

The Translation Codex



REQUIRES THE STRANGE COREBOOK
BY MONTE COOK GAMES, LLC

The Translation Coder

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Preface



My name is Dr. Erica Prethus and I am of the Strange. Something is not quite right with me. Something ticks when it should probably tock. I am a lost visitor. A changeling. A foreign walker on the Earth. I know not where I belong, but the realm of man is not it.

I call myself doctor, not because of my academic degrees, but because of the nature of my work. I am an observer and documenter of realities. I theorize and test my hypotheses. I seek truth behind the curtain of mere sense perception. I use tools few traditional scientists possess.

This book represents the collected writings of my travels to other worlds. If you are holding it, you likely know that I mean recursions - small universes spun from the stuff of collective belief interacting with ancient forces. You are probably someone for whom nothing I say will be surprising, for you've been to other universes yourself or felt the tug of another world on your soul. You know you can

slip away between the bones of mother Earth. You can walk between the known paths into the unknown and become someone else. Something else. I have seen what you can be. I know much of what other worlds have to offer.

I hope that by looking upon this work you can become prepared for what lies ahead. If Earth is to survive the lurking world eaters of this galaxy we'll need people with insights like yours to be well informed. Capable of making worlds of your own even.

Take this tome to be a sign that your time is right. Take what I've provided here as hard won wisdom to be carefully guarded and dutifully heeded. Most of what I have to say involves the ways in which we become part of the worlds we invade. Understanding of these ways may one day provide you with the knowledge needed to be whatever you need to be. I hope this codex is a beacon in the dark.

How to Use This Book

First and foremost, this is a book of Foci. You'll find 100 of them compiled here for use as a GM in constructing recursions or just providing more options for new characters on Earth. Each Focus has been kept to a single page so that it's easy for you to print out select Foci for each player using them.

All the following six chapters provide numerous Foci for one or more genres (Chapter 6 has 5 small genres), somewhat associated with the various recursion laws, but mostly just grouped according to similarity of theme and fictional source. You'll get a lot of mileage from mixing and matching Foci from the various sections though.

For instance, when constructing an action-packed space opera the obvious starting place is the five space Foci presented in Chapter Six. However, a number of the science fiction / mad science Foci in chapter three would likely be appropriate as well and could be included in a list for your players as they translate their characters in.

Each chapter also provides a number of example recursions built around these Foci. These can be used as jumping off points, examples, or even the central places your game could take place within. One of the great things about The Strange is the infinite possibilities presented by the nature of recursions. The Translation Codex aims to assist in the enjoyable task of making worlds.

Many of the Foci presented do not include starting equipment. When they do provide equipment these are intended to be in addition to any standard starting gear. The reason we leave this out is because we don't know how the reader is going to use these Foci. The recursions you make could have widely varying science and technology, not to mention currency and economics. The Foci presented in The Strange Corebook should be used as guidelines for starting equipment when needed.

The chapters of the Codex are as follows:

Chapter 1 - Disenchanted. A look at low fantasy and other non-magical, non-scientific settings. Useful for gritty throne wars and feudal settings throughout world history. Any of these Foci can be added to a fantasy game to provide more non-magical options.

Chapter 2 - Otherworldly. Foci suitable for high fantasy settings, recursions infused with magic or just epic world-shaking events. Usable in Ardeyn or the fictional bleed of your favorite fantasy novel series. Some Foci here could also be used as though they were among the more unusual psionic powers.

Chapter 3 - Pseudoscientific. A presentation of Foci drawn from various mad science sources. Robots, death rays, superpowers, and gadgets. Useful for sci-fi and comic book recursions alike.

Chapter 4 - Earthly. Abilities for Earth and Earth-like recursions, with Foci suitable for action packed modern settings. Many Foci here would also work in sci-fi and comic book settings.

Chapter 5 - Paranormal. Mental and otherwise psychic powers suitable for recursions under the Law of Psionics. These Foci can also be adapted to magical settings with a more cerebral theme.

Chapter 6 - Miscellaneous. Five sets of five Foci, each presenting a taste of a less expansive genre. These are: Space, Wild West, Mythic (Greco-Roman), Lovecraftian Horror, and The Strange itself (including one Focus for Exotic recursions).



Erica surveyed the great hall of Duke Cantor and the people within. The hall received its illumination from dozens of candles hung in iron-worked chandeliers suspended from the ceiling and two roaring fires in the huge fireplaces on opposing walls. Despite the fireplaces the hall was still chilly - likely the reason so many of the dozens of nobles gathered here wore fur. Erica herself was wrapped in fur, which she pulled a little tighter to ward away the cold. She sipped at her mulled wine and grimaced at herself. Normally she wouldn't consume any alcohol on a job, but this mission was proving more difficult than she first anticipated.

The goldsmiths of the Cantor Duchy were the finest in any recursion, and Erica was in need of a very particular key. So she had approached the guild with her commission, hoping to exchange her unique gifts for the key. Unfortunately what the guild wanted most was an end to their tyrant Duke, and for his more reasonable daughter to replace him. She had agreed, thinking that it would be easy to take out someone in this backwater recursion. She quickly learned that Duke Cantor was very paranoid, and while he would have been easy to kill if she could get at him, accessing the Duke seemed nearly impossible. Hence the party. Using a device given to her by an old friend, she planned to seduce Cantor and lure him back to his bedchambers, where disposing of him would be quite easy. Unfortunately, the Duke seemed entirely immune to her, even when she had the opportunity to speak with him directly. She had left broad hints that she wouldn't be displeased to have some private attention from him, and with the effects of the chemicals she was wearing, he should have been panting over the idea. Instead he was only distractedly polite, and she was forced to move on before attention was drawn.

Frustrated, Erica put her goblet down and headed for one of the palace's many balconies, where she could reassess her strategy. The air was frigidly cold, and she could see from her vantage that the entire duchy was covered in a thick layer of snow.

"It's not working out like imagined," a masculine voice said behind her.

"Pardon me?" Erica replied, turning to face the speaker. The voice came from a handsome young man, no older than 18, dressed in smoking grey velvets trimmed in a sable fur.

"Your plan was good, and you certainly drew the attention of most of the lords here. Your miscalculation was that the Duke prefers a man in his bed to a woman," a faint smile at the youth's mouth proved that he was clearly quite charming, putting Erica on edge.

"I have no idea what you mean," she replied.

"Oh, of course you do. The smiths might be excellent merchants, but they make poor intriguers. Too open with their schemes," the young man said as he came and leaned on the balcony. "I'm Danielle by the way."

"Erica, and I still have no idea what you're talking about," she said, not sure what to make of the situation.

"Look, normally I would have simply let you fail, but we have shared interests. The smiths might be ham-handed at politics, but they are right about one thing; the Duke must be removed. If you still want to carry out your task, come to my room in an hour. His grace should be sufficiently distracted by that time."

"How do I know this isn't a trap?" Erica asked.

"If you think it's a trap, don't come," Danielle said, winking at her and moving back into the palace.

An hour later, against her better judgment, Erica moved quietly through the halls of the palace towards the youth's room. After a quick scan of one of the maid's minds, she had easily determined its location. She paused just outside his door, and checked to make sure no one was in the hallway. Finding it empty, she pushed the door open as quietly as possible. One of the nicer guest accommodations, the suite's out chamber was finely furnished, with a fire burning low in the hearth. As Erica slipped in, she immediately noticed Danielle tied and gagged, slumped against one of the couches. Whirling around, Erica was struck across the face, sending her to the floor hard.

"Damn this stupid clothing," she thought as she hit the ground. Standing over her was the Duke, a cruel smirk on his face.

"You stupid bitch, do really think I wasn't aware of what you were up to?" He stepped closer to her, ropes in his hands. As soon as he was standing over her, she shot out her hand, calling on her gift. The Duke went rigid, the force of her power freezing him in place. With a flick of the wrist she hurled him across the room; his head made a dull crack as it hit the wall.

As she untied Danielle she said, "Since you got me into this mess, you get to help me hide the body."

Chapter 1:

Disenchanted



There are many places in the Strange comprised of fictional bleed from medieval or otherwise historical periods. From Sherwood Forest to samurai infested feudal Japan, the Strange around Earth has a preponderance of places and times, both real and imagined, in which modern technologies are not present and older ways reign.

The Foci I've documented here can be found in both magical and non-magical settings, by those who possess no arcane tricks. Relying on skill and boldness, Strangers become the heroes and villains of these fantasies. Some of them were difficult to isolate, as they would seem almost mundane to the untrained eye. But in the end even those who are merely adept at navigating interlocking social circles or cunningly plying their trade can make a difference.

Yet there is a certain heroic spirit to those of us who find ourselves in mundane circumstances within these recursions. We take up challenges despite our humble or simple natures, using whatever useful skills we have. There's something inspiring in that.

And this is not to say that there are no bold swords or sharp eyed archers to be found here. But their existence is often in relation to their causes and masters. They are attached to their recursion as you are to your Earth.

Foci

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Eradrake

Eradrake is a low fantasy recursion in which politics and war play a central role. The recursion represents the warred-over border lands between the kingdoms of Erad and Draken. Many castles are included within this region, where soldiers muster and train and courtiers plot and scheme. The most powerful lords actually within the recursion are Duke Brethesc in Erad and Duchess Helsen in Draken. The two nobles are bitter enemies, wielding warriors and assassins against one another in an endless conflict.

Recursors translating into Eradrake often find themselves dressed as soldiers and even cast in the role of noble family members of the Duke or Duchess. Easily swept up into the conflict, Strangers quickly earn bitter rivals on the other side, leading to greater and greater escalating violence and intrigue.

This is not to say that the battlefield is the only place in which the war of Eradrake plays out. From time to time peace is called and diplomatic envoys from both sides meet in each other's castles to work out terms, but ultimately such overtures are just a means to spy upon each other. War inevitably breaks out due to careless violence by one side or the other.

Level: 3

Age: Old Recursion

Laws: Substandard Physics and a small amount of Magic

Playable Races: Human

Foci: All from this chapter and potentially other mundane fighting Foci from Ardeyn.

Connection to the Strange: A hidden tunnel in the dungeons of Castle Fox leads out into the Strange.

Connection to Earth: A hidden tunnel in the sepulcher of Castle Bleak leads to the catacombs under Paris.

Size: Dozens of castles on the border between two kingdoms, spanning several hundred miles.

Spark: 35%

Trait: Strong (see The Strange corebook page 142)

Sengoku

Level: 2

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Standard Physics (gunpowder works, but is rare)

Playable Races: Human

Foci: Defends the Realm, Indulges in Worldly Pleasures, Protects the Weak, and Rules with an Iron Fist, as well as Carries a Quiver and Wields Two Weapons at Once from Ardeyn (see Chapter 2 of *The Strange* corebook).

Connection to the Strange: Just beyond the seas around the Island of Sengoku lies the Strange, which could be accessed by ships which would sail off into it, were anyone foolish enough to try such a thing.

Connection to Earth: Several gates and shrines in Japan.

Size: A shrunken, simplified version of the islands of Japan, the entire chain less than 100 miles (160 km).

Spark: 50%

Trait: Brash (see *The Strange* Corebook page 141)

Sengoku is a recursion spawned from Earth's romance with tales of feudal Japan. It is a violent if socially restrained period in which daimyo (lords) throw the might of their armies, samurai, and even hired ninja against each other for territory, glory, and honor.

Physically Sengoku is shaped like Japan's island chain, but it is much smaller, merely representing all the major parts of the original. It is surrounded by a nameless sea from which pirates emerge from time to time, seemingly out of nowhere. These pirates are often monstrous and are actually hybrids between humans and certain creatures from the Strange from which they are spawned.

Though traditionally the Emperor keeps out of politics and allows the Shogun to rule, Sengoku is set during a period of upheaval, when even the neutrality of the Emperor cannot be assumed. Depending on when in the recursion's recurring storyline the PCs enter, the Shogun may have recently been killed, with his murderer attempting to usurp his position. An alliance of other houses begins to form in the aftermath, opposing the murderer and leading to all-out war.

Sherwood Forest

A collection of tales about the legendary Robin Hood's activities in his forest hiding place have formed this recursion over the centuries. The recursion is largely a lush forest in England within which Robin's band hides their wooded fortress of traps and rope bridges. On the edge of the forest lies the hamlet of Sherwood, frequently abused by the local Sheriff.

Recursors translating into Sherwood Forest often find their clothing matches those of the "merry men" and that they are accepted as part of Robin's outlaw band, just in time for an assault by the Sheriff of Nottingham.

Once in a while a new recursor will enter and develop the Steals from the Rich focus, in which case the merry men and the rest of the people in the recursion will treat this person as though they were Robin Hood. The merry men follow Robin's lead, just in time for (again) a raid by the Sheriff. A love interest usually comes along, and potentially a kidnapping. When a kidnapping occurs it is possible for the recursion to lead into other nearby recursions of medieval castles and cities.

Level: 5

Age: Old Recursion

Laws: Substandard Physics

Playable Races: Human (an alternate version of this recursion exists in which all of the people are anthropomorphic animals, called Animal Sherwood Forest)

Foci: All from this chapter and potentially other mundane fighting Foci from Ardeyn, particularly Carries a Quiver, which may be taken by more than one PC.

Connection to the Strange: The darkest parts of the forest lead to The Strange, which locals refer to as either "France" or "The Levant."

Connection to Earth: Several stone portals throughout the British Isles lead into the forest.

Size: A forest 100 x 100 miles on a side (160 x 160 km), near a hamlet.

Spark: 80%

Trait: Graceful (see *The Strange* corebook page 141)

Carries the Burden of Knowledge



Many recursions are places in which some are cultivated as the sole masters of scholarly knowledge, steeped in minutiae of unknown usefulness. These are the plumbers of lost and forbidden secrets, as well as practical if intellectual work. Their inquisitive natures and sometimes annoying need to spew forth “facts” have made them a grudgingly valued ally of certain groups taking action within medieval recursions. Knowledge is power, particularly when the mind warping secrets you have access to relate to some world eating monster trying to leverage your home recursion into a gateway to Earth.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You once mentored this person in a topic you consider most important.
2. Pick one other PC. This person defended you against charges of witchcraft or other heresy.
3. Pick one other PC. You grew up with this person, a longtime friend.
4. Pick one other PC. You both fell in love with the same person when you were younger.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Also, you recall a somewhat related but interesting fact!

Major Effect Suggestion: Also, you recall a related and incredibly useful fact!

Suggested GM Intrusion: The book you’re quoting was completely wrong about this topic, providing you with a wealth of false information.

