharites control by will alone. These can unwrap in order to be used as weapons, and everything they touch will suffer the corrupting effects of the void. Like serpents ready to strike, they weave back and forth when the Nepharites enter combat and are used to snare and rip their enemies apart. Ilian is the only Apostle that has Nepharites with female features in her ranks. It is unknown if Nepharites actually have a gender per se or if it's merely a cosmetic change imposed by the mistress as she wants to see her own features reflected in her most powerful servants.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d12
Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Mysticism d12, Notice d10
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 15 (6)
Dark Gifts: A Witch Nepharite can use any Dark Gift from the Dark Symmetry or Ilian lists
Special Abilities:

- **Dark Presence 2**
- **Fanatics:** When the Witch Nepharite is hit in combat, the damage is redirected to an allied extra within 6" of them.
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** A second result of Shaken does not cause a wound.

- **Immunities:** The Witch Nepharite ignores attacks and effects from Cold, Vacuum, or Fatigue.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Lighting.
- **Kiss of the Void:** If the Witch Nepharite successfully grapples a character, the target must make a Willpower test, and if they fail, they immediately lose a point of Willpower.
- **Nepharite Armour:** 6.
- **Serpentine Chains:** Str+d8, Reach, AP 4.
- **Size +1**

DEFILED AVATAR

With unimaginable awe-inspiring power at their disposal, the Defiled Avatars stand proud as some of Ilian's most trusted minions and disciples. These entities are her personal creations and she takes great pride in them.

The Defiled Avatars are a hybrid creature: part human flesh and part raw Dark Symmetry. Only the strongest-minded women are selected. These humans are rare, and without this unique iron resolve, the ritual will surely fail.

The subject is suspended at the mouth of a symmetry gate, often at the heart of the citadel, where the priests of Ilian draws out raw symmetry, forcing it into the victim. The process is extremely painful. The symmetry forms a black raging flame that engulfs the victim, searing away the skin and most parts of the flesh. It then burns out all but the smallest part of the soul, replacing it with the symmetry pattern of Ilian. The ritual takes several hours. At the end, a Defiled Avatar steps forth.

There is nothing similar to these entities in the other ranks of the Dark Legion. They are more of the void than of the physical world, which renders them virtually immune to physical damage. Their feet never touch the ground, instead hovering a few decimetres above it. They are forged of swirling dark gusts of symmetry mist and flame, yet one can see an outline of a twisted and distorted shadowed body in the form of a very tall woman, with clawed hands, gnarled limbs, and a blurry visage reflecting some of Ilian's appearance and malice. An aura infused with the destructive cold, emptiness of the void extends around their bodies, rippling with power, and capable of killing everything it touches. Those few who have seen these entities and lived seem to be incapable of accurately describing them, or even understanding what it is they have seen. One Mishiman samurai who survived an encounter with a Defiled Avatar said that it burnt bright with a perfect illumination of beauty that shed no light and filled his heart with nothing but an indescribable horror and longing.

With but a thought they can bring forth searing and corrupting torrents of pure symmetry with which they can destroy scores of enemies. Few other creatures have such control and insight into the symmetry, as the Defiled Avatars are forged out of it, and are capable not only of laying waste to enemies, but of also transporting their allies.

Defiled Avatars are used to guard the citadels and as high ranking adjutants to the Nepharites at the forefront of important battles. They glide through the fields of war wreaking havoc, untouched by enemy fire.

Defiled Avatars have made destruction into an art.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d4, Mysticism d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

Powers: *Teleport*

Dark Gifts: *Dark Curse, Dimensional Flensing, Harrowing of the Void, Sense Weaves of Power, and Symmetry Burst*

Special Abilities:

- **Dark Presence 2**
- **Ethereal:** The Defiled Avatar is immune to physical attacks. Items specifically designed to fight the Dark Symmetry or Mystic powers can damage them.
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Immunities:** The Defiled Avatar is immune to Fire and Cold based attacks.
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.
- **Symmetry Torrent:** Cone Template, does 3d6 damage, Ignores Physical Armour, Corrupting and Fire Weapon Qualities.

TEMPLAR

Hurled through space and time, ripped from a world of eternal war in another dimension, the Templars stand loyal at Ilian's side, acting as her citadels and personal guard. Their ardent wish is eternal war and conflict and serving Ilian grants them this.

Templars are humanoid in form but are taller than any man is and their bodies are massive, designed to carry heavy weaponry. They are a semi-mechanical race of alien flesh and technology and their gigantic combat armour is grafted directly to their bodies. A spiked helmet with a visor covers their heads, only revealing glowing red eyes. As this, too, is grafted to them no one has ever seen what these beings truly look like.

Templars have two unique abilities that make them stand apart. They are capable of moving with incredible bouts of speed, and they are attuned to pain and fear, able to sense it from a distance. They can pinpoint the direction of these emotions and sensations, and even feel the intent of those causing pain. This makes them capable of moving to the heart of any battle, and it also makes them uniquely adept as Ilian's citadel guards.

These beings are highly aggressive and never retreat or take cover, only moving forward wielding their massive firearms or their heavy two-handed Blade of Ilian. Their combat armour bears the symbol of their mistress along with runes telling the tale of their achievements.

A Templar wielding a Blade of Ilian with deadly efficiency.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Throwing d8
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (8)
Gear: Templar Warplate (+8), Blade of Ilian (Str+d8, 2H, Parry +1, Corrupting), Kratach Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, 30 shots, AP 2, Auto, 3RB).
Special Abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Lighting.
- **Sense Pain and Fear:** A Templar can detect any creature in pain within a range of 100
- **Sprint:** When running, the Templar rolls 2d6 to determine its movement.

CHILDREN OF ILIAN

It is unknown if these twisted and wretched creatures have been taken from another world, created from scratch, or were actual human children that have been corrupted. These morbid helpers stand no more than a meter at their tallest, and look like an utterly perverted version of a disproportionate human infant. Their skin is grey and pale, at places translucent as it shifts between faint shades of blue and reveals revolting pulsating otherworldly organs beneath. Their eyes are pitch black, their mouths filled with needlelike black teeth, and semi-organic tubes connect the brain to the spine. They scurry about gibbering in a bizarre language with their shrieking high-pitched voice.

The Children of Ilian are a race of servants found in citadels and Heretic temples. They carry odd tools and devices of necrotechnology in their belts, which they use to repair broken equipment. They are also capable medics. These are the lowest of creatures in the ranks of Ilian and obey all others.

Even though they are low ranking and rather feeble, the Children have been known to pose a danger. They can utter a shrill shriek that has a disorienting effect on humans, and it also has the capacity to jam mechanical and electronic devices, rendering firearms and other machines useless for short periods. If forced, they will attack in droves, shrieking as they bear down on the victim, tearing off armour and biting into exposed flesh with their piranha-like teeth.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Technical Aptitude d6
Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:**
Gear: 'Child's Rattle' (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, 20 Shots, AP 2, Semi-Auto.
Special Abilities:

- **Claws and Fangs:** Str+d4
- **Corrupting Presence:** A Child of Ilian can make a Repair test against any item with a Corruption rating of 0 or more within 6". If successful, the item is unusable for 1 round.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Lighting.

The Children Of Ilian's appearance belies their keen insight.

- **Shrill Shriek:** All humans within a Medium Burst Template centred on the Child must test Spirit or become Shaken.
- **Small:** –1 Toughness.

ETERNAL ZEALOTS

Though Ilian seldom storms the enemy using troops, she is still in need of foot soldiers. To fill this role she created the Eternal Zealots, and these are the most numerous of her units. The Zealots are created from fallen human soldiers, but they are not reanimated in the fashion of Undead Legionnaires and they have a mind of their own. They are brought back to life, albeit a twisted version of it.

The dead bodies are brought into the Focal Chambers of Ilian and infused with her symmetry pattern. Their bodies twist and change, turning stark white and they elongate, adding almost a meter in length and growing gaunt. They lose all body hair and their features are smoothed over and are more or less neutralised, making them androgynous. Their lips atrophy, revealing their purple gums and razor-sharp black fangs. The soft tissue of the nose withers leaving only two skeletal holes. The nails grow into thin, diamond-hard claws. These beings only have empty hollows for eyes, fuming with the cold of the void, as does every breath they take. Yet, everything is proportioned and they almost look sculpted into a frightful type of perfection, each one almost identical to the next and sporting an eternal manic grin.

Eternal Zealots forgo traditional armour, dressing only in spotless black and purple ritual garments that hang loose on their thin bodies. On their heads, they wear caps reminiscent of a priest's mitre, and every inch of their clothing is adorned with symmetry infused symbols, which grant them a certain amount of shielding against physical attacks.

They are armed with a Sinarack, two Daggers of Ilian, and grenades. They are competent swordsmen, capable of wielding both swords at once. They also have the unique ability of spewing forth the empty cold of the void, freezing enemies solid with their own despair. In close quarters, Eternal Zealots weaken their enemies with their Frozen Breath and then move in with their blades.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (2)
Gear: Sinarack (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 30, Corrupting, AP2, Auto, 3RB).
Special Abilities:

- **Frozen Breath:** Once per combat, an Eternal Zealot can make an attack against a foe within Reach 1. The attack does 2d6 damage.
- **Mystic Wards:** Armor 2
- **Twin Daggers:** In Melee, the Eternal Zealot will attack twice with its daggers. Each attack does Str+d4 and there is no penalty for attacking with both weapons.

The Eternal Zealots are far more powerful than the Undead Legionnaires.

MALIGNANT

When a human is exposed to the raw forces of the Dark Symmetry, either through focused corruption or as a result of specially crafted necrotechnological spores Ilian created, they risk turning into a Malignant. When a human is exposed in this way, it works almost like a kind of mutagenic symmetry virus. The soul is burned away and the flesh is twisted. The end result is a humanoid creature whose facial features look as if they have melted like fleshy wax and the teeth and nails give way to wicked rows of long incisors and talons.

In most cases, the process of becoming a Malignant is a prolonged ordeal. The change begins with the mind slowly giving way to corruption and can often be mistaken for insanity at first. The mind turns darker and the world view of the afflicted changes. What begins as fear of what is happening soon grows into anger, sadism, and homicidal tendencies. Soon the individual will begin to revel in the malice that has grown in his soul. The voices of the Apostles begin to whisper to him and the symmetry begin to deform his body. In the end, he is turned into a pure monster with the sole purpose of terrorising and killing humans.

The corruption of the symmetry can twist a man into a Malignant.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4, Stealth d8
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)
Special Abilities:

- **Claws and Fangs:** Str+d8.
- **Hardened Flesh:** Armour 1.
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Immunities:** Cold and Vacuum
- **Infection:** Malignant Change: If a creature is wounded by a Malignant they have to make a Vigor test. If unsuccessful they have to make a second Vigor test six hours later. If the second test is failed, the victim suffers from heightened aggression and cannibalistic anger. The victim then makes a third test eighteen hours later, and if failed they turn into a Malignant.
- **Wall Walker:** The Malignant can walk along walls using its standard movement rate.

TWISTED MARIONETTE

When the Dark Symmetry first arrived, the corruption of high technology took hold. However, it didn't just result in malicious malfunctions. The symmetry pattern of Ilian sang to the circuits, logic systems, and cables and it was a song prophesising the doom of man. The technology listened and began its twisted deadly dance.

Twisted Marionettes, often called just Marionettes, are another one of Ilian's great achievements. They are animated entirely by the Dark Symmetry. When raw symmetry has infested and corrupted a larger technological system and managed to subvert it entirely, it can form terrifying humanoid shaped creatures out of the cabling, wiring, and metallic parts.

There is no such thing as a typical Marionette. Some are huge, whipping monstrosities that have assimilated power tools that they use as weapons. Others are smaller, attacking in hordes and created from bundles of smaller wiring, using electricity as a weapon. Some are content using the cables alone: ensnaring and crushing their victims. Many form mouths and claws out of metallic shards and glowing eyes out of panels of lights. Some even add parts of corpses, such as a rotting skull for a head, just to appear even more disturbing. Marionettes can also express themselves by causing violent electrical short circuits or electrical fires, and by controlling the systems they infest, using them to manipulate, herd, and harass their prey. They do everything in their power to frighten their intended victim as they, like Malignants, feed off fear.

Marionettes are nearly impossible to destroy by attacking the actual manifestation, as bullets and blades do little to harm thick industrial cables and wires, and often attacks pass straight through them. They do have one weakness: even though they can choose to travel through different parts of an installation by manifesting in different systems, their physical manifestation always has to be connected to the main system via at least one thick cable. In most cases, it

uses several connections, but if all are severed, the Marionette is destroyed. It might sound simple but cutting cables while being attacked by one of these monstrosities is easier said than done.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Mysticism d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6
Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)
Dark Gifts: *Obfuscation*, *Symmetry Burst*, *True Corruption*
Gear: Power Tools (Str+d6, AP 2).
Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 Recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from call shots, constructs do not suffer from poison or disease.
- **Electrical Jolt:** Range 5/10/20, RoF 1, Damage 2d6, Stun
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Lashing Cables:** Str+d6, Reach 1.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Lighting.
- **Mechanical Form:** Armour 2.

CASTIGATOR

Marionettes can combine themselves with a Malignant in order to gain its freedom while at the same time increasing the power of the Malignant. When this happens, the Marionette envelops the Malignant with its cables, sometimes even ripping open its flesh to bond with its internal organs. The fusion of the two is over in seconds but it is a horrid sight. The technology violently merges with the twitching flesh as electric currents run through it and the creature fumes and smells of burning flesh. A Castigator is born.

The Castigator is a combination of the two creatures. It retains all the powers of the Malignant according to the Apostle but gains abilities from the Marionette. The one Malignant ability it loses is the capacity to climb up walls and ceilings. However, it can extend its cables, snaring victims at range or using them to get around. The cables that envelop the body grant it natural armour and additional strength. Some have metal shards attached to these cables that cause gruesome wounds. The creature is capable of corrupting any

A Twisted Marionette takes form.

technology the cables touch. The most important detail is the fact that the Castigator is free to move around as it pleases, as it doesn't need to stay connected to any system.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Mysticism d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Dark Gifts: *Obfuscation*, *Symmetry Burst*, *True Corruption*

Special Abilities:

- **Clawed Tendrils:** Str+d8, Reach 1, AP 2, Stun
- **Construct:** +2 Recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from call shots, constructs do not suffer from poison or disease.
- **Corrupted Flesh and Steel:** Armour 4.
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Immunities:** Cold and Vacuum
- **Infection:** Malignant Change: If a creature is wounded by a Castigator they have to make a Vigor test. If unsuccessful they have to make a second Vigor test six hours later. If the second test is failed, the victim suffers from heightened aggression and cannibalistic anger. The victim then makes a third test eighteen hours later, and if failed they turn into a Malignant.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Lighting.
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.

ALGEROTH'S SERVANTS

It was from the pits of endless war and conflict that the roar of eternal rage first echoed. The Lord of Annihilation, the Apostle of War, stared out, looking upon the worlds of man with a ravaging hunger. With one step, he had entered the universe of man and, in that instant, all light faded and waves of devastation washed over mankind.

With him, he brought his loyal lieutenant, Alakhai. In the darkness his Tekrons worked, creating eternal machines of war out of dead and living flesh, fed with the lost souls of his enemies. Gates to dimensions of war opened up and from them stepped the Ezoghouls and Razides. Proud and hungry for destruction, they charged over the burning battlefields.

