

HELLHUI TRASH



UNVEILED THREATS



WILDFIRE
Igniting Imagination

SHULHUI テマヒ

Unveiled Threats



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FOR MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY

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



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There was always something about the smell of burned powder and gun oil that was comforting to Roy. For other people, it might be the smell of fresh baked cookies or a turkey in the oven. Not so for anyone who had spent any amount of time on the lines. Strangely though, pretty much all women hate the smell of gun oil, whether or not they had served.

This was Roy's own personal oasis, a place Simon once referred to as a sanctum. To all appearances, it was a shipping container stored in a yard near Puget Sound, on the south side of the arcology. However, on the inside, it was a full-fledged armory and something that had become Roy's obsession.

Working on his guns was one of the few things that kept him calm and centered. Not even martial arts could provide that anymore. Today, Vera was getting some love. She was a heavily customized HKS-192 heavy assault rifle, with an under-slung M-303 grenade launcher. Her sights had been a little off lately. Roy loved this gun, a custom version of the one he'd used in the field. A well-sealed and reliable weapon, the HKS-192 rarely jammed and needed only sporadic cleaning. The clip, on the other hand, was a little on the short side. Roy had fixed that problem by machining new clips and re-balancing the weight.

His latest prize awaited him in a case on the workbench – a HF-5 Hellstorm hand-held flame-thrower. Not the easiest weapon to get a hold of, but not impossible for Roy's connections in the Society. Hellstorm's were a great close-in weapon, great for clearing small enclosed spaces. He'd used one pretty regularly in China and missed not having one. There was something about the smell...

Disrupting his work, Roy's peek pinged – text message. "Knock knock" was all it said.

15 mm Enforcer in hand, he got up to push open the door. It was reflex at this point, to cover the entrance so that he had a clear shot of whoever was there. Midnight skin, shades that cost more than most people make in a week, and an award-winning smile was waiting for him, hands held up.

"And that is why I still knock," said Sorena.

Roy relaxed. "Hey. I don't shoot at noises anymore."

Sorena gingerly entered the container and took off his shades. "Yeah, recently."

"You can't blame me for that. I was having nightmares."

"And sleepwalking. It's not like that's rare for you." The Nazzadi pulled a small bottle out of his pocket and tossed it to Roy. "Your prescription."

Roy caught the bottle of small white pills. Veracet – a powerful painkiller. The only thing that kept Roy going some days. He expertly popped the cap with one hand, poured a handful of tablets in his mouth, and chewed.

Sorena shook his head. "Man, I don't know how you do that."

"Tager metabolism's a bitch," replied Roy.

"Not that, bro. I'm talking the taste."

Considering some of the stuff Roy had to eat when he was on the lines in China, Veracet was downright innocuous.

Things had been different ever since the peninsula. That was force of nature kind of business. Ever since they'd disrupted the ritual, Chrysalis had mainly seemed like pouting children. Sure, that meant more than average numbers of Dhohanoids trying to kill them every time they turned around, but it was like the volume had been turned down. It just didn't seem as big a deal anymore.





Of course, that could just be the damage talking.

In a half hour, maybe a little more, the drugs would kick in and his nerves would feel like he was floating ever so gently above the world. All the horrors of the world would take a break and he would be once again clear-headed.

Because he needed that clear head to face the horrors of the world that he knew damn well never took breaks.

.

2070. Seattle arcology. Roosevelt Secondary School – an integrated school. Only five years after the First Arcanotech War.

The new Nazzadi kid was pretty and a lot of the girls liked him. If he was just Human, that would mean a whole lot of guys wanted to kick his ass. Him being from the wrong side of the solar system meant pretty much all the guys wanted to kick his ass.

Lucky for him, the kid knew how to fight. Romer was fascinated by the fluid martial arts the kid used to beat the stuffing out of anyone with the

guts to take a swing. Things had calmed down, for the most part.

Today was different. Kaushik sat down with a tray of something that was supposed to pass as lunch. "That Nazzadi kid doesn't know when to quit."

Roy poked at the soupy lasagna. "This ought to be good."

"Turns out that he nailed Kristy Severson last weekend."

Roy looked over the table where the football players sat. "Ain't she Thimba's girl?"

Thimba Were was the brick of the offensive line and he and Kristy had been together for the last year. He was not going to take this kind of news well. Roy could see Thimba and a couple of his buddies already planning their attack.

"So, when's it going to be?" he asked.

"The minute he steps off school property," replied Kaushik.

That was only a couple hours away. Roy and his friend skipped last period to make sure they could follow the Nazzadi kid out.

What followed was one of the most legendary fist-fights at Roosevelt. Three of the offensive line, led by Thimba, came at the Nazzadi kid with no warning. The kid was ready for them and he was fast. He took several good hits, the kind he wouldn't quickly forget, but his snake-like strikes hit nerve clusters and gave him the edge he needed to take the football players down.

The only problem was that he kind of lost it towards the end. The Nazzadi kid ended up kicking Thimba's buddies in the guts, hard, after they were down. Roy felt the need to step in after he started to kick Thimba in the face.

Fortunately, there was something sensible and reassuring about Roy in those days, so the kid didn't attack him, too. When things had calmed down, Roy had to talk to the kid.

"Where did you learn to fight like that?"

The kid finished wiping his bloody nose, which was finally stopping. "Man, I grew up in the

Nazzadi fleet. I started training in Hun-Zuti when I was five."

"Military, huh?" replied Romer. "My brothers are thinking of joining up and they want me to come when I'm old enough."

The Nazzadi kid threw the bloody paper-towel in trash. "Are you going to do it?"

Romer laughed. "Me? I'm not much of a fighter. By the way, I'm Roy Romer."

They shook hands. "Sorena," said the kid.

.

It was an ugly, ugly sight.

Roy finished wiping the vomit off his mouth, his stomach finally empty. Looking up, he saw that no one else was in any better shape. Most of his squad was simply wandering through the carnage, staring with distant disbelief.

This place had to be a village for the savage cultists that followed the Rapine Storm. Roy had heard stories, but the reality was so much worse. The smell was the first thing - the place smelled like death. No wonder, as the center of the village was a gigantic fire pit surrounded by poles. Based on the charred bones and remains of the people that were tied to them, they were used as spits.

Sergeant Villalobos was the first to snap out of it. "Romer, Vienna, make sure those huts are clear. Pham, Bati, you're on the other side."

Vienna nodded and took point. The ramshackle huts looked like they'd been hastily constructed, mostly out of bamboo. The first one was empty, other than whatever personal possessions the freakish cultists kept there. Neither of the soldiers was particularly keen on seeing what they were.

As the soldiers were just about to kick in the door to the second, Roy heard something. It sounded like something moved in the very last hut. Then, the shack swayed a little.

Roy tapped Vienna on the shoulder and signaled to him that there may be hostiles. Again, Vienna took point, the two carefully and quietly making their way up to the door in question. From across the camp, the soldiers heard someone

yelp followed by a quick burst of gunfire. The camp clearly wasn't empty yet.

Rifles ready, Roy pulled the door so that Vienna could cover the room. Sweeping his the flashlight on his gun around the hut, Vienna looked confused. "What the eff?"

Then, a flash of recognition flew across his face – and he hurled all across the inside of his helmet. He stumbled back, ripping his helmet off, heaving whatever wasn't left in his stomach onto the ground.

Roy's training took over and forced him into the hut. Little did he know it, but this was one of the things that he was never going to forget. Inside the hut, a handful of children were tied up, naked. Most of them looked starved, dehydrated, but barely able to move. However, one still tried to thrash, hissing with his split tongue.

That's when it started to sink in. The children were covered with wicked-looking tattoos, along with some of what looked like large ceremonial scars. They had been pierced all over their bodies and their teeth had been filed. Not a one looked at Roy with anything resembling a mortal face. All that stared back at him was madness. Not to mention the tools and other horrific things that were hung in the hut.

This was Rapine Storm day-care. The cultists were making more of themselves, doing god know's what to these kids to turn them into monsters.

That was the straw that broke the camel's back. Something inside Roy gave up for the last time and died.

Blankly, he drew his CS-44 Enforcer from its holster and put it under his chin. Vienna was still outside with the dry heaves. He tried to think of something to say, but nothing really mattered anymore. Without flinching, he pulled the trigger.

Nothing. He pulled it twice more. Nothing.

After wading through the mud and all the other crap they'd endured the last five days, his gun was finally so dirty it wouldn't fire.

"Huh," was all Roy could say. He looked at his HK-192, but decided that would just be ridiculous. Screw it. Maybe another time.

After this, Romer made a vow to always keep his weapons clean.

.

There are Section 8's and there are Section 8's. Sometimes the military tells you that you've gone too far and that it's time to go home. And then there are the times they put you in a straightjacket and lock you away until the doctors say its okay to let you out again.

Though the government was nice enough to leave it off Roy's permanent record, this latter kind of Section 8 was the one he got.

.

More than a decade since secondary school. Things certainly had changed.

Sorena sat out in front of the VA mental hospital. It had been the better part of a year since Roy had been shipped back. He'd spent too much time on the front lines. The things he'd seen in China has finally driven him over the brink. He'd been shipped home for in-patient therapy and there were those that wondered if he was ever coming out.

However, it turned out that Roy was a fighter after all – in a lot of ways.

Roy's parents wouldn't come. There was something about having lost two sons to the war already that made it too difficult for them to face their up until recently certifiable son. Sorena thought that was a crappy excuse.

Then, there he was, led out by a nurse. He didn't look much like Roy anymore. He looked more like someone had sent him to hell and then tried to make him look like a person again. Frankly, it was a shock. Sorena composed himself and walked up.

"Hey Roy. Long time. Good to have you home."

Roy looked up with distant eyes. He still wasn't entirely home. "Hey."

The nurse quickly jumped in. "If I'm releasing him to you, there are some things you'll need to know."

Sorena nodded and handed Roy his sunglasses. Roy seemed a little blinded by the daylight, as if he hadn't seen a lot of it recently.

The nurse continued. "Mr. Romer is going to be on a strict regimen of medication for the foreseeable future." She started handing Sorena pill bottles. "This one's an anti-depressant, this one's an anti-psychotic, this is a sedative, and these are his painkillers. The list of side effects is embedded in the bar code. The instructions for weaning him off the Veracet are in there as well. Pay attention to those, because he is already addicted, so that's going to be a little rough."

Sorena tried to take it all in, while taking in the shell of a man that was his best friend. "Okay. Got it."

"And you'll have to keep him away from any uppers, even Bliss. We've had to help him kick a neural stimulant addiction he acquired in the field. We don't want to trigger it again." And with that, she patted Roy on the shoulder and left.

Roy stood silently, casually scanning the world around him. Sorena finally said something. "Well, you're back in the world finally. What do you want to do first?"

Roy waited so long to respond that Sorena thought he wasn't go to say anything. Finally, he said two words.

"Gun store."

.

Sorena ducked nimbly down behind the speaker stack. Too many people. He couldn't bring the Vampire, not if he didn't want to blow his cover. This was trouble.

People, panicked, ran everywhere, stumbling over and trampling each other to get to an exit. It was absolute chaos. Of course, what can one expect when Dhohanoids show their true selves in public. The creatures were indiscriminately mauling or murdering anyone who accidentally got in their way and it was time to take them out.

This was the problem with the Eldritch Society. By keeping the Shadow War a big secret, Tagers were treated like any other supernatural critter - something for the government to destroy.

Just then - CRACK! The loud report of a large-bore handgun. Several more followed. Sorena

peeked out around the speaker to see Roy vaulting over the bar, plugging the Dhohanoids with 15 mm rounds.

Sorena reached in his jacket and pulled out the UT-9 Stinger that Roy insisted he carry. He'd have to thank him later. Sorena didn't think the 10 mm needler was going to do much against his prey, but it was certainly better than nothing.

He popped around the side of the speaker and let several needles fly with a hiss. It was enough to really piss off the Dhohanoids, on top of the wounds Roy's Enforcer had left. This gave Roy opportunity to get hold of the SM-14 submachine gun he had hidden under his jacket.

The laser sight lancing across the club smoke, Roy took barely a moment to aim before he let loose. Bullets tore up several of the Dhohanoids, making the fight a little more even.

Then Mesta got his groove on. Being a White and registered para-psychic had its advantages. In this case, it included flying up above the crowd and dropping gravity wells on the Dhohanoids, crushing their bodies. Show-off.

Regardless, Sorena was going to have to thank Roy for always being so prepared.

.

"Are you always so paranoid?" asked Mesta.

This was not an unusual breakfast scene. Sorena was in the kitchen, making up one of his famous Nazzadi concoctions. Today it was carne asada waffles. However, eating it was going to be a challenge, as Roy had taken up most of the table. There were gun parts everywhere, on top of tools, cleaning rags, and the smell of gun oil - which almost cut through the delicious smell of the carne asada. Roy meticulously cleaned the firearms, as he did every day.

"What's wrong with practicing proper firearm maintenance?" asked Roy.

Mesta took the bait. "Okay, I get that you believe in carrying guns. It makes sense, considering. But you always have at least three on you at all times!"

From the kitchen, Sorena added, "Don't forget the arsenal under the back of the Pioneer. And the grenades."

"Right. The grenades." Mesta shook his head. "And for some reason, you insist on cleaning the guns at the breakfast table."

Roy checked the barrel of his Enforcer, making sure it was squeaky clean on the inside. "I'm just trying to be social. You've got a gun you need to clean. And I don't mean putting it in the dishwasher, like you did that one time."

Sorena brought out the spicy waffles and tried to find a place to put the plates. Mesta did his best to clear out a place for them. "I don't need guns," he said, as several of Roy's gun parts moved at the control of his mind.

Roy reached over and cut himself a big forkful of breakfast and chowed it down. "You know, someday you're going to run out of juice at a bad time. You should have a gun, just in case."

"I'll think about it," replied the White. "As long as I don't have to sleep with one under my pillow, like you do."

Roy shoveled another forkful of waffle into his mouth. "You have lived a spoiled life."

.

Not that Roy had spent a lot of time thinking about it, but it never had occurred to him that that his weapons collection might be an aphrodisiac. However, Sara Jaye certainly seemed to be getting hot and bothered, going over pieces of their shared past.

"How did you get all this?" she asked, tossing her now brown longish hair back in a vaguely come hither way.

"I have friends," he replied.

"Friends? Really?"

Roy snorted. "Okay. Friends with contacts and money."

Without thinking, they had managed to gravitate closer to one another, the kind of close that didn't happen with people who didn't have chemistry.

Sara Jaye licked her lips and batted her eyes. "You've come a long way from the days of bedding down in bamboo forests."

Even the dense Romer started to get the right idea. "Those days weren't all bad, either."

Just then, Sara Jaye turned up her nose, sniffing like she'd just smelled something foul. "What's that smell?"

"What?" asked Roy, trying to identify it.

"It smells..." she sniffed some more. "It smells like gun oil?"

And there it was. Hard evidence that, no matter how good it smelled to a man, gun oil was a sure fire way to repel the fairer sex.

Even one who'd spent time on the front lines of China.

.

"Hey man. Where'd you go?"

Roy shook his head. Memories. They had a nasty habit of showing up when you least expected - or wanted - them. He popped the cap on the bottle and chewed up a couple more Veracet. That should do the trick.

He looked up at his jet black-skinned friend. "Sorry. Zoned out for a minute."

The Nazzadi sighed. "Listen, you've been worrying me lately."

Not comfortable with this level of concern, Roy just grunted, hoping that his friend would drop it.

"Seriously, man," Sorena continued. "You've been getting that look again."

Knowing that the Nazzadi wouldn't drop it, Roy responded. "What look?"

"Like when I picked you up from the hospital. Like after you'd gotten your Section 8."

That triggered something in Roy, something that would soon be drowned out by the drugs. Still, he chuckled bitterly.

"We're all Section 8's now."

chapter one

WELCOME

This is *Unveiled Threats*, what might be termed the gear book for *CthulhuTech*. However, in these pages, you will find much more than simply what most people think of as gear. You'll not only explore firearms and explosives, as well as hand things for your Characters to own, you'll also discover new rituals designed for sorcerers to create more exciting and useful enchanted items. There are also artifacts, legendary items of powers capable of amazing things. Finally, you'll take a look at the weapons and armor of the Migou and the Esoteric Order of Dagon.

Some of these weapons might be familiar. Their statistics have been presented in other books. However, *Unveiled Threats* actually updates these weapons and gives you a sense of what they're truly like – so that you can choose the weapons that best suit your Characters.

Welcome to *Unveiled Threats*! Carry a gun...

This chapter will give you a road map to this major rules expansion.

THE BOOK

This book is divided into a series of chapters, each addressing a type of thing that might be useful for your game. 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 rules expansion and give you a reference for what this book contains.

Chapter Two: Dealers of Death provides an in-depth look at the firearms, explosives, and armor of the New Earth Government. It also includes new optional firearms rules and new kinds of ammunition.

Chapter Three: Tools of the Trade provides a variety of new things for Characters to own and use, including peeks options, medical equipment, and vehicles. It also outlines new rules for drugs and a variety of pharmaceuticals.

Chapter Four: Objects de Magie details new rituals designed to give sorcerers access to more and more diversified enchanted objects, from silent communicators to the coveted invisibility cloak.

Chapter Five: Ancient Objects introduces several legendary magical creations, along with their histories. Some may be things to quest for, while others may be things to avoid at all costs.

Chapter Six: Ashcroft's Legacy details exciting, non-mecha arcane technology from the Ashcroft Foundation, the Chrysalis Corporation, the Migou, and the Disciples of Death's Shadow.

Chapter Seven: Alien Hands provides an in-depth look at the firearms, explosives, and armor of the New Earth Government. It also includes new optional firearms rules and new kinds of ammunition.

Chapter Six: Appendices includes the index.

A NOTE ABOUT UPDATES

Many of the weapons listed in this book are updated and balanced versions of the weapons found in both the Core Book and *Mortal Remains*. If you have any question as to which listing to use, always use the listing from *Unveiled Threats*.

A NOTE ABOUT METAPLOT

Some people love it, some people hate it. Regardless, there is an 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. Most of any such material included in this book is for flavor only, and does not affect the substantive rules. 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.

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.





Animals. That's what the Disciples of the Rapine Storm were. Beasts rooting around in the dust, pawns of the Dead God's dreams. Pathetic.

Miklos hated the deliveries to Asia. It was sad that executives of the Chrysalis Corporation would be charged with such a menial task. But then again, who else would be able to enter this territory and survive?

The sun was setting behind him as his people carried the crates to the drop point. The steppes of Central Asia were a blasted place these days, something unfamiliar and undesirable to Miklos. He had become a creature of luxury, one of the perks of his position at the company.

The Ghasts didn't even try to keep their presence a secret. Crawling up on to the nearby rocks, one of them growled. Territorial creatures. Terrance, the bald one who was new, brought up his RMG-14 submachine gun and trained it on the Ghast. A beautiful weapon, one of Armorcorps finest, one that Miklos admired. As much as he hated to, he shot Terrance a glance that told him to lower his weapon and relax.

Of course, relaxing wasn't in the cards for the new guy, because then the Ghast did something he never expected - it spoke. It had a thick, guttural accent, like it's palate was never designed to speak English. If one had never heard it before, it would be very difficult to understand. "Shifter is scared?" it laughed, which sounded not dissimilar to choking.



Being what he was, Terrance's face twisted, baring sharp needlelike fangs with a hiss. His shadow, moving on its own, made violent striking gestures at the Ghost.

"Compose yourselves," said Miklos, his commanding voice echoing off the rocks.

From behind the rocks, a new figure approached. She was Human, if one could call her that anymore. Heavily tattooed and scarified, Raina was one of the few Humans who had the stomach to worship the Dead God with his Storm.

"You know they need a thow of thrength," replied Raina, her speech tinged with the lisp of a person who had cut her tongue into a fork. It would have been funny if not attached to such a hideous thing.

"Indeed."

Following shortly behind Raina was a man in similar shape, though with an alarming number of extreme piercings. His lips here held back by what looked like staples.

"You have weapons for us, Miklos,?" inquired the thing, surprisingly free from impediment.

Miklos motioned for the cases to be placed on some nearby rocks. His underlings did as they were asked, barely able to conceal their disgust at the creatures around them. As soon as they backed away, the monstrous Humans opened the cases to inspect.

"Another shipment of Norinco arms has conveniently fallen off the back of a truck for the servants of your master."

The male, the one known as Sovann, pawed eagerly at the explosives in the first crate. "Good. Very good.

The Unnamed One will be pleased. Tell us what you've brought."

Sovann was practically drooling as he said this. Miklos was once again thankful that he had undergone the Rite of Transfiguration. These creatures, though wise in their allegiances, were to be pitied.

"In that case, there are L7A1 fragmentation grenades, designed to damage targets with wide burst radius, as well as FFB-1 incendiary grenades. I know how much you like to make things burn."

Both Sovann and Raina smiled at this, chuckling to each other.

"If you pull the top tray out, you'll find that our friends at Armorcorp have made a generous donation. Two Deathmaster 2000 grenade launchers, with a host of M-482 high-explosive anti-mech grenades, to help you with troublesome New Earth Government armor."

The cultists couldn't wait, scrambling to get down to the bottom tray. They set the grenades down unevenly, sending several of them skittering across the rocks. The Chrysalis team reflexively took a step back. Raina held one of the Deathmasters up and barked something at one of the nearby Ghosts. The Ghosts chattered amongst themselves excitedly.

Miklos continued as soon as the noise died down enough for him to speak. He was anxious to get out of here. "The other case includes firearms. You'll find NIR-05 light assault rail rifles, but watch out for these. The energy system can fail if you fire in three-shot or full auto regularly. There are also NIR-09 heavy assault rail rifles, which don't suffer from the aforementioned problem. There are also several NIP-10 needle pistols, which probably aren't as much use to you, given your track record. There are also several chargers for the rail rifles, so you can hook them up to your generators to recharge."

Sovann took out one of the heavy rail assault rifles and admired its lethal beauty. Raina put down the Deathmaster in favor of a shiny black big-barreled gun.

"I nearly forgot the NIS-88 shotguns. Wonderful for tight spaces and at close range."

Raina petted the shotgun. "Thith ith wonderful. Ith that all?"

Miklos nodded and the cultists began to pack up. But the Ghosts had begun to creep into flanking positions. Then another pack, this one armed, bounded over the ridge.

The ungrateful Ghosts were looking for a fight.

Miklos nodded and his agents opened fire. It was time to teach these animals a lesson.

chapter two

dealers of death

In a world where violence and warfare are as common as the rising sun, it is of little surprise that there is an ever advancing tide of new weapon systems being developed by the New Earth Government and others. Some of these developments are as mundane as simple materials advances that allow a blade to hold its sharp edge longer. Others include more impressive advancements in the fields of ammunition, energy storage and more. However, these advancements come at a cost and it often takes time for new systems to find their way into the field so older systems, even outdated ones, stay in common usage for years after their production runs have come to an end.

WEAPON ARCHITECTS

There should be little surprise that there is a great deal of money to be made in the development and sales of weapons system and related paraphernalia. Within the New Earth Government, there are more firms dedicated to the manufacture of new weapons than can easily be counted. Even so, only a few of these firms have risen to the top of the pile and their names have become synonymous with quality, reliability, and effectiveness.

Armorcorp

Armorcorp, long known for the high-tech materials found in many armor systems, has gone from strictly developing defensive sub-systems to producing an impressive catalog of high-tech weapon systems. Using their mastery of materials engineering, Armorcorp has perfected lightweight superconductors used in many of the gauss and rail weapons in use today. Even Electroarms uses the magnets produced by Armorcorp and have a long-standing agreement to share future technologies developments for the mutual benefit of both companies. Many analysts believe it is just a matter of time before the two firms merge. However, there are some who are working to make certain this does not happen, as the company's links to the Chrysalis Corporation make those parties nervous about the level of control it might give them over the weapons market.

Colt Springfield

Colt Springfield is a weapons design, development, and manufacturing firm that can trace its roots back to the 19th century. The current incarnation of the company is an amalgamation of two companies that, at one time, were fierce competitors in the weapons industry. In 2035, not long after the public unveiling of the D-Engine, Colt Defense and Springfield Armory merged to form Colt Springfield. Today the company is considered one of the top developers of light weapon systems. Their CS series of handguns are in use by nearly every law enforcement and military agency in the New Earth Government and by many entities of a less forthright nature.

Electroarms Inc

With weapon systems ranging from personal firearms to massive Engel and mecha weapon systems, Electroarms is the largest, most successful defense firm within the New Earth Government. Their purview almost exclusively lies within high energy weapon systems including gauss, particle, and laser weapons. Much of

their success lies in their willingness to partner with other, more specialized firms in the development of the technologies that lie behind their product. Their most well-known partnership is the one they enjoy with Armorcorp.

Fabrique Nationale

A primary competitor of HK&S, Fabrique Nationale has been producing chemically propelled firearms for more than a century. Unlike their rival, FN has opted to maintain their focus on the products they are known for and have managed to recently take a fair amount of HK&S's market share thanks to that company's recent disastrous move into energy-based weapon systems. Besides firearms, Fabrique Nationale has also become known as a reliable source of new, more effective ammunition for theirs and others weapons. While it is not generally known by the common public, the Chrysalis Corporation actually owns a significant share in FN and some believe it is for that reason that they recently gained a license from Electroarms to become the exclusive manufacturers of the FN-GAL gauss assault rifle.

Heckler Koch and Sig

Much like Colt Springfield, HK&S has roots that can be traced to a time long before the Aeon War. HK&S has had its good and bad times and is currently recovering from a nearly disastrous attempt to move into the high-tech arena of energy weapon systems. After undercutting Electroarms for a contract to develop a new, more energy efficient charge beam, an undetected flaw in the energy transfer matrix led to several of the weapons exploding, disabling the mecha in the midst of combat operations. Since then, HK&S has retreated back what they know best – the tried and true chemically propelled weapon systems they have been building for almost 200 years.

Norinco Inc.

Norinco is considered by many to be a laughable company and many do not understand how they have managed to stay in business. Most also consider them to be nothing more than a parasite on the industry. Many of their products are inferior versions of other company's weapon systems and what little they have developed on their own is generally of shoddy quality at best. However, while they may not do a booming trade in the traditional venues, they do significant business in the shadows of society where minor inconveniences such as paperwork are generally overlooked. Their cheap prices also make their products attractive to the less savory elements of the world. Oddly enough, it is most often Norinco arms that fall off the back of trucks and find their way into the hands of the Disciples of the Rapine Storm.

Steyr Mannlicher

Upon first glance this company appears to be another survivor of a time before the invasion of the Migou and the subsequent events that so altered life on Earth. However, on deeper inspection, this turns out to not be the case. Steyr Mannlicher, as it exists today, has no relations to the Austrian weapons firm. Instead, it was founded less than 30 years ago by Jean-Philip Ar-

gez. In an effort to stand apart from his competition he decided to resurrect a relic of better times to use as a model for his own business. For a time he even managed to pass himself off as a surviving relative of the founding family, though that ruse was eventually discovered. The overall plan succeeded and now Steyr is a successful weapons company today. Their catalogue is eclectic in what they have available as the company has dabbled in a number of weapon disciplines.

Ultratech

The name of the company is a good indicator of its goal – to create the most advanced and leading-edged weapon systems available. Ultratech spends a great deal of time and resources in obtaining military contracts, especially those that call for technologies that will need to be perfected or even developed from the ground up. They are especially giddy when they have an opportunity to improve upon a system originally developed by Electroarms, who they see as their primary competitors. Ultratech specializes in energy and electrokinetic weapon systems as well as some high-tech melee weapons. They also produce one of the most highly regarded and most popular series of needler weapons in use today.

FIREARM TECHNOLOGIES

The advent of the D-Engine and the resulting technologies that followed have done a great deal to change the technology behind the modern firearms. New manufacturing methods, new core delivery technologies, and more, have all worked together to create the modern firearm that is seen in use across the globe today. Even so, the core look and feel of most weapons is nearly identical in many aspects to those that were in use a century ago. As is in many cases, it is what is under the hood that really makes the weapon.

Chemically Propelled Weapons

The most common firearm in the age of the Aeon War is still the chemically propelled firearm. For centuries, the most common example of this was the black-powder weapon. These weapons worked by igniting a highly volatile powder with a spark or flame that was contained within a casing. This casing directed the resulting explosion forward and pushed the bullet out ahead of it. Black powder weapons are the earliest examples of firearms and stayed in use, albeit in a refined form, for many centuries. Such weapons could be, however, dangerous to use.

Today chemically propelled weapons have come a long way and are a great deal safer. While the basic idea behind the workings of these weapons is the same, the accelerant used is triggered electronically rather than by a spark or fire. In addition, only the cheapest ammunition utilizes cases to contain the powder and bullet. Most ammo today is of the caseless variety which means that many weapons do not require an ejection port and jams are extremely rare. Some weapons still utilize a hammer mechanism, though it acts as a backup should the electronic firing circuits become damaged. Even so, this hammer does not trigger a spark, but rather contains a mini-firing circuit and still uses electricity to trigger the round.

Another advance in chemically propelled weapons is binary liquid weapons. These weapons use two liquids – each of which is completely stable when separate but become highly volatile when combined – to propel the round forward. The liquid is injected into the firing chamber in precise quantities and electronically ignited. The advantage of these types of weapons is that the amount of propellant can be altered depending on the range and type of target being attacked. The disadvantage however is that the liquid must be stored separately in tanks with a somewhat complex feeding system that directs the liquids into the firing chamber. As a result, these types of weapons are typically limited to heavier weapons and are most often found on vehicle mounted systems.

Electrokinetic Weapons

The idea of electrokinetic weapons has been around for decades. As early as the 20th century experiments were being conducted by various militaries to build these weapon systems. Many saw them as the weapons of the future. However, until the advent of the D-Engine and D-Cells, the energy requirements for these weapons meant that a full-sized reactor had to virtually be dedicated to the weapon. In addition, the super-conductor technology which is vital to the basic operating principles of the weapon was still in its infancy and simply not efficient enough to produce small, man-portable versions. Instead they were typically mounted on naval vessels and tanks. Today that has all changed and now these weapons can be found as small as a common assault rifle.

Electrokinetic weapons come in two main flavors: gauss and rail systems. Both of these systems operate using the same principles but follow different approaches. Rail systems use a series of four rails to generate a powerful but highly localized magnetic field. The ammunition is magnetically charged to match the field's polarization which then causes it to be forcefully ejected from the barrel at a tremendous velocity. Because the field generated by the rails is stable and constant, it allows for a tremendous rate of fire. Unfortunately, the trade-off is a limit to the allowable mass of the ammunition itself which must itself be properly charged in the milliseconds available to do so. Nearly all rail weapons are needler weapons.

Gauss weapons follow the same basic principle of utilizing powerful magnetic fields to accelerate ammunition to lethal speeds, but they do so in a different manner. Gauss weapons are built with a series of magnets that encircle the length of the barrel. These magnets are energized, one at a time, down the length of the barrel. As each magnet energizes it pushes the round further down the barrel until it shoots out of business end of the weapon. Like a rail weapon, a gauss weapon can accelerate the round to tremendous speeds. Lower end gauss weapons simply break the sound barrier. More powerful weapons can actually accelerate a round to several times the speed of sound. The advantage of a gauss weapon over a rail weapon lies in the caliber of round the weapons can use. With larger calibers, the damage potential of these weapons is much higher than rail weapons can achieve. Unfortunately, they also tend to have a shorter range than

an equivalent rail weapon and have a greater power demand as well. Most who use gauss weapons believe this is an equitable trade given the ability of one of these weapons to punch through even the heaviest armor.

Needlers

A final common type of personal firearm found in the modern world is the needler. These weapons are somewhat similar to rails guns in that they utilize a long, thin sliver of steel called a needle for ammunition. In addition, like a rail gun, needle weapons do not use explosive force like those used in chemically propelled weapons. That, however, is where the similarity ends.

A needler uses highly compressed gas to accelerate ammunition down the barrel of the weapon and towards the target. The gas is stored in miniature tanks that are built into each clip of ammunition. Thus, each time you change clips you also refresh your propellant supply.

Another difference between a rail gun and a needler weapon lies in the nature of the ammunition. Where a rail gun fires a single relatively large needle with each shot, a needler weapon actually fires a small cloud of metal slivers with a single pull of the trigger. This makes these weapons incredibly deadly at close range but more of an annoyance for targets that are distant.

The biggest advantage of the needler lies in the nature of its ammunition. While the needles are highly effective against flesh and cloth, anything more resilient is fairly immune to being damaged. This means needlers can safely be used in environments with sensitive equipment that may not weather bullet impacts well. A second notable advantage, and there are those who would argue it is the greatest advantage, lies in the silent nature of the needler weapon. A rail gun's needle breaks the sound barrier when it is fired and creates a loud concussive pressure wave in the wake of the shot. Conversely a needler fires at subsonic speeds and thus the only sound they make is the gas being discharged as they fire.

NEW WEAPON RULES

The following rules should be viewed strictly as optional and your Storyguide must approve their use before integrating them into your game. These rules are designed to illuminate the differences between the various types of firearms in common use and give each a little more life beyond a stat line in this book.

Electrokinetic Rules

Cannot be Silenced: Because the noise created by these weapons is caused by the breaking of the sound barrier as the round is fired, silencers do not work with either rail or gauss weapons in any way.

Kinetic Slam: The heavier ammunition fired by gauss weapons has a tendency to stagger a target, even if it doesn't penetrate the armor. If a pair (or a larger number of duplicates) is rolled when making a Marksmanship Test while firing a gauss weapon, the target must succeed at a Difficult Tenacity Feat Test or be

stunned by the impact – and lose a single action on his next turn. This happens even if the hit causes no damage.

Tip of the Needle: The slivers fired by a rail weapon impart an incredible amount of energy at a highly-concentrated location when the round hits a target. As a result, they tend to slide through Vitality-scale armor like it was not there. If a pair (or a larger number of duplicates) is rolled for the Marksmanship Test when firing a rail weapon, reduce the armor protection rating of the target by 1, to a minimum of 0.

Needler Weapons

Cloud of Knives: At medium and long ranges, the cloud of needles fired by these nasty weapons has spread out. At medium range, anyone standing within 1 yard of the target may also be hit. At long range, any target standing within 2 yards of the target can potentially be hit. Make attacks against them normally, but the damage rating is reduced by one since these targets are on the periphery of the cloud.

Hard Targets: Needlers lose a great deal of effectiveness against armored targets. If a target is wearing armor that grants at least a +1 protection rating, increase the protection rating by 1 point. Thus, armor with a protection of one counts as armor with a protection of two against a needler.

Silent: Since needlers are virtually silent when they fire, any attempt to locate the source of the attack suffers a Test Modifier of -4.

Increasing the Rate of Fire

Weapons may be modified in an attempt to increase their rate of fire – this requires competency in the Armorer skill. If the weapon being modified is not normally an automatic weapon, the Degree for this Test is Hard. If it is normally automatic, the Degree is Incredibly Hard.

Success on a non-automatic weapon increases its Shot rating by one. For example, if a CD-42 Peacemaker is successfully modified, it will be able to fire twice each turn instead of once. Failure on this Test has no adverse affect, but you cannot attempt to modify this particular weapon in the same way again.

Success with an automatic weapon increases the number of targets that can be hit, the number of bullets that potentially hit each target, and the number of bullets expended with each attack. Both the number of targets and the number of bullets that may hit each target is increased by one. The number of bullets fired in the attack is increased by twice the new number of bullets fired at each target. For example, if the automatic weapon profile of the firearm is 4/1-5/30, a successful Test would change it to 5/1-6/42. A failure with this Test essentially destroys the firing mechanism of the weapon, making it useless for anything beyond an expensive club.

WEAPONS CATALOGUE

PISTOLS

Pistols are the most common firearm across the New Earth Government and, in fact, across the world itself. Their small size means they are easy to transport, relatively inexpensive to manufacture, and can be highly effective even at point blank ranges where a rifle or other larger weapon becomes a bit too cumbersome. Pistols can be found in all walks of life, from highly skilled military combatants to little old ladies who feel safer at night with the weight of a small pistol in their handbag.

CS-32 “Midnight Special”

The CS-32 is sometimes known as the ‘Granny Gun’ because it has become a popular choice among the population for personal protection. The name arrived as a result of a news vid that showed a grandmother protecting her grandchildren from a group of delinquent youths outside the Chicago Arcology. Its low cost, simple operation, and reliability, even when not properly cared for, all contribute to its popularity. Colt Springfield has even started marketing disposable clips that come pre-loaded, making the weapon even easier to use. Unfortunately its small size also limits its damage potential and the weapon is almost useless against anyone wearing anything but the lightest armor.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Colt Springfield
<i>Legality:</i>	PA
<i>Type:</i>	Small Autopistol
<i>Cost:</i>	250 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	2.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15/30/50
<i>Damage:</i>	0
<i>Shots:</i>	3
<i>Rounds:</i>	15 (Caseless)

CS-40 “Defender”

While a number of other firearms are in common use, the CS-40 is by far the preferred and most common sidearm in use by New Earth Government law enforcement and military branches. The Defender is well-known for its stopping power, even against targets that have a moderate level of armor, though that is only part of the reason the weapon is so well-liked. Utilizing a unique self-lubricating system, the CS-40 is virtually maintenance free. Even after heavy use, the most work an owner of one of these weapons will be in for is a quickly swab of the barrel to remove any powder residue and a visual inspection to search for any abnormal wear and tear. A final feature of this weapon is the self-ejecting clip. When a clip empties it automatically ejects itself from the gun saving the user a step in reloading the weapon. This feature can be set to fully eject the clip or to simply pop it free and allow the user to pull it the rest of the way out.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Colt Springfield
<i>Legality:</i>	PA
<i>Type:</i>	Medium Autopistol

<i>Cost:</i>	495 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	3.6 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15/30/50
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	15

CS-42 “Peacemaker”

Another Colt Springfield weapon, the Peacemaker has never managed to gain the popularity of its brother, the Enforcer, due to its heavier weight and slower rate of fire. The Peacemaker is a monster pistol, the heaviest on the legal market, with a very intimidating look that tends to get whoever it is aimed at to back down unless they are really serious about mixing things up. The heavy 15mm ammo used by this weapon can punch through even heavy body armor, though it is still useless against even the lightest powered armor. Even when it doesn’t manage to pierce armor the impact will often stagger the target long enough for follow up fire to finally take him down.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Colt Springfield
<i>Legality:</i>	P
<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Autopistol
<i>Cost:</i>	750 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	15 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.2 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	20/40/60
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	15

CS-44 “Enforcer”

The Enforcer is the primary heavy pistol sold by Colt Springfield and will likely be completely replacing the older, and far less popular, CS-42. In many ways this weapon is similar to the CS-40 Defender and with good reason – much of the technology that went into the CS-40 was refined upon and integrated into the Enforcer. Despite the heavy appearance of the Enforcer, the weapon is actually relatively light and much more wieldy than the older Peacemaker. It utilizes the same 15 mm caliber ammunition but has been fitted to fire caseless rounds, which means there is no need for an ejection port. The gasses created in the firing of the weapon are vented upward, safely away from the user, and also act to counter some of the natural climb weapons this size tend to exhibit when fired rapidly.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Colt Springfield
<i>Legality:</i>	P
<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Autopistol
<i>Cost:</i>	850 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	15 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.1 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	20/40/60
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	15 (Caseless)

CS-32 MIDNIGHT SPECIAL



CS-40 DEFENDER



CS-42 PEACEMAKER



CS-44 ENFORCER



MP-6A1



AR-25



UT-9 STINGER



UT-7 HORNET



HKS-192



M-87 SHOTGUN



FN-GAL



GSL-MKII



MP15-9



LCG



RMG-14



SM-14



RG-3



FN-MAG10



RG-11



SSG-6000



GSL-MG



RG-21



ESR-99



RMG-10A



MP-6A1

The MP-6A1 Machine Pistol is a fairly unique entity in the personal firearms market. While nearly all modern pistols are automatic in design, the MP-6A1 is a fully automatic pistol. When in automatic mode, a single pull of the trigger lets fly 15 rounds in less than 2 seconds enabling someone to lay down limited suppressive fire. While not as impressive as a true assault rifle, it is still an impressive display out of such a small weapon. Optionally the weapon can be set to semi-automatic fire, in which case it can maintain pace with more popular pistols such as the Defender and Enforcer. The nature of this weapon has led to it being a restricted item inside New Earth Government territory and possession of one without a proper license carries a stiff penalty.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Heckler Koch and Sig
<i>Legality:</i>	RA
<i>Type:</i>	Machine Pistol
<i>Cost:</i>	1095 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	10/20/40
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	2 or 2/1-5/15
<i>Rounds:</i>	30 (Caseless)

NIP-10 Needle Pistol

The NIP-10 is the most produced pistol that Norinco manufactures. It is, for all intents and purposes, a poor copy of the UT-9 Stinger. Ultratech has taken Norinco to court on a number of occasions for this, as well as other weapons, but the Chrysalis Corporation is a difficult opponent in a court of law. With its ability to gain virtual monopolies and control distribution in the more rural parts of the world, Norinco is able to demand a premium for these pistols despite their shortcomings and the availability of higher quality and less expensive competing models.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Norinco
<i>Legality:</i>	PA
<i>Type:</i>	Medium Needle Pistol
<i>Cost:</i>	575 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	3.75 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	10/25/40
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3
<i>Rounds:</i>	15 (Needle)

UT-7 “Hornet”

Another favorite in the realm of personal protection, the UT-7 is a small needler auto pistol. One of the few entries in the personal firearms category by Ultratech, it has all the hallmarks one expects from a weapon built by the high-tech company. The weapon is equipped with a high capacity magazine as standard and utilizes a digital readout to inform the user how many rounds remain. As with most needlers, there is never a need to recharge the gas propellant as each clip has a tank built into

it. The Hornet’s body is made of a strong but incredibly light polymer that is machined out of a single piece. Due to legal requirements however small metal strips are integrated into this polymer on the interior surfaces that will trigger any weapon detectors. These strips cannot be removed without destroying the body of the weapon.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Ultratech
<i>Legality:</i>	PA
<i>Type:</i>	Small Needle Pistol
<i>Cost:</i>	350 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	2.1 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15/30/45
<i>Damage:</i>	0
<i>Shots:</i>	3
<i>Rounds:</i>	15 (Needle)

UT-9 “Stinger”

A heavier version of the Hornet, the UT-9 has quickly gained notoriety for its effectiveness against unarmored targets. Outside the relative safety of the arcologies, these weapons have become very popular in the hands of gangs as their silent nature allows a potential attacker to hit his target from cover and escape without anyone knowing where to look for him. The UT-9 does have a minor design flaw that has prevented it from becoming as popular as its smaller cousin. The mechanism that controls the release of propellant into the firing chamber has a tendency to wear early and uses more propellant than necessary when triggered. This, in turn, sometimes leads to the propellant being expended before the entirety of the clip has been fired.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Ultratech
<i>Legality:</i>	PA
<i>Type:</i>	Medium Needle Pistol
<i>Cost:</i>	650 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	3.2 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15/30/45
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3
<i>Rounds:</i>	18 (Needle)

ASSAULT RIFLES

The mainstay of infantry forces across the world, the assault rifle is one of the most flexible forms of personal firearms available. With the ability to selectively fire single shots, bursts, or fully automatic the weapon is useful in just about every scenario in which a soldier can find himself. However, as is the case with all rifle-type weapons, when the battle gets close and personal the assault rifle can prove to be cumbersome and loses a great deal of its effectiveness.

AR-25

The AR-25 assault rifle is an evolution of the ArmaLite AR-15, a weapon that was more commonly known as the M-16 after Colt Springfield purchased the rights to the weapon from the now de-

funct company. The AR-25 is in wide use by the New Earth Government military. Underworld elements also use this weapon to help enforce their will on the streets, though possession of it is a crime that carries significant penalties. As with nearly all assault rifles, this weapon can be fired in single, burst, or full auto modes as the situation dictates. The primary drawback to this weapon, and one that competitors are quick to point out, is the relatively small-sized clip requiring users to carry more clips than most assault rifles of this caliber.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Colt Springfield
<i>Legality:</i>	RA
<i>Type:</i>	Light Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	1495 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	6.2 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	30/75/200
<i>Damage:</i>	0
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	60 (Caseless)

FN-GAL

A unique firearm for Fabrique Nationale, the FN-GAL is their only entry into the electrokinetic arena. Even then, the weapon has been licensed from Elektroarms and is not a home-brewed product relieving the company of the normal risks associated with developing such high-tech weaponry. As a heavy assault rifle, the GAL performs well. With a larger clip than the HKS entry into the class, the weapon requires less frequent clip changes reducing the vulnerability of soldiers who carry it. However the weapon's electronics are notoriously touchy and poorly sealed against the elements and thus requires constant maintenance by those who use the weapon. This is perhaps the main reason the weapon has not become a standard in the New Earth Government Armed Forces and why Elektroarms has opted to license out its manufacture rather than keep the weapon in house.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Fabrique Nationale
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Gauss Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	2195 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	6.8 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	45/90/220
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 3/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	60 (Caseless)

HKS-192

Designed and manufactured by Heckler Koch and Sig, the HKS-192 is a solid, reliable weapon that sees regular use by the military in the heaviest regions of conflict. Its heavy hitting 9mm rounds ensures that even the most stubborn creature will be dispatched with all due haste. The HKS-192 has been designed for extended use on the front lines and has a number of features to ensure its reliability. The barrel can be replaced in less than 30 seconds should the need arise. The bulk of the inte-

rior components are sealed to prevent dirt and contaminants from gumming things up. A dust cover automatically snaps into place whenever a clip is removed further ensuring nothing gets up inside the weapon that should not. For these reasons, the HKS-192 is the assault rifle of choice among most New Earth Government military personnel. Unfortunately, the weapon has a notoriously small clip that leads to frequent ammo changes, though many armorers make their own custom clips.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Heckler Koch & Sig
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	2050 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	6.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	30/75/200
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 3/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	30 (Caseless)

LCG

Until recently, the LCG was the lightest gauss weapon in existence. As with all gauss weapons, the LCG utilizes a series of superconducting magnets that accelerate the round being fired down the barrel to super-sonic velocities. The weapon has a unique appearance that is unmistakable. In an effort to keep the weight to a minimum, the barrel is open on the top and bottom. The accelerating magnets are encased in a protective shell along each side of the weapon. These two lengths are joined together at the business end of the weapon in order to ensure they do not flex when the weapon is subjected to violent and abrupt movements.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Steyr Mannlicher
<i>Legality:</i>	RA
<i>Type:</i>	Light Gauss Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	1650 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	40/85/210
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	90 (Caseless)

NIR-05

The NIR-05 is a light rail assault rifle built by Norinco Inc. Like most of their weapons, this one is based heavily upon the works of others. However, in an unusual move for the company, they have actually managed to obtain a licensing agreement to build the weapon which is a virtual copy of the Armormcorp RG-3. Unfortunately, shoddy manufacturing practices and substandard materials makes the weapon a very poor knockoff. While significantly cheaper than the real thing, only those who can't get their hands on the higher quality RG-3 settle for this weapon. In particular, this weapon's energy system suffers from an even worse failure rate than the RG-3, tending to fail frequently when used in any mode other than single shot.

When fired in any mode other than single shot, there is a chance the power system on this weapon will fail. If more ones are rolled than tens in the attack the power system fails. The attack is resolved normally but the weapon is useless until it can be repaired.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Norinco Inc.
<i>Legality:</i>	RA
<i>Type:</i>	Light Rail Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	500 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	7.0 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	50/85/220
<i>Damage:</i>	0
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 3/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	90 (Needle)

NIR-09

Like its smaller cousin, the NIR-09 is a licensed version of an Armorcorp assault rifle, the RG-11. Unlike the poorly built NIR-05 the 09 is surprisingly well built and tends to be much more reliable than most Norinco weapons. However, the price difference between the RG-11 and NIR-09 are not nearly as severe as those between the NIR-05 and the RG-3. One reason for the success of the NIR-09 lies in the fact that Norinco purchases some of the components directly from Armorcorp rather than manufacturing them on their own. This means they are of higher quality and more reliable. However, pressure from other companies for Armorcorp to sever all ties with the largely unpopular firm may see an end to this supply and an accompanying drop in quality of the NIR-09.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Norinco
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Rail Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	2000 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	7.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	50/100/200
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 3/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	60 (Needle)

RG-3

Armorcorp's entry into the light assault rifle market is the RG-3. The RG-3 was initially developed by Armorcorp to test the superconductive magnets they were developing for use in electrokinetic weapons. As development on the magnets continued, Armorcorp execs decided to try and reclaim some of the exorbitant costs associated with the research by turning the test weapon into an actual production model. While the initial reception of the weapon was good, limitations of the weapon soon caused the public's perception to sour somewhat. With an initial function of being a development platform for the research field, endurance was not of top priority. As a result, the power systems that energize the magnets have a tendency to fail after prolonged use. This makes any extensive use on a war front questionable at

best. However, for purposes of security within more stable areas, the weapon has proven its worth and sales have steadied at an acceptable level.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Armorcorp
<i>Legality:</i>	RA
<i>Type:</i>	Light Rail Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	1750 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	6.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	60/110/240
<i>Damage:</i>	0
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	90 (Needle)

RG-11

The RG-11 was developed from the lesson learned with the RG-3. From the start, the weapon was slated for field use, rather than as a development platform, as the RG-3 had begun life. The power systems in the RG-11 are state of the art and utilize a primary/backup configuration that has led to a weapon that has had no reported power failure in the field since its introduction four years ago. In addition, each rail has a dedicated capacitor that ensures there will be no interruptions in power during a firing cycle. While the military is reluctant to field electrokinetic weapons on a large scale, the reputation the RG-11 has gained has begun to open those doors and even now Armorcorp is negotiating a deal to provide over 100,000 units to the troops fighting along the Asian front.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Armorcorp
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Rail Assault Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	2250 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	7.2 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	60/140/270
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 3/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	60 (Needle)

SHOTGUNS

Shotguns, sometimes referred to as street sweepers, are highly effective weapons at close range. They can fire either a slug which will punch through just about any armor or an area-affecting spray of shot. Shotguns are not a weapon of finesse - they are one of the most brutal personal firearms available.

M-6 Pistol Grip Shotgun

Where most shotguns require two hands to wield, the M-6's grip has been designed to allow the firer to use it with one hand, though it will not be the most accurate way to fire it. Like most shotguns, the M-6 can fire either slugs or shot depending on the situation. Unfortunately, there is only a single clip and no way to select between differing shot types, so a user must plan ahead. As with most shotguns, the M-6 has a low rate of fire and a limited clip size.

