

SHULHU

アマルド



ANCIENT ENEMIES



WILDFIRE
Igniting Imagination

GHULHU テマレ ANCIENT ENEMIES



CREDITS

CTHULHU^{TECH} AND FRAMEWERK CREATED BY
MATTHEW GRAU

WRITTEN BY
MATTHEW GRAU, FRASER MCKAY (Chrysalis Corporation
Story & Hooks)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEVELOPER
MATTHEW GRAU

EDITING
JONNI EMRICH, MATTHEW GRAU

ART DIRECTION & LOGO DESIGN
MIKE VAILLANCOURT

LAYOUT & TYPESETTING
MATTHEW GRAU

COVER ART
TYSHAN CAREY

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATION
JONAS ANDREASSEN (64, 80, 83, 103), SAUL ESPINOZA (119,
121), TOM GARDEN (12, 60, 61, 68, 72, 75, 76), ZACHARY
GRAVES (51, 52, 54, 118), MACLEAN KENDREE (5, 116),
JONNY KLEIN (36, 91, 96), CHRISTINE MACTERNAN (24, 84,
115), CHRIS OCAMPO (53), ANDREW OLSON (67, 71, 79,
117), OPUS ARTS (19, 43, 49, 106), DAVID SMIT (31, 113)

WILDFIRE OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT:
FRASER MCKAY

THANKS TO

Colin Chapman, Luke Walker, TekHed, everyone on the *CthulhuTech* forums, yog-sothoth.com, rpg.net

SPECIAL THANKS

- Bob Arens, Todd Frazee, and David Stoeckel, for being awesome guys and *CthulhuTech* evangelists at Gen Con. We couldn't have done it without you.
- Bob & Gerry at the Source Comics & Games, for selling our books at all the shows we couldn't go to this year.
- Jonni Emrich for being the person that keeps Matthew grounded and supporting *CthulhuTech* with generosity and love.
- The judges and everyone at the ENnie Awards, for giving us the opportunity to beat the odds and win a couple.
- The staff and volunteers of Gen Con for their commitment to the industry.
- Dave Arneson for starting this whole journey for all of us. We miss you.

www.cthulhutech.com
Forums, Information, & Downloads

WildFire LLC
23321 SE 291st St.
Black Diamond, WA 98010
www.wildfirellc.com

Black Sky
www.blackskystudios.com

First Printing. ©2010, WildFire LLC, used under exclusive license from Matthew Grau dba Black Sky Studios. All Rights Reserved. *CthulhuTech* and *Framework* are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Matthew Grau dba Black Sky Studios, in the United States and/or other countries. All characters, names, places, and text herein are copyrighted by Black Sky Studios, used by WildFire LLC under license. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the Copyright Owner, nor be otherwise circulated in any form other than that in which it is published. References to the works of H. P. Lovecraft are from and remain in the public domain. The Sandstorm logo is a trademark of Sandstorm Productions, LLC.



DISCLAIMER

CthulhuTech is a game. It is a work of fiction intended as entertainment. Everything contained within is a product of imagination. None of it is real.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters, and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fictional and intended for entertainment purposes only.

FOR MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY

This book is intended for mature readers. It contains dark and disturbing content and images. Reader discretion is advised.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

004	FICTION	<i>Tough Choices</i>	3
010	CHAPTER ONE	<i>Welcome</i>	
012	FICTION	<i>Confab</i>	
014	CHAPTER TWO	<i>Scions of the Forgotten</i>	
048	FICTION	<i>Testament</i>	
050	CHAPTER THREE	<i>Eldritch Acolytes</i>	
084	FICTION	<i>Special Reports</i>	
086	CHAPTER FOUR	<i>Minions of an Endless Chaos</i>	
112	FICTION	<i>Sex Worker</i>	
114	CHAPTER FIVE	<i>Children of the Chrysalis</i>	
141	CHAPTER SIX	<i>Appendices</i>	

Another back alley meeting. Dumpsters and industrial lighting. This was becoming a habit.

"I'm serious, Jada," said Akory. "It's time to choose."

He looked blankly at her. There she was. Average looking, average height, well-toned, tattooed, dressed in clothes that showed off her body. Akory was exactly what one might expect from a Nazzadi woman. No one would ever suspect the nightmarish creature that lurked beneath the surface, that she could become on less than a moment's notice. At least no one other than Jada, who'd seen the thing first-hand.

"C'mon, G-man. It's not that hard," she urged.

At that, Jada smiled. "Really? It's not that hard. I just have to give up my job, my life, and not to mention my mortality. That's all."

Akory crossed her arms – a sure sign of closing off. "You know the score. You've been there. This is what it takes."

"Yes, I have been there. And so far this is what it takes. But how do you know I'd even survive?"

There was an uncomfortable pause before Akory replied. "I don't."

These people, if you could even call them that anymore. Jada had to wonder how he'd ended up here in the first place.

.

First, there was Rain. A Phantom had saved his bacon that night and he didn't even know what the thing was. All the experience did was incite the curiosity that had always been within him. That same curiosity had him skirting the edge, because if his employers found out what he'd taken home with him, he'd not only be fired, he'd be locked up somewhere deep underground while they tried to figure out if he was still mortal.

All the research in the world turned up nothing but rumors. Even searching through the incredibly illegal library he'd amassed for himself yielded nothing. It was as if these things never existed.

Then came the call.

Out of the blue, someone called his personal number. The ID had been blocked. Jada did the opposite of what most people would – he answered it.

"Agent Jada of the Office of Internal Security?" the voice asked.

"This number is restricted and calling it could be considered a felony."

"Your threats mean nothing to me, Mr. Jada. Now listen."

Again, Jada's curiosity won over. "Go ahead."

"The creatures you saw at Rain, the shape-shifters, are up to something new. Are you interested?"

"Go on," replied Jada.

The voice continued. "I will take that as a yes, then. There is a package arriving at the O'Hare International Airport at 3:09 pm today aboard private charter. It will be carried by one of these creatures. It will be in a metal briefcase. It is vitally important that this package not be allowed to leave the premises."

"And what do you expect me to do about this?" inquired the Nazzadi.

"Lock down the airport. Apprehend the courier. Take the package into custody and lock it away forever. That is what you people do, is it not?"

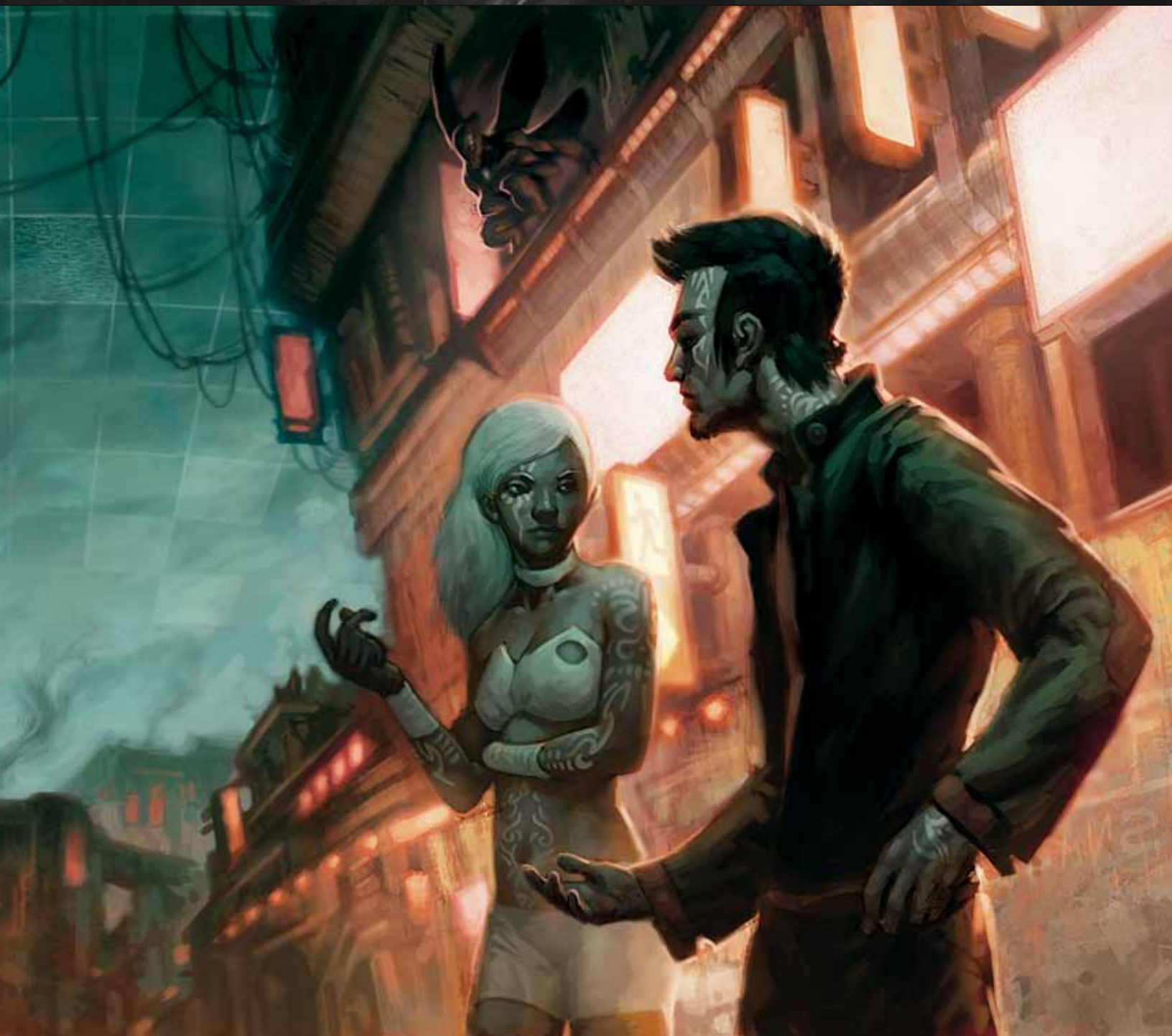
"I can't do all that on an anonymous tip," replied Jada. "I need more than that."

The voice snickered. "Your history has proven otherwise. Your agency has done far worse on far less reliable tips in the past. Trust me, this is something you want to do. For all of us."

.

There he was. Jada had gotten the Office of Internal Security to quietly lock down O'Hare on very short notice. Several government officials had been caught in the action. If there wasn't something to be gotten in this bust, Jada was going to find himself in a whole lot of hot water. Not even his ex-wife, the vaunted Deputy Director Dezary, would be able to bail him out when pissed off politicians wanted his head.





He'd narrowed down the possibilities from a list. There were only a few private charters coming into O'Hare today and most of them were corporate. Great. Just what he needed. Piss off a couple powerful corporations on top of the politicians. If he made it through today...

Then, there it was. A shiny metal briefcase attached to a non-descript traveller. Jada checked and no one had even seen this guy get off a plane. But it was 3:15 pm and here he was, as promised. He ordered his response team to move in.

Later on, after many drinks, Dane would admit that his stretch working with Jada was the most demoralizing

time of his life, primarily because his rough and ready marines kept getting their butts kicked. This day was one of those days. The response team waited until the courier was in a tight hall to advance on him. Then everything went to hell. Jada knew it was coming, but he couldn't very well tell everyone else.

The courier was dressed in a well-tailored black suit and walked with a level of confidence that would normally say he was upper management. He was one of the few people Jada had ever seen who could truly rock a mustache - this guy's was thick and bordering on bushy. These are the kinds of details one takes in when assessing if someone is a genuine threat, though Jada was already aware the threat was imminent.

Dane's voice came over the comm. "We tailing him or are we taking him?"

Once the courier got out of the airport, anything could happen. At least with so many people, it was less likely that mayhem would erupt if they advanced on him inside. "Let's show him there's someone here and see what he does about it."

Dane issued an order and a couple of heavily armed marines stepped into view down the corridor. Despite their usual lack of subtlety, they tried to look as if they were doing a routine patrol instead of hunting for someone. The courier didn't miss a beat and casually changed direction, heading down what most likely led to a maintenance door.

It was time. "Dane, he's skittish. Move your boys in. But be careful. I've got a feeling about this one." Jada had to be cool, but he didn't want anyone dying because he didn't say anything.

Not one to watch from a monitor, Jada grabbed an assault rifle and rushed to fall in behind the response team. The courier hit the end of the corridor and tried to open the door. It was secure and there was no way he was getting through it. He turned to see the marines take firing position - and that was the last thing that made sense.

Like others that Jada had already had the misfortune of encountering, the courier began to change. The transformation really only took an instant, but he remembered it in painstaking detail. His eyes merged into a giant unblinking orb, he grew a thick coat of fur, shot up to ten feet tall, and became a bristling monster with a half dozen ways to murder.

It happened so fast, none of the marines could react. If they had, they may not have even had their wits about them. The creature reached back, tore one of the doors off its hinges and threw it at the stunned soldiers. Moments later, it did the same with the other door. Most of the marines had been taken out of commission within seconds, many with the cracking sounds of breaking bones.

Jada barely had a chance to react. He brought up his rifle and squeezed off a burst. The rounds tagged the creature, but did nothing to slow it down. It turned to the pair of marines that had secured the corridor beyond the door and roared. One of them had the luck to run screaming, while the other was ripped in half by the giant blast that erupted from the things eye. It kept fast hold of the case and bounded down the hallway.

Though he wanted to follow, it was clear to Jada that such a course of action was suicide.

.

Another call. Blocked ID.

"Great," muttered Jada as he hit the answer call button. "Yeah, we blew it."

It was the same voice as before. "You may have lost the battle, but the war is still undetermined. Are you willing to go the distance?"

"And where were you? You knew this was coming and you let us take the hit."

"We could not afford to operate that openly, Agent Jada. You know that. The nature of who we are demands it. We were hoping our involvement in such activities would not be necessary."

Jada sighed. "And now you want me to go the distance? What exactly does that mean?"

"It means," the voice continued, "that you are willing to follow these creatures to retrieve what they have now acquired."

Jada looked out his apartment window. The arcology weather people decided that tonight might be a good night for a light misting. It set the stage.

"If I had a clue where they were going, I would try to stop them."

"How difficult would it be for you to take your investigation to the west coast?"

It had been a while since he'd enjoyed the sunny beaches of California. "I think I can make that happen."

The voice said one thing before it hung up. "Then make your arrangements. Seattle is your next destination."

"Great," said Jada to no one in particular. "Just what I need. More rain."

.

"You're doing what?" Uh-oh. Sara was about to pop a gasket.

"I'm going to Seattle." Jada tried to sound nonchalant as he packed a few shirts into his duffle.

The spritely Chinese girl was practically screaming at him. "Why the hell would you want to go there?"

"I'm going to follow the case."

Sara took two steps toward the bed and then sat on Jada's duffle. No more packing for now. "Oh great. Your own personal obsession. What makes you think they'll approve this?"

"Because it's already done," Jada replied. "The Deputy Director seems to think someone needs to stay on

top of it, not just pass it off to the local branch office."

"Yeah and you used to give it to the Deputy Director every night. I'm not surprised she went for it."

"Dezary and I have been divorced for a while. That has nothing to do with this. And you need to move. You're wrinkling my clothes."

Sara didn't budge. "Don't try to change the subject. What about me? Don't I have something to do with this?"

"It might be easier if you don't come. You don't like the way I've handled this and it'll probably only get worse."

"You're serious. You're asking your partner not to go with you?"

Jada sighed. "No. I'm just saying it might be easier on the both of us if you don't."

Tears welled up in Sara's eyes. "Eff you."

"It's not like that. It's just work."

At that, Sara jumped up, reached back, and started throwing anything she could find in the duffel at Jada, tears streaming down her face. "The eff it is, Jada! The eff it is! This has never been just about work. You've been hiding things from me all the way back since that night with the Farrah Cartel. What is it? What is it that's got you so sucked in that you can't let go?"

Jada tried to stay calm and let the storm wash over her. It's not like this wasn't the first time he'd seen this happen. Letting the boxers bounce off him, Jada had to duck his deodorant, only to be knocked square in the forehead by a bottle of cologne. He couldn't help but yelp.

That brought Sara back down to Earth. She rushed over to him and delicately checked his forehead. "Oooh, sorry about that. I was getting a little nutty again. Let me go get some ice."

Sara ran into the kitchen while Jada ran his fingers over the lump forming just above his left eye. Fortunately, such things were not as obvious on jet-black Nazzadi skin as they were on most shades of Human.

She returned after a few moments with ice wrapped in a towel. She gently put it over his wound and Jada felt the coolness begin to do its work. Trying to lighten the mood, Jada smiled and said, "It's a good thing I'm good looking or something like this could seriously impact my self-esteem."

Sara chuckled. Wiping her eyes, she kissed Jada on the cheek. "I'm coming. That's final." However, something

still darkened her eyes. "And things are not okay between us."

Making sure Jada had hold of the ice, she turned and left, gently shutting the door behind her.

.

This was not good. He had no idea how long he'd been out. He had no idea where Sara was. He had no idea where he was.

Taking stock, Jada realized that he was in what appeared to be a basement, clued in by the electrical junction box and boiler, and it was a big basement. He was tied to a chair and whoever did it knew what they were doing. It felt like someone hit him with a baseball bat and he was completely unarmed. They'd even taken his backup piece.

This was really not good.

The door at the top of the stairs opened. Jada craned his neck to try to get a look up them, but with no luck. Soon enough, a man came into view. He was perfectly bald, wearing a very expensive black suit, and walked like he was used to being listened to.

The man smiled as he pulled up a folding chair. "Thank you for not screaming. I'm glad you're smart enough to realize we wouldn't have taken you someplace where that would help."

Jada's interrogation training kicked in – say nothing.

"We've encountered you enough times to know that you have not yet undergone the Rite. So tell me, why would someone of your position risk your neck to help them?"

Jada just stared at him. The man sighed. "I would hate to have to tell the Office of Internal Security that they're short another man today. I just want to have a conversation. Participate and you might get to see that charming little Chinese woman we have locked up again."

That hit Jada where he lived. He strained doubly-hard against his bonds, but it was still no use.

"Again, I repeat. Why are you helping them? Is this an initiative on behalf of the agency or are you helping them alone? And please don't lie. You might say I have a sixth sense for that."

This was it. Jada had to play ball. "It's just me."

"Very good," responded the man. "That wasn't so bad. Now, why would someone who works for an agency as distrusting as the Office of Internal Security follow a renegade cult like the Society? Surely you know how dangerous they are – and that they've played you."

Jada knew what he was talking about, but he'd never heard the name. The man picked up on that in his reaction.

"My goodness. You're just a dupe. A poor soul that they've manipulated into the line of fire. Typical. What is it you think you've been chasing?"

"Something bad," replied Jada. "A big conspiracy right in the center of the New Earth Government that no one wants to believe. Monsters that look like people."

"Oh it's much more than that, Agent Jada. However, I believe you have one of the important facts wrong. You see, the Society has lied to you. A conspiracy we may be, but we are something far greater than good or bad. Do you know what we are?"

Jada's mouth was sometimes trouble. "Psychotic and dangerous?"

Fortunately, the man laughed. "No. We are the next step for humanity. If the mortal races of this world want to survive, we are what they must become. Agent Jada, we are the legacy of the species."

"That's seriously depressing."

"No, what is seriously depressing is that you are here, playing in the dark end of the street, and you have no idea what is really going on. I'm getting the sense that your handlers at the Society have managed to hook you without ever revealing the truth. You must be compulsively curious, or remarkably careless. Given your position, I'll go with the former."

The man got up off his chair and straightened his suit. "Regardless, there is nothing for me to gain by further conversation. You are most certainly not a threat."

Jada summoned that old command presence that was pounded into him. "Not a threat? I am an agent of the Office of the Internal Security and the New Earth Government. This alone will land you in jail for life."

"The government we can handle," said the man as he began walking up the stairs. "It's too bad your other friends don't categorize you as a more valuable asset."

"What's going to happen to me?"

The man stopped, only his legs in view. "Most likely, one of those monsters will be down in a few minutes to kill you."

That sank in as the man disappeared from view. Jada was once again alone. Suddenly, the room felt a lot smaller and the silence became terribly obvious.

Most people who face imminent death have a moment where they review their life. Was it a good life? If

they died in the next few minutes, would they be satisfied? Is there anything they regret?

All that ran through Jada's mind was this. If he was to make it out of this, two things were going to happen. One, he was going to get laid. Two, he was going to find out once and for all who the hell he'd been helping. And if he didn't make it out of here, who was going to take care of his cat?

The door at the top of the staircase opened and someone began down the stairs. Whoever, whatever it was, he was excited. The quintessential young professional bounded his way down into the basement and landed on both feet with a stomp. "Hi."

Confused, Jada replied, "Hi."

"Or should I say, bye," said the young man, as he began to change. His grin widened as he head became massive, slick and black. The maw left where his mouth would be was huge, filled with fangs, and began to drool. The rest of him followed suit, with powerful legs, a fleshy tail, and arms tipped with razor-claws.

Jada gave up the hope he was going to make it out of here. He just hoped it wouldn't hurt that much.

Without warning, a shape entered the room. It was as if it had simply swam through the basement wall. It was impossible to make out what it was, because the room immediately filled with a dense, fog-like haze. Jada could hear the toothy thing stalk through the fog, trying to locate the source. Then, there was the horrible sound of rending flesh and Jada was spattered by a few pieces of sticky black meat.

A shadow approached him through the fog, alien at first, then shrinking to a the outline of a woman. A tiny Hispanic woman that he knew as Wight, who talked way too fast. One of the good guys. She cut his bonds and helped him up.

"Jada, no time for questions. We gotta go. Just hang on and don't open your eyes until I tell you."

Without waiting for a response, Wight grabbed him by the arm, shifted shape, and ran with him towards the concrete wall. Jada could hear the door open behind him and shouts of alarm. Forgetting to close his eyes, he tried to backpedal as Wight pushed him face-first into the wall...

...and through it, out the other side. "What the eff," was all he managed to get out before Wight dragged him through another wall into another basement. He was through three more before he even got his bearings. Then the retching started and didn't stop until Jada had managed to puke out everything in his stomach.

Wight shifted back into a Human. "You okay?"

Jada managed to nod. Then something hit him. "Sara!"

"They never had her. It was just a lie so you'd talk. Don't you know better than that?" Wight began up the stairs. "From here on out we're on the street. Just act calm and blend. We're going to catch the train and get you someplace safe."

Stopping to catch his breath for a second, Jada leaned up against the railing and sighed.

Wight turned and smiled. "What? You didn't think we'd forget about you, did you?"

.

It was hard to believe it was over. Jada had been through so much hell to get to this point that it seemed like a dream. Here he was, in the rain forests of the Olympic Peninsula, and it seemed like less than an hour ago the world was going to end. He planned on drinking heavily when he got out of here, in the hopes that he could forget the horrific creatures he'd seen out here. What was even worse was that several of them had managed to seduce some of the agents out here, which qualified as yet another thing he wanted to forget – as he was sure they also did. Some of the things in this world...

One of the many OIS marines approached him. Under all that combat armor and blood, they all looked the same. "Sir, I think you'll want to see this."

They had finally put down enough of the cult's resistance that they were taking important ground. Whatever ritual they'd been up to here was big enough that it shook the earth and whipped the elements into a frenzy. He had no idea how the Ministry of Information was going to cover up such a profound occurrence. Thank goodness he'd been on this case for months, because it was so well concealed no else would have had any idea it was coming.

The marine led him through what was clearly the ritual space, though bigger and more ornate than any he'd seen. Up ahead, Jada swore he could see what looked like hospital cribs.

As he got closer, he realized that was exactly what they were. Jada's stomach dropped. He hoped that what he was going to find inside them wasn't going to make him hate the world more than he already sometimes did. Fortunately, even over the din and the remaining gunfire, he could hear the cries of babies.

"We found them a few minutes ago. I don't know what the crazies were planning, but it seems to have involved them."

Jada approached the cribs. There they were, dozens of infants, most of them terrified and howling. But they were alive. Thank goodness, they had gotten there in time. Dozens of living babies that could be returned to their parents, who were undoubtedly sick with worry and grief.

He keyed his comm. "This is Jada. We need someone in here fast. We've got dozens of babies who need evac. They all seem to be in decent condition, but they know something bad has gone down. Have medical standing by and get that list of parents of the missing babies from Harborview. I want this done fast. It's time for them to finally go home."

It was too bad he had no experience with infants, because he really wanted to comfort them. In his defense, there were too many of them for just one man. Lost in thought, Jada jumped as his phone rang. Perils of the job. He didn't look before answering. "Agent Jada."

It was the voice again. "Your men can relax. We have control of the outer perimeter and none of them are going to escape. Well done, Agent Jada. Know that you have been instrumental in something that was no less than saving the world. You have the sincere thanks of the Eldritch Society and, though they don't know it, the thanks of every citizen of the New Earth Government."

Now this was something Jada could get used to. This was the kind of difference he wanted to make and he really wasn't making it at the OIS.

.

So here it was. The choice. Ever since he'd finally been let in on the big secret, he'd known it was coming.

Jada looked at Akory, who was trying not to look impatient. "In retrospect, you realize you guys have not exactly treated me very well."

"We've saved your life numerous times and given you the opportunity to save lots of others. Besides, it's the nature of what we are. If you become one of us, you'll end up doing the same to another. But when that time comes, you'll understand why."

She paused for a moment to look over her shoulder, something that was a habit with her. "And Jada, if you remember, it's always been your curiosity that's gotten you into trouble. I don't recall any time that we made you do anything. You've always had a choice."

Which was true. Jada couldn't deny that most of the scrapes he'd found himself in were something he'd chosen. He could have ignored them, but no.

It was as if Akory could see his thoughts playing out in his eyes. "Think about the alternative. You walk away from all this and go back to your life. You'll do some good, but you'll always know that there's something else going on out there that you are no longer a part of. Will you really be satisfied with that?"

When she put it that way, there really wasn't any way Jada could think of to say no.

CHAPTER ONE: WELCOME

This is *Ancient Enemies*, the core resource book for the Shadow War. In these pages, you will find a detailed exploration of the Eldritch Society, that mysterious secret society that fights against the threats that threaten to destroy the New Earth Government from within. You'll also discover a wealth of information about Tagers, including new Character options and types. Find out what it's really like to join in symbiosis with something from beyond time and space. Go even further to indulge your symbiont and metamorphose, becoming a brand new kind of monster.

Then you'll have a chance to go behind the scenes and discover the forbidden world of the Children of Chaos and the Chrysalis Corporation. Learn how they work and go in-depth about their horrible shapeshifting minions, the Dhohanoids. If you'd like to play on the wrong side of the fence, you'll have the chance to explore Chrysalis Corporation Characters more personally, even to the point of taking on Dhohanoids as Characters.

Welcome to *Ancient Enemies*. The Shadow War beckons...

This chapter will give you a road map to this major setting expansion, teach you terms, the physical structure of the text, and give a shout out to a few of our resources.

TERMS

Like the *Core Book*, the material presented in this book uses new terms with which you may not be familiar. Just to make things clearer as you move on, we'll detail a few of those here. Each of these terms, and others, are fully explained in the text.

SETTING TERMS

Blind Lady, the: An avatar of Nyarlathotep that guides the Circle, a group of powerful sorcerers and para-psychics. She teaches that to deny using ones' mystical gifts is unforgivable – that arcane might makes right.

Children of Chaos, the: The incredibly powerful cult of Nyarlathotep, it is often confused with the Chrysalis Corporation. The Corporation is the most temporally powerful part of the cult, but the Circle and the Order of Taris are also parts of the Children of Chaos.

Director, the: The avatar of Nyarlathotep that directly runs the Chrysalis Corporation. Dwelling in Johannesburg, the Director is even a public figure.

Founders, the: The three T99 Division Dhohanoids that rebelled and escaped with the *Ta'ge Fragments* and later formed the Eldritch Society in response.

Genesis Pits: Facilities where sorcerers perform several Rites of Transfiguration at the same time, so as to produce the maximum number of Dhohanoids. Genesis Pits are also designed to help newborn Dhohanoids make it through their first few potentially traumatic days.

Hive: Chrysalis Corporation buildings which are home to nothing but Dhohanoids or potential Dhohanoids.

Lorekeeper: An occultist in the employ of the Eldritch Society. They maintain the Society's archives, assist Tager packs with arcane knowledge and information, and record the exploits and findings of both themselves and the packs under their watch. Together, they make up the Lorekeeper Network, which keeps all Lorekeepers in touch around the world

Metamorphosis: By acting in accordance with the desire of a symbiont, a Tager may join in further union. Those who do enter a cocoon, from which they emerge a more powerful being.

Murder: The name by which Tagers refer to operational groups of themselves. Known to the rest of the Eldritch Society as *packs*.

Networks (Eldritch Society): The various groups of non-Tagers that form the infrastructure of the Eldritch Society. They include the Administrative Network, the Arcane Network, the Informants Network, the Lorekeepers Network, and the Operators Network.

Operator: A non-Tager in the employ of the Eldritch Society who helps coordinate packs in the field. They call up information on a moment's notice, hack computers, and generally coordinate pack actions. Together, they make up the Operators Network, which helps coordinate Tager actions all over the world.

Pack: An operational group of Tagers, as known by the Eldritch Society. Known to Tagers as *murders*.

Safehouse: A residence or similar building maintained by a covert organization, where agents in the field who find themselves in trouble can go for aid and also to hide.

Special Projects Personnel Resources: Within the Chrysalis Corporation, this subdivision of Personnel Resources keeps an eye out for employees who could be potential Dhohanoids.

Support Services (Chrysalis): The different divisions of the Chrysalis Corporation whose purpose is to support Dhohanoids in the field. Includes InfoNet, Expeditors, Containment Teams, Transportation Services, and the Safehouse Network.

Variants (Tager): Some Tagers are a little different from others of their manifestations, colloquially described as variants.

THE BOOK

This book is divided into a series of chapters, each addressing an expansion to the setting or new Character options. Here's a breakdown of those chapters, both to give you an idea of what's ahead and to help you find something specific in which you're interested. Interspersed between these chapters are short pieces of fiction to help you get a better feeling for what the *CthulhuTech* setting is like.

Chapter One: Welcome is what you are reading right now. It's meant to help ease you into the vision for this setting expansion and give you a reference for what this book contains.

Chapter Two: Scions of the Forgotten provides an in-depth look at the mysterious Eldritch Society. It contains all aspects of the organization, including how Tagers come to be, what it is like being a Tager, how the Society functions, and where regular people fit in.

Chapter Three: Eldritch Acolytes provides a variety of new Character options for Eldritch Society Characters, including new Qualities and new professions. It also includes new rules for customizing Tager manifestations, as well as the rules for metamorphosis.

Chapter Four: Minions of an Endless Chaos details the Chrysalis Corporation, as well as other aspects of the greater Children of Chaos. It explores how the cult works, what it is like to be a Dhohanoid, and the threat the cult is to the world.

Chapter Five: Children of the Chrysalis introduces new rules for designing and playing Chrysalis Corporation Characters, including new Dhohanoids, rules for Dhohanoid Characters, new magic and technology, and full guidelines for Storyguides.

Chapter Six: Appendices includes the index.

SOURCE MATERIAL

ANIME

The Guyver is the story of an alien suit of bio-organic armor, an evil corporation bent on world domination, and a school boy in the wrong place at the wrong time. The Guyver suits are very cool and the hideous enemy Zoanoids are likewise. The Guyver influenced the Tagers and Dhohanoids in *CthulhuTech*.

INTERNET

Wikipedia & *Google Maps* – These two sites are indispensable resources when researching parts of the world where one does not live. Thank goodness for the internet making the world a much, much smaller place.

IF YOU DOWNLOADED THIS BOOK

So if you're one of the people who has downloaded this book illegally off the internet, let's talk. We want to stay in business. We don't get to stay in business if you don't buy our products but you use them anyway. In more personal terms, if you like *CthulhuTech*, please go out and buy the books, because if you don't we go out of business or we kill the line because sales suck and boom – no more *CthulhuTech*. You lose, we lose, everybody loses. Everybody loves something for nothing, but this sort of thing comes with a price whether it's money or not.

A NOTE ABOUT METAPLOT

Some people love it, some people hate it. Regardless, there is a overarching plot that is a part of *CthulhuTech*. That doesn't mean you have to use it.

There are parts of this book that will refer to events in 2086, which are detailed in the *Damnation View*. If you are a fan of the metaplot, then all is well. If you're not or you don't want to use the particular material to which this book refers, then ignore it. Just layer the information here onto the baseline game from the *Core Book* and you are good to go. There's not so much that you won't be able to easily strip it out.

As always, you bought the book. It's your game. Play it however you'd like.





One of the grandest advantages to meetings of the regional Lorekeeper's Network was that they could be taken in the garden.

James Vanian, one of the primary Lorekeepers in the Chicago area, also had the advantage of having a large and very nice garden in his archives. It was completely private, encased by environmental panels so that it seemed he was sitting on a patch of grass in the middle of nowhere, blue skies up above. The only thing that ruined the illusion was the door.

There was a ring of PT screens, each of which bore the image of one of the other Lorekeepers in the Midwest region. James sat in the middle of them, sipping the most delightful tea that had been sent to him by

a friend overseas. Furthermore, the orchids were in bloom. The conditions were quite relaxing, even if the topics of conversation were not.

Mr. Nod continued. "The attack on Ashcroft was bold. We stopped them, but this is becoming a habit."

"It is," replied Ms. Otoi. "They've been more active here than they have for over a year. What do you think, Mr. Corbin?"

That was James. They all used false names here, for protection. It would be dangerous if they really knew who each other was if one were to be captured – or if someone managed to intercept their transmissions, which would take a miracle.



"Their attention is freed up now. They appear to have no single large initiative. Activity is up everywhere, I'm afraid."

Mr. Nod spoke again. "It's time to send out recon teams."

"I agree," replied James. "Since there are all kinds of new activities and we've been caught unawares, it is time to do some research. We'll send out a report to the packs through the Operator's Network suggesting that Whispers, Shadows, and Spectres mobilize for heavy duty. Let's get an idea of scope here before we start shutting the buggers down."

Ms. Otoi nodded in agreement. "I'll check with other areas to see if this is across the board."

James put down his tea to give the assembly his full attention. "Ms. Umbra, I trust that you will post the minutes to the journals. We have a course of action and it has been wonderful speaking with you all again. See you again soon. Good luck."

Each of the Lorekeepers responded with some similar well-wishes and then shut down their connection.

However, there was something that didn't sit quite right with James. He couldn't put his finger on it, but it would be something he'd contemplate on his walk home.

.....

"Well, how was it?"

James always called his sister after these meetings. Fortunately for their relationship, they'd both found places in the Eldritch Society. She was a symbiotic being now, however, but things still worked out.

"Thanks, Lilly. No hello, no how are you."

"Business first. You know that."

James was blocks away from the archives. It was later, so the streets were pretty quiet in this part of town. That allowed him to notice the man that seemed to have fallen into step a half block behind him.

"It looks as if what we were suspecting is true."

Lilly paused on the other end. "Well I guess that's that. Recon it is."

James tried to sneak a nonchalant glance over his shoulder. This most certainly didn't feel right. The man was catching up.

"I'll have to call you later. Looks like I may have picked up a tail."

"James, where are you..." He didn't hear the rest as he hung up his peek.

He walked along normally until he rounded the next corner. Out of sight, he broke into a sprint and ducked into the first alley he could.

The man continued walking and James could hear his approach. The footsteps kept going and James watched the man walk past the alley and keep going.

Waiting a few minutes, the footsteps faded away. James breathed a sigh of relief and inched his way toward the street.

He couldn't help but start when the finger tapped him on the back.

Spinning around and jumping back, James was face to face with the man. Something started to change in his eyes. Dhohanoid. "Didn't think you could lose me that easily, did you?"

The change continued. The man's flesh flowed. Bat-like ears, dark fur, mouth of needle-like fangs, moving shadows - Ramachese.

In one practiced move, James drew his Enforcer. The thing was too surprised to react. The report echoing off the alley walls, James put two rounds into the thing's brain pan. It slumped limply to the ground. However, James knew better than that and emptied the rest of the clip into the thing's head and vitals.

James took off running. There were bound to be more around and he didn't want to have an encounter with the local police.

As the adrenaline wound down and he hit the steps of the train station, James couldn't help but snicker. They always assumed that the bookish ones were harmless.

chapter two

SCIONS OF THE FORGOTTEN

The Eldritch Society. A secret society that is all that stands between the New Earth Government and a hidden enemy they don't even know and won't believe is there. A group that is the sole heir to the legacy of the enigmatic Forgotten Ones, whose soldiers are people who have joined in symbiosis with something from beyond time and space. They have sacrificed everything, some even their humanity, in order to fight a Shadow War against a cult that is dedicated to bringing about the end times.

The question is, are they playing with fire?

THE SOMEWHAT SECRET HISTORY OF A VERY SECRET SOCIETY

The history of the Eldritch Society began only a few decades ago. Only five years after the Children of Chaos laid claim to the Chrysalis Corporation, the T99 Division was scouring the world for lost secrets. An expedition to the frozen Arctic discovered something very surprising. They found ruins of an ancient mystical city, with a gigantic monolith inscribed with a writing never before seen on this world. After gleaning all the samples they could and determining that the monolith itself was not critical, the team transcribed every piece of writing on the standing stone. They then blew the entire ruin to pieces and sank it to the bottom of the ocean.

Everything that had been discovered was immediately taken to corporate headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa. The T99 Division's first step was to figure out a way to translate this dead and alien language. For three months, the best and most talented linguists the Chrysalis Corporation had to offer spent all their waking hours pouring over every occult language known to humanity, hoping to get some sort of a foothold on the script. Finally, they had it and the pieces began to fall into place. Over the coming months, they translated every piece of the monolith.

The problem was, none of it made any sort of sense.

After several months of grinding away at the problem, someone finally suggested the obvious. Their cipher was wrong. It was time to start over. Another half year passed while the researchers worked to avoid the traps they'd already fallen into, but finally a real cipher was discovered. Translation began for real and the body of knowledge was named the *Ta'ge Fragments* after the avatar that supposedly inscribed knowledge in those ruins, hinted at being a manifestation of the Forgotten One known as Drazet.

The *Fragments* contained much that had not been seen by the world. It revealed more of the secret history of the world, the time long, long before the rise of mammals. It contained new powerful magical rituals. It told legends of the Forgotten Ones, a group of mysterious gods that had never come to light anywhere else. It spoke of the conflict between the Forgotten Ones and the Old Ones and provided detail on this latter group the likes of which the researchers had never seen.

The more these researchers revealed about the Old Ones, the more they began to wonder if bringing them back to this world was such a good idea. There was something powerful about the way the *Ta'ge Fragments* portrayed these creatures, something real and authentic, that pierced into the heart of a group of the T99 scientists. It was so potent that it drilled past their Dhohanoid souls. They had each undergone the Rite of Transfiguration because they believed that a new world order was coming, one in which humanity could become as they were meant to be and the true masters of the planet could return. Now they saw the Old Ones for what they truly were – horrific alien monsters who would once again bring about an aeon of darkness.

As research continued, enough of the scientists had voiced their concerns that a secret cabal formed. These renegades were somehow able to push past their own monstrous natures to form a plan – to take the *Fragments*, erase all data within Chrysalis, and hide them where no one could find them again. They had to work quickly as translation of the *Fragments* was going faster and faster. The plan was dangerous, but it was all they had.

Twelve researchers made up the renegades and they used every bit of power and influence at their disposal to quietly seize the lab in which the *Fragments* were kept. They downloaded every shred of data gleaned from their research and erased all critical knowledge from all Chrysalis computers, even going so far as to physically destroy data drives. They made it almost as far as the exit before the alarm was sounded. Their escape was daring, but it required sacrifice. Of the twelve renegades, only three made it out alive, but with the *Fragments*.

The surviving renegades knew they had to find somewhere safe to disappear. Because of the Corporation's influence, nowhere in Africa or Europe would be safe, and going to Asia would be suicide. They chose to flee to the heart of the New Earth Government and hide under their umbrella. The renegades made their way to Chicago and then disappeared to continue their research in the shadows.

However, such a venture required things – more specialists and certain financing. The renegades realized that they could not simply go and apply for an academic grant. A society formed around their research, as they enlisted more and more gifted academics, and it naturally stayed secret. Through their academic contacts, the group began to also gather those of power and wealth who were like-minded. Finally, someone pointed out the obvious – the group had become a secret society. Some of the more playful researchers decided that such a society needed a name.

As with all things of this nature, many bad ideas were tendered before anything good began to appear. Society became a theme in later rounds, as the group wanted to differentiate themselves from a cult, from which some of them had recently freed themselves. Finally, the word eldritch was thrown out, meaning weird and sinister or ghostly. The work the group was up to was certainly weird and sinister and they operated as ghosts in the shad-

ows of the world. Thus it was chosen and the Eldritch Society was officially born.

During this time, the group also began to discuss what they could do about the threat posed by the Chrysalis Corporation. The original renegades knew the truth and had the desire to do something about it, but no one knew exactly what. Regardless, some kind of resistance was assured.

However, the New Earth Government was not to be a part of it. The Founders knew how entrenched the Chrysalis Corporation was inside the government and infrastructure of society. They'd already seen how corrupt things had gotten at the highest levels. There was no way they could choose to reveal themselves to the New Earth Government and hope to survive. The Society was on its own.

It took the nascent Society until 2064 to finally finish translating the *Ta'ge Fragments*, and in them the group found what it had needed to help foment their opposition to the Children of Chaos. Hidden within was a complicated magical ritual that was known as, loosely translated, the Rite of Sacred Union. The original renegades, now referred to as the Founders by the secret society, were intimately familiar with the Rite of Transfiguration. This ritual seemed to use some similar principles, but promised something different. Instead of turning people into monsters, this rite would join a person in symbiosis with a thing from beyond time and space, granting him incredible power. Better yet, it did not compromise his humanity. He could become a man who could assume the form of a monster, instead of a monster that remembered how to assume the form of a man. There was no doubt that with an army of such warriors, the Eldritch Society could make the Chrysalis Corporation hurt.

Preparing for the ritual was anything but easy. There were rare components to be acquired, gifted sorcerers to be taught, and everything had to be timed just right. The Society also needed volunteers. Six brave souls took on the terrifying duty of being the first test subjects of the Rite of Sacred Union. It did not go well. Of the six separate rituals, three volunteers died horribly during the third day as it appeared an extra-dimensional entity devoured them alive and one entire ritual circle simply disappeared without a trace. However, the two that survived were forever changed.

What they had become was a symbiotic lifeform, a mortal who had joined in perfect union with a thing from the higher dimensions. The symbiont manifested as a monstrous exo-skeleton that came into being around the person. Each of them was unique, the first of their kind, but they were both capable and deadly killers. They were named Tagers, in honor of the *Fragments* and the avatar that inscribed them.

The Eldritch Society began to create their army. The first several batches of Rites suffered the same level of mortality, which made it difficult to find further volunteers. Society researchers began to study the traits of those Tagers that had survived, to see if

there was some sort of clue as to why. The Rite itself was grueling, so some sort of training could be created to help endure it. Furthermore, they discovered that those who survived wanted to – they had the will to overcome the alien sensations and stresses that were a part of the ritual. It was almost as if a potential Tager had to bring both an iron will to live combined with a desire to master the extra-dimensional entity that joined with him. The Society began new training programs based on these findings. The training worked and more and more Tagers survived the Rite of Sacred Union. Over the next two years, the Eldritch Society gathered its forces, solidified its resources, and created as many Tagers as they possibly could. By the end of 2067, the Society's warriors were ready to take to the streets and begin the fight for real. The Shadow War had begun.

Their children off to battle, the Founders stopped to take stock. They had done what they set out to do. They had kept the power of the *Ta'ge Fragments* from the Chrysalis Corporation. They had formed a formidable resistance to the cult's predations. All of it would exist long after they were gone. The time had come, as they knew it would. The Founders were each Dhohanoids and it would only be a matter of time before the pull of the Old Ones drew them back. They had already begun to feel it and the dreams were coming more and more frequently. If they wanted their precious Eldritch Society to survive, the Founders would have to go. To be truly safe, they would need to die.

Adriana Diotrephe and Shen Meng Rui made all of the necessary arrangements. They then agreed to commit ritualistic suicide. The problem is that Dhohanoids regenerate and it takes quite a bit to kill them. In the end, they chose a ceremony that culminated in the first Tagers humanely murdering them. Their loss was felt throughout the Society, only serving to fuel the hatred of the Tagers even more. They are still revered today.

Marcus St. Xavier was the third Founder and chose a different path. Instead, he wanted to wander out into the wilderness to find his death in nature. Marcus firmly believed that he could continue to resist the call of the Old Ones, at least for a while longer, as long as he was far away from the world. The Society took him to the most remote part of Alaska, just far enough away from the Migou, and left him with nothing but the clothes on his back. It is assumed he died, as nothing of Marcus has been heard of since.

The last twenty years have seen the Eldritch Society grow into a formidable force. They are spread all around the world, ready to oppose the Children of Chaos wherever they might rear their ugly heads. The Society has become enough of a threat that the Chrysalis Corporation treats them as if they were their primary enemy in the Strange Aeon. Dhohanoids now fear Tagers, as so many have fallen to the symbiotic warriors' hands. The Society has even foiled several large and important Corporation operations, setting them back years, or more in some cases.

As time goes on, the Shadow War becomes more and more critical. However, will the Eldritch Society prevail?

THE FOUNDERS

Of the twelve researchers that rebelled against the Chrysalis Corporation and orchestrated the theft of the *Ta'ge Fragments*, only three escaped with their lives. They became known as the Founders, the visionaries who brought the Eldritch Society into being. To this day, they are honored as martyrs who gave their lives for the cause.

Adriana Diotrephe was a young woman with a head for languages. She was recruited fresh out of college by the Chrysalis Corporation to be a translator for business meetings and deals. The work paid well and she got to travel, which were two things of interest to many girls in their 20's. Adriana was very good at her job and soon became the top translator, working directly for the Chrysalis Corporation (instead of subsidiaries).

Of course, rising to that level in the Corporation means that the Children of Chaos will start to get their hooks into a person and Adriana was no different. She began to see the prestige of the upper management and feel the perks herself. The sense that there was a hidden group within that ran everything at the company also became prevalent in her life and she was given her first peeks into it. What really tempted Adriana was the thing that spoke to her need for acceptance, her need to belong. Eventually, she was drawn into the Children of Chaos and underwent the Rite of Transfiguration to become a hyper-intelligent Ciraqen. Her ability to teleport became key in both her survival and in the removal of the *Ta'ge Fragments* when she rebelled.

Both her intellect and her linguistic ability made her a natural choice for the T99 Division when the *Fragments* showed up. Adriana was instantly taken with them, the kind of challenge she now craved. She attacked the dead language obsessively.

Then there was Shen Meng Rui, who had started out at the Chrysalis Corporation as a project manager. However, his natural attention-deficit disorder, while it helped make him a highly efficient project manager, had also made him a jack of all trades. He was, among other things, an archaeologist, a theologian, a linguist, and an occultist. It was no surprise that the Children of Chaos had their eyes on him within a few months of starting at the company.

Shen was always looking for the new challenge. He did his best work under pressure, against odds at which others would blanch. All the Chrysalis Corporation had to do was keep presenting him with greater and more exciting challenges. By the time he was exposed to the cult within, Shen was ready to be elevated to a whole new level. Undergoing the Rite, he became a Vrykol, which only exacerbated his ADD tendencies.

The T99 Division recruited Shen because of his widely varying abilities. They needed someone who could bridge many gaps, to bring everything together. His Dhohanoid ability to multi-task did not hurt either. The *Fragments* represented the greatest challenge he had ever faced, so it was not difficult to enroll Shen in what would prove to be the thing that defined his life. Like so many of the others, it was hard to pull him away.

Marcus St. Xavier came to Chrysalis Corporation as a sought-after sorcerer. He had been working for other companies, even though magic was not yet fully accepted. The man had a photographic memory for the occult and was put to work helping the company determine how it was to best utilize sorcery in its practices. Marcus entered the Corporation as a manager and went up from there.

Of any, Marcus was the least resistant to the idea of becoming a part of the Children of Chaos. He'd always had a different view of right and wrong and generally regarded Humans as tragic beings anyway. The combined temptation of unrestricted magical experimentation and enormous personal power and Marcus was ready to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. He became Thog-Manna that night and never looked back.

His vast occult knowledge and expertise made him second-in-charge of the project to decipher the *Ta'ge Fragments*. Stories say that Marcus moved into the building, not even going home to sleep. There was something that fascinated and enchanted him about such rare and forgotten knowledge that he could barely take his eyes off the *Fragments*.

The names of the others who rebelled have been forgotten, as they perished while the Founders escaped with the *Fragments*. This is not because the Founders were ungrateful – it just never occurred to them what the Eldritch Society would grow into and that they would be revered by it. They were simply people, or monsters, doing what they felt was right. However, there are those within the Society who seek the forgotten names of those who died in the T99 labs that fateful night. The Chrysalis Corporation has expunged all records of them, so the quest is a difficult one.

The Founders are a bit of a legend within the Eldritch Society. There are many stories of them and their accomplishments, most of which are no doubt exaggerated. They have become icons, representations that humanity can overcome and persevere. It really doesn't matter who they were for real anymore, as long as what they are to the members of the Eldritch Society is inspiring.

Of course, legends have their own ways of spinning into the implausible and there are several that involve the Founders never having died. There are those still alive who were at the ceremony in which Adriana and Shen ritualistically gave their lives for the survival of the Society. There is no doubt that they are dead. However, such evidence means little to those who want to believe, who hope that one day they will return with fresh knowledge that will help guide the Eldritch Society to victory.

If Adriana and Shen have taken on that kind of place in story, Marcus St. Xavier has gone to the next step. Since he left to die of his own accord, there was never any evidence that he did perish. There are many yarn-spinners who like to tell stories of what they think Marcus has been up to, because he will, of course, be returning soon. Most likely, he has been dead for decades.

THE SHADOW WAR

The covert conflict that has become known as the Shadow War began in 2067 – it is barely two decades old. However, in those nearly twenty years, the Eldritch Society has proven to be a worthy foe of the Chrysalis Corporation. Without the efforts of the Society and their Tager warriors, the world would be a much darker place that was much further along the path towards final apocalypse for the mortal races.

In essence, the Shadow War is a guerrilla conflict fought on the streets and back alleys of the New Earth Government. The Aeon War has the luxury of being fought on obvious fronts against obvious foes. The Eldritch Society decided long ago that the New Earth Government was not to be trusted due to cult infiltration, and the Society's enemy is concealed deep within its belly. Its warriors are hidden within everyday society and its battles fought in places no one can see. It is a secret war of which almost no one knows.

There can be no doubt that Tagers are the front line of the Shadow War. The mystical shapeshifting soldiers are deadly warriors, each bristling with tools of death. Tager packs go out into the world to root out the predations of the Chrysalis Corporation wherever they find them. They are coordinated by massive support networks world-wide, sent on missions gathered by intelligence networks. Fundamentally, Tagers are on call all the time, ready to meet the enemy head on, regardless of circumstance.

The Tager packs must face an unfortunate enemy in the field – the New Earth Government. Law enforcement agencies are not kind to what they perceive as monsters. One of the prices the Eldritch Society must pay is that whenever Tagers are seen in their monstrous forms, the government sends powered armor teams to blow them to kingdom come. Not only must the Tager packs keep quiet so that they are not discovered by the Chrysalis Corporation, they must fear the reprisal of the people they are working to save. This does not even include the investigations that so often accompany Tager missions, where law enforcement officials might force a pack to law low for months.

One of the least obvious and most valuable assets the Eldritch Society has in the Shadow War are its double-agents. These are people in service to the Eldritch Society who deliberately go to work at the Chrysalis Corporation in an effort to be recruited to join the cult. Once inside, they can feed information back to the Society about cult activities, giving them an eye on the inside. Most such double-agents are either para-psychics or those tainted by the Outsiders, so that there is never any suspicion within the Chrysalis Corporation as to why they never undergo the Rite of Transfiguration.

Being a double-agent is one of the most dangerous jobs in the Eldritch Society. Spies must be on their toes at all times and face danger around every corner, especially if someone mystically-gifted picks up the wrong stray thought. They are highly regarded within the Society, even among Tagers. Fortunately, they have a limited shelf-life and usually must be extracted after anywhere from six months to a couple of years of service. Any more than

that and their discovery and painful execution are assured. Some even go so far as to have extensive plastic surgery, or undergo mystical alteration such as Beckon the Unexpressed, so that they can go undercover a second or even third time.

There are those in the Eldritch Society who are committed to unmasking the Chrysalis Corporation, to show the world its true predatory face. If they could only prove to the citizens of the New Earth Government that the Children of Chaos have infiltrated a gigantic corporate pillar of the community, their battle would not be so difficult. Pulling off such a feat, however, is nearly impossible. The Chrysalis Corporation is so entrenched in the halls of power that they could make such efforts appear to be a joke and they would blow over. Furthermore, the Corporation is careful, despite what some Tagers want to believe. They get the job done and they cover their tracks. Coming up with such evidence is an epic task.

Even though the amount of evidence required to swing the opinion of the mammoth machine that is the New Earth Government is absent, there is enough that the Eldritch Society can wage its own underground information war. The internet is a powerful tool and the Chrysalis Corporation does not have the resources of an organization like the Ministry of Information to censor anything dangerous that hits the electronic highway. Whenever the Society can leak damaging information about the Corporation over the internet, it does. Unfortunately, much of what the Society leaks ends up in communities of conspiracy-theorists, the kind of paranoid people who will believe anything. They are not the audience the secret group needs to reach.

In a similar vein, propaganda is an important part of the Shadow War. The Society finances documentaries and other forms of legitimate media in an effort to discredit the Chrysalis Corporation. Some of these efforts actually reach the public, but the Corporation is again so entrenched it makes little difference.

If one were to ask minions of the Chrysalis Corporation, they would say that the Eldritch Society was nothing more than a thorn in the side of the Children of Chaos. They would say that there is no way they could lose. However, the Society has many bold victories to suggest otherwise. Those that fight on the side of the mortal races of Earth believe that there is hope they can win. They believe that their continued struggle will one day yield a discovery or a victory so large as to topple the supremacy of the Chrysalis Corporation.

However, the truth is not so bright. Those who can see the bigger picture know that the efforts of the Eldritch Society, while valiant, are simply forestalling the inevitable. The Children of Chaos are too powerful a foe for a decades-old conspiracy, even if they do have an army of supernatural warriors. If the trend continues, the Society will have to face that the might of the Chrysalis Corporation continues to grow, despite their resistance.

When the day is done, the reality is that the Eldritch Society is losing the Shadow War.

THE TA'GE FRAGMENTS

One of the least known bodies of occult lore is the *Ta'ge Fragments*. Though once in the possession of the Children of Chaos, this treasure is now the sole province of the Eldritch Society. The *Fragments* are the thing that spawned the creation of the secret society in the first place and has provided the central spine of their power – the Rite of Sacred Union. It is a piece of the occult puzzle that has an interesting past, even for the short time it has been a part of the mortal world.

It really was a complete accident that the *Fragments* were found at all. The Arctic Circle is nothing more than thick ice floes, unlike the Antarctic which is a true land mass. Who would put anything on something that was fundamentally so unstable, especially throughout the years? The reasoning behind such a thing must be as alien as the thing itself, though it is likely that the city and monolith on which the *Fragments* were inscribed had a mystical component that kept them intact and afloat.

The Chrysalis Corporation wasn't looking for anything in particular. The team that found the *Fragments* thought that they had angered somebody at the Corporation to have been assigned such a miserable duty as combing the Arctic on the off-chance that there was something forgotten to be found there. They were very surprised to find the ruins of a city and even more surprised to find a monolith inscribed with never before seen symbols.

The team spent days cataloging and inspecting the city, with several individuals dedicated to nothing but recording everything found on the giant monolith in the center of the place. They knew they'd discovered something important and, considering the degradation of the ruins, they knew they would most likely not get a second chance. If they returned with everything intact, they would be assured their places in history. Though this team did their job well and did in fact return to the world the sole possessors of lost knowledge, having destroyed and sunk the Arctic ruins, historical immortality was not to be theirs. That honor would instead go to those who stole it.

Translating the *Fragments* proved to be a very difficult task. The language in which the body of knowledge was transcribed was not entirely like others on the planet, but it did have just enough similarities to long-dead tongues that there was at least a chance of translation. The team assigned to the task blew it the first time, translating something that looked promising but that ultimately turned out to be gibberish. They finally got it right, just in time to have the whole project stolen by the Founders.

Much of the *Fragments* tell further stories of the secret history of the world, of the time long before the rise of mammals. They are the sole source of any information regarding a group of incredibly powerful beings, many would say gods, that the Society has named the Forgotten Ones. It may be these Forgotten Ones that have provided the Eldritch Society with their power. Legends within the *Fragments* suggest that the being referred to as Ta'ge, who is supposedly responsible for inscribing the ancient knowledge within the Arctic city, is an avatar of Drazet. There are those that believe, based on passages in the *Fragments*, that

Drazet is a friend to the mortal races of Earth and knew that this conflict was going to arise. Many regard such a postulation as wishful thinking, that an alien deity might look through millennia of time to plant a seed to help us in our time of need. There are those that simply believe that Ta'ge left the knowledge he did to cause trouble for those audacious enough to find it. It is doubtful that anyone will ever learn the truth.

The largest prize within the *Fragments* is undoubtedly the Rite of Sacred Union. This one magical ritual has created the supernatural army that fights for the Eldritch Society. Without it, the Society would most likely be far less effective. It is the thing that has formed and guided the Society, the thing that has brought the precious Tagers into the world, the thing that has brought fear to the Children of Chaos – something perhaps previously unthinkable.

The *Fragments* are oddly vague about what the symbiont summoned by the Rite of Sacred Union really is. It is described as a being of divinity, which the Society has come to understand as simply a creature of the higher dimensions. It is well-known that union with such a being will provide the host with incredible power, but there are those that ponder the cost. There are still passages in the *Fragments* that are vague in their translation regarding the symbionts, that may or may not suggest severe ramifications in such pairings. So far, there have been no reports of unusual side-effects to those Tagers that have been around since the beginning. However, the first Tagers have been in existence less than two decades and that may not be enough time to truly tell.

Some believe that the *Ta'ge Fragments* are named such because the knowledge they contain was brought back on pieces of the city. That is not even close to true. The information of the *Fragments* was brought back digitally, and the name comes from a reference to an incomplete body of work. The *Ta'ge Fragments* are clearly not the entire story, as there is no definitive context for the knowledge it contains. Many Society scholars believe that there was once more to the Arctic ruins, something that would have put the *Fragments* in the right frame. However, there are others who believe that the knowledge still exists out there somewhere and that we still have yet to find the remains of the Forgotten Ones footprint on this planet – or in this solar system.

One of the things overlooked about the *Fragments* are the prophecies held within. There are certainly those who don't want to take the book that literally, even though it would make sense to do so. After all, the Rite of Sacred Union came from the same source, so perhaps the prophecies are intended to be as useful. There are those, however, who would like to see them suppressed, something kept from the rest of the Society. Belief in prophecy naturally fosters a belief in divinity, something the powers that be would like to keep out of the secret society. However, there are those who believe.

One such prophecy regards the coming of a being best likened to the Mahdi, the Guided One of some Islamic belief. There are



those Muslims who once believed that the Mahdi will help rid the world of injustice and tyranny. The Mahdi Prophecy, as the writings have come to be known, tells the story that one day a person will come from the outer worlds to elevate the servants of the Forgotten Ones. They say this being will come from the void in the world's darkest hour to bring light from darkness, order from chaos, rationale from insanity. The Madhi will be of the people, but from a world apart.

The Madhi Prophecy is the *Ta'ge Fragments'* very own messiah foretelling. There are those within the Society who truly hope that such a divination is accurate, for they can use all the help they can get. However, most regard it as fanciful storytelling, even those who know that the secret history and magical rituals within are legitimate. There are those that watch and wait, regardless.

The *Fragments* also tell of a time when what it terms as the crowned people will be lost in chaos. It speaks of a dark time when ancient foes will clash in a struggle of epic proportions. It says that dark gods will roam the planet, enemies of the crowned people, and that the conflict will be a conflict of many sides. The crowned peoples' own servants will rise up against them and they will be forced to flee to the places where they can be safe. The prophecy points towards the extinction of the crowned people, but the exact phrasing is inexact.

Many scholars take this to be the prophecy of the Aeon War. The crowned people are clearly the upright-walking mortal races of the Earth. Dark gods are certainly roaming the planet and the Aeon War is clearly a war of many sides. These occultists stop to

wonder where the people of the New Earth Government could possibly flee that would be safe, however, especially considering that the Migou have us planet-locked, and they definitely hope they are misreading the part where humanity faces extinction.

However, there are those occultists who have a slightly different view, claiming that this situation also describes the plight of the Elder Things. Millions and millions of years ago, they too faced such a struggle, as they fought against the Migou who could be considered an ancient enemy. They also struggled against the Old Ones, but in a time long before their conflict with the Migou. In the end, they did flee to the remote places of Earth before leaving altogether. In the end, however, who knows.

Another prophecy spoken of by Eldritch Society scholars in deep conversation tells of the lost city. The *Fragments* speak of a ruler who faced exile, perhaps even deceived by traitors among his own. The war was of epic proportions, said to have scarred the Earth forever. The foes of the ruler are not well-described, instead said to have been tired of his despotism and capable of facing him and his awesome power. It says that the ruler's foes were incapable of killing him, instead placing him in a death-like trance and sealing him in his city for all eternity.

However, the prophecy also says that there will come a time when the stars come right that the ruler's lost city will once again return and that the being himself will be unleashed from his exile. This is the part that makes most Society occultists sweat. The prophecy most clearly draws its parallel with the stories of Cthulhu and says that he will most definitely rise. It makes them wonder if the Esoteric Order isn't a more urgent foe.

THE FORGOTTEN ONES

Of any of the terrible deities of the universe that humanity has conveniently decided to ignore, the Forgotten Ones are the most mysterious. At least some body of lore exists regarding the Old Ones and the Ancient Ones, lore that the mortal races of Earth have carried with them for generations. The Forgotten Ones were just that until a Chrysalis Corporation team found the Ta'ge monolith in the Arctic only decades ago.

It is unknown how many deities could be classified with the Forgotten Ones, but there are four that the *Fragments* detail. They are Drazet the Unformed, Morfean the Dreamer, Myrovh the Puppetmaster, and Savaty'ya the Seer.

Drazet, who is also known as the Unformed, is the Forgotten One perhaps best known by all who are a part of the Eldritch Society. The *Ta'ge Fragments* suggest that Drazet is the one who left such knowledge behind, who made sure that life on this planet was given the Rite of Sacred Union. They also say that the symbiotic creatures that are the monstrous part of Tagers are its servants, designed for such a task. It is quite possibly the true progenitor of the Eldritch Society.

Because of what Drazet appears to be according to the *Ta'ge Fragments*, it has a special place within the Eldritch Society. It is, for lack of a better term, the patron saint of Tagers. It is not fully revered or intoned as a god, for that may very well be dangerous, but it is viewed as a powerful being watching over the warriors of the Eldritch Society, the keeper of the key that makes them what they are. That is, for most, as far as it goes – a disembodied voice from the past that deserves recognition for its contribution. Fortunately, or unfortunately, Drazet is a being that has long departed from here.

Morfean, known to some as the Dreamer, is a being the dream magicians within the Society are not entirely sure ever left this part of the universe. It is told to be a thing that takes its interests in what exists on the other side of sleep. The Dreamlands are gone, of that there can be no doubt, but there are those who believe that Morfean closed that realm to keep it safe. There are also those that believe that Morfean has a connection to the mysterious and dangerous creatures known as the Hounds, which typically hunt those with the audacity to look beyond the space and time to which they are limited. Whether or not this last part is true, Eldritch Society sorcerers and para-psychics have little trouble from Hounds, even those with full-blown abilities to see into the future.

There are those that hope to entreat Morfean, if it is in fact still paying attention to this corner of creation, to fight against Gurathnaka. Some are sure the Old One is gone, while others hold convincing proof that it is already mucking about with the world. If Morfean would be persuaded to join the fight, whatever predations Gurathnaka plans on visiting upon the Earth would be stymied. However, despite efforts, Morfean remains silent.

There are those that hope the state of things isn't all a game cooked up by Myrovh. The *Fragments* tell that Myrovh is a being

that promotes survival of the fittest through continual conflict. The Earth has always been a hotbed of conflict, now so more than ever. If this Forgotten One was to take an interest in our world, now would most certainly be the time. There are those within the Society who are keeping an eye out for evidence of Myrovh throughout all the chaos of the Aeon War, and there are those convinced that they will find it. But what then?

The similarities between Myrovh and Nyarlathotep are undeniable. Both deities have a tendency to push species. Both have a habit of placing avatars to take a personal hand in the world of the species they take interests in. Both have a connection to Yog-Sothoth. There are those within the Society that have gone so far as to believe that the two entities are one, something most hope is not true. If it were true, it would certainly cause a moment of pause in several of the important players in the Aeon War.

