



WEIRD LORE

A Numenera compatible
metacampaign setting
by Fabio Passamonti

Requires the Numenera corebook
from Monte Cook Games



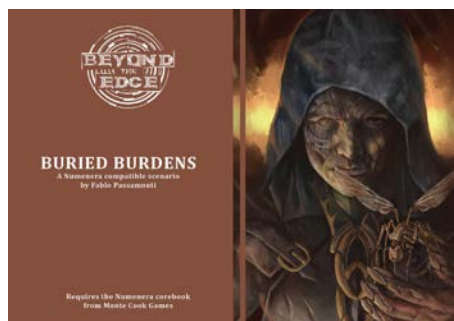
BEYOND THE EDGE

Beyond The Edge is a useful Numenera compatible digital resource for your roleplaying campaign. Every installment brings you in-depth characters, mortal perils and breathtaking locations. Each issue offers new game options, creatures and thrilling adventures – everything you need to take your campaign beyond the edge...of the known world.

Beyond The Edge is optimized for tablet and on screen reading.

BEYOND THE EDGE BACK ISSUES

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ISSUE #1: BURIED BURDENS

The townsfolk of Ample Quarry make their livelihood from quartz mining in the Scattered Lands beyond The Beyond. Once part of the Kingdom of Xendalia, that civilization collapsed millennia ago and what remains juts awkwardly and mysteriously from the landscape – pillars and pylons of rocks, ceramics or metal. While mining proves thankless and unprofitable, the people of Ample Quarry survive – but, now brutish ne'er-do-wells threaten their simple lives...

Buried Burdens is a scenario for 4-6 players. It comes complete with:

- Two new dangerous creatures, plus a lot of characters and items to add to any campaign.
- Three detailed adventure locations.
- Imaginative, full color art and maps.



ISSUE #2: UNKNOWN WONDERS

Unknown Wonders provides Numenera players and GMs with a choice of options for better customizing characters. It comes complete with:

- New Character customization options -
- Character Heritage feature (You have a quasi artificial body, but how? You can alter your phase state and become ethereal, but why? You're able to control beasts, but since when? Your heritage is the answer).
- Seven Descriptors, like Cooperative, Mysterious and Resourceful.
- Seven Foci to make your character truly unique (e.g. Duplicate Himself/Herself, Has a Shade Twin or Is a Living Assimilator).

New Technology -

- Ten Cyphers, from the Bloodline Analyzer to the Voice Trapper.
- Five Artifacts, such as the Psychometric Probe or the Technophobia Inducer.

WEIRD LORE

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INTRODUCTION

"I choose weird stories because they suit my inclination best – one of my strongest and most persistent wishes being to achieve, momentarily, the illusion of some strange suspension or violation of the galling limitations of time, space, and natural law which for ever imprison us and frustrate our curiosity about the infinite cosmic spaces beyond the radius of our sight and analysis."

– H.P. Lovecraft, Notes on Writing Weird Fiction

Mounting an expedition to the lost site of Stillness, in The Hanging Pelagus, is a complex endeavor: maps, cyphers and equipment are certainly needed. Whose consciousness does the mad Magister Taranthius probe with his lab instruments? The theft of a dream in Mirage propels adventurers into the depths of the Gorge City, in search of a gang of dream dealers. A wealthy merchant hires adventurers to recover his daughter from the mischievous grasp of the ethereal gypsies. Abhumans attack a scout of the Fortress of Dralla, and the wounded sentry begs the heroes to take a secret dispatch to the Lochagos. An old scholar recruits explorers for his last journey into the heart of the Living Storm of Ba'tla.

Every day, a thousand adventures unfold in the Scattered Lands. Brave souls stand and fall; *weird lore* is unearthed or stolen.

The Scattered Lands are a hotbed of *weird* activity, a cauldron full of character options, an ideal location to set a single adventure or an entire campaign.

Weird Lore is essentially a great garden of ideas: you could stop by and pick up a single flower – its value unscathed – or you may linger a little longer and enjoy a well-rounded experience.

Each idea is designed to be used as a self-referential option, but you can combine two or more of them to create a resource pool, or use them all as a coherent meta-campaign setting.

Chapter 1: How to Use this Sourcebook, tells you how to do those things. It gives GMs and players hints and tools to make the best use of *Weird Lore* options.

Chapter 2: The Scattered Lands, discusses the region's historical and geographical background, providing an orientation to its many

peculiarities. It includes suggestions and information useful to the GM who wants to set a campaign in the Scattered Lands.

Chapter 3: Weird Lore, it's the bulk of the sourcebook. It presents five *weird themes*, macro contents or sandboxes, each divided into three sections (General Overview, PCs Resources and GM Info) with distinct layout markings.

Throughout this supplement, you'll see:



This symbol when the text refers to a General Overview section.



This one when it contains PCs Resources.



This one when the material is for the GM only.





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CHAPTER ONE: HOW TO USE THIS SOURCEBOOK

A MODULAR SOURCEBOOK

Weird Lore is more than a simple weird-themed rule expansion, it include many useful tools to integrate the Scattered Lands' storylines into your Numenera campaign. It's a modular sourcebook, allowing the GM to use any character, event and place independently or as a part of a majestic fresco. Your adventures can be gradually shaded with mystery or, in any moment, weird events may be at hand, that player characters may face if watchful and prepared for anything.

THE METACAMPAIGN SETTING

A meta-campaign setting is essentially a microcosm, a naturally or artificially-created fictional area that exist within the spatial-temporal bounds of another world. It stitches itself to the main campaign setting (in this case the Ninth World). The exact merging rules are up to the GM. The Scattered Lands could simply be an unexplored region beyond the Beyond, an alternate instance in space-time known as a pocket dimension, or the result of a noetic experiment conducted by an ancient cabal, who had intentions to forge a new world.

All that exists in the main campaign setting also exists in the microcosm, but the reverse is not always true. Bits of technology leftover from past civilization, Aeon Priests, and wandering mutants are a common sight in the Scattered Lands, whereas the **Hypnagogic Guild** (page 29), the **thulian race** (page 43) and the **Ethereal Gypsies** (page 36) do not exist neither in the Steadfast nor the Beyond, unless – of course – the GM decides otherwise.

Degrees of Weirdness

There are three viable options to explain the true nature of the Scattered Lands, each marked by a degree of weirdness (feeble, moderate and intense). The first two describe an “objective reality”, the third presents a “subjective reality”. The final choice only depends on how the GM wants to run the campaign.

Feeble Weirdness: If the GM chooses this option, the Scattered Lands are simply some other vast, unexplored region beyond the Beyond. A strange area perhaps, filled with ancient mysteries and scarred by an inscrutable past, but not too different from any other odd part of the Ninth World. It's the straightest way to use *Weird Lore* and possibly the simplest since it requires few efforts from the GM. At the same time, it's probably the least rewarding way to introduce the Scattered Lands

Moderate Weirdness: The Scattered Lands exist within a pocket universe contained within the Ninth World, an alternate space-time bubble that consists of a collection of land pieces called “Lost Aeons”. Brought together by a mysterious force known only as “The Wyrd”, each Lost Aeon is a small world (or era of the world) itself. Each connects to the others by ethereal bridges, conduits built by the Ethereal Gypsies to span the physical boundaries of each Aeon.

The first travellers to escape from the grasp of The Wyrd were some clever adventurers who fashioned a way to traverse the Lost Aeons using powerful transdimensional knowledge. As time went by, they returned and chose to live in the Lost Aeons and took the name of Ethereal Gypsies.

The Wyrd is the unknowable force that controls the Scattered Lands. Its exact nature is vague, but it's probably a personification of the Datasphere: a huge, quasi-omnipotent A.I., a chronicler designed to create and nourish a “library of universes”. Therefore, the PCs could be natives of the Scattered Lands, prisoners or just explorers who run (intentionally or not) into a Lost Aeon.

Intense Weirdness: The Scattered Lands are not “real”, at least not in the sense we define our existence. They're the result of a complex noetic experiment called “Blending Qualia” (from the Latin adverb “qualis”, meaning “what sort” or “what kind”) conducted by the Hypnagogic Guild. The lodge's aim was to prove the ultimate power of the mind over matter, to demonstrate that if something is conceivable then it's possible and that the reality could be subjective.



The Blending Qualia succeeded, but that left the Guild's philosophers trapped within their own creation. The Scattered Lands are a prison world, a golden cage in which the PCs too find themselves confined. The synthetic world of the Blending Qualia is constantly growing, its ontogenesis no longer under the Guild's control.

In this option, the Hypnagogic Guild is the main enemy, since its members are trying to reboot the "subjective reality" even if – as the result of doing this – it will collapse, sentencing all its residents to annihilation.

It's the most thrilling but challenging option since it forces the PCs to live in an artificial world. They're a figment of the creation of greater minds than their own. If and when they realize the truth, they could choose to live on or to seek a means of escape from this ersatz universe.

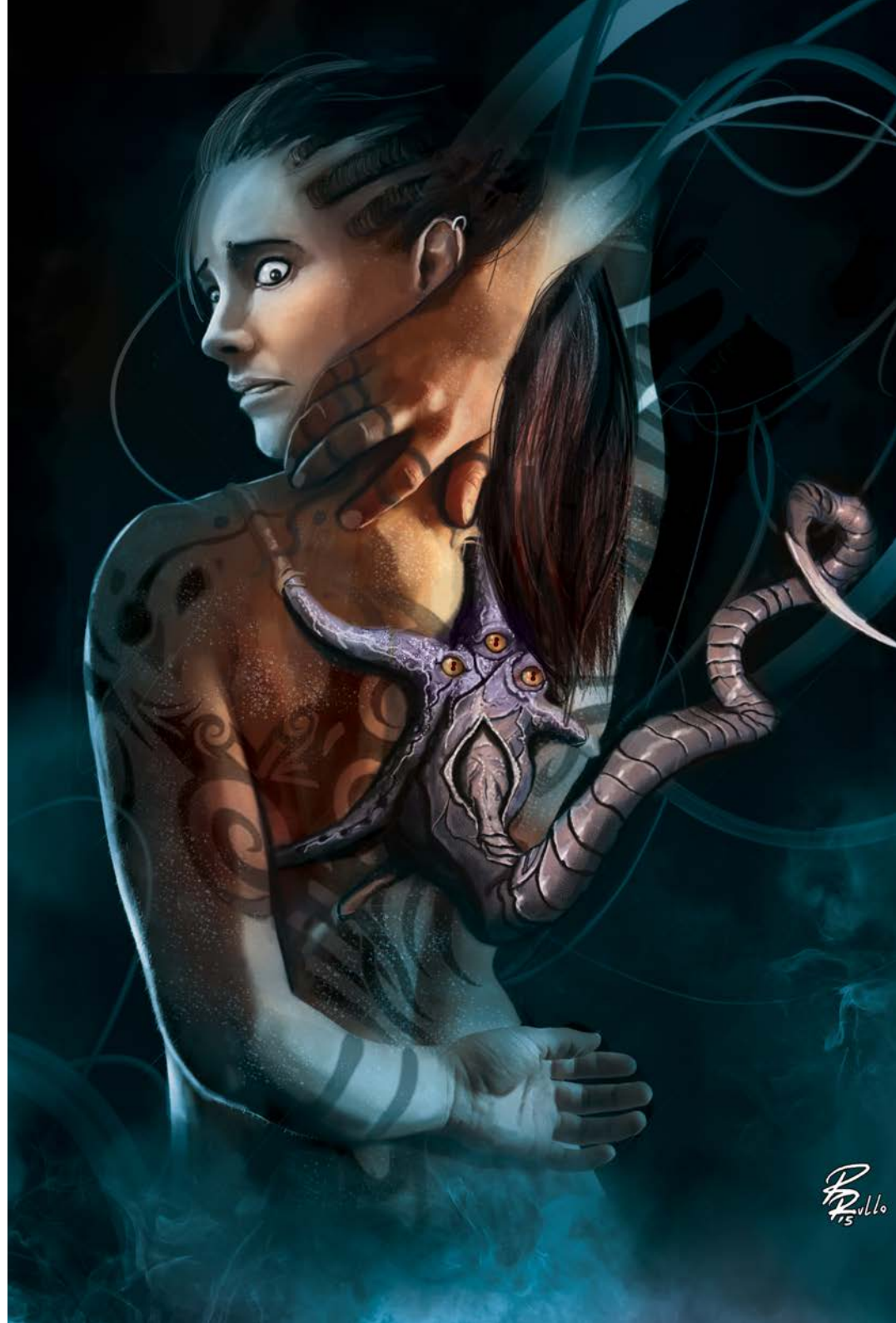
WEIRDNESS IN A ROLE PLAYING GAME

The GM has the power to define the precise feel and flavor of the Ninth World for their game, but Numenera is meant to be weird. Weird can be disturbing, fascinating or a combination of both. The Numenera corebook contains many references and hints covering fundamental aspects of this topic; it provides the necessary means to define effects and consequences of dread and wonder within the game, both in combat and social interaction.

Conditions: Fictional diseases are nonexistent medical conditions. They may be mental disorders or physical illnesses, have evolved naturally, been engineered by artificial means (created as biological weapons), or be any malady that came forth from the abuse of technology.

Some examples include:

- Deadly crystalline ultraterrestrial agents that only function within a narrow pH range (like the Green Line of Death in *The Andromeda*



Rullo
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Strain, by Michael Crichton).

- A virus that feeds from its host's memories (*ARIA*, by Geoff Nelder).
- A conscious self-modifying organism capable of inducing mutations in any life form (*Speaker for the Dead*, by Orson Scott Card).
- A neurological illness which causes an awakening of primordial behaviors (*Harlequin Rex*, by Owen Marshall).
- A nanotech pathogen inducing development of new sensory organs, which causes synesthetic psychosis in hosts (*Dark Benediction*, by Walter Miller Jr.)

When you read a science fiction tale, you often come across horrid conditions or weird diseases. Outbreaks of such rare sickness are a fascinating theme and a powerful gaming tool to convey weirdness.

Creatures: Every Numenera creature is associated with a certain degree of weirdness or is an expression of an unusual concept. Some are dreadful, like the **abykoses** (page 230 of the **Numenera corebook**) or the **erynth grask** (page 240 of the **Numenera corebook**), others are an enigma and could fuel an entire campaign, as the **philetis** (page 252 of the **Numenera corebook**). The first type of creature is best used in brief, terrifying encounters that feel like otherworldly phenomenon; they make the players feel as though they have stepped over the threshold of some unimaginable horror. Creatures of the other kind work best as narrative tools. Such creatures hint that their mere existence renders humanity an irrelevance in the face of a vast and indifferent universe, filled with unfathomable schemes and greater designs.