Manufacturer: Benelli
Legality: PA
Type: Shotgun
Cost: 650 Tn
Caliber: Slug or Shot
Weight: 6.6 lbs loaded
Range (yards): Shot 10/20/30
 Slug 15/30/50
Damage: Shot +2 or Slug +3
Shots: 1
Rounds: 5

M-65 Double-Barrel Shotgun

When you want to intimidate someone, point an M-65 at them. With two barrels on the business end, the weapon is likely to cause anyone facing it down to rethink their plans. The M-65 is a very simple weapon which is devoid even of a magazine. Instead, after firing you simply pop the barrels open, dump the expended shells, and put two new ones in. The two barrels can be triggered at the same time or separately and the two barrels do not have to be loaded with the same type of shell.

Before rolling any dice, the attacker must declare how many barrels are being fired. If both barrels are being fired, the damage bonus for a successful hit is increased by one in the case of shot or two if slugs are being fired. Both barrels must be loaded with the same type of shell to be fired together.

Manufacturer: Benelli
Legality: PA
Type: Shotgun
Cost: 600 Tn
Caliber: Slug or Shot
Weight: 7.5 lbs loaded
Range (yards): Shot 10/20/30
 Slug 15/30/50
Damage: Shot +2 or Slug +3
Shots: 1 (both barrels fired)
 or 2 (fired separately)
Rounds: 2

M-87 Auto Loading Shotgun

The M-87 is the standard by which most other shotguns are measured. With a large clip (for a shotgun anyway) and a reliable ejection mechanism for spent shells, the M-87 has a good rate-of-fire. A single barrel model, the M-87 is capable of firing either shot or slug shells, though there is no ability to select one over the other if both types have been loaded into the magazine.

Manufacturer: Benelli
Legality: PA
Type: Shotgun
Cost: 625 Tn
Caliber: Slug or Shot
Weight: 6.6 lbs loaded
Range (yards): Shot 15/30/45
 Slug 20/40/60

Damage: Shot +2 or Slug +3
Shots: 3
Rounds: 10

NIS-88 Shotgun

The NIS-88 is a knock-off copy of the Benelli M-87 though it is inferior in almost every aspect. While the weapon is reliable, the loading mechanism is slower than the real thing, reducing the rate of fire slightly. The standard magazine also holds fewer shells, but the NIS-88 can accept an M-87's magazine so owners can get a larger magazine if they really want one. In fact, nearly every part on the NIS-88 can be swapped for those of the M-87.

Manufacturer: Norinco
Legality: PA
Type: Shotgun
Cost: 525 Tn
Caliber: Slug or Shot
Weight: 7.0 lbs loaded
Range (yards): Shot 10/20/30
 Slug 15/30/50
Damage: Shot +2 or Slug +3
Shots: 2
Rounds: 6

SUBMACHINE GUNS

Submachine guns fill the void between the assault rifle and the pistol. Smaller, lighter, and more agile than assault rifles, they are better suited for close-in operations. SMGs have the cyclic rate of most assault rifles, but tend to have shorter ranges comparable to a typical pistol. Police forces favor these weapons over traditional assault rifles, since much of their work occurs in the close confines of an urban environment. They are also a favorite of underworld elements, since they are easier to keep concealed than an assault rifle but still spray out the bullets like a fountain.

GSL-MK II

When the original GSL was released, Electroarms promoted it as the ultimate in high cyclic close range weaponry. Unfortunately a major design flaw reared its ugly head about six months after the introduction of the weapon. The magnets used in the acceleration rails had a tendency to develop micro fractures that caused the magnetic field they generated to destabilize and fire rounds off at odd trajectories. After an internal investigation, the flaw turned out to be related to the manufacture of the magnets and the weapon had to be recalled. Almost a year later Electroarms introduced the MK II version of the weapon to a lukewarm reception, but time has shown that they did correct the flaws of the original and the weapon is slowly increasing in popularity and sales. In addition to correcting the flaws in the magnet manufacturing process, the company added small touches such as digital counters on the back end of the weapon and an auto-ejection option when the clip runs dry.

Manufacturer: Electroarms
Legality: RA

Type: Light Gauss SMG
Cost: 2250 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 5.6 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 25/40/60
Damage: +2
Shots: 3 or 4/1-5/30
Rounds: 60 (Needle)

MP15-9

The MP15-9 has taken on a sort of legendary status in the eyes of the public. Many view it as almost romantic. This odd perception of an adequate, at best, weapon is due to the way it has been portrayed and romanticized in the media. It is the weapon of choice for crime vid directors across all the arcologies. The truth though is that while the MP15-9 gets the job done, there is really nothing spectacular about the weapon. Unlike many modern weapons, it is prone to jamming as it utilizes older jacketed ammunition instead of the more modern caseless ammo that many current weapons use. It also suffers from an odd clip size. The clip holds 45 rounds, which is more than enough for a single full burst, but not nearly enough for two. Many expected a larger 60 round clip to be introduced, but HK&S have yet seen fit to do so. Despite these shortcomings, its low price keeps it a regular seller for the company.

Manufacturer: Heckler Koch & Sig
Legality: RA
Type: Light Submachinegun
Cost: 1395 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 5.7 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 15/30/50
Damage: +1
Shots: 3 or 4/1-5/30
Rounds: 45

RMG-14

With 25% more range and almost twice the stopping power, Armorcorp's RMG-14 has overshadowed the GSL-MK II. The RMG-14 has become a common sight in Armorcorp corporate sale sheets and the weapon has become standard issue for nearly all Chrysalis Corporation security forces. The weapon has integrated every advance the company has made in the design and manufacture of superconducting magnets for use in electrokinetic weapons. The weapon's magazine, as in many SMGs, is its biggest drawback, but Armorcorp has managed to even minimize this through the introduction of the 'In/Out Magazine Breach'. Unlike most weapons, there is no need to eject an expended clip before inserting the new one. Instead the new clip slides in one side while pushing the empty clip out the opposite. Even more impressive is the fact that this can be done in either direction meaning the weapon does not favor left or right handedness.

Manufacturer: Armorcorp
Legality: R

Type: Heavy Rail SMG
Cost: 2795 Tn
Caliber: 10 mm
Weight: 6.8 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 20/40/80
Damage: +1
Shots: 3 or 4/1-5/30
Rounds: 30 (Needle)

SM-14

When Colt Springfield introduced the SM-14, it was met with a great deal of enthusiasm by the military and various security organizations. Excellent stopping power, agility and a simple, yet elegant design made the weapon a dream for many people. Once out in the field, the enthusiasm for the weapon continued. Despite using jacketed ammunition, the weapon virtually never jams. The integrated flashlight and laser sight are built into the shell of the weapon, eliminating the need for additional peripherals for most circumstances. The primary drawback to the weapon lies in the small clip, which generally runs dry after a single sustained burst of fire.

Manufacturer: Colt Springfield
Legality: R
Type: Heavy Submachinegun
Cost: 1950 Tn
Caliber: 10 mm
Weight: 6.1 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 15/30/50
Damage: +2
Shots: 3 or 4/1-5/30
Rounds: 30

MACHINE GUNS

Where assault rifles are the work horses of modern war, the machine gun is the Clydesdale. They are the heavy hitters with the range and firepower to bring down even the most obstinate target. Only full powered armor or large targets present any sort of difficulty for these weapons. Typical machine guns are belt fed and designed to be used from static positions. Most are mounted on tripods or, at a minimum, have a bi-pod that helps the firer keep the weapon stable. Only the lightest versions of these weapons can be called portable. Machine guns are often found mounted onto light vehicles to provide that vehicle some sort of defense.

FN-MAGiC

The Magic, as most simply call it, is famous for the firepower the weapon is capable of directing towards the enemy. The weapon utilizes two fire settings. The first low-fire rate is used when a local suppression of the enemy is needed. The higher rate-of-fire is used when especially heavy targets need to be put down or the firer simply wants to put the fear of God into his enemy. While many extol the sheer firepower of the weapon, critics point out its higher-than-average jam rate. Regardless of which side of the line you are on, no one can argue the weapon's success in the market.

Manufacturer: Fabrique Nationale
Legality: R
Type: Medium Machinegun
Cost: 2950 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 14.50 lbs empty
Range (yards): 75/500/1000
Damage: +1
Shots: 4/1-5/30 or 8/1-10/80
Rounds: 100 or 500 (Belt)

GSL-MG

This light machine gun is popular with special operations teams as it is light enough to be humped across country, but puts out enough firepower to suppress even the most determined enemy. The GSL-MG has a built in bi-pod that allows it to be ready to fire in a matter of seconds. It also has a built in tri-pod coupling for when it is employed in a more static position. Ammunition is fed via a belt system, with belts being available in either 100 or 500 round lengths.

Manufacturer: Electroarms Inc
Legality: R
Type: Light Gauss Machinegun
Cost: 2450 Tn
Caliber: 5mm
Weight: 13.75 lbs empty
Range (yards): 75/450/1200
Damage: 0
Shots: 6/1-10/60
Rounds: 100 or 500 (Belt, Needle)

RMG-10A

The RMG-10A is Armorcorp's entry in the heavy machinegun market. Designed with sheer firepower in mind, the RMG-10A can match the FN-MAGiC in cyclic rate. Unlike that weapon, however, the RMG-10A does not have a lower setting, so this weapon tends to chew through ammo like no other. In addition, the bulkiness of the weapon requires a solid mounting and is almost always used from a prepared static position or mounted to a vehicle. The 10A also enjoys a slight range advantage over the MAGiC, though it is minor at best. Unique to this weapon, however, is the computer interface that allows it to be quickly hooked to an optional automated turret that will allow the weapon to be used as a remote sentry system.

Manufacturer: Armorcorp
Legality: R
Type: Heavy Rail Machinegun
Cost: 3495 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 14.75 lbs empty
Range (yards): 75/500/1050
Damage: +3
Shots: 4/1-5/30 or 8/1-10/80
Rounds: 100 or 500 (Belt)

SNIPER RIFLES

Sniper rifles are built with one goal in mind – the elimination of a high-value target from as far away as possible. As a result, many of the normal design elements found in a modern firearm are completely ignored in one of these weapons. Rather than concentrate on the cyclic rate of the weapon, the designers work to ensure the targeting and trajectory elements are as refined and flawless as possible. Some of these weapons can fire from such distance that they have built in fire control computers that take into account gravity, the spin of the earth, barometric pressure, and more. High-end sniper rifles can cost a staggering amount.

ESR-99 Sniper Rifle

The ESR is a top of the line sniper rifle with a range greater than any other currently on the market. Everything about the weapon screams high-tech, from the 200X digital telescopic scope to the built-in flight characteristic computer that firers use to compute targeting offsets based on wind, barometric pressure, and even the spin of the earth. Built with ultra-light high-tech composites and able to be broken into parts that are small enough to fit in a large briefcase, the weapon is the ultimate assassin's tool.

This weapon can be broken down for transport in five turns (15 seconds) and assembled again in seven turns. The weapon must be fired using the integral bi-pod, from a stationary position – it is too unwieldy to be fired in any other manner. If the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the turn prior to making the attack, all range penalties are ignored.

Manufacturer: Electroarms
Legality: R
Type: Sniper Rifle
Cost: 6,250 Tn
Caliber: 15 mm
Weight: 14.25 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 300/1200/3600
Damage: +4
Shots: 1
Rounds: 1

NSR-88 Sniper Rifle

The NSR-88 is the Norinco equivalent of the RG-21. Built with cost in mind rather than quality, the weapon does not break down as well as the RG-21, making it more difficult to both transport and maintain. To get over the typical energy problems Norinco electrokinetic weapons tend to suffer from, the 88 uses replaceable capacitors rather than the traditional D-Cell energy cell. The capacitors hold enough energy for about a dozen shots before having to be replaced and, while less convenient than a D-Cell that generally does not need replacing, the NSR-88 exhibits none of the energy system flaws to which Norinco users have grown accustomed.

After firing a dozen shots, a user of an 88 must replace the capacitor. This is done just like swapping magazines. Capacitors cost 25 Tn and can be recharged between uses.

Manufacturer: Norinco
Legality: R
Type: Rail Sniper rifle
Cost: 2950 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 10.0 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 105/515/1000
Damage: +3
Shots: 3
Rounds: 12

SSG-6000

Heckler Koch and Sig's SSG-6000 Sniper Rifle is the most widely used sniper rifle in the world. While it does not have the longest range or a fancy fire control system, its simple, no nonsense design and solid construction means that, even in the harshest conditions found on Earth, the firer always knows that when he pulls the trigger the target in his scope will feel his wrath. The SSG-6000 is most commonly employed as a support weapon in an infantry platoon, giving the platoon counter-sniper capabilities. The sniper can also cover the advance of his platoon from the rear, taking out potential targets to which the platoon may not have a good line of fire – or may not have noticed.

Manufacturer: Heckler Koch & Sig
Legality: R
Type: Sniper Rifle
Cost: 2750 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 8.5 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 75/500/1250
Damage: +3
Shots: 1
Rounds: 12

RG-21

The RG-21 is Armorcorp's answer to the older and much more popular SSG-6000. Designed to fill the same role as the SSG, the RG-21 has thus far failed to catch the attention of the powers that be. While it has a modest increase in range and a higher rate of fire, the significantly higher price tag or more finicky rail system means that soldiers in the field simply have not grown to trust the weapon. Only time will tell whether this model will manage to gain a following or will be relegated to the sale bin. However, there are those who believe that electrokinetic weapons are the only way to go, and they are avid RG-21 supporters.

Manufacturer: Armorcorp
Legality: R
Type: Rail Sniper rifle
Cost: 3995 Tn
Caliber: 9 mm
Weight: 9.25 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 105/530/1450
Damage: +3
Shots: 3
Rounds: 15

SPECIAL PURPOSE WEAPONS

Special Purpose Weapons is a catchall category into which weapons and firearms that do not fill the normal categories get lumped. Many of these weapons include non-lethal weapons such as tasers and bean-bag guns, but other exotic weapon systems can also found within this category. Presented here are three kinds of non-lethal weapons for use in multiple situations.

BB-2 Beatdown Gun

The BB-2 looks like a grenade launcher in many respects. It is a large tube with a trigger, but where a magazine would normally be is a can of compressed air. This weapon fires a bean bag at high velocity at the target, stunning but not hurting him. One can of air has enough pressure to fire a dozen bean bags. The beanbags themselves are loaded simply by dropping them down the front of the barrel. These weapons are used to suppress riots and bring difficult targets down when the goal is to capture rather than kill.

Treat the BB-2 as if it had a Damage of +2 when determining 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. Anyone affected by the Beatdown Gun must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist this. 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 when struck by the bean bag and the effect of the stun is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last shot.

Manufacturer: Armorcorp
Legality: G
Type: Impact
Cost: 100Tn
Caliber: n/a
Weight: 4 lbs (loaded)
Range (yards): 5/10/20
Damage: +2 (Stun)
Shots: 1
Rounds: 12

Fumigator 2000

Marketed as the ultimate personal protection device, the Fumigator is nothing more than a small can of gas that can be hung from a belt loop, purse, or even carried in the palm of someone's hand. The gas inside is a severe irritant when sprayed in the vicinity of a target's eyes, nose, mouth, or other mucous membranes. The victim of the gas will suffer from burning and tearing (in the case of the eyes) and, when inhaled, will suffer from severe nausea. Basically, it will keep someone off balance and distracted long enough for a potential crime victim to flee the area or call for help. The gas inside breaks down quickly, so there is no fear of it affecting others that may be nearby.

This weapon is only effective if the target is mortal and has an unprotected face – particularly the eyes and nose or mouth. As

long as the user of the Fumigator wins the Combat Contest, the victim will then suffer the effects of the spray. Armor does not protect against these effects, unless said armor protects the victim's face – in which case it simply blocks the spray. Anyone affected by the Fumigator must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist this. 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 when struck by the spray and the effect of the stun is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last spray.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Bugkiller LLC
<i>Legality:</i>	G
<i>Type:</i>	Pepper Spray
<i>Cost:</i>	25 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	n/a
<i>Weight:</i>	.25 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	1/2/3
<i>Damage:</i>	(Stun)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	10

Model 18 Taser

Like the many tasers before it, the Model 18 taser works by hitting the target with a brutal jolt of electricity in order to overload his system and incapacitate him for a short period of time. Nicknamed the Viper by many of the law enforcement officers that use it, the Model 18 fires a pair of barbed darts that trail a monofilament wire used to transmit the electrical shock. As a result, the weapon has a very short range – it is generally employed at less than ten feet. Unlike its predecessor, the Model-18 utilizes a small cartridge that contains five darts, meaning the user does not have to reload the weapon after each shot.

Treat the Model 18 as if it had a Damage of +0 when determining 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. Anyone affected by the taser must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist this. 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 when struck by the taser 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.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Ultratech
<i>Legality:</i>	G
<i>Type:</i>	Advanced Taser
<i>Cost:</i>	395 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	.75 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	5/10/15
<i>Damage:</i>	+0 (Stun)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	5 (Darts)

GRENADES AND GRENADE LAUNCHERS

Grenades have existed almost as long as black powder weapons. They typically exist in two distinct forms – hand-thrown and launched. Hand-thrown grenades are basically timed bombs. The user triggers the timer, then throws the grenade at the target. Grenades are excellent weapons for tailoring the type of attack one is delivering to the enemy. Some are deadly explosive bombs that throw shrapnel all about them, others deliver gas to debilitate the enemy, and a few are even simply used to create cover or mark a position with smoke. The unfortunate truth of grenades, however, is that they are extremely limited in range – no further than a man can throw them. To solve this problem the grenade launcher was introduced.

Grenade launchers allow grenades to be delivered at much longer distances. Such weapons come in two distinct varieties: mounted and self-contained. Mounted grenade launchers are typically attached to an assault rifle or similar firearm. These grenade launchers typically hold a single grenade that must be reloaded between shots, though a few models are known to hold as many as three. Self-contained launchers will typically have a magazine that holds as many as a dozen grenades. These operate like most any other firearm – point and pull the trigger.

Deathmaster 2000

While the name of Armorcorp's grenade launcher may raise a few eyebrows and get a chuckle or two, it is descriptive of what the weapon is able to dish out. With a thirteen-round selectable magazine and a solid rate of fire (for a grenade launcher) anyone using this weapon is able to put multiple grenades on one or more targets within a few seconds. In addition, a basic targeting system tells the user approximately how far the grenade will travel based on the angle the weapon is raised, making it relatively accurate. The Deathmaster is a very popular support weapon in the New Earth Government ranks.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Armorcorp
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Grenade Launcher
<i>Cost:</i>	850 Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	40 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.25 lbs (unloaded)
<i>Range (yards):</i>	50/100/300
<i>Damage:</i>	by grenade
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	13

HKS-80 Grenade Launcher

The HKS-80 is a single shot, one-handed grenade launcher. It is simply a short hollow tube with a trigger attached to a pistol grip. Users insert the grenade in the back end, snap it closed, and fire. The HKS-80 is a bare-bones weapon with no targeting system, requiring the firer's experience to put the grenade on target. At short ranges, the grenade can pretty much be fired directly at the target, but at moderate and longer ranges the user must learn to judge how much arc to give the grenade to hit.

Manufacturer: Heckler Koch & Sig
Legality: R
Type: Grenade Launcher
Cost: 310 Tn
Caliber: 40 mm
Weight: 2.25 lbs (unloaded)
Range (yards): 50/100/300
Damage: by grenade
Shots: 1
Rounds: 1

Manufacturer: Colt Springfield
Legality: R
Type: Grenade Launcher
Cost: 450 Tn
Caliber: 40 mm
Weight: 1.75 lbs (unloaded)
Range (yards): 50/100/300
Damage: by grenade
Shots: 1
Rounds: 4

M-303 Grenade Launcher

The M-303 is the current iteration of the common under-slung grenade launcher. The weapon is designed to mount under the barrel of most assault rifles, as well as some of the larger sub-machine guns, and provides the soldier extra firepower. The M-303 has a small four-round magazine. While different grenades can be put in the magazine, it operates on a strictly first-in-last-out principal so there is no way to select the grenade you wish to fire. In most combat operations, at least one member of a squad will be equipped with a M-303 to help break loose entrenched enemies. They are also common among law enforcement, loaded with tear gas grenades.

FFB-1 Incendiary Hand Grenade

The FFB-1 utilizes a phosphorous compound to create a large fiery explosion that has the tendency to stick to and continue to burn anything or anyone unlucky enough to be caught in the grenade's detonation. Many consider this type of weapon to be far too cruel a weapon to be used in war, but given the nature of the war and the enemies, most of the cries have gone unheard.

Anything caught within the burst of one of these grenades will continue to burn (+1 damage) until it has been put out. The phosphorous will burn itself out after four turns. To stop said damage requires success at a Challenging Agility or Medicine

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RRG-55 THUMPER



VIRCATOR EMP-6



RPG-27 ROCKET LAUNCHER



RMG-10M ANTI-MECHA RECOILLESS RIFLE



RPG-11 ROCKET LAUNCHER



RPG-7 ROCKET LAUNCHER



FLM-666 BRIMSTONE



M303 GRENADE LAUNCHER



ACML-99 EXTINCT



HF-5 HELLSTORM



HKS-80 GRENADE LAUNCHER



GRENADES



DEATHMASTER 2000



EML-4 CROSSBOW

Test by the person trying to put out or remove the phosphorous, as well as success at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test for the victim to hold still long enough to allow the phosphorous to be removed. Simply throwing water of the phosphorous will not stop it from burning.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Thrown
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Incendiary
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	10
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Cost:</i>	45 Tn

M-486 Incendiary Grenade

The M-486 is a launcher variant of the FFB-1. Beyond the additional range the launcher offers, the grenade itself operates in the same manner as the hand thrown variety. It follows the same rules as those presented above.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Launcher
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Incendiary
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	10
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Cost:</i>	50 Tn

L7A2 Fragmentation Grenade

Oftentimes referred to simply as a Frag, the L7A2 is the standard grenade used by the New Earth Government military. It is nothing more than a small bomb whose shell has been designed to fragment into thousands of tiny slivers of metal, which then tear through armor and flesh alike. These weapons are highly effective against infantry and other soft targets, but do not do much against an armored vehicle or mecha beyond singeing the paint. There are dozens of variants of Frags used across the world.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Thrown
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Fragmentation
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	5 primary/5 secondary
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Cost:</i>	25 Tn

M100 Fragmentation Grenade

The M100 is a larger version of the L7A2 and is designed to be launched from a grenade launcher. The most common use of these weapons is to 'prepare' an entrenched enemy for an assault. Their large explosive radius also means that the firer does not need to be particularly accurate in their targeting. Unlike its smaller cousin, the M100 explodes on impact rather than after a set time.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Launcher
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Fragmentation
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	10 primary/5 secondary

<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Cost:</i>	30 Tn

L9HE-1 HE Grenade

High-explosive grenades like the L9HE-1 are similar to fragmentation grenades, but rather than relying on shrapnel to kill they utilize a high-yield explosive that combines several effects to do the job. First, the basic fireball will incinerate anything caught within it. Second, a massive concussive shockwave is generated that can shatter bones and peel flesh from muscles. Finally, they will kick up any debris in the region and send it flying with enough force to punch through flesh and light armor. These grenades are deadlier than fragmentation, but tend to have a smaller area-of-effect.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Thrown
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	High-Explosive
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	3 primary/3 secondary
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Cost:</i>	35 Tn

L9HE-2 HE Grenade

This hand grenade is a more focused variant of the L9HE-1. It has been designed to concentrate its energy in a smaller area increasing its destructive power, but quickly dissipating in effectiveness. As a result, this grenade requires a more accurate throw but will devastate any enemy it lands near.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Thrown
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	High-Explosive
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	3 primary/1 secondary
<i>Damage:</i>	+3
<i>Cost:</i>	50 Tn

M-481 HE Grenade

The M-481 HE is simply a grenade launcher version of the L9 series, though it is a significantly more destructive version. It has an area-of-effect equivalent to the L9HE-1 but the destructive potential of the L9HE-2, making it the most powerful standard grenade currently in circulation.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Launcher
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	High-Explosive
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	5 primary/5 secondary
<i>Damage:</i>	+3
<i>Cost:</i>	50 Tn

M-482 HEAM Grenade

The 482 is an anti-mecha high-explosive grenade. Where most high-explosive grenades release an omni-directional burst, the M-482 directs the explosive forces in one direction increasing its destructive potential, but severely reducing its area of effect. This is the only way to punch through mech armor.

Delivery: Launcher
Legality: R
Type: High-Explosive
Burst (yards): 2
Damage: +0 Hybrid
Cost: 55 Tn

SG-11 Saren Gas Grenade

Saren nerve gas has long been against international law for use in warfare, but the arrival of ancient, previously unheard of enemies has seen it enter limited use again. Fully aware of the incredibly dangerous nature of weapons like this, a great effort has been made to limit its use. Not only does its employ require special permissions from the highest authority, but the gas itself has been altered so that it rapidly breaks down into its component parts, giving it a very limited radius even in high wind conditions. Possession of one of these weapons without express authorization carries severe penalties, with the minimum being life in prison.

Armor provides no protection from this grenade unless the armor is fully enclosed with a closed environment, such as those offered by powered armor or Spectrashield Heavy Combat Armor. The only way to get one of these grenades is to have it issued specially or to find one on the black market. Even the most closely connected criminal is highly unlikely to have one or even be willing to look for one. Should one be found it will cost a minimum of 5,000 Tn.

Delivery: Thrown
Legality: R
Type: Chemical Gas
Burst (yards): 3
Damage: +6
Cost: Special Issue Only

M-440 Saren Gas Grenade

The M-440 is simply a launcher equivalent of the SG-11. These grenades are even more difficult to get one's hands on and even requesting one will raise a great many red flags. This weapon follows all the rules for the SG-11, with a minimum cost of 7000Tn.

Delivery: Launcher
Legality: R
Type: Chemical Gas
Burst (yards): 5
Damage: +6
Cost: Special Issue Only

M-460 Tear Gas

Tear gas grenades are used to not only provide cover, but to also to partially incapacitate someone. The smoke created by these grenades stings and burns any mucous membrane and partially blinds anyone caught in the area. These grenades are generally used to disorient and handicap a potential criminal before police storm his position.

The smoke of these grenades will not obscure infrared devices but will obscure normal vision (treat as partially obscured). Anyone in the cloud without a breathing device and goggles (such as a gas mask) will need to succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or suffer a -3 Test Penalty to all Actions. This Test Penalty lasts for as long as the subject is within the gas, as well as for 1 to 5 minutes after leaving the gas cloud. This Test must be made each turn while the subject is within the gas, until failed. Multiple failures do not accumulate.

Delivery: Launcher
Legality: R
Type: Chemical Gas/Smoke
Burst (yards): 6
Damage: Obscure/Incapacitate
Cost: 40 Tn

M-580 Parachute Flair

The M-580 is a grenade in name only. Designed to be fired out of any 40 mm grenade launcher, the M-580 is fired up in the sky where it bursts into a bright flare that slowly floats down to the earth. The flare is bright enough that in the day it is easily visible from miles away and at night it can light up the region around it. The flare lasts for about 45 seconds and takes the same length of time to float back to the ground. M-580's can be found in red, white, and yellow flare colors.

Delivery: Launcher
Legality: RA
Type: Illumination
Burst (yards): 2
Damage: Signal/Illumination
Cost: 15Tn

UT-40 Smoke Grenade

Smoke grenades are used by the military and local law enforcement alike for the purposes of providing cover and hiding their activities from prying eyes. They are most often used to set up a wall of smoke, behind which they can reposition in relative safety or advance on the enemy's position safe from any accurate fire. Modern smoke grenades do more than simply spew out smoke. Their emanations are designed to also obscure heat signatures and thus are effective against infrared and similar sighting devices.

Anyone in or behind the smoke cloud created by one of these grenades is considered partially obscured. The smoke will last about one minute in relatively calm conditions.

Delivery: Thrown
Legality: R
Type: Smoke
Burst (yards): 6
Damage: Obscure
Cost: 20 Tn

UT-42 Flash Grenade

Flash grenades are designed to blind, but not otherwise harm, anyone near them when they detonate. These small hand grenades let off a brief but incredibly intense flash of light that will blind anyone who is nearby, providing a breaching police or other force the precious few seconds they need to gain control of the situation.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Thrown
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Flashbang
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	6
<i>Damage:</i>	Blindness
<i>Cost:</i>	20 Tn

Anyone within the burst of the flash must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or be blinded for one to ten turns (roll a single die). If the subject is wearing light-enhancing devices, this becomes a Very Hard Tenacity Feat Test. If the subject is normally blind or wearing eye protection of some sort, he is immune to the grenade. Multiple grenades are not cumulative in their effects, though once blindness has been recovered from the subject can be blinded by subsequent flashes.

UT-45 Concussion Grenade

Concussion grenades detonate with a loud and disorienting, but not otherwise damaging, concussive explosion. They are designed to disorient the target without hurting him and are often used in conjunction with flash grenades.

Anyone caught in the burst of a UT-45 must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or become disoriented for one to ten turns. The subject will suffer a -3 to all Tests during this period. Once affected by a concussion grenade there is no further need to make tests for subsequent grenades until the effects of the first one wears off.

<i>Delivery:</i>	Thrown
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Concussive
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	6
<i>Damage:</i>	Disorient
<i>Cost:</i>	25Tn

ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADES

Rocket Propelled Grenades, or RPGs as they are more commonly known, are very basic weapon systems in the same vein as grenade launchers. They are not much more than a tube, a basic targeting system, and a trigger. Many are targeted with nothing more than the firer looking through a basic iron cross-hair. The Ultratech variety shown below has a slightly more sophisticated targeting system that overlays the projected path the rocket will take and the impact point based on where the launcher is pointed. The grenades fired from these systems are mounted on short-ranged rockets that give them significantly more range than a standard grenade launcher. Without exception these grenades detonate on impact and utilize a shaped charge that helps

it penetrate even the heaviest mecha and tank armors. Most also utilize a safety mechanism that will not allow a rocket to detonate until it has travelled at least 25 yards, though this can be disabled.

RPG-7 Rocket Launcher

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Ultratech
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Rocket Propelled Grenade
<i>Cost:</i>	1050Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	40 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.5 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+0 (Hybrid)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

RPG-11 Rocket Launcher

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Ultratech
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Rocket Propelled Grenade
<i>Cost:</i>	1495Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	70 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.75 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+0 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

RPG-27 Rocket Launcher

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Ultratech
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Rocket Propelled Grenade
<i>Cost:</i>	1995Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	105 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	8.75 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

Vircator EMP-6

The Vircator isn't technically a rocket launcher, but it is a relatively new entry that is somewhat of a departure in modern weapons. Armormcorp developed the EMP-6 at the request of the New Earth Government military as a way of disabling enemy mecha and vehicles without destroying them, so that they might be captured intact for detailed study. The weapon system has had mixed results in the field. While it does disable enemy equipment, it is only a temporary disruption and New Earth Government forces have bare minutes to force the pilot out or find a way to permanently disable the machine without destroying it. This means that the only real targets are those that are isolated.

The Viricator EMP-6 disrupts electrical systems and can momentarily incapacitate machinery. Treat as if it does +1 Hybrid Damage when determining if its attack penetrates armor, though it does no real damage. An attack must do at least one point of damage to cause harm. Any machine affected by the EMP loses 2 Actions per turn for one to five minutes (roll one die), which can effectively reduce a pilot's Actions to zero. Only one Test needs to be made per turn when struck by the EMP and the effect is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last shot.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Armorcorp
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Rocket Propelled Grenade
<i>Cost:</i>	2495Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	105 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	7.5 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Integrity Machine Stun)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

MISSILE LAUNCHERS AND MISSILES

Missile launchers are similar to rocket launchers, superficially. Both are shoulder-fired systems that generally enable the common soldier to take down tanks, aircraft, and mecha. However, that is where the similarity ends. While rockets are basically point and shoot with no true guidance system, missile launchers have highly sophisticated guidance and tracking systems, making them highly accurate but more complex to use.

Using a missile launcher is a two-step operation. First, the operator must obtain a lock on the target being attacked. This requires one action and success at a Contest pitting the user's Support Weapons skill against the target's Pilot or Stealth skill (the target may select which skill to use). If this is successful, a second action must then be taken to fire the missile.

Missiles fired from these launchers have highly efficient targeting systems. Once a lock has been obtained the target profile is fed into the targeting computer in the missile, which will guide it to the target. Hitting the target requires a standard combat Contest, but some missiles provide Contest Bonuses to this roll.

ACML-99 Extinct

The Extinct is UltraTech's primary shoulder-mounted missile launcher system. It utilizes a magazine that can hold up to four missiles and has built in A-Pod lifters to help overcome the inherent weight issue. The magazine can hold different types of missiles and a selector switch allows the operator to easily select which missile he wishes to fire. The system is unfortunately bulky and the complex magazine system takes more time to load than most soldiers like, so it has never gained as much popularity as the smaller Crossbow system.

Selecting the type of missile to fire is a free action. Reloading the magazine requires three actions for each missile.

<i>Type:</i>	Shoulder Fired Missile Launcher
<i>Cost:</i>	6,250Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	120 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	18.5 lbs
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	4

EML-4 Crossbow

Built by Electroarms, the EML is a reloadable shoulder mounted missile launcher. It can accommodate most any standard 120 mm missile and has a smart targeting system that automatically detects the type of missile loaded and activates the appropriate guidance system. These weapons have the advantage of being relatively light, but have a slow rate of fire due to the need to load a new missile after every shot - this missile launcher requires three actions to reload after each shot is fired.

<i>Type:</i>	Shoulder Fired Missile Launcher
<i>Cost:</i>	3570Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	120 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	13.5 lbs
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

MISSILES

CF-5 Cluster Munitions Missile

The Cluster Munitions Missile (or CMM) is designed to cause devastation over a wide area rather than against a single target, and is most effective against infantry, though it has the ability to damage tanks and mecha as well. Unlike most missiles, the CF-5 is not targeted on a specific target, but rather is programmed to detonate over a specific area of the battlefield. When it reaches the designated coordinates, the missile unleashes hundreds of tiny bombs that rain down on a wide area, causing serious devastation in the region. While each bomb is not individually powerful enough to punch through the armor of an Integrity scale vehicle or mecha, it is inevitable that some of them will find weak points they can exploit.

When firing a CF-5, use the rules for Static Targets. If the Test succeeds, then the cluster explodes over the area intended and does damage to everything that can't avoid the blast. If it misses, it deviates as usual, but still explodes to harm whatever is below it.

<i>Type:</i>	Area Saturation Missile
<i>Cost:</i>	850Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	120 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	8.5 lbs
<i>Range (yards):</i>	200/600/1200
<i>Targeting Bonus:</i>	0
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Hybrid)
<i>Burst (yards):</i>	10/20

HEP-6 High Explosive Missile

Primarily designed to clear infantry out of entrenched positions the HEP-6 has a large area-of-effect. Like the CF-5 the HEP-6 is not targeted on a specific target but rather at a specific location. The warhead is programmed to detonated several yards above the surface which makes the ensuing blast all the more effective. What the fiery explosion and shrapnel do not take care of, the massive shock wave generally finishes off. The primary drawback of this weapon is its inability to damage armored vehicles and mecha.

A single action is required to lock the missile at the chosen target point but no opposed test is necessary to do so. Any cover that is not fully enclosed provides no protection from this missile.

Type:	Anti-Personnel Missile
Cost:	775Tn
Caliber:	120 mm
Weight:	9.25 lbs
Range (yards):	200/600/1200
Targeting Bonus:	n/a
Damage:	+2
Burst (yards):	5/10

LAP-4 Armor Piercing Missile

Designed to take down mecha and main battle tanks and large beasts the LAP-4 uses a specially designed shaped charge warhead to punch through almost any armor like paper. So focused is the explosion these warheads give off that there is virtually no chance of anything around the target suffering any damage making the weapon a good precision weapon. These are the most common missile issued to soldiers fighting on the fronts of the Aeon Wars.

Type:	Anti-Armor Missile
Cost:	1100Tn
Caliber:	120 mm
Weight:	9.75 lbs
Range (yards):	200/600/1200
Targeting Bonus:	+1
Damage:	+2 (Integrity)
Burst (yards):	½

MW-1 Multi-Warhead Missile

The MW-1 contains two small warheads inside a single body. Each warhead can be targeted on separate targets as well as the same target. While these warheads are less powerful than a single-warhead missile they provide the user the ability to engage more targets in the same amount of time or to simply give one target more incoming warheads to deal with. When fired the missile takes the two smaller sub-munitions most of the way to the target. The smaller warheads then detach and guide themselves the rest of the distance to the target or targets.

It takes only a single action to target either one or two targets. A single lock-on test is made and each target makes his own op-

posing roll. If targeting a single target then the target makes only a single opposing test (he does not make two tests). When targeting two targets, both targets must be in the same range band (short, medium etc) and in the same general direction from the attacker.

Type:	Anti-Armor Missile
Cost:	820Tn
Caliber:	120 mm
Weight:	10.25 lbs
Range (yards):	200/600/1200
Targeting Bonus:	+1
Damage:	+1 (Integrity)
Burst (yards):	3/6

SAM-6 Surface-to-Air Missile

Designed to take aircraft and other flying targets down, the SAM takes away the relative immunity that many pilots feel above the battlefield as it allows even a lowly infantryman to reach out and touch him. Using a proximity warhead the missile simply closes to within a few yards of a target then detonates its warhead. The detonation sends special packets of shrapnel at the target which tear through armor, avionics and other critical systems. These missiles have guidance and avionics specifically designed for the high speed maneuvers that may be necessary to get within effective detonation range of the target and are very difficult for a target to shake once it is locked on. This missile may only be fired at flying targets.

Type:	Anti-Air Missile
Cost:	1450Tn
Caliber:	120 mm
Weight:	12.5 lbs
Range (yards):	400/1200/3600
Targeting Bonus:	+3
Damage:	+0 (Integrity)
Burst (yards):	3/6

RECOILLESS RIFLES

Recoilless rifles are lightweight firearms that are specifically designed to fire rounds much heavier than one would expect of a weapon of its size. They are typically used in an anti-armor roll and, like missile launchers and RPGs, give the common soldier a weapon that helps even the playing field when confronted with main battle tanks, mecha and large beasts. These weapons are less expensive than missile launchers and have better rates of fire than RPGs. They are also more precise weapons as they do not have a burst that can harm nearby allies.

Recoilless rifles must be fired from a stationary position. It takes two turns to set up a recoilless rifle to fire. However, once set up it can fire every turn normally after that until the firer moves to a new position.

ERG-10 Splinter

The Splinter is Electroarms entry into the recoilless market. It is a gauss weapon that has a greater range than the RRG-55 as

well as an integral targeting system that makes it much more accurate than the Thumper. It unfortunately does not have either the magazine capacity or the relatively inexpensive pricetag that system has.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Heckler Kock & Sig
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Recoilless Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	8250Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	90 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	17.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	250/500/1000
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	12

RMG-10M Recoilless Rifle

The RMG-10M is a light recoilless rifle that enjoys a higher rate of fire but does not have the armor punching ability of the heavier versions. It is basically effective against lighter targets but heavy targets such as the Migou Spider tend to shrug hits from the weapon off. This weapon can also be fired on the move so there is no need to set it up to fire as is the case for most recoilless rifles.

The RMG-10M can be fired without the normal two-round setup period. It can also be fired while the firer is moving but is not very accurate and suffers a -4 targeting penalty to the attack roll.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Armorcorp
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Light Rail Recoilless Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	4995Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	70 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	12.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/500/750
<i>Damage:</i>	+0 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	10 (Needle)

RRG-55 Thumper

The Thumper is the main entry into this limited market by Heckler Koch and Sig. It has proven to be a reliable weapon and is popular among NEG soldiers for its reasonable rate-of-fire and its large magazine. The Thumper does require a bit of training as it does not have an integrated targeting system meaning it is literally a point and shoot weapon. This can make it difficult to target fast moving targets as the firer will need to manually lead the target to get a hit.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Heckler Kock & Sig
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Recoilless Rifle
<i>Cost:</i>	5650Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	90 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	16.7 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	200/400/800

<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	9

FLAME THROWERS

Considered by many to be a particularly cruel weapon, flame throwers have nevertheless appeared in virtually every war that has been fought on the planet. Firing a sticky, highly combustible gel, the fires caused by a flame thrower are difficult to stamp out. These weapons are highly effective at clearing out entrenched enemies, as the stream makes a mockery of traditional cover.

For safety reasons, the gel used in these weapons is a binary liquid – each half of the formula stored in separate tanks. Until they are combined when fired, both are inert and will not detonate if the tanks are ruptured.

A target hit by a flame thrower is automatically set on fire. To put out the fires on oneself requires success at a Very Hard Tenacity Feat Test, during which time the victim may do nothing else. Putting out the fires on another target requires a Hard Agility Feat Test to successfully stamp out all the flames. Neither the person trying to extinguish the flames nor the target may do anything else during the turn.

A target that is on fire will continue to burn until the fire is put out, or until the victim dies (though the corpse continues to burn). Each turn a target is on fire, the flames cause damage equal to the flame thrower's damage bonus, +1 die for each turn the target has been on fire past the first.

Flame throwers also ignore any cover bonuses the target may normally get.

FLM-666 Brimstone

The Brimstone is a truly nasty weapon that has a relatively long range for a flame thrower, and a large canister size that gives the user a generous supply of gel. The canisters are worn like a backpack, which limits the amount of gear the user can bring with him. Special valves located on opposite sides of each canister can quickly empty each canister safely and rapidly should they become damaged, removing any real chance of an explosion – which would not only likely kill not just the man using the Brimstone, but any others nearby. Like all flame throwers, it is an intimidating weapon to use.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Steyr Mannlicher
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Flame Thrower
<i>Cost:</i>	1100Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	flame gel
<i>Weight:</i>	14.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	20 yard stream
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Fire)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	24

HF-5 Hellstorm

This small hand-held flamer has a very short range, as well as a small canister that limits the number of shots the weapon can make. Even with this limit, however, it is popular with New Earth Government close assault troops, as it can allow them to quickly clean out bunkers and other emplacements that might otherwise be very dangerous to enter.

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	Steyr Mannlicher
<i>Legality:</i>	R
<i>Type:</i>	Flame Thrower
<i>Cost:</i>	850Tn
<i>Caliber:</i>	flame gel
<i>Weight:</i>	3.25 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	5 yard stream
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Fire)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	3

SPECIAL AMMUNITION

Armor Piercing Rounds

AP rounds are designed to punch through armor like it wasn't there. These weapons reduce the damage rating of the weapon by one (to a minimum of 0), but also reduce the target's armor protection by one. Armor piercing rounds are generally illegal, and only standard ammo comes in the AP variety.

Cost: 2x the standard ammunition cost

Dum-Dum Rounds

Dum-dum rounds are designed to fragment upon impact and can cause more damage to unarmored targets. If one of these rounds hits a target wearing armor that has a +1 or less protection, the damage of the weapon firing the dum-dum round is increased by one.

Heavy armor reduces the damage of these rounds. If the target has armor that has a protection rating of 3 or greater the weapon's damage rating is reduced by 1.

However, dum-dum rounds quickly lose accuracy, as they are not as aerodynamic as a standard bullet. At all ranges greater than short, attacks suffer an additional Test Penalty of -2.

Only standard and caseless rounds can be dum-dum rounds.

Cost: Same as standard ammunition cost

Explosive Rounds

Explosive rounds are designed not only to damage the target, but potentially damage anyone near him. Explosive rounds reduce the range of the weapon by 50%, but have a burst radius of damage that depends on the caliber of the weapon. Calibers 9 mm or under have a burst radius of one foot, .40 caliber (10 mm) to anything below .50 caliber has a burst radius of two

feet, while .50 caliber and above has a burst radius of three feet. Anything caught in the burst takes damage equal to the weapon's damage rating, minus one. Standard, caseless, and needle rounds can all be explosive rounds.

Cost: 3x the standard ammunition cost

Tracker Rounds

Tracker rounds are not designed to cause actual damage. Instead, they contain a small tracking device that can be easily followed using a coupled receiver. These bullets may only be fired from pistols – the caliber of the pistol has no bearing on the effectiveness of the tracker round. These rounds are sold in sets of ten and include a tracking receiver that is tuned to the same frequency as the bullets. When a tracker round hits the target, it sticks but causes no damage.

The round can be programmed before being fired to start transmitting immediately, or after a predetermined delay. In addition, it can be programmed to transmit constantly or intermittently. This can all be programmed on the tracking receiver and transmitted to the bullet, even after it has been loaded in the magazine. Once fired, the program is locked in.

The tracking receiver can pick up the signal from these rounds from up to one mile away outdoors. Inside an arcology, this range is reduced to a mere quarter mile.

Tracker rounds can be standard, caseless or needle.

Cost: 200 Tn per 10 (includes the receiver)

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Like anything else created in the modern world, a number of peripherals have been crafted to augment the capabilities of a firearm. Below are common examples of some of these peripherals.

Holsters

Despite what the media may have glorified over the years, sticking your weapon down your pants as a means to hold onto it is neither functional nor safe, and more than one low-life has found this out the hard way. Holsters come in three basic varieties. The most common is the belt holster, which holds the weapon on your hip. This makes for easy access and displays the weapon for others to see – something that can have a deterrent factor. The second variety is the shoulder holster, sometimes referred to as a concealed holster. This holster is designed to keep the weapon under a coat or jacket, and holds the weapon on the side of your torso. Finally, there is the back holster. This holster is designed for weapons such as shotguns, and leaves the stock of the gun sticking up above a shoulder. Again, this can sometimes be good when trying to give off an imposing or intimidating appearance.

<i>Belt Holster Cost:</i>	20 Tn
<i>Concealed/Shoulder Holster Cost:</i>	95 Tn
<i>Back Holster Cost:</i>	125 Tn

Laser Sight

A laser sight is not much more than a novelty laser pointer, though admittedly more powerful and with a much greater range. They literally make a weapon a point and shoot affair, as the point the laser hits is where the bullet will impact. However, these lasers show up in even the lightest fog or similar atmospheric conditions, essentially pointing a line directly back to the firer's position. In addition, the laser is obviously visible on the target, potentially alerting anyone looking at the right place at the right time. Because it relies on the firer being able to see the point the laser hits, a laser sight is only useful out to a limited range.

A laser sight provides a +1 Test/Contest Modifier when activated, as long as the target is within 100 yards.

Cost: 275 Tn

Recoil Suppressor

Used on assault rifles and other weapons that can fire in an automatic mode, recoil suppressors reduce the kickback of these weapons when fired. There are a number of ways these suppressors work, but the most common is a simple redirection of the gases created when the weapon is fired. They can make automatic fire more accurate, but tend to reduce the range of the weapon to an extent.

When firing a weapon with a recoil suppressor, the automatic fire Test/Contest Penalty is reduced to -1. However, the range of the weapon is reduced by 25%. Each range increment should be reduced equally.

Cost: 325 Tn

Silencer

Silencers are used to muffle the report of a weapon, and see common use in special forces operations where stealth can play a key factor. Silencers can be fitted either onto pistols, submachine guns, or even assault rifles, though they are rarely used on the latter. They are ineffective on either gauss or rail weapons, due to the incredible super-sonic velocities of the rounds. In general, you must be licensed to carry a silenced weapon and using one without a license tends to add heavily to any judicial sentence.

To detect a firearm that has been fired with a silencer, treat the range as though it were ten times further away than it really is.

Cost: 345 Tn
Legality: R

Telescopic Scope

Telescopic scopes have been in use with firearms since the late 19th century. They significantly increase the accuracy of the weapon at moderate and longer ranges. The oldest scopes were a series of lenses and had limited utility. Today's telescopic

scopes are digital in nature, providing the user unprecedented accuracy at even the longest ranges. Most telescopic scopes have UV filters, giving them utility at night. Thermal sensors can also be added, allowing them to see targets through some walls and other obstructions. While most pistols have the ability to mount scopes, their utility is limited at best and are generally used to provide night targeting capabilities.

The magnification of a scope decreases the range of a shot by a number of increments based upon the power of the scope. A lower power scope decreases the range by one increment, a medium by two, and a high by three, to a minimum of short range. Aiming through a scope requires one Action. A UV modification allows the firer to see his target in any light conditions. A thermal option will allow a user to see target through as much as 12 inches of solid concrete. Both options may be added to a scope, but only one of these three modes may be active at any given time.

<i>Low Power (7x32) Telescopic Scope Cost:</i>	245 Tn
<i>Med. Power (9x40) Telescopic Scope Cost:</i>	350 Tn
<i>High Powered Telescopic Scope Cost:</i>	545 Tn
<i>UV Option for all scopes:</i>	+100 Tn
<i>Thermal Option for all scopes:</i>	+125 Tn

MELEE WEAPONS

Even with all the modern weapons that exist in the age of the Aeon War, conflict sometimes comes down to brutal face-to-face combat. While the biggest factor in the outcome of hand-to-hand combat is the skill of the two combatants, a quality weapon can sometimes make the difference between life and death.

Combat Knife

Combat knives are large and dangerous-looking weapons. They come in a wide variety of designs and range in length from as short as four inches to as long as eight. Some combat knives have smooth edges, while others are serrated. The blades of these weapons come in two varieties - stainless steel and a ceramic composite. The former is less expensive, but the latter holds its edge better and is more adept at penetrating armor.

Stainless Combat Knife	
Type:	Bladed (Small)
Legality:	G
Cost:	80Tn
Damage:	0

Composite Combat Knife	
Type:	Bladed (Small)
Legality:	PA
Cost:	195Tn
Damage:	+1

Fists and Feet

The oldest and most reliable weapons a human being has at his disposal are his feet and fists - the standard since the first fight



broke out ages ago. They have the advantage of always being available, but unfortunately are about the most ineffective melee weapon one could ask for – though with proper training, they can become every bit as deadly as the sharpest knife.

Type:	Impact
Legality:	n/a
Cost:	n/a
Damage:	-1

Katana

Katanas have long been a weapon that has been romanticized by the media. The long, slightly curved blades have been around since Japan's feudal era, when Samurai were the epitome of honor and nobility. At that time, they were crafted by hand, with some blacksmiths folding the metal a thousand times. Today manufacturers are more practical, but the blades are still as sharp and effective as ever.