Savaty'ya is perhaps the most potentially absent of all the Forgotten Ones. The being's quest for evolution and enlightenment seems to have taken it far beyond our reckoning. However, if the stories of Savaty'ya's quest for ultimate power are true, it may be the next thing we need fear. However, the Old Ones would most certainly be present to such a threat, so the Eldritch Society watches for signs within the major Cults.

The truth is, there is very little known of these supposed deities beyond what is told in the *Ta'ge Fragments*. There is no other documentation than the *Fragments*. These creatures have been recorded nowhere else. The only thing that is for sure is that Nyarlathotep recognizes the things that fight for the Eldritch Society, as his minions have not missed a beat in the Shadow War. Like the Old Ones, it is unknown if they are truly deities or simply creatures from higher planes with powers so beyond our comprehension that they might as well be gods to us. No one knows the roles the Forgotten Ones have played throughout time either. Some say that they are the enemies of the Old Ones, having driven them to places unknown or imprisoned them. Others believe that may be optimistic, that the Forgotten Ones were simply fighting against their enemies. There is not and has never been any evidence that the beings the Society now knows as the Forgotten Ones have any benevolent feelings towards the mortal life of Earth – most of which did not exist during the times attributed to the era of the Forgotten Ones.

In that vein, there are those within the upper echelons of the Eldritch Society who believe that they are playing with very dangerous forces. No one knows what a person joins in symbiosis with to become a Tager. The Society has been going on faith up until this point that the Founders knew what they were doing and that Tagers were the answer to the problem. What if Tagers aren't? What if they're just wiping out the competition? These are questions that keep the inquisitive up at night. For now, everything is working. However, it is clear that the Eldritch Society is playing with fire.

In today's world, it is wise to distrust those who would be gods. They have shown they so rarely have our best interests in mind.

CULTS WITHIN

Though there are lightly religious overtones to everything within the Eldritch Society, there are those that take things a step further. There are several cults within the Eldritch Society, some of them small and obscure, but some of them growing in power every year. In any of these cases, membership is only open to members of the Society – outsiders are not allowed.

The Fellowship of Remembrance is a group of those who believe that the Forgotten Ones should be worshipped as the gods that they are. Fellows treat the *Ta'ge Fragments* as their holy book and those that have become priests of this religion have looked to the *Fragments* to create their own unique dogma and rituals of worship. They intone the names of the Forgotten Ones as blessings, gather on their version of holidays, and worship in formal rites during the new moon of each month.

The Fellowship has combed through the *Ta'ge Fragments* over the years, assembling their own prophecies that they believe were foretold by the Forgotten Ones. They have found evidence they believe envisioned the Strange Aeon and the return of the Old Ones. The prophecy they find most interesting is that of the Mahdi, the mother who is neither entirely of Earth nor entirely from Outside, who is destined to soon return to the faithful. It is said that she will tip the scales and bring divinely inspired order out of chaos, leading the Eldritch Society into the final battle. They also speak of lost allies, races long gone to Human eyes. These creatures have also dwelled on the planet for generations, but have hidden in the face of humanity. The role they have to play is supposedly not insignificant.

All who are part of the Fellowship of Remembrance are Tagers, or aspire to be Tagers, as such union is essential to their faith. It brings them one step closer to their gods. In that vein, one of the highest states any mortal can aspire to is full metamorphosis. Joining in deeper symbiosis is becoming more divine. The highest ranking members of the Fellowship have all metamorphosed, and they support all who wish to undergo the transformation.

The Fellowship of Remembrance is tolerated within the Eldritch Society. Most regard them as a little off their rockers, but not of any harm at all. Membership is not encouraged but is only lightly frowned upon. However, the Fellowship is gaining in both power and popularity. The Eldritch Society is, after all, run by those who have undergone metamorphosis and those who are part of the cult are encouraged to push down this path. Thus, there are more and more metamorphosed Tagers that are part of the faith. It seems likely that there will be some kind of conflict between those that believe that the Eldritch Society should remain a secret society and those that believe it should be an organization based around religious beliefs.

The Fellowship of Remembrance is not alone in their worship of the Forgotten Ones. There is a group known as the Children of the Sword, who are an ultra-militaristic cult dedicated to the worship of Drazet. It is said that Drazet is responsible for the *Ta'ge Fragments* being left on Earth for us to find and that the creatures that Tagers join in symbiosis with are his servants. The

Children of the Sword take this to its logical conclusion. If Drazet wanted mortals to become Tagers, then it must want Tagers to do what they do best – hunt their ancient enemies, the servants of Nyarlathotep. Those who choose to join the Children enter a world of hardcore combat training, where they are trained to hunt as military units. They are some of the best, most strategically minded, most coordinated packs of Tagers in the Society. Like the Fellowship, metamorphosis is also paramount – it is the purest expression of weapon of which the cult knows.

Less technically religious than the Fellowship of Remembrance, the Children of the Sword are accepted within the Eldritch Society, even respected. They do not bother anyone and they do not attempt to impose their beliefs on others. Those that choose to join do and they are utilized to the best of the cult's abilities. There are certainly times when the Society deliberately chooses Children of the Sword packs for special assignment, knowing their particular talents will get the job done.

There are also those that follow what they believe to be the teachings of Morfean. Somnambulists, as they refer to themselves, are unusual among Tagers in that they regard purely mortal sorcerers and para-psychics as equals – particularly if gifted with dreaming abilities. They are dedicated to preserving both the world of the waking and the world of the dreaming. Most of them are lucid dreamers, who choose to spend their days patrolling the land of the waking and their nights guarding against the unseen horrors that can prey on the sleeping. Many Tagers that are part of this cult take the time to learn dreaming magic for themselves, so that they can do more than simply assist in rituals.

This cult, of any within the Eldritch Society, is completely accepted. Those that don't buy into the dogma have no problem with the idea of protecting the mortal races of Earth in another arena – in fact, most laud the idea.

There is also a cult of which the powers that be within the Eldritch Society do not approve. Known only as Quintessentialists, they believe that Myrovh and Nyarlathotep are the same being, the same deity of entropy and chaos in the universe. They believe that the same being is sourcing both sides of the Shadow War, to see which of its servants are most deserving – or at least which side is smart enough to figure it out.

This in and of itself wouldn't be that big a deal, as one would expect it would breed a group of Tagers fanatically dedicated to wiping out the Children of Chaos. However, that is not the case. The problem with the Q's, as they are colloquially known, is that they believe that they can redeem and recruit the servants of Nyarlathotep. They prefer not to cold-bloodedly murder Dhohanoids – they prefer to try to convert.

Needless to say, this does not work within the Eldritch Society's overall plan. Taking time to preach to Dhohanoids does not work for most Tagers. As a result, membership in the cult is frowned upon and known Q's are typically ridiculed.

RECRUITING TAGERS

As one might imagine, it isn't just anyone who wishes to become a Tager. Few would ever even think about undergoing such a process if the world were still sane. However, the world is what the world is and desperate times call for desperate measures. The Eldritch Society must always be on the lookout for people who may be the next batch of Tagers.

The Eldritch Society does not maintain a part of the organization that is dedicated to recruitment. The Rite of Sacred Union is a touchy thing and the Society doesn't want to complicate things further by trying to guess who will do. Potential Tagers have to have been exposed to the predations of the Chrysalis Corporation on their own. They have to have stumbled onto the Shadow War by accident. Once the door is open, then the Society can enter – but they will not force their way in.

People are exposed to the Children of Chaos in all kinds of ways. Perhaps they were in the wrong place at the wrong time and saw a Dhohanoid in its monstrous form. Perhaps they unknowingly crossed the Chrysalis Corporation and found themselves fleeing for their lives. Perhaps they were employees of the Corporation who had risen to a high enough level to discover the truth – and be horrified by it. Regardless, all potential Tagers have had some sort of unforeseen and unpleasant run in with the true face of the Children of Chaos and not been seduced by the cult.

The Eldritch Society approaches potential Tagers with caution. After all, one can never know how such people will react. The first interactions are shrouded in mystery. The Tagers that approach such people do not reveal who they are or what they are doing, instead dropping cryptic messages and hints. The hope here is that a person's curiosity, given their situation, will drive them to further exposure to the Children of Chaos. This works in most cases.

However, there are those who did not have such a gentle introduction. There are many such people who had to be saved by the Eldritch Society, most likely by Tagers. These people know that Tagers are arcane shapeshifters, having been exposed to their monstrous side. Unlike others, these people do not need to be gently nudged for further exploration. The Eldritch Society takes them into protection and begins to show them everything they need to see. The Society has the ability to be much more heavy-handed in these situations.

The ultimate result in either case is more show and tell. These potential Tagers are taken out into the world to get a full view of the Shadow War. They come to know the Eldritch Society as the good guys and discover the depths of horror that is the Chrysalis Corporation. In the end, most come to the conclusion that they are not safe, that no one is, no matter where they try to go. Once a person has accepted this sort of uneven footing, it isn't much of a leap to continue down the path towards membership.

However, membership is not the first thing offered. Many at this point do not even know the name of the Eldritch Society, as much is still clouded in secrecy for reasons of security. Things

do progress past show and tell into the world of involvement. Now these potential Tagers are part of the action, in whatever way they can assist. Some participate in observation or research, while others help with planning, while others play bait or carry firearms into hostile situations. Some are sent on their own tangential missions, while others are thrust into the action. Regardless, the outcome is the same – the potential Tagers begin to take action on behalf of the Society. They become a part of the Shadow War, proving that they are willing to do what must be done now that they know the truth.

This phase goes on for a while, during which the potential Tager is constantly assessed. He must show that he is someone who is willing to risk himself and his life in order to fight for what he feels is right. This conviction is the first hurdle, followed closely by an ability to live a secret life. Many people cannot keep secrets, even huge ones like this. Fortunately, such people usually reveal themselves as such fairly quickly, before real damage can be done. Most who have reached this point pass all tests, but those few that don't find themselves suddenly alone. Those that can't keep secrets are quickly abandoned, even if they are in mortal danger. The Society cannot afford to compromise itself for any one person, no matter how tragic it might be.

Potential Tagers soon discover that they will have to give up much of their lives to dedicate themselves to the cause. For most, this isn't that big a deal. The Society takes care of its people and their lives are not forever gone. Furthermore, most who have reached this level have already had their lives permanently altered and they know there is no more going back. Many are also scared that now, knowing what they know, there will be no more safe haven if they go their own way. The Society represents protection, if nothing else.

Finally, once a potential Tager has proven himself to be someone worthy of being a part of the Eldritch Society, all is revealed to him. He learns the truth about the Society and the Shadow War. He learns how he can fit into the organization. Finally, he is asked if he would join the fight. It is unsurprising that once a person has come this far, the answer is almost always yes. However, there are those who refuse, but they promise to keep the secret and to help out however they can. They become a part of the Informant Network.

Before a new recruit can get used to the routine, the Society begins to probe him about undergoing the Rite of Sacred Union. If he's been marked as a potential Tager, the sooner he becomes one the better. Perhaps one of the most awkward parts of this process is when potential Tagers are told all the details that go with the Rite of Sacred Union. They are certainly instructed about the months of preparation that are going to be a part of it, including how unpleasant much of it is going to be. They are even told about the frightening nature of the Rite and how it may be one of the scariest things they will ever do. However, neither of those things are sticking points by this time. What is a problem is when potential Tagers are informed that the symbiont may well, for all intents and purposes, painfully consume them dur-

ing the Rite if they cannot handle the process. This gives most people pause. The package is already intimidating enough, but add horrible demise to the equation and many balk.

There is no stigma in the Eldritch Society if one chooses not to undergo the Rite of Sacred Union. It is a terrifying thing that changes one forever and not the kind of thing that works for everyone. Many who refuse the Rite go on to help the Society in other ways, usually working within one of the networks. They will never hear word of it again, but the door will always be open should they change their minds.

Occasionally, the Eldritch Society will have a specific need or discover a specific person that would be of great benefit to the cause. They then begin to woo such a person. Most times, this starts out innocuous enough, with an agent of the Society getting close to the person in question. It gets manipulative after that. Since no normal person would engage in the Shadow War of their own free will if simply told about it, the Society knows it must show them. This means that the Society creates a situation in which the person in question will be exposed to the horrors of the Chrysalis Corporation. Once this has been done, the conversations commence as usual, but the Eldritch Society must resort to a little dirty pool in order to get the person they want involved. Some have a problem with this, while others believe that all is fair in times of war.

At every step of the way, the pack that recruited the potential Tager is responsible for him. They guide him down the path towards membership and must protect him from what lurks outside – as well as protect the Society from him. Packs are on their own recognizance when it comes to identifying and recruiting new members and each has their own style of doing it. Some do it “men in black” style, while others prefer a more compassionate approach. Regardless, the pack must maintain secrecy at all costs and some must face the guilt that can come with abandoning or even being forced to kill potential recruits who show themselves to be a danger.

Once someone makes the choice to join the Eldritch Society, whether or not he is on the path of the Rite of Sacred Union, he must undergo a Rite of Initiation. This rite is performed by the pack that has sponsored the new member of the Society and can vary according to pack traditions. The standard initiation involves going to some kind of quiet, ritualistically decorated place, where a ceremony is conducted by the pack’s Lorekeeper. This is the first place where the legacy of the Eldritch Society is impressed upon the new recruit. The culmination of the Rite involves the new recruit taking a series of solemn vows that signify the depths of his chosen duty.

The vows most commonly used in the Rite of Initiation are:

- I will protect the secret of the Eldritch Society with my life.
- I will fight the Children of Chaos and all those who work to destroy humanity from within.
- All friends of the Eldritch Society are friends to me and all the mortal races of Earth.

Some packs, as always, do things differently. For some, there is less pageantry and initiation is more practical in nature. For others, there are tasks the initiate must perform before he is inducted. These tasks can include doing something like the rounds all on his own or can be more dangerous in nature. Some packs also have their own personalized ceremonies based on their history and duties. While the three basic vows are present in all initiations, some packs add others that fit with their views. Regardless, the Rite of Initiation is a personal thing and it is different for those inducted by different packs.

Once a potential Tager has been properly initiated, he either stays with the pack that recruited him or sometimes goes to another based on need. He then undergoes the naming ritual and his callsign is then sent out through the networks. He becomes an official member of the Eldritch Society, with a false face for all to see. Others of the organization will at least begin to recognize him by name. For most, this is the first time they begin to feel the community that is the Eldritch Society and begin to truly embrace their new lives.

However, a new Tager isn’t accepted as an equal part of the pack until he has been blooded. Blooding is just a fancy term for making one’s first Dhohanoid kill. A new Tager must have finally faced a fierce Dhohanoid enemy in one-on-one combat and killed it, while remaining relatively unhurt himself. This sort of solid kill is the last step he needs to prove himself and most packs go out to celebrate a Tager’s blooding. Until a Tager is blooded, he is referred to by any number of rookie terms, including greenie, noob, or whatever the pack prefers. The most commonly used term, however, is pup – something that goes nicely along with the term pack.

The pressure to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration begins immediately. Those who have recruited potential Tagers have a good idea by this point on what will be required to move the potential to actual. Many packs are quite elegant in their persuasion. They take the potential out into the world to see the score on an even deeper scale. Essentially, they create such a compelling argument simply by showing the corruption of the Chrysalis Corporation that the recruit cannot say no. Others use more directly applied peer pressure. The recruit is constantly reminded of how short of soldiers the Society is in this war and how everyone who can undergo the Rite should. They play on what could be loosely classified as patriotism. There are those who later resent the emotional manipulation, but many who experience this kind of pressure later let it go.

Regardless, what it takes to become a Tager is force of will, so potential Tagers are naturally resistant to most forms of manipulation. Those who become part of packs who use more obvious forms of emotional manipulation as opposed to persuasion come to find such efforts comical. For some packs, this is all part of the plan, one final test to make certain that the recruit is truly a potential Tager. No matter what the packs around the potential Tager might be up to, the decision is ultimately his. Most do not refuse the call.

BECOMING

The Rite of Sacred Union is tricky. It is a powerful ancient ritual whose power is beyond most mortal sorcerers. The components are not always easy to come by, the ritual may only be performed during certain times and conditions, and, regardless of preparation, there is still a chance that the otherworldly things summoned by the rite may cruelly devour the potential recipient. However, those that survive become something very special, the key tool in the Eldritch Society's Shadow War.

Once a potential candidate has been identified, has been informed as to what this journey will take, and has agreed to the dangers, his training begins. The training takes six months, although in periods of necessity it has been reduced to a three month intensive, and encompasses both physical and mental training.

Meditation is an important part of a potential Tager's training, something that will become a regular part of his life should he survive the Rite. Mastery of one's self, control over emotion, mind over body – these are important concepts that can help a potential Tager overcome the trials ahead. Such training starts out simply, with basic Zen principles. Students meditate with their instructor in peaceful settings, so that they can learn to qui-

et their mind. Once this basic aspect of meditation is mastered, things no longer remain as simple. Students are put in situations designed to cause their emotions to flare and taught to overcome them, so that they can act with intention and clarity. Anger is, naturally, the easiest to incite. Students must endure all manner of things many would deem mental antagonism during this period, and the final step many potential Tagers must take during this training is to overcome their rage and hate towards their instructors.

Then the physical trials begin, testing and training endurance and willpower. Students are placed in environments that test the very limits of their will to overcome and survive. There are many that would classify much of this training as outright torture. Students are put into extreme climate situations and told to overcome their discomfort. They are caused intense pain and told to block it out. They are pushed to the very limits of their physical abilities and told to go further. By the time this training is complete, potential Tagers can endure almost anything with grace and a serene smile.

Martial training is also a part of every potential Tager's regimen. It doesn't matter which manifestation of Tager chooses the initi-



ate, they all can fight up close, at a distance, and must know how to get out of the way of an enemy's blows. They learn at least basic proficiency with hand-to-hand combat, bow and arrow, handgun, and spar with each other in ever more dangerous arenas. Many initiates get hurt during this, but Eldritch Society healers help such injuries mend quickly.

As a student is enduring all of this training, they are also being educated by the Society's Lorekeepers. This education is manifold. It includes the secret occult history of the world, as told through a variety of illegal tomes that are part of the Society's archives. Initiates also learn about the history of the Children of Chaos, the Chrysalis Corporation, and the Eldritch Society. They study tactics and enemy weaknesses. They study the victories and failures of other packs through the collected Lorekeeper journals. Naturally, initiates are heavily indoctrinated into the philosophies of the Eldritch Society at every step along the way.

In general, training consumes the life of the potential Tager for half a year. The Society takes care of the initiates basic needs, including food, clothing, and shelter. However, there is room for little else, including socialization or relationships, in a potential Tager's life. Training takes six to ten hours a day and education another six. A moment to decompress combined with a full-night's rest is all the free time an initiate gets.

Needless to say, there are many that wash out of this training and choose instead to become mortal agents of the Eldritch Society. It is best that they choose to do so, for the alternative could very easily mean their horrible death during the Rite. There is no shame in the Society of leaving the training to become a Tager.

Finally, the day arrives. It is time for an initiate to undergo the Rite of Sacred Union. He has been carefully trained in both body and mind and the odds have been stacked in his favor. However, it will still be one of the most terrifying experiences of his life.

It begins with days of ritual preparation, though most of such preparation is done by the sorcerers responsible for the Rite. However, the potential Tager must also play his part. He must ritualistically cleanse himself, donning special robes made of natural fabrics and adorned in arcane symbols found in the *Ta'ge Fragments*. He must also fast for several days, which is both a blessing and a curse during the Rite.

Then the Rite begins. It is three full days long, which represents a feat of endurance for all involved. The sorcerers must maintain intense focus during this entire time, most especially the lead sorcerer. Other magicians may swap out after a day or so, as they are only helping guide and power the ritual. The lead sorcerer is the potential Tager's partner, suffering along with him. Fatigue is not the only enemy here. Hunger, thirst, and other necessary body functions begin to build throughout the ritual. Those who participate are dehydrated, starved, exhausted, and delirious when all is said and done. It is fortunate the sorcerers are trained to endure the same as potential Tagers.

The first day of the Rite appears to be routine. The sorcerers chant, gesture, and mark the recipient the entire time. The potential Tager sits or stands and meditates, keeping himself focused and alert. These first twenty-four hours often lull the recipient into a false sense of security, like the experience is not going to be anywhere near as bad as others have made it out to be.

Day two helps eliminate that, for it is somewhere during these hours that the visions begin. The potential Tager begins to get glimpses across space and time to the place where the symbionts dwell. There is no way to describe this experience. The mortal mind and the way it interprets sensory input is not sufficient to process what occurs. Regardless, the images are so alien and incomprehensible that they are terrifying to the potential Tager. While the visions are mere flashes at first, they grow to take over the perception of the recipient for minutes at a time. The potential Tager must use what he has been taught to maintain his center and not lose his mind.

As he is overcome with visions, something inside of the potential Tager calls out to the symbiont that wishes to claim him. It approaches then, across the rift, becoming a presence in the room. The entity remains incorporeal, but it can be felt by those present.

By now the potential Tager has given up all hope that this will be an easy process, though he does get a small respite during the third day. The visions ease for a while, but the entity's presence becomes more and more pronounced. The potential Tager begins to feel like it is probing, examining him to see if he is strong enough to survive what is coming – or if it has simply been summoned for a meal.

As the ritual reaches its climax, the potential Tager is suddenly seized by cosmic forces and held fast. Time slows and then stops, the recipient fully aware in a timeless moment. The symbiont entity then begins to merge with him. The pain is unlike any pain the potential Tager has ever experienced or will ever experience. The entity, as it merges, infuses the recipient with power the likes of which was never to be accommodated by the mortal mind and body. It threatens to tear the potential Tager apart – what most confuse as the symbiont attempting to devour a person. The recipient must utilize every shred of his will and training to hold on for dear life. Though it seems to last for an eternity, eventually the symbiont solidifies its bonds and the two become one. The timeless moment ends, the Tager manifests, and a new warrior for the Eldritch Society is born. Unless the potential Tager could not overcome the overwhelming power of the symbiont, in which case he dies horribly.

Tagers emerge from the Rite of Sacred Union with the intuitive ability to use the gifts they have been given. Some require additional training to maximize their abilities, such as stealth training for Shadows. However, Tagers also emerge changed. The symbiont itself has needs and urges and these become a part of the new Tager's personality. The pull towards these is inescapable as the two beings are no longer separate.

TAGERS

The product of symbiosis between a Ta'ge symbiont and a mortal, Tagers are unique creatures. They are people who can summon what is functionally a monstrous exoskeleton that endows them with tremendous power and ability. Becoming a Tager is certainly a world unto itself.

The powers of this symbiotic union are manifold. The physical attributes of the host increase, even when not shifted, sometimes taking them to the pinnacle of mortal development. When shifted, a Tager oftentimes is capable of what can only be classified as supernatural physical feats. A Tager's ability to move also changes, as he becomes able to jump long distances, grows microhooks so that he can climb sheer surfaces and cling to walls and ceilings, and in some cases grows wings to fly or gills and fins to swim. The symbiont is also resistant to the environment, protecting the host from gaseous environmental hazards and even producing its own air supply for a couple of hours. Likewise, a Tager can survive unharmed in extreme pressure or no pressure at all, such as in the deep trenches of the ocean or in the void of space.

The union also grants a Tager new ways to experience the world. Most gain a host of new senses, the two most common being the ability to see in the dark and to sense the life-force of a creature. Some gain the ability to see the heat patterns of matter or even into the x-ray spectrum. All Tagers, however, have the ability to sense Dhohanoids, which many take as a sure sign that the two beings are indeed natural enemies. It takes one full minute of observation in order to tell, but after that the Tager intuitively knows whether or not the creature he is watching has undergone the Rite of Transfiguration. Furthermore, the symbionts are all mindlinked, so Tagers within a mile of each other can communicate mentally through a limited form of telepathy. They also know when other Tagers are within that range and whether or not they are alive or dead.

Tagers are clearly creatures of violence. Their monstrous forms are bristling with weapons, even the manifestations that aren't clearly combat-oriented. They are designed to fight both from a distance and up close, complete with what has become known as a limit weapon. This powerful attack may only be summoned by an incredible exertion of willpower on the part of the Tager and may only be utilized once every 24-hours. However, limit attacks are typically devastating, dishing out a significant amount of pain to the Tager's enemies. Furthermore, the monstrous form of the symbiont is armored against harm and regenerates at lightning speed. Most Tagers are capable of returning from death's door to combat readiness in less than fifteen minutes, some even faster. This regenerative ability is greatly diminished when the host is in mortal form, but it is still a clear advantage. To go along with this package, Tagers are very difficult to frighten, allowing them to take on the most terrifying of foes without missing a beat.

There are many things that don't change when one becomes a Tager. All a person's natural bodily needs remain the same. A Tager must still eat, sleep, excrete, is still affected by tempera-

ture and environmental conditions, must breathe, and all the other things that come with being mortal. However, the symbiont does alter certain things. A Tager becomes more resistant to disease and his regenerative abilities make his symptoms far less. He flushes most diseases quickly, and cannot develop chronic or fatal ailments. Poisons and toxins are likewise affected, including drugs and alcohol – a Tager has to take about twice what the average person does to be properly affected. Tagers are also usually capable of pushing themselves to greater limits, including sleeping less for longer periods of time.

The creature lives outside of time and space and is always around its host. It manifests physically only when called upon. As such, there is no way to stop a Tager from manifesting. The symbiont will mystically destroy bonds or restrictions of any kind, coming into being despite confines. Many describe the feeling of shifting as having a warm towel or wet flesh slide over them, while others claim it is more indescribable than that. Some describe the sensation as having the thing flow from their cells or that a part of them that is always there simply comes into view.

Since the two parts become a greater whole, it only makes sense that the desires and needs of the symbiont would become present in the everyday life of the host. Thus, there are aspects of the Tager's personality that change after the Rite. Those who are bound with a Phantom become more attuned to their body, become confidently aware, and gain a newfound general sense of freedom. However, they also develop a lust for blood to go with it. Those who become Vampires develop incredible patience to go with a certain predatory arrogance. However, they also become sadists who need to inflict pain and enjoy murder. There is always a trade-off. Each of the symbionts has demands that the host might have once thought disgusting or objectionable, but now they are a part of him. These traits cannot be denied, not that a host would even think of trying.

One of the many advantages of being a Tager is that the symbiont is totally undetectable. While Dhohanoids become what they are body and soul and it leaves a mark on their genetic structure, Tagers do not have that problem. Nowhere in their everyday physical makeup is there evidence of the symbiont. They appear to be 100% mortal in every way. This makes it very easy to travel in and out of arcologies or other government checkpoints and makes it so that they need not worry about being carted off by the Office of Internal Security the next time they have blood drawn. The symbiosis doesn't even show up on mystical radar. Para-psychic ESP, sorcerous rituals such as Eldritch Faculties, or monstrous senses – none of them can determine that a Tager is a Tager. Tagers can't even detect other Tagers, unless they are shifted and within a mile of each other so the mindlink kicks in.

What type of symbiont a Tager manifests is entirely uncontrollable. No one knows what it is in a person that calls to a particular type of symbiont, if that even matters. Whatever wants to show up is what shows up and that's that. The Eldritch Society hopes to one day find some method of guiding this aspect of the Rite, but all attempts thus far have been fruitless.

Among Tagers, about 80% are common manifestations, such as the Mirage or the Phantom. About 17% are specialized manifestations, such as the Echo, the Shadow, the Spectre, or the Whisper; around 2% are exceptional symbionts, such as the Nightmare or the Vampire; and finally about 1% are rare symbionts, such as the Efrete or the Widow.

To illustrate potential Tager populations, let's take a look at a hypothetical case. In a city of four million people, approximately 0.08% of the population is a Tager, or up to 3200 of them. Of those, about 2560 are Mirages or Phantoms – about 1280 of each, if evenly split. Continuing on, about 544 of these Tagers is a specialized manifestation – about 136 each of Echoes, Shadows, Spectres, and Vampires, if evenly split. Of the remaining, about 64 are Nightmares or Vampires and about 32 are Efreets or Widows.

It appears that the ten manifestations of Tagers that are a part of the Eldritch Society are all there are. Each of these types manifested within the first five years the Society began to use the Rite of Sacred Union, with the Efrete and the Widow being two of the last to be seen. This has led the Eldritch Society to conclude that these are all the Tagers there ever will be, though they continue research to see if there are ways to bring new manifestations into the world.

Because Tagers are an entirely mystical phenomena that in no way maps itself onto the physical code of the host, there is no threat of passing such symbiosis on to offspring. Tagers can and do breed, but they breed like mortals and their children will be mortal. There is no known way for symbionts to procreate. Someone has to undergo the Rite of Sacred Union to become a Tager. This limitation puts them at a severe disadvantage over the Chrysalis Corporation – Dhohanoids can make new baby Dhohanoids.

In general, Tager numbers are nowhere near as easy to replenish. The Rite of Sacred Union requires special conditions, gifted sorcerers, and a fully prepared and trained potential Tager. The Chrysalis Corporation can kick out new Dhohanoids a couple times a month and they can be created from anyone with a pulse. Furthermore, they can make more the old-fashioned way and have breeding programs to support that. There will always be more Dhohanoids than Tagers, a fact that the symbiotic beings take very seriously. As such, each Tager is a precious commodity.

Though the symbiont helps a Tager regenerate from even grievous wounds and helps keep him alive when other mortals would have died, it does not prevent him from aging. Eventually, even the most powerful Tager will grow old and die of natural causes. However, the symbiont does alter the process somewhat. Tagers live to be about 150% of the normal mortal lifespan, which can be up to two hundred years, but most will die of violent causes long before that. An advantage they can use, on the other hand, is that the deleterious effects of aging do not set in until later than in other mortals. Where a normal person starts to slow

down in his forties, a Tager won't start until his sixties. Where a normal person might be considered elderly in his nineties, a Tager won't be until around a hundred and fifty. The symbiont allows a host to cling to youth longer – it's too bad he'll have to use it in battle.

The Rite of Sacred Union is a mind-wrenching experience that can cause damage to a person's psyche, and often does. That, however, is not the end in this matter. Being a Tager is a regular threat to one's grasp on conventional reality. The pull of the symbiont is ever-present, an unknowable thing from beyond that can barely even interface with these lower dimensions. The host must remain strong and grounded, which is where meditation comes in, as the presence of the symbiont can draw him off the deep end. This is a constant internal battle within the Tager for the rest of his life.

In addition to the constant pull of the symbiont on a Tager's sanity, it also feeds on his reservoir of cosmic energy. Most have access to only half what a comparable mortal would and those that are exceptional have access to none. This does not make them effective sorcerers, without significant help, or assistants in magical rituals.

TAGERS IN THE ARMED FORCES

There are those who would like to play Tager Characters that are somehow part of the New Earth Government Armed Forces. Here are a few reasons why that doesn't work.

Being a part of the Eldritch Society is a full-time gig. It isn't just something in which people participate when they feel like it. Being a part of the military is likewise a full-time job and soldiers are on-call pretty much all the time. The two duties conflict.

Some might come up with a reason why a Tager might go undercover within the Armed Forces. That doesn't happen. The Eldritch Society is dedicated to fighting the corruption of the Chrysalis Corporation and the Children of Chaos. The Armed Forces are committed to fighting the Migou, the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, and the Esoteric Order of Dagon – all the threats the New Earth Government already knows about. There is no reason the Eldritch Society would want to spread their already thin resources to help fight the overt danger, which is already heavily focused upon. Sending a Tager into the military is a complete waste of a scarce and valuable tool.

Furthermore, the chances of a Tager being caught as something other than mortal within the Armed Forces is almost 100%. They regenerate, even in mortal form. All it takes is for the Tager to be hurt in the line of duty and he'd have to face the powers that be wondering why he healed weeks or months too fast and doesn't even have scars. Then, it's off to a lab with him.

So while playing a Tager mech pilot may sound like a good idea, it really isn't a viable option within the restrictions of the setting.

PACKS

Tagers (as well as other field agents) operate in semi-autonomous units known as packs. These small groups function as fully-encapsulated teams capable of answering the call wherever they are. They are the backbone of the Eldritch Society in the field. However, packs tend to become more than just an ops team – the people that are a part of a pack become very close, sometimes as close as family.

While the rest of the Eldritch Society refers to these groups as packs, Tagers refer to them as murders. Not only is a murder a group of crows, it is also what Tagers tend to do a lot. There is a certain irony there that makes amuses them. No one knows the exact origin of this practice, but a Tager who does not refer to his pack as such is likely to be laughed at. Some of the more educated will occasionally refer to their pack as an unkindness, which is a group of ravens, but the effect is often lost.

Packs tend to come into being naturally. There is no assignment process where the Eldritch Society saddles a pack with a newbie. Most Tagers are brought into the Society by a pack and it is expected that they will be a part of that pack when they are finished with the Rite of Sacred Union. Those who were brought to the Society through other channels will eventually catch the interest of a pack in the area, who may need to replenish lost numbers or simply need a person with particular skills. Sometimes packs will become large and a subsection of the pack will want to split off to start their own – with the pack's blessing, of course.

A Tager's official induction into a pack is one of the most important moments in his life. Each pack has its own induction ceremony, a rite of passage that moves the Tager from his old life into the new. For most, this ceremony is tradition, including inspirational readings from the Lorekeeper journals and a spiritual journey. For some, it is a physical trial, some way in which the Tager must prove himself, often in the face of danger. For others, it could be as simple as taking the new Tager out drinking until he passes out. However the pack chooses to induct their new members, the ceremony always ends the same way – with the naming ceremony.

Every Tager has a second name, similar to the callsigns used by pilots. It allows each Tager to be uniquely identified by a name that more directly reflects his new soul – as well as hiding his true identity. Pack names usually carry dark undertones to them, including Agony, Anguish, Blood, Bone, Corrosion, Crimson, Delirium, Edge, Eviscerate, Fever, Flatline, Gasp, Ghostrunner, Hush, Incubus, Kestrel, Malice, Null, Overkill, Ravage, Ripper, Slaughter, Sledge, Spook, Stitch, Suicide, Thresh, Vendetta, Ver-tigo, Wight, or Wither. However, not all have to be dark. Some simply reflect dominant personality characteristics or something in the world that speaks to the Tager. There are Tagers with pack names like Heavenly Light, Orchid, Preacher, or Winter. These names are not assigned – they are agreed upon. The Tager who is to be named may make some suggestions, as will every member of the pack, and they will be discussed until one clearly sticks. Once a Tager has taken a pack name, it will be with him forever.

A non-Tager's induction into a pack is a little different. Packs who utilize more traditional induction ceremonies use only a slightly modified version. Those who require some sort of trial tone said trial back so that a normal person can accomplish it. However, those with more irreverent inductions usually keep them as is. Regardless, they likewise end with a naming ceremony, where the non-Tager will take on some sort of pack name, more akin to a personal nickname. Non-Tager pack names do not have the same kind of character that Tager pack names do. If the person in question is a para-psychic, his pack name usually has something to do with his predominant gifts, such as a firestarter named Ash or a telepath named Clear. Sorcerers gain their names in a similar fashion, though they are normally more occult in nature, some even from occult languages. Such people might end up with pack names like Dreamseeker or Leoc (Enochian). Those with Outsider Taint usually wind up with pack names that reflect their physical mutation, such as a person with black eyes being named Soulless or one with discrete tentacles being named Squid.

Leadership within a pack is determined by experience. Both skill set and how long a person has been a Tager are the important factors. If a pack is primarily centered around violent conflict, the leader will be the Tager with the most combat experience and time in combat as a Tager. If a pack is mostly focused around recon or covert ops, then the Tager in charge will be one that most fits that bill. Unlike many types of command structures, leadership within a pack is not autocratic. Pack leaders are expected to lead fairly, by example, and from experience. Those who try to lead by domination quickly discover that their packs have no intention of following them. Leadership can and does change – there are unfit leaders who must step down, leaders who no longer want the mantle, and new pack members with more pertinent experience.

Regardless of leadership, every member of a pack is important. Sometimes pack members take on temporary leadership roles because an action falls within their area of expertise or experience. The rest of the time, everyone's input is what forms overall plans. Every member of a pack is in the Shadow War together and their absolute cooperation is what will allow them to survive and prosper.

Most packs tend to have from four to eight members. Those with more than four tend to create several teams within the pack, so that they can split up effectively. Though Tagers are by far the majority, mortals can and do often make up a part of a pack, especially sorcerers and para-psychics. However, mortals can never occupy a position of authority within the pack – the Tagers always run the show. That does not mean that the mortals are not respected and that their contribution is not appreciated and considered.

Infighting among a pack is only tolerated for so long. Tagers are people, after all, and people sometimes start to snipe at each other when forced to be in close proximity for long periods of time. A quarrel here and there is organic, but anything more

than that is the leader's duty to end. Pack members need to be in a space where they are willing to give their lives for one another, and resentments lead to failure and death. Sometimes a leader will simply lock the two in a room and tell them to work it out. If appropriate, he'll put two Tagers in a room and have them beat the daylight out of each other. If the rift is insurmountable, he will have to reassign one of the parties. Regardless, the outcome is the same – the friction ends.

Rivalry between packs, however, is not uncommon. However, such rivalry is always friendly. Two packs might be competing for body count, most dangerous stunt, or most daring infiltration. On the other hand, they could be two packs who like to compete over more ordinary things like drinking, playing billiards, or feats of physical ability. Such competition pushes Tagers to greatness and such rivalry helps build camaraderie and teamwork.

Members of packs go through a lot together. They see dark things, fight terrible monsters, and face death back to back on an almost daily basis. The relationships that form under these circumstances run deep. Many packs find themselves becoming best friends and others find those bonds going even deeper. In a world where members of the Eldritch Society limit their contact with their biological family for reasons of safety, sometimes packs become surrogate families.

A side-effect of emotions running so deeply is dating within a pack. While the Eldritch Society has no particular policy when it comes to such things, everyone has their own opinion. It is common for two pack-mates of the opposite sex (or same sex, depending upon preference) to find themselves drawn to one another. With the New Earth Government's casual attitude towards sex, it is also not unusual for members of a pack who are attracted to each other to hook up once or twice (or sometimes more). It is when feelings enter the mix that things come into question. Some packs believe that deep romantic feelings between two pack-mates can only strengthen their resolve and put them more deeply into the conflict. Others believe that the minute one is in danger, the other will lose his focus and no longer be able to make sound decisions or function at 100%. Some packs have rules against inter-pack relationships, which they expect all new members to abide by. Most, however, leave it up to the judgment of the people involved, trusting that they will make the best decision for all of the pack. If something pops up that creates concern or doubt, it is expected that the pack will discuss it.

Perhaps the larger concern is break-ups. Romantic relationships have a nasty tendency to end badly, complete with resentments and bitter feelings. These are the sorts of things that can cause serious problems within a pack. The parties involved are expected to be mature about the situation, but the kind of emotions involved in such break-ups can be overwhelming. If it can't be dealt with properly, someone may leave for another pack.

In the unfortunate event that a Tager dies, it is his pack's duty to recover the body. It is essential for the continuing secrecy of

the Eldritch Society that Tager corpses not be allowed into the hands of the authorities, where they might probe far enough to determine who the Tagers really are. Since the symbiosis of a Tager is impossible to detect, that aspect of his existence is safe. However, such a death might bring the authorities knocking on the pack's door and that can be a problem for everyone involved. This does not even take into account the emotional impact for the pack.

One of the most important rituals in any pack is the ritual of passing, when a Tager leaves this world. The same goes for any pack-mate, but there is a special loss associated with a Tager. They are creatures of violence, but creatures that are designed to endure. Caught in the right circumstances, however, they will die the same as any other living being. Their death is the passing of a loved one to those close to them and also the loss of a precious commodity to the Eldritch Society and the world they died trying to protect.

There is always a private ritual of passing for each pack. Like the induction ritual, some are traditional and formal while others are more irreverent. Those closest to the deceased are invited to participate in the ceremony. For most, it is a place to let their grief go and to gain some closure, just like any other funeral. For others, it is place to stoke their anger and hate – bloodbaths are not an uncommon side effect of such ceremonies.

Once the pack has said their private good-byes, they must arrange to get the body to the Tager's family, if possible. If the pack had to steal the body from the morgue or the like, or if the body was taken from a violent confrontation or is all torn up, then it may not be appropriate to return the body to the family. The Tager's loved ones will have to deal with his death being classified as a missing persons case, something not unusual in the Strange Aeon. On the other hand, if the family can receive the body and put on a funeral, the pack tends to fade into the background. The rest of those who knew the Tager will be notified, as will other members of the Society, but they will attend incognito. Everyone will get a chance to pay their respects, but without the risk of blowing covers.

PACK LEADERSHIP

Storyguides, it is important that you choose your pack leader wisely. This person is going to be the voice of reason for the group and will hopefully guide them in their adventures. The leader is the only force of authority that really looms over Tagers, who otherwise can and will do pretty much anything they want.

Many groups are going to want to choose the leader democratically or there will be the guy who always has to be in charge. Do yourself a favor – assign the position to the person you know can do the job. You will make your life easier.

As always, your game is your own and you know your players best. This is only a suggestion. Do whatever works best for you and your players.

METAMORPHOSIS

There is a step beyond the Rite of Sacred Union, where a host can join in deeper union with his symbiont. He can enter a state called metamorphosis and on the other side he will emerge with enormous power.

Most Tagers go their entire lives without ever coming close to metamorphosis. A Tager has to listen to the call of his symbiont, giving in to its urges more and more, if one wants to metamorphose. If a symbiont is bloodthirsty, then the Tager must give it blood. If a symbiont is sneaky, then the Tager must satisfy its stealthy needs. These urges don't need to be sated only once in a while – they must become a way of life for the Tager. Most of the things a symbiont desires are things that are already a part of the Tager, but every single one has things that will or should give the host pause.

Just like there are those who are unwilling to undergo the Rite of Sacred Union because it scares them to death, there are those Tagers who are too frightened to contemplate metamorphosis. It is not an easy path and it is not for everyone. There is no shame within the Society in refusing to pursue metamorphosis and many do not.

If a Tager has made a lifestyle out of becoming one with his symbiont, metamorphosis will eventually come. A Tager never knows it is coming until within about a month of when it is to occur. He feels like something is tugging at him, on an almost cellular level. This sensation is distracting at first, but a Tager is very capable of ignoring it after a day or so. This feeling intensifies when metamorphosis is somewhere about a week out. The Tager becomes restless. He has difficulty sitting still, has trouble sleeping, and nothing he seems to do will settle him down. There are those Tagers who take to tranquilizers during this stage, but others believe that dilutes the purity of the experience. Somewhere around three days from metamorphosis, these sensations amplify even further. The Tager goes beyond restless into anxious, and becomes incapable of staying in one place or gaining any enjoyment from anything. He experiences near-constant discomfort as he encounters something that feels like microscopic threads worming their way through his flesh. Also, he is filled with the overwhelming urge to wrap things up in his life, for he is about to leave it for a while. These last several days are unpleasant – for the Tager and for those around him.

Finally, metamorphosis takes hold. The Tager does not know the moment it will happen – it just does. One moment he could be having breakfast and the next filaments start to snake out of him. While each manifestation of Tager has its own style, somehow the body of the metamorphosing Tager creates a hard cocoon that envelops him. Over the coming solar month, from 28 to 32 days, he will slowly begin to change inside.

Metamorphosis makes the Rite of Sacred Union look like a walk in the park. At first, the Tager is insensate as the cocoon finishes itself and hardens. Conditions during the first several days slowly adjust to the optimum for metamorphosis to occur – both physical and metaphysical. The chrysalis sees to all of the hosts

physical needs, mystically providing him with all the gasses and nutrients he requires – a bit like being in a womb. Then, when conditions within are right, the symbiont begins to infuse itself more and more into the host. The host suffers incredible discomfort and pain for weeks as the incredible power of the symbiont once again ravages a frame not designed to accommodate it. Alien visions again accost the host, but more frequently, more vividly, and for a far longer time than during the Rite of Sacred Union. The host's mind is no better equipped to interpret them or deal with them than it was before. The entire experience is maddening and many emerge psychologically scarred.

Then the magic day arrives when the process is complete. Again, each manifestation has its own variation, but the metamorphosed Tager rips his way into the world in his new body. Most often, his pack has moved his cocoon someplace quiet and safe so that his appearance does not disrupt the world around him. Many times, a metamorphosed Tager's emergence is a loud and violent thing.

There is no need for the Tager to experiment with his newfound potency. He is so in tune with his symbiont now that everything is second nature. He emerges from his cocoon ready to go back out in the world, in command of a whole new level of power. The world opens up to him in a fresh way, for he is a brand new creature. Even the things that were once familiar will be strange to him again as he learns the world from a new perspective.

Metamorphosed Tagers gain many new abilities. Their bodies become even more finely tuned. They develop new senses and move faster. Their natural weapons become more deadly. Their regenerative abilities dramatically increase, making them much more difficult to kill. They even gain a new second limit attack, of a similar vein to their first, which can also be used every 24 hours and is frighteningly destructive (in most cases). However, what is perhaps most useful are the new special abilities that go with metamorphosis. Revenants become undying, Wraiths become unyielding, and Torments project agony. They express the nature of the symbiont in surprising ways.

Furthermore, a metamorphosed Tager enjoys greater authority within the Eldritch Society. He has undergone personal suffering to join in further union with a creature from the higher planes, therefore attaining a greater level of divinity. In short, he now outranks everyone in the Society who is not also a metamorphosed Tager. However, he may or may not be promoted within his pack, depending upon leadership needs.

There is rumored to be a step beyond metamorphosis, where the host and symbiont join in even further union. There are no legends of such things, nor are there any sort of hints from the *Ta'ge Fragments*. However, there are those who believe such a thing exists, if for no other reason that it makes good conversation. The question is, does the Eldritch Society want more of the symbionts manifesting in this world? What comes as a product of metamorphosis is already powerful and frightening. What could possibly be after that?

CONTINUING TRAINING

Once a Tager has been sent out into the field, he is already fully trained to deal with the things ahead of him. Experience will be a better teacher than lessons taught behind safe walls. However, there are things that people let slide once they are out in the world, so the Eldritch Society does maintain a training regimen in which it requires Tagers to participate.

The meditative and spiritual practices are some of the first to wane once a Tager begins his new life. After all, there's no more Rite to survive and there are plenty of Dhohanoids on which to take out one's anger. Thus, once a month, every Tager is expected to visit the archives to meditate with one of the masters there. Most find the experience to be one they enjoy, even if they resist at first, for it provides direct benefit. Tagers feel more focused, present, and centered afterwards, being able to let go of many of the disempowering worries and concerns to which they cling.

Continuing study is also an aspect of ongoing training. The Lorekeeper journals grow every day, so Tagers can learn from each others' successes and failures, as well as about what each other is uncovering in the world. New occult knowledge also comes to light, and Tagers must be aware of the things going on in the secret side of the world.

Every day, through secure private electronic message, Tagers are sent important updates about what the Chrysalis Corporation is up to in their area. Most Tagers take the time to read these reports as soon as they arrive, if they are in position to do so. They do not, however, include which packs are doing what – that sort of information one needs to get from an Operator, for security purposes. Going hand-in-hand with these updates are reports on the local arcane underground as well. Tagers spend so much time in the same world as the underground that it is often important know its ebbs and tides as well.

Combat training is, of course, a natural part of continuing training. Those who are manifestations that see a lot of conflict must submit to monthly training with a master. After all, even those with regular experience can suffer from sloppy form or might learn a new trick that could save their lives in the near future. However, combat training is most advantageous for those Tagers who are of manifestations who see little direct or close quarters combat. Whispers, for example, can benefit greatly from regular training, for it just might make the difference between life and death the next time they get caught. The style of ninjitsu developed by the Eldritch Society is the primary focus of such training, keeping Tagers skilled shadow warriors.

31



DAILY LIFE

Needless to say, one's daily routine changes once one has become a Tager. The basics don't change all that much. Most Tagers wake up in the morning, take a shower, eat some food, read the news – whatever their normal mortal routine might be. They eat meals throughout the day and they go to bed at night, sleeping between six and nine hours (if they're lucky).

What is an interesting fact about the lives of Tagers is that they do not need to work out in order to remain in peak condition. There is something about the symbiont that keeps a Tager in shape, regardless of what he eats and how much physical activity he gets. The lives of Tagers are naturally active, so that is rarely a problem, but this side effect allows them to focus on more specialized types of physical training. On the other hand, many Tagers enjoy the broad leeway in diet and eat whatever they want, whenever they want. A Tager nutrition is also not all that important and some have been known to survive on fast food and junk food.

Every day, Tager packs receive encrypted electronic messages from the Eldritch Society, providing them with their own special version of the news. These messages contain important updates from around the world, as well as information specifically for the pack in question. They provide any new information regarding missions in progress or anything that might need the Tagers' attention. Sometimes, the morning update is simply a request to call a Lorekeeper or Operator.

Tagers are often engaged in some kind of active mission. These missions may be simple or multi-faceted, but they generally take up all of a pack's time while they are in play. Most times, they provide only space for meals and sleep. A Tager pack is expected to put all of their efforts into active missions. Because of the state of the world, most Tagers are on some sort of mission about 70% of the time.

Even when involved in something important, most Tagers make what is colloquially known as the rounds. Every pack has certain informants that are a key part of its operations. These informants see and hear things that are of importance to both the pack and the rest of the Society. When packs make the rounds, they check in with these informants to get the latest and greatest. Though it is an electronic age and most informants could simply share what they know via electronic messages (and most do), most Tagers believe that this sort of thing is best done face to face, or at least as close as possible. The presence of the Tager often motivates informants to work harder and provide more, a reminder that the Shadow War is knocking on their door – even when things seem safe and quiet.

However, there are those informants that are in sensitive positions and it would be dangerous for Tagers to show up – even in mortal form. It is only every so often that they are visited on the rounds, but visited they are. The pack in question makes sure that such visits are surreptitious so that the informant is not compromised, often sending in the most innocuous or trained infiltrator in their pack.

Patrolling is a common part of Tager life. When not actively engaged in a mission of some sort, packs spend time every day simply going out into the world, looking for trouble. The kinds of places they go on patrol are specific, however. It's not as if a pack of Tagers can do much about a group of Chrysalis executives out to lunch in a highly populated part of downtown. They search through hangouts that are part of the arcane underground, near back alleys or out of the way Chrysalis fronts, and anyplace else where they might be able to get some sort of lead on an important operation or kill off some Dhohanoids without calling unnecessary attention to themselves.

Not every patrol is successful. In fact, most are not. Like any kind of hunting, there is much looking for prey and few exciting moments of actual confrontation. This does not change the value of the activity, however. Tager patrols are responsible for the thinning of the Dhohanoid population of any city, a service not to be underestimated. There is most often quiet competition between packs in a city, keeping track of the hunting tolls.

Those that are part of the Society don't get a lot of downtime. When on a mission, the only downtime a person gets is by accident, when there is a natural lull in the action. That kind of downtime is, by its very nature, catch as catch can and hardly reliable. However, the Society provides.

Everyone associated with the Society, Tagers particularly, need time to blow off steam. The conditions under which such people operate can be extreme and the tension can be great. Time is needed to let a little of it go – there's no way it will ever all go away. For some this is going out and partying hard, for others it is sexual intercourse, for some it's getting out of the city for a while, and for still others it is indulging some personal hobby. Regardless, everyone who is part of the organization is encouraged to take the time when they get it. After all, who knows when it will come around again?

Sometimes the Society, particularly after long or brutal missions, will require that a pack or those associated take some time off. This time is not time to relax, but rather time to enhance. The pack is given time to train and hone their skills, most likely those they utilized extensively during their last mission. They are also given the opportunity to learn new things, often those things they discovered they were lacking on their last mission. The Society will provide instructors if so desired.

However, the powers that be within the Society require that even the most battle-hardened Tagers take personal time. It is important for all members of the organization to stay connected to the world, especially Tagers, who already have an excellent reason to dissociate. Most important are relationships with family and close friends – those kind of deep connections have value that cannot be underestimated. Even though those within the Society who maintain false identities and keep away from those they love most for the better part of the time never fully leave those persons' lives. Loving from a distance, with infrequent contact, is better than nothing at all, especially in the Strange Aeon.

As one might imagine, being a part of the Eldritch Society consumes a person's life. There is little time for such essential things as a normal vocation. The question is, if Tagers and other support staff spend all of their key time working for the Society, how do they support themselves? This is managed through a combination of government assistance and the deep pockets of the Eldritch Society. Many Tagers, particularly those who do not mind the lifestyle, live in government housing. These basic apartments aren't much to the eye, but they provide all the necessities. The Society makes sure the proper paperwork is filed and faked so that the Tager in question eternally appears to be someone who qualifies for such housing, and so they will not be disturbed by government officials or social workers. Others, depending upon personal desires, covers, or needs, live in any number of residences owned by the Society. The secret group has many very wealthy financiers, so it is never a problem to house a member of the Society.

Then simply comes the question of cover. Many have fake jobs as a part of Society's sympathizer organizations, never actually going to work. Some actually work part-time to maintain the cover, or to develop or practice important skills. Members of the Society are given disposable income as determined by their assumed level of lifestyle. Most are middle-class, with all their material needs covered.

However, there are those within the Society that walk a very fine line. They were already wealthy, famous, or public figures before they became a part of the Eldritch Society. Some might be wealthy blue-bloods that are a part of an arcologies' elite social circles, others might be entertainers or media figures, while others might be powerful businessmen. It is up to these people, with support from the Society, to use their influence to create a lifestyle that works with being a part of the organization – as well as kick some money into the secret society to help finance operations.

Some Tagers prefer to let their symbiont out to play as often as possible. They spend their time behind closed doors in their monstrous forms, getting more acquainted with the sensation and contemplating their new existence. For some, it's just fun. Such Tagers often spend as much time patrolling as possible, leaping from roof-top to roof-top as their shifted selves, daring someone to catch them. Furthermore, there are those that choose to sleep in their shifted forms, sometimes tucked away in some inaccessible corner, clinging to a wall or ceiling. These Tagers find that there is comfort in doing so, as they are most certainly ready for whatever the world throws at them during their slumber. Most say that, despite all appearances, that sleeping in their shifted form is actually quite pleasant. Any who do so, however, are most likely on their way to metamorphosis.

Despite the fact that most Tagers still classify themselves as mortal, many begin to suffer from a subtle kind of elitism. They begin to think that they are superior to those who have not undergone the Rite of Sacred Union. They intellectually know that there is no way the Eldritch Society could run without the inval-

uable assistance of the mortal contingent, but that makes little difference. It isn't an overt kind of thing, where the Tagers become obviously arrogant and begin to treat the mortals in their life with disrespect. It's more like the Victorian view of women, which were regarded as creatures to be loved and cherished, but who simply were not as hearty and capable as men. No one knows if this is simply a cultural thing that begins to weave its way through new Tagers as they work in their new packs or if it is something that is a part of the way the symbiont influences a Tager's personality. Most mortals don't even notice those Tagers that fall prey to this attitude and those that do let it go. After all, it's the Tagers that have to face death every day, so they get some leeway with regards to their personal beliefs.

While the citizens of the New Earth Government have the efforts of the Ministry of Information to help create a world where they do not have to fear for their lives every day, Tagers do not have that luxury. They are far more aware of the truth and live in a world where they face death almost all the time. Every day could easily be a Tagers last. Who knows when the Chrysalis Corporation could get a bead on the Tager's normal life or when he'll end up in a fight that he's not going to win? It is a life of never-ending violence and constantly looking over one's shoulder. Despite the psychologically hardened natures of most Tagers, this has an impact on their lives.

Many Tagers live with a kind of seize the moment attitude. As the old saying goes, "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die." They live in a world where they enjoy whatever pleasures they can with the time they have. These Tagers are the kind of people that appreciate good food and drink, party like rock stars, and seek the company of their sexually-preferred partners as often as possible. Their personal time is a hedonistic voyage, where they live as deeply as they can.

However, many Tagers are affected differently. Instead of enjoying life's pleasures, they become more fatalistic. They begin to view their lives as a constant struggle to which they must give in. The life they have chosen has a price and being connected to and appreciating the distractions in life is one of the biggest costs. Such Tagers throw themselves into their duty, having little in their lives that doesn't have to do with the Shadow War. This does not mean that they are not happy in their own ways, but rather than they have accepted their fate and crafted their lives to reflect that.

Uncommon are those Tagers who fool themselves to living in blissful state of denial. They simply go about their lives, doing what they must, but living their personal lives as if nothing were different. They never think about death and trust that they will persevere and survive to their dotage. Strangely, they function like normal people. Many wonder if such denial is chosen or simply a psychological break.

It is rare that a Tager dies of old age. The Shadow War is simply not that kind. Most Tagers die horrible violent deaths long before their natural times. Such is the way of things.

THE ELDRITCH SOCIETY

The Eldritch Society is a secret society with a few cult leanings that operates in the shadows. Like any outlaw group, they have to operate in a certain way in order to be effective and also to maintain their secrecy. Fortunately, the Society has had a couple decades to work everything out, building on the practices of those who came before them.

The Eldritch Society functions utilizing a cell structure, similar to those used by conspiratorial groups over the centuries. Essentially, cells are compartmentalized from the organization as a whole. They know little more than they need to know and they only know who they need to know in the big picture sense. Most time, they operate without knowing anyone's real name outside of their cell. This limits the amount of damage that can be done to the overall organization should one individual or cell be compromised.

Within the Society, cell structure works like this. A pack is the central spoke around which a cell forms. In addition to the Taggers, a cell typically also has a Lorekeeper and an Operator. Sometimes a sorcerer or para-psychic may be thrown into the mix. This forms the core cell. Within the cell, the members get to know each other more personally. They learn each others names, histories, and all the things people close to each other learn – since there is little opportunity to really socialize with those outside of one's cell, the cell becomes an important social group. This also means that if the cell is compromised, the only people that are in danger are the members of that cell.

Each cell is connected to the greater Eldritch Society in several ways. They may have made friends with other packs or they may have to interact with a Tagger of authority. The key to making contacts, and even friends, with members of the Society that are not a part of the same cell is observing basic security protocols. In such relationships, people do not exchange real names or critical personal data. They do not learn where each other lives or where they like to hang out. When they take communications from each other, there are always codes used to verify identity. Such relationships can still be close and enjoyable, but they must always be guarded.

The various networks of the Society (found on p. 38-39) must function in an even stricter fashion. Lorekeepers and Operators must function in networks in order to fulfill their duties. This means that each knows many of the others and knows many of the Tagger packs. Those who operate in such networks are forbidden from knowing each other personally. All contact must be remote and observe all security protocols. They do not learn each others' real names or personal details and they always go through identity verification. If even one Operator were to be compromised and these security measures weren't in place, it could lead to the downfall of many packs and entire chunks of the support networks.

To go along with the conspiratorial nature of the Eldritch Society, nearly all who are a part operate within some sort of assumed identity. The modern world has many effective and easy

ways to identify a person. DNA samples can be gained from something as simple as hair and fingerprints are easy to acquire. However, modern facial recognition software has been the biggest problem. All a person needs do is load a photo or two of someone into the program and it searches the internet for possible matches. This technique can provide all kinds of information about a person, most notably contact information and the identities of friends and family. Without assumed identities, all the Chrysalis Corporation would need is a few digital photographs and a Tagger's life would be blown wide open.

When someone becomes a part of the Society, the Administrative Network gets to work on creating a new identity for that person. Those who are a part of the support networks have the least to worry about, but even they get fake ID's. The hackers that are a part of the Administrative Network enter the new identity into key New Earth Government agencies and create a false electronic trail of the new identity. For all intents and purposes, it appears that the false identity is a real person with a real life. However, certain key details are eliminated. The friends that appear as part of the new identity are only those that are a part of the person's cell and family is always listed as dead (killed in some facet of one of the recent wars). That way, if compromised, no one in the person's life is in danger. Then, the person's real life is hidden in the system. Those that come prying will first land on the false identity – the only ones that might stumble across the real information might be the government. A Society member's real identity becomes, in essence, a ghost in the system.

For most, this false identity is more than adequate. The only time it can be called into question is if the Society member is heavily investigated by federal law enforcement. If the Federal Security Bureau or the Office of Internal Security is really looking, they will notice some of the tags that go with false identities. They will also most likely dig to find the person's real identity. It is, at that point, a difficult situation of which to talk one's way out.

So why not eliminate the real identity altogether? Because most members of the Society aren't willing to give up their ties entirely. It is important for most to remain in contact with their families or old friends, even sporadically. Erasing their true identities would eventually make someone in their life worry. It would be disconcerting for one's mother to go onto the internet and find no trace of him – something that is likely to happen. Therefore, the Society walks the fine line of security versus giving those involved the ability to keep parts of their lives.

Sometimes, the Society must gather *en masse*. There may be a major event of some kind or a massive assault, but there are secrecy issues that must be maintained. Whenever possible, these meetings occur well off the beaten path, sometimes in gigantic arcology maintenance corridors or sometimes industrial parks. The Taggers come to such gatherings in their shifted forms, to protect their identities. However, there are those who must, for functional reasons, operate in their mortal forms, but they are exposed to as few of the others as possible or show up in some sort of disguise.

In terms of authority, the Eldritch Society functions a little like an old holy order of knights. The Tagers are the holy warriors who fight the battle, so they are the one that get to call the shots. They take in the information provided them by the Society's networks and take whatever action is required. The networks work for and under the Tagers, supplying them with any assistance they require. The packs are, for the most part, autonomous and operate independently.

However, there is and must be a pecking order. There is always a Tager who is the leader of any pack and those in his pack will listen to his orders as long as he is not crazy. Between Tagers who are not part of the same pack, the pecking order boils down to experience. Whoever is the most qualified or who has been a Tager the longest usually is respected as being in charge in larger groups. There are more rigid and traditional hierarchies within the networks, with overseers and directors managing the majority. Regardless, in any situation, a mortal of any kind cannot outrank a Tager and mortals cannot lead packs, even despite experience or specialized knowledge. They have not undergone the Rite of Sacred Union and therefore have not earned the right.

If Tagers are above the mortal servants of the Society, hierarchically-speaking, then those who have undergone metamorphosis are a step above the Tagers. Anyone who has been willing to do what must be done and endure what must be endured to join in deeper symbiosis with a thing from beyond has earned further authority, even if they do not have extensive experience or time as a Tager. Tagers obey those who have metamorphosed without question – both out of respect and out of fear.

Typically, the metamorphosed Tagers of any arcology coordinate with each other to direct the overall activities of the Eldritch Society. There are never very many metamorphosed Tagers at any one time, so it is most often easy for them to do so. However, who guides the Society on a grand scale? A group known as the Chamber is the ultimate authority. It is made up of the oldest metamorphosed Tagers in the world. Those who are some of the first Tagers, who have survived, are the highest authorities within the Chamber. Everything about the Chamber is incredibly secret and tight security measures encircle everything they do. No one knows how many there are or how they communicate. They will only appear to others in their metamorphosed forms and communicate via mindlink. However, for most, their presence is barely felt. They are distant voices playing a game on a much grander scale.

While the packs manage themselves on a daily basis, there are broader issues that sometimes need the Society's attention. This information is disseminated by the support networks that are a part of the organization. Each day, Tager packs receive encrypted communications that provide them with information. Many times, possible missions are a part of such communications. Either the Operator or Lorekeeper Networks suggest important happenings to the pack and it is then up to the pack to take on whatever they feel is the best and most effective use of their efforts.

Ultimately, it is the Operator Network that is responsible for daily reporting. The packs update their Operator with their activities and results, who then in turn passes that up the chain. It is then disseminated through the Eldritch Society so that all arms of the organization are up to speed. Though the group operates in cells, the infrastructure is as such that the powers that be within the Society are abreast of everything that is going on worldwide.

The Eldritch Society is a massive organization that requires a large amount of capital in order to function. It is not as if the group could function on the money of its members alone, most of which are so engaged that they can't take outside jobs. This is something that fortunately the Founders foresaw and took measures to manage. Many of the first recruits of the Eldritch Society were those who had the personal wealth to help finance the operation. As the Society has grown, it has added many more wealthy financiers to the mix, each of whom contributes significant funds. Now, after decades of operation, the organization has investment brokers to manage their money and help it grow to support operations. The Society has even purchased outright many local ubiquitous businesses to help with the financial burden, including chains of cleaners, residential maintenance, and other kinds of everyday services that won't attract attention from anyone. These businesses also, not coincidentally, often act as Society safehouses.

One of the largest secrets regarding Society finance is that some of the wealthiest and most avid patrons of the organization are some of the earliest employees of the Ashcroft Foundation. The two organizations have no ties, official or unofficial, but that does not mean individuals do not. All of the early employees of the Ashcroft Foundation, due to stock options, made multimillions if not billions of terranotes through the massive revenue provided by arcanotechnology patents. Most of them are retired now and have been for some time. It is unsurprising that the corruption of the Children of Chaos would find even these elite and the Society has fortunately been there to save several of them. The Ashcroft patrons provide a great deal of money to the Society, quietly financing the saviors of the Shadow War.