Tier 1

Studied. You’ve studied at a university or other place of learning within this recursion and still have access to its reservoirs of knowledge when in the right cities. Additionally, you are trained in a knowledge skill of your choice. Enabler.

Tier 2

Natural Philosopher. You enjoy an asset on rolls related to analyzing or recalling information about a natural phenomenon. Enabler.

Tier 3

Branching Out. You are trained in an additional knowledge skill of your choice. Enabler.

Academic Ally. You gain a Contact long-term benefit representing a mentor in academic circles. Enabler.

Tier 4

Unique Perspective. You may use a knowledge skill of your choice in lieu of the Healing skill. When you do so, add 1d6 to the amount healed. Enabler.

Tier 5

Deep Mysteries. You are now specialized in the two knowledge skills you’ve gained through this focus. Enabler.

Tier 6

Forbidden Knowledge (6 Intellect points). You learn a forbidden fact or piece of lore after a day’s work doing research in a library or other source of information. This knowledge is dangerous and the GM should offer you a number of intrusions on your way to using it. Enabler.

Counts Coins

Placed into the bodies of merchants and other money grubbing tradesfolk, these are practical folk. Unusual heroes, they are the epitome of the mundane-turned-important. When Strangers find themselves in the bodies of common folk they should count their

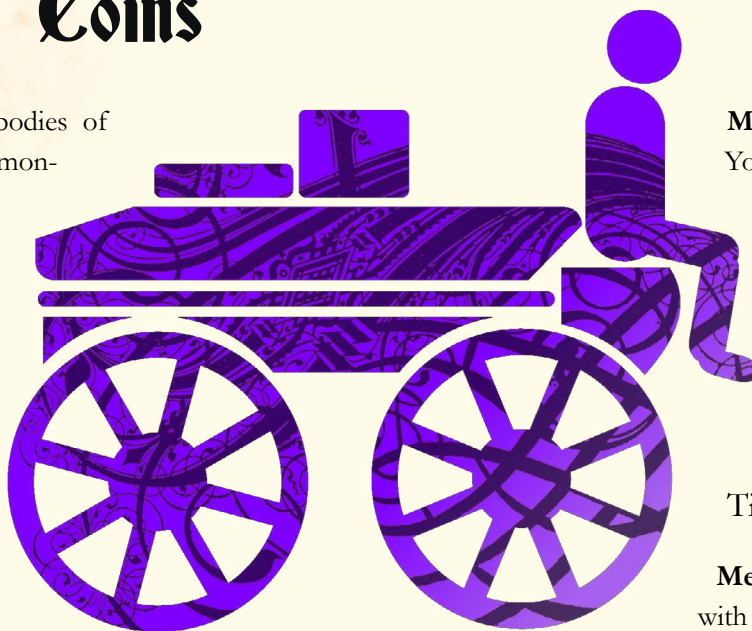
blessings, however, for their innocuous or well-connected nature makes them extremely useful for those who wish to “do business” in the recursion.

Connections, reputation, a way with words, and an eye for a person’s weakness make traders of this sort into excellent leaders and negotiators for an otherwise rag tag group of adventurers. Lending legitimacy to travel, trade, weapons, and an inquisitive nature, a caravan of goods can be the perfect cover for the less-than-reputable work Strangers often find themselves involved in.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You once sold this person truly inferior goods, and you’re still trying to make it up to them.
2. Pick one other PC. This person has worked as a bodyguard or sentry for you in the past.
3. Pick one other PC. This person worked in your shop as a child, and you still see yourself as their patron or mentor.
4. Pick one other PC. You acquired the item this person values most for them.

Minor Effect Suggestion: A former customer is nearby and puts in a good word for you.



Major Effect Suggestion:

Your reputation as a useful person precedes you, granting you an asset on further social tasks in this encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion:

A thief grabs something of value from your stock.

Tier 1

Merchant. You begin with a shop with modest stock, which counts as the Home long-term benefit. You are also trained in appraisal and haggling tasks.

Enabler.

Tier 2

Well-connected (2 Intellect points). You know where to find a source for a particular mundane item. Action.

Tier 3

Knows the Need (3 Intellect points). You learn the heart’s desire of a person you can see. Action.

Tier 4

Hidden Cache. Your shop contains a compartment no one could ever find (difficulty 8 to do so). Additionally, you’ve accumulated enough to gain the Wealth long-term benefit. Enabler.

Tier 5

Always Be Closing. You enjoy two assets on all tasks involving persuasion. You are now specialized in appraisal and haggling tasks. Enabler.

Tier 6

Master Trader (6 Intellect points). You learn where to buy or sell Cyphers and Artifacts in this area of the recursion. Action.

Defends the Realm

This is the Focus of the knight or other sworn combatant, ready to take up their trusty weapon to fight for honor or glory or whatever motivates these fools. I cannot abide such devotion to the causes of these fictional places. They are but fleeting dreams in the minds of the collective unconscious of humanity. Why bother?

These questions do not plague the defender of the realm. She is a mighty warrior of her people, even if her home is on Earth. She has the tug of a local loyalty and that inspires her to greatness.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You are honorably sworn to protect this particular person.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is the heir to the lord you serve, holding great sway over your destiny.
3. Pick one other PC. This person works for you in your official capacity.
4. Pick one other PC. This person knows a great deal about the area you're supposed to defend, making them important to you.

Minor Effect Suggestion: NPCs around you recognize your position and importance, causing them to defer to you or support you.

Major Effect Suggestion: You are overcome by righteousness in your cause, granting you +1 damage on attacks for the rest of the encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You lose confidence in your charge, your self-doubt causing you to suffer a one step penalty on actions this encounter.

Tier 1

Knight of the Realm. You begin with a Title or Job long-term benefit, such as a knighthood or other position, requiring you to defend the weak in an area. You are widely recognized in that region as a defender. Enabler.

Tier 2

Ear to the Ground. While within the region you patrol or defend, you always hear rumors relating to the troubles faced by the people there. Word spreads to you fast. Enabler.

Tier 3

Capture (3 Might points). You perform a complex fighting move, disarming and subduing a person of Level 3 or lower. Action.

Tier 4

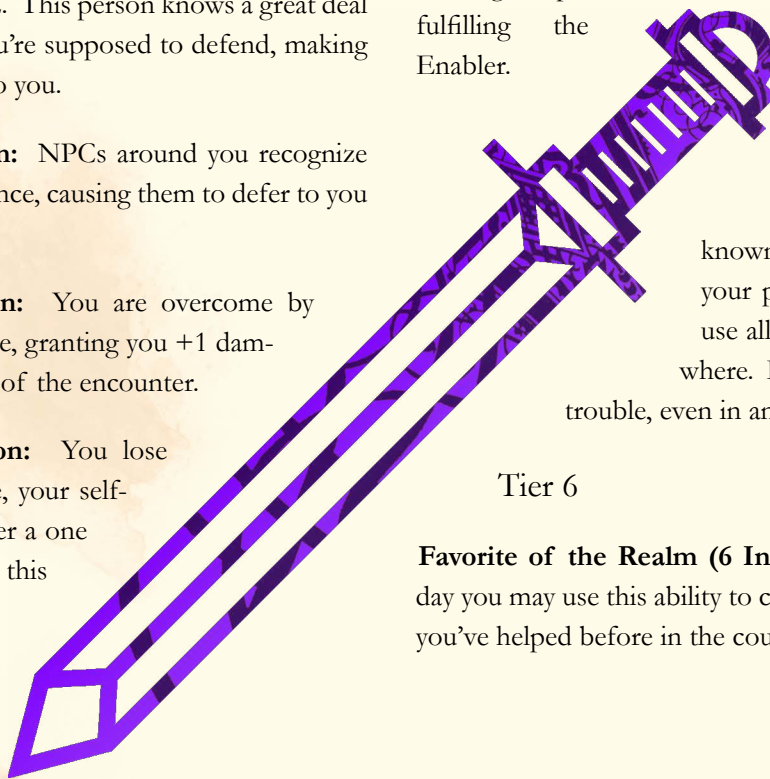
Signature Move. Choose a weapon-based attack ability you possess from your Type. This power now costs nothing to perform as long as you are fulfilling the duties of your office. Enabler.

Tier 5

Renown. You are known beyond the borders of your patrol area, allowing you to use all of your focus powers anywhere. E.g.: You pick up rumors of trouble, even in another county. Enabler.

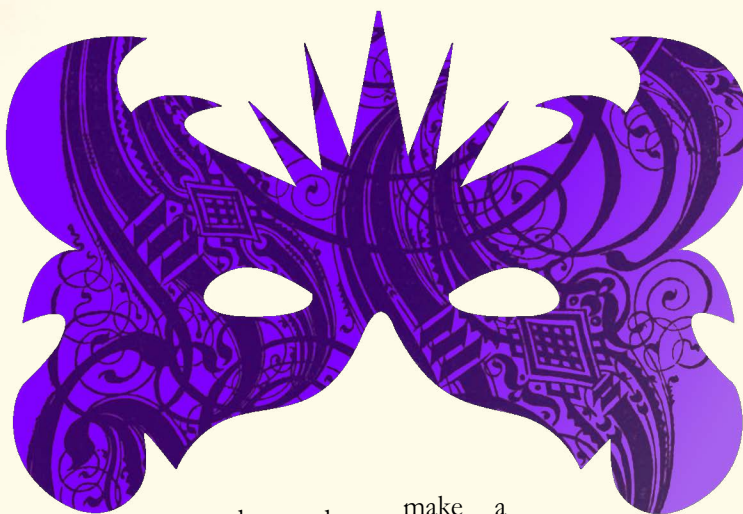
Tier 6

Favorite of the Realm (6 Intellect points). Once per day you may use this ability to call in a favor from someone you've helped before in the course of your duties. Action.



Dines with Kings

I've spent more than one evening in the courts of the powerful within the many recursions I've visited. Some of us are brutish beasts, unfit for courtly life. Some of us manage not to end up the court fool, a victory in itself I say. But the most exquisite specimen of the royal world are those who can flit between conversations, displaying the utmost grace, while spinning those around them into configurations that work best to their advantage. These social predators are the most subtle of creatures and I delight in watching them work. If only I could be so coyly powerful.



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tations, display-
ing the utmost grace, while spin- ning those around
them into configurations that work best to their advantage.
These social predators are the most subtle of creatures and
I delight in watching them work. If only I could be so coyly
powerful.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is a close relative of yours who usually manages to embarrass you.
2. Pick one other PC. This person has a talent for social games and so usually acts as your right hand during carefully controlled conversations.
3. Pick one other PC. You were once saved by this person from certain doom. They're not your kind, but you can respect them.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is training you in the use of weaponry, something you think might come in handy when politics go sour.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You notice something useful about the person you're interacting with. A possible pressure point or bit of blackmail.

Major Effect Suggestion: You manage to control your persona during the conversation, allowing you to come off as you see fit (intelligent, charming, foolish, etc.).

Suggested GM
Intrusion: You make a terrible social gaffe, such as addressing someone by the wrong title or stepping on someone's dress hem.

Tier 1

First Impression (1 Intellect point). You good first impression on your choice, granting you ther interactions for the rest of

make a
a target of
an asset on fur-
the encounter.

Tier 2

Notice Relationships (2 Intellect points). You read the room, noticing major relationships such as who's in charge, who holds blackmail, who is secretly allied with whom. This mostly just picks up the big stuff, like large political blocs, etc. Action.

Tier 3

Rumor Monger (3 Intellect points). You craft and disseminate a rumor that spreads like wildfire. Action.

Tier 4

Present (4 Intellect points). You talk your way into the room when something important is going being decided. Action.

Tier 5

Trusted Briber. You enjoy two assets when attempting to make bribes. Enabler.

Tier 6

Ear of the Lord (6 Intellect points). You gain audience with the local ruler, who will most likely take your words seriously. Enabler.

Enforces Divine Will

Sometimes belief can be powerful. Even in mundane circumstances, the mind can affect the reality of the individual. Faith can empower us, but the truly faithful are as rare as Strangers. Still, some of us find ourselves in the bodies of those who find solace in a higher power - such solace that they can draw upon it in times of need. Their quickened nature makes this power all the more real.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person sees you as their spiritual advisor.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's greed, malice, or other sins disturb you. You must help mend their soul.
3. Pick one other PC. This person came to you for help and you won't let them down.
4. Pick one other PC. You've seen a vision or dream of this person doing great things.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your faith is bolstered by your success, recovering one point in a stat Pool of your choice.

Major Effect Suggestion:

The gods smile upon you. You may reroll your next failed roll at no XP cost.

Suggested GM Intrusion:

Temptation against your vows or holy restrictions strikes, potentially threatening your faith in yourself and your position within the clergy.

Tier 1

Faithful. You are a recognized member of a religious order. You enjoy an asset in social tasks related to recruitment and conversion to your faith. Additionally, you are entitled to food and shelter at places of worship for your order. Enabler.

Tier 2

Solace. You may pray during a recovery roll, adding ten minutes to the time required but gaining two additional Pool points in recovery. Enabler.

Tier 3

Holy Ground. When you are in a location sanctified or sacred to your faith you gain a free effort on all tasks at no Pool cost, with the normal limits of your Effort rating. Enabler.

Tier 4

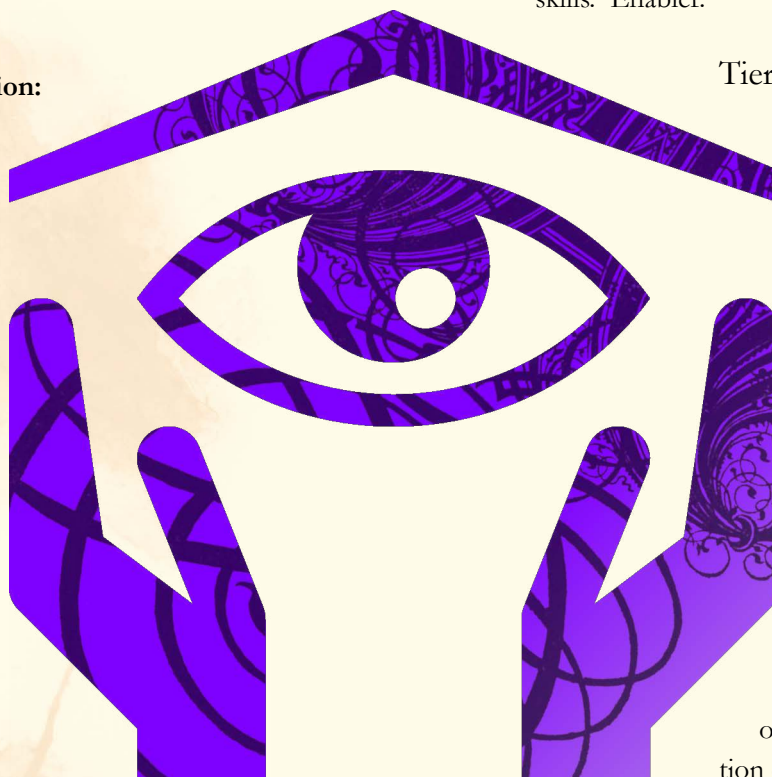
Divine Protection. Whenever you hold a holy relic of your faith in one hand, you count as trained in all defense skills. Enabler.