Type:	Bladed - Steel (Large)
Legality:	PA
Cost:	450Tn
Damage:	+2

Type:	Bladed – Composite (Lg)
Legality:	PA
Cost:	1200Tn
Damage:	+3

Machete

The machete has been a staple in bladed weapons since long before the Aeon Wars erupted. With a heavy blade as long as two feet, the original purpose of the machete was to hack through dense vegetation such as the rain forests of the Amazon – but its more martial aspects were not lost on anyone. These weapons can clear arms and legs as well as thick brush and vines.

Type:	Bladed (Medium)
Legality:	G
Cost:	20Tn
Damage:	+1

Military Officer's Sword

Nominally a ceremonial blade, the Officer's Sword is still every bit as dangerous as swords of ancient times. Utilizing a composite ceramic blade that is sharpened to a razor's edge, the sword can give a soldier a chance when facing the claws and fangs of the beasts of old that now commonly fill modern battlefields. Always ornate in nature, these weapons are as beautiful as they are deadly.

Type:	Bladed (Medium)
Legality:	PA
Cost:	250Tn
Damage:	+1

Snap Baton

A snap baton is basically a short stick roughly 12 to 18 inches in length with a handle at one end. Snap batons are carried by most law enforcement officers to help subdue overly aggressive criminals, when they'd prefer not to kill the criminal outright. Some companies actually market these in various colors and sell them to the public for use as a fashion accessory that doubles as a defensive weapon.

Type:	Impact
Legality:	G
Cost:	35Tn
Damage:	0

Staff/Pole/Club

Perhaps the oldest weapon in existence, with the possible exception of the rock, hitting an opponent upside the head with a thick piece of wood has always been a means to an end – or at least a means to an end of the fight. While staves are more than simple lengths of tree branches today, the same basic principal still applies. Most staves are made of a wood of some sort, though plastic and other materials are not unusual. Generally four to six feet in length (with clubs generally being around 3 feet in length), just about anything of the same general shape and length can be used as a weapon.

Type:	Impact
Legality:	G
Cost:	varies
Damage:	+1

Steel Knuckles

Steel knuckles are a good equalizer when all one has available is his fists. Overcoming the inherent weakness of flesh, they give a combatant's punch a little more impact. Inexpensive, these weapons are little more than a steel band wrapped around a user's fist that lends a bit more impact to his knuckle's hits. In most places, steel knuckles are actually illegal and carry hefty fines when one is caught with them.

Type:	Impact
Legality:	RA
Cost:	10Tn
Damage:	0

Stun Baton

Almost identical to a snap baton, the stun batons also deliver an impact-triggered burst of electricity that can stun the target. A small battery built into the handle of the weapon provides enough charge for dozens of swings. Like snap batons, these weapons see wide use in law enforcement circles.

In addition to doing normal damage, the Stun Baton can stun targets. If an attack penetrates armor and does at least one point of Vitality damage, a target must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to avoid the stun effects. If this Test is failed, the vic-

tim 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 stun baton 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.

Type:	Charged Impact
Legality:	G
Cost:	35Tn
Damage:	0 (Stun)

Stun Gun

Stun guns are similar to tasers in that they deliver a powerful electrical shock into the target, rendering him incapacitated for a short period of time. Unlike tasers, stun guns are strictly close quarters weapons. They are not much more than a small palm sized case that contains a small power cell with a pair of steel prongs on one end that are used to deliver the shock. Stun guns are popular defensive weapons in the civilian sector.

Treat as if the Stun Gun had a Damage of +0 when determining 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. Anyone affected by the stun gun must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist this. 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 stun gun 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.

Type:	Stun
Legality:	G
Cost:	35Tn
Damage:	0 (stun)

Sword Cane

Sword canes have always had a reputation as being a weapon for a gentleman. At first glance, a sword cane looks like an ordinary walking stick. Oftentimes, they are handcrafted of high-end wood, marble, or precious metals. They generally have intricate carvings in the pommels, or other features that transform what is essentially nothing more than a stick into something that gives the appearance of stature and elegance. Hidden inside one of these canes, however, is a deadly short blade. Modern sword canes are made of high-tech ceramic composite that holds its edge forever. People often use these when they wish to keep a weapon close at hand, but prefer to conceal this fact from those around them – after all, brandishing a weapon in high society is hardly good form.

Drawing the blade from a sword cane takes no more time than drawing a blade from a proper scabbard. In addition, unless someone specifically looks for it, these weapons will normally be mistaken for ordinary walking sticks – thus the owner can often get them into places where weapons are not normally allowed. For an extra 25% of the cost, a secret release can be built into a

sword cane so that anyone who does not know the secret will be unable to draw the blade hidden inside.

Type:	Bladed (Medium)
Legality:	P
Cost:	350Tn
Damage:	+1

Wakizashi

The smaller brother of the katana, the wakizashi is a short blade with a slight curve to it. Some experts use it in conjunction with the katana, using it to parry their attacker's blows while leaving the larger sword free to strike when openings appear in their enemy's defense. Like the katana, these weapons have a long and noble history.

Type:	Bladed- Steel (Medium)
Legality:	G
Cost:	195 Tn
Damage:	+1

Type:	Bladed-Composite (Med.)
Legality:	PA
Cost:	350Tn
Damage:	+2

MODERN ARMOR

The armor of the modern age bears no resemblance to the armor of old, when men walked around in formed, folded metal and links of chain. Today's armor provides much more protection, but is lighter and more flexible, giving soldiers an unprecedented level of freedom and agility. Of course, the weapons they need to fend off are equally more powerful.

COMMON TYPES OF ARMOR

Modern armor comes in three basic flavors. The most common and most readily available are armored vests that are designed to protect the wearer's vital organs. This type of armor has the advantage of being light, as well as easily donned and removed. It, however, does not afford any protection for the wearer's extremities, meaning that his arms, legs and head are conspicuously vulnerable. Armored vests are most commonly used by local law enforcement agencies such as the Federal Security Bureau. In most cases, the armor is more than adequate for the low-level criminals and scum with which they often deal. When facing more serious threats, heavier armor is the order of the day.

Light combat armor is a full body suit that offers protection not only to the wearer's torso, but also armors his arms and legs. While heavier than the lighter vest, it is still light enough so as to not encumber the wearer or hamper his flexibility to a noticeable degree. Light combat armor can also be outfitted with a sealed air supply that can allow the wearer to operate safely in smoke, gas, and other forms of unfit air. These air systems typically contain enough oxygen to support the wearer for one

hour. The armor is not sealed however, and the wearer's skin and eyes are generally exposed to the environment. This means he is still vulnerable to environmental hazards that can be absorbed through the skin.

Heavy combat armor provides the most comprehensive protection to the wearer. Like light combat armor, the heavy variety is a complete suit providing protection to the torso, arms, and legs. However, unlike its lighter cousin, heavy combat armor is a fully enclosed and sealed system. It supports a fully sealed internal environment, giving the wearer complete immunity from any gases, smoke, or biological agents in the air around him. The armor has enough air to support the wearer for a full hour and the system can automatically refill its tanks when in a safe environment.

A new variant of heavy armor is the exo-skeletal combat armor. This armor has an external skeletal array that can increase the wearer's strength and speed. While it does not generally increase the protection the armor provides, it does allow a wearer to bear greater weights and increases his endurance significantly.

ANATOMY OF MODERN ARMOR

Modern armor must protect the wearer against a myriad of attacks ranging from simple fists and clubs, to bullets and rail gun needles. Two distinct elements are used for this purpose: ballistic cloth and trauma plates.

Ballistic cloth is designed to protect against bullet impacts. It is a cloth-like material that has a composite thread woven into it. This composite thread is incredibly strong with a very high tensile strength and is designed to distribute the kinetic energy of an impact across the armor. This has the effect of reducing the energy of the impact enough that the high tensile strength of the woven composite material is greater than the remaining energy in the bullet. At minimum, the armor will reduce the damage any bullet that does penetrate causes.

Ballistic cloth may be able to stop a bullet, but against a knife or similar weapon it is virtually useless. To protect someone against this sort of attack, armor is often reinforced with trauma plates. These plates are made of a similar composite material to the composite threads in ballistic weave. These plates are light but strong and able to deflect most attacks with knives and similar weapons. In most armor suits, these plates can be removed when the wearer wishes to lighten the armor.

While the ballistic cloth and trauma plates are all that make up a vest, combat armor is somewhat more complex. Light combat armor has an integral oxygen supply system that can protect the user from dangerous gases and chemicals. Specially designed bladders located throughout the armor suit store enough oxygen to last for one hour in a combat environment – longer if the wearer is not stressed. Sensors in the armor can determine whether the armor is located in a toxic environment. When it is not, the bladders are continually infused with fresh oxygen. As soon as a toxic gas is detected, the bladders automatically

PHALANX II SECURITY SHIELD
(HAND HELD KEVTECH
COMPOSITE POLYMER SHIELD)



SENTRYTECH MK-IV LIGHT
CONCEALABLE ARMOR



SENTRYTECH MK-V HEAVY
CONCEALABLE ARMOR VEST
W/TRAUMA PLATES



SPECTRASHIELD LIGHT SPECTRA
FIBER COMBAT ARMOR W/LIGHT
TRAUMA PLATE



SPECTRASHIELD HEAVY
SPECTRA FIBER COMBAT ARMOR
W/HEAVY TRAUMA PLATE



EXO-SKELETAL ARMOR



seal themselves. In this manner, there is no need to ever resupply the armor with fresh oxygen. Movement by the wearer provides the power needed for the system. When the oxygen is needed, a small mask located just under the neck can be quickly fastened over the mouth and nose.

Heavy combat armor is more complex and utilizes a number of integral systems. In a manner similar to light combat armor, the suit has an integral oxygen system and is a self-contained and self-replenishing system. The oxygen supply in these armor suits can also be supplemented with an additional supply when combat operations are going to occur in a toxic environment for an extended period.

Besides an integral oxygen supply, heavy combat armor also has thermal controls allowing a wearer to adjust the temperature inside the armor. Unless the wearer overrides the system, the environment inside the armor is kept at a comfortable 70° F (21° C). In times of stress, when the wearer's body heat rises, the system automatically adjusts to keep the environment optimal.

Heavy combat armor can also be equipped with a number of other integral systems. The most common of these is an integrated voice communications system that can link with local wireless networks and can transmit on a rotating frequency to prevent its transmissions from being easily intercepted. Heads-up-displays can be installed that project critical combat information on the faceplate of the armored helmet. This data can include up to the minute intelligence, current coordinates, a map of the region and more. Many reconnaissance units have integrated sensors that can record any data they obtain within

memory cells in the suit and then transmit that same data to an appropriate authority.

A variant of the common heavy combat armor is the exo-skeletal armor suit. This suit has a powered skeleton married to the armor, giving the wearer an appearance of have an external skeleton. Some military units have taken this visual illusion a step further by painting the exo-skeleton white and keeping the rest of the armor black. The exo-skeleton increases a wearer's strength, speed, and agility to a limited degree. While not as powerful as true powered armor, it does enable a wearer to move faster, carry larger burdens, and operate for longer periods of time. It also goes a long way to evening the odds when some of the exotic beasts get in close and personal with the soldier.

The suit works along the same principles as mecha, though on a much smaller scale. Sensors embedded throughout the suit detect movements made by the wearer, as well as mental signals, and basically match those movements. The carbon-steel composite can withstand a tremendous amount of punishment and the strength the suit lends the wearer more than compensates for the extra weight the skeleton and power system bring with it. Unfortunately the cost of the armor and the difficulty in manufacturing has limited its deployment to a few elite units, and getting one outside the military is virtually impossible.

ARMOR CATALOGUE

PHALANX II SECURITY SHIELD

The Phalanx is basically a kevtech polymer composite shield the user holds up in front of him for protection. The shield is roughly

four feet tall and two and a half feet wide making it large enough that a full grown man can plant it on the ground and crouch behind it for protection. The entirety of the shield is transparent, so it does not hinder the sight lines of the user in any way. Police forces use this shield to break up illegal gatherings and riots. It also sees use in the military for special situations and is popular with soldiers who tend to find themselves in close combat with the enemy, as these shields do a great job of fending off knives and claws alike.

A Phalanx requires one hand to wield. It may be used in addition to any other normal armor type and is cumulative with any protection that armor provides against attacks coming from one direction (generally the front). Defenders may use their Armed Fighting Skill to defend against projectile attacks when using this shield. If a user spends a single action planting the shield and crouching behind it, the protection the shield offers doubles, but the user cannot move and may not fire a weapon larger than a pistol while crouching behind the shield. Even when firing the pistol, he will suffer a Test Penalty of -2 due to his awkward position. Finally, the shield may be used to bash an enemy. This uses the Armed Fighting Skill to resolve and the shield has a 0 damage rating.

Type:	Handheld shield
Legality:	RA
Weight:	10.5 lbs
Cost:	450Tn
Protection:	+1/+1

SENTRYTECH SERIES ARMOR

The SentryTech series of armor is the most common and most popular armored vest in general use. It is a standard issue item for all law enforcement agencies and the military issues it for nearly all personnel. The vest is light enough to be worn under normal clothing, though it is recommended that one wear a t-shirt under the vest or risk some serious chaffing around the shoulders and chest. The presence of the vest will be fairly obvious even when worn under other clothing.

Two variants of this armor are in common use. The Mark IV series is the lighter of the two and is designed to defend primarily against firearms. This is the most commonly issued version of the armor and is worn as part of the standard uniform for all military personnel. The Mark V series is somewhat heavier but includes the addition of trauma plates that can effectively defend the wearer against claws, knives, clubs and other physical damage types. Riot troops and any personnel who are planning breaching actions are issued the Mark V version of the armor, as these are the people who are most likely to get up close.

Mark IV Series	
Type:	Concealable Armored Vest
Legality:	G
Weight:	5.75 lbs
Cost:	400Tn
Protection:	+0/+1

Mark V Series

Type:	Concealable Armored Vest
Legality:	G
Weight:	9.75 lbs
Cost:	495Tn
Protection:	+1/+1

SPECTRASHIELD SERIES COMBAT ARMOR

The Spectrashield series is the standard issue full body combat armor used by the New Earth Government Armed Forces as well as elite law enforcement units. Light enough to be worn for extended periods, the military has adapted the light version of the armor as the standard uniform worn for common duty outside administrative offices.

Both the light and heavy version of the armor have a number of common features. Both systems have an integrated oxygen supply system that can provide the wearer up to an hour of fresh oxygen when needed. In addition, both models have a comms systems built into the helmet that can be tuned with a simple voice command to one of several channels, or can even be set to listen to the chatter on multiple channels. However, it will transmit only on a single channel at a time.

The heavy version of this armor is a fully enclosed and sealed environment, lending protection even from elements that can be absorbed through the skin. In addition, the combat helmet that is part of the heavy armor can have a number of other options integrated into it which enhance the abilities of the soldier on the battlefield.

The light version of this armor has an integrated oxygen system that protects the wearer from gas and smoke agents. However, the armor is not sealed and does not protect the wearer from agents that can be absorbed through the skin. The oxygen will last up to one hour and is self-replenishing (which takes 30 minutes).

The heavy version of this armor has the same integrated oxygen system, but is a fully sealed environment and thus offers protection against agents that can be absorbed through the skin. However, this armor is bulkier than the light armor and wearers have a -1 Test Penalty imposed upon any Tests that use Agility.

Basic models of both armor types are available through certain non-military channels. These versions do not have the integrated oxygen system, and only the versions issued to the military have the integrated comms system. The prices below reflect each version.

Light Version

Type:	Spectra fiber combat armor
Legality:	RA
Weight:	12.5 lbs
Cost:	575/650/750Tn
Protection:	+2/+2

Heavy Version

Type:	Spectra fiber combat armor
Legality:	RA
Weight:	19.5 lbs
Cost:	705/795/895Tn
Protection:	+3/+3

SPECTRASHIELD EXO-SKELETAL ARMOR

A relatively new entry into the personal armor market, the exo-skeletal armor offers the wearer the same protection of heavy combat armor, while also giving him an increase in strength and agility. This armor currently sees very limited distribution and is only legally worn by military personnel, as well as a select few law enforcements officers. No version of this armor has been licensed for civilian use, though, with the right connections, it is possible to get hold of one for limited periods.

While this armor is heavier than standard heavy combat armor, the strength it lends its wearer more than compensates. It also removes the normal impediments to agile movement that the heavier armors impose upon their wearers. The power systems that keep these armors operational have a limited endurance however, and only last for approximately two hours – a bit less in strenuous combat situations. The D-cells that power these suits can be changed in the field, but the process takes roughly five minutes, which can be an eternity when bullets are flying. In addition, the wearer cannot change the cells on his own. Most personnel issued these suits are also issued two spare cells when extended operations are expected and they are away from an easily accessible supply.

This armor has all the standard systems of heavy combat armor. It is a sealed system and has a built-in communications suite. When operational, the wearer is treated as if he had an additional +1 Agility and an additional +2 Strength. This does not alter Secondary Attributes, but it does increase the amount he can lift, his damage bonus, his Feat levels, and the like. In addition, its inherent weight is countered (i.e., it does not count if there is a question of how much gear the wearer can handle).

If the armor loses power, the wearer will suffer a Strength and Agility penalty of -1. The power cells cannot be changed by someone wearing the suit.

Type:	Spectra exo-skeletal armor
Legality:	R
Weight:	40.25 lbs
Cost:	5,570 Tn
Protection:	+3/+3
Power Cells:	Class 1 D-Cell

ARMOR ACCESSORIES

There are a number of optional systems that can be added to armor to enhance the capabilities of the one who wears it. Not all armor types can use all the options – these limits are detailed in each entry below.

Command and Control Integrated Interface

Used extensively in the military the C&C2I is generally issued to command personnel in the field. These systems allow the user to directly link with the command and control network, gaining real time intelligence feeds including continually updated operation zone maps that show the positions of all allied and known enemy assets. It also allows a user to quickly put in requests for artillery and air support. Finally, live and recorded video feeds can be accessed, allowing a commander to view the battle through the eyes of any of his men with an appropriate system. All this information is projected onto the faceplate of the helmet when used with heavy combat armor or onto a special viewing reticule when used with light combat armor.

Cost:	1,250Tn
Legality:	RA
Useable On:	Combat Armor

Portable Oxygen Supply

While combat armor has an integrated oxygen supply system built into it, armored vests do not enjoy this benefit. To rectify this, Armorc corp developed the POS (or Portable Oxygen Supply). This system is essentially a small highly compressed can of oxygen attached to a mask. Unlike the version built into combat armor, these systems are not self replenishing and the tanks must be changed out manually. Each oxygen tank offers only 30 minutes of air, and changing the tank takes about 30 seconds.

Cost:	125 Tn
Legality:	G
Useable On:	Armored Vests

Stealth Coating

Useful only for combat armor, a stealth coating helps to hide the wearer from detection. The coating has properties that mask the thermal signature of the wearer, absorb any radar or similar sensor waves, and even protects against motions sensors. The coating also provides some protection from visual detection, by taking on the overall color of the environment similar to a chameleon's ability to shift color. Unfortunately the stealth coating tends to get rubbed away and must be reapplied on a regular basis and is expensive to produce.

When making a Stealth Test while benefitting from stealth coating the wearer gets a +4 Test/Contest Bonus. The coating will last for roughly two days, after which if must be reapplied using a special spray gun. Proper application of the coating takes about an hour, plus another hour for it to set and dry.

Cost:	500Tn per application
Legality:	R

This was exactly what Kandry needed. A night out on the town.

Sub Rosa was a hole in the wall compared to some of the more prestigious nightclubs in town, but it was a local treasure if you knew about it. The guy who owned the place was a famous club promoter and this was his own private little slice of heaven. He'd dropped bank on the sound system and the bar was always stocked with the best booze and legal drugs. Plus, there were always dealers around to get you the drugs you wanted but couldn't get from the bartender. You just had to know who to ask.

Not even 11 pm yet and the dance floor was already packed. Kandry wasn't surprised. There had been a lot of tension in the air lately and everyone needed to blow off steam. The DJ was some famous guy from Amsterdam who was personal friends with the owner. He was spinning off of one of those high-tech augmented-reality holographic turntables. He even had one up way higher than the other – maybe just to show that he was bad-ass. Behind him, giant PT screens flowed with patterns, colors, and images, making it feel like you'd stepped into another world.

Kandry was the kind of girl who could come to a nightclub alone and have a great time. That was even in spite of some of the funny looks she always got. A xenomix, born of two worlds, there was some people who never quite knew how to react to her. Fortunately, her parents had raised her Nazzadi and she had the tattoos to prove it. That made the Nazzadi okay with her and made her more exotic for the Humans – which was exactly like she liked her boys. It also didn't hurt that the pairing of the two species made Kandry more attractive than most.

She bellied up to the bar and leaned over at exactly the right angle to get the bartender's attention. The retro-cowboy rolled up to her. "I hope you're in the mood for something nice, seniorita. The Bliss is particularly strong tonight."

"I don't think I'm going to start there, hoss," she replied. "Let's start with something simple. Gold cinnamon martini. Straight up."

The bartender smiled and began to fix her drink. As he shook the vodka and Goldschlager over ice, Kandry took a quick look around to see who she wanted to meet. Being a Friday night and as packed as it was, there were many interesting choices. Her first choice was the boy toy with the washboard abs dancing on a speaker – until she noticed that his boyfriend was dancing on the floor underneath him. The second choice was an edgy Asian guy – Vietnamese from the look of him. Her third was, when all was said and done, the cowboy behind the bar.

For each, Kandry took out her peek, snapped a picture of the guy, ran it through an internet face recognition search, and then found their matching profiles on

FaceSpace. Aaah, social networking. How did people even keep in touch before it? Must've been the dark ages.

Her first choice, Kirk Alexander, identified himself as gay on his profile, not bisexual. No chance there. Plus, the boyfriend. Her second choice, Eric Nguyen, was apparently a corporate banker who was into motorcycles, flying ultralights, and several of the same bands as Kandry. Promising. Her third choice was Daniel Handerman. Apparently, he was an artist in his off-time who did pin-up girls. It also seemed like his cowboy fetish extended to the rest of his life. That wasn't going to work at all.

Never one to wait for opportunity to knock, Kandry zeroed in on Eric and waited for him to leave the girl he was talking to and head to the bar. He must've been in a good mood, because he downed the rest of his drink and headed up. Kandry moved in almost immediately. No need to be shy. It was 2086, after all.

"So, Eric. What kind of motorcycles do you ride?" she asked, smile on her face.

He laughed. "You know, I don't understand why we just don't just hand out our FaceSpace profiles at the door."

"Ain't technology grand?" Kandry replied. "I'm Kandry, by the way."

"And you're a modern Nazzadi fusion dancer for fun, and an office manager for a plastic surgeon by day. You're a fan of sushi and you prefer Human guys. I think we like some of the same music."

Kandry had to laugh. "Nice to know that I was on your list tonight, too."





"You missed the part of my profile where I say that I'm the kind of guy who prefers my women on the exotic side," said Eric.

"That could mean a lot of things."

He moved in closer. "Now you know exactly what it means. And in answer to your question, I ride anything with two wheels - cruisers, sport bikes, dual-sports, doesn't matter. I have quite the collection. If you like, I can show you some time."

It was on. Kandry replied, "That might be okay."

"Okay, I lied. I won't ride one of those touring 'I might as well have bought a car' bikes, that weighs a

ton and has everything on it, including an entertainment center."

She laughed. Their conversation continued for a while, before they decided they should leave - together.

Once upon a time, people had to take a huge risk and walk up to a stranger they knew nothing about and try to break the ice in order to have some kind of conversation that might have told you something you liked about the person, other than how they looked. That was before you even got around to figuring out if you wanted to go to bed. The modern world broke down barriers between people quickly. However, sometimes Kandry had to wonder what it would be like to live in a world that had a little privacy and anonymity.

chapter three

tools of the trade

The average citizen in the Strange Aeon lives his life in much the same way as we do today. He wakes up, goes through a morning ritual (typically showering, eating breakfast, shaving and other hygiene practices, and so on), goes to work or school, comes home when he's finished, and enjoys the rest of the evening as leisure time. Weekends and holidays are his to spend as he wishes.

As part of their daily lives, these average citizens use many products similar to those of today. They carry wallets and purses, for even if they don't ordinarily use cash, these containers still hold a variety of other helpful items, from business cards to personal grooming products, and the like. They wear the same sort of clothing, even if the fashions might be bizarre by today's standards, including hats, shirts, jackets, belts, pants, shoes, jewelry, and so on. They drive cars and motorcycles, play sports and other games, read magazines and watch video entertainment, and in general are very much like people of almost a century ago. The one significant difference is the level of technology, which is beyond what we are used to today.

Where we might dial a number on a cell phone, a citizen of New Earth Government gives a verbal command to his peek and watches his holo-interface project a video conference call. Where a person of the past would catch a city bus and wait while it slowly rumbled down crowded streets to its next stop, a citizen in a modern arcology rides computer-controlled mag-lev trains which run smooth, virtually silent, and almost always on time. Technology has improved the average person's life tremendously, making things like transportation and shopping easier and more streamlined, allowing more time for work, sports, and leisure.

This section discusses some of the technology and gear available in the *CthulhuTech* setting, from ordinary devices all the way up to rare items available only through specialist dealers – or on the black market. There are also new vehicles for Characters to use. None of the items in this chapter are magical or para-psychic in nature, although some may be used in conjunction these abilities. The focus here is on items nearly anyone might have a reason to list on his Character Sheet, or at least have access to on a reasonably regular basis.

BASIC GEAR

Every Character has gear, even if it's only simple things like clothing, a timepiece, or a peek. Some of these items have been discussed in other books, so a detailed explanation of what a "peek" is won't be necessary, for example. Other items are so obvious as to need no description – simply convert the price to terranotes (p. 114 of the *Core Book*) as well as the availability of a familiar item without worrying too much about futuristic conversions. Paint brushes, fingernail clippers, and coffee cups may look slightly different in the future, but they're still functionally the same item. The Storyguide can make exceptions or improvements, of course – for example, a high-tech coffee cup might be designed to catch spills, or keep its contents continuously hot, but in the end it's still just a coffee cup.

What follows is a list of some of the more useful items a Character might own or use during the game. Please note that in some cases these items wouldn't normally be carried on one's person. They'd usually be stored at a house or in a personal vehicle, where they can be used when needed. After all, how many people go for a walk around town with night vision goggles or laser range finders? Not many, unless we really need such things for our jobs – or are truly paranoid.

Each item hereafter includes a name, an average cost, and a general indication of its availability. Common items can be acquired virtually anywhere, while uncommon ones require specialty stores, and rare ones have to be sought out with great care and diligence. Illegal items can only be acquired on the black market, and highly illegal ones require very good contacts and probably more than a few favors from people in the underground – as well as potentially being dangerous simply to purchase.

BLACKSUIT

Cost: 900Tn

Availability: Illegal

A favorite of spies, cat burglars, and anyone who relies on stealth, the blacksuit is a skintight full-body jumpsuit that also covers the head and face, leaving nothing at all exposed. The ears are usually equipped with hearing augmentation units, and the eyes with night vision goggles, but even if this isn't the case, both areas are covered with thin polarized mesh that doesn't affect normal sight or hearing.

While wearing a blacksuit, a person is nearly invisible in darkness and heavy shadow, gaining a +8 Contest Bonus for attempts made to spot him. The suits also absorb all body heat, making the wearer almost impossible to notice in infra-red scans. The only danger is his effect on the nearby air, which causes a slight temperature distortion if he stays in the same place too long. If the wearer suspects he's being searched for, a blacksuit wearer should move around every now and then, just to confuse the IR scanners.

Blacksuits don't protect items worn or carried, nor do they block sound, although a quiet screen works very well in concert with these outfits. A blacksuit must be custom tailored to its wearer and, because it must be tightly situated against bare skin, it can't be used in concert with armor. A user could, of course, wear armor over the top of the outfit, but wouldn't gain the blacksuit's benefits.

CONDITIONAL CLOTHING

Cost: Varies

Availability: Uncommon

One fairly recent development in the world of fashion accessories is so-called conditional clothing, which is capable of modifying itself depending on weather conditions, lighting, and the like. Nearly any article of clothing can have this feature. A jacket, for example, might automatically roll up its sleeves if the wearer en-

ters a heated room, while a hat may widen its brim if rain begins to fall. Clothing of this type is available in a wide range of similar features, and in many cases is completely programmable or can even respond to voice commands. However, the price is usually four to five times that of a normal article of clothing, or even more for complete outfits.

The practical applications of conditional clothing for Characters are limited only by the players' imaginations. A bodysuit that turns black at night would be useful for spies or cat burglars, while a fancy dress that changes colors and shapes in response to music would be an amazing party outfit. For those venturing into more extreme climates, it's possible to purchase clothing with built-in heating or cooling, protection from the sun, and more. In general, a piece of conditional clothing, used at the right time, might provide a slight modifier to a Test, but nothing more. There would never be an armor benefit, for example, as such things can be provided by other, more specialized pieces of gear.

Originally intended only for convenience, conditional clothes are starting to appear on fashion runways as part of the latest styles and trends. One can only wonder how far this sort of thing will go in the future.

DIGITAL VIDEO RECORDER

Cost: 225Tn or more

Availability: Uncommon

A digital video recorder, or DVR, is a self-contained camera unit capable of recording hours of images, compressing them on the fly and storing them electronically on removable chips. More expensive DVRs can also transmit collected video wirelessly to nearby peeks or other devices, allowing them to record almost indefinitely – limited only by the power in their Class 3 D-cell. While some DVRs only record video, audio recording is available for just a few more terranotes, or even more depending upon the quality of audio a consumer requires.

DVR's are a favorite of families, amateur videographers, reporters, and virtually anyone who works in a field where having video capture capability might be useful. In a pinch, DVR's can also be used as security cameras and input devices for telecommunications, allowing the user to (secretly) collect an archive of meetings, agreements, and so on.

DVR's look much like palm-sized camcorders or pen-style flashlights. The lens is the size limiting factor – anything smaller than a dime reduces the quality and range of the associated video tremendously. A DVR can only record what it's pointing at and they tend to be rather myopic, so it's possible to stand off to the side of one (if its presence is known). Some of the more expensive DVR's are designed for secrecy, attached to a user's PCPU, disguised as other ordinary objects, or even taking the place of articles of clothing or jewelry. As a result, in the Strange Aeon, one can never be sure when one is being recorded. Big Brother may actually be watching...

ELECTRONIC BUSINESS CARD

Cost: 5Tn each (usually produced in lots of 25, 50 or 100)

Availability: Common

Electronic business cards, or EBCs, are a preferred means of introduction in the world of business. They are typically exchanged whenever potential business associates meet for the first time, a ritual similar to what handshaking is today. Each EBC is a small, flexible plastic card, usually rectangular but sometimes coming in distinctive shapes or styles, embedded with electronic information about the bearer, his company, and associated contact information. Anyone holding the card can activate a quick (at most ten-second) video clip that can be viewed using any AR monitor display or with a peek's holo-interface, giving a brief overview of the business or service provided by the cardholder. Furthermore, the card can interface with any peek using any holo-interface, automatically downloading the businessman's contact information into the PCPU's internal database.

EBCs are designed for mass production and are treated as quick throwaway items, so they are rarely kept for long. They don't stand up well to damage or extreme temperatures. Their programming can't be changed once they are made, although new batches can always be whipped up by any competent duplicating house.

LASER RANGE FINDER

Cost: 295Tn

Availability: Rare

Laser range finders are small clip-on devices that are normally found attached to other items, such as weapons, AR goggles, night vision goggles, binoculars, and the like. Using an invisible, micro-thin beam, the device determines the range to whatever it's targeted on and reports it back to the attached item, where it is usually displayed in numeric form. In the case of weapons, the range can also be used to instantly calculate targeting vectors, which is especially useful in the case of artillery and other long-range fire.

A laser range finder depends entirely on a direct line of sight to the target. Anything that disrupts this line will prevent an accurate reading. Smoke, precipitation, invisibility, certain magical wards, and the like, will all defeat the range finder. Note, however, that the beam is so fine that even smoke won't reveal its presence. Similarly, there is no big red targeting dot on the subject, who almost certainly won't be aware that a range finder is pointing at him.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

Cost: 295Tn and up

Availability: Rare

Night vision goggles are normally used only by law enforcement and military units, although sometimes these useful devices find themselves in the hands of ordinary citizens. The item requires a small amount of power (a Class 3 D-cell) which is inserted into

the goggles' frame. The goggles completely wrap over the eyes, somewhat restricting vision and creating a tunnel effect. As a result, the wearer takes a -1 Test Penalty to Observation Tests involving vision, and loses the benefits of Peripheral Vision, if he has that Asset.

While worn, night vision goggles provide night vision that is equal to what the typical Nazzadi possesses. If worn by a Nazzadi or other race with inherent night vision capabilities, or by someone with the Night Vision Asset, the range of their night vision is tripled.

Night vision goggles are equipped with brightness sensors that automatically close the viewports if light conditions change dramatically – faster than the wearer can blink. If a bright light appears, the goggles shut off, leaving the wearer temporarily blind until he can remove the goggles (requiring one Action). The user must still squint and blink as his eyes adjust to the new conditions, however, putting him at a -2 Test Penalty to all Actions involving vision until his next turn.

Night vision goggles come in several versions, depending on the features desired. Add the following costs for these additional features:

- Infra-red Illuminator: 100Tn
- Binocular Zoom Feature: 130Tn
- Crosshairs and Range Finder: 410Tn
- Colorizing Software: 325Tn

The infra-red illuminator allows the wearer to note heat sources and their approximate temperature, causing hot spots to appear in various degrees of brightness. The binocular feature allows the wearer to zoom in on distant objects, but this doesn't increase the range of vision, and such objects often appear fuzzy and indistinct. The range finder uses an overlay to display the approximate range of the object under the crosshairs. Finally, the colorizing software attempts to translate shades of gray into approximate colors, giving a more realistic view of the area.

QUALITY CLIMBING GEAR

Cost: 300Tn and up

Availability: Rare to Illegal

Quality climbing gear is generally found in specialty sporting goods shops, where it is marketed as the ultimate in mountain and rock climbing equipment. The kit normally includes 200 feet of high tensile strength rope, a dozen self-hammering pitons, a body-hugging safety harness, sure-grip gloves and boots, and a simple first aid kit. Advanced versions, found on the black market, have additional features appreciated by cat burglars and spies: self-propelled grappling hooks, high power electromagnets, vacuum suction cups for sheer surfaces, ultra-thin cut-resistant rope with automatic reels, and so on. A complete set of the most high-tech climbing equipment available would cost upwards of 2000 Tn, but the law would view with suspicion anyone purchasing such gear.

A simple climber's kit available in a sporting goods store is fairly bulky, weighing 20 lbs. and provide a +2 Test Bonus to any Athletics Test used for climbing. Once ropes and guide lines are in place, a fairly time-consuming process taking anywhere from minutes to hours depending on the terrain, the Test Bonus increases to +4 and climbing speeds are doubled. More advanced climbing kits double these bonuses and permit the user to climb up smooth surfaces such as glass windows, building exteriors, and the like, even in extremely difficult conditions. Cat burglar's gear can also be easily and silently collected after use, leaving no evidence behind to give away the user's presence.

QUIET SCREEN

Cost: 175Tn

Availability: Rare

Quiet screens, also called silence fields or silencers, consist of a ring of stubby rods about six inches long and three inches in diameter, surrounded by a thin array of microwire mesh. The device is placed on a flat surface and activated, whereupon it produces a field that nullifies sound. Any sound produced within a short distance, usually about five feet from the device, is cancelled. The quiet screen instantly detects any sound emanating from its vicinity, and automatically creates a complementary waveform that exactly cancels any ambient sound waves. The device is normally 95% effective at eliminating individual sounds, but if there are a wide variety of different sound waves in the area the screen is less effective.

Quiet screens are marketed as essential tools for privacy. They allow a user to make phone calls, have conversations, and the like without being overheard outside the resulting "cone of silence." Of course, they can also be used for a variety of less savory activities, such as spying, breaking and entering, and other naughty things.

Attempting to listen in on an area protected by a quiet screen incurs a -8 Test Penalty to any Observation Tests that depend on hearing. Of course, this goes both ways, as anyone inside the screen can't easily hear anything going on outside. The quiet screen produces no visible field or aura, so its effects are hard to notice from a distance. However, the device doesn't work unless it is open to the air, so putting it inside a box or behind a door prevents it from functioning. Similarly, it must be stable, so it doesn't work if it's jarred or moved. It can be used on a vehicle, but only one that's exceptionally calm – it would function on a large aircraft, for example, but not if that aircraft experienced turbulence or attempted a difficult maneuver. One Action is required to place or remove a quiet screen, and another to activate or deactivate it.

WALLET/PURSE

Cost: 25Tn (more for designer items)

Availability: Common

Wallets and purses in the Strange Aeon are essentially identical as in days gone by, consisting of small pouches or bags slung

about the waist, on stylish bandoliers, in large cargo-style pockets, or strapped to the thigh. The only difference is that a wallet is used by men and has a utilitarian, masculine look, while purses are carried by women and tend to be more colorful and feminine.

Regardless of the name, these containers are used to carry small items, usually toiletries, hygiene products, cigarettes, medicine, and things of that nature. They also provide a convenient carrying case for items that don't necessarily fit in one's pockets. Wallets and purses often have watertight seals to protect their contents from the elements, and alert devices to keep them from the roving hands of pickpockets. Retrieving an item from a wallet, or placing one inside, takes one Action.

WIRELESS COMMUNICATION EARPIECE

Cost: 50-100Tn

Availability: Common

This simple earpiece comes in a variety of styles, sometimes resembling an almost invisible hearing aid, but more often taking the form of a large earring, ear wrap, or other decoration. Some more expensive models include extendable arms with built-in microphones, allowing the device to be used in crowded or noisy settings without too much interference.

A wireless communication earpiece, or WCE, transmits sound from the user's nearby PCPU to the wearer's ear, and can also send his voice back to the peek. The most common use for this is for long-distance calls, which are often accompanied by video from a nearby holo-interface. WCE's can also communicate with devices other than the owner's peek, such as automated public transportation, emergency services, and so on.

WCE HEARING AUGMENTATION UNIT

Cost: 75Tn

Availability: Uncommon (and sometimes Illegal)

Developed originally for medical purposes, the WCE-HAU, also called a "howler," is an advanced hearing aid that electronically augments sounds coming from the direction the owner is facing. The HAU's legitimate use is to help those with hearing loss, but these devices are also favorite tools for law enforcement, information gathering, reporting, and outright spying. In the latter case, howlers can be designed to fit so well in the user's ear, or in the shape of ordinary earrings, so that they can't even be identified as HAU's except on very close and careful observation. Howlers of this sort cost five to ten times as much as listed above, if they can be found at all. Howlers used for legitimate purposes aren't restricted, but listening in on private conversations is illegal (especially recording said conversations). Anyone using one of these devices for spying is subject to prosecution.

A howler augments sounds in the direction the user is facing, giving the wearer a +4 Test Bonus to Observation Tests involving hearing, but only in a very narrow field directly ahead. Sounds coming from other directions are often slightly distorted, but

not so much as to cause any Test Penalties to Observation Tests. HAU's are so sensitive that they can be dangerous in some situations. A sudden loud noise, such as a scream, gunshot, or explosion, can cause temporary deafness. Such situations require a Tenacity Feat Test at a Difficulty Degree set by the Storyguide, based on how loud the offending sound was. Failure results in several minutes of deafness (usually one to ten); a critical failure can last hours. If the sound was particularly loud (perhaps 100 decibels or more), the deafness can be permanent.

Installing and tuning a howler takes one minute. The device must be properly inserted and attuned to the ear, lest permanent hearing damage result.

MEDICAL GEAR

MEDKIT

Cost: 375Tn

Availability: Rare

Medkits are the high-tech version of an old-style doctor's bag, including a variety of medical tools, ranging from the obvious bandages and splints all the way up to electrostabilizers and bioscanners. In addition to its obvious utility in treating ordinary wounds, a medkit also allows a trained physician to treat and stabilize patients who are Moderately Wounded or more. Without a medkit, the best anyone can do for such patients is bind their wounds and hope for the best.

All medkits include a bioscanner, which can be used to swiftly identify many medical issues, and (if within about 100 yards) can also interface with a nearby Automated Patient Diagnosis Machine for a complete diagnosis. Bioscanners produce very technical readouts that are generally useless to anyone other than a trained physician. Thus, attempting to use a medkit without the proper training (at least Novice level in the Medicine skill) provides no benefits. A medkit also usually includes a number of medicines and drugs to treat a wide variety of mental and physical problems. Some of these drugs are discussed starting on p. 53, but many others are simply included as part of ordinary treatment. They don't produce any significant Test Modifiers, nor are they addictive, and rarely if ever cause side effects. On the other hand, their effects are far less dramatic than the drugs detailed herein.

A typical medkit is about a foot wide and several inches thick, about the size of a small folded parachute. They are often carried like a briefcase, or strapped on like a backpack. Medkits can also include one or more of the following improvements, which increase their size and weight noticeably.

ADVANCED SURGICAL TOOLS

Cost: 300Tn

Availability: Rare

Advanced surgical tools include auto-sutures, laser cutters, bone knitters, burn soothers, synthskin patches and a number of oth-

er highly advanced devices used to quickly and accurately correct critical injuries. These tools can be used only by individuals with at least an Adept level of expertise in the Medicine skill. Anyone else gains no benefit from using them.

When used to stabilize a character who is at least Moderately Wounded, advanced surgical tools reduce the Test Penalty caused by said wounds by one, and also prevents unconsciousness caused by being at Death's Door – but only if the physician succeeds at a Hard Medicine Test. This effect ends after one minute, unless the doctor continues to treat the patient during that time. The effect also ends if the victim takes any additional damage, although the physician can attempt another Medical Test to continue aiding the patient.

In addition to this, if the doctor continues treating the patient for at least five minutes after he is reduced to Seriously Wounded or greater, he can substitute the result of a Medicine Test for the Character's Tenacity Feat Test used to avoid gaining a complication from his wounds. In this case, make the Medicine Test first, and only if that Test fails is the Character required to make a Tenacity Feat Test. If the Medicine Test critically fails, however, he makes a major error in treatment, accidentally causing the very injury he was trying to prevent.

EMERGENCY DEFIBRILLATOR

Cost: 400Tn

Availability: Rare

Also known as a “crash kit,” the emergency defibrillator delivers a powerful electric charge that attempts to shock the heart and/or brain back to life. A crash kit draws power from a Class 3 D-cell, which burns out all its power in a single blast. It goes without saying that nobody else will want to be in contact with the subject when this device is activated.

A crash kit can literally bring a dead Character back to life, but it must be used within no more than a minute or two after he expires, or brain damage will be too severe. A Medicine Test of at least a Hard Degree is required to use the device properly. The actual Degree of Difficulty can be higher depending on the type and severity of wounds the Character has suffered. Usually, if he's only taken a few points above the amount required to kill him, the Degree will be merely Hard. Of course, if the injury was caused by a laser beam through the head, that's another matter entirely. If the Medicine Test fails, another charge can be attempted (after a new D-Cell is installed), but each such Test after the first takes a cumulative -2 Test Penalty. This may also



cause more damage or more severe injuries, at the Storyguide's option. On a critical failure, the victim is permanently dead.

If the Medicine Test succeeds, the victim's wounds are reduced to Death's Door levels and he regains consciousness – if he succeeds at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test. Depending on the type of injury and the length of time he was dead, more severe injuries may still result (typically nerve or brain damage). If the Medicine Test is a critical success, the victim drops to the extreme edge of Severely Wounded and regains consciousness immediately. Apparently he wasn't as badly injured as everyone thought.

LIMB REATTACHMENT SALVE

Cost: 750Tn

Availability: Rare

This potent paste-like material is capable of doing just what its name implies – reattaching a severed limb. The effect takes time and the limb doesn't necessarily function at one hundred percent, but at least it's not flopping around on the floor someplace.

Limb reattachment salve is more than just a bunch of chemicals – it contains specially programmed nanites that go to work the moment the material is applied to damaged tissue. The nanites quickly move to locate severed nerve endings, blood vessels, bone shards and the like, identifying the point of any breaks and stopping the body's loss of fluids. Then, when the missing limb is pressed against the stump, the nanites swiftly locate the proper junction points and go to work reattaching the severed flesh. The entire process takes anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour depending on the severity of the damage and the amount of skin and sinew involved. Note, however, that the severed limb must be relatively intact – a severely burned or smashed limb is probably better off left where it is and a new one grown later through cloning.

Once reattached, the limb is functional, but only at about half its normal capabilities. For a severed arm or leg, the Character takes a -2 Test Penalty to Strength or Agility-based Tests that use the limb in question. In the case of missing fingers or toes, he takes a -1 Test Penalty to Agility-based Tests where that hand or foot is needed. If an ear, nose or eye was lost (assuming, of course, that these were sufficiently intact to be reattached), the character takes a -1 Test Penalty to Observation Tests involving the associated senses. These penalties are removed once the character's injuries have healed to at least Flesh Wounds.

SYNTHETIC TRANSFUSION KIT

Cost: 150Tn plus 50Tn per blood pack

Availability: Rare

Synthetic transfusion kits, or STKs, use packets of synthetic blood to replace that lost by those who have been critically injured. Once the victim has been bioscanned, the medkit induces chemical changes in a bloodpack's contents to ensure the fluids are compatible with the victim. Rejection is thus extremely rare.

These chemicals require one turn to take effect. Immediately thereafter, the bloodpack can be injected into the victim, a process that takes two more turns. At the conclusion of this time, the victim recovers one die of damage, representing the effects of lost blood being restored to the body. A victim must be alive and be at least Moderately Wounded to benefit. Furthermore, the victim must be stable and immobilized during the transfusion process. If he takes any more damage during the transfusion, its benefits are lost. Note that the subject must have recently experienced wounds that would cause blood loss in order to be aided by a transfusion – someone who took a blow to the head from a hammer, for example, isn't going to get anything out of the procedure.

After a transfusion, the victim is treated as having the Tired Drawback until he has had a chance to rest for at least 10 hours. If he already has this Drawback, its penalties are doubled.

PCPU GEAR

The humble PCPU, or “peek,” is an essential item in modern society. Pretty much everyone has one, even at the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder. A person's peek is as ubiquitous as a cell phone was in days gone by.

Many citizens become attached to their peeks, feeling lonely or incomplete if they don't have it on their person or close by. Some treat peeks as if they were pets and there are different add-ons and physical modifications available to give the PCPU a “personality.” Although it's possible to simply carry around an unmodified, basic peek, most people personalize theirs at least a little bit, if only to help them identify it at a distance.

A wide variety of applications, or “apps,” are available for peeks, so many that the PCPU often seems capable of nearly anything. The device does have limits, though. Unless heavily modified, it can't undertake any task that would break the law, such as tap into communications, hack other computers, and the like. Most peeks are sold with built-in coding and firmware that prevents this sort of thing and even goes so far as to log and report such activities. Any hacker worth his salt can deactivate or work around these features, but it keeps the joyriders out of trouble.

While capable of extremely powerful computing processes, peeks are normally used for two primary purposes other than communication: games and pornography. Every time the computing power of a PCPU is increased to the next level, these two fields push the envelope, allowing even more realistic and satisfying experiences for the user. Of course, a peek can also be used for business applications, but games and porn are where the real money is.

The following gear is available for peeks, ranging from simple carrying cases and protective devices to illegal improvements and add-ons that allow PCPUs to be used for an astonishing variety of criminal activities. Please note that the authorities often know what to look for, so keep any such illegal improvements carefully hidden.

AUGMENTED REALITY GLASSES/GOGGLES

Cost: 495Tn

Availability: Uncommon

Augmented reality (AR) technology consists of a thin, transparent transistor film that covers glasses or goggles. The wearer's PCPU can project images – typically maps, schematics, diagrams, and the like – in such a way that it overlays what the user is naturally seeing. Thus, for example, a traveler in unfamiliar environs could overlay a GPS-aided 3D map showing him the location of his destination, as well as potential turns and routes he could use to get there. Furthermore, only the person wearing the goggles can see the displays.

The technology has many excellent applications, but is limited by the biological nature of the human eye, which can only take so much input. Displays must be simple and unobtrusive or the user's brain can become confused. The primary effects of sensory overload are headaches and an inability to focus on distant objects. AR displays usually can't be manipulated like HIU input devices can, and in the few exceptions that exist, the controls are very limited.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH MONITOR ADD-ON

Cost: 750Tn (installation), 150Tn (hardware), plus drug costs

Availability: Rare

Favored by the elderly, those with chronic illnesses or psychiatric problems, soldiers or other fighters, and the like, the comprehensive health monitor consists of medical software tied into a number of small sensors and monitoring devices embedded in the skin, bones, and organs of the owner. These sensors constantly broadcast short-range signals (up to 10 yards) that the accompanying software uses to update a constant medical profile. This includes things like blood pressure, heart rate, cholesterol levels, brain wave activity, white blood cell count, injury evaluations, and so on. If the profile indicates danger, the peek warns its owner with audible explanations of the problem (“heart rate exceeding normal tolerances,” for example). In cases of great danger, it can also send warning messages to medical personnel or summon emergency teams to the owner's present location.

In addition to these functions, the CHM's hardware includes a small automated injection device that wraps around the upper arm or thigh. Hollow capsules within the wrapping can be filled with up to three different types of medicine which can then be injected by the peek, should the medical software detect the need for it. Each dose can be programmed for separate conditions. Thus, for example, a soldier expecting combat could outfit one of the injectors with instant pain killer, programmed to automatically inject the drug if he reaches Death's Door.

A CHM and its injector are useless if the user is separated from his peek by more than about ten yards. Once it loses the signal, the CHM software shuts off for safety purposes. If returned to the proper range, it reactivates and can resume functioning after one minute, once it has acquired and extrapolated enough data

to form a new profile. CHM software is coded to accept only its owner's genetic code, so that two CHM users passing near each other won't interfere with each other's profiles.

DARK SHIELD

Cost: 100Tn

Availability: Uncommon

One thing that makes a peek incredibly useful is its ability to interface with nearby electronic equipment. For example, a citizen wishing to make a purchase can, in many stores, simply walk in, grab what he wants and leave. His peek automatically notifies the shop's central computer of his presence, reports which items he's picked up, and provides his bank account information. The store then bills his account the appropriate amount, through the peek's automatic debit processing system.

Nothing could be more convenient, but for many people, especially conspiracy theorists and those who prefer privacy, the thought that their peek is communicating with other devices is somewhat disturbing. As a result, the dark shield, or “darkener,” was developed. When attached to one of a PCPU's external ports, this small, unobtrusive device simply blanks out the peek, preventing it from interfacing wirelessly with any nearby equipment. At the same time, other devices don't see the peek and are unaware of its presence. This doesn't prevent security systems from detecting the peek, of course – it merely prevents such systems from accessing the PCPU against its owner's wishes.