The existence of the Eldritch Society is an absolute secret. There is no one, other than the Children of Chaos, who knows that the organization exists. There are elements within the Global Intelligence Agency who have some idea that a secret society exists that is fighting cults, but they have no details. The Office of Internal Security has files on Tagers, but regards them as unknown Outsider beasts to be destroyed on sight. The Society operates entirely in the shadows. Their operatives blend in with everyone else, deliberately choosing not to call attention to themselves (with a few exceptions). They do not maintain centralized meeting or operations buildings or places. If one were to go looking for the Society, there would be little or no chance of finding them. Secrecy is one of the organization's most powerful weapons, something ingrained into all who are a part. However, there are those elements within the Eldritch Society who believe that the advantages of secrecy are at an end.



SOCIETY CULTURE

Like secret societies throughout time, the Eldritch Society has a culture all its own. It is a culture steeped in forbidden knowledge and a solemn vow to protect the world from enemies it won't even acknowledge are there. Secrecy, naturally, is paramount within the Society, so few will ever know what it is like to walk within its halls.

One might compare the world of the Eldritch Society to a fusion of the traditional trappings of a secret society with those of a military order. Secret societies throughout the generations have had their own rituals, bodies of knowledge, gestures of recognition, meeting places, and the like, and the Society is no different. They are the sole keepers of the precious Rite of Sacred Union and the *Ta'ge Fragments*, there are certain code phrases that members use to identify each other, there are many secret Society safehouses, and more. However, what makes the Eldritch Society different from other secret societies is that it is waging a war. In that vein, the Society has taken on characteristics of the knightly orders of the middle-ages. Tagers are akin to the holy warriors, those who have given up everything to fight for a higher cause. As they are the ones risking their lives in battle, the ones daring enough to take on the calling, they become the ones in charge. Even those who take on support roles within the Society take on some kind of combat training. After all, the enemy will not differentiate between warriors and non-combatants.

To go with that is a certain sense of discipline that is a part of the Society's culture. Everyone who fights in the Shadow War knows

that things could fall apart at any moment and the only thing that might prevent that is conscious readiness. Members of the Society train themselves whenever they are not actively involved in some kind of mission. There is also little room for irresponsible lifestyles. Those within the Society do all the things necessary to keep their lives in perfect ordinary order and themselves in a condition to deal with whatever may come up.

To have gone through what they needed to go through to become an active part of the Eldritch Society, most people have developed some level of what can only be termed fanaticism. They have become willing to give up their lives in service of the cause and each and every person is willing to die in the fight that is the Shadow War. Wherever, whenever – members of the Society are ready to be of service. What they may have once wanted for their lives is now gone.

The two values that the Society most encourages are strength and compassion. Strength is obviously required in order to overcome the struggles that are still ahead. However, physical strength is not the only focus. Strength of mind and will are also necessary, for the horrors the Society faces are not those of the everyday world. Left to its own devices, strength can easily become tyranny, which is why the Society also works to build compassion in its members – especially Tagers. When one must fight tooth and nail against vicious foes, one can sometimes forget the ordinary people for which he is fighting. Those within the Society are saviors and no one can forget that.

The Society also fosters an attitude of reverence towards their legacy. The confluence of events that brought about the formation of the Eldritch Society is highly improbable and there has been sacrifice. The Forgotten Ones left fragments of their incredible power for us to find. The Founders gave their lives so that the Society could be born. Many have died, and continue to die, so that the legacy of the organization can be a world free of and safe from the dark cancers that eat away at its insides. What has come before and what is still to come must never be taken lightly, nor fade away.

There are lightly religious overtones to everything in the Eldritch Society, but they do not encourage a culture of worship of anything. The knowledge that powers the Society comes from a deity of some kind. The Tagers have joined in symbiosis with some sort of creature from the higher dimensions, the nature of which is usually classified as divine. They do what many believe to be sacred duty in doing what is best to save humanity, regardless of the wishes of the temporal powers. That is how the Society interjects divinity into their overall culture, but that's about it.

Despite the fact that most of the Society believes that messing around with ancient deities more than they already do is a dangerous thing, there are those who have pushed the boundaries. There are several radical faiths that have erupted as part of the Eldritch Society that can best be classified as cults. The Fellowship of Remembrance believes the Forgotten Ones should be worshipped as gods, the Children of the Sword revere Drazet with their militaristic ways, the Somnambulists follow Morfean through the dreaming world, and the Quintessentialists hold the unpopular belief that Myrovh and Nyarlathotep are one and the same. Most within the Society do not belong to one of these cults, but many are tolerant of those who do.

The Society has several customs and gatherings, aside from a packs' individual rituals. The most common, unfortunately, is the Rite of Retribution, though the Rite of Winter's Moon is a regular annual gathering not to be dismissed.

There is a custom within the Eldritch Society known as the Rite of Retribution, though most today just call such gatherings Murder Parties. Whenever the Chrysalis Corporation goes out of their way to assassinate Tagers or kill members of the support networks, the Society gathers its forces to exact a swift revenge. All the Tager packs in the local community are given the basics, which usually just consists of a night when the Rite will take place. On that night, the Tagers are unleashed on the city with the sole goal of murdering as many Dhohanoids as possible. It is a rash and sometimes foolhardy custom, as sometimes Dhohanoids who have not been marked are killed, but custom is custom and Tagers demand blood when one of their own is slain.

The Rite of Winter's Moon is a time when Tagers take a moment to remember or contemplate their place in the universe. It occurs on the first full moon after the dawn of the new year. Tagers within a geographic area determine a secret meeting place, usually far outside a city. Naturally, not everyone can participate as

some must be left behind to make sure that things don't get out of hand while the majority of Tagers are busy for the better part of a night. Out under the full moon, an agent redirecting the cosmic energy of the source, the Tagers discuss the framework of the universe, the secret history of the world, and their place in all of it. There is a general feeling of hope that comes out of this gathering, as those that lead it believe that humanity will prevail and that we are rapidly on our way to what is next for the species. Soon, we will occupy a new place in the universe.

When it comes to membership, the Eldritch Society is accepting of pretty much anyone that is willing to take up the fight. This includes those that society would ostracize or outright persecute. Para-psychics of all shades are welcome, though the few Zoners that are part of the organization are treated with the delicacy they deserve. Sorcerers are valued, even those that have been tainted by the Outsiders, no matter how severely. Even many summoned creatures are welcome within the Society. Obviously the dangerous Outsiders like Bahki, Gaunts, and N'athm are not, nor would such creatures want to be a part of the group. However, there are familiars and fetches that are servants of sorcerers that are commonplace. There are even some fetches and superior fetches who have become independent, usually because their sorcerous master has been killed, who have found sanctuary and a place within the Society.

As the Society is an organization of people, deep relationships naturally form. Regardless of the feelings of individual packs, dating and romance within the Society is common. Those that are part of the Eldritch Society don't really have the option of creating lasting romantic relationships with outsiders. The secret must be maintained and there are few outside the organization who would understand the lives those that are part of the Society must lead. Therefore, the Society also becomes the pool from which one might choose a romantic partner someday, someone who already understands.

Within that, it is unusual for Tagers to date non-Tagers. If the gap between a normal mortal member of the Eldritch Society and a normal member of everyday society is substantial, it is just as large between non-Tagers and Tagers. Those who have undergone the Rite of Sacred Union can best relate to others in the same boat, so Tagers usually become romantically involved with each other. That doesn't mean that a Tager won't have a tryst with a regular mortal, but anything deeper is pretty much impossible.

Despite the fact that Tagers lead dangerous lives that are likely to end prematurely, the Eldritch Society fully buys into the New Earth Government's norm – they are expected to have babies. The perpetuation of the race is the responsibility of everyone. Even though Tagers can't make more Tagers through sexual reproduction, the ranks of both the mortal races of Earth and the Eldritch Society need to grow. This unfortunately does take female Tagers out of action for nine months, but the birth of a new child is always something to celebrate. Fortunately, the Society joins together to help raise such children.

THE REST OF THE SOCIETY

There are many people who are part of the Eldritch Society who have not and will never undergo the Rite of Sacred Union. There are only certain types of people who are suited to survive the Rite and there are many more who have no desire to come anywhere near such a thing. However, such people do know the threat the Chrysalis Corporation presents and want to help in whatever way they can. That is why the Eldritch Society operates five key networks, designed to create the infrastructure of the organization and to support the Shadow War.

The first network that all potential Tagers are exposed to, and one they will interact with their entire lives, is the Lorekeeper Network. Lorekeepers are the scholars of all things needed for the Shadow War, most especially all things occult. They pass information and unearthed knowledge along from city to city, from pack to pack. They continue to delve for anything that might help the Eldritch Society turn the tides of the Shadow War. Furthermore, they are responsible for much of the training a potential Tager receives on his way to the Rite of Sacred Union. If one likened the Society to a body, the Lorekeepers would be the brain.

Each arcology has its own archives, the centralized base of the Lorekeepers. These libraries are extensive, filled with forgotten and forbidden knowledge. However, perhaps the most useful and treasured of the archives are the *Ta'ge Fragments* and the Lorekeeper journals. The coveted *Ta'ge Fragments* give the Eldritch Society access to knowledge no other creatures on Earth have and is fundamentally the spine upon which the organization is built. Aside from legends and prophecies, the *Fragments* also contain the coveted Rite of Sacred Union, which many Lorekeepers still study. They hope to uncover some kind of code or some way to influence the ritual, hoping to unlock secret power or guide the way Tagers manifest. So far such researchers have had little luck, but that has not dissuaded them from continuing to try.

Also a critical part of the archives are the journals containing the observations and experiences of Lorekeepers and their packs from around the world. Everything of consequence discovered by a Lorekeeper or experienced by the packs under their watch are meticulously recorded, so that the whole benefits from the individual. It is surprising the number of insights that come from the personal writings of hundreds of Lorekeepers from every corner of the Earth for more than the last twenty years. It is a regular part of continuing Tager training that they study the Lorekeeper journals.

In addition to being a repository of knowledge, the archives are also places of meditation. Not only is it crucial for the Lorekeepers to have a place to clear their minds, it is also important that Tagers have a place to go to when they have not practiced meditation in their everyday environment. The peace of the archives creates a safe space to get back to basics, to center oneself and get back in tune with the world. To these ends, archives are often equipped with a small, beautiful, private, and carefully tended garden in which to meditate, something that is rare and special for arcology dwellers.

Lorekeeper archives, because of their importance, are carefully guarded. They are housed either in wealthy areas, so they will not be disturbed, or their presence is very carefully masked in some out of the way neighborhood. Ownership of the building is through a dummy company or false identity, and Operators have measures in place that will notify them when someone tries to access the information. Lorekeeper identities, like everyone else in the Society, are kept secret and they operate under false documentation. The facility itself is protected by state of the art electronic surveillance and security, as well as by wards to keep out unwanted prying eyes. It is rumored that the mystical protection that guards the *Ta'ge Fragments* and the Lorekeeper journals can blind a person or even kill. To top it all off, every archive has a Tager guardian, one given the important duty to keep such knowledge safe. The guardian typically lives on or near the premises, with a six month tour of duty before getting back to the field.

There are many Lorekeepers who are content to hide within the high walls of the archives. There is no shame in being strictly an academic within the Society. However, there are those who believe that knowledge is best gathered first-hand. These intrepid souls are the kind that go out with packs of Tagers and gather experience in the field. Without a symbiont or para-psychic powers to aid them, but perhaps with a modicum of sorcery, these Lorekeepers must train themselves to survive as best they can as mortals. They typically become marksmen and masters of martial arts, for violence is a regular part of the Shadow War. It is something of a thrill inside the network to be able to share one's personal adventures with the rest of the Lorekeepers.

The second network is another with which all Tagers have regular contact, and that is the Operator Network. Operators are those who sit in front of computer terminals and communications equipment, waiting to dig up information for a pack on a moment's notice. However, information is not the only service of the Operator Network. They are a legion of hackers waiting to cause havoc on behalf of the Society. Furthermore, they are communications specialists, coordinating amongst themselves and thereby coordinating the actions of all the packs around the world. Each pack has a dedicated Operator, who becomes the disembodied team member on the other end of the line that brings the power of the Eldritch Society to bear.

Operators live in a virtual world, so there is no need for them to have a physically central location. Operators can be found all over arcologies and outside, as long as they can create a secure connection to the internet. Security is much easier to manage when the entire network cannot be compromised at once. Many Operators hack into others' wireless connections and then route their signals through a variety of secure servers before they ever access anything. Some make it even more difficult by physically moving around every day. They are ghosts in the machine who are almost impossible to find. The Operators Network is under much greater threat of being discovered and investigated by the Federal Security Bureau's Fraud Investigations Division than they are by agents of the Chrysalis Corporation.

Though they may not meet in person, the Operators Network does have centralized virtual meeting places in the internet. These secure servers act as hubs for the Operators to store information and communicate with one another. They function a little bit like old-fashioned forums, where people of common interest could keep ongoing conversations recorded along with files for download, but with greatly enhanced functions for direct communication.

Some Operators do their best work behind closed doors, far away from any direct threat. However, as with Lorekeepers, there are those who believe that the best work is done when an Operator is a part of the situation. These brave people don their augmented reality goggles, grab a powerful portable computer, and hit the streets with their Tager pack. They too must learn how to handle themselves when danger strikes, so most have learned to use a gun and to effectively get out of harm's way.

Despite their ubiquitous presence and obviously useful natures, the contribution of the Operators is something often overlooked by Tagers. They get caught up in the danger they personally face and begin to regard their Operator as nothing but an admin. Operators are not afraid to remind Tagers who have lost their gratitude that the Operators Network is a powerful resource, if properly respected. Sometimes all a pack needs is a reminder at a critical juncture, and it will be a long time before they forget how important the network truly is.

The third network is one that most Tagers pay little attention to – the Administrative Network. Someone has to keep the Eldritch Society running as a cohesive whole and manage all the things that slip through the cracks of the other networks. This very important and not glamorous job is the province of the Administrative Network. Most of their activities are invisible to the Tager packs, if they are doing their job well.

However, there is two important facets of the Administrative Network's duties with which everyone must interface at some point. The first is that the network manages all things related to identities. Anyone who is a part of the Eldritch Society needs to keep their friends and families safe and the world makes it very easy to uncover someone's identity. The Administrative Network hacks into records to either erase or misdirect the paper trail associated with a person's true identity, and then does everything it needs to in order for that person to have a new false legal identity complete with paper trail. They then keep track to make sure that these identities are not electronically compromised. Even those who never see field work live inside some kind of limited alternate identity, even if it is just the one to which their dwelling and vehicle is registered. The system works and it keeps someone who has chosen to join the Eldritch Society from hurting those he cares about.

The second important facet is that the Administrative Network is in charge of clean-up. Things so often go badly for Tager packs and messes are left. It is the network's job to make sure that such evidence is cleaned, so that it appears as if nothing happened.

Their experts expunge crime scenes, fabricate stories for those who go missing, and create alibis and witnesses to corroborate stories. This allows Tager packs to be mobile, while those less suited for conflict make sure there are no loose ends on the back side.


Workers of the Administrative Network are often in the field, but they are doing administrative tasks. They rarely see combat and almost never run afoul of the enemy. They work behind the scenes of the Shadow War, to make sure everyone else can fight.

Since Society sorcerers and para-psychics are given a lot of freedom and support to pursue study and advancement in their respective fields, they maintain their own network – the Arcane Network. It is much less formal than the others. Traditionally, the Arcane Network serves as a sounding board of what can and can't be done mystically. They also exist to provide their specialized services to any pack that needs them. Furthermore, the network manages investigations into the arcane underground, so that the Society always has their finger on the pulse of that dark subculture, as well as being responsible for any black market dealings that need to be done. They know that world more intimately than others, so it is perhaps best they are responsible.

There are few of those who are a part of the Arcane Network who do not in some way participate in the field. Most are a part of Tager packs or part of their own service groups fighting the Chrysalis Corporation. Some are those who strictly deal with the Rite of Sacred Union and the creation of more Tagers. However, they are easily contacted via the Operators Network, through which many packs reach them in times of need. Any pack with a sorcerer or para-psychic member can easily contact the network directly.

One network sits apart from the rest, composed of people who are only casual affiliates of the Eldritch Society. The Informant Network is a loose group of people in the world and on the street, who for some reason or the other have become the kind of people that will pass on key information to and occasionally do favors for the Society. When a Tager pack needs something, they contact the Operators Network, who then looks to see what informants may be able to assist. Likewise, informants often upload important data or information to the Operators Network that is disseminated to the Society. They are a numerous and incredibly useful group of people who just help out as best they can, when they can.

Most informants are people who have been rescued or helped by the Eldritch Society. They are not willing to take up the cause as a lifestyle, but they do want to help. Most are unaware of the larger world into which they have stepped, only knowing that the Society are the good guys and that the Chrysalis Corporation is dangerous. Most wouldn't even know the name Eldritch Society, instead dealing only with those individuals with which they have already met. Regardless, they know that it is right for them to pitch in.



The extent to which an informant is willing to assist varies greatly. Some are only willing to pass on information, while others are willing to put Tagers up for a night. It all depends on how willing an informant is to stick his neck out for the Society, knowing the dangers that lurk in the shadows. Those who help out more often see more protection from the Society, though any could call on help in times of need.

Given all of these networks and the staff it takes to keep them alive and running, how does the Eldritch Society recruit enough bodies to keep things going? Fortunately, the circumstances of the world are as such that there are many pools from which to choose. It is also not surprising the number of people who want to help once they figure out what's going on.

Many within the Society are those that once worked for the Chrysalis Corporation. Most of the company's employees are blissfully unaware of what is truly going on and are capable of going on with their lives without concern. However, some discover the hidden nature of the corporation as they rise through the ranks or accidentally run across it in their normal course of work. Some leave of their own volition, keeping what they've found to themselves. Sometimes, they say the right thing at the right time and someone from the Eldritch Society is there to give them a cause. Some try to report things to the authorities, in which case they are immediately marked for death. Fortunately, the Operators Network looks for such things, so the Society can rescue them and give them a place.

Those who have worked for the Chrysalis Corporation have another problem, especially if the cult is aware of the breach in secrecy. The company has such a person's personnel records. They can easily go after families, friends, and anyone else they decide needs to die or suffer. The Eldritch Society can help a person get his people to safety and even offer them new identities. Sometimes, the whole lot of them will all end up part of the Society.

There are also those who somehow angered the dark forces behind the Chrysalis Corporation directly. Some might be dealers in the arcane underground who tried to take the wrong person for a ride. Some might be law enforcement, coroners, or doctors. Many are competitors. Regardless, they have brought down the wrath of the cult and face death – or worse. If the Eldritch Society can rescue them, they often become new additions. Again, there is a concern for friends and family, which the Society accommodates.

Unfortunately, the largest group from which the Eldritch Society recruits are those that can be best classified as collateral damage. These are people who were just in the wrong place at the wrong time. They may be the survivors of someone the Chrysalis Corporation murdered. They could be the people who witnessed a Dhohanoid rampage through a restaurant. They could be considered loose ends because they were too close to something important. Regardless, either their lives have been shattered or they have been marked for death for no good reason and the Society is the best place for them to go.

It is certainly a tragedy that these unsuspecting people had their lives ripped away, which most often didn't even coincide with Chrysalis Corporation business. The biggest tragedy, however, is that most people who are a part of this category are murdered before they can be rescued by the Society.

A minority of such recruits comes from those who have needed special talents or those with the kind of personality that speaks to being a part of a secret society fighting a Shadow War. One might be a police officer whose investigative skills are top-notch, who is a true white-hearted crime fighter. Given the right enticement, he might jump at the chance to fight against a villain such as the Chrysalis Corporation. One might be an occultist with a knack for dead languages, who might desire to have access to the special knowledge kept by the Eldritch Society – in exchange for his services. There are all kinds of people needed to fill the roles within the Society, and sometimes the organization needs to cherry pick the best.

Many of those in this category are mystically gifted. The Society needs sorcerers to maintain wards, create enchanted items, and to push the boundaries of magic. They are also needed to help with the Rite of Sacred Union, something that is not for just any sorcerer. Para-psychics help provide greater utility to packs, especially those with powers that go beyond destruction. The enhanced senses, ability to manipulate others, and power of augmented bodies can be of significant value to packs in the field. Like many, when presented with the truth, most such mystically gifted individuals are interested in helping out the Society in one fashion or another. Sorcerers especially jump at the opportunity, because the Eldritch Society gives them the chance to explore illegal magicks in a controlled and supportive environment.

The Society is also a safe haven for those who, for one reason or another, choose to operate outside the mystical laws. Many choose not to register, believing that it violates their rights or marks them for persecution. Others want to utilize their powers without society's boundaries. The Eldritch Society recruits these types of the mystically gifted, giving them protection from the powers that be. The same goes for those who find themselves tainted by the Outsiders. Not everyone who suffers taint is a monster – many are just people messing with the wrong forces. However, the New Earth Government does not differentiate. The Society then is one place they can turn to that will not judge, and who will also give them a place and a cause.

Perhaps the most unlikely of those who help out the Eldritch Society are those who live beneath – ghouls. These necrophages may be monstrous, but there are few who are what would be classified as evil. Most are not any more interested in the return of the Old Ones than any other mortal. Sometimes the activities of the Society bring packs into contact with ghouls, either those living outside the city or those who brave the nooks and crannies of the arcology. Some have seen the predations of the Chrysalis Corporation first hand or even experienced it. Though the ghouls will never join in a formal sense, there are many who are happy to cooperate.

THE SOCIETY WORLDWIDE

The Shadow War rages all across the globe. There is not a part of the New Earth Government that is not in some way touched by it. The Chrysalis Corporation perpetrates its evil in so many ways, with resources that allow them to go anywhere. The cult even treads into enemy territory, to places the New Earth Government dares not go, and it is up to the Eldritch Society to follow.

It is fortunate that the Eldritch Society has nearly as long a reach as the Chrysalis Corporation. It may not be as deep, but it gets the job done. The Society has resources to help its operatives all over the world, including support networks and safehouses in all major arcologies. In most places where a Tager or other operative of the Eldritch Society goes, there is always someone waiting to assist. However, it is often that a pack finds itself well out of the way and must rely on their own abilities to survive.

While the Chrysalis Corporation is the most hated foe of the Eldritch Society, they do have other enemies. The circles in which the Society operates often run in concert with the Disciples of Death's Shadow. It would be hard to ignore such a sinister threat, especially since the Society is designed to fight against those who are hidden within. In the same vein, the Eldritch Society also sometimes crosses paths with the Esoteric Order of Dagon. The cult of the fish god has many agents that operate on dry land, whether they be mortal cultists, Hybrids, or those from the Church of All. Considering that the New Earth Government does not truly acknowledge how great a threat the Esoteric Order is, the Eldritch Society is happy to pick up the slack whenever possible.

Aside from these two, the Society generally fights against any cult it finds in the shadows, even going so far as to police the arcane underground against truly heinous threats. The Children of Chaos, however, always remain the primary focus.

Here we will take a broad look at the Eldritch Society around the world. For more detailed New Earth Government information on these areas, please see *Mortal Remains*, p. 38-45.

NORTH AMERICA

The biggest concentration of the Eldritch Society is in the New Earth Government's home town of Chicago. When the Founders first fled the Chrysalis Corporation, they needed someplace that had the kind of security that would save them from the minions of the cult – or at least give them an advantage. Since then, the Society has more or less stayed.

North America has its advantages. Not only is security in the heart of the continent tighter because of the government, the cults tend to lay lower here than they do in other parts of the world. Furthermore, the headquarters of the Ashcroft Foundation is also here and whatever the Foundation touches seems to be better for their ministrations. The true fronts of the Aeon War also have not yet begun to ravage the continent, so the Eldritch Society has less to worry about from the overt war as they wage theirs in the shadows.

Los Angeles sees a lot of Chrysalis Corporation activity, as a major port and a primary manufacturer of pop culture. The Corporation's operations blend right into the chaos of the town, and agents of the cult do not need to be as careful here as they do in other parts of the continent. The company seems to test their most anarchic inventions in Los Angeles, including the introduction of bad drugs and resulting in many disappearances. However, it is here that the Society faces another enemy of which it often runs afoul – the Disciples of Death's Shadow. The degenerate servants of the Dead God have overrun the city, and the Eldritch Society fights them as often, if not more so, than the Chrysalis Corporation.

The Pacific Northwest has seen a lot of Eldritch Society activity in recent times. The Children of Chaos had a lot of traffic going through the area, most especially Seattle, leading up to the Fall of 2086. All kinds of horrible things happened and went through the arcologies of the Pacific Northwest and there were Tagers that even temporarily relocated to help out with the fight. In what might be the greatest single victory of the Eldritch Society ever, they stopped the cult's massive ritual. However, the Children of Chaos have taken things personally and have more than doubled their efforts in hunting Tagers in the Pacific Northwest. It is a dangerous place for Tagers to be, at least for the foreseeable future.

The Migou invasion of Alaska claimed the lives of many members of the Eldritch Society. Tagers have combed the ruins looking for survivors while evading Migou patrols. However, little remains and many former mortal operatives of the Society have been enslaved by the alien insects. However, the Chrysalis Corporation is, for some reason, still sending Dhohanoids into the area as if they are looking for something. To that end, the Eldritch Society continues to send packs of Tagers north, in an effort to both stop the Chrysalis Corporation and also to find out what they find so interesting that they would be so far behind enemy lines.

SOUTH AMERICA

South America enjoys the same sort of atmosphere as its neighbors to the north. The true dangers of the Aeon War have yet to ravage the continent, leaving a place of relative peace and prosperity. This puts the Chrysalis Corporation in a position where they need to keep to the shadows the way they do in North America.

Two of the largest population centers in South America are also the primary staging points for Chrysalis Corporation operations. The Corporation holds many offices in Rio De Janeiro, but the biggest threat here is the aid the cult provides to the nearby coastal territories of the Esoteric Order of Dagon. Buenos Aires is also of significance, as it is the center for both the New Earth Government Armed Forces and the Chrysalis Corporation to deal with the Migou incursion from Antarctica. For the Corporation, however, this city is a tactical point for their regular missions to the frozen continent in their attempt to unearth lost secrets that the Migou have missed. The operations that the Eldritch Society

can stop coming out of Buenos Aires means less dangerous missions into Antarctica to stop their explorations.

The crowded streets of South American arcologies, including Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, and San Paolo, are the perfect hunting ground for the Chrysalis Corporation to kidnap unwilling test subjects for their nefarious experiments. The missing persons index in many of these cities is higher than average, but the Corporation makes sure it doesn't become alarming. The Eldritch Society spends time patrolling the streets to help keep citizens safe from such predation.

Because of the population density, the Chrysalis Corporation does a large amount of recruiting. There are many universities and many people for general labor – as well as a large pool of potential Dhohanoids. Though the Corporation doesn't have the good will among the people of South America it has elsewhere in the world, the opportunities they present are appealing to many. As a result, the Eldritch Society engages in a lot of renegade propaganda against the Corporation, hoping to provide just enough doubt for potential recruits to be wary. It sometimes works.

There are mystical places and ruins that are part of the long history of South America. However, the Chrysalis Corporation already has legitimate claims to many of them and is simply parked on the rest. They viciously defend these sites from all comers and they are very dangerous places to try to infiltrate. The powers that be think that such ruins may be of significant use to the Eldritch Society, so there is much effort spent trying to infiltrate or take these places. The strange thing is that those who have experienced such things claim that though the Chrysalis Corporation guards these places, they are not doing anything with them. It's as if they know something no one else does.

EUROPE

The Aeon War has taken its toll on Europe. The Migou press down from the north while the Rapine Storm approaches from the east. The Esoteric Order of Dagon plays all over the Atlantic Coastline, daring to push into the Mediterranean Sea. The Chrysalis Corporation has fertile ground in which to play, with two allies close by.

In and amongst the chaos, the Chrysalis Corporation has stepped in with highly effective and highly publicized relief efforts. This initiative has created a high opinion of the company overall among the population. Odense and Volgograd are two cities in which the Chrysalis Corporation is highly lauded by the refugee populations. The company has especially used its position to gather favor with the local governments, who will often go out of their way to help the Corporation. Combined with the confusion of the war and refugee situation, the Chrysalis Corporation gets many favors and can operate more openly here than in many places in the world. This presents a problem for the Eldritch Society. Attacking targets that are more out in the open and who are among those considered heroes makes their job harder than it should be.

Another problem is that these two refugee cities are also used by the Corporation as gateways into territory where the New Earth Government cannot go. They can operate in these places with little scrutiny from the government, who has their own problems with which to deal. The Chrysalis Corporation can head into Migou territory from Odense and into mostly friendly Rapine Storm lands from Volgograd. This latter city is often used as a staging ground to ship weapons and ammunition to the monstrous cult.

The Corporation also uses its status in this area to more easily help the Esoteric Order of Dagon. Chrysalis agents can reach their outposts easily, slipping past the New Earth Government net with shipments of all kinds to help their cousins find their lost city.

However, the forces of the Chrysalis Corporation are not the only enemies here. The Disciples of Death's Shadow have moved into the refugee cities to prey on those transient populations. All kinds of heinous things go on under their direction, including drug trafficking, slavery (both sexual and otherwise), and recruitment for the cult. The Eldritch Society has appointed themselves the protectors of the refugees, who have few to protect them so close to the front lines. They fight as desperately against the Death Shadows here as they do the Chrysalis Corporation. Unfortunately, the two cults often cooperate, creating a situation that makes it very difficult to do permanent damage to either.

The Eldritch Society has their work cut out for them. The Chrysalis Corporation wields more power and has allies in even closer geographic proximity in Europe than anywhere in the world besides Africa. Missions are going all the time and there is little rest for those fighting the Shadow War. Add to that the threat of the Disciples of Death's Shadow and things reach a dangerous boiling point.

To make matters even more complicated, the Eldritch Society sometimes does what they can to help the beleaguered New Earth Government. They will, from time to time, go on reconnaissance missions into Migou or Rapine Storm territory just to provide the Armed Forces with intelligence they otherwise most likely would not have gotten. This information is filtered through the Global Intelligence Agency, however, and is making the federal agency look good – which only helps the relationship.

ASIA

The broad lands of Asia are a difficult place for citizens of the New Earth Government. The Disciples of the Rapine Storm own a great share of the continent, coupled with the Migou's northern occupation. Unfortunately for the Eldritch Society, the Chrysalis Corporation has special dispensation to operate behind enemy lines and packs of Tagers sometimes must follow.

Fortunately, the Disciples of the Rapine Storm are a dangerous and unpredictable lot. This means that agents of the Chrysalis Corporation sometimes meet with hostilities from their supposed allies. While the relationship works in general, especially with the

Corporation filtering weapons, ammunition, and mecha parts to the Storm, it is one more sticking point that is preventing the balance from tipping.

The Eldritch Society knows that the Children of Chaos have something special going on the Plateau of Leng. There are rumors and evidence, but they make little difference. The Society simply cannot find the mystically hidden plateau. There are those who volunteer for missions to go deep into hostile territory to attempt to find the place, knowing the difference it would make for the world. However, few such volunteers return and the Society allows few to go for just this reason.

The largest presence of the Chrysalis Corporation in Asia proper is in Mumbai, though the Disciples of the Rapine Storm may soon come knocking. Fortunately, as it is the Corporation's center of business in this part of the world, agents of the Children of Chaos tend to behave themselves. This gives the Eldritch Society a more level playing field for operations here, something of which they take great advantage.


The Middle East is a dangerous place for the Eldritch Society, as the pull of the Director can be felt even here. Fortunately, there

is little in the way of Chrysalis Corporation special operations here – it's mostly business as usual. Still, the work of the Society extends to these lands, and the influence from Johannesburg doesn't make it easy.

Despite a robust presence in Japan, the Chrysalis Corporation is not the main enemy here. The Disciples of Death's Shadow have again moved in and become very active. Tokyo especially sees their wide-scale predations. For the most part, the Chrysalis Corporation stays out of the Death Shadows' way, helping out where they can. This means that the Eldritch Society in Japan must fight differently than how they are accustomed and their foe is more deeply embedded in the infrastructure of the country. Instead of fighting a monstrous foe, they must fight against peoples' own dark desires.

As in Europe, the Eldritch Society feels the need to help out the efforts of the New Earth Government. The Society has the capability to send Tagers into the territory of the Rapine Storm to gather intelligence that might normally be impossible for the NEG to find. Again, such information is filtered through the Global Intelligence Agency, who is finding the Society to be a very valuable ally.





Here, more than anyplace in the world besides Africa, agents of the Chrysalis Corporation operate pretty much openly. The company enjoys high regard for their relief efforts and the public values their presence. It is yet another difficult part of the world for the Eldritch Society.

AFRICA

The dark continent is the stronghold of the Chrysalis Corporation and the company wields an enormous amount of influence everywhere. The company has assured that it has become an integral part of Africa. The Corporation holds sway over police and politicians, and anyone else who doesn't go along with their plans is intimidated or killed. Agents of Chrysalis can pretty much operate openly and even get away with murder. It is not an agreeable or safe place for the Eldritch Society.

Johannesburg, as one might expect, is nearly impossible for the Society to operate within. The entire arcology has been built around the gigantic headquarters of the Chrysalis Corporation, known colloquially as the Castle. It is almost as if the Director has extended his eyes and ears to his agents, for Tagers or undercover agents are quickly discovered and hunted. The arcology is ground zero for the power of the Chrysalis Corporation and it is apparent.

Those Tagers that volunteer to operate in and around Johannesburg are known as Cleavers, for they dare to cleave deep into the heart of the enemy. They are the bravest of the brave, the most daring of the daring, choosing to operate in small cells right under the nose of an enemy that is actively seeking them. There are many, even other Tagers, who regard them as down-right crazy. Unfortunately, Cleavers have a limited effective window of time before they become compromised or the situation bears down on them, so they volunteer in six month tours with a minimum of six months away. Any Tager can volunteer to be a Cleaver, but some serious recommendations must come with the request. The Eldritch Society likes to make sure their Tagers have a chance of surviving.

Despite the fact the Esoteric Order of Dagon stays under control here and that the Disciples of the Rapine Storm and the Migou won't set foot on the continent because of the Director, Africa is the most dangerous place in the entire world for agents of the Eldritch Society. North Africa, as far away from Johannesburg as one can get, is the safest place on the continent to operate.

AUSTRALIA

While New Zealand is of little interest to the Chrysalis Corporation, and thus the Eldritch Society, the continent of Australia seems to be calling to the cult. There is something in the deserts of Australia that is attracting everyone's interest – except for the New Earth Government. The military is bound up fighting the incursion of the Disciples of the Rapine Storm and the Esoteric Order of Dagon's coastal outposts, leaving no one to fight against an even more deadly threat. That threat is the possibility that either the Migou or the Chrysalis Corporation might discover some of the alien secrets buried in the ruins of the Great Race.

The Eldritch Society has taken it upon themselves to not only foil the Chrysalis Corporation at every turn, but also to flush them out in an attempt for either the New Earth Government or the Migou to take notice. The cult runs a better chance than either of actually unlocking the secrets hidden here, so it must be the first to be eliminated.

The increasing military presence in Australia can make it difficult to operate covertly here, but things will become easier if the chaos increases. That is something for which no one in the New Earth Government or Eldritch Society is wishing.

Unfortunately for the Society, there is goodwill toward the Chrysalis Corporation in this part of the world due to their relief efforts. This is something the Corporation uses to their advantage as often as possible.

ELSEWHERE

The Arctic is a frigid land of gigantic floating ice floes. However, it is the place where the Chrysalis Corporation found the *Ta'ge Fragments* and it is someplace where they have not given up looking for further forgotten treasures. Since the enemy of the Society still roams these lands, packs of Tagers must also. Who knows if there is still anything there, but the Society cannot risk the possibility that there is. The occasional Migou patrol spices things up from time to time.

Trying to go to Antarctica is suicide. It is the primary base of the Migou on Earth and their Hive Ship hovers in geosynchronous orbit high above the planet. However, anyone who delves deeply into the occult knows that there are things hidden on the continent – most especially the Chrysalis Corporation. It is widely believed that the Migou have not yet found all of the lost places and secrets of Antarctica, given their focus on the Aeon War, and the Corporation sends intrepid teams to cut deep behind enemy lines in an effort to find them.

As in Johannesburg, the Cleavers are represented. Those who have the guts to brave missions into Antarctica deserve the special recognition that comes from membership in the Cleavers. While operating in Johannesburg has a limitation due to security measures, there are no such rules in place here. Cleavers can go back and forth to Antarctica as often as they want, though preparing and planning such missions takes time. It is unfortunate that so many Cleavers die attempting to penetrate deep into Antarctica, but there are legends among them of great ruined cities in the ice. That alone is enough to keep them going back for more.

The Eldritch Society is aware that the solar colonies were home to many Chrysalis Corporation initiatives before their fall to the Migou. Though few believe that anyone or anything could have survived the Migou attack, the Society is keeping a close eye on technological advancement. The minute the New Earth Government has the capability to outrun the Hive Ship and once again enter the galaxy, the Society will be working to send Tagers with them – just in case.

LIFE AS A MORTAL IN THE SOCIETY

When all is said and done, it is clear that the Eldritch Society is fighting a desperate war for the continuation of the mortal races of Earth. It is an organization to be proud of serving. Many people either cannot or will not undergo the Rite of Sacred Union, but the Society is primarily focused on the activities of its mystical warriors. What is it like for them on a daily basis?

No doubt, participating in the Shadow War is dangerous. Even the completely mortal agents of the Society face death on a regular basis. It is even more terrifying for them, considering they do not have a monstrous form to help them in facing the Dhohandroids of the Chrysalis Corporation. Any ordinary person that is part of the Society should have the sense to engage in some sort of combat training. The organization provides varying sorts of firearms, weapons, and hand-to-hand training for those who wish to learn.

One of the great advantages a combat-trained purely mortal member of the Eldritch Society gains is that of surprise. Dhohandroids almost always underestimate mortals – that sort of arrogance is built into their systems. This gives such people the ability to take a Dhohandroid out or down before the creature has any idea the prey they face has teeth. Sometimes, surprisingly, purely mortal combatants can be more effective than Tagers, at least in the short term.

Those who have chosen to become a part of the conspiracy are often those who have come face to face with it. In many cases, they simply would no longer be safe in their everyday lives. The government certainly couldn't protect them. The best they could do is rant and rave until they were institutionalized, and even then the Chrysalis Corporation could easily reach them. The protection that the Eldritch Society offers is invaluable and something to which many cling.

However, such protection comes with a price. Being a part of the conspiracy means that one's friends and family are in danger, in addition to oneself. Even the purely mortal servants of the Society must effectively give up their lives to be a part of the Shadow War. They assume false identities and maintain sporadic contact at best with what they once knew as their lives. It is a price most are willing to pay.

Perhaps one of the hardest things about maintaining one's normal mortal status within the Society is coming face to face with one's limitations. Non-Tager's are quite vulnerable and fragile. The foe they face is vastly superior to them. When the day is done, ordinary mortals need to deal with the realization that they will always be second-best to the Tager population. This is not necessarily a bad thing, especially if one is invested with maintaining one's own pure mortality. Most are quite happy to still be 100% mortal, even if they have twinges of jealousy from time to time.

However, some people make this mean something that it doesn't necessarily mean. There are those that walk around with chips on their shoulders, feeling that it is unfair that the Tagers should

occupy the space of privilege that they do. Once they get too big for their britches, they are casually reminded that Tagers have chosen to give up their pure mortality to join in symbiosis with a monstrous creature that is not completely understood. They have taken an enormous risk to become what they are, typically far outshining the risk ordinary mortals took to become a part of the Society.

Everyday people, on the other hand, join the Society because it represents something to them. It is a place where one can make a true and sincere difference, the likes of which cannot be had elsewhere. People do have the option of joining up with the New Earth Government in one of many capacities, but each of them fundamentally represents being a cog in the machine. In the Eldritch Society, people get to make a difference every day and see the impact their assistance makes in the world.

The other part of the equation is asking the question, "if not me, who?" The Shadow War is aptly named – it is a secret war waged far away from the eyes of the public. It is named so because the organization's foe is so insidious that it takes a specialized group to even think about combating them. Those who choose to be part of the Eldritch Society get to be part of the renegade good guys, which appeals to many. The psychological reward is not to be underestimated.

Unless one is a para-psychic or had the misfortune of being tainted by the Outsiders, the Rite of Sacred Union will always be hanging over one's head. Once one has refused the Rite, there is no pressure within the Society. The organization knows just how harrowing such a thing is and what must be given up to have it, so they do not shame those who have chosen otherwise. However, it is still there and those who could be capable of undergoing it often feel a pull to do so. It is a constant internal struggle for many – to risk all for the greater good. There are certainly those who later change their minds and do become Tagers, feeling that they are wasting their time functionally behind a desk when they could be in the field.

Of course there are those who do not fit the profile for those who are likely to survive the Rite of Sacred Union. These folks don't ever have to concern themselves with a pull to be a Tager, as that option has been removed entirely. They find their equilibrium within the Society and contribute in the ways they know best.

Regardless of anything, the Society values its members who hold onto their pure mortality and values their contribution. The powers that be make sure this attitude pervades the organization, for without the profound efforts of the support networks, the Society would get little done.

In the end, life as a pure mortal within the Eldritch Society has its challenges, as it does everywhere. The difference is that these brave souls know the difference they're making and are the kind of extraordinary people who are willing to give up everything to make it.

RELATIONS WITH THE NEW EARTH GOVERNMENT

The Eldritch Society was formed out of a schism in the Chrysalis Corporation. The Founders knew full-well the extent to which the Corporation held influence in the New Earth Government. The company was, after all, a key player in many important government initiatives and supplier to the military. If the nascent Society would have come forward to the government, someone at the Chrysalis Corporation would have found out and humanity's only champion in the Shadow War would have been snuffed out before it even started.

Since that first decision, the Eldritch Society has chosen not to trust the New Earth Government. It's not that the Society believes that the NEG is an antagonist, only that the government has been corrupted by the influence of the cult that works in such close proximity. The chronic inefficiency of big government creates a situation in which any initiative the Eldritch Society might bring to expose the truth to the powers that be would be crushed and all evidence of it erased.

That does not mean that the Society has given up. The New Earth Government would be a powerful ally. Just think of how quickly the Chrysalis Corporation might fall with help from the government and law enforcement agencies. It is a dream to which many cling. However, there has been no proposition that has been powerful enough to sway the belief that corruption will cause the New Earth Government to betray their saviors.

To that end, the Eldritch Society maintains several contacts with select elements of the government. The most prominent and perhaps most promising is with the Global Intelligence Agency. Contrary to what people want to believe, the GIA is into all kinds of illegal things. However, they are all in the interests of the New Earth Government's victory. They are an agency that isn't afraid to get its hands dirty to accomplish their goals, who isn't afraid of breaking a few rules to do what needs to be done. It is that attitude which has gotten the attention of the Society, who can totally relate.

The agreement, as it stands right now, is very informal. It is mostly a back alley relationship maintained by select members of the Global Intelligence Agency. When the Eldritch Society acquires information that may be of use to the GIA, they pass it along to their contacts. When the GIA learns something that may be important to the Society, they likewise pass it along. For now, most contact between the organizations is simply mutual information exchange.

However, sometimes such assistance is more direct. There have been times when GIA operatives working undercover have found themselves face to face with Dhohanoids or stumbling into a Chrysalis Corporation operation that will get them killed. The Eldritch Society helps out when it can. Likewise, there are times when Taggers find themselves in some kind of legal trouble or are in need of extraction from a place the Society cannot reach. The Global Intelligence Agency helps get them out of such hot water. This aspect of the relationship is not relied upon, but it is something that has been of great use to both parties.

The Eldritch Society has not been forthcoming with what is truly going on. After all, the GIA is part of the government and thus could be infiltrated or influenced by the Children of Chaos. The GIA knows a few basic and important facts. To them, the Eldritch Society is a secret society waging their own war against a dangerous cult that's hiding within the New Earth Government. They understand that this cult holds influence over the powers that be, necessitating the Society's secrecy. They also know that this cult's primary agents are monstrous shapeshifters, capable of blending in with everyone else. In essence, they have the sides right and know who their allies and enemies are and the agency is content with that – for now.

What is most surprising about this relationship is that some of those involved on the Global Intelligence Agency side are quite high ranking. It's amazing that people of such high stature within a federal agency are willing to take so much on faith – it must be a product of the times, as well as the circumstances that forged the relationship. The Eldritch Society enjoys this benefit, however, as these ranking officials can pull much greater strings than those in the trenches.

The situation with the GIA is building some trust between the Eldritch Society and the government. Some of the things the Society does is to test the agency to see if it will stand up. The hope is that the Global Intelligence Agency will be a portal through which the Society can reach the government and a champion that will win their cause aid. Without broader reaching assistance, the Society knows that the odds of winning the Shadow War are stacked against them.

There is another agency in which the Eldritch Society has taken interest – the Office of Internal Security. If there is one group that has the misfortune of running afoul of both Society and Chrysalis Corporation operations, it is the OIS. The agency polices those areas of the world where both groups are most likely to be found. To date, the OIS policy has been to kill everything and wonder if there were questions later. No one has questioned this policy, so it is likely to continue indefinitely.

The Office of Internal Security knows very little. They know that there is some kind of group or cult out there that behaves a little like organized crime, whose primary agents are monsters that can look like people. They also know there is some other group fighting against them. The agency doesn't really care if it is some kind of cult war or arcane struggle, only that such groups operate within the arcane underground and are often part of raids. Most of the marines trained to serve on OIS response teams just kill whatever is inhuman and in front of them and learn not to think too much about it.

On the other hand, the OIS would be the perfect ally for the Eldritch Society. The Chrysalis Corporation, by its very existence, is a violation of the laws the agency upholds. The agency has broad leeway to do its job. Furthermore, it already lives in a world where it could understand the Society. However, in-roads into the organization have proven very difficult to acquire.

DIRTY SECRETS

The Eldritch Society is not an organization of saints. The good guys they may be, from the mortal races of Earth's perspective, but they are fighting a war and dealing with some very dangerous magicks. There are things that they are up to that the powers that be don't want the average member of the Society to know about.

Perhaps the dirtiest secret that the Eldritch Society covers up, even to themselves, is that sometimes Tagers go bad. Some decide that the tactics of the Society are not effective enough, that they are not aggressive enough, or that the whole Shadow War is for the birds. For those in the two former categories, they most often try to push the boundaries or outright rebel and form their own splinter groups. For the latter, membership in the Society is for life. The response to any Tager going rogue is death – something few have the presence of mind to ask when taking their vows.

Unfortunately, only Tagers can hunt other Tagers. This is where things can enter the realm of messy politics. It is difficult to ask one pack to hunt another and it is something they do not like to do. In fact, many will outright refuse. However, it is policy of the Eldritch Society that there be only one Society and that all Tagers are a part of it. Violate that and someone will come for you. The battles are bloody and brutal and there are usually losses on both sides, and no one comes back from such an experience unchanged.

If such practice was common knowledge among the membership of the Eldritch Society, it would certainly cause a stir. Most would never even think that there was any other option than towing the party line – and in practice there is not.

Most believe that the process of becoming a Tager is harmless, other than the threats posed by the Shadow War. Once the symbiont is bonded, it's all over. Life continues and all is well. Unfortunately, that isn't always true. There are rare times when a Tager begins to exhibit unusual symptoms. First, the parts of the Tager's personality that are those of the symbiont become radically pronounced, to the point that the Tagers friends begin to wonder if he is cracking up. Second, the Tager begins to experience a skin-rash, mild at first but growing in intensity. It appears to all examinations as if the Tager's skin is drying out, cracking and flaking off. Unfortunately, this goes so deep that within a few months, the Tager's body is raw and scabby.

Then, suddenly, one day something goes terribly wrong. The Tager shifts and the symbiont appears to start breaking down his body. It is an ugly affair that lasts up to fifteen minutes and results in a puddle of viscous, reeking flesh. The result is always death. There is no known way to stop this and it has been fatal in every known case.

The Eldritch Society does not advertise that this is even a possibility. Whenever it happens, the metamorphosed leaders of the Society visit those that were close to the victim and request that the occurrence never be spoken of. The victim is honored as

someone who has died for the cause, with a cover story that gives him a heroic death. There is enough instability in the Shadow War that rumors of fatal Tager diseases need never circulate.

Of a similar vein, most believe that the process of metamorphosis, while terrifying, to be perfectly safe. At least what most take that to mean is that there is no chance that the Tager inside the cocoon can die. This is not strictly true, again. Though also rare, there are some times those Tagers never make it out of the cocoon. Something goes horribly wrong during the change and all that's left after a month is a chrysalis of decaying organic goo accompanied by an unwholesome smell.

The symptoms that something is wrong vary. The first and most obvious symptom is that the cocoon starts to change in ways not typical to those normal for the metamorphosing Tager. For example, the chrysalis of an Inferno drops in temperature or that of a Bloodgod begins to pulse uncontrollably, like fibrillation in a heart. The second and less obvious can be sensed by touching the cocoon, if it is the type of chrysalis that can be touched without harm. There is normally a certain amount of movement or vibration within, but things become deathly still for those in danger.

The reason these symptoms are important is that a Tager has about a 48-hour window in which it can be saved. If one knows what to look for, the minute something is firmly identified as wrong, action can be taken. The Tager needs to be removed from the cocoon as quickly and carefully as possible, something most often easier said than done. Some of the cocoons are particularly difficult to get into and the Tager inside might wind up being harmed by his own chrysalis on the way out. Once the Tager is freed, he will need the services of an emergency medical technician as his regeneration is fouled up for the first few hours. If he can make it out of the woods, his symbiont, though confused, will eventually stabilize and he will regenerate as if nothing had happened. The experience, however, is usually psychologically scarring.

Despite the horrifying and failed experience, such Tagers are not forever barred from the path of metamorphosis. They can, if they so choose, attempt to entreat their symbiont once they are again ready. However, most who experience this sort of thing are not eager to give it a shot again and there is no guarantee that these complications won't happen a second (or even third) time. Those that have come this far aren't easily dissuaded and they find themselves entering a cocoon once again.

Again, this is not something the Society likes to advertise. Few know that this sort of thing is even a possibility, so few know to keep watch. However, if anything is ever reported through the Lorekeeper or Operator Networks, a specialist is dispatched and all efforts are made to save the Tager in question. The Tager and his pack are asked to keep the incident quiet, informed that such things are rare and the revelation of such may only serve to harm morale among those others that seek the path of metamorphosis.

Taryn didn't know if she was going to make it.

It was pushing hour 30. Even after all of the intense training, she was not prepared for how truly grueling the Rite was. She hadn't eaten, slept, or gone to the bathroom for nearly three days. Even with her natural knack for meditation, her body's demands were starting to sharply poke at her. She had no idea how Kamariya was still chanting and gesturing coherently after this long.

As if that wasn't enough, the mystical forces at play were getting scarier by the minute. Day one was pretty innocuous, with a little wind blowing here, some shimmering there, and some creepy feeling all around. Day two is when her mind started to make contact with a world beyond our world. The visions that came with that were none too pleasant, primarily because her mind was ill-equipped to translate that kind of sensory input.

Now Taryn was sure that something else was here, circling her unseen. It was something from her visions, something she couldn't quite process. Something in her had called to it, across space and time. Academically, Taryn knew that she was going to be joining in symbiosis with something inhuman, but now that the thing was actually here and it was real she was having second thoughts.

She could feel the invisible presence closer now. It almost felt like it was bumping up against her, like it was inspecting her. Taryn knew why. It was trying to figure out if she was strong enough to be a predator or if she was going to end up as prey. The moment of truth was coming.

Suddenly, a pillar of light shot down from nowhere, encompassing her. She was jerked into the air, held there as if crucified. The thing she'd felt circling began to touch this reality.

It was then she noticed the chanting had stopped. Then she noticed that the sorcerers' mouths were still moving, though she heard nothing. Their movements slowed and slowed and slowed and then everything stopped. Everything, except Taryn – and the thing.

It was no longer invisible, but rather an ethereal presence. It was enormous, way bigger than Taryn had expected. How could a thing that size create the monstrous shell that were Tagers?

Then, without warning, she and it existed in the same space and the same timeless moment together. To say it entered her would not properly describe the experience. The entity invaded her space – body, mind, and soul – and was now trying to merge with it.

Now Taryn understood the harsh training she'd suffered. No amount of physical discomfort or pain could compare to this. Her mortal body was simply not designed to contain this sort of power, to merge with

a being of this magnitude. It was an agony there were no words to describe. If she could not keep herself together and master the part of this entity that was joining with her, she would be torn apart.

It seemed to last an eternity. She wrestled with these overwhelming alien sensations piece by piece, limb by limb. All the while, she could feel the symbiont infusing itself into her soul, literally becoming a part of her. This whole time Taryn had thought symbiosis meant that she and it would remain somehow separate. Now she understood that symbiosis meant becoming one and the same.

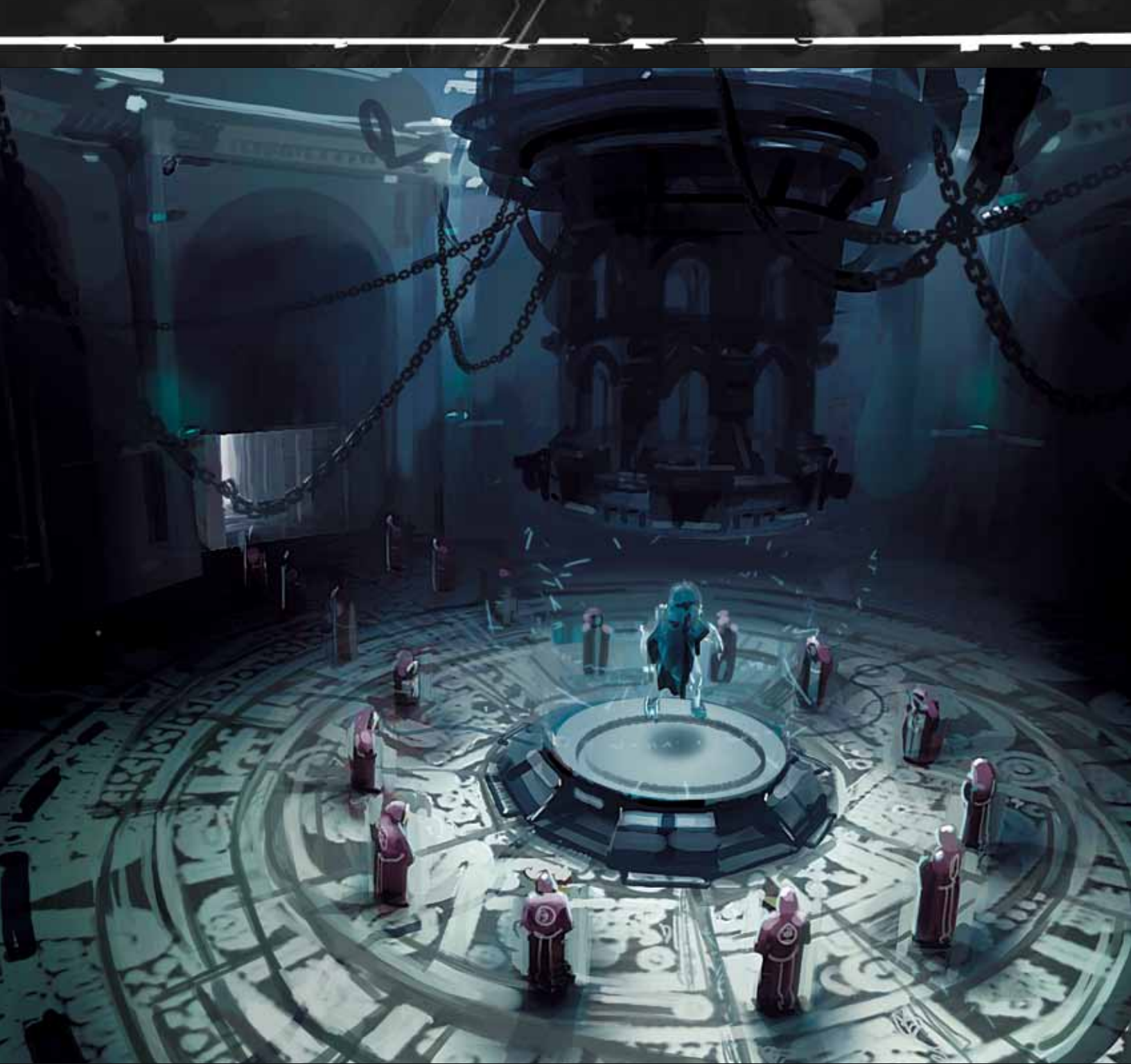
Each time the power of the creature threatened to rip her to pieces, she called upon the reservoir of indomitable will she had learned to harness. Each time she did, it hurt a little less.

Taryn could begin to feel time slowly start to flow once again. Ghostly and alien flesh and limbs began to glow all around her body. It was the strangest sensation. The flesh that was beginning to form around her didn't feel like a shell. It felt like it was hers.

The entity was gone. Actually, gone would be the wrong word for it. It was still here. She was it and it was her. There was no more division.

Time returned to normal and Taryn could hear the chanting meet a climax. However, she heard it like she'd never heard anything before. In fact, all her senses were like that. The world opened up to her in new ways. She could see life in the sorcerers around her, feel the energy that made them. Then she noticed that flesh forming around her had become corporeal. It was her new body and it was something to behold.





The raw power she now possessed was intoxicating. The blades snapped out of her arms and they felt like she'd always had them. Strength rippled through her every muscle and she knew she could move in ways no mortal ever could. The power surged through her in waves, each one making her feel more indestructible than the one before it.

Then one last surge hit her, like an otherworldly umbilical snapping. Taryn dropped to her knees, buckling under the pressure. Then, as quickly as it came, it was gone.

It was over. She had won. Taryn had faced the thing from beyond time and space and she had the will to conquer it. She was now and forever a Tager.

Finally, she stood, feeling the power coursing through her veins. There was no feeling in the world that could have compared to this. It was the feeling of being something to be feared.

Kamariya fell to her knees, exhausted, sweat dripping down her face. "You have been chosen. You and the Phantom are now one."

Something possessed Taryn and her mouth split open. She let loose a deafening otherworldly howl that echoed off of the ritual chamber's walls, creating a cacophony that announced to the world she was here.

Tonight, the trail of bodies would only be further testament.

chapter three

eldritch acolytes

There are many types of Characters that make up Eldritch Society games that aren't Tagers. There are also those Tagers who have chosen to go beyond the pale. That's what this chapter contains – new options for Characters, both Tager and non-Tager, rare Tager manifestations, and Tager metamorphosis.

However, first let's look at some new Qualities that can apply to Eldritch Society Characters, as well as how Dhohanoid Characters (regardless of creative background) don't fit into Eldritch Society games.

NEW ASSETS

GIFTED MULTI-TASKER (2)

There are those people who truly have no trouble doing multiple things at once. Your character is one of those people, most likely an Operator in the Eldritch Society. His Multiple Action Penalty is reduced, as long as mental Actions are a part of the mix. If your Character chooses to take one physical Action and one mental Action in a turn, or two mental Actions, he only suffers a -1 Multiple Action Penalty to his Tests. If he chooses to take one physical Action and two mental Actions, or three mental Actions, he only suffers a -3 Multiple Action Penalty to his Tests. Mental Actions can include technical tasks, such as tasks utilizing the Computer or Technician skills.

SOCIETY PARA-PSYCHIC (2)

Your Character is a para-psychic who has chosen to be a part of the Eldritch Society. He also has chosen not to register, to operate on the fringes of society. As such, the Eldritch Society looks out for your Character and helps keep him safe from the authorities – and also does not judge him.

SOCIETY SORCERER (3)

Your Character is a sorcerer who has chosen to be a part of the Eldritch Society. He has also chosen not to register and avoid the chains of society. As such, he has access to nearly all First and Second Order illegal magicks, and can gain access to such Third Order magicks if a situation warrants. The Eldritch Society also helps watch out for your Character and helps him dodge authority.

TAGER: RARE (1)

Prerequisite: Tager Asset, as well as the Tager: Exceptional Asset for the Efreet.

Not only does your Character have what it takes to be a Tager, he's fortunate enough to have been chosen by a rare Tager – like the Efreet or the Widow (see p. 60-61). Choose either an Efreet or Widow symbiont and add its powers to your Character. Only Characters who have both the Tager and Tager: Rare Assets can be Widow Tagers, and only those with the Tager, Tager: Exceptional, and Tager: Rare Assets can be Efreet Tagers.

The rules for Orgone access and Insanity Tests apply as they would for normal Tagers (Widows) or Exceptional Tagers (Efreet).

NEW DRAWBACKS

EXAGGERATED SYMBIONT (2)

Prerequisite: Tager Asset

Your Character's symbiont is particularly influential on his personality. All of the usual traits that become a part of a Tager's personality based on his symbiont are exaggerated in your Character. For example, if your Character is a Whisper, he is particularly feisty. If he is a Nightmare, he is particularly murderous. Whatever manifestation he is, he displays the symbiont's desires in a way few do.

INSISTENT SYMBIONT (4)

Prerequisite: Tager Asset

Your Character's symbiont has control most don't. Sometimes, when your Character is asleep, his symbiont manifests and does whatever it is it wants to do. The symbiont typically goes out to eliminate the Character's enemies or hunt Dhohanoids. It operates the same way as if your Character had been knocked unconscious, though with greater will and goals. Your Character has no memory of this activity and typically has no idea that it is even happening. The symbiont can get the Character in trouble or even severely harmed, though regeneration mitigates that. This can be a very dangerous Drawback to have.

DHOHANOIDS IN THE ELDRITCH SOCIETY

So, after reading all this, someone is going to think to himself, "I want to play a Dhohanoid who has gone renegade like the Founders! I want to play a good Dhohanoid!"

While we applaud your desire to come up with interesting and unusual Character concepts, the answer is no. There are no such things as renegade Dhohanoids. Even if there were, they would not join with Tagers to fight in the Shadow War against those that conceived them.

The process that creates Dhohanoids turns people into monsters. They don't come back from that. The instincts that are built into Dhohanoids put them squarely on the wrong side of the Aeon War from those that fight with the Eldritch Society. Period. Even if rare Dhohanoids can have "good" urges for a brief period of time, they will eventually come to their senses.

The Founders were an extreme case. They were Dhohanoids, but they came under the influence of powerful lost knowledge. They did manage to break away from the Chrysalis Corporation, they did manage to create the Eldritch Society, but then they sacrificed themselves knowing that their inhuman natures would once again take them over.

In short, Dhohanoid Characters are appropriate for only one type of game – Chrysalis Corporation games. If you want to play an Eldritch Society game, play Eldritch Society Characters, of which this section should give you some new options.



LOREKEEPER

There are few who understand the secrets of the universe like the Lorekeepers of the Eldritch Society. They have access to archives the likes of which most occult scholars only dream. Lost and forbidden lore are their daily bread and they are the sole keepers of the sought-after *Ta'ge Fragments*.

Lorekeepers are the specialized scholars of the Eldritch Society. They maintain the vast secret libraries of the society, take reports from Tager packs, and train potential Tagers. It is believed that the mental and educational preparation that Lorekeepers teach helps potentials survive the Rite of Sacred Union. They are also keepers of certain meditative techniques many believe have their roots in the mysterious *Ta'ge Fragments*.

In addition to their duties as educators of potential Tagers and support for Tager packs, Lorekeepers are responsible for their diaries. Lorekeepers all over the world keep records of the activities and findings of those packs under their aegis, keeping a record of the Shadow War and compiling important information and uncovered secrets for the entire Lorekeeper network to utilize. Some practice sorcery, almost universally unregistered, but most stick to being fountains of important knowledge.

Attributes: Higher than average Intellect and Perception recommended.

Suggested Skills: Education, History, Languages, Occult, Research

Suggested Qualities: Eidetic Memory (3)

Required Qualities: Duty (3)

Special Gear: A small basic personal occult reference library and a good portable computer.

Sample Attributes:

Human/Nazzadi

Agility 5/6

Intellect 8/8

Perception 6/6

Presence 5/5

Strength 5/5

Tenacity 7/6

Sample Skills:

Appraisal: Student

Computer: Student

Education: Adept

History: Student

Languages (Arabic): Novice

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Languages (Latin): Novice

Languages (R'lyehian): Novice (if Human)

Languages (Tsath-yo): Novice

Literacy: Adept

Occult: Adept

Parapsychology: Student

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Research: Novice

Trivia: Student



OPERATOR

Regardless of what some packs might think, the Eldritch Society would not function without the Operator network. Operators are those gifted individuals who, at the drop of a hat, have information for the packs under their accountability and who coordinate the actions of the packs once they've decided on their courses of action.