Tier 5

Retribution. When attacking the enemies of your faith or order you deal 2 additional damage. Enabler.

Tier 6

Crusade. You cannot be persuaded or mentally controlled to give up on a task or quest of your order. You enjoy an asset on physical tasks when overcoming obstacles to your completion of holy tasks. Enabler.



Follows their Feet

Some are born, or translated, to wander. They get into adventures and sometimes live to tell the tale beside a campfire or in the pub. They live by their wits and the capricious favor of fortune. No wall or guard can keep them from experiencing all that their recursion has to offer. Those who find themselves displaying these talents likely suffer from a kind of wanderlust back on Earth, exaggerated now that they're in a place where such qualities are the stuff of legends. For who better to get into memorable trouble than those who couldn't know better?

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You've travelled with this person far and wide.
2. Pick one other PC. This person keeps you around just for the entertainment value, either to watch you get into trouble or listen to your stories.
3. Pick one other PC. This person seems to be on their way to adventure and you'd hate to miss seeing it happen.
4. Pick one other PC. This person once sprung you from jail or rescued you from kidnappers.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You memorize the moment well, for future storytelling.

Major Effect Suggestion: You manage to draw everyone's attention to you for the moment. Make the most of the limelight.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You run across an old enemy from a previous adventure on the road.

Tier 1

Scrounge. While you travel you don't need to worry about water, food, or shelter. You generally find what you need. Enabler.

Tier 2

Adaptable. You quickly adapt to the customs of any place you come to, rarely making a faux pas. You are trained in etiquette related tasks. Enabler.

Tier 3

Local Help (3 Intellect points). You find a native guide to the area or other needed assistance, willing to work for pay or perhaps a good story. Action.

Tier 4

Lore. You are trained in knowledge of local legends for wherever you go, granting insight into important places, Artifacts, and creatures. Enabler.

Tier 5

Traveler's Luck. You tend to stumble into interesting situations. Additionally, you get one free die re-roll per game session, at no XP cost. Enabler.

Tier 6

King of the Road. Somehow you always travel in the lap of luxury (the equivalent of the Wealth long-term benefit).

Skip Town (6 Intellect points). You enter or leave a location without being noticed. Action.



Forges Arms and Armor

Those who tinker and toil are often bestowed with useful insights and the capacity to make fine things just when they are needed. Equipment can be the defining feature of a hero. The sword of legend. The battered armor. These must be made and maintained, sometimes by some unknown crafter, but other times by great and renowned master makers.

Ultimately capable of forging the Strange itself into Artifacts beyond knowing, they hold knowledge of the deeper mysteries of translation that I envy. Alas, I am not inclined to such physical pursuits. Their secrets will have to remain elusive to me.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You crafted their most prized possession.
2. Pick one other PC. This person assists you at the forge from time to time.
3. Pick one other PC. This person knows the value of your talents and insists on your presence.
4. Pick one other PC. You are friendly rivals at some non-heroic task, such as cards or cooking.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your work not only functions, but is quite beautiful.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your work is not only functional and beautiful, but deals one more damage or provides one more point of Armor.

Suggested GM Intrusion:

You make a terrible mistake in the process of crafting, ruining all of the materials.

Tier 1

Smith. You are trained in all tasks related to the forge, including weaponsmithing and armorsmithing, as well as more mundane blacksmithing. Enabler.

Forge. You possess either a permanent smithy or a portable forge that fits in a cart. Enabler.

Tier 2

Speed and Precision (2 Speed points). You create (or completely repair) a mundane suit or armor or weapon over the course of one work day. Enabler.

Tier 3

At Hand. You can use local materials to craft items with your Speed and Precision ability. From coral hammers to stone axes, you adapt to your environment without any increase in task Difficulty. Enabler.

Small Things. Beyond just arms and armor, you are trained at crafting nearly any mundane item. This does not stack with your skill from the Smith ability. Enabler.

Tier 4

Maker's Mark. Your fame provides two assets on any task related to selling your goods, so long as your identity is known to your buyer. Enabler.

Tier 5

Masterwork (5 Might points). You craft a weapon or suit of armor that deals one additional damage or provides one more point of armor. Crafting this item takes one more week of work than usual. Enabler.

Tier 6

Legendary Forging (6 Might points).

You create a weapon or suit of armor with the magical properties of an Artifact, as well as the additional point of usefulness as though you'd used the Masterwork ability. This crafting takes one week per Level of the item and requires a number of unusual materials, including at least one Cypher with related powers to the Artifact. Enabler.

Hunts Dangerous Beasts

This is the hunter of the impossible-to-kill creatures. Many recursions contain monsters of legend and unspeakable nightmares. These are the people who see themselves as the defenders of the light, or the ultimate skilled marksman. They think themselves fearless, though they are often challenged on that point by the very things they obsess over. No one is immune to fear.

The interesting twist about this Focus is the need for cunning involved in such dangerous work. Those who bravely march out into the wilds without knowledge of their intended foes rarely return. Those who master the art of the big kill are smart about their work, honing their craft.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You slew a beast in defense of this person once.
2. Pick one other PC. This person once slew a beast in your presence, and you've been impressed ever since.
3. Pick one other PC. This person clearly needs your help in becoming a slayer of beasts.
4. Pick one other PC. This person has an academic interest in your work.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You've got the perfect footing right here, granting you a +1 on attack rolls this encounter so long as you stay in the same area of the fight.

Major Effect Suggestion: You exploit the secret weakness of this beast, eliminating one of its special moves or powers.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You mistake a common animal for a ferocious beast.

Tier 1

Hunter Tracker. You are trained in tracking and stealth tasks. Enabler.

Trusty Weapon. You are practiced in a weapon of your choice. Enabler.

Tier 2

Beast Lore (2 Intellect points). You identify a creature, recalling its name, behavior, and habits. Action.

Tier 3

Traps (3 Intellect points). You set a trap for a creature you've identified with Beast Lore. Once the trap is sprung it deals 3 damage and immobilizes the creature until it spends a round breaking loose. Action.

Tier 4

Big Game. You enjoy an asset on all attacks against creatures larger than yourself. Enabler.

Tier 5

Skinner. You are trained in tasks related to using the carcass of a large animal, such as skinning, tanning, and cooking the beast. Enabler.

Sworn Enemy. Choose one type of creature. You enjoy a +2 to damage when attacking that type of creature. Enabler.

Tier 6

New Quarry (6 Intellect points). You declare a single legendary creature you've heard of or seen as your Sworn Enemy for the next day, gaining the +2 bonus on damage as though it were your chosen creature. Additionally, you receive 2 assets on rolls made to track the beast. Action.



Indulges in Worldly Pleasures

It is hard to spot those with this Focus. They exhibit few noticeable skills worth mentioning. Certainly nothing heroic. And yet there are those who clearly have more control over their debauchery than others, powerful in their subtle command of pleasure and the people who indulge in it. It is through this shared indulgence that alliances are forged and friendships fashioned.

To those of us with the eyes to see it, they are manipulators of the highest order and they seem to enjoy doing it. Maybe they enjoy it too much.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is your drinking partner for life.
2. Pick one other PC. They're always the one who gets you home safe after a night of debauchery.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is always spoiling your good time.
4. Pick one other PC. You're not sure how the two of you met. You can't remember the occasion but you're sure it was a great story.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You drag one extra person into your carousing.

Major Effect Suggestion: You drag ten extra people into your carousing.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your good time is ruined by someone needing help or violence or whatever. You weren't listening. Party over though...too bad.



Tier 1

Indulgence. You can find a source of pleasure wherever you go, from good food to good drink to companionship and more. Additionally, you are trained in all carousing related tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Wingman. You possess a follower serving as your bodyguard or party companion, a Level 2 NPC armed with a medium weapon and light armor. Enabler.

Tier 3

Fashionably Late (3 Intellect points). You seamlessly jump into a scene of your choice currently going on, such as a nearby combat or negotiation, so long as you're a bit late (a few rounds or minutes). Action.

Tier 4

Life of the Party (4 Intellect points). You cause a major distraction, drawing all attention in the area to you or whatever it is you've done. Action.

Tier 5

Under the Table (5 Intellect points). Get someone drunk with you, while you remain relatively sober. This takes several hours, depending on the size of the target. Enabler.

Everybody's Friend. You are specialized in all carousing related tasks. Enabler.

Tier 6

Debauchery. You possess one additional 1 hour Recovery roll that you can only use while indulging in worldly pleasures. Enabler.

Knows the Hidden Paths

A strong connection to the local topography and dangers can be incredibly useful when thrust into an otherwise unfamiliar recursion. This Focus represents those who know their homeland well; whether that be the countryside or the urban streets, they are masters of blending in and finding their way. Indeed, this knowledge comes to them almost intuitively, as though this were the only place they need ever go.

If we could only tap into this knowledge whenever we translate, we could be well prepared for whatever comes our way. Until I discover an Artifact or process for doing so, we'll have to rely on Strangers with this inclination to get us by.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person also grew up in this region and you've known them for as long as you can remember.
2. Pick one other PC. You've got a problem with this person's culture or personality - it just doesn't mesh well with yours.
3. Pick one other PC. This person always sticks out when you're trying to blend in.
4. Pick one other PC. This person loves hearing your folksy tales or advice.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You see someone you know who might be able to help.

Major Effect Suggestion: You've been in basically the same situation in this exact spot before, granting you an asset on all rolls for the rest of the encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Something has dramatically changed in a place you thought you knew, completely throwing you off.



Tier 1

Local Knowledge. You know virtually everything there is to know about a particular region. You are specialized in knowledge of local legends and rumors. Enabler.

Tier 2

Aware of Surroundings. You are trained in perception and stealth tasks. Enabler.

Tier 3

Use the Terrain (3 Speed points).

You maneuver a target within Immediate distance into a disadvantageous position, granting you and your allies an asset against them until they get a chance to move away. Action.

Tier 4

Back Door (4 Speed points). You find an escape route out of this situation. Action.

Tier 5

Group Perception. You and those within Immediate distance of you cannot be ambushed or trapped.

Something's Not Right (5 Speed points). You notice all hidden doors and passages in the area. Action.

Tier 6

Group Stealth. You are specialized in stealth tasks and may make a single stealth task roll on behalf of yourself and those within Immediate range of you. Enabler.

Protects the Weak

Some are drawn to roles in which they sacrifice their bodies and freedom for those they see as deserving. The seemingly weak and innocent. They are constantly under threat in many recursions, as most have some sort of villainous force at work destroying what is good and pure. I have my theories as to why this always seems to be true.

The noble defender of the weak is often sworn to a code, administered by a knighthood or priestly order to which they belong. While they therefore have ties to an organization, this is not the basis of their power and motivation. They are driven to fight injustice in the realm. That is what empowers them.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Your vow of service forces you to protect this person.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems to work for the common good, making them your natural ally.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has connections to a local tyrant you're trying to get close to.
4. Pick one other PC. This person finds you inspiring.

Minor Effect Suggestion: A witness of your actions is inspired to assist you.

Major Effect Suggestion:
A witness of your actions is inspired to begin following you.

Suggested GM Intrusion:
You accidentally break your vows, causing you to suffer a one step penalty on all tasks until you make things right.

Tier 1

Vow. You have taken a vow of service to defend and provide for the weak. You regain one point to each Pool every time you successfully uphold your vow. Enabler.

Tier 2

Defender. You can take the Guard action (see The Strange corebook page 116) once per round without spending your action to do so, so long as you are defending someone physically weaker than you. Enabler.

Tier 3

Fight Tyranny. You enjoy an asset on your attack roll whenever you strike at a foe who is a tyrant, bully, or is currently oppressing the weak or innocent. Enabler.

Tier 4

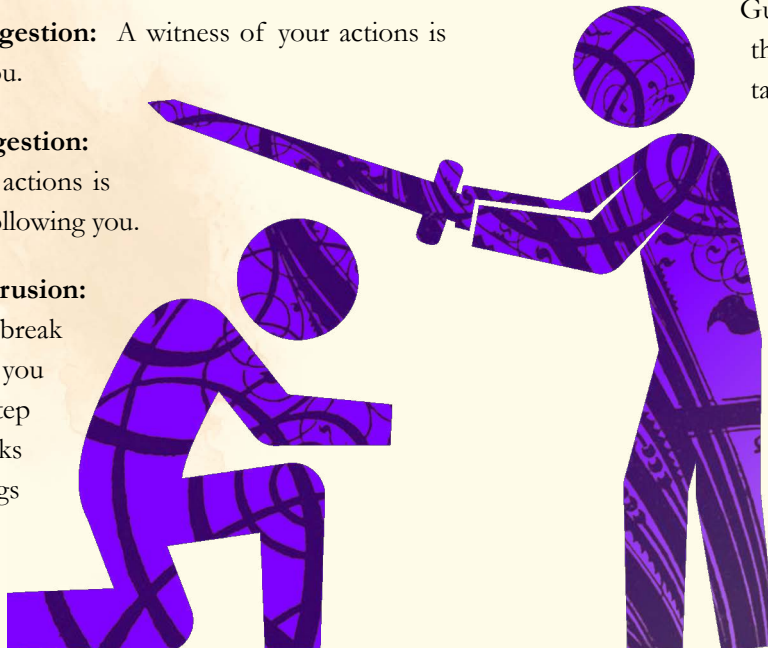
Inspirational. You enjoy two assets on social tasks to inspire others to take up your cause. Enabler.

Tier 5

Empower. Whenever you use the Guard action to defend someone, they gain an asset on their next attack roll (or act as +1 Level if they are an NPC). Enabler.

Tier 6

Righteousness. Whenever you use the Guard action to defend an NPC, your Vow counts as being fulfilled, regaining you one to each of your Pools. Enabler.



Rides a Noble Steed

There are many interesting mounts to ride in the seemingly endless variety of recursions around Earth. From horses to dragons and other strange beasts, those who cultivate a special relationship with these animals are often celebrated as important and powerful. Mounts are a symbol of nobility in many places and those who master their companion animals are seen as having an almost supernatural aspect.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has a good rapport with your mount.
2. Pick one other PC. You've helped this person escape danger on your mount in the past.
3. Pick one other PC. This person once rode your mount and the beast still resents them for it.
4. Pick one other PC. This person crafted or found you your saddle.