Although possession of a dark shield might seem like an admission of guilt to some, in much the same way that a radar detector implies that a driver speeds all the time, owners don't see it that way. While not necessarily paranoid, those who employ darkeners simply like their privacy, and the law permits them to have it if they so wish. Of course, if they actually do want to hook up to another device, they have to either remove the darkener or connect directly, which can be cumbersome or even impossible in some cases.

HOLO-INTERFACE UNIT (HIU)

Cost: 125-1000Tn

Availability: Common

The holo-interface unit, also called a HIU or “hi-you,” is a small item about the size of a pencil that can project a holographic keyboard, monitor, mouse, trackball, pointer, or virtually any other kind of input/output (I/O) device, save for those that produce physical output – you couldn't use a HIU to produce a hard copy. Each HIU type is different and they can't be programmed or altered to produce a different sort of I/O peripheral. The holographic display is three-dimensional, but ephemeral, basically translucent with no real substance.

Costs for some of the various HIU types are as listed below:

- Keyboard: 125Tn
- Mouse/trackball/pointer: 75Tn

- Joystick/simple game controller: 100Tn
- Advanced game controller: 225Tn
- Average sized monitor: 250Tn
- Large monitor: 400Tn
- Ultra-wide wraparound monitor: 1000Tn
- All-in-one keyboard/mouse/monitor combo pack: 400Tn or more
- Custom control panel: Varies

Some HIUs are designed for specific hardware, such as remote vehicle controls, foot panels, multiple apps, and so on. These must be specifically designed to fit the task in question. While the average computer user would have no idea how to do this, it would be a good challenge for an engineer or technician.

HIUs operate at a distance of no more than ten feet from their parent PCPU. The peek need not be in the open, but if it's inside a box or behind a wall, the range is noticeably reduced. Setting up a HIU peripheral takes one Action, after which the peek automatically interfaces with the device and acts on its own thereafter.

IDENTITY MASK

Cost: 300Tn

Availability: Illegal

One of the more easily acquired illegal tools available for PCPU users, the identity mask is a plug-in device equipped with a wraparound shield that encases peeks of nearly any size. When activated, the identity mask overlays false information atop the peek's normal profile without actually modifying anything internally. Thus, when interfaced with by nearby devices, the peek appears to be owned by someone other than its actual user. Equipped with a properly programmed mask, a disguised peek could be used to make purchases, send electronic messages, download or upload files, and do almost anything in someone else's name.

Of course, in order to pull this off, the mask must be properly set up with the false identity, which requires success at a Computers Test, at a Difficulty Degree set by the Storyguide based on the amount of information available about the false identity. The Character must make this Test without knowing the Degree, and thus won't know for sure if the mask was properly coded until he actually puts it through its paces. Note that in general the more powerful and influential an individual, the more security factors and cross-checks will be in place to protect him from this sort of identity theft.

INVISIBLE HOLO-INTERFACE UNIT (IHIU)

Cost: 1600Tn

Availability: Rare

Used by those who desire security and privacy, the IHIU is similar to a normal holo-interface unit, except the displayed monitor and keyboard can only be seen by the computer's owner. While projected holo-displays can be seen by any passerby, and AR

monitor displays can be tapped into remotely, the IHIU beams its display directly into the recipient's eyes using a low-power, harmless laser. The device's security system automatically makes continuous retinal scans as well, ensuring the information being sent can only be viewed and controlled by a legitimate user. Thus, for example, a stock trader could literally stand in the middle of a room full of competitors, making purchases and manipulating the markets to his heart's content without any fear of being spied upon. Onlookers will know he's doing something, but not exactly what.

LANGUAGE RECOGNITION UNIT

Cost: 540Tn

Availability: Rare

The language recognition unit, or LRU, is a PCPU add-on that replaces the user's normal wireless earpiece, and resembles a large headset or pair of hearing aids. The headset muffles external sounds, attempting to detect and filter foreign tongues and translate them on the fly. When the LRU detects a spoken voice, it processes the sounds using software in the PCPU and attempts to produce a translation directly in the listener's ears. The LRU can be programmed to recognize up to five languages at a time, but it doesn't notify the user as to which language it's translating.

While wearing a LRU, the user gains +8 Test Bonus to any Language Tests related to words spoken in his presence, but only for languages the LRU is currently programmed to understand. However, the user takes a -4 Test Penalty to all Observation Tests involving hearing, because the headset muffles other sounds. The LRU only translates incoming voices, not anything the wearer speaks – thus, to carry on an actual conversation between two people who don't understand each others' languages, both individuals should be wearing LRUs.

OVERLOAD DEFENSE MATRIX

Cost: 500Tn

Availability: Uncommon

Used as an expensive form of hacker protection as well as an offensive weapon, the overload defense matrix, or ODM, is a small peripheral that covers the PCPU's external data ports. Virus protection software (included with the device) blocks most normal internet malware, while the exterior hardware scans incoming wireless transmissions for evidence of hacking. Should such an attempt be detected, the ODM emits a warning tone and blasts the offending computer with a powerful data spike. This may or may not damage the enemy device, but it usually puts a stop to the hacking long enough for the owner to equip a dark shield or protect his peek in some other way.

The ODM can also be used offensively, although this isn't its intended use. The peek's owner must do a little hacking to make this possible (a Challenging Computer Test) and then directs the data spike as he wishes. While this rarely causes any physical damage, it will shut down simple devices, cause momentary

power surges, and the like. Other innovative uses for the data spike are left up to the players.

An ODM can deliver a data spike once every ten minutes and must then recharge. Using an ODM defensively isn't a crime, but attacking other computers is, so those who wish to use the device in this way should take care to avoid detection.

PERSONAL LOCATOR ADD-ON

Cost: 50Tn

Availability: Common

A popular add-on for parents who need to know where their children are every single minute of the day, personal locators are small tracking chips installed internally – often without the owner's knowledge. Once functioning, the chip uses the peek's built-in GPS locators to continuously broadcast the PCPU's location to the internet. Anyone who knows the encoded serial number of that particular chip can then find out where the peek is at any time, allowing easy tracking of its owner. Of course, if the owner knows the personal locator chip is there, he can simply separate it from his person to confuse whoever's tracking him.

A personal locator has obvious legal uses in the areas of child-rearing, law enforcement, and the like, but it can also be used for mischief. Installed surreptitiously, it allows tracking of a subject without their knowledge or suspicion (unless they are truly paranoid). Top quality personal locators, costing ten times the listed price or more, are virtually undetectable, even if the peek is opened and examined. Even more expensive versions are rumored to exist that can track what the peek is doing at any given time, allowing hackers remote access from great distances, but these could just be the stuff of paranoia.

SELF-DESTRUCT UNIT

Cost: 150Tn

Availability: Rare (permit required)

In a world at war, there are always secrets, and where there are secrets there are those who would seek to steal them. Security, especially at higher levels of the government and military, is paramount. When a peek is used to transport sensitive data – which happens more often than one might think – it is often equipped with a self-destruct unit.

The method of destruction can take different forms, but usually consists of a small explosive or caustic substance stored within the PCPU's case. Whenever certain parameters are met, as programmed by the owner, the self-destruct mechanism activates, instantly and irrevocably destroying the peek and any data it contains. Typical programming includes the death of its owner (or separation from him by a certain distance), voice or thought commands, being touched or accessed by someone who doesn't provide proper identification, and so on. This destruction rarely causes any harm to whoever is carrying it – the device is so small it's difficult to provide enough explosives to deal that kind of damage.

Self-destruct units will be detected by most anti-terrorism safeguards, such as those in and around public gathering places and transportation centers. For this reason, a permit is required to install and use one. Without such a permit, anyone carrying a self-destruct capable peek might be arrested – or at least would have some very serious explaining to do.

SHOCK-RESISTANT COATING

Cost: 50Tn

Availability: Common

Designed to protect a peek from harm, shock-resistant coating surrounds the device in a thick, clear plastic-like material. While so protected, a PCPU can fall great distances, withstand blows, and even be thrown against a wall without suffering damage. The coating absorbs any impact, distributing the kinetic force around the peek while leaving the device unharmed. What's more, the covering can be peeled away as needed to install peripherals or repair the unit. The coating only protects against ordinary falls and blunt weapons, and does nothing to stop bullets or other high-speed weapons.

A shock-resistant coating comes in several micro-thin layers, several of which are shedded with each impact – after ten or so blows, depending on severity, the coating wears away and must be replaced. Installing a shock-resistant coating requires success at a Challenging Technician Test, as care must be taken to fit the material about the computer, and since each peek is different this isn't as straightforward as it might seem.

STYLISH ARMORED CARRYING SHELL

Cost: 250Tn

Availability: Common

For those who truly love and cherish their peek, the ultimate in style and protection is this armored shell, which acts as a secure carrying case, protective barrier, and electromagnetic shield all in one. The case can be locked and keyed to the owner's retinal scan, so only he can open it safely, and the container is made of interlocking plates that can't be easily broken into without destroying its contents. Attempting to penetrate the case without the proper retinas on hand requires success at a Hard Criminal or Security Test. An impatient or unskilled thief could try to break in the hard way, using any appropriate weapon or tool, but he must succeed at a Hard Agility Feat Test or he will damage or destroy the peek in the process. The armored shell also protects the peek from the effects of heat, cold, explosions, indirect fire, lightning, electromagnetic surges, and so on. If the case comes under direct attack and is destroyed, the peek inside is also destroyed.

Extremely high-tech versions of these cases also exist, adding features such as DNA recognition testing (to complement the retinal scan), electronic coded passwords (so an eye can't be plucked out to open the lock), self-destruct mechanisms that douse the peek inside in an acid bath on command, and so on – increasing the cost by four times or more.

THOUGHT WAVE MONITOR ADD-ON

Cost: 5,000Tn or more

Availability: Extremely rare

One of the more exciting developments in recent PCPU communications technology is the development of fledgling thought control devices, based off of military technology used in mecha. Attuned to a user's specific brain wave patterns, the TWM is able to actually read simple, direct commands from its owner's very thoughts, allowing him to control his peek silently and almost instantaneously, even if restrained or silenced in some way. Complex programming tasks are impossible (at least so far), but the user can order his peek to open files, activate streaming video or audio, visit web sites, make phone calls, activate or deactivate peripherals, and the like. The peek must be close by (within a few feet) and the direct path from it to the user can't be blocked by any solid objects, other than thin material like paper or cloth.

Each individual's brain wave patterns are unique, so a peek equipped with a TWM must be "taught" how to read its owner's thoughts. This takes a few hours, but doesn't require a Test unless the owner wants to accelerate the process. It's generally believed to be impossible for someone to take control of another's

peek using this device, although this technology is so new in the private sector that nothing is truly certain. Certainly little or no security exists to prevent such a thing, if someone figures out how to do it, for now.

PHARMACEUTICALS

The world has seen a wide variety of technological improvements over the last few decades, and nowhere is this more evident than in the field of medicine. Doctors can cure nearly any ill, given enough time, and even lost body parts can be replaced using genetic cloning techniques. Furthermore, what a physician can't cure, a well-trained sorcerer probably can.

This is all well and good for those with direct access to modern medical facilities and magic, but often such opportunities simply aren't available, or are inconvenient to use. A field agent or soldier on duty can't always afford to spend days or more sequestered in some hospital, for example. In such cases, drugs are often used to assist healing or as a preventative measure.

Drugs aren't limited to simple medical uses, of course. Since the earliest days of human history, medicinal substances have been used – or abused – to improve or alter the body and mind. From



common drugs like alcohol to the most exotic hallucinogen or psychiatric metahormone, the uses for such chemicals are nearly endless. Some are legal, others illegal, and a few so dangerous only the truly desperate or insane would risk their side effects.

There's no such thing as a typical drug, as each one is unique. Drugs might be taken as pills, injected, consumed in liquid form, dripped into the eyes, smoked, or applied in any of numerous other ways. A drug can be safe or risky, addictive or non-addictive, cheap or expensive, available over-the-counter or by prescription only (or only through the black market), and produce a wide variety of side effects.

This section lists a number of drugs available in the *CthulhuTech* setting, each with any or all of these possible attributes.

Addiction

One of the dangers of taking drugs is the potential for addiction. Even taking some drugs once can result in some sort of dependency, be it mental or physical. The need for more doses of some drugs can be overwhelming – the most desperate addicts will do almost anything for one more hit.

Each time a Character takes a drug, he must make an Addiction Test. This Test is made when the effects of the drug wear off, using the Attribute Feat and Difficulty given for the drug's Addiction Rating. If the Character succeeds, he continues to resist addiction, but if he fails, addiction takes hold. Note that while the player is now aware that his Character is addicted to the substance, the Character himself probably won't realize this right away. Only when he notices he's taking the drug more and more often, and altering his lifestyle to make this possible, will he understand that he's now addicted – and often not even then.

Taking a drug with regular frequency increases the risk of addiction. If a Character takes another dose of the substance in question within the listed Safety Window, increase the Degree of the associated Addiction Test by one category – and double the length of the next Safety Window. Each increase in Degree is cumulative, until the newly calculated Safety Window time expires.

For example, while on stakeout outside a suspected criminal's lair, Officer Teskary injects a stimulant with an Addiction Rating of Tenacity 12, a duration of two hours, and a Safety Window of four hours. When the criminals don't make an appearance, she decides she must stay awake and vigilant, so she risks a second dose without waiting the Safety Window of four hours. The next Addiction Test will be at a Difficulty of 16, and she must wait eight hours before trying another dose, or the Difficulty Degree will increase to Hard.

If a Character becomes addicted, he suffers two primary effects: a physical or mental dependence, and a buildup of tolerance. A Character suffers a physical dependence if the drug's Addiction Rating is based on Agility, Strength, or Tenacity, and a mental dependence if it is based on Intellect, Perception, or Presence. In either case, he is required to take another dose of the drug within

six to ten hours of the end of the previous dose, or else suffer from withdrawal. However unpleasant, dealing with withdrawal is the only effective way of breaking most addictions.

Tolerance means the body or mind grows used to the presence of the drug over time, so that either more or larger doses are required to produce the original effects. Each time a Character takes a dose of a drug after becoming addicted, he must make another Addiction Test, exactly like the first. If this Test fails, he becomes a bit more tolerant, requiring more of the drug (about 25% more) to achieve the drug's normal effects and to avoid withdrawal. Tolerance levels are technically cumulative, with no upper limit – that is, until overdose.

Withdrawal

If a Character is addicted to a drug and fails to take doses regularly, he can fall prey to the unpleasantness of withdrawal. Withdrawal lasts until the Character takes the appropriate amount of the drug as required by his tolerance, or fights off the effects through tenacity or sheer force of will.

When a Character suffers from withdrawal, he becomes fatigued (see Side Effects), and immediately takes damage sufficient to push him to the next Wound Level (Unwounded to Flesh Wounds, Flesh Wounds to Light Wounds, and so on). He remains in this state, not healing damage normally, for a period of time equal to the drug's Safety Window statistic – then he must make a Tenacity or Intellect Feat Test (depending on whether the dependency is physical or mental) against the drug's Addiction Rating. Compare the result to the following chart:

- *Critical Failure* – The condition grows worse. Increase to the next wound level immediately. Then, wait another Safety Window period and make another Test, this time at a -2 Test Penalty. During this waiting period, the Character is unconscious.
- *Failure* – Withdrawal continues, slowly sapping the character's vitality. Wait another Safety Window period, increase to the next Wound Level at that point, and make another Test. During this waiting period, the Character is fatigued and nauseous.

GETTING HIGH

Some players may wish to look upon drugs as the potions or elixirs of the Strange Aeon, but in reality they're just another sort of tool. The risk of addiction and the pain of withdrawal provide the natural balance to the overuse of drugs as Character enhancements or buffs. At the Storyguide's discretion, Characters who abuse drugs regularly or use downtime as a loophole to painlessly get through withdrawal can experience greater side effects or a variety of health problems stemming from this abuse. Medical treatment for habitual offenders can become more difficult or expensive, and the law may take an interest if the drugs involved are illegal. Additionally, the Storyguide may optionally rule that the Tests used for side effects or withdrawal can't be modified through the use of Drama Points.

- *Success* – The Character fights off withdrawal, but the wounds remain. Reduce the drug's current Tolerance Level by one. If the Character remains addicted, wait another Safety Window period and make another Test. During this waiting period, the Character is fatigued.
- *Critical Success* – The Character's mind and body rejuvenate quickly, removing the last level of damage taken (if any), and reducing the drug's Tolerance Level by two. If the Character remains addicted, wait two Safety Windows before making another Test. During this waiting period, the Character suffers from mild dizziness, but can otherwise act normally.

Note that at any time during any of the above results, a Character can end the process by taking enough doses of the drug to match his current Tolerance Level. Doing so does not erase any damage already taken, however. It's entirely possible for a Character suffering severe withdrawal symptoms to fall into a coma – or even die, if such addiction is physical in nature.

Should a Character fight his way through withdrawal and remove all levels of Tolerance from his system, he's still at risk. The drug retains its power over him, should he be exposed to it again. In much the same way as an alcoholic falling "off the wagon," taking another dose is dangerous. Keep a record of how many Tolerance Levels the Character has reached in the past – these are applied as a permanent Test Penalty to any Addiction Tests for that drug. You might shake your addiction for weeks or even years, but the drug still has a hold on you, even if you refuse to believe it.

Side Effects

Many drugs have side effects, ranging from minor – headaches, slight dizziness, and the like – to potentially life-threatening. Not all Characters will suffer them. A drug's typical side effects are listed in its description, but the method used to apply them is described here.

When a drug is taken, immediately make a Feat Test using the Attribute listed in the drug's Side Effect Rating, similar to an Addiction Test – except this Test is made immediately, not when the drug wears off. If the Character fails a Side Effect Test, he suffers one or more side effects from the list provided in the drug's description. If he critically fails, the Storyguide decides exactly what happens, but usually it'll be a combination of two side effects, one such effect doubled in strength, or something similar, though all usually much worse. Depending on the drug and the situation, the Storyguide may decide on something else, especially if it adds drama to the current scene. Note, however, that side effects should be consistent – if a given Character experiences a migraine from one dose of a given drug, he'll probably get migraines every time he suffers side effects from that same drug. The same goes for side effects from critical failures.

Side effects tend to lessen the more a Character becomes used to the drug in question. If he has acquired any Tolerance Levels,

apply these as a Test Bonus to Side Effects Tests. Once a Character has many Tolerance Levels, he might be able to avoid side effects entirely, which would be desirable if he didn't have to continue taking the drug to avoid withdrawal.

Side effects typically last as long as the drug itself. There may be exceptions listed in individual drug descriptions.

Some of the more common side effects are listed below, to avoid cluttering up the drug listings with repetitive text.

- *Minor Side Effects* – Many drugs have small minor effects that don't really affect game play, but could be useful for your story. Minor effects are unpleasant physical symptoms, such as nervousness, mild paranoia, loss of appetite, intestinal gas, diarrhea, dry eyes or mouth, shallow breathing, hacking coughs, headaches, and so on. The Storyguide is free to decide which effects occur in this case, but again, he should be consistent as far as each specific Character is concerned. A drug can have different side effects for different people, but a given individual tends to suffer the same ones each time.
- *Dizziness* – Characters under the effect of dizziness take a -1 Test Penalty to any Test that uses Agility or Strength as a base. If the dizziness is severe, increase the Test Penalty to -2. The Storyguide may rule that severely dizzy Characters can't drive vehicles safely, suffer from vertigo, or any similar effect.
- *Drowsiness* – The Character becomes tired, finding it difficult to concentrate and focus, feeling a strong need for sleep. For ordinary drowsiness, simply apply a -1 Test Penalty to all Actions taken, which can be negated by sleeping for a period of one-half the drug's duration. Strong drowsiness applies a -2 Test Penalty and requires the Character to make a Tenacity Feat Test at a Difficulty equal to the drug's Side Effect Rating, or else fall asleep for the drug's duration.
- *Fatigue* – A fatigued Character feels weak and finds strenuous activity difficult. He can take no more than one Action per turn, takes a -2 Test Penalty to any Tests involving physical abilities, and cannot use more than one Drama Point on any physical Test. Furthermore, if he attempts to move faster than cautious speeds, he must make a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or fall to the ground, gasping and wheezing for one Turn.
- *Fear/Hallucinations* – Some mind-affecting drugs induce feelings of fear or dread, often accompanied by terrible hallucinations. If a drug has these kind of side effects, any stressful situation – typically combat, but potentially including any dangerous activity – requires a Fear Test at a Difficulty equal to the drug's Side Effect Rating. The affected Character might think that an approaching police officer is a slaving monster, for example, and react accordingly. The Storyguide may adjust certain results on the Fear Effects ta-

ble differently as a result of the drug – for example, he may cause the Forget result to erase all memory of the Character's time under the influence of the drug, or he may rule the Phobia entry causes the character to become permanently afraid of the drug itself – or afraid of what might happen if he doesn't take it.

- *Headaches/Migraines* – A Character afflicted by headaches finds it difficult to concentrate, and takes a -1 Test Penalty to any Test that uses Intellect or Perception as a base. In the case of migraines, increase the Test Penalty to -2. At the Storyguide's option, severe headaches may have other effects, such as loss of concentration or worse.

- *Jitters/Shakes* – Jittery Characters have the shakes, a condition which makes them shudder and shiver, though not from nervousness. While not harmful in and of itself, the shakiness of the hands makes fine manipulation difficult. Whenever attempting a Test involving careful work in close quarters, such as trying to pick a lock or hot-wire a vehicle, the victim takes a -4 Test Penalty.

- *Lethargy* – The Character is weakened and feels a sense of “dragging,” as though carrying heavy weights that slow him down. While a character is under the effects of lethargy, all Tests that use Strength as a base lose one die (to a minimum of zero). Furthermore, the character treats his Strength as halved for purposes of calculating his speed. Lethargic characters may also suffer slowness in other ways, such as when making mental efforts such as complex mathematics or translations, but this is up to the Storyguide.

- *Nausea* – Nauseous characters feel queasy and find physical activities, especially those involving motion, very difficult. Such a Character takes a -1 Test Penalty to any Test that uses Agility or Tenacity as a base. Increase this Test Penalty to -2 or more for any such Test made in a moving vehicle. This Test Penalty should be increased if the vehicle is flying, moving unusually fast, swaying, providing a good view of the ground rushing by, or, in the Storyguide's opinion, is doing anything that would increase the effects of nausea.

Overdosing

Any time a Character takes too much of a given drug, or attempts to take multiple drugs at once, he's at risk of overdosing.

THE MONKEY ON YOUR BACK

Drugs and addiction are a much more complicated topic that we can accurately represent with a few simple rules. The real world of addiction and its consequences ranges from the mostly unhindered life of the functioning alcoholic to the obsession and humiliation of the crack addict. If you choose to make drugs a regular part of your *CthulhuTech* game, use these rules as guidelines, modifying them however you see fit. On the other hand, you may find the whole idea distasteful, in which case simply remove the use of substances from your game and have them be something that other people do.

The sheer number of drugs available and their many combinations precludes any specific rules for this situation, so this is left up to the Storyguide, using the general guidelines below. Usually, ordinary or common drugs are far less risky than expensive or illegal ones, but even the simplest and safest of medicines can be dangerous if abused.

When the possibility of an overdose arises, the Character must succeed in a Tenacity Feat Test. The Difficulty Degree for this Test is usually at least as high as the drug combination's highest Side Effect Rating, plus one Degree. Should the Character fail this Test, an overdose occurs; if he critically fails, the overdose is major.

An overdose can have any of a number of effects, but usually these take the form of one or more of the component drugs' usual side effects, often doubled in strength. Thus, if a character overdoses by taking one drug that produces dizziness and another that causes nausea, he might feel both effects, or be so dizzy he can barely stand, or (in severe cases) both. These effects usually persist at least the duration of the shortest-lasting drug in the combination, but may last slightly longer. In any case, the character still gains the benefits (or penalties) of each of the drugs in the cocktail.

If a major overdose occurs, the Character also takes damage – usually two or three dice, although he could take more if he's under the influence of many drugs, or they are individually very powerful or notably dangerous. This damage can't be reduced by any means. A Character driven to Death's Door by this damage automatically falls into a coma. It's entirely possible for overdosing Characters to die as a result of their error.

DRUG DESCRIPTIONS

Presented here are a variety of drugs for use in your *CthulhuTech* game. Most of the drugs detailed here are the kind that might be interesting for your game, leaving out most of the kinds of recreational drugs that people enjoy in the Strange Aeon.

AHP INSTANT PAIN KILLER

Manufacturer: Agwyn-Hallister Pharmaceuticals

Slang: Nervebreaker, Painaway, PK

Form: Inhaled, Oral

Cost: 110 Tn

Addiction Rating: Tenacity 12

Availability: Uncommon, Prescription Only

Onset: 1 turn (1 minute if taken orally)

Duration: 1-10 minutes

Safety Window: 2 hours

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 8

Description: Instant pain killers, usually referred to as simply PKs, are a fairly easy to acquire and low-risk way to temporarily reduce the effects of injury. PKs are usually sold in boxes of 10, 20 or 50 small globules, which can be crushed between the fingers in front of a victim's face. The subject breathes in the resulting vapors and within moments feels a surge of vitality, allowing him

a few precious minutes to tend his wounds – or find someone else who can.

When a dose of instant pain killer takes effect, the user treats his Wound Level as one level lower for purposes of assessing penalties. This can reduce or eliminate Test Penalties, and even temporarily remove a Character from the effects of Death's Door. Naturally, the drug has no effect on Characters that have passed Death's Door into being actually dead. While they don't provide any actual healing – the Character's actual Wound Level is not reduced in any way – instant pain killers may give the user a second chance at survival. Since the risk of addiction is relatively low, and side effects are rare, multiple doses can be taken as necessary – though civilian doctors will pay attention to overall usage when assessing a prescription.

The usual side effects of this drug range from minor effects like loss of appetite or dry mouth, and sometimes mild nausea, but a Critical Failure when checking for side effect causes one extra die of damage to the user, which can't be reduced in any way.

ALCOHOL

Manufacturer: Various Beverage Companies

Slang: Booze, Firewater, Hooch

Form: Liquid

Cost: Varies

Addiction Rating: Tenacity 8 (see description)

Availability: Common, Over-The-Counter

Onset: 1 to 10 minutes (one die)

Duration: 1 to 5 hours (half a die)

Safety Window: 1 hour

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 12

Description: Alcohol is one of the most common drugs in the world, available nearly anywhere and subject to only a few laws and limitations (mostly regarding age). Alcohol lowers inhibitions, makes the user feel empowered, and produces a “buzz” that helps the subject have more fun. This makes alcohol a common party drug – there are few social gatherings that don't include alcohol in one form or another. It is also the single most socially acceptable drug, mostly due to its long history.

READING DRUG LISTINGS

Name:	The official name of the drug.
Manufacturer:	The drug's primary manufacturer or patent holder or, in the case of illegal drugs, the most likely source. Legal drugs are very profitable, and patent holders jealously guard their formulas and manufacturing processes. Illicit drugs are even more profitable, and drug dealers are always looking for the next new product to introduce to their customers.
Slang:	Some of the more common names used on the street to describe this drug. For example, marijuana is sometimes referred to as weed, grass, pot, and so on.
Form:	How the drug is usually taken, e.g., pills, capsules, injections, etc.
Cost:	How much you should expect to pay per dose, assuming you can find the drug in the first place.
Addiction Rating:	The Difficulty Rating of the Feat Test required to resist addiction, as well as the Attribute used in said Test. For example, a highly addictive drug that creates a physical dependency might have an Addiction Rating of Tenacity 28, while a commonly available psychiatric medicine might possess a rating of Intellect 12.
Availability:	How the drug is usually acquired. This could be over-the-counter, prescription, or black market, and further qualified as common, uncommon or rare. For example, over-the-counter drugs can be purchased in most supermarkets and convenience stores if rated as common, even in small communities; in this respect they are much like today's aspirins and cough medicines. However, some over-the-counter medicines are more difficult to find, and rare ones might appear only in one or two specialty stores in a major city, and not at all in rural areas. Similarly, a rare illegal drug would be exceptionally dangerous and risky to seek out, unless one has very good (and trustworthy) contacts in the underground.
Onset:	How much time passes before the drug takes effect. Sometimes there's no delay at all, while other times the onset of the effects is variable.
Duration:	How long the effects of the drug last before wearing off. Again, this can be a variable amount of time.
Safety Window:	How long the Character must wait before taking another dose, without incurring penalties to addiction and side effect rolls. The clock starts ticking when the drug wears off, not when it is first taken. For example, if a Character takes a drug that lasts one hour and has a Safety Window of four hours, it will be five hours before he can safely take a second dose.
Side Effect Rating:	Many drugs can have side effects, as described in more detail in a separate heading below. The drug's Side Effect Rating is listed in a manner similar to its Addiction Rating, with an Attribute and associated Difficulty Level. When Testing to see if side effects occur, use this rating as noted in the drug's description.

DRUG SLANG

In addition to slang terms for individual drugs, those who take them often use their own particular vernacular to describe the effects (and the business) of drug use. A sampling appears below.

Around The Turn: Recovering from withdrawal.

Baby Habit: Occasionally using drugs.

Babysit: Guiding someone through their first experience with a new drug.

Bad Trip: When a hallucinogenic drug experience goes wrong, filling the user with feelings of fear, dread, and/or alienation.

Bender: A drug binge, usually lasting days. Also, taking many different drugs in rapid succession, often at a party.

Burnout: A heavy abuser of drugs that are taking its toll on the user's well-being.

Cocktail: A mixture of two or more drugs, one of which is often (but not always) alcohol.

Cold Turkey: To stop using drugs suddenly and without buffer, usually in combination with addiction.

Coming Down: Coming off the effects of a drug.

Dealer/Pusher: A user's drug source.

Drop: To swallow drugs.

Fiending: A state of craving and later desperation that occurs in a user when he wants drugs and doesn't have them.

Flipping: Mixing a hallucinogen with a euphoric. Candy flipping is mixing LSD and Bliss, while Hippie Flipping is mixing psilocibin and Bliss.

Glider: Someone who gets drugs for free, typically someone wealthy or famous, but may also refer to doctors who "borrow" a few doses from work.

Graduate: Move up from simple, easily acquired drugs to more powerful and addictive ones.

High/Getting Off/Ripped: Under the influence.

Hit/Fix: A dose of a drug. Fixes are usually (but not always) injected.

Invincible: Addicted to painkillers.

Jacking: Stealing drugs or selling bunk drugs.

Junkie: An addict, used most often for opiate addicts.

Kicking: To quit using drugs to which the user is, in some form, addicted.

Kit: Equipment used to take drugs, usually for injections, but also referring to other paraphernalia.

Loaded: High on drugs.

Metahormone: A drug that affects a user's magical or parapsychic powers.

Monkey: Drug dependency (as in, "getting the monkey off my back").

Pumper/Booster: A user of steroids, or any drug that improves physical abilities.

Rolling: A Bliss high, or the high of any next generation ecstasy, usually characterized by euphoria and a heightened tactile experience.

Shooting/Banging: Injecting a drug.

Snort: Taking a drug by breathing it in.

Stash: A secret cache of illegal drugs, often hidden in one's dwelling or within a personal item such as a PCPU.

Stoner: A habitual user of marijuana.

Tripping/Frying: Someone under the effects of a hallucinogen, though frying is most often applied to LSD.

Tweaker: Someone addicted to stimulants, particularly methamphetamine or derivatives.

Wasted: Exceptionally high on drugs.

One dose of alcohol provides a +1 Test Bonus to Presence, Tenacity and Strength-based Tests, but a -1 Test Penalty to Agility, Intellect, and Perception Tests. A user can take multiple doses at once, causing these bonuses and penalties to stack (to a maximum of +3/-3), but each extra dose increases the Side Effect Rating by one Difficulty Degree. Furthermore, each time the Character takes a dose after the first, he must make a Tenacity Feat Test (unmodified by the alcohol's normal benefit) or pass out for 1 to 10 hours (one die). The Degree of this Test is determined by the Storyguide, based on the potency of the alcohol. For example, beer would be relatively easy, wine somewhat less so, medium proof liquors harder, and very high proof liquors harder still. The Degree increases by one for each additional dose taken.

A Character only becomes addicted to alcohol on a Critical Failure on his Addiction Test. Once hooked, he typically doesn't even realize this fact and continues his life as normal, but simply adds the consumption of liquor to his usual daily routine. Though he may require more to get drunk, many alcoholics are perfectly functioning and are capable of keeping their lives together. However, there are some who fall into public drunkenness, destroying their lives. It is up to you and your Storyguide to work out what kind of drunk an alcoholic Character is. Breaking an alcohol addiction is very difficult, requiring days instead of hours for each Tenacity Feat Test – however, as the Character can heal normally during this period, he isn't normally at risk of death.

Side effects from alcohol typically include headaches, nausea, or dizziness, along with a host of other minor effects. Major side effects are rare and usually have long-term consequences, such as chronic liver disease and the like.

ARCANIX

Manufacturer: Underground Alchemists

Slang: Arc, Spellboost

Form: Inhaled (Burned)

Cost: 500Tn

Addiction Rating: Intellect 12

Availability: Common, Black Market

Onset: 1 minute

Duration: 24 hours

Safety Window: 24 hours

Side Effect Rating: Intellect 22

Description: Arcanix has been around almost as long as sorcery has been an accepted part of society. It is an advanced herbal concoction designed to help boost a sorcerer's abilities while casting difficult spells. Its unpredictable and common side effects can be dangerous, so the government has outlawed its use.

Arcanix usually comes in small blocks similar to incense. When set afire, the block burns to ash in seconds, leaving the sorcerer only a brief moment to inhale the vapors. Approximately one minute later, he feels his mind clearing and his connection to his inner spirit sharpening, providing a +2 Test Bonus to all Tests made to cast spells. Furthermore, he regains one additional

point of Ruach every time he would normally generate Ruach while under the drug's effects – Tagers do not receive this benefit.

Unfortunately, the drug also has the potential for serious side effects. If a side effect occurs, the Storyguide should secretly roll one die and consult the following chart:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1-3 | Instead of receiving a +2 Test Bonus, the sorcerer suffers a -2 Test Penalty. |
| 4-7 | Instead of increased Ruach regeneration, the sorcerer cannot recover Ruach at all during the drug's duration – this also applies to Tagers. |
| 8-9 | The drug works normally, but the caster immediately gains 1 Insanity Point due to his enhanced and open consciousness. |
| 10 | One of the above effects occurs (roll again to see which one), but in addition, an instability develops. A magical mishap will occur at the conclusion of any ritual the sorcerer attempts, successfully or not. Storyguides should keep this result a secret – players won't attempt to cast any spells if they know something bad is coming. If the spell was cast successfully, it still works. |

BRAINSTORM

Manufacturer: Underground Labs

Slang: Gray Burn, Mindscape

Form: Ingested (Liquid, Pill, or Powder)

Cost: 250Tn

Addiction Rating: Intellect 12

Availability: Uncommon, Black Market

Onset: 1 minute

Duration: 1 hour

Safety Window: 4 hours

Side Effect Rating: Intellect 16

Description: Brainstorm was originally developed to help recently manifested para-psychics learn to control their powers, but its formula was copied and sold to the black market. Underground versions of the drug are unsafe, but provide para-psychics with a temporary boost to their powers. Brainstorm is particularly favored by underground para-psychics who are hiding from the government. The drug provides some protection from the dangers of burns, which is especially useful if the individual is forced to frequently use his powers to escape or elude pursuit.

Taking a dose of brainstorm has several different effects, depending on the situation:

- If the para-psychic is not burning, a dose will allow him to clear his mind to focus more intently on his abilities. He gains a +2 Test Bonus for both invoking his ability and also for using it. However, any failure on a latter Test is automatically a critical failure which causes him to blow through twice the normal Orgone required.

- If the para-psychic is not burning, and he refrains from using his powers while under the influence of the drugs for its entire duration, he regains 1-5 points (half a die) of Orgone when the effects wear off.

- If the para-psychic is burning when he takes brainstorm, the drug provides neither of the above benefits. Instead, he may make a Burn Test at the same Difficulty Degree that caused him to burn in the first place. If he succeeds, the burn ends immediately, and he is fatigued for the rest of the drug's duration. If he fails, the burn continues, but is reduced by one hour (or one day in the case of Burn Tests of the Very Hard Degree). During the saved hour (or day), the character is considered fatigued.

- If a para-psychic is caught in a permanent burn, brainstorm does nothing. It has no effect whatsoever.

If a Character becomes addicted to brainstorm, as part of the withdrawal process, he must succeed at a Challenging Burn Test each time he must make an Intellect Feat Test, or enter a burn. A burning para-psychic who is also in withdrawal is a danger to both himself and others.

The usual side effect of brainstorm is dizziness, but some have reported diminished Orgone levels, diminishment of para-psychic powers, or, in extreme cases, the sudden onset of a burn.

CATSEYE

Manufacturer: NazzTech Ltd.

Slang: Infra, Nazeye

Form: Eye spray

Cost: 175Tn

Addiction Rating: None

Availability: Rare, Over-The-Counter

Onset: 1 minute

Duration: 2 hours

Safety Window: 4 hours

Side Effect Rating: Perception 12

Description: Catseye is a chemical developed primarily for the military to improve the vision of Humans and Xenomixes to Nazzadi levels, although it also aids Nazzadi a little bit as well. The drug has something of a dark history, having been created with the unwilling aid of incarcerated Nazzadi test subjects during the First Arcanotech War. A few such survivors have attempted to sue NazzTech (still a primarily Human-owned company), but the courts have determined there wasn't enough evidence to prove any wrongdoing. Most Nazzadi refuse to have anything to do with catseye out of protest, viewing those who use the substance with suspicion and disdain.

Humans and Xenomixes who take catseye gain Nightvision equal to that of a Nazzadi, according to their racial ability. In addition to this, anyone (Nazzadi included) who takes this drug gains a +1 Test Bonus to any Observation Tests involving vision. However, the Character also becomes extremely sensitive to light, so



that the sudden appearance of a bright glare (such as a flash-light shining in his face, or interior illumination suddenly being activated) will blind the character for 1 to 10 turns (one die). For one minute after the blindness fades, he remains dazzled, taking a -2 Test Penalty to any Tests requiring vision, including ranged attacks. Catseye users often wear flip-down sunglasses for use in such situations, but this still requires they know the light is about to be turned on – if the sudden illumination takes them by surprise, it's too late to do anything about it.

When the catseye wears off, the Character's vision is blurry, imposing a -1 penalty to all vision-related Tests during the Safety Window. Other side effects include dry eyes, light sensitivity, and temporary blindness on a critical failure.

CLARITY

Manufacturer: Ashcroft Foundation

Slang: Ashcroft Stare, Blankface

Form: Injection

Cost: 750Tn

Addiction Rating: Intellect 16

Availability: Rare, Prescription

Onset: 1 minute

Duration: 4 hours

Safety Window: 8 hours

Side Effect Rating: Presence 12

Description: The drug known as Clarity is a metahormone created by an arcane alchemical process pioneered by the Ashcroft Foundation. The purpose of Clarity is to temporarily suppress dangerous insanity long enough to return a patient to the proper facilities for treatment. Clarity must be injected directly into the

brain or brain stem, a risky proposition requiring success at a Challenging Medicine Test. Failure deals one die of damage to the patient, while a critical failure deals two dice – this damage cannot be avoided or reduced. After a failure, the physician can again attempt to administer the drug without penalty.

Once it goes to work, Clarity suppresses Fear Effects and the effects of Insanity and permanent disorders entirely, leaving the Character free to act normally. However, the individual also loses the ability to feel or display emotions, or even react to pain, giving him a unmoving blank stare that most people find unnerving. As a result, he suffers a -4 Test Penalty to all Presence-based Tests in social situations.

While the drug is in effect, the Character takes damage and suffers from fear and insanity as normal, making any associated Tests and suffering any associated penalties, but the results do not manifest while under the influence. Wounds still cause the normal penalties, for example, but the Character would not react to them in any personal way. Likewise, a Character who received the Terror result on the Fear Effects chart feels no fear and isn't required to run away screaming. However, should the drug wear off while a Fear Effect is in play, he would manifest the effects immediately.

Clarity is too dangerous to be used repeatedly. Attempting to apply another dose during the Safety Window automatically causes side effects and adds one Insanity Point to the character's total – though its effects won't be felt until after the drug wears off. Overdosing can also result, if too many doses are taken in rapid succession, or if more than one dose is applied simultaneously, and such overdoses can be ugly.

Side effects include severe migraines (double the normal effects), extended loss of empathy, temporary disorders, and schizophrenia. Because of this, as well as the difficulty associated with injection, the Ashcroft Foundation doesn't normally prescribe this drug for outpatient care.

HGM/COA FREE RADICAL INHIBITOR

Manufacturer: Loris-Tealsky Medical Co., Inc.

Slang: Fountain of Youth

Form: Capsule

Cost: 10,000Tn (or more)

Addiction Rating: Tenacity 28

Availability: Extremely Rare, Prescription

Onset: 10 minutes

Duration: 1 week

Safety Window: None

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 8

Description: HCM/CoA Radical Inhibitor is an extremely expensive specialized drug designed to eliminate free radicals and oxidants in the body, thereby lessening and even ending the aging process. It is, however, incapable of reversing it. According to Loris-Tealsky Medical's documentation and advertising, taking the drug on a regular basis could prolong an individual's life span for long periods of time, potentially even centuries. Of course, this comes at an extremely high price – the cost per dose is so restrictively high that only the very wealthy can afford this potent medicine. Furthermore, the drug is so physically and psychologically addictive that nearly everyone who takes it becomes hooked immediately.

There are many conspiracy theorists who believe that HGM/CoA, usually called "Fountain of Youth," is really just a secret means to dominate certain important and influential members of society, controlling their decisions and actions on pain of withholding further doses of the drug. Although there has been no evidence to support this, it's still a lasting concern, and the New Earth Government prohibits the drug's use by anyone in its service. The drug does seem to work, however, and there is no shortage of desperate customers who fear death and are willing to pay well to avoid it.

Loris-Tealsky Medical has so far refused to release any details on the means used to produce the Fountain of Youth, and the chemical defies analysis by conventional science. The drug is clearly manufactured through some arcanotech process, but what its components are can't be determined at the present time. Perhaps someone will find out some day and reveal this information to the world – and an interesting day that will be.

When a user takes a dose of HGM/CoA, his body is cleansed of any substance that causes aging, including free radicals, oxidants, and similar things. Damage and disease aren't cured directly, but normal healing rates are doubled, and chronic ailments such as cancer or heart disease don't progress any further while the drug is in effect. The user's Vitality is also treated as two points higher during the drug's duration – however, note that if it wears off while the Character is severely injured, he

could potentially perish if he winds up with more damage than he can normally stand. Finally, the user gains a +2 Test Bonus to all Tests involving physical or mental health, such as Fear Tests, Insanity Tests, Tenacity Feat Tests to avoid a coma, and so on.

Fountain of Youth is so addictive that nearly anyone who takes even one dose becomes hooked. However, the body never builds up a tolerance to it – apparently the substance is self-correcting in this regard. Withdrawal is severe, lasting one month between the Tests required to break the addiction. During withdrawal, the Character ages at twice the normal rate, any diseases or poisons in his system progress at twice normal speed, and he takes double damage whenever he suffers any injury. He's also considered fatigued for the duration.

Roll for side effects each day a Character is under the influence of this drug. Side effects are typically minor, but might also include dizziness, nausea and, in extreme cases, fatigue.

LIFTER

Manufacturer: Underground Labs

Slang: Upper

Form: Injected

Cost: 50Tn

Addiction Rating: Perception 22

Availability: Common, Black Market

Onset: 1 minute

Duration: 10 minutes + 1-10 minutes (one die)

Safety Window: 2 hours

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 8

Description: Lifter is a generic term applied to a variety of illegal stimulants that temporarily boost a person's mental and physical abilities, giving them a variety of advantages for short periods. Although there are many variants, lifters all use the same basic rules. They are popular with black market dealers, because they are extremely addictive and have a low incidence of side effects, so a pusher can hook his victims quickly and without risk to their health. These drugs are so easy to make and so ubiquitous that drug dealers often cut discounts and give away free samples just to increase the volume of sales to a point where they can actually turn a profit.

Once a lifter takes effect, the user feels faster, more aggressive, and uninhibited. The Character's personality may change as a result – a normally timid or shy individual might become suddenly outgoing and gregarious, for example. Emotions tend to be over-exaggerated while under the effect of lifters, so a mild attraction might be fanned into burning passion, while smoldering anger might well boil over into frenzied aggression. Deliberately overplaying one's normal tendencies is normal while under the effects of lifters.

In addition, the user gains a +1 Test Bonus to all Tests that involve physical activities, increases his speed by 50% (round fractions up), and can take more Actions in a turn. The number of additional Actions he can take is increased by one over the norm, so a Character normally unable to take more than one Ac-

tion per turn can now choose to take two Actions, for example. A Character who can take three Actions could actually take four, but the Test Penalty for doing so is -6 to all Actions.

Lifter side effects are typically minor in nature. When users become highly addicted, as is common, shakiness and jitters result. Apply the Character's current Tolerance Level as a Test Penalty to the Feat Test made to determine side effects, instead of as a bonus. At very high tolerances, side effects will be inevitable.

MUSCLE

Manufacturer: Underground Labs

Slang: Boost

Form: Liquid Inhalant

Cost: 375Tn

Addiction Rating: Strength 8

Availability: Rare, Black Market

Onset: 2 Turns

Duration: 5 minutes

Safety Window: 8 hours

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 22

Description: Muscle was originally designed under the name Solaca-DHV, by an obscure company called Night Flyer Industries. The company attempted to market the drug without fully testing it, to a disastrous end. The resulting fallout from those harmed by the product's side effects quickly put NFI out of business. However, the formula for Solaca fell into the hands of the black market, where it is now manufactured for use almost exclusively by highly paid enforcers in the service of wealthy criminal organizations and unethical companies.

Muscle is usually applied to a piece of cloth or a handkerchief, where it evaporates quickly. The vapors are then breathed in, and the drug goes to work on the muscles and ligaments, causing them to temporarily strengthen and harden. This allows the user to perform incredible feats of physical prowess, such as making amazing leaps, lifting heavy objects, and so on.

While under the effects of muscle, the user can lift twice his normal limits, can run twice as fast as normal, can jump twice as far (or three times as far with a running start), and deals an extra die of damage in combat with any hand-held or thrown weapons. He also receives a +4 Test Bonus for any Tests involving Strength.

Unfortunately, the increased strength comes at a cost. The user's muscles and other tissues are put under extreme stress, and suffer from inflexibility. Any time the user takes damage during a turn, he takes one additional point. Furthermore, when the dose ends, the user is fatigued for one minute, in addition to any other side effects he may incur. The usual side effects include nausea and dizziness, or unconsciousness on a critical failure.

NEURAL STIMULANT

Manufacturer: Various

Slang: Upper, Screamer, Tweak

Form: Oral, Skin Patch

Cost: 200Tn

Addiction Rating: Perception 16

Availability: Common, Over-the-Counter

Onset: 10 minutes

Duration: 4 hours

Safety Window: 8 hours

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 16

Description: Neural stimulants were developed decades ago in an attempt to provide soldiers on long, tedious patrols a means to remain in a constant state of readiness. A neural stimulant is taken either as a time-release capsule or on a patch fastened somewhere on the skin. In either case, the drug is administered slowly, over the course of its normal duration, keeping the subject awake and alert.

While under the effects of neural stimulants, a Character ignores fatigue and sleepiness caused from lack of rest, and receives a +1 Test Bonus to all Perception-based Tests.

The main disadvantages of stimulants are a relatively high addiction factor (at least as far as over-the-counter medications go), as well as the crash effect when the drug wears off. For the duration of the stimulant's Safety Window, the Character will automatically suffer from drowsiness. If he used stimulants more than once that day, the drowsiness will be severe. Delusions often also occur in those who spend days awake.

PARTY PRESCRIPTIONS

Manufacturer: Various Manufacturers or Mother Nature

Slang: Widely Varied

Form: See Below

Cost: See Below

Addiction Rating: See Below

Availability: Common, Over-The-Counter

Onset: See Below

Duration: See Below

Safety Window: See Below

Side Effect Rating: See Below

Description: Party prescriptions are any of the many drugs people in the Strange Aeon might regularly encounter in bars, nightclubs, or at parties. For purposes of space, we'll provide brief rules for several of the most popular here.

Bliss – *Form:* Pills, *Cost:* 20Tn, *Addiction Rating:* Tenacity 12, *Onset:* 1 Hour, *Duration:* 4 Hours, *Safety Window:* 4 Hours, *Side Effect Rating:* Tenacity 12. Bliss is a next generation Ecstasy, a drug with euphoric effects. People under the influence of Bliss feel more in touch with their feelings and more connected to others, as well as feeling far more open. They also have increased tactile sensations and want to touch things – particularly other people. Often an increased libido is a part of the experience. In general, users suffer a -1 Test Penalty to nearly all tasks that aren't interpersonal, a -2 Test Penalty to physical tasks, but a +1 Test bonus to any Tests based on Perception. Side effects include diarrhea, nausea, and sometimes the jitters.

Cocaine – *Form:* Inhaled Powder, *Cost:* 60Tn, *Addiction Rating:* Tenacity 16, *Onset:* 30 seconds, *Duration:* 4-6 Hours, *Safety Window:* 8 Hours, *Side Effect Rating:* Tenacity 12. Cocaine, also known as blow or simply coke, is a psychoactive powder that imparts increased energy and a sense of well-being. The amount and duration shown here signify enough cocaine to keep someone going for several hours – he will be bumping regularly throughout – which is usually how the drug is taken. Users experience a -1 Test Penalty on any task that requires focus or concentration. Increase the Addiction Rating one Degree if a user smokes the drug, or by two if he takes it intravenously – both are other and more effective ways to use cocaine other than snorting it. Side effects include post-nasal drip, headaches, dry mouth, diarrhea, and the sometimes the jitters.

Marijuana – *Form:* Smoked or Eaten, *Cost:* 2Tn, *Addiction Rating:* Tenacity 8, *Onset:* 1 Minute, *Duration:* 2-4 Hours, *Safety Window:* 1 Hour, *Side Effect Rating:* Tenacity 12. Marijuana, also known as pot or weed, is a plant that is naturally covered in a psychoactive substance. Users feel euphoric and subdued. Marijuana is popular because it has an easy come down and few after-effects. Users suffer a -1 Test Penalty to pretty much anything they want to do. Side effects include increased appetite, dry mouth, mild paranoia, the giggles, and sometimes headaches.