For example:

- Detecting a mysterious transmission from nearby ruins, the Aeon Priests of a localclave asks the PCs to investigate. Inside the complex, they find a strange, near spherical device, somehow activated by recent geomagnetic activity. As soon as they begin to uncover hints of its purpose, a horrid creature (an erynth grask) emerges from a

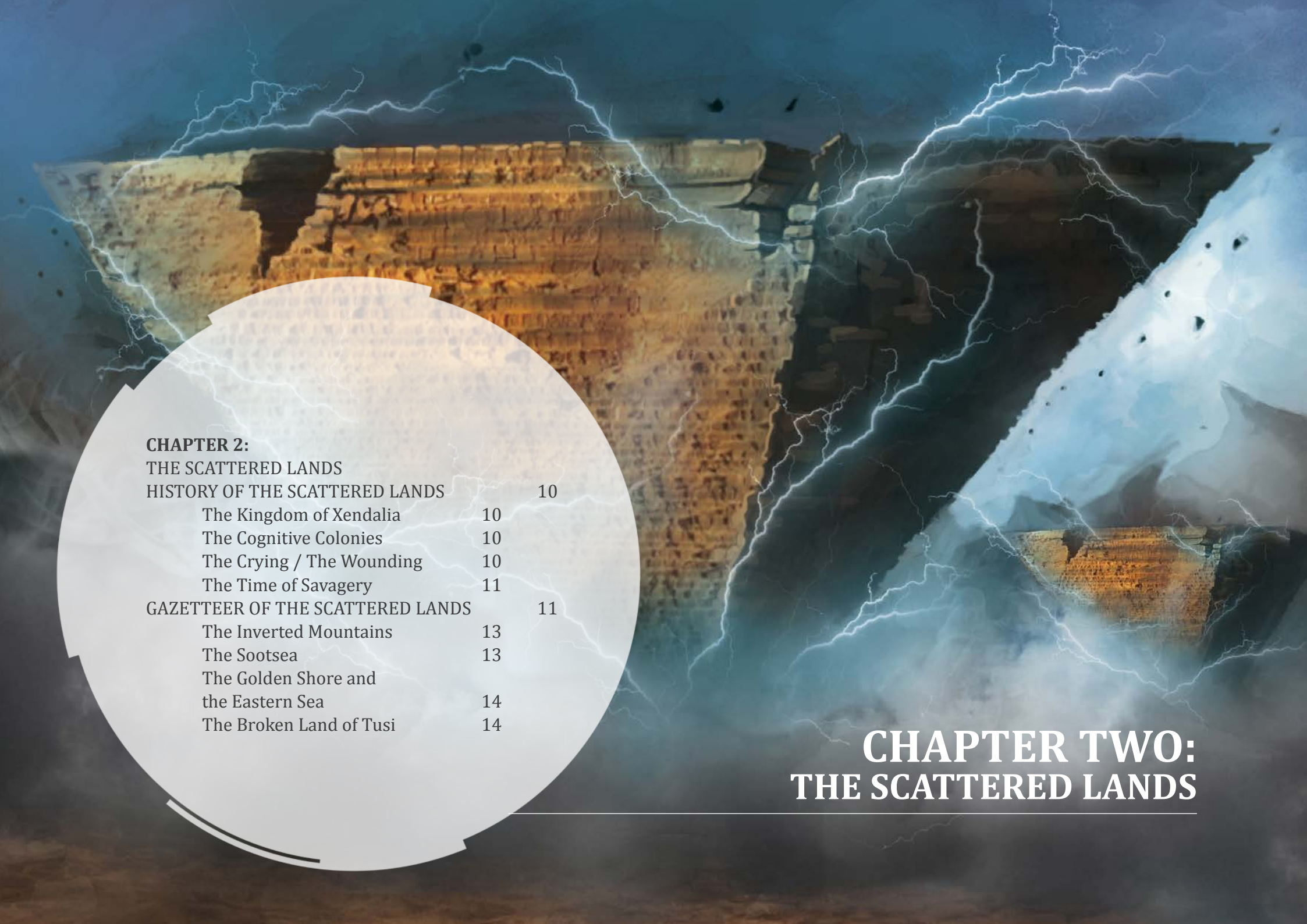
tiny wormhole inside the machinery and begins to hunt them down in a deadly game of hide and seek.

- One of the PCs stumbles into a bizarre cloaked figure (a philetis). The creature says something creepy and apparently senseless like "*I'm imagining the waves of blood rushing over this city*" or "*How long is it since that duty was thrown upon you?*", before disappearing into a dark alley. As he tries to follow it, the PC becomes a helpless witness to a major crime and starts the adventure.

Discoveries: Discoveries provide potential for entire adventures, filled with mystery and unsettling reality. Whether landscapes peppered with inexplicable alien plants, craters lit with unquenchable flames, rivers shimmering with colour that excites and disturbs every sense, or strange creatures lurking and hunting far beyond their natural homes - all are good examples of wondrous strangeness. The strange, at odds with the mundane and expected, creates a sense of bewilderment, unease and disquiet. The weird defeats understanding and mocks human limitation in their failure to understand. A weird adventure must eschew fixed tropes of the supernatural and feed into surrealism and symbolism.

Esoterics, mutations and special abilities: To create a truly weird adventure and keep the game thrilling, never use the same idea twice. Provide NPCs and creatures with ever-changing weird esoterics and abilities, focusing on their impact on the story. Your adventure must present an uncanny realm, a country without borders, especially if you're using a creature or an NPC the PCs have already met with. A ruthless bandit chief that has been defeated by the PCs came back as a mutant; a particular **sarrak** (page 255 of the **Numenera corebook**) has somehow developed the unique ability to transfer its consciousness into electrical devices and start haunting one of the PCs' artifacts.





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CHAPTER TWO: THE SCATTERED LANDS

HISTORY OF THE SCATTERED LANDS

Over the course of the aeons, cultures have risen and fallen time and again in the Scattered Lands. Their many marks are visible everywhere, each leaving a score of mysteries to fascinate and terrify travelers.

The Kingdom of Xendalia

Thousands of years before the present day, the lands were home to a great realm, the Kingdom of Xendalia (which sounds like “New-days” in Truth). Little is known about its inhabitants, except for their renowned “magical” prowess (their mastery of biochemistry was so great they actually managed to create silicon-based lifeforms). Some scholars speculate that the xendalians were not humans at all, but visitants fleeing a dying world and striving to invasively transform their new home. According to such theories, based upon archeological studies of Xendalian ruins, these entities came from a remote star called Aalon (“Ammonia-world”), a cold world with a reddish-orange atmosphere and gold-bronzed oceans, covered in black vegetation.

Whatever the truth, Xendalians left nothing but odd-looking ruins, their civilization annihilated by a self-inflicted ecological cataclysm.

Some lesser-known theories about the Xendalians include:

- They were silicon-based organisms with skeletons like Earth’s vertebrate. They had multiple brains, extremely acidic ammonia-based body fluids, a vivid blue coloration and a high-toxicity.
- They possessed a hive mind of sorts.
- The ecological havoc that wiped out their kingdom was caused by powerful devices, specifically conceived to transform Aalon’s environment.
- [The Living Storm of Ba’tla \(page 17\)](#) and the [Sootsea \(page 13\)](#) may have originated from the disaster.
- Some Xendalians managed to survive the cataclysm by hibernating on a remote flying station known as [Kuk’O’Kura \(page 17\)](#), which means “Watchful-Slumber”.

The Cognitive Colonies

In time, foreign colonists began to explore the Scattered Lands. A wave of psychically-endowed humans arrived onboard incredible hypno-driven vessels - Iora, Kestrel and Jabiru - to the Lands’ northern shores. They pushed forward and explored the southern areas, seeking land to settle and an urban center to erect. As a result, they came upon a narrow bay and built a city above the inlet, naming it Somnium, since it seemed as their long-sought dream was becoming a reality.

Over the next five hundred years, Somnium grew into a powerful and wealthy metropolis. As an ever-growing city-state, ruled by powerful psychics, it easily emerged as the undisputed leader of the Scattered Lands. They subjugated native human and abhuman tribes, heedless of resistance, one at a time.

HYPNO-DRIVEN VESSELS

According to the Hypnagogic Manuscript, the vessels Iora, Kestrel and Jabiru were “psychotronic vehicles” (although these words possess various conflicting translations), devices or structures for “transplanting” persons and things. If the legends are true, their engines were propelled by pure willpower or some other mind-fuelled force. It seems they shared features with certain teleportation devices, but their true nature has never been confirmed.

The Crying / The Wounding

It happened suddenly while the colonists’ civilization was at its height. Historians have to rely upon oral history and folktales, as no accurate written records of the gruesome event that wiped out the Cognitive Colonies remain.

It started with The Crying, a surprisingly high drop-off in the birth



of colonists with psychic potential. It seemed that the migration from their original homeland (or dimension) progressively had weakened the colonists' gift. Six hundred years after its foundation, Somnium inevitably became a corrupted city-state, where masses of lowlives were ruled by few hedonistic and ruthless psionic-tyrants.

An impact-event known as "The Wounding" was the final straw that pushed Somnium past the tipping point; in fact, it proved the civilization's deathblow. A strange, artificial celestial body appeared in low orbit and then promptly exploded, sending down a rain of debris. Survivors called it Doradruus, the "Star of Ill-Omen". Through either direct atmospheric injection of small particles or showers of ejecta from large impacts, the atmosphere was suddenly filled with smoke and soot, causing cold weather and reduced sunlight for a period of years, followed by a stifling greenhouse effect.

Somnium suffered greatly and was abandoned. For over three hundred years, superstitious folk shunned the ruined city, muttering about the "curse of the sky gods". Despite the superstitions, the location had considerable geographic and economic value. The few psychics who survived formed a guild and sent a force to rebuild a new 'polis, inside and above the gorge created by the Wounding, where once there was a bay. It was they who gave the city its actual name, **Mirage** (page 23).

They played a critical role in the reconstruction, and to this day the **Hypnagogic Guild** (page 29) remains one of the most influential forces in Mirage.

The Time of Savagery

The Wounding deeply affected the stability and social cohesion of the Scattered Lands, an already highly volatile region.

The "Time of Savagery" is a historical periodization that emphasizes the social and economic deterioration following the decline of the Cognitive Colonies. This period is also characterized by the scarcity of

written records, for most areas of the Scattered Lands.

People often speak of the Time of Savagery as a period of corruption and brutality. Truth be told, it represents an age of rebirth, redemption and new hope, as communities arose and evolved. Nomad merchants flock to the region through the Nameless Road, and Mirage constantly prospers and grows.

Only a few Xendalian facilities remain, buried deep beneath the sands of time. It's believed that their curse still lingers above the verge of the horizon. Occasionally numenera-hunters venture into the haunted ruins that lie amid the Broken Land of Tusi, but the majority of the inhabitants know little or nothing of the past that haunts the Scattered Lands.

Today, Mirage stands as a center for trade, diplomacy and intrigue, a city with an important role to play in the future of the Scattered Lands.

GAZETTEER OF THE SCATTERED LANDS

The Scattered Lands could be further east from the **Clock of Kala** (**Beyond the Beyond**, page 213 of the **Numenera** corebook) or on a distant continent – supposing that the GM chooses them to be on the Earth. They're bounded by the Inverted Mountains and the Sootsea to the north and west, the Eastern Sea to the east and the Frozen Fields of Aspic to the south.

Their landscape varies greatly, from wastelands and forbidding mountains in the north to frostbitten deserts in the south.

The climate is influenced strongly by nanoengineering-post fallout interactions which often manifest themselves in extreme (and weird) weather events such as soot-hurricanes, ground-propagated electricity and acidic or molten glass rains.



THE “STAR OF ILL-OMEN”

Was Doradruus the result of a catastrophic visitant spacecraft crash landing? The explosion of a malfunctioning man-made orbital weapon or a Xendalian drifting space station? These are all good options; the best choice, of course, depends on how much *weird* graces your campaign.

Feeble Weirdness: The moon-like satellite was a damaged visitant vessel that exploded before landing / The Doradruus was one of the last Xendalian clockwork devices, an environment modification module.

Moderate Weirdness: The Star of Ill-Omen was a ruinous glitch of the Wyrld. Reorganizing its partition of universes it accidentally overlapped two different Lost Aeons, provoking an unexpected reaction / The Doradruus was the first ethereal bridge to be opened. Its unwary disclosure resulted literally in a “rain of matter”.

Intense Weirdness: Trying to revert the experiment which gave them their long-sought new world, the philosophers who performed the Blending Qualia caused a minor collapse of reality. Doradruus is simply the name of the scholar who lead the reverse-thought experiment.





Weird Feature: As weird as it may seem, in the Scattered Lands the sun rises in the west and sets in the east, as a consequence of...

- The library of universes (Lost Aeons) being arranged in a strange, non-human thinking way, resulting in some unnatural visuals (Moderate Weirdness).
- A perception/orientation error caused by the Blending Qualia experiment (Intense Weirdness).

This feature is an easy way to boost the sense of weirdness among your players. Yet – as with all other strange cues – it must be used subtly to evoke the greatest response. If the PCs are native of the Scattered Lands, they will think nothing strange of the sun rising in the west.

The Inverted Mountains

The Inverted Mountains are a series of dark upside down pyramid-like monoliths. Their height varies from 60 to 3,000 feet (18 to 1,000 meters) and the top end of each structure merges into the ground. Obviously they're not natural, but the exact structural engineering that keeps them balanced remains a mystery. Perhaps the effect relates to their strange metallic nature and to the strong electromagnetic fields that radiate from them. Travellers throughout the mountains find navigation perilously hard, due to the frequent electrical deluges that rage all around, damaging people and technology. Disorientation caused confuses the senses, which serves to compound the problem.

The few who make it out alive speak of horrid creatures and devilish aberrations who hide amid the dark soot seas flowing through the monoliths.

The Sootsea

Many believe the Sootsea haunted. Actually, it's a massive cloud composed of smoke and sentient sediments, created somehow by the Wounding. It's a persistent numenera and that snakes its way in

streamers among trees and crags, covering the entire north-western border. For reasons unknown – perhaps related to the atmospheric pressure and temperature – it seems unable to either leave the area or grow in length. Still, it's quite concerning, especially considering the poisonous potential of its particles.

More disturbingly, it seems translucent dark shapes appear all over the Sootsea. Travellers can hear victims' screams, those who succumbed to the Wounding endlessly echoing their historical trauma. The mist prevents travellers from discerning more. However, a foul smell pervades and those who venture too close to the cloud simply lose their will to live or return home changed, trying to fulfill a rather dark and mysterious agenda.

Weird Feature: The Sootsea may be...

- A particularly aggressive and strangely persistent form of the Iron Wind (Feeble Weirdness).
- A security measure designed by the Wyrd to protect the Lost Aeon Library from the inside (Moderate Weirdness).
- Some other philosophers of the Hypnagogic Guild, attempting (from the outside) to affect those trapped inside the Blending Qualia fictional universe. This could explain why those who experience the cloud effects start acting weird, as their mind is being controlled by others (Intense Weirdness).

The Golden Shore and the Eastern Sea

The Golden Shore, also known as the Sundown Coast, stretches along the Eastern Sea from the Sinkhole down to the bay of Jaws at Ark-N in the south. The Golden Shore gets its name from the color of its coastline and beaches, always bathed in the light of the dying sun.

The Eastern Sea is the largest body of water in the Scattered Lands. Its major areas include the Sinkhole on the north (a mysterious, huge space between waters, overlooked by floating islands) the Storm

Reaches on the east, and the Liquid Womb on the south, where – as brine from the sea mitochondria-rich ice sinks – tendril-shaped icicles appear, starting new life-forms on the seafloor with a random touch.

The Broken Land of Tusi

No one knows if the disaster was caused by a numenera weapon from an enemy nation or a doomsday device of Xendalians' own design. The catastrophe may have been intentional or an accident. In the end, the outcome was the same: Tusi, once known as "The Barn of the Kingdom", evaporated in a blast of radiation. It just disappeared on the "Day of the Cleansing". Now it's a toxic desert, a place marked by sand heat-fused into jagged lakes of glass. It stands as a grim reminder of the awful past. Like a wound that bleeds afresh, the ground is broken and spills poisonous hydrofluoric acid. Petrified bodies of various creatures are part of the landscape, as a vast, monumental graveyard. There's no safe path in the Broken Land, only the Nameless Road, an ever-changing trail hidden among the dusty dunes, created by pressure gradient changes and lime-light intensity interactions. Navigating the Broken Lands it's more about empiric chemistry than geography. Numenera effects continue to rain upon the land like storms that never dissipate, hampering travel and isolating one community from the other.

WHERE DO THE SUN RISE?

You may have heard that the Sun "rises in the east and sets in the west". Well, that's a generalization (one that fits for role playing games). Actually, the Sun only rises due east and sets due west on 2 days of the year – the spring and fall equinoxes. On other days, the Sun rises either north or south of "due east" and sets north or south of "due west." Each day the rising and setting points change slightly. At the summer solstice, the Sun rises as far to the northeast as it ever does, and sets as far to the northwest. Every day after that, the Sun rises a tiny bit further south.