Operators typically sit in special rooms designed by the Eldritch Society. Their communications and computer networks are heavily encrypted and there are Operators whose sole job it is to make sure that their illegal activities and computer use are not traced. They sit at an information hub, with access to high-level computing power, extensive databases, and many forms of lightning-fast communications. From there, they serve whatever needs a pack has while they are in the field, from requests for reinforcement to researching important information to simply passing on status updates to the powers that be.

There are also those Operators who go out into the field with their Tager packs. These adventurous souls carry high-tech portable computers, AR rigs, and communications devices. They believe that the best way to understand the information and communications needs of the pack is to roll with them. Considering the kind of danger packs end up in on a regular basis, they must be brave people indeed.

Attributes: Higher than average Intellect and Perception recommended.

Suggested Skills: Computer, Education, History, Observation, Occult, Research

Recommended Qualities: Egghead, Gifted Multi-tasker

Required Qualities: Duty (3)

Special Gear: A good portable computer and an excellent peek.

Sample Attributes:

Human/Nazzadi

Agility 5/6

Intellect 8/8

Perception 8/7

Presence 5/5

Strength 5/5

Tenacity 5/5

Sample Skills:

Appraisal: Student

Computer: Adept

Communications: Novice

Education: Novice

History: Student

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Larceny: Novice

Literacy: Novice

Observation: Novice

Occult: Adept

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Research: Adept

Trivia: Student



SOCIETY PARA-PSYCHIC

There are those gifted with the intuitive ability to manipulate cosmic power, and they are no less immune to the predations of the Children of Chaos. Some have been double-crossed by the Chrysalis Corporation, hunted by the Circle, or had loved ones killed by Dhohanoid agents. Some are those who were once part of the Chrysalis Corporation, but who erupted during the Rite of Transfiguration and emerged with a new view of the cult. It is from these unfortunate people that the Eldritch Society most often gains para-psychic operatives, happy to utilize their unique talents in the Shadow War.

On the other hand, some para-psychics are simply recruited by the Eldritch Society because of their abilities. The Society needs people like this, so they are not shy about seducing those who might be headed into a darker world. Sometimes the Society also recruits from that darker world, taking in renegade para-psychics from within the arcane underground.

Being a para-psychic within the Eldritch Society has its benefits. If one wishes to remain unregistered, the Society does not demand it. In fact, they prefer their para-psychics not to register and will provide false identities to help keep them undiscovered. The Society also offers other protection, including the ability for a para-psychic to safely and comfortably disappear when necessary and the sheer muscle of packs of Tagers to help keep a para-psychic from harm.

Attributes: Higher than average Intellect and Tenacity recommended.

Suggested Skills: Observation, Para-Psychic Powers

Required Qualities: Duty (3), Erupted Para-Psychic, Latent Para-Psychic, Misfit (3) (or 4 for Dangerous or Invasive Powers, if registered), Watched (3) (if registered)

Special Gear: A handgun.

Sample Attributes:

Human/Nazzadi

Agility 5/6

Intellect 7/7

Perception 6/5

Presence 5/5

Strength 5/5

Tenacity 8/8

Sample Skills (Kinetic):

Athletics: Novice

Criminal: Novice

Dodge: Adept

Hobby: Student

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Literacy: Novice

Marksman: Novice

Misdirect: Novice

Observation: Novice

Occult: Novice (Adept, if Human)

Parapsychology: Student (Novice, if Human)

Pyrokinesis: Student

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Streetwise: Novice

Trivia: Student

Sample Para-Psychic Powers: Pyrokinesis

Insanity Points: 1



SOCIETY SORCERER

As with para-psychics, there are those sorcerers who have run afoul of the Chrysalis Corporation. Some may have had bad dealings, others may have been too close and gotten burned, while there are those who may have worked for the company and fled once they discovered what was truly going on behind the scenes. Regardless, the Eldritch Society is a haven for these sorcerers, giving them someplace to which to run.

The Eldritch Society is also the perfect destination for those sorcerers who have become tainted, but are not inherently dark or willing to live in the dark corners of the world. Sometimes those who play with cosmic forces find themselves no longer entirely mortal, and those kinds of people have no place in society. Those who wish to do some kind of good in the world have a home in the Society.

Being a sorcerer within the Eldritch Society has its benefits. The first is the significant protection the Society offers. There are Taggers to watch one's back and a secret infrastructure to keep one hidden from the authorities. The Society also does not demand that a sorcerer register – in fact they prefer those who do not – and they are willing to share illegal rituals with sorcerers for use in the Shadow War.

Attributes: Higher than average Intellect and Tenacity recommended.

Suggested Skills: Education, History, Languages, Occult, Research

Recommended Qualities: Outsider Tainted

Required Qualities: Duty (3), Watched (3) – if a registered sorcerer.

Special Gear: A handgun, a small basic occult reference library, and a good portable computer.

Sample Attributes:

Human/Nazzadi

Agility 5/6

Intellect 7/7

Perception 6/5

Presence 5/5

Strength 5/5

Tenacity 8/8

Sample Skills:

Computer: Student

Dodge: Novice

Education: Novice

History: Student

Hobby: Student

Languages (Arabic): Novice

Languages (Latin): Novice

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Languages (R'lyehian): Novice (if Human)

Languages (Tsath-yo): Novice

Literacy: Novice

Marksman: Student

Occult: Adept

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Research: Novice

Trivia: Student

VARIANT TAGER TYPES

As written, the functionality of those with the same Tager manifestation are the same. This is not strictly true. There are those that manifest symbionts that are somewhat different from their fellows. These rules will guide you through the process of creating slightly different Taggers for your game.

In essence, these rules allow two people to create two Taggers of the same manifestation and not have them be exactly the same on the symbiont side. There are three areas in which you can choose to vary your Tagger: Attributes, weapons, and protection.

The first area in which you will need to make a choice is with regards to the packages of Attribute bonuses that are part of every Tagger. Some of these alternate packages will exaggerate the Attributes for which the Tagger is already known, such as a Nightmare's Strength. Others will help balance the Tagger, such as increasing the Tenacity of a Whisper. You can choose from either the packages listed or the ones from the Tagger's original presentation.

The second area with which you make new choices is with regards to weapons. Each variant Tagger listing shows all the weapons available to that manifestation, with rules for how many you should choose. While Taggers, as originally presented, have a mix of both close quarters and ranged attacks, these rules give you the option to focus entirely on one or the other, or to keep a mix of both. Using these rules, you can also create a Tagger that uses nothing but variant weapons, who will appear as distinct from those around him.

The third area is regarding the Tagger's protection. In some cases, you will be able to trade off regeneration for greater armor protection, while in others you will do the reverse. You can, of course, always choose to stay with the original presentation's ratings.

In order to create a Tagger with a variant symbiont, you must acquire the Tagger: Variant Asset. Then go to the following four pages, find your manifestation, and choose variations according to the rules found there. However, always check with your Storyguide to see if he will allow Tagger variants – they are a useful part of the rules, but one with which he may not want to deal. They can complicate things.

The variants for the Efreet and the Widow are on the pages following their presentation. The new Taggers are found on p. 60 and 61, with the variants on p. 62.

WITHIN THE SOCIETY

Taggers with variant symbionts are not treated any differently within the Eldritch Society. It is expected that an organic being, or at least primarily organic, will evolve with differences. In the end, all Phantoms function fundamentally the same and the symbionts influence the host's personality in the same way. The same goes for all Taggers. Most do not even differentiate variant Taggers with different names.

The Eldritch Society, however, would be foolish to disregard such differences altogether. The differing abilities of said Taggers can present unique tactical advantages. For example, a Whisper with both gossamer bombs and boom shocks will be used as a first-in, confounding unit, capable of new levels of support during conflict situations. Same goes for a Mirage whose tentacles are capable of entangling foes, or the Nightmare who can shoot around corners.

METAMORPHOSIS

The process for variant Taggers to undergo metamorphosis is exactly the same as for other Taggers of his manifestation. However, things will ultimately be different for a variant symbiont than a regular one after metamorphosis.

To accommodate this, each presentation of metamorphosed Tagger here includes a short section to help you determine how your variant will work after metamorphosis.

NEW QUALITY

TAGER: VARIANT (1)

Prerequisite: Tagger Asset, as well as possibly the Tagger: Exceptional and/or Tagger: Rare Assets (depending upon manifestation of Tagger).

Your Character is not the average Tagger of his manifestation. He has manifested traits that are not what can be expected from his usual type. If he's a Phantom, perhaps his claws have become vicious weapons instead of blades. If he's a Vampire, perhaps he produces sonic static instead of firing barbs.

The variant descriptions allow Tagger Characters to choose alternate packages of Attribute bonuses, other than those listed in the original presentation of the symbiont, weapon variants, so you can choose to specialize in close quarters combat, range combat, or a mix of the two, and a mix of regeneration versus armor.

ECHO VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a more agile Echo, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+4
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +1/+2
- Tenacity +1/+3

If you desire a stronger Echo, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+2
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +1/+5
- Tenacity +1/+2

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with two ranged weapons
- two close quarters weapons with one ranged weapon
- three ranged weapons
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Bite (+2) – The Tager’s mouth opens wide to bite down on foes and tear out chunks of flesh with its sharp teeth.

Claws (+2) – The Echo’s claws have developed into vicious weapons.

Electrified (+1) – Anything that physically strikes the Echo takes one die of damage, which can be reduced by armor. This also adds one extra die of damage to the Tager’s close quarters attacks.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Fathom Beam – Range 30/75/200 (Amphibious), Damage +2, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds.

Ink Cloud – Range 5 yard radius, Damage n/a, Shots 1, 10 Rounds per Day. Obscuring. Each time the Echo uses its Ink Cloud, it completely obscures sight in a five-yard radius around the Tager for one to five minutes (half a die). This ability may only be used underwater; one round regenerates every half hour.

Sonic Pulse – Range 10/25/50 in a 90° cone (Amphibious), Damage 0, Shots 1. This pulse also mystically reveals the sonar signature of the affected area to the Tager’s allies, especially enemies.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Echo’s armor for a higher level of regeneration.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1/1 die

MIRAGE VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a more agile Mirage, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+6
- Perception -/+1
- Strength +1/+2
- Tenacity +1/+2

If you desire a stronger Mirage, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+3
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +1/+4
- Tenacity +1/+2

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Tentacle Lash (+2) – These razor-tipped tentacles grow from the shoulder blades of the Tager and can be retracted. They are lashing weapons and cannot be used to entangle, though they can be used as rudimentary hands. While not capable of fine manipulation, they can hold or push things (but cannot wield weapons). These tentacles give the Tager an extra Action each turn that can only be spent to attack with them – this can bring a Mirage’s total Actions to four. The usual Multiple Action Penalties apply.

Impeding Lash (+0) – These tentacles grow from the shoulder blades of the Tager and can be retracted. They can be used to entangle, as well as rudimentary hands. While not capable of fine manipulation, they can hold or push things (but cannot wield weapons). These tentacles give the Tager an extra Action each turn that can only be spent to attack with them – this can bring a Mirage’s total Actions to four. The usual Multiple Action Penalties apply.

Tentacle Hook (+1) – This attack can target any foe within 20 feet. The target must engage in a Strength Feat Contest with the Mirage. If the Tager wins, the target is dragged into close combat range, as close to the Mirage as he wishes.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Photon Blast – Range 30/75/200, Damage +2, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds.

Whirling Lash – Range 15 foot radius, Damage +1, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. This attacks targets all enemies within the radius; generate one attack total against which all must defend. Targets must succeed at a Challenging Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Mirage’s armor for a higher level of regeneration.

Armor: -/-

Regeneration: 1/1 die

NIGHTMARE VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire an even stronger Nightmare, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility -/+2
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +2/+8
- Tenacity +2/+3

If you desire a more agile Nightmare, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility -/+4
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +2/+5
- Tenacity +2/+4

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- two close quarters weapons with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons
- four close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Talons (+2) – These vicious claws tip the Tager's fingers.

Tentacle Sheathe (+1) – This tentacle sheathe may be used to entangle foes.

Rend (+4) – The Nightmare may use both its sets of talons to tear into a foe. This attack takes two of the Tager's Actions to perform.

Stomp (+3) – The Nightmare jumps into the air and lands on top of an opponent. In addition to the damage, the foe must succeed at a Challenging Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Shoulder Pods – Range 25/60/170, Damage +3, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds.

Depthless Strike – Range 10/30/60, Damage +3, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. This attack must trace a path along a physical plane, like walls or the ground. It is capable of ignoring cover and can also shoot around corners.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Nightmare's high level of regeneration for more armor.

Armor: 3/3

Regeneration: 1/3

PHANTOM VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a stronger Phantom, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+2
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +1/+5
- Tenacity +1/+2

If you desire a more agile Phantom, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+4
- Perception -/+2
- Strength +1/+2
- Tenacity +1/+3

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with two ranged weapons
- two close quarters weapons with one ranged weapon
- three ranged weapons
- four close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Blades (+2) – These blades often extend from the forearms of the Tager.

Claws (+2) – The Phantom's claws have developed into vicious weapons.

Rend (+4) – The Phantom may use both its sets of blades or claws to tear into a foe. This attack takes two of the Tager's Actions to perform.

Screaming Clutch (0) – The Phantom grabs a target and disrupts its equilibrium with its howl. The target must succeed at a Challenging Strength Feat Test or be unable to take action for the next turn. This attack is entangling and requires two Actions to perform.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Arcane Blast – Range 30/75/200, Damage +2, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds.

Concussive Strike (0) – The Tager strikes the ground and sends out a concussive wave that affects all targets touching the ground within 10 feet. Targets within must succeed at a Challenging Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.

Howl (0) – Range 20 ft. Target must succeed at a Challenging Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Phantom's armor for a high level of regeneration.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1/1 die

SHADOW VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a more agile Shadow, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+4
- Perception 1/+3
- Strength -/+2
- Tenacity +1/+2

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Concealing Aura (n/a) – The Shadow can extend his concealing abilities to one other living being that is of equal mass or less. This ability only functions as long as the Shadow is touching the creature with which it wishes to conceal. This costs 5 Orgone for one minute.

Spiny Embrace (+3 + Poison) – The Shadow may use its thorns in a bear hug-like grasp. This attack takes two of the Tager's Actions to perform.

Thorns (+1) – These thorns grow out of the hands, forearms, shoulders, lower legs, and feet.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Needle Pods – Range 25/60/170, Damage +1 (+ Poison), Shots 2, Infinite Rounds.

Quills – Range 10/20/30, Damage +1 (+ Poison), Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. These quills fire from the Tager to affect a three yard burst radius – all foes within must defend against the attack or be affected.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice all of your Shadow's armor for a high level of regeneration.

Armor: -/-

Regeneration: 1/1 die

SPECTRE VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a stronger and hardier Spectre, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+2
- Perception +1/+2
- Strength +1/+4
- Tenacity -/+3

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Chilled Touch (+1) – The Spectre's touch is supernaturally freezing. It leaves frost on whatever it touches.

Eon Touch (+0) – This debilitating attack ages a living being to its senior years in an instant. The creature must make a Fear Test against a Hard degree, as well as suffer a -2 to his Agility, Strength, and Tenacity and a -1 to his Perception. He also moves one full category slower than normal. These effects naturally wear off in a half hour. Creatures that regenerate or are supernaturally long lived only suffer damage from this attack.

Phasing Touch (n/a) – The Spectre can extend his phasing abilities to one other living being that is of equal mass or less. This ability only functions as long as the Spectre is touching the creature with which it wishes to phase. This costs 5 Orgone for one minute.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Gravewind – Range 5 yard radius, Damage +1, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. Obscuring.

Ill Wind – Range 5 yard radius, Damage n/a, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. Obscuring. Unlike the Gravewind, Ill Wind does no damage. Instead, it completely obscures the area in a single turn.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Spectre's armor for a higher level of regeneration.

Armor: -/-

Regeneration: 1/1 Die

VAMPIRE VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a more agile Vampire, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+5
- Perception +1/+3
- Strength +1/+3
- Tenacity +1/+4

Or, if you desire a stronger Vampire, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+4
- Perception +1/+3
- Strength +1/+5
- Tenacity +1/+3

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Darkness (n/a) – The darkness in the Vampire is made manifest for a moment. It creates a three yard radius of completely obscuring darkness that lasts for only one turn. The Vampire can only do this 10 times a day normally – rounds regenerate one per hour.

Domination (n/a) – The predator inside a Vampire can manifest in a more physical way, mystically dominating enemies. If the Vampire succeeds at a Tenacity Feat Contest versus an enemy's Tenacity Feat, his foe loses 2 Actions (which may reduce his Actions to zero for a turn or two).

Exsanguinating Touch (+2) – The Vampire's touch causes blood to boil. These mystical energies also cause decay (and therefore damage) in inanimate objects.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Barbs – Range 25/50/150, Damage +3, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds.

Sonic Static – 5 yard burst, Damage +1, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. The Vampire uses its sonar to produce static that both harms and confounds opponents. Those who take at least one Vitality point of damage lose their next 2 Actions (which may reduce his Actions to zero for a turn or two).

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Vampire's high level of regeneration for more armor.

Armor: 3/3

Regeneration: 1/3

WHISPER VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a hardier Whisper, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +1/+3
- Perception +2/+4
- Strength -/+2
- Tenacity -/+2

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapon with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Claws (+2) – The Whisper's claws become deadly weapons.

Fly-by (+2) – The Whisper can rake an opponent as he flies by. The Whisper must be moving (up to his full movement) and airborne to use this attack, which takes two Actions.

Whips (+1) – These whips most often extend from the forearms of the Tager and can be used to entangle opponents.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Gossamer Bombs (Blinding) – These radiant balls are dropped from the air. Wherever they land, they burst in a blinding light and everything with a 15-foot radius must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or lose its next two Actions, which can reduce a Character's Actions to zero for the turn. Only one gossamer bomb can be fired each turn, but each Whisper has an unlimited supply.

Boom Shocks (Deafening) – These shimmering balls are dropped from the air. Wherever they land, they burst in a deafening explosion and everything with a 15-foot radius must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or lose its next two Actions, which can reduce a Character's Actions to zero for the turn. Only one boom shock can be fired each turn, but each Whisper has an unlimited supply.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice all of your Whisper's armor for a high level of regeneration.

Armor: -/-

Regeneration: 1/1 die

EFREET

Type: Rare Combat Tager

Note: Requires the Tager, Tager: Exceptional, and Tager: Rare Assets, as well as a Presence of 7 or more.

It burns. Char marks follow it wherever it goes. Cracks in its skin reveal glowing embers of pure otherworldly fire. Waves of visual distortion float off of it from the intense heat. Little can stop its onslaught of unadulterated force and flame. It is a being whose name is derived from (or possibly the inspiration for) the infernal Ifrits from middle-eastern mythology. Those that find themselves the target for the righteous fury of an Efreet have but one choice – to pray.

One of the rarest and most powerful Tagers known to the Eldritch Society, the Efreet is a powerhouse of searing pain. Its skin is so hot that anything touching it is scarred. Its mace-like fists beat down walls and it can shoot flame from its mouth like a dragon breathes fire. However, it is the thing's limit attack that is most feared, as it calls down a mystical meteor strike that smashes and burns anything within a 400 square foot area.

The Efreet is a proud and righteous symbiont. Those who are bound with one begin to feel unstoppable and, while they recognize and appreciate the assets of those around them, they believe themselves to be one step above. They also develop a burning hatred for the forces of the Old Ones and Nyarlathotep and find their moral conviction becoming as pure as fire.

Special: Firestarter – The skin of an Efreet burns with heat and the seams in its “skin” and joints glow with fire. While it can consciously dampen these effects, the Efreet still leaves char marks anywhere it walks or on anything it touches that is not resistant to heat and flame. It lights things on fire with a mere touch, if its firestarting abilities are left at full effect. Anything that physically strikes an Efreet takes one die of damage, which can be reduced by armor. However, its radiance makes it difficult to conceal – Efreets suffer a –6 Penalty to Stealth Tests in their shifted form. These effects are not dampened by water – in fact, the boiling water around it creates a three-yard radius cloud of partially obscuring bubbles. The Efreet is immune to any kind of fire, including plasma blasts.

Size: Medium (8 to 9 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility -/+2

Perception -/+1

Strength +3/+9

Tenacity +2/+4

Weapons:

Dragonbreath – Range 10/25/50, Damage +4, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. This attack ignites combustible materials.

Spiked Fists (+2) – The hot and mace-like fists of an Efreet sear anything.

Demonic Uppercut (+4) – The Efreet may only use this attack every other turn. This attack uses two of the Tager's Actions that turn, with the accompanying Multiple Action Penalties.

Limit Weapon:

Meteor Strike – Range 30/60/100, Damage +6; this attack calls down a mystical shower of super-heated rocks, attacking all things in a 400 square foot area. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. This attack does Hybrid Damage. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1/1 Die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Double), Jumping (Quadruple), Land (Normal)



WIDOW

Type: Rare Combat Tager

Note: Requires the Tager and Tager: Rare Assets.

Black, shiny, terrifying. These are the most obvious traits of a Widow. One of the rarest of all the Ta'ge symbionts, it is even more difficult than usual for the outside observer to consider that this hideous thing is in fact one of the good guys. Named for its arachnid-like similarities, the Widow is the Tager sent when the Eldritch Society wants to take someone or something alive. However, sometimes the Widow has different ideas...

The Widow mimics its namesake in many ways. It spins webs to capture even the strongest of prey. It can grow four extra legs at will, skittering along and over surfaces at accelerated speeds. Five-inch long fangs drip a disorienting poison, putting its enemies off-balance. And when it gets the urge, it can put all its advantages to work, cocooning a victim and holding him fast. The Widow can then play with him at its leisure – or it can reduce his insides to jelly with just one bite.

Widows are scary and monstrous symbionts. Those who are bound with one often develop an affection for dark and concealing places, a patient nature with the cold-blooded distance of a spider, and a perverse pleasure in the grotesque.

Special: Spinnerets – A Widow naturally generates an infinite supply of thin sticky webbing. It is incredibly strong, capable of supporting up to a half a ton on a single strand. Rumors claim that Widows can support up to five tons with enough time, effort, and webbing. In addition to being quite sticky, these webs are also caustic. The organic fluids inside the spinnerets make them so, but this substance lasts only for a few seconds before rendered inert – they quickly become nothing but webs. The Widow can fire the webs on the fly or create webs to entangle the unwary. When using the webs for entangling Contests, the Widow uses the strength of the webbing over its own. Treat the webs as if they had a Strength of 10 with five dice to roll for its Strength Feat Test. Webs naturally last for a few days before decaying. A Widow does not stick to its own webs or the webs of other Widows.

Special: Poisonous – The fangs of a Widow can introduce a disorienting toxin into the body of a victim. This poison requires that a bite do at least one point of Vitality damage to be administered. Anyone affected by the poison must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist. If this Test is failed, the victim suffers a -3 Test Penalty to all Actions for one to ten minutes (roll one die). Only one Test needs to be made per turn affected by the Widow's poison and the disorienting affect is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last dose.

Special: Extra Legs – The Widow can sprout an additional set of legs at will, as a free action. This doubles its climbing speed and triples its land speed.

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +2/+4

Perception +1/+3

Strength -/+2

Tenacity +1/+2

Weapons:

Spinnerets – Range 10/25/50, Damage +1, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds, Entangling. These webs only do damage on the turn they are fired and do no further damage if used to entangle.

Fangs (+2) – These piercing fangs grow out of the Widow's face.

Limit Weapon:

Cocoon (+6 or 2) – The Widow bursts into a flurry, leaping back and forth and spinning a victim into a shell of webbing. The Tager can choose to use this attack to simply incapacitate or can choose to inject an organic acid that begins to liquefy the victim's insides. If the Widow chooses to incapacitate, the victim still takes two dice of damage (no extra for success), as the webs are caustic, and is trapped for one to ten minutes (roll one die). Creatures with Strengths over ten will free themselves faster – subtract one minute for each point of Strength over ten, with a minimum of one minute. If the Widow chooses to prey, its victim suffers the trapping effects of the cocoon, but instead deals six dice plus those for success. This attack uses the normal range for the Widow's spinnerets. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1/3

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Sense Smell & Taste, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Double or Triple), Jumping (Triple), Land (Normal or Triple)



EFREET VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a more tenacious Efreet, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility -/+2
- Perception -/+1
- Strength +3/+7
- Tenacity +2/+6

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- two close quarters weapons with one ranged weapon
- two ranged weapons with one close quarters weapon
- two ranged weapons
- four close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Spiked Fists (+2) – The hot and mace-like fists of an Efreet sear anything.

Demonic Uppercut (+4) – The Efreet may only use this attack every other turn. This attack uses two of the Tager's Actions that turn, with the accompanying Multiple Action Penalties.

Searing Filaments (+1) – This flaming whip may also be used to entangle.

Soul Stare – The Efreet can fixate a nearby enemy with its righ-teous stare. If the Efreet succeeds at a Tenacity Feat Contest versus an enemy's Tenacity Feat, his foe loses 2 Actions (which may reduce his Actions to zero for a turn or two).

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Dragonbreath – Range 10/25/50, Damage +4, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. This attack ignites combustible materials.

Fireburst – 3 yard burst, Damage +3, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. This attack bursts out from the Efreet, damaging all in close proximity. It also ignites combustible materials.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Efreet's high level of regeneration for more armor.

Armor: 3/3

Regeneration: 1/3

WIDOW VARIATIONS

ATTRIBUTES

If you desire a more agile Widow, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +2/+6
- Perception +1/+2
- Strength -/+2
- Tenacity +1/+1

Or, if you desire a stronger Widow, you may choose the following Attribute Modifications instead of the standard:

- Agility +2/+3
- Perception +1/+2
- Strength -/+5
- Tenacity +1/+1

WEAPONS

You may choose:

- one close quarters weapons with one ranged weapon
- three close quarters weapons

Close Quarters Weapons

You may choose close quarters weapons from the following list:

Deadly Strike (+4) – The Widow knows how to deliver deadly strikes when concealed in shadows. This attack may only be performed from surprise.

Fangs (+2) – These piercing fangs grow out of the Widow's face. *This close quarters attack is mandatory for all Widows.*

Web Shield (n/a) – The Widow uses its web-spinning abilities to create a dense shield that can last for a turn. This adds +1 die to the Tager's defense.

Ranged Weapons

You may choose ranged weapons from the following list:

Leaping Strike (+3) – The Tager leaps up to its maximum jumping distance to attack an enemy. This requires two Actions.

Spinnerets – Range 10/25/50, Damage +1, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds, Entangling. These webs only do damage on the turn they are fired and do no further damage if used to entangle.

PROTECTION

Instead of the usual level of armor and regeneration, you may choose to sacrifice your Widow's armor for a higher level of regeneration.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1/1 Die

THE RULES OF METAMORPHOSIS

Metamorphosis is a powerful experience for a Tager. However, not just any Tager has the kind of symbiotic connection that allows for metamorphosis. In game terms, a Tager has to have met certain game statistic as well as behavioral requirements in order to be eligible to metamorphose. The host must act deliberately in tune with his symbiont's nature.

There are two key areas necessary for metamorphosis. Game statistics are the first area with which you'll need to concern yourself. Each metamorphosis has certain skill and level of expertise requirements. There will also be certain levels of Attributes that will need to be met. Furthermore, a Tager wishing to metamorphose will need to save up a sizable bank of Experience. However, these hard and fast game mechanics are not the only things needed for such an event. You will then have had to portray your Characters in certain behavioral ways. He will have to perform certain acts and be certain ways in order to become more in tune with the nature of his symbiont. For example, a Vampire will require acts of cruelty, while a Nightmare will require acts of destruction. Furthermore, he will have to have spent significant time in his transformed state, allowing the part of the Tager that manifests in this dimension to exist out in the open with more regularity. When all is said and done, when a Tager finally meets all of the necessary requirements, he is eligible to metamorphose. If you're ready, spend the required Experience – your Storyguide will then secretly choose a time within the coming game month when your Character's metamorphosis will begin.

Tagers never know for sure when metamorphosis will begin, but they can feel it coming. The first inklings occur when the Character meets his requirements and spends the necessary Experience. He then knows that sometime in the next month his metamorphosis begins. The next warning occurs when the week of metamorphosis is coming. The Character begins to feel that things are getting closer. The last warning occurs when metamorphosis will arrive within three days. This last internal road sign is powerful, giving the Character a sense of urgency in wrapping up all the immediate things that need to be completed before he goes away for a while. Then, whenever your Storyguide has chosen, metamorphosis strikes. One minute, your Character is doing whatever he is doing, the next he is consumed by the change. Though the exact manifestation varies according to the type of Tager, your Character's symbiont will force a cocoon to grow out of his body and encase him in a hard, protective shell. The cocoon attaches itself to whatever it nearby, whether it be the floor, the ceiling, the car seat, the bed, or whatever. It will remain secured there unless someone wants to move it, which often is a disgusting and possibly dangerous, but not difficult, experience.

A metamorphosis cocoon is tough and can withstand a reasonable amount of punishment. However, someone who is determined to destroy a metamorphosing Tager most certain can do it. If someone is intent on doing so, treat the cocoon as if it had an armor rating of 2/2, with an amount of Vitality equal to twice that of the Tager inside's. It also regenerates at a rate equal to the metamorphosing Tager. In addition to being helpless while inside the cocoon, your Character will be out of commission for

a while. The entire process takes about a full solar month, from 28 to 32 days. This means that your Character won't be able to join in on all the excitement that will undoubtedly be going on in his absence. If you have the luxury, you may want to coordinate with your Storyguide to have your Character's metamorphosis come during a lull in the action or in between major storylines. That way you can give your fellow players the opportunity to develop their Characters during your downtime as well. They may wish to study new skills or rituals, and this would be a perfect time.

When metamorphosis is finally complete, the newly manifested Tager will rip his way into the world. It is a messy and often loud affair. Once free, it only takes moments for the metamorphosed Tager to get his bearings. His new abilities have been ingrained in him during the process, so there is no learning curve. He intuitively knows his new capabilities and how to use them.

However, the deepened symbiosis further alters the Tager's personality – and adds potential for psychosis. The influence of the symbiont is now more extreme. The aggression of a Phantom (now a Wraith) becomes more pronounced, as the bloodthirst of a Nightmare (now a Torment) will grow. The symbiont is now a more integrated part of the Tager and he behaves as such. As one might expect, the experience is terrifying. Any Tager than has emerged from their metamorphic cocoon must succeed at a Tenacity Feat Test or gain Insanity Points.

There are many benefits to metamorphosis. The Attributes bonuses normally conferred by the Character's Tager increase and are available regardless of form. The Tager gains new attacks, enhanced movement and senses, a second limit attack (that may also only be used once a day), and powerful new mystical abilities. Metamorphosed Tagers also receive the Authority (3) Asset, to reflect their new position of leadership, and the Tager: Metamorphosed Asset, to reflect their new state of being. These new Assets are included in the overall cost of metamorphosis.

In addition, all metamorphosed Tagers can now selectively shift. This means that they can manifest only parts of their Tager when in their mortal form, much the same way Dhohanoids do. Thus, a Bloodgod could choose to sprout wings in his Human form, while a Wraith might have blades pop out of his Nazzadi arms. Likewise, the enhanced senses of the Tager are available all the time in either form, as are their mystical abilities and anything else Tager related. Their natural armor and regeneration is present at all times, regardless of form. Metamorphosed Tagers can layer physical armor on top of their natural armor when in mortal form, but only receive a maximum additional bonus of +1/+1 to their armor rating, regardless of the type of armor and its normal protection.

The following twenty pages detail the ten Tager metamorphoses, including the new abilities and requirements. Do not add these benefits over the top of your existing Character – they replace all benefits and abilities of the old symbiont. The old symbiont is gone forever, leaving something much more dangerous behind.



BLOODGOD

Metamorphosed Vampire

It is a winged monstrosity, a thing that must have spawned the legends of demons. Where it goes, melted flesh and deformed bone follow. Those that stand before it tremble, for they know that the Bloodgod will ruin their bodies, toying with them cruelly as it does.

The Bloodgod pushes what manifests in the Vampire to a horrific and logical conclusion. The metamorphosed creature no longer simply boils blood, it now controls flesh and bone. However, in order to undergo metamorphosis, a Vampire must have bonded with many of the less savory tendencies of his symbiont. To him, the flesh and blood cry out to him and he must answer their call.

Size: Large (9 to 10 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +5
Perception +6
Strength +5
Tenacity +5

Weapons:

Exsanguinating Touch (+3) – The Bloodgod's touch causes blood to boil. These mystical energies also cause decay (and therefore damage) in inanimate objects.

Nerve Strike (+2) – The touch of a Bloodgod can also cause a victim's nerves to ignite in agony. Anyone hit by the Bloodgod's nerve strike must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or lose his next two Actions. This can reduce an opponent's Actions to zero for a turn.

Barbs – Range 50/150/450, Damage +3, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds

Limit Weapon:

Bloodbath (+6) – This cancerous crimson force bomb is dropped from the air. It bursts where it lands, throwing needle-like shards twenty feet in all directions. Living things caught within internally hemorrhage – they bleed from their noses, eyes, and ears and cough up blood. In addition to the damage, anything still alive suffers double the normal Test Penalties from their wounds for the turn they are hit and the next. This attack does not damage non-living things, but it does bypass non-mystical armor (including powered armor or mecha) and does Hybrid Damage to living things (including Outsiders and other Tagers). This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Meltdown (+6) – Area effect: 2 primary burst, 1 secondary burst. This horrific assault utilizes the Bloodgod's flesh warping abilities. A wave of dark energy radiates from the Tager, causing the flesh of those caught within the burst to melt and bones to deform. They become hideous monstrosities, and those that survive the assault must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or accrue 2 Insanity Points. Those that survive are also reduced to half their normal movement and any natural weapons are reduced to half effectiveness. Anything that does not naturally regenerate is permanently disfigured, though a Purify Form ritual will negate the effects. Those that do regenerate will be back to normal in a couple hours. This attack does not damage non-living things, but it does bypass non-mystical armor (including powered armor or mecha) and does Hybrid Damage to living things (including Outsiders and other Tagers). This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1 Die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Long Range, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Flight (Triple), Jumping (Double), Land (Normal)

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

The Bloodgod gains the ability to control the flesh of living beings through his touch. He can speed up or slow down a person's pulse rate, raise or lower blood pressure, raise or lower body temperature, induce states of panic or arousal, and the like. None of these effects can be taken to the life-threatening level, but they certainly can seem like it. Most are simply manipulative, disconcerting, or painful.

However, those are the benign uses of these abilities. The Bloodgod can also forcibly shape and deform another's body with his hands, sculpting flesh and bone like clay. On the benevolent side, the Bloodgod can fix deformities, perform plastic surgery without surgery, or save someone from death by severe trauma. This can instantly heal two dice worth of wounds, once per Character, once per conflict in which he was wounded. This ability can also grant +0 natural weapons. On the malevolent side, the Bloodgod can turn a victim into a deformed and crippled monstrosity, providing a +6 Test Bonus to Intimidate or Torture Tests. It can also cause Fear and Insanity, as appropriate, as well as remove natural weapons or advantages. This can cause up to two dice worth of wounds if the Bloodgod wishes, which cannot be reduced by armor. Otherwise, this ability does no damage to the victim, as his insides respond by moving, shifting, and adapting to the mystical changes. These effects, no matter how severe, are permanent for creatures that do not naturally regenerate – those who regenerate will be back to normal in a matter of hours. The use of the Purify Form ritual will also return a victim to his normal form. The Bloodgod's Artist skill determines the effects for aesthetic uses of this ability.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

The Vampire is a sadistic and bloodthirsty symbiont. Those who are bound with one develop a need to inflict pain and an unholy thirst for blood combined with the patience of a predator and an arrogance borne of birds of prey. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time with in close communion with the symbiont.

Aerial Predator

A potential Bloodgod must have displayed his aerial superiority as a predator. He must have destroyed at least two dozen airborne foes, six of whom must have been of approximately equal or greater power. Aerial foes of lesser power might include Gaunts and Vrykol, while equal or superior might include Groke or any Integrity-scale creature. Bakhi may be in either category, depending upon mystical ability – ditto for parapsychics.

Furthermore, he must have spent at least a third of the nights in the last six months hunting Dhohanoids – hunting to kill, not just to find.

Bloodlust

Vampires like to kill things. A potential Bloodgod must have murdered at least two dozen living things, in his shifted form. Furthermore, he must have actually tasted the blood of at least three worthy, fallen foes.

Pride

Vampires are proud, to the point of arrogance. A potential Bloodgod must have not backed down from a fight in the last six months that seemed justified, even if engaging in such a conflict would not be the smartest idea. He must also have seen at least a dozen difficult fights through to completion, even if retreat would have been the best move. Furthermore, the Vampire must have effectively responded in some way to any insult thrown at him in the last six months – verbally or physically.

Sadism

Sadism and cruelty are an important part of a Vampire's nature. A potential Bloodgod must have tortured at least two dozen enemies, as well as tortured one single enemy for at least three straight days (allowing twelve hours a day for bodily needs, sleeping, and the victim passing out).

Symbiosis

A potential Bloodgod must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and taken flight every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour in the air. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Bloodgod must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Bloodgod must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Tenacity of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Flight specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Intimidate.
- Must be at least Focused in the Torture specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Medicine.

METAMORPHOSIS

The cocoon that engulfs a metamorphosing Bloodgod is visceral in nature. It appears to be a bloody veiny sack, filled with fluids, with thick, muscle-like walls and an unpleasant smell. It throbs and pulses of its own volition, clearly alive. Tendrils snake out from every direction, anchoring it to whatever spot it has chosen. When the Bloodgod finally emerges, it rips its way free, blood and alien fluids spraying and flowing everywhere. The inside smells worse than the outside.

The experience of becoming a Bloodgod requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 75 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Vampire into Bloodgod.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (More Agile)* – Agility +6, Perception +5, Strength +5, Tenacity +5
- *Attributes (Stronger)* – Agility +5, Perception +5, Strength +7, Tenacity +4
- *Darkness (n/a)* – The darkness in the Bloodgod is made manifest for a moment. It creates a three yard radius of completely obscuring darkness that lasts for only 1 to 10 turns (one die). The Bloodgod can only do this 20 times a day normally – rounds regenerate one per hour.
- *Domination (n/a)* – The predator inside a Bloodgod can manifest in a more physical way, mystically dominating enemies. If the Bloodgod succeeds at a Tenacity Feat Contest (with a +4 Contest Bonus) versus an enemy's Tenacity Feat, his foe loses 2 Actions (which may reduce his Actions to zero for a turn or two).
- *Sonic Static* – 5 yard burst, Damage +1, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds. The Bloodgod uses its sonar to produce static that both harms and confounds opponents. Those who take at least one Vitality point of damage lose their next 2 Actions (which may reduce his Actions to zero for a turn or two).
- *Protection* – Armor 3/3, Regeneration 1 die

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

When a Whisper becomes a Dream, the old barriers of observation and understanding become dramatically thinner. He begins to see and hear things in a whole new way, and sense things in other people he never even knew were there. This manifests in three important ways.

First, the Dream becomes very sensitive to input. This is reflected in the new senses and Assets given to a Dream, as listed on the opposite page.

Second, a Dream gains the ability to sense the surface thoughts and emotions of other people. He hears the surface thoughts of anyone he can see and concentrate on, similar to the para-psychic power of Telepathy (at an Adept level of expertise), and read a target's current emotions and know their causes, similar to the para-psychic power of Empathy (at an Adept level of expertise). For further reference on these powers, see p. 65 and 68 of *Vade Mecum: the CthulhuTech Companion*, respectively.

Third, a Dream gains the mystical ability to see into the dreams of sleepers. He cannot influence them in any way – he can only see them, as if they were movies played out on the inside of the sleeper's head. In order to view a sleeper's dream, the Dream must be within 20 feet.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

The Whisper is a delicate but feisty symbiont. Those who are bound with one develop great patience and a cool temper, along with a dogged determination and an amazing eye for detail. They are often voyeurs. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Determination

A potential Dream needs to prove that it is not the kind of being that gives up easily. A Whisper needs to have carried on in the face of hardship, even when others are ready to quit, at least a dozen times. He must also have deliberately chosen to be an important part of risky and dangerous missions where it is likely he will be hurt, at least two dozen times.

Eye for Detail

Whispers are extremely aware of their surroundings. As such a potential Dream must have proved that little escapes his notice. A Whisper must have succeeded at least two dozen Observation Tests of Challenging degree or higher (or the equivalent Contests). Furthermore, his skills at observing must have thwarted at least a dozen potential surprise attacks.

Patience

A potential Dream must exhibit patience and a cool temper. He must have not acted impulsively in at least two dozen situations that call for such rapid action. He must also have convinced his fellow Tagers to stop and think through their actions, at least a dozen times when it is warranted.

Spirited

Whispers are not combat-oriented, especially when compared to other Tagers. However, they are not likely to back down from a fight. A potential Dream must have squared off against at least a dozen foes that would normally defeat it (at least three turns of combat). Furthermore, he must also have stayed in at least two dozen fights while being within five points of Seriously Wounded before fleeing.

Symbiosis

A potential Dream must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and taken flight every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour in the air. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Dream must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Dream must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least an Agility of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Perception of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Flight specialization.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Observation.
- Must be at least Focused in the Lip Reading specialization.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Stealth.

METAMORPHOSIS

Of all Tagers, the cocoon of the Dream is perhaps what can be considered dainty. When the urge comes upon a Whisper, it curls up into a tight ball and its pores secrete a hardened organic substance. When all is said and done, they are a compact ball encased in an organic shell. However, as the Tager metamorphoses, it jerks and stretches inside the cocoon, making it an unnerving ball of movement.

The experience of becoming a Dream requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Whisper into Dream.

VARIANTS

If a Dream metamorphoses from a variant type, here are the ways those variations will change:

- *Attributes* – Agility +4, Perception +7, Strength +3, Tenacity +2
- *Claws (+3)* – The Dream's claws become deadly weapons.
- *Fly-by (+3)* – The Dream can rake an opponent as he flies by. The Dream must be moving (up to his full movement) and be airborne to use this attack, which takes two Actions.
- *Boom Shocks (Deafening)* – These shimmering balls are dropped from the air. Wherever they land, they burst in a deafening explosion and everything within a 15-foot radius must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or lose its next two Actions, which can reduce a Character's Actions to zero for the turn. Only one boom shock can be first each turn, but each Dream has an unlimited supply.
- *Protection* – Armor 1/1, Regeneration 1 die

It is a creature that sees all. It lives in a world where little escapes its notice, not even the secrets behind other people's eyes. It is a feisty Tager, flitting across the sky like a dragonfly, refusing to back down even from fights it's likely to lose.

The Dream is what many would expect might come from a more evolved version of a Whisper. It is faster, with far more sensory ability. It even manifests unexpected ways to take in its environment, by looking into the thoughts, emotions, and dreams of another. Of course, that requires a Whisper who is willing to do what it takes to have its symbiont manifest more fully, which is far easier said than done.

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +5
Perception +7
Strength +2
Tenacity +2

Weapons:

Whips (+2) – These whips most often extend from the forearms of the Tager and can be used to entangle opponents.

Gossamer Bombs (Blinding) – These radiant balls are dropped from the air. Wherever they land, they burst in a blinding light and everything with 30-foot radius must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or lose its next two Actions, which can reduce a character's Actions to zero for the turn. Only one gossamer bomb can be fired each turn, but each Whisper has an unlimited supply.

Limit Weapon:

Razor Wing (+4) – The Tager's speed and armor quadruples for the turn of this flying charge attack. This attack still requires the use of the Fighting skill and can be used to attack as many targets as are in a reasonably straight line, up to the Tager's maximum movement for that turn. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Gossamer Whirlwind (+4 + Blinding) – The Dream forces three Gossamer Bombs to launch at the same time, bursting to encompass a 50-foot radius around the Tager. Those within must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or lose their next two Actions, which can reduce a character's Actions to zero for the turn. At the same time, the Tager spins in a

violent whirlwind, quadrupling his speed and armor for this turn. He then razor wing's all enemies within a fifteen-foot radius and has the option to complete his full movement after the attack, in an effort to get away. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 3

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Hearing, Smell & Taste, Touch, & Vision (all as Assets), Broadband Audio, Long Range, Nightvision, Scan, Sonar, Thermal, Wary (as Asset), X-ray

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Flight (Sextuple), Jumping (Triple), Land (Triple)



HORROR

Metamorphosed Widow

It should not exist, a creature so horrifying that its mere presence drives people into the throes of panic. It is an alien arachnid, or something close, that snatches prey from the shadows and disappears again under cover of darkness.

The Horror is the thing beyond a Widow. More of the hideous symbiont manifests, bolstering the creature's web-spinning abilities and poison. However, it brings with it fear so primal that most run screaming from it. Joining further in symbiosis with such a thing is not easy and is not for the squeamish.

Enhanced Special: Spinnerets – This functions similar to the Spinnerets listed on p. 61, with few exceptions. The webbing is stronger, supporting up to ten tons with enough time, effort, and webbing. Also, treat the webs as if they had a Strength of 15 with seven dice to roll for its Strength Feat Test. A Horror does not stick to its own webs or the webs of other Widows or Horrors.

Special: Poisonous – This disorienting poison works similarly to the Widow's poison on p. 61. However, anyone affected by the poison must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist. If this Test is failed, the victim suffers a -4 Test Penalty to all Actions for two to twenty minutes (roll two dice).

Enhanced Special: Extra Limbs – The Horror can sprout two additional sets of legs at will, as a free action. This sextuples its climbing speed and quadruples its land speed. It also has a second set of usable arms, adding +1 to its Actions. The usual Multiple Action Penalties apply.

Size: Medium (8 to 9 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +6

Perception +4

Strength +3

Tenacity +3

Weapons:

Spinnerets – Range 25/50/100, Damage +2, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds, Entangling. These webs only do damage on the turn they are fired and do no further damage if used to entangle.

Fangs (+3) – These piercing fangs grow out of the Horror's face.

Slashing Limbs (+2) – The Horror's extra set of arms and legs can be used to entangle in close quarters.

Limit Weapons:

Cocoon (+6 or 2) – The Horror bursts into a flurry, leaping back and forth and spinning a victim into a shell of webbing. The Tager can choose to use this attack to simply incapacitate or can choose to inject an organic acid that begins to liquefy the victim's insides. If the Horror chooses to incapacitate, the victim still takes two dice of damage (no extra for success), as the webs are caustic, and is trapped for one to ten minutes (roll one die). Creatures with Strengths over fifteen will free themselves faster – subtract one minute for each point of Strength over fifteen, with a minimum of one minute. If the Horror chooses to prey, its victim suffers the trapping effects of the cocoon, but instead of only two dice of damage, deals six dice plus those for success. This attack uses the normal range for the Horror's spinnerets. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Spinneret Dance (+6) – The Horror bursts into a flurry, leaping all around, slashing and spinning webs as it goes. The attack is centered on the Horror's original position and encompasses all foes within a five yard radius. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. Those within may also be entangled. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1 Die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Hearing, Acute Sense Smell & Taste, Acute Touch, Broad-band Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal, Wary (as Asset)

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple or Sextuple), Jumping (Sextuple), Land (Double or Quadruple)



NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

Upon metamorphosis, a Horror gains mastery over that most visceral of responses known as fear. Anything non-Tager within ten feet of the Horror must make a Fear Test against the creature's Fear Factor (Challenging) every single turn. This is not something someone can get used to either – the generation of the fear is mystical in nature. Anything within twenty feet must make a Fear Test against one degree lower (Average) every turn as well. This only applies to beings that can see or hear the Horror. A Horror can also fix its gaze on one opponent within ten feet to increase the degree one category (Hard). As long as its attention remains on that target, the increased Fear Factor remains.

Due to their intimate connection with fear, Horrors themselves are absolutely immune to it. They never need to make a Fear Test again and nothing can force them to do so. The presence of an Old One might quickly erode a Horror's sanity, but he would not be afraid.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

Widows are scary and monstrous symbionts. Those who are bound with one often develop an affection for dark and concealing places, a patient nature with the cold-blooded distance of a spider, and a perverse pleasure in the grotesque. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Creature of the Shadows

Widows are creatures that are most comfortable and effective under cover of darkness. As such, a potential Horror must embrace the symbiont's need to be the hidden predator. He must have successfully utilized the Stealth skill at least two dozen times, winning Contests while stalking prey. Furthermore, he must have successfully attacked prey from surprise at least two dozen times.

Frightening

There is no doubt that the Widow is one of the most terrifying of all Tagers. As such, a potential Horror must have embraced his ability to inspire fear. He must have frightened at least two dozen enemies (they have to have failed their Fear Tests and suffered a Fear Effect). He must also have deliberately utilized terror tactics on at least two dozen enemies, tactics designed to inspire fear and hopelessness.

Grotesquery

Widows develop a very odd sensibility in their fascination with the grotesque. A potential Horror must have deliberately left behind at least two dozen messy crime scenes, the kind that makes the investigators gag. Body parts, pools of blood, creatively positioned corpses – the more extreme the better. Though it isn't required, potential Horrors often hang around in the shadows to watch peoples' expressions. Furthermore, he has to have crossed the line between man and monster and actually eaten and digested at least a dozen enemies or prey. This requires the use of the Widow's limit weapon, which will liquefy the insides of a victim so that the Tager can suck them out.

Monstrous

Widows are monstrous, it's that simple. A potential Horror must have caught at least two dozen enemies in its webs. Furthermore, he must have murdered at least two dozen foes of any kind, in his shifted form.

Symbiosis

A potential Horror must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and spun a full web every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour in the web, and the web must be someplace where it can actually catch potential prey. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Horror must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Horror must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least an Agility of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Perception of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Climbing specialization.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Intimidation.
- Must be at least Focused in the Frighten specialization.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Stealth.

METAMORPHOSIS

A soon-to-be Horror's cocoon is what one might expect it to be – a neatly spun webbed enclosure. The Widow begins to spin a cocoon of webs around it as soon as metamorphosis strikes. The caustic nature of the webbing breaks down quickly, leaving a hard ball behind. Once the transformation is complete, the Horror neatly slices its way out of the cocoon and must promptly eat something substantial. Woe betide those nearby who the Tager does not know.

The experience of becoming a Horror requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Widow into Horror.

VARIATIONS

If a Horror metamorphoses from a variant type, here are the ways those variations will change:

- *Attributes (Agile)* – Agility +8, Perception +3, Strength +3, Tenacity +2
- *Attributes (Stronger)* – Agility +5, Perception +3, Strength +6, Tenacity +2
- *Deadly Strike (+5)* – The Horror knows how to deliver deadly strikes when concealed in shadows. This attack may only be performed from surprise.
- *Web Shield (n/a)* – The Horror uses its web-spinning abilities to create a dense shield that can last for two turns. This adds +1 die to the Tager's defense.
- *Leaping Strike (+4)* – The Tager leaps up to its maximum jumping distance to attack an enemy. This requires two Actions.
- *Protection* – Armor 2/2, Regeneration 1 die

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

An Impulse is a creature of speed. All of its natural rates of movement increase, as reflected in the listing on the opposite page. However, it also gains the ability to move from place to place by teleporting.

Impulses are capable of instantly traversing distances without traveling the space in between, also known as teleportation. They can teleport to any location they can physically see, or also to any location they cannot see within 25 yards. Teleporting requires the use of an Action. Fortunately, an Impulse's spatial knowledge is intuitive, so they never accidentally teleport into solid objects. Underwater, this ability often leaves behind a mass of bubbles as the space the Impulse occupied fills.

Any non-living matter on their bodies transports with them – they don't leave behind their clothes and personal objects – though they cannot bring anything larger than a suitcase with them. They cannot transport other living creatures, regardless of size.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

Echoes are aggressive and primal symbionts. Those who are bound with one find themselves drawn to deep water, that they are heavily influenced by scents, and develop both an ecstatic love of instinct and an obsession for chewing on hard or tough foods. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Aggressive

Echoes like to kill things. A potential Impulse must have murdered at least two dozen living things. Furthermore, he must have also killed at least a dozen Dhohanoids.

Aquatic Predator

A potential Impulse must have displayed his superiority as an aquatic predator. He must have destroyed at least two dozen aquatic foes, six of whom must have been of approximately equal or greater power. Aquatic foes of lesser power might include Dua-Sanaras Dhohanoids or the average Deep One, while equal or superior might include Patul Dhohanoids, powerful Deep Ones, or any Integrity-scale creature.

Furthermore, he must have spent at least a third of the nights in the last six months hunting amphibious Dhohanoids – and have killed at least one every night he hunts, unless viable targets are absolutely unavailable.

Chewing

Echoes have large, frightening maws and they like to chew on things. A potential Impulse must have killed at least two dozen foes by intentionally biting them to death (this can include uses of the Frenzy limit attack). Furthermore, he has to have crossed the line between man and monster and actually eaten and digested at least a dozen enemies or prey.

Primal

Echoes are creatures that run on instinct. A potential Impulse must have gone with his gut feeling regarding a situation at least a dozen times, when others around him don't necessarily support the action or feel that reason and planning are a better course. Furthermore, he must also have continued on with a fight once he's smelled blood, no matter how bad an idea pursuing the enemy might be – he must have done this a dozen times.

Symbiosis

A potential Impulse must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and taken to open water every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour swimming. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Impulse must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Impulse must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least an Agility of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Swimming specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Intimidate.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Stealth.
- Must be at least Focused in the Aquatic specialization.

METAMORPHOSIS

An Echo must go to water to metamorphose. When the time comes, the Echo feels an irresistible draw to the nearest large body of water – the pull is primal and he can do nothing else. Once he enters, his symbiont spins a cocoon that is similar to a shark's egg case, covered in a hard, leathery exterior. The cocoon is usually spun in an underwater cave, a very deep point, or a trench. Hopefully the body of water has prey, for the Impulse will emerge ravenous.

The experience of becoming an Impulse requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Echo into Impulse.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (More Agile)* – Agility +5, Perception +3, Strength +4, Tenacity +4
- *Attributes (Stronger)* – Agility +3, Perception +3, Strength +7, Tenacity +3
- *Claws (+3)* – The Impulse's claws have developed into vicious weapons.
- *Electrified (+2)* – Anything that physically strikes the Impulse takes two dice of damage, which can be reduced by armor. This also adds two extra dice of damage to the Tager's close quarters attacks.
- *Sonic Pulse* – Range 10/25/50 in a 90° cone (Amphibious), Damage 0, Shots 2. This pulse also mystically reveals the sonar signature of the affected area to the Tager's allies, especially enemies.
- *Protection* – Armor 2/2, Regeneration 1 die

IMPULSE

Metamorphosed Echo

It is clearly the master of the sea, a thing that must have been the progenitor of sea monster stories. It slides through the water at lightning speed, carving things to ribbons with its mighty jaws. The things in the water fear, for an Impulse is hunting again.

The Impulse is perhaps not what many would have imagined the metamorphosis of an Echo to be. Certainly, its increased power and further development as an apex aquatic predator are predictable, but its sheer speed is not. The creature is capable of outrageous speed for an organic creature – and develops the ability to teleport to boot.

Special: Amphibious – While all Tagers are mystically sealed and can survive even the massive pressure found in the depths of the ocean, the Impulse goes one step further. It has “gills” that allow it to breathe in any kind of liquid that contains oxygen. It also does not suffer Test Penalties for acting underwater.

Size: Medium (8 to 9 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +4

Perception +3

Strength +5

Tenacity +4

Limit Weapon:

Frenzy (Special) – Once an Impulse has smelled fresh blood, it may Frenzy for the next one to ten turns (one die). The Tager's speed is doubled for the duration and it may take up to three Actions each turn at no Multiple Action Penalty, but each of these Actions must be used to attack (or move into position to attack). The Tager's Bite damage is increased to +4 for this duration as well. If underwater, the froth the Impulse generates during its Frenzy partially obscures sight in a five-yard radius around it. The Tager may come out of its Frenzy at will, but while it Frenzies it must continue to attack.

Frenzyport (Special) – Once an Impulse has smelled fresh blood, it may Frenzyport. By rapidly teleporting, the Impulse may attack up to six targets he can see, regardless of distance, at no Multiple Action Penalty. The Tager's Bite damage is increased to +4 for these attacks. The same target may be attacked multiple times. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1 die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Sense of Hearing, Acute Sense of Smell & Taste, Nightvision, Scan, Sonar, Thermal, Wary

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Double), Jumping (Double), Land (Normal), Swimming (20 Times Normal)

Weapons:

Fathom Beam – Range 50/200/450 (Amphibious), Damage +3, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds

Bite (+3) – The Tager's mouth opens wide to bite down on foes and tear out chunks of flesh with its sharp teeth.

Ink Cloud – Range 5-yard radius, Damage n/a, Shots 1, 20 Rounds per Day. Obscuring. Each time the Impulse uses its Ink Cloud, it completely obscures sight in a five-yard radius around the Tager for one to ten minutes (one die). This ability may only be used underwater; one round regenerates every half hour.





INFERNO

Metamorphosed Efreet

It is righteous fury, ready to burn the impurity from the world. Standing ten feet tall with burning wings, the Inferno is a thing that must look like what many have envisioned as the avenging angel. There is little that can stop its onslaught, as the fire that lives within it cleanses the world.

The Inferno takes the abilities of the Efreet and pushes them beyond. The creature becomes a being of living flame, capable of merging with and controlling it in unimaginable ways. However, becoming an Inferno is not for the faint of heart, as the symbiont's demands are not simple or easy. Those Efreets that choose to undergo metamorphosis have accepted their true natures and have been unafraid to set the world on fire.

Enhanced Special: Firestarter – The skin of an Inferno burns with heat and the seams in its “skin” and joints glow with fire. While it can consciously dampen these effects, the Inferno still leaves char marks anywhere it

walks or on anything it touches that is not resistant to heat and flame. It lights things on fire with a mere touch, if its firestarting abilities are left at full effect. Anything that physically strikes an Inferno takes two dice of damage, which can be reduced by armor. However, its radiance makes it difficult to conceal – Infernos suffer a –8 Penalty to Stealth Tests in their shifted form. These effects are not dampened by water – in fact, the boiling water around it create a five-yard radius cloud of partially obscuring bubbles. The Inferno is immune to any kind of fire, including plasma blasts.

Size: Medium (9 to 10 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +3

Perception +2

Strength +12

Tenacity +5

Weapons:

Dragonbreath – Range 20/75/150, Damage +4, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds. This attack ignites combustible materials.

Spiked Fists (+3) – The hot and mace-like fists of an Inferno sear anything.

Demonic Uppercut

(+5) – The Inferno may only use this attack every other turn. This attack uses two of the Tager's Actions that turn, with the accompanying Multiple Action Penalties.

Limit Weapon:

Meteor Strike – Range 30/60/100, Damage +6; this attack calls down a mystical shower of super-heated rocks, attacking all things in a 400 square foot area. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. This attack does Hybrid Damage. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Unearthly Radiance – Area effect: 5 primary burst, 5 secondary burst, Damage +6; this attack is centered on the Inferno and bursts outward. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. Those within the primary burst must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or be blinded and lose their next two Actions. This can reduce a character's Actions to zero for the turn. This attack does Hybrid Damage and lights flammable objects on fire. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1 Die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Long Range, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Double), Flying (Triple), Jumping (Quadruple), Land (Normal)

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

When an Efreet metamorphoses into an Inferno, it merges even further with the otherworldly fire that is a part of the symbiont. It gains the ability to generate and control fires mystically, with the equivalent power of an Expert level of expertise pyrokinetic (the rules for which can be found on p. 60 of *Vade Mecum: the CthulhuTech Companion*). This ability does not cost Orgone and requires no load time, unlike the para-psychic ability.

Furthermore, an Inferno can become one with fire. It gains a +8 Test Bonus for Stealth Tests while engulfed in flames. It can also merge with fires and travel within them at a rate equivalent to 400 mph.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

The Efreet is a proud and righteous symbiont. Those who are bound with one begin to feel unstoppable and, while they recognize and appreciate the assets of those around them, they believe themselves to be one step above. They also develop a burning hatred for the forces of the Old Ones and Nyarlathotep and find their moral conviction becoming as pure as fire. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Living Flame

Fire is the essence of the Efreet. To metamorphose, he must have been personally responsible for at least a dozen massive fires, the kind which claim property and make authorities cringe. Furthermore, a potential Inferno must have murdered at least two dozen enemies by burning them to death – and watching them burn. Beating them with smoking fists does not count.

Moral Conviction

Potential Infernos must act in accordance with the symbiont's intense moral conviction, which strangely works when laid over mortal codes. An Efreet must have chosen the ethical high road at least a dozen times, when the alternative was clearly the good idea. Furthermore, he must also have utterly destroyed something he perceives as evil when it didn't seem like a good idea or appropriately timed, at least a dozen times.

Righteousness

An overinflated sense of righteousness is an important part of an Efreet's nature. A potential Inferno must have been instrumental in destroying or dismantling at least a dozen important operations that would have directly served the Old Ones. Furthermore, he must have spent at least a third of the nights in the last six months hunting Dhohanoids – hunting to kill, not just to find.

Symbiosis

A potential Inferno must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and started some kind of significant fire every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour either in a fire or contemplating fire (of fireplace-sized or larger). Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement,

the potential Inferno must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

Unstoppable

Efreets are not easily dissuaded. A potential Inferno must have chosen to stand his ground against a clearly superior opponent or when significantly outnumbered, at least two dozen times. He must also have carried on fighting when reduced to Serious Wounds, or gotten up and continued fighting after being reduced to Death's Door, at least a dozen times.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Inferno must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Tenacity of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Intimidation.
- Must be at least Focused in the Overawe specialization.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Observation.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must be at least Focused in the Tager specialization.

METAMORPHOSIS

The metamorphic cocoon of an Inferno is the most inconvenient of all Tagers to try to conceal. The shell that forms around a metamorphosing Efreet is hard and rocky, but more than 400° on the surface and constantly steaming and smoking. From time to time, the cocoon vents, causing a loud high-pitched whine. When the Inferno finally emerges, it usually engulfs the immediate area in flames.

The experience of becoming an Inferno requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 75 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Efreet into Inferno.

VARIATIONS

If an Inferno metamorphoses from a variant type, here are the ways those variations will change:

- *Attributes* – Agility +3, Perception +2, Strength +10, Tenacity +7
- *Searing Filaments* (+2) – This flaming whip may also be used to entangle.
- *Soul Stare* – The Inferno can fixate a nearby enemy with its righteous stare. If the Inferno succeeds at a Tenacity Feat Contest (with a +3 Bonus) versus an enemy's Tenacity Feat, his foe loses 2 Actions (which may reduce his Actions to zero for a turn or two).
- *Fireburst* – 3 yard burst, Damage +4, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds. This attack bursts out from the Inferno, damaging all in close proximity. It also ignites combustible materials.
- *Protection* – Armor 3/3, Regeneration 1 die

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

A Memory becomes forgettable – they are truly out of sight, out of mind. Those that interact with them only acknowledge the Memory when he is present. They will not imprint memories of the encounter in any way, once the Memory has left their sight for even five seconds. Powers that allow people into the minds and memories of others find no evidence of a Memory, for the memories simply aren't there. Furthermore, recording devices of any kind will not record a Memory – they leave no kind of image whatsoever. They become ghosts in the system.

Perhaps most interesting is that attackers will also not imprint the Memory. If they are forced to chase the Tager and lose sight of it for one full turn, they will forget what they were chasing.

Fortunately, a Memory can consciously choose to turn off this ability so that they can have normal relationships.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

Mirages are precise and cautious symbionts. Those who are bound with one develop precise bodily control and a confident awareness combined with a more guarded personality and a desire to blend into the background. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Awareness

Mirages are very aware of their surroundings. As such a potential Memory must have proved it is in tune with its environment. A Mirage must have succeeded at least two dozen Observation Tests of Challenging degree or higher (or the equivalent Contests). Furthermore, his awareness must have thwarted at least a dozen potential surprise attacks.

Bodily Attunement

The Mirage symbiont is one that is attuned to its physical body. A potential Memory must have come into deep connection with his body. Specifically, he must have succeeded at least two dozen Athletics Tests of Challenging degree or higher (or the equivalent Contests). Furthermore, he must have successfully dodged at least four dozen attacks by enemies.

Caution

A potential Memory must exhibit patience and caution. He must have not acted impulsively in at least two dozen situations that call for such rapid action. He must also have convinced his fellow Tagers to stop and think through their actions, at least a dozen times when it is warranted.

Everyperson

Mirages are not the kind of people that like to stand out. A potential Memory must have, in two dozen important meetings or social engagements, faded successfully into the background, observing rather than interacting. He must also have a guarded personality, being unwilling to let people in – he must have resisted the urge to become intimate with people for the last 90 days. This includes any kind of emotional or personal intimacy, not physical. This does not mean he has to pull back from his existing relationships, only make sure that new people don't truly see behind the facade.

Symbiosis

A potential Memory must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and engaged

his displacement field every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour out in the world. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Memory must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Memory must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least an Agility of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Jumping specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Observation.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Misdirect.
- Must be at least Focused in the Confuse specialization.