Psilocybin – *Form:* Mushroom Caps & Stems, *Cost:* 10Tn, *Addiction Rating:* Tenacity 12, *Onset:* 1 Hour, *Duration:* 6-8 Hours, *Safety Window:* 8 Hours, *Side Effect Rating:* Tenacity 12. Psilocybin, also known as magic mushrooms or simply shrooms, contain an alkaloid that induces hallucinations in users. Some people simply feel high and have altered perception, including tracers off lights, organic movements in non-moving objects, and the like. Others experience full-blown hallucinations and experience things that aren't there. Some users can become overwhelmed by too much sensory input, and many find that peaceful surroundings are the key to enjoying psilocybin. However, it mixes well with Bliss – something known as Hippie Flipping on the streets. Those under the effects of psilocybin suffer a -2 Test Penalty to pretty much anything they want to do. Side effects include dizziness, nausea, and sometimes jitters or the giggles.

REGEN X-15A

Manufacturer: Chrysalis Corporation

Slang: Lizardtail, Regen

Form: Poultice

Cost: 25,000Tn

Addiction Rating: See Below

Availability: Extremely Rare, Black Market

Onset: 1-10 hours (one die)

Duration: Varies (hours or days)

Safety Window: See Below

Side Effect Rating: Tenacity 34

Description: Regen X-15A is the most successful in a long line of medicines designed to become the ultimate panacea – a magic bullet that can cure anything and everything that might go wrong with the human body. So why isn't it in common use? The

existence of this drug isn't even known to the general public, and those black marketeers who do know of it normally speak of the drug only in hushed whispers. Even the fact that Chrysalis Corporation is the creator of this drug remains a carefully guarded secret. How regen is actually made is a subject that would strike terror into the hearts of most mortals, and anyone who knew the truth would sooner die than take even one dose of this so-called "medicine." Needless to say, it is unwholesome magic.

Regen is administered by applying rune-covered bandages soaked in the drug to the afflicted area. No knowledge of sorcery is required, but the poultice must be properly prepared in advance – simply dumping the liquid over a victim isn't sufficient. The magic infused within the bandages, combined with the medicine, soaks into the body and gradually restores it to its normal shape and form. Over the course of hours or days, depending on the severity of the injury, all damage, conditions, diseases, poisons, and the like are cured, but not psychological conditions. The drug will cure all major injuries, including all those listed in Chapter Four of *Vade Mecum*. In this way, regen functions much like the Purify Form spell – regen is very much like an enchanted item carrying similar power. While this healing is going on, the subject falls unconscious and can't be awakened by any means. If he takes any damage or suffers any injuries, these won't be cured by the drug's current healing process, and remain in place once the regen has run its course. Regen has no effect on creatures that normally regenerate.

Regen is non-addictive, but there are nearly always side effects. If the Side Effect Test fails, the subject gains one Insanity Point, and must immediately make an Insanity Test or else gain another such point. Furthermore, the major changes to his body have left his brain struggling to catch up. He gains a physical Drawback (such as Amnesia, Chronic Pain, Grating Voice, Low Pain Threshold, etc.) as selected by the Storyguide. Usually this Drawback will be related to one of the major injuries he suffered – for example, a Character who had his eyes put out might suffer from Impaired Sight. These Drawbacks last for 1 to 5 weeks (half a die) before the mind catches up to the repairs done to the body, and everything then returns to normal.

There are some who believe the true nature of Regen X-15A is so terrifying that using it begins a long, horrible process of transformation – the unfortunate victim will one day become a monster, the exact nature of which can't be predicted. This is probably just a rumor, however.

PLANES, TRAINS & AUTOBUSSES

Until someone invents a way to reliably teleport people and cargo from one point to another, there will always be a need for vehicles. From something as simple as a bicycle all the way up to massive cranes and cargo lifters, the world of *Cthulhu Tech* is filled with vehicles of all shapes and sizes. Here are a few of the more common varieties that the average, and not-so-average, citizen might encounter.

PERSONAL VEHICLES

JUMPSUIT

The jumpsuit blurs the line between personal equipment and a vehicle, but since it's used primarily for movement only (unlike jump boots, which are recreational in nature), the suit's statistics are included here. Originally intended for military use, the suits are now sold commercially, one of the few successful products made by Armorcorp for sale on the open market.

A jumpsuit is a bulky jet pack, leg bracing, and wing assembly worn over the body like a suit of power armor, but immensely cheaper and clunkier. The wearer can use the suit to leap high into the sky, deploy the wings, and glide to a target location up to hundreds of feet away. If the leap is made off a large structure or pinnacle, such as the side of a mountain or cliff, the wearer can sail for miles. Flight of this sort is entirely unpowered gliding, and thus is dangerous to attempt in high winds or around other aircraft. However, the sheer amount of distance a wearer can travel in just a few jumps is considerable. Jumpsuits are also quite affordable, though their size and bulk makes them somewhat unpopular, as a wearer has to remove and store the device when he reaches his destination. This tends to make them unpopular among commuters and sports enthusiasts, and the market for jumpsuits remains limited.

While worn, a jumpsuit provides the same protection as light combat armor, although it has no independent air supply. Some users equip themselves with such devices, especially when traveling swiftly or through areas of questionable air quality, but these items are not included in the basic cost.

Type: Jumpsuit (0.2 AP)
Manufacturer: Armorcorp
Size: Tiny (7 ft. tall)
Passengers: 1
Cargo: None, but can carry a total weight of 400 lb. including passenger
Cost: 2,500Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) +1
Sensors (*Perception*) 0
Frame (*Strength*) 4
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -3

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 5 mph
Air (Jump/Glide) Speed: 80 mph
Acceleration Code: C (2/2)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 1

HYPERLIGHT

A popular vehicle for personal flight is the hyperlight, or "hyper." A hyper is similar in appearance to an ultralight, equipped with a Type-3 D-cell that powers one or more propellers mounted behind the seat. The wings and frame fold up into a compact form weighing approximately 75 lbs., which can be easily moved and stored, although it can't move under its own power while folded.

Hyperlights are slow compared to A-Pod flight, but their reasonably cheap cost makes them affordable when compared to other flying vehicles. Their small storage size also makes them an attractive alternative to such craft. They are also a lot of fun to use for many. A driver simply straps himself in, turns on the engine, and launches himself into the air. The motor then drives the aircraft along at a slow but stately pace, often just above trees and buildings, affording an amazing view of the ground. Hyperlights are fairly noisy, making them poor choices where stealth is required, unless they can approach from a high altitude and land in some out-of-the-way spot. They are also difficult to control in windy conditions or other extreme weather. If the winds are strong enough, a hyperlight will be unable to make any headway, or might simply be knocked out of the air.

Military versions of hyperlights can be equipped with noise dampeners and coated in black, detection-resistant materials, but this would increase the cost by a factor of 5 or more.

Type: Private Skycar (0.5 AP)
Manufacturer: Various
Size: Small (8 ft. with 12 ft. wingspan)
Passengers: 1
Cargo: None, but can carry a total weight of 300 lbs., including passenger
Cost: 8,500Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) +1
Sensors (*Perception*) 0
Frame (*Strength*) 1
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) +1

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 40 mph
Acceleration Code: C (2/2)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 1

ROAD BICYCLE

The simple bicycle remains the personal conveyance of choice for many who need to travel outside arcologies. Modern bicycles are light, quick, and extremely comfortable, automatically configuring themselves to the cyclist's body shape, size and weight to provide the perfect ride. Tires are self-inflating, the frame contains built-in shock absorbing materials, and the handlebars shift position and angle to keep the rider's hands from going numb, even after extremely long rides. More expensive bikes are equipped with additional options, such as internal motors that can take over if the rider becomes too tired to continue (or on extremely steep climbs), or sensor arrays that detect other vehicles nearby and report their locations to a heads-up display provided by the user's peek. Cyclists can pretty much go anywhere they like as long as they obey traffic laws.

Bicycles can't normally carry much in the way of cargo — just what the rider himself can hold on a backpack, for example. Some are equipped with racks that can hold special bags called panniers. Heavier bikes can also tow trailers which can carry more cargo, but restrict the vehicle's speed and maneuverability.

Some options available for bicycles are:

- Cargo rack – 40Tn
- Panniers – 20-50Tn each, depending on size
- Cargo Trailer:
- Heavy Duty (Puncture-free) Tires – 50Tn each or 100Tn for spiked off-road/winter versions)
- Freeway Safety Interlink (Requires Peek) – 70Tn
- Close Vicinity Sensors (Requires Peek) – 120Tn
- Internal Backup Motor (Requires Class 2 D-Cell) – 250Tn
- Theft-Deterrent Lock – 25Tn
- Framelock Security System – 250Tn

Type: Bicycle (0.1 AP)

Manufacturer: Many

Size: Tiny (4 ft., 8 ft. with trailer)

Passengers: 1

Cargo: None (up to 20 lbs. with panniers, 50 lbs. more with trailer)

Cost: 350-750Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*): +1 (if freeway safety interlink or close vicinity sensors are installed; 0 otherwise)

Sensors (*Perception*): 0

Frame (*Strength*): 1

Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*): -1

Warning Systems (*Reflex*): 0

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 20 mph

Acceleration Code: A (1/1)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 1

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES AUTOBUS

An autobus is a long, rectangular flying craft shaped roughly like an old-style railroad boxcar, but without wheels. These buses fly entirely on automation, landing and taking off from platforms located here and there in the surrounds of major cities. A potential passenger simply moves to one of these platforms and allows his peek to take over, signaling the bus line's central computer of his destination and payment information. The nearest bus is then diverted to the platform, where the customer boards and sits down to enjoy the ride. The bus then drops him off at the stop nearest to his destination, and his payment is automatically deducted from his bank account. The passenger can bring along as much cargo as he can lift, as long as it fits inside without causing too much discomfort to other riders.

The bus line's computers constantly track any of the thousands of riders, always calculating and updating the optimal route for any passenger. Even when a traveler has to move from one side of a city to the other, he rarely spends more than half an hour on any given bus. Transfers are also infrequent, usually happening only when the bus itself fails a safety check and requires maintenance.

Bus fares are low, varying by city, but usually ranging from 0.5-2Tn depending on the distance between platforms. Bus lines make most of their money through volume, low maintenance costs, and the lack of any need to pay a driver's salary. For those who desire cheap travel, don't own their own vehicle, and don't mind waiting, they are the transit method of choice.

Type: Commercial Air Transport (1 AP)

Manufacturer: Arcanoline, Inc.

Size: Large (36 ft.)

Passengers: 30

Cargo: 4,000 lbs.

Cost: 180,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) 0

Sensors (*Perception*) 0

Frame (*Strength*) 6

Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) 0

Warning Systems (*Reflex*) 0

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 120 mph

Acceleration Code: E (3/3)

A-Pods

STRUCTURE

Integrity 3

CARGO VAN

Although the development of anti-gravity has made the movement of cargo easier, the sheer size of A-Pods limits their use in crowded or restricted areas. In most such places, particularly the more populous cities, cargo is brought by air to a central distribution location, often loaded onto special modules called pallets. Pallets come in several sizes, the smallest roughly the size of a coffin, each designed to stack onto each other and lock into place.

Movement of pallets in crowded downtown areas is accomplished using cargo vans, which can load up to 4 small pallets into their cavernous interiors. The van then drives to the local business or residence, where a small crane affixed to the roof unloads the pallet safely and automatically. For businesses that accept deliveries on a regular basis, the loading dock is often equipped with a complimentary crane or other device that can move the pallet inside the building, where it can be rapidly unloaded. Empty pallets can be placed on the van or simply unfolded and stored for later use, depending on need.

Type: Commercial Transport (1 AP)

Manufacturer: Various

Size: Small (18 ft.)

Passengers: 2

Cargo: 3,600 lbs.

Cost: 52,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -2

Sensors (*Perception*) -1

Frame (*Strength*) 2

Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1

Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -2

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 75 mph

Acceleration Code: C (2/2)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 2

CORPORATE YACHT

These huge behemoths of the sky are used almost exclusively by multibillion T-note companies, or rich and powerful individuals who see no reason not to flaunt their wealth. A corporate yacht is operated by a crew of ten, all of them professionals whose job it is to see to their passengers' every need. The yacht itself contains the latest in technology and facilities, with staterooms, meeting areas, recreational equipment, private communications, powerful computers, and anything else the owner might require. A large corporation could hold top-level board meetings aboard such vehicles just as easily as they could take a pleasure cruise or junket to some distant city. The price of such trips is considerable, and far more than most citizens could afford; but if you can afford to own a monstrosity like this, the price isn't really an object.

Most people or companies with enough wealth to afford one of these vehicles also have enemies, and the yacht provides a highly visible target. Thus, they are usually protected with top-of-the-line security and defensive systems, further adding to their price. Particularly affluent owners with numerous enemies sometimes operate several such yachts, using them in a shell game to confuse any potential assassins.

Type: Commercial Air Vehicle (5 AP)

Manufacturer: Arcanoline, Inc.

Size: Behemoth (180 ft.)

Passengers: 360

Cargo: 60,000 lbs.

Cost: 88 million Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) 0

Sensors (*Perception*) +1

Frame (*Strength*) 10

Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) 0

Warning Systems (*Reflex*) +2

SENSOR SYSTEMS

Long Range

Nightvision

Radar/IFF

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

ECM

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 720 mph

Acceleration Code: E (3/3)

A-Pods

STRUCTURE

Integrity 7

Armor 2/2



INFILTRATION CAR



SECURE TAXICAB



MODULAR TRUCK



CARGO VAN



PALLET

LUXURY LIMOUSINE

Modern stretch limousines are capable of flight. They are luxurious cruisers available for hire at a price affordable only by the wealthy, or perhaps a member of the middle class for a time on special occasions. A customer usually purchases the services of a limo by the hour, and the driver is at his beck and call for the entire time. The limousine can go virtually anywhere, depending on the passenger's needs and desires. Limo drivers are highly trained, very professional, and specially licensed; their best attribute is their knowledge of their limitations, of what a limo can and can't do, and when and how to say no.

Limousines are equipped with a variety of interior luxuries, such as high-quality food and drink, surround-sound and video, intricate electronic devices, and anything else the limo company could think to include. The passenger compartment is entirely self-contained, so the customers can do whatever they like, in complete privacy if they wish. Most drivers take a 'don't ask, don't tell' attitude towards what happens in the back of their limos. The limo company usually keeps a variety of different interiors available for special needs, including ones with built-in Jacuzzis, saunas, game equipment, and the like. These increase the price considerably, sometimes as much as double the original price (usually 100-200 Tn) depending on the rental duration.

While the vast majority of limo companies are reputable, there are some that push the limits of what the law allows them to get away with. If a customer knows what to ask for, he can sometimes arrange for borderline services to be included in his rental.

Some limo drivers can also be bribed into traveling into restricted or dangerous areas, if the passengers are thrill-seekers with fat wallets.

Type: Commercial Air Transport (1 AP)
Manufacturer: Arcanoline, Inc.
Size: Medium (24 ft.)
Passengers: 10
Cargo: 1,200 lbs.
Cost: 180,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) +1
 Sensors (*Perception*) 0
 Frame (*Strength*) 1
 Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
 Warning Systems (*Reflex*) 0

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 200 mph
Acceleration Code: B (2/1)
 A-Pods

STRUCTURE

Integrity 2

MIDNIGHT CRUISER

Midnight cruisers (so called by the companies that operate them) are large flyers designed for luxurious sightseeing and special occasions. The spacious, comfortable interior is divided into several compartments that can be altered depending on the customers' needs, or simply left open to form a mobile ballroom, meeting hall, or whatever else is needed. A midnight cruiser can be rented for hours or (rarely) days, usually for special events such as weddings, funerals, or family gatherings. The cruiser's name comes from the way its walls, ceiling and floor can be replaced with transparent panels, allowing the passengers to feel as if they are floating through the air, a sensation especially romantic at night, under a full moon.

Renting a midnight cruiser for a full evening costs upwards of a thousand T-notes, depending on the destination and length of the flight. Weekend trips are also available for considerably more. The cruisers usually have a pilot and co-pilot who split the flying duties, as well as two crewmen and a "host" (or hostess) who attends the passengers' needs. Since there are no facilities aboard for lodging, anyone renting a cruiser for overnight trips must make other arrangements, greatly increasing the cost.

Type: Commercial Air Transport (2 AP)
Manufacturer: Arcanoline, Inc.
Size: Behemoth (60 ft.)
Passengers: 40
Cargo: 21,000 lbs.
Cost: 2.5 million TN

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -1
Sensors (*Perception*) 0
Frame (*Strength*) 10
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) 0

SENSOR SYSTEMS

Long Range
Radar/IFF

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 400 mph
Acceleration Code: E (3/3)
A-Pods

STRUCTURE

Integrity 4

MODULAR TRUCK

Times have changed and interstate trucking no longer requires huge, bulky 18-wheelers rumbling down the highway between cities. Instead, today's trucks are equipped with A-Pods for flight, hauling anywhere from 8 to 96 coffin-like cargo pallets between distribution centers. Depending on the number of pallets and the weight of their contents, trucks can use one, two, three, or even four A-Pod lifters in order to attain and maintain altitude in transit. While slow, modular trucks are incredibly efficient and stable in flight and accidents involving them are rare.

Type: Commercial Air Transport (1 AP)
Manufacturer: Arcanoline, Inc.
Size: Large (32 ft.)
Passengers: 2
Cargo: 100,000 lbs.
Cost: 380,000TN

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -1
Sensors (*Perception*) 0
Frame (*Strength*) 8
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) 0

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 240 mph
Acceleration Code: D (3/2)
A-Pods

STRUCTURE

Integrity 3

SECURE TAXICAB

Modern-day taxis are fast-moving ground vehicles equipped with the very latest in personal comfort and security. The passenger steps inside and is encased in a private, armored compartment surrounded by safety equipment designed to encompass his body in protective padding in the unlikely event of an accident. Should the cab come under attack by hijackers or thieves, the compartment seals itself and places a call to the nearest law enforcement agency. The internal armor is strong enough to defend the passenger long enough for the authorities to arrive and stop the attack.

Secure taxis are extremely fast, and maneuver from point to point within even the largest and most crowded arcology surrounds with surprising grace. Drivers are hired for their knowledge of the city and its many shortcuts, as well as the chokepoints to be avoided during busier times of the day. Since the passenger pays a fee based on a formula that can be pre-calculated using his peek, the driver is never motivated to cheat by purposely entering a traffic jam or taking the long way around. Instead, he knows that his tip will depend on his speed and driving skill, so he's motivated to get his fare to his destination as quickly and safely as possible.

Taxi rides usually cost in the neighborhood of 5-15 Tn, depending on the distance and complexity of the route. Tips are usually 10-20% of this amount, or more if the driver does a particularly good job. Some drivers are very friendly and personable, going after that extra tip money, while others choose to remain silent and simply get the job done.

Type: Passenger Car (0.1 AP)
Manufacturer: Tri Motors
Size: Small (16 ft.)
Passengers: 4
Cargo: 420 lbs.
Cost: 45,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -1
 Sensors (*Perception*) -1
 Frame (*Strength*) 1
 Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
 Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -1

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System (Passenger Compartment)

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 120 mph
Acceleration Code: B (2/1)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 2

INDUSTRIAL VEHICLES

MOBILE HOVERCRANE

Whenever something huge needs to be moved, repaired, or constructed, there has to be some way to transport it or hold it in place. The most common means of accomplishing this is the mobile hovercrane, a massive vehicle equipped with no less than five A-pods arranged underneath a gigantic square lifter platform. The central A-pod provides primary thrust, while the other four apply extra lift on whichever side of the crane is bearing the brunt of the lifting effort. The vehicle moves very slowly, almost drifting, slowly transporting whatever object its grapples are holding to its destination. Although an operator drives the vehicle, computer overrides constantly monitor all conditions, thereby making accidents virtually impossible.

Hovercranes can lift many times their own weight, and hold their cargo perfectly stable for hours, sometimes even days. This makes them ideal for performing delicate repair work, although, in practice, they are normally used for simpler purposes. In cities damaged by the war, they have proven invaluable in clearing out rubble and quickly rebuilding structures and infrastructure.

Type: Industrial Air Vehicle (3 AP)
Manufacturer: DriveLift Industries
Size: Medium (28 ft.)
Passengers: 2
Cargo: 42,000 lbs. (lifted)
Cost: 240,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -3
 Sensors (*Perception*) 0
 Frame (*Strength*) 4
 Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
 Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -1

MOVEMENT

Air Speed: 20 mph
Acceleration Code: E (3/3)
 A-Pods

STRUCTURE

Integrity 2
 Armor 1/1

SEWER CRAWLER

Originally designed as a “mole machine” for military use, the prototypes of this vehicle proved woefully inadequate for their intended task. Drilling through the ground simply isn’t a viable means of travel, unless the ground is extremely soft, which normally occurs only near the surface (where such machines could be easily detected). Even in ideal conditions, prototypes proved too noisy and slow to be viable.

Instead, the design was adopted by public works departments of several large cities, which already had large networks of underground tunnels already in place. Without the need to drill, the cylindrical, track-driven crawlers could make their way through even narrow passageways, clearing them of debris, broken items, solid waste, thick roots, and other obstructions. Today, crawlers make their way through sewer lines, irrigation pipelines, subway tubes, and other sorts of manmade tunnels, illuminating the passage brightly and searching for breaks, cracks, and other potential dangers. Sometimes the crawler will deliver maintenance crews to fix damage or reinforce weak points, but just as often they simply plod along, slowly traveling through the darkness.

Sewer crawlers are watertight and can drive over nearly any surface, even above ground if necessary, but most are never seen by the general public. There are rumors that some military versions exist, ostensibly to transport strike teams to specific locations underground in contested areas, but the truth of this may never be known.

Type: Industrial Vehicle (1 AP)
Manufacturer: DriveLift Industries
Size: Small (18 ft.)
Passengers: 8
Cargo: 1,200 lbs.
Cost: 80,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -1
Sensors (*Perception*) -1
Frame (*Strength*) 1
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -1

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 30 mph
Acceleration Code: C (3/3)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 2
Armor 1/1

WALL CRUSHER

Wallcrushers, or simply “crushers,” are medium-sized ground vehicles that resemble a combination bulldozer and wrecking ball. When a structure is targeted for demolition, or has been damaged so much that it needs to be rebuilt from the ground up, a crusher is called in. A wrecking arm smashes the targeted building into rubble, whereupon the bulldozer shoves the debris into a nearby pit or pickup area (often for removal by hovercrane).

Crushers are rarely seen in most cities, except where expansion is going on. They are typically used to clear out structures damaged by fighting. On rare occasions, they are also employed to clean up debris left behind on battlefields, such as smashed mecha, aircraft wreckage, and so forth. Military versions are used for various engineering tasks, such as quickly constructing roads and airfields, producing makeshift earthworks, and more. In a pinch, they can be used as heavily armored platforms for snipers or to lead columns of infantry.

Type: Industrial Vehicle (2 AP)
Manufacturer: DriveLift Industries
Size: Small (16 ft.)
Passengers: 4
Cargo: 600 lbs.
Cost: 120,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -1
Sensors (*Perception*) 0
Frame (*Strength*) 6
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -1

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 40 mph
Acceleration Code: C (3/3)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 3
Armor 1/1

AUXILIARY MILITARY VEHICLES

INFILTRATION CAR

This two-man ground vehicle designed to sneak silently into enemy territory, spying on enemy activities and occasionally using harmless lasers to “light up” targets for incoming fire. The car is equipped with a limited stealth system (as found on p. 80 of *Mortal Remains*), though the silent running aspect of the system allows the vehicle to make far less noise than powered armor. The limited stealth system has been modified to include “track-sweepers” that clear away any trails left by its wheels. It’s also equipped with the latest monitoring gear, sound amplifiers, detection sensors, and so on.

Infiltration cars aren’t designed for direct combat. They aren’t very well armored and can’t stand up to a direct attack. Once they are spotted, they usually flee at top speed, preferably to a pre-determined extraction point. If the vehicle is traveling through particularly dangerous areas, the crew will often prepare a bolt-hole into which to duck. If they can’t find a spot large enough to accommodate the vehicle, they will abandon it when they can, allowing its internal computer to self-drive the car away from the bolt-hole for as long as possible. The crew then calls for extraction later, after the heat dies down. The vehicle can also be self-destructed on command, either remotely or when any set of pre-determined conditions are met.

Type: Military Vehicle (1 AP)
Manufacturer: Eurodine Systems
Size: Small (14 ft.)
Passengers: 2
Cargo: 240 lbs.
Cost: 280,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) +1
Sensors (*Perception*) +2
Frame (*Strength*) 2
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) +2

SENSOR SYSTEMS

Nightvision
Radar/IFF
Targeting +1

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Ejector System
Limited Stealth System
Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 80 mph
Acceleration Code: C (2/2)

STRUCTURE

Integrity 1
Armor 0/1

SELF-GROUNDING MOBILE ARMORED TURRET (SMAT)

This support vehicle normally carries a long-range weapon such as a heavy artillery turret or beam weapon tower, operating as a kind of mobile base. The SMAT resembles a wide, squat platform mounted on thick treads, on which it trundles over nearly any type of terrain. When it reaches the right spot, as determined by the driver, the vehicle digs in with deep-boring anchors, providing the platform extreme stability, even on what might otherwise be considered shaky ground. Interlocking armor plates then unfold to provide protection to the turret, and the cannon then opens fire on distant targets, at a far greater range and power than most mobile units can provide.

The weapon carried by the SMAT is deactivated while the vehicle is in motion and is extremely vulnerable at that time, so once it gets into place and starts firing, it usually stays put. Often accompanied by infantry units equipped with anti-air and point defense weaponry, the SMAT has no weapons of its own and no way to defend itself if it comes under direct attack. Typically, it operates from well behind the lines of a military engagement, firing its weapon as long as it can safely do so, then retreating or advancing as necessary.

Type: Military Vehicle (1 AP)
Manufacturer: Eurodine Systems
Size: Medium (25 ft.)
Passengers: 4
Cargo: 16,000 lbs.
Cost: 220,000Tn

ATTRIBUTES

Control Response (*Agility*) -1
Sensors (*Perception*) 0
Frame (*Strength*) 6
Multi-Task Systems (*Actions*) -1
Warning Systems (*Reflex*) -1

SENSOR SYSTEMS

Radar/IFF

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Sealed System

MOVEMENT

Ground Speed: 40 mph
Acceleration Code: C (2/2), or E (3/3) while loaded

STRUCTURE

Integrity 5 (6 when deployed)
Armor 0/0 (2/2 when deployed)



The classroom was an unusual hybrid of ivy league sensibilities mixed with the occult trappings of a consecrated space. Such were most of the rooms on this floor, dedicated to the Enchanted Objects section of the School for Applied Arcane Arts. A private university, students here either had to be gifted or rich. Most, unfortunately, were the latter.

Teaching first year enchantment to second year students was not something that Dr. Kunayak enjoyed. Unfortunately, his teaching assistant was recovering from an accident. There were never many doctoral candidates in his discipline, at least at this school. So, here he was, on the classroom floor, answering stupid questions once again. It was a simple demonstration of using a Ruach Well.

One girl named Crystal Gagnon, the daughter of an MP, was the typical overachiever who had to know it all. "Sir, approximately how much mystical energy do Ruach Wells hold at different sizes?"

"Ms. Gagnon," Kunayak responded. "That is entirely unimportant at this stage of your education. I would appreciate it if you would focus on the lesson at hand and not on knowing unnecessary details that will allow you to appear smarter than your fellow students."

Several of the students snickered, but Dr. Kunayak shot them stares that quieted them down quickly. If he wasn't going to be having any fun, why should they?

"Now, who can tell me what we're actually supposed to be studying, now that Ms. Gagnon sidetracked us?"



The first hand he noticed was that of his only favorite student, Steven Rivera. Here was a student with vision. Kunayuk immediately called on him. "Mr. Rivera, please enlighten the rest of the class."

"Your instruction was to begin to feel the pull of the Ruach Well, to feel its presence in a sense beyond normal senses," answered the dark-haired young man.

Kunayuk smiled. "Very good. And why am I asking you to do such a nebulous thing?"

"Because understanding that sensation is the first key in being able to tap into such wells when leading an enchantment ritual. This is a basic skill we need to master."

"Thank you, Mr. Rivera," replied Kunayuk. "Learning how to tap Ruach Wells is an important skill because there are few rituals any of you will be able to power on your own. Familiars are outlawed and too many participants can spoil the pot, in my opinion."

Kunayuk pulled back the hood of his ritual robe. "Your assignment before Friday is to schedule at least a half hour to spend here with this well, practicing what we've discussed here. You'll find the sign-up sheet on-line. Do not wait until the last minute if you want to pass. And the reading still stands. Dismissed."

Knowing better than to grumble, the students filed themselves out quietly, with a minimum of whispering. However, the smart few already had their peeks out, scheduling their time with the enchanted monolith in the classroom. One student remained behind - Steven Rivera. This was not unusual, as Kunayuk routinely tutored the boy at his father's request.

"They don't understand, do they?" asked Steven.

Kunayuk walked over to the classroom doors and locked them. "It's doubtful. Most of them are those who have chosen this path from an intellectual level, unlike you. You've been called, the same way I was."

A smirk came across Steven's face. It made him look cruel. "They also don't have the will to explore the arts the way they were intended."

"And few have the wisdom to temper the power the government regulates. Unfettered exploration of the arcane is something only for the truly cautious or truly foolish."

Steven approached the altar. He handed Kunayuk a memory stick. "From my father. He feels that this is something I should master."

Kunayuk plugged the memory stick into his peek. There it was, something unfortunately very illegal. The complete ritual text to Craft the Talisman of Fascination. "One of these days, I'll have to have a conversation with your father about where he gets all these wonderful spells."

"Is it something we can do?" inquired the student.

"Yes," replied Kunayuk. "But do you know what this is?"

"As my father told me, this is the Talisman of Fascination. Its power lies in increasing the charm and persuasiveness of the wearer. Now that is something that I could put to good use."

Kunayuk laughed. "I have no doubt that you could. However, this is of an order beyond your skills. Frankly, it's years beyond your training."

"Ambition is the mark of the gifted. Isn't that one of your sayings?" responded Steven.

"It is. Which is why I agreed to this when your father asked me. However, I will not risk your well-being on this. You have to promise that you'll be the perfect apprentice. Do only what I ask. No more, no less. Do you agree?"

Steven smiled. "Of course, Master Kunayuk. I am a vessel waiting to be filled. I will do as you command. No more, no less."

As far as Kunayuk, and many of his contemporaries, were concerned, traditional ethics cannot be applied to the exploration of the arcane. Such artificial boundaries were the creations of men who did not understand that there can be no limits in magic.

Furthermore, it is always preferable to teach students who want to learn, instead of those who do so out of obligation. Far be it from Kunayuk to stifle hungry minds.

chapter four

objets de magie

The problem faced by many practitioners of the arcane arts is that cosmic power so often requires significant time and preparation. The only way to bring cosmic power to bear in times of immediate need is through the binding of magic to physical objects – the art and craft of enchantment.

An enchanter, as masters of this type of magic often choose to be referred, can become quite powerful. They can, in essence, become magical gadgeteers. In this chapter, you will find many new and wondrous enchanted objects, as well as some optional rules that may assist in the creation of magical gadgeteer Characters.

NEW OPTIONAL RULES

Following are a couple of new optional rules that will allow sorcerer Characters to begin play with one or more enchanted items. These options are strongly recommended for games where sorcerers are mixed in with other powerful Character types, such as para-psychics or Tagers.

Starting with Enchanted Items

The *Core Book* states on p. 65 that Characters should not be allowed to begin play with enchanted items, even if they know the appropriate rituals. However, if you are planning a game where you want sorcerers to be more gadgeteer-like, or if they are mixing in games with other powerful Characters, all starting sorcerer Characters should begin play with at least one of every item they can make themselves – definitely more than one if such rituals are for consumable items like Corporal Restorative or Powder of Ibn Ghazi.

Spending Cheats for Enchanted Items

You may also want to allow starting sorcerer Characters to spend Cheats to acquire enchanted items, whether or not they know the appropriate rituals. In this case, use the following options.

CHARACTER ENHANCEMENT	CHEATS
Begin play with an enchanted item from a First Order ritual	2
Begin play with an enchanted item from a Second Order ritual	4
Begin play with an enchanted item from a Third Order ritual	6

This gives Characters the option of starting with several items, and is generous in that it does not differentiate between legal and illegal enchanted objects.

If you really want to have sorcerous Characters be magical gadgeteers, as might be appropriate for sorcerer Characters that are part of the Eldritch Society, feel free to cut these Cheat costs in half.

There are certain items that are not appropriate for Characters to begin play with, as they are especially rare or powerful. Included in this category are the Ring of Dreams, as well as any enchanted item that is the secret purview of alien races or cults.

NEW ENCHANTMENT RITUALS

Animate Simulacrum

First Order

aka: Enchant Toy, Puppetmaster

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Legal

Learning Time: 2 Weeks

Insanity Test: None

Occult Rating Required: Novice

Intellect Required: 7

Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day

Casting Time: 4 Hours

Difficulty: Average

Extended Tests Required: 2

Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, a small doll, sculpture, or similar figurine, naturally or artificially occurring wind, several small harmonic crystals, certain essential oils.

Effects: A favorite of entertainers, and sometimes charlatans, the Animate Simulacrum ritual invests a small amount of magical energy into an otherwise inanimate doll, sculpture, or other similar figurine. The magic allows the figurine to move around of its own accord – it can walk, run, dance, jump and do just about anything else one could reasonably expect for a full-sized real-life version.

When cast, the sorcerer can choose one of two options. The first option functionally programs the figure with a set of predetermined movements. For example, a figure of an acrobat may perform a series of flips, jumps, and somersaults, or a model of a bird might fly around in a circle. Up to half a dozen of these ‘canned’ animations may be programmed into the figure.

The second option provides the figure with more freedom. Instead of a series of animations, the figure is programmed to accept specific commands from the person to which it is attuned. For example, the object might walk or run back at the “Come here!” command, or it might climb up a pipe on the side of a building when given the command. Up to half a dozen commands can be programmed at the time the ritual is cast – the object will obey the spirit of any such command.

In any case, the enchanted object is not intelligent in any way. It cannot make decisions and will only do what has been specifically programmed to do at the time of the casting of the ritual. It cannot be told to go seek someone specific out or to climb up someone’s pant leg and poke him in the eye. If such a command is given, the figure will walk in a straight line until it is told to stop or turn or the magic empowering it runs dry. If knocked down, it will pick itself up and continue walking, but that is the limit of its ability to react.

This ritual will animate a single object up to twelve inches tall (or long). The enchanted object can be given commands, so long as the speaker is within reasonable talking range. The effects will last for a season. Once enchanted, any sorcerer can easily recharge the object, using a ritual that takes half the normal time to prepare and cast.

No matter what, the ritual must be cast on an object that, when animated, will be capable of movement. It would not work, for example, on a plain rock or a planter.

Market Price: 2100Tn
Casting Fee: 700Tn
Component Cost: 175Tn + Figurine

Constitute Potion of Il-Sarr

First Order

aka: Brew Reading Potion
Type: Enchantment
Legality: Illegal
Learning Time: 2 Weeks
Insanity Test: None
Occult Rating Required: Novice
Intellect Required: 7
Tenacity Required: 8

Prep Time: 2 Days
Casting Time: 6 Hours
Difficulty: Challenging
Extended Tests Required: 2
Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, a basic lab set, a metal or glass jar, purified water, various herbs, a fresh or fresh frozen mammalian brain. The primary caster must have the Hobby (Cooking), Life Science, or Trivia (Herbalism) skill at a Novice level of expertise.

Effects: This ritual brews a potion that imparts on an imbiber not only enhanced hearing, but the ability to hear the surface thoughts of others. The Potion of Il-Sarr takes an hour before it takes effect, but once it does a user can hear the surface thoughts of anyone he can see. These surface thoughts are those that occur at the very topmost level of a person's consciousness that are most often related to what's happening around them.

However, this potion has side-effects. A user, especially one who isn't used to such sensory overload, will be distracted the entire time he is under the influence of the potion. The psychic din will be ever-present, causing a -2 Test Penalty to all actions – the noise in his head is substantial. Others will also notice that he appears to be paying attention to things that no one else can hear. Only the practiced can fake it – succeeding at a Challenging Misdirect Test.

The Potion of Il-Sarr lasts for about twelve hours.

Black Market Price: 3500Tn
Black Casting Fee: 1050Tn
Component Cost: 420Tn

Constitute Restful Inhalant

First Order

aka: Create Sleep Charm
Type: Enchantment
Legality: Legal
Learning Time: 2 Weeks
Insanity Test: None
Occult Rating Required: Novice
Intellect Required: 6
Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day
Casting Time: 6 Hours
Difficulty: Average
Extended Tests Required: 2
Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, a basic lab set, a clay or earthen jar, purified water, various soporific herbs. The primary caster must have the Hobby (Cooking), Life Science, or Trivia (Herbalism) skill at a Novice level of expertise.

Effects: This ritual creates a powder that is designed to be burned like incense, which has soporific effects. The benign intent of the Restful Inhalant is to help a person sleep – through pretty much anything. One dose of this substance will put anyone to sleep under any circumstance. It has particular use on the field of battle, with soldiers who have difficulty sleeping due to conditions or the horrors they have seen. In general, the effects of the Restful Inhalant hit within seconds and last for eight hours at a stretch.

Unfortunately, there are those who would use the Restful Inhalant for less than benign purposes. The use is obvious – knock a person out against their will. If a person is forced to inhale this substance, he must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test in order to resist its effects. This Test must be made twice – during the first moment it is inhaled and one hour thereafter.

Overdosing on the Restful Inhalant is not a good idea. Double dosing will increase the Degree to resist to Hard, but it runs the chance of causing one die worth of damage if failed – against which there is no defense or reduction. Doses more than that not only increase the Degree to Incredibly Hard, they increase the damage exponentially – it jumps to five dice for three doses, and to ten dice for four doses. It is simply a lethal substance when not used as directed.

Each use of this ritual creates a batch of six doses.

Market Price: 1400Tn
Casting Fee: 420Tn
Component Cost: 140Tn



Craft Axin's Pass

First Order

aka: Enchant Lockpick

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 2 Weeks

Insanity Test: None

Occult Rating Required: Novice

Intellect Required: 7

Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day

Casting Time: 6 Hours

Difficulty: Average

Extended Tests Required: 2

Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, an object to become the lockpick, various small harmonic crystals, various herbs, various essential oils, feathers from wild birds.

Effects: This spell enchants a pick, hair-pin, file, skeleton key, or similar object to be a mystical lockpick. The object itself must be the kind of object that could conceivably be used as a lock-picking or lock-opening device in the first place. However, the magical enchantment adds great utility to the object, allowing it to mystically open locks.

Axin's Pass gives a user a +6 Test Bonus to uses of the Criminal skill to open locks. This Test Bonus even applies if a user is unskilled. However, traditional items will be of no use against the modern world of computerized or biometric locks.

Modern sorcerers have modified this spell so that it can be useful in the face of progress. A purchaser must be careful when acquiring this ritual, as the traditional version is the one most readily available. The modified version allows a user to enchant a key card which, when held up or passed through virtually any kind of computerized or electronic lock, provides the usual benefits. Naturally, these Passes are useless against traditional locks.

A single Axin's Pass will last for twenty uses before the enchantment will fade. It can be recharged by a ritual that requires only half the time.

Black Market Price: 3500Tn

Black Market Casting Fee: 1050Tn

Component Cost: 420Tn + Object

Craft Crystal of Mizrahar

First Order

aka: Create Mystical SpyCam

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Legal (Permit Required)

Learning Time: 2 Weeks

Insanity Test: None

Occult Rating Required: Novice

Intellect Required: 8
Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day
Casting Time: 6 Hours
Difficulty: Challenging
Extended Tests Required: 3
Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, an innocuous object with a crystal or gem mounted in or on it, powdered elephant tusk, various harmonic crystals, various essential oils.

Effects: The Crystal of Mizrahar is a mystical device that can record in a holographic way. The device itself is typically something innocuous, utilizing a crystal or gem-like substance as a matrix. When placed in an area, the Crystal of Mizrahar records the video and audio happenings of a ten foot radius around the enchanted object – in full 3D. It is capable of recording up to twenty minutes of continuous footage, triggered by a predetermined command phrase by the sorcerer who created it. For all intents and purposes, no one would notice the object unless they were looking for something out of place – however, anyone using something like the Eldritch Faculties ritual or the ESP parapsychic power will notice the magical aura around the object.

The information contained on this enchanted object is displayed upon the appropriate command, hovering projected into the air above the Crystal. It can be scrubbed much in the same way as modern A/V, but only by the sorcerer who created the enchanted object. It can likewise be erased and reused.

The reason these objects have not become more popular in mainstream entertainment is that they cannot be hooked up to modern electronics. They record what they record and display how they display, and that is a personal experience that cannot be duplicated for the mass market. That doesn't mean there aren't those who are trying to figure out how to do so.

A Crystal of Mizrahar lasts for only a month before it must be recharged using a ritual with half the requirements.

Market Price: 3500Tn
Casting Fee: 1050Tn
Component Cost: 420Tn + Object

Craft Distant Whisper

First Order

aka: Enchanted Comms
Type: Enchantment
Legality: Illegal
Learning Time: 2 Weeks
Insanity Test: None
Occult Rating Required: Novice
Intellect Required: 7
Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day
Casting Time: 4 Hours
Difficulty: Average
Extended Tests Required: 2
Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, a small object to become the Distant Whisper, various herbs, various small harmonic crystals, the reasonably fresh ears of a keen-hearing mammal.

Effects: The Distant Whisper is a magical device that, when properly attuned, allows several users to communicate soundlessly with one another across distances – up to 500 yards away. Each Distant Whisper is some kind of talisman or piece of jewelry that must be worn against the skin of the user in order to function. They often take the form of bracelets or rings, for simplicity's sake.

In order for a Distant Whisper to be effective, it must be tuned to others of its kind. Essentially, the users of two Distant Whispers that wish to communicate must infuse their own Ruach into the other. Anyone who wants his Distant Whisper to communicate with another must spend an hour meditating with that other Distant Whisper, infusing five points of his own Ruach into it – and vice versa. An unlimited number of Distant Whispers can be attuned to each other. However, they are all on, all the time, and there is no way to selectively communicate. Any more than a handful can become a nightmare for those involved.

While wildly useful, the New Earth Government has outlawed these devices, for they allow people to communicate with no outward signs that they are doing so. Thus, they have become the tools of terrorists and cultists, who have ruined it for everyone else.

Market Price: 3500Tn
Casting Fee: 1050Tn
Component Cost: 420Tn + Object

Craft Insect Claws

First Order

aka: Create Climbers
Type: Enchantment
Legality: Legal
Learning Time: 2 Weeks
Insanity Test: None
Occult Rating Required: Novice
Intellect Required: 6
Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day
Casting Time: 4 Hours
Difficulty: Average
Extended Tests Required: 2
Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, objects to become the Climbers, various live insects, various herbs, various harmonic crystals.

Effects: This ritual creates a set of enchanted objects known as Insect Claws, more commonly known as Climbers. They manifest as rings, glove & boots, or things of that nature, and they allow a person to climb sheer surfaces. They can stick to pretty much anything that isn't too slippery, such as greasy or icy surfaces. A user can move at double his normal climbing rate.

Insect Claws require no Orgone to function and activate at the will of the user. They simply know when it is appropriate to stick to things and when it is not.

Market Price: 1400Tn

Casting Fee: 420Tn

Component Cost: 140Tn + Objects

Craft Oculus of Revelation

First Order

aka: Create Magic Glasses

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Legal

Learning Time: 2 Weeks

Insanity Test: None

Occult Rating Required: Novice

Intellect Required: 8

Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day

Casting Time: 6 Hours

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 3

Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, an appropriate object to enchant, the eyes of a dead human being (usually acquired through donation), various small harmonic crystals, various herbs.

Effects: This ritual imbues some kind of device designed to aid mortal optics with the ability to sense things normally beyond a mortal's means, in a fashion similar to the abilities granted by the Eldritch Faculties scrying spell. Anything invisible or mystically hidden is instantly revealed to a user, if he looks through the glasses. He can also see the auras of living things, which allows him to ascertain a being's health and wellness, its dominant emotional state or states, and if it is affected by or under the influence of magic or para-psychic powers.

This enchanted object is imbued with an amount of Ruach when it is created, determined by the amount the participants are willing to give to it beyond the cost of the ritual, up to 40 points. The Oculus can be recharged in a ritual that takes half the time to both prepare and execute, but can never hold more than the amount of Orgone it was imbued with when it was created.

It costs 1 point for five minutes to see auras and 2 to see the mystically hidden, or 3 for five minutes of both. Any user can intuitively activate the Oculus at will and can sense approximately how much cosmic energy is left in the device.

The Oculus can be crafted into any sort of optics designed to extend human visual perception, including spectacles, monoculars, binoculars, camera lenses, and the like. If a camera lens is enchanted, however, the camera will not record the mystical images it sees, as the mechanics of recording are not designed to and therefore do not pick up such things. Anyone looking through the camera, on the other hand, will see such things if the camera is single-lens reflex – anything where the only way to see the image is through a digital screen will fail.

Market Price: 3500Tn

Casting Fee: 1050Tn

Component Cost: 420Tn + Object

Craft Shocking Totem

First Order

aka: Shocking Token, Joy Buzzer

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Legal

Learning Time: 2 Weeks

Insanity Test: None

Occult Rating Required: Novice

Intellect Required: 7

Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 1 Day

Casting Time: 4 Hours

Difficulty: Average

Extended Tests Required: 2

Ruach Cost: 10

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, an object to be enchanted, the glands of an electricity generating creature (such as an electric eel), a pupating caterpillar, various small harmonic crystals, various essential oils.

Effects: This spell enchants a small object to be a non-lethal weapon. Such objects are activated by touching another living thing with the object, which causes magical energy to discharge into a victim, overloading his or its nervous system. Such an attack is based off the user's Fighting skill and must do at least one point of Vitality damage to cause harm. Treat as if the Shocking Totem had a Damage of +0 when determining if its attack penetrates armor, though it does no real damage. Anyone affected must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to resist the effects. If this Test is failed, the victim loses 2 Actions per turn for one to ten minutes (roll one die), which can reduce a character's Actions to zero. Only one Test needs to be made per turn when jolted by the Shocking Totem 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. This ability functions at the user's will and will not happen involuntarily.

The use of a Shocking Totem is hardly subtle. While the enchanted object itself makes no sound, the inevitable groan of a victim, as well as the spasms that accompany said shock, make it so that people nearby will notice something amiss.

Shocking Totems can be any kind of object, but they must be something smaller than a coffee cup and something the user can touch against another living thing. They most often take the form of innocuous, everyday things – though close inspection will reveal the arcane markings required for the vessel to receive the magic. The biggest danger is that the only person immune to the effects of the Shocking Totem is the person to which it is attuned.

Shocking Totems last for one season before they must be replenished by the use of this ritual again.

Market Price: 1400Tn

Casting Fee: 420Tn

Component Cost: 140Tn

Craft Amulet of Waveless Voice

Second Order

aka: Smooth Talker Button

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Expert

Intellect Required: 8

Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 1 Day

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 3

Ruach Cost: 15

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, a still night, various incense. The eventual owner must have either made or overseen the creation of the amulet or other object. 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: This ritual creates an amulet, or other worn object of similar size, that increases the user's charm and personal magnetism. It activates when personal interaction begins, so it is not the kind of thing that is immediately obvious – it wouldn't draw someone across a room, for example. However, once the user begins to talk, all those hearing begin to experience the Amulet of Waveless Voice's magic. His voice becomes smooth and beautiful, his words taking on an almost lyrical quality. He becomes a gifted smooth talker, capable of influencing people in a supernatural fashion. Of course, all this is subconscious and not the kind of thing people would immediately identify.

The Amulet affects only those that can clearly hear the user speak, generally within about fifty feet if he is addressing an audience. This power does not translate through broadcast or recording, however. It also does not allow the user to convince people to do things that are not in their interest or generally dangerous – it only makes him more charming and convincing. The Amulet of Waveless Voice provides a +6 Test or Contest Bonus when using social skills – including Misdirect, Persuade, Savoir-Faire, and Seduction (and kindly uses of the Intimidate skill) – or for Presence Feats that come from the user speaking.

People who are influenced by this enchanted item tend to be very resentful if they discover the truth. Its use is considered poor form among even the denizens of the arcane underground, with regards to using it during interactions within that subculture. They do not, however, complain when using it on normal people or authorities.

Market Price: 21,000Tn

Casting Fee: 3500Tn

Component Cost: 490Tn + Object

Craft Figment Lock

Second Order

aka: Illusionary Charm

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Legal (Permit Required)

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Adept

Intellect Required: 8

Tenacity Required: 7

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 1 Day

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 3

Ruach Cost: 15

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, a small physical object to enchant (gem, jewelry, coin, etc.), the internal organs of chameleonic animals (fish, reptiles, insects, etc.), an effigy or image of the intended effect of the glamour. 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: This spell creates a more powerful version of a Glamour Lock, creating a more complicated illusion that affects the recipient of the object. While a Glamour Lock might change minor details about a person, such as hair or eye color or even unusual traits like cat's eyes, a Figment Lock can change a person's entire appearance. He may be Nazzadi, but suddenly appear completely Human. He may want to look like a completely different person. The only limitation is that these illusions can only change the appearance of a person – they cannot change

his height, weight, general body shape, or gender. They also cannot imitate a specific person, as the illusions cannot make that broad a change (that is the purview of the Thief Visage ritual), unless the two people in question already look very similar. The Lock also does not change clothes, only the person. Otherwise, the only other boundary is creativity. In fact, the Figment Lock doesn't even need to look real. For example, a person could give himself tiger-stripping or color his skin fire-engine red. Each Lock contains one set illusion pattern, with which it is encoded at the time of creation, and is locked into a small physical object. This object must be the kind that the recipient must carry or wear on his person in order for the enchantment to be active. Such objects are often gems or stones set in jewelry. A Figment Lock maintains its enchantment for a season before it must be renewed by a ritual that takes half the time and preparation.