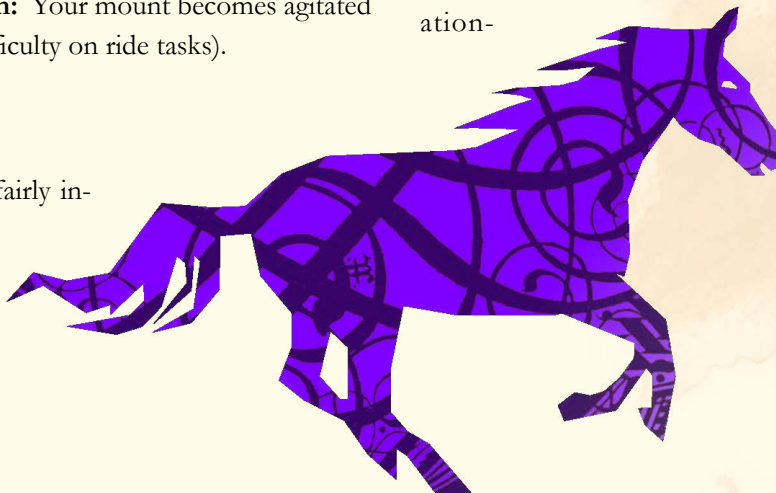
Minor Effect Suggestion: Your mount is used to this terrain, riding swiftly through it.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your mount is especially capable today, acting as though it were one Level higher.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your mount becomes agitated for the encounter (+1 difficulty on ride tasks).

Tier 1

Loyalty. You possess a fairly intelligent and highly loyal Level 2 creature as your mount. Enabler.



Like the Wind. You are trained in riding tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Smarter Than Average. Your loyal mount can do things most other animals like it won't, such as climbing stairs and going into caves. The mount will never spook or run away unless compelled by a supernatural force. Enabler.

Tier 3

Mounted Warrior. You are trained at melee weapon attacks with medium and light weapons, so long as you are on your loyal mount. Enabler.

Tier 4

War Horse. Your mount now gets to attack each round, dealing 4 damage on hits. Enabler.

Tier 5

Whistle (5 Speed points). Your mount happens to be nearby, ready for you to leap upon it and ride off. Enabler.

Tier 6

Master of War. You are specialized in using either ranged weapons or large melee weapons while riding your loyal mount. You never suffer any situational penalties due to your positioning while fighting when mounted. Enabler.

Rules with an Iron Fist

Translation can put us in interesting situations. These are Strangers fortunate enough to find themselves in the position of nobles and other rulers, granted the authority and majesty of their titles. These petty tyrants often go a bit too far for my tastes, but if it gets the job done I'm all for taking advantage of one's power.

Just watch out for their temper. Power rarely makes for cool heads among those with something to prove.

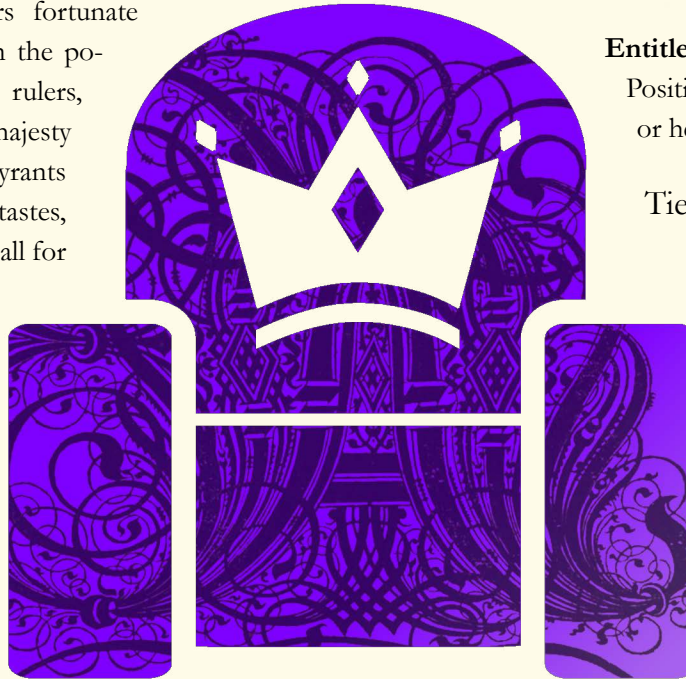
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You consider them your personal servant, whether that's actually true or not.
2. Pick one other PC. This person has sworn a vow to serve as your lackey.
3. Pick one other PC. You can see the marks of greatness on this one and it's both inspiring and threatening at the same time.
4. Pick one other PC. This person grew up with you among the opulence of your family estates.

Minor Effect Suggestion: One of your foes is paralyzed with fear, unable to move for one round.

Major Effect Suggestion: One of your foes flees in terror at your presence.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You stumble or otherwise humble yourself before a crowd, taking away your ability to use this focus during this encounter.



Tier 1

Entitlement. You begin with the Position long-term benefit as a ruler or heir apparent of the local region.

Tier 2

Overconfidence (2 Intellect points). You Effort rating is effectively one higher this round. Enabler.

Presence. You are trained in intimidation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 3

Silence with a Glance (3 Intellect points). With but a look you render someone speechless for 1d6 rounds. Action.

Tier 4

Edict (4 Intellect points). You give a single-word command to a target, who must immediately fulfill it. The Edict cannot be suicide, but nearly any other dangerous action is possible. Action.

Tier 5

Reign of Terror. Those of lower station are not willing to question your authority when in your presence. You enjoy an asset on all intimidation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 6

Authority. All NPCs of 5th Level or lower automatically follow your commands without the need for a roll, so long as you are within your Position's domain. Enabler.

Speaks with a Silver Tongue

Diplomats are powerful figures in most worlds, driving the peace and war between competing peoples. Those with political skills of this kind are hard to find and should be sought. They are capable of turning violence into negotiation, a feat that could save a group of explorers from extermination. The fact is that those of us who travel between recursions often find ourselves in difficult or murky diplomatic situations we rarely understand. Natural diplomats are the next best thing to a native guide.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Your diplomatic skills are the only thing keeping this person calm or civil. Otherwise they usually cause a scene in polite company.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is the threat of violence that keeps your diplomatic overtures viable. They are the iron fist and you are the velvet glove.
3. Pick one other PC. This person needs educating in social graces and you're there to help.
4. Pick one other PC. You grew up with this person, often aiding them with your silver tongue. By your accounting they owe you more than one favor, but your friendship is too old for you to bring it up.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The person you're talking to comes to respect you.

Major Effect Suggestion: The person you're talking to wishes to help you in the future.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You realize that you've been talking to someone who isn't very important in this situation, completely wasting your efforts.

Tier 1

Worldly. You can fluently speak every language used in this recursion. Enabler.

Tier 2

Well Spoken. You are trained in all social tasks. Enabler.

Tier 3

Diplomatic Immunity. You are generally exempt from all minor criminal charges wherever you go. People tend to recognize you as an important person, beyond petty concerns. Enabler.

Tier 4

Negotiation (4 Intellect points). You immediately pause combat, so long as all of the participants are sentient beings, allowing for five minutes of negotiation. Action.

Tier 5

Master Manipulator. You are specialized in all social tasks. Enabler.

Tier 6

Broker Deal (6 Intellect points). You convince all parties in a negotiation or other social encounter to agree to some kind of compromise. You are able to guide exactly who gives up what by expending effort on the roll for this ability, at a rate of one negotiated concession per effort spent. Action.



Steals from the Rich

They are the ultimate populist bandits, utilizing the skills of the outlaw to further their greater goals. These heroes can be found in the stories of nearly every culture, for who doesn't love the antihero struggling against oppressive rulers? They are a sign of that oppression, for even the outlaw is willing in these stories to take up arms for the greater good.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You once robbed this person. Sorry about that, chap.
2. Pick one other PC. This person has served as an important part of your criminal life for some time.
3. Pick one other PC. You follow this seemingly powerful person, in the hopes of one day stealing something important from them.
4. Pick one other PC. This person was once your partner in crime. They might still be.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your action is done with great stealth and doesn't reveal your identity.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your action is done with sufficient stealth that you're not even noticed.

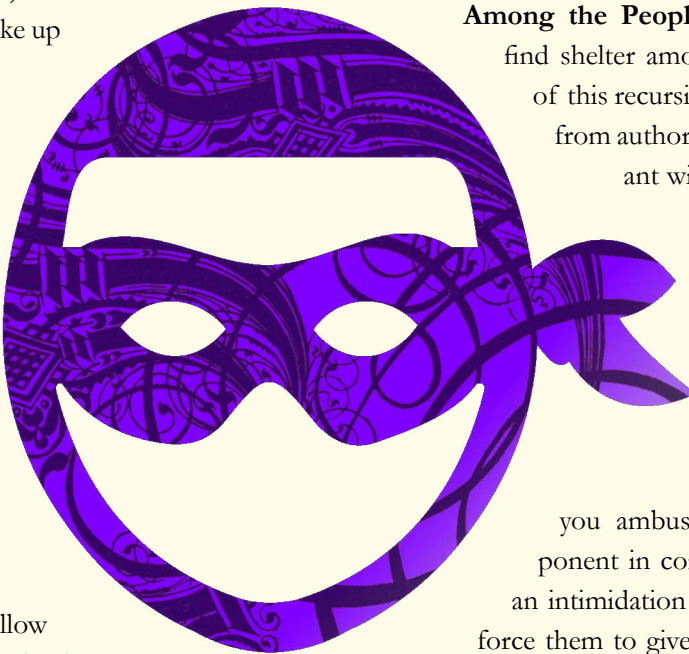
Suggested GM Intrusion: You blunder into another group of bandits.

Tier 1

Spot the Mark (1 Speed point). Without the need for a roll, you find the best mark in a group of people. They'll be the wealthiest or easiest to take in a fight (whichever you'd prefer). Action.

Outlaw. You are trained in intimidation and pick pocketing tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2



Among the People. You are able to find shelter among the peasant class of this recursion, who will hide you from authorities. Not every peasant will do this, but at least one will if you take the time to look for a sympathetic face. Enabler.

Tier 3

Bandit. Whenever you ambush an intelligent opponent in combat, you may make an intimidation task against them to force them to give you all their money. Enabler.

Tier 4

Hidden in Plain Sight (4 Speed points). Hide a weapon of any size on your person. Action.

Tier 5

Den of Thieves. You are associated with a group of 6 Level 2 criminals. They don't follow you around, but they will help you from time to time and generally follow your lead, especially when there's money to be made. Enabler.

Tier 6

Hero of the People. Your Among the People ability now grants you the benefits of the Wealth long-term benefit while hidden by the peasants. You also enjoy two assets on social interactions with them.



Climbing the long spiral staircase to the magus' workroom, Erica was once again reminded of the fact that she despised the penchant for arcane practitioners to build absurdly tall towers as their research abodes.

"They should at least have the decency to include some kind of mystical conveyance," she thought to herself as she paused to catch her breath.

It didn't help that she was lugging a large wooden chest up the stairs, but she refused to allow the context of the situation to assuage her irritation. After wiping her brow of sweat, she picked the wooden chest back up, and continued up the stairs, pushing hard for the last leg of the climb. She soon spotted the door to Magus Blake's work room. The door was tall and arched, made of polished ash, and fixed with dozens of bronze cast runes, which pulsed a pale green every few seconds. As Erica approached, the door swung open, and as always she was vaguely surprised there was no grinding of hinges to accompany such an absurd entry.

"I see you have the wards up," she said, practically dropping the chest on one of the few open spaces on the circular room's many work benches.

"I recently got into a scuffle with a rather nasty necromancer over her baseless claim to a certain sarcophagus," Blake said, as he emerged from behind a rather tall stack of books. If the door's hinges failed to live up to the cliché, Blake's workroom definitely did not. Packed full of books, scrolls, strange jars, and a few live creatures in cages, one could only navigate the tower room via strategically placed pathways through the heaps of junk. Blake came over to where Erica had placed the chest, cleaning his spectacles with grey, velvet robes. Looking no older than 20, Blake's messy hair gave him the appearance of someone who had just been startled. Point of fact, Blake was one of the most powerful mages Erica had ever come across in her travels through recursions, if a bit distractible.

"Did you get it?" he asked eagerly, looking at the box.

"See for yourself," she answered, opening the chest's lid. Inside was a large, still beating heart, though the beats were slower than expected.

"It's rather small, isn't it" Blake said as he produced a thin silver rod from one of his sleeves and began to poke the heart.

"Blake, I wasn't going to take on an adult dragon. I barely survived the encounter with this one, and it was juvenile. Most of the mercenaries I hired didn't make it," Erica responded, an edge in her voice.

"Well, it doesn't matter, it seems the chest kept things in working order, which is what's really important." Blake closed the lid.

"When will my item be ready?" Erica asked as Blake locked the chest.

"It's ready now, if you would like it."

"I would."

"This way then." Blake headed towards the back of the workroom, carefully avoiding teetering stacks of books. Erica resisted the urge to sneeze, as clouds of dust were kicked up by the magus' passing. Blake led her to another door, strangely normal given the rest of the tower. He opened the door, but instead of another room, Erica could see only blackness. As soon as he stepped through the door, Blake disappeared. Erica followed quickly, and was immediately hit with an intense wave of nausea and dizziness. She hated teleportation in any recursion.

They both emerged in well-lit cave, illumination provided by an ornate bronze fixture that poured out steady golden light. All across the cave walls and floor, runes pulsed with a similar light to Blake's door, only these pulsed with the rhythm of a human heart beat.

"Damn, why did you place the key so far from the tower?" Erica asked, using the wall to steady herself.

"Have you any idea the energies involved in forging this kind of device?" Blake's voice was amused. "I wasn't sure that I could pull this off, and I certainly was not going to sacrifice my home in the process."

"So it worked then," Erica said, as she walked towards the stone altar in the middle of the room. In the center was an ornate key, forged of several metals, and now brimming with arcane power. Being this close to it felt like standing outside on a summer day.

"I think so," he said.

"You think?"

"You asked me to forge a key that will bring you to a world I've never seen, and to do so without causing significant damage where you're going to or coming from. So yeah, I think."

"Remember, you have to be in the exact place where you came through, and this key, if it works, will only work once. Got it?"

"Got it," Erica answered, picking up the key.