THE SOOTSEA

PELAGUS

INVERTED MOUNTAINS

AMPLE
QUARRY

BROKEN LANDS
OF TUSI

TARANTHIUS' LAB

FORTRESS
OF DRALLA

THE FROZEN FIELD
OF ASPIC

THE NAMELESS ROAD

MIRAGE

GOLDEN SHORE

KUNK'OKURA

THE LIVING STORM
OF BATLA

NORTH

LIQUID WOMB

BAY OF JAWS

ARK-N

THE
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CHAPTER THREE: WEIRD LORE

KUNK'OKURA

"That is not dead which can eternal lie, And with strange aeons even death may die."

– H.P. Lovecraft, The Nameless City



GENERAL OVERVIEW

Kunk'Okura is a hovering megastructure, suspended in the atmosphere. It levitates above the Earth by magnetism, amid the ammonia clouds of the Living Storm of Ba'tla, where the air is toxic for humans to breathe. To stay in the air, two gigantic generators shoot earthward electric rays that by reaction with the Earth produce the force to keep the outpost aloft.

It was conceived to allow Xendalian survivors a permanent lab, a place from which to rebuild their former glory; in the end, it became a prison.

This crystalline octagonal structure was once a research compound, teeming with frantic activity. Now it's dark angular corridors and spacious rooms resonate with sepulchral emptiness, as if death had passed that way. Yet there's still life in Kunk'Okura, for in the shadows of this tomb something stirs in its sleep, waiting to awaken once more. Waiting to be discovered.



PCS' RESOURCES

RACIAL OPTION: XENDALIAN

Players can create Xendalian characters if the GM allows it. As per all non-human races, Xendalian is a descriptor.

Xendalian characters present significant role-playing challenges, so

it's recommended that new players do not create such PCs.

Xendalians are translucent skinned creatures with spider-like bodies. They have four pointed legs, a thin chest, two elongated multi-jointed arms with no hands and a flat, rounded plate that function as a featureless head.

Its surface moves continuously, creating a disturbing ripple effect. It has been described as *"a pool in which a rock was thrown."*

Even though Xendalians lack prehensile organs, the end of each of their arm can produce a weak, yet precise, electromagnetic field, which comes in the semblance of a pair of hands. They're 6.5 feet tall (2 m) and heavy, yet slender.

They have trouble breathing in normal atmosphere, but they don't ingest organic materials or water. Instead they periodically need to absorb metal-ammonia compounds, ingesting them through a weird digestive apparatus, placed on both their arms.

Among themselves, Xendalians communicate by showing strange glyphs (perhaps alien numbers) on their rounded melted faces, and by emitting high-pitched noises. When they feel the need to interact with other intelligent beings, they reproduce a resemblance of what they think is their interlocutor's main distinguishing feature. While for many this might be some semblance of a face, a Xendalian amongst a populace with other key means of communication might replicate something awkwardly inappropriate or strangely disquieting. Lacking the frame of reference, the faces they create may look more like caricatures, almost anime like with large eyes and lips moving out of sync with any sounds. Others might misinterpret jewellery, brightly coloured clothing or sexual organs as the apparent focussing feature.

Xendalians have been observed mimicking human voices but without intonation.

They are introverted and reclusive, and clinically appear distant, aloof, apathetic, if not arrogant.

Truth is, they're simply unfathomable and weird creatures.

Xendalians have a very complex sexuality, given that they seem to have no apparent gender. Eugenetic cloning methods were used to ensure the survival of their species. Oddly, Xendalians subject to intense electromagnetic fields experience a state of sex-like arousal. In this state, they push to mingle their electromagnetic fields in an attempt to reach some kind of radiation balance.

In general, Xendalians are obsessed with humans and their adaptive behavior. The Xendalian kingdom reached the pinnacle of its power during the Eltanin Era when it rivaled the local human settlements. After this, it fell into a state of rapid decline. They strove to create a hybrid carbon-silicon based life-form but apparently failed.

The last of them are scientists, recently awakened from their hibernating slumber and struggling to survive in a hostile environment.

XENDALIAN CHARACTERISTICS

All xendalian characters have the following characteristics:

Highly Evolved Mind: Your Intellect Pool increases by 4 points.

Technological Aptitude: You treat all numenera as being one level higher or lower than normal (depending on what's best for you).

Technophilic Body: You are a silicon-based life-form, so radiation and harmonic frequencies created by cyphers are less inimical to your organism. As a result, you can bear one more cypher at a time.

Weird Biochemical System: You're not an earthling at all, so you suffer severe drawbacks for having an alternative biochemical system. You take 1 additional point of damage any time you suffer damage from physical weapons or energies (except electricity). Furthermore, your life's necessities are strange. Once every ten days, you must feed on metal-ammonia compounds. Doing so has no positive effect, but if you fail to keep this "diet", you lose 5-point from your Might Pool that day and each subsequent day until you consume such substances. These points cannot be recovered with recovery rolls until you consume appropriate material.

Living Conductor: You are immune to electricity. If you're struck by an electrical attack, the reach of your "hands" extends from immediate to short until the end of your next turn.

Micro or Macro Sight: You have a very odd sense of sight, shifting between micro and macro vision. When you chose to perceive through the micro-sight, you're trained in all perception tasks to notice even the smallest detail and to value the general state of something, but you have an inability in all initiative tasks. When you shift to the macro-sight, you're trained in perceiving distant things, but you've an inability in all actions you take to affect things or creatures at an immediate distance. Your shift between micro or macro-sight requires an action.

Sluggish: You are incredibly slow. You have a weakness of 1 in Speed

Skill: You've four legs, so you've an asset in all tasks involving balance and in all actions to avoid being knocked prone.

Skill: You are trained in all tasks involving study.

Skill: You are trained in the numenera.

Severe Inability: You have very limited empathy responses. The difficulty of all interaction with carbon-based life-forms is increased by two step.



GMs' INFO

THE MEGASTRUCTURE

This ancient floating station looks like a sophisticated outpost or a research facility, shrouded by dreadful storms. It's hard to tell for sure, but many of its (now empty) chambers appear to have been labs, connected by twisting hallways. There are many other areas with unfathomable purpose, and even the main corridors don't always follow Euclidean geometries.

The complex is almost entirely made of a strange metal alloy, although the ceilings and the walls are everywhere covered of crystal-clear



tiles. It's in good shape, but its maze-like structure makes it difficult to navigate. There are many octagonal, automatic sliding doors, made of thick metal.

Hallways are almost 10 feet (3 m) high and wide while chambers have taller ceilings. The air inside is heavy, thick and damp from the noxious gases pumped by the ventilation system.

REACHING THE MEGASTRUCTURE

The megastructure is suspended in the air over the Eastern Sea, at an elevation of 3,000 feet (914 m). Few people have the means to reach its landing platforms, which is why it remains almost unexplored.

These are the obstacles to overcome:

- **Shrouded Facility.** First, explorers have to locate its position. Whether they use scopes or scrying esoterics or devices, the task has a base difficulty of level 9.
- **High Altitude.** Explorers must have a means to reach the facilities elevated position.
- **Breathing Difficulty.** Explorers must overcome breathing complications (through abilities, esoterics or devices).
- **Nanothreat.** The Living Storm of Ba'tla poses a significant threat to all organic life-forms. The level 7 quasi-sentient numenera attacks by freeze drying victims through sublimation of liquid water, getting bodies completely frozen and then dropping their pressure down to about 100 millitorr).

BREAKING IN

Explorers can enter the megastructure in any of this ways:

- **Landing Platform Doorways.** These are highly secure areas, probably patrolled by groups of six gazers (page 56 of *The Ninth World Bestiary*) or guarded by a couple of mastigophores (page 245 of the *Numenera corebook*). Metal doorways (level 7) are secured against access.

EXPLORATION

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 01-40 | Empty Hallway/Chamber: So far, the exploration has led to nothing of interest. |
| 41-70 | Weird Feature/Property: The party discovers a weird feature/property of the megastructure (roll on the Weird Features of Properties table below). |
| 71-90 | Creature: The party encounters a creature that inhabits the megastructure (roll on the Creatures table below). |
| 91-115 | Disorientation (treat this result as "Empty Hallway or Chamber" if a Xendalian is guiding the party or if the players have rolled this result before): The PCs are struck by the oddly non-Euclidean architecture of the facility and lose their bearings. Finding their way back is an Intellect task with a difficulty of 5. Each time a PC fails a roll, it adds one additional hour to the time required to get back (minimum of one hour). Thus, if the PCs explore for four hours, then get lost, then explore for another hour before deciding to go back, it takes them at least six hours to get back (five hours of exploring, plus at least one for being lost). However, if the PCs fail the roll three times before succeeding, it takes them eight hours to get back. |
| 116-130 | Xendalian Device: The party comes across a still functioning device (roll on the Xendalian Device table below). |
| 131-150 | Structural Hazard: The party runs into a structural hazard, as a part of the megastructure's hardware is needed by two or more tasks at the same time (roll on the Structural Hazards table below). |
| 151+ | Core lab: See below. |



- **External Vents.** Someone might enter through a vent shaft as an easier task (difficulty 4), but can only do so while flying. Moreover, the air shafts contain a weird and noxious effluvia (see Conditions, page 7).
- **Gigantic Generators.** These machines keep the megastructure floating. Daring explorers may try to cross the generator's turbines (a level 7 Speed task), provided they can fly and resist a tremendous electrical discharge. Anyone who fails takes 10 points of damage and moves down one step on the damage track.

EXPLORING THE MEGASTRUCTURE

Rather than rely on a precise map of the Xendalian installation, which is almost abandoned, you may simply describe the general look of the facility as the PCs venture inside its maze-like pathways. Let the players roll on the Exploration table, below, for each hour of activity. For each consecutive hour of exploration add 10 to the roll (or 20 if a Xendalian is guiding the party). This determines what the PCs encounter and how long it takes them to reach the core lab, which is the central and most interesting part of the megastructure.

CORE LAB

The core lab of the megastructure is an immense (3000 sq feet or 278 m2) hexagonal room with mysterious quartz consoles on four of the walls and two exits in opposite sides. One is the gate that the PCs just entered, the other is a huge iris-opening door leading through the hibernation chamber, which is a rounded hall with a circle of translucent steles in the middle. Leaning against its walls, there are many pod-like structures.

Quartz Consoles: This control panels are used to feed in the lab-ship commands, including those affecting the generators that keep the megastructure afloat. They work through electromagnetic manipulation.

WEIRD FEATURES OR PROPERTIES

01-20	The hallway/chamber is flooded with a brilliant blue or emerald light.
21-40	All creatures in the hallway/chamber suddenly feel unnerved, plagued by strange, alien thoughts invading their minds.
41-60	The hallway/chamber is a set of rotating machinery. Wild energies flash across the gaps between the devices.
61-80	The internal atmosphere is filled with billions of tiny ammonia raindrops.
81-00	An artifact/cypher carried by the PCs activates by itself.

XENDALIAN DEVICES

01-30	Xenostat (see Beyond The Edge: Buried Burdens, page 9)
31-60	Huge quartz electromagnetic device
61-80	Xendoids' hatching machinery (see Beyond The Edge: Buried Burdens, page 13)
81-90	Pair of crystal spheres of different size, mounted on a metal cradle. It reveals when the next planetary alignment of Aalon and Earth will occur.
91-00	Hybridization machine. This large bio-mechanical device resemble a spherical life support pod, and it's used to create "hybrid prototypes".



STRUCTURAL HAZARDS

- 01-30 All lights fade
- 31-60 Five different automaton voices shout meaningless orders at the PCs
- 61-80 Ventilation system ceases to function
- 81-90 A rush of incomprehensible data surges into the PCs' minds
- 91-00 An energy syphon shuts down any active esoterics

CREATURES

- 01-30 Pack of 1d6+2 xendoids (see Beyond The Edge: Buried Burdens, page 12)
- 31-60 Group of six gazers (page 56 of The Ninth World Bestiary)
- 61-80 Party of explorers (level 4)
- 81-90 Roaming gray sampler (page 60 of The Ninth World Bestiary)
- 91-00 Awakened Xendalian savant (see below)



21

Iris-opening Door: It's a heavy metal door (level 7). It cannot be opened unless its release mechanism is activated by someone who can generate (and modulate) an electromagnetic field. It leads to the hibernation chamber.

Hibernation Pods: These pod-like devices are usually situated in large numbers in the central section of a xendalian lab-ship, containing hundreds of dormant xendalians. An inorganic membrane surrounds the sleeping creature, and a quartz console nearby allows the pod deactivation. Ammonia fluids flood each capsule. Many silicon tendrils extend from the pod to the sleeping creature, nourishing it with the proper compounds. When deactivated, the ammonia fluids drain from the capsule and the tendrils retract, after which the Xendalian is awakened from its slumber. There is a safety protocol, so in case of power failure, the pod opens and awakens its host. Should such protocol fail, the creature inside would slowly suffocate. Tinkering with a hibernation pod to make this happen requires success in a difficulty level 7 task.

Translucent Steles: These floating glyphs made of light show the hibernated xendalians' vitals.

AWAKENED XENDALIAN SAVANT 4 (12)

Xendalians are barely humanoid creatures, about 6.5 feet (2 m) tall, composed of translucent skin and silicon frame. They slouch on four elongated multi-jointed legs, and manipulate things with two keen electromagnetic fields, generated from the end of their arms.

A Xendalian's most peculiar physical characteristic is perhaps its flat, featureless "face", an ever-swirling metal-like plate through which it communicates.

Xendalians were revered scientists and numenera experts, fleeing from their home planet that was being devoured by its dying star.

Motive: Mysterious, but it usually involves self-preservation and scientific curiosity

Environment: Ancient Xendalian outposts (cryogenic laboratories)

Health: 12

GM Intrusion

The Xendalian savant, acting out of turn, activates two of its cyphers simultaneously.

Damage Inflicted: 4 points

Armor: (see Combat)

Movement: Short

Modifications: Level 6 in most areas of knowledge (including numenera) and perceiving details or distant things (but not both on the same time); Might and Speed defense as level 3 due to weak frame.

Combat: Most Xendalians avoid conflict. If forced to fight, they do so with numenera weapons and esoterics.

A Xendalian savant can do one of the following: disable a technological device at short range and make it inoperable for ten minutes (if the device is being used by a character, the PC can attempt an Intellect defense roll to prevent this), gain 4 Armor for ten minutes via a force field or drain bioelectricity from living organisms (targets at short range must succeed an Intellect defense roll or suffer 4 points of Intellect damage).

Further, whenever a Xendalian savant is encountered, the GM should roll 1d6+1 times on the **cypher table** (page 281 of the **Numenera corebook**). Thanks to its mastery of the numenera, a Xendalian savant can use them twice (not just once, as is normally the case with cyphers).