With each battle, Algeroth grew stronger, and new monstrosities were created and hatched in the biochambers and necrofoundries. Scores of soldiers fell, but the dead walked again, now loyal to the Darkness.

Many were those who joined the side of Darkness, leaving the protecting light of the Cardinal: traitors turned Heretics, who took the battle to the very heart of human civilisation. Algeroth's Black Technology spread across the worlds, corrupting those who craved power. Soon entire human armies marched under the thrall of the repugnant machines that had

A Castigator gets ready to strike, intent on eradicating all life in the vicinity.

Algeroth has been known to assume the form of the Whirlwind of War in battle.

now been implanted into their flesh, listening only to the voice of the Dark Father of Black Technology.

Then the massive citadels arrived, the largest and most deadly ever seen. They fell from the sky and rose from the ground, giant cities of corruption and death. The eternal cogs of destruction were set into motion, and the Dark Legion spewed forth. Only the light could save us. Only by uniting under one banner could we survive and stem the tides of war, hate, and utter annihilation. Therefore, it was that the Cardinal called upon the second directorate to commence, and the Inquisition was born. It was as the prophets had foretold; only by a blinding light did we stand a chance against the suffocating darkness.

–The Fifth Chronicle: The Arrival of Algeroth, by Veritis Feria

Algeroth is the Apostle of War and the Dark Father of Black Technology. He controls the art of perverted biotechnology as well as the nightmarish necrotechnology. He is the herald of twisted science, and beyond his mission to destroy all light he is also tasked with spreading his corrupting knowledge. Worlds are crushed beneath his feet, and he is second only to Ilian.

Algeroth loathes his sister and believes that he should be the leader of the Apostles, not the Mistress of the Void. His goals often coincide with those of Semai and together they scheme and plot, always coming up with new strategies to plunge the worlds of man into war and despair. They take every opportunity to undermine Ilian.

The legions of Algeroth are the most numerous and diverse. His Tekrons can create whatever units their master wishes and his ranks swell with relentless Undead Legionnaires, Necromutants, and the powerful commanding Centurions. They charge without fear, spreading death and pain across the burning battlefields. His citadels are the largest and most powerful of all the Apostles. Algeroth's physical manifestation is that of a very large, powerful man. His muscles are unnaturally large and bulging to an extent that tears the skin and reveal necro—and biotechnological enhancements. Biological tubes run in and out of his body, connecting glistening, pulsating implants. He wears immensely heavy combat armour, weighed down with combat coordinators, targeting systems, and a massive amount of ammunition. On his back, he carries a gigantic chain-sword, and he holds an enormous carbine made of black technology. It weighs hundreds of kilos, can fire any kind of ammunition imaginable, and seems to have an everlasting amount of rounds. Despite its immense weight, the Apostle of War can wield it with one hand; firing volleys of auto fire one minute, and gusts of black flame, or even surface-to-air missiles, the next.

THE DARK TECHNOLOGY

Algeroth is the unchallenged master of the Dark Technology. He has an uncanny insight and control over those aspects of the Dark Symmetry that can shape, create, and infuse technology with corrupted otherworldly abilities and powers. In quiet and loyal service, the Tekrons follow the malicious and dark design of their master, and construct the insidious machines of the Dark Legion.

It is the skill and efficiency of the Tekrons that gives Algeroth a large portion of his power, and he jealously guards his technologic secrets. The Tekrons are the most cunning of Algeroth's minions. The vast amount of weapons and technology they manufacture strengthens the Dark Legions, but beyond the massively destructive equipment they create, they are also capable of breeding abominations, horrible creatures of war that wreak havoc upon the enemy. Breeding Chambers expulse the hideous beings, visions of the Dark Master made flesh. Wherever Algeroth wages war, his Breeding Chambers can be found.

The one and only way to get access to the technology of Algeroth is by paying for it. Algeroth accepts payment in many forms, including the promise of soldiers, symmetry patterns, Heretic souls, or knowledge otherwise inaccessible to him. Most of the technology found among the other Apostles can be traced back to Algeroth, giving the Apostle of War a position of great influence among his siblings. His rebellious nature and power is only kept in check by Ilian.

A fresh batch of Undead Legionaries deployed from the base of a citadel.

None of the technology created by the Tekrons, be it vehicles, weapons or armour, conforms to the traditional design used by the human forces. While in many cases they may be similar, they have been twisted, melted, and corrupted. Often they look impossible to use, broken, or gnarled; in reality they function better than human equipment, as they are augmented by the Dark Symmetry and capable of performing at levels unattainable by human technology. A simple handgun created or augmented by this technology can be as powerful as an assault rifle, and is covered with sharp edges that are capable of ripping armour and flesh to shreds. Algeroth's technology is generally divided into three types: Black Technology, Necrotechnology, and Biotechnology.

BLACK TECHNOLOGY

While seldom used to create standalone pieces of equipment, it is often used to corrupt and twist existing human technology. This is extremely efficient as it saves time and raw material. Equipment captured from the corporations, the Cartel, and the Brotherhood on the battlefield are taken to the Tekron weaponsmiths. Through a combination of symmetry infusion and archaic blacksmithing, they are twisted into odd and ominous shapes. The sharp spikes and edges that they become covered with make it near impossible for humans to use them, and at times, they can only be used if the creature handling it radiates some of the Dark Symmetry.

Black Technology can be used on any type of technology, which includes ships, ground vehicles, weapons, and armour. The main purpose of Black Technology is to re-engineer and repurpose equipment on a massive scale to arm the ever growing ranks of Necromutants and Undead Legionnaires. The main drawback of Black Technology is that it tends to be a bit unreliable.

NECROTECHNOLOGY

This technology is the most mystifying and terrifying. It uses dead organic material that is animated and corrupted by the Dark Symmetry and, in most cases, a damned human soul or spirit from the netherworld is forced into the weapon, armour, or implant. The souls and spirits captured inside Necrotechnology possess a demonic nature and their presence has a tendency to corrupt, twist, and pervert those who employ the objects to which these spirits are bound. Another frightening aspect is the fact that they have minds of their own. They draw power and energy from their surroundings and can form a parasitic or symbiotic link with their carriers. The energy is efficiently accumulated and can be released in highly destructive bursts.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

At its core Biotechnology uses living organisms, organic living material, and simple genetic structures to create everything from implants to huge lumbering biomechanoids that are capable of crushing a tank by stepping on it or crashing a helicopter with a swipe of its chainsaw arm.

Tekrons specialised in bioengineering gathered embryos, taking them from their natural environment and placing them in artificial wombs inside the Biochambers. The Biochambers are themselves reengineered and artificially created life forms, a sort of non-sentient creature whose only purpose is to serve as a tool for the Tekrons in their dark works. They have been perfected to create new kinds of morbid life or twist existing life into new, grotesque forms. Usually one such creature extends throughout the entire citadel, forming all the Biochambers in a Citadel, creating a plethora of living and breathing halls and laboratories.

Each new embryo has its genetic code virtually erased, turning it into a blank slate. Genetic material created by the Tekrons, coded after the designs of their master, is fused with the basic DNA of the embryo, and shaped into new organisms. Nutrients, often a protein-based sludge made from fallen enemy soldiers, are fed to the embryo using umbilical-like tubes. The new life forms go through several stages, growing and developing extremely fast. As the entity grows, it is moved through channels into a larger womb and, at times, combined with parts that have been grown and assembled in other areas of the Biochamber. It usually takes mere weeks or months for a life form to go from embryo to battle-ready creature. Through neural reprogramming, the new-born is given the skills and most of the experience it needs. Human doctors and engineers have found it utterly impossible to separate merged biotechnology from its host without destroying both.

WARMONGER NEPHARITE

Algeroth's are the most physically powerful of all the Nepharites. They are capable strategist as well as extremely skilful soldiers who live for combat and crave new battles and enemies to crush. They tear through men, vehicles, and buildings alike, spreading death and wanton destruction wherever they go. Like rabid predators, they stalk the battlefields, searching for new prey to tear apart.

Algeroth's Nepharites are massive creatures, standing twice as tall as a man. They are extremely muscled and their skin is usually

an aggressive fire red or stark blue. They are clad in spiked heavy metal combat armour augmented with Necro—and Biotechnology. The weapons they carry are enormous and, in many cases, linked directly to their bodies through bio—or necro links. With cold, commanding efficiently they lead their forces into combat with harrowing battle cries.

A few of Algeroth's Nepharites are smaller and devoted more to the use of raw symmetry, but these are rare and cannot match the insight and power of Ilian's Nepharites in this area.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Gunnery d8, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Mysticism d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 21 (10)

Dark Gifts: *Dark Curse*, *Heightened Prowess*, *Painless*, *Sense Weaves of Power*, *Symmetry Burst*

Special Abilities:

- **Azoghar Blade:** Str+d12, Vicious, Reach 1
- **Big Boom:** When firing a fully automatic weapon that creates a blast template the hero can double the ammo use in a shot to create a second adjacent blast template.
- **Dark Presence 2**
- **Fast Regeneration:** At the start of its Action every round, the Warmonger rolls Vigor to remove wounds and gains a +2 to remove Shaken. This ability ceases to function if the Warmonger is incapacitated.
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Fist of Malice HMG:** Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d12+2, RoF 3, Shots 200, Snapfire, Vicious, 3RB or Medium Burst, AP 10, Heavy Weapon
- **Hardy:** A second result of Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Lightning Crew:** The character increases the Rate of Fire of vehicular weapons by 1.
- **Nepharite Warplate:** Armour 10
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.
- **Size +2:** Warmongers stand 10-12 feet tall
- **Unholy Flechettes:** Range 10/20/40, Damage 3d8, RoF 1, Shots 50, Snapfire, Vicious, Knockdown, LBT, AP 5, Heavy Weapon

Nepharites of Algeroth are the embodiment of war.

CENTURION

Centurions are extremely powerful warriors and are one of Algeroth's most successful creations. Wounded soldiers, often commanders, squad leaders or those who have showed great potential are taken to the citadels where they are subjected to a brain wipe. Everything except basic skill memory and combat experience is erased and combat memories are manipulated so the Centurion remembers fighting humans on the side of Algeroth. A false memory of being badly wounded and tortured is also implanted, laying the foundation for a deep-seated hatred for humanity in the Centurion.

The body of a Centurion is fused with biotechnological and necrotechnological technology. When all implants are in place, they are bombarded with Algeroth's symmetry pattern. In the end, the Centurions resemble humans but have black or red eyes, hardened dark greenish skin, and very thick jet black hair. They are about two meters tall and heavily muscled. Their bodies are extremely hardy, allowing them to withstand bullets without the aid of armour, and as a result, they often wear only light armour, or none. Centurions are often made into squad leaders and commanders. They lord over Necromutants and Undead Legionnaires in the hundreds and are tactically savvy and ruthless.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Special Abilities:

- **Combat Reflexes:** A Centurion gains +2 to recover from Shaken.
- **Command:** A Centurion leading a Squad has the Command Edge.
- **Corrupted Armour:** Armour 3.
- **Shalak:** Str+d8, AP 1, Parry +1.
- **Voriche Handgun:** Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 10, Semi-Auto

NECROMUNTANT

Like Centurions, the raw material for these savage beings comes from fallen enemy soldiers. However, any old soldier will do. They are tossed into the automated mass restructuring chambers. Damaged parts are replaced with other body parts, their DNA is restructured, most of their internal organs are replaced by mass produced necrotechnological high-powered organs, and additional muscle mass is grafted on to the original muscles. The skin is hardened and made to withstand ballistic damage, which gives it a leathery quality. The arms are often made longer and the hands larger so they are able to carry larger weapons. The mind is wiped, with a standard range of basic Dark Legion training being implanted. A minute trace of creativity is left intact, which allows them to make decisions on their own.

The end result is a near perfect soldier; loyal to until death, fearless, and unquestioningly obedient. Necromutants are quite numerous, and the exceptional specimens hold positions as adjutants or second in command to Centurions, while others are even given the task of squad leaders, leading scores of Undead Legionnaires into combat.

They are of normal height but have a muscled frame beyond that which most humans could achieve. Their skin ranges from dark green to black, and their hair is usually stark white or black. The process of creation leaves their eyes a silvery white, and strips away their lips, leaving an eternal horrifying grin of yellow teeth. Tactically they are often used as frontline infantry units, but the best and brightest have been known to form elite squads. Though they often use long range weapons for practical reasons, they prefer up close and personal kills, using bladed weapons.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)
Special Abilities:

- **Belzarach Rifle:** Range 24/48/96, Damgage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 100, Snapfire, AP 2, Auto, 3RB.
- **Grenade of Flies:** Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d4, Small Burst Template, Corrupting
- **Insalubrious Body Fluids:** When a Necromutant is killed, it explodes and all targets within a Small Burst Template centred on its body take 2d6 damage.
- **Patchwork Armour:** Armour 1.
- **Sectioner Bayonet:** Str+d4, a bayonet affixed to a rifle increases the damage to Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands.

Centurions are the elite commandos of Algeroth.

Necromutants have been created to be the ultimate frontline soldier.

UNDEAD LEGIONNAIRES

They march in the millions, silent, unflinching, and mindless. The massive hordes of the Undead Legionnaires are the most important and numerous of Algeroth's forces. What they lack in skill, intelligence, and speed they make up in sheer quantity and easy production processes. The Undead Legionnaires are created using bodies that have been left to rot in the fields of battle, or even from those that have been buried. They are only one step up from Kadavers.

The bodies are thrown into large vats, where they are bombarded with dark symmetry and then sent to the necrotechnological chambers so that parts that are too damaged can be replaced with simple and basic necrobionic replacements. One of the main reasons they are so numerous is the fact that a body can be quite decomposed or damaged and still be turned into one of these legions. They are extremely unsophisticated but effective. These soldiers have no will of their own, they are little more than empty husks that know how to aim, shoot, and reload. Their appearance varies, as they are all in different states of halted decomposition and wear a bizarre mix of weapons and armour taken from the battlefield and twisted by Black Technology. Legionnaires are frightening to behold as one often can see traces of the humans they used to be. They are mockeries of the proud fallen soldiers used to create them.

Hordes of Undead Legionnaires form the bulk of Algeroth's forces.

Legionnaires are incapable of speech and have no emotions whatsoever. If left without a commander they will follow their last order after which they will stand perfectly still until a new commander arrives. They only take orders from legions of darkness with a measure of power. Centurions and Necromutants bark out their orders to the legions while Nepharites controls thousands of them via a mental link, one that scientists and the Brotherhood have not been able to understand. No one knows how many one Nepharite can control, but it probably has to do with the rank of the Nepharite in question. In any event, any command given has to be simple, as the Undead Legionnaires only can understand the most rudimentary of orders. They attack with savage ferociousness. If not utterly destroyed, fallen Legionnaires are given new body parts and sent back out onto the battlefield.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6
Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (1)
Special Abilities:

- **Scraps of Armour:** Armour 1.
- **Corroded Blade:** Str+d6, AP 1, Corrupting
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Kratach Assault Rifle:** Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, 30 shots, AP 2, Auto, 3RB.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

EZOGHOUL

It is unknown from which war-torn, hellish dimension this gargantuan creature comes from. It lives and breathes for the glory of the battlefield and its only ardent wish is to cause pain and suffering to other beings. It is impossible to tell how much of the creature is actually its true body, or a highly advanced biocybernetic combat chassis. It looks like a depraved and twisted version of the mythical Centaur. Its torso is large with powerful arms in which it carries enormous weapons. Two jagged bone blades sprouts from its back and the top of its jaws and the nose is covered by a biotechnological breathing apparatus, known as an Illitachk, which it needs in order to breathe our atmosphere.