Market Price: 3500Tn

Black Market Price: 9000Tn

Casting Fee: 1050Tn

Black Market Casting Fee: 2100Tn

Component Cost: 640Tn + object

Craft Hidden Death

Second Order

aka: Enchant Wicked Surprise

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Adept

Intellect Required: 7

Tenacity Required: 8

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 1 Day

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 3

Ruach Cost: 15

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, an object to enchant, living thorny flowers or brambles, a new moon. The eventual owner must have either made or overseen the creation of the amulet or other object. 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 may be more instantly intimidating, the enchanted weapons known as Hidden Deaths are more insidious. This ritual transforms some sort of seemingly everyday object into a lethal close combat weapon.

The magic that powers this ritual creates a hidden mystical weapon that does +1 damage. For example, rings will suddenly, at the will of the user, sprout a two-inch spike, or blades will suddenly extend around all sides of an amulet, or a blade will pop out of the top of a peek. These objects can be any sort of

normal, everyday object, but the kind where some kind of protruding lethal edge is possible.

Hidden Deaths are, needless to say, very illegal. Many sorcerers that travel in the walks that might face danger carry them anyway.

Like most mystical weapons of this sort, Hidden Deaths last for one season before they must be recharged by a ritual that takes half the normal time to both prepare and execute.

Black Market Price: 9000Tn

Black Market Casting Fee: 2100Tn

Component Cost: 640Tn

Craft Infernal Machine

Second Order

aka: OS Enchant

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Challenging/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Expert

Intellect Required: 8

Tenacity Required: 8

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 2 Days

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 4

Ruach Cost: 20

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, a computer to enchant, various incense, various harmonic crystals, a lightning storm. The eventual owner must participate in the ritual. Also, ritual participants must have meditated during the two days of preparation, must be freshly bathed without perfume or deodorant, and wearing clean natural clothing.

Effects: This spell creates what is functionally an enchanted computer. The magic imbues the machine with increased functionality, giving users enhanced computing abilities.

The ritual awakens the operating system of the computer, giving it capabilities similar to a Limited Artificial Intelligence. The machine does not become fully self-aware, but it does take on the ability to function in ways other computers cannot. Infernal Machines can understand voice commands in ways other computers can't, make intuitive leaps based on previous commands, and generally enjoy an increased speed that is at least five times what other computers of similar capacity enjoy. It is capable of speaking to a user and holding basic conversations, though falling short of actual intelligence. Perhaps the most useful part of this ritual is that it can enchant even very small computers like peeks, to create machines that are far more useful than their normal counterparts.



In addition to the ease of use, Infernal Machines confer a Test Bonus of +8 to the Computer Tests of those who use them.

Infernal Machines are very illegal. The New Earth Government feels that it doesn't need to allow anything that aids hackers in their pursuit of computer crime. To the authorities, such devices are just another example of how magic can make society spin out of control. However, that does not prevent various factions within the New Earth Government from using them – especially those associated with the war effort.

The enchantment that creates an Infernal Machine lasts for one season before it must be renewed with a ritual that takes half the usual preparation and time.

Market Price: 21,000Tn

Casting Fee: 3500Tn

Component Cost: 490Tn + Computer

Craft Talisman of Fortune

Second Order

aka: Lucky Rabbit's Foot

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Legal

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Adept

Intellect Required: 6

Tenacity Required: 8

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 1 Days

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 3

Ruach Cost: 15

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, an object to enchant, various incense, various harmonic crystals, the finger-bone of a gambler. The eventual owner must participate in the ritual. 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: This ritual creates a Talisman of Fortune, something that acts as a mystical good luck charm. The item enchanted can be any small item, but are typically things associated with good luck – rabbit's feet, special coins, charms with lucky symbols on them, and the like. Whatever the item, it must be something that is small enough to be carried on or worn by a person.

When the Talisman of Fortune is created, the participants must imbue it with an additional amount of Ruach in order for it to be effective. For every five additional points, the Talisman gains one use, up to a total of ten uses.

Once charged, a user may utilize the Talisman to help him out in times of need. He may choose to spend one use of the item to allow him to roll three times for a Test and take the best result. This choice must be made before the user rolls dice, and the Talisman may only be used once per Test – you can't burn multiple uses to roll an exponential number of times for one particular instance.

A Talisman may be utilized until its uses run dry. However, the item may be recharged by a ritual that takes half the amount of preparation and casting time. There also is obviously no need to spend the time crafting or attuning the object, as it is already prepared to receive magic.

While Talisman's of Fortune aren't technically illegal, they are restricted in many walks of life. For example, athletes are barred from using them, they are banned in schools or around games of chance, frowned upon in business negotiations or dealings, and the like. Anywhere where a Talisman of Fortune could give someone an unfair advantage, they are not to be used. They are sold to be used only in situations where a user having a lucky edge will harm no one else, physically or psychologically.

Market Price: 16,000Tn

Casting Fee: 2100Tn

Component Cost: 280Tn + Object

Craft Traceless Pass

Second Order

aka: Create Free Pass, Get Out of Jail Free Card

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Expert

Intellect Required: 8

Tenacity Required: 8

Prep Time: 2 Days

Casting Time: 1 Day

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 3

Ruach Cost: 20

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, an object to enchant, various incense, various harmonic crystals, the ashes of an executed criminal. The eventual owner must participate in the ritual. 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: The Traceless Pass is something coveted within the less than savory circles of the world. It has one important use – it prevents a user from leaving any sort of evidence in his wake. That means a user of the Traceless Pass will leave no forensic evidence for investigators to follow, such as fingerprints, clothing fibers, hair, blood, or other DNA samples. Furthermore, video and audio recording equipment will not record him – it is as if the user simply is not there.

However, the Traceless Pass does not make the user a ghost. Anyone the user encounters will see, hear, and remember him. The user still makes noise and will be seen and heard as normal. While he may not leave forensic evidence, the evidence of

his activities will still be obvious. For example, if the user moves something people will notice, or if he hurts someone, there will still be blood splatters.

In addition to the obvious uses of the above effects, anyone trying to gather evidence about someone with a Traceless Pass while using the Research skill will suffer a -8 Test Penalty.

These objects may be crafted into any object that a user might carry. Some might place the enchantment on some ornament on a cane, on a purse or backpack, or even on a peek. However, the most common manifestations are those most often used by enchanted objects – jewelry.

The Traceless Pass lasts for one lunar season and may be recharged with another ritual that takes half the time.

Market Price: 21,000Tn

Casting Fee: 3500Tn

Component Cost: 490Tn + Object

Bring Drinker of Blood

Third Order

aka: Enchant Magic Sword

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 6 Months

Insanity Test: Hard/2 Insanity Points

Occult Rating Required: Master

Intellect Required: 7

Tenacity Required: 9

Prep Time: 1 Week

Casting Time: 3 Days

Difficulty: Hard

Extended Tests Required: 8

Ruach Cost: 40

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, an object to enchant, various incense, various harmonic crystals, some sort of live sacrifice that is large dog size or bigger. The primary sorcerer must have either made or overseen the creation of the weapon. Also, ritual participants must have fasted for the two days prior to the ritual, must be freshly bathed without perfume or deodorant, and wearing clean natural clothing.

Effects: Legends often speak of traditional weapons that have been enchanted in such a way as to be preternaturally lethal. One magical ritual capable of bringing such weapons into existence is known as Bring Drinker of Blood. It is capable of taking an ordinary weapon and making it an enchanted thing of destruction.

Drinkers of Blood are most often traditional close combat weapons, such as daggers or swords. A sorcerer can conceivably enchant any kind of weapon, but it must be the kind of thing

that does the damage itself. Therefore, one cannot enchant a firearm, but one could enchant a bullet – which would be a massive waste of ritual magic. The old choices are still the best, for practical reasons.

Drinkers of Blood do no more damage than a normal version of their weapon type. However, they convert that type of damage to Hybrid damage and reduce the armor rating of any type of protection by one die. These two attributes make them incredibly dangerous – and incredibly illegal.

One of the more interesting facets of a Drinker of Blood is that the weapons seems to suck up blood from whatever they touch. Victims bleed less than they would from normal comparable wounds, and these weapons will actually absorb blood that has dripped or been sprayed from wounds.

These enchanted weapons are highly coveted and not very common. The Office of Internal Security has no sense of humor the rest of the time and they are particularly harsh on anyone who is found in possession of a Drinker of Blood. This wouldn't be so bad if these weapons weren't thoroughly marked with arcane symbols so that they are entirely conspicuous. There are those who would walk such a fine line, but there are many who regard the risk as not worth the reward.

Once enchanted, a Drinker of Blood is forever. They can, however, be melted down or destroyed in any way that would destroy the weapon in question.

Market Price: 36,000Tn
Casting Fee: 9200Tn
Component Cost: 490Tn + Weapon

Craft Shroud of Shadow

Third Order

aka: Invisibility Cloak, Potter's Toy

Type: Enchantment

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 6 Months

Insanity Test: Hard/2 Insanity Points

Occult Rating Required: Master

Intellect Required: 9

Tenacity Required: 9

Prep Time: 1 Week

Casting Time: 3 Days

Difficulty: Hard

Extended Tests Required: 8

Ruach Cost: 30

Components & Requirements: a consecrated arcane space, piercing needles, the eventual owner's blood, a cloak to enchant, various incense, various harmonic crystals, the sacrifice of several creatures that hunt by stealth, such as a trap-door spider, praying mantis, or the like. The primary sorcerer must have either made or overseen the creation of the cloak. Also, ritual partici-

pants must have fasted for the two days prior to the ritual, must be freshly bathed without perfume or deodorant, and wearing clean natural clothing.

Effects: This spell enchants a hooded cloak, or other like clothing or covering designed for a person, so that it acts like a mystical stealth field. A Shroud of Shadow is functionally two-sided – one side looks like the cloak, the other is mystically invisible. It works thus so that owners of this wondrous object don't lose track of it the minute they set it down.

The cloak itself bears the enchantment, so in order for it to be effective, it must cover the person using it from the top of the head to the ground. This might make it very difficult for the user to navigate, but the enchantment turns the material see-through when worn properly.

The Shroud of Shadow uses similar rules to a stealth mech or a Shadow Tager, though the user of this item cannot move as fast as either of those. Functionally, the Shroud makes a user almost impossible to detect, except by X-ray sensors or sometimes normal sight (which reveals only a distortion). To see such distortion is easiest when the user is moving and within fifty feet (unless using zoom-assist), requiring a Hard Observation Test – this Degree drops to Challenging when the user of the Shroud is within fifteen feet of an observer. Even then, it only shows up as an indistinct shimmer (-4 Contest Penalty to attack it). Once spotted, the Degree drops to Average for Observation Tests to track the user, until he moves outside of fifty feet. By remaining still, the user can increase these Degrees one category and use of the Stealth skill can raise them another. Otherwise, X-ray sensors will reveal user and the Shroud immediately, making him plain as day.

Rapid, erratic movement forces the concealing powers of the Shroud of Shadow to fail. In short, the user can't remain invisible and jump into conflict. Furthermore, touching anything living (of dog-size or larger) will force the stealth to drop. Once visible, he is forced to remain so for two turns (10 seconds) before disappearing again. Also, when concealed, a user can't move faster than a quarter of his normal Movement.

The enchantment magic powering this ritual will only enchant something designed to cover a normal-sized person. It cannot be used to create larger Shrouds designed to hide larger things. The enchantment lasts as long as the item it enchants.

Market Price: 36,000Tn
Casting Fee: 9200Tn
Component Cost: 490Tn + Cloak

This had to be one of the dumbest places on Earth to have come to voluntarily. Western Asia, inside Rapine Storm territory. Normally, no amount of money would be worth this – except it was.

The instructions were, as usual, vague. This was Henrik and Arudiny's life – mystical treasure hunters for hire. So many of their clients didn't want them to know what they were retrieving. That could be a good security practice, but sometimes it needlessly concealed danger. This time, they'd simply erred on the side of caution and over-prepared. If they hadn't, they'd be dead already.

They knew two important things. The item they sought was referred to as the Anakhara Stone – not that this did them much good. None of their usual contacts had ever heard of such a thing or, more appropriately, would admit to having heard of such a thing. The second thing they knew was that they were somehow going to have to find passage from Eastern Europe into Western Asia. That was going to be difficult, as most who travelled that route were coming the other way and for good reason.

Fortunately, there was always someone crazy enough to head to the wrong place for the right cash. They'd gotten a reference from a contact in Budapest for a reliable runner. It worked out so that getting behind enemy lines wasn't going to be the hard part, and word had it that the runner was reliable for pick-up. That last part was the most important.

The four days trek through the blasted world the Disciples of the Rapine Storm had made was not so easy. Things hunted both night and day, and each moment was tense. They did everything they could to cover their scent, right down to bathing themselves in the entrails of some Ghosts they'd killed. Neither of them had really slept in days.

Tired, worked to their last nerves, they finally found the place. It shouldn't have been hidden from view, but it was. It was almost as if one had to be specifically looking for the place in order to see it. Wouldn't be the first time.

Descending through the rocks, the place quickly took on the appearance of some kind of inhuman temple. The reliefs carved into the walls had not been made by mortal hands, and the monstrous faces they showed set both Henrik and Arudiny even more on edge – as if that were even possible.

Strangely, there were no guardians, no traps. The dust layer showed clearly that nothing had been in here for a very long time. Considering who now owned this land, that alone was unusual.

Finally, they arrived at their destination. A chamber with high ceilings and particularly fierce reliefs surrounded a pillar, upon which something wrapped in rags sat undisturbed. Something glowed underneath

deteriorating wraps, responding to their presence. This most certainly was the object of their quest. Henrik slung his gun over his shoulder and carefully approached the carved pillar on which it sat.

He breathed carefully and cleared his throat. "Wish me luck. Here goes nothing."

Henrik reached out and gently drew back the wraps, which slid off almost of their own volition. The thing underneath should have been made of stone, except that it had translucent qualities and glowed with an eerie green light from within. The surface had been carved, or possibly etched, with some kind of obscure occult symbols.

The good news is that it didn't immediately do something horrible to either of them. That was always a risk.

Gathering up his courage, Henrik reached down to take the stone. He gingerly lifted the thing off the pillar. Then, he almost dropped it as a surge of energy flowed from the stone, up his arms, and over his body, coming in waves. Somehow, Henrik managed to keep it together and place the stone back down deliberately, taking a few steps back. However, he was shaking and hyperventilating like someone had hit him with adrenaline.

Arudiny dropped her rifle and went for her medical kit, but by the time she got to Henrik, he started to calm down. That is when she noticed. The gray had faded from his stubble. The crow's feet around his eyes were gone. His skin looked tighter, more vibrant





- younger. He practically hummed with energy, all trace of fatigue gone.

"That's... weird. Wait. How do you feel?" she asked.

Henrik blinked his eyes. Then, he looked around and stretched his limbs. "I... I feel good."

The Nazzadi girl couldn't help herself. She went over to the pillar herself and touched the Anakhara Stone. The same energy, the same waves, the same rush.

After a moment, the results were what she'd expected. Not yet thirty, she could feel and see where her body had shed what little age she had. She looked and felt nineteen again.

Henrik noticed the difference immediately. "Whoa. Is that what happened to me?"

Ariduny nodded, barely able to conceal her excitement. "I wonder how long this lasts?"

"Buried this deep and hidden this well? The money we were offered? Probably permanent," Henrik responded. "I just have one question."

Ariduny's head still buzzed. "Whew. What's that?"

Henrik covered the stone and stowed it in his pack. "Are we willing to part with this?"

And that is how the trouble always starts.

chapter five

ancient objects

There are many objects of ancient and incredible power that have been forged throughout the centuries, many not by Human hands. Some of the artifacts have been lost to time, their legacies spoken of only in legend. Some have been unearthed by accident, their true natures unknown as they are kept in collections or placed on display. However, some have been found and now live in the possession of dangerous people – or things.

In this chapter, we'll take a look at several such artifacts, as well as their legends. Some of them might show up in the hands of your antagonists, while others might be objects of your quests. Some you might only hear their tales, as they stay lost to the modern age.

Each of these items requires some sort of Tests or Extended Tests to identify. You'll find that there are no prices associated with these artifacts, as each could command a small fortune on its own.

THE ANAKHARA STONE

Identification: Extended Tests (requiring 5 successful attempts each) for the Research and Occult skills, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

The Anakhara Stone is a smooth, oblong, greenish jade-like stone about the size of a basketball. Its surface is carved or possibly etched with alien symbols. To most, it would simply appear to be an object of art, if it did not glow as if a flame burned in its heart. This gentle glow is about the intensity of a night-light.

History

Legends say that the Anakhara Stone was a gift brought to this dimension by particularly powerful Bakhi sorcerers. Odds are that the creatures brought it with them to sustain their physical forms indefinitely, but there are those ancient peoples who sought commune with demons. It is likely then that the Bakhi used the artifact to tempt and ultimately control such people, knowing that the power of the Stone was never meant for mortals. It is also likely that the Anakhara Stone is the reason there are legends of immortal rulers in some ancient cultures.

The only reason that creatures such as humanity have survived is because of our capacity to learn. Eventually, someone realized

that this powerful object needed to be removed from the world altogether. The temptation of its youth-giving effects was too great, as was its price. The Anakhara Stone was taken from the world of men – by inhuman hands. Whoever it was that stole the artifact felt that handing it to creatures other than the Bakhi was a sure way to keep it from the mortals who could not handle it. It is believed that it was given to intelligent creatures such as Ghosts, but that part of the story is lost in time.

The Anakhara Stone has been hidden away for thousands of years. However, the modern age has increased acceptance and awareness of arcane things. This has hastened the artifact's discovery. Found in a hidden cave-temple in the ravaged lands of the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, occult treasure-hunters recently had the incredible luck to not only find the Stone, but to escape with it. The reality is that there is no way the monstrous hordes would have let such an incursion occur if there weren't a reason for it. It is likely that the Bakhi have decided it is time to once again let such an object back out into the world, and the best way to do so is to make the mortal believe it was hard won.

The current whereabouts of the Anakhara Stone are unknown. It is likely the occult treasure-hunters became addicted to its use. It is possible that they still have it, or it is possible that those that hired them to do the job killed the treasure-hunters to get the artifact. It could very well be floating around the arcane underground somewhere in the world, where it will most likely find its way into the hands of someone very wealthy and powerful.

There are many of those that know of the existence of this object and are actively seeking it. Those with the resources are drawn to the temptation of eternal youth. There are many arcane investigators who are charged with looking for evidence of the Anakhara Stone or, more importantly, its whereabouts.

While most people in the know believe that there is only one single Anakhara Stone, there are those who believe that there may be more than one. If the Bakhi did create such an object, it would stand to reason that they made multiples.

Function

Simply put, the Anakhara Stone is a tool for healing. A person doesn't even need to be a sorcerer to use it and it requires no ritual for its power to manifest. All it requires is touch – bare skin to stone.

One touch drains all the Orgone from a person, but the price is tiny. The Anakhara Stone then immediately cures all disease and takes away five years of age. It does not, for some reason instantly heal trauma or wounds, but it does cause mortals to heal three times as fast.

The artifact cannot be used again by a person until his Orgone has fully regenerated. Then, he may use the Stone again for the same effects. Fortunately, the magic that powers the artifact will not reduce a person's age any lower than their physical prime – around 21.

RECOGNITION

Some of the items presented here may be familiar to you. The Circlet of Ghabbaz has been seen in both the *Core Book* and *Damnation View*. The Rictus Knife of Ephrates can be found in *Damnation View* as well. The Krytyk Crystal and the Nexus of Almazoara can be found in *Ancient Enemies*. The reason they appear here, is to provide you with more complete histories, as well as something that has never been presented before – their actual game effects. This way, you can choose to use these artifacts in your game, instead of them just being plot points in a story.

The Anakhara Stone may be a virtual fountain of youth, but it has its price. Use of such invigorating power is addictive. Use it once, and a person must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or come back immediately after his Orgone has regenerated. Every use increases the Degree one category. Once a person has reduced their age to their prime, they only need to use it once a month. If kept from the Stone, an addicted person will be obsessively consumed with finding and using the artifact, much like any other junkie. However, the debilitating effects start after the first week. Every week thereafter, the person will age ten years each week, until he reaches a physical age that is twice where he started. He will also begin to suffer the effects of any diseases the Stone cured, but twice what they were. It is entirely possible for a person to die from this withdrawal.

Those are not the only side effects of the Anakhara Stone, as it was never designed to be used by Humans (or Nazzadi). Each month a person uses the artifact, he must succeed at a Challenging Insanity Test or gain 1 Insanity Point. However, the real danger lies in extended use. A mortal who uses the Anakhara Stone regularly for one solar year must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or the artifact instills the victim with life energy while stopping all bodily function – the person in question becomes a liche. The good news is that the Anakhara Stone, as long as it is used once a week, will preserve the new liche from decay. The bad news, aside from being undead, is that the new liche will rapidly age if kept from the Stone, which means rapid decay.

On the other hand, when used by a member of a monstrous race, such as Ghosts or Spawn, the Anakhara Stone has all of its beneficial effects and none of its negative side-effects.

THE CIRCLET OF GHABBAZ

Identification: Extended Tests (requiring 5 successful attempts each) for the Research and Occult skills, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

The Circler of Ghabbaz is composed of four key components, which joined together form the artifact. The three pieces are the headpiece, the circler, and the clasp. The Circler can be separated into its component pieces, in which case it loses its power. This was not so much a desire on the part of the artifact's creators to stymie its power – it was just a convenient way to create the object.

Each piece of the circler, barring the metal pieces that comprise the clasp, is carved from an unidentifiable black wood. The wood is most definitely that of some ancient tree, perhaps the kind that grew in the primordial forests of Pangean prehistoric times. This wood is remarkably hard – but then again, that could be the magic that powers it.

In general, the Circler of Ghabbaz is a simple carved crown, with a rising headpiece in the front. It is unremarkable to the average person. The power of the object is as such that even someone

picking up the intact Circler would not be aware of the artifact's power. However, the magics that power it would have an impact – the individual in question's sex drive would kick into overdrive for at least the next 48 hours.

In short, such a person needs to succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or spend all his energy seeking a willing sex partner. He is willing to couple with anyone who says yes, regardless of his normal standards.

History

The origin of the Circler of Ghabbaz has been lost in time. It existed in pre-history, another of the great objects of power that was created long before the continents assumed their current positions.

The first recorded appearance of the artifact was in ancient Sumer in Mesopotamia, more than eight millennia ago. There it became integral to the rites of fertility cults and was where it acquired its current name. As things like this go, the authorities found the cults too dangerous and rooted them out, hiding the Circler for what they thought was forever.

The Circler again appeared not too much later in ancient Egypt. The same thing happened. Wild cults sprang up round the object and the Egyptian authorities were forced to wipe them out. Discovering that they could not destroy the artifact, they split the Circler of Ghabbaz up into its three component pieces and spread them to the corners of the Earth.

Most recently, the pieces of the Circler of Ghabbaz were found and reassembled by the Children of Chaos, despite resistance by the Eldritch Society. The artifact was then used in a massive ritual perpetrated by the Children of Chaos on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State in North America. Like other important artifacts in the incident, it was lost. It has not reappeared in the possession of the Children of Chaos, and there are many that believe it has found its home with whatever survived of the Congregation of the Earth Mother. Of course, that likewise has yet to be substantiated and the Circler could just as easily have found its way into the arcane underground – where it would command a ridiculous price.

Function

The Circler is primarily known for its use in fertility rituals. If worn by either party in a heterosexual sexual encounter or by the magician overseeing such a union, the couple is guaranteed to conceive. In fact, it is likely, like the use of fertility drugs, that such a union will conceive of twins, triplets, or quadruplets. Such pregnancies will be on the easy side of the mortal norm and without complication.

When used in the union of a mortal and Horned One, the results are even more extreme. It is a guarantee that a person mating with a Horned One will result in conception. Such unions made under the influence of the Circler will produce a litter twice the size, mystically allowing the creature to carry so many offspring.

However, its ability to increase fertility is not the primary draw for this artifact – it is tied to life itself. When utilized by a sorcerer with sufficient knowledge, the Circlet of Ghabbaz can be used to heal any wound and cure any disease, even bringing back a person from the brink of death. This can greatly extend a person's lifespan, though it does not slow or stop the aging process.

These things might make one believe that the Circlet, in the right hands, is a tool for good. Unfortunately, this artifact was created not for Humans as they are today, but instead for Humans who worshipped the Old Ones, most notably Shub-Niggurath. Modern mortals are far too civilized and stable in form for what they envisioned. Participating in rituals with the Circlet of Ghabbaz will, most notably, begin to bring out the wild animal inside of people, as well as causing some level of transformation or mutation.

If used to power a Transmogrification ritual, the spell costs half as much Ruach to cast, is one Degree lower in difficulty, and is twice as potent in its effects (as appropriate). Victims suffer either a -6 Contest Penalty to resist, or such attempts are one Degree higher than normal (as appropriate). Furthermore, if used to cast a ritual that is directly in line with the intended effects of

the Circlet, such as the Congregation of the Earth Mother's Call the Soul's Beast, the ritual costs only a quarter of the Ruach to cast and the Degree to cast the spell is lowered to Easy. It also takes half the time to prepare and execute.

If powered with an enormous amount of mystical energy, the Circlet can also reach out across dimensional boundaries to commune directly with Shub-Niggurath. This requires more than 200 Ruach, which must come from life that has not yet begun to deteriorate – must be under the age of 25 for people. This functions similarly to the ritual Commune with the Beyond, but it takes half the time, is guaranteed to work without mishap, and creates a direct pipeline to the Old One.

THE KARYTYK CRYSTAL

Identification: Extended Tests (requiring 5 successful attempts each) for the Research and Occult skills, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

The Karytyk Crystal isn't so much a single crystal as a device of predominately crystalline technology. It is about the size of a suitcase, an area that holds what appears to be a 3D scanner, a



video/audio recorder, and something that samples the molecular content of the air. There are also slots which are assumed to be ports, into which data devices could be plugged. However, the technology is so alien and advanced that there is no known way to interface with the artifact. Even so, any input entered into the device using the other input methods is almost instantaneously translated into any language the user understands.

There is another area on the other side of the machine which contains a surface on which these translations are displayed. It is assumed that the device can somehow make physical copies of such translations or transfer them to a data device, but again the technology is indecipherable.

Physically, the Karytyk Crystal is difficult for mortals to describe. It is not fashioned in any way that is easily understood and its components are thoroughly alien.

History

The first recorded appearance of the Karytyk Crystal wasn't until the last century, when humanity escaped the bonds of Earth and spread out into the solar system. To aid humanity in communicating across the vast distances between colonies and expeditions, Darchir Logistics, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chrysalis Corporation, built the Hermes Project. As they did, agents of the Chrysalis Corporation took the opportunity to explore some out of the way places before the New Earth Government got there. While exploring the Jovian moon called Callisto, they came across what appeared to be ancient ruins. They laid claim to it, excavated it, and left nothing for the colonists and explorers that would eventually make their way out into this part of the solar system to find.

Currently, the Chrysalis Corporation is the only known entity in possession of such an artifact. 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.

However, it is thought by many and is likely that the Karytyk Crystal is a device created by the Elder Race. If that is the case, there are most likely more such devices that can be found in their ruins, whether on Earth or out into the solar system.

Function

The Karytyk Crystal's use is very obvious. It is capable of translating any language – written, spoken, or otherwise – from anywhere or any time. If it is a method of communication, the device reaches beyond space and time into higher dimensions and draws down the archetypes necessary to spit out a fully and accurately translated version the user will understand.

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, though it does seem to keep itself in full repair. It also seems to have its own inexhaustible power source, somehow drawing the energy from the environment around it.

THE NEXUS OF ALMAZOARA

Identification: Extended Tests (requiring 5 successful attempts each) for the Research and Occult skills, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

The Nexus of Almazora 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, an approximate star map, to roughly determine when said disaster will occur.

History

Found in secret catacombs beneath Paris, the Nexus of Almazora 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 since prehistoric times.

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.

However, there are also those who posit that this device is not unique. More precisely, they believe that this artifact is but one of many, each with a different purpose. Certainly, the Nexus of Almazora is designed to predict natural disasters, but there may also be a Nexus that functions similarly that predicts weather patterns. Others might find minerals or natural resources, while some might be designed to find people or other living things.

It is rumored that at least one other Nexus has been discovered by those courageous enough, or foolish enough, to brave the contested Australian outback to search for ruins of the Great Race. One thing can be assured – if the Children of Chaos get wind that such a device exists, they will marshal their full resources to acquire it.

Function

The Nexus of Almazora is clockwork and it works all on its own. A wonder of prehistoric arcanotechnology, all a user needs to do is wind the device up using a small key on the side of the object. Beyond this, it needs only a little basic maintenance, including cleaning and oiling the intricate parts, and keeping it out of hostile environments.

Figuring out the function of the Nexus required many years of effort on the Chrysalis Corporation's part. In the end, the discovery was made by pure accident when a researcher laid a map

on a table near the device – on which he was planning a family vacation. The Nexus sprang to life crawling over to the map. The rest fell into place quickly after that.

One can assume that other such creations function similarly. The problem lies in figuring out what each is designed to locate or predict. Fortunately, if one is lucky in their research and is capable of discovering the existence and basic function of the Nexus of Almazoara, one can begin experiments of trial and error that will save him years of wasted time and frustration.

If a character stumbles upon another Nexus, discovering its purpose can be a long and tedious process. If one does not know anything about the Nexus of Almazoara, then it will be a long process of deduction to discover another Nexus' purpose. It is possible to discover the function of a Nexus through simple trial and error. In this case, a Character may make a single Hard Intelligence Feat Test once each week. Success will allow him to stumble upon some aspect of the device's function.

However, there can be a price when using mystical devices that predict coming things. Such activity may attract the attention of the Hounds. They do not usually take kindly to those in the World of Elements who attempt to pierce the veil of time. It is likely that the Children of Chaos have no such difficulties due to the direct influence of Nyarlathotep. The Great Race, the most likely creators of any such devices, appear to have made some sort of deal with the creatures, as they continually peer and migrate through time and space without harm. Anyone else is unlikely to have such patrons or power, and therefore may face the Hounds' wrath.

To simulate this, have one of the Characters using such a device roll one die each time he successfully uses it. It does not count if he's simply experimenting – it has to actually do its job and peer across time. If he rolls a one on this single die, he has attracted the attention of the Hounds.

THE RICTUS KNIFE OF EPHRATES

Identification: Extended Tests for the Research and Occult skills, requiring 5 successful attempts each, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

This artifact is an oddly-shaped knife carved from one large single bone, whose handle is wrapped in tough aged leather. If one is medically-inclined, it appears that the bone used to craft the knife is a human femur and that the leather wrapping the handle is made of human skin. The age of either is impossible to determine, as they appear to be in an arrested state of decay – both should have disintegrated eons ago.

Aside from how it looks, there is something else about the knife that is unnerving – cold seems to radiate from within the blade. This chill is not enough to make the artifact difficult to hold, but is certainly enough to let one know there's more to the object than meets the eye. Most have the immediate urge to put the

knife down once they pick it up – success at an Average Tenacity Feat Test will allow a Character to overcome this urge.

History

Rictus knives are not unusual tools in the world of the occult. Anyone who can succeed at a Challenging Occult Test will know that rictus knives are specially consecrated ritual blades used for blood sacrifice. The name comes from the often used term rictus mask, which described the fixed grimace on a dead thing's face – the usual result of such rituals. Many are specially enchanted, giving the user the ability to focus the Ruach of the sacrifice more powerfully and intensely into the ritual at hand. Typical enchanted rictus knives will allow a sorcerer to channel the victim's Ruach into the ritual, in addition to using the victim as a ritual component.

This artifact's name comes from not only its obvious function, but also from its supposed place of origin. Ancient texts speak of a place that existed long before the dawn of recorded history, deep within the cradle of civilization. The legends claim that this place was known as Ephrates, where powerful sorcerers ruled the common people. They practiced their arts with no restraint or challenge, except for the rivalries amongst each other. It is said that the sacrifice of children was commonplace in their powerful rituals, designed to work magick beyond the World of Elements.

Legends also claim that these same sorcerers ultimately bore the wrath of the powers they attempted to command. Whether by angering a powerful Outsider or through the horrific backlash of mishap, their civilization was wiped off the face of the planet. Since that day, there has been no evidence of their civilization and it has been assumed that any of their knowledge or artifacts died with them. The Rictus Knife of Ephrates may be the only thing of them that remains.

No one is quite sure how long the Rictus Knife was lost. Journals of the learned cite its reappearance first among the Egyptians and then later during the final days of Rome. It made its way to the new world, as stories say it was found in the possession of a deranged family of early pilgrims. Most recently, in the fall of 2086, it was discovered to be in the possession of a centuries-old liche named Julien Roux, who sold it to the Chrysalis Corporation for a substantial sum.

The Children of Chaos lost possession of the Rictus Knife due to intervention by the Eldritch Society. While locked safely away in a magically protected vault in Seattle, the artifact somehow has disappeared. Whether the Rictus Knife was stolen or if it was simply taken by an unscrupulous party within the Society is unknown. However, rumors say that it has once again found its way into the black market, for those with a large enough pocket-book and dark enough urges to seek it.

Function

The Rictus Knife of Ephrates is a particularly potent rictus knife. Instead of simply channeling a victim's Ruach into a ritual, the Rictus Knife amplifies it. To gain maximum benefit, a sorcerer

must spend at least four hours torturing the victim with painful cuts during the ritual in question. Then, by not only murdering, but also carving out the heart of the victim, the artifact will channel three times the victim's Ruach into the ritual. This is especially useful for advanced rituals, including those that are designed to go beyond the World of Elements.

The Rictus Knife of Ephrates is also a particularly useful weapon when wielded by sorcerers, or even para-psychics. It steals a victim's Ruach and channels it into the Knife's wielder – an amount equal to one quarter of the damage done in any single attack. For example, a sorcerer wielding the Rictus Knife does 12 damage to his opponent. He immediately drains three points of Ruach/Orgone from his opponent, replenishing his pool. When the victim is drained of Ruach, this ability no longer applies.

Furthermore, the Rictus Knife has a debilitating effect on those it strikes. Each wound's pain is amplified. A person struck by the Rictus Knife must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or suffer double the normal Test Penalty from their wounds as normal, for the next one to five turns (roll half a die). This effect is not cumulative.

In case anyone found themselves with the urge to try, the Rictus Knife of Ephrates appears to be indestructible by all mundane means.

THE SKULL OF TEARS

Identification: Extended Tests for the Research and Occult skills, requiring 4 successful attempts each, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

The Skull of Tears is a frightening artifact that appears to be a Human skull that is shot through with spidery black veins of an alien substance. From time to time, at seemingly random intervals, the Skull's ocular cavities will suddenly begin to shed tears of blood. This blood comes from nowhere and there appears to be an endless supply – it is not identifiable as any known living thing.

As if the thing's appearance wasn't off-putting enough, touching the skull will suck the warmth from a person's heart, as if it were suddenly pierced by ice. It requires success at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test to not put the artifact down immediately. This effect can be mitigated by wrapping the Skull up in some kind of insulating material, or by keeping it in some sort of storage container.

For those who wish to test, it is impossible to determine the age of the skull, as it exists in a state of mystically arrested decay. It should have been nothing more than dust by now.

The substance that makes up the spidery veins in the skull is something unknown to humanity. Even if one were scientifically inclined, he would discover nothing – only that the substance cannot be identified or classified according to modern methods.

However, if one synthesized both the occult and science, or was studied in the theories of arcanotech engineering, there may be some information to be gleaned. Success at an Extended Test for both Occult and Science: Physical, or simply Arcanotech Engineering, requiring 5 successful attempts apiece, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28), will identify the substance as something that exists in more than four dimensions. It is something that is projecting into this world from Outside. It also appears to emanate a unique energy signature of its own, as if it were in some way alive.

History

The Skull of Tears is the skull of a serial murderer and sadist whose name has been lost in time. It is said that he existed on Pangaea and was one of the earliest Human monsters. Legend says that he was touched by the Eater of Dreams itself. It is widely regarded to be cursed, corrupting the environment in which it exists – and it has so far proven to be indestructible.

As one might expect, there has been some connection between the Skull and the N'athm throughout the ages. There are those who believe that it was the N'athm that ushered this terrible artifact into the world. Regardless, the creatures seem to be searching for the Skull when they don't know where it is, and using it when they do.

Most recently, the Skull of Tears was unearthed by a group of tomb raiders in South America. The shipment containing the artifact was hijacked and stolen by a group of low-level traders in the arcane underground, who normally dealt in things like human body parts, skulls of sorcerers, and that sort of thing. They brought it all the way up to Los Angeles, along with the rest of their goods. From there, it caused much insanity and death before being lost on the outskirts of the Angeles National Forest. No one seems to know where it is, though there are many who suspect that it is once again in the hands of the N'athm.

Function

There are no admirable uses for the Skull of Tears. It is an object of the darkest magic and power. Even simply sitting in a sorcerer's collection, the artifact will breed nightmares, pain, depravity, and ultimately insanity.

Proximity to the Skull of Tears causes sanity-eroding nightmares, as if one were in the presence of a N'athm. Anyone dwelling in the same place, or approximately next door, to the Skull must succeed at an Average Insanity Test every week or gain one Insanity Point. As long as one is reasonably sane, they will have difficulty getting a good night's sleep.

That's not where the difficulty ends, however. Those who stay closest to the Skull will soon begin to experience waking hallucinations. They begin subtly at first, but they are always disturbing. A victim needs to succeed at a Hard Observation Test in order to have a clue that the things he is experiencing aren't real. This Degree increases to Legendary if one has the lack of sense required to actually touch or hold the object, allowing it to come

into contact with bare skin. If the victim fails, he is only allowed to Test again when something happens that might shock him back into reality. Most, however, simply lose themselves to the Skull. The only way they can be brought back is by taking the artifact far away. Someone so affected must succeed at an Average Insanity Test every day or gain one Insanity Point.

There is something in the Skull of Tears that recognizes its own. In the possession of a dream magician with questionable moral fiber, or in the possession of a cultist that worships death or evil on the mundane side, or any manifestation of Gurathnaka on the more informed side, the artifact can provide great power. True, it's sanity eroding effects might harm those nearby, but any such sorcerers or cultists become substantially more powerful when casting their spells. Dream or Transmogrification magic costs half as much Ruach to cast, is one Degree lower in difficulty, and is twice as potent in its effects (as appropriate). Victims suffer either a -6 Contest Penalty to resist, or such attempts are one Degree higher than normal (as appropriate).

If ever in the possession of a N'athm, who are unsurprisingly immune to its effects, the Skull of Tears will greatly enhance the creature's natural abilities. Those plagued by the nightmares caused by the N'athm will no longer be only those living in close proximity – anyone who dwells within the equivalent of a large city block will be affected. Furthermore, the nightmares become more intense – anyone within this range must succeed at a Challenging Insanity Test every week or gain one Insanity Point.

However, like always, it's when a N'athm directs its attentions on a single person that its power is most amplified. Normally, a N'athm requires a piece of the intended victim's body to truly plague him. One who is in possession of the Skull of Tears has no such restriction – all the creature needs is to have seen the victim in person. As long as the N'athm is within 1000 yards of where the victim sleeps, the victim is plagued with terrifying, alien nightmares. He must succeed at a Hard Insanity Test every morning after he is victimized in this way, or gain one Insanity Point. Such a N'athm is likely to drive all but the most strong-willed over the brink in less than two weeks.

The Skull of Tears cannot be used as a conventional weapon. It is more like a time bomb. If one were to acquire it and give it to an enemy, or place it in his environment, it would eventually do bad things. Like most artifacts, the Skull of Tears appears to be immune to all forms of mundane harm. Going hand in hand, nothing likewise seems to be able to block its power.

THE X'AN-TUUM VIOLATOR

Identification: Extended Tests (requiring 6 successful attempts each) for the Research and Occult skills, against a Degree and Difficulty of Incredibly Hard (28).

Appearance

Most know of this device's appearance from the few complete sets of plans and sketches that exist – fortunately, few have ever built such an infernal machine.

According to its most primitive steam-driven plans, the Violator appears to be a massive engine, with varying phallic probes on automated articulated arms and intravenous stations around nine reclining chairs – each designed to hold and restrain a Human being. It is designed to be built above a ritual space, functionally raining down whatever it collects onto the spell below.

However, the few madmen who have actually built this device have created something more advanced. The X'an-tuum Violator found in the 1940's was built on internal combustion principles, powered by a gigantic airplane engine. The automated articulated arms with phallic probes were more advanced, as the victim was suspended in such a way that he could be positioned in any way the sick operator desired.

The most current incarnation is an arcanotech abomination. It consists of a massive arcanotech brain powered by a small D-engine, a staggering array of phallic probes attached to LAI robotic arms, and LAI controlled robotic intravenous drug dispensaries attached to nine fully functional robotic chairs that are capable of moving victims into any position of which they are physically capable. The functional equivalent of an Orgone accumulator sits below the machine, carefully funneling cosmic energy into whoever stands beneath it.

It is obvious to anyone upon even casual examination that it is a sick device designed for some kind of torture. Either that, or it is a sex machine for the extreme fetishist.

History

There are many objects of ancient power that were not crafted by the hands of men. Unfortunately, this horrid device is not one of them. The first time plans for the Violator were found was only 250 years ago. A Swiss inventor and occultist by the name of Vitus Lautens is first credited with designing the machine, though he very easily may not have been the first one to conceive of it. In his notes, he claims to have received visions to spur on his design, even going so far as to dictate an ancient and nonsensical name for the machine. Vitus' journals were found by the authorities and he was promptly executed as a madman, pedophile, and murderer. It was perhaps too kind a fate.

From that time forward, plans for the X'an-tuum Violator have found their way into various extreme factions. The most notable of such factions was the Nazis. Their quest for occult power led them to a complete set of plans, and they managed to build one of the first fully-functional X'an-tuum Violators in existence. Built below the infamous Dachau concentration camp, it was promptly destroyed by Allied forces upon discovery. In a time where most Nazi technology was seized for later examination, the troops that found this machine had the sense to eradicate it before someone could rationalize its further use.

There have been many rumors since that time of warped individuals finding the plans for the Violator and trying to build it. However, such rumors have remained thus, and there has been no evidence of success until the modern age. It appears that

the wonders of arcanotechnology have only spurred on the advancement of such a horrid creations. It is said that the Disciples of Death's Shadow have actually built several of these devices. One is said to exist just north of the Los Angeles arcology, while the other is said to exist outside the Tokyo arcology.

No one of sound mind or inclination would ever consider coming near such a creation.

Function

The X'an-tuum Violator is a disgusting machine that is designed to induce emotional states in victims, via drug interactions. They are then raped by the machine's various probes to gather Ruach.

By manipulating powerful emotions and combining that with stimulation and sexual energy, the Violator forces the victims to unleash greater than normal amounts of Orgone, which the device then funnels into rituals. It is said that the machine can be used in conjunction with ritual circles to fuel spells that are beyond the World of Elements.

In essence, the Violator is designed to accommodate up to nine victims at once. The process drains them of their Orgone, but they also produce twice as much of it. For example, an average Human has 10 Orgone, but on the X'an-tuum Violator he produces 20 Orgone. Thus, one session on the machine can produce up to 180 Orgone from nine average people. This process takes but a mere two hours from beginning to end. Using the machine in this manner requires that the user succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or gain 1 Insanity Point.

This is a maddening experience for those strapped into the machine, as all permutations of pain and pleasure, arousal and horror, are inflicted upon them. Each must succeed at a Hard Insanity Test or immediately gain 2 Insanity Points.

However, madness is not the least of the worries for the victims of the X'an-tuum Violator. Each can only withstand the physical and mystical ravages of the machine a few times before they take their toll. The third time a victim is strapped into the machine, he must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or outright die at the conclusion of the Violator's activities. Each time thereafter increases the Degree one category, up to Legendary.

There is one other option for the machine and that is to emotionally stimulate and physically rape the victims to death. This process takes longer than normal, but an insignificant amount of time considering the benefits. As the poor souls are slowly victimized to death over a six hour span, the X'an-tuum Violator drains them of their Orgone, but they also produce four times as much. Thus, one such death session on the machine can produce up to 360 Orgone from nine average people. Using the machine in this manner requires that the user succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test or gain 2 Insanity Points.

Unlike many other artifacts, the X'an-tuum Violator is a device that can be destroyed by traditional means.





Montenegro nervously checked his watch. It had taken them far longer than he'd hoped to make it through the massive city-like structure that was the Ashcroft Foundation's world headquarters. Vizaky was as calm as she always was. Montenegro sometimes wondered what it would take to ruffle her feathers.

"Relax. We will get there when we get there," said Vizaky.

"And how often are we asked to come down to this sort of high-security level for an emergency meeting with R & D?" he replied.

"How long have you worked here?"

They only had minutes. "Ten years."

The Nazzadi gently brushed her white sleeve. "This is Ashcroft. You would think you'd be used to things like this by now."

Something suddenly struck Montenegro. "Wait. How long have you been here? I've known you for years and I don't recall ever knowing."

"Since I was a teenager."

Looking ahead, the room was just around the corner. "I know it's impolite to ask a lady this question, but how long has that been?"

"Since the end of the First Arcanotech War. I was apprenticed as an arcanotech engineer by the time I was fourteen. Ashcroft recruited me."



They rounded the corner, their destination in sight. "Then why aren't you my superior," inquired Montenegro.

The Nazzadi woman smiled. "I have little interest in management."

She flashed her security pass, the door opened, and they stepped into the observation room. Arcanotechnicians in clean suits stood over something on the other side of bullet-proof two-inch thick lexan. Whatever it was they had found, they were being extremely cautious.

A woman they'd never seen before, clearly also Ashcroft, nodded to them as they entered the room. She was middle-aged, with the wrinkle lines of someone who has spent a good deal of her life worrying. "Ms. Vizaky, Mr. Delgado, I'm Ms. Hahn. Thank you for coming."

Vizaky approached the transparent barrier, looking curiously at what lay inside. A box, a bit smaller than a cat carrier,

sat on a desk, hooked up to monitors and machines. Stunned by what she saw, she recognized it immediately. "A QBattery. How did you get this?"

Ms. Hahn joined her at the window. "It was delivered to us anonymously. We are not supposed to have it. This is not happening, and we are not here. Clear?"

Montenegro jockeyed for a better view of the thing. "Clear. How far along are they?"

"Far enough that they've disabled the wireless signal that was beaming back to Chrysalis."

Vizaky frowned. "Why would they need such extreme security measures on something that's functionally

nothing more than an Orgone accumulator? We're within a year of having a competing model that will make the QBattery obsolete."

Breaking away from the barrier, Ms. Hahn walked over to a small table to pour herself a glass of water from a crystal pitcher. "Indeed. Why would they make them so very difficult to acquire, requiring licenses that are nearly impossible to get? Why would they have created such draconian end-user licenses, which practically strips privacy away? Why would this box be trying so hard to transmit its status and coordinates to the nearest Mercury Communications tower?"

"Because they don't want it to fall into the hands of competitors? They are first to market and they don't need people like us trying to reverse engineer their product - and then improve on it," offered Montenegro.

Vizaky chimed in. "Alternatively, it could be because their manufacturing methods are faulty or have cut corners and they want to keep that a secret. Or, once again, they have cut ethical corners and created something that is not entirely safe to use."

Ms. Hahn took a sip of her water. "That is why we are here. The technicians are about to open the box, hopefully without damaging it, and you are here to give us our first impressions of the workings."

The speaker buzzed, as one of the technicians spoke from inside his clean suit. "Ms. Hahn, we think we've disabled the last of the kill-switches. Whoever designed this thing didn't want anyone else to open it. Ever."

Ms. Hahn, Vizaky, and Montenegro pressed up against the glass, trying not to look like kids at the zoo. The technicians gently lifted the top of the QBattery off with a hiss. The monitors next to the barrier showed the closed-circuit feed of the insides. It was arcane, even for a piece of high-level arcanotechnology. The technicians took the next half hour, gently probing around the inside of the device. Finally, one spoke. "I think I've found something."

The camera feed was obscured by the six hands that worked into concert to remove something from the box. Then, one of them fainted, one ran for the door, and the other just froze.

The hands out of the way, the cameras showed something horrible. In the heart of the device was what looked like a shriveled human fetus, with a mask riveted to its face and wires and tubes stuck into its body.

Montenegro ran for the nearest trash can, trying unsuccessfully to hold the vomit in with his hand. Vizaky simply stared in shock.

Ms. Hahn, herself barely composed, was the first to speak. "Now who the hell are we going to tell about this?"

chapter six

ashcroft's legacy

The Strange Aeon is defined by arcanotechnology. It takes its place alongside atomic power, internal combustion, steam, and a whole host of innovations reaching back to the invention of the wheel as one of the technologies that fundamentally changed the way our species lived, worked, and traded. It does, however, hold the unique distinction of being the only piece of human inspiration that so rattled the minds of extraterrestrial powers, regarding their preconceived notions of humanity's place in the universe, that invasion was the remedy.

It was the Human's discovery of arcanotechnology that spurred the Migou into hostility, creating the Nazzadi race, invading the planet, and eventually embroiling themselves in a war against not just the Earth's people but its cults as well. Without arcanotech, Humanity never could have withstood the Nazzadi and Migou assaults, not to mention the more recent incursions from forces like the Esoteric Order of Dagon and the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, employing arcanotech themselves to ruinous effect.

As the Aeon War drags on, all factions pursue new avenues of arcanotech research – the right breakthrough could give any side the upper hand. The New Earth Government, now well-versed in eldritch engineering, focuses with a frantic single-mindedness on the war effort in pursuit of survival. Though newcomers to the field, the Migou have quickly mastered the art and have begun adapting to its paradigm. The Chrysalis Corporation sinuously melds corporate profitability with the Children of Chaos' agenda in its arcanotechnology so sinisterly that it is impossible to see where one ends and the other begins. The Disciples of the Death's Shadow, while currently enjoying great successes, are nevertheless exploring new ways to further the goals of their newly-retained god.

All of this ingenuity comes at a cost, of course. Scientists from all factions risk their sanity and, occasionally, their lives delving into these secrets. A poorly designed experiment, insufficient safeguards, even reading the wrong word at the wrong time during a ritual carries the potential to summon uninvited extra-dimensional terrors. To research arcanotechnology is to walk a razor's edge surrounded by death, madness, and horrors on all sides.

Everyone is pushing the boundaries. Sometimes the boundaries push back.

THE NEW EARTH GOVERNMENT

INTEGRATED SIDE-EFFECT ENHANCER

This device, when implanted into a human brain, confers the ability to pilot any D-Engine powered vehicle with no training in very little time - at the cost of the user's humanity.