Chapter 2:

Otherworldly

The Law of Magic is a powerful and pervasive one, found in recursions with a whimsical and unearthly nature, such as Wonderland or Oz, but more obviously underlying worlds of high fantasy. These often Tolkienesque recursions represent a powerful and dangerous fictional bleed from the vociferous and meticulous minds of Earthly fandoms. I say dangerous because the magics inherent in these settings could be deadly if unleashed upon Earth itself, a prospect embodied by the constant machinations of the Betrayer in Ardeyn. Godlike power in the hands of would-be gods is a recipe for disaster and a constant danger to prime worlds such as ours.

The Foci we find ourselves adopting in these places fall along the lines of both supernatural magical or deity-invoking power, as well as those relating to folk heroes with unusual powers. Together these tropes grant strangers the unusual properties we need to accomplish our goals and get out before we lead something else back with us.

Some choose to dally in these worlds, taken in by the seduction of arcane or divine power. I have myself been one to enjoy the crackle of magic held within my closed fist and the luxury of studying such secrets in a world which affords me a wizard tower. But such never lasts in these places. Magic draws danger to itself and fantasy is a place of epic stories, usually involving sorcerers being bothered right when we're about to discover the secret to immortality. I can't tell you how annoying this can be.



Foci

| | | | |
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| Bears a Holy Symbol | 29 | Communes with Nature | 37 |
| Binds Spirits | 30 | Consorts with Dragons | 38 |
| Braves Dungeons | 31 | Follows the Old Ways | 39 |
| Carries the Weight of Destiny | 32 | Inscribes Runes of Power | 40 |
| Changes Shape | 33 | Practices Sorcery | 41 |
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Hubric

The City of Hubric was once an idyllic metropolis representing the height of magical understanding and artistry within the fictional universe from which it is derived. But the high magisters, in a foolish attempt to harness the power of the Strange, have made a deal with a mystical “spirit” from outside the recursion. Having given the spirit access to The Golden Heart, an Artifact that is the source of much of the city’s magic, the magisters are now seeing their shining city crumble around them.

The so-called spirit is in truth a Strange creature named Ezledeth, which cannot be bound by the Hubric spirit magics (much to their surprise). It is using its newfound connection to The Golden Heart to tear a hole in Hubric that will lead back to Earth, from which it was spawned. As soon as the recursion ruptures, an unprecedented flow of Strange invaders will enter Earth.

Only the PCs can avert this catastrophe, for it is they who hold the power to harness The Golden Heart for some other use within the Strange. Standing at the heavily guarded Golden Dais they can wield its power to construct a wholly new recursion of their own design, before the Heart breaks.

Level: 5

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Magic

Playable Races: Humans and a plethora of semi-human experiments

Foci: Binds Spirits, Changes Shape, Channels Elements, Charms the Unwary, Consorts with Dragons, and Practices Sorcery.

Connection to the Strange: Hundreds of portals lead to the Strange, which is a well-studied (if not understood) plane of existence here. As the recursion crumbles, more and more locations in the city simply become the Strange at a certain point.

Connection to Earth: Hundreds of portals, mostly leading to the tops of mountains on Earth. These sites work as portals to the City of Hubric, but only if the proper rites are performed.

Size: A large city, currently 3 miles in diameter, but rapidly crumbling.

Spark: 25%

Trait: Intelligent (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Lake Ashlynar

Level: 3

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Magic

Playable Races: proto-Elves and proto-Goblins (very similar to each other)

Foci: Binds Spirits, Changes Shape, Channels the Elements, Communes with Nature, and Inscribes Runes of Power.

Connection to the Strange: The tall forests that surround the lake eventually lead into the Strange once a person gets lost.

Connection to Earth: The bottom of the lake holds a cave which leads to a similar cave in Crater Lake, Oregon.

Size: A magical lake ten miles across (16 km), with a village on each side.

Spark: 10%

Trait: Stealthy (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Formed from the combined tales of a number of fantasy novel canonical backstories, Lake Ashlynar is a birthplace of intelligent life, where two fantasy species (elves and goblins) have diverged from their similar ancestry to become mortal foes. The elven and goblin cultures here could both be described as tribal, each residing within a village on the edge of the magical lake. However, their ways are beginning to reflect the differences between them, with the elves learning to harness both nature and the magic in the lake, and the goblins growing jealous of the elven advancements.

The elves have a distinct physical difference from the goblins, becoming less fertile but longer lived, making each elf a power unto themselves. The goblins have begun evolving in the opposite way, leading to an inevitable attempt by the goblins to overwhelm their powerful neighbors with sheer numbers.

PCs inevitably get caught up in this conflict, potentially siding with one of the races. But if the party is split in terms of the races they've translated into they may have a more complicated story on their hands. This is an opportunity for diplomacy, but it's also a chance to kill lots of goblins, so don't be surprised if the players give in to their thirst for violence.

Tortuga

A fantastical version of the Caribbean during the height of piracy in the 17th century, Tortuga is an island of pirates. The fantasy element of this recursion resides in the existence of various magics, such as functioning voodoo necromancy and curses laid by the native Carib and Arawak people.

Potential piracy targets are plentiful and captains are always looking for crews on Tortuga to replace their fallen sailors. Adventuring here is dangerous, but among the cargoes of merchant vessels can be found Cyphers, and Spanish galleons have even been known to carry Artifacts. These conditions make Tortuga a popular place for recursion miners, and so Strangers here often find themselves in competition with others of their ilk. Multiple fleets of pirates, each led by a Stranger with magic powers or raw charisma, can at times be seen practically at war over the shipping lanes in the area.

Tortuga is ultimately a place of high stakes and debauchery, where everything has a price.

Level: 5

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Magic

Playable Races: Humans

Foci: Carries the Weight of Destiny, Channels Elements (water), Commands Armies (navies), Speaks of Forgotten Gods, and Follows the Old Ways, as well as Counts Coins and Steals from the Rich (from Chapter 1), and Scores Points (from Chapter 4, flavored as swashbuckling).

Connection to the Strange: Sail far enough, particularly into the Bermuda Triangle, and you'll find yourself sailing through the Strange itself.

Connection to Earth: The bottom of the sea holds many portals back to Earth, and some voodoo priests and priestesses with the spark can summon people here through ritual.

Size: An island 69 square miles seemingly off the north coast of Haiti. Includes seas around the island and some of Haiti's coastlines.

Spark: 20%

Trait: Fast (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Bears a Holy Symbol

Within some recursions, the power of faith is purifying on many levels. Belief can shape a recursion, whether by magical effects willed into being or by setting things back to normal through sheer force of faith. Holy symbols are a direct expression and point of focus of faith, allowing those who believe in right to bring things back around to that condition. They are the means by which the status quo is enforced, expunging recursions of unwanted elements such as mockeries of death or invaders from the Strange.

It is this last element that makes faith-born powers so appealing to those of us who translate, for we are often at odds with dangerous Strange beings.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has been chosen by your god to do great things.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's strangeness is a blessing, not a curse.
3. Pick one other PC. This person aids you in crusading against Strange things.
4. Pick one other PC. This person's faith is only just beginning. You'll see them through to full understanding and acceptance.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You momentarily glimpse beyond the veil of this world, allowing you to know which Strange creatures and things surround you.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your faith is rewarded with a Cypher.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your last attempt to fight Strange things has made you the enemy of a much more powerful creature, now advancing against you.

Equipment: Holy symbol in the form of an amulet, weapon, or shield.

Tier 1

Brand the Unclean (1 Intellect point). You brandish your holy symbol, causing all undead and otherwise unnatural creatures within Immediate distance to take 3 ambient damage and become unable to move towards you for so long as you hold your symbol aloft. Action.

Tier 2

Expel the Unbeliever (2 Intellect points). You spew insults at a person not of your faith within Short range, causing them to leave the area. Action.

Tier 3

Turn Strange (3 Intellect points). All creatures not of this recursion within short distance of you take 3 ambient damage and become unable to move towards you for so long as you hold your holy symbol aloft. Creatures that are from the Strange itself take an additional 2 damage each. Action.

Tier 4

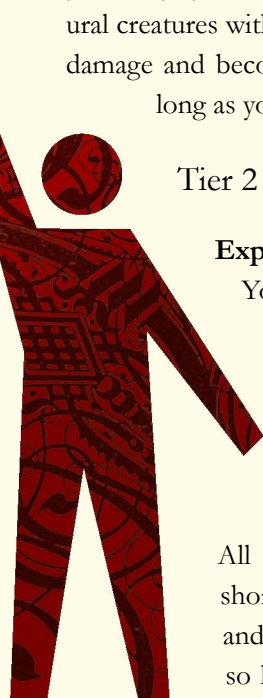
Track the Unholy (4 Intellect points). You can see the pathways that creatures not of this recursion took within the last 33 days, allowing you to easily follow their trails. This ability to see pathways lasts for three hours. Action.

Tier 5

Smite Evil (5 Intellect points). You use your holy symbol to fire a blast of holiness at an unnatural creature or one not of this recursion within Long range, dealing 7 ambient damage and causing them to flee the area. Action.

Tier 6

Vanquish (6 Intellect points). You banish a creature not of this recursion back to whatever world or recursion it came from. Action.



Binds Spirits

Many recursions are populated by creatures unseen, serving as enforcers of the laws and themes of those realms. In some, these sprits are those of the dead, silently watching the living and making themselves known only in the places where mortal fear is strongest. In other worlds, the spirits are capricious faeries or elemental embodiments of platonic ideals.

Throughout these recursions are people with the power to bind the otherworldly souls. They are mediums and shaman, protecting the quick from the dead. But their power extends to more than mere wards against the unseen. Their knowledge of these forces allows them to harness their potential, binding them in chains of magic or faith.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You once removed a harmful spirit from their body.
2. Pick one other PC. This is the person you go to for advice.
3. Pick one other PC. This person seems to trust you implicitly.
4. Pick one other PC. Your spirits hate this person for some reason.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The spirits aid you, moving objects in your immediate area to best suit your needs.

Major Effect Suggestion: A spirit takes its own attack against this foe as well, pushing them into unconsciousness.

Suggested GM Intrusion:

The spirits revolt against you, invisibly attacking you until you can get them under control.



Tier 1

Bound Spirits. You have control over several minor spirits, which take simple but invisible actions up to a Short distance away from you, such as opening doors or moving chairs. They cannot attack for you. You must verbally or visibly command them to take these actions. Enabler.

Exorcism (1 Intellect point). You remove a foreign spirit from a body it inhabits, up to Long distance away. This could potentially subdue dead bodies animated by spirits, depending on the metaphysics of this recursion. Action.

Tier 2

Spirit Sight (2 Intellect points). For the next hour you can see the spirits of this recursion. Action.

Spirit Lore. You are trained in knowledge of the spirits of this recursion. Enabler.

Tier 3

Interrogation (3 Intellect points). You force a spirit to answer a question truthfully. Action.

Tier 4

Binding (4 Intellect points). You bind a specific spirit, of a Level your Tier or lower, into your servitude, adding it to your collection of Bound Spirits. Action.

Tier 5

Coordinated Haunting (5 Intellect points). Your spirits work together to attack a foe within Long distance of you, dealing 7 ambient damage. Action.

Tier 6

Powerful Spirits. Your collection of Bound Spirits now includes some powerful members. Once per round your spirits may take an action at your command, acting as a 5th Level creature. Enabler.

Braves Dungeons



In some recursions catacombs and dungeons exist, seemingly designed only for the torture of would-be explorers. Ardeyn is a good example of this, though I expect this relates to the origins of that recursion as a computer game. In any case, there are those who are better equipped for dealing with the dangers such ancient structures represent, braving their depths to acquire tempting Artifacts and Cyphers.

The skills necessary to succeed here are a combination of athleticism, a sense for potential traps, and an almost foolish level of bravery. For some Strangers, translation into this Focus is less about gaining new powers from the recursion and more about enhancing existing exploratory tendencies through quick reflexes.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You honed many of your dungeoneering skills with this person's help.
2. Pick one other PC. This person always seems to be triggering traps before you get a chance to search the area. You keep an eye on them now.
3. Pick one other PC. This person seems almost as treasure obsessed as you are.
4. Pick one other PC. This person serves as your protector when out in the world exploring. You scout ahead and they cover your back.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You not only avoid a danger, but find a way for everyone to get past it.

Major Effect Suggestion: You realize an important physical feature of the room you're in, such as its position directly above your destination or a passage hidden behind rubble.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You get hit by more than one trap at once.

Tier 1

Neverlost (1 Speed point). You catch your bearings, immediately understanding your current location in relation to previous landmarks in the area. Action.

Looter. Whenever you gain money from looting corpses, tombs, or other non-commercial adventuring activities you acquire 50% more than you normally would. This only provides extra money, not extra sellable goods. Enabler.

Tier 2

Trapfinder (2 Speed points). You notice the triggers for all traps Level 5 or lower in the room. Action.

Tier 3

Nerves of Steel. You gain 4 points to your Speed pool. Enabler.

Tier 4

Quick Work. You enjoy two assets on Speed Defense rolls when attempting to dodge a trap. Enabler.

Tier 5

Eye for Detail. Your Trapfinder ability now detects the triggers of all traps of any Level within the room. Enabler.

Tier 6

Artifact Lust. When attempting to acquire an Artifact that is within view, you enjoy two assets on all tasks related to its acquisition. Enabler.

Carries the Weight of Destiny

This is the archetypal Campbellian local hero, rising from humble origins to put things right. Called by a special destiny to fight for good or make change, they are often mentored and trained for battle against the forces of evil. This Focus can even be found outside of high fantasy realms, in any place where destiny calls heroes to epic quests. Science fiction creates such heroes from time to time, so this Focus is found in those recursions as well.

The hero here walks a treacherous path. Heroes are often called upon to make a sacrifice of themselves for their ultimate goals. As tempting as success may be, beware fulfilling your destiny before you translate back home.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has always provided comic relief to your more serious attitude.
2. Pick one other PC. This person provided a means of escaping the dullness of your origins.
3. Pick one other PC. This person isn't the best role model, but you look up to them nonetheless.
4. Pick one other PC. This person got you out of a jam once and you've never forgotten the favor.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You happen to stumble into a better position, or into the person you were looking for.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your destiny aligns with this action, and its repercussions will affect the rest of your life. Maybe the man you kill is the king's heir. Maybe the object you make becomes an Artifact.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your fate takes you down a dark path, filled with dangers and temptations.

Tier 1

Fate Marked. The mark of fate is upon your body and soul. Those wise in the old ways or capable in magic will recognize this and offer you assistance or advice from time to time. Enabler.

Humble Origins. You are trained in tasks related to a profession and possess the tools of that trade. Enabler.

Tier 2

Find Danger (2 Speed points). You find your way back to your party. May be used to "jump" into a combat scene you're missing. Action.