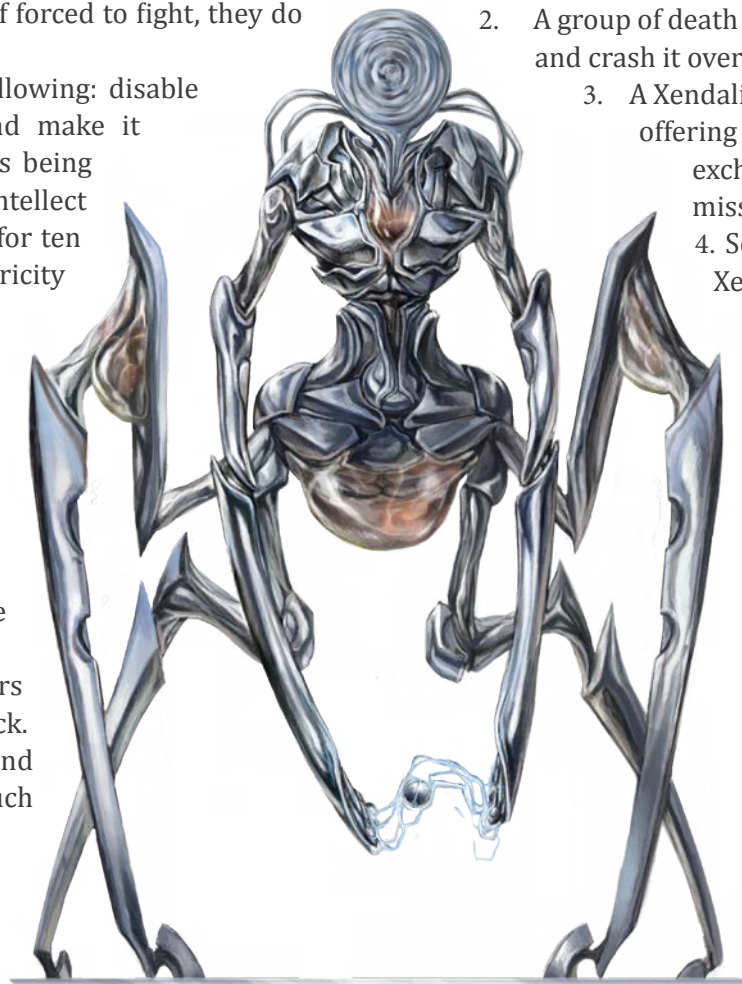
Interaction: A Xendalian savant appears aloof, cold and usually ignores social feedback.

Loot: 1d6+1 cyphers (see above) and probably an artifact. It's likely to use such devices to the best of its ability.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

You can use these ideas to create new adventures right from the start, or to tweak a campaign that is already running.

1. A crazy scholar is hiring explorers to delve into the very heart of the Xendalian megastructure.
2. A group of death cultist nanos plan to take control of the facility and crash it over a densely populated area, in a ritual sacrifice.
3. A Xendalian representative makes contact with the PCs, offering access to previously unknown technology in exchange for their assistance with a (dubious) mission.
4. Some people form a religious cult that believes Xendalians were wiped out by the gods for advancing their science and technology too far. They believe that living beings are not to become too godlike, so they form a fanatic group dedicated to halting technological advance.



MIRAGE

"Arriving at each new city, the traveler finds again a past of his that he did not know he had: the foreignness of what you no longer are or no longer possess lies in wait for you in foreign, unpossessed places."

– Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*



GENERAL OVERVIEW

After traveling in the Scattered Lands, along the Nameless Road, for two synodic-cycles the Dust Bedouins caravan arrived at the gates of Mirage, the Beautiful, the Gorge City, the Sundered Jewel of the Golden Shore. The weeks spent in the desert, between incessant sand storms and the assault of hostile beasts, had proved a grueling test for even the hardiest of the travelers.

The herd merchant caught Domingo's attention, pointing to the parched plain on which swayed the shimmering walls of the city. Beautiful and vibrant light, changing constantly; fast-moving flashes, filled with shapes; a vision able to move seamlessly from compression to elongation.

Even from afar the fortified walls gleamed, as if faceted. They towered over the desert, as if a sculpture wrought by the metal-smiths of the gods themselves, surmounted by neo-attic buildings, temples and giant domes. It would take the whole day to capture every detail of the urban landscape and rarely would an eye alight on something without suffering the pull of distraction by other things: a glimpse, a sign, a fount, or a hanging garden blooming with hibiscus.

Beyond the walkways of the Gates traversed about a crystal spring in which bathed huge golden argo birds. Peripatetic travelers walked down the street alongside odd strangers, none dressed alike.



"Might I trouble your ear to tell you about the goods available hereabouts, for a fair price?" The merchant said. "Agate, onyx, chrysoprase, and several other varieties of chalcedony garnered from Blood Jasper's Caves. I recommend the golden argon's meat, sold at Trade Hub, smoked with wild cherry wood and sprinkled with spices."

"Oh, and the girls. The girls I have seen bathing in the boudoir pools of Rêverieville. Sometimes, you know, they invite strangers to enjoy cool waters with them, as well as a round of lucid-dream nootropic. Oh... no interest in girls? The sights, perhaps? I could tell you also about venerable psychopomps, who drive visitors through alleyways."

"Still my tongue, for in muttering and uttering like a madman, I convey not the true essence of this city. While the vision of Mirage makes your dreams blossom one by one, forcing you to stifle your desire for fear of being overwhelmed, you – wide-awake in the middle of an urban maze – feel the pull of both ecstasy and madness. There's no way out."

"The city appears as a whole living thing where no dream, even nightmarish, is lost. You belong to the city; and, since Mirage thrives on everything that you could not enjoy, you can do nothing but dwell on this cruel desire and be grateful. This is the treachery of Mirage, venomous to some, wondrous to others."

"If you work as an agate cutter in the Caves, eight hours a day, your sweat – which gives form to desire – takes from desire its meaning. Clouded by drugs, you do not feel anything looking at young faces without a future, and the honeyed lies that you have drunk make you deaf to the cries of those who were sacrificed for vainglory. So you think to bask in Mirage's beauty while you're its mere slave."

This severed sprawl, soaking up memories, swollen like a sponge,

hosts wretched souls in the Grievous Wound, a vitrified chasm in whose depth is confined all filthy things. Mirage's portrait should contain the whole history of the Ninth World. The city does not share its secrets; instead, it hides them as invisible lines of a clenched palm, mysteries carved in stone, pareidolic phenomena crowding its bare walls.



PCS' RESOURCES

LOCATION-BASED DESCRIPTOR

This location-based descriptor is provided for characters who want to be strongly connected to the megalopolis of Mirage, the Sundered Jewel of the Golden Shore.

MIRAGIAN

"Only in your dreams you're free." You must have heard this saying a thousand times in Mirage.

Dreams may truly open doors to other worlds and outdo reality. Such ideas have deeply affected you. Your dreams always guided you, telling you important things about your true self, the Scattered Lands and the reality you're supposed to live in.

Maybe you spent a great deal of time with a psychopomp (page ...) or are one of them yourself. Anyway, you often attempt to reach your oniric self through philosophy, numenera, oneironautics or all the three of them, reaching a much higher comprehension of the world. You're a dreamer, a visionary.

You gain the following characteristics:

Visionary: +2 to your Intellect Pool.

Oneironaut: You can perform the esotery known as Telepathic Dreaming when you can pay the Intellect point cost.

Telepathic Dreaming (3+ Intellect points): You induce yourself, and up to three other willing creatures at an immediate



distance, a lucid dream that lasts about ten minutes. Then, you're able to travel and interact within that dream, to find or retrieve something that lies in their subconscious minds. Instead of applying a level of Effort to decrease the difficulty, you can apply it to affect more willing creatures. For each level of Effort applied, you can affect one additional willing living creature. Some creatures (such as most automatons) cannot experience a lucid-dream.

The lucid dream always concerns something that happened or is about to happen to the dreamers (including you). You and those who are experiencing the lucid-dream learn one random fact that is pertinent to the dream (one each and not necessarily the same).

You may guide the lucid-dream to a precise path, showing something more specific, but doing so require a difficulty 5 Intellect task. If you fail, you and those who are experiencing the lucid-dream awaken confused and frightened. The difficulty of all Intellect-related tasks attempted by a confused and frightened character is increased by one step for the next hour. Action to initiate; action to guide the lucid-dream

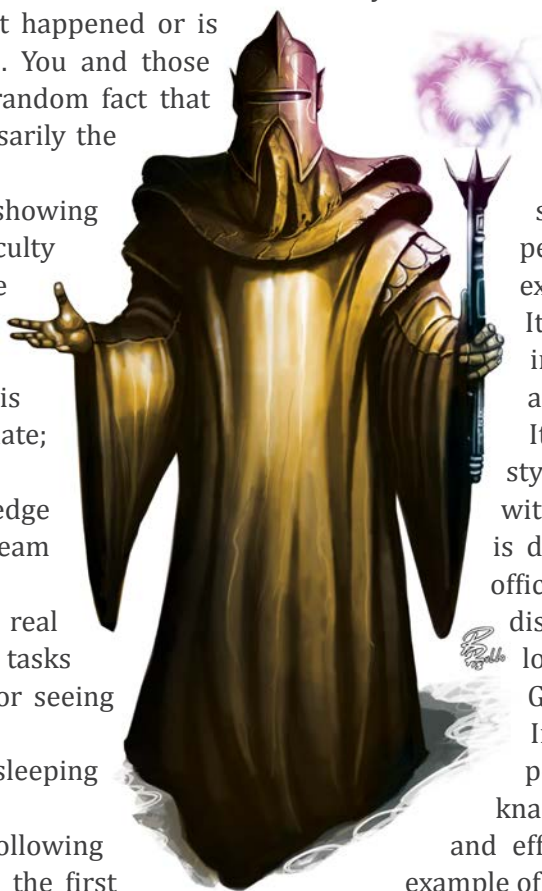
Skill: You're trained in all tasks involving knowledge of the human mind and dreams (including dream interpretation and Telepathic Dreaming).

Inability: Sometimes it's hard for you to tell the real world from the dream one. The difficulty of all tasks involving discerning reality, telling truth from lie, or seeing through disguises is increased by one step.

Additional Equipment: You've three doses of a sleeping draught (level 2).

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

1. A dream led you here.
2. You believe that the PCs' mission is somehow related to one of your dreams.
3. One of the PCs heard about your skills and asked you to help guide them.
4. You dreamed about the whole thing and convinced the others to join you.



GMs' INFO

Mirage's "persona" makes it unique. Unlike smaller settlements, it has a character all its own, developed by people and events that have shaped its history. The city exists for commerce and it has grown as a trade hub. It (apparently) operates under a council of its most influential citizens, the Wise Ones, that is supported by all the three strongest local guilds.

Its architecture is impressive, yet lacks a single unifying style, as each district is a small urban center in itself. As with many other aspects of the city, Mirage's architecture is divided along class lines. The marble mansions and offices of the wealthier people show neo-attic style and display brightly colored statues and fountains, while the lower social class dwell inside the sheer walls of the Grievous Wound, the chasm behind the Gates of Mirage. In fact, a large part of the city is built into that cliff, perched on the very edge of the coast. The miragians' knack for construction, coupled with their sense of style and efficiency, turned the settlement into a breathtaking example of unusual urbanity.

The prevalence of weird technologies produces an unnatural danger



unique to Mirage: nano-pollution. It's a rare phenomenon that occurs near nano colleges and numenera laboratories. The atmosphere becomes tainted by numenera residue and the radiation of esoteric experiments, producing random side effects.

The true power center is the Hypnagogic Guild, a court of philosophers led by numenera savants. They keep the law through the Circadian Keepers, a mysterious force of soldiers acting as both police and protectors. The mere sight of their numenera uniform is enough to make even the bravest drop to his knees and beg for mercy. It's made of a bio-synth texture that changes its color as the light hits it from different angles.

One of Mirage's most iconic establishment is a group known as the psychopomps, a collective of city guides, historians, and know-it-alls. They're usually hired by newcomers as escorts, cicerone and information dealers, and are distinguishable from their odd hairstyles, cultured attitudes and clothing.

CITY DISTRICTS

MIRAGE GATES

It's a colossal wall-like city in itself, the seat of government and bureaucracy. Its narrow streets and huge balconies are crowded with dignitaries, couriers, and scholars. Its terraces range from simple ledges to large platforms where airship can land. Velitrons (sort of electromagnetic airships that can take up to fifty passengers) and eliplans (much smaller and faster flying devices) are not an unusual sight here. Most of Mirage's spires have at least one balcony and many have more, at least at certain levels. Since flying is not uncommon in this part of the city, such features are potential weak points. They can be secured by ordinary means (like gates or portcullis) to less trivial means, such as with force walls or other numenera defenses.

The hum of conversation fills the air, punctuated by occasional





melodies. Here the edifices are towering, with sweeping arches and tall spires, built mostly of white marble. Mirage Gates' twelve levels are occupied by universities, theaters, mansions, hanging gardens and walkways, adorned with synth birdcages full of exotic avians. Its bathhouses are a sprawling complex of plain stone where the richest socialize. It employs the best illumination devices available, bathing intersections and core structures in perpetual brightness.

Services: Education. Guides. Messenger Services. Numenera. Trade (Rarities).

Renowned Buildings or Features: The **Ideagora** (seat of the Hypnagogic Guild), the **Lèschedom** (a huge numenera mausoleum in which the wealthier can consort with their dead loved ones' soul print, provided they have something that belonged to them) and the **Fluorescent Gardens**.

Renowned NPCs: **Councilman Hyden** (level 3, level 5 with politics. Machiavellian and quarrelsome). **Councilwoman Ko-li** (level 3. Bossy. She has a device that allows her to speak and comprehend any language). **Councilman Wardav** (level 3. Sarcastic and selfish. Has a metallic skullcap through which he seems able to anticipate his interlocutors' thoughts). **Goluna the Engraver** (level 3, level 5 with the numenera. Knows esoterics).

THE TRADE HUB

A general marketplace, chaotic and boisterous, but not without some gentler businesses. Many inns dedicated to the needs of travelers are located here, near the city gates. Shops see heavy traffic and enthusiastic haggling, with negotiations always conducted with politeness and courtesy. The Trade Hub is located at the very footsteps of the Mirage Gates district. The district's multicolored cobblestone streets conduct feet, hooves, pawns, and wheels alike.

The main roads are wide and most major thoroughfares are lit at night by lanterns or, in the wealthier portions of the district, by glowglobes.

Alleys are not hidden from the main streets, so merchants are often inconvenienced by trash and beggars. Most of its buildings are squat and square, the majority are wooden, but some implement stone or metal as well. Clearly this part of the city is built for functionality, yet it has its style, being a cultural and racial melting pot. The district has a scent and accent all its own, which is the fusion of visitants' languages, imported goodies, sweat and other stranger smells. This characteristic manifests as a sense of reciprocal acceptance and friendliness that visitors notice.

But it's also a façade. The Trade Hub can prove as dangerous as any other parts of the city where transactions (of any kind) run free.

Services: Delivery Services. Dining. Guides. Lodging. Trades (General). Trades (Rarities).

Renowned Buildings or Features: **Tande Station** (seat of the Covenant of Barter), the **Scepter of I'norc** (velitrons and eliplans landing spot. It's a huge spire-like numenera structure that functions as a kind of anchoring device).

Renowned NPCs: **Melchor the Keeper** (level 5, level 6 with all weapons, to intimidate and to see through deceptions, health 20; 3 points of Armor). **Malik** (level 4, level 6 to pilot velitrons).

ONYX RIFT

This part of the city is built into and over the sheer walls of the Grievous Wound. Its dwellings are interconnected within the cliff and by elevators, stairs and ladders on external metallic ledges. It is a business area full of workshops and apartment-style dwellings, more utilitarian than fashionable. The scents of smoke, coal and sweat are ubiquitous. The air reverberates with craft-working, carving and heavy hammering. Here are collected the city's most noisome businesses and some of the bulkiest buildings, filled with goods not yet ready for sale or shipment.

Services: Delivery Services. Laborers. Lodging. Trades (General).

Warehousing.

Renowned Buildings or Features: **Cluster** (seat of the Union), **Onyx Mines** (subterranean caves and tunnel quarried by Union's workers), **Iora's Vault** (hidden spoils of the last hypno-driven vessel)

Renowned NPCs: **Simril** (level 4, level 5 with the numenera. Knowns esoterics. She is the only Aeon Priest in Mirage).

THE HIVE

Here lives the poorest and those who cannot afford more than a simple room in a flophouse. Like the Onyx Rift district, the Hive leans against the walls of the gorge. Millennia of unnatural storms blowing in from the Eastern Sea eroded vast openings in the cliffside, resulting in something resembling a huge hive of stone. Most buildings are carved from the rock, but builders took care to strengthen the sides of those directly facing the chasm. The most important uses of technology in the Hive is perhaps the creation of mechanical lifts to facilitate vertical travel between the levels of the cliff.