METAMORPHOSIS

Filaments snake out of the metamorphosing Tager, creating something that looks like what one might expect from a cocoon. It is a hard, organic chrysalis, but it is protected by the Mirage's displacement field. The cocoon always appears to be up to five yards from where it actually is, making it very difficult to find.

The experience of becoming a Memory requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Mirage into Memory.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (More Agile)* – Agility +7, Perception +2, Strength +4, Tenacity +3
- *Attributes (Stronger)* – Agility +4, Perception +3, Strength +6, Tenacity +3
- *Impeding Lash (+1)* – These tentacles grow from the shoulder blades of the Tager and can be retracted. They can be used to entangle, as well as rudimentary hands. While not capable of fine manipulation, they can hold or push things (but cannot wield weapons). These tentacles give the Tager an extra Action each turn that can only be spent to attack with them – this can bring a Memory's total Actions to four. The usual Multiple Action Penalties apply.
- *Tentacle Hook (+2)* – This attack can target any foe within 25 feet. The target must engage in a Strength Feat Contest with the Memory. If the Tager wins, the target is dragged into close combat range, as close to the Memory as he wishes.
- *Whirling Lash* – Range 20 foot radius, Damage +2, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. This attacks targets all enemies within the radius; generate one attack total against which all must defend. Targets must succeed at a Hard Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.
- *Protection* – Armor 1/1, Regeneration 1 die

MEMORY

Metamorphosed Mirage

There is something about it that makes it impossible to remember. It is there for a minute and then it is gone, lost to the ether. It is a creature that lives in the cracks between moments, a thing that exists without leaving an imprint. It is a Memory, the thing that lies beyond the Mirage.

Whereas once the Mirage was a thing whose true physical location was a constant deception, the Memory becomes a thing that leaves no traces in the minds of those it meets. It is forgettable in a way that even technology can't comprehend.

Enhanced Special: Displacement – The Memory projects a mystical displacement field around itself, making it appear as if it were a few feet away from where it really is. This provides a number of benefits, including adding one extra die to all of the Tager's defense rolls. It also cannot be surprise attacked while this field is engaged – the attacks are invariably aimed at the illusory simulacrum. The real position of the Memory is almost impossible to detect – use the rules for Stealth Systems when attempting to locate a Memory's real position, but increase the Degrees one category. Seeing the real Tager negates the benefits of Displacement as long as an observer is capable of tracking it.

Its Displacement ability drains the Orgone of the Tager, at a rate of one point for every hour the Tager spends with the displacement field engaged. The ability of the Memory to use Displacement is not affected by this drain – it only affects the Tager's ability to use or assist with magic. A Memory may even use this ability when its Orgone has been drained to zero, but will not regenerate Orgone while it is engaged.

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +5

Perception +3

Strength +4

Tenacity +4

Weapons:

Photon Blast – Range 50/225/350, Damage +3, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds

Tentacle Lash (+3) – These razor-tipped tentacles grow from the shoulder blades of the Tager and can be retracted. They are lashing weapons and cannot be used to entangle, though they can be used as rudimentary hands. While not capable of fine manipulation, they can hold or push things (but cannot wield weapons). These tentacles give the Tager an extra Action each turn that can only be spent to attack with them – this can bring a Mirage's total Actions to four. The usual Multiple Action Penalties apply.

Limit Weapon:

Multiplicity (n/a) – This deceptive ploy generates 6 to 10 (5 + half a die) illusory copies of the Tager. The moment these duplicates are created the real Mirage mystically and randomly changes places with one of them to conceal his presence in the group. The copies either independently engage any apparent enemies or they follow the lead of the Tager, and last for one to ten minutes (one die). The copies cannot cause harm nor can they be harmed – it doesn't take most foes long to realize they are fighting an illusion. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Duplicity (n/a) – This deceptive ploy generates illusory copies of the Tager's enemies, which turn on them – 1 to 3 copies of each enemy within a 20 foot radius (third of a die). The moment these duplicates are created, the real enemies mystically and randomly change places with one of their duplicates. The copies then begin to attack the real enemies and each other, confusing everyone but the Memory as to who is who. Enemies may end up seri-

ously harming each other during these first moments of confusion. The duplicates last for one to ten minutes (one die). The copies cannot cause harm nor can they be harmed – it doesn't take most foes long to realize they are fighting an illusion. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Jumping (Quadruple), Land (Normal)



PHANTASM

Metamorphosed Shadow

It is impossible to see coming. It may have even walked past, wearing a dozen different bodies and faces. However, if it chooses to show itself, death will follow shortly behind. It is the Phantasm, what a Shadow can become if it embraces its true nature.

The Phantasm goes beyond simply being mystically concealed to a world of illusion. It gains the ability to create realistic au-

dio-visual illusions to live in the world. Beyond that, it can even generate mystical disguises for itself, appearing to be anyone it desires. However, there are many aspects of the symbiont a Phantasm must embrace in order to make the change, some of them less palatable than others.

Enhanced Special: Paralytic Poison – The needles fired by the Phantasm are coated with an organic paralytic poison. This poison requires that the needle do at least one point of Vitality damage to be administered. Anyone affected by the poison must succeed at a Very Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist. If this Test is failed, the victim loses 2 Actions per turn for one to ten minutes (roll one die), which can effectively reduce a character's Actions to zero. Only one Test needs to be made per turn struck by the Phantasm's needles and the effect of the needles is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last dose.

Enhanced Special: Stealth – The Phantasm projects a mystical stealth field, which functions like a mecha stealth system except that all Degrees to spot it are increased one category. In addition to rapid, erratic movement, touching anything living (of dog-size or larger) will force the stealth to drop. This ability drains the Orgone of the Tager, at a rate of one point for every hour invisible. The ability of a Phantasm to use its stealth is not affected by this drain. A Phantasm may even use this ability when its Orgone has been drained to zero, but Orgone will not regenerate while it is engaged.

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +5

Perception +4

Strength +3

Tenacity +4

Weapons:

Thorns (+2) – These thorns grow out of the hands, forearms, shoulders, lower legs, and feet.

Needle Pods – Range 50/150/300, Damage +1 (+ Poison), Shots 3, Infinite Rounds

Limit Weapon:

Multiport – This attack can target anything within a range of twice the Phantasm's average jumping distance. By rapidly teleporting around his target, the Phantasm can take double his normal Actions – though no movement – with no Multiple Action Penalty, for one single turn. These attacks occur simultaneously. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Phantasmagoria – This illusionary attack can incapacitate groups of enemies by placing frightening and distracting hallucinations in their minds. They see things out of the corner of their eyes that aren't there, things in shadows, and the like. Make a Contest using the Phantasm's Performance (Illusion) skill. Use this one result against each enemy's Observation skill – each enemy within a 20 foot radius of the Phantasm must Test. For every five points the Phantasm beats an opponent's defense roll by, that enemy suffers a -2 Test Penalty to all Actions for the next one to ten minutes (one die). This also includes defense Tests.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal, X-ray

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Jumping (Quadruple), Land (Normal)



NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

Phantasms gain the ability to create realistic audio-visual illusions up to twenty feet in size. They are most often used to confound or distract enemies, though clever Phantasms find all kinds of uses for their illusions. At first, while a Phantasm is developing his skill, his illusions are rudimentary. Once he masters his abilities, he can even create large complicated phenomena like fires. The illusions, in any case, are purely visual and aural – they can be seen and heard – but they lack any sort of substance, do not give off heat of any kind, and have no smell. Furthermore, Phantasms can create illusionary appearances for themselves. These illusionary shells allow them to become whoever they want to become, even mimic a specific person (which requires greater skill). They become the ultimate infiltrators.

This ability is governed by the Performance (Illusion) skill, which a Phantasm can now learn. For a viewer to sense that a Phantasm's creation is an illusion requires a Contest of the Tager's Performance (Illusion) skill against a viewer's Observation skill. Most often, however, some sort of clue is necessary to make a person doubt an illusion, including lack of physical ability to manipulate objects, thermal qualities, or scent. If the Phantasm wishes to adopt an illusionary persona, a different kind of Contest is required – the Tager's Performance (Acting) skill against a viewer's Observation skill. Only those familiar with the person that the Phantasm is mimicking would notice a difference.

This ability drains the Orgone of the Tager, at a rate of one point for every fifteen minutes of illusions. A Phantasm may not use this ability when its Orgone has been drained to zero.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

The Shadow is a deadly and careful symbiont. Those who are bound with one develop great patience and cool temper, combined with a controlled nature and a callous attitude towards killing. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Callous

If there's a reason to kill something or somebody, Shadows don't wrestle with moral quandaries – they do it. A potential Phantasm must have finished off at least two dozen enemies that either begged for mercy or who were badly wounded and out of commission – neither of which necessarily needed to be killed. Furthermore, he must have also murdered at least a dozen potential witnesses that might otherwise have been considered innocent.

Careful

A potential Phantasm is a creature who takes care in everything he does. Two dozen infiltrations inside of enemy territory or strongholds must have gone off without a hitch, without being noticed. Furthermore, his caution must have thwarted at least a dozen potential surprise attacks.

Deadly

Shadows are designed to kill things. A potential Phantasm must have murdered at least two dozen living things. Furthermore, he must have also killed at least a dozen Dhohanoids.

Patient

A potential Phantasm must exhibit patience and a cool temper. He must have not acted impulsively in at least two dozen situations that call for such rapid action. He must also have convinced his fellow Tag-

ers to stop and think through their actions, at least a dozen times when it is warranted.

Symbiosis

A potential Phantasm must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and become invisible every single day for the last 180 days. He must spend at least an hour hidden in plain sight. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Phantasm must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Phantasm must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least an Agility of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Perception of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Climbing or Jumping specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Observation.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Performance (Acting).
- Must be at least Focused in the Mimicry specialization.

METAMORPHOSIS

The cocoon a Shadow enters is physically what one might expect. Filaments snake out of the metamorphosing Tager, entombing him in a hard, organic chrysalis. However, the mystical stealth field kicks in, rendering the cocoon all but impossible to detect without physically running into it.

The experience of becoming a Phantasm requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Shadow into Phantasm.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (More Agile)* – Agility +6, Perception +4, Strength +3, Tenacity +3
- *Concealing Aura (n/a)* – The Phantasm can extend his concealing abilities to one other living being that is of equal mass or less. This ability only functions as long as the Phantasm is touching the creature with which it wishes to conceal. This costs one Orgone per minute.
- *Spiny Embrace (+4 + Poison)* – The Phantasm may use its thorns in a bear hug-like grasp. This attack takes two of the Tager's Actions to perform.
- *Quills* – Range 10/20/30, Damage +1 (+ Poison), Shots 2, Infinite Rounds. These quills fire from the Tager to affect a three yard burst radius – all foes within must defend against the attack or be affected.
- *Protection* – Armor 1/1, Regeneration 1 die

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

There is something in the Revenant that is so tied to life that it is very difficult to kill, even more so than other Tagers – even the metamorphosed ones. This has several effects.

Revenants suffer differently when it comes to the amount of damage they have taken. They suffer no penalty at Light Wounds; a -2 Test Penalty and a max of two Actions, but no movement or armor/regeneration penalty at Moderate Wounds; a -4 Test Penalty and a max of one Action, but reduced to half movement and half armor/regeneration at Serious Wounds; and unconscious with quarter regeneration at Death's Door (see below). They stay up until they have to go down.

A Revenant will also come back from the dead. Essentially, the Revenant does not have the standard Wound Level called Death's Door – all damage it receives past Serious Wounds goes into that category. The Tager is unconscious, but in no danger of dying. His rate of regeneration is cut to a quarter, but it still operates. As long as there is something recognizable as the Revenant left, it will regenerate back to full health. If it has been vaporized, burned to ash, destroyed by Integrity scale weapons, or the like – in essence, has been reduced to particles or pulp – then the Revenant will die. Otherwise, nothing else will kill it, only take it out of commission for a time.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

The Spectre is a resolved and aloof symbiont. Those who are bound with one develop a precise nature with an unyielding determination combined with an emotional distance. They often have difficulty forming bonds with those who are not of a supernatural nature. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Aloof

Spectres aren't the most outgoing people. A potential Revenant must have given up his mundane friends (anyone not a Tager, sorcerer, para-psychic, ghoul, or the like) entirely. Furthermore, he must have attained a level of emotional distance that can be measured. He must have resisted the urges that come from emotional connection for the last 90 days, including intimate relationships, deep friendships, sexual liaisons, social gatherings, and the like. This doesn't mean he has to have given up his relationships altogether, only that he must be apart from them.

Deathly

There can be no doubt that there is something of what mortals regard as death in the Spectre. A potential Revenant must have spent at least 200 points of Orgone to be insubstantial, and it must have been in situations that count – he can't just blow the points running around for the fun of it. Furthermore, he must have frightened at least two dozen enemies (they have to have failed their Fear Tests and suffered a Fear Effect).

Precise

A potential Revenant must have displayed his ability to be precise, no matter the temptations. The Spectre must have assassinated at least two dozen enemies, killing only the target without anyone else knowing he was there. This target must be someone that is difficult to reach. Furthermore, a potential Revenant must have stayed his path in the face of sincere temptation, whether it be the distraction of other enemies, the urging of his pack-mates, supernatural influence, or the like, at least two dozen times.

Symbiosis

A potential Revenant must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and spent at least four hours and been out in the world in this form every single day for the last 180 days. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was

impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Revenant must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

Unyielding

A Spectre does not give up. A potential Revenant must have carried on in battle when reduced to Serious Wounds at least a dozen times. He must also have been reduced to Death's Door at least a dozen times and come back from it.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Revenant must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least an Agility of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Jumping specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Observation.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Stealth.
- Must be at least Focused in the Concealment specialization.

METAMORPHOSIS

The metamorphosis process with a Revenant can be disconcerting. At first, it appears that the Spectre assumes his Tager form and then dies – while retaining his monstrous shape. His body then begins to crystallize, becoming hard on the outside. As the days go on, the body begins to slump and decay. Then, the week before his metamorphosis is to end, the remains go nuts, regenerating and building the brand new form until the process is complete. Many Revenants refer to it as being resurrected.

The experience of becoming a Revenant requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Spectre into Revenant.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (Stronger & Hardier)* – Agility +4, Perception +3, Strength +5, Tenacity +4
- *Eon Touch (+1)* – This debilitating attack ages a living being to its senior years in an instant. The creature must make a Fear Test against a Very Hard degree, as well as suffer a -2 to his Agility, Strength, and Tenacity and a -1 to his Perception. He also moves one full category slower than normal. These effects naturally wear off in an hour. Creatures that regenerate or are supernaturally long lived only suffer damage from this attack.
- *Phasing Touch (n/a)* – The Revenant can extend his phasing abilities to one other living being that is of equal mass or less. This ability only functions as long as the Revenant is touching the creature with which it wishes to phase. This costs one Orgone per minute.
- *Ill Wind* – Range 10 yard radius, Damage n/a, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. Obscuring. Unlike the Gravewind, Ill Wind does not damage. Instead, it completely obscures the area in a single turn.
- *Protection* – Armor 1/1, Regeneration 1 die

REVENANT

Metamorphosed Spectre

It will always keep coming. It is a thing that knows no bounds, apparently not even death itself. Shrouded in a ghastly mist, it relentlessly pursues that which is its prey and nothing can stand in its way. It is a Revenant, the thing a Spectre is supposed to be, a creature that has passed beyond.

The Revenant expounds on all the properties of the Spectre. It grows in its capacity to pass through solid objects, to the point where such behavior is instinct. However, beyond that, the Revenant becomes its namesake as it rises from seeming death again and again. However, such a creature sacrifices much in order to become undying.

Special: Insubstantial – The Revenant can mystically pass through solid objects, literally walking through walls, trees, cars, even people. It cannot pass through things that are moving more than casually – for example, it can't let bullets pass through it. It also cannot rematerialize within an object or the Tager will be destroyed – with one exception (its Limit Attack). Only places that have been mystically protected against Outsiders block a Revenant. Revenants only become insubstantial at the moment they are phasing through an object and are solid at every other time. This ability drains the Orgone of the Tager. Each point of Orgone allows the Spectre to pass through any number of solid objects at will for five minutes. When the Tager is out of Orgone, it can no longer pass through solid objects.

Special: Gravewind – The Gravewind is a fetid cloud of withering gas, harming all living things within – even those protected by environmental suits. Each turn, generate a Test Result using the Tager's Tenacity Feat skill and use it in all Contests to determine damage. Those within defend using their Tenacity Feat skill. Each time the Revenant uses Gravewind, it partially obscures sight in a five-yard radius around the Tager. If a Spectre uses Gravewind two turns in the same area, sight becomes completely obscured. This ability does affect Outsiders (including other Tagers), but not other Spectres or Revenants.

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +5
Perception +4
Strength +4
Tenacity +3

Weapons:

Chilled Touch (+2) – The Revenant's touch is supernaturally freezing. It leaves frost on whatever it touches. The Tager can consciously dampen this effect.

Gravewind – Range 5 yard radius, Damage +2, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds. Obscuring.

Limit Weapon:

Phasing (+6) – The Revenant phases into a single living target and materializes, violently displacing the thing's flesh and bone. The Tager then rips itself out of the victim, tearing out further chunks of internal organs as it does. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Deathly Repose (+8) – The Revenant literally explodes, sends shards of itself through those around it; the attack has a burst radius of five yards. Make one Marksman Test against which all potential targets must defend. Each

of those shards operates like the Phasing limit attack above. Once the attack is complete, the shards of the Revenant will mystically reform within a minute and he will be back in action (to his level of Vitality before the limit attack) in the next ten minutes. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal, X-ray

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Jumping (Quadruple), Land (Normal)



TORMENT

Metamorphosed Nightmare

It has become suffering personified. While it once was a thing of death and destruction, it has now taken on the aspect of agony. It is perhaps best to run screaming before it, for the alternatives are far too gruesome to contemplate. It is a Torment, the evolution of a Nightmare, neither of which are things to cherish.

The Torment grows into a monstrosity whose sole purpose is to bring pain, suffering, and death to all it encounters. The creature now not only brings painful death through its weapons, it causes agony by its very existence. The perfection of pain becomes what it is and what it loves. Regardless, what a Nightmare must undertake to metamorphose is nothing easy – the Tager must have embraced all of the bloodiest and most menacing parts of the symbiont as his own.

Size: Large (9 to 10 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +3
Perception +4
Strength +8
Tenacity +6

Weapons:

Talons (+3) – These vicious claws tip the Tager's fingers.

Shoulder Pods – Range 50/150/400, Damage +3, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds

Tentacle Sheathe (+2) – This tentacle sheath may be used to entangle foes. It also now has two of them, one in each arm.

Limit Weapon:

Mystic Blast – Range 30/75/200, Damage +6; this blast is a five-foot wide swathe of eldritch destruction. It damages anything in its path, in a straight line. This attack does Hybrid Damage. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Death Blossom – Range 5/10/20, Damage +6; the Shoulder Pods of the Torment spasm, letting loose blasts at all foes within range. Everything caught within the death blossom is attacked, at no Multiple Action Penalty. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. This attack does Hybrid Damage. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn. Note that this ability, unlike the area effect limit attacks of many Taggers, is selective – it only targets the Torment's enemies.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1 die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Jumping (Triple), Land (Normal)



NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

Once a Nightmare becomes a Torment, it becomes untouchable – literally. Something in the being of a Torment radiates agony. Anything attempting to touch a Torment must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or lose their next two Actions. This can reduce a Character's Actions to zero for the turn. This painful result also applies to anyone who tries to attack the Torment using their own fists or natural weapons, to anything that the Torment attacks with its natural weapons in close quarters, as well as anything that chooses to get within six inches of the Tager's physical body.

Furthermore, a Torment gains a Contest Bonus to all attack Tests equal to the Test Penalty an opponent suffers due to pain or his wound level. For example, a Torment would gain a +3 Contest Bonus to attack a Moderately Wounded foe, and a +6 to attack a Seriously Wounded foe.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

The Nightmare is a dangerous and bloodthirsty symbiont. Those who are bound with one develop a certain menace and predatory ease, combined with a cold temper and murderous streak. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Cold Temper

The temper of a Nightmare is cold and deadly. To metamorphose, a potential Torment must have indulged this side of his personality. He must have, at least a dozen times, dished up cold revenge – that is, exacted personal revenge on an enemy long after emotions had run cold, when most likely the foe will have mostly forgotten about the incident that warrants such revenge. Furthermore, a Nightmare must have later chosen to attack an enemy that has offended him from ambush, instead of attacking him outright at the moment.

Menacing

Nightmares are intimidating, even just standing still. However, a potential Torment must have deliberately menaced at least two dozen enemies. Specifically, he must have succeeded with at least two dozen Intimidation Tests of Challenging degree or higher (or the equivalent Contests).

A potential Torment must have displayed his superiority as a predator. He must have destroyed at least two dozen foes, six of whom must have been of approximately equal or greater power. Foes of lesser power might include Gaunts, Ghosts, or common Dhohanoids, while equal or superior might include specialized or elite Dhohanoids.

Murderous

Nightmares like to kill things. A potential Torment must have murdered at least two dozen living things. Furthermore, he must have also killed at least a dozen Dhohanoids.

Nightmare

These creatures are their namesake. A Nightmare must have forced at least two dozen foes to fail their Fear Tests and scared them – they must suffer from a Fear Effect. These must be worthy enemies, not just the average joe who would piss himself at the sight of a Tager.

Furthermore, he must have spent at least a third of the nights in the last six months hunting Dhohanoids – and have killed at least one every night he hunts, unless viable targets are absolutely unavailable.

Symbiosis

A potential Torment must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and spent at least four hours and been out in the world in this form every single day for the last 180 days. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Torment must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Torment must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Tenacity of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Adept level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must have at least an Adept level of expertise in Intimidate.
- Must be at least Focused in the Menace specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least a Novice level of expertise in Survival.
- Must be at least Focused in the Tracking specialization.

METAMORPHOSIS

A metamorphosing Torment encases itself in what appears to be a hard, organic alien chrysalis. It is a rather violent process, as the Nightmare fights the whole way. Its body tries to entomb it, while the conscious self tries to fight. Hence, the cocoon is anything but normal looking – it looks like it caught something that didn't want to be caught. Touching the cocoon causes intense pain, like an electrical shock.

The experience of becoming a Torment requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Nightmare into Torment.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (Stronger)* – Agility +3, Perception +3, Strength +10, Tenacity +5
- *Attributes (More Agile)* – Agility +5, Perception +3, Strength +7, Tenacity +6
- *Rend (+5)* – The Torment may use both its sets of talons to tear into a foe. This attack takes two of the Tager's Actions to perform.
- *Stomp (+4)* – The Torment jumps into the air and lands on top of an opponent. In addition to the damage, the foe must succeed at a Hard Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.
- *Depthless Strike* – Range 25/60/120, Damage +3, Shots 2, Infinite Rounds. This attack must trace a path along a physical plane, like walls or the ground. It is capable of ignoring cover and can also shoot around corners.
- *Protection* – Armor 3/3, Regeneration 1 die

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

A Wraith becomes an inertial juggernaut and little can stand in its way. It gains the mystical ability to control the inertia around it and is capable of amazing feats.

Once in motion, a Wraith is very difficult to stop. Once at full speed, anything it hits is dealt two dice worth of Hybrid Damage. This makes it capable of bursting through most vehicles, walls, and knocking most powered armor and Integrity-scale creatures out of the way – living things must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to remain standing. Anything knocked over by a Wraith loses its next two Actions, which can reduce the number of Actions it can take to zero. The Wraith itself takes no damage from such collisions.

Once choosing to stand its ground, a Wraith is very difficult to move. Nothing of Vitality-scale can move it. Anything hitting a Wraith at speeds of ten to thirty miles an hour takes one die worth of Hybrid Damage. Anything hitting a Wraith at speeds of 30 to 60 miles an hour takes two dice worth of Hybrid Damage, while the Wraith takes one die (armor cannot reduce). Anything hitting a Wraith at speeds of 60 to 120 miles an hour takes three dice worth of Hybrid Damage, while the Wraith takes one die (armor cannot reduce). This ability reaches its maximum effectiveness at 120+ miles an hour, where the target takes five dice worth of Hybrid Damage, while the Wraith takes two dice (armor cannot reduce).

At no time, under any circumstances, can a Wraith be knocked down or moved, unless it wishes to be. However, its inertial abilities do not defend it against normal combat, where all the usual rules apply. Its abilities do apply to falling, where it always takes half damage.

REQUIRED BEHAVIORS, BY TRAIT

Phantoms are sleek and aggressive symbionts. Those who are bound with one develop an attunement with their body and a confident awareness, combined with a sense of freedom and a certain bloodlust. If one expects to metamorphose, one must have acted in accordance with these key traits, as well as having spent time in close communion with the symbiont.

Aggression

A potential Wraith must have displayed his superiority as a predator. He must have destroyed at least two dozen foes, six of whom must have been of approximately equal or greater power. Foes of lesser power might include Gaunts, Ghosts, or common Dhohanoids, while equal or superior might include specialized or elite Dhohanoids.

Furthermore, he must have spent at least a third of the nights in the last six months hunting Dhohanoids – hunting to kill, not just to find.

Awareness

Phantoms are very aware of their surroundings. As such a potential Wraith must have proved it is in tune with its environment. A Phantom must have succeeded at least two dozen Observation Tests of Challenging degree or higher (or the equivalent Contests). Furthermore, his skills at observing must have thwarted at least a dozen potential surprise attacks.

Bloodlust

Phantoms like to kill things. A potential Wraith must have murdered at least two dozen living things. Furthermore, he must have also killed at least a dozen Dhohanoids.

Body Attunement

The Phantom symbiont is one that is body aware. A potential Wraith must have come into deep connection with his body. Specifically, he must

have succeeded at least two dozen Athletics Tests of Challenging degree or higher (or the equivalent Contests). Furthermore, he must have successfully dodged at least four dozen attacks by enemies.

Symbiosis

A potential Wraith must have spent a significant and regular amount of time shifted into his Tager form. He must have shifted and spent at least four hours and been out in the world in this form every single day for the last 180 days. Missing a day resets the clock to zero, unless such activity was impossible and not by choice – in these cases, the Tager must still have spent an hour shifted in order for it to count.

Furthermore, he must have utilized his limit weapon successfully at least twenty times. In order for it to count against this requirement, the potential Wraith must have had sufficient cause to use his limit weapon and not just fired it off for fun.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

To go along with actualizing the personality traits of the symbiont, a potential Bloodgod must also have achieved certain statistical measures:

- Must have at least a Presence of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Strength of 7, unshifted.
- Must have at least a Tenacity of 8, unshifted.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Athletics.
- Must be at least Focused in the Jumping specialization.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Fighting.
- Must be at least Focused in the Tager specialization or in a fighting style, as typified by Cascades.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Marksman.
- Must have at least an Expert level of expertise in Observation.

METAMORPHOSIS

The cocoon of a soon-to-be Wraith is what one might expect from something called a cocoon. Filaments snake out of the metamorphosing Phantom, entombing him in a hard, organic chrysalis. The cocoon is far heavier than one might expect – four times to be exact. Therefore, a Wraith cocoon that should weight 250 pounds weighs half a ton.

The experience of becoming a Wraith requires a Hard Tenacity Feat Test, utilizing the Character's unshifted Tenacity. Failure means the Character gains two Insanity Points.

EXPERIENCE

Once all requirements have been met, it costs 50 Experience to begin the process of metamorphosis from Phantom into Wraith.

VARIANTS

- *Attributes (Stronger)* – Agility +3, Perception +3, Strength +6, Tenacity +4
- *Attributes (More Agile)* – Agility +5, Perception +3, Strength +3, Tenacity +5
- *Claws (+3)* – The Wraith's claws have developed into vicious weapons.
- *Rend (+5)* – The Wraith may use both its sets of blades or claws to tear into a foe. This attack takes two of the Tager's Actions to perform.
- *Screaming Clutch (+1)* – The Wraith grabs a target and disrupts its equilibrium with its howl. The target must succeed at a Hard Strength Feat Test or be unable to take action for the next turn. This attack is entangling and requires two Actions to perform.
- *Concussive Strike (0)* – The Tager strikes the ground and sends out a concussive wave that affects all targets touching the ground within 20 feet. Targets within must succeed at a Hard Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.
- *Protection* – Armor 2/2, Regeneration 1 die

WRAITH

Metamorphosed Phantom

There is something both threatening and alien in the confident way it stalks. It was once one of the most common manifestations of Tager, though it is no longer. It is a Wraith and there is little that can stand before its might, or any who are mighty enough to force it to falter in its stance.

The Wraith takes the Phantom to the next level in many ways, some surprising. Everything about it becomes more deadly. The tentacles that were always a part of the creature now manifest more fully, capable of bursting out in all directions to claim many foes. However, most unusual, the Wraith become an immovable being, a creature capable of controlling its own inertia in special ways.

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +4
Perception +3
Strength +4
Tenacity +5

Weapons:

Arcane Blast – Range 50/225/350, Damage +3, Shots 3, Infinite Rounds

Blades (+3) – These blades often extend from the forearms of the Tager.

Howl (+0) – Range of 15 yards; Target must succeed at a Hard Strength Feat Test or be knocked to the ground.

Limit Weapon:

Tentacle Sheathe (+3) – A mass of tentacles bursts out of the Phantom's chest, covering a 30 ft. cone in front of him. Everything caught within the tentacles is attacked, at no Multiple Action Penalty. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. One of the targets, randomly selected, must also succeed at a Challenging Strength Test or the symbiont will drag him back and eat him. This takes one full turn and results in the death of the victim. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Tentacle Frenzy (+3) – A mass of tentacles bursts out of the Phantom, attacking all targets within a five yard radius. Everything caught within the tentacle frenzy is attacked, at no Multiple Action Penalty. Generate only one attack roll for the Combat Contest, against which all potential targets must defend. Roll half a die – this is how many victims this attack will attempt to devour. Choose from among the eligible targets (non-Tager), and each must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or the symbiont will drag them back and eat them. This takes one full turn per victim and results in the victim's death. This uses all Actions and can be the Tager's only Action that turn.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 1 Die

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Scan, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple), Jumping (Quadruple),
Land (Normal)





The Spire had an impressive view. It jutted out over the top of the Johannesburg arcology in a way no other non-military structure did. Such were the benefits of such temporal wealth and privilege. The ability to see the true sky and to open the window to breath fresh air.

At the top of the Spire was, naturally, the office of the man known only as the Director. He stood today, calmly regarding the world outside his windows. That was the only way the Director stood. Egyptian-looking, handsome, dark-skinned, and middle-aged, he was much like his wildly expensive white suit. Never ruffled. Legend had it that no one had ever seen the Director lose his cool for even a moment. Those who understood exactly what the Director truly was knew the reason why.

The office around him was the kind of place that once made the President of the New Earth Government envious. Large, open, and airy, the Director's senses tended toward the minimalist. Fascinating architecture was broken up only by a few key paintings – originals, of course. Edvard Munch's famous work *The Scream* and Salvador Dali's eternal *The Persistence of Memory*. There was something about Human suffering and melting clocks that fit right in here. The world, of course, did not know these masterful works were here. They had been acquired illegally at quite a price.

Besides the Director's desk and personal lounge was the giant glass conference table. More than two dozen people could fit around the table, each with their own custom chair. It didn't see much use, as the Inner Circle did not meet many times a year. However, today



was one of those special days.

Those that served the Director knew better than to disturb his reverie. One by one the top executives of the Chrysalis Corporation quietly arrived and took their places.

Finally, the Director turned. There it was. The group of beings known as the Inner Circle, his tools wholly dedicated to a return to a simpler time. A time when the Old Ones ruled this part of the universe.

He took his place at the head of the table. "Welcome."

Each of the executives seated at the table was a powerful inhuman creature in his own right. Most would quake in their presence. Now each of them sat at perfect attention, present and mindful of the being in whose presence they now bathed.

The Director continued. "I know there is much to discuss today, but there are a few highlights I would like to address first."

Everyone nodded in agreement, as if such a ges-

ture were truly necessary.

"Ms. Doje." All eyes turned to face an aging Asian woman. Her eyes were sharp, however, and her expression fierce. It was clear that she knew how to function here.

The Director noticed this, but did not smile. "How are things going in Leng?"

Ms. Doje did not miss a beat. "Very well, sir. As you've seen from the reports, there is still some level of resistance among the Disciples of the Rapine Storm. However, that has not stopped us. Continuing analysis of both the ruins and the Ruined King's behavior would suggest that there is more untapped

mystical power on the Plateau. Our initial concerns may be correct."

The Director nodded. "If this is so, when can we expect the breach to be fully closed."

"Within the year, sir. Our teams have already made advances," she replied.

"Very good. Next I would like to address the business of the Pacific Northwest of North America. Mr. Vaqueirinho?"

A balding Brazilian man dressed in an understated suit shifted uncomfortably. The reaction was so subtle as to be unnoticeable by most, but here it was plain as day.

"Yes, sir. What would you like to know?"

"What is it you think I'd like to know?"

Mr. Vaqueirinho took a deep breath. "The business of the ritual to bring forth the Black Mother failed. I have prepared a full report."

The glass table lit up from the inside, projecting an electronic report for each of those seated to see.

"As you can see, despite the many obstacles, we had acquired everything we needed for the ritual, including the rare artifacts and the ceremonial site. The ritual began on schedule, as planned." He stopped to take a sip of his water.

"The cause for failure is two-fold. The first was the unexpected assault by the Eldritch Society. Despite tight and multi-layered security, Tagers managed to discover and infiltrate the ceremonial site. However, it was not the Eldritch Society that was the biggest threat. The second cause of failure was the large-scale assault by the Office of Internal Security. Somehow, the Eldritch Society managed to convince the federal agency that there was a real and significant threat of mystical proportions, so response teams, powered armor, and even military mecha units were deployed. Despite our resistance, there was no way we would win against such an overwhelming force. Contingency plans are already underway.

The Director let that sink in for a moment. Mr. Vaqueirinho began to sweat ever so slightly. "I see. However, the conditions for such a ritual are very specific. You have missed your window. Now the Black Mother cannot manifest."

"Sir," responded Mr. Vaqueirinho. "We are looking into a way around such limitations."

The Director sighed. "There are none. This failure is inexcusable. I'm going to have to let you go." A cloud of vapor suddenly occupied the space where Mr. Vaqueirinho sat. And then there was nothing.

chapter four

MINIONS OF AN ENDLESS CHAOS

There have always been those who believe that giant corporations are evil. In the early days, it was because the owners and managers took gross advantage of the workers. As time went on, there were other reasons. Giant corporations polluted and abused the environment with no care for sustainability. They began to kill off small business and local flavor as they globalized. They even got to a point where they were so big they could not be policed by governments, and began to kill for their bottom line. This was all before the year 2000, before everything changed. The thing about it is, these corporations weren't evil, despite the outside perception. They were simply greedy.

Unlike its predecessors, the Chrysalis Corporation actually is evil. However, again, it's all a question of perspective. The Children of Chaos, one of Nyarlathotep's oldest cults, would strongly disagree.

A BRIEF HISTORY FOR AN ANCIENT CULT

It seems the Endless One known most commonly to us as Nyarlathotep has taken interest in the Human race for quite some time. One of his most prominent cults, the Children of Chaos, has been around since the early days of Human civilization.

It is uncertain how early Humans came to worship a being such as Nyarlathotep. Perhaps it was something they picked up from Migou cults, before the alien insects became more discrete in their interactions. Perhaps the Endless One touched the dreams of some early shamans. However, once they came into being, it was not difficult for the cult to find more followers and grow.

As the name of the cult suggests, the Children of Chaos believe that the status quo is unnatural. The inevitable consequence of unchecked order is stagnation. They have been a secret influence, prodding society throughout time to make certain that there is a dynamic nature to Human development. Unfortunately, the cult's execution is not as noble as their mission may at first sound. They have incited revolutions that resulted in the deaths of millions. They have introduced harmful and addictive drugs into societies. They have fostered corruption in governments to force a reaction from those they rule. The Children of Chaos are not quirky and unruly discordians. They are entropy, stark and ugly.

To aid them in their work, the Children of Chaos have also always sought to unearth powerful cosmic forces. Their patron takes special interest in sorcerers and para-psychics, so it is only natural that they would have an interest in such things. They seek lost places, forgotten knowledge, and powerful forbidden rituals – all guided by a being that knows where to point them. The cult has access to some of the most powerful artifacts and magicks on this world.

The Children of Chaos operated much the same as other cults have for thousands of years. Though they had successes, they were not going to make the world quake. However, in 2057,

something happened that changed the face of the cult in ways no one could have predicted.

The Chrysalis Corporation began in the early part of the century as a small, but prestigious consulting firm specializing in process improvement. Made up of some of the most respected specialists of the day, companies all over the world utilized the Chrysalis Corporation's services. What was interesting about the firm is that the financial wizards that ran the company believed that one of the strongest ways to grow and prosper was to ask for equity as part of the company's fees. This meant that Chrysalis ended up owning a chunk of every company that hired them. For most, this interest was inconsequential. For smaller companies who desired help but could not afford the usual price, this equity was more substantial.

Sometimes companies would require repeat consulting from Chrysalis, or on-going consulting. The corporation ended up owning more and more of some companies, eventually gaining seats on boards. Chrysalis consultants would also look for opportunities where the merging of their clients would yield greater results than the individuals. Each time companies merged, the Chrysalis Corporation would get a significant slice of equity. Eventually, after enough shuffling, merging, and other more arcane financial manipulation, Chrysalis ended up running a large multi-national conglomerate, a holding company that produced many diverse products and services through its subsidiaries.

It was, frankly, a stroke of genius and something that is studied in business schools all over the New Earth Government, though such a move is unlikely to ever work again.

In the years leading up to the First Arcanotech War, the Chrysalis Corporation had already begun to rot from the inside. The powerful people who ran the company's greed knew no bounds. They already were above the law with an army to match. They already had overflowing coffers of money. They already had their hooks so far into society that it would seem impossible that they could ever come out. The executives of the corporation had all but reached the limits of earthly greed.

So, they looked beyond what is earthly. It is amazing where greed can take a person, but combine that with Chrysalis' board of director's jealousy of the Ashcroft Foundation and you have a recipe for disaster. Forces within the Chrysalis Corporation were marshalled for research into the occult and the secret T99 Division was born. At first, their findings were nothing special. They had, however, discovered enough to know that there was a hidden world and that magical power was real. This only served to steel their resolve.

The beginning of the end came when T99 investigators got wind of authentic fragments of the notorious Necronomicon. Chrysalis threw its significant resources after the acquisition of such forbidden treasures. Though it took them years, they eventually became the proud owners of a genuine and complete copy of the Book of Dead Names.

However, the power of the book was only truly realized when a T99 Division acquisitions team stumbled across a little known volume called the Breath of R'lyeh in the ruins of Ninevah in 2052. Upon study, the researchers discovered that the power of the Necronomicon was only part of the equation. Though seemingly fragments at first, the Breath of R'lyeh was the missing piece, sliding into the cracks of the Book of Dead Names. This unlocked power that neither of the books on their own could offer. The board of directors was ecstatic.

Over the next two years, the T99 Division labored to decipher the combined texts. Something known as the Rite of Transfiguration became their primary focus, a magical ritual designed to bestow great power upon a recipient. Researchers ignored the implications of the book, despite that it detailed the predations of the Old Ones, prophesied their return, and told that the Rite of Transfiguration was a key to both surviving and serving them. Despite their understanding of the occult, those at the Chrysalis Corporation regarded such tales as nothing more than myths.

Eventually, they met with success. The T99 Division bestowed the power of the Rite of Transfiguration onto the first recipient in 2054. Scientists being what they are named the creature a Dhohanaoid, due to the key part of the dimensional known as the Formula of Dho-Hna – finding, of course, that Dhohnaoid was very difficult to say. It was a creature that could shift from a Human form to that of a powerful monster, with greatly increased health, longevity, and regeneration. The board of directors had found something that made their efforts worthwhile. It wasn't long before elite of the Chrysalis Corporation had undergone the Rite of Transfiguration.

This did not go unnoticed. As agents of chaos, the Children already had spies operating deep within the corporation. They had been keeping an eye on such an empire in case they needed to topple it, or use it in the toppling of others. The cult took great notice of Chrysalis after the company had acquired complete copies of both the Necronomicon and the Breath of R'lyeh. Once they learned of the Rite of Transfiguration and its success, the Children of Chaos began to infiltrate the Chrysalis Corporation with the intent of stealing such knowledge.

Then, the dreams began. Those who ruled the cult soon knew that they were not to simply take knowledge from Chrysalis, they were to take the whole company and make it theirs. Children of Chaos soon took positions of power in the corporation, aided by their magic and the influence of their master. Managers had dreams of who to hire and executives had dreams of who to promote. The Children of Chaos, over the next three years, infested the company at so many key levels that staging a coup was not even a challenge.

As if on cue, a new leader emerged to take over the now overrun Chrysalis Corporation. He simply walked into the board room one day and took the head chair, with no opposition. The Director, the only name by which he is known, was a being that radiated power and it became clear to the Children that their

master had come down to join and guide them. Their time was surely at hand.

Since that time, the better part of what was the Children of Chaos and the Chrysalis Corporation have become one. Their bottom-line is doing very well, as they have been one of the few large corporations to have survived the Arcanotech Wars. While they still contribute to general instability, the cult's primary focus is on doing what is necessary to bring the Old Ones back into this world. The Ruined King Project has already yielded the return of Hastur, though the return of Black Mother has been thwarted.

The Chrysalis Corporation is also continuing their quest to discover more and more lost things. The T99 Division is more powerful than ever, bringing more occult secrets under heel. However, this research has also backfired – particularly with regards to the *Ta'ge Fragments*. The Chrysalis Corporation has inadvertently birthed their only real enemy in the Strange Aeon.

THE SHADOW WAR

The first five years of the union between the Children of Chaos and the Chrysalis Corporation were what some consider halcyon days. The cult operated unopposed. No one even knew they were there, much less that they were a gigantic threat to the New Earth Government.

If it were not for the T99 Division's discovery of the *Ta'ge Fragments*, the Chrysalis Corporation would have gone on without hindrance. That one discovery sparked a chain reaction that ultimately led to the birth of the Eldritch Society. Suddenly, the Children of Chaos had an enemy, one who not only knew what the cult was but also what they were up to.

One of the great advantages the Chrysalis Corporation enjoys is that the Eldritch Society does not trust the New Earth Government. They believe that the Children of Chaos have their tendrils too deeply into the system that the system cannot help but work for them. Thus, the Chrysalis Corporation only has to concern itself with a guerrilla war waged in secret, instead of an assault by the powers that be.

The truth is, it would be almost impossible for the Eldritch Society to bring the powers of the New Earth Government against the Chrysalis Corporation. Surely, the company does hold great influence in the halls of power, but that isn't it. There is simply no way the Eldritch Society could ever bring together enough compelling evidence to prove the existence of an evil cult-infested multi-national corporation, that is also a government contractor. The company covers its tracks too well and is too entrenched. The system they have set up is one that allows them to operate in perpetuity, without concern for discovery.

To the Children of Chaos, the Shadow War is an abomination, a thing that should not exist. At the best of times, it is a distraction from their goals. At the worst, it is a thorn in their side. However, the cult that runs the Chrysalis Corporation knows there is no way the Eldritch Society can win, no matter how hard they try.

THE ENDLESS CHAOS

The Endless One known as Nyarlathotep is a primal force, the embodiment of entropy and chaos in the universe. It is a creature long associated with the development of Earth, as it undoubtedly has been with all evolving species in every corner of the cosmos. It has been a part of our growth, sometimes a guiding, sometimes a hindering force. However, now, for some reason, it has decided to come to Earth to help destroy the Human race and completely alter the course of the planet by helping bring the Old Ones back.

Not the being's true name (which would be impossible to comprehend) or even its ancient name, Nyarlathotep comes from one of the early Egyptian dynasties. They are the first to record the being's involvement with the Human race, though there are stories that go back much further than that. There is something in the Endless One that has taken great interest in Human affairs. It has always been there, in the shadows, pulling strings we didn't even know were there.

Nyarlathotep has always taken particular interest in those that manipulate the cosmos. Perhaps it is fascinated by the little mortal things learning to break outside their box. Perhaps it just enjoys watching the futility of a doomed species rage against the dying of the light. Whatever the reason, it has manipulated those with such power since the dawn of recorded history. In the past, sorcerers and para-psychics were the Endless One's focus. Some it would encourage and provide lost or hidden knowledge. Others, it would deliberately lead astray. Today, its fascination has grown to encompass scientists as well, who are the new pioneers. Even today, such visionaries may find themselves in some way visited by an avatar of Nyarlathotep. There are those that believe Dr. Anton Miyakame is one, or at least has been heavily influenced by one, and that Teresa Ashcroft may have been as well. If one plays heavily in such arenas, it is likely that he will eventually be visited.

When it has chosen to take form on this planet, it has rarely taken the same form – or even type of form – multiple times. There have been times when it has appeared as something monstrous and terrible, a thing designed from the nightmares of men. Other times, it has appeared mortal and almost benevolent, pushing people further down their path in ways they never would have thought possible. Regardless, the Endless One continues to take form through its avatars on Earth, and most times there are more than one.

The Director is perhaps the most famous, or infamous, of Nyarlathotep's avatars. He is a dark-skinned Egyptian-looking man in his mid-forties, handsome and debonair. What is amazing is that this creature that is fundamentally god-made-flesh lives in plain sight and is often a media figure as head of the Chrysalis Corporation. He coordinates the company, takes meetings, and occasionally speaks with the President of the New Earth Government. No one has any clue what he is, which is mostly a function of his enormous power. He has never said his name, claiming that the title Director is all people should know him as, for the security of himself and his family.

As one might expect, the Director is very involved in the guidance of the Chrysalis Corporation. He saves most of his attention for the special projects, the ones that involve the goals of the Children of Chaos. However, one might be surprised to discover how much attention he pays to the legitimate side of the business. He contributes however he can to making sure that the Chrysalis Corporation grows in power, wealth, and prestige, so that the vehicle of the end times can do what it must. This does include a fair amount of industrial espionage, blackmail, and wetwork, which eventually makes the two sides of the business synch up. Many times it seems as if the Chrysalis Corporation is simply an extension of the Director.

Though the Director never seems out of sorts, upset, or angry in any way, there is an aura of unease that follows him. Others are calm and in control of their wits around him, but not because he is a calming influence. It's more like everyone behaves because they instinctively know there is a bigger predator in the room. If he needs to, the Director is possessed of enormous personal power – he is, after all, the avatar of a primal deity. Those that have tried to assassinate him have met with ugly ends and those that cross him rarely do so twice. He is not afraid to get his hands dirty and end people who need to be killed. This includes his own executives or employees, which is often an excellent form of office motivation.

If one were to meet the Director, which happens only at high society functions, summits, and high-level business meetings, one would never know something was amiss. Most attribute his aura to his position, something that all men of power have. However, the Director can suss out those who serve the Eldritch Society on sight, and they are usually greeted by Dhohanoid hit squads on the way home.

The question those in the Eldritch Society are at a loss to answer is, how does one stop or even kill such a creature? It seems that he would likely know ahead of time of most methods of assassination. It is also likely that he cannot be physically harmed. While the bulk of the Eldritch Society fights the Chrysalis Corporation on the streets, the higher powers of the secret society labor to try to find a way that they will be able to defeat the Director. Until he can be stopped, the cult, like him, will never die.

Another facet of Nyarlathotep's power is the Circle. Few even know that the cult known as the Circle exist, even within the Chrysalis Corporation. This is surprising, considering that when taken together, they make up the better part of the Children of Chaos. One would have thought that Nyarlathotep would have forced his cult to unify. After all, there is great power to be gained by undergoing the Rite of Transfiguration, power that would not interrupt the sorcerers of the Circle's activities. However, for some reason, Nyarlathotep not only tolerates this schism, it fully supports it and rewards the Circle with their own avatar to guide them.

The Blind Lady is undoubtedly the most obscure avatar of Nyarlathotep. She appears to no one outside the Circle, so others

must simply accept that she exists. She appears as a beautiful alabaster-skinned young woman, with gaping, bloody sockets where her eyes should be. The Blind Lady does not maintain a constant physical presence in the lower dimensions. However, the leadership of the Circle always intuitively knows where to find her. She always appears in someplace indicative of the decline of society, whether they be abandoned buildings, forgotten basements, industrial sites, or the like. Her aura is said to be akin to a lightning rod, which forces a person into perfect presence. Perhaps most unnerving is that she always knows what is on a person's mind, right down to their deepest darkest secrets.

In many Human cultures, the image of a blind woman is often equated with justice and the idea that justice is blind (being impartial). The Blind Lady is not equated with justice, but rather power, teaching that power is blind (meaning above ethics and morality). Power is an extension of those who wield it, and those who do have already been given the right to use it any way they see fit. Mystical power is its own authority. The only crimes in the Blind Lady's eyes is to be afraid of one's power, to be timid in its use, or to stunt oneself to fit in with the less empowered.

That is, however, not where the lesson ends. You see, mystical power all comes from a source and it is to that source that all are indebted. To the Circle, that source is Nyarlathotep. The power coursing through them is from it, so they must utilize their might in its service. It is all part of a greater plan and they are all part of a greater whole. Despite their considerable abilities, those of the Circle ultimately regard themselves as instruments of a higher power.

Like the Director, the Blind Lady is a constant force in her cult. It is not difficult for the leadership of the Circle to gain her guidance – most of the time, if they seek her, she is there. However, the Blind Lady is rarely direct. She speaks in metaphors and riddles, trusting that her intelligent and powerful minions will make order out of the chaos. They often do, which keeps them constantly returning to her. The Blind Lady has been known to appear outside of her usual pattern, but only when something is terribly wrong. Unlike the Director, she has never been known to snuff out a life with her own hand – if someone needs to be killed, she entrusts that to her minions.

There have been many cults that have worshipped Nyarlathotep over the millennia, though there are some that were unaware that the Endless One was their deity of choice. However, one in the last century became its chosen – the Children of Chaos. The cult had been around for many years, dedicated to injecting chaos and disorder into the world. Strangely, as the world came closer together, the Children of Chaos grew, as if the species sensed that too much order might be a bad thing. When Nyarlathotep discovered that the Chrysalis Corporation was on to very real power, it was the Children of Chaos that were in the best position to infiltrate the multi-national corporation. They were given the blessing of the Endless One's guidance and soon had the secrets of the Dhohanoids and the power of the corporation to themselves and their greater goals.

The Children of Chaos is not the only cult Nyarlathotep has left in this galaxy. There are those among the Migou that worship it as well. These Migou cults most often monkey-wrench their race's careful plans, but sometimes they are called upon by Nyarlathotep for other purposes. The needs of the Children of Chaos often extend beyond the simple boundaries of the New Earth Government. Sometimes, lost knowledge must be brought from Pluto or old sites must be shown to the cult's Dhohanoid agents. The Migou accommodate. Sometimes Dhohanoids must travel into Migou occupied territory on Earth. Migou cultists can help with that. It is an unusual alliance, but one that must sometimes be forged to accomplish the cult's greater goals.

There are even those unusual Migou that are called by Nyarlathotep to be runners, coordinating and ferrying information back and forth between the Chrysalis Corporation and his cults within the Migou. It is an incredibly dangerous job for its alien worshippers, but one that they accept without emotion – only efficient dedication.

Avatars of Nyarlathotep began to appear in earnest again when the Strange Aeon arrived. There is something in the possibility of the Old Ones' return that has excited Nyarlathotep, moving it to create a powerful cult dedicated to helping them out. Why would such a creature want to help beings known for their alien malevolence? It is not normally in the way scholars have come to understand Nyarlathotep, but the embodiment of entropy is bound to be unpredictable. No one even knows if Nyarlathotep gets along with the Old Ones, though it seems likely he outclasses them in terms of sheer power. The answers won't be likely be told until things have come to their ultimate conclusion, and perhaps not even then.

AN UNUSUAL OPTION

On p. 121 of *Mortal Remains*, we say that you cannot play a Migou Character that is associated with other races or factions. Under normal circumstances, this is entirely true.

However, this section presents one unusual circumstance – those Migou cultists who are called upon by Nyarlathotep to assist the Children of Chaos. If you are willing to portray a Character that is a traitor to its own race and must keep its activities hidden from them, who will never be entirely accepted by the Dhohanoids with which it must work, and must also keep its presence secret from the New Earth Government, you may be someone who can portray a cultist Migou.

However, this is an extremely challenging Character option and not for the less-experienced. Please honestly assess if you are the kind of person who is truly capable of portraying such a Character. Regardless, you will need your Storyguide's approval to portray a Migou in a Chrysalis Corporation game, as he must be up to the challenge as well.

Storyguides, feel free to throw this option right out if it doesn't work for you.

THE PATH TO MONSTROSITY

There are many employees at the Chrysalis Corporation who are neither cultists nor who are aware of the Children of Chaos and their Dhohanoid coworkers. However, it is from this pool that the Corporation draws the majority of its recruits. How does one go from gainful employment at a multi-national corporation to initiate in an ancient cult to undergoing a magical ritual that turns one into a monster? It certainly doesn't happen overnight and it does require an entire division whose sole job is locating new and likely candidates.

Inside the Personnel Resources departments of the Chrysalis Corporation is a quiet and unassuming subdivision known as Special Projects. The above-board cover story for this subdivision is that they are the headhunters who cherry pick those best suited for the many special projects that are in process at the Corporation at any given time. They operate autonomously of but in partnership with the Personnel Resources management hierarchy, examining personnel files and interviewing employees at will.

Since psychological screening is mandatory at all large companies, including those operating by the Chrysalis Corporation, the Special Projects subdivision has a leg up. As one might expect, the minimum level of stability required to work at Chrysalis is lower than most major employers. Those who apply for jobs with questionable psychological profiles are the first Special Projects keeps an eye on. There are many types of psychological instability that do not attract Special Projects' attention, most especially those that would not contribute to a person's desire to join an insidious cult. Those with criminal histories or instabilities that work within a cult framework are hired and put to work by Special Projects.

In general, Special Projects cherry picks from within the Corporation. The culture within Chrysalis is cut-throat, but employees are treated well – especially as they advance. Once inside the machine and part of it, it seems more sensible for Special Projects to take who is already there.

There are several ways they soften potential cultists up once they are employed. The first is through the ringers that line every layer of the Chrysalis Corporation. These are cultists, often Dhohanoids, who buddy up to the new guys (or the newly promoted or transferred). Their job is to both assess and nudge these employees, to see if they are the kind of people that can be tempted and/or influenced.

The way they most often corrupt those on the Special Projects radar is through greed. First, potentials are asked to overlook small things that aren't entirely kosher. They are rewarded for their behavior with cash under the table. Then, they are asked to overlook something much larger. They are again rewarded, more generously this time. They are eventually asked to participate in something clearly illegal or unethical. If they rise to this occasion, they are most often promoted for their trouble. The more questionable acts a potential takes, the more he is rewarded by the company.

Vassiamon are also very useful in this task. A creature that is designed to become a person's sexual ideal is ideal when it comes to pushing a potential employee further and further down the dark path. They often enter when a potential is at a tipping point and needs a nudge to overcome his resistance. Many a person has done something stupid because of an irresistible demon lover.

Eventually, a potential cultist is the kind of employee that would do anything for the company and to line their own pockets or increase their own prestige. Right about here is when the first real carrot is dangled. The potential begins to hear rumors about a secret society of the company's elite, a group that is the real power behind the throne. It doesn't take long before he begins to investigate these rumors, as he undoubtedly isn't pleased that he's not part of the inner circle. The Children of Chaos will make certain that his labors bear fruit, that he finds more and more alluring evidence of a powerful cabal inside the Corporation.

Eventually, such a potential cultist is delivered an anonymous message, telling him to be in a certain place at a certain time. If he takes the bait, he is greeted by someone he knows – possibly one of the ringers who has been with him on his journey or one of the Vassiamon who has tempted him with her lustful ways. This is his point of entry into the Children of Chaos. He is offered a window into the secret society that is truly running the Chrysalis Corporation.

The process from first peek to the revelation that the power elite is in fact the Children of Chaos, a cult dedicated to the worship of Nyarlathotep, comes gradually after that. Such potentials are first initiated into the most basic tenets of the cult, and tempted with great reward. Basic brainwashing techniques also begin here, among the most notable being financial dependence (the cult is the company) and social isolation (as they discourage having social contact outside the company). It doesn't end there. The cult, through the Chrysalis Corporation, has a great degree of control over the potential's everyday life and cultists are already undoubtedly part of the potential's friend group. It isn't long before he capitulates and joins.

Once inside the Children of Chaos, the religious iconography and dogma become more and more prevalent in the newly initiated's life. Frogs can be easily boiled if placed in cool water that is slowly heated up. So with the new Child of Chaos. They become so steeped in the culture and goals of the cult that it doesn't take long before new initiates have bought into the worship of Nyarlathotep and the goals of the Children of Chaos. The reward system doesn't hurt, either.

Now there are those who are either ready for a radical shift in their lives, who have given up, or who are so disenfranchised with how things are they'll go with anything. There are cases where what the cult offers is exactly the thing for which a person has sought. These people, part of the lunatic fringe, are much easier to recruit, and Chrysalis can skip many of the steps required for the average potential.



Sometimes, there are those the cult wishes to draw in but who are of a mind set that is not predisposed to sliding into the worship of the Endless One. The Children of Chaos are not above using their mystical might to coerce such a person into service. In these cases, they utilize a combination of para-psychic suggestion and dream magic to manipulate the potential candidate into new ways of thinking so that they do become properly disposed to the lure of the cult. It isn't necessarily the most graceful way to go, but it certainly works, especially given the magical might of the Children of Chaos.

There are, however, those that have been born as a part of the Children of Chaos. Either they were part of a family that has served for generations, long before the advent of the Chrysalis Corporation, or they are among the first born Dhohanoids. As the years roll by, the Corporation relies on these more and more, as recruitment is a long and tricky process. Now that the Chrysalis Corporation has a stable base of Dhohanoids and has begun breeding programs, it is only a matter of time before external recruiting will become a luxury instead of a necessity.

Once a willing part of the Children of Chaos, new initiates are exposed more and more to the mystical side of the cult. It isn't long before such people are exposed to the stories of those who are augmented by magic and given enormous power. Furthermore, those that agree to such augmentation grow in importance in the cult, instantly boosting their authority and power. Such rumors and stories continue to filter into the initiate's ears, growing in their level of power and temptation. Then, the initiate is allowed to meet a Dhohanoid. The first couple of meetings are innocuous as the Dhohanoid plays up how amazing it is to be closer to their god and to wield the awesome powers his chosen

do. Eventually, the initiate is shown the Dhohanoid's true form. It is disturbing for most at first. However, they have come so far and been brought in so deep that such a revelation is eventually taken in stride. The initiate is now presented, either overtly or covertly, with a choice.

The general arrogant attitude within the Children of Chaos is that it is far better to be a Child of Chaos than it is to be one of the other pathetic mortals crawling on the planet, waiting for their destruction. However, it is also universally believed that undergoing the Rite of Transfiguration is far better than being one of the pathetic mortals that is choosing to serve Nyarlathotep without adopting a form more suitable of serving him. There is an overwhelming societal push on initiates to become Dhohanoids, to the point where those that delay are ridiculed and eventually treated as outcasts within their circles. Para-psychics are, of course, the exception, as they cannot undergo the Rite, nor can those tainted by the Outsiders – they are reluctantly relegated to positions below those who can undergo the Rite.

There is little other preparation necessary for someone to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. By the time an employee has gone so far that they are fully initiated into the Children of Chaos and understand that they have a choice to become a Dhohanoid, they need nothing else. Nearly all are eventually pushed to become a monster, and few have regrets afterward. Once the Rite is complete, their new frame of mind takes over.

It can be a long and rocky road, but Special Projects has become very good at identifying new recruits. In the end, the Chrysalis Corporation is designed to filter new and talented employees into the cult – with ultimate destinies as Dhohanoids.

THE RITE OF TRANSFIGURATION

It is central to the power of the Chrysalis Corporation, a ritual so obscure that only one cult possesses its power. Long lost to the world, it only recently resurfaced after the might of the Corporation was brought to bear, reuniting a complete version of the coveted Necronomicon and the thought-gone Breathe of R'lyeh. It is the Rite of Transfiguration and there are few who understand what it truly is.

The Rite of Transfiguration is supposedly designed to bestow upon a recipient a form that will better allow him to both survive the return of the Old Ones and to better serve them when they come. This turns him from a man into a monster, a creature of alien darkness. These creatures are known as Dhohanoids and they are the primary agents and foot soldiers of the Chrysalis Corporation and the Children of Chaos.

The conditions and requirements for the Rite of Transfiguration are more forgiving than those of the Rite of Sacred Union, but it is still a powerful spell that not just anyone can pull off. First and foremost, the Rite requires a powerful sorcerous circle, a group of magically gifted people with the cleverness, will, and cosmic reservoir to pull off a ritual of such enormous magnitude. Such sorcerers are not the every day variety. Fortunately, the Children of Chaos has many powerful, bent practitioners of magic, but even they must be properly trained to endure the grueling Rite.

In addition, there are naturally a variety of components that must go with such a ritual. These components are not all easy to come by – fortunately, the vast resources of the Chrysalis Corporation keep such ingredients in supply. They would, however, make a lesser person blush.

Furthermore, the Rite can only be performed on six nights of any month, on the nights previous, during, and after the new and full moons. The way the energy of the universe flows into the world during these times is conducive to the kind of shadowy magic that the Rite entails. The ritual itself takes days to complete, between three and four, apart from the days of preparation required.

Those undergoing the ritual need not be prepared in any of the special ways that potential Taggers are prepared – those who undergo the Rite will survive and be transformed. However, they must be, as in most rituals, clean and perfume-free while clothed in natural fabrics. The ritual participant is adorned in arcane symbols and anointed with rare oils both before and during the ritual, and that is the extent to which he must be prepared.

Those who wish to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration must also be free of any unchecked arcane influence. Sorcerers are fine, as such knowledge is earned, but para-psychics, Taggers, and the like are not. Any attempt to undergo the Rite will fail, sometimes with disastrous results. Fortunately, the Chrysalis Corporation's screening process weeds most such individuals out before it is too late. No spy of the Eldritch Society has ever found their way so deep in the Corporation that they have been chosen to undergo the Rite, especially not a Tagger.

Once all requirements have been met, the Rite can begin. To the participant, the Rite is grueling. To the recipient, it is terrifying. It isn't just the new state that makes a Dhohanoid inhuman – his humanity is stripped from him by the cosmic forces of the Rite. Such a recipient is bathed in the power of the Old Ones, assaulted with alien visions and urges over the first few days of the ritual. The power that begins to course through his body is agonizing. For all intents and purposes, the combination of what is both psychological and physical torture drives a recipient mad by the end of 48 hours. Many beg for the ritual to end – though none are ever given reprieve.

Somewhere on the third day, the transformation begins to take place. The vessel has been primed and the monster manifests. This first change is excruciating. The recipient's body is ripped and torn as his new flesh comes into being. The transformations come at intervals until the energy in play stabilizes and the new Dhohanoid is finally and permanently transfigured.

When all is said and done, it usually takes the average new Dhohanoid several days to several weeks to recover from the experience, before they can even begin to explore their new lives and bodies. However, within a month, nearly all memory of their painful birth is gone.

Anyone undergoing the Rite automatically enters a higher level of initiation than the mortal members of the cult. This often corresponds with a promotion as well. Depending upon manifestation, significant promotions may be in order. Ciraqen, for example, shoot up the food chain to high-level managerial positions rapidly. Some are promoted and removed from the normal chain of command, including Thog-Manna or Zabuth.

The only thing that will stop the Rite of Transfiguration from working is if a person is somehow of a state that will stymie the cosmic forces at play. The most common incidents involve latent para-psychics who have not yet been identified as such. The already active reservoir of cosmic energy in a para-psychic makes it impossible to coalesce the forces that bring about the transformation bestowed by the Rite. It most often results in a violent and possibly dangerous unravelling of the spell mid-ritual, as well as the full-blown eruption of the no-longer latent para-psychic. Some walk away from the experience changed even further, as something in the failed ritual tainted them with something from Outside. Those who survive this experience are relegated to the positions of mortals within the cult and often ridiculed or outcast by their peers who become Dhohanoids.

The other most common failure of the Rite involves those who have either concealed their Outsider Taint or those who have been tainted and have either repressed or been left somehow unaware of their state. It seems odd that the Rite would somehow reject those who already had been touched by the higher planes, but the energies that go into both taint and the Rite cannot coexist in the mortal form. True, once the Rite is complete the participant is no longer mortal, but such transformation occurs during the Rite. Mixing the two results in the participant being

ripped apart by the cosmic forces colliding within him. The cult warns those who are going to undergo the Rite about this, but there are those who are tainted who don't buy it. The believe it's just a ploy to keep them from becoming even more powerful. However, most often such failures arise from those who refuse to acknowledge their taint or have repressed their memory of getting and having it. This is a difficult thing to do, unless the physical evidence of taint is more subtle than most, or if the person is one of those people whose psyche can compartmentalize to the Nth degree.