Tier 3

Mentorship. You possess the Mentor long-term benefit, whom you may call upon once per session for advice and equipment. Enabler.

Tier 4

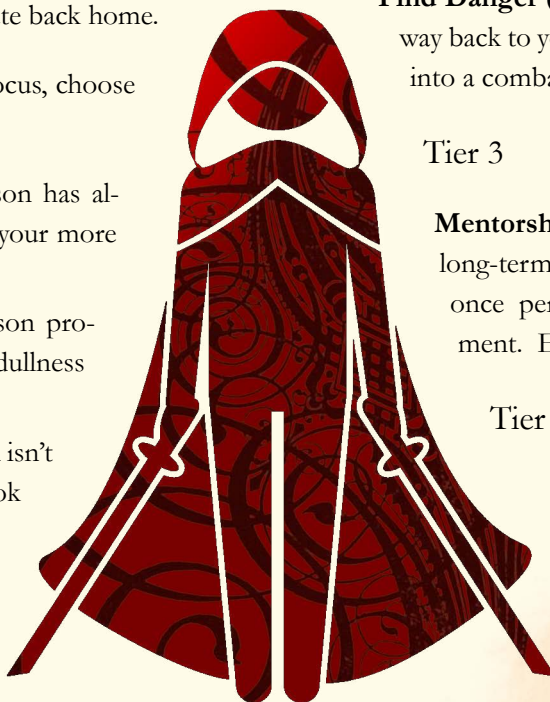
Weapon of Destiny. You acquire a weapon which deals one more damage than normal. It has some remarkable story or property. Enabler.

Tier 5

Fated to Succeed (5 Speed points). Roll your d20 twice on this roll and take the higher result. This ability may only be used once per day. Enabler.

Tier 6

Fulfillment. Once per game session, upon making significant progress towards your destiny, regain all spent pool points. If at some point your destiny is fulfilled, you no longer enjoy this replenishment of pool, but you no longer suffer from Intrusions on rolled 1's. Enabler.



Changes Shape

Within some recursions there are those who howl at the moon and change shape into beasts. While Strangers with those powers have been studied before, I have come across others who deserve to be documented for the mercurial nature of their changing. Beings capable of altering themselves into animals of any sort seem to be found in recursions based on stories of wild folk and wilderness spirits. Fascinatingly, they seem to enjoy their power, rather than see it as a curse as the wolf-man might. Delighting in being creatures of change, they seem to represent the capricious nature of the wild itself.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Your wild nature is strangely drawn to helping this person.
2. Pick one other PC. This person found you as a child and helped to raise you.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is your oldest friend, though you've been rivals in the past.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the one person you'd like to impress. The rest of them can rot.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The wild adjusts to aid you in some minor way; growing to make sure you can fit or reach.

Major Effect Suggestion: You become something more powerful than usual, gaining 5 to your maximum Might pool until you change shape again.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You transform into a different creature than the one you'd planned, most likely one related to what you were thinking.

Transformations: When changed into an animal, you enjoy all of the usual physical benefits and suffer all

the usual limitations for that animal's form (flight, water breathing, etc.). You do not retain your Type abilities, but your

thoughts remains largely human. All changes last for one hour or until you spend an action to return to your normal shape.

Tier 1

Critter (1 Might point). You become a small animal, no larger than a house cat. Action.

Tier 2

Wild Thing (2 Might points). You become an animal up to the size of a large dog. This creature potentially has unarmed attacks dealing 3 damage as a light weapon, due to claws and teeth. Action.

Tier 3

Call of the Wild. While in a natural environment you count as trained in all Defenses. Enabler.

Tier 4

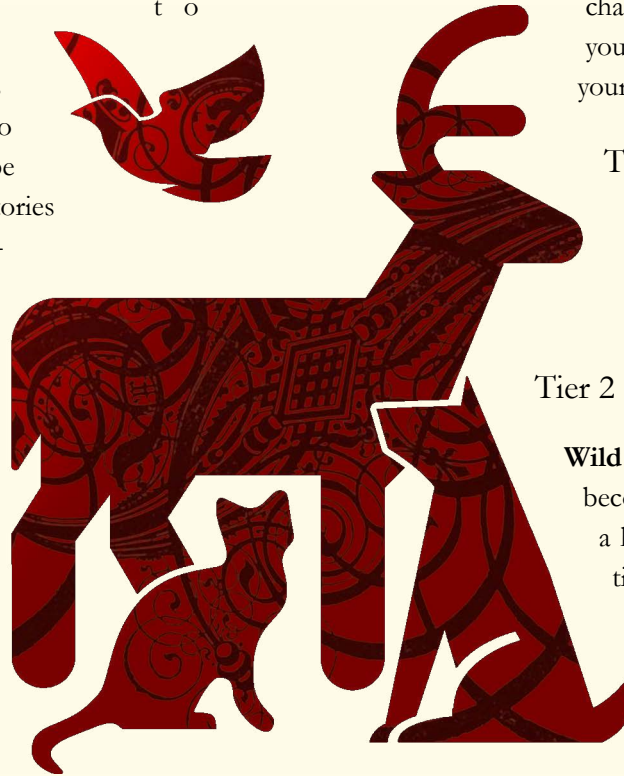
Massive Beast (4 Might points). You take the shape of an animal up to the size of a cow or bear. Your unarmed attacks deal 5 damage if the creature has claws or teeth. Action.

Tier 5

Mind of Man. You may now use your Type abilities while in an animal form. Enabler.

Tier 6

Chimaera (6 Might points). You turn into a creature of your own design, made up of the features of other animals. Alternatively, you can become a flock or swarm of a smaller creature. Action.



Channels the Elements

Some have a connection to one of the cardinal elements dominant in a recursion. High fantasy worlds often have their own cosmology and this is an example of how those metaphysics come into play among heroes. These elements can be the four European elements of fire, water, earth, and air; but often they're derived from broader pantheons. Metal, wood, spirit, absence, darkness, light, etc. may be present as elemental forces. Life and death energy can even come to be a duality presented. The source of the fictional bleed is the guide here.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has the spark of your element and you mean to kindle it.
2. Pick one other PC. This person was once harmed by your element and you wish to make amends.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has a connection to an element that opposes yours.
4. Pick one other PC. Your elemental powers have no effect on this character, a seeming void in the elements.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your element leaves remnants of itself behind (pools of water, sparks of fire).

Major Effect Suggestion: Your element remains inside you, providing an asset on all Focus tasks for the encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: An element that opposes yours is strong in the area, causing your Focus abilities to activate at +1 Difficulty.

Element: Choose one element appropriate to the cosmology/metaphysics of this recursion. Your powers within this Focus are tied to that element, and you can turn the energy of your Type powers into that of your element when you so desire.

Tier 1

Attunement (1 Intellect point). You meditate on your element and gain an asset on all non-combat tasks for the next ten minutes. Must be at a large, pure source of your element to activate. Action.

Tier 2

Elemental Connection. Permanently gain 4 points to the maximum of a Pool of your choice. You now look more like your element, with hair, eyes, and skin that reflect your elemental nature. Enabler.

Tier 3

Enlightenment (3 Intellect points). You provide the benefits of Attunement to a target within Immediate range. The normal requirements and cost still apply. Action.

Tier 4

Countermeasures (4 Intellect points). You stop an attack that would deal damage related to your element, such as heat if you're a fire elemental. For two additional Intellect points you can use this ability to cancel an attack relating to an element that is opposite to yours, such as water putting out fire. Enabler.

Tier 5

Overrun (5 Intellect points). You alter the surrounding terrain dramatically, causing your element to overrun everything within Long distance. Action.

Tier 6

Elemental (6 Intellect points). You become an embodiment of your element for one hour. While in this form you no longer need air or sustenance, you are immune to poison and disease, and you can't be knocked down. Additionally, those who touch you take two damage from your element. Action.



Charms the Unwary

Enchanting spells that enthrall their wits about them are the bread of these Strangers. They are at times subtle with their sorcerous ways, but the chains of their affections are far stronger than any common seduction.

I've seen these will benders operate in a number of iterations, from dragons ruling island chains to the hypnotic gaze of vampires. At times they are merely specialists in the arcane secrets of oaths or emotions. I personally have a policy of never dealing with these types directly. Too much risk of having my mind and will compromised. I must say that I'm not alone in my mistrust of those who enslave with a smile or a wink.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person was once enthralled by you and has never stopped following you around.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is immune to your charms.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is way too concerned with the liberty of your victims.
4. Pick one other PC. This person makes the perfect foil in your social games.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your target lets slip a bit of useful information.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your target is permanently enthralled by your enchantment.

Suggested GM Intrusion: One of your enchanted thralls becomes jealous of your party members and attacks them.

those without
and butter

Tier 1

Entrance (1 Intellect point). You catch the eye of a person within Long distance, forcing them to only worry about you for one round. They can attack, but only if you are the target. Action.

Charms. You are trained in tasks related to seduction and charming others. Enabler.

Tier 2

Mesmerize (2 Intellect points). You render a hostile person friendly or a friendly person obsessed with you for the next hour. The target must be within Long distance and must be able to see you. Action.

Tier 3

Enthrall (3 Intellect points). A target who has been Mesmerized by you becomes affected by that power for the next 33 days. Action.

Tier 4

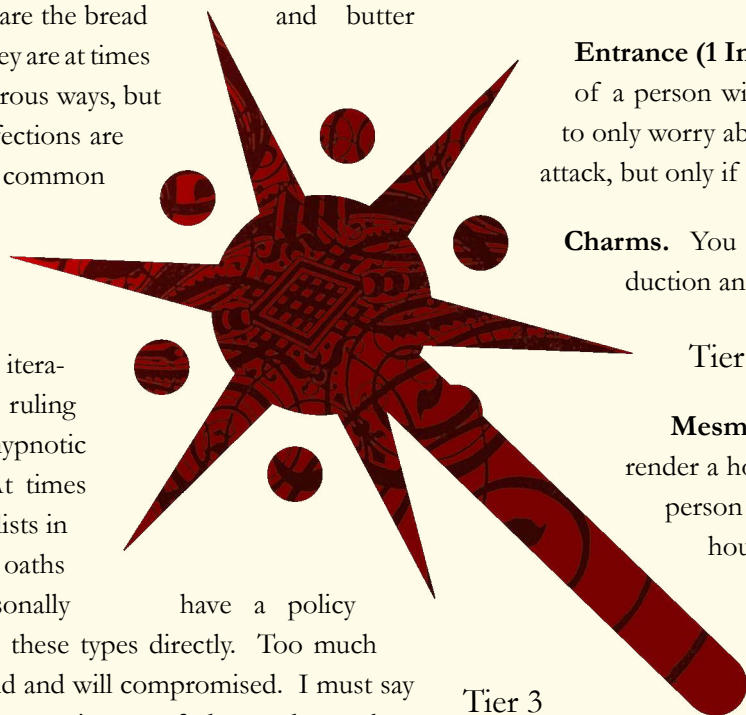
Enchanting Aura. You enjoy an asset on all positive social interactions. Enabler.

Tier 5

Confess (5 Intellect points). A person within Immediate range affected by your Mesmerize ability begins to tell you information they think you'd want to know. This condition lasts for ten minutes. Action.

Tier 6

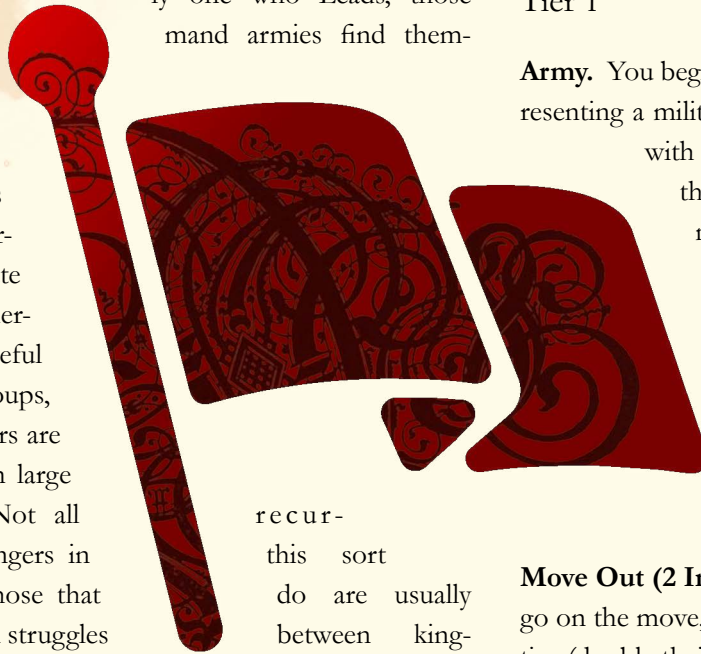
Heart of the Beast (6 Intellect points). You Mesmerize any living creature (not just a person) within Long distance, making the beast friendly to you until they next rest. Enthrall may be used on the creature after this point, with its usual effects. Action.



Commands Armies

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military forces
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to. Where leader-
ship can be useful
for small groups,
these commanders are
more focused on large
scale power. Not all
sions place Strangers in
of position. Those that
focused on grand struggles
doms and houses.

ly one who Leads, those
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I include description of this Focus among those of high fantasy because of the sweepingly epic tales these Strangers become a part of. They are tales of war and world shattering events, and often this means powerful spells and the intervention of gods.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. They are your most trusted lieutenant.
2. Pick one other PC. This person was your mentor in scholarship or fighting.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has been your ally since childhood and you've never left them behind.
4. Pick one other PC. This person was once your greatest rival.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your forces follow the plan and get the jump on the enemy.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your forces work so quickly they have few casualties.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your forces are ambushed by a superior force.

Tier 1

Army. You begin with the Position long-term benefit, representing a military rank of some importance. You begin with control over a sizeable military force for this recursion. In smaller recursions this might be the local city watch; in larger ones this could be a kingdom's navy or griffon rider flight. While this force isn't always at your side, you are able to use them to support your causes and work for the goals of the kingdom. Enabler.

Tier 2

Move Out (2 Intellect points). You order your forces to go on the move, causing them to travel swiftly to an objective (double their usual movement rate). Enabler.

Tier 3

Ambush (3 Intellect points). A unit of your forces sets up the perfect ambush for a particular unit of the enemy. Can be used to attack or capture the enemy leader, if their location is known. Action.

Requisition. You possess the Wealth long-term benefit, due to the perks of your position or supplies you have access to. Enabler.

Tier 4

Bulwark (4 Intellect points). Your forces stop enemy movement from a particular direction, holding the line. Action.