Services: Laborers. Trades (Poor). Warehousing.

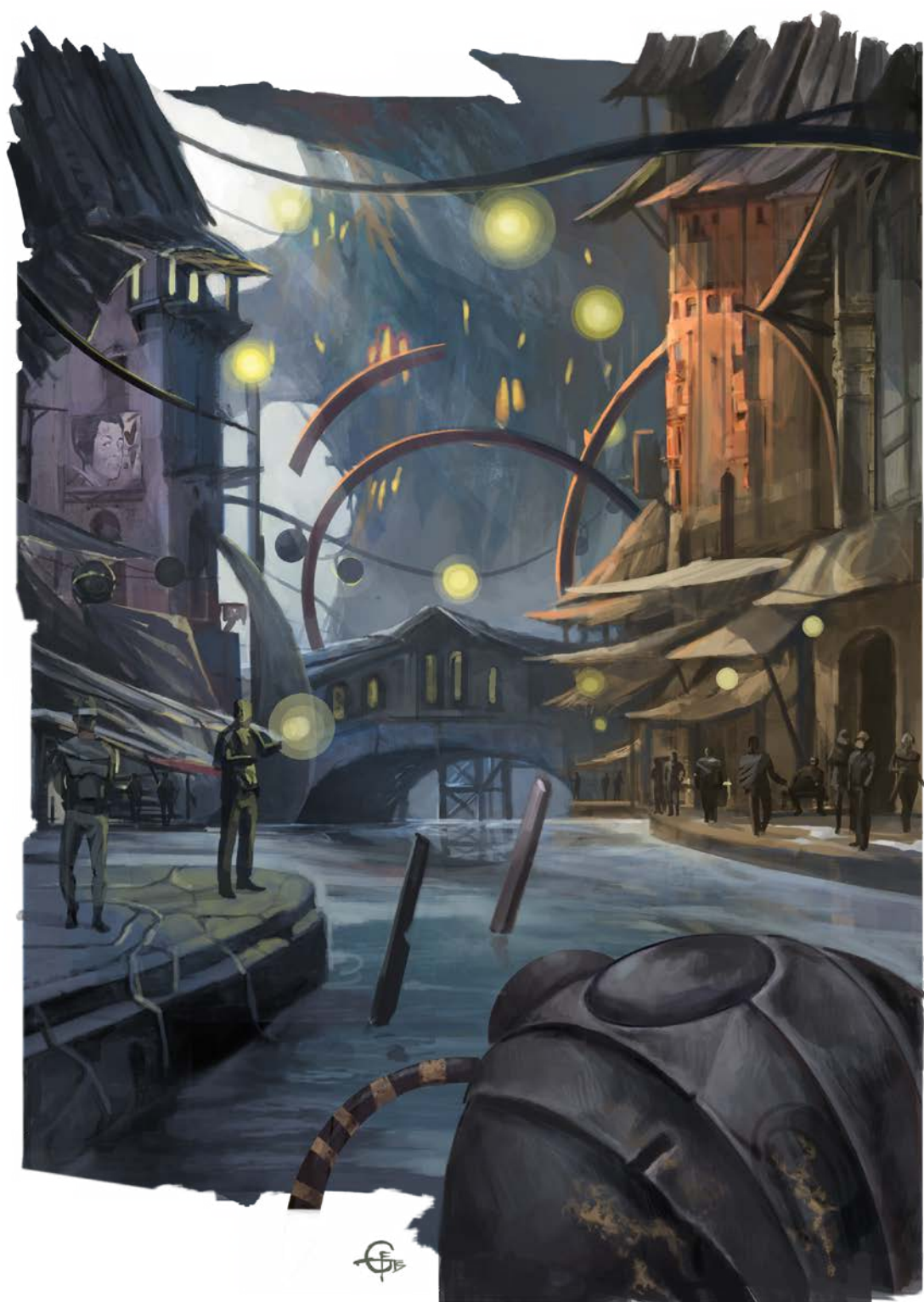
Renowned Buildings or Features: None.

Renowned NPCs: None.

RÊVERIEVILLE

This part of Mirage is known as the "Drifting District". It consists of twenty-six massive floating barges, connected by jury-rigged bridges. It provides services to clients seeking gambling and sexual or exotic entertainments. It's a red-light district, a dangerous and disreputable place, clouded in the mist that fills the chasm; yet most visitors dream of visiting it to have fun, whatever type of fun one might be interested in having. It's famous for the oneironautic drugs trade (like bizepia and glazivir, all substances derived from the psychotronic nano-fluids that fueled the hypno-driven vessels' engines).

This area is unofficially monitored by a criminal regime: even illegal



practices are tolerated and controlled by the Dream Dealers gang, and little is done to regulate or restrict it. Naïve customers are likely to become victims. Except for the Trade Hub, this is the district with the highest non-human population.

Services: Boating. Carousing. Dining. Entertainment. Guides. Lodging. Trades (Black Market).

Renowned Buildings or Features: *The Living Moon* (inn and nightclub).

Renowned NPCs: *Vi-Sabine* (level 4, level 7 with all information-related tasks. Has flawless white skin and bluish hair. She is a regarded oneironaut, but also a drug addict).

THE PARADOCKS

The smell of waste, fish and sweat fills this wharf district, along with the tang of sea breeze. Like *Rêverieville*, the Paradocks are built on floating platforms, anchored on the lowest level of the cliff, designed to ease passage of goods. It stretches along the shoreline for about 1 mile (1.6 km). It owes its name to the unsettling phenomena of nanopollution, which gives birth to mutants, aberrations, and other even odder progeny. The buildings here are simple stalls and shacks, but the area has docks to accommodate small boats and cargo ships from other ports of the Golden Shore.

Services: Boating. Delivery Services. Trades (Black Market). Trades (Poor). Warehousing.

Renowned Buildings or Features: *Brainery* (seat of the Institute of Improvers), *Kinyans' Nests* (higher level caves where the kinyans are hatched, trained and lodged).

Renowned NPCs: None.

GUILDS AND ORGANIZATIONS

THE HYPNAGOGIC GUILD

It consists only of eminent philosophers, heirs of the psychically-endowed humans that colonized the Scattered Lands. Mirages' power behind the throne. The guild rules the city through the Wise Ones and the Circadian Keepers, despite no apparent political presence. A coterie of scholars, only its members knows the truth about Mirage and its weirdness: the proximity of the hypno-driven vessel *Iora*, hidden somewhere beneath the city.

Their power comes from the Incubation, a process of combining thought fragments to foretell or influence the future (and thus reality) through psychotronic nano-fluids.

The Hypnagogic Guild has an influence on crime through the Dreams Dealers, given its mastery of psychotronic drugs.

Renowned NPCs: *Lecturer Cantos* (level 5, level 7 with the numenera. Knows probability-manipulation esoterics. Has a *hoop-staff*, [page 305 of the Numenera corebook](#). Obsessed with finding the spoils of *Iora*, the lost vessel).

THE DREAMS DEALERS

This criminal guild exists for one purpose: control the black market, fence stolen goods and offer other illegal services. Its agents have a strong hold on *Rêverieville* and the Paradocks districts and knows how to pull the right strings to maintain it.

The dealers earn a lot of shins from the oneironautic drug trade, and can provide a customer with almost any prohibited (or strange) goods or services. These include stealing other people's dreams and thoughts, kidnapping, extortion, and burglary.

Renowned NPCs: *Sharga* (level 5, level 6 to intimidate. Hulking and bald crime lord. Has a nightmare inducing artifact).



THE UNION

The Union is a large and growing social phenomenon in Mirage. It's a laborers' guild, one that unites the laborers and unskilled workers of the city. It provides laborers with a place to gather and discuss their complaints, in the hope to gain some political influence through the strength of the number. Thanks to some insightful, brilliant trade unionist, the guild now controls Mirage's mining operations in the Onyx Caves and has garnered a fair amount of respect.

Renowned NPCs: **Taskmaster Arken** (level 4, level 6 to negotiate with authorities. Crafty and witty. His numenera tongue makes him immune to poisoning and able to identify properties by taste alone).

THE COVENANT OF BARTER

This guild is devoted to all trades and professions. It's a multicultural (and multiracial) mercantile association. It seeks to secure businesses, protect its members from crime and stave off the overweening taxes of the city council. Sometimes it offers loans to start or expand a commercial route in the Scattered Lands.

The Covenant oversees Mirage's entire market. It accepts all tradespeople as members and wield immense economic and political influence. Slavery is legal in Mirage, so the slave trade is controlled by this guild. A native citizen of Mirage cannot be enslaved unless found guilty of a major crime.

Renowned NPCs: **Master Yuhe** (level 4, level 5 with almost any interactions).

THE INSTITUTE OF IMPROVERS

Nanos, vermin hunters, engineers, explorers, doctors, and all who use technology to improve living conditions can be a member of this loosely organized guild. It is not a municipal organization, yet it works at the behest of the city. The Institute has departments with pretentious names like "City's Safety" or "Evolution Endorsement", each with its

own purpose and resource pool.

Ironically, the Institute of Improvers is responsible for the nano-pollution increase, caused by unsafe storage and disposal of weird technologies and their noxious waste.

Renowned NPCs: **Professor Tazhra Sha'vai** (level 4, level 6 with mathematical tasks. Knows many esoterics. Octophobia. Tazhra has an irrational fear of the number 8 and cannot bear to have, see, or interact with anything that has eight of something).

ADVENTURE SEEDS

You can use these ideas to create new adventures right from the start, or to tweak a campaign that is already running.

1. One of the approaching velitrons goes out of control during docking maneuvers at the Scepter of I'norc. The damaged airship, which has not yet been secured to the dock, begins to drift away and PCs have only one chance to retake it before it kills innocent passengers and Mirage's residents.
2. While visiting Mirage, one of the PCs unwillingly picks up (by telepathic means or through a numenera device) a weird message. It's something about a conspiracy or plotting guilds – making it of a possible value to competing organizations.
3. The PCs stumble across a corpse in a less traveled part of the city. Investigation reveals that the body is that of a Union courier. More troubling is the fact that the laborer hasn't been reported missing. In fact, he is still in service. Taskmaster Arken hires the party to discover who killed his employee and to protect him from the spy hiding in the Union.
4. The PCs are in the Trade Hub when someone comes charging through the crowd, being pursued by Circadian Keepers or other dangerous individuals. He/she collapses at the PCs' feet, holding out a small box-like device and imploring them to take it and make sure that "they" don't get it.



TARANTHIUS' LAB

"How dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge and how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to be greater than his nature will allow."

– Mary Shelley, Frankenstein



GENERAL OVERVIEW

Taranthius was a secretive and manipulative nano, a scientific genius and a leading authority on mutation. He was also a **Convergence** magister (page 223 of the Numenera corebook), and his goal was to improve the genetic quality of the human race through manipulation. To achieve this aim he built a series of laboratories, specifically designed to create, explore and control mutant powers. Taranthius' students considered him a visionary, and he was highly regarded by others in the Convergence.

This was before the episode that almost took his life.

It all started with a strange sort of cattle deformity plaguing pastures and reached its climax with three teens abducted from an isolated settlement, near one of Taranthius' labs. The townsfolk blamed everything on the "fiendish sorcerer" and arranged an expedition to his den, led by a local hero. They intended to destroy the lab and kill the nano, in order to rescue the poor lads and prevent any further harm to their community.

As the angry mob bayed for his blood, Taranthius hid with his naïve apprentice in the basement, intent upon a desperate yet daring emergency plan. Drawing on his knowledge of the numenera – and a device he built himself for that very purpose – he connected his mind with his unwary pupil. Having carefully harmonized the wavelength of their thoughts, Taranthius released a flux of psychic energy to implant

his consciousness into the apprentice's brain. To his great surprise, he failed; and yet, he had so very nearly succeeded.

The townsfolk burned the lab to the ground, to destroy the horrible aberrations within, preferring to spare the abductees' families any further pain. Only his poor servant was found clinging to life, bleeding from a severe head wound.

They took him to the local healer, who found him bruised and cut but in fair health. The very next morning, he vanished - departing the village unseen.

Taranthius, they say, is no more. Nevertheless, the cattle deformity continues in isolated settlements, and teens have been reported missing in some communities.



PCS' RESOURCES

A WHOLE (OR NEARLY) PARTY OF MUTANT PLAYER CHARACTERS

This option provides all PCs of a party with a common background: they're all (or almost all) mutants, artificially created humanoid beings, or semi-human chimeras, formed using numenera technologies.

There is more, though, as all these mutant characters were created by the same man: Magister Taranthius, or maybe one of his most promising apprentices; someone who took his legacy and expanded it, forwarding the study of mutation.

This option places every character of the same party in the situation (the first adventure) and helps provide a common motivation. It also grants them a special group connection. Such connection replaces the one given by the chosen focus.

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

1. All of you are acting as bodyguards for your creator.



2. All of you recently discovered the fact of your common origin; now you seek what truth lies behind it.
3. All of you are trying to locate your creator, maybe seeking revenge of some sort.
4. You're finite creatures with an expiration date, determined by your creator. If you made peace with this aspect of you, or if you're trying to find some sort of cure, it's up to you.

Connection: Chose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other mutant PC. When this character is next to you, one of your mutations is strengthened or works in a weird way.
2. Pick one other mutant PC. By touching him, once per day you may emulate one of his mutations for up to one hour. However, if you do so, as long as you keep emulating his mutation the difficulty of all your defensive Might rolls is increased by one step.
3. Pick one other mutant PC. Sometimes, suddenly one (or more) of your senses switch with his.
4. Pick one other mutant PC. When this character is next to you, one of your harmful mutations is somehow worsened.

MUTANT BLOODLINES

A mutant bloodline is a genetic pedigree common to a group of individuals, kindred, clones or pod-brothers. Three major artificial mutant bloodlines are presented here: they can be chosen as sub-descriptors by all mutant members of the same party.

BROODED

Pod-brothers are two or more mutants who were grouped in the same pod during their gestation.

Members of the Brooded bloodline have the following traits:

Mutations: You gain two **beneficial mutations** (page 124 of the *Numenera* corebook; page 45 of the *Numenera Character Options*) and

a harmful mutation.

Brood Awareness: unless you're unconscious, you're always aware of your pod-kindreds' state of health, as well as their approximate distance and direction relative to your current position.

Switch Mutation (1 Might Point and 1 Intellect Point): You can switch one of your mutations with that of another willing member of you brood. You only need to touch your fellow pod-kindred in order to switch the mutation. The switch is permanent until you or one of your mutant kindreds use this power again. Action to switch.

The Switch Mutation power could be very useful and interesting, especially if one of the pod-kindreds has the **Constantly Evolves** focus (page 55 of the *Numenera Character Options*).

CHIMERIC

Creatures made of parts from different sources, human and non-human, are known as chimeric mutants.

Each member of the Chimeric bloodline has the following traits:

Advanced Life-form: You truly are an eugenic wonder. You gain +1 to all stat Pools.

Hybrid: You are a human/non-human crossbreed.

Choose one non-human **creature** (page 230 of the *Numenera* corebook; page 20 of the *Ninth World Bestiary*). The "donor" creature must be the same for all party members. You gain one of its special abilities or powers (see Modifications or Combat entries), manifesting as a weird mutation. Since creatures don't follow the same rules the PCs do, you and the GM must work out the exact details of the ability you chose.

Before choosing a creature's ability, consider these guidelines:

- Living creatures work better than automatons, but don't let that stop you!
- The chosen ability should not provide the character with more than one level of an asset in a single useful task.