It is the will of the Old Ones, or Nyarlathotep as many believe, that guides what type of Dhohonoid a participant will manifest as. The Chrysalis Corporation, despite many attempts to the contrary, has no control over the ultimate result of the Rite of Transfiguration. Furthermore, there are a finite number of types of Dhohonoids that will manifest, and there has not been a new manifestation of Dhohonoid in almost twenty years. That is, except for the three unique Dhohonoids created by the experiments of Dr. Aina Eze in 2086 (for more information, see p. 42 of the *Damnation View*).

As a result, the Chrysalis Corporation has ended up with a preponderance of what are sometimes called the common manifestations, including the Derebith, Dua-Sanaras, Ramachese, and Vassiamon Dhohonoids. This is not viewed as a problem. However, the Corporation would love to be able to intentionally create other specialized manifestations for specific duties and uses. For example, they would love to create more Ciragen for research and development or more Grokell or Zabuth to take care of big problems. Research in this arena continues.

The most common way that Dhohonoids are created is in special facilities known as Genesis Pits. Such places are designed to accomplish several goals. Potential Dhohonoids are brought here not only to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration, but also to recover from the experience, adjust to their new lives, and receive basic training so they can learn to utilize their new forms. They are ritual spaces, boarding houses, and training facilities all rolled up into one. A mortal goes in one door and a fully functioning monster comes out the other.

Genesis Pits are designed to create as many Dhohonoids as possible, as efficiently as possible, on the six nights a month the Rite of Transfiguration can be performed. It is corporate planning on a ritual level, creating what is best described as a magical assembly line. Typically, several groups of sorcerers perform the Rite simultaneously in separate ritual spaces under the same roof. Up to a dozen Dhohonoids can be created in a single Genesis Pit of larger than average size in a single batch of rituals. Once the new Dhohonoids are born, they are kept within the facility for anywhere from one to two weeks, depending upon how fast the subject in question adjusts to his new life.

There are those who cannot deal with what they become. Anyone who is to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration is fully briefed on what he is about to do – no one is surprised to discover that

he has become a monster that can assume his former shape. However, as with so many things, the reality of the situation is far different that the mental image some believe it to be. Many have difficulty adjusting for the first few days, but their new instincts kick in and they happily find their way. There are those, on the other hand, whose mind shatters to a point where they will never adjust, where they will be nothing more than broken raging monsters. The Chrysalis Corporation is prepared for this and keeps fire teams on hand at every Genesis Pit to execute all such anomalies when the time comes.

For the most part, Genesis Pits are not found inside official Chrysalis Corporation buildings. They are typically created in one of two places – in innocuous subsidiaries or in fully out of the way places. In the case of the former, the Corporation creates hidden areas in the basements of companies where one would never have cause to suspect foul play of any kind, even white collar crime. Consumer manufacturing or food processing plants are both common. For the latter, the Corporation buys abandoned warehouses or old storefronts outside the city, in places where the law most often doesn't go. With this kind of privacy, the Genesis Pits can operate without reproach – though getting supplies to and from such a place is more difficult and may stir up attention, if done improperly.

Despite what they look like on the inside, Genesis Pits all have certain things in common. They all have multiple ritual spaces set up, distinct from one another, properly consecrated and permanently set up for the Rite of Transfiguration. They all have a number of boarding rooms for new Dhohonoids, as well as reinforced cells for those who are not adjusting well. They are entirely self-contained with regards to facilities and supplies, so that no one need leave the Genesis Pit for weeks at a time. They are staffed with a number of sorcerers, who work the Rites in shifts, and Dhohonoid security agents, who both safeguard the Pit and help train the newborn.

The primary reason that the Corporation locates Genesis Pits elsewhere is so that such operations appear to be rogue sorcerous activity to the authorities. Despite Chrysalis' care, Genesis Pits do sometimes get raided by the Office of Internal Security or Special Services. They draw in quite a bit of necessary illegal magical substances and components and those sensitive to magic can feel such locations' power when nearby. They do not want the authorities getting any closer than a quick operational shutdown – and they certainly do not want to give the Eldritch Society anything to go on, should they be the flies in the ointment.

Genesis Pits are key to the Chrysalis Corporation's overall strategy. It is standard that operatives are lost on any mission of appreciable danger, but the way the Eldritch Society relentlessly hunts agents of the Corporation helps deplete the number of Dhohonoids at an increased and regular rate. The number of Dhohonoids that are created through Genesis Pits has been optimized the best it can be for now, but the Chrysalis Corporation is always researching new ways to increase that number.

DHOHANIDS UP CLOSE

Those who choose to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration are forever changed. They become horrific creatures, supposedly forms better suited to serve the Old Ones upon their return.

Perhaps one of the greatest arguments is whether Dhohanoids are mortals who have been imbued with the form of their masters in order to assume that shape at will, or whether they are mortals that have been transfigured into monsters, yet still retain the ability to assume their former shapes. To the initiate, the former is the case. No one wants to believe that their fundamental nature is going to be altered by a ritual such as this. No, they want to believe that they will be the same, only with added power. This is a lie perpetuated by the Children of Chaos to calm the nervous and entice the greedy.

The truth of the matter is that the latter is the case. Those who undergo the Rite of Transfiguration are no longer mortal. Their true form, the form that lives in their DNA and in their souls, is that of the monster they have become. It is their natural being. This is why it takes many new Dhohanoids days to assume their mortal form after the Rite – that form is only a memory. This fact becomes more and more clear to a Dhohanoid over time, as they come to feel more at home in their monstrous state than the form they once knew. By that time, however, their world view has been altered to a point where that realization is hardly a concern.

The physiology of a Dhohanoid is forever altered. They are not just an otherworldly thing – they are flesh and blood, among other things. What they have become is ingrained in their cells, written in the DNA. This is why they cannot enter an arcology through normal means. One of the things regular arcology gates are designed to scan is the genetic code of those that pass through. The anomalies in Dhohanoid DNA are too pronounced to conceal, and would instantly alert authorities that something inhuman was present. Thus, the Chrysalis Corporation arranges to have certain gates closed down for maintenance or for shipping gates to be unguarded. This is how Dhohanoids travel in and out of arcologies without notice. In the absence of such an entrance, Dhohanoids are in trouble.

Besides the alteration in base genetic code, Dhohanoids also manifest physical traits in their mortal form that reveal what monster lays underneath. Dua-Sanari become flexible to the point of being freakishly double-jointed, while losing their body hair. Ramachese gain inhuman hearing, while becoming uncomfortable in bright light. Each and every manifestation of Dhohanoid can be recognized in their mortal guises, if one knows for what one is looking. There are Tagers that have become so adept at noticing these physical traits that they do not have to wait for their supernatural senses to tell them if what they are looking at is a Dhohanoid. Many Dhohanoids do their best to play these things down, but they are an essential part of who they are now. It is more difficult than one might expect.

Unlike their hated enemy, the Tagers, Dhohanoids do not have a rigid division of form. Tagers can either be mortal or mon-

strous. Dhohanoids can choose to be a mix of the two. They can weave aspects of their monstrous selves into their mortal form, if need be. Inhuman senses, regeneration, resistance to harm, otherworldly abilities – these are all part of the Dhohanoid all the time.

Whatever may have once passed as conventional sanity is gone the minute someone emerges from the Rite of Transfiguration. A Dhohanoid is no longer mortal, so the mortal rules of worldview no longer apply. They are now living in a new world designed from the perspective of inhuman things and unholy urges.

One of the biggest shifts in thinking is with regards to harming or killing other sentient creatures. Regardless of how a person thought before the Rite of Transfiguration, the process of becoming a Dhohanoid removes him from the natural order. He becomes a monster in his very being and in his heart, so the idea of hurting or murdering a mortal is no longer as emotionally impactful. There might be echoes of such regrets and remorse the first time, but they quickly disappear. A Dhohanoid's moral compass shifts so that the only thing that occurs internally as wrong is the harming of another of their kind – another Dhohanoid.

That rapidly degenerates into full-blown bloodlust. All Dhohanoids, within a few months of their transfiguration, develop a disdain for Humans and Nazzadi. Since all Dhohanoid manifestations are monstrous, each with their own deadly natural weapons, this quickly turns to a murderous desire. Dhohanoids not only take a casual attitude towards ending Human or Nazzadi life, they fully enjoy it. The types that are prone to such a lust for violence, such as Elib or Zabuth, tend to take mutilation and murder to heights that can only be likened to art.

In general, a Dhohanoid begins to regard himself as the pinnacle of the food chain in all aspects of life. This does not mean that he is a predator all the time, but it does mean that he doesn't get along with mortals the same way anymore. The average everyday person becomes something to pity or look down on to a Dhohanoid. It doesn't matter how reality occurs, he is now always better than any mortal. This includes former friends and family members. Even if the cult wasn't in the practice of forcing cultists to cut off ties to people outside the Corporation, no new Dhohanoid would want to maintain those relationships. Dhohanoids like to hang out with other Dhohanoids and that's pretty much it.

Even though the predator is not always on the surface, there is something predatory to the way that Dhohanoids behave. They can easily become territorial (not just in a geographical sense), they like to establish dominance and a pecking order, they do not show weakness, and they lash out at perceived threats. These sorts of behavior can be subtle in those Dhohanoids who prefer to continue to act mortal, and some don't even notice them – after all, there are plenty of mortals who behave the same way. However, if Dhohanoids are not careful, these traits can become more bestial and far more disconcerting.

Furthermore, no matter what, Dhohanoids always have the song of the Old Ones in their hearts. The Rite of Transfiguration is designed to make servants of the Old Ones, so Dhohanoids have a deep mystical connection to them. Naturally, such built-in fealty also applies to Nyarlathotep. No matter what changes of heart a Dhohanoid might have, no matter what he begins to see in the world, he will never be able to break the bonds of servility – he is a slave to the Old Ones forever.

The world of sex also changes for Dhohanoids. They have become monsters, a different species altogether, and they no longer feel the same urges as they once did. Most find the idea of sex with a mortal to be repulsive. A gross analogy might be the idea of a Human looking at a chimpanzee with sexual lust – most likely not going to happen. However, in the case of a Dhohanoid, the shift is even more profound – perhaps more like a Human sizing up a lizard as a sexual partner. There are those Dhohanoids who, typically as a part of their function, still can and do enjoy having sex with mortals. Thog-Manna, who must impersonate people, and Vassiamon, who sexually arouse pretty much any mortal, are the two types that are this exception to the rule. However, in no way can a mortal and a Dhohanoid mate – the genetic material is incompatible.

Make no mistake, sex is still a driving urge for Dhohanoids – when it comes to other Dhohanoids. They become sexually attracted to other Dhohanoids of the same or physically similar manifestation. For example, it's a given that a Dua-Sanaras is attracted to other Dua-Sanari, but it may also be attracted to an Elib or a Patul. A Ramachese might also be attracted to a Namarok or a Zabuth. When engaging in sexual intercourse with their own kind, Dhohanoids prefer to do it in their natural form – the monstrous one. It appears to outside observers as something alien and unnatural.

The interesting thing about these unions is that they can bear fruit. Dhohanoids can be born, as well as made. When a female Dhohanoid gets pregnant, she will gestate similarly to a mortal – nine months of pregnancy, possible morning sickness and hormone imbalances, food cravings, and the like. However, the food cravings caused by a Dhohanoid fetus may stray into the realm of the unnatural – blood, mortal flesh or organs, and the like. After nine months, the Dhohanoid mother will give birth to a single baby, or possibly twins. The child's manifestation will be of either the mother or the father's, with common Dhohanoid types being dominant (rare types are the most recessive). Because the baby comes out in its natural form, the mother must have shifted to her monstrous shape in order for the birth to be successful and uncomplicated.

One might assume that certain manifestations of Dhohanoid can't breed. After all, the Ciraqen, the Thog-Manna, and the Jjia-sin-dumas have no identifiable sex organs. However, Dhohanoids are shapeshifters. Any Dhohanoid can mate with another in his mortal form, though it isn't as much fun for him. Furthermore, these more alien manifestations can mate in their monstrous forms, but only with others of the same manifesta-

tion – this fortunately assures the manifestation of the child and is the way to carry on special bloodlines or rare manifestations.

As with the Rite of Sacred Union, neither those undergoing nor those bringing into being the Rite of Transfiguration have any control over what type of Dhohanoid will manifest. It's the cosmic crap shoot. Undergo the Rite, roll the dice, and you manifest as the monster you manifest as.


Among Dhohanoids, 68% are common manifestations, such as Derebith, Dua-Sanaras, Ramachese, and Vassiamon. 20% of all Dhohanoids are specialized manifestations, such as the Elib, Gelgore, Namarok, Patul, or Vrykol. Elite Dhohanoids, such as the Groke, Thog-Manna, or Zabuth, make up another 10%. The remaining 2% of Dhohanoids are rare manifestations, such as the Ciraqen or Jjia-sin-dumash.

To help illustrate Dhohanoid populations, let's take a look at a hypothetical case. In a city of four million, between a quarter and a third of the population is employed by some subsidiary of the Chrysalis Corporation. Of the approximately 1.3 million employees, about 1% are Dhohanoids. Thus, there can be up to 13,000 Dhohanoids in a city of four million, about 0.3% of the population. To break this down further, there would be about 8840 would be common manifestations, about 2600 specialized manifestations, about 1300 elite manifestations, and about 260 rare manifestations.

Most Dhohanoids that have been regarded as unique in the past were simply the beginning of a new manifestation. When the first Jjia-sin-dumash manifested, it was regarded as a one of a kind, as it took months before others came. However, recently Dr. Aina Eze of the T99 Division has discovered a process by which the Rite of Transfiguration may be altered by the use of special stones. Three such unique Dhohanoids exist and they are far more powerful than any other Dhohanoids to date. Their abilities seem to be an evolution of Dhohanoid ability, combined with powers that mimic those of para-psychics. Perhaps they will ultimately be the key that will allow the Children of Chaos to use para-psychics in the Rite. Regardless, these unique Dhohanoids have made quite the impact. Furthermore, Dr. Eze still has a few of her stones left, so there may eventually be more.

There are those who believe that the Dhohanoid population is controlled by some sort of mystical super-organism that determines what manifestations are needed to maintain the current mix. That would explain how Dhohanoid populations and breakdowns by manifestation remain fairly constant. However, it would not explain why there aren't more Zabuth or Groke created in high-conflict areas or why there aren't more Vassiamon in Johannesburg or Chicago. If such an assertion were to be true, it would only apply to the overall mix with no concern for the specific needs of regions.

There are those within the T99 Division who are trying to determine if there are any factors that contribute to a Dhohanoid's manifestation, even if the connection is questionable. There are



those who believe that personality is a key – not just personality, per se, but down deep identity. Most people have a personality they show to the world and another that is them deep inside. Few people show their true selves to the world and many are downright afraid of it, for it usually contains the things people cannot be with. It may be these places into which the Rite of Transfiguration taps. There is something about this private soul that calls to the essence of one of the manifestations. T99 has begun to experiment with this, but there have been no conclusive results.

There are also those within T99, like Dr. Eze, who believe that there are ways to alter the ritual through its components or the addition of extra steps, passages, or actions. They regard the Rite of Transfiguration as a recipe, one that if modified in small ways might change the overall flavor. Only Dr. Eze has met with success regarding this path of experimentation, but there are teams experimenting all the time. They have been bolstered by Dr. Eze's success, but have many of their own disastrous failures.

No one knows what it is that makes a Dhohanoid. Unlike the Rite of Sacred Union, Dhohanoids do not bond with an extra-dimensional symbiont to become what they are. Within the Chil-

dren of Chaos, the most popular answer is that the monster a Dhohanoid becomes is the monster they would have been born as should the Old Ones not have been exiled (or whatever their personal belief of what happened to them is). That does make a certain amount of sense. It's as if the Rite of Transfiguration is bringing into existence races of creatures that should have always been here. There are also those who believe that the Rite triggers dormant DNA, put there by those that came before us. Mortal life was no accident, but we did not evolve to the point we were supposed to – something inhibited the fullest expression of our genetic code. The Rite of Transfiguration changes that.

However, within the Eldritch Society, such explanations differ. The most popular is that the Rite of Transfiguration obliterates the mind and soul of the person undergoing it, allowing a monster to be summoned across dimensions that takes up residence in that person's body. The creature then has memories of being that person and continues to pretend that it is. The person is gone, the monster remains. In essence, there is nothing left of the mortal when the Rite is done. There are those within the Society that also buy into the Children of Chaos' explanations, but most adhere to the belief that the monster is all that remains. For some, it makes it easier to sleep at night.



DHOHANOID SUPPORT

While Dhohanoids may be the primary agents of the Chrysalis Corporation, they do not and cannot operate in a vacuum. The Corporation maintains a significant network of support staff to coordinate Dhohanoid operations, ready to help out their inhuman cousins anytime, anywhere.

What is perhaps most interesting about the entire support network is that all of the cultists are mortal. Dhohanoids are meant for other jobs and have the limelight as far as the Chrysalis Corporation is concerned. Mortals are simply better suited for these types of mundane tasks. The mortals involved are typically cut from one of three cloths. The first are those who are on their way up the ladder, who will eventually rise to a position where they can undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. They are, in essence, Dhohanoids in training. The second are those that cannot participate in the Rite of Transfiguration, such as the tainted or the para-psychic. The third are those who do not wish to become Dhohanoids, typically because the idea scares the daylight out of them. These latter two categories are people who still want to serve the cult, but who cannot or will not give up their mortality to do so. They still perform very useful services for which the Chrysalis Corporation is grateful.

The support service most utilized by Dhohanoid agents are what is colloquially known as InfoNet. Expeditors, as those who work within InfoNet are known, are similar in many ways to the Eldritch Society's operators. They monitor Dhohanoid team activities and stand by to provide any information support necessary. They look up mundane information, delve into forbidden knowledge, and hack into computer systems to provide Dhohanoid teams with the data they require to complete their missions.

Expeditors also serve another useful function for those in the field. They coordinate Dhohanoid teams from a high level, making sure that their efforts result in maximum efficiency. Furthermore, they help teams stay in communication with one another and that teams can reach who they need to during their mission. They act as mission control, in many ways, without any real authority. Expeditors also put agents in touch with those they need to reach in cities with which they may be unfamiliar. If a Dhohanoid needs to find someone for a specific task or needs to check in with the hierarchy, the Expeditors facilitate this. They also act as a sort of social network, introducing agents to agents in the city they are visiting, so as to foster the company's desire to have cultists associate with one another.

Perhaps the most essential of any of the Dhohanoid support services are the containment teams. Sometimes Dhohanoid activities result in evidence that the police should not find or in bodies the Chrysalis Corporation wants to disappear. Sometimes former allies get cold feet or people see things they shouldn't. Containment teams are agents trained in the clean-up of crime scenes and the closing of loose ends. They make evidence and bodies disappear. They make loose lips permanently shut. Whatever the Dhohanoids get up to, cleaners, as members of containment teams are known, make sure that when they are done it is like it never happened.

Containment teams are like doctors – they're on-call all the time. Dhohanoid agents never need to worry that a containment team won't be available. The Chrysalis Corporation makes certain to train more than they think they'll need, just to be sure. After all, the duties the containment teams perform are so essential that the cult can't afford to be without them. Of any of the mortal servants of the Children of Chaos, those that are part of containment teams are treated the best by the inhuman servants of Nyarlathotep. Everyone likes the person who is covering their behind.

Transportation services is another essential branch of the support network. Dhohanoids need to get places, sometimes to remote locations or to locations where they are not to be detected, and it is transportation services' job to get them there. Drivers, as they are called, are trained to pilot a number of vehicles, from cars to aircars to full-blown aircraft. However, where they truly shine is when Dhohanoids need to be evacuated or extracted. Drivers sweep in out of nowhere, grab their agents, and blow out, even in hot zones. There are those Dhohanoids that will swear that even in the most remote places, transportation services will never be more than three hours away. In more civilized arenas, a driver will be at your door in a matter of minutes, amazingly even when the authorities are hot on agents' heels. Fortunately, they can trash as many vehicles as they like.

Dhohanoids, being what they are, need somewhere to bolt to when the heat is on. To this end, the Chrysalis Corporation maintains a network of safehouses throughout every arcology in the world. Some of these safehouses are simply secure crashpads, hidden off the beaten path, places where the agents can recuperate and lay low until whatever they needed to hide from is more distant. This is particularly true in smaller arcologies. However, in major arcologies, there are many safehouses, most of which are complexes unto themselves. They are fully stocked with many luxuries, complete with staffs whose job it is to make sure that the agents in question get all the help they need.

Corporation safehouses are excellent for the Dhohanoid in extreme trouble. They can provide disguises, false documentation, false alibis, money, vehicles, and more. If an agent needs to get back out in public, it can be done. If an agent needs to get to another city, no problem. All he needs do is drop into the local safehouse, stay hidden for as long as it takes, and he is back out in the world, ready to cause more trouble for the New Earth Government.

It takes something to support the kind of resources required to staff all these support services. The Chrysalis Corporation has them split up into pods, operating in cells out of the many company facilities. Given the number of types of businesses that are a part of the Chrysalis Corporation, it is easy to hide one support service or another under different banners. Transportation services can fit under Armorcorp or Arcanoline. The InfoNet can be concealed within Mercury Communications. It's just a matter of putting the staff and material in a location where it won't seem too out of place.

LIFE AS A DHOHANOID

The first days of a new Dhohanoid's life are disorienting and confusing. Fortunately, they are spent in the confines of the Genesis Pit, where their unique needs during these first few days can be managed. Then they are expected to go out and greet their new lives.

Naturally, Dhohanoids are trained to use their unique abilities in their new capacities. It is rare that a Dhohanoid goes back to his old job, which probably did not have the level of excitement required for Dhohanoid missions. This training does not take very long, as Dhohanoids instinctually know how to be what they are. Promotions, however, are common.

Then, it's off to their new jobs and new authority within the Corporation. By the time a person has reached the level of initiation required to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration, all of his co-workers are also in on the secret. Thus, nobody bats an eye when the newborn Dhohanoid suddenly goes off to greener pastures within the company – in fact, it is expected.

Some go off to what might be considered mundane positions. There are many upper level administrative, executive, and research positions that are of a sensitive nature, that can only be staffed by Dhohanoids or others of that level of initiation. Some manifestations are designed to function in these kinds of environments. While one may never find a Zabuth occupying a desk job, one might find a Ciraqen in research or corporate planning, Vassiamon in negotiations or human resources, or Jjia-sin-du-mash anywhere where people need to be brought to the right frame of mind.

On the other hand, there are many Dhohanoids that are best suited for the less above board work of the Corporation. They are placed in positions that mask their true responsibilities, spread throughout the subsidiaries of the company. Here they are given title and salaries for jobs they'll never do. Instead their real jobs are whatever sorts of dark things the Chrysalis Corporation needs done. Some deal with the black market, some the arcane underground, some with violence and networks – in essence, all kinds of unsavory things. They are at the truest beck and call of the cult, as their day jobs are merely a cover. However, it is a cover with significant resources and benefits.

In their everyday lives, many Dhohanoids, especially those who are new or those who have yet to rise through the ranks, live in communal housing known as Hives. Hives are Chrysalis Corporation apartment or condo buildings in which everyone that lives or works there are either Dhohanoids or on the short list for becoming Dhohanoids.

Hives blend in with their surrounding neighborhoods. They are typically located in high-traffic areas with high population densities – the kinds of places where people don't pay much attention to each other. The people who do notice know that such places are temporary corporate housing and just assume they're for employees who have recently relocated and things of that ilk. If asked, those who do notice probably couldn't even tell you

what corporation's housing it was and they really don't care. The Dhohanoids coming and going from such places are careful not to draw unnecessary attention to themselves.

If one plays closer attention, it doesn't take much to notice that the security of a Hive is incredibly tight. Motion and heat sensors, video cameras, armed guards, security doors, and the like keep the place and its surrounds safe. The security cameras even do periodic x-ray sweeps to make sure no mystical hidden creatures are attempting to spy or infiltrate. The Dhohanoids even quietly patrol the neighborhood at all times. After all, while it might be suicide for a Tager to enter a Hive, it isn't as hard to burn such a building down, for example.

The Dhohanoids who live within Hives have the unique opportunity to form bonds with one another. Many are new to being what they are, so the Hive gives them a chance to get guidance from more experienced Dhohanoids, as well as support during the hard times of transition. Hives are typically the place where Dhohanoids make Dhohanoid friends who are not those that they work with on a regular basis. Though there may be rivalries, the creatures of a Hive look out for each other.

Your average Hive apartment or condo isn't much, but it's enough. They are one or two bedroom dwellings, depending upon need and pay-scale, with all the basic amenities. However, the advantage that the Chrysalis Corporation has is economies of scale, so the apartments are all nicely designed and furnished. While a new Dhohanoid may not have the square footage a mortal peer might have, he does have a nicer building and apartment in which to live. Plus, all costs associated with it are covered by the Corporation.

In addition to their support function, Hives also provide the Children of Chaos with one other unique advantage. With that many Dhohanoids living under one room, strike or response teams can be created on the spur of the moment. If something happens near a Hive, the Corporation knows it can have trusted operatives at the scene in no time. If necessary, the Hives in any city could instantly be mobilized as small armies. It is similar to having bases and keeping troops in barracks.

Hopefully there will come a day when a Dhohanoid can set aside the Hive lifestyle and move into new accommodations. Dhohanoids get a housing allowance at every level of employment, unless they live in the Hive (which is covered). As they rise through the ranks, they will move into nicer homes. Most Dhohanoids make prompt leaps from the Hives to nice condominiums or townhouses, much of the expenses being covered by the Chrysalis Corporation.

Dhohanoids occupy a special place within the Chrysalis Corporation. The highest paying positions and positions of highest authority, both above and below board, are reserved solely for those who have undergone the Rite of Transfiguration. Many middle-management positions are as well, as well as any sensitive position. This means that a Dhohanoid is likely to be el-

evated in his position at the company, and at a far faster rate than his mortal coworkers.

Rising through the ranks is not something that has to do with position in the company for most Dhohanoids. Promotion for them means further initiation into the cult, which means further responsibility and authority on a level that makes simple executive power pale. However, the two do go hand in hand.

Most Dhohanoids begin their careers as basic managers or supervisors, overseeing crews of mortal employees. If a Dhohanoid is best suited for work inside the company, the employees he oversees may not be aware of the Children of Chaos. However, if he is the type of Dhohanoid who will be operating primarily on behalf of the cult, he may be placed in charge of employees in one of the many support networks. However, these positions are temporary, designed to give the Dhohanoid time to adjust.

If he proves himself as a basic supervisor, which primarily involves being a cog in the machine, the Dhohanoid is promoted to a full-blown executive. Dhohanoids that will serve best within the standard corporate structure are put in charge of departments and given the special projects to oversee. They become the elite, the fast-moving young executives that make the unknowing mortal employees envious. However, these Dhohanoids are the ones to make sure that the company is always moving towards its true goals. On the other hand, there are those who bear the title and job description of an executive manager who are unlikely to ever set foot in an office. These Dhohanoids fulfill any number of the covert positions, dealing with the company's illicit activities. They have proven that they are a part of the organization, so they are given the autonomy to operate in the shadows. The Chrysalis Corporation operates everything like a business, so there are workgroups and a corporate chain of command even in these areas.

Those that distinguish themselves at this level of authority may be promoted to any one of a seemingly unlimited vice-presidencies. Inside the above board corporation, VPs are in charge of large areas of the company, with large levels of responsibility including budgeting and strategic planning. They do, however, enjoy a great deal of prestige and a sizable compensation package to go with it. Those who operate within the shadow side of the Chrysalis Corporation attain similar positions, becoming in-charge of large-scale operations and coordinating many employees. There is a downside to reaching such heights, however. Executives of this level are under far more scrutiny than any other level and the chances of failure are much greater. Politicking becomes intense as VPs make sure they have others to blame, that they can throw their enemies under the bus, and that they can outmaneuver their peers for resources and recognition. Things become very dangerous, all from within.

If a Dhohanoid is very good and very lucky, he may someday rise to join the Inner Circle, known to the outside world as the Board of Directors. This group of seeming top-level executives runs the cult as a whole, beholden only to the Director himself. There are

only a couple dozen Dhohanoids who are part of the Inner Circle world-wide, split up across the various continents. Each of them is functionally royalty. They have vast salaries, enormous bonuses from illegal activities, and access to all the resources of the Chrysalis Corporation. There is little they cannot do and little they cannot have. As with everything, there is a price. Members of the Inner Circle work directly for the Director, which means they are regularly in the presence of the avatar of an Endless One. There is little such a being does not know. Those of the Inner Circle must be extremely crafty and capable in order to maintain their position – and their lives. They play at a level of politics of which few can even conceive.

The reality is that Dhohanoids have a high mortality rate, which is interesting for a creature with a long, but unknown lifespan. Left to their own devices, T99 Division scientist theorize that Dhohanoids could live centuries before natural death. However, the life that is cut out for your average Dhohanoid is one filled with risk. The work they take on is typically violence-laden and dangerous and Dhohanoids die in the field all the time, many by the authorities of the New Earth Government or the Migou. Some meet their ends by other supernatural creatures, sometimes even by those in service to the Disciples of the Rapine Storm – apparently Hastur's minions don't always recognize that Dhohanoids are friends. Many die at the hands of Taggers, the most effective enemy of the Children of Chaos, who always show up at the most inconvenient times.

Fortunately, Dhohanoids do not suffer from the same kinds of maladies or diseases as they did when they were mortal. Their regenerative abilities prevent them from getting sick in any usual sense of the world. Dhohanoids may have the occasional down day, but they are rarely under the weather for more than a few hours at a time. In the same vein, they never suffer from hereditary diseases or chronic illnesses like cancer. To be a Dhohanoid is to live a healthy life, albeit as a monster in a dangerous world.

But outside threat is not the only way that Dhohanoids die – there are many from the inside. Failure is the most common. While small failures or failures that could not be prevented are tolerated, large failures that are clearly the fault of a Dhohanoid are not. Some may be given second chances, but most find themselves executed at an employee review. The second is rivalry for position. When two or more Dhohanoids are being considered for a promotion or new position, those rivalries quickly become violent. Though such behavior is frowned upon by the Chrysalis Corporation, it is not uncommon for at least one of the competitors to die in such situations.

Those Dhohanoids who have managed to jockey themselves into a cushy executive-level desk job are only marginally more safe. While they may have removed much of the outside threat of death, the inside threats become more pronounced. Such an executive's politics had best be sharp or he won't survive long. Furthermore, he's even more of a target for Tagger assassination, so he'd best travel with Dhohanoid guards.

THE CHRYSALIS CORPORATION

The second largest and most powerful corporation in the New Earth Government, the Chrysalis Corporation is an aegis under which many wholly-owned subsidiaries operate. It is a company with little in the way of a unified public face – instead it is more of a shapeshifter, with many faces to show the world. It is perhaps appropriate that it is a corporation run by shapeshifters.

The Chrysalis Corporation itself is not a house-hold name. Like many corporate giants before it, the Corporation is an umbrella company managing many wholly-owned subsidiaries. It is these subsidiaries that are well-known to the people of the New Earth Government, as the Chrysalis Corporation manufactures and distributes all kinds of consumer products. Snacks, soft drinks, pre-packaged foods, consumer electronics, computer software, video games, motorcycle and cars – these are all just a few of the things made by subsidiaries of the Corporation that are in nearly every home in the Strange Aeon. People use Chrysalis Corporation products every day and aren't even aware of it.

Perhaps the Chrysalis brand most people would immediately recognize is Agrarian Foods, an agricornp specializing in pre-packaged and pre-prepared foods. They own many farms in the fertile parts of the world, paying farmers to grow crops and maintain the facilities. They utilize science in their agriculture to make it as efficient and sustainable as possible, as well creating genetically engineered strains of crops that grow and survive better and hormones to provide healthy and copious amounts of meat. Most people have at least a couple Agrarian quick-cook dinners, pasta or rice sides, and canned goods, along with some snack foods, soft drinks, and cookies, in their pantry.

To those in the know, the fact that the Chrysalis Corporation is a major supplier of food to the New Earth Government is extremely disturbing. If the Children of Chaos wanted to simply poison the food supply, they would kill an enormous number of people overnight. Fortunately, the cult does not want to call that kind of attention to itself and instead plans to let the Old Ones sort things out when they arrive.

Micrologic is one of the biggest brands under the Chrysalis Corporation, a giant software manufacturer upon whose operating system at least half of all computers run. Their operating system is mediocre at best, but good sales techniques and brilliant marketing have given them a large share of the market. Since they are agents of chaos, the Chrysalis Corporation builds in flaws to every version of the ML-OS (as it is called), many of which compromise security. ML-OS used to be the standard for the New Earth Government until the Ashcroft Foundation began manufacturing their own operating system. Now the NEG is run on Imagine Technologies' Shepherd OS, which is more intuitive and pretty much air tight. In yet another arena, the rivalry between the Corporation and the Foundation continues.

Operating systems are not Micrologic's only bread and butter. The company also manufactures common business software, installed on many computers worldwide, as well as video games. With the resources they have behind their projects, Micrologic's

video game titles are among the most advanced in the market. They are a driving force in video game development and see significant revenue from this stream.

Mercury Communications is another name people would know. The company is a major provider of telecom services to the New Earth Government. Though not a monopoly, Mercury is one of the primary competitors at the top of the market. It is through them that many people video chat with each other every day, as well as access the internet. Again, it is disturbing to think that the Chrysalis Corporation supports a good chunk of the New Earth Government's communications infrastructure.

A company most people are unfamiliar with, Norinco is a weapons manufacturer. Their rail weapons are considering second class when it comes to personal firearms and they do not have the Armed Forces contracts for such things. However, they do have a reputation for manufacturing quality explosives, which has earned them the government contract for grenades, rockets, and other man-portable explosives, as well as ordnance for military vehicles.

Despite modest sales to law enforcement, there would appear to be no reason on the books to keep their rail weapons division open. Profit, however, is not what the company is after. Norinco rail weapons are the primary firearms of the Rapine Storm. They specially manufacture rifles for use by the metaterrestrials of the hordes, as well as supplying the mortal cultists. Fortunately, the executives of Norinco are very clever, so the chances of anyone finding this out upon inspection is slim to none.

The step up from Norinco is Armorcorp, a major manufacturer of military hardware with several key government contracts. They manufacture the rail weapons of choice of the New Earth Government Armed Forces, including the RG-3 light rail assault rifle, the RG-11 heavy rail assault rifle, the RMG-10A heavy rail machinegun, the RMG-10M anti-mech rail gun, and the RG-21 rail sniper rifle. They also manufacture the Deathmaster 2000, a favorite 40 mm grenade launcher of soldiers in the field, and the coveted Vircator EMP-6, a electro-magnetic pulse anti-mech weapon. Armorcorp has also ventured into the realm of powered armor manufacturing, supplying the Mk-10 Centurion and the Mk-5 Crusader to both the military and law enforcement around the world. These contracts generate an enormous amount of revenue for the Chrysalis Corporation.

Things fall off the truck at Armorcorp in a similar, though not as extreme way, to Norinco. Their rail weapons find their way into the hands of the Rapine Storm as well, though Armorcorp does not customize their weapons the way Norinco does – the company is under far more scrutiny. Occasionally, especially when new units are being delivered to battlefronts, Armorcorp provides the mortal servants of the Rapine Storm with a suit or two of powered armor.

The Hermes Project was made possible by Darchir Logistics. The company is a high-level engineering firm, capable of dealing with

the kind of technology necessary to help put a system of communications satellites through the solar system. They also manufacture significant systems that are a part of nearly all modern spacecraft, including those manufactured for the military. Darchir Logistics is not a name most people would know, but they would recognize many of the important projects of which they have been a part. These days, they are laboring to create new technology that could help the New Earth Government escape the planet and evade the forces of the Migou Hive Ship. They do this not to help save humanity, but rather to get out to the planets and moons that may have important ruins or artifacts for them to excavate. While the company had not yet been infiltrated by the Children of Chaos during the days of the Hermes Project, the cult had taken the subsidiary over by the time the New Earth Government was spreading out into the stars. It is through Darchir Logistics that Dhohanoids first made it to the colonies and cemented the Chrysalis Corporation's presence there.

The Chrysalis Corporation also provides a variety of ubiquitous and important vehicles to the world through its subsidiaries Arcanoline and EuroWagon. Arcanoline produces vehicles which fly people all over the world every day. EuroWagon is also a reputable manufacturer, responsible for many popular conveyances. Both these companies make sure that the Corporation has substantial revenue, as well as a variety of powerful vehicles to transport agents of the cult wherever they need to go.

Then there's the Vantage Group, the largest manufacturer of pharmaceuticals in the New Earth Government. They are in charge of manufacturing the bulk of the drugs that treat the common mental disorders associated with Aeon War Syndrome. Vantage is a great tool for the cult, making sure that the consistency of their drugs is not always up to par.

Each of these companies operates differently, in a manner that best fits their individual industries. However, there are things all of them have in common. They are all wholly-owned by the Chrysalis Corporation, which means that there are executives from the parent company whose job it is to oversee their operations. Furthermore, all higher-level management positions at these subsidiaries are occupied by Dhohanoids and agents of the Children of Chaos are spread throughout. They may appear to be mostly autonomous on paper, but they are all arms of the Chrysalis Corporation and the Children of Chaos and the money all filters back to one place.

So what does the Chrysalis Corporation itself do? On paper it operates as it has for generations, as a management consulting company that specializes in process improvement and efficiency. The company is hired by other companies to help them streamline, and the Chrysalis Corporation has a reputation for being the best in the industry – if one can afford them. The company also manages centralized human resources and legal departments for all their subsidiaries, as well as high-level financial services. They also provide broad research and development for all of their businesses, the operations of which mask the T99 Division. In addition, they manage the overall vision and coordination

of all the subsidiaries in a grand strategic plan. Aside from their unique consulting services, the Chrysalis Corporation is essentially the spider in their giant web.


The Chrysalis Corporation as an entity does have its own public face in one important way. Through the use of mystical spells and artifacts, the Corporation has an edge when it comes to natural disasters, which certainly occur in the Strange Aeon. They are poised to help out wherever is needed, especially in refugee towns. It is through these kinds of operations that the Chrysalis Corporation has gained the public face of savior in many parts of the world. This is, of course, a smoke screen designed to call attention away from the other things the cult is up to.

However, there is one other thing that takes up a lot of the Chrysalis Corporation's resources – the Shadow War. The Eldritch Society's crusade against the Children of Chaos may not be winning, but it certainly is a massive thorn in the side of the Chrysalis Corporation.

Since the Chrysalis Corporation never knows when or where the Eldritch Society will strike, the ability to respond with significant force is essential. This means that important shipments, key meetings, or other significant activities are guarded by groups of Dhohanoids. Such security is overkill when it comes to threats of a mortal nature, but often barely enough or not at all enough when faced with powerful Tagers. It is rare that an Eldritch Society operation will find a couple of Dhohanoids as guards – they will usually find a well-coordinated group. If the cult is lucky, they'll kill a Tager, but mostly they just hope to drive the Eldritch Society away.

However, simply reacting to the threat is not enough. That is why the Chrysalis Corporation also sends out hunting teams, whose sole job it is to patrol an area looking for Tagers or Eldritch Society activity. Once Tagers are found, the hunting teams set traps so that they can assure the elimination of at least one of the Tagers. Many a pack's night has been disrupted when several coordinated Dhohanoid hunting teams has picked up their scent. However, given the nature of Tagers, hunting teams spend a lot of time finding nothing.

The Chrysalis Corporation also makes good use of spies. Most often Thog-Manna or Vassiamon, these Dhohanoids seek out information about Tagers, hoping to meet them as mortals and be taken into their trust. This is possible only through the T99 Division's invention known as the trans-state nullifier, which disrupts a Tager's natural ability to sense Dhohanoids. These spies try to get as deeply into the pack as they can, so that they can expose the identities of the Tagers. Once they are identified, Dhohanoid teams can be sent to take the Tagers out however they can. Sometimes this is as blatant as building fires or explosions, and sometimes it goes even further. When the Chrysalis Corporation wants to leave a message or instill a little fear, they go after the Tager's family and loved ones first, doing horrible things before killing them. They will eventually get around to the Tager, but Dhohanoids do enjoy a little psychological torture first.



Given the Eldritch Society's natural level of paranoia, it is unlikely that a Chrysalis Corporation spy would ever push in far enough to be able to reach the inner workings of the secret group. Mostly, spies root out groups of Tagers for elimination. However, it does not prevent many spies from trying to go further.

The Chrysalis Corporation, being who they are, wields a significant amount of influence with the government. They are a major supplier to the New Earth Government of all kinds of goods, not to mention leaders of several powerful special interest groups. Many politicians are firmly in the pocket of the Corporation, along with ranking members of important government agencies, the Armed Forces, and the police. Sometimes, the cult turns those forces loose on their enemies.

If the Corporation is of a mind and Tagers have revealed themselves, are in the process of messing things up, or an unlucky Tager or two has had his identity compromised, the cult mobilizes the authorities against them. The Eldritch Society does, after all, usually operate illegally – not to mention the fact that Tagers are unknown monsters that the authorities will hunt on sight. Members of the Eldritch Society find themselves investigated, arrested, or possibly killed by the very forces they have set out to protect. Such is the cancer that is the Chrysalis Corporation and there is little the Eldritch Society can do besides run and hide.

No matter how they choose to fight the Shadow War, the Chrysalis Corporation has one significant advantage, with which not even money and influence can compete. The creation of Tagers is not an easy thing. The creation of Dhohanooids, for the most part, is. There are now and always will be more Dhohanooids than Tagers, so the Children of Chaos will always have that one point of simple supernatural superiority. The Eldritch Society can kill as many Dhohanooids as they want – there are always more waiting in line to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. That disparity will continue to grow as the years pass, as well.

The Corporation does, however, have one thing it must always attend to. Much like the Eldritch Society, they need to keep their dead out of the public eye or the hands of the authorities. Modern facial recognition, DNA sampling, and other biometric software can easily identify a person from pictures of their face, much less from a corpse. The cult cannot afford too many investigations regarding monsters that turned back into employees upon death. Whenever possible, Dhohanooids take their dead with them. If their image is caught on camera or a body is taken to the morgue, the Chrysalis Corporation uses its influence to destroy the evidence. It is only the intrepid investigator who comes close to the truth and even then not very long – at least, if he wants to live.

These days, the Chrysalis Corporation is moving in several directions, to help them with the Shadow War and bring an end to the Aeon War. They know their goals are far reaching and that it will take much effort and patience to get there, but they are, after all, a large corporation. That level of strategy takes something and they are not afraid to commit the resources to get there.

The one government agency that has been a serious hindrance to Chrysalis Corporation covert operations is the Office of Internal Security. The agency is, despite the draconian way they enforce mystical law, the good guys. With all of the mystical might floating around the agency, there is little corruption. Those powers that be which might be influenced by the Chrysalis Corporation are loathe to mess with an agency that is dedicated to policing such important and dangerous crimes. After all, it's not like looking the other way over white collar crimes or even some illegal trading. Hindering the Office of Internal Security is like letting loose a cosmic bomb. The forces involved are simply too scary to be compromised by greed.

Thus, the Office of Internal Security continues to foil Chrysalis Corporation operations. They continue to take the lives of Dhohanooids and inhibit important illegal operations and profits. This situation is not one the Corporation is willing to tolerate, so they have begun to explore other options. If they cannot infiltrate and corrupt the agency from within, perhaps they will just have to attack them from without.

The Disciples of Death's Shadow and the Chrysalis Corporation have always been friendly. While their goals may not be similar, they live and operate in the same world – hiding within the New Earth Government. Both Cults have significant influence, but in different ways. Working together, the two could make great use of each other's advantages, bringing both Cults to a new level of prominence and effectiveness. The financial and political resources of the Corporation combined with the blackmail and mystical influence of the Death Shadows would create a coalition that would be difficult to fight.

However, there are snags. The Chrysalis Corporation is ready to sign the deal and the Director has already blessed such a strategic partnership. However, the Desolate Ones are the lords of the Disciples of Death's Shadow and they take their orders directly from the Dead God himself. It appears the Unnamed One has specific unknowable plans for his cult and believes that the followers of the Endless One need no help. While there are those among the Death Shadows who strongly believe that such a union is the way to go, the Cult's stand is officially that the two should remain separate. That has not stopped the Chrysalis Corporation from continuing to court their cousins.

On a broader front, the Chrysalis Corporation is looking to expand in the field of telecommunications. While Mercury Communications already provides key communications infrastructure and service, the Corporation is looking to add content providers to their fold. Currently, they are exploring what it would take to acquire the Global News Network, the most prominent news reporting channel in the world and important pawn of the Ministry of Information. The first step is getting the Ministry of Information to accept a change in regime, so the Chrysalis Corporation has begun courting key members of that agency. If the company did acquire GNN, the Children of Chaos would suddenly have nearly unlimited access to one of the key public opinion-making tools in all of the New Earth Government.

INTERNAL CULTURE

The Chrysalis Corporation isn't entirely a sink-hole of predation and darkness. Most don't and won't ever experience the company as such. After all, the Chrysalis Corporation is a corporation that has to operate in order to provide a wide array of goods and services, many of which the public has become dependent upon.


The various companies that make up the Chrysalis Corporation, when taken together, are welcome leaders in the marketplace. Positions pay a little better than industry average, most employees qualify for some level of benefits, including retirement, life insurance, and stock options, and the company is generous with holidays and paid time-off. To most, working for one of the Corporation's subsidiaries is a great job and positions within the company are sought after.

At the lowest ranks, the culture of the Chrysalis Corporation is one of continuous improvement. Everyone is given a voice to suggest changes and employees feel like they have a say in how things go. The goal is to create a workplace that is as efficient as possible, so the whole thing operates like a well-oiled machine. The company even offers cash rewards for those who suggest or create new ways of doing things that save time and money, while increasing profits and/or quality.

However, as one goes up the corporate ladder, things change some. The Chrysalis Corporation has definitely fallen prey to an internal culture of arrogance. With the position the company occupies, its revenue and cash reserves, and entrenched position within society, the general attitude is one of "we're simply better than everyone else." Employees tend to look down on people who work at other companies, and they also usually talk trash about competing products or services – even when such products or services have proven to be better. This sometimes leads to an attitude of infallibility, that whatever the Chrysalis Corporation does is right and will work. This has withstood despite many egregious product failures and departmental firings, surprisingly. Unfortunately, the culture of continuous improvement sometimes must take a backseat to this corporate attitude.

The work environment within the Chrysalis Corporation is also very competitive. Employees are deliberately pitted against each other. An attitude of scarcity is cultured so that people will work extra hard to do better than the guy at the desk next to them. Employees aren't naturally promoted, instead they beat someone (or several someones) out to get the job. This environment does not foster cooperation or trust among many departments, as employees only truly work together if they feel they've got an angle on each other. Furthermore, employees learn not to take





responsibility for errors or failure. Most employees make sure they have an out when complication or failure is possible, the most common being another employee as scapegoat. As long as there is someone to blame, someone to pass the buck off on, an employee is okay to proceed. This is especially true at higher levels of management, where failure can be lethal – though those at lower levels are unaware of this fact. It is all very cut-throat.

Though a standard job requires only a 40-hour work-week to be considered full-time employment, one must work more if one expects to keep up at the Chrysalis Corporation. Most employees work 60-hour weeks, if not more, simply to stay on top of their game and be competitive. Once above an entry level position, most employees become workaholics, working long days and even weekends. They have little life outside of the company and their work.

Another technique popular within the Chrysalis Corporation is to muddy the waters of management and reporting. While every employee has one for-sure manager to which he must report, he usually also has several “dotted-line” managers. These floating and semi-official managers are usually based on project, but also often have to do with managers who are control freaks who must check up on those below them and those they are managing. This forces employees to be on their toes, for the requirements to satisfy all the people to which they must report are typically wide and varied. However, it also creates an atmosphere of ambiguity and frustration. No one manager is really willing to go out on a limb to provide concrete direction. Managers typically fight with one another, yanking employees back and forth. Higher managers will often step in to completely change months of work, because now they feel they have a more concrete or better direction. Despite the push towards efficiency and process improvement on lower levels of the company, it’s almost amazing things get done at the middle to mid-upper levels.

A cultural aspect created by some of the largest corporations of the 20th century, the Chrysalis Corporation encourages its employees to socialize with their own. The company provides many social functions and departments and coworkers often spend time after work together several days a week. While the Corporation doesn’t come right out and say it, the general attitude is that it is preferable, especially the higher ranking a person is, that employees only spend social time with other employees. There is a subtle push for employees to cut off social ties with those who do not work for the company – even if those friends work for subcontractors.

All of these points, everything that the corporate culture is, is for the mortal employees to prepare for recruitment into the Children of Chaos. Many of the cultural aspects point towards the cult, most especially giving up one’s life for the Chrysalis Corporation. Most employees don’t even come close, but it’s nice to have everyone ready, just in case.

Now there are a whole lot of people that work for the Chrysalis Corporation who have no idea what’s really going on. There

are many jobs at many subsidiaries that are of a more routine nature that employees could work their whole lives and never come across the darkness that lurks behind the scenes. However, as one rises in the ranks or takes a position of prestige, things begin to show up to cause some kind of suspicion. Many notice that there are many things discussed in hushed tones, like there are things going on behind the scenes. It also appears that there is an in-crowd, a group of people who are tight and who seem to be the company’s favorites. Eventually, most come to the conclusion that there is a secret cabal running the organization, though most attribute it to something like university secret societies or alumni groups.

Of course, these upper levels of management are occupied by the Children of Chaos, particularly Dhohanoids. One does not get to rise to that level of employment without being fully initiated into the cult and having undergone the Rite of Transfiguration. This is why those who deal with upper management often feel like a secret cabal is running things – because it’s true.

The culture at the higher levels is different in many ways. One of the big shifts is with regards to structure. There is no ambiguity among the upper management. Dhohanoids know chain of command intimately and it is clear. Everyone knows who they report to and everyone knows what job is being done. Where there may be inefficiency in the middle tiers of management, there is none at the top. While there is still an attitude of arrogance, it is in a different way. Instead of believing that the Chrysalis Corporation is better or infallible, Dhohanoid employees look down on mortals and mortal society. They believe that the Rite of Transfiguration is the destiny of the mortal races of Earth and that anyone who has not yet undergone it is just cattle. Guided by Nyarlathotep as they are, they also believe that the end is just a matter of time and that the Children of Chaos will be a major factor in its coming.

Of course, even upper management and Dhohanoid employees are still expected to give their lives to the company/cult. Time off is a luxury and most don’t get much of it. Dhohanoids are on-call all the time and are expected to work long hours nearly every day of the week. There is, however, much of this work that isn’t desk or meeting work, which is helpful for the predatory nature of Dhohanoids. Furthermore, there is no need for the company to encourage such employees to socialize primarily with other employees at their level. Dhohanoids naturally aren’t much for anyone’s company but their own, so their coworkers readily become social friends.

Those who choose to solely remain sorcerers, usually those who have been tainted by Outsiders, or para-psychics can become part of the Children of Chaos, but they will never advance higher than a mid-upper level of management or authority. It doesn’t matter how clever, dedicated, or powerful they are. Such people are prevented from undergoing the Rite of Transfiguration, so in the cult’s eyes they are prevented by the cosmos from attaining a state of being that is worthy of the return of the Old Ones. They are simply tools for now.

T99 DIVISION

There is no more infamous part of the Chrysalis Corporation than the T99 Division. Only those who work in the division and upper level management even know it exists. On paper, there is no such place and funds must be diverted from other budgets and contracts, or from illegal operations. Those that do know it exists are usually of one of two minds – either they are fascinated and excited to see what T99 will do next, or they are terrified of the whole thing.

Looking inside of the T99 Division is a vision in and of itself. It is the home to every mad scientist and occultist-gone-wrong that one could possibly imagine. The equipment is state of the art, the facilities are lavish, and there are no ethical guidelines holding back research. That does not include the nearly unlimited resources put at the division's disposal. It is a researcher's dream – or nightmare.

The T99 Division was born in 2045, when the Chrysalis Corporation was still just run by normal people. These greedy individuals wanted to create a part of the company whose job it was to harness occult and mystical power for the benefit of the corporation – most importantly for its executives. Whether the T99 Division found them or whether Nyarlathotep guided them to such things is up for debate, but the Chrysalis Corporation came into possession of a complete Necronomicon and the Breath of R'lyeh. Together, the two books outline the Rite of Transfiguration and it was all downhill for the mortal management from there.

The T99 Division is most well known for their mastery and implementation of the Rite of Transfiguration, which has given the Chrysalis Corporation their Dhohanoïd army. They are also responsible for all technology that has been developed for specific use by Chrysalis agents.

They are also the only other place that has been home to the secrets of the *Ta'ge Fragments*. However, the Founders of the Eldritch Society not only stole them, they made sure to erase all traces from the T99 Division. This is not something of which they like to be reminded.

These days, the T99 Division has many fields of research in play. They are conducting experimentation on Whites, under request from the New Earth Government. T99 hopes to discover why Whites are born, perhaps uncovering a genetic trigger for para-psychic powers. They have little care for the Whites, other than curiosity, but being able to intentionally engineer para-psychics is of sincere interest to the cult.

Gear is always something under development in the division, most especially gear for Dhohanoïds. The continue to create useful things for agents to use in the field, much like the secret agent gadgets of the past. However, they have become intent on utilizing arcanotech to create controlled high-yield explosives. The breakthrough they are truly hoping for would create a device that utilizes the infinite energy associated with D-engines in such a way that it could vaporize all living matter in an area without

leaving any trace other than the device. Such a device would be a vicious weapons, but the T99 Division isn't anywhere close – they're still working on the theory.

The Rite of Transfiguration remains a primary area of research for the division. The lack of control over the Rite has frustrated the Chrysalis Corporation for years. T99 hopes to break the code, so that they can choose the manifestation of the person undergoing the Rite. They would be able to maximize a Dhohanoïd's natural tendencies and training with an appropriate manifestation. They would also be able to create Dhohanoïds of the manifestations that were most needed, whenever the Corporation desired. It is, in many ways, the holy grail of the division.

However, research into unique Dhohanoïds has borne fruit. In 2086, Dr. Aine Eze used something called m'yas stones to bring three totally individual Dhohanoïds into the world, thus proving that it can be done. The problem is that m'yas stones are extremely rare and difficult to come by, and Dr. Eze has a very limited amount. She continues to lead research into other ways that the Rite of Transfiguration may be influenced to produce similar results.

However, one of their most secret initiatives involves finding the remains of the Great Race. Occult history tells that the Great Race was capable of travelling through space and time, in fact migrating across both several times over the eons. This kind of technology has been replicated by no other race in recorded history. Unfortunately, the best place to seek what is left of the Great Race is in the deserts of Australia, lost under the sands. This area is a place of conflict, as the Disciples of the Rapine Storm and the New Earth Government clash. To make matters worse, the Migou appear to be hunting for something in the desert as well – the Children of Chaos hope it is not the same thing.

Not just anyone can be a part of the T99 Division, though there are many who wish to be. To be considered, one must first be possessed of an education and skill-set that would be of use to this specialized research and development branch. Scientific, arcane, parapsychological, and the occult are all areas in which the T99 Division specializes. However, that does not mean the division doesn't need those of a more brutish or adventurous nature. Things need to be acquired, subjects taken, and new ground covered and explored, and these are the types of jobs that take the more physically-oriented employee.

Everyone in the T99 Division is a Dhohanoïd or a para-psychic (many Ciragen are recruited). Those normal people who have been recruited for T99 must be willing to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration before they begin work. However, that is not the only personal requirement. All those who become a part of T99 Division must also be completely amoral and ruthless, in a way that even makes other Dhohanoïds blush, as well as visionary thinkers. The things that the division's researchers get up to are not for the faint of heart – or for those who think inside the box.



ACROSS THE WORLD

The goals of the Chrysalis Corporation, which will never appear on any mission statement, are simple – to become a major economic force in the New Earth Government and to bring about the return of the Old Ones. In truth, the Chrysalis Corporation in many ways has a greater reach than the New Earth Government. The company operates not only within the confines of mortal-controlled territory, but also in cult and Migou territory as well. Agents of the cult can, for the most part, get anywhere they need to reach, all around the world.

No matter where they go, agents of the Chrysalis Corporation have access to vast resources. The company has enormous cash holdings, a nearly unlimited supply of weapons from its own manufacturing, political and financial influence, and a good public face in war-torn areas through its disaster relief initiatives. That does not even include the armies of Dhohanoids that are one communication away. However, even agents of the mighty Chrysalis Corporation find themselves in positions or behind enemy lines where they must rely on their own pluck and ability, though these are more the exception than the rule.

What most members of the Eldritch Society don't realize, or choose to ignore, is that the Chrysalis Corporation has another enemy – the Ashcroft Foundation. The Foundation has achieved vast power through arcanotechnology patents and its broad advisory initiative. If the Corporation could crush the Foundation financially, it would be a big win. If they could get rid of the Ashcroft Advisors, the government would belong to the Cults.

Here we will take a broad look at Chrysalis Corporation operations around the world. For more detailed New Earth Government information on these areas, please see *Mortal Remains* p. 38-45.

NORTH AMERICA

Besides Africa, North America sees the largest and most prominent presence of the Chrysalis Corporation and all of its subsidiaries. The two reasons for this are that the continent, up until recently, has been very safe and also that it is the seat of world government. Many of the Chrysalis Corporation's products and services are in government contracting, so it pays to be both visible and close to the hand that feeds. The cults less savory activities are kept to the shadows throughout most of North America – they are less brazen than they are in other parts of the world – as they do not wish to be discovered by the heightened security in and around important centers like Chicago.

However, Chicago is also the home of the only real competition that faces the Chrysalis Corporation in the business arena – the Ashcroft Foundation. While the Ashcroft Foundation is also spread through the New Earth Government, their gigantic headquarters is a part of Chicago. Therefore, it is a constant hotbed of industrial espionage. Agents of the Chrysalis Corporation are nearly always trying to infiltrate or sabotage some kind of Ashcroft Foundation project. Fortunately, they are careful so that the Foundation still does not know that Chrysalis is home to all kinds of shapeshifting monsters.

Seattle and Vancouver have been of particular interest to the Children of Chaos, as they prepared for the giant ritual that was meant to go off in the Fall of 2086. It became a clearing house for all kinds of things, including horrible creatures and dark mystical components. However, the Eldritch Society stopped the ritual and the Pacific Northwest ceased to be so important to the Chrysalis Corporation. However, things have not gone back to normal. The Children of Chaos have taken the defeat personally, and have more than doubled their efforts in hunting down the Eldritch Society in the Pacific Northwest. They are determined to exact their revenge and it is a dangerous place for Tagers now.

Los Angeles, home to both the best and the worst of New Earth Government society, is a place of so much activity and chaos that the agents of the Chrysalis Corporation do not need to be as careful as they do in other parts of the world. Furthermore, Los Angeles is a test bed for anything the Chrysalis Corporation comes up with that may mess with society. There are many unusual disappearances, rashes of bad drugs, and the like that are all part of Chrysalis Corporation testing. However, they don't extend themselves too much, as the city is already overrun by the Disciples of Death's Shadow.

There were things in Alaska that the Corporation hadn't gotten around to moving further south when the Migou invaded. Since then, they have had to send covert Dhohanoid teams into Migou occupied territory in an attempt to get those things back. The ruins of cities in Alaska are bound to contain small Dhohanoid teams, seeking things that were lost.

SOUTH AMERICA

Until recently, South America was a surprisingly quiet place in the Aeon War. The Chrysalis Corporation has a significant presence on the continent, but they keep to the shadows as they do in North America.

Two cities are of special importance. Rio de Janeiro holds many offices of the Corporation, but is also a center for the cult to assist the Esoteric Order of Dagon. Even though the cult of the fish god doesn't really like anyone else, they cannot deny that help from the Chrysalis Corporation was instrumental in helping them secure as much of the South American coast as they have. Further south, Buenos Aires is a hub for missions going into Migou-occupied Antarctica. With the military as caught up as it is with the Migou incursion, Chrysalis Corporation sorties can come and go as they wish.

There are also many mystical ruins in South America. The Chrysalis Corporation uses its operations to mask many investigations into them, primarily sent out from the continent's largest cities. They are not kind to anyone else they find poking around what they view as theirs.

EUROPE

Europe is a mess – exactly the kind of place the Chrysalis Corporation likes to do business. While they do not have the luxuries they have in Africa, they are able to operate with less discretion

in many places due to the pressing nature of the invaders. With the Migou coming in from the north, the Disciples of the Rapine Storm coming in from the east, and the omnipresent threat of the Esoteric Order of Dagon, the citizens of Europe have plenty of obvious threats to worry about.

The two prominent government and financial centers of Europe are Berne and Frankfurt am Main, and it is here that the Chrysalis Corporation has made certain to grease the appropriate wheels. By stepping up to the plate and offering many forms of assistance above and beyond the call of duty, the Corporation has garnered many favors from politicians on all levels of government. They are most especially known for their great help in relief efforts in the many refugee cities in Europe. This position allows them to call in help whenever the cult finds itself in hot water.

Odense and Volgograd are two cities on the edge of disaster. Odense is a refugee town on the front against the Migou coming in from Scandinavia, and Volgograd is likewise a refugee town but on the front against the incursion of the Rapine Storm from the east. The chaos of both these cities gives the Chrysalis Corporation two havens in which they can operate without much oversight from the government. Odense also acts as a bridge for the Corporation into Scandinavia and northern Asia, while Volgograd is a portal into Asia.


The overall opinion of the Chrysalis Corporation in Europe is high. They use this to their every advantage, in more places than the four cities mentioned here.

ASIA

Asia, as far as the New Earth Government is concerned, is nearly lost. The Disciples of the Rapine Storm broke the lines in 2086 and pushed all the way to the coast, claiming China. The Migou have had control over the northern part of the continent for years. Fortunately, things are a little different for agents of the Chrysalis Corporation.

Despite a clearly allied relationship, the Chrysalis Corporation doesn't always experience a warm welcome from the Disciples of the Rapine Storm. There are many of the monsters in the hordes that feel it to be sacrilegious for the cult of the Endless One to be hiding among the mortals. Any mortal agents of the Chrysalis Corporation can expect to be brutally tortured and/or eaten if discovered. However, in general, the relationship works and the Children of Chaos can come and go at will.

The Unnamed One has not forgotten the key role that the Chrysalis Corporation played in bringing him into this world. As such, a contingent of T99 Division researchers is allowed to operate and dwell on the Plateau of Leng, protected from the Rapine Storm's potential predations. They search for hidden and forgotten powers and information that might help lead to the return of others of the Old Ones. It is doubtful that the Dead God experiences anything akin to gratitude – it is more likely simply in the name of efficiency.



Mumbai would be the largest presence of the Chrysalis Corporation in Asia proper, skirting the edge of the Rapine Storm in India. It is the largest city in the world, home to many industries into which the Corporation dips its fingers. It is from here that the business spider-web of the company stretches into Asia and the Middle East. For the most part, the cult minds its behavior here, knowing the city is a critical tactical point in global terms.

Further east, the Chrysalis Corporation does most of its business in Japan through its massive presence in Tokyo. Things, however, are mostly business as usual in the city, as Japan has seen a massive influx of the Disciples of Death's Shadow over the last few years. The cult of the Unnamed One is very active, but also fortunately very cooperative. The Chrysalis Corporation helps when it can, but mostly just stays out of the way.

As in many parts of the world, the Chrysalis Corporation enjoys a good public image from its emergency relief operations. The chaos that grips the continent makes it easy for agents of the Corporation to operate mostly out in the open.

AFRICA

The Chrysalis Corporation controls Africa – pretty much the whole continent. The headquarters of the Chrysalis Corporation is in Johannesburg, not coincidentally right over the site of one of the most notorious prisons of the apartheid era. The arcology has been built around the company's headquarters, a gigantic spire that shoots up and through the center all the way to the open air above. Needless to say, Chrysalis Corporation security in Johannesburg is extremely tight. The Eldritch Society has a difficult time operating in the arcology and is relegated to small cells.

Chrysalis Corporation agents can operate more or less openly anywhere in Africa. The company has spent decades making certain that it is an integral part of the continent and holds considerable sway over the government there. They bribe and blackmail the police, manipulate and corrupt politicians, and intimidate anyone else that might get in their way. As a result, agents of the Corporation can literally get away with murder.

Africa is, unknown to the rest of the world, the safest place in the New Earth Government. The Migou will not invade as long as the Director sits in his office on the southern tip of the continent. The Esoteric Order of Dagon takes only the territory allowed by Nyarlathotep. The Disciples of the Rapine Storm won't set foot on the continent until the final times are nigh. In truth, Dhohanoids are the greatest threat to mortals in Africa, but the news reports things a little differently.