Tier 5

Lay Siege (5 Intellect points). Your forces surround and blockade an enemy fortress indefinitely, completely thwarting any attempts to escape or enter. Action.

Tier 6

Invasion (6 Intellect points). Your forces find a way into an enemy fortress, no matter how fortified. Action.

Communes with Nature

These are the tree hugging nature lovers of the fantasy recursions. They speak for the trees and react violently to those would harm their precious ecosystems, or whatever concept of interdependence they have in these primitive backwaters. The laws of these worlds often empower such zealots, in order to aid them in defending their pretty wooden homes. This is meant to represent nature's justice or the justifiable fear of the natural world or some other such human phobia.

Obviously I don't put much stock in their ideologies and motives, but I do warn against their power. The tree people have the laws of the wild on their side. My former assistant, Jennifer, exhibited these abilities in the Camelot recursion and served as a formidable ally.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person's love of nature is obvious and you cherish it.
2. Pick one other PC. This person threatens nature, but seems to have a valuable destiny nonetheless.
3. Pick one other PC. This person once required your rescue in the wild.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is your ally in vengeance on behalf of nature.

Minor Effect Suggestion:

Nearby trees and vines grab at your foe, tripping them up and providing an asset on rolls against them next round.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your attack contains a natural poison, immobilizing your foe they are until cured.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Nature calls on you to take vengeance. For the next 24 hours you cannot use your Focus powers except to exact vengeance upon those who encroach upon nature.

Tier 1

Wild Walk. You leave no trace when passing through natural terrain. It is impossible to track you in nature. Enabler.

Tier 2

Growth (2 Intellect points). You cause plants immediately around you to grow quickly for the next ten minutes, following your direction. For example, you could easily construct a cage or shelter made of trees. Action.

Tier 3

Wild Flight (3 Intellect points). Trees and other plants wrap around you and move you up to Long distance to a location of your choice, even high in the air. This power only works in an area with sufficient plants to grow and move you about.

Grab. Your Growth power now works fast enough to use it to ensnare or capture a foe during combat. Enabler.

Tier 4

Natural Combatant. You are trained in the use of any weapon made entirely of biological materials, such as wooden staves. Enabler.

Tier 5

Nature's Vengeance. Your attacks made using weapons that qualify for your Natural Combatant ability ignore the effects of armor and shields made of metal or magic. Enabler.

Tier 6

Isolation. Whenever you make attacks while separated from your party, you gain an asset on the roll. This increases to two assets if you are in a completely natural environment. Enabler.



Consorts with Dragons

Dragons are a thing of legend in so many cultures of Earth that it's no surprise that they turn up in so many magical recursions. These creatures are the embodiment of fear, majesty, and power, and those who would tame or even willingly seek them are definitively heroes. As such, Strangers sometimes find themselves with the "blood of dragons," able to speak their language and harness their power for themselves.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person also seems to get along well with dragons.
2. Pick one other PC. This person also seems to be able to speak the language of dragons, a secret language you share.
3. Pick one other PC. This person once saved you from a dragon.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is immune to dragonsbreath as a weapon, though they likely don't know it yet.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You adopt the stance of a dragon, providing a +1 to your damage for the rest of the encounter.

Major Effect Suggestion:

Your connection to the blood of dragons grants you strange knowledge of the subject of this task. You know nearly everything about it.

Suggested GM

Intrusion: A dragon becomes jealous or angry at your abilities, coming after you and your party.

Tier 1

Dragon Tongue. You speak and understand the language of dragons. Dragons are generally positively predisposed towards you, though there are exceptions. Enabler.

Tier 2

Pet Dragon. You now possess a small dragon as a pet. It is a level 2 creature with 9 Health and 1 point of Armor that deals 4 damage on an attack. It can fly and generally follows you around. It's about as intelligent as a child. Enabler.

Tier 3

Draconic Knowledge. You are trained in tasks related to dragons, such as lore, etiquette, and finding lairs. Enabler.

Tier 4

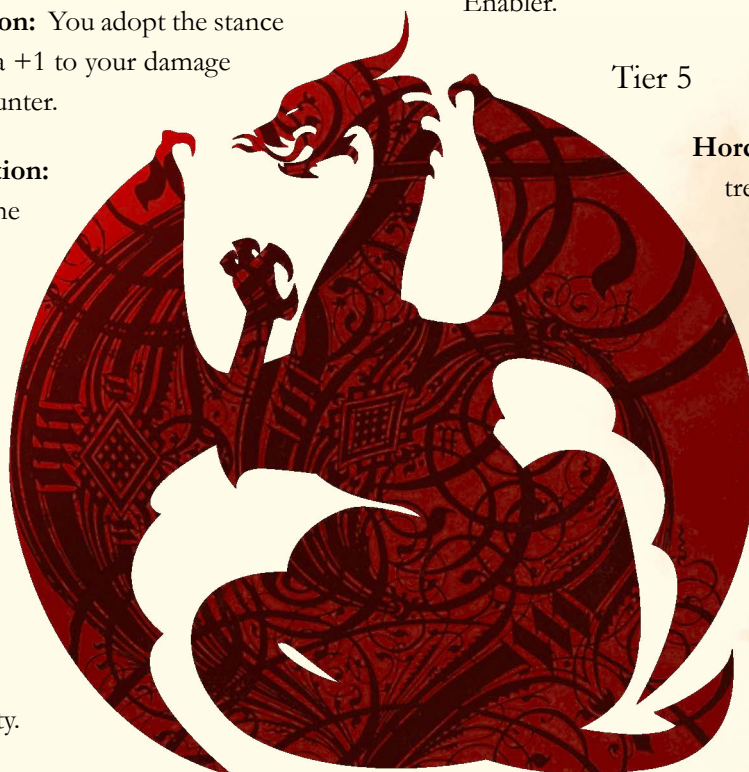
Dragon Friend. A fairly powerful adult dragon (Level 7+) considers you a friend. You may call upon it for wisdom once per game session through a mental summons or via smaller dragons, though it is sometimes too busy to help. Enabler.

Tier 5

Horde. You have access to the treasure horde of your Dragon Friend, granting you the Wealth long-term benefit and allowing you to search for a Cypher in the horde once per day. Enabler.

Tier 6

Dragon Rider. Your pet is large enough now to use as a flying mount. It is now a Level 5 creature with 25 Health, 3 Armor, and dealing 7 damage with attacks. Enabler.



Follows the Old Ways

There fantasti-even those and as-who take a to their arcane over brilliance, dwelling witches religions or tend these fallen se-ruptive as they careful use. The sons down to the healer.

Yet the wise ones meek, for their millennia of use, recursions they're are willful and their knowledge. them are often of this confident sort and I tend not to tangle with them. Wisdom is so much more useful when it's on your side.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has an old soul you can respect.
2. Pick one other PC. You sense this person has a great destiny to fulfill.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has helped your community in the past.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is your apprentice, but appears to be taking their own path to wisdom.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Supernatural forces provide an asset on your next action.

are many folk in cal recursions, with wizardry tonishing magic, more restrained tack arts. Preferring wisdom these often old or remote-and shaman practice older to forgotten lore. But crets are not so much cor-are tempered by time and wise only pass wise les-next generation of village

should not be deemed magics hold the weight of within the context of the to be found within. They well aware of the value of

Strangers who become

Major Effect Suggestion: Supernatural forces grab your foe and hold them in place for 1d6 rounds.

Suggested GM Intrusion: A seemingly innocuous problem turns out to relate to a greater foe in the recursion, making the scene significantly more dangerous.

Tier 1

Nature Lore. You are trained in healing and survival tasks that can be solved with plants and herbs. Additionally, you're trained in handicrafts. Enabler.

Tier 2

Poultice (2 Intellect points). A target within Immediate range moves one step up the condition track and is cured of one poison or disease. Action.

Tier 3

Talisman (3 Intellect points). You transfer the effect of an Intrusion caused by a rolled 1 onto a target within Long range. Enabler.

Tier 4

Familiar. You possess a loyal and highly intelligent animal (Level 1 creature). When the animal is within Immediate range you enjoy an asset on all tasks related to this focus. Enabler.

Tier 5

Curse (5 Intellect points). You cause an effect equivalent to a GM Intrusion against a target within Long range. Action.

Tier 6

Circle of Stone and Bones (6 Intellect points). You perform a half hour ritual, immediately after which you receive a two asset bonus on a roll involving magic or the skills you gained from Nature Lore. Enabler.

Inscribes Runes of Power

The power of the written word, or even the inscribed letter, is a powerful and old kind of magic. In the ignorance of the medieval world, writing is a way of communicating that transcends mere utterances and appears to invoke an otherworldly power. There's something in the permanence of carving or painting runes upon an object that feels powerful. In recursions with magic, this power is often quite real and those with the power to inscribe can be highly respected among their cultures.

This Focus calls to those with a penchant for crafts or words. At times it attaches itself to the pious, for it seems to relate to the gods in some recursions. Useful craft if you can make it, for like any handicraft it provides for the group as well as the individual.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You're jealous of this person's craftwork and follow them to learn.
2. Pick one other PC. This person bears a rune upon their skin, a fateful portent.
3. Pick one other PC. This person funds your work, seeing it as important.
4. Pick one other PC. This person's actions in the world seem worthy of your runes.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The rune you mark is especially deep and will last twice as long as normal.

Major Effect Suggestion: One of your runes begins to glow with power, doubling its effects during this encounter. The gods must smile upon you.

Suggested GM Intrusion: A rune is broken or removed from one of your items.

Tier 1



Master's Tools (1 Speed point). You inscribe a rune upon a tool. It will provide an asset on tasks related to its normal intended use (non-combat actions). This ability may be used to inscribe the tools you use to make runes, providing an asset on uses of this Focus. Action.

Tier 2

Stalwart Shield (2 Speed point).

You place a rune upon a shield. The next time it's used in a combat it will provide two assets rather than one. Action.

Tier 3

Runecasting (3 Speed points). You use the runes to get a sense of your future. If you are ambushed before your next extended rest, you automatically succeed in noticing the attack and enjoy an asset on the initiative roll for the combat. Action.

Tier 4

Sturdy Armor (4 Speed points). You place runes upon a suit of armor, granting it +1 Armor rating for the next hour. Action.

Tier 5

Steely Weapon (5 Speed points). You place runes upon a weapon, causing it to ignore Armor rating for the next hour. Enabler.

Tier 6

Permanence (6 Speed points). Used with any other rune inscribing power, the rune you carve is permanent. Enabler.

Practices Sorcery

A Focus I've found myself in possession of many times, this is the art of magic itself. While others dabble, we sorcerers indulge in the deepest mysteries of the arcane. We search and study, learn and experiment. We carve our name into the tree of knowledge and proclaim ourselves gods of our time and place.

Sorcery is not for the timid. It is not for the merely curious. It is serious and dangerous work, requiring courage and focus. It is willful discipline alone that alters these worlds in ways worth writing songs about, and sorcerers are those who forge our souls into such shapes that we may do so.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

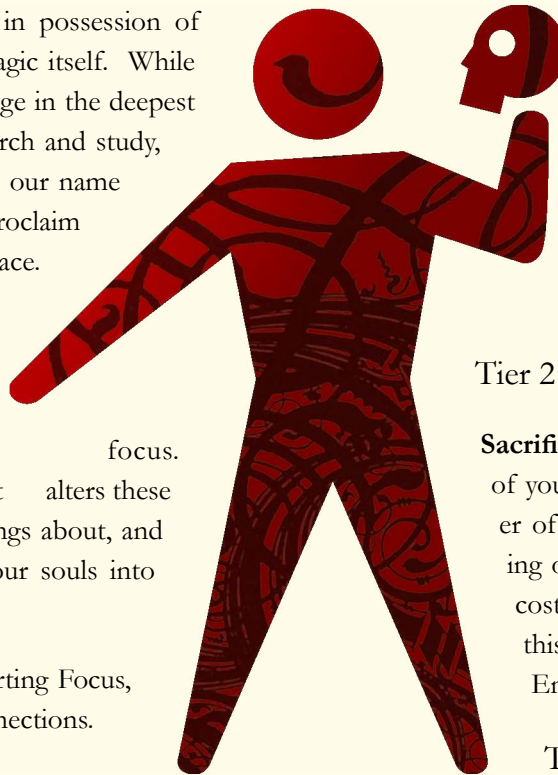
1. Pick one other PC. This person sometimes assists you in your studies and spells.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems to envy your power.
3. Pick one other PC. This person was changed by your magic in the past.
4. Pick one other PC. This person's worldview seems at odds with yours, but you've become friends anyway.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Arcane energies swirl about, distracting a foe for one round.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your spell affects one additional target within range.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The dangers of magic catch up with you and you are permanently altered in some grotesque way.

Paradoxical: This Focus is designed specifically with the Paradox Type in mind. Other Types are not focused enough on "magic" to practice it.



Tier 1

Empower (1 Intellect point).

You draw upon ambient magical energies to increase the effectiveness of a Paradox Revision you cast this round, providing an Asset on any roll made to activate. Enabler.

Tier 2

Sacrifice (2 Might points). You give up some of your own life energies to increase the power of a Revision you cast this round, gaining one Effort on the activation roll, at no cost beyond the Might points used to fuel this ability. Can stack with Empowerment. Enabler.

Tier 3

Practice. You are trained in the use of all Revisions. Enabler.

Syphon (3 Intellect points). You gather magical force from a large source of magic within Long distance, eliminating the cost of a Revision you cast this round. May be used in conjunction with Empower and Sacrifice. Enabler.

Tier 4

Dispellation (4 Intellect points). You destroy one magical effect of a Level equal to or lower than your Tier. Action.

Tier 5

Channel. Whenever you use the Syphon ability, you may gain the benefits of Empower and Sacrifice at no cost. However, when you elect to do so, you trigger an Intrusion on a roll of 3 or lower, rather than just on a 1. Enabler.

Tier 6

Precision. You are specialized in the use of all Revisions. Enabler.

Speaks of Forgotten Gods

The concept of lost and forgotten religions bearing importance on the present day is one that has caught hold in many recursions. From the elder races of fantasy serving the first gods upon their fictional world to the Lovecraftian monsters which warp the minds of mere mortals, humans cling to this frightening prospect. I believe this is because it is true.

In fact, recursions in which the wicked or outcast practice these secrets often serve as tenuous gateways to the Strange and the various creatures that inhabit it. The servants of the Planetovores make use of these beliefs, but our fear of them is also useful to us. For knowing that something is out there in the dark chaos lets us know we should be ready.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You're certain this one should hear the gospels of your gods.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's heart is in the right place, and you'll see to it that they're encouraged.
3. Pick one other PC. This person condemns your religion but admires your skills.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the person you admire most in the world.