- Each party member should take a different ability.
- Consider Armor bonuses with care.
- Special attacks, abilities that hinder targets in some way or that grant enhancement should require a roll and have a cost. The best way to assess such factors is by comparing the effects of a new ability with that of a pre-existing one from the Numenera corebook.

Example: Say a party of three chimeric mutants (Gravok the glaive, Ne'vei the jack, and Evran the nano) chose **Erulian Master** (page 20 of the *Ninth World Bestiary*) as their donor creature. The players and the GM come up with this weird idea of an alien entity, interested in making adaptive hybrids to spread its influence throughout the world.

Ne'vei has already selected **Exist Partially Out of Phase** (page 60 of the *Numenera corebook*) as her focus, which – by the way – sounds perfect (as Erulians are composed primarily by energy). She likes to be elusive, so she takes the power to alter the perception of time for a foe who is a thinking being, making the creature move at half its normal speed and increasing the difficulty of that creature's next action by one step. The GM decides that Ne'vei has to succeed in an Intellect attack roll to hinder a victim at a short distance. Plus, using the ability will cost her 3 Intellect Points.

Gravok is a combat-oriented character, so he chooses to have an unsettling prehensile tail that resembles a spinal column. With that, Gravok could grip and make use an extra weapon or a shield.

Finally, Evran's player is fascinated by psionics powers and goes for an ability that confuses a thinking foe by overloading its sensory inputs. This effect increases the difficulty of that enemy's next action by two steps. As with Ne'vei's power, the GM rules that Evran's ability requires an Intellect attack roll against a living target within a short

distance, and has a cost of 4 Intellect Points.

INFECTED / "WINDED"

Human beings suffering from massive nano-induced genetic alterations, due to a common condition (like being treated with a specific numenera substance, exposed to a particular phenomenon and so on), are called infected or "winded" mutants.

Each member of the Infected / Winded bloodline has the following traits:

Adaptive: You're immune to poisons and toxins (Infected) or to the **Iron Wind** (page 135 of the *Numenera corebook*) (Winded).

Energy Pool: You have an additional special Pool called Energy that begins with a number of points equal to the party infected / winded members, and it has an identical maximum value.

When spending points from any other Pool, you can take one, some, or all the points from your Energy Pool first. When you make a recovery roll, your Energy Pool is one additional Pool to which you can add recovered points. When your Energy Pool is at 0 points, it does not count against your damage track. Furthermore, you can distribute your Energy points to your infected / winded comrades, simply by touching them. You can transfer points at the rate of 1 Energy point per round. If one of your infected / winded comrades dies, your Energy Pool permanently lowers. Enabler. Action to transfer Energy points.

Energy Boost (2 Energy Points): You can spend Energy points to help an infected / winded comrade. If one of your mutant allies attempts a task and gets help from you, the acting character gets the benefit of your help, whether you're trained in that task or not. Enabler.

GM Intrusion (Group): Magister Taranthius releases a curtain of numenera smoke. The fumes cause a random harmful mutation to all victims that fail a Might defense roll.





GMs' INFO

MAGISTER TARANTHIUS 5 (15)

His appearance may vary, to fit the GM's needs. Magister Taranthius could be:

Feeble Weirdness: A middle-aged man with a fierce gaze, flowing dark hair, pale gray skin and scars along the right side of his face.

Moderate Weirdness: A disembodied entity that talks to/controls people. A glitch of the Wyrd (page 6)

Intense Weirdness: An otherworldly A.I. pursuing an agenda or program to control human evolution through mutations.

Motive: Improve the genetic quality of living species through manipulation.

Environment: One of his many secret laboratories.

Health: 15 (within a body. Up to 20 as artificial construct)

Damage Inflicted: at least 5 (up to 8 with a particular esotery or artifact)

Armor: (see Combat)

Movement: Short (None as A.I., but may have special transport forces).

Modifications: Intellect defense as level 6. Level 7 in all tasks involving mutations and in most areas of knowledge (including numenera).

Combat: Magister Taranthius has many technological enhancements and devices that aid in defense and offense. He uses ray emitters, detonations, and similar means of directed destruction. He has many esoteric abilities, such as:

- Fire a beam of body-warping energy at one target within long range, that inflicts 6 point of damage and causes a **harmful mutation** (page 124 of the Numenera corebook; page 45 of the Numenera Character Options).
- Fire a beam of nerve-targeting energy that paralyzes one target within long range, if she fails a Might defense roll. Each round, the

paralyzed victim can attempt another Might defense roll to shrug off the effect.

- Gain Armor 5, from a force screen. The energy field sustains itself by draining a cypher (of level 5 or lower) held by an enemy, within short range, each round. With no cyphers to drain, the screen loses its strength, at the rate of 1 Armor point per round.
- Inject a numenera toxin that weakens one target within immediate range.
- Use a special serum (or a run-time) to regenerate 3 points of health each round, for ten minutes.
- Transfers his consciousness into the body of an unconscious living target (requires several hours of contact).

Interaction: Magister Taranthius is difficult to interact with. Although brilliant, he doesn't seem to find any interest in anything except his studies. However, he could be willing to share some of his knowledge about mutations, for a price (usually the completion of a task) or because the question at hand intrigues him.

Loot: Magister Taranthius has collected an impressive quantity of cyphers, oddities and artifacts, all related to mutations, body and mind alteration.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

You can use these ideas to create new adventures right from the start, or to tweak a campaign that is already running.

1. The characters are framed for a mutation outbreak they didn't cause, and must find the real culprit.
2. A local farmer is suspected of breeding mutant beasts, after several of the creatures are spotted killing the cattle of other farmers.
3. The person which the group was sent to meet has been replaced by a shapeshifter mutant.
4. The party meets a crazed **aneen** (page 231 of the Numenera corebook) breeder who kills travelers and feeds them to his mutant animals.



WEIRD WANDERERS

"Definition Of A Wanderer: A guy who's always looking beyond."
– Stephen King, Wolves of the Calla



GENERAL OVERVIEW

THE CLAN OF CLANG

The Metalline People.

It was during one of those trips that we met Vivek.

The first thing that caught my attention was her metallic upper limb. It was different from all other prosthetic appendages I'd ever seen; it had no servo-mechanism nor gears, and seemed like a shiny metal sculpture, hard and flexible at the same time. Not without some effort I learned that was not the only part of her body to have that composition; the lower ipsilateral limb was metallic as well. I also discovered that these changes were a feature of all her people, and that's why they were known as the Metalline Ones. On that occasion, I had the unusual opportunity to live a few days with them. Although at a distance, I could study their singular condition on whose origin I have developed some theories.

The metalline people, or the Clan of Clang as they call themselves (probably an onomatopoeic term based on their peculiarity), are a nomadic population, who limit their contact with urban settlements. This likely roaming state likely arose from problematic relationships with other fixed settlements who feared or reviled the techno-anomalies apparent amongst the Clan.

Hypothesis:

- Transforming techno-virus
- Mutation
- Modification
- Other

Observations:

Data is obviously limited and obtained exclusively through external observation; it was not possible to dissect or conduct a more detailed study.

All members of the clan present at birth with at least a mechanical defect - a finger, an eye or a patch on the skin. Rarely members of the clan mate with external partners; the offspring show the distinctive characteristics of the clan regardless of which parent possessed the bio-mechanically infected genome.

After birth, tissue transformation continues during maturation, extending the changed surface. It's possible that in some cases the mutation also extends to internal organs, a state often incompatible with life. Progressive tissue "metaplasia" may explain the lack of geriatric clan members; life expectancy of this metalline population is statistically lower than the common baseline. This may also explain the predominance of techno mutations in the upper and lower limbs and in the cranial and maxillofacial area.

The analysis of mutation of the optic apparatus was very interesting as a means to refute my own hypothesis. We observed different modes of alteration. In some cases the eye showed a widening of the visual capacity at distance or microscopic vision; in others, the ability to perceive wavelengths not visible to us, allowing low light or thermographic vision. In some cases, however, this widening of the visual spectrum afflicted the subject with an altered perception sufficient to bring about psychosis and a state of mental derangement. In a small number of cases, the eyes did not work at all or, perhaps, bestowed a sense state too alien for the afflicted to comprehend. This demonstrates that the mutation is not purposive. In the absence of an autopsy, we cannot determine whether similar hyper-functional mutations affect the internal organs. However, as already stated, the greater level of dependent complexity means the percentage of disadvantageous or lethal variations appears much higher.

In some cases, a mutation at the level of the brain tissue occurs,



expanding normal brain function in matters of calculation and memory. Some metalline can interface with the machinery or even cyphers from a distance. Such individuals attain special consideration among the Clan though I have not had the privilege to know one. The metalline calls them technomancers, possessing the faculty to reach across and into the datasphere. The metalline people recognize them as savants and soothsayers, capable of perceiving hidden truths beyond common ken.

Something noticed only after spending time with the Clan is that individuals experienced mutation at an advanced stage experience a sort of apathy or fugue. Such metalline display an absence of emotional reaction and a decrease in physiological drives (including libido). The development of this condition, according to what was seen, correlates to the metalmorphosis of the brain; it expands to affect the limbic area of the brain, in particular, the amygdaloid nuclei of the thalamus.

This stunts the empathic capacity of many Clan members.

The cellular mechanism in which metalplasia is developed remains unknown.

In what percentage do cells remain functional following metallization?

Where and how does the body acquire the raw material for such mutation while in a gestational state?

A more thorough investigation and analysis of metalline nutrition might hint at the necessary accumulation of heavy metals; perhaps the wide-ranging nomadic lifestyle of the Clan as hunter/gatherers might provide further explanation.



Conclusions:

According to my observations, the random nature of developed mutations leads me to exclude the hypothesis that the Clan owes their origin to external modification; the progressive metalplasia seems more consistent with an invasive viral reprogramming. The one might reject the hypothesis of the virus given the presence of characteristics at birth, with no transmission through the act of intercourse to a non-infected sexual partner.

The hypothesis of the mutant strain is consistent with what has been observed, especially in the parental diffusion, even if the origin of the mutation remains unclear: random? naturally induced - perhaps a particular side effect of the Iron Wind? artificially induced (a trial of modification)? It would need further studies and perhaps the opportunity to perform a dissection...

Other causes less probable might yet prove the possible cause. The Ninth World is a strange place and often its natural (or unnatural) laws escape explanation or understanding, even for those who feel they have seen everything!

– From Hex's journal.

THE ETHEREAL GYPSIES

The Ethereal Gypsies are a human sub-race of gypsy wanderers who, centuries ago, adopted the Scattered Lands as their home (or – according to someone – were imprisoned within them). The land (or the Wyrd) in turn has “adopted” the gypsies, granting them some unique multidimensional powers. It is possible that their place or origin either is lost to them or is purely a myth. It is suggested that they can venture beyond the Lost Aeons, but there's no real proof of that. The Ethereal Gypsies are an ethnic group, loosely bound together by cultural ties.

– An excerpt from Weird Wanderers, by Unan-tau.



THE VESSEL CITY OF ARK-N

The vessel city of Ark-N lies in a remote area of the Ninth World. The Arkanians, its citizens, share a special connection – a quasi-mystic bond – with the beasts nourished among the city labs. Arkanian lore on living beings, especially on animals, comes from advanced bio-engineering skills and scientific notions, though none knows it as such. Arkanians are the last scions of a space-team, geneticists and biologies who travelled the stars searching for – and studying – new species.

Ironically, the Ark-N vessel (the fifth of nine spaceships, although the number is now unreadable) was a returning deep exploration vessel that crash-landed back to Earth, leaving only a few survivors and a cargo of cryogenically frozen beasts. The survivors found the Earth they left for centuries dramatically changed in landscape and ecosystem. All they could do was try to adapt themselves to the new environment and its perils, using the few still functioning Ark-N5 technologies.

As eons passed the spaceship Ark-N5 turned into a small community: the city of Ark-N (Ark·en). The original scientists of the ship transformed into revered, near mythical ancestors and their knowledge on biology and genetics devolved and transformed into traditions of animism and pervasive superstitions. The Arkanians became beasts tamers, known for their unique, embedded numenera.

– An excerpt from *Weird Wanderers*, by Unan-tau.



PCS' RESOURCES

The Scattered Lands are populated by every kind of people, all with their own agendas and purposes, and struggles to survive and thrive. Here are presented three unique populations: they can be chosen as Heritage options by all characters. Heritage is a special feature, introduced in *Beyond The Edge: Unknown Wonders*.

CLANG ONE

Clang Ones are nomadic warriors, bio-enhanced monster hunters and flesh and steel nano-warlocks.

Heritage Benefits: You gain **familiarity** (page 111 of the *Numenera corebook*) in one of the following tasks:

- Metalline Frame: Might defense rolls against diseases, viruses and poisons of any kind.
- Edgy Ends: Escaping from bonds and breaking inanimate objects.
- Bioelectrical Capacitor: Defensive rolls against electrical attacks or use electrical machines (chose one).

Heritage Drawbacks: You have a **disliking** for one of the following task

- Thick Bones: Running actions.
- Artificial Visage: Pleasant social interactions (except when dealing with other cybernetic or biomechanical creatures).
- Sealed Brain: Learning tasks.

Suggested Foci: Employs Magnetism (page 59 of the *Numenera corebook*), Fuses Flash and Steel (page 64 of the *Numenera corebook*), Fuses Mind and Machine (page 61 of the *Numenera Character Options*), Never Say Die (page 70 of the *Numenera Character Options*), Talks to Machine (page 72 of the *Numenera corebook*).

DISLIKING

Disliking is basically the opposite of familiarity. If you have a disliking for one task, you have a -1 to all rolls regarding that task.

ETHEREAL GYPSY

Ethereal gypsies are plane-walkers and inborn scoundrels. They have some knowledge about dimensional travel, gates and the like.

Heritage Benefits: You gain familiarity in one of the following tasks

- Always on Edge: Initiative rolls.
- Ghastly Reputation: Verbal intimidation tasks.
- Plane-walker: Sensing and finding gates, dimensional doors or portal-like devices or energies.

Heritage Drawbacks: You have a disliking for one of the following task

- Children of the Diaspora: Gaining the trust and the respect of other human beings.
- Fabulist: Trading tasks.
- Ephemeral State: Resisting prolonged physical stress.

Suggested Foci: Crafts Illusions (page 57 of the Numenera corebook), Exists in Two Places at Once (page 56 of the Numenera Character Options), Exists Partially Out of Phase (page 60 of the Numenera corebook), Sees Beyond (page 74 of the Numenera Character Options).

ARKANIAN

Arkanians are bio-sorcerers and zoological science experts from an ancient vessel-city, with a policy of abstaining from political or economic relations with other communities.

Heritage Benefits: You gain familiarity in one of the following tasks

- Beast Tamer: training, riding, or placating natural animals (select one kind of species).
- Stellar Compass: Navigation during nighttime (except in bad weather).
- Biological Savant: Diagnosis and healing tasks, or identifying animal species (choose one)

Heritage Drawbacks: You have a disliking for one of the following task

- Isolationist Traditions: Commanding, captivating or convincing others.
- Rough Manners: Tasks involving charm, persuasion, and etiquette
- Prone to Superstitions: Telling the truth from deception.

Suggested Foci: Controls Beasts (page 55 of the Numenera corebook), Masters Insects (page 65 of the Numenera Character Options), Morphs His/Her Body (page 17 of Beyond The Edge: Unknown Wonders).





GMs' INFO

A SAMPLE OF WEIRD WANDERERS

This brief section provides basic stats for three unusual NPCs: numeneromant, unbounded, and bio-sorcerer.

CLANG ONE NUMENEROMANT

5 (15)

Numeneromants are almost unique individuals, who claim to discover hidden knowledge and relics with the aid of supernatural powers. Although they don't use a divining rod to find the numenera, they're particularly good at that job, as if their whole body is tuned to detecting the spoils of the past.

Motive: Retrieve numenera items for the benefit of the Clan.