This apparatus is a wiry, tubed device that expels a green cloud of unknown gaseous mixes. An Ezoghoul's weaponry is often merged with its body. A muscled metal-framed quadruped lower body carries it swiftly across the battlefield. What it doesn't shoot to pieces, or cut in half with its sword, it tramples beneath its powerful clawed feet. It is one of the more powerful beings the Apostle of War has in his command.

Ezoghouls are drawn to conflict; indeed, they seem able to sense it, appearing unheralded in the most intense combat zones. They

usually arrive by flight, although it is unknown how it is able to fly, as it has no artificial help in the form of thrusters or any natural limbs such as wings that would allow it to do so. They are incapable of speech and only communicate using mental images sent telepathically. They are known to roar, however, and few who survive an encounter with an Ezoghoul can forget their hideous call.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Mysticism d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10

Pace: 8; **Fly); Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 17 (4)

Dark Gifts: *Black Fire*, *Dark Curse*, *Sense Weaves of Power*

Special Abilities:

- **Alien Flesh:** Armour 4.
- **Ashreketh Howling Blade:** Str+d10+2, AP 1, Corrupting, Vicious, Parry 1, Heavy Weapon
- **Blutarch Hand Cannon:** Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d10, RoF 2, 20 Shots AP 1, Semi-Auto, Medium Burst Template
- **Carcass Grenade Launcher:** Range 10/20/40, Damage As Grenade, RoF 1, Shots 5
- **Dark Presence 1**
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** A second result of Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Illitchak:** Though they are incapable of breathing an atmosphere suitable for humans, Ezoghouls are bonded with a parasitic device that provides a breathable atmosphere for them. An Ezoghoul is completely unaffected by poisonous gases, suffocation, drowning or any other conditions that revolve around not being able to breathe. This parasite can be targeted with a Called Shot at a –4 penalty. The trauma of this parasite being damaged causes the Ezoghoul to be Shaken, in addition to the attack's normal damage.
- **Large:** Attackers add +2 when attacking an Ezoghoul
- **Size +5**
- **Telepathic:** Ezoghoul communicate telepathically.

Ezoghoiuls have been known to crush entire armies.

RAZIDE

Taken from another time and space and enhanced by the Tekrons of Algeroth, the Razide stands over three meters tall. It is made out of reddish flesh, black iron, hardened glass, and meteorites from another dimension.

Razides are built in layers. They have an endoskeleton connected to its muscle tissues and tendons, but on top of this layer of muscle an additional supportive skeleton is fastened, which is then covered by even more muscle tissue. Entwined within this structure are large semi-organic tubes, which pump its viscous bodily fluids through its organs and tissues; some visible as they run outside its body. It breathes heavily through a large biotechnological breathing organ, which it has instead of a nose and mouth. Its eyes glow a soft eerie yellow, turning stark red as it enters combat.

They never wear armour, as they are extremely tough and hardy. At times, they have been merged with necrotechnological weapons, but they are never augmented with technology. These beings are powerful enough as is, so the Tekrons don't waste their time to improve upon near-perfection. Their massive arms allow them to carry very large support weapons. Some carry weapons made with Dark Technology while other have been known to rip chain guns from enemy tanks or carry surface to air cannons that they swiped from enemy fortifications.

Razides are very loyal to the Nepharite overlords and serve as commanders, special support units, and citadel guards. In many cases, they lead Necromutants and Undead Legionnaires.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12+2
Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d10
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 15 (3)
Special Abilities:

- **Bounding Leap:** The Razide ignores cover and obstacles less than 4' in height when moving.
- **Claws:** Str+d10, Knockback
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** A second result of Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Nazgaroth Machine Gun:** Range 50/100/200, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, Shots 200, AP 10, Heavy Weapon, 3RB, Small Burst Template
- **Rage:** A Razide that fails a Spirit test goes Berserk. It cannot fire a Ranged Weapon but can attack twice per round with its claws.
- **Size+3**
- **Thick Hide and Muscles:** Armour 3.
- **Unstoppable Onslaught:** When firing a Nazgaroth Machine Gun, targets do not gain a cover bonus against the Razide's attacks.

Razides are among the most powerful of Algeroth's heavy troops.

PRAETORIAN STALKER

This is a terrifying and fearsome machine of war. It is Algeroth's greatest achievement and it stands unchallenged as the deadliest unit he has in his ranks. The creature was created by the Tekrons as they followed the dark designs of the Apostle of War, and is the embodiment of his vision of the ultimate frontline soldier. The Stalker was named by the Imperial Blood Berets, and is considered to be their sworn enemy.

The Stalker represents the height of dark technological achievement. It is powered by a highly advanced mechanical body interconnected through a symmetry-powered system of servo engines, hydraulics, and necrotechnological organs and circulatory system. The one thing that is, in fact, alive and organic is its brain, which is a modified human brain extracted from willing Heretics. The process of extraction is a combination of ritual symmetry mysticism and Black Technology. It involves immersing the Heretic in lava while a Nepharite protects him using the symmetry. If the willing sacrifice utters so much as a whimper of fear or pain the Nepharite removes his protection and allows the unworthy to succumb to the flames.

However, if the Heretic manages to stay true, a charred skeleton and a husk of a brain is left. It is at this stage that the Tekrons begin their work. The brain is highly protected in the creature's head, which is made out of several thick layers of hardened metal armour. The rest of its organs are equally well protected by massive amounts of metal armour fastened to the charred remains. The head has been designed to be similar to that of a Nepharite, though the metal spikes have been turned into tusk-like horns aimed forward at the side of its head.

Stalkers are always created in Twin Pairs. They have a unique link and seem to know each other's thoughts, though no evidence of an actual telepathic link has ever been proven or implied. The robotic design enables the Praetorian Stalker to carry very heavy support weapons, such as grenade launchers, flamers, and chain guns. It can move fast and tirelessly, and is basically a sentient tank on two legs. Even though it has a human brain it lacks any kind of emotion, and every action is a cold and calculated move aimed at killing as many humans as possible in combat or otherwise executing the orders of its masters.

Twin Pairs often work apart from other creatures of the Dark Legion, ambushing patrols with heavy fire from high vantage points. Though huge and bulky they are very adept at constructing camouflage, and they are known to hide using stripped vegetation, under water, covered by mud, or in burrows they have dug themselves. They can sit motionless for hours or even days and never sleep. That they can

stalk their foes in such ways, in spite of their massive size and bulk, only makes them more terrifying.

While on the frontlines, or when they attack, there is nothing subtle about them. They keep the trigger down until every enemy within line of sight is shredded. Stalkers are extremely adept at spraying an area with heavy fire, avoiding their own allies while striking the enemy.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12
Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 18 (5)
Special Abilities:

- **Bayonet:** Str+d8, Parry +1, Reach 1, AP 1
- **Carcass Grenade Launcher:** Range 10/20/40, Damage As Grenade, RoF 1, Shots 5
- **Dark Presence 1**
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** A second result of Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Immune to Fire and Poison**
- **Praetorian Armour:** Armour 5.
- **Reaper of Semai:** Str+d12, Parry +1, Vicious
- **Scythe of the Sentinel:** Range 50/100/200, Damage 3d6+2, RoF 3, Shots 200, AP 4, 3RB, Auto, Small Burst Template.
- **Size +5**
- **Twin Pair:** If two Praetorian Stalkers are present, they count as a Twin Pair, and both of them gain a Wild Die for all actions. If both are promoted to Wild Cards, increase their Wild Die to a d10.

Praetorian Stalkers are like living tanks.

DEMNOGONIS' SERVANTS

Thus, it was that the darkness showed another face, one of filth, vermin, and plague. Demnogonis, the Befouler, infected and besmirched reality as he entered it. As the unclean blade makes the blood boil with sepsis, so this unclean Apostle made our world boil with disease. With but a breath he polluted the water, fouled the air, and cursed the cleansing light of the Cardinal.

The unclean envisioned a world of death and decay, of famine, rot, and plague; of corpses bloated with infection as vermin fed on the putrid flesh. Moreover, so was it that he twisted all disease with the aid of the Dark Symmetry, bringing forth the Black Rot. The dead arose, parasites lived within our walls, and their filthy touch stained the souls of the dead. In his wake, new, unknown horrors were born from the dead, bred in the pits of vile sickness and putrefaction.

No longer could we honour our dead as we had, and it was the beginning of the cleansing fires. From that day, the air would be filled with the stench of burning corpses. Fire is the only way to keep the Befouler and his minions at bay.

–The fifth Chronicle: Legions of the Befouler, by Jalari Cercos

Demnogonis thrives in the aftermath of death and when worlds are plunged into war, he will arrive as a wind of pestilence. His touch can be seen on the battlefield, it can be felt on the streets, it cleaves to the jungles, and hangs heavy wherever life, death, and sickness can be found. He besmirches that which is clean and infects that which is healthy. Every day thousands upon thousands die and each and every one is a potential minion of the Foul One. The dead are dragged to the Infestation Chambers and turned into all manner of horrors.

At a first glance, his forces look like a tattered mess: their armour broken, the banner they march under tattered, and their weapons old. However, it is what the eye can't perceive that is dangerous and deadly. Wherever they go, the Black Rot and all manner of other pestilences will follow. Demnogonis' legions are by far the most numerous and although individual minions are often weak, they swarm the battlefield, drawn to the enemy like flies to the rotting

Demnogonis has been known to assume the form of the Cleft Paragon of Pestilence.

carcass. Even as they fall, the Blessed Legionnaires continue to infect the enemy. Only by complete destruction and annihilation by fire can they be purged from existence. His legions are often called the Army of the Thousand Plagues, and it can take months or even years to sanitise the ground where they have walked after the battle has been won.

Another aspect that is extremely dangerous is that most wounds inflicted by his minions require the Arts to be fully healed, and often the wounded will turn into one of Demnogonis' minions if not subjected to an exorcism. Some of his minions are also capable infiltrators, and contaminate blood supplies and medical instruments. Some even strike at the very heart of human civilisation, infiltrating central hospitals in the cities.

Demnogonis appears as an emaciated tall and disfigured old man. His eyes and skin are jaundiced and coarse necrotechnological stitches hold his body together. From the inflamed seams, black ichor and puss constantly run, and at times vermin find their way out. Underneath the skin, swollen transplanted organs can be seen pulsating, connected through tubes. Part of his circulatory system is routed on the outside of his body and a white film covers his watery eyes. He dresses in simple robes, stained with dried blood and foul smelling discharge.

CONTAGION NEPHARITE

Physically, these are the weakest of all the Apostles' Nepharites, but the disease they spread is infused with the Dark Symmetry and they can even infect other legions of darkness if they so wish. These foul creatures have a unique insight into the nature of disease. They are capable of seeing the structure of any microbe by looking at a sample with their naked eye and can manipulate it with a touch in order to make it as deadly and transmittable as possible.

These Nepharites have been tainted and twisted by their master and it shows. Their skin is covered by boils that burst releasing pus and parasites, only to regenerate and begin the cycle again. Like their master, they are jaundiced and their yellow eyes are milky with cataracts. The spikes that pierce their hides are smaller than those of most Nepharites and are, in fact, hollow and capable of injecting plagues into anyone who touches them. They are, in most cases, bloated with folds of pus filled skin hanging off their bodies.

These Nepharites wear robes stitched out of human skin and the only armour they wear are light shoulder pads adorned with the mark of Demnogonis. They are surrounded by a revolting stench of putrefaction and a swarm of flies always follows them. Even though they are physically weak, they lead their troops into battle. The revolting boils serve a purpose. The worms and insects that spill forth are actually symbiotic machines that can heal the Nepharites very rapidly, knitting wounds with weeping scars and vile scabs in moments. As the enemy bullets rip through them the troops closest to the Nepharites are spattered with infected tissues.

If humans are struck they will be infected, while members of the Dark Legions only become carriers, unaffected but capable of infecting humans. The Nepharites can also direct swarms of corrupted flies that are capable of infecting, observing, and distracting enemy troops.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

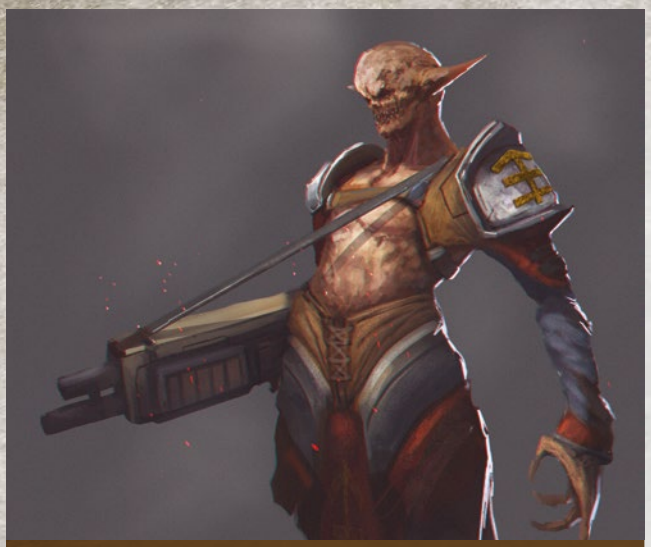
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Mysticism d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Dark Gifts: *Black Rot Spew*, *Dark Curse*, *Dark Strain*, *Obfuscation*, *See Sickness, Sense Weaves of Power*

Special Abilities:

- **Carrier of a Thousand Plagues:** Any creature within a Large Burst Template centred on the Contagion Nepharite when it is wounded must test Vigor at −2 or gain a level of Fatigue from illness.
- **Dark Presence 4**



Nepharites of Demnogonis decimate entire armies with their mere presence.

- **Fanatics:** When the Contagion Nepharite is hit in combat, the damage is redirected to an allied extra within 6" of them. The Contagion Nepharite can choose to take the damage in favour of using the Carrier of a Thousand Plagues ability.
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Filthy Talons:** Str+d8.
- **Hardy:** A second result of Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Immunities:** The Contagion Nepharite is immune to Disease and Poison.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Lighting.
- **Nepharite Armour:** Armour 3.
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.
- **Plaguebringer Cannon:** Cone Template, 4d6, RoF 1, Shots 50, Corrupting, Contagion, AP 5.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** A Contagion Nepharite rolls for Natural Healing at the start of every round. This ability does not work when the Nepharite is Incapacitated.
- **Supernatural Resilience:** The Contagion Nepharite ignores all penalties for Wounds and Fatigue, and rolls a d10 on the Wild Die for all Vigor checks.
- **Vermin Swarms:** As an action, the Contagion Nepharite can create a Swarm (see the entry in the Bestiary of the *Savage Worlds* rulebook) from the thousands of flies and maggots clustering around it.