AUSTRALIA

The land down under is a place of importance and interest to the Chrysalis Corporation. They could care less about the Migou incursions in New Zealand and those islands are of little use to them anyway. They work with the Esoteric Order of Dagon along the coastlines, but otherwise they are of little concern. On the other hand, the incursion of the Disciples of the Rapine Storm

are problematic. The Corporation knows there are important ruins in the deserts of Australia and the presence of the Storm has increased the military presence here. It is becoming harder and harder for the cult to explore the wastes of the continent, greatly slowing their timeline for unlocking the secrets of the Great Race.

To make matters worse, the Migou are looking for the exact same thing. The Chrysalis Corporation must put in calls to the military or carefully plant intelligence in order to combat this threat, making their job even tougher. The territory that once belonged to the Great Race is hotly contested, with little progress for any of the parties involved.

As in Europe, the Chrysalis Corporation has a good reputation here due to their relief efforts. They cannot, however, use that to the same advantage as the main cities of Australia are not yet in chaos.

ELSEWHERE

The Chrysalis Corporation was the first of any faction to take the Arctic seriously as a place that may hold forgotten knowledge. That belief paid off for them, as it was in the cold wastes that Chrysalis Corporation agents found the monolith containing the *Ta'ge Fragments*. All evidence of such a find have long been erased from the face of the Earth, however.

Regardless, the Chrysalis Corporation still has a few teams that search through the Arctic, evading the occasional Migou patrol. The cult believes that it has found everything worth finding on the gigantic ice floes, but continues to send researchers just to be safe.

Migou security around the Antarctic is extremely tight. However, the Chrysalis Corporation knows there are things hidden on Antarctica that would serve their purposes nicely. The Migou have certainly kept an eye out for such things, but they do not have the secret knowledge that only someone raised on Earth might have access to. The cult is convinced that the Migou haven't found everything and so they send infiltration teams to the frozen continent to see what they can find. Most especially, stories tell of ruins of Elder Thing cities and possibly the dark place known as Kadath. The latter may be of critical importance, as it supposedly is a place where one can directly commune with beings like the Old Ones. However, there are many who wonder whether or not such a place is even physically reachable.

Given the Chrysalis Corporation's involvement with solar exploration and colonization, there were many investigations and excavations in progress when the Migou wiped out the colonies. There were most certainly Dhohanoids among the colonists, carefully hidden and coordinating the cult's activities among the stars. Given their supernatural fortitude, the Chrysalis Corporation hopes that some may have survived and found treasures that they one day will return. To that end, the company continues to work with the New Earth Government to get past the Hive Ship and back out into the solar system.

OUTSIDE RELATIONS

The Children of Chaos do not operate outside the normal boundaries of society. As such, they must maintain relations with many different groups, including the government, their competition, and other cults.

The New Earth Government is blissfully unaware of the true nature of the Chrysalis Corporation. This is something that has been carefully crafted by the cult and that must be constantly maintained. The New Earth Government regards the Chrysalis Corporation as one of the pillars of society. They are an economic giant that employs many citizens, that pays their taxes, and that generally stimulates the economy. They are a company that provides many necessary goods and services to the world. The Chrysalis Corporation, through its subsidiaries, is one of the primary government and military contractors, researching, developing, and building that which gives the New Earth Government an edge in the Aeon War. The cult has placed itself in such a position as to be essential to the infrastructure of society. Little does the New Earth Government know how in bed with the enemy they really are. Every year, the Chrysalis Corporation puts on a big gala event that benefits many social initiatives, inviting all of their most important government clients and officials to celebrate the relationship. Even the President attends.

As one might expect, relations between the Chrysalis Corporation and the Ashcroft Foundation are strained. They are the two largest companies in the New Earth Government. While the Ashcroft Foundation does not regard the Chrysalis Corporation as competition, for their internal cultures are radically different, the feeling is not mutual. On a purely economic level, the Chrysalis Corporation would love it if it did not have to pay stiff licensing fees for their military contracts that utilize patented arcanotechnology. Beyond that, they would prefer to find some kind of an angle on the Foundation that would allow them to either acquire or sabotage the company's operations. On a philosophical level, the Ashcroft Foundation is out to better the mortal races of Earth and provide counseling to make modern living more bearable. This is not in line with the end of times.

Furthermore, Ashcroft Advisors are making it far more difficult for the Children of Chaos and their allies to corrupt government officials and civil servants. Many officials who might normally have fallen to the siren call of personal self-interest choose to honor their positions when faced with the Ashcroft Foundation's watch-dogs. This also does not work for the cult.

Since the goal of the Children of Chaos is to bring about the Strange Aeon and the return of the Old Ones, the Chrysalis Corporation has many dealings with other cults. They are, in many ways, the go between for the major cults and the facilitator for many of their plans.

The Esoteric Order of Dagon doesn't really like anybody. They tend to stay out of the way of other cult activities, but more because their interests don't coincide with the others than anything else. Their single-minded focus keeps them on their own path. However, they still need help from time to time. The Eso-

teric Order has many resources available to them, but societal and political influence are not some of them. Sometimes, they need the help of a giant entity like the Chrysalis Corporation in order to make their way deep into New Earth Government territory and to reach places within that may have been unreachable otherwise.

The Church of All, the Esoteric Order's primary recruitment cult, is the one that interfaces most often with the Children of Chaos. They are firmly rooted within society and sometimes need someone to get them contraband or to help them out of sticky situations. The Children of Chaos are usually happy to oblige.

As a courtesy, the Children of Chaos pass along any information or artifacts they uncover that might help the Esoteric Order with their hunt for R'lyeh. This factor alone is enough to keep the Chrysalis Corporation in good graces with the cult of the fish god.

The Children of Chaos and the Disciples of the Rapine Storm have little to do with each other. The only times the two cults intersect is if the Children of Chaos need to search in land already razed by the Rapine Storm or in delivering weapons. Fortunately, the beasts that make up the Storm do not regard Dhohanoids as mortals, so they most often leave Chrysalis Corporation agents alone. However, the occasional feisty warband will attack them if the creatures are bored.

On the other hand, the Desolate Ones that run the Disciples of the Rapine Storm do get something in return. The warbands are routinely delivered weapons, manufactured by subsidiaries of the Chrysalis Corporation. The Corporation reports them stolen, and the monsters and mortals in the cult that can use firearms now do.

The Children of Chaos' relationship with the other half of the Unnamable's cult is quite different. Though the Disciples of Death's Shadow have a very different goal, the two are both large cults operating hidden within the New Earth Government. Sometimes the Death Shadows need the economic influence of the Chrysalis Corporation and sometimes the Chrysalis Corporation needs the Death Shadows' political influence and blackmail files. Together, the two wield an enormous amount of temporal power. One might think that Chrysalis Corporation executives might enjoy the privilege of the Dionysus Clubs, but they are all Dhohanoids who don't really have any of those urges anymore.

Recently, the Children of Chaos found the remnants of the cults known as the Congregation of the Earth Mother. They were a group almost hunted to extinction by the Federal Security Bureau, worshipping nature and the animal inside everyone. However, the Children of Chaos were only building the cult back up to assist them in a massive ritual. Since the failure of that ritual and thinning of the Congregation in 2086, the Children of Chaos are no longer interested in the minor cult. There are, however, cells of the Congregation that still work with the Chrysalis Corporation, who never turns down an asset worth using.

THE GREATER CULT

It is a common mistake by those in the know to assume that the Chrysalis Corporation and the Children of Chaos are the same thing. Certainly, the Chrysalis Corporation wields the most temporal power of any aspect of the cult and it is the biggest part. However, the Children of Chaos are more than just high finance and Dhohanoids.

The Circle is comprised of the very special mystical servants of Nyarlathotep. They are ruthless special forces, each of them gifted sorcerers or para-psychics. However, they do not agree with the Chrysalis Corporation's methods. They do not believe that the corporate model is the next evolution of the cult, nor do they believe that the Rite of Transfiguration is the ultimate level of servitude. They have chosen to remain separate and have been gifted with the continuing guidance of the Blind Lady in honor of their decision.

Where the Chrysalis Corporation cannot go, the Circle infiltrates. They do whatever is called for to whomever is necessary. Those of the Circle are capable of getting to people no one else can get to, while remaining ghosts in the system. They are the boogey-men, the shadows out of the corner of someone's eye, the thing in the darkness.

In 2086, the Circle was most recently front and center for the enormous ritual of the Pacific Northwest. The fact that the Eldritch Society managed to stop them is something from which the Circle is still reeling. How could such intricate planning have gone awry? As such, the Circle has turned much of their effort toward the hunting of Taggers. There will be many deaths among the Eldritch Society over the coming years, but the game of chess has truly just begun.

Whatever Nyarlathotep's grand plan is, the Endless One certainly does not feel the need to reveal it to his followers. What neither the Circle nor the Chrysalis Corporation know is that there is a third secret part of the Children of Chaos. They are known as the Order of Taris, a secret group whose sole purpose is the gathering of information. However, there is a twist – the groups they spy on are the Children of Chaos' allies.

The Order of Taris is a secret order that has existed for many centuries. They have taken the art of espionage to a whole new level. Predominately made up of families that have been a part of the cult for generations, parents teach their children the ways of the Order and expect them to improve on such traditions. The result is a group that has all facets of espionage in their blood, including disguise, information gathering, and lethal combat. They are so skilled as to make the Global Intelligence Agency blush.

The Order has been kept a secret from the Children of Chaos for one simple reason – the fewer who know they exist, the lesser chance there is that they will be exposed. Secrets are best kept when few people know of them, and the spies are most useful when few people know they exist. If more knew of the Order's activities, there would be a chance that a para-psychic might pick such things out of someone's brain, that it might come up

in interrogation, or that someone might reveal something in a moment of indiscretion. They provide information to the most important person in the cult, the Director, and he then filters it down to everyone who needs to know.

The job of the Order of Taris is to infiltrate the other cults that are a part of the Aeon War. This includes the Disciples of Death's Shadow, the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, the Esoteric Order of Dagon, and any of the associated minor cults. Not only does the Order infiltrate these other cults in order to keep a watchful eye on them, to make sure they aren't up to something that would interfere with the Children of Chaos' plans, but they also steal important secrets that the other cults won't share. Each of the cults has their own particular focus – the Death Shadows wish to corrupt the world, the Rapine Storm wants to destroy the world, and the Esoteric Order just want to find R'lyeh – and they are not always forthcoming with information that might benefit the others' cause or the grand cause of the Children of Chaos. One of the main purposes of the Order of Taris is to steal these secrets, so that the Children of Chaos can redistribute them and put them to good use.

What is perhaps most amazing about the cult is the depth to which a Tarisian spy is willing to go in order to become a trusted part of the cult he is infiltrating. Such spies undergo the most horrible and hideous things to become acolytes, while never losing their identities. They must travel to the depths of depravity to become a Disciple of Death's Shadow, violate and eat the flesh of their own kind to join the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, and feign worship of and copulate with Deep Ones to enter the inner ranks of the Esoteric Order of Dagon. Their fortitude is amazing.

The odds of stumbling onto the existence of the Order of Taris is slim to none, even at the highest ranks of either the Chrysalis Corporation or the Circle. They are the quiet part of the cult that continues to help the others out, without any possibility of recognition. They perform their duty solely for the pleasure of serving their god.

These days, the Order knows that the Esoteric Order of Dagon is up to something that they are keeping very secret. Any advances towards R'lyeh are difficult to keep under wraps. so it is unlikely that is the source. Most importantly, the Order has discovered that the Esoteric Order has mortal spies placed within the Chrysalis Corporation, something previously thought impossible. These spies have been so highly trained that they are undetectable to the Corporation's deepest probes. How this has happened is a mystery, as well as what they are up to. Whatever it is, it can't be good, or else why would they have gone through this much effort?

THE CIRCLE
More detailed information on the Circle can be found in
Dark Passions.

LIFE AS A MORTAL IN THE CHRYSALIS CORPORATION

For your average employee, the Chrysalis Corporation appears to be much like every other large company. One becomes a cog in the machine to have a stable job, a reliable paycheck, and a retirement fund. The company's culture is elitist and closed off and that is something that infects nearly all who work there. However, for most the Chrysalis Corporation, or any of its subsidiaries, is just a place to work and nothing more. The Children of Chaos, for the most part, leave the mundane employees alone and treat them well.

However, there are those who wish to climb the corporate ladder, seeing the possibility for serious advancement in such an economic giant. Little do such employees realize that the path they are starting out on will lead them to the dark worship of an Endless One. If one wishes to become an executive, one must join the cult. Most who have the drive necessary to rise through the ranks of the Chrysalis Corporation are the kind of people who really don't have a problem joining a secret society, not quite understanding its scope.

However, the politics involved in such a move are serious. The Chrysalis Corporation doesn't make it easy to rise to the higher levels of management. This is deliberate, so that those who are less likely to take the bait to join the Children of Chaos are weeded out and left behind. There are occasionally those who make it far, who are not cut out for, or are philosophically opposed to, becoming a part of the cult. Unfortunately, their lives are unnaturally cut short.

Everything in the Chrysalis Corporation pulls towards becoming a Dhohanoid. Once an employee has become initiated into the cult, he becomes a potential Dhohanoid in the eyes of the powers that be. Much effort will go into enticing such a person into the Rite of Transfiguration and many go along with it. The temptation is simply too much for most, with the promises of power, position, and wealth. However, there are those who are content serving the cult as mortals.

The lot of a mortal cultist is anything but glamorous. They can never rise to the highest levels of the company and they are regarded as lesser beings in the eyes of the Chrysalis Corporation. Unless they serve an obviously useful function, such cultists can expect to be bullied or picked on by Dhohanoids on a semi-regular basis. The hope is, with enough hassle, that the cultist will change his mind and choose to become a monster. Some do, but many still don't.

One of the best ways for a mortal cultist to avoid the usual troubles of choosing mortality is to become part of one of the support networks. Dhohanoids tend to leave those alone who are dedicated to helping them out or saving their bacon, even going so far as to treat them with grudging respect. A smart mortal cultist starts to look into the various support services as soon as he hears of them. The training may be intense and he may go off the grid with regards to his position, for which he must be available long hours, but the rewards are well-worth it for many to live a more secretive lifestyle.

Mortal cultists may also find an important place within the illegal operations of the company. Many of such jobs are unexciting, but the cultist is providing a important service and risking his skin to do so. Such employees are regarded more highly than those who fill simple administrative functions. Furthermore, mortal cultists are sometimes better suited to work in areas where Tagers may be afoot, to act as bait for Tagers, or to try to infiltrate the Eldritch Society. They are mortal, so they do not register as anything other to Tager senses so that the minions of the Eldritch Society may be caught off-guard.

There are those who choose this path who one day realize that there are ways to go further without becoming a monster. The path of sorcery is open to anyone with the intelligence, will, and obsessive desire to learn. Those who can distinguish themselves as powerful sorcerers become far more useful to the Chrysalis Corporation than other non-mystically capable mortals. Some even go so far as to become one of the magicians responsible for the Rite of Transfiguration and go to work in one of the Genesis Pits. This is about the highest level of initiation a mortal can reach within the cult, and it is a position of prestige.

Occasionally, a fortunate mortal cultist will be unaware that he is a latent para-psychic. Not everyone who has the sort of unusual occurrences that normally happen around latent para-psychics clues in to the fact. Such employees may erupt after they have become a part of the cult, dramatically increasing their value to the company. They are promptly taken in for testing, so that the powers that be can figure out where their abilities will be of most use. While they will never reach the level of Dhohanoids, they will never again live in the bottom strata of cult prestige.

Regardless of elitism and attitude, the Chrysalis Corporation is a business and those in charge realize that it must function as such. Mortal cultists are valuable resources who serve in important roles within the company. They do many jobs that Dhohanoids would be loathe to do, that would also be a waste of such creatures' talents. Dhohanoids are only allowed to treat the mortals as lesser beings to a point, before executive management will step in to remind everyone how valuable the mortal cultists are. If a Dhohanoid insists on bullying a mortal, or even goes so far as to harm or kill him, the monster must have a good reason or he will face the consequences.

Life for mortal cultists in the Chrysalis Corporation is nowhere near as dangerous as it is for Dhohanoids. Most mortals don't live the kind of violent lives their monstrous fellows do and it is far more difficult for a Tager to know they are in service of the enemy. Even if facilities or offices are raided by the Eldritch Society, the mortals typically survive. The biggest threat to such employees is the authorities. The Office of Internal Security, for example, knows nothing of Dhohanoids but is indiscriminate in their dispensation of arcane justice. On the other hand, those who choose to function within the illegal side of the company not only face these threats, but others. In general, there is less mortal peril for mortal cultists, but there is a direct correlation between prestige and danger.

Lust is the most uncontrollable of desires. When the primal urge to mate is excited, there is little that will stand in its way. Particularly so for the male sex drive, sometime so powerful it all but defines the gender.

Seraphine, being a creature of lust, thought about such things often.

It was a beautiful summer night in the arcology and the Deimos Room was the happening place to be. The outdoor patio was filled to capacity with patrons enjoying the world-famous appetizers and wine selection. Sitting at what would arguably be the best seat in the house was her target, celebrating a business deal he shouldn't have closed. He laughed with his business partners, downed his wine, and snorted another line of cocaine.

There were several pretty girls who had already taken interest in the table, clearly full of high-rollers who might be their next sugar-daddy. One would easily believe they were actresses or models, or at least highly sought after porn stars. Any girl would be facing stiff competition for a seat at that table tonight. Fortunately, there was no woman in the world that could hold a candle to Seraphine once she got her hooks in a man.

Weaving through the crowd, pretending to be looking for someone, she finally got close enough to imprint. Nazzadi, huh? The man had a taste for the exotic. No problem. Thank goodness it wasn't a twelve year-old boy like last time. That threw Seraphine for a loop and she was woefully unprepared.

Now she was only concerned that she had the clothes to go with her new body.

Quickly exiting the restaurant, Seraphine went around the back to an unmarked waiting utility van. Stepping inside, she stripped and began to change. Her flesh flowed and warped and voila! There it was. A stunning Nazzadi girl stared back at her from the mirror, complete with tattoos. Looking through her racks of clothing, she found a revealing number that she knew would catch her target's eye. Pulling on thigh-high boots, she was out the door and back into the restaurant.

All she had to do was get within eye-sight and the man's jaw dropped. He promptly ignored the red-head he was badly attempting to seduce and called over a server. Seraphine sauntered up to the bar, catching many men's eyes in the process, and waited for the request she knew was coming. Sure enough, the server bee-lined to her, passing along the message that the wealthy gentlemen on the terrace would be honored if she would join them.

She was introduced to Arnold Chufkin, a man who had no idea the trouble he was in. It didn't take the couple of bottles of wine to have Chufkin eating out of her

hand. He was putty from hello – that is the advantage of being someone's sexual ideal.

She pleasantly surprised him by suggested they go somewhere before he clumsily could. The check paid, they were off to Chufkin's manor.

Once Seraphine took off her clothes, the man went from lap-dog to willing slave in moments. She could have told him to order a hit on his own mother and he would have complied. Instead, she tied him to the bed using a couple of his ties. This turned him on quite a bit.

However, his arousal faded a little into confusion when Seraphine simply stepped back to assess him, wicked grin on her face, instead of proceeding with any kind of sex act.

"My, look how helpless you are."

He smiled. "Oh, we're playing a game. I get it. Yeah baby, I'm totally helpless. You can do whatever you want to me and there's nothing I can do about it. Seriously, just don't hurt me, because I'm not into that."

"Really?" responded Seraphine, chuckling. "Perhaps you should have thought of that before you went behind our backs."

His arousal took another hit. "What are you talking about. Behind what backs?"

"Ms. Jasinski and you had a deal. And now you're trying to play ball with Oshinawa and his cronies? Double-dealing is no way to honor your existing obligations. We take such breaches very seriously."

Finally, it hit him. "Wait. You work for Chrysalis?"





"No. Hot girls like me are always into fat balding men."

Chufkin struggled with his bonds. There was no way he was getting free without help or a knife – neither of which he had. Seraphine knew how to tie people up. It was part of her job description. She just watched him, amused.

Finally, he gave up. "I can pay you. Just walk away."

"You cannot pay me more than my employers already do," she replied. "Besides, I am beholden to them on a far deeper level than that. Something I suspect someone like you wouldn't understand."

"What... what are you going to do to me?"

Seraphine held up her arm and let her natural form show through. The beautiful smooth jet-black skin gave way to a spindly, leathery black arm, her fingers tipped with sharp talons. Chufkin gurgled in fear as his bowels let loose.

Seraphine let her inner predator into her smile. "I'm going to deliver a message from your business partners, and take no small pleasure in doing so."

He screamed in agony as Seraphine cut into him. She paused to take it in.

"That's right, baby. Talk dirty to me."

chapter five

children of the chrysalis

DESIGNING CHRYSALIS CHARACTERS

Sometimes it's fun to go behind the curtain to see what it's like on the other side. There is no doubt that, from the perspective of the New Earth Government, that the Children of Chaos are evil. However, sometimes evil is fun to play – especially if you've been fighting that evil for a long time.

Just like in Eldritch Society games, you will have to keep an eye on balance between the Characters. If most of the Characters are Dhohanoids, it might be prudent for those few mortal Characters to be sorcerers or para-psychics, just to keep up. However, remember that Dhohanoids are the top of the food chain in the Children of Chaos and are a lot less humble than Tagers about their position when it comes to having mortals around.

This chapter contains several new profession templates. Three of them can be used with mortal Characters, while all can be used for Dhohanoid Characters. Also presented here are four new manifestations of Dhohanoids – the Derebith, the Grokek, the Jjia-sin-dumash, and the Vassiamon. The specific rules for designing Dhohanoid Characters are presented starting on p. 122.

This chapter also contains new magic known only to the Children of Chaos, as well as guidelines for guiding Children of Chaos games. There is also a complete starter story for Chrysalis Corporation Characters, to help you get started right away.

However, before we get to all that, let's look at a few new Qualities applicable to Children of Chaos Characters.

NEW ASSETS

CHILD OF CHAOS SORCERER (2)

Your Character is not only a person who is capable of using magic, he has been chosen for the honor as a keeper of the Children of Chaos' mystical secrets. Your Character now has access to the special magical rituals and devices that are part of the Children of Chaos, as presented starting on p.132.

DHOHANOID (4)

Your Character has been blessed by the Children of Chaos and chosen to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. Choose one of the common Dhohanoid manifestations – Derebith, Dua-Sanaras, Ramachese, or Vassiamon – and add its powers and abilities to your Character. Only Characters who have this Asset can be Dhohanoids.

Your Character is now a full-blown monster. Without extensive training, he will never pass a legitimate psych-eval – he will quickly be identified as psychotic. On the up side, he is now immune to further insanity and never needs to Test to resist things that might cause a mental breakdown. He no longer needs to track Insanity Points – he is permanently insane. Furthermore, genetic scans will reveal that he is no longer Human or Nazzadi. He is beholden to the Chrysalis Corporation in order to function in society.

DHOHANOID: SPECIALIZED (2)

Prerequisite: Dhohanoid Asset

Your Character has manifested as one of the more specialized types of Dhohanoid. Choose one of the specialized manifestations – Elib, Gelgore, Namarok, Patul, or Vrykol – and add its powers and abilities to your Character.

DHOHANOID: ELITE (4)

Prerequisite: Dhohanoid Asset

Your Character manifested as one of the elite types of Dhohanoid. Choose one of the elite manifestations – Grokek, Thog-Manna, or Zabuth – and add its powers and abilities to your Character.

DHOHANOID: RARE (3 OR 5)

Prerequisite: Dhohanoid Asset

Your Character manifested as one of the rare types of Dhohanoid. Choose one of the rare manifestations – Ciraqen or Jjia-sin-dumash – and add its powers and abilities to your Character. This Asset costs three points to portray a Ciraqen and five points to portray a Jjia-sin-dumash.

NEW DRAWBACKS

FAILED RITE (4)

Prerequisite: Latent Para-Psychic Asset

Your Character did not know that he was para-psychically sensitive before he attempted to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. The mystical energies of the Rite fizzled as the Character became keenly aware of his inner reservoir of cosmic power. On the plus side, this could have forced him to erupt, if you wish to also choose the Erupted Para-Psychic Asset. On the down side, he can never be a Dhohanoid and is relegated to the spots all mortals are within the Chrysalis Corporation. He also most likely must endure some amount of ridicule from his peers (and probably others), once they have successfully manifested as Dhohanoids. It is better to not undergo the Rite if one is para-psychically capable than it is to have undergone it and failed.

LOST MORTALITY (3)

Prerequisite: Dhohanoid Asset

Most Dhohanoids retain some shred of their mortal self after the change. At least, they retain enough to be able to interact with mortals in a normal fashion. Your Character, on the other hand, has gone so deeply into his monstrous nature that he has difficulty interacting with mortals. He is simply too predatory, too animalistic, too distant, or too deep down inhuman to be able to relate. Many times, simple mortal manners and courtesies are beyond him, making others believe that he is rude and/or possibly disgusting.

He now suffers a permanent -4 Test/Contest Penalty to all interpersonal skills, including Misdirect, Persuade, Savoir-Faire, and Seduction, as well as any skills that involve performance to mortals. However, because of his nature, he now receives a +2 Test Bonus to uses of the Intimidate skill.

DHOHANOID AGENT

The primary arms of the Chrysalis Corporation are its Dhohanoïd agents, fanatics who have been willing to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration to give up their mortality to serve the Endless One. They are trained for a wide variety of purposes, including combat in both their mortal and monstrous forms, social and business graces, and in covering up the truth. Regardless, they do the bidding of their masters whenever and wherever they are needed – out in the world, not chained to a desk or a department like so many of the corporation's elite.

Dhohanoïd agents must be ready for all kinds of assignments. They may need to negotiate business deals, both above and below board. They may need to oversee delicate operations or critical shipments. They may need to engage in less tasteful activities, including terror tactics, blackmail, extortion, or outright maiming or murder. Fortunately, Dhohanoïds no longer have mortal consciences to plague them, so most enjoy their work fully.

All Dhohanoïd agents retain a piece of who they used to be. Some were simply businesspeople caught in a downward spiral of greed. However, some may have been ex-military or ex-government agent, and their assignments will reflect that.

Attributes: Higher than average Agility and Perception recommended.

Suggested Skills: Criminal, Dodge, Fighting, Misdirect, Survival

Required Qualities: Dhohanoïd (4), Duty (3)

Special Gear: A suit of concealed combat armor (usually Heavy Sentrytech armor), a sidearm (such as a UT-7 Hornet, CS-40 Defender, or CS-44 Enforcer), and a submachinegun (such as an MP15-9, SM-14, or RMG-14).

Sample Attributes (Not Including Dhohanoïd Modifications):

Human/Nazzadi (Will vary according to manifestation)

Agility 7/8

Intellect 5/5

Perception 7/7

Presence 5/5

Strength 6/5

Tenacity 6/6

Sample Skills:

Athletics: Student (Novice if Human)

Bureaucracy: Novice

Criminal: Student

Dodge: Adept

Fighting: Novice

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Literacy: Novice

Marksman: Novice

Misdirect: Novice

Observation: Novice

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Savoir-Faire: Student

Security: Student

Stealth: Student (Novice if Human)

Survival: Novice



CHRYSALIS EXECUTIVE

There are those among the Children of Chaos who appreciate bloodshed of a different sort. They prefer to destroy opponents over the negotiating table, to bring about the downfall of competitors through industrial espionage, and to ruin lives through policy. They are fierce warriors of the modern financial battlefield, laboring tirelessly to make sure that the world ends as scheduled.

Life as an executive of the Chrysalis Corporation is never dull. There is always some hidden initiative to be executed, some dirty pool to be perpetrated, some meeting to be had. Some warrant the prestige to have their own entourage or their own bodyguards. Then again, some are their own bodyguards. Regardless, it is a life of deal-making, deal-breaking, and prestige.

Some executives aren't even Dhohanoids yet. They are simply enthusiastic cultists who are on their way up. It is only a matter of time before such executives find their way to the Rite of Transfiguration, it's just that their number isn't up yet. On the other hand, most executives are already Dhohanoids, and their distinct lack of mortal conscience does them well.

Attributes: Higher than average Intellect and Presence recommended.

Suggested Skills: Bureaucracy, Business, Misdirect, Persuade, Savoir-Faire

Required Qualities: Authority (2), Duty (3)

Recommended Qualities: Dhohanoid (4), Elite (4), Wealth (2)

Special Gear: A handgun, an excellent peek, and an extensive wardrobe of expensive attire.

Sample Attributes (Not Including Dhohanoid Modifications):

Human/Nazzadi (may vary according to manifestation)

Agility 5/6

Intellect 7/6

Perception 6/6

Presence 7/7

Strength 5/5

Tenacity 6/6

Sample Skills:

Bureaucracy: Novice

Business: Novice

Dodge: Novice

Intimidate: Novice

Larceny: Novice

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Literacy: Novice

Marksman: Student

Misdirect: Novice

Observation: Novice

Occult: Student

Persuade: Novice

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Savoir-Faire: Novice (Adept if Human)

Trivia: Student (if Human)



FIRE TEAM AGENT

Chrysalis Corporation fire teams are the agents trained for serious combat. They are para-militarily trained, a private army unto themselves. Unlike normal soldiers, Chrysalis fire teams are trained to operate within everyday life, in seemingly plain clothes with concealed weapons. Urban guerrilla combat, covert operations, and wetworks are the names of the game.

Many fire team agents are those cultists who have an aptitude for combat, but who are not yet ready to undergo the Rite of Transfiguration. They work as support for Dhohanoid agents, bringing in the additional firepower as necessary. It certainly is a way to distinguish oneself faster – those who serve on fire teams and survive are often bumped up the queue to undergo the Rite. It is these agents that throw themselves into conflict with a fervor that may rival that of their Dhohanoid compatriots.

However, many fire team agents are Dhohanoids who have been trained to maximize their combat effectiveness – both in their mortal and monstrous forms. They are easily the most dangerous of all Dhohanoids, typically populated by violent-aspected manifestations – Dua-Sanaras, Gelgore, Grokell, Namarok, Ramachese, and Zabuth.

Attributes: Higher than average Perception and Tenacity recommended.

Suggested Skills: Armed Fighting (if mortal), Dodge, Fighting (if Dhohanoid), Marksman, Survival

Required Qualities: Duty (3)

Special Gear: A suit of concealed combat armor (usually Heavy Sentrytech armor), a sidearm (such as a UT-7 Hornet, CS-40 Defender, or CS-44 Enforcer), a submachinegun (such as an MP15-9, SM-14, or RMG-14), a composite combat knife (if mortal), and a survival kit.

Sample Attributes (Not Including Dhohanoid Modifications):
Human/Nazzadi (May vary according to manifestation)

Agility 6/6

Intellect 5/5

Perception 7/7

Presence 5/5

Strength 6/6

Tenacity 7/7

Sample Skills:

Armed Fighting: Novice (Student if Dhohanoid)

Athletics: Student (Novice if Human)

Criminal: Student

Dodge: Adept, Dive for Cover Focus

Fighting: Novice (Adept if Dhohanoid)

Hobby: Student

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Literacy: Novice

Marksman: Adept, Submachinegun Focus

Observation: Novice

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Stealth: Student (Novice if Human)

Survival: Novice

Trivia: Student



STREET DEALER

There are many of the Chrysalis Corporation's dealings that are not above board. They employ many crafty, slick, and morally ambiguous people to work on the streets and under the radar. While internally they are known by many names, including Freelance Acquisition Specialists or Marginalized Commodities Brokers, they are what they are – street dealers.

The job of street dealing can take on many forms. Some are those who seek illegal items or substances for corporate projects. Some are those who sell illegal items or substances to help finance covert company projects. Some are sent to flood illegal and dangerous things onto the streets, just to up the chaos a notch. Arcane items, forbidden texts, illegal rituals, drugs, guns – Chrysalis street dealers traffic in these items and more, sometimes on both sides of the line.

This profession is a common choice for those of the Children of Chaos who cannot or will not become Dhohanoids. Para-psychics, in particular, are likely to have the chops to survive on the streets, serving a useful function within the cult. However, as in any profession that faces potential peril as a part of their job description, being a Dhohanoid can provide a street dealer with an extra and sometimes much needed edge.

Attributes: Higher than average Presence and Tenacity recommended.

Suggested Skills: Criminal, Dodge, Misdirect, Occult, Streetwise

Recommended Qualities: Ally, Contacts

Required Qualities: Duty (3)

Special Gear: A handgun, several concealed knives and stun weapons, an excellent peek, and a portable computer.

Sample Attributes:

Human/Nazzadi

Agility 5/6

Intellect 5/5

Perception 6/6

Presence 7/7

Strength 6/5

Tenacity 7/7

Sample Skills:

Armed Fighting: Student (if mortal)

Computers: Student

Criminal: Student

Dodge: Adept

Fighting: Student (if Dhohanoid)

Languages (Per Race): Per Race

Law Enforcement: Student

Literacy: Novice

Marksmanship: Student

Misdirect: Novice

Observation: Novice

Occult: Novice

Persuade: Novice

Regional Knowledge: Novice

Research: Student (Novice if Human)

Security: Student

Streetwise: Novice

Trivia: Student (if Human)



DHOHANOIDS

DEREBITH

Frighteningly common, Derebith are creatures of pestilence. Even considering their monstrosity, there is something about the creatures that is unwholesome. They ooze in all the wrong places and their hides seem to have almost leprous patches. They are skinny, spindly creatures, emaciated and bony. Something in them speaks to both reptilian and rodent stock, with their long, thin, teeth-filled snouts, pointed ears, long skinny tail, and dark scales. In a word, they are foul.

Derebith are only truly satisfied when they are bringing suffering to others. They love to watch their victims languish in their debilitated conditions, often messing with their heads, playing cruel tricks, or outright torturing them. They are cruel and unsympathetic creatures.

What is perhaps most fascinating is that their mortal forms appear to be the picture of health – perhaps a camouflage for their true natures. However, there is always something cruel in their smiles.

Special Rules: Derebith are plague-bearers. The type of disease they carry is similar in symptoms to a bad case of influenza, though it is never lethal. It cannot be cured by medicine, though the symptoms can be somewhat mitigated with drugs. Derebith can infect anyone within ten feet. When one chooses to infect, all within the affected area must succeed at a Challenging Tenac-

ity Feat Tests each minute or they will begin to exhibit symptoms. The disease takes full effect within an hour and lasts for up to five days. While affected, a victim suffers -3 to Agility, Strength, and Tenacity, and a +2 to Intellect, Perception, and Presence (with the accompanying reduction in Secondary Attributes). Supernatural beings are immune to this disease (including Tagers). Victims also suffer an additional -2 Test or Contest Penalty to all actions.

Average Derebith (Experienced)

Allegiance: Children of Chaos

Scale: Vitality

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. tall)

Attributes: Agility 10 (+2), Intellect 5, Perception 7, Presence 6, Strength 9 (+2), Tenacity 9 (+2)

Secondary Attributes: Actions 2, Orgone 12, Reflex 7

General Skills: Athletics: Adept (3), Bureaucracy: Adept (3), Computers: Novice (2), Criminal: Adept (3), Education: Novice (2), Misdirect: Adept (3), Occult: Novice (2), Observation: Adept (3), Savoir-Faire: Adept (3), Security: Novice (2), Stealth: Adept (3), Survival: Adept (3)

Combat Skills: Dodge: Adept (3), Fighting: Adept (3), Marksman: Novice (2)

Weapons: Bite (+1), Claws (0)

Damage Bonus: +1

Vitality: 14

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Cruel & Unsympathetic

Senses: Acute Smell & Taste, Broadband Audio, Nightvision

Movement & Speed: Jumping (Double), Land [17 mph (42/10 ypt)]



GROKELL

Something descends from above, a screeching bat-like thing with wide leathery wings. It is a dark form, nothing but an enormous tri-lobed alien eye, a vicious mouth, and sharp claws. Burning saliva pours from its mouth in thick, ropy strands. It is a Grokell, a companion to the Zabuth and death on wings.

There is something about the Grokell that is fear incarnate. They are creatures of darkness, who intensely dislike the light. It is as if Nyarlathotep crafted them himself to be his hunters in the darkness.

Grokell are hateful creatures, who wish nothing more than to grind every mortal they meet into paste. They delight in the terror of others, preferring to drive prey to madness before delivering a painful and ugly death. There is nothing subtle or redeeming about the Grokell and even other Dhohanoids are leary of them.

In their mortal manifestation, Grokell burn with a seething hatred. Their eyes always appear to be a little too big for their faces. They prefer the night and dim indoor lighting and wear sunglasses to protect them from the glare of bright lights. They will, if at all possible, avoid contact with the sun.

Special Rules: The screech of a Grokell forces those within 50 feet to make a Fear Test against a Challenging Degree. This is beyond the Fear Test required for simply being in the creature's presence.



Average Grokell (Experienced)

Allegiance: Children of Chaos

Scale: Vitality

Size: Medium (8 to 9 ft. long)

Attributes: Agility 12 (+4), Intellect 5, Perception 11 (+4), Presence 6, Strength 12 (+4), Tenacity 6

Secondary Attributes: Actions 3, Orgone 10, Reflex 9

General Skills: Athletics: Adept (3), Bureaucracy: Novice (2), Computers: Novice (2), Criminal: Adept (3), Education: Novice (2), Intimidate: Expert (4), Occult: Novice (2), Observation: Adept (3), Savoir-Faire: Novice (2), Stealth: Adept (3), Survival: Novice (2)

Combat Skills: Dodge: Adept (3), Fighting: Master (5), Marksman: Expert (4)

Weapons: Maw (+3), Screech (Fear), Talons (+2)

Acidic Spit Range 10/25/60

Damage +4 Shots 1

Damage Bonus: +3

Vitality: 13

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 3 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Hateful & Terrifying

Senses: Acute Hearing, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Sonar, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Flying [69 mph (171/39 ypt)], Land [23 mph (57/13 ypt)]

JJIA-SIN-DUMASH

Seemingly nothing more than a giant mass of golden tentacles surrounding a protean ball is the Jjia-sin-dumash. Each as long as a man, the creature's tentacles move and probe, as if they are each hungry on their own. The truth is, they are – hungry to sap the will from a sentient being, bending the being to the creature's will. Fortunately for the world, the Jjia-sin-dumash are one of the rarest manifestations of Dhohanoid.

The tips of a Jjia-sin-dumash's tentacles can snap off, penetrating the body of a victim, worming its way deep inside. There, it takes control of the victim's will, making it absolutely subservient to the creature. The Dhohanoid maintains telepathic contract wherever the victim is in the world, giving it control or the ability to plant commands that the victim must follow in both letter and spirit.

There is a cold confidence that permeates the attitude of a Jjia-sin-dumash at all times. They tend to be very impatient with people, as they are very used to getting exactly what they want. Furthermore, their skin always seems to be perfectly bronzed, as if they have spent time in a tanning booth.

Special Rules: If a Jjia-sin-dumash does at least one point of damage with its tentacle attack, the tip of said tentacle will break off and worm its way into a victim's body. Within a minute, the victim will be under the Dhohanoid's control. A victim can resist a Jjia-sin-dumash's commands if he can succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test – however, if he fails he must obey all commands for the next hour (including self-harm or suicide). The Dhohanoid can control up to six victims at the same time. The controlling piece of the Jjia-sin-dumash will die off after 24 hours – after which time they may inject again. The controlling piece may not be removed surgically and such efforts will kill the host.



This ability does not work against supernatural creatures (including Taggers), but does affect Humans, Nazzadi, Ghouls, Migou, and anything else classified as mortal.

Average Jjia-Sin-Dumash (Experienced)

Allegiance: Children of Chaos

Scale: Vitality

Size: Medium (9 to 11 ft. across)

Attributes: Agility 10 (+3), Intellect 9 (+2), Perception 8 (+2), Presence 8 (+2), Strength 9 (+2), Tenacity 10 (+3)

Secondary Attributes: Actions 3, Orgone 14, Reflex 9

General Skills: Athletics: Novice (2), Bureaucracy: Novice (2), Computers: Novice (2), Criminal: Novice (2), Education: Novice (2), Misdirect: Novice (2), Occult: Novice (4), Observation: Adept (3), Persuade: Novice (2), Savoir-Faire: Adept (3), Security: Novice (2), Stealth: Adept (3), Surveillance: Novice (2), Survival: Novice (2)

Combat Skills: Dodge: Adept (3), Fighting: Expert (4), Marksman: Novice (2)

Weapons: Tentacles (+2 + entangle), Tentacle Flurry (+4; requires two Actions)

Damage Bonus: +1

Vitality: 14

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 3 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Confident & Impatient

Senses: Acute Touch, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Thermal, X-ray

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple – can scale sheer surfaces), Land [17 mph (42/10 ypt)]

VASSIAMON

Siren. Succubus. White Woman. The deadly lover. This is the Vassiamon. Different from most Dhohanoids, the Vassiamon is designed to play off a mortal's desires, bending his will to the needs of the Children of Chaos. They take on the form of fabulously alluring lovers, becoming a victim's sexual ideal. Of course, the creature has another face. Its monstrous form is as terrible to behold as its mortal face is beautiful. It is a black, leathery almost arachnoid humanoid, with sharp mandibles, spindly arms, and legs that look like a vise.

Vassiamon live to bring people to their knees. They use their seductive abilities to gain more and more control over other people. In general, they view mortals as nothing more than amusing playthings to be used up and discarded. They play power games and weave extensive webs of manipulation.

As mortals, they are always unnaturally beautiful. They draw attention to themselves simply by being. The one thing that gives them away as inhuman is the predatory way they move.

Special Rules: Vassiamon have the mystical ability to know a person's sexual ideal – all they have to do is be within 50 feet. They can shapeshift into that ideal within 30 seconds, and can assume either gender (though they'll need the appropriate clothes). They receive a +8 Contest Bonus to interpersonal skills – including Misdirect, Persuade, Seduction, and Savoir-Faire – against their intended victim.

Vassiamon do have their own mortal forms, a beautiful and idealized version of their former selves. They receive a +4 Contest Bonus to interpersonal skills in this form against the opposite sex, and a +2 Contest Bonus against the same sex (if target is heterosexual; reverse if homo- or bi-sexual).

Average Vassiamon (Experienced)

Allegiance: Children of Chaos

Scale: Vitality

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attributes: Agility 8, Intellect 5, Perception 6, Presence 13 (+4), Strength 9 (+2), Tenacity 5

Secondary Attributes: Actions 2, Orgone 10, Reflex 6

General Skills: Athletics: Novice (2), Bureaucracy: Novice (2), Computers: Novice (2), Criminal: Novice (2), Education: Novice (2), Misdirect: Expert (4), Occult: Novice (2), Observation: Adept (3), Persuade: Expert (4), Savoir-Faire: Expert (4), Security: Novice (2), Seduction: Master (5), Surveillance: Novice (2)

Combat Skills: Dodge: Adept (3), Fighting: Adept (3), Marksman: Novice (2)

Weapons: Bite (+1), Leg Vise (0 + entangle), Talons (0)

Damage Bonus: +1

Vitality: 12

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Manipulative & Seductive

Senses: Acute Touch, Nightvision

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple – can cling to sheer surfaces), Jumping (Triple), Land [15 mph (37/9 ypt)]



DESIGNING DHOHANOID CHARACTERS

If you're going to play games centered around the Chrysalis Corporation, you'll need to know how to design Dhohanoid Characters. Dhohanoids will likely be the most common Characters in such a game.

This section will explore the common abilities of Dhohanoids, the specifics you need to design them as Characters, and provide Character templates for the ten previously revealed Dhohanoids, as well as the four new manifestations presented in this book.

GENERAL ABILITIES

There are certain benefits that are available to all manifestations of Dhohanoids. Many of them revolve around the fact that, unlike Tagers, Dhohanoids have access to their monstrous selves at all times.

Shifting Shape

- Dhohanoids can shift instantly between their two forms. This ability cannot be constrained by restraints or physical objects. Such obstacles will be mystically destroyed by the Dhohanoid as it manifests.

- Dhohanoids can partially shift, revealing only aspects of their monstrous forms when they appear primarily mortal. For example, an Elib can shift his forearm and hand into his powerful claws, attack, and then immediately shift back.

- If, for any reason, a Dhohanoid is rendered unconscious, it will shift to its mortal form.

- Dhohanoids shift to their mortal form upon death.

Supernatural Abilities

- The attribute bonuses from a Dhohanoid's manifestation are present all the time, regardless of form. He receives them whether he is shifted or not and does not need to maintain a second set of attributes.

- The enhanced senses of a Dhohanoid are present in both his mortal and monstrous forms.

- The natural armor and regeneration of a Dhohanoid is present at all times, regardless of form. Dhohanoids can layer physical armor on top of their natural armor when in mortal form, but only receive a maximum additional bonus of +1/+1 to their armor rating, regardless of the type of armor and its normal protection.

- The mystical special abilities of Tagers are also present at all times, unless such special abilities require a monstrous form to utilize. For example, a Gelgore still has a poisonous bite in mortal form, but cannot use such poison with its needle pods unless it shifts. Also, an Elib cannot swallow something in its mortal form, as another example.

- Unlike Tagers, Dhohanoids have access to their full pool of Orgone. They can become full-fledged sorcerers, though they can-

not be para-psychic in any way. Those with latent para-psychic ability cannot undergo the Rite of Transfiguration – it will not work.

- In either form, Dhohanoids receive a +4 Test Bonus to Fear Tests. They are difficult to frighten.

QUALITIES

Any Character that you wish to be a Dhohanoid must choose, at the very least, the Dhohanoid Asset. This confers the ability to manifest as one of the common Dhohanoids. If you wish to portray a Dhohanoid with more specialized or greater ability, you will also need to choose other Assets, as presented on p. 114.

It is also appropriate that you choose the Duty (3) Drawback, to indicate the Character's lifelong servitude to the Chrysalis Corporation and the Children of Chaos.

PUTTING THE MONSTER IN

Once you have designed your Character as usual, and you have purchased the appropriate Assets to allow you to choose the manifestation of Dhohanoid you wish to play, it is time to add the special abilities and modifications. First apply the attribute modifications and recalculate your Secondary Attributes (which will most likely change for the better). Also, modify your Characters movement types and rates. Then record the special abilities, weapons, armor, regeneration, senses, and Fear Factor associated with your manifestation.

Each listing here also shows the ways your Characters' personality and physical appearance (in mortal form) will change after the Rite of Transfiguration.

NOTING A FEW CHANGES

As we explored Dhohanoids more deeply in this book, we have discovered a few things that need to be changed. Some of the abilities or attributes we gave the ten Dhohanoids that appeared in both the *Core Book* and *Vade Mecum* have required revision.

Don't worry – none of them are very big, but they are of particular importance if you are thinking of playing a Dhohanoid as a Character.

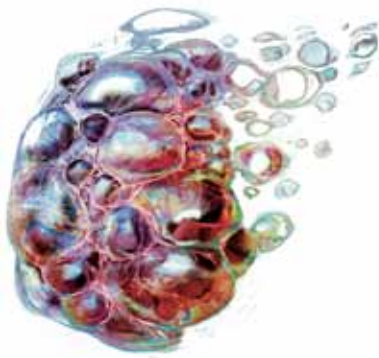
- In *Vade Mecum*, the Ciraqen is listed without regenerative abilities. It should regenerate one point of Vitality per turn.

- In *Vade Mecum*, the Patul is also listed without regenerative abilities. It should regenerate two points of Vitality per turn.

- Though it is likely to be inferred, neither the Dua-Sanaras (from the *Core Book*) nor the Patul (from *Vade Mecum*) are listed as having amphibious abilities. They can both breathe underwater and descend into the ocean depths. These special abilities have been added to both Dhohanoids here.

- Though attribute modifications have been included in the monster listings for the ten Dhohanoids presented in the *Core Book* and *Vade Mecum*, some of them have been revised in the interests of balance. In all cases, use the attribute modifications presented in this chapter instead.

DHOHANOID MANIFESTATIONS



CIRAQEN

A full description of the Ciraqen can be found on p. 126 of Vade Mecum.

Special Abilities

Ciraqen are capable of teleportation – traversing distances without traveling the space in between. They can teleport to any location they can physically see, or to any location they cannot see within 25 yards, as an Action. Any non-living matter on their bodies transports with them – they don't leave behind their clothes and personal objects – though they cannot bring anything larger than a suitcase with them. Their spatial knowledge is intuitive, so they never accidentally teleport into solid objects.

Furthermore, their alien brains can multi-task. They can, with no Multiple Action Penalty, take two mental Actions at once.

Ciraqen also receive the Wary Asset for free. This does not count against the Character's starting skill points.

Personality

Ciraqen are hyper-geniuses who are beyond mortals. They are too brilliant to keep the company of normal people – even most Dhohanoids. Their alien minds play with principles most others cannot grasp.

Physical Changes

Ciraqen are incapable of holding real conversations with normal people. When they move, it's as if they flow instead of walk. They also always seem to be doing two or three things at once, because it's the only way to keep their large brains busy.

Typical Roles

Ciraqen are most often found occupying positions of high-level strategic management, or in scientific and research capacities. Some are also found as arcane researchers or full-blown sorcerers.

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. long)

Attribute Modifications:

Intellect +8
Perception +6

Weapons:

Otherworldly Touch (0) – Simply the touch of a Ciraqen is more than mortal life can bear.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Thermal, X-ray

Movement & Speed: Flying (Triple), Teleportation



DEREBITH

A full description of the Derebith can be found on p. 119 of this book.

Special Abilities

Derebith are plague-bearers. The type of disease they carry is similar in symptoms to a bad case of influenza, though it is never lethal. It cannot be cured by medicine, though the symptoms can be somewhat mitigated with drugs.

Derebith can infect anyone within ten feet. When one chooses to infect, all in the affected area must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Tests each minute or they will begin to exhibit symptoms. The dis-

ease takes full effect within an hour and lasts for up to five days. While affected, a victim suffers -3 to Agility, Strength, and Tenacity, and a -2 to Intellect, Perception, and Presence (with the accompanying reduction in Secondary Attributes). Supernatural beings are immune to this disease (including Taggers). Victims also suffer an additional -2 Test or Contest Penalty to all actions.

Personality

Derebith are only truly satisfied when they are bringing suffering to others. They are cruel and unsympathetic creatures.

Physical Changes

Their mortal forms appear to be the picture of health – perhaps a camouflage for their true natures. However, there is always something cruel in their smiles.

Typical Roles

Derebith are industrial saboteurs and black ops agents.

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +2
Strength +2
Tenacity +2

Weapons:

Bite (+1) – The toothy snout of a Derebith has a wicked bite.

Claws (0) – Sharp claws tip the Dhohanoids fingers.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Smell & Taste, Broadband Audio, Nightvision

Movement & Speed: Jumping (Double)



DUA-SANARAS

A full description of the Dua-Sanaras can be found on p. 212 of the Core Book.

Special Abilities

Dua-Sanaras are fully amphibious and can breathe underwater indefinitely. They can function in the deep cold and intense pressure of the deep ocean, all the way to the bottom of the trenches.

Personality

Dua-Sanari are coldly malicious. They delight most in the pain and suffering of others, never missing a chance to bring darkness to another's life. They are evil for evil's sake and they love it.

Physical Changes

Dua-Sanari are incredibly flexible to the point of being freakishly double-jointed. They also have little or no body hair and men have difficulty growing facial hair.

Typical Roles

Dua-Sanari are one of the most common manifestations of Dhohanoid. As such, they can be found in almost any function.

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +2
Strength +2
Tenacity +2

Weapons:

Beak (+1) – The serrated beak-mouth of the Dhohanoid has a vicious bite.
Tentacles (0) – The many tentacles of a Dua-Sanaras may be used to entangle foes.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Nightvision, Sonar

Movement & Speed: Swim (Double)



ELIB

A full description of the Elib can be found on p. 213 of the Core Book.

Special Abilities

An Elib is capable of swallowing a target whole. If he beats an opponent by more than fifteen points when biting, he has swallowed the unfortunate soul – but only creatures under four feet in size or length. Swallowed victims suffer 4 dice of damage each turn that only supernatural forms of armor can counter, as a powerful digestive system tries to grind him up and reduce him to paste. The only way to save a swallowed victim is to kill the Elib or induce him to vomit – something easier said than done.

Personality

Elib are bloodthirsty and murderous – they know no greater joy than the destruction of life. They are unruly and difficult to control, flying into nearly shark-like killing frenzies when given the chance.

Physical Changes

Elib have powerful legs and a mouth that might seem a little too large. They sport a grin that could only be described as predatory. Their bodies are virtually or completely hairless and males have difficulty cultivating facial hair.

Typical Roles

Elib are rarely used in positions where finesse or discretion is required. They are most often enforcers or security personnel.

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +3
Perception +1
Strength +3
Tenacity +3

Weapons:

Talons (+1) – These sharp talons are retractable.
Leaping Strike (+2) – This vicious attack requires room to leap at an enemy, as well as 2 Actions.
Mouth (+2) – The Elib has an enormous and deadly mouth, and attacking with it requires 2 Actions.
Swallow – as described under Special Abilities.
Tail Swipe (+1) – An Elib can lash out with its fleshy sweeping tail.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 2 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Smell & Taste, Nightvision

Movement & Speed: Jumping (Double)



GELGORE

A full description of the Gelgore can be found on p. 213 of the Core Book.

Special Abilities

A Gelgore's Needle Pod contains an infinite supply of ammunition. However, for every turn a Gelgore fires at an automatic rate of fire he must spend one turn firing only single-shot – up to a maximum of four turns in a row automatic followed by four turns in a row single-shot.

Furthermore, the needles fired by the Gelgore are coated with an organic paralytic poison. This poison requires that the needle do at least one point of Vitality damage to be administered. Anyone affected by the poison must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test to resist. If this Test is failed, the victim loses 2 Actions per turn for one to ten minutes (roll one die) – which can effectively reduce a character's Actions to zero. Only one Test needs to be made per turn struck by the Gelgore's needles and the effect of the needles is not cumulative. A target may again be affected following his recovery from the last dose.

Personality

Gelgore are precise. They think and act quickly, moving and striking with surgical accuracy. As cold-blooded as they look, Gelgore leave their emotions out of their job. They are dispassionately efficient and waste no precious time.

Physical Changes

Gelgore are thin and graceful, though in a deadly kind of way. No matter what their natural eye color may be, there is always just a hint of red in them – enough to unnervingly most people on an unconscious level.

Typical Roles

Gelgore are used in positions where dispassionate efficiency is a benefit. They are often found in accounting, finance, and, ironically enough, human resources. They are also key fire support for black ops teams.

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +2
Perception +4
Tenacity +2

Weapons:

Bite (0) – Their fanged unhinged jaws provide a vicious bite, that is also poisonous (see Special Abilities).
Claws (0) – Thin, sharp talons tip a Gelgore's fingers.
Needle Pods – Range 25/60/170, Damage +2 + Poison, Shots 3 or 4/1-5, Infinite Rounds.

Armor: 0/0

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Smell & Taste, Nightvision, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Sextuple), Flying (Triple)



GROKELL

A full description of the Grokek can be found on p. 120 of this book.

Special Abilities

The screech of a Grokek forces those within 50 feet to make a Fear Test against a Challenging Degree. This is beyond the Fear Test required for simply being in the creature's presence.

Personality

Grokek are hateful creatures, who wish nothing more than to grind every mortal they meet into paste. They delight in the terror of others, preferring to drive prey to madness before delivering a painful and ugly death.

Physical Changes

Grokek burn with a seething hatred. Their eyes appear to be a little too big for their faces. They prefer the night and dim indoor lighting and wear sunglasses to protect them from the glare of bright lights.

Typical Roles

Grokek are rarely used in positions where finesse or discretion is required. They are most often enforcers or security personnel.

Size: Medium (8 to 9 ft. long)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +4
Perception +4
Strength +4

Weapons:

Acidic Spit – Range 10/25/60, Damage +4, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds.
Maw (+3) – The gigantic fanged maw of the Grokek is its primary form of attack.
Screech (Fear) – As described in Special Abilities.
Talons (+2) – Thick, black talons tip a Grokek's feet.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 3 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Hearing, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Sonar, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Flying (Triple)



JJIA-SIN-DUMASH

A full description of the Jjia-Sin-Dumash can be found on p. 120 of this book.

Special Abilities

If a Jjia-sin-dumash does at least one point of damage with its tentacle attack, the tip of said tentacle will break off and worm its way into a victim's body. Within a minute, the victim will be under the Dhohanoid's control. A victim can resist a Jjia-sin-dumash's commands if he can succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test – however, if he fails he must obey all commands for the next hour (including self-harm or suicide). The Dhohanoid can control up to six victims at the same time. The controlling piece of the Jjia-sin-dumash will die off after 24 hours – after which time they may inject again. The controlling piece may not be removed surgically and such efforts will kill the host.

This ability does not work against supernatural creatures (including Tagers), but does affect Humans, Nazzadi, Ghouls, Migou, and anything else classified as mortal.



NAMAROK

A full description of the Namarok can be found on p. 127 of Vade Mecum.

Personality

There is a cold confidence that permeates the attitude of a Jjia-sin-dumash at all times. They tend to be very impatient with people, as they are very used to getting exactly what they want.

Physical Changes

Their skin always seems to be perfectly bronzed, as if they have spent time in a tanning booth.

Typical Roles

Jjia-sin-dumash are always in a position of command. They are also used for negotiation, industrial espionage, and black ops.

Size: Medium (9 to 11 ft. across)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +3
Intellect +2
Perception +2
Presence +2
Strength +2
Tenacity +3

Weapons:

Tentacles (+2) – A Jjia-sin-dumash can attack with any of its tentacles, in any direction. They can be used to entangle.

Tentacle Flurry (+4) – The Dhohanoid lets loose in a maddening flurry of tentacles swipes. This attack uses two Actions.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 3 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Touch, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Sonar, Thermal, X-ray

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple – can scale sheer surfaces)

Personality

Namarok run on instinct more than reason and live by the law of the jungle. However, they are not cold – they are passionate killers and ecstatic defilers. Also, once they get something in their head, they won't stop until it's done.

Physical Changes

Something animalistic taints a Namarok's every movement. They often need to be reminded of social niceties, including personal hygiene.

Typical Roles

Namarok are most often used in operations away from civilization. Within cities, they are muscle – and hunters.

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Perception +2
Strength +4
Tenacity +4

Weapons:

Bite (+1) – The armor-plated mouth of a Namarok yields a terrible bite.

Claws (0) – The fingers of a Namarok are tipped in talons.

Savage (0) – It is very difficult to force a Namarok to release once it has bitten down. This attack may be used to entangle foes.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 2 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Nightvision, Scan

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Double – can cling to sheer surfaces), Jumping (Double), Land (Double, if on all fours)



PATUL

A full description of the Patul can be found on p. 127 of Vade Mecum.

Special Abilities

Patul are fully amphibious and can breathe underwater indefinitely. They can function in the deep cold and intense pressure of the deep ocean, all the way to the bottom of the trenches.

Personality

The alien nature of the deep infects a Patul's being. They are almost impossible to read as people. One never knows if a Patul is going to turn on him simply because it's hungry.

Physical Changes

Patul have unnerving black irises in their eyes. They also have little or no body hair and men have difficulty growing facial hair.

Typical Roles

Patul are often managers of sea-side operations, anything having to do with the water. They are also often security for coastal offices.

Size: Medium (10 to 11 ft. long)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +3
Perception +2
Strength +3
Tenacity +2

Weapons:

Bite (+1) – The sharply-fanged gigantic mouth of the Dhohanoid has a wicked bite.

Locking Bite (+1) – Patul sometimes don't let go of their prey, and their bite may be used to entangle foes.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 2 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Nightvision, Sonar, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Swim (Triple)



RAMACHESE

A full description of the Gelgore can be found on p. 126 of Vade Mecum.

Special Abilities

Shadows unnaturally respond to Ramachese. This gives them a +4 Test Bonus to Stealth Tests involving shadows or darkness. They can consciously dampen this ability to conceal their true natures, but often don't. Their shadows sometimes move of their own volition.

Personality

Sinisterly clever, Ramachese live to create fear. They prefer to revel in a victim's terror (or to attack from surprise). Even in their mortal guises, they intimidate, threaten to great effect. No mortal can ever be comfortable in their presence – there is simply something evil about them.

Physical Changes

Ramachese display enhanced hearing that makes them appear inhuman. They prefer night-time and dim lighting indoors and often complain about uncomfortable glares in brightly lit rooms or sunlight. It isn't unusual to find them wearing sunglasses, even at twilight.

Typical Roles

Ramachese are used in positions where intimidation can be a factor, including negotiations and general management.

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +2
Perception +2
Strength +1
Tenacity +1

Weapons:

Bite (0) – Ramachese can attack with snout of needle-like fangs.

Claws (+1) – Black talons tip a Ramachese's fingers.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Hearing, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Sonar, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Jumping (Quadruple)



THOG-MANNA

A full description of the Thog-Manna can be found on p. 214 of the Core Book.

Special Abilities

Thog-Manna have no solid internal structure; therefore it is nearly impossible to crush them and they can flatten to slip through all but the tiniest of cracks. Furthermore, they maintain a body temperature equal to their surroundings, so they do not register on thermal sensors. This formlessness also allows them to smother opponents. Treat smothering like entangling, except the victim suffers an additional two dice of damage every turn from suffocation (once their last breath runs out). Even in their mortal form, Thog-Manna are shape-shifters and can change their appearance at will. They can appear as just about any living thing from half to twice their size, though their Performance skill dictates how convincing the mimicry will be. However, while they do gain the natural weapons of any creature they impersonate, they do not gain any special abilities. They can also imitate specific individuals, but again their Performance skill is the thing that shows whether or not they pull it off.



VASSIAMON

A full description of the Vassiamon can be found on p. 121 of this book.

Special Abilities

Vassiamon have the mystical ability to know a person's sexual ideal or ideals – all they have to do is be within 50 feet. They can shapeshift into that ideal within 30 seconds, and can assume either gender (though they'll need the appropriate clothes). They receive a +8 Contest Bonus to interpersonal skills – including Misdirect, Persuade, Seduction, and Savoir-Faire – against their intended victim.

Vassiamon do have their own mortal forms, a beautiful and idealized version of their former selves. They receive a +4 Contest Bonus to interpersonal skills in this form against the opposite sex, and a +2 Contest Bonus against the same sex (if target is heterosexual; reverse if homo-, or both if bi-sexual).

Personality

Thog-Manna are malevolent egomaniacs, believing their mutable alien form to be a sign of their superiority over other lifeforms. They don't actually experience anything that could be considered to be mortal emotions. They are supernatural evil and they play their roles to the fullest.

Physical Changes

Thog-Manna are freakishly double-jointed, almost as if they had no bones. When they move, it is better said that they flow from place to place rather than walk. Anyone with any level of empathy can also quickly ascertain that a dead zone exists where Thog-Manna are concerned – recognizable emotions simply do not exist within them.

Typical Roles

Thog-Manna are used for corporate espionage and black ops.

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. across)

Attribute Modifications:

Agility +5
Perception +3
Presence +1
Strength +3
Tenacity +2

Weapons:

Pseudopod (+1) – A Thog-Manna can lash out with any part of its protean body.

Smother (0) – As described in Special Abilities.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 2 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Nightvision, Scan, X-ray

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple – can cling to sheer surfaces), Land (Double)

Personality

Vassiamon live to bring people to their knees. They use their seductive abilities to gain more and more control over other people. In general, they view mortals as nothing more than amusing playthings to be used up and discarded. They play power games and weave extensive webs of manipulation.

Physical Changes

They are always unnaturally beautiful. They draw attention to themselves simply by being. The one thing that gives them away is the predatory way they move.

Typical Roles

Vassiamon are used for negotiation and industrial espionage.

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

Presence +4
Strength +2

Weapons:

Bite (+1) – A Vassiamon's monstrous form has wicked mandibles.

Leg Vise (0) – The creature's legs can lock a victim in a vise-like grip, and can be used to entangle

Talons (0) – Vassiamon have sharp fingertips.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Touch, Nightvision

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple – can cling to sheer surfaces), Jumping (Triple)



VRYKOL

A full description of the Vrykol can be found on p. 214 of the Core Book.

Special Abilities

Vrykols can truly multi-task. They can, with no multiple Action penalty, take one physical and one mental Action at the same time.

Personality

While it might seem that they suffer from some sort of severe attention deficit disorder, Vrykols absorb every detail of their surroundings. The assault of sensory information makes it difficult for Vrykols to assess their own emotions – they seem to act in an instinctual cause-and-effect kind of way.

Physical Changes

Vrykol move rapidly, erratically, and frenetically. Their eyes are always roving and it appears as if they can't pay attention to any one thing for more than a few moments at a time.

Typical Roles

Vrykol are utilized in positions where information processing is critical, and where attention span is not important.