Health: 20

Damage Inflicted: 5 points

Armor: 2 (light armor, plus natural armor)

Movement: Short

Modifications: Perceives numenera (items and phenomenon) and resists numenera effects as level 7

Combat: A numeneromant is a very special individual. His formidable resistance to numenera effects could be of great help in a battle.

Sometimes, a numeneromant willingly uses disruptive numenera items that explode or release lethal energies on himself, trusting his inborn resistance. If seriously threatened, a numeneromant can overload numenera items to produce a one-time harmful effect, like a burst of radiation or a short-lived singularity. Using the [Cypher Danger table \(page 279 of the Numenera corebook\)](#) the GM rolls d100 and adds 10 to the result for each cypher within a short distance from the numeneromant.

Interaction: Numeneromants are committed to their cause, retrieve numenera items for the good of their clan. They're not

easily distracted from such missions.

Use: When the PCs need to find a specific numenera, in the wilderness, a numeneromant could be their only hope of success.

Loot: Numeneromants usually has a weapon, light armor, an explorer's pack, 1d6+1 cyphers and 1d6+1 oddities. One in ten might have an artifact.

ETHEREAL GYPSY UNBOUNDED

4 (12)

Unbounded roam dimensions and delve into ancient ruins, seeking time-space knowledge and loot. They possess powerful, innate phasing abilities. Usually mistrusted and looked upon with suspicion, they typically carry a wide array of oddities.

Motive: Curiosity and finding new places to explore (or fleeing from the Lost Aeons in a Moderate Weirdness campaign)

Health: 18

Damage Inflicted: 4 points

Movement: Short

Modifications: Navigates and takes initiative as level 5

Combat: Unbounded are not eager for a fight, but they sure know their way around one. They prefer ranged weapons or hit and run tactics.

An Unbounded can also fade in and out of reality for one minute once an hour. When he uses this ability, every round the GM rolls a d6. If the result is 1-3, no attacks or special abilities will affect the Unbounded in that round, but the players don't learn this until after they have declared their actions. However, the Unbounded always attacks just before or after fading, so he is always able to affect creatures in this world.

Interaction: Unbounded could be formidable allies (scouts or thieves), providing one knows how to handle them. They are usually unpredictable or secretive individuals.

Use: Unbounded often roam ancient ruins or wilderness searching



for portals or interdimensional gates.

Loot: Unbounded have at least two weapons, an explorer's pack, 1d10 shins, 1d6 cyphers and 2d6 oddities.

ARKANIAN BIO-SORCERER 3 (9)

Bio-sorcerers are healers, wisemen, beasts breeders and keepers of the Arkanian traditions. They're highly regarded within the vessel-city and usually lead sampling expeditions.

Motive: Finding and understanding biological knowledge, preserving animal species and Arkanian traditions.

Health: 15

Damage Inflicted: 3 points

Movement: Short

Modifications: Heals as level 4, level 5 at all biology related tasks.

Combat: Bio-sorcerers use esotery-derived attacks with long range.

A bio-sorcerer can do one of the following as an action:

- Produce a fully developed level 2 allied beast.
- Add +1 Armor to an allied beast or restore 5 points to its health.
- Release a cloud of bio-selective targeting nanites at a short distance, that inflicts 5 points of Speed damage to all enemies within immediate distance.

Interaction: Arkanian bio-sorcerers are usually leery and standoffish, due to their society's isolationist perspective.

Use: Arkanian bio-sorcerers are rare but can be encountered anywhere seeking biological samples.

Loot: A bio-sorcerer usually has a weapon, one oddity or two, miscellaneous technical gear and perhaps an artifact.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

You can use these ideas to create new adventures right from the start, or to tweak a campaign that is already running.

1. Through trickery and by digging into the PCs' past (via dimensional travel), a vicious ethereal gypsy has something to hold over the heads of the PCs and make them jump. The PCs must end the cycle of blackmail, deprive the villain of his edge, and keep him temporarily satisfied while doing it.
2. The PCs are relic hunters, who have caught wind of a numenera-laden ruin. They go to explore it, and must deal with its denizens (an aggressive tribe of clang ones) to find the "treasure" (a baby who controls magnetism, revered as a goddess).
3. The PCs are minding their own business when they are attacked by savage clang ones/beasts. They don't know why. They must solve the mystery of their attackers' motives, and in the meantime fend off more assaults. They must put two and two together (one of their artifacts releases electric or psychic waves that resonate with the attackers' brain) to deal with the problem.
4. A serious crime has been committed: a unique biological sample was stolen from the vessel-city temp-lab, and the PCs have already been found guilty.



THE HANGING PELAGUS / THE SINKHOLE

"Searchers after horror haunt strange, far places."

– H.P. Lovecraft



GENERAL OVERVIEW

For those who venture out into new and uncharted territories, the Hanging Pelagus is a renowned landmark, one that calls forth awe and mystery, but mostly a sense of wonder. It has been described in many tales, none of which caught its real essence, because the Pelagus is as alien and unnatural as human mind could imagine, its very nature being otherworldly. It's like an unintelligible note in the world's music, one that gives the chills and makes men ask more of the universe than it can give.

The Hanging Pelagus is a group of six small, reversed spire-shaped islands, floating above a huge hole in the ocean, where waters take a seemingly endless fall. It clearly shows signs of former intelligent life, but explorers found no evidence of any sentient creatures that remained, and the advanced complexes scattered across the islands show proof of long term deterioration.

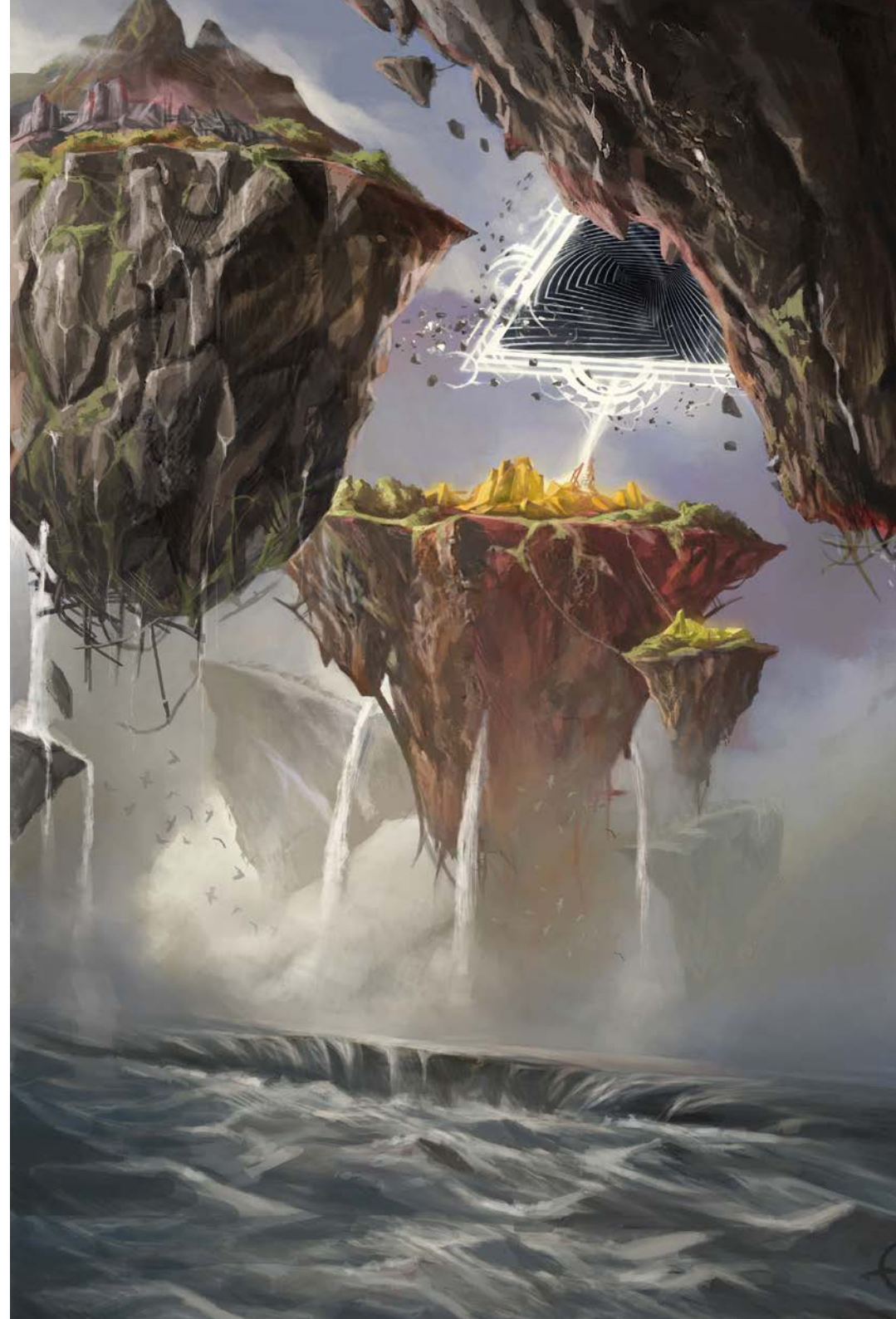


PCS' RESOURCES

This section provides a new exploration-themed weird focus.

CUTS THROUGH THE WINDS

A long time ago, you came to the conclusion that your roots lay in



the wind, not in the earth. Since then, you spent every moment of your life trying to overcome gravity using the numenera. Perhaps you were destined to ride the winds, or maybe you just devoted yourself to find a way that led to the open sky. Anyway, you obtained an ability so long sought by men: flight.

You built (or was given by someone else) mechanically gliding rigs from available numenera items, which could be kept aloft by you almost indefinitely. This artifact is your most prized possession, and it's now part of you. Furthermore, your mastery of air drafts gives you other interesting abilities.

The longer you glide the more your body cries out for your next gulp of air, which raises you up and up.

No one type of character is more likely to cut through the winds than another, but the power to fly is rare and riding the winds could prove physically demanding, so glaives and jacks make the best candidates.

Connection: Pick one other PC. In the recent past, while using your flying abilities, you accidentally endangered her life. It's up to the player of that character to decide whether she resents or forgives you.

Additional Equipment: You have an in-built gliding wing – a folding flying device that allows you to drive through the winds. You know how to properly use it, and if destroyed, you can scavenge just about anywhere for 1d6 days to create another wing.



Minor Effect Suggestions: The duration of the effect is doubled.

Major Effect Suggestions: You can take another action on that same turn while airborne.

Tier 1: Drift (1 Speed point plus 1 Might point).

You can use your gliding device to float slowly into the air. As your action, you can maneuver to remain almost motionless in the air, or move your normal speed; otherwise you drift with the wind. This effect lasts for up to ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Winged Balance. You're trained in all types of movement tasks while airborne. Enabler.

Tier 2: Gust of Wind (3 Speed points plus 1 Might point). You can use your gliding device to push up to two creatures or objects an immediate distance away from you. You must be able to see the targets, which must be your size or smaller, must not be affixed to anything, and must be within short range. The gust of wind is quick and rough, but can be used to slam a door or violently push a lever. You can use this ability while airborne or on the ground. Action.

Sun Compass: You're trained in orientation tasks while airborne and during daytime. Enabler.

Tier 3: Ride the Winds (4 Speed points plus 2 Might points). You can use your gliding device to float and fly through the air for one hour. In terms of overland movement, a flying creature moves about 20 miles (32 km) per hour and is not



affected by terrain. Action to initiate.

Tier 4: Perfect Body Control. Your Speed Edge and Might Edge both increase by 1. Enabler.

Tier 5: Rapid Maneuver (5 Speed points plus 2 Might points). You can move up to a long distance and take another action on that same turn while airborne. Enabler.

Tier 6: Migration (6 Might points). While Riding the Winds, you can carry one additional creature of your size or smaller. You must hold this creature with both your arms (unless you find a way to hold her tight to your body). Enabler.



GMs' INFO

THE THULIAN RACE

Hanging Pelagus is but a human word. The place was and still is known by the name of Trau'rem, a thulian settlement, the last colony of an ancient non-human race.

If encountered first hand, an observer would describe a Thulian as something akin to a mix between a large bird and a wide-hipped humanoid creature, with leaf-like appendages sprouting from the back. An elegant elongated head tops the Thulian form, punctuated with three glowing eyes (two lateral and one in the center of the skull) and a beard-like mass of flesh tendrils. They possessed a choral voice that would sound incredibly solemn to human ears.

Unfortunately, only one thulian still "exists", held in a state of suspended animation (see below). Thulians were peaceful savants and highly-evolved creatures, suffering from a major emotive disorder, one that pushed the race in an endless search for inspiration and discovery. In this, they bear some semblance to humans, except

GM Intrusions:

The gliding device may suffer malfunction or damage. Sunlight can blind while flying. A sudden gust of wind may push into dangerous situations.

their need for discovering meaningful truths, is almost a paroxysm, a self-destructive hunger.

Searching low for a higher truth, they discovered another realm, one in which they got caught, a prison that still holds them.

THE KRA'QUOMM (HYPER SPACE-TIME)

An eye that can see the three dimensions of time as well as the three dimensions of space, it will reveal you beauty beyond belief, but once you've seen the Kra'Quomm, will you ever look at this realm again?

– Kreelain The Keeper, last of the thulians

Thulians called their discovery Kra'Quomm, which means Hyper Space-Time, a wholly new life-condition inside the Erebus (the name they gave to the dark energy network). Through an incredibly complex technology they open a gate into the Erebus, a tunnel that permanently altered their physical nature making them pure-thought being. Thulians all traveled to this "realm", where three dimensions of time joined to the three dimensions of space.

Kra'Quomm is indescribably beautiful, but Thulians can build nothing there, they can create nothing. In Kra'Quomm they simply exist, on and on, throughout all time and space, with empty lives and hearts that long for their real home.

Feeble/Moderate Weirdness: The Kra'Quomm is a different space-time not unlike a dimension of pure thought. The Thulians entered directly into this new reality as entities without form, unable to find their way back.

Intense Weirdness: The Thulians were the first ones to

acknowledge the false reality of the Blending Qualia world, a special kind of **recursion** (page 134 of *The Strange corebook*), accidentally created by the Hypnagogic Guild. The Kra'Quomm was their way out, a special gate into the **Strange** (page 212 of *The Strange corebook*), which they call the Erebus.

THE SINKHOLE

The overwhelming planar powers released by the gate had a side-effect. The extractor siphoned immense amounts of energy to activate the gateway, creating a permanent area of odd directional gravity. As a result, a huge chasm opened below the islands, measuring almost 3300 feet (1.06 km) in diameter. Inside, the water falls as far as the eye can see.

Explorers called this weird feature "The Sinkhole"; no one knows where the waters go or how deep the chasm, since those brave enough to venture down never reach the ocean floor.

THE SIX ISLANDS

The Pelagus' *floatons* are a mass of rocks, mud, and peat between 225 and 300 feet thick (76 to 91 m). These islands are almost 3500 feet (1.06 km) away from the coastline and free-floating at a height of 1500 feet (457 m). Originally, they may have been directed by the whim of their inhabitants; now they slowly levitate up and down, in a cyclical manner. Sometimes they reach the surface of the water. That is perhaps the easiest way to reach them. The force that held them aloft remains unknown, but it is closely related to the Kra'Quomm and the energies dissipated when the gate opened.

Every island hosts a different installation, but all of them are necessary to reopen the gate. They are collectively known as the Stillness.

GM Intrusions:

The Helium Line suffers a malfunction while the PCs are moving out of phase from one island to another. A difficulty 4 Intellect roll is required to remain out of phase; otherwise, victims are tossed away and suffer a long (and potentially deadly) fall.

The islands are connected together through a weird transport called the Helium Line.