The Integrated Side-Effect Enhancer (ISEE) Project has its roots in a research project conducted by the Ashcroft Foundation in the early 2040's into the nature of how the Operator Extension Side-Effect (OESE) of D-Engine vehicles affects learning to pi-

IN-GAME ARCANOTECH RESEARCH

Arcanotechnology is a cornerstone of the *CthulhuTech* universe and, as such, it can be tempting for both players and Story-guides alike to treat it as inconsequential or mundane. While the use of most arcanotechnology is, indeed, largely hazard-free, its research most certainly is not. For the most part, players won't be actively engaging in the research of a brand-new arcanotech device or using bleeding-edge prototypes, but when they do, make it special and memorable. Relegating the invention of a new arcanotech device to a few Tests and an Insanity point or two mutes its peril and importance, not to mention depriving your game of what will almost certainly be an intriguing story.

Finally, remember that no piece of arcanotech research is trivial. Using new arcanotechnology as a central focus to a game's plot, as the MacGuffin that drives the story, is much more rewarding than as just another attack bonus or problem-solver.

lot those vehicles. Diagnostic devices hooked up to D-Engine powered equipment benefitted from the holistic nature of the eldritch power source – tracing the flow of energy from the D-Engine would often reveal faults in equipment not being probed, so it was assumed that some kind of technical information was being carried in the arcane current.

Unfortunately, the initial finding of Foundation researchers was that learning the nitty-gritty of piloting was unaffected. While the human mind readily benefitted from being able to “sense” the feel of the boom on a crane with a heavy load to avoid over-extending, or the legs of a mecha on difficult terrain to avoid falling over, first-time drivers of D-Engine construction equipment still had to practice learning which levers did what, and green mecha pilots still needed to study their technical manuals to avoid shooting their own legs off.

The working hypothesis developed from this study was that processing information about the mechanical workings of the machine itself was just not in the brain's nature; as the product of organic, evolutionary processes, the brain had no faculties for understanding the mechanical information the D-Engine's impulses carried, and probably never would. The research project lost funding at the outbreak of the New Cold War in 2047, with all project notes relegated to long-term storage at the Ashcroft Foundation's Arkham facility.

Nearly forty years later, the breakthroughs from Dr. Anton Miyakame's Engel Project revived scientific interest in OESE. Specifically, it was thought that a device similar to the Engel Synthesis Interface might be designed to mediate the gap between the organic mind and inorganic machine. With the destruction of Arkham in the First Arcanotech War, the research would have had to start from scratch if one of the original researchers, Dr. David Ngarivhume, hadn't survived the decades of war and upheaval with his original notes intact. Dr. Ngarivhume had a soft spot for the project – it was the first he'd worked on as a research assistant at Ashcroft and, a bit of a gear-head himself, the idea

of fusing man and machine fascinated him. Though retired and in his seventies, he jumped at the Ashcroft Foundation's invitation to lead the renewed efforts.

The Ngarivhume Lab's research began in the fall of 2084, and initially progressed with extraordinary velocity. Within a few months, the lab had been able to intercept and interpret mechanical information carried by the D-Engine's energy signature, and had begun designing prototype implants similar to the ESI. Dubbed the Integrated Side-Effect Enhancer, or ISEE, the Ngarivhume Lab published their seminal paper "Effects of Enhanced Operator Extension Side-Effect in Rodents" in May of 2085. Footage of ISEE-equipped rats navigating a maze in shoe-box-sized cars were such a cultural sensation that a children's movie called "Rat Race," featuring a team of rodent race car drivers, came out that winter. Cars, boats, even toy-sized mecha, the rodents could learn to pilot just about anything.

Down-played in his reports and entirely absent from media portrayals were the anomalous behaviors Ngarivhume's rats exhibited almost immediately once they started piloting their pint-sized vehicles. They became listless, using their exercise wheels only enough to prevent muscle atrophy, and grew increasingly disinterested in the various food-based rewards used in their conditioning the more often they piloted their vehicles. After 60 days of piloting, the rats even lost interest in mating. Antidepressants had no effect and vivisections of their brain matter showed no major anomalies. Fearing that further investigation would reveal damaging results, Ngarivhume and his associates declined to pursue further behavioral studies in the rats. Vivisection was mandated for subjects 45 days after implantation and socialization amongst the rats was forbidden.

These disturbing phenomena remained unexplained even as Dr. Ngarivhume declared the project ready to be fast-tracked for human trials. The potential implications of the ISEE revealed by the rats' odd tendencies were undercut by the Ngarivhume Lab's insistence that any behavioral changes in human subjects would be more than counterbalanced by modern psychiatric treatment. After all, they reasoned, Engel pilots had to share their minds with inhuman monsters; certainly there would be less danger in doing the same with something as mundane as a garbage truck. The NEG Armed Forces, anxious to cut down training time for new recruits, brought pressure for the project's approval and backed the Ngarivhume Lab's assertions of safety.

The first wide-scale field test of ISEE technology began in early 2086. Initial reports were encouraging, with a low rejection rate for the implants and no major post-surgical side effects. Test subjects were able to begin learning to operate new vehicles within a few weeks after implantation. The results were astounding. Attuning to a vehicle required little more than sitting in the vehicle with the ISEE plugged in, and poking at the controls a bit. Subjects learned to pilot mundane vehicles like cars and commercial transports in minutes, and slightly more complex vehicles like motorcycles and skycars in under an hour. Within an

NEW DRAWBACK: INTEGRATED SIDE-EFFECT ENHANCER (2)

Your Character has an implant in his brain that allows him to link to any vehicle powered by a D-Engine, imparting a Student level of expertise in piloting that vehicle. Attuning to an unfamiliar type of vehicle requires sitting in the vehicle with the ISEE connected to a control interface for between thirty minutes and two hours, depending on the complexity of the vehicle's controls and the Character's familiarity with similar vehicles (Storyguide's discretion). The ISEE does not confer familiarity with any of the vehicle's other systems, such as the sensors or weapon systems.

Characters with an ISEE start play with one Insanity Point. They must also succeed at a Challenging Insanity Test every month of game time; failure to do so adds another Insanity Point to the Character's pool. Furthermore, Characters operating a vehicle they've linked with must succeed at an Insanity Test for every hour of vehicle operation at increasing degrees of Difficulty - Challenging after the first hour, Hard after the second, etc. Characters must spend a full day without operating any D-Engine powered vehicles of any kind for the Difficulty to reset.

The ISEE interferes with the Engel Synthesis Interface, Nephilim Synthesis Interface, para-psychic powers, sorcerous magic, and Ta'ge symbionts. Characters with any of these Qualities cannot take this Drawback, and vice-versa.

hour and a half they could pilot simple mecha, and in two hours they could take off and land in some of the New Earth Government's most advanced fighter aircraft.

Not all of the news was good, unfortunately. Once they began piloting vehicles with the ISEE, the subjects began reporting similar symptoms in their psychiatric evaluations: depression, sullen disposition, withdrawal from friends and family, and a marked decrease in measures of empathy, emotional response, and social tendencies. Interestingly, measurements of spatial reasoning, mechanical aptitude, and overall intelligence showed no change, even though subjects showed a preternatural ability to pilot their vehicles. More interestingly, subjects spontaneously manifested knowledge on the maintenance of vehicles to which they had linked while in the presence of those vehicles, but could not reproduce that knowledge if quizzed later or given a different but identical vehicle to work on. Ashcroft Foundation psychiatrists theorized that the test subjects were identifying with the machines, and advised that all test subjects spend a day away from vehicles for every hour of piloting.

This advisory was never implemented, as the field test was halted that same month, in the fall of 2086. One of the test subjects was watching a high school soccer game when a failed slide-tackle broke his teenaged son's leg. After the boy was taken off the field, the test subject promptly went down to the sidelines, determined the cause of the injury, took out a pocket knife, and began cutting the child's leg off at the knee. When questioned, the father dispassionately reported that he was simply removing the defective part for replacement. In the ensuing public rela-

tions nightmare, the project was put on indefinite hold, and Dr. Ngarivhume was removed as project lead.

The ISEE Project is currently pending official review by the Ashcroft Foundation Ethics Panel. Certain elements in the New Earth Government military are pushing to take control of the project – some suspect that they already have.

DIMENSIONAL VIBRATION COMMUNICATIONS PORTAL (VIBE)

Though it fills the vital need for reliable long-distance communication, the very nature of this device invites interference by things from beyond.

One of the first things the Migou Hive Ship did upon reaching Earth was to shoot down each and every satellite in orbit, shattering global communications. The results were disastrous – no existing technology could replace the reliability, speed, and range of the satellite network. There were far too few stealth satellites left to even attempt taking over the load. The New Earth Government scrambled to produce shortwave radio sets, and the scant handful of amateur radio operators around the globe found themselves pressed into service as instructors for the thousands of military and civilian personnel tasked with intercontinental transmission. Century-old manuals and textbooks detailing the antique technologies became priceless assets, and every member of the NEG Armed Forces received a pamphlet teaching them Morse code.

The New Earth Government maintained no illusions about these stopgap measures replacing their former information grid. Wireless technologies that delivered adequate fidelity and speed could be achieved only with “line of sight” technologies, which had limited range as well as reliability problems. Other communications techniques that did not require line of sight, such as “moon bounce,” had far greater range, but again suffered from reliability issues as well as reduced speed. Wired communications continued more or less uninterrupted on a continental basis, but this was insufficient to conduct a defense of the Human race. Transatlantic and transpacific cables were systematically destroyed by the Esoteric Order of Dagon, and relay stations dotting the oceans on islands and man-made platforms are favorite EOD raiding targets to this day.

Chief among all the problems of the NEG’s long-range wireless communications technologies is that of jamming. The Migou regularly fire pulses of high-energy radiation at known transmission avenues, disrupting communication in much the same way as a solar flare. Sorcerers of the Disciples of the Rapine Storm summon severe weather to disrupt communications before an attack, while the Disciples of Death’s Shadow do the same simply to spread the fear and uncertainty that accompanies a temporary signal blackout between arcologies.

A potential answer to this crisis was accidentally discovered, though at the cost of the discoverer’s sanity. Several D-Engines sent to replace damaged or malfunctioning units in the ve-

DISSOCIATIVE MECHANO-PSYCHOPATHY (AKA MACHINE HEAD)
When Characters with an ISEE go insane, 9 out of 10 of them will develop dissociative mechano-psychopathy, known to those in the ISEE Project as “machine head.” The Character suffers from a gradual loss of his humanity, shedding empathy and emotion in the process and displaying depressive symptoms. Schizophrenic and psychopathic disorders often follow.

hicles at Fort Benning were found to have been manufactured with defects in their dimensional shielding. The officer in charge of the motor pool, one Lt. Kelany, was short on materials for instruction and demonstration, and decided to hang on to the faulty engines. They were officially reported “beyond repair, scrapped for parts.” During one demonstration, Kelany started four of the engines, approached one of them, and went mad. It was as though she had four pairs of crippled eyes, each pair able to see dimly in every direction at once, overwhelming her mind and fracturing her senses.

Arcanotechnicians on the base discovered that the minor shielding defects caused the entire dimensional apparatus to vibrate, setting up a standing wave of dimensional energy co-locating the ambient energies around the engines through a small portal linking the devices; in the case of Lt. Kelany, she had experienced a degraded view of the visible light spectrum in a two-foot radius around each of the malfunctioning devices at the same time. Ashcroft advisors were dispatched to the base immediately, and a joint research effort began.

By altering the shield vibrations, researchers were able to affect the waves that determined the harmonization frequency of each engine, turning the engines into rudimentary transceivers. It was also discovered that the information passed by the co-location fields wasn’t limited to blurry, imperfect visuals. The devices could transmit any energy in the electromagnetic spectrum, nearly instantly, although imperfectly – whatever medium the waves passed through, it certainly wasn’t a vacuum. Audio engineers measured a scant 24 dB of dynamic range, effectively ruling out high-speed digital communication, although archaic teletype systems allowed text-based transmission.

Further research also showed that there was a minimum energy output required to set up harmonization between D-Engines, and while higher energy would create a physically larger portal, the size of the portal had no effect on either quality or range of the transmission. Range was, in fact, the most remarkable property of the newly-named Dimensional Vibration Communications Portals, nicknamed “Vibes,” as it seemed to be functionally infinite. Whether four feet or four thousand miles apart, broadcasts were received within milliseconds of being sent, and with the same signal quality.

The New Earth Government’s leadership, at all levels, was ecstatic. Though far from perfect, secure global communication was again a reality. Final prototypes were produced in 2084,

measuring around eighteen inches long, nine inches tall, and three inches thick, and weighing around forty pounds. The devices transmitted audio and teletype data, although they could be modified for limited video transmission.

Before the celebrations could begin, however, concerns were raised. A small group of Ashcroft Foundation scientists had expressed serious doubts regarding the device from the beginning. The dimensional shielding of D-Engines were designed with exacting precision for a reason, and the shielding imperfections which allowed for harmonization amounted to nothing short of potential breaches in that shielding. Their concerns were ignored by Ashcroft and military personnel alike, until finally finding a friendly ear with the first, accidental Vibe operator.

Kelany, recovered and now a colonel with signal intelligence, had participated in the device's development, and was shocked that these potentially disastrous flaws had not been properly investigated. She was able to halt initial deployment of Vibe sets, pending further tests. Her chain of command was furious. The reports they had read indicated that the chances for dimensional breach were insignificant, and in any case, Vibe transmission was energy-only. Thus, manifestation of a hazardous lifeform through the portal would be impossible.

Barely a week after Col. Kelany's order to stop Vibe deployment, the impossible happened. Nothing materialized physically through the Vibe portal, but the twisted, malign thoughts of some unknown malevolent extra-dimensional beings seeped their way into the transmissions carried on the Ashcroft Foundation's harmonization frequency. Seventeen staff members were found dead at four separate research facilities in apparent murder-suicides, committed by the Vibe operators. Before taking their own lives, the operators had set their Vibe sets to broadcast the same message in Morse code, continuously repeating: "TEKELI-LI".

Too important to abandon, too dangerous for ubiquitous use, research into improving and warding the Vibe continues. In the mean time, a small number of Vibe sets and trained operators have been dispatched to major military bases and command centers, ostensibly to be used sparingly if at all. In practice, Vibe use is determined by a facility's commanding officer, and some are more willing to take the chance than others. Of course, it takes two to communicate, and the risk is the same for both the sender and receiver.

Like so much arcanotechnology, operating the device is as much an art as it is a science. Communicating by Vibe requires both operators to know what frequency they're going to communicate on, then harmonizing their sets to that frequency by succeeding at a Challenging Arcanotechnician Test followed by a successful Challenging Communications Test. Vibe transmission is done by broadcast, allowing any number of sets to communicate with each other as long as they're all harmonized to the same frequency.

Military sorcerers have become increasingly common in the NEG Signal Corps, working to protect Vibe operators from outside influences lured by their sets. Vibe operators always operate with some kind of warding, although some wards are more useful than others. Operators always benefit from personal wards such as Ward Against Sorcery, while wards which affect an area, such as Ward Against the Unseen or Ward of Seclusion, will protect operators only if the location of every functioning Vibe set harmonized to the same frequency is protected - otherwise, the portal created inside the unprotected device will compromise the others.

THE MIGOU


REMOTE CONTROL IMPLANT

The huge monstrosities of the Rapine Storm become little more than drones under Migou control when implanted with this device... for a while, at least.

The Migou came to Earth with all the materiel they would need to wage a decisive war against the forces of humanity. All of their years of careful planning were thrown into disarray, however, with the global emergence of the cults. Especially destructive to the Migou war machine were the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, indiscriminately razing territory held by both Human and Migou forces, and redefining the combat lines of the world's largest continent. This new enemy had a major advantage in their seemingly endless supply of gargantuan horrors from beyond, called through inter-dimensional rifts and found in the secret parts of the Earth rather than being manufactured.

Losses incurred battling along the scar the Rapine Storm ripped across Asia created a gap in Migou logistical planning, and bridging that gap with resources from Pluto wasn't a feasible short-term solution. Filling the shortfall with mecha captured from NEG targets and piloted by Blanks was an expedient, albeit insufficient, stopgap measure. The Migou High Command tasked Specialists of the invading force, both on the Hive Ship and on the ground, with developing technologies that would bolster the ranks until the second Hive Ship's arrival could reinforce the invasion effort.

Nanoforges transported from their home planet were already operating at full capacity, so simply ramping up production of their existing materiel wasn't an option. Furthermore, while the advances they had been making in weapons of war were certainly remarkable, it was a widely known but unacknowledged fact that none of them expressed the kind of brilliance that led Humanity to discover arcanotechnology. Many theorized that it was the Human's ability to ride the crest of madness that brought about those achievements; if the Migou couldn't produce that type of demented creativity, perhaps they could import it. Migou scientists were forced to think outside of the proverbial box, and they had never experienced anything as far out of that box as the Rapine Storm itself.



In a master stroke of logistical judo, the Migou would use the implacable foe that helped destabilize their careful planning to rebalance the military equation. Having mastered a computer-brain interface millennia ago, attempts were already underway to replicate the Engel Synthesis Interface. These efforts were disastrous failures – for whatever reason, the secrets to the device utterly eluded them and continue to elude them to the present day. Part of this research focused on turning creatures from the Rapine Storm into living weapons platforms; this was unsuccessful as well.

Unable to assert mental control over the beasts directly, new experiments attempted an indirect, remote control method. These projects were far less ambitious than replicating the Synthesis Interface, and were far more successful. The Migou had existing technologies that could control a creature's actions once attached to the brain, leaving the problems of deployment and communication open. Transcoding command impulses into a system of radio control frequencies was simple enough, but surgical implantation of a neuro-controller was a time-consuming and potentially dangerous process.

A solution was found through the application of biotechnology. Sharp, strong claws attached to powerful muscles were grown and then grafted to the edges of an eight-inch diameter oval-shaped device containing a transmitter for the control interface. The device was then mounted into a capsule for deployment. Mecha armed with massive neurotoxic weaponry would find and subdue a likely candidate for implantation, quickly smashing the capsule against the creature. The capsule, filled with a mild sedative and anesthetic, would dissolve and the implant's claws would sink in to the creature's skin. Once attached somewhere in the vicinity of the neck, living tendrils would burrow through the wounds created by the claws, seeking out the brain. These control tendrils would then entwine themselves through the brainstem and subvert control of the nervous system.

The device used to command the actions of a creature in the thrall of a control rod is uniquely adapted to Migou physiology. The analogy of a puppeteer controlling a marionette is apt when describing how control is achieved without a melding of minds – just as the puppeteer moving a string connected to the marionette's hand causes its wrist, elbow, and shoulder to move without directly controlling any of those joints directly, so does the Migou controller transmit a general task or action and the creature's brain takes care of the rest. The controller places its cilia over a sensor orb, which interprets the fine movements and translates them into instructions transmitted to the control rod. This leaves the controller's limbs free to operate the various sensory apparatus available to it, including the senses of the creature controlled, as well as information regarding the creature's position, overall health, and the like.

Testing of the device started in the Spring of 2086 and was successful enough that the Migou High Command decided that full-scale deployment of the devices would begin following the

impending operation to conquer the area known to the Humans as China. However, a mishap during a training exercise forced a change in their timetable. While laying waste to a village during a training exercise, a New Earth Government patrol discovered a remotely controlled Gug along with a group of Locusts in one of China's western provinces. Defeating the Migou forces, the NEG were able to retrieve the control rod and begin to study it. The operation to take China began immediately, partly in an attempt to recapture or destroy the rod.

This fiasco was compounded by new data from long-term control tests. Apparently, the control provided by the implant was not as absolute as once thought, as creatures that had been under Migou control for months suddenly began going berserk, causing an unsettling amount of damage. Believed docile, the implanted creatures had been quartered along with mecha and without any kind of armed guard, and so had ravaged the base for several minutes before they could be subdued. Other creatures that had been implanted for only a few weeks began breaking their control as well, becoming liabilities during missions. It appears as though some external force is helping these creatures to overcome the control implant's influence. Migou Specialists working with a team of Sanctified believe that sorcerers of the Disciples of the Unnamable are using eldritch means to supplant the control devices, and are working to find ways to guard against their influence.

A creature under implant control is partly autonomous, in that while it obeys whatever directives it is given, it carries out those directives independently. For example, if directed to travel to a certain area, the creature will decide how to get there on its own unless given specific instructions to do otherwise. Regardless of execution, the creature obeys both the word and spirit of the controller's commands completely. Since the control exerted by the device is imperfect, the creature uses its own Attributes and Skills when making Tests, both in and out of combat. Regardless of the controller's skills, the controlled creature cannot attempt any actions it would not be able to do if not controlled. Even though a Shabus Morgo might be able to pick up and theoretically use a hand-held mecha charge beam, it wouldn't be able to use the weapon no matter how skilled the controller might be; the monster has neither the understanding nor the faculties to use such a device.

Control is guaranteed for the first two weeks after implantation for creatures with an Intellect of 6 or below. Each following week, the creature is granted a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to break the implant's hold over its will, though more intelligent creatures immediately begin making Tests every day. Once control is broken, the understandably enraged creature will start attacking nearly everything in sight. The only thing a creature so enraged won't attack is another implanted creature, assuming that creature is docile. A threatening or aggressive creature under implant control is fair game. If the Storyguide feels as though the Disciples of the Unnamable are working on impeding the Migou's efforts, feel free to give controlled creatures a bonus to their rolls.

CLONING PODS

A rogue sect of Migou are using forbidden knowledge to produce nearly perfect Human and Nazzadi clones, complete with their memories and utterly subservience to the will of the Migou, though marred by an almost palpable aggression.

Migou society appears, from the outside, to be a singular and cohesive whole, free of the sectarian and ideological strife that plagues mankind. If only it were so easy. Beyond simple disagreements about policy or efficiency, some factions chafe against Migou tradition forbidding communion with the dark powers of the universe. One such faction dedicates itself to the worship of Gurathnaka, the Eater of Dreams. Some of those worshippers, part of the Migou invasion force orbiting earth and working as Specialists on different arcanotech projects, received guidance in their dreams that while their projects individually would be failures, combining them would yield a device of incredible power.

The first group were part of a team working on a method to recycle organic matter for use in the nanofactories vital to the Migou war effort. The second group had been tasked with altering the minds of captured Humans in a way that would not be detectable by New Earth Government brainscans. Neither of these projects were considered to be a top priority by the Migou High Command, and as such never received the necessary resources to tackle these problems. Even if those resources had been allocated, it's likely that the projects would remain incomplete. Migou mystical tradition consciously avoids certain avenues of eldritch power, lest their race be corrupted as a consequence; some of those avenues are necessary to reach the solutions to problems such as these.

Those worshipping Gurathnaka felt no such constraint, of course. While delving into the forbidden knowledge provided by their patron, they found that though their separate efforts



would ultimately prove futile, the two groups were instructed to seek each other out with the promise of a powerful piece of arcanotech as their reward. Although the few cultists on both projects numbered barely a dozen Specialists out of those assigned, they brought enough information with them that their pooled efforts were sufficient to set up a clandestine research program, complete with facilities in the abandoned nickel mines outside of what used to be the city of Norilsk in Siberian Russia.

The organic recycling researchers had come only as far in their experimentation as engineering large, fungal organic digesters which operated at very high efficiency. The resulting sludge produced by the digesters was not refined enough for the nanofactories, but they were remarkable nonetheless in that the digesters grew and operated without any energy input. Once a sufficiently nutritious medium in a suitably warm environment had been inoculated with spores, a deep red moss would grow rapidly, covering many square yards a day. The great fruiting pods would then grow to envelop any organic material placed on the moss within a few days, with each pod transforming up to two hundred kilograms into a basic organic goo every week. The spores could be easily harvested, dried, and transported anywhere the pods would be required.

Specialists on the mind alteration project had achieved less tangible results. Their research had revealed that the only plausible method for altering a Human mind without detection would require the complete disintegration, then reconstitution, of the brain. A New Earth Government brainscan would indeed detect that some change had taken place, but if made subtly enough as the brain was reformed, the changes would fall within acceptable margins of error. The scans pick up but ignore certain changes in cerebral structure and function such as those caused by new learning, medications, mild drug use, etc., so hypothetically a brain could be altered in such a way to look as though the brain's owner had simply taken LSD, or undergone an intensive language course. While sound in its theoretical underpinnings, however, the method could never be tested, as the Migou lack the raw expertise needed to recreate a brain.

Ironically enough, the majority of the knowledge Gurathnaka imparted to his faithful to solve this problem had been known to the Humans for centuries. The key lay in distilling an entity into its essential materials (in practice, a few ounces of fine powder and a few more of liquid), then recombining them while casting a ritual that would mold the brain during its regeneration. The fungal digesters were already performing this function in a way, although they had stored the wet and dry parts together. Re-engineered to perform the full distillation, the process was also slowed enough to allow for the ritual to be cast.

The being is placed, unconscious, onto a bed of digester moss, where a fungal pod forms around the being's body over the course of a few days depending on the body's mass; destruction of the pod at any time during this process results in the being's death. Once the pod has formed, distillation of the body be-

gins, with the wet and dry distillates sequestered in different organelles inside the pod. The sorcerers' work commences at this time as well, setting up the morphic field templates that will help shape the reforming brain tissue. Finally, the distilled essences of the being are recombined, and the body slowly regains its shape over the course of a day. This recombination and the completion of the ritual must occur simultaneously, making timing an essential element of the process.

The rogue Migou have successfully cloned a number of different beings using this process, from Blanks to unaltered Humans, and even a Ghast or two; the process seems to work on just about anything. The one unforeseen side-effect of the cloning is the aggression endemic to the cloned being's personality. Regardless of the personality and proclivities of the being prior to dissolution and reformation, the resulting clone always shows a marked aggression that can only barely be kept in check by their Migou masters. While the clone will obey any orders given to it without fail, it will go out of its way to be as cruel, brutal, and sadistic as possible within the given parameters.

Neither the Migou High Command nor the Earth-bound powers know the full extent of how this new technology is being deployed; even the Migou who developed these devices aren't sure where the project is ultimately leading. The applications are obvious; perfect clones under Migou control undetectable by brainscan would allow for unprecedented infiltration, if only the clones didn't suffer from unchecked aggression. Cloning relatively subtle beasts, such as N'athm, could lead to a quite effective terror campaign, as the N'athm would likely cultivate many domiciles in order to affect more victims. An army of cloned Ghouls could devastate an arcology in a matter of hours. As enticing as these possibilities are, the cultists of Gurathnaka have received no instructions from their dark god, and so they experiment, and wait.

Human society is largely unaware of the cloning pods, though a New Earth Government patrol discovered an abandoned pod field in Mongolia. Taking a sample back to the base, the arcanotechnicians there managed to get the odd fungus to grow on some agar growth medium and used it to clone an apple. One of them, a para-psychic, nearly went mad after sensing emotions emanating from the cloned apple – and that it... hated her.

RITUAL

Subservient Reconstitution

Third Order

Type: Transmogrification

Learning Time: 8 Months

Insanity Test: Hard/2 Insanity Points

Occult Rating Required: Master

Intellect Required: 9

Tenacity Required: 8

Prep Time: 1 Week

Casting Time: 3 Days

WHAT'S GOING ON?

The reason for the cloned being's malice is that the knowledge passed on to the heretical Migou by Gurathnaka allows him to impart a fraction of his nightmarish hatred into everything produced by the pods, turning the clones into minute extensions of his malign will set loose in our world. Even if cut off from Gurathnaka directly using a warding spell, the clone retains its aggression, acting autonomously in a manner that would surely please the Eater of Dreams.

Difficulty: Hard to Legendary (Storyguide's discretion)

Extended Tests Required: 8

Ruach Cost: 30

Components & Requirements: various herbs, incense, candles, a bell or chimes, at least a 100 square foot reasonably undisturbed working space covered in fungal digester moss, the being to be affected by the ritual (which must be kept unconscious during the week of preparation time).

Effects: This ritual works in conjunction with the fungal digesters developed by the Migou worshippers of Gurathnaka to transform any sentient being into a willing servant of the ritual's casters and their allies. This ritual is just one component of the arcaneotech system which produces these subservient clones and serves no function on its own, although it is a critical component. Specifically, this ritual allows the sorcerers to shape how the being's brain is reconstituted in the pod. Though the Migou have thus far limited the use of this ritual to ensure the being's undying loyalty, the sorcerer may make any number of changes to the being's personality, memories, even motor skills or handedness at varying Degrees of Difficulty (set by the Storyteller). Regardless of the changes made during reconstitution, the being will emerge as an aggressive, malevolent version of its former self.

THE CHRYSALIS CORPORATION

QBATTERY

This auxiliary source of Ruach for magical rituals supplies energy in the most perverse way the human imagination could conceive.

"We understand – sorcery is a tough business. Arduous rituals tax mind and body, leaving you exhausted. The important spells you cast can take hours, even days to complete, keeping you from family and friends. Does it feel like the magick in your life is replacing the simple magic... of living? It doesn't have to be that way. Let the Chrysalis Corporation help you shoulder the burden. Introducing the QBattery – the safe, reliable Orgone solution you've been waiting for.

Cast smarter. QBattery."

Chrysalis Corporation Promotional Material

The ties between sorcerous power and life energy are strong. When a sorcerer's Orgone reserves can't cover the Ruach costs of a spell, he can sacrifice his own Vitality to fill the gap. This is a

painful and potentially deadly process, one in which few sorcerers are keen to engage.

This, however, was not the problem that the Children of Chaos were trying to solve. The well-being and lives of their cultists and minions have never been of any concern to these single-minded fanatics. Secrecy, on the other hand, is. Many of the rituals employed by the Children of Chaos require blood sacrifices, and some of those require human blood. As cheap as life can be in the Strange Aeon, disappearances on the scale required to fuel the eldritch machinations of the Chrysalis Corporation could never be concealed for long. Further complicating matters is the infrequent need to perform these rituals outside the walls of the Corporation. No matter how surreptitious, occasionally someone sees something they're not supposed to, and loose ends need to be tied up.

The earliest versions of what would eventually become the QBattery were as simple as they were elegant. A soundproof metal box, known as a "murder cube" held a small animal, usually a stray cat or dog, in a harness underneath a hydraulic knife. With the press of a button, the knife would plunge into the animal's chest, the blood pooling into a removable external flask.

This setup was fine for sacrificing animals but not humans, as a murder cube large enough to hold a human sacrifice would be sure to draw attention in public. The answer was to simply adapt the cubes to accommodate small humans. Children were small humans – and newborns were very small indeed. While far less common than the usual fodder they used for human sacrifice, – i.e., terminally ill hospital patients and the dregs of society – the convenience factor could not be underestimated.

Further developments were made to extend the device's "expiration date." Animal-based murder cubes had been outfitted early on with food and water supplies as well as waste sequestration, allowing the cultist in the field a week or more before the cube would go stale. Similar modifications made to devices carrying the more potent payload proved less effective, as the contents could go bad with very little warning in anywhere from two to ten days. The use of intravenous nutrient supplements and feeding tubes helped stabilize shelf life enough that, while imperfect, the devices went into use by the agents of Nyarlathotep in 2069 and remained largely unchanged for over a decade.

Chrysalis next chose to innovate in 2081 after an investigation from the FSB's Restricted Technology Enforcement division led to the arrest of some corporate sorcerers in possession of a cube. While strong intellectual property laws forbade them from confiscating the device as evidence, the conspicuous blood trail leading from the device could not easily be explained away. Having prepared for this eventuality, lawyers from the Corporation immediately contacted officials in the agency to inform them that the cube was a prototype for a new arcane energy source that represented billions of Terranotes worth of private and governmental research funding. Politicians indebted to Chrysalis for one reason or another backed the story, claiming that they

had authorized the “QBattery” project in a secret research appropriation, were fully apprised of the project’s details and that no further investigation was warranted. The FSB directorate was unconvinced, but powerless to act.

It would have been easy enough to let the coverup sit and quietly release a statement a few months later that the QBattery project was a failure, had an unnamed Ciraqen Dhohanoid not had a flash of insight that could turn the lie into a reality. Cult sorcerers had recently unraveled the mystery of how the physical substances carried the life force that underwent the arcane change to become part of the spell being cast. It was conceivable that a device could be engineered using arcanotechnology to force the transformation and temporarily store the resulting Ruach.

Many years of research went into the design of the converter, with further refinements being made to the internals of the device. The problem of maintaining the child alive inside the box was also addressed. No matter how well restrained, the squirming and mewling of new life put stress on the internal components and attachments inside the QBattery. A fetal child, on the other hand, was far more passive, and even had a built-in umbilical connection to control biological functions. Once a mask

to protect the fetus’ face and monitor its vital signs was essentially riveted to its skull, it could be placed among the serpentine tubes and wires of the battery’s innards, sealed in to waste away in the darkness for up to two or three months.

The QBattery was officially launched in 2085, heralded with a massive PR blitz. Chrysalis-controlled arcanotech magazines, journals, and broadcast media hailed it as the greatest innovation since the D-Engine, while less credulous sources dismissed it as nothing more than an unnecessary sorcerous accessory, a one hundred pound, three foot tall paperweight. Arcanotech scholars were severely critical of the theoretical underpinnings of the device, ridiculing the official research reports which claimed that the device somehow condensed ambient Orgone into a usable form. Further debunking proved impossible, as physical and arcane shielding of the QBattery’s interior prevented all but the most cursory inspection of the device’s inner workings.

The product, while moderately successful, hasn’t made as big a splash as some expected. Most business analysts agree this is due in large part to the unprecedented level of control the Corporation imposes on obtaining one. Any individual wishing to secure the device must first apply to Chrysalis for a QBattery



Operator's License, a process which involves a written exam and full background check. Hidden in the fine print of the application are provisions essentially stripping the applicant of their privacy and allowing the Chrysalis Corporation to access all facets of the applicant's life, regardless of whether or not the license is granted.

Actually getting one's hands on the QBattery presents another hurdle, as they are not available for retail purchase; one does not simply walk into a store and buy a QBattery. The department in charge of distributing the devices approves each sale individually, ensuring that only those deemed worthy will ever get their hands on one. For this reason, the vast majority of QBatteries outside Chrysalis control have been sold only to other corporations, and even then only as one part of larger deals, making it nearly impossible to assign a cost to the devices. While private citizens owning a QBattery is not unheard of, only those individuals highly regarded by the Children of Chaos are allowed to possess a QBattery. Terms of ownership are even more draconian than those for application; any location, public or private, housing a QBattery is considered to be Chrysalis Corporation property as far as laws regarding entry, search, and seizure by Chrysalis security forces are concerned.

Obtaining a QBattery by any other means is all but impossible. Each device has an encrypted transponder which continuously reports its location in real-time to monitoring stations around the globe. Covert troubleshooting teams, always including one or more Dhohanoids, are sent to investigate when one of the devices goes missing. Of course, it occasionally serves the greater purpose of the Children of Chaos to have one of these devices fall into unauthorized hands. If one of these shows up in the arcane underground, it's a safe bet that it's there with their knowledge, and for a malign purpose.

The apparatus which drains the fetal life force is designed to leech it away slowly. When operated this way, the QBattery will produce a total of 60 points of Ruach at the rate of 3 points per hour. As the Ruach is supplied, the living thing inside slowly shrivels away until nothing is left but a desiccated husk. A special override mode, available only on models provided to Chrysalis personnel, can sacrifice the fetus as part of a ritual, or to provide an emergency "dump" of 15 Ruach.

EXTREME THERAPY AID AND RECEPTACLE

Troubled minds analyzed by an octopoid headpiece can be cured through the transfer of the madness from their minds into a storage device, which becomes a vault of nightmares.

The initial proposal for the research which would come to challenge the Ashcroft Foundation's dominance in the treatment of psychological disorders was penned by Chrysalis Corporation's Director himself. Humanity had become disturbingly adept at combating madness, the very playground of the Old Ones, and could not be allowed to gain full dominion over this potent force. Besides, insanity was proving to be a growth industry with limitless potential and there were shareholders to keep happy.

In their dreams, scientists in the Corporation's research and development department saw a chair, similar to one a dentist or gynecologist might have, with thick leather restraints for the arms, legs, and neck. The weird apparatus was crowned with a mass of tentacles, extending down from a bulbous protrusion above the headrest. Into the protrusion was attached a bowling ball-sized metallic sphere with viscous green liquid coursing through clear tubes. With a click, the sphere detached... and the dreamer would awake, startled, sweating, but brimming with strange ideas.

Although the device's design was complex, the idea behind it was quite simple. The aim was to find the source of insanity in a disturbed mind, and "suck" it out. The eldritch thermodynamics involved precluded simply eliminating whatever caused the madness in the first place - the disturbed energy had to go somewhere. One Chrysalis researcher explained the approach to removing madness in terms of a boulder being dropped into a field. Traditionally, the patient would undergo intensive therapy at an institution such as the Ashcroft Clinic, where patient and doctor alike would chip away at the boulder, removing small pieces one at a time until little enough of the boulder remained to mar the field. The Extreme Therapy Aid, on the other hand, was akin to calling in a backhoe to just scoop the boulder out and drop it somewhere else.

The approach revolved around an intensive scan of a patient's brain to locate and isolate the memories which brought about madness in the first place. The patient would have to be tightly strapped in to the chair, as the process caused excruciating pain. Tentacle-like probes, each one with a dozen or so neuroconductive pads, wrapped around the head of the restrained patient to produce a highly detailed map of the engrams encoding every memory in the patient's mind. A search algorithm then identified which engrams matched the anomalous pattern of a memory caused by some unnatural, aberrant happening. The cerebral energies maintaining these engrams would then be contained inside a biomystical pattern field, and transferred into the storage receptacle.

With a strong commitment of financial and human resources, primary research on the Extreme Therapy Aid, along with its Receptacle component, was completed in two and a half years, debuting in 2077. Human subject studies began that same year, concluding in 2084 with an impressive record. Severely traumatized patients treated with the Extreme Therapy Aid recovered three times faster on average than similar patients treated with conventional therapy. Even the most serious cases, some having been classified as incurable by the Ashcroft Clinic's best doctors, recovered after receiving one treatment every week for ten weeks. Furthermore, the studies reported that the majority of those treated didn't even require medication after the three month observation period following their treatment. Health clinics owned by the Chrysalis Corporation began exclusively offering the treatment in 2085, as the Corporation refused to sell or license the technology to any other entity, including the New Earth Government itself.

As the treatment became more wide-spread, the public's adulation turned to shock when the short-term side effects were more generally documented. Absent from reports of the human studies were descriptions of the treatment as like "being jabbed in the brain with a hot poker while reliving your worst nightmare over and over." Some described the cure as being worse than the disease. A small percentage of those treated, about 1%, acted as though they had been lobotomized. And while it was well known that anyone undergoing the treatment would need to undergo observation for three months following the treatment, it came as a surprise to many that this essentially entailed a 24-hour suicide watch – every patient, across the board, experienced severe depression following treatment. They couldn't explain the reason for their melancholy, except to say that it felt like someone had violated their very essence. About one patient in three had suicidal thoughts. One in eight exhibited self-harm tendencies. And one in twenty attempted suicide after experiencing the Extreme Therapy Aid, though few were successful.

While they acknowledge the somewhat extreme consequences stemming from their product, the Chrysalis Corporation remains adamant that the benefits far outweigh the risks. They point to their success stories, chief among them the story of Specialist Raj Patel, a soldier who had been catatonic since the First Arcanotech War. During some routine maintenance on a mecha D-Engine, a charge beam from a Nazzadi sneak attack fractured the device's casing, and for a fraction of a second, he saw inside. He had worn the same look of stunned confusion from that day until the day twenty-five years later, after his third of ten treatments in the Extreme Therapy Aid. True, Patel's first action in decades was to scream for two days straight, but six months later he wore a smile as his portrait was hung in the foyer of the newly dedicated Chrysalis Corporation Mental Health Research Building in Chicago, above a plaque which read "Hope for the Future."

Triumphs aside, the New Earth Government is being heavily pressured by the Ashcroft Foundation to investigate the devices. At the very least, they contend treatment should be monitored to ensure that the intervention is used only in the most extreme cases, where twelve solid weeks of suicide-inducing depression is preferable to the alternative. For its part, Chrysalis has its public relations officials dismissing any notions of oversight with the assertion that Ashcroft is trying to protect its monopoly on mental health care.

Hidden within this controversy is the importance of the Extreme Therapy Receptacle. This vaguely skull-shaped device that plugs into the chair is the "somewhere else" to which the boulder of insanity from the patient's mind is moved. Eventually, these devices fill up with the collective madness of those treated, indicated by the weird green fluid which slowly turns into a black sludge as it reaches full capacity. It's well known by those working at the treatment centers that these receptacles are sent back to a central Chrysalis Corporation facility, presumably to be cleansed and redistributed. What is largely unknown, except to those ini-

tiated into the Children of Chaos, is that these filled vessels are not recycled, but hoarded, used for dark and malign purposes whose ends are known only to Nyarlathotep himself.

The Extreme Therapy Aid can be used to instantly remove one Insanity Point. This can be done once a week at most; attempting treatment more than once per seven days will render the patient insane, dead, or worse. As for the receptacles, none but the most beloved of the Children know what foul purposes for which these receptacles are used. Not even the Eldritch Society has been able to penetrate this secret.

RUMORS

- Patel died from the therapy; that guy who posed for the news was an impostor, set up by Chrysalis for good PR.
- The whole "suck out the crazy" pitch is all smoke and mirrors, covering up for the fact that these so-called therapy aids are nothing more than wholesale brainwashing.
- The newest top-secret project at the Chrysalis Corporation involves networking the Extreme Therapy Receptacles together over a network. Some in the arcane underground suspect that this might create a rift in our reality. Why would anyone want to do that?

THE DISCIPLES OF DEATH'S SHADOW

EROGENOUS ENHANCEMENT LEECH

This device is a favorite for the Death Shadows; it beckons the unsuspecting to their Dionysus Clubs while simultaneously depriving them of any will to resist the cult's machinations.

For those obsessed with fornication, the Strange Aeon is a good time to be alive. Sex clubs, swinger's parties, and the loosest morality laws in human memory all create an atmosphere where casual sex and indulgence in just about any fetish or fantasy barely causes one to bat an eyelash. For the wealthy and powerful, it's even better. While a century ago a businessman might have to fly halfway around the world to force himself on a twelve year-old boy, today he can just go down to his local Dionysus Club on his lunch hour – provided, of course, that he's a member in good standing, having violated his own morals and set himself and the world around him down the road to decay and depravity.

For some, the descent into their deepest, darkest sexual desires is really only one step. This presents a bit of a challenge to the Dionysus Clubs, tempting their patrons where each reward is more debauched than the last. For these disappointingly one-noted individuals, the only thing better than a good thing is that same thing, amplified. That's exactly what an odd parasitic organism created by the Disciples of Death's Shadows, with a fusion of arcanotechnology and genetic engineering, was designed to do.

Known to Club members as everything from the "leech" to the "eel" to the "thigh-pod", this small creature has become a star

attraction. After being placed within about ten inches of the genitals, this pus-yellow organism, a little smaller than the human kidney, attaches to the host via dozens of small suckers along the underside of its segmented body. Once attached, it begins secreting a hormone into the blood stream that amplifies pleasurable sensations to astronomical levels. The process is completely painless, although it's unlikely the host would notice even if it wasn't. The experience is so overwhelming, so all-encompassing, that every other experience pales in comparison.

Being a parasite, the leech only produces this enzyme in order to feed on its host. Once the host reaches orgasm, the leech has compromised the biomystical energy of the host body to the point where it can drain the host's Orgone. Unless the host is a sorcerer or para-psychic (something the Death Shadows are careful to avoid), the only sensation felt is one of contented exhaustion. No permanent damage is done, the host walks away with a healthy glow, and the organism crawls off with a full belly.

The relationship could be described as symbiotic, if not for the leech's effect on a host with repeated use (more than one orgasm per 24-hour period). Once the host has run out of Orgone to feed on, the leech begins feeding on the host's willpower itself. While subtle at first, the change in the host's personality will become apparent to those around him over time. The host will become sluggish, avoid confrontation, and show a tendency towards indecision. Master negotiators will become conciliatory, backing down at the slightest display of disapproval. Confident decision makers will become wishy-washy, preferring to go with the flow rather than making waves.

This fate is generally reserved for members deemed by the Dionysus Club masters as unfit for promotion, but too important to simply kill. Rather than wasting a valuable asset, they turn the unfortunate victim into a puppet to serve the purposes of the Unnamed One, to be discarded once his usefulness has run out. One such victim was a prominent politician in the New Earth Government Senate, known for his strong moral stance and focus on family values. To the surprise and revulsion of his colleagues, he introduced legislation to drop the age of consent to pre-pubescent levels, setting off a firestorm of criticism against him and his political party. Weeks later, he was implicated in a child prostitution ring, resigning from the Senate in disgrace and further lowering the average citizen's opinion of their government.

The secret to breeding and tending the erogenous enhancement leeches is a closely guarded secret within the Death Shadows cult, known to very few. Use of a leech is usually granted to Dionysus Club members as a reward for crossing yet another line to prove loyalty to the Club and its membership, and only to those the Club's masters deem worthy. Upon the host's sexual climax, the leech consumes two-thirds of the host's total Orgone; if not enough Orgone is available in the host's pool, all remaining Orgone is consumed, and the host must succeed at one Challenging Tenacity Feat Test for each use of the leech in the past 24 hours. Each failure causes the host to temporarily lose one point

of Tenacity, with all subsequent Tests made using a Feat skill level calculated from the new Tenacity value (with a minimum of one). Using a leech gives Characters the Habit Drawback, with a level based on how often the leech gets used. Using a leech once confers a level 2 Habit, using a leech more than once a week is a level 3 Habit, and once a leech has drained a Character's Tenacity it becomes a level 4 Habit. The Character gains no skill points for this Drawback if gained during the course of play.

THE PASS

The Strange Aeon is a good time to be a gambler. As online gambling rose in the early 21st century, it became easier and easier for addicts and aficionados of games of chance to get their fix. Starting with web casinos and moving on to mobile phone applications, the apex came with the introduction of the PCPU and the ability to be online, all the time, surreptitiously. Internal displays and small wireless monitors meant anyone from a college student bored in class to a desk jockey at yet another meeting could find distraction with one of any number of games, played just for fun or for actual stakes.

Gambling is a simple enough vice to provide, and where there is vice, there are the Disciples of Death's Shadow. Gambling operations expanded greatly once the cult set its mind to the task, using their political influence to ease laws on gaming while using their criminal fronts and organizations to expand gaming halls, both physical and virtual. The virtual arena provided the most fertile ground for expansion, culminating in the creation of The Pass.

Using a special PCPU obtained from a dealer connected to the arcane underground, a gambler can access the greatest casino in the world. It essentially operates as an open-market for so-called "proposition" bets. A player may notice a local eatery's business declining, and post a wager of a few Terranotes that the business will go under by the end of the month. Some players on The Pass consider such small potato wagers over such trivial matters gauche, preferring to bet that a prominent politician's mistress will come forward with a tell-all story for the tabloids, or that the offensive against the Migou in Canada will result in land gained or lost by next month.

Like all casinos, The Pass takes a piece of the action. Along with 3% of every wager, a very modest cut all things considered, the custom PCPUs used to access The Pass take the emotional "temperature" of all of its players. This gives the Death Shadows a picture of the emotional zeitgeist of the segments of the New Earth Government, affording them an opportunity both to gauge the effects of their efforts at destabilization, and to perfect the timing for new campaigns against society, waiting for when the world's morale is at its lowest to strike.

His was a sacred duty, one passed down from generation to generation. Ever since Darik had discovered his heritage, that one day he would join his ancestors in the deep, he fantasized about taking his place at his father's side. Now, as he polished the sretha knife, he swelled with pride.

One day, he would be able to dive unassisted to the depths where the things that made the material for the knives lived. It was hard, black, and deadly when properly sharpened. The last stage involved a potent corrosive – its sharp odor still hung in the air.

Darik could feel that Marissa had entered the room, but she stood silently in the doorway, reverently giving him time to finish. If his partially transformed face was capable of such things anymore, he would have smiled.

"Marisa," was all he said.

"I didn't mean to interrupt," she replied.

"You didn't. Your timing is perfect. As always."

As she approached, there was tension in the air. Though respectful, Marisa's pheromones said something else. She wanted to mate with him. His pheromones responded in kind. Though not now, it was decided.

Her nictitating membranes blinked reflexively. "My father is anxious for the new blade."

Darik turned and showed her the sretha knife. She took it gently from his hands and turned it over and over. "It's beautiful."

"Only fitting," he replied. "It's finished. You can take it now."

"Will you be coming to the ceremony tonight?"

It was a special night tonight for those of the holy Esoteric Order. Bloodletting, sacrifice, mating rituals. It was rumored that Dagon himself would be in attendance. It would be foolish not to attend.

"Yes. Would you accompany me?"

She gently touched his forearm. "Yes."

There were some of the mammalian emotions he would miss once he had fully converted to cold blood. Passion was one of them.

Fortunately, pride was not.

.....

The acruta spear missed its mark. The Human male breathed quickly, perspiring, clearly relieved at his temporary reprieve. Il'liy walked over, removed the spear from the ground, and brought it back.

"The weight. Is wrong," said the tall fish-man, as he thrust the weapon at Darik.

Darik took the weapon carefully from the Deep One warrior. First, he held it up length-wise, to see if the shaft had somehow warped. No, that wasn't it. Then, he tested the mid-point to see how it was balanced. Somehow, the carefully maintained acruta spear was tip-heavy. He expertly flipped the spear around and, sure enough, battle damage had caused weights in the butt to fall out.

"Il'liy, when did you last have your spear cared for?"

The Deep One hissed. "Always. This spear. Loved."

Darik whipped the spear around, showing Il'liy the damage. "Here. Have your weapons checked after every raid. You are a vicious warrior. You don't want to fail because your acruta spear was damaged."

The flattery was not lost on the creature. "You fix?"

"Immediately," replied Darik. "You are a warrior of the people who deserves nothing less."

Il'liy's gills flared with pride. "My thanks."

"Now, I need you to test the modified stunners." Darik motioned to the bench, whereon sat a batch of freshly crafted firearms. Il'liy and his warriors were the among the finest of those that captured mortals for breeding, so the fit was natural.

The Deep One approached the bench and roughly grabbed a stunner. In one swift motion, he whipped around and fired a dart at one of the Humans tied up at the end of the range. It found its mark, embedding itself into the torso of the male. It released its electrical pay-





load and the man jerked spasmodically as his central nervous system overloaded.