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

- Agility +4
- Perception +4
- Tenacity +2

Weapons:

- Forearm Blades* (+1) – Serrated slashing blades grow from the Vrykols' forearms.
- Mandibles* (+1) – Vrykols can bite with their double mandibles.

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Hearing, Acute Smell & Taste, Acute Touch, Broadband Audio, Nightvision, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Climbing (Triple – can cling to sheer surfaces), Flying (Quadruple)



ZABUTH

A full description of the Zabuth can be found on p. 215 of the Core Book.

Personality

Zabuth are, to put it mildly, arrogant. Anything that they consider weaker than them, which is most everything, they treat cruelly – however, anything that shows its strength and worth gains a grudging respect. They obey their Chrysalis Corporation masters and that's it.

Physical Changes

Zabuth develop tapered, almost pointed ears. While hair on other parts of the body remains unaffected, they have thick, lustrous heads of hair and men can grow bushy, luxurious facial hair.

Typical Roles

Zabuth are found in positions of command, where strength matters.

Size: Medium (9 to 12 ft. tall)

Attribute Modifications:

- Agility +3
- Perception +2
- Presence +1
- Strength +4
- Tenacity +4

Weapons:

- Barbed Claws* (+2) – Thick, barbed claws tip a Zabuth's fingers.
- Maw* (+3) – The massive grinding jaws of a Zabuth are deadly, and require 2 Actions in order to attack.
- Ocular Blast* – Range 25/60/170, Damage +4, Shots 1, Infinite Rounds.
- Spiked Tail* (+2) – This long tail can strike even strike at enemies behind a Zabuth.

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 3 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Senses: Acute Hearing, Nightvision, Sonar, Thermal

Movement & Speed: Normal

THE ARCANES SECRETS OF THE CHILDREN OF CHAOS

The Children of Chaos have many resources at their disposal and it is no wonder that they have a variety of rituals and devices that are theirs and theirs alone. Presented here are several new spells, artifacts, and devices for use with your Children of Chaos game.

RITUALS

There are four important rituals that are secrets possessed only by the Children of Chaos. The first is Bestow the Protean Form, a true shape-shifting ritual. The others are only available to the Circle, including Bind the Silent Tongue, Craft the Labyrinthian Identity (found on p. 31 of *Dark Passions*), and Craft Wasting Orb.

Bestow the Protean Form

Third Order

aka: Shapeshifter

Type: Transmogrification

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 6 Months

Insanity Test: Very Hard/2 Insanity Points

Occult Rating Required: Master

Intellect Required: 9

Tenacity Required: 9

Prep Time: 3 Days

Casting Time: 2 Days

Difficulty: Very Hard

Extended Tests Required: 8

Ruach Cost: 15 + 5 per form

Components & Requirements: at least a 100 foot reasonably undisturbed working space, a bell or wind chimes, candles, piercing needles or a sharp knife, some piece of each of the up to five living things the recipient wishes to transform into, various herbs, various incense, various large harmonic crystals. Also, ritual participants must have fasted for the two days of preparation, must be freshly bathed without perfume or deodorant, and wearing clean natural clothing.

Effects: True shapeshifting is rare to magic. While there are rituals to disguise a person or take another's face, the ability to truly become something else is something that has only been mastered by the Children of Chaos. This ritual allows a recipient to assume up to five other shapes while under the influence of the spell. These shapes must be predetermined and represented in the ritual – they can be anything living and Vitality scale, up to 50% larger or smaller, even a specific person. While under the effects of the spell, the recipient can instantaneously transform into any of these shapes and gains the full abilities of them. If he becomes a N'athm, he can plague the dreams of others. If he becomes a Deep One, he can swim to the depths. The exception to this rule is when it comes to Hounds – anyone assuming their form will promptly be hunted down and slain. It also does not impart sorcerous or para-psychic ability, unless impersonating a person with them. Normally, it is impossible to tell when some-

one is under the effects of this ritual. The only telltale sign is in the aura, which shows magic – many under the influence of this spell wear Wards or carry enchanted objects to mask its effects.

The effects of this ritual last for three days and may be renewed using another ritual that uses all the same components but takes half the time to prepare and cast.

Black Market Price: n/a. The Children of Chaos keep copies of this ritual out of circulation.

Casting Fee: n/a. The Children of Chaos will not perform the ritual for someone outside their ranks.

Component Cost: 1050Tn

Bind the Silent Tongue

Third Order

aka: Hush

Type: Transmogrification

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 6 Months

Insanity Test: Very Hard/2 Insanity Points

Occult Rating Required: Master

Intellect Required: 8

Tenacity Required: 9

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 2 Days

Difficulty: Hard

Extended Tests Required: 8

Ruach Cost: 30

Components & Requirements: at least a 100 foot reasonably undisturbed working space, a bell or wind chimes, candles, piercing needles or a sharp knife, blood from the primary caster, the tongue of a liar, various herbs, various incense, various large harmonic crystals. Also, ritual participants must have fasted for the two days of preparation, must be freshly bathed without perfume or deodorant, and wearing clean natural clothing.

Effects: This spell is used by the Circle to assure that those who know things they should not will not divulge them. It is not always practical to simply eliminate those who know too much, so it is sometimes better to mystically silence them. Once a Circle sorcerer knows that a person is carrying a secret, he can hush that person – either by gesture or by verbal command. That person must then keep that secret or suffer incredible pain and possibly death. A secret can be classified as any one train of related information in the person's head or any one train of related incidents or experiences that the person has witnessed or of which he's been a part. These effects last for one season, though the person affected does not know when they dissipate. It is wise for a sorcerer who uses this spell to keep track where he's used it.

Simply thinking of divulging the secret causes the person to experience dizziness and nausea. The first step of revelation causes shooting pain through his body. Should he actually divulge the secret, he takes eight dice of damage (which cannot be reduced

in any way). This is enough to put most in the hospital, if not in the ground.

The recipient of this spell can utilize its effects for three days. The spell may be renewed using another ritual that uses all the same components but takes half the time to prepare and cast.

Black Market Price: n/a. The Circle keeps copies of this ritual out of circulation.

Casting Fee: n/a. The Circle will not perform the ritual for someone outside their ranks.

Component Cost: 1050Tn

Craft Wasting Orb

Third Order

aka: Spheres of Degeneration

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 6 Months

Insanity Test: Very Hard/2 Insanity Points

Occult Rating Required: Master

Intellect Required: 7

Tenacity Required: 9

Prep Time: 1 Week

Casting Time: 2 Days

Difficulty: Hard

Extended Tests Required: 8

Ruach Cost: 30

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, a wind storm, wind chimes, candles, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, various herbs, various incense, at least one pound of putrefying flesh. The eventual owner must either have made or overseen the daily creation of an orb, which must be entirely fashioned from like materials. If the orb is to be rock, it must be entirely from rock, or if it is to be crystal, it must be entirely crystal, etc. This orb must be from one and a half to three inches in diameter and be, for the most part, spherical. Also, ritual participants must have fasted during the two days of preparation, must be freshly bathed without perfume or deodorant, and wearing clean natural clothing.

Effects: While Woeful Orbs are non-lethal and Weeping Orbs are deadly, Wasting Orbs are painful and terrifying. Somehow the Circle has figured out how to empower the Wasting Orb to infect victims with a mystical wasting disease. This spell enchants a small sphere to be a semi-autonomous lethal weapon. Wasting Orbs are fully capable of flight and float around when activated with speeds up to 45 mph – they can operate up to 100 yards away from their owner. They will respond to threats on their own and are about as smart as dogs, but they will also obey the direct orders of their owner. They are capable of taking one Action per turn, attacking with a bludgeoning +0 damage. Wasting Orbs attack with an Adept Armed Fighting Skill, defend with an Adept Dodge Skill, attacks against them suffer a Test Penalty of -4, and they can take ten points of damage before being destroyed.

Treat them as if they had an Agility and Perception of 7 and an Adept Observation skill.

However, if a Wasting Orb so much as brushes against bare skin, it will infect the victim with a mystical wasting disease – if the victim fails a Hard Tenacity Feat Test. The onset of symptoms is immediate. Within minutes, the victim is weak, overcome with fever, vomiting, and diarrhea. Within hours, the victim begins to lose weight and his hair starts to fall out. By the end of the day, the victim will be a wheezing, emaciated thing that's barely strong enough to whisper and crawl. These effects cannot kill a person but, unless mystically cured by the Purify Form spell, the effects are permanent. If cured, the victim returns to normal within a week.

Wasting Orbs may be bonded to someone besides the primary sorcerer of the ritual, but the person must participate. Wasting Orbs last for one season before they must be replenished by the use of this ritual again.

Black Market Price: n/a. The Circle keeps copies of this ritual out of circulation.

Casting Fee: n/a. The Circle will not perform the ritual for someone outside their ranks.

Component Cost: 1050Tn + orb

ARTIFACTS

The Children of Chaos have been searching the planet for items of mystical power and significance for hundreds of years. They have come across many such important items, but a special few deserve mention here. These artifacts are those that give the cult a global edge.

THE KARYTYK CRYSTAL

Not all of the artifacts in the possession of the Children of Chaos were found on Earth. As Darchir Logistics was building the Hermes Project and helping humanity spread out into the solar system, they found things they didn't share with the New Earth Government. One such thing was what is now known as the Karytyk Crystal, found in what appeared to be ancient ruins on the moon of Jupiter named Callisto. The Chrysalis Corporation laid claim to such an area, excavated it, and left nothing for the colonists and explorers that would eventually make their way out into this part of the galaxy.

The Karytyk Crystal isn't so much a crystal as a device of predominately crystalline technology. It is about the size of a suitcase, with areas where communications data is taken into the machine and a surface on which it is broadcast. T99 Division researchers have never been able to figure out how it functions, but it does, seemingly drawing energy from the environment around it. However, its function is plain – it is a techno-mystical translator.

It has taken some time for the Chrysalis Corporation to get the Karytyk Crystal to work and it still doesn't work all the time. If it had been in operation decades ago, the translation of the *Ta'ge*

Fragments would have been a breeze. These days, the Chrysalis Corporation uses the Crystal to decode Migou transmissions, so that they can protect their assets and make effective incursions into Migou territory. It is the only thing on Earth capable of understanding the alien insects and it would make all the difference in the world to the New Earth Government. However, the Chrysalis Corporation has no intention of sharing such intelligence.

THE NEXUS OF ALMAZOARA

Found in secret catacombs beneath Paris, the Nexus of Almazoara is an item believed to belong to a legendary sorcerer of the middle-ages named Loic Bontecou. It is unknown where Bontecou found such an object, but he most certainly did not have the power to create it. There are some who believe that the Nexus is an artifact of the Great Race, buried somewhere in the southern hemisphere from prehistoric times.

The Nexus of Almazoara appears to be a complicated clockwork device that one lays over a traditional map. The Nexus animates and rolls over the map, its crystal eye searching for something very specific – upcoming locations of natural disasters. When it finds one, an image of the disaster and its severity manifests in the crystal. It also projects a constellation to determine the approximate time of said disaster.

Now in the hands of the Chrysalis Corporation and currently safely kept in Johannesburg, the cult uses the Nexus to make certain that their operations and holdings are always protected. They also use it to capitalize on such disasters, seizing assets and also mounting effective relief efforts that mobilize long before anyone else's can. This latter function helps paint a beautiful public relation face on the Chrysalis Corporation and its subsidiaries.

T99 INVENTIONS

The infamous T99 Division has created several exciting devices for use in the field, many of them to support Dhohanoid agents or in the capture or defeat of Tagers. Each of them is a scientific or mystical wonder (or both) in and of itself. Presented here are a few of them.

DRG-B08 BOOM GUN

The Dhohanoid Rail Gun, Build 08, is an unsubtle weapon created for use against Tagers. It is so large and powerful that it cannot be used by creatures with a Strength less than 12 (limiting its use to mainly Grokell and Zabuth), and has been nicknamed the Boom Gun by agents in the field. It is essentially a Dhohanoid-portable cannon, whose projectiles are covered with an advanced caustic chemical that prevents regeneration for a few seconds.

The Boom Gun is a 40 mm rail gun with a range of 105/530/1030, that does +4 Damage. It can fire only once per turn, but carries 50 rounds. The caustic chemical prevents regeneration for up to fifty seconds (one die in turns). The Boom Gun is available to no one outside the Chrysalis Corporation and they are equipped with a small charge to destroy them, if necessary.

If anyone smaller or weaker attempts to fire the Boom Gun, there is a better than average chance he will severely hurt himself. For every two points of Strength under twelve, the user takes one die of damage that cannot be reduced by armor.

ETHERWAVE COMMUNICATOR

Astoundingly, the T99 Division has created a device that will allow agents to communicate with each other using a limited form of telepathy. The etherwave communicator is a small device about the size of a button, with spiked filaments on one side. The spikes are inserted at the base of the skull, into the spinal column, where nanofibers weave up into the brain. In essence, it allows those with attuned etherwave communicators to send and receive soundless mental communications as long as they are within a mile of each other.

Only elite Dhohanoid teams are allowed to use the expensive etherwave communicators, as they are difficult to mass produce and something the company wants to keep quiet.

INHIBEX

One of the things that the New Earth Government has asked of the Chrysalis Corporation, through its subsidiary the Vantage Group, is to create a drug that can be used to temporarily weaken a para-psychic so that his abilities are not so strong. Any version of such drugs that the Chrysalis Corporation have provided are weak at best – because they have been saving the best for themselves.

Inhibex, whose chemical name is long and complex, is an advanced para-psychic nullifier drug. When introduced into the bloodstream of a para-psychic, Inhibex locates and blocks the parts of the brain associated with para-psychic abilities. Combined with sedatives, Inhibex can reduce a para-psychic to nearly mortal levels within moments and keep him there for days. The problem is that long-term use leads to brain death in the para-psychic in question.

Once Inhibex has been introduced into a para-psychic's system, through a dart gun, injection, and the like, his abilities are all reduced to the Student level (if Adept or above), or nullified completely (if Novice or less). He can attempt to fight the drug to gain one turn of normal use, but must succeed at a Very Hard Tenacity Feat Test for each such attempt. On the fourth day, the para-psychic's body revolts, causing ten dice worth of damage (which cannot be reduced by armor or the like). The para-psychic can reduce the damage by half if he succeeds at a Very Hard Tenacity Feat Test.

OCULAR IMAGER

This device looks much like a normal set of binoculars. However, it is used to capture the last several minutes of visual information stored in a person's brain. When placed over the eyes of a living being, the nanofibers shoot into the person's eye sockets, weave themselves into the optic nerves, and weave their way into the brain where visual information is stored. It then can record up to the last two minutes of everything the person has seen. It

can also be used to glean the last few images out of the mind of the recently deceased. About the last five seconds of a person's last visual experiences can be retrieved from a corpse that is less than 24 hours old.

The ocular imager is not always reliable and sometimes the information gets noisy or garbled.

THI-B13

Tagers, even in their mortal forms, are notoriously resilient. It has proven difficult to use non-lethal force against them, as they most often shrug such efforts off with ease. The Tager Host Incapacitator, Build 13, is an answer to this problem. It is a stun gun capable of felling an elephant, or a Tager, rendering him stunned and/or unconscious, all in a compact package that uses a revolutionary power converter.

The THI-B13 fires darts like a standard taser, with a range of 5/10/15. It can be fired once per turn, but carries enough charges for five uses. Treat as if the weapon had a Damage of +2 to determine if its attack penetrates armor, though it does no real damage. An attack must do at least one point of Vitality damage to cause harm. Any Tager, or other supernatural creature, affected by the THI-B13 must succeed at a Very Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist being stunned. If this Test is failed, the victim loses 2 Actions per turn for one to ten minutes (roll one die), which can effectively reduce a character's Actions to zero. If the Tager fails to succeed at at least a Challenging degree, he is instead knocked unconscious for one to ten minutes (roll one die). Only one Test needs to be made per turn struck by the weapon and the effect of the stun is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last shock. However, the advanced shock is lethal to mortals – treat the weapon as if it did +2 Damage and determine damage normally.

The THI-B13 is available to no one outside the Chrysalis Corporation.

TRANS-STATE INHIBITING SPIKE

Built off similar technology to that of the trans-state nullifier, the trans-state inhibiting spike helps solve another large problem with the non-lethal capture of Tagers – how to keep them from shifting the minute they gain something resembling consciousness. However, it also does the same to Dhohanoids.

The device is about the size of a dagger and very sharp. When the trans-state inhibiting spike pierces the flesh of a Tager in mortal form, it creates a mystical interference field that prevents the Tager from taking on his monstrous form. It will prevent such transformation as long as it pierces the Tager's flesh – its effects immediately abate when it is removed. Thus, the device is impractical for common use, but of great utility when combined with something like the THI-B13.

Trans-state inhibiting spikes are still new technology and fail 10% of the time for no reason at all. Fortunately, the device has an indicator that tells a user whether or not it is working.

TRANS-STATE NULLIFIER

One of the biggest problems the Chrysalis Corporation faces in the Shadow War is that Tagers have the innate ability to detect Dhohanoids, given a little time to observe. This has made it all but impossible to get close to Tagers, so that essential intelligence can be gathered and critical operations against the Eldritch Society can be executed. The trans-state nullifier has changed that.

About the size of a pen, the trans-state nullifier throws out an interference field that conceals a Dhohanoid's nature from prying Tager eyes. It makes it so that a Tager's innate ability to sense Dhohanoids is confused, reading the mystical shapechanger as nothing special. Of course, the Dhohanoid in question is detectable in all the usual physical ways.

The trans-state nullifier is difficult to build and easy to break. Not just any Dhohanoid is allowed to carry one. The Chrysalis Corporation restricts them for use by Thog-Manna on important missions, only allowing other Dhohanoids use of the coveted devices if absolutely necessary.

CIRCLE DEVICES

The Chrysalis Corporation is not alone with their toys. The Circle, though they prefer to utilize mystical power, have poached several former T99 researchers for themselves through the years. As such, they have a few devices that are solely their domain.

ALL-ACCESS CHARM (AAC)

An arcanotech item that is more arcane than tech, the all-access charm circumvents all mundane forms of locks. This means that members of the Circle can get through any door or open any locked item in an instant. This includes all forms of mundane locking mechanisms, including hard bolts and keys, digital keycodes, cardkeys, digital biometrics, and the like. The AAC does not, however, prevent proximity or trip alarms from going off – it only provides instant access.

FLARE TRIMMINGS

Though the sorcerers and para-psychics of the Circle are powerful, they are not always designed to engage in combat with some of the more dangerous things that dwell in the Strange Aeon. To that end, they have created what are referred to as flare trimmings – personal accessories designed to blind opponents. They manifest as watches, jewelry, pins, and the like, and can be anything with either a glass face or a jewel. When activated, they emit a mystical blinding light that blinds all who are close, though the person who activated it is immune.

Anyone exposed to this flash must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or be blinded for the next one to ten turns (roll one die). This Test becomes Very Hard if the target is wearing technological nightvision enhancements. Anyone blinded must use the rules for Blindfighting while affected. The effects of flare fittings are not cumulative and a target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last blast.

STORYGUIDING THE CHILDREN OF CHAOS

Portraying the bad guys always has its allure. Even if you're new to *CthulhuTech*, playing Characters that are part of the Chrysalis Corporation, especially Dhohanoids, can seem pretty cool. However, such games go to dark places, so you have to ask yourself if you and your players are the kind of people that can handle being this kind of bad guy. The Children of Chaos aren't the 'tie the girl to the railroad tracks and laugh evilly' kind of villains. They are much, much worse.

If you're ready to tackle such a foray down the dark end of the street, then here are some things to keep in mind, along with a few things to help you out.

PORTRAYING DHOHANOIDS

Dhohanoids present an interesting type of Character to portray. They are people who have willingly given up their mortality to become monsters to better serve horrific deities that they believe will one day soon rule the Earth. Think about where you are now. How far would you have to go, psychologically speaking, to hit a point where such a thing would occur to you as a good idea? That's the type of people that Dhohanoids are, and they should be portrayed as such.

Furthermore, Dhohanoids are not just people that can shape-shift into monsters. They are people who have undergone a torturous mystical rite to permanently give up their mortality. They are now monsters, inside and out. The old shape they wear, their mortal form, is just a disguise. The monster is always underneath, waiting to get out. There are no more mortal urges left – feel free to remind your players when they forget.

Even without the predatory urges many feel, nearly all Dhohanoids want little to do with mortals. They simply have nothing in common anymore. The only ones they respect are those that are cultists in some capacity or those who are potential future Dhohanoids. All others are just fodder that will be cruelly toyed with and extinguished when the Old Ones return. This includes former friends, family, and anyone the Dhohanoid was once close to in his mortal life. They are permanently dissociated.

TYPES OF GAMES

As with everything in *CthulhuTech*, there are several different ways in which you can play Children of Chaos games. However, most Children of Chaos stories are going to revolve around the Chrysalis Corporation and most Characters are going to be Dhohanoids. Those that aren't should at least be sorcerers or para-psychics.

CORPORATE ESPIONAGE

One of the primary strengths of the Chrysalis Corporation is their vast resources. Naturally, the cult wants to maintain their position of financial superiority and that takes something. Corporate espionage is the answer. Such activities can be everything from blackmailing or assassinating key employees or executives, to infiltrating and stealing newly developed technology or processes, to sabotaging shipments or product launches, and more.

Characters who are part of corporate espionage teams participate in all these types of activities and more. If you want to feel the dirty pool aspect of the Chrysalis Corporation in a more mundane-style setting, this is the type of game to play. Dhohanoids are likely to have a clear advantage in this kind of game.

SECURITY

The Chrysalis Corporation has much it needs to keep safe. Mundane corporate security is best left for the ruck and run. Dhohanoids have much more delicate and exciting duties. They are charged with keeping all of the illegal operations of the Corporation safe from outside prying or influence. They are also charged with many of the more violent activities of the cult, including the assassination of those who threaten to expose the Children of Chaos.

Another such duty includes dealing with the Tager problem. There are those teams who are specially trained to deal with Tagers, wherever they may strike. Others are trained to go out and actively hunt Tagers – they are widely regarded as the equivalent of extreme sports enthusiasts by the rest of the Dhohanoid population.

Regardless, Characters involved in these types of games see a lot of action, and action is the primary thrust.

T99 DIVISION

Some groups of players are interested in a more intellectual style of game. The T99 Division researches all kinds of things, mundane and mystical. They are the primary providers of advancement to the Children of Chaos and are given wide berth.

This is the type of game to play if your players want to get into the lost and the forbidden. Knowledge that is unavailable (or unwanted) by the majority is the bread and butter of T99. They can be those who set up and conduct unwholesome experiments or those who mess with dangerous dark magic. T99 is a place of unfettered experimentation.

HUNTING LOST THINGS

One of the primary focuses of the Children of Chaos is to find lost mystical power. There are many things – creatures, places, artifacts, books – that have fallen out of the mortal world, but that are possessed of incredible power. There are many teams within the Chrysalis Corporation whose job it is to hunt down such things, no matter where in the world they are found.

This type of game can provide a broad variety, especially in terms of location. One story might take such Characters to Greece, while another might take them behind enemy lines in Asia or Alaska. Characters can go all over the world, searching for any variety of interesting, dark, and/or messed up things.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The ultimate purpose of the Children of Chaos is to bring about the return of the Old Ones. To that end, the Chrysalis Corporation has many projects afoot. The Ruined King Project was one

such initiative, that brought an avatar of Hastur into being on the Plateau of Leng. Characters could easily be part of one of the projects designed to find lost pieces of the puzzle to bring Gurathnaka more fully into this world, to find a way to salvage the operation to bring Shub-Niggurath forth, or to help the Esoteric Order of Dagon on their path.

THEMES

Needless to say, the thematics of a Children of Chaos story are going to be different than those of a more conventional game. The themes presented here provide a better view of such games, whether they be centered around mortal or Dhohanoid Characters.

Note: You may recognize some of these themes from *Dark Passions*. All cult games share some things in common.

NON-HEROES, AKA VILLAINS

Characters who are part of the Children of Chaos are cultists and they are the bad guys. They aren't even anti-heroes. They are the creeps perpetuating some pretty dark and inhuman business. They aren't just hooded cultists who run around in the shadows intoning over-used incantations to the Old Ones. They have given over their soul to something that we would most commonly know as evil and they are agents of it.

Never let your players forget this. If they've chosen to play this kind of game, feel free to make them regularly wonder if they've gone too far.

SICKNESS OF THE SOUL

The Children of Chaos have gone beyond the pale. They no longer have a normal sense of right and wrong. Most are fully-functioning lunatics. What they think is fun and good and proper in the world is typically a far cry from what any sane person would believe.

Children of Chaos Characters may be capable of masking this sort of thing for short periods of time, but they can't hide it from anyone with whom they are intimate. They should keep to relationships within the cult or in related walks of life.

ABOVE THE LAW

Children of Chaos Characters are on the wrong side of the law. Most of the activities they are up to are illegal, the cult of which they are a part is illegal, some dabble in illegal magic, and others are full-blown monstrosities that the government would happily hunt down. The police, the Sectarian Crimes Division of the Federal Security Bureau, and the Office of Internal Security are just three of the law enforcement agencies that the Children of Chaos must guard against.

However, there is a far more potent flip side. The Chrysalis Corporation wields an enormous amount of temporal power. Authorities are bribed or blackmailed. Sometimes simply position keeps cultists free of legal examination. Witnesses or squealers are assassinated. The cult uses the system against itself when

it can, and uses its enormous dark power when it needs to. In many ways, the Children of Chaos are above the law.

WORSHIP OF THE ENDLESS

A cult is a faith, though radical. A cultist, especially in the Strange Aeon, is a religious fanatic. The Children of Chaos have ideals, holy beliefs, rituals, and dogma. It permeates everything in their lives, all the time.

Children of Chaos Characters have lost themselves to greed and their worship of Nyarlathotep. They have given up their lives, their families, and their friends to worship the Endless One – even if it regards them only as tools. They surround themselves with others like them and keep themselves in an environment that caters to their beliefs.

Inside the Chrysalis Corporation, it is unlikely there will be a time your players will forget this. It permeates everything, especially if one is a Dhohanoid.

BRAINWASHING

At some stage, most initiates into the Children of Chaos have undergone some form of brainwashing to reinforce the cult's radical beliefs. Your Characters, whether they like it or not, have most likely been victims of it. Therefore, if they are still mortal, they are not going to have moments of lucidity where they wonder if what they're doing is wrong or not. That's what deprogrammers are for. They also do not get to choose which of the cult's dogma they believe and adhere to and which they do not – they've already swallowed it hook, line, and sinker.

INHUMANITY

Most Children of Chaos Characters are going to be Dhohanoids – after all, becoming such a being is the most desirable thing in the cult. However, Dhohanoids aren't just people that get to become horrific beasts. They are horrific beasts that remember how to look like people. They are forever divorced from the world around them. Everything that may have once mattered to them is now gone and they have no memory of why such things may have been important. Their old life is dead and their new life is on a whole other level.

ANCIENT ENEMIES

The Children of Chaos might have their ducks in a row when it comes to most of the heinous activity, but they are not getting away scot free. The threat of the Eldritch Society is ever-present. Though the Children of Chaos are technically winning the Shadow War, no one wants to be the agents carved up by investigating Taggers – creatures, it seems, mystically designed to be Dhohanoid-killers. Taggers are often capable of taking out Dhohanoids three-to-one or more, odds no one in the Children of Chaos likes.

Your Characters should never get cocky, for all it takes is one visit from the Eldritch Society and the hunters become the hunted. Despite the bravado, most Dhohanoids are scared of Taggers, at least on the inside.

THE END OF A PROMISING CAREER

This is a ready-to-run story designed for you to use to get a Chrysalis Corporation game on its feet.

BACKGROUND

One of the largest telecommunications companies in North America is Mercury Communications. Mercury, as it turns out, is a very successful 225 billion terranote subsidiary of the Chrysalis Corporation. The Chrysalis Board of Directors would certainly view anyone chosen to take the helm of this massive corporate ship as someone held in high regard. So is the case with Mercury CEO Jason Ludlow. Mr. Ludlow has been the product of careful grooming by his superiors, placed on the fast-track of lofty promotions and luxurious benefits. What most people don't know is that, aside from being a wealthy corporate executive, Mr. Ludlow is also a dedicated servant of ancient and monstrous forces – he is a Dhohanoid.

Mercury Communications has enjoyed considerable commercial success under Jason Ludlow's reign. Along with the company's business achievements, he has positioned Mercury as a major contributor to humanitarian projects and charity organizations, thus nurturing considerable political clout in Chicago. What the Chrysalis Corporation invested in Ludlow has thus far has paid off substantially. That is until recently.

Accusations of corruption began to surface from unidentified sources. Word slipped to the press that Mercury terranotes were being used to traffic Chinese refugees to camps where family members were being involuntarily separated and forced into hard labor under barbaric conditions. Though Mercury Communications denied the accusations and claimed zero involvement with the movement of any such refugees, Ludlow's name continued to surface under dubious light within the public eye. The whole situation finally bubbled to a boiling point when a Tager pack interceded to investigate the claims of abuse and corruption. Their involvement ended in a skirmish near Ludlow's Bay Area home. Many of Ludlow's Dhohanoid bodyguards were killed, but Ludlow himself got away. Chrysalis Corporation publicists and spin-doctors labeled the incident a terrorist attack, hoping to garner public support under the image that Ludlow was in fact a victim of an elaborate terror plot. However, Ludlow's image was too tarnished to sway public opinion and the overall scope of his actual usefulness has been called into question by his superiors.

Somewhere deep within a secret chamber in Johannesburg, alien eyes began to view the situation with keen interest. The plot weavers and string-pullers of an ancient cult knew that Ludlow's usefulness had just about come to an end. A plan was soon devised to take advantage of Ludlow's misfortune and perhaps at the same time strike a blow against the hated Eldritch Society. It was realized that public opinion and outrage could be just as effective a weapon against one's foe as a hit squad of Dhohanoid soldiers. The plan would mean sacrificing he who had, until recently, been the next rising star among the Children of Chaos. However, it was realized that such sacrifices are often necessary in war and it was Ludlow's failures to contain his op-

eration properly that led to these current circumstances. So now the Children of Chaos have dispatched a new team of Dhohanoids to protect Ludlow as his bodyguards. The only difference was that this new team would be given a new and far more devious agenda.

ACT I: MEETING

Goals: Meet with Jason Ludlow at his corporate office in San Francisco, get a background on the situation with the company, receive orders to infiltrate the San Francisco Chronicle building.

Setting: High-end office building of Mercury Communications in San Francisco.

The Dhohanoid team arrives at the Mercury Communications Headquarters Building in San Francisco for a scheduled meeting with Jason Ludlow. The building sits on the uppermost floor of the San Francisco arcology and affords a spectacular view of the Bay from a large panoramic balcony. It's rare that any internal structure be granted access to an arcology's outer surface. It is clear that Mercury Communications pays a premium for the privilege of this headquarters' real estate.

The room that adjoins the rather impressive external balcony is a large executive conference room resplendent with the best in comforts, style, and electronic meeting devices. Plush leather chairs surround a large coffin-shaped wooden conference table. Built-in holoprojectors make computer-generated meeting material easy to access and view. This is where the team is led to by an assistant, to meet with Ludlow. The man himself soon shows up alone.

He introduces himself graciously enough, but there is a definite sense of reserve and unease in his manner. He eyes each member of the team carefully as he asks for their referral documents. One of the team members will have the appropriate letters of introduction adorned with an official Chrysalis Corporation logo contained within his peek. Taking a moment to beam the document to the office mainframe will allow Ludlow to view the document from a secure terminal. He seems to visibly relax when he reads the letter. He explains to the team that he has been a bit jittery since the recent attempt on his life. Caution has now become the order of the day. He expresses a kind of half-hearted appreciation to the team for showing up and being willing to take on this assignment. However, there is a little item of urgency that needs to be taken care of immediately.

Ludlow explains that the Corporation has enjoyed a certain amount of financial success from the utilization of cheap labor provided by Chinese refugees. Though the living conditions aren't the best, he is certainly quick to justify that their lot is far better now than it would have been if they had stayed in China. Besides that, the company needs to be able to recoup as much of their financial loss as possible for terranotes donated to the refugee effort. Inhuman justifications for the mistreatment of these refugees seem to roll off easily from the tongue of a man in

Ludlow's position. Unfortunately certain outside human rights groups have objected violently to these arrangements and it is suspected that the Eldritch Society might be behind the upheaval, especially after the recent Tager attack that was responsible for destroying Ludlow's former team of bodyguards.

Even though the majority of the dirt thrown at the company over the Chinese refugee issues has been opinion and hearsay, Ludlow mentions that the San Francisco Chronicle has uncovered evidence that could potentially be damning. Inside sources have revealed the presence of certain videos and related documents that, if they were to fall into government hands, could not only damage the company severely but lead to an investigation of senior executives. This cannot be allowed to happen. Fortunately a copy of those files has been retrieved, thanks to that inside source. However, there is still the threat of multiple copies stored in an unknown number of locations. So the elite company hackers have devised a computer virus that will seek out and corrupt all copies of the file in question. The only drawback is that this virus needs to be inserted directly into the Chronicle's computer mainframe.

The team is directed to infiltrate the San Francisco Chronicle building, find the main server room, inject the virus, and get out undetected. This will be a night mission that will require Stealth, Security, and Computer skill competency to bypass security measures and identify the correct location to administer the virus. The team is naturally advised to use absolute secrecy. There are to be no witnesses and no records whatsoever of their presence. If killing is required, then the team is to make sure that it is clean and that the remains can be easily cleaned up. Ludlow stresses that the company is in enough hot water already and cautions the team against creating any more issues. It is essential that this mission be executed with flawless precision. He also states, with a certain amount of arrogance, that this will also be a great opportunity for the team to prove their worth to their new employer.

ACT II: NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

Goals: Break into the San Francisco Chronicle building, administer the virus, set the bait, get out of the building undetected.

Setting: San Francisco Chronicle building – Mission Street, 2nd level, San Francisco Arcology.

It's late afternoon by the time the characters leave the Mercury building. Ludlow advises that the Team take what time they need to get situated before hitting the Chronicle building that evening. He provides security access to his upscale home located on Marina Boulevard. Accommodations have been provided in a guest wing of Ludlow's estate, so he suggests that the team get settled there before going out that evening. The man has clearly spared no expense and the accommodations are more than adequate. What Ludlow doesn't know is that the team is under strict orders to contact someone known as Gideon once Ludlow's instructions are revealed. A secure communications chan-

nel with an authorization code was provided to contact Gideon from a peek at the first possible opportunity.


Gideon is soft-spoken, emotionless, and humorless. However, there is something seriously deadly about his way of being. He'll ask for details of the conversation and the team's assigned mission. He will also ask for specifics about Ludlow's behavior. Once he seems satisfied, he will instruct the team to lay low until he contacts them with instructions in approximately two hours. The Characters are, of course, free to do whatever they want in the intervening time. When Gideon returns his call, he will provide the next steps.

The team is to proceed as directed by Ludlow, with one added detail. A story has been fabricated and downloaded to a peek belonging to one of the Characters. It is a fictitious news story describing Jason Ludlow's sudden and insatiable interest in arcane relics. According to the story, Ludlow has begun to withdraw under severe public pressure. People close to Ludlow have noted a marked increase in agitated and nervous behavior. His new fascination with sorcery seems nothing short of bizarre to most people who know him. His latest acquisition to his collection of relics seems to have also startled several people familiar with such matters. According to an unnamed source within Ludlow's entourage, the most recent piece added to his list of old artifacts is the Jade Cup of Jiangnan. A somewhat obscure ancient Chinese legend states that the proper use of this cup, when filled with the blood of a victim, will allow a sorcerer to consume his soul, and therefore his power. Most modern arcane experts believe this to be an old wives tale. Nevertheless, it hasn't stopped Ludlow from assembling groups of sorcerers at his home in San Francisco.

The purpose of the story is, of course, to imply that Ludlow is out of control and playing with supernatural fire. Inside of the current wave of negative public opinion, it shouldn't be very difficult for the story to further fan rumors about Ludlow – creating a smoke screen between what is real and what is not. By adding further drama and intrigue around Ludlow's name, the Eldritch Society should be pushed into further action. Once the team injects the file-killing virus, they are to add the false story to the next day's Chronicle addition. The bait will be hooked and the trap will be set. Once the team completes their mission, they are to contact Gideon before returning to Ludlow.

The Chronicle Building

Though the San Francisco Chronicle Building is protected by a reasonable security system, it's certainly not the best in the world. Main door access is accomplished with a card reader system – a radio frequency signal is emitted from the security card to a local receiver that contains employee and access authorization data. In addition, security cameras cover all the major entrances on the first floor. The glass doors are shatterproof and only an excessive level of force will break through the barrier. The use of such force will most certainly draw the attention of after-hours security guards. The best option for infiltrating the main entrances would be to obtain a key card from an employee.



Upper floor windows can be broken into easily enough, but a shattered pane would certainly leave evidence of an intrusion. Another option is roof access. If the Characters can somehow traverse the space between a neighboring building to the roof of the Chronicle building, then breaking through the roof door shouldn't present much of a problem. The major challenges within the building will include avoiding the security cameras, roving guards, and janitorial staff. Stealth is the key here. The situation might seem simple at the moment, but any major disturbance would cause an emergency call to local police and the untimely intervention of powered armor units.

The interior is pretty standard for an office building – cube farms, break rooms, offices, conference rooms, and the like. A portion of the first floor has been dedicated to a relatively small printing operation for the minority who still prefer to see their news in solid form. However the heart of the operation resides on the second floor, where the media room is located. Here is where holographic projectors display updated news events from around the world. Terminal stations allow for reporters to directly update blogs and to submit stories into the editors queue for online publishing. A central server stores the submitted stories while they await approval prior to layout. Editor access provides the necessary means to include other media formats such as video, audio, and images to the story. Editors are equipped with the highest level of access to the system outside of administrators. Gaining editor or administrator access will be the team's goal to accomplish their mission.

Finding the media room will not be difficult. There are directories located at the elevator entrances of each floor. Accessing the media room will be another matter. There are two entrance doors to the room, both main and back. Security cameras and another secure key card receiver also cover both doors. There is a fifty percent chance that the team would have acquired a key card to access the building that would also access the room. If the team does not have the proper card, then they do have the option of taking the card from the security officer posted at the front door of the media room. However they choose to deal with the guard, they'll need to make sure that the actions they take are done so off camera and that the body be disposed of cleanly in the event of extreme measures.

It is now only a matter of getting into the server mainframe once the media room is accessed. The mainframe is located in another secure room behind a heavily reinforced door. The door would be almost impossible to break down. There is a holographic keypad to the right of the door. Success at an Incredibly Hard Computer Test will allow a hacker on the team to break the code and access the room. Otherwise, another option would be entering the office that says "IT Administrator" on the door. Cracking the computer inside of that room only requires success at a Challenging Computer Test. This IT Administrator is particularly sloppy with his security precautions, keeping a spreadsheet of current passwords for the entire system on his computer. The team can easily locate the passcode for the mainframe room – 947659. The admin password for the mainframe is also listed as

"rickastley1." There is no accounting for some people's tastes in classic pop.

Entering the mainframe room is simple enough now. The entire system can be accessed through a main terminal inside. The virus, once loaded into the system, will begin to hunt down and corrupt each copy of the target file within the local network. The whole system will be purged of evidence within moments, with the only evidence of tampering leading back to the log-on of the System Administrator. The team will also find a folder titled "Morning Edition." Here they will discover a pre-release version of local news. Success at an Average Computer Test will allow one of the Characters to insert the false story about Ludlow for release the next morning. With both missions accomplished it will be time to leave, hopefully without detection. Discretion is vital in that causing the authorities to be called in at this point will also initiate an investigation that could stop the morning story from going out on time.

The Characters can now attempt a Challenging Observation Test. Success will mean that the character gets this strange tickling sensation, like they are being watched. There is no immediate evidence as to by what, or even if the feeling is based on anything real. However, the nagging sensation remains and will continue to pop up as the team makes their way out of the building. The Characters can attempt another Challenging Observation Test to finally see what's been watching them. Perched high atop another building adjacent to that of the Chronicle is a Whisper, watching intently. The team can deal with that in any way that they want. If they choose to pursue the Tager, it will likely get away by taking flight. If they manage to somehow corner the Whisper, then a pack of Tagers will soon show up and the fight will be on. The Tagers are only on a scouting mission, so they will be at a disadvantage in terms of numbers. Thus, the fight should be weighted in favor of the Dhohanoid Team.

Surveillance Equipment

Gideon will congratulate the team for completing the mission successfully once he is contacted. He will stress that they move on to the next stage of the plan as quickly as possible. Telling him about the Tager will add to the sense of urgency, though he'll seem somewhat pleased with the added Tager involvement, as long as the overall mission wasn't compromised. He'll direct the team to a public storage facility on Market Street, unit 24B. He provides the code for the lock, which is 248134. There they will find a box filled with remote surveillance equipment – wireless hidden cameras, a wireless hub, and a remote telephony device to provide wireless video streaming to an outside receiver.

Gideon explains that Ludlow will be called out tomorrow afternoon for a very important but impromptu meeting. That will be the time to set up the cameras and wireless network inside of his home. The team will need to work quickly and avoid suspicion from the household staff. If all goes to plan, the house should be properly bugged once Ludlow returns. Then it will simply be a matter of waiting to see if and when the Eldritch Society will choose to strike.

ACT 3: BETRAYAL

Goals: Wait for the Tager attack, deal with Ludlow, escape the battle in the estate.

Setting: The posh Ludlow Estate on Marina Boulevard – San Francisco Arcology.

Ludlow is very pleased the following morning when he receives news of the team's success. That is until he reads the morning edition of the San Francisco Chronicle. The effect of being bombed by the unsubstantiated lies within the planted story will be considerable. Ludlow will lose his temper and violently break things in his home. The tantrum will not last long, however, and he will soon demand that the team hunt down whoever started these rumors and eliminate them permanently. He'll also mutter a few pointed expletives about "those damn Society scum!" His tirade will eventually simmer once his personal assistant, Sarah Myers, enters the room. She will seem very cool, even in the face of Ludlow's recent explosion. Perhaps she has grown accustomed to these kinds of antics as her reaction is almost non-existent – only a slight flash in her gaze. She will inform Ludlow that the Board of Directors has called him in for an emergency meeting. Ludlow will be, of course, visibly upset but he will do his best to pull himself together. His unpleasantness will tinge his demand that the team get to work immediately while he is away. Gideon's maneuver is successful.

Ludlow leaves sometime around mid-morning. It will take about three hours to set up the cameras. The Characters will have to choose where best to position them so that they cover as much of the estate as possible and yet remain undetected. Gideon's plan is to capture as much evidence of a Tager attack as possible and transfer the video via a wireless link to a remote location. A skilled video editor could certainly create a convincing video account of alien Tagers assaulting the home of a well-known businessman – a perfect propaganda tool to turn the public and the government against the hated Eldritch Society turncoats. In addition to the false story, Gideon has been pulling certain other strings to coax a Tager assault on Ludlow's home. All that will be left for the Dhohanoid team to do is to break away once the mayhem starts and let things fall where they may. Of course, not everything goes according to plan.

Ludlow returns later that evening – somewhat later than would have been expected. He's no longer angry, just very cold – deadly cold. He gathers the team together to meet in one of the larger rooms of his estate. It is there that he confronts them and he seems very self-assured in doing so. There is biting venom in his voice as he accuses them all of their betrayal. It was the strange story run in the morning edition of the Chronicle that made him suspicious. It was after he left the supposed emergency meeting that turned out to be not much of an emergency after all that he started to smell a rat. Ludlow might have gotten himself into trouble in the past, but he is no fool – and he has allies. He made a few inquiries with inside contacts this afternoon and, though he doesn't know the details, he certainly has an idea of

what's going on. He's been marked as expendable and the team has been sent to set him up. So, he's made a few preparations of his own.

The dialog between Ludlow and the Characters will occur as it will. However, at some point, during the height of tension, Ludlow will call for support. Several men in SWAT gear will burst into the room, guns trained and ready to take down anyone who moves. There will be twice the number of gunmen as there are Dhohanoid Characters. Ludlow soon declares that a lesson must be taught to those who betray their own kind. With that he shifts into his Dhohanoid form and the fight is on. Ludlow is Dohahoid, who can be approximated as a highly skilled Zabuth. He will not engage in direct combat just yet, unless the Characters choose to confront him. He will instead wait for his Human henchmen to thin his enemy's numbers first. Of course, the hidden cameras planted by the team proceed to capture all the ugly details of this fight.

A Whisper Tager sits and watches the battle raging inside of the estate from a remote location. It turns out that their tip of a Dhohanoid infestation was true. If Ludlow is experimenting with dangerous sorcery, he certainly will need to be taken down quickly. However, what the Whisper didn't expect was to find Dhohanoids fighting cops – what he thinks are SWAT inside the building. He mindlinks with the rest of his pack and reports the situation. The Tagers soon realize that they must intervene now or those cops will be slaughtered. A Phantom gives the order to move out and soon an entire Tager pack descends on the house.

Tagers soon burst violently through doors and crash through windows with intent to kill Dhohanoids and save those they think are cops. The battle begins to rage in a strange three-way fight. If the Characters fail to take down Ludlow, it's likely that the Tagers will. Nevertheless, the Dhohanoids now find themselves inside of an unwanted fight that they must extricate themselves from as soon as possible – while the video cameras continue to capture images.

The inside of the estate home will be left in ruins. Torn bodies adorn the walls and floors in a bloody mess of liquid goo and ripped flesh. Ludlow will be dead by the end of the battle. If any of the Dhohanoid team manages to escape, they will soon receive a message from Gideon thanking them for a job well done. The results they captured for the video were far better than expected. The loose end of Jason Ludlow is now cleaned up. He promises that the team will rise far in the company and that the Board of Directors is very pleased with their results.

Within a week, local government officials create a special board to investigate and eliminate a new infestation of alien creatures within their city. The key piece of evidence that incites this new inquisition is a new underground video all over the news depicting Tagers murdering cops and destroying the home of Jason Ludlow. Since the disappearance of Mercury's CEO, it can only be assumed that he was a helpless victim in the attack.

CHRYSLIS CORPORATION HOOKS

WHAT'S LAW GOT TO DO WITH IT?

"Our most precious blood is that of our children." That is the slogan used by the Guardian Angel Orphanage when they talk about the care given to those young lives held delicately in their charge. Guardian Angel has the best image, the best advertising, the best legal council, and the best results of any orphanage in the nation. In fact, their success rate for finding new homes for their children is spectacular compared to most other orphanages in the nation. Yet complaints have surfaced about the inner workings of Guardian Angel. Secrets kept behind walls prevent prying eyes from seeing what's really going on. Some have become suspicious of Guardian Angel's methods. When a handful of adopted families began to show up murdered in their sleep, questions began to arise. The children in question often survive or disappear. Now a child advocacy group known as the Global Child Welfare League has taken Guardian Angel to court in a class-action lawsuit.

The Law Offices of Penn and Graham, one of the most respected law firms in the employ of the Chrysalis Corporation, has been hired to defend Guardian Angel. However, the lawyers for GCWL claim to have damning evidence that will shut down Guardian Angel for good and they refuse to bargain. Therefore, Penn and Graham have requested under the table assistance from the Chrysalis Corporation. They need a team of Dhohanoids to investigate what, if anything, GCWL might have and eliminate any possible threats. The request has been accepted. After all, it is vital for the Children of Chaos to maintain a supply of their most precious blood.

ASHCROFT SMASHCROFT

Military contracts are among the most profitable for any business. The New Earth Government military has created a scope of work to design a new prototype stealth mech equipped with the latest in arcanowave weapons technology. The Ashcroft Foundation immediately jumped at the chance to compete in that arena. Being that they are the foremost experts in arcanotechnology, it would seem that they certainly have the advantage in this contest. However, the Chrysalis Corporation enjoys many other major advantages – one of them is corporate espionage. Unfortunately, the Ashcroft Foundation is known for possessing some of the most effective security measures in the world, including the employment of para-psychic agents. Infiltrating an Ashcroft Foundation facility will take crack timing, amazing talent, and steely determination.

A Dhohanoid team has been selected to infiltrate the primary Ashcroft Foundation campus in Chicago to locate and steal their plans for the prototype mech. It's going to take extensive planning, casing the location, pulling up building designs, timing security patrols, and many other steps to be prepared. The team will only have one shot at this. If the team gets caught, they will be on their own to face a criminal trial against Ashcroft representation that will almost certainly mean a maximum sentence. However, if they manage to pull this off, they will be considered heroes and prime candidates for promotion within the company.

GHOST SHIP

Some say that it was a freak storm in the Mediterranean that uncovered the stone. Whatever the cause, it clearly led a group of scuba divers to discover the remains of a wrecked Roman trireme off the coast of Tunisia a few days later. The Bizerte Stone, as archeologists have dubbed it, appears have Cypro-Minoan script etched upon the surface suggesting a work that is far older than Rome. The writing would certainly indicate its origin to be somewhere in Cyprus. However, some theorists have gone so far as to stretch its origin to Plato's concept of an ancient Atlantis. Regardless, the story of the stone has, until now, made for an interesting side-note on GNN news.

It was when the Chrysalis Corporation took an interest in the stone that things began to turn for the worst. Some experts claimed that the stone's writing described a fabled underwater kingdom ruled by a terrible god. The narration seems to go into a possible location of this ancient kingdom. This is what drew the interest of Chrysalis. They soon purchased the stone for an unusually high price, packaged it in a secure vault with both physical and arcane safeguards, and shipped it via convoy to Johannesburg, South Africa. Unfortunately the ship was lost about a month ago and search parties could find nothing – until now.

The *Buena Ventura* has been spotted floating in the Atlantic off the coast of Liberia. There has been no radio contact and apparently no sign of life on the vessel. The Children of Chaos have chosen to send in their own strike team to investigate the situation and determine the disposition of the stone. What will they find there? What happened to the crew? What are the chances that Deep Ones might have been a little too impatient?

TOO MANY RITES

The Eldritch Society has their Rite of Sacred Union, and the Children of Chaos certainly use their Rite of Transfiguration to abandon. Both groups are extremely protective about the secrets of their Rites, and rightfully so. However, what happens if a third group uncovers the secret of a transformational rite? A small group of sorcerers and occult scholars, claiming to be revivalists of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn have discovered a new ritual based on ancient Mayan religious text. Piecing elements of Mayan script from several locations within the Yucatan Peninsula and combining them with a new work discovered at a small burial site in Honduras has produced an interesting result. These so-called Hermetic sorcerers claim to have discovered a ritual that will transcend a human being into a greater lifeform, capable of reading the fabric of reality and divining the future. The Rite of Holy Ascension, as they call it, could produce very promising results. That is, if human sacrifice wasn't considered to be an essential part of the ritual.

Nevertheless, both the Children of Chaos and the Eldritch Society are eager to get their hands on this ritual for their own purposes. One group wants to use it to their advantage and the other to hide it from the ignorant eyes of man. Whether or not the Rite of Holy Ascension is legitimate or not, the attention it has drawn will prove to be ugly indeed.

INDEX

Administrative Network	39	Dhohanoid: Specialized Asset	114
Agrarian Foods	100	Dhohanoids	94-95
All-Access Charm	133	Dhohanoids in the Eldritch Society	50
Arcane Network	39	Diotrephes, Adriana	15, 16
Arcanoline	101	Director	10, 88
Armorcorp	100	Drazet the Unformed	20
Bestow the Protean Form	130	Dream	66-67
Bind the Silent Tongue	130	DRG-B08 Boom Gun	132
Blind Lady	10, 88-89	Dua-Sanaras Characters	124
Bloodgod	64-65	Echo Variations	56
Child of Chaos Sorcerer Asset	114	Efreet Tager	60
Children of Chaos	10	Efreet Variations	62
Children of Chaos Artifacts	131	Eldritch Society, General	34-35
Children of Chaos History	86-87	Eldritch Society Africa	44
Children of Chaos Rituals	130-131	Eldritch Society Antarctic	44
Children of the Sword	21	Eldritch Society Arctic	44
Chrysalis Corporation, General	100-101	Eldritch Society Asia	42
Chrysalis Corporation Africa	108	Eldritch Society Australia	44
Chrysalis Corporation Antarctic	108	Eldritch Society Authority	35
Chrysalis Corporation Arctic	108	Eldritch Society Cells	34
Chrysalis Corporation Asia	107	Eldritch Society Cults	21
Chrysalis Corporation Australia	108	Eldritch Society Culture	36-37
Chrysalis Corporation Europe	107	Eldritch Society Dirty Secrets	47
Chrysalis Corporation History	86-87	Eldritch Society Double-Agents	17
Chrysalis Corporation Hooks	140	Eldritch Society Europe	42
Chrysalis Corporation Inner Circle	99	Eldritch Society False Identities	34
Chrysalis Corporation Internal Culture	103-104	Eldritch Society Finance	35
Chrysalis Corporation Mortal Life	111	Eldritch Society History	14-15
Chrysalis Corporation North America	106	Eldritch Society Initiation	23
Chrysalis Corporation Relations	109	Eldritch Society Membership	37
Chrysalis Corporation Safehouses	97	Eldritch Society Mortal Life	45
Chrysalis Corporation South America	107	Eldritch Society Network Recruits	40
Chrysalis Corporation Story	136-139	Eldritch Society Networks	38-39
Chrysalis Corporation Themes	135	Eldritch Society North America	41
Chrysalis Corporation Worldwide	106-108	Eldritch Society Para-Psychic Profession	53
Chrysalis Executive Profession	116	Eldritch Society Propaganda	17
Ciragen Characters	123	Eldritch Society Relations	46
Circle Devices	133	Eldritch Society Sorcerer Profession	54
Circle, the	110	Eldritch Society South America	41
Cleavers	44	Eldritch Society Values	36, 37
Containment Teams	97	Eldritch Society Vows	23
Craft Wasting Orb	131	Eldritch Society Worldwide	41-44
Darchir Logistics	100, 101	Elib Characters	124
Derebith	119	Etherwave Communicator	132
Derebith Characters	123	EuroWagon	101
Dhohanoid Agent Profession	115	Exaggerated Symbiont Drawback	50
Dhohanoid Asset	114	Expeditors	97
Dhohanoid Changes	122	Failed Rite Drawback	114
Dhohanoid Characters	122	Fellowship of Remembrance	21
Dhohanoid Life	98-99	Fire Team Agent Profession	117
Dhohanoid Populations	95	Flare Trimmings	133
Dhohanoid Position	99	Forgotten Ones	20
Dhohanoid Promotion	99	Founders	10, 15
Dhohanoid Recruitment	90-91	Gelgore Characters	125
Dhohanoid Support Networks	97	Genesis Pits	10, 93
Dhohanoid: Elite Asset	114	Gifted Multi-Tasker Asset	50
Dhohanoid: Rare Asset	114	Global Intelligence Agency	46

Grokell	120	Rite of Transfiguration	92-93
Grokell Characters	125	Rite of Winter's Moon	37
Hermes Project	100, 101	Rui, Shen Meng	15, 16
Hive	10, 98	Safehouses	10
Horror	68-69	Savaty'ya the Seer	20
Impulse	70-71	Shadow Variations	58
Inferno	72-73	Shadow War	17, 87
InfoNet	97	Society Para-Psychic Asset	50
Informant Network	39	Society Sorcerer Asset	50
Inhibex	132	Somnambulists	21
Insistent Symbiont Drawback	50	Special Projects Personnel Resources	10, 90
Jjia-Sin-Dumash	120	Spectre Variations	58
Jjia-Sin-Dumash Characters	126	St. Xavier, Marcus	15, 16
Karytyk Crystal	131	Storyguiding Children of Chaos	134-135
Lorekeeper	10	Street Dealer Profession	118
Lorekeeper Archives	38	Support Services (Chrysalis)	10
Lorekeeper Network	38	T99 Division	14, 86-87, 105
Lorekeeper Profession	51	T99 Inventions	132-133
Lost Mortality Drawback	114	Ta'ge Fragments	14, 15, 18-19
Memory	74-75	Tager Bleeding	23
Mercury Communications	100	Tager Continuing Training	31
Metamorphic Cocoon Rules	63	Tager Daily Life	32
Metamorphic Cocoons	30	Tager Funerals	29
Metamorphosis	10, 30	Tager Missions	32
Metamorphosis Rules	63	Tager Naming	28
Metaplot	11	Tager Pack Induction	28
Micrologic	100	Tager Pack Leadership	28, 29
Migou Cultist Characters	89	Tager Packs	28-29
Mirage Variations	56	Tager Patrols	32
Morfean the Dreamer	20	Tager Populations	27
Murder	10	Tager Recruitment	22-23
Myrovh the Puppetmaster	20	Tager Rounds	32
Namarok Characters	126	Tager Variants	55
Networks (Eldritch Society)	10	Tager: Rare Asset	50
Nexus of Almazoara	132	Tager: Variant Asset	55
Nightmare Variations	57	Tagers	26-27
Norinco	100	Tagers in the Armed Forces	27
Nyarlathotep	88-89	THI-B13	133
Ocular Imager	132	Thog-Manna Characters	128
Office of Internal Security	46, 101	Torment	80-81
Operator	10	Transportation Services	97
Operator Network	38	Trans-State Inhibiting Spike	133
Operator Profession	52	Trans-State Nullifer	133
Order of Taris	110	Types of Chrysalis Corporation Games	134
Packs	10	Unique Dhohanoids	93
Patul Characters	127	Vampire Variations	59
Phantasm	76-77	Variants (Tager)	10
Phantom Variations	57	Vassiamon	121
Portraying Dhohanoids	134	Vassiamon Characters	128
Potential Tager Training	24-25	Vrykol Characters	129
Prophecies	18-19	Whisper Variations	59
Quintessentialists	21	Widow Tager	61
Ramachese Characters	127	Widow Variations	62
Revenant	78-79	Wraith	82-83
Rite of Initiation	23	Zabuth Characters	129
Rite of Retribution	37		
Rite of Sacred Union	24-25		

GHULHU テラ

Available Now!



Vade Mecum

The Last War Continues

Foes without. Foes within. It seems that safety is just an illusion in 2085. Congregations of dead religions work their evil on the world. Armies of monsters and alien creatures bring death and horror. Hidden cults chew away at the innards of the New Earth Government, secretly destroying us from within.

This is the Aeon War. And it's bigger than just one book.

Explore society as one of the forbidden Human-Nazzadi xenomixed lovechildren. Be a stranger in your own land as an otherworldly White. Fight the hidden enemies within society as an agent of the Federal Security Bureau. Abuse shocking power policing arcane crimes as an agent of the Office of Internal Security. Bring the power of the cosmos to bear with just the power of your own mind – or lose yourself to it.

160 pages, \$39.99.



dark passions

At Your Doorstep

The Aeon War rages outside. The Migou encroach on the heart of civilization from Alaska. The Rapine Storm throws itself against failing lines in China. Dark things awaken in the forgotten corners of the world. All the while, sinister cults erode the New Earth Government from within.

Fight fanatical suicide bombers dedicated to the fall of civilization – and the destruction of our “alien” brethren. Face your own inner fortitude in the face of overwhelming temptations of forbidden physical pleasures. Sleep fitfully in the fear that something out there is intent to ravage your dreams.

All in your neighborhood. Down the street. Even next door.

60 pages, \$19.99.



damNation View

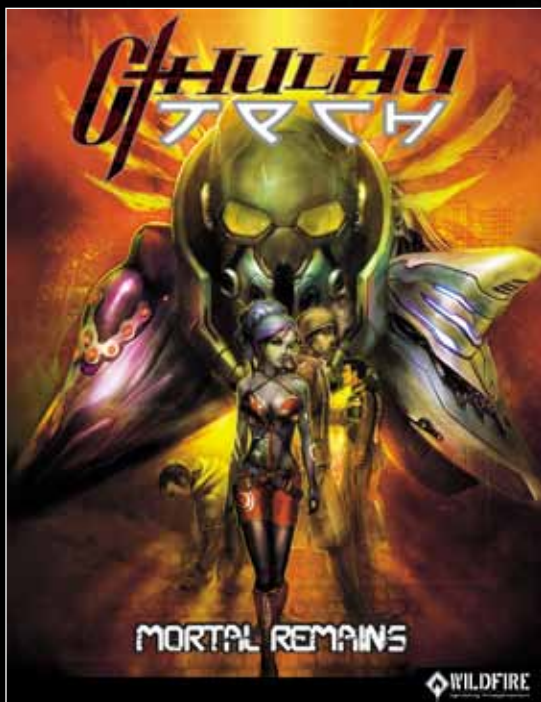
It's a Question of Perspective

Time waits for no one. The Disciples of the Rapine Storm throw themselves with renewed fervor against the beleaguered troops holding the lines of the East. The New Earth Government desperately searches for a plan to drive the alien insects from their last bastion of safety. Deep within the dark places something ancient and primal stirs, ready to gift the world with its unspeakable presence once again. And somewhere, the children of the fish-god find lost things that were better left lost.

This is how the end begins. Welcome to 2086.

Discover new breakthroughs that might give humanity a much needed edge – but at what cost? Suffer a plague of street crime, eroding the places where people once felt safe. Watch in shock at the lengths the Nazzadi are willing to go to police their own kind. And quietly, something new is born within the darkest pits of the Chrysalis Corporation. Explore a year in the Strange Aeon or lose yourself in the lies and pretend it isn't happening.

144 pages, \$39.99.



mortal remains

The Enemy Of My Enemy Is Still My Enemy

The New Earth Government. A place of progress and hope. A world carefully crafted by the powers that be to give lives to those it protects. The last hope of humanity in a time when it seems as if our light will be extinguished forever. The Migou. Beings who have always viewed the Earth as their backyard, to be used and abused as they will. Creatures caught unaware by what we have become and intent on destroying us because of it.

Enemies bound to the mortal coil, perhaps soon to be consumed by it – and each other.

Live in the world of the NEG, exploring society from the streets on up. Walk within the worlds of politics, religion, and mainstream society. Discover what the growing identity of the Nazzadi is all about. Explore the dark end of the streets where vice and crime dwell. Or discover the world of the alien insects from Pluto and even explore it as one of them. Peel back the veil and see the Migou for what they truly are – and maybe even admire them for it.

144 pages, \$39.99.

USES THE NEW GAME SYSTEM

FRAMEWORK

CthulhuTech and the Framework Game Mechanic are designed by and trademarks of Black Sky Studios
WildFire and the WildFire logo are trademarks of Wildfire, LLC.



WILDFIRE
Igniting Imagination

Thicker Than Blood

Underneath the carefully crafted world of the new Earth Government, a sickness festers. The Children of Chaos hide within the mighty Chrysalis Corporation, agents of the end. Intent on bringing back the lost days of terrible old gods, they are a hidden tumor that soon will be too malignant to excise. Only one force has the power and the secrets to fight the enemy within. Legacy of the Forgotten Ones, the Eldritch Society secretly hunts the Children of Chaos. Holy warriors, monsters with the hearts of men, struggle desperately to save humanity. And to the New Earth Government, its saviors are monsters and its destroyers heroes.

This is the Shadow War – so few know the truth.

Peel back the layers of secrecy to explore the mysterious Eldritch Society. Discover what joining in symbiosis with a thing from beyond space and time really means. Undergo mystical metamorphosis to join more deeply with your other-worldly symbiont and feel the pull of its wild power. Pull back the veil to stare into the dark eyes of the true Chrysalis Corporation. Give yourself over to the power of the Old Ones and endure the infamous Rite of Transfiguration, sacrificing your humanity for something greater.

Nowhere else will you find a setting like this.

Inside this book you will find:

- five pieces of provocative short fiction to help portray the feel of the setting.
- a detailed exploration of the Eldritch Society, to give you a real idea of what it is like to be a Tager and to fight in the Shadow War.
- a first look behind the curtain at the Chrysalis Corporation and the greater Children of Chaos.
- new Character options, including new Qualities and eight new professions, including Eldritch Society Lorekeeper and Chrysalis Corporation Street Dealer.
- more friends and foes – two new rare Tager and four new Dhohanoid manifestations.
- optional rules for creating variant Taggers, so that no two manifestations need be alike.
- full rules for the mysterious Tager metamorphosis, including ten new metamorphic manifestations.
- full rules for designing Dhohanoid Characters and telling Chrysalis Corporation stories, including fourteen playable Dhohanoid manifestations and four new professions.
- an introduction to the arcane tools of the Children of Chaos, including new rituals, artifacts, and tools and weapons for the field.
- a ready-to-play starter story for Chrysalis Corporation games, as well as several Children of Chaos story hooks, to start you off right away.

This book is meant to be used with the *CthulhuTech* storytelling game and requires the *Core Book*.

FOR MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY

This book is intended for mature readers. It contains dark and disturbing content and images. Reader discretion is advised.

WDF23100

www.cthulhutech.com

Sandstorm
INTERACTIVE ADVENTURE

FRAMEWORK