TORN SPEWER

The Torn Spewer is an unholy abomination of pestilence. When the dust has settled on the battlefield the Curators triage the casualties and human soldiers that are badly damaged but still alive are dragged back to the citadel and given to the Biophages, who transport them to the Infestation Chambers. Here they drill several holes into the screaming victim, making sure to penetrate the bone. They then place leech-like parasites in the wounds, which crawl inside the very bone, eating away at the bone marrow and replacing it with a mutagenic viral sludge. Over a period of agonising days, the victim is mutated. A vertical cleft opens in the chest, tearing it open more and more each day. Bones splinter, skin and muscles are ripped open, and skin becomes riddled with semi translucent boils that are filled with black ichor. In the end, the head is split open, and in the bottom of the gaping maw that has opened, there is a putrid sludge. It's corrosive and tainted with pestilence and the Black Rot. The acid constantly bubbles and boils.

The Torn Spewer staggers across the battlefield, sending out directed sprays of disease riddled acid. This acid is capable of eating through the toughest armour, and melting flesh and bone. Those who die rise soon after, as they are animated by the Black Rot. If the Torn Spewer stumbles across piles of dead bodies it regurgitates on them, animating them with the Black Rot so they can join the ranks of the Dark Legion.

Spewers are kept protected behind troops with long distance capabilities. When they have closed in, the long distance units move out of the way and allow the Spewers to engage the enemy. They are also sent to the top of trenches in droves, spewing forth their vile fluids, and turning all those in the foxholes into a putrid soup, their final moments spent in excruciating agony.

Torn Spewers use their deadly payload to turn enemies into sludge.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Black Rot Spray:** If a creature dies from damage caused by the Virulent Spray, or it touches a corpse, the corpse will be animated as a Kadaver in 1d4 rounds.
- **Claws:** Str+d8, Vicious, Contagion, Corrupting
- **Fearless:** The creature is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Immunities:** Immune to Poison and Disease.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.
- **Unfeeling Flesh:** Armour 1.
- **Virulent Spray:** Cone Template, Damage 2d6, Contagion, Vicious, AP 6

BIOPHAGE

While Algeroth has his Tekrons, Demnogonis has Biophages. These twisted bioengineers are of utmost importance to Demnogonis. They cultivate new viral strains, create new minions, and breed parasites. They manage the Infestation Chambers and are thus quite high-ranking.

Biophages have been created by Demnogonis himself. He fused the biology of an ancient and forgotten race from another dimension with that of a human. While humanoid in shape, the resemblance to humanity ends there. They have no discernible eyes or nose, only a toothless maw filled with constantly whipping tendrils. Where there should have been a nose, eyes, and a forehead there is instead a bacterial fungus that constantly shifts and mutates. They only communicate through sending mental images.

The rest of their body is extremely pale, glistening with secretions. Thick black veins, which seem to be fastened on the outside of the skin rather than lying beneath it, cover their entire body. On their back they have two fleshy sacks, somewhat resembling lungs, that expand and deflate as they breathe, giving off a wet, wheezing sound. They have no garments or armour, and are bred in incubators, rendering them genderless. Solemnly, they perform their dark works, their breathing heard between the cries of their subjects.

Biophages are experts in genetic engineering and virology. The growth on their head actually serves a purpose; they can extract small samples of it and add it to any other biological system that they have trapped in an Infestation Chamber. They uphold a mental link with this sample as it mixes with other bacterial cultures, or as it is injected into a living organism. Through this, and with some aid of the Infestation Chamber, they are able to mentally command strains of DNA. Only their imagination is the limit of what hellish creatures and viruses they can spawn given time, and their imagination is endlessly repugnant, horrifying, and vast.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Genetics) d12, Knowledge (Biology) d12, Mysticism d10, Technical Aptitude d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Dark Gifts: *Dark Gifts: Dark Curse*, *Dark Strain*, *Control Sickness*, *Obfuscation*

Special Abilities:

- **Dark Presence 1.**
- **Fuelled by Pestilence:** Creatures within a Large Burst Template of a Biophage suffer a −1 to all Vigor tests.
- **Herald of Decay:** As an Action, the Biophage can force a creature within 50" to make a Vigor check at −2 or suffer a Wound.
- **Immunities:** Immune to Poison and Disease.
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.
- **Surgical Tools:** Str+d4, AP 1
- **Telepathic:** Biophages never speak, they can communicate freely with any intelligent creature within 12".
- **Unfeeling Flesh:** Armour 1.

It would be a grave error to mistake a Biophage for a simple monster.

PLAGUE VULTURE

Part reconnaissance and part maintenance unit, the Plague Vulture has a wingspan of approximately one meter. They were created by the Biophages and their bodies are built around a necrotechnological endoskeleton. Human flesh and skin is used to craft its exterior in a revolting patchwork. Mouldy, lice-infested feathers cover its vile flesh. From their torso a pair of arms protrude, ending in small, three fingered, clawed hands. They chatter and screech but it seems that the Biophages, Eternal Zealots, and Nepharites fully understand them.

The Plague Vulture is capable of performing smaller mechanical repairs and is also capable of melting and bonding biological tissue by using its saliva and hands. It uses this method in order to maintain the growth grafted on to all of Demnogonis' citadels. The vultures also scavenge body parts and enemy weapons, and give them to the Biophages.

Offensively they can give a small amount of support while in the air, dropping fleshy and pulsating egg-like objects that ooze with bacteria. When they hit the ground, they explode in a shower of infected filth and diseased vapour.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10
Skills: Fighting d8, Healing d6, Notice d8, Repair d6, Shooting d6
Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (1)

Plague Vultures circle high above the battlefield.

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Necrobionics:** Armour 1
- **Plague Bombs:** Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d8, SBT, Contagion
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

CURATOR

One can almost believe that these beings have been spawned by Muawijhe, as most seem to be utterly insane. Stalking the battlefield, garbed in a tattered nightmarish mockery of a surgeon's outfit, these morbid doctors dish out their own brand of 'medical attention'.

Their belts, which more resemble something a misguided butcher would wear, are filled with twisted medical equipment corrupted by pestilence and necrotechnology. Under their surgeon's robe, they wear sleek, spiked armour that covers vital organs and important cybernetic systems. Within their bodies nests a whole host of parasites that can be expulsed.

Demnogonis brought these creatures through a gateway from a plague world located in another time and plane. Pain and suffering is their religion, and the secrets of infection and sickness are what motivates them to do what they do. They are used to collect and triage fallen enemies in order to assess their potential as raw material to be taken to the infestation chambers.

These beings are tall, man-shaped entities. They possess a wiry musculature and many organs and limbs have been replaced by a perverted alien form of cybernetics beyond even the most knowledgeable Tekron. This makes them much stronger than they look. Their skin is a patchwork of stitched together stolen skin in varying states of decomposition. Their heads are flayed, revealing a grinning skull, and the brain is exposed but seemingly even more resilient to damage than any human skull. Many have sutured tubes and wires into their brains and connected them to devices in their belts for reasons beyond human comprehension. Their yellow eyes shine with insanity, and an expression of depraved childlike delight settles on their faces when they cut into the flesh of a still living, screaming, and quivering 'patient'. Though it is difficult to reconcile it with their sadism and appearance, they are highly intelligent and proficient doctors, and aid members of the Dark Legion in the battlefield by acting as field medics when they must. They are skilled at resuscitation, and can get troops up and running again, replacing their damaged limbs and organs with necrotechnological implants.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d8, Mysticism d8, Shooting d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Dark Gifts: *Dark Curse, Dark Strain, Control Sickness, and Obfuscation*

Special Abilities:

- **Metal Plates:** Armour 1.
- **Immunities:** Immune to Poison and Disease
- **Fear:** A Curator causes Fear.
- **Curator Sword:** Str+d6, Contagion, Parry +1
- **Plague Gun:** Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 30, 3RB Auto, Contagion. A Plague Gun fired by Curator causes Infected Wounds.
- **Resuscitate:** A Curator can attempt a Healing check on any creature that has died within the last five minutes. The creature is restored to life with one Wound, but loses 2 Willpower.
- **Vile Resurrection:** Any creature killed or a corpse struck by a curator sword is resurrected as a Kadaver in 1d4 rounds,

Avoid the triage of the Curator or die a painful death.

GRAFTERS

Grafters are sly, dangerous beings. They are not particularly strong, nor do they possess any martial prowess or powerful dark gifts. Nevertheless, they are first rate infiltrators, using their abilities to penetrate the human healthcare system, contaminating it from within.

Grafters are a creation of the Biophages, and a combination of human and Curator DNA. They are quite small, only reaching about one meter in height, and are proportioned as a human child. They have no facial features whatsoever, their bodies are sinewy, and their skin is semi-transparent, revealing pulsating organs, muscles fibres, and circulatory system.

These beings are capable of 'wearing' the dead body of a human, controlling it like a puppet. They use a poisoned spur that slides out from their forearm to attack their prey. The poison only paralyses, as the victim must be alive for the horrors to come.

Grafters use their razor sharp claws to slice open the victim's back, instinctively knowing how to do it without severing vital arteries or veins. Then they slowly eat into the organs, beginning with parts the victim can survive a short while without: parts of the liver, a kidney, and gallbladder. The victim feels everything but cannot move. It's not purely sadism that drives a Grafter; as they eat, they absorb DNA, as well as the thoughts, memory flashes, and personality of the victim. They can only absorb bits and pieces, just enough to mimic the individual. After about an hour, the Grafter is ready for the next gruesome step. It consumes vital organs, killing the prey, and then eats away at the flesh until only the skin, spine, skull, and brain is left. The Grafter enters this husk, sealing the wound on the back without a mark. It grafts itself to the inside and can now control the body. It sounds, looks, moves, and behaves just like the one it mimics. They are intrinsically knowledgeable in medicine and are sent to mimic people within the human medical community in order to be able to contaminate blood supplies and entire hospitals.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Espionage) d6, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Streetwise d8, Survival d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** A Grafter in its natural form causes Fear.
- **Immunities:** Immune to Poison and Disease
- **Puppeteer:** A Grafter is able to insert itself into the body of a paralyzed victim, devouring its innards and absorbing its genetics over several hours. Once within, it gains the knowledge and memories of its victim, allowing it to move and behave exactly like the person whose body it now inhabits. Detecting a disguised Grafter is an opposed Stealth vs. Notice check, the Grafter gains a +2 on this check.

- **Razor Claws:** Str+d4, AP 1, Paralytic Venom—a target Wounded by a Grafter has to test Vigor at −2 or is paralyzed and unable to move for 3 rounds.
- **Small:** −1 Toughness, about the size of a small child.

Grafters wear human bodies as though they were suits of flesh.

CAIRATH

Together with the Biophages, the Nepharites of Demnogonis created this vilest of creatures. It is a testament to the greatness of the Befouler, and is granted as a gift to the most devoted of his cults as a token of gratitude for its loyalty. The Cairath is formed of necrotechnological and biological rotting flesh that has been combined with symmetry-infused bacterial cultures and grafted on to a polymorphic metal skeletal frame. To this base framework, the creature adds more organic and inorganic material, growing exponentially.

Cairaths are released into sewer systems or swamps that are close to or at the heart of human civilisation while still in their embryonic form, no larger than a tennis ball. The infant Cairath feeds off organic material in its proximity and grows at an alarming rate as it consumes more and more. It has the unique ability to absorb biological materials, adding it to its own body mass little by little. Not only does it absorb dead matter and material, but it also hunts living organisms. It has no mouth, organs, or limbs and navigates by sense of touch and vibrations. In essence, it is basically a multicelled, semi-sentient, amoeba infused with the Dark Symmetry.

The creature doesn't outright kill its prey; it envelops it and slowly absorbs it while it's still living using corrosive digestive enzymes. For days, the victim lives as it is slowly being absorbed for sustenance and its biological material. The process is unfathomably agonising as skin melts and flesh is liquefied. For a short while the victim is actually connected to the Cairath symbiotically, which unfortunately allows them to survive far longer than they should. They are reduced to a quivering lump of flesh with exposed, raw nerve endings. When the victim finally dies and is fully absorbed, the Cairath must hunt again.

The creature will stop growing when it weighs between one and three metric tons, and at that point it's so large that it could envelop a car. Even though it hasn't got any limbs, it can extend parts of itself, forming primitive, corrosive appendages that it can use to catch prey. It also has the ability to crawl through narrow spaces and slither up walls and across ceilings, but it's at its fastest when traversing bodies of water that are at least waist deep. Those cults who are given one of these beings as a reward are responsible for its survival and pledge to provide it with human sacrifices. Some members even sacrifice themselves to the Cairath in order to be one with their Apostle.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12
Skills: Fighting d12, Survival d6
Pace: 4; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 19 (4)

Cairaths devour all.

Special Abilities:

- **Absorb Biology:** Whenever a Cairath inflicts a Wound with a melee attack, it can make a Natural Healing check. If the Cairath kills a creature, it regains a Wound automatically.
- **Amorphous Flesh:** Armour 4.
- **Claws and Fangs:** Str+d12, Reach 1.
- **Fear (–2):** The Cairath causes Fear checks at a –2.
- **Immunities:** Immune to Poison and Disease
- **Size +5**
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

BLESSED LEGIONNAIRES

These disease and plague riddled wretches make up the bulk of Demnogonis' troops. Swarming like flies, they march relentlessly to the twisted tune of their Apostle. The Blessed Legionnaires are virtually unstoppable; the one and only way to defeat them is by total and utter annihilation, preferably by fire. Through numbers alone, they topple their enemies, washing over them like a living wall of putrid, infected flesh, filth, plague, and vermin left in their wake.

Blessed Legionnaires are created from humans that have been gathered up from the numerous battlefields throughout the solar system. Scores of bodies are crammed into Infestation Chambers, piled on top of each other. This is not a delicate process. Here they are sprayed with a bacterial sludge and infused with the raw symmetry pattern of Demnogonis. Their minds become twisted while their souls are trapped inside the now putrid husk, forever screaming in agony. Only in their destruction will they find peace if they are lucky, and driven by this and their forced loyalty to the Befouler they fight tirelessly, hoping to meet their end. Frenzied, crazed, and relentless these legions tear into their enemies.

Blessed Legionnaire activating a plague grenade.

The Blessed stagger forth in whatever armour or clothing they were wearing when they died. Due to their unpredictable nature, they are seldom armed when they march into battle, as they may well turn on their masters if there are no enemies around. Usually they pick up the weapons of fallen enemies or allies along the way, but it is the plague they carry that is the biggest threat. Even with the host body dead, the plague is still able to spread and kill.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (1)
Gear: Kratach Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Dmage 2d8, RoF 3, 30 shots, AP 2, Auto, 3RB).
Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d6, Corrupting
- **Scrap Armour:** Armour 1.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

KADAVERS

These are the wretched remains of humans who have been killed and risen as a result of the Black Rot, or of Heretics that have degenerated. They are undead creatures that do little else but shamble about and attack any human with a pulse who is not already corrupted by the Dark Symmetry.

They appear as they did when they rose from the dead; some might be pale and blue with white eyes while some are rotting horrors. However, they do continue to rot until they are a fleshy skeleton with a few putrid organs, somehow held together by the symmetry. They can only be destroyed by fire or complete bodily dismemberment. Kadavers only attack using bites and their bare hands, and even though they are not very fast, they possess an incredible strength. Kadavers are not exclusive to Demnogonis but are in most cases associated to him, as most are a result of the Black Rot.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12
Skills: Fighting d
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (1)
Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d6, Corrupting
- **Head-Shot:** A Kadaver takes +4 damage from Called Shots to the head, overriding the normal Undead immunity to Called Shots.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** A Contagion Nepharite rolls for Natural Healing at the start of every round. This ability cannot heal Wounds caused by Fire.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.
- **Unfeeling Flesh:** Armour 1

A once brave soilder rises as a Kadaver, ready to devour his former brothers in arms.