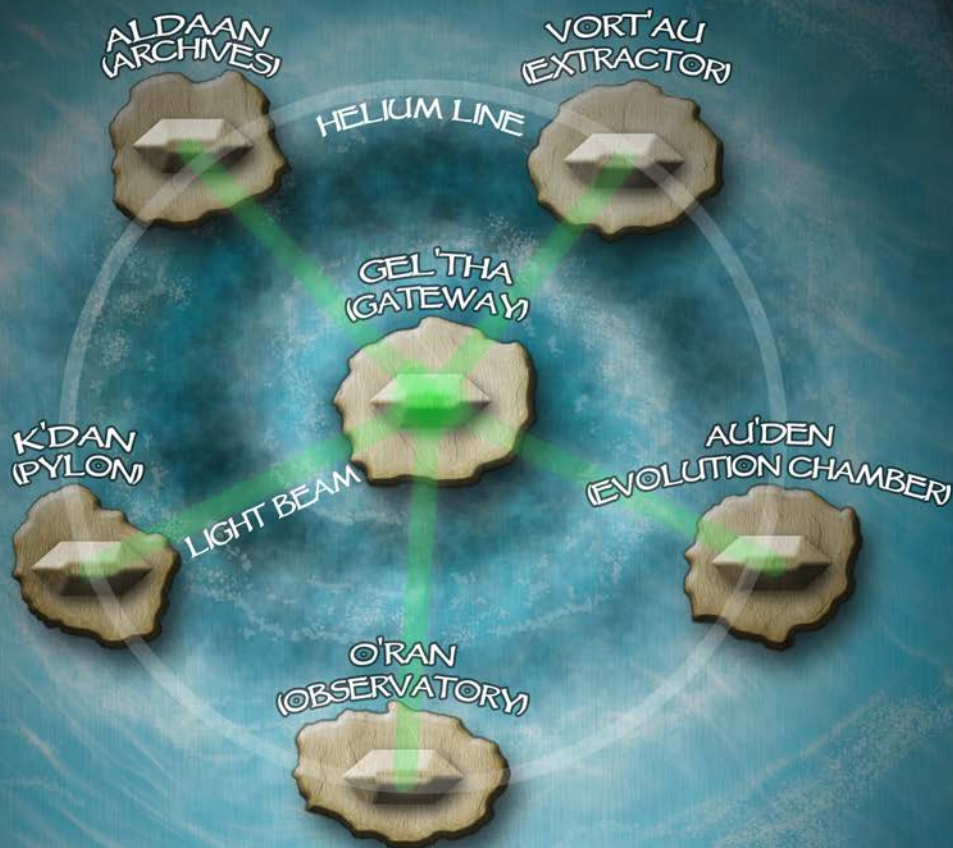
In order to reach the islands, one must face the following obstacles:

- **High Altitude.** Explorers must somehow be able to fly or teleport. Approaching the islands as they reach the surface of the waters (see below, roughly occurs once per year) can be done, provided one knows such a thing to be possible (a level 7 Intellect-based task).
- **Gravity Storms.** Explorers have to overcome sudden gravity pulls from the islands that draw victims to themselves (a gravitational level 6 threat, inflicts 6 points of ambient damage).
- **The Sinkhole.** Reaching the floatons by boat, as they touch the waters (see above) is possible, but a strong pull from the sinkhole (a difficulty 7 task) must be avoided during navigation, while climbing up to the top of an island (a difficulty 6 task). Falling in the Sinkhole leads almost certainly to death unless the watery walls of the pit are reached (a difficulty 6 task). Doing so inflicts 10 point of ambient damage due to intense pressure. Furthermore, the victim has to dive back to the surface.

EXPLORING THE ISLANDS

The floatons are indistinguishable from one another. Each hosts a single structure, a hexagonal prism made of unknown metals as large as a small manor. At the very center of each structure lies a huge, translucent synth sphere, connected to a perch, which is the sole means of transport between the islands. This machinery is called the Helium Line, and can be reactivated (a difficulty 6 Intellect task). Each sphere has an invisible opening panel (difficulty 5 perception task to locate) and can hold up to six human-sized creatures. Ten seconds from activation, it switches passengers out of phase. Passengers are then "moved" to another Helium Line sphere,





PELAGUS TRAU'REM

their ghostly images visible from the outside as shimmering shapes inside a fast-flying marble device. The Helium Line sphere stops after ten seconds (decrypting the five symbols tied to the external islands requires a difficulty 7 Intellect task), “lodging” the users inside the space occupied by another sphere.

Island K'dan (Pylon): This is the nearest island to the coast. It is filled with strange flora and it truly seems like nature has taken over. The structure at the center of the floaton can be accessed by a huge opening. It's almost empty, a single stele standing near an old metal console and a Helium Line sphere. The stele is engraved with odd symbols. Translating the stele by normal means is a difficulty 10 task, unless one spends at least 1d6+1 days in the archives trying to learn the nuts and bolts of the Thulian language (which has mathematical-like properties, inextricably bound up with it).

The inscription says:

*“K'dan erit-tet a nau. Door'Aldaan.
Aldaan math-du O'ran.
O'ran kalith Vort'au.
Vot'au nida thy Au'den.
Au'den xel'nan Gel'tha.
Erebus mi-thy fee.”*

*“Reality is a lie, there is only knowledge.
Knowledge can be gained through observation.
Observation leads to penetration.
Through insight, you may evolve.
Through evolution, your chains are broken.
Erebus shall free you.”*

It hides a message tied to a Light Beam activation order (K'dan, Aldaan, O'ran, Vort'au, Au'den, Gel'tha. See: "Open the Gate to the Erebus"), which opens the gate to the Erebus and the Kra'Quomm.

Metal Console: It can be activated (a difficulty 5 Intellect task, 3 if one has learned a bit of the Thulian language) to release a light beam, a slanting pillar of energy that reaches a height of 300 feet (90 m). The console may also be scavenged to obtain a random light-related cypher, but doing so damages the machine (that must be repaired in order to function again).

Encounter ideas: Abykoses (page 230 of the *Numenera* corebook) may infest the Helium Line sphere, as well as a **Yellow Swarm** (page 266 of the *Numenera* corebook).

Island Aldaan (Archives): It is mostly rocky. The structure at the center of the island can be accessed by a huge sealed panel (level 6). The building is filled with neatly placed Thulian holocords ("all-records", data concealed inside small metal rods, placed along the walls). It is a huge alien library. Inside, there is a Helium Line sphere and a metal console.

Holocords: Thulians can "read" holocords by manipulating them with their beard-like appendages. Holocords could be dangerous to others, as they violently fill the minds of those who touch them with random images and thoughts. They're classified by their color (green: ordinary knowledge; purple: technical knowledge; pink: holidays and celebrations; white: sacred knowledge; red: war; black: lore of death; blue: philosophy).

A PC who touches a random holocord must succeed an Intellect defense roll or suffer 4 points of Intellect damage. If the roll is successful, the PC learns one random piece of information.

Here's a list of sample information:

- **Green:** The PC sees random images of Thulian life. He gains an asset to the next task related to Thulian knowledge he makes in

the same day.

- **Purple:** The PC sees random images of Thulian scientists at work. He gains an asset to the next numenera task he makes in the same day. If the PC gets a Minor/Major Effect, he can learn how to fix Helium Line spheres (extremely useful in the Extractor Chamber, see below).
- **Pink:** The PC sees random images of a Thulian festival. He gains an asset to tasks he makes in the same day to learn the Thulian language.
- **White:** The PC sees random images of a Thulian ceremony. He gains an asset to tasks he makes in the same day to learn the Thulian language.
- **Red:** The PC sees random images of a battle between Thulians and hordes of yellow swarms (no effects).
- **Black:** The PC sees random images of a Thulian entombment (the grave looks exactly like the small pyramid in the Evolution Chamber).
- **Blue:** The PC's mind is filled with random Thulian thoughts. He gains an asset to the next Intellect-based task he makes in the same day. A PC could spend 1d6+1 days in the archives trying to learn the basis of the Thulian language (a prolonged Intellect action that requires at least three successful rolls, before three failures).

Metal Console: It can be activated (a difficulty 5 Intellect task, 3 if one has learned a bit of Thulian language) to release a light beam, a slanting pillar of energy that reaches a height of 300 feet (90 m). The console may also be scavenged to obtain a random light-related cypher, but doing so damages the machine (that must be repaired in order to function again).

Encounter ideas: Sometimes, **explorers** or scholars (page 271 of the *Numenera* corebook) camp here, trying to learn more about the Thulian ruins.



Island O'ran (Observatory): It is at a slightly higher altitude than the other islands (1650 feet, or 500 m). The structure at the center of the floaton can be accessed through a huge opening. Inside the structure – a theatre built for training in **Chaosphere navigation** (page 215 of *The Strange corebook*) – it is always pitch black. The dominant feature is the large dome-shaped projector screen onto which scenes of **landmarks** (page 222 of *The Strange corebook*), planets and other celestial objects can be made to appear and move realistically to simulate the “motions of the heavens”. The celestial scenes can be created using complex numenera technologies.

Here, too, are a Helium Line sphere and a metal console

Planetarium: The planetarium can be used (a level 7 difficulty Intellect task) to learn about the existence of the Erebus, the dark energy network, a boundless “alien” cosmos.

Metal Console: It can be activated (a difficulty 5 Intellect task, 3 if one has learned a bit of thulian language) to release a light beam, a slanting pillar of energy that reaches a height of 300 feet (90 m). The console may also be scavenged to obtain a random light-related cypher, but doing so damages the machine (that must be repaired in order to function again).

Encounter ideas: Using the planetarium's commands, the PCs unwillingly draw the attention of a hostile creature like an **erynth grask** (page 240 of *the Numenera corebook*).

Island Vort'au (Extractor): It has an unnatural shape on the bottom, it seems kind of pointy rather than smooth. The structure at the center of the island can be accessed by a huge sealed panel (level 6). The whole place is filled with odd machinery and arcing lightning. Inside, there are a Helium Line sphere and a metal console, both of which are broken.

The Extractor: The machine absorbs the energies required to open the gate. It interferes with the attractive force, suddenly changing **gravity** in the environment (page 97 of *the Numenera corebook*). This makes it hard to act and avoid random electrical discharges released by the machine itself (level 5, inflicts 5 points of ambient damage). It could be deactivated (a difficulty 6 task).

Broken Helium Line Sphere: If the PCs arrive here via a Helium Line Sphere, with a short loud noise the machine ceases to function, and they're violently dumped into the room. They can't leave the island by this means unless they repair the numenera (but that's probably unlikely, because it requires a difficulty 8 task and several rare spare parts).

Broken Metal Console: It must be fixed (a difficulty 7 Intellect task) to restore its functions. It works exactly like the other metal consoles.

Encounter ideas: The cosmic energies siphoned by the extractor change the interior into an eye-watering, mind-bending non-Euclidean maze, from which the PCs must find a way out.

Island Au'den (Evolution Chamber): It is one of the biggest floaton. The structure at the center of the island can be accessed by a huge sealed panel (level 6). Inside, there are an opaque pyramid-like crystal artifact, a Helium Line sphere, and a metal console. The ceiling shows holographic scenes of the Thulian civilization at its zenith. It should feel like a sacred place, a glorious temple, instead it conveys a sense of despair and resignation.

Crystal Pyramid: Inside this level 8 artifact lies Kreelein, the last of the Thulian, keeper of traditions, the only one of its race that did not cross the gate. It lies in suspended animation, but can be awakened and released from its slumber (a level 6 Intellect task). Kreelein is a peaceful, melancholic creature, eager to warn others of

GM Intrusions:

A very annoying foe is thrust far away from Kreelein by a tremendous amount of psychic force.

the perils posed by the Kra'Quomm (provided one finds a way to speak with the Thulian).

It shows a torpid and fatalist behavior, as it points out the hubris of its race. It tries to dissuade the PCs if they intend to reopen the gate. Even if this could help its fellow comrades find their way back from the Erebus, there's also an high risk it could prove dangerous in the end, attracting world-hungry entities like a [planetovore](#) (page 8 of [The Strange corebook](#)). Having met the PCs and dealt with their questions, Kreelain reactivates the pyramid-like artifact from the inside, falling back into its eternal sleep.

Metal Console: It can be activated (a difficulty 5 Intellect task, 3 if one has learned a bit of Thulian language) to release a light beam, a slanting pillar of energy that reaches a height of 300 feet (90 m). The console may also be scavenged to obtain a random light-related cypher, but doing so damages the machine (that must be repaired in order to function again).

Encounter ideas: Kreelain, the last living Thulian lies here, asleep.

KREELAIN, LAST OF THE THULIAN 5 (15)

A Thulian bears a strong resemblance to a large peacock-like being and a wide-hipped humanoid creature, with fleshy appendages growing from its back and a noble elongated head, showing three glowing eyes and beard-like tendrils. It has a choral and deep voice.

Motive: Warning others from the Kra'Quomm's perils. Keeping the Thulian traditions alive

Environment: The Evolution Chamber, on Au'den Island

Health: 30

Damage Inflicted: 5

Movement: Short; immediate while flying

Modifications: All Intellect-based tasks as level 7.

Combat: Kreelain never starts a fight, although it could easily destroy its enemies via esotery-derived attacks. If threatened, it simply encloses



itself in the pyramid-like artifact, actuating a defensive protocol which hardens its crystal walls (level 10) and falling back to sleep

Interaction: Kreelain is a somber creature. It sought for death but found it not; yet, seeking, found his true vocation, as a warning.

Loot: Kreelain doesn't have any loot.

Thy eyes may be wide-open, but has the mind the strength to see?

– Kreelain The Keeper, last of the thulians

Island Gel'tha (Gateway): It is the largest island, floating directly above the Sinkhole. The structure at the center of the floaton is sealed on the outside (level 10). The inner chamber can be reached only with the Helium Line sphere, and only from the Evolution Chamber. It is almost empty, except for a Helium Line sphere and a massive spire-like device, with a metal console at its feet.

Metal Console: It can be activated (a difficulty 5 Intellect task, 3 if one has learned a bit of Thulian language) to release a light beam, an upright pillar of energy that reaches a height of 300 feet (90 m). The console may also be scavenged to obtain a random light-related cypher, but doing so damages the machine (that must be repaired in order to function again).

Opening the Gate to the Erebus: If the opening sequence is correctly initiated, the metal console in this chamber can open the Gate to Erebus. The building ceiling slowly opens without a sound, as the pillar of light turns solid, becoming a spiral-staircase-like artifact that leads to the gated summit.

Encounter ideas: The Gate to Erebus is a door to the unknown (or to the dark energy network). Depending on the tone of the campaign, the GM may use it to bring up new threats or to give a new hope to the Thulian race.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

You can use these ideas to create new adventures right from the start, or to tweak a campaign that is already running.

1. Somehow, a Thulian trapped in the Kra'Quomm found a way to send a request for help, in the form of a strange globular vessel. The PCs recover the weird craft, believing it to be some kind of numenera, but the item suddenly carries them to Island K'dan.
2. The PCs are hired to escort a team of scholars to the Hanging Pelagus.
3. A settlement's enemies have a secret base that must be found, and someone believes it to be on the Hanging Pelagus.
4. The PCs found a peculiar Thulian holocord and experiences a prolonged vision. They don't know why, but they feel compelled to explore the place they've seen in their vision.



RESOURCES

FICTION

A Scanner Darkly, by P.K. Dick

ARIA, by Geoff Nelder

At the Mountains of Madness, by H.P. Lovecraft

Dark Benediction, by Walter Miller Jr.

Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley

Harlequin Rex, by Owen Marshall

Invisible Cities, by Italo Calvino

Speaker for the Dead, by Orson Scott Card

The Andromeda Strain, by Michael Crichton

The Nameless City, by H.P. Lovecraft

The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch, by P.K. Dick

Ubik, by P.K. Dick

Windhaven, by G.R.R. Martin and Lisa Tuttle

VIDEOGAMES

Tales from the Borderlands

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The Last Door

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Inception

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