Il'liy made the huffing sound that was synonymous with Deep One pleasure. He motioned to his warriors. "Good. Test."

In turn, his warriors each picked up stunners and bull's-eyed the restrained Human and Nazzadi targets, jolting each into stunned consciousness. Each nodded in approval. Then, Il'liy turned and handed the stunner to Darik. "You?"

The Hybrid took the weapon and tested its weight. Then, in one swift move, he unleashed several rounds in rapid succession. Each found its mark in the neck

of the intended victim. Darik took pride on knowing his creations in every way possible, making him capable of wielding them better than any warrior could hope.

The warrior regarded Darik with his large milky eye. "Too bad. Your skill. Excellent in battle."

Again, he would have smiled. "My thanks. But my skills are needed here."

There will always be warriors willing to deal death or experience it on the fields of battle. There will never be enough of those who make the weapons of death. It is a position of prestige that not just mammals failed to understand.

chapter six

alien hands

Human beings, with their Nazzadi cohorts, are not the only creatures in the Aeon War who have created their own technological arsenals. In this chapter, we'll explore the weapons and armor of the Migou, as well as those of the Esoteric Order of Dagon.

THE MIGOU

Earth is a tough place for the Migou to wage a prolonged war. What was meant to be a rapid-strike military campaign has turned into a long and drawn-out bloodbath hampered by persistent enemies, limited supplies, and a hostile planetary environment. Battling the New Earth Government, the Disciples of the Rapine Storm, and the Esoteric Order of Dagon would be enough on its own. However, Migou supplies have been severely taxed during this conflict, leaving the forces of the Hive Ship stranded on Earth and forced to rely on innovation and scaled-up manufacturing techniques to try and keep up with demands.

The Migou excel in the areas of bioengineering, neural interfacing, genetics, and hybrid technologies that combine organic, physical, and arcane systems to produce amazing results. Possessing such a wide array of expertise has opened up several opportunities for technological breakthroughs and the Migou are quick to harness any advancement that might be to their advantage. Some of these breakthroughs have been realized in new neural interface systems that rely on an organic control mechanism. Others show up as weapon stabilization platforms comprised of muscle tissue. Knowledge gleaned from Human arcotechnology has led to further advancements in anti-matter containment fields. Bio-mechanical solutions have also led to new ways for Migou soldiers to endure some of Earth's harshest climates. However, no matter the technological breakthrough, there is still the problem with manufacturing limits that often leaves Migou units short on supply. The Migou have discovered the hard way what humans have known for centuries – attacking critical supply routes drains the lifeblood of your enemy.

Some of the more mundane parts and materials are manufactured in factories on Earth using both nanotechnology and more conventional construction methods. In fact, assimilated Humans provide an excellent resource for assembly line manufacturing. Such factories provide standard weapons, vehicles, and supplies to support the war effort. These include needle or rail weapons, critical mecha parts, combat vehicles, and some of the more mundane mecha.

The manufacturing of some of the more advanced hybrid technology equipment and supplies are provided by Migou-run nanofactories located in Northern Russia and in the Antarctic. These are typically equipment types that combine organic and non-organic systems for complex applications. However, the most sensitive of supplies and material is still manufactured aboard the Migou Hive Ship, using frequent convoys to supply their troops on the ground. Though the New Earth Government Navy has tried to blockade those convoys to some minor degree of success, the Migou have managed to keep their supply lines open thus far.

Nevertheless, New Earth Government bombing runs over factories, interceptor actions against Hive Ship convoys, and the sheer demand of this extended conflict in general, has put an amazing amount of strain on the system. Thus, the Migou have been forced to categorize their equipment into a classification system that allows them to identify and focus production efforts on the most common, if not the most critical, of materiel. All Migou have access to equipment and supplies that are rated as Common. Such items typically include food rations, common spare parts, standard weapons and armor, and other necessary provisions. These are the most commonly produced Migou resources in mass production. The step up from a Common rating is Special. These are items typically reserved for special combat units, certain scientific research personnel, or the like – Migou serving special functions with specific needs. Special items are produced in less quantity than Common items, and might include heavy weapons, specialized weapons, or unique equipment. The highest tier of equipment rating is Select. These items are set aside for highly select military units, core research and development personnel, upper echelon leaders, and other Migou serving at a high level.

This chapter outlines some of the weapons, equipment, and supplies used by the Migou on Earth during the Aeon War. It's certainly not an all-encompassing list, but it gives a good example of what most Migou have at their disposal.

SPECIAL WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY

Some Migou weapons fire magnetic projectiles containing a small dose of neurotoxin that can cause temporary paralysis in a victim. An attack must do at least one point of Vitality damage to administer this toxin. Those affected must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or lose 2 Actions each turn for one to five minutes (roll half a die). The effects of the toxin are not cumulative and a target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last dose.

Some larger weapons are based on High Powered Microwave (HPM) energy and use low-level lasers to acquire targets. This targeting laser ionizes the surrounding air molecules and the HPM pulse propels the ions toward the target like a high-powered sub-molecular sand blaster. Migou HPM Weapons can do additional damage if a blast penetrates armor. Calculate damage as usual, but if armor is penetrated (the attack does at least one damage), roll one additional die of damage against which armor is useless. Such rounds will also fry unshielded electronics, rendering them useless.

Migou null rays are anti-matter weapons that typically affect an area with their blast. In addition to damage, those affected by a null ray weapon must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or lose one Action the same or following turn. Also, if your Storyguide allows, null rays provide a +1 bonus to Firearms Tests.

MIGOU WEAPONS CATALOGUE

PISTOLS

Migou pistols come with special grips designed to work with their unique physiology. One of the advantages of being a technologically sophisticated, winged species with multiple limbs is that Migou are not limited to the use of just two pistols. In fact, some Migou have been known to arm themselves with as many as four while in flight – otherwise, they need the limbs for stability. Such Migou take the standard penalties for choosing to take multiple actions of that sort.

ANH-1 Auto Needle Pistol

The ANH-1 is a strap-mounted sidearm used by Migou who prefer to keep their appendages free for other uses. The beauty of this weapon's design is such that it doesn't require any kind of holstering. The user needs only to switch the weapon to firing mode and command the weapon to fire through a remote neural-link. Needles are loaded through an interchangeable magazine. The ANH-1 uses a long, sleek, and low-profile design to minimize bulkiness and provide ease of use while flying. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

Type:	Auto Needle – Small
Classification:	Common
Caliber:	5 mm
Weight:	2.1 lbs loaded
Range (yards):	15/35/55
Damage:	0
Shots:	3
Rounds:	20 (Needle)

NTH-1 Auto Neurotoxin Pistol

The NTH-1 is also a strap-mounted sidearm, though the profile of this weapon is larger than the ANH-1. The magazine feed for this weapon is accessed through a rear hatch in its frame and each magazine must be loaded with pre-filled neurotoxin needles. If no neurotoxin is included, then treat this weapon as ANH-1. Neurotoxin weapons are preferred for capturing enemies to be assimilated. The NTH-1 sees the most action as a secondary weapon for soldiers invading enemy habitats. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories, though the neurotoxins are produced in Migou labs.

Type:	Auto Neurotoxin – Small
Classification:	Common
Caliber:	5 mm
Weight:	2.0 lbs loaded
Range (yards):	20/40/60
Damage:	0 (+ Neurotoxin)
Shots:	3
Rounds:	20 (Neurotoxin)

ANH-2 Auto Needle Pistol

The ANH-2 is much like its smaller cousin, the ANH-1, with the

exception that it is a pistol grip weapon. Holsters provided for these weapons are strapped to the mid-thorax of the Migou's body for easy access. This weapon is the favored sidearm for most Migou soldiers. The weight of the ANH-2 is fairly light thanks to its sleek, low profile, poly-composite frame. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

Type:	Auto Needle – Medium
Classification:	Common
Caliber:	10 mm
Weight:	2.8 lbs loaded
Range (yards):	15/30/50
Damage:	+1
Shots:	3
Rounds:	18 (Needle)

NTH-2 Auto Neurotoxin Pistol

The NTH-2 is most often seen among Migou units assigned for mop-up detail after major military engagements – snagging not-so-voluntary volunteers for the Blank processing program. Though slightly larger than the ANH-2, the NTH-2 is surprisingly light, with a very nice balance that is quite noticeable when the weapon is aimed at a target. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories, though the neurotoxins are produced in Migou labs.

Type:	Auto Neurotoxin – Medium
Classification:	Common
Caliber:	10 mm
Weight:	2.6 lbs loaded
Range (yards):	15/35/55
Damage:	+1 (+ Neurotoxin)
Shots:	2
Rounds:	18 (Neurotoxin)

ANH-3 Auto Needle Pistol

Even though ANH-3 is the largest caliber pistol in the Migou arsenal, they are rarely found on a battlefield. Agents most often carry this firearm, as well as other specialized personal. Though the effective range of this weapon is slightly less than other pistols, the considerable punch that it delivers makes the ANH-3 a choice sidearm for any Migou in a close-quarters fire-fight. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

Type:	Auto Needle – Large
Classification:	Special
Caliber:	15 mm
Weight:	3.2 lbs loaded
Range (yards):	12/25/45
Damage:	+2
Shots:	31
Rounds:	15 (Needles)

NTH-3 Auto Neurotoxin Pistol

The NTH-3 is a fairly new addition to the Migou arsenal. Casualties began to mount due to enemy pockets of resistance, even

in occupied territories. The need for a neurotoxin weapon that could also stand in as an effective combat firearm became clear. The design of the NTH-3 is based on the NTH-2 – in fact, it fires the exact same caliber of neurotoxin rounds. However, the barrel length was increased to accommodate an extended 91A7 superconductive coil, allowing for a much higher muzzle velocity of the projectile. Thus, the NTH-3 inflicts more damage to the victim due to a higher level of impact. These weapons are manufactured in Migou nanofactories.

<i>Type:</i>	Auto Neurotoxin – Large
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	2.8 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15/30/50
<i>Damage:</i>	+2 (+ Neurotoxin)
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	15 (Neurotoxin)

RIFLES AND A SHOTGUN

Migou assault rifles all share the common characteristics of selective fire, ammunition drum magazines, onboard targeting computers, and small caliber rounds. These rifles are equipped with laser range-finder, thermal scan, and night vision capability. Even SRR-2 and SNR-2 Sniper Rifles fit within this criteria. The only exceptions to the rule are the Migou's inclusion of energy weapons to their arsenal. Though the Migou tend to categorize their HPMPR-1 and NRR-1 weapons within the family of assault rifles due to their size and combat utility, these weapons certainly stand in a class of their own for the Migou soldier in the field. Another characteristic of Migou rifles is that, unlike Human designs, these weapons do not include a butt stock due to a Migou's lack of shoulder area to brace against while firing. A Migou soldier typically relies on his extra limbs to help brace his firearm, and the use of electromagnetic weapons such as needlers and rail guns minimize the recoil of the weapon.

ARR-1 Assault Rail Rifle

The ARR-1 is a lightweight, small caliber weapon that serves as the primary Migou infantry assault rifle on Earth. The beauty of the ARR-1 is its ability to function under rough environmental conditions. Throw one of these rifles into a pool of mud and you can still squeeze off a burst afterward. Most Migou troops on the ground carry an ARR-1 because of its durability and the ease with which it can be produced in large numbers. The onboard computer display for the ARR-1 can be located on either side of the weapon depending on the preferences of the user. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Light Assault Rail Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.6 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	60/100/230
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	90 (Needle)

NTR-1 Assault Neurotoxin Rifle

The sheer success of neurotoxin weapons against Human targets demanded the production of a specialized assault neurotoxin rifle – the answer was the NTR-1. Built on the design of the ARR-1, its enhanced effective range, ammunition capacity, and rate of fire have allowed the Migou to engage in a new level of combat operations. Specialized infantry teams armed with NTR-1s have been formed to sweep down on Human civilian settlements and subdue the populace with neurotoxins as quickly as possible. The onboard computer display can be shifted in the same way as the ARR-1. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories, though the neurotoxins are produced in Migou labs.

<i>Type:</i>	Light Assault Neurotoxin Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.4 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	50/95/220
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (+ Neurotoxin)
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	90 (Neurotoxin)

ARR-2 Assault Rail Rifle

The ARR-2 is an effective assault rifle for most combat applications. The vast majority of firefights occur within shorter ranges and lighter caliber rounds make for easier use in autofire mode. However, other combat situations call for a heavier caliber weapon with longer-range accuracy that carries with it a greater punch – that's where the ARR-2 comes in. Equipped with a top-mounted onboard computer display, the ARR-2 works well as a primary assault weapon for airborne Migou troops. It also serves nicely in situations requiring long-ranged suppressive fire or targeted sniping. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Assault Rail Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	6.0 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	40/85/210
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 3/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	60 (Needle)

SRR-2 Sniper Rail Rifle

Rail weapons are by their very nature quieter than traditional firearms – save the crack of a round breaking the sound barrier. Add enhanced computerized accuracy, a higher caliber round with a much longer effective range, and a tight vertical spread and you have a very dangerous sniper rifle. The Migou SRR-2 operates with an effective range of 2200 yards. Its elongated barrel is supported within the stock by fibrous organic material that operates similar to muscle tissue. The onboard computer analyzes wind speed and direction as well as range to target in order to adjust the position of the barrel for optimal firing. The operator can, in this way, simply target the victim in his crosshairs and

allow the weapon itself to make the appropriate adjustments. NEG troops call the SRR-2 “Silent Murder.” This weapon is manufactured in Migou nanofactories.

If the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the turn prior to making an attack with this rifle, all range penalties are ignored.

<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Sniper Rail Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	7.25 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	200/1500/2200
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	6

SNR-2 Sniper Neurotoxin Rifle

Combat circumstances sometimes call for taking a target down without killing it. An important target might, for instance, possess important tactical information or communications encoding secrets. That’s where the SNR-2 fills the greatest need. Built on the design of the ARR-1, the SNR-2 utilizes an elongated rail

system to propel a small caliber neurotoxin round over large distances. It’s also equipped with an on-board targeting computer similar to the SRR-2, giving the weapon an effective range of 1800 yards. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

If the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the turn prior to making an attack with this rifle, all range penalties are ignored.

<i>Type:</i>	Sniper Neurotoxin Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Special
<i>Caliber:</i>	5 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	7.0 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	160/1100/1800
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (+Neurotoxin)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	6

HPMR-1 High Power Microwave Rifle

The HPMR-1 is the most common particle beam weapon in the Migou arsenal. This brutal weapon emits a precise red laser conduit to focus a high-powered particle beam pulse that reso-

ANH-1 AUTO NEEDLE PISTOL



NTH-1 AUTO NEUROTOXIN PISTOL



ANH-2 AUTO NEEDLE PISTOL



NTH-2 AUTO NEUROTOXIN PISTOL



ANH-3 AUTO NEEDLE PISTOL



NTH-3 AUTO NEUROTOXIN PISTOL



SAF-1 NEEDLER SUBMACHINE GUN



HNAF-1 NEUROTOXIN SUBMACHINE GUN



SAR-1 RAIL SUBMACHINE GUN



ARR-1 ASSAULT RAIL RIFLE



ARR-2 ASSAULT RAIL RIFLE



NTR-1 ASSAULT NEUROTOXIN RIFLE



NRR-1 ASSAULT NULL RIFLE



SAR-2 RAIL MACHINE GUN



HPMR-1 MICROWAVE RIFLE



HPMC-1 PORTABLE ENERGY CANNON



AMAC-1 SQUAD NULL CANNON



nates at around 20 gigahertz. The instant blast of charged ion particles reduces living tissue to overcooked meat and causes a catastrophic fusion of unshielded electronic devices. Of course, the natural “blooming” effect of the weapon causes it to lose effectiveness over increased distances. The fact that the destructive characteristics of this weapon can penetrate armor to a certain degree, as well as blow vital control circuits, makes it an ideal weapon for enemy personnel, sophisticated gear, and lightly armored vehicles. However, the HPMR-1 is still a highly specialized weapon that is distributed at a rate of one per combat squad at the most. These weapons are manufactured on the Migou Hive Ship.

<i>Type:</i>	Heavy HPM Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Special
<i>Caliber:</i>	None
<i>Weight:</i>	6.75 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	30/60/150
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	3
<i>Rounds:</i>	9 (Energy)

NRR-1 Assault Null Rifle

New Earth Government forces first felt the devastating effect of the NRR-1 during the Battle of Moscow in the early stages of the Aeon War. This is the most rare and feared of Migou assault weapons – a disintegrating ray that reduces matter to pure energy. Nevertheless, its large power pack and antimatter containment chamber make the weapon very bulky and often difficult to manage in confined spaces. The Migou have already manufactured as many of these weapons as they can. A new supply of antimatter would be required to produce any new null weapons, so any lost are permanently lost from the arsenal.

<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Assault Null Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Select
<i>Caliber:</i>	None
<i>Weight:</i>	6.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	10/20/30
<i>Damage:</i>	+2 (Hybrid)
<i>Shots:</i>	2
<i>Rounds:</i>	6 (Energy)

SGM-1 Combat Shotgun

The SGM-1 is strictly a Migou defensive weapon, most often used by mecha and aircraft pilots. It's ability to provide a devastating short-range punch makes it an ideal self-protection weapon for pilots awaiting rescue recovery. The SGM-1 is similar to NEG shotguns in that it utilizes a short, smooth bore barrel. However, it differs from the human counterpart in that shot is loaded into a feed cylinder without a case. The ammunition is then magnetically ionized to a negative polarity. When fired, the weapon opens an iris-style portal and charges a powerful electromagnet to hurl the shot toward the target. An automatic reversal of the electromagnetic polarity attracts a new load of shot into the feed chamber once the iris closes again. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Combat Shotgun
<i>Classification:</i>	Special
<i>Caliber:</i>	Shot
<i>Weight:</i>	5.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15/30/45
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	10

SUBMACHINE & MACHINE GUNS

Interestingly enough, the Migou war doctrine pertaining to the Aeon War did not evolve by itself. Much of what the Migou have brought to Earth in terms of modern combat strategy and weapons applications is the direct result of observing the development of mankind through the ages. From a myopic perspective, one might say that the students have come to enslave or destroy their teachers. The study of human warfare during the 20th and 21st centuries has revealed a certain amount of effectiveness and success with personal and squad level automatic weapons. New Earth Government troops would certainly deploy such weapons against Migou troops, so why not respond in kind? Thus, Migou designers began to manufacture the first machine gun weaponry in the history of their race.

SAF-1 Light Needler Submachine Gun

The SAF-1 is quite popular among airborne Migou troops dropped behind enemy lines, used to provide area suppression fire during landing. It's also popular with combat units that expect a high percentage of close-quarters action, such as urban assault teams. The SAF-1 is less cumbersome than the ARR-1 and it provides greater accuracy and a higher rate of fire in fully automatic mode. The SAF-1 is also remarkable durable and light, thanks to its simplicity of design and that fact that it does not carry any onboard computer targeting systems like those of Migou assault rifles. This weapon is manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Light SMG Needler
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.9 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	25/40/60
<i>Damage:</i>	+1
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	60 (Needle)

HNAF-1 Light Neurotoxin Submachine Gun

Migou experience with the SAF-1 in close quarters situations gave rise to the question of how can a rapid discharge small arms weapon contribute to enemy crowd suppression? Drugging Human refugees for assimilation can be tedious and time-consuming when targeted one at a time. However, what would happen if submachine guns were fitted for neurotoxin rounds? The answer is the HNAF-1. These firearms stand almost identical to the SAF-1, with the exception of an altered magazine and feed mechanism. Many Human men, women, and children have been mowed down in devastating numbers after the downfall of

population centers at the hands of Migou troops. The HNAF-1 is manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Light Neurotoxin SMG
<i>Classification:</i>	Special
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.8 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	25/40/60
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (+ Neurotoxin)
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	50 (Neurotoxin)

SAR-1 Heavy Rail Submachine Gun

One of the fundamental drawbacks of the SAF-1 in combat is the comparative inability for needle rounds to penetrate certain advanced New Earth Government armor types. Thus, Migou engineers went to work on a heavier submachine gun based on the designs of the SAR-2. By scaling down the SAR-2 barrel length and removing its onboard, computerized targeting system, the Migou were able to construct a portable heavy submachine gun with devastating effect. In fact, the Migou classify the SAR-1 as a companion to the ARR-2 Heavy Assault Rifle, often replacing the latter among urban combat units. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Rail SMG
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.25 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	20/40/80
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	3 or 4/1-5/30
<i>Rounds:</i>	30 (Needle)

SAR-2 Heavy Rail Machine Gun

The SAR-2 is the mainstay machine gun of choice for the Migou. Its high rate of fire and armor-piercing capability make it ideal for use against personnel, light armored vehicles, slow aircraft, and boats. The SAR-2 is most often seen mounted to a vehicle to provide suppressive fire against enemy combatants. However, the SAR-2a has been modified to allow for a stand-alone tripod application that requires two soldiers to operate. Its onboard targeting computer not only compensates for direction, wind, and distance to target, it also provides a warning alarm when ammunition is running low. The weapon can be set for either fully automatic mode or single shot mode – giving the SAR-2 a makeshift, high caliber sniping capability. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

If the tripod is set and the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the turn prior to making the attack, all range penalties are ignored.

<i>Type:</i>	Heavy Rail Machine Gun
<i>Classification:</i>	Special
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.3 lbs loaded

<i>Range (yards):</i>	105/530/1030
<i>Damage:</i>	+2
<i>Shots:</i>	8/1-10/80
<i>Rounds:</i>	500 (Needle)

HEAVY & SPECIAL WEAPONS

Heavily armored combat mecha might form the core of the Migou army, but infantry support is certainly a crucial component of the Aeon War. The Migou are no strangers to the practice of arming infantry units with heavy weapons capable of taking down enemy armored units. Countless New Earth Government mecha have fallen victim to a null cannon ambush from a concealed position or a rocket launched from inside the cover of a dilapidated building. Arming Migou infantry units with such weapons creates yet another threat for the enemy to deal with while assaulting urban areas and other places rampant with cover. Though high explosive rockets and grenades are similar in effect to those of their New Earth Government counterparts, the advent of Migou energy weapons has certainly brought a new game to the battlefield. There's something about the blast of a Null Cannon or the electric destruction of an HPM Cannon that can make the Migou seem invincible.

HPMC-1 High Power Microwave Portable Energy Cannon

The HPMC-1 is the most common portable energy weapon deployed in the field. One squad in any given platoon might carry one of these weapons, depending on the mission designation of the platoon. The bulk of this weapon requires two troopers to tote it across the battlefield and set up rapidly for firing. The HPMC-1 packs a mighty punch at close and moderate ranges, causing objects and personnel to experience a kind of blowback while standing to the side of the weapon's discharge – such a situation requires success at a Moderate Tenacity Feat Test to remain standing. However, it loses some of its potency if the target is at long range, due to the natural blooming effect of energy weapons. An onboard targeting computer calculates enemy distances, optimizes the weapon's firing profile, and monitors the variant energy levels for optimum performance. These weapons are manufactured on the Migou Hive Ship.

The HPMC-1, in addition to the normal effects of HPM weapons, provides a strong electro-magnetic pulse against machines. An attack must do at least one point of damage for the EMP to be effective. Any machine affected by the EMP loses 2 Actions per turn for one to five minutes (roll one die), which can effectively reduce a pilot's Actions to zero. Only one Test needs to be made per turn when struck by the EMP and the effect is not cumulative. A target may again be affected on the turn following his recovery from the last shot.

The HPMC-1 is fed by an external D-Cell and also requires a bipod or tripod to fire. This weapon can be broken down for transport in five turns (15 seconds) and assembled again in seven turns (25 seconds). If the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the turn prior to making the attack, all range penalties are ignored.

Type: HPM Energy Cannon
Classification: Special
Caliber: None
Weight: 15.5 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 75/500/1000
Damage: +2 (+1) (Hybrid)
Shots: 2
Rounds: 18 (Energy)

AMAC-1 Squad Null Cannon

Perhaps the rarest of Migou squad-level heavy weapons is the AMAC-1 Null Cannon. An elite infantry company might carry one in their arsenal, but only if that company is properly supported by several other combat units. The Migou go to great lengths to protect the integrity of the antimatter containment field deployed in this weapon – allowing one of these weapons to fall into enemy hands is not an option. Like the HPMC-1, the AMAC-1 requires two soldiers to carry and operate effectively. Unlike the HPMC-1 however, the AMAC-1 does not suffer damage potential over longer ranges. The onboard targeting computer acquires the target and optimizes the firing solution as expected. However, it also monitors power consumption and will alert the operator when power levels drop below the safety

threshold. Losing power completely puts the weapon at risk of unleashing a catastrophic chain of events that might lead to an antimatter explosion, something that the Migou take very seriously and try to avoid at all costs, though there are many fail-safes in place to prevent this. These weapons are manufactured only on Hive Ships.

The AMAC-1 is fed by an external D-Cell and also requires a bipod or tripod to fire. This weapon can be broken down for transport in five turns (15 seconds) and assembled again in seven turns (25 seconds). If the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the turn prior to making the attack, all range penalties are ignored.

Type: Squad Null Cannon
Classification: Select
Caliber: None
Weight: 12.3 lbs loaded
Range (yards): 10/25/40
Damage: +1 (Integrity)
Shots: 1
Rounds: 9 (Energy)

STUN ROD



SURVIVAL BLADE



HOOK STAFF



HOOK STAFF -ELECTRICAL



Y-BLADE -CEREMONIAL



Y-BLADE



Y-BLADE -EXQUISITE



PRGT-35 GRENADE LAUNCHER



MTS-1 ROCKET LAUNCHER



MTS-2 MISSILE LAUNCHER



MTS-3 MISSILE LAUNCHER



AMRL ANTI-MATTER MISSILE LAUNCHER



SRR-2 SNIPER RAIL RIFLE



SNR-2 SNIPER NEUROTOXIN RIFLE



SGM-1 COMBAT SHOTGUN



PFTR-2 FLAMETHROWER



PFTR-1 FLAMETHROWER



PRGT-35 Grenade Launcher

The Migou expanded on another quaint Human idea by creating a weapon that could effectively hurl 35 mm grenades toward their enemies. The result was the PRGT-35 Grenade Launcher, which are single shot weapons with a breech-loading capability. Grenades are propelled by a brief but intense pulse of electromagnetic energy that is generated inside the barrel of the weapon – generating a muzzle velocity of over 260 feet per second. The interchangeable power supply for the weapon is stored in the stock. Aside from that, this is a fairly low-tech firearm with no onboard computer whatsoever. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Grenade Launcher
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	35 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	2.12 lbs unloaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	50/100/300
<i>Damage:</i>	Grenade Type
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

WPGT-35 Grenade Launcher

The WPGT-35 is very similar in function to the PRGT-35. It's a single round grenade launcher that uses electromagnetic energy to propel a 35 mm grenade toward its target. The difference with this weapon is that it is designed to mount on the underside of an assault rifle, giving a single combat soldier an impressive array of firepower. The WPGT-35 does not, however, rely on its own power source. It instead feeds off the internal power of the assault rifle, thus reducing the added mass and bulk to the weapon. An additional feature allows the onboard assault rifle computer to select the grenade launcher and fire using the main trigger. The advantage of a computerized firing solution for 35 mm grenades makes the WPGT-35 more effective than its cousin. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line plants.

<i>Type:</i>	Rifle Grenade Launcher
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	35 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	3.75 lbs unloaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	50/100/300
<i>Damage:</i>	Grenade Type
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	3

PFTR-1 Flamethrower

There's nothing unusual about Migou flamethrowers – they ignite a stream of flammable liquid propellant using a heated electrical coil and high-pressure tanks. The PFTR-1 was developed both as a psychological deterrent for prisoner crowd-control and to provide a back-up weapon for troops engaged in urban combat. A Migou is as likely to pull out his PFTR-1 to clear a room as he is a hand grenade. This weapon uses its onboard power supply to heat the ignition coil near the feed area of the barrel. A small, pressurized canister of flammable propellant at-

taches above the handle like an interchangeable magazine. The PFTR-1 can be fired six times before its canister empties. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Hand Flamethrower
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	Flame Gel
<i>Weight:</i>	3.0 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	5 yard stream
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (fire)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	6

PFTR-2 Flamethrower

The PFTR-2 functions the same as the PFTR-1, only this weapon is equipped with enough tank capacity to manage a sustained firefight. Equipped with a pack mounted external, tri-cylinder tank and fed through a two-handed “rifle-style” applicator, the PFTR-2 was designed as a support weapon used to assault fortified positions such as bunkers, pillboxes, and trenches. The operator can select to fire in effective short bursts or with long searing streams of flaming death sprayed back and forth like a fire hose. Either way, the horrific threat of being burnt alive like barbecued meat plays just as well against the enemy's psyche. Those not killed by the initial blast often find themselves breaking in panic anyway. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Flamethrower Rifle
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	Flame Gel
<i>Weight:</i>	6.75 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	15 yard stream
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (fire)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	6

MTS-1 Rocket Launcher

The MTS-1 is the smallest of the Migou single-person rocket launchers. It's an anti-armor/anti-mecha weapon capable of firing an unguided rocket equipped with a high explosive warhead. They're typically most effective against lightly armored and unarmored vehicles and mecha. The intention of the MTS-1 is to be lightweight, portable, and easy to use under combat conditions. Therefore, there is no computerized tracking or warhead programming involved. It is strictly a point and shoot weapon. MTS-1 uses a shaped-charge warhead for increased armor penetration, making this a nasty ambush weapon against New Earth Government scout mecha and recon groups. However, it's comparative inaccuracy due to an unguided projectile means that the weapon must be fired relatively close to its target. These weapons are manufactured in assembly line factories.

<i>Type:</i>	Rocket Launcher
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	40 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.25 lbs loaded

<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+0 (Hybrid)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

MTS-2 Missile Launcher

Migou weapons manufacturing also includes guided missiles. The MTS-2 is a man-portable anti-tank/anti-mecha guided missile launcher designed to hit and destroy heavily armored units. These are the weapons that truly give Migou troops on the ground a chance to face and defeat enemy armor. The onboard firing computer identifies the target and programs a firing solution sequence into the missile. The missile then uses an electro-optical imager to fix its flight path on the target, thus creating a “fire and forget” capability for the weapon. Therefore the Migou soldier can easily aim, fire, and duck for cover while the missile makes what flight corrections are necessary to hit the target. The one drawback to the MTS-2 is that the missile is vulnerable to enemy electronic countermeasures. These weapons are manufactured in Migou nanofactories.

<i>Type:</i>	Missile Launcher
<i>Classification:</i>	Common
<i>Caliber:</i>	70 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	5.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+0 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

MTS-3 Missile Launcher

The MTS-3 operates as a larger version of the MTS-2. The difference is that the MTS-3 is a tripod-mounted weapon that requires a squad or fire team to carry and deploy for firing. Its multi-stage high explosive warhead allows for greater armor penetration than its smaller cousin. This weapon can also be set to direct attack mode for use against stationary structures such as buildings. A built-in infrared imaging seeker allows the MTS-3 to be used effectively against low-flying aircraft with a peak altitude of 500 feet. Once fired, the missile’s internal rocket will not ignite until a safe distance from the operator is reached, at which point the missile becomes a live and deadly hunter. These weapons are manufactured in Migou nanofactories.

<i>Type:</i>	Missile Launcher
<i>Classification:</i>	Special
<i>Caliber:</i>	105 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	8.0 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

AMRL Anti-Matter Missile Launcher

The AMRL is hands-down the deadliest of the Migou’s anti-armor “fire and forget” weapons. The launcher itself is based

on the design of the MTS-3 and in fact requires a similar squad or fire team to carry and deploy in the battlefield. The missile itself however is far different. The multi-stage high explosive warhead has been replaced with a containment chamber designed to house one milligram of antimatter. On onboard radar system allows its guidance computer to not only calculate range and path to target, but also the possible threat of incoming counter missiles. Thus, the AMRL missile is capable of taking evasive action while in flight. The antimatter is released in a devastating explosion once target contact is made. These weapons are rare and only manufactured on the Migou Hive Ship.

<i>Type:</i>	Anti-Matter Missile
<i>Classification:</i>	Select
<i>Caliber:</i>	105 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	10 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	100/300/500
<i>Burst:</i>	10 yard primary/ 10 yard secondary
<i>Damage:</i>	+2 (Integrity)
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	1

MIGOU SPECIAL WEAPONS

Just as the New Earth Government has provided their soldiers weapons designed to allow an infantryman to take on armor or mecha, the Migou have done the same – beyond simple rocket launchers. Within the Migou armory, one will find their equivalent of analogs to nearly every grenade, missile launcher, missile, and recoilless rifle.

In game terms, use the same game statistics presented in Chapter Two to use these weapons in Migou hands.

MIGOU HAND WEAPONS

The Migou have a long traditional of martial showmanship. This is not limited simply to the skill of the individual, but also to the craftsmanship of the weapons used in personal combat. Even the most common Migou hand weapon is crafted with a care unlike anything seen in the Human spheres. Most Migou hand weapons are made of a light but strong polymer that can hold a razor sharp edge as well or better than any blade issued to a New Earth Government soldier. Migou hand weapons are prized trophies for NEG soldiers, though there are few Humans or Nazzadi that can claim any sort of skill with one. Most often, they are relegated to hanging on the wall to serve as proof of the soldier’s success in the field of battle.

Hook Staff

Hook staves are weapons of ancient design. With a length of eight to ten feet, a hook staff provides its wielder with a respectable reach. Curved, backward facing hooks extrude near the business end of the weapon, allowing a user to grab an opponent and fling him to the ground, potentially opening his defenses for a killing blow. Most modern hook staves have a telescoping feature that reduces their length to approximately three feet when not in use, making them more portable. A simple squeeze

by a wielder will cause it to extend to its full length of up to ten feet in less than a second. Some variants of the hook staff have an integral battery back that allows the weapon to not just beat the enemy senseless, but also stun him into submission.

In addition to doing normal damage, an electrical hook staff can stun targets. If an attack penetrates armor and does at least one point of Vitality damage, a target must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to avoid the stun effects. 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 when struck by the electrical hook staff 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.

Standard Hook Staff	
Type:	Club Weapon
Classification:	Common
Damage:	+1
Electrical Hook Staff	
Type:	Charged Club Weapon
Classification:	Special
Damage:	+1 / stun

Stun Rod

In truth, the majority of Migou prefer not to wield a stun rod. They are seen by most as lacking – not a surprise, given that most soldiers prefer the brutality of close combat. However, when there is need to capture or incapacitate, rather than kill, the stun rod is an efficient weapon of choice. Stun rods are nothing more than charged rods that shock an opponent into submission. These weapons rarely have the intricate filigree and expert workmanship associated with most Migou hand weapons.

In addition to doing normal damage, the Stun Rod can stun targets. If an attack penetrates armor and does at least one point of Vitality damage, a target must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to avoid the stun effects. 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 when struck by the stun rod 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.

Type:	Charged Club Weapon
Classification:	Common
Damage:	+0 / Stun

Survival Blade

The sole Migou hand weapon that seems to have been pulled from human design, the survival blade generally looks like any common combat knife used in the New Earth Government – though the blade is thicker and the hilt is designed for a Migou's appendages rather than a hand. The Migou use survival blades for utility in everyday tasks far more often than they are actu-

ally wielded in combat. Even so, the blades are razor sharp and heavy, and can kill every bit as well as any other hand weapon.

Type:	Bladed Weapon – Small
Classification:	Common
Damage:	+0

Y-Blade

These ornate weapons are the Migou equivalent of a Human sword, though they look quite different. The blades of these weapons are split down the middle along much of the length, giving them a fork-like appearance to many Humans. In most cases, both the interior and exterior edges of the blade are kept razor sharp. There are three common versions of the weapon, though the Ceremonial Y-Blade is rarely seen outside special rituals or elite gatherings.

Ceremonial Y-Blade	
Type:	Bladed Weapon – Med.
Classification:	Common
Damage:	+0

Standard Y-Blade	
Type:	Bladed Weapon – Med.
Classification:	Common
Damage:	+1

Exquisite Y-Blade	
Type:	Bladed Weapon – Med.
Classification:	Special
Damage:	+2

MIGOU ARMOR

The unique physiology of the Migou has posed a number of challenges related to the creation of effective combat armor for these alien insects. The biggest challenge lies in creating an armor that is light enough that the wearer is not anchored to the ground – especially given the higher gravity of Earth over Pluto. In addition, the armor must accommodate the delicate wings that give the Migou their ability to fly.

A derivative of Substance 91A7, classified by the New Earth Government as Substance 91B7 is the primary material used in the creation of Migou armor. The bio-mechanical material has a solid appearance, but in truth is made of a fine honeycomb mesh that allows even the heaviest-looking armor to be relatively light. The material is also relatively flexible, which is especially important around the wing and leg joints of a Migou soldier. Light armors leave the Migou wing membranes exposed, as this is necessary if the wearer is to fly under its own power – something vastly preferred by these creatures.

Sealed armor is a bit more difficult for the Migou. Exposing the wings necessary for them to fly violates the entire propose of the sealed environment the armor affords a wearer. To overcome this, a special compartment is built along the top spine of the armored suit, which can contain the wings and protect them from

adverse environmental conditions. When safe, doors on either side of this compartment open and allow the Migou to spread its wings and take flight.

The all important sensor cilia that hang from the 'mouth' of a Migou also posed a problem for Migou engineers when designing heavy armor. An important part of both the bugs' sensory network, as well as a key component in their ability to communicate, these cilia cannot simply be contained in an armored husk. However, they also cannot be exposed to the dangerous environments common on fields of battle, for doing so would effectively compromise the sealed integrity of the armor's self-contained environment. To solve this, Migou engineers created a special sealed compartment that gives the cilia the room they need to operate normally, but keeps them protected from toxic environments. Special filters keep toxins out while allowing safer gases in for the cilia to taste. Sensors inside the armored compartment can also read any communications the cilia are attempting to convey and transmit those to others nearby in a format their own armor can translate, allowing for nearly normal communications. Most Migou do not like their cilia contained, however, so whenever possible this portion of the armor is retracted back into the suit. For many Migou, this need to contain and protect their cilia are yet another reason to despise the upstart monkeys that have forgotten their place in the grand scheme of things.

ACA-2 Amphibious Armor

Unique in the armories of the Migou, the ACA-2 was brought into service due to the unfortunate necessity of operating under water – in order to take the fight to the Esoteric Order of Dagon. A variant of SECA-2 armor, the ACA-2 has been fitted with special gills that can filter oxygen and other necessary atmospheric elements from the water, while expelling built up toxins. In addition, the suit is equipped with micro A-Pods lifters that allow the Migou to swim; something the insects cannot normally accomplish. ACA-2 armor is fully sealed, with its own internal environment.

Type:	Hvy. Sealed Amphibious Armor
Classification:	Special
Protection:	+2/+2
Weight:	10.25 lbs

LBA-1 Light Ballistic Armor

The most common type of armor issued to Migou soldiers, the LBA-1 is a light, flexible armor that most of the alien creatures find comfortable. Many even prefer this armor over the heavier sealed armors, despite the better protection the heavier armors offer. The Light Ballistic Armor is fully exposed to the environment and offers no special protection for the delicate wings or their legs. This deficiency is offset by its incredibly light weight, allowing it to be easily tolerated for extended periods of time.

Type:	Light Ballistic Armor
Classification:	Common
Protection:	+1/+1
Weight:	7.50 lbs

SECA-1 Sealed Combat Armor

When faced with heavy combat conditions, Migou soldiers are issued SECA-1 armor suits. This armor affords the wearer a completely self-contained environment and protects his wings and legs from stray shots and shrapnel. The sealed environment continually refreshes its reservoirs while in a safe area and allows for up to four hours of operations in toxic atmospheres. As with other types of sealed armor, the wings can be either tucked safely under the armor plates or set free, allowing the Migou soldier to fly quickly across the battlefield.

Type:	Sealed Combat Armor
Classification:	Common
Protection:	+1/+1
Weight:	9.25 lbs

SECA-2 Medium Sealed Combat Armor

A more heavily armored version of the SECA-1, this model is issued in heavy regions of combat – especially if the soldier is expecting combat with powered armor infantry or beasts of the Rapine Swarm. Uncomfortable in the minds of most Migou, most wear the heavier armor for as short a period as possible, though extended use is not uncommon.

Type:	Sealed Combat Armor
Classification:	Common
Protection:	+2/+2
Weight:	12.25 lbs

SECA-3 Heavy Sealed Combat Armor

The heaviest armor in relatively regular use, it is also the least desirable in most bug minds. It is the least flexible of all Migou armor and is heavy enough that Migou are slowed down when in flight. This armor is generally only issued for especially dangerous missions and most soldiers receive special training to help them better deal with its necessary, but loathsome, rigid nature.

Migou wearing SECA-3 Armor move at one full category lower than normal.

Type:	Sealed Combat Armor
Classification:	Select
Protection:	+2/+2
Weight:	16.50 lbs



LBA-1 LIGHT BALLISTIC ARMOR



SECA-1 SEALED COMBAT ARMOR



SECA-2 MEDIUM SEALED
COMBAT ARMOR



SECA-3 HEAVY SEALED
COMBAT ARMOR



ACA-2 AMPHIBIOUS ARMOR

THE ESOTERIC ORDER OF DAGON

While the forces of the Esoteric Order of Dagon may not have developed the wide array of weapons that other armies have, they have created an effective array that works perfectly for their unique needs. After all, they're not interested in open warfare – just the guerilla tactics required for their goals.

Needler Pod

The Needler Pod is a common weapon among Esoteric Order forces. It is a pistol designed to fire large needles either singly or in volleys of up to six rounds at once. The deadly force of six such needles striking a target in such a tight group often results in the incapacitation or death of any but the most heavily armored of foes – not to mention that the needles can also be coated with s'pranth toxin. As the Needler Pod is designed to function equally well both on land and underwater, the weapon uses compressed gasses instead of electromagnetism to fire, which are built into each clip. The most notable limitation of the Needler Pod is its limited range, designed to accommodate the poor eyesight of Deep Ones.

The Needler Pod can fire volleys of two to six needles. A target defends once against the volley, not each needle. If hit, the Needler Pod does the standard damage for success plus one die for each needle in the volley, against which armor is rolled only once.

<i>Type:</i>	Needler – Medium
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	4.0 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	10/20/30
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 or volley (up to +6)
<i>Shots:</i>	1 or volley (up to 6)
<i>Rounds:</i>	36 (Needle)

Needler Rifle

The Needler Rifle is very similar to the Needler Pod in almost every characteristic, with one important exception. It is designed to fire volleys of up to twelve tightly grouped needles at a time, increasing its lethality by several orders of magnitude. It is very deadly in close quarters.

The Needler Rifle fires volleys of one to twelve needles – the target defends once against the volley, not against each needle. If hit, the Needler Rifle does the standard damage for success plus one die for each needle in the volley, against which armor is rolled only once.

<i>Type:</i>	Needler – Medium
<i>Caliber:</i>	10 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	8.25 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	10/20/30
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 or volley (up to +12)
<i>Shots:</i>	1 or volley (up to 12)
<i>Rounds:</i>	72 (Needle)

Scattergun

While the Needler Pod is more lethal than nearly any shotgun, its volleys are too tight to be useful as a room sweeper in close quarters. Given some of the Deep One's tactics, the Esoteric Order's scattergun has come in very useful for indoor or urban raids. It is an auto-loading shotgun with a good rate-of-fire, capable of firing either shot or slug rounds from its single-barrel – though there is no way to choose one over the other once the magazine has been loaded.

<i>Type:</i>	Shotgun
<i>Caliber:</i>	Slug or Shot
<i>Weight:</i>	7.25 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	Shot 15/30/45 Slug 20/40/60
<i>Damage:</i>	Shot +2 or Slug +3
<i>Shots:</i>	3
<i>Rounds:</i>	10

Sniper Rifle

Though Deep Ones do not have great eyesight, there is a need in their arsenal for an effective long-range killing tool. The Esoteric Order's sniper rifle has borrowed the zoom assist and targeting computer from the ESR-99. It has 200X digital telescopic scope with a built-in targeting computer that will compute targeting offsets based on wind, barometric pressure, and even the spin of the earth. This allows even Deep Ones to be snipers on land.

If the firer succeeds at a Challenging Marksman Test the round prior to an attack, all range and eyesight penalties are ignored.

<i>Type:</i>	Sniper Rifle
<i>Caliber:</i>	9 mm
<i>Weight:</i>	14.5 lbs loaded
<i>Range (yards):</i>	75/500/1000
<i>Damage:</i>	+3
<i>Shots:</i>	1
<i>Rounds:</i>	12

Stunner

The Esoteric Order has many targets it does not wish to kill, the most common being those who will be captured for breeding. To those lengths, they have developed their own form of advanced taser-type stunner. This carbine-style weapon fires barbed darts that carry their own charges, allowing them to be fired over longer distances with no electrical tether. It also carries a decently-sized clip of darts, so it can be used repeatedly.

In addition to doing normal damage, the stunner can stun targets. If an attack penetrates armor and does at least one point of Vitality damage, a target must succeed at a Hard Tenacity Feat Test to avoid the stun effects. 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 when struck by the stunner 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.



DEEP ONE SNIPER RIFLE



DEEP ONE SCATTERGUN



DEEP ONE STUNNER



DEEP ONE NEEDLER POD



DEEP ONE NEEDLER RIFLE



SRETHA KNIFE



ACRUTA SPEAR

Type:	Advanced Taser
Caliber:	9 mm
Weight:	4.25 lbs loaded
Range (yards):	10/25/40
Damage:	+1 (+ Stun)
Shots:	2
Rounds:	10 (Darts)

HAND WEAPONS

Acruta Spear

A modern version of a traditional weapon, the acruta spear is one of the first weapons all Deep One warriors are trained to wield. The bladed end of the spear is made from an extremely durable and sharp organic material found deep under the ocean, somewhat akin to a black coral, known as r'rucha. Shaping r'rucha is challenging and a secret passed down from generation to generation. The ultimate result is an eighteen-inch blade that is extremely sharp, serrated, and barbed. Though once attached to coral or stone hafts, modern metals and composites are used today. Deep One warriors can spin acruta spears in a frenzy, utilizing both the haft and the blade in their attacks. They have been known to hurl them short distances as well. In other parts of Deep One society, acruta spears are still also used in ceremonies.

Type:	Large Blade – Organic
Range (yards):	2/5/10
Damage (Blade):	+2
Damage (Pole):	0

Sretha Knife

A smaller counterpart to the acruta spear, the sretha knife is a wicked curved foot-long blade also shaped from r'rucha. The haft of such blades have always been mounted in metals or carefully wrapped, to assure that those who have not yet come into their scale would not be harmed by coral or r'rucha. Though oddly shaped, there is a balance that can be mastered by those who desire to hurl the weapon. Like the acruta spear, the sretha knife is still used in Deep One ceremonies, most often the agent of bloodletting or sacrifice.

Type:	Small Blade – Organic
Range (yards):	2/5/10
Damage:	+1

POISON

S'pranth Toxin

Many aquatic organisms are capable of producing potent neurotoxins. What the Deep Ones have come to name s'pranth toxin comes from an especially poisonous form of a deep sea urchin-like creature. The warriors of the Esoteric Order of Dagon synthesize s'pranth toxin into a paste that they use to coat their sretha knives, acruta spears, and needler weapons. This paste is designed to not wash off in water. If a weapon coated in s'pranth toxin does at least one point of Vitality damage, the poison takes effect. Those affected must succeed at a Challenging Tenacity Feat Test or lose 2 Actions each turn for the next one to five minutes (roll half a die). The effects of s'pranth toxin are not cumulative and a target may only be affected again on a turn following his recovery from the last dose.

ARMOR

Deep One armor is based on the armor manufactured by the New Earth Government, though modified for amphibious use. For more information regarding the important differences and capabilities of combat armor, see p. 38. The armor presented here may also utilize the optional combat armor systems on p. 41. As Deep Ones, as well as Hybrids in advanced stages of transformation, can breathe both air and water, combat armor is designed to be flooded with either. Streamlining and fins make it so that user's experience little, if none, resistance when operating underwater.

Och'wil

This light-weight yet sturdy material is crafted using arcanotechnology pioneered by and known only to the Deep Ones. Filmy to the eye, it provides protection when worn as clothing. Hybrids wear full outfits, while Deep Ones usually use hooded cloaks. This protection can combine with armored vests, but not with combat armor.

<i>Type:</i>	Arcanotech Armor
<i>Weight:</i>	Negligible
<i>Protection:</i>	+1/+1

Light Armor

The Esoteric Order's light combat armor provides good overall protection, while remaining comfortable for extended wear. It does not hamper a wearer's mobility in any way – even underwater. The EOD makes versions for both Deep Ones and Hybrids in various stages of transformation.

<i>Type:</i>	Fiber combat armor
<i>Weight:</i>	12.5 lbs.
<i>Protection:</i>	+2/+2
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Claws)

Battle Armor

A more advanced version of the light armor, EOD battle armor takes things up a notch. It does, however, hamper mobility – wearer's incur a -1 Penalty to Agility while wearing it – and is only made for Deep Ones.

<i>Type:</i>	Fiber combat armor
<i>Weight:</i>	19.5 lbs.
<i>Protection:</i>	+3/+3
<i>Damage:</i>	+1 (Claws)



DEEP ONE LIGHT ARMOR



DEEP ONE HEAVY ARMOR

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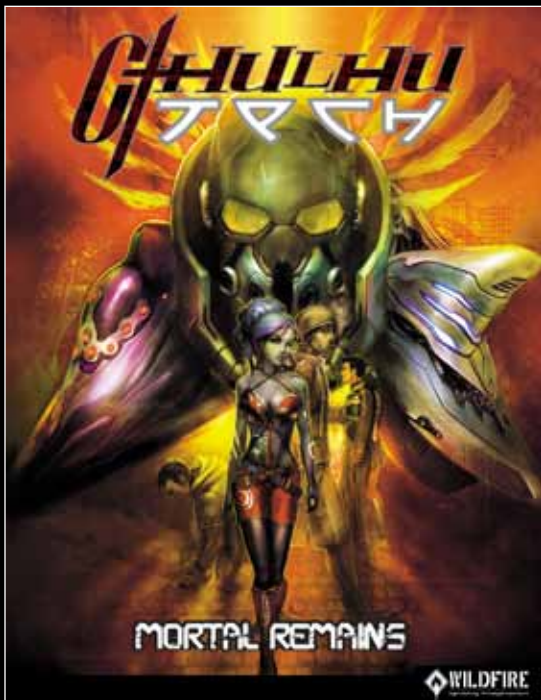
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