SEMAI'S SERVANTS

As brave men fought and died in the fields of battle, laying down their lives to stem the tide of darkness, another war, a quiet war, was brewing by the very hearts of man.

He whispered ever so gently, cajoled and caressed. Soon the Darkness grew in the heart of man like fat, slithering, hungry worms, rotting the flesh and blemishing the soul. At first, those who lusted for power became corrupted in their wants and jealousy. Then neighbour turned against neighbour, brother against brother, and mother against child.

Semai, the Lord of Spite, had arrived.

The Brotherhood scoured the worlds in search of the Great Perverter. However, his methods and his corruption were insidious and not even the cleansing fires could root him out. Moreover, as they searched, Semai searched and found what he was looking for. The corporations. The vileness slithered its way into the upper echelons of the most powerful groups in the solar system. This new ground was ripe for the taking, already teeming with spite, jealousy, and envy. The Unholy Heretics now lorded over machines of war, vast resources, and millions of humans. Nevertheless, the ever watchful Inquisition did not stop in its pursuit and hunted the Darkness even in the halls of power. In the end, it brought the light, exposing the eternal evil. However, where there is light there is shadow, and in despair, it realised that the Lord of Spite, Semai, laughed where he stood hidden in the gloom.

–The Fourth Chronicle: The Arrival of Semai, by Gerard Adurandis

Semai appears as The Man of Greedy Hands when appearing in corrupting dreams.

Semai is the most subtle of all the Apostles. He pushes and pulls at our dreams, desires, wants, and needs. The Great Perverter uses our egotistical minds against us, and snares us with our own petty jealousy.

The Lord of Spite plays an enticing tune but he seldom forces us to dance to it. His web is a tangled and deadly one, filled with temptation and forbidden desires. This web's embrace feels safe and warm at first, but then it tightens, grows heavy, and drags the very soul down into eternal darkness; a darkness the afflicted has created on his own.

This Apostle and his servants always offer exactly what is desired. Do you want wealth? It is yours. Do you crave respect? You shall have it. Do wish for the death of those that oppose you? It will be done. However, there is always a price in the end, and often it is your eternal soul.

Semai does everything in his power to go unnoticed; he wishes to stay unassuming. One of his strengths is the fact that few ever see him coming, and in that horrible moment when they realise they have been manipulated it has gone too far already and their souls are already his.

At a first glance, Semai appears to be the weakest of the Apostles, but in his own way, he is just as strong and perhaps even more powerful. He gains his power from those he corrupts: as their ranks swell so does his power and his symmetry pattern. His ability to predict and see that which is to come has made his brothers seek his counsel. Ilian, however, never seeks the counsel of Semai, as she knows that he would mislead her at the first chance he got.

His legions are the tempters, the unseen infiltrators, agitators, and deceivers. While his brothers and sister command legions of awesome power, or myriads of minions that by force of sheer numbers overrun their enemies, Semai has only a few. However, with only one of his minions he can slowly spread his corruption, turning the population of a city against itself. His minions are spread across the solar system, carefully placed in key positions and ready to strike. When it comes to assassins, Semai is unmatched. His sacred murderers are capable of performing hits with surgical precision, removing obstacles with ease and often shifting blame and feeding the ambient paranoia.

The Lord of Spite's physical manifestation is an embodiment of gluttony. He stands two meters tall, a greasy man that swells with a near gelatinous corpulence. His head is a blubbery mess of double chinned mouths, all of them whispering eternal lies and false promises. From his belt hang broken shards of crystals, solidified tokens of the first broken promises. Next to them, always close to his heart, he has the unholy scroll in which the very first lie is inscribed. He wears heavy armour crafted of gold, gems, and coins from every era of human history. It is a mockery of humanity's greedy and spiteful nature.

DEFILER NEPHARITE

These dark masters of obfuscation and deception have their hungry gaze fixed on humanity. They constantly linger in the shadows just outside the rim of man's perception, herding us toward our own doom. No other Nepharites have this amount of direct contact with human Heretics. They often oversee operations of cultist cells, driving them on to agitate the masses and instigate uprisings. They have been given the gift of foresight and the ability to read and shape minds. With these tools, they manipulate events, and undermine and corrupt the rule of the corporations and the Brotherhood. They also possess the ability to physically twist and shape the flesh and the minds of humans as if they were clay, physically shaping them into Heretic Legionnaires.

Of all the Nepharites, these are the most human-like. They are the size of a tall, muscled human. They have wickedly long, sharp teeth and grotesquely large mouths. Blackish fluid runs down their lips as they speak, their very mouths, saliva, and black tongues corrupted by all the lies. Their eyes are completely black. These Nepharites lack the spikes most of their cousins have; instead, they are adorned with

Nepharites of Semai can walk among men and corrupt them from within.

smouldering runes that cover every inch of their bodies. These runes represent the first lies ever told. They dress in impressive black body armour and tall metal helmets. They have been known to disguise themselves as Inquisitors on occasions, and use this disguise to influence the ignorant masses and spread paranoia and distrust.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d12, Spirit d12+2, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Espionage) d8, Intimidation d10, Mysticism d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Stealth d12+2, Streetwise d8, Taunt d10, Technical Aptitude d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Dark Gift: *Dark Curse*, *Muddle the Memory*, *Obfuscation*, *Pluck Mind*, *Sense Weaves of Power*, *True Fear*

Gear: Vassht: (Str+d10, AP1, Corrupting, Parry +1, Vicious).

Special Abilities:

- **Corrupt Flesh:** Armour 2.
- **Dark Presence 2**
- **Grasping:** The Defiler gains a +2 to all opposed Grapple checks.
- **Innocent Guise:** The Defiler can change its form to appear as a normal human. While disguised this way, any attempt to discern the Defiler's true form is an opposed Stealth vs. Notice check. This Guise is lost as soon as the Defiler takes an offensive action or uses a Dark Gift.
- **Kiss of Corruption:** Against a grappled opponent, a Defiler can spend its action to profane the creature's soul. The Defiler and target make an opposed Spirit check, for every success and raise the Defiler gets, the target's Willpower is reduced by 1. If this action reduces a target's Willpower to 0, they are immediately turned into a Heretic Legionnaire.
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.

CORRUPTOR

The Corruptors are recruiters and deceivers. In the beginning, they were human Heretics, but as a result of their own eternal corruption and the application of the Dark Symmetry, they were changed into these revolting beings.

On the surface, these entities look like a human, the human they were before the change. However, this is a disguise they use to move among mankind unnoticed. Beneath the skin, the horror awaits. The true form of the Corruptor is humanoid shaped, to a degree; the creature has a head and a semi-solid torso, but the arms and legs all end in repulsive roiling masses of fleshy, whipping tendrils. The head is dominated by two large red eyes and a yawning maw filled with uneven, translucent hooked teeth.

When they shed their human skin, they burst forth in a spray of flesh, blood, even tearing their clothes to shreds. In their true form, they can fit through the smallest of spaces and are able to crawl up walls and across ceilings, but in most cases they stay hidden beneath their human visage. It takes them a couple of hours to grow a new skin, but they can also kill a human and absorb his skin, leaving a skinned, slime covered carcass in their wake. They always return to the appearance they had while still human.

In their natural form, they are very dangerous as their bizarre bodies and whipping tendrils make it difficult to injure them. On the other hand, they are not very hardy and usually flee rather than fight. Corruptors are able to read the minds of others as well as peering into their memories. To do so they have to slither some of their tendrils inside the head of the target, usually penetrating the mouth and nose with a few of their appendages. They wrap themselves around the optic nerve, using it as a conduit for electrical impulses. When in human form the tendrils usually roil out from the Corruptor's own nose, mouth, and eyes and enter the victim while he is immobilised. It is a horrid thing to witness. This process is something the creature usually performs while the victim is asleep.

If in deep sleep, the first touch of a tendril will make the victim fall unconscious. During this time, the Corruptor rummages through the

Corruptors are highly intelligent and hide beneath a mask of human flesh.

memories, dreams, and thoughts of the victim. When it detaches the target will remain unconscious for an additional minute or two, after which he resumes his normal sleeping pattern. When he wakes, he will have no memory of the incident, but will have a headache and often remember having nightmares of drowning, or being smothered. The Corruptor use the information with frightening efficiency, striking up a conversation with the victim, and knowing exactly what to say in order to manipulate him.

Semai may be the inventor of the Corruptors but his siblings, Ilian included, have also been able to create them, and they are used by all Apostles as the ultimate recruiters of Heretics. They are also used as spies and assassins as they are capable of entering well-guarded locations. Most Corruptors have a high-ranking job as a corporate manager or successful lawyer. They are highly sociable and intelligent, retaining the skills they had as humans. As valued and important members of human society, they have access to prominent and influential individuals who they attempt to corrupt. Just months after the arrival of a Corruptor large portions of a business, such as a law firm, might have gone over to the side of darkness, or at least teeter on the precipice.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Any one) d6, Knowledge (Espionage) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d10, Streetwise d8, Technical Aptitude d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:**

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4), Piranha Handgun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi-Auto, +1 to Hide).

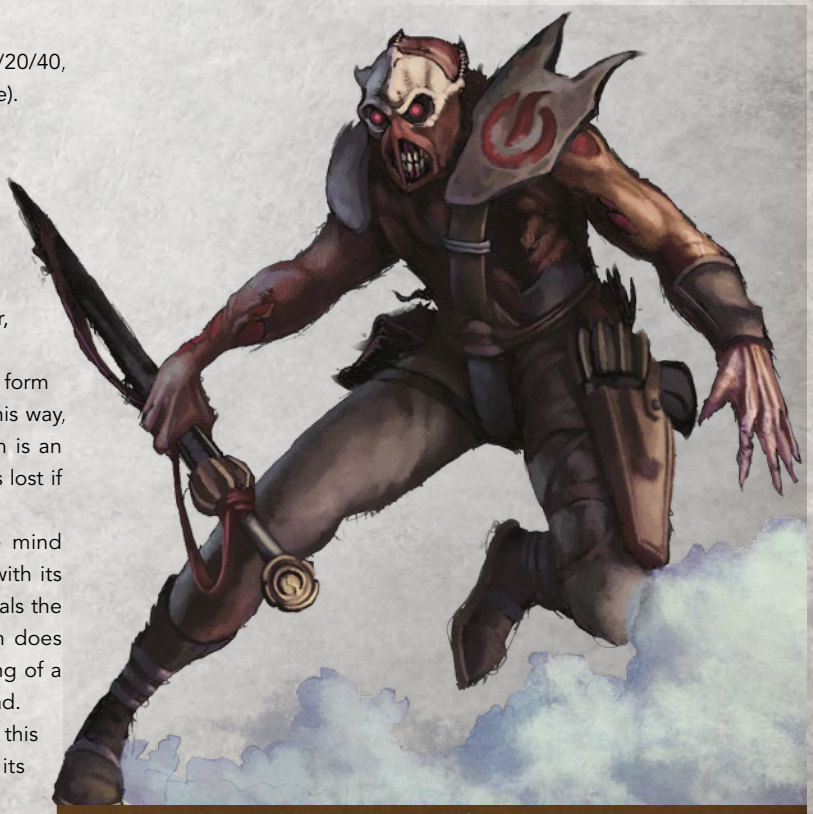
Special Abilities:

- **Amorphous Form:** A Corruptor may shed its human form in a shower of gore as a free action at any time. Once revealed, it can squeeze through spaces as small as 5" and gains the Wall Walker monstrous ability.
- **Fear (–1):** A Corruptor's true form causes Fear, with a –1 penalty.
- **Flawless Infiltrator:** The Corruptor can change its form to appear as a normal human. While disguised this way, any attempt to discern the Corruptor's true form is an opposed Stealth vs. Notice check. This disguise is lost if the Corrupter is in its true form.
- **Mental Infiltration:** A Corruptor can read the mind of an unconscious victim by invading the brain with its tendrils. This process takes several hours but reveals the victim's thoughts and memories fully. The victim does not remember the experience, other than a feeling of a horrible night of sleep and gaining a point of Dread.
- **Whips and Tendrils:** Str+d6, Reach 1, Parry +2, this attack can only be used by the Corruptor in its natural form.

CALLASTONIAN INTRUDERS

These are the special commandos, saboteurs, and assassins of Semai. They are used to assassinate important targets such as corporate heads, political figures, and even members of the Brotherhood. They are also used to sabotage enemy facilities and perform missions behind enemy lines. Callistonian Intruders are masters of silent death and the art of guerrilla warfare. They act as lone gunmen in the heart of human civilisation and as covert death squads on the fields of battle, and are a race of hunters and destroyers taken from a distant alien world.

The Intruders are rather small creatures. They are humanoid and stand no more than 170 centimetres tall. They have hardy, almost black, leathery skin and have a sinewy build. This gives them a natural residence to physical damage. Intruders possess an incredible strength and tenacity, far beyond what their small size would suggest. Their facial features and body resemble a mummified human corpse. Their yellow teeth always visible between shrivelled lips and their white eyes give off a cat-like sheen when the light hits them in the dark. Intruders wear light armour and their faces are covered by grim protective masks that strike fear into their foes, and which conceal the cat-like shine of their eyes. Parts of their armour are covered by retractable razor sharp hooks and blades, which they use while in close combat. Intruders are usually armed with a Jahkt, Vilihak, and a light firearm. They



No one has seen the horrors that lie beneath the mask of a Callistonian Intruder.

also use small gas, fragmentation, and smoke grenades. When they perform long range kills, they use a Darelech and are among the best snipers the Dark Legion has at its disposal.

These beings have perfect night and day vision. They also possess an uncanny regenerative ability that allows them to recuperate from the most grievous of wounds with frightening speed. Even lost limbs and organs regenerate. This makes them ideal for long term field deployment.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d12
Skills: Fighting d8, Mysticism d6, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d10, Throwing d8
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (2)
Dark Gifts: *Obfuscation*, *Sense Weaves of Power*, *Muddle the Memory*
Gear: Jahkt (Str+d6, AP 2, Vicious, Thrown Range 5/10/20, Returns to Intruder at end of combat round), Vassht (Str+d10, Parry +1, AP 1, Vicious, Corrupting).
Special Abilities:

- **Lightweight Armour:** Armour 2.
- **Prey Seeker:** A Callastonian Intruder gets a Wild Die on Fighting and Shooting rolls. If a Callastonian Intruder is a Wild Card, it gets a d10 Wild Die on Fighting and Shooting rolls.
- **Regeneration (Slow):** A Callastonian Intruder checks for Natural Healing every day.

HERETIC LEGIONNAIRES

Marching over the battlefields in great scores, the Heretic Legionnaires, also known as Hereticals, are the backbone of Semai's army. They are the warring faction of the Lord of Spite and these poor wretches have sold their soul to their master in exchange for empty promises. They patrol his citadels and make up the spear tipof his lines. These creatures were once human but now they are only bleak shadows of what they once were. They are hollow-eyed, twisted, and suffer in eternal agony of the flesh and spirit. All have been snared by promises of glory and power by the Corruptors, ensured a place at the side of the great Apostle, for which they gave up their souls willingly. Instead, they ended up betrayed, tortured, and enslaved, eternally marching towards the enemies of Darkness.

Even in death, they belong to the Great Perverter. Hereticals are little more than puppets, dancing to the tune of spite and agony. They follow their Nepharite lords blindly into combat and long for an eternal peace that never comes. These legionnaires also serve in the ranks of cult temples and Corruptors, and their number are mixed in with the agitated masses who run down the street in riots instigated by the Lord of Spite.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6

Heretic Legionnaires march in agony to the drums of spite.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8
Gear: Jagged Blade (Str+d6, AP 1), Kratach Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, 30 shots, AP 2, Auto, 3RB).
Special Abilities:

- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

ENABLER

Enablers are an extremely dangerous breed of creatures, but the threat they pose lies in their ability to manipulate a target and get close. They were a gift from Algeroth and are a necro—and biotechnological being. They appear as an extremely beautiful man or woman of physical perfection.

Enablers usually work for Semai's cults and go after targets their masters have selected. Using charm, guile, and sex appeal as tools, they wheedle their way into the victim's life. The cult is usually trying to get the individual in question to do something for it, something that clashes with the morals and ethics of the target. The Enabler stays by their side and carefully pushes and pulls, whispering to them that it's the right way to go, enticing them.

The creature has the ability to release pheromones specifically engineered to affect the target. They can only do so after spending some time in close proximity with the target and after having extended skin to skin physical contact. These pheromones makes it extremely hard for the individual to say no to the Enabler, and after

a while, it is as if they are enthralled. The Enabler can only affect one target at a time, and as it takes hours or even days to create the connection they seldom switch targets, working their prey according to the instructions of their masters.

Enablers can change appearance. The appearance is random but beautiful and they can only control gender, age, and ethnicity of their human form. They can never take on the same appearance twice and it takes several days for them to change. While doing so they form a chrysalis, spending days within it growing a new human exterior. Beneath the human skin is a blackish glistening humanoid of pulsating necrobionic organs and biotechnological tubes. If they suffer superficial damage in their human form they can bleed and still appear human, but gunshot wounds and deep cuts tear off bloody chunks of skin and reveal the unnatural glistening innards, oozing with unholy yellow and green body fluids. Given time, they can heal these wounds, again hiding their true appearance.

If given a chance to kill a witness when exposed, they can extend long needle-like claws or use their whipping poisonous tongues to subdue and slay their prey.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d12, Mysticism d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Stealth d12, Streetwise d10, Taunt d12

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9

Dark Gifts: *Muddle the Memory*, *Obfuscation*, *Pluck Mind*, *Sense Weaves of Power*, *Stir the Dark Heart*

Special Abilities:

- **Alluring Form:** An Enabler's form is that of an eerily perfect man or woman, a guise that allows them to penetrate any part of society. Discovering an Enabler for what it really is requires an opposed Stealth vs. Notice check, with the Enabler gaining +2. Additionally, any attack against an Enabler while disguised suffers a –1 penalty.
- **Envenomed Tongue:** Str+d4, Corrupting, Reach 1
- **Needle-like Talons:** Str+d4
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.
- **Persuasive Pheromones:** After more than an hour of close proximity to a target, and five or more minutes of direct skin-to-skin contact, an Enabler gains a +2 to all Intimidation, Persuasion, and Taunt checks against a single target.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

MUAWIJHE'S SERVANTS

In the cold night, it began as a laughter. Nothing more than a reaction of delight, it seemed. For every night that passed the laughter grew louder and more ferocious. Soon men could hear it in their dreams, and when they did the dreams turned into nightmares. Each passing night another laugh joined the now desperate utterances. In the end they formed a deranged cacophony of maddening cackles, and when the men who had heard it realised that they had been alone all this time, the only laughter was their own. Their hands were bloodied as they had unknowingly slain those they loved, led on by their own madness. Muawijhe, the Lord of Visions, had entered our world.

The Lord of Visions has made us distrust our own senses and minds. He hides the truth behind a veil of distortion and makes us believe that the truths are lies and that lies are true. The song of insanity ever-present, hiding in the voice of the kind stranger, or travelling on the unassuming wind. Our good intentions are usurped and twisted into acts of cruelty and evil. As we scurry about, following this mad tune, we swing the gates open to the eternal darkness.

–The Fourth Chronicle: the Creeping Song of Madness, by Alindra Desanti

The Demon of the Shattered Mind, one of the many incarnations of Muawijhe.

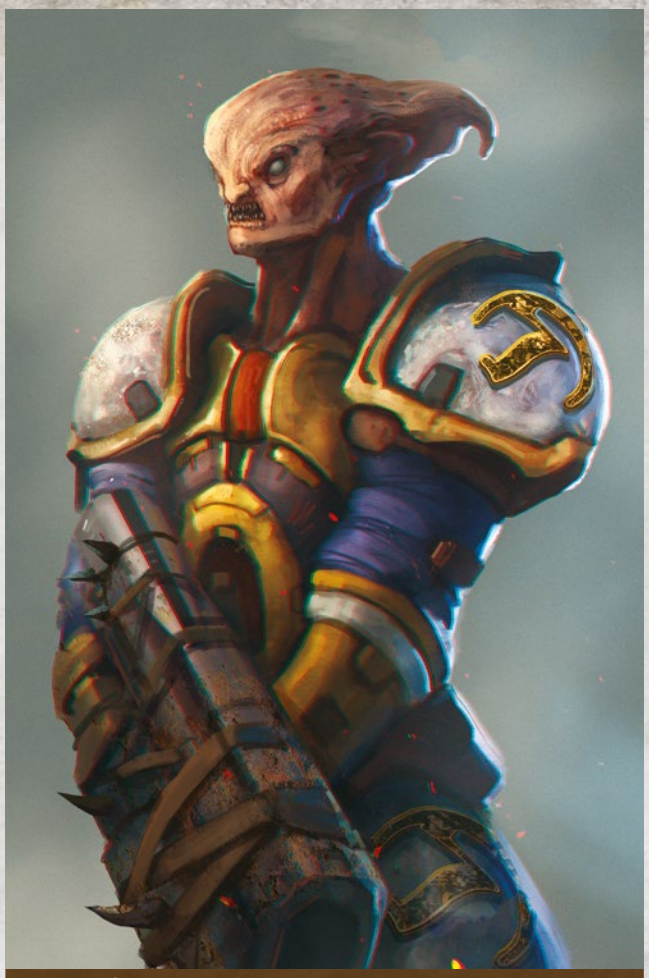
Lord of Visions and the Demon of Screaming Insanity are both names given to Muawijhe. He walks the realm of horrible dreams and the twisted paths of the shattered mind. He knows our fears, hopes, and dreams and uses them to cause confusion, distortion, and chaos. He uses those with a weak mind, corrupting them with ease. Muawijhe walks between perceptions, realities, and worlds, feeding off the insanity he instils. His shadow is cast over all of humanity and every so often, it is so powerful and terrifying that it blots out the purging light of the Brotherhood.

His hordes are brimming with the weak of mind who have been ripped from the warm womb of humanity and driven beyond insanity, to a point where their souls have become damned and dance to the frenzied tunes of their new master. His legions are made out of the worst monstrosities ever to be produced in nightmare, and legionnaires twisted and driven over the edge by the madness he radiates. The world as it is drives people insane and the Lord of Visions draws those that have been lost to his mad court. They come to him like moths to a flame.

The Lord of Vision stands twice as tall as any man, his shoulders broad, and his long gnarled arms ending in long, black talons. He is surrounded by an aura of pure madness, and he radiates a sickness of the mind that goes beyond words. Yet he is always calm, collected, and in perfect control. His heavy combat armour is forged out of distilled delusions and nightmares found in the most twisted minds in his legion. It is covered by a swirling and ever changing design that reflects the pattern of his symmetry. The shape and colour are also in constant flux, gleaming with the shade of madness. From his shoulders hangs his ever-flowing dark cloak, filled with the images of enslaved dreamers that flow like blood-dimmed water, forever screaming in agony and trying to find a way out. His belt clanks with the sounds of rattling chains, which he uses to snare his prey. From his head fat worms and tendrils whip and crawl, always reaching out and searching for healthy minds to twist with their madness. One touch is enough to drive the strongest man irrevocably insane as they crash through the walls of sanity, drowning the unfortunate in a sea of madness and leaving them leashed to their new master, reduced to gibbering, drooling fools.

SCREAMING NEPHARITE

Muawijhe's Nepharites are moulded after their master, echoing his grim visage; but they are not able to command the same calm control of madness as the Lord of Visions. As most, Nepharites act as generals in the armies and Overlords in the citadels of their master. They stand at the tip of his legion, whipping the frenzied mad creatures into an even more ferocious insanity. Their one purpose in life is to spread the glorifying madness of their dark lord and collect those who have been enthralled by the message of Muawijhe, adding them to the ranks of the ever growing Screaming Legion.



Nepharites of Muawijhe control and mould madness with ease.

Immensely well versed in the art of their master's symmetry pattern, they are able to travel between worlds of nightmares, insanity, and our reality. They use this ability to infect and twist new minds and bring forth creatures of nightmare. They are capable of bringing these worlds of madness to the tip of their long serpentine tongues, using them to give the Kiss of Muawijhe. This puts the victim's mind in touch with that of the Lord of Visions, and instantly turns the poor soul into a Screaming Legionnaire.

Attributes: Agility d12+2, Smarts d12, Spirit d12+2, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Mysticism d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Shooting d10, Taunt d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11 (4)

Dark Gifts: *Dark Curse*, *Lunacy*, *Obfuscation*, *Sense Weaves of Power*, *Veil of Enemies*, *Waking Nightmare*

Gear: Cenarath (Str+d4, Reach 1, Corrupting), Shrieketh (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, Auto, Corrupting, 3RB).

Special Abilities:

- **Dark Presence 1**
- **Grasping:** The Defiler gains a +2 to all opposed Grapple checks.
- **Kiss of Madness:** Against a grappled opponent, a Defiler can spend its action to profane the creature's soul. The Defiler and target make an opposed Spirit check, for every success and raise the Defiler gets, the target's Willpower is reduced by 1. If this action reduces a target's Willpower to 0, they are immediately turned into a Screaming Legionnaire.
- **Master's Lash:** A creature with a Cenarath may spend an action to use it on group of Screaming Legionnaires within range. For the remainder of the combat, the Screaming Legionnaires get two actions per round.
- **Nepharite Armour:** Armour 4.
- **Patron Blessing:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point to give the creature Dark Gifts, in addition to any it may already have.

MIND RENDER

Ripped from a demented nightmare and made flesh, these gnarled and corrupted monsters streak across the battlefield with incredible speed and stealth. Standing no taller than 150 centimetres, the Mind Renders look like skeletons covered by a layer of charred flesh, twisted muscle tissue still visible. They have no fingers, only five semi-organic bladed claws on each hand. Their mouths are fused together, but they can still shriek, stretching and ripping the flesh. Specks of yellow light burns bright within their otherwise hollow eyes, reflecting the madness of their master.

Mind Renders can physically rip the sanity from their foes.

Mind Renders are not very intelligent but they have powerful instincts. They are used to overrun enemy troops as well as to spread the madness contained within them. Shrieking and howling they move quickly, alternating between running on all fours and upright. They only attack using their claws, which are capable of penetrating flesh as well as combat armour. Mind Renders are quite easy to rip from the nightmare realm, so are quite numerous—second in numbers only to the Screaming Legionnaires. Renders follow the Screaming Legionnaires and overrun enemy forces as soon as they have closed the distance.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7
Special Abilities:

- **Grasping:** The Defiler gains a +2 to all opposed Grapple checks.
- **Nightmare Made Flesh:** A Wild Card Mind Render recovers a Wound every time a creature within 6" of it suffers a wound.
- **Talons:** Str+d6, AP 1, Corrupting.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

SCREAMING LEGIONNAIRES

The shadow brought to life, stalking the corner of our dreams, running across endless battlefields and through the unseen worlds of insanity, the Screaming Legionnaires destroy the flesh of man and shatter their minds. They charge forth, dressed in rags, forever screaming. They are humans that have been taken over by the madness of Muawijhe. They stagger forth spasmodically, bodies and minds torn asunder, suffering constant fits of lunacy. Only the screams of their master fills their existence.

These ragtag legionnaires are dressed in whatever they have scavenged from the battlefield, their outward appearance almost as disjointed as their minds. For the most part, they are armed with close combat weapons and light firearms. Screaming Legionnaires also carry a assortment of bizarre musical instruments such as twisted drums, flutes, and harps.

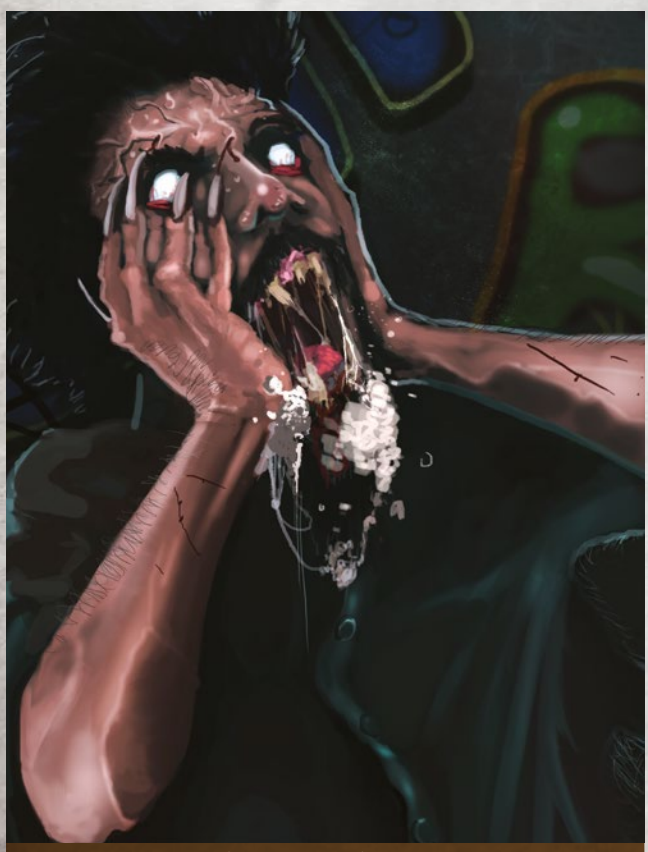
Their true power lies in their ability to channel, focus, and summon forth the pure madness that constantly surrounds us and direct it. Using their instruments and a wild, frantic dance they can make madness sweep across the fields like a whirlwind, leaving nothing behind of the mind that was, only an empty shell. The legionnaires can even combine forces, creating enormous gusts of madness that can bring whole armies to their knees.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (2)
Gear: Corroded Blade (Str+d6, AP 1, Corrupting), Shrieketh (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, Corrupting, 3RB, Auto).
Special Abilities:

- **Scrap Armour:** Armour 2.
- **Torrent of Madness:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry pool. Instead of performing any other action in the current round, all living creatures within 6" of a Screaming Legionnaire have to test Willpower, with a penalty equal to the number of Screaming Legionnaires within 6" of the target.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

HOWLING LEGIONNAIRES

Within the ranks of the Screaming Legionnaires, there is a kind of Special Forces unit called the Howling Legionnaires, or Howlers. They are only armed with musical instruments of madness and with the power of the Dark Symmetry, they can impose their insanity on reality, actually reshaping the physical world with terrifying effect.



Screaming Legionnaires can shatter a man's mind.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d8
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (2)
Gear: Corroded Blade (Str+d6, AP 1, Corrupting), Shrieketh (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, Auto, Corrupting, 3RB).
Special Abilities:

- **Distilled Nightmare:** As an action, a Howling Legionnaire can target one living character within 6". The target must make a Willpower test at −1. If the Willpower test is failed, in addition to the point of Dread, a Mind Render is summoned next to the target. The Mind Render will vanish after five minutes or when the target of this action dies, whichever comes first.
- **Scrap Armour:** Armour 2.
- **Torrent of Madness:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point from the Dark Symmetry pool. Instead of performing any other action in the current round, all living creatures within 6" of a Howling Legionnaire have to test Willpower, with a penalty equal to the number of Screaming Legionnaires within 6" of the target.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

ZENITHIAN SOULSLAYER

These nightmarish creatures are true fiends. They are huge monsters that tower up three meters high. They act as second in command to the Nepharites and surround themselves with the legions of the doomed, swaying to the drums and pipes of their soldiers.

Zenithian Soulslayers are vaguely humanoid, possessing a head, a pair of arms, and a pair of legs. Beyond this, there is nothing human about them. Their elongated head is the home of two deep-set eyes and a massive fang-filled maw. They have thin but extremely strong arms that end in long claws oozing with otherworldly ichor. On their back, they have two huge and arched saw-toothed blades of bone connected to powerful muscles, which then can use to scissor a fully armoured man in twain or as horns, skewering opponents. With their long and muscled legs and balancing tail, they are capable of incredible feats of speed. Their skin is thick, black, and glistens as if wet, although they are dry and cool to the touch.

The sight of these hissing and madly grinning horrors will make even the most battle-weathered soldier pause.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d12, Vigor d10
Skills: Fighting d10, Mysticism d8
Pace: 10; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (2)
Dark Gifts: *Dark Curse*, *Distil Horror*, *Sense Weaves of Power Waking Nightmare*

The nightmarish Zenithian Soulslyer

Special Abilities:

- **Alien Flesh:** Armour 2
- **Claws and Blades:** A Soulslayer gets two attacks per round, Str+d10, AP 1, Reach
- **Dodge:** A Soulslayer is –1 to hit by ranged attacks.
- **Fear (–2):** A Soulslayer causes Fear, with a –2 penalty to all checks.
- **Size+3.**

SCRAMBLER

Scramblers are beings that exist in two forms. One is pure energy within an electrical system and the other is a physical manifestation, which is accomplished by actually corrupting, possessing, and animating a machine. They share some similarities with Marionettes, but they can only manifest on a much smaller scale and have the ability and need to harass the minds of their prey before manifesting.

If a Scrambler has managed to spread enough discord and madness, it can possess the device; twisting it into a semi-organic horror of teeth, claws, and wiring. Scramblers attack furiously once they are animated, and then disappear. It is unknown if they are destroyed or simply flee back out into the ether. Individual Scramblers exhibit a range of levels of power, with the most powerful needing to feed on more strife and suffering before they manifest, though they are consequently also able to remain manifest for much longer.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4
Skills: Fighting d4, Mysticism d6, Stealth d6
Pace: 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5
Special Abilities:

- **Barbed Tendrils:** Str+d4.
- **Dark Gifts:** The Scrambler knows the following Gifts: *Corrupt Device*, *Dream Transfer*, *Symmetry Burst*, *and Waking Nightmare*.
- **Ethereal:** The Scrambler is immune to physical attacks. Items specifically designed to fight the Dark Symmetry or Mystic powers can damage them.
- **Small:** –1 Toughness, Scramblers are small creatures that tend to go after smaller gear and items.
- **Technological Possession:** A Scrambler can possess any device that has a Corruption rating of 1 or more.
- **Technological Terror:** The GM can spend a Chronicle Point after a Scrambler has Possessed a device. This allows the Scrambler to operate the device normally, gaining a d8 in the relevant skill. For ranged weapons, this would be shooting, for most devices it would be Technical Aptitude.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to the Recover from Shaken, Immune to Poison and Disease, No additional damage from Called Shots, Undead Wild Cards do not suffer Wound Penalties.

A Scrambler possess a television set.

SETTING GLOASSARY

SETTING GLOSSARY

The following is a glossary of common names and terms used in the worlds of Mutant Chronicles, along with page references (where relevant) for where those concepts are discussed in more detail. Where a glossary entry refers to a concept with its own glossary entry, this will be marked with bold text.

ALGEROTH (page 242): Algeroth is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Algeroth is the Apostle of War, the Master of Dark Technology, and the Supreme Commander of the Dark Legion.

BAUHAUS (page 174): One of the four original Megacorporations, Bauhaus established itself upon Venus, and swiftly developed a reputation for exquisite craftsmanship, reliable technology, and a culture of order. Bauhauser society is a many-layered feudal system, with wealthy noble houses ruling over all aspects of commerce, diplomacy, faith, and warfare.

BROTHERHOOD, THE (page 228): Founded by Nathaniel Durandin the midst of the Dark Symmetry Era, the Brotherhood exists to unify humanity against the threat of the Dark Soul and its servants. While the Brotherhood is widely known for its charitable works, the most iconic image of the Brotherhood is that of heavily-armed Inquisitors kicking down doors and gunning down Heretics. The agents of the Brotherhood are notable for their ability to wield the mystical powers of the Light, conjuring powerful spells using techniques known as The Art.

CAPITOL (page 164): One of the four original Megacorporations, Capitol were the first to depart from Earth, and the first to settle on Luna before they established themselves on Mars. Capitol is a democratically-run corporation, with its citizen-shareholders able to vote for their leaders in regular elections, and the ideals of personal freedom and self-determination are powerful factors in Capitolian life. Capitol has the largest population of any of the corporations, and it is has the greatest economic power as well, owing to the countless millions of smaller businesses run by Capitolian citizens.

CARTEL, THE (page 224): The Cartel was founded during the Dark Symmetry era to manage inter-corporate relations. The Brotherhood and the five Megacorporations all maintain a presence within the Cartel, which serves as both a neutral venue for diplomatic relations and as a means for the corporations to coordinate military and law enforcement activities. The Doomtroopers and Luna PD are both parts of the Cartel.

CYBERTRONIC (page 204): The newest of the Megacorporations, Cybertronic was founded only a century before the Second Dark Legion War. Thoroughly distrusted by outsiders, Cybertronic embraces technology that has been illegal for over a thousand years, including sophisticated electronics, computers, and even artificial intelligence. Cybertronic is secretive and reclusive, and little is known of the corporation's inner workings, leading to widespread speculation about their true nature.

DARK GIFT (page 116): Supernatural powers employed by Heretics and creatures of Darkness, Dark Gifts draw upon the power of the Dark Symmetry to create a variety of unnatural effects.

DARK LEGION (page 272): The Dark Legion is the collective term for the military might of the Dark Apostles. Algeroth, as the Apostle of War, provides and commands the overwhelming majority of Dark Legion forces. The Dark Legion are drawn from a wide variety of sources; many are created from the twisted and defiled bodies of dead or captured soldiers, while others are created from scratch using a blend of sorcery and technology. Many of the strangest creatures are denizens of alien realms and dimensions that were conquered by the Dark Apostles aeons ago.

DARK SOUL (page 241): The Dark Soul is an enigma, and outside the ranks of Heretics and the Dark Legion, knowledge of it is more speculation and theory than concrete fact. The Dark Soul does not act directly upon the universe, but rather works through its Apostles, Ilian, Algeroth, Demnogonis, Muawijhe, and Semai.

DARK SYMMETRY (page 239): The Dark Symmetry is best described as the influence of the Dark Soul upon reality. It feeds upon and amplifies the darkest impulses of the human psyche. It seethes in the shadows of every dark alley and writhes across abandoned places. Knowingly or not, many humans submit to the power of the Dark Symmetry, becoming Heretics, whose actions contribute to the downfall of humanity. Powerful servants of the Dark Apostles, including many Heretics, can wield Dark Gifts, which draw upon the patterns and flows of the Dark Symmetry.

DEMNOGONIS (page 242): Demnogonis is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Demnogonis is the Lord of Pestilence, Master of Decay, Herald of Filth, and the Cultivator of a Thousand and One Diseases.

DOOMTROOPER (page 226): Originating during the First Dark Legion War, Doomtroopers are recruited from the finest soldiers in the Megacorporations' militaries. They are mighty warriors, used to fighting against the abominations of the Dark Legion and taking on the deadliest missions. To that end, they are armed with the finest weapons and armour.

ILIAN (page 242): Ilian is the foremost and mightiest of the Dark Apostles, and the mightiest servant of the Dark Soul. Ilian is the Mistress of the Dark Symmetry, the Lady of the Void, the Arch-Sorceress, and her command over the mystical forces is absolute.

IMPERIAL (page 194): Originally a collection of smaller businesses, the Imperial Corporation banded together to become the last of the four original Megacorporations. Imperial history is a tumultuous and bloody affair, with internecine warfare between the Clans – families descended from the original businesses – being more common than anyone likes to admit. Imperial is scattered across the Solar System, with most of their holdings spread through the asteroid belt, or upon hard-won scraps of land on the inner worlds.

LUNA PD (page 159): Founded by Capitol in the earliest days of Luna City, Luna PD was transferred to Cartel control during the Dark Symmetry era. It has always served as a politically-neutral law enforcement agency, patrolling the streets and keeping the peace across the solar system's greatest city. Luna PD's officers are drawn from all walks of life, and all of the Megacorporations support its operations to varying extents.

MISHIMA (page 184): One of the four original Megacorporations, Mishima – based in the caverns and tunnels beneath the surface of Mercury – is divided into hundreds or thousands of keiretsu, or business groups. Their culture is divided into an overclass of Samurai and the teeming masses of common workers who serve them. The complex webs of fealty between Samurai define Mishiman politics, where tradition and personal honour are the highest virtues, and a dishonoured Samurai can find his business ruined and his family impoverished for generations.

MUAWIJHE (page 243): Muawijhe is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Muawijhe is the Apostle of Madness, the Master of Twisted Visions, and the Lord of Nightmares.

SEMAI (page 243): Semai is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Semai is the Apostle of Spite, the Prince of Sin, and the Architect of Vice. Semai's agents lurk within the cities of humanity, seeking out the disaffected, the abandoned, and the hopeless to serve as foot soldiers in his cause, while simultaneously tempting the ambitious and the powerful with their darkest desires.

SPELL (page 109): Supernatural powers employed by Brotherhood Mystics, Spells are individual abilities that draw upon the Light. These abilities are also known as The Art.

WHITESTAR (page 214): For the longest time, most people in the solar system thought that Earth was a toxic, irradiated wasteland where no human life remained. The Megacorporations were disabused of this notion during an aborted attempt to reclaim humanity's birth-world. Whitestar, ruled by Tsarina Alexandra, dwell in bunkers and tunnels beneath what was the Eurasian continent. These territories, and all that they can salvage of the world beyond, are fiercely defended by the soldiers of Whitestar, and they will brook no trespass.

At first glance, you would not think much of Rasmus Boserup as he stepped off the underground train in a cloud of steam. A bowler hat jammed tightly down over his bald head, his posture was somewhat stooped though his body was hidden underneath a high-collared greatcoat. He walked with the aid of a silvered walking stick and looked, for all the world, like a professor of theology or something similar. Certainly that is what the Croak street gangers thought.

"Give us your wallet, old man, and we might let you walk out of here."

Rasmus simply smiled and said in a soft voice, "You should let me pass, gentlemen."

The gangers grinned, snapped open their switchblades and moved in. Rasmus sighed, and then faster than the eye could track, his right arm snapped out and – with the sound of powerful pistols – threw the first ganger several metres backwards to land with a squishy thump. He brought his cane up and it telescoped out into a full length fighting pole, catching another ganger in the groin as he did so. The ganger collapsed into a wheezing heap. The other gangers, now aware that they had bitten off much more than they could chew, looked for an escape. Rasmus Boserup merely smiled and said, "I warned you." And then the steam engulfed them and all you could hear were the screams.

APPENDIX 02

INDEX

Algeroth Bleed Effects Table 119
Algeroth Weapons Table 126
Algeroth 9, 20-21, 27, 119-120, 124, 126-127, 129, 137, 160-161, 173, 225, 228, 240-243, 246, 248-249, 251, 265, 271, 278-285, 289, 298
Algeroth's Servants 279
Centurion 281-282
Ezoghoul 283-284
Necromutant 282
Praetorian Stalker 285-286
Razide 284-285
Undead Legionnaires 283
Warmonger Nepharite 280-281
Armor 101-105
Armor Table 105
Arms manufacturers of the solar system 81
Assault Rifles, Battle Rifles, and Carbines 85-88
AC-19 'Volcano' Assault Rifle 88
AG-17 'Panzerknacker' 86
AR3000 86
M50 Assault Rifle 85
Mk. XIb 'Invader' Battle Rifle 86
Mk. XLIII Plasma Carbine 86
No. 1 'Shogun' 86
Zhivotnoye Mat Type 2 Infantry Weapon 88
Assault Rifles, Battle Rifles, Carbines Table 86
Asteroid Belt 8-9, 14-15, 17, 27, 74, 140, 153, 200, 214
Autocannons 100-101
CA-138 Deathlockdrum 100-101
Mk. 1 'Nimrod' Autocannon 100-101
Autocannons Table 100
Background Edges 34
Mystical Exposure 34
Big Scream, The 16
Black Ships 126
Black Rot, The 128
Blood Beret 38, 196, 198, 200, 211, 254255, 285
Brothers, The ..... See Durand, Alexander; Durand, Nathaniel; and Durand, Peter
CAW (Close Assault Weapon) ..... See Shotguns
Character Creation 28-31
Edges and Hindrances 29
Faction 28
Lifepath Edge ..... 29, See also Lifepath
Race 28
Skills 29
Traits 29
Willpower 29
Citadel, Dark 19-24, 27, 112-113, 126, 132, 161, 169, 173, 178, 180, 210, 224, 228, 242-243, 249, 258, 263, 265, 273-274, 280, 285, 288
Clan Bartholomew 18, 94, 148-149, 192-194, 199, 201
Clan Kingsfield 18-19, 27, 137, 192-194, 242
Combat Edges 34-35
Big Boom 34
Lightning Crew 35
Natural Calculator 35
Strong Grip 35
Common Items Table 70-73
Conquistador, Imperial 9-10, 15-16, 18-19, 36, 39, 136, 141, 149, 173, 188, 198, 228, 237, 242
Corporate War, First 17-18
Corporate War, Second 23-24
Dark Apostles 8-9, 11, 19-20, 24, 26-27, 31, 42, 112, 116-117, 121, 123-124, 160, 210-211, 225, 228, 239-243, 246, 249, 251, 264-265, 270-272, 276, 279, 287, 295, 297, 308
Dark Eden 8
Dark Legion Era 8, 23-24
Dark Symmetry Era 8, 16-23
Deimos 20, 27, 242
Demnogonis Bleed Effects Table 120
Demnogonis 9, 21, 59, 120, 127-129, 160, 228, 240-243, 248-249, 251-252, 265, 270, 286-290, 292-293
Demnogonis' Servants 286
Biophage 289
Blessed Legionnaires 293
Cairath 292
Contagion Nepharite 287-288
Curator 290-291
Grafters 291-292
Kadavers 294-295
Plague Vulture 290
Torn Spewer 288-289
Demonogonis Weapons Table 129
Dieselpunk 8
Divination Address 18
Doomtrooper 8, 11-12, 23, 36, 41, 52, 81, 85, 90, 102, 142-143, 180-181, 211, 222, 224-225, 255, 257
Durand, Alexander 18, 21-22, 27, 227
Durand, Nathaniel 11, 18, 20-21, 27, 151, 173, 227
Durand, Peter 18, 27, 227
Earth 8-10, 13-15, 18, 20-21, 24, 26, 38, 46, 57-58, 61, 76, 92, 115, 136-137, 140-142, 149, 151, 153, 158, 170, 172-173, 182, 185, 187, 191-192, 199, 203, 205, 207, 209, 212-214, 216-222, 226, 228, 237, 259, 261-262
Edges 34-53
Background 30
Gear 29
Languages 29-30
Flamers 95-97
CA-451 'Gehenna Puker' Heavy Plasma Flamer 97
Flamer 97
Light Flamer 97
Flamers Table 97
Freedom Brigade 42, 103, 166-167, 169, 219-220

Freelancer..... 9, 12, 28, 30, 36, 41-43, 58, 131-135, 171, 201, 203, 206, 239, 257, 265-266, 268
Graveton Archipelago.....17, 21, 181
Grenades, Missiles, and Launchers..... 97-98
Anti-Armour.....97-98
Anti-Personnel.....97-98
ARG-17 Rocket Launcher.....98
Black Grenades.....97-98
DPAT-9 'DEUCE' Rocket Launcher.....97
Gas.....97-98
Incendiary.....97-98
No. 86A5 'Daimyo' Rocket Launcher.....97
Pushkin Rocket Launcher.....98
RL Mk. XIIc 'Southpaw' Rocket Launcher.....98
Smoke.....97-98
SSW5500 Rocket Launcher.....97
Stun.....97-98
Grenades, Missile, and Launchers Table.....98
Guardians, The.....See Durand, Alexander; Durand, Nathaniel; and Durand, Peter
Handguns and Machine Pistols..... 80-83
.45AP No. 3 'Ronin'.....82
.55G M15 'Ironfist'.....82
.74 M13 'Bolter'.....80
Iron Hand Autopistol.....83
MP-105.....82
P1000.....82
P60 'Punisher'.....83
Piranha Handgun.....83
PSA Mk. XIV 'Aggressor'.....82
Handguns and Machine Pistols Table.....83
Harbinger, H.S.S.S, The.....16, 237-238
Heavy Machine Guns and Support Machine Guns..... 92-94
AC-41 'Purifier'.....94
HMG Mk. XIXb 'Charger'.....94
Improved M89.....94
MG-80.....94
No. 45 'Dragonfire'.....94
Nova Vesna Heavy Machine Gun.....94
SSW4200P.....94
Heavy Machine Guns and Support Machine Guns Table.....92
Heretic.....9, 21, 29, 36, 42, 50, 107, 109, 112-113, 115-123, 138, 152, 162, 169, 244-246, 249, 251, 256, 258-259, 270, 274, 279, 285, 295-296, 298
Hindrances.....33-34
Ilian..... 9, 19-20, 26, 117-119, 124, 127, 137, 160-161, 228, 240-243, 249, 251, 261, 265, 270-276, 279, 281, 295, 297
Ilian Bleed Effects Table.....118
Ilian's Servants.....271
Castigator.....277-278
Children of Ilian.....274-275
Defiled Avatar.....273
Eternal Zealots.....275
Malignant.....276
Templar.....274
Twisted Marionette.....276-277
Witch Nepharite.....272-273
Ilian Weapons Table.....124
ImpCom.....15-16
Item and Weapon Qualities.....54-55
Backlash.....54
Biometric Lock.....54
Brotherhood.....54
Contagion.....54
Corrupting.....54
Illegal.....54
Knockdown.....54
Launcher.....55
Shotgun.....55
Vicious.....55
Jupiter.....9, 23, 153
Lifepath Edges.....35-49
Blood Beret.....38
Bone Hussar.....38
Celebrity.....39
Conquistador.....39
Corporate Samurai.....40
Cyber-Infiltrator.....40
Cyberscientist.....41
Doomtrooper.....41
Freedom Brigade.....42
Heretic.....42
Inquisitor.....43
Luna PD Detective.....43
M&A (Murder & Acquisitions) Agent.....44
Merchant Captain.....35, 44
Mortifactor.....45
Mystic.....45
Night Witch.....46
Politician.....46
Rake.....47
Resector.....47
Shadow Walker.....48
Technological Archaeologist.....48
Triad Enforcer.....49
Venusian Marshal.....49
Lifepath Edges by Faction.....36
Light Machine Guns and Squad Automatic Weapons..... 90
AC-40 'Justifier'.....92
LMG M. XXIII 'Destroyer'..... 92
M606.....90
MG-40.....92
No. 11 'Kensai'.....90
Rebrov Light Machine Gun.....92
TSW4000.....92
Light Machine Guns and Squad Automatic Weapons Table.....90
Luna PD.....9, 11-12, 36, 43, 68, 81, 94, 101, 106, 108, 112, 132-133, 135, 139, 143, 159-160, 171, 201, 223-225, 257, 268-269
Luna..... 8-9, 11-16, 18-20, 22, 24, 29, 31, 36, 43, 52, 54-55, 68, 81-82, 94, 101, 106, 108, 112, 114-115, 132-133, 135-136, 139-153, 156-162, 164, 169-173, 178, 184-185, 188, 190-191, 198-199, 201, 203, 208-209, 211-214, 220-228, 234, 239, 242, 256-257, 259, 267-269, 308
Mars..... 8-9, 13-15, 17, 21-24, 26, 42, 48, 61, 94, 106, 108, 140, 144-145, 151, 153, 156, 162,

164, 169, 178, 184, 186, 190, 194, 209, 224, 226-227, 242-243, 259, 263-264
Melee Weapons 75-80
Baton or Cudgel 75
Bayonet 76
Bladed Nightstick 77
Bonesword 79
Brass Knuckles 75
Chain Bayonet 76
Chainsword 76
Clansman Claymore 78
CSA400-Series Combat Swords 78
Daggers and Knives 75
Daisho 79
Duelling Sabre 77
Electro-Jolt 79
Explorer's Pick 79
Greatsword 76
Guardian Power Shield 78
Katana 79
Mortis Sword 77
Punisher Short Sword. 78
Rapier Cane 78
Slicer 75
Spear 76
Sword 76
Wakizashi 79
Melee Weapons Table 80
Mercury 8-9, 13-15, 17, 61, 138, 140, 149-150, 153, 156, 184, 186-190, 194, 199, 256, 259
Muawijhe 9, 20, 27, 31, 121-123, 130, 160-161, 228-229, 240-243, 248-249, 251, 265, 290, 299-301
Muawijhe Bleed Effects Table 123
Muawijhe's Servants 299-303
Howling Legionnaires 302
Mind Render 301-302
Scrambler 303
Screaming Legionnaires 301-302
Screaming Nepharite 300-301
Zenithian Soulslayer 302-303
Muawiijhe Weapons Table 130
Nepharites 22, 270-271, 281, 282, 285, 288-289, 301, 311, 323, 330, 357, 432
Neptune 9, 153
Nero 9, 17, 19, 23, 26-27, 124, 153, 173, 198, 207, 238, 242-243
New Hindrances 33-34
Bullet Magnet (Major) 34
Slow (Major) 34
Weak-willed (Minor or Major) 34
Zero-G Sensitive 34
New Skills 32-33
Gunnery (Agility) 32
Knowledge (Varies) (Smarts) 32
Knowledge (Espionage) (Smarts) 32
Knowledge (Psychology) (Smarts) 32
Mysticism (Spirit) 32-33
Technical Aptitude (Smarts) 33
Phobos 20, 27, 242
Pluto 9, 16, 19, 26, 136, 149, 153, 237-238, 242, 259
Power Edges 50
Contemplative Recuperation 50
Crimson Bulwark 50
New Arts 50
New Gift 50
Professional Edges 50-52
Catfall 50
Counsellor 50
EMT 51
Misdirection 51
Newsmonger 51
Ship Crew 51
Spacewalk 51
Strong Rider 52
Wall Crawler 52
Sad Struggle, The 18
Saladin 21, 27, 263
Saturn 9, 15, 74, 153
Seal of Repulsion 19, 26, 176, 242
Setting Rules 30-31
Chronicle Points 30
Dark Symmetry Pool 30
Environments 30-31
Fanatics 30
No Power Points 31
Skill Difficulties 31
Vacuum 30
Zero-G 30-31
Semai 9, 20, 27, 107, 114-115, 121, 129, 160-161, 228, 238, 240-243, 248-249, 251, 265, 270, 279, 286, 294-295, 297-298
Semai Bleed Effects Table 121
Semai's Servants 294-299
Callistonian Intruders 297
Corruptor 296-297
Defiler Nepharite 295-296
Enabler 297-298
Heretic Legionnaires 297
Semai Weapons Table 129
Shotguns 94-95
50/50 'Airbrush 94
Bryzgi Sawn-Off 95
HG-14 95
M516D 94
M516S 94
Mk. XIV 'Mandible' 94
Sawn-Off HG-14 95
SG7000 94
SG7200I 94
Zhukov 4 Tunnel Clearer 95
Shotguns Table 95
Sniper Rifles 88-90
Mephisto Sniper Rifle 90
No. 15 'Archer' 88
Okhotnik 778W 90
PSG-99 90
SR Mk. XII 'Assailant' 88-90
SR3500 88

SR-50 'Manstalker' 88
Sniper Rifles Table 88
Social Edges 52
Bedroom Eyes 52
SolarCom 15-16
Stipend, H.S.S.S, The 17
Sub-Machine Guns and Personal Defence Weapons 83-84
CAR-24 Close Assault Rifle 83
CAW2000 83
MP-103 'Hellblazer' 84
MP-105GW 84
No. 4 'Windrider' 83
SMG Mk. III 'Interceptor' 83
Submachine Guns Table 85
Techno-fantasy 8
Terrestial Vehicle Table 108
Toth, Commander Marshall 20-21
Tsarina, The 9-11, 38, 47, 56, 83, 212, 215-216, 218-221, 263
Uranus 9, 153
Vehicle Qualities 55
Enclosed 55
Exposed 55
No Life Support 55
Rugged 55
Walker 55
Vehicular Weapons Table 101
Venus 8-9, 13-15, 17-18, 20-22, 24, 26-27, 38, 48, 61, 76, 94, 137, 140, 144-145, 151, 153, 156, 172-173, 176-178, 180-181, 184-186, 189-190, 194, 200, 206, 224, 226-228, 239, 241-242, 253, 259, 264
Venusian Crusade, the 20
Weapons of the Dark Symmetry 124
Belzarach 125-126, 282
Blade of Ilian 124, 275
Carcass Grenade Launcher 125-126
Cenarath 130, 300-301
Curator Sword 127-129, 291
Darelech 124-126, 298
Desovach Auto-Shotgun 125-126
Jahkt 129, 297-298
Kratach 125-126, 274, 283, 293, 298
Nazgaroth 125-126, 285
Plague Grenade 127-129, 293
Plague Gun 127-129, 291
Shrieketh 130, 300, 302
Sinarack 124, 275
Tzoteth 130
Valcheck 125-126
Vassht 296,298
Vilihak 129, 297
Weird Edges 53
Avoid Corruption 53
Dark Knowledge 53
Mental Fortress 53
Mystic Ward 53
Rub some dirt on it 53
Slayer of Darkness 53
Wyvern, The 19
Zephyr, H.S.S.S, The 16, 19, 26, 237-238

Imperial Blood Berets get stuck in.

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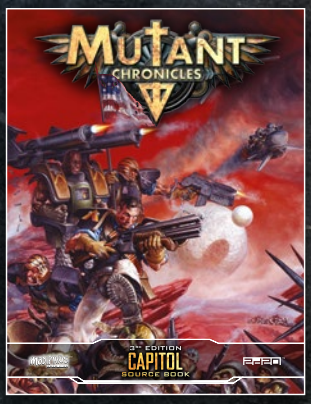

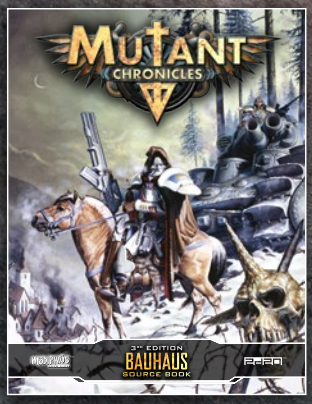

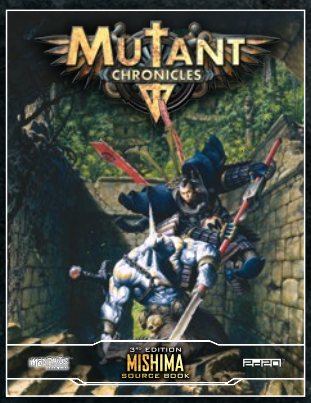

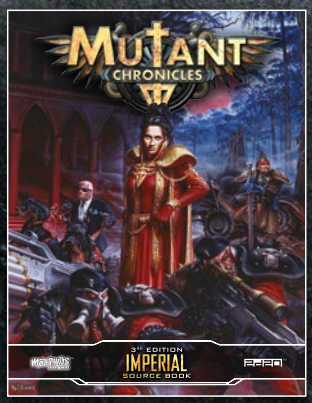

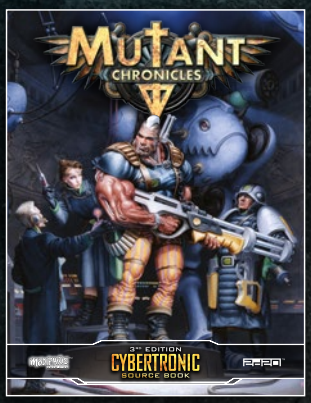

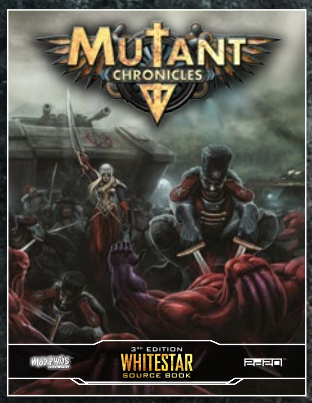

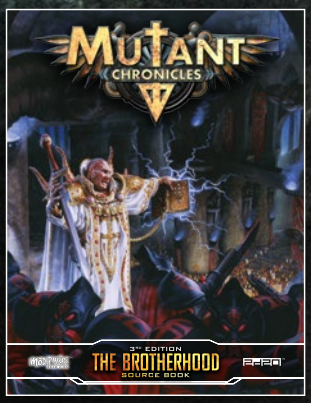

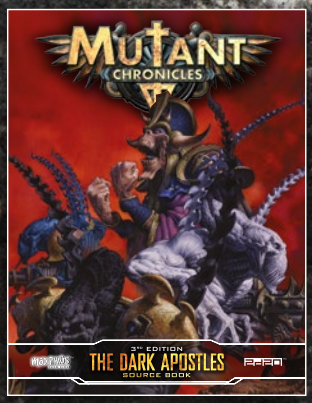

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