Minor Effect Suggestion:

The old gods smile on you and grant you a minor favor of your choice.

Major Effect Suggestion:

The old gods smile on you and deliver your most pressing desire.

Suggested GM Intrusion:

The new gods thwart your efforts, ruining something you've accomplished today.

Tier 1

Name of the Gods (1 Intellect point). You speak forgotten names and all people (friend and foe) who can hear you within Immediate range flee in terror. Action.

Tier 2

Foreknowledge (2 Intellect points). A god will, for a sacrifice, reveal the answer to a yes or no question. This information is from the perspective of the gods and so can be misleading. Usable once per day. Action.

Tier 3

Forbidden Knowledge. You are trained in history and religion tasks, but should you fail a roll, you are completely incorrect in your knowledge. Enabler.

Tier 4

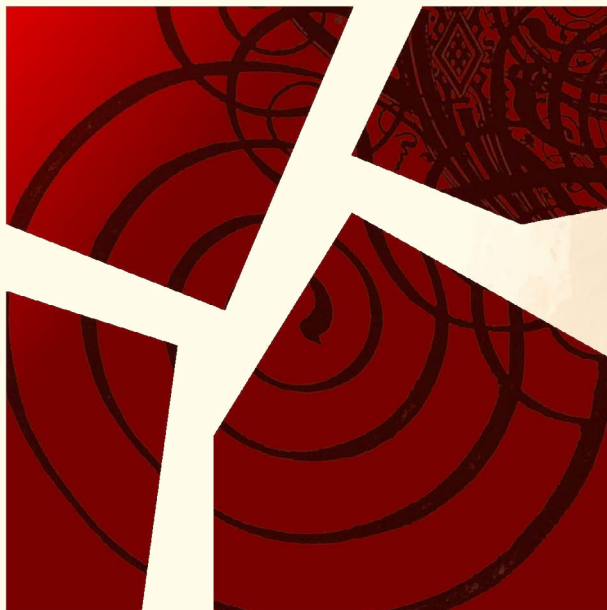
Stolen Sanctuary (4 Intellect points). You convert a holy place for the new gods of this recursion into a holy place for your own gods. From this point forward you may use the Foreknowledge power once per hour rather than the usual once per day, so long as you're at this holy site. Action.

Tier 5

Cultists. You acquire 5 Level 1 followers. Your church now provides you with the Wealth long-term benefit. Enabler.

Tier 6

Deus Ex Machina (6 Intellect points). Once per game session you may use this ability to call directly on your god for aid. While this aid will generally be beneficial to you, you have no control over what the god does. Action.



Tends the Flock

Many worlds hold many gods. They are reflections of our Earth religions, yet all the more prevalent and obvious, intervening often and bestowing religious leaders with cosmic powers. The gods of the recursions are in this way so much more real than their Earth counterparts, and their followers so much more pious and arrogant, safe in the knowledge of the truth of their faith.

I suppose I don't strike you as one who indulges in religion. Honestly I'm fascinated by it. The fact that the gods are quite capable of making themselves known in these recursions only makes religious institutions all the more interesting to me. For what place is there for faith when there's proof? What need is there for afterlife if magic exists to bring back the dead? Are those without the "spark" bereft of souls? Truly fascinating.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is a member of your congregation.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's lack of faith is troublesome to you.
3. Pick one other PC. This person needs moral guidance and you're there to provide it.
4. Pick one other PC. This person constantly proves that faith isn't everything, annoying you to no end.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your faith provides you an asset on tasks against your current target for the encounter.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your faith provides you two assets on a non-combat task of your choice this encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You realize that your actions do not reflect well on your faith, causing you to lose 7 Intellect points due to shame or lack of confidence.

Tier 1

Minister. You are a priest or other church leader in your community, with the Position long-term benefit. Enabler.

Tier 2

Good Fortune (2 Intellect points). You pray for a minor event and it eventually comes true, such as good weather, a lost child found, or someone getting over a cold. Action.

Tier 3

Pious Lifestyle. You have vowed to give up worldly pleasures. On days when you maintain this vow you receive an asset on positive social interactions. Enabler.

Tier 4



Shield of Faith (4 Intellect points).

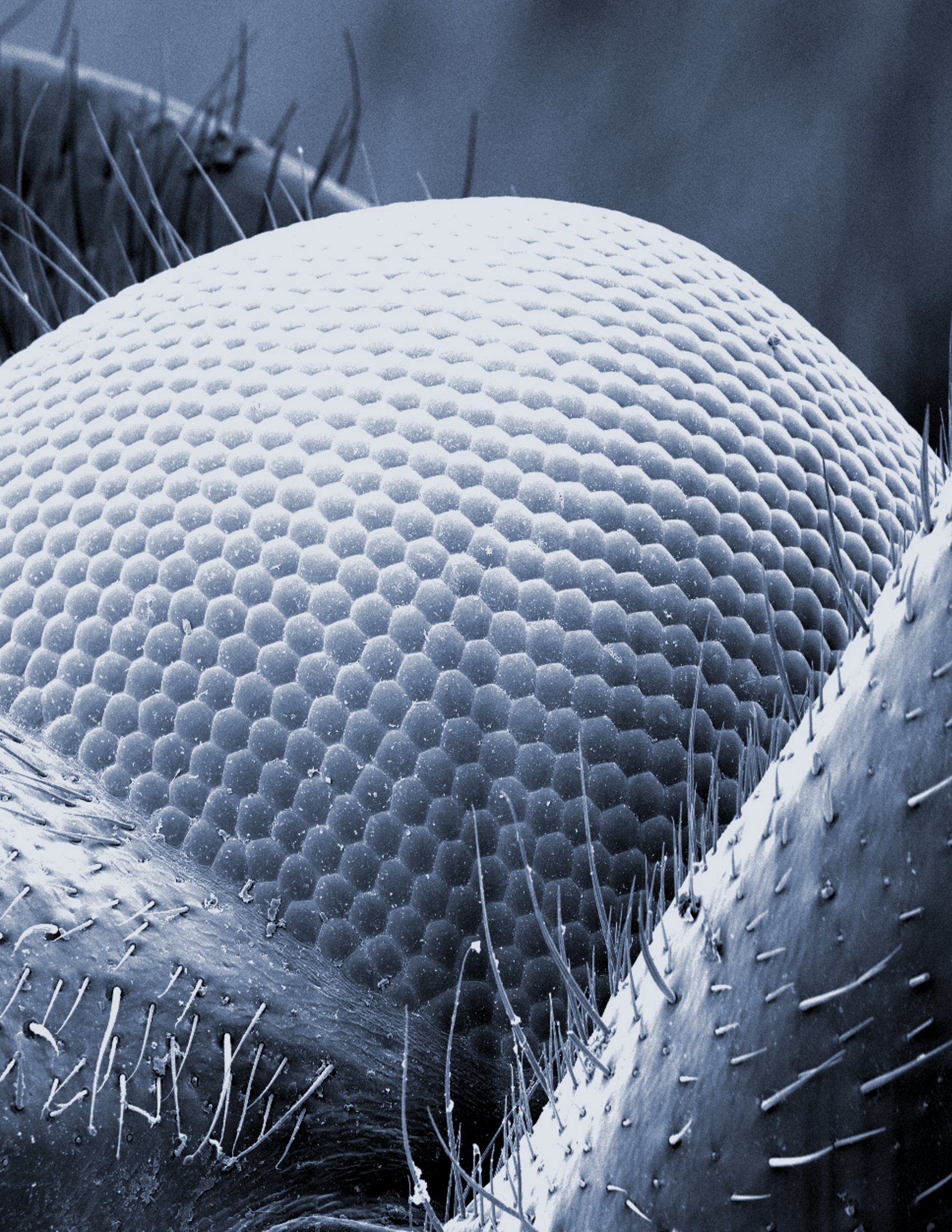
Your faith stops an attack made against a target within Immediate range. Interrupts the attack, but takes up your action for the round. Action, but outside of the initiative order.

Tier 5

Conversion (5 Intellect points). A target within Long distance that has directly benefited from your Good Fortune ability in the past comes to see the benefits of your religion, though full conversion could take some time. Targets must have a Level equal to or lower than your Tier. Action.

Tier 6

Aura of Faith (6 Intellect points). For the next ten minutes, every living creature within Immediate distance (including yourself) regenerates one Might point or Health at the end of each round. Action.



Erica and Dr. Octavian Smathers peered through the observation glass, examining a small cylinder in the isolation chamber. No more than two feet tall, the cylinder contained coils of wiring surround by clear glass. Although it was somewhat difficult to tell in the harsh light, Erica could detect a faint illumination being emitted from the interior of the cylinder.

"The tests were successful?" Erica asked, turning away from the window to look at her colleague. The cybernetic scientist turned to look at Erica with a smile on his face.

"They were. Every single time. The beacon is guaranteed to call the Kray to its location," he answered, still smiling.

"How long does it take for them to arrive?" She turned back towards the device.

"It varies, but usually within a day, never any longer than two though. You know Kray infestations are extremely dangerous. If even one spore escapes, it can cause -"

"I am aware of the risks," Erica said as she moved away from the window and back into the lab. She avoided staring at the walls, for they always made her feel vaguely queasy. Octavian's lab was located at the bottom of a deep ocean for security reasons, and staring out into the black expanse of sea floor was disconcerting.

"About my payment."

"Ah, yes." Erica strode over to pack, and pulled out a clear gelatinous sphere the size of a basketball. Suspended inside was a smaller, misshapen hunk of silvery metal.

"I can't believe you found some," Octavian whispered, coming close to examine the orb.

"It wasn't easy, I had to call in several favors, and finding the gates to move this through recursions was and adventure all its own," Erica said, handing Dr. Smathers the ball.

"Before being placed in the containment unit, we registered that element as having 250 protons in its nuclei."

"I hardly believe it, how is it that I'm holding it now?"

"The containment sphere it's encased in. Which, by the way, will only last another day, so I would get that secured if I were you."

"You're sure this isn't radioactive."

"Absolutely. Elements that dense have reached an island of stability. The recursion where I went to find that, they make it into a foil that they use as radiation insulation. Damn effective too. We had to get pretty close to a collapsing star to harvest the stuff."

"I am often envious of your travels, Erica," Octavian said, handing the orb to one of his many robotic assistants. The many-limbed construct scuttled away, presumably to store the sphere in a more secure location.

"So, is there anything I should know about transporting the beacon?" Erica asked as she picked up her pack.

"I'm afraid that I'm not going to be turning it over to you," Octavian replied, a look of casual amusement on his face.

"Octavian, there is no reason that we shouldn't conclude our business in an amicable fashion," Erica turned to stare pointedly at the doctor.

"Normally I would agree, but surely you realize that I cannot allow such a powerful weapon to leave my control. No hard feelings."

Erica sighed, "None at all." Erica then pulled a small pistol from her pack and shot Dr. Smathers in the neck with a small silver dart. He shrieked in surprise, clawing at the dart. Almost immediately, Octavian collapsed onto the floor, writhing in a strange, almost mechanical fashion.

"Don't worry Octavian, the nanites in that dart will only disable your cybernetic components for a few hours. Plenty of time for me to leave, and for both of us to forget this incident." Erica quickly accessed the isolation chamber and stowed the beacon in her pack. She returned to the main lab to see that Octavian had propped himself up against one of the tables. His face had lost some of its muscle control, but she could still see the rage in his expression.

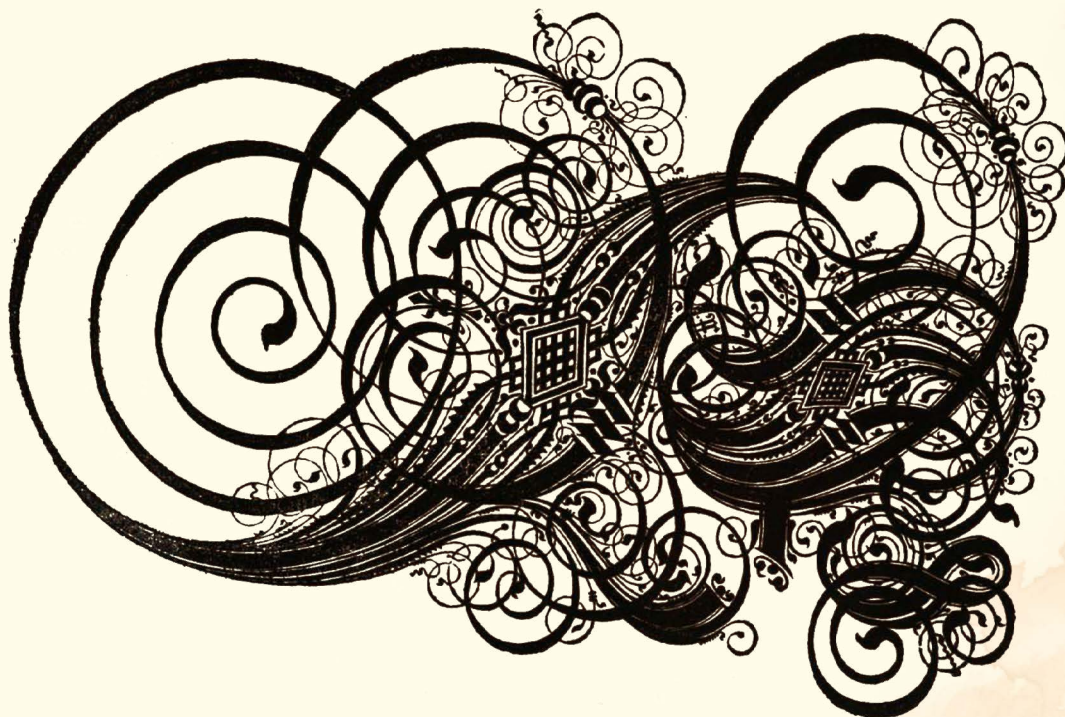
"You knew," his voice came out in a rasp.

"I suspected. We've worked together many times, and you were always loathe to hand over any technology, much less something of this magnitude. "

"You're good Erica, I'll give you that." With a jerking motion, he touched a sensor on his belt. A door at the back of the lab swooshed open, and Erica heard the clonk of metal feet against the floor. Two large mechanical drones entered the lab, arms bristling with weapons. Erica sighed. Things were rarely as easy as they should be. Happy she had bothered to recharge her weapon, Erica pulled her energy pistol from her pack and took aim at the nearest robot.

Chapter 3:

Pseudoscientific



Some call the places where the known laws of science are more complex or better understood the recursions of “mad science.” A fascinating thing this mad science, for each recursion is defined and therefore made stable by the laws that govern it. The more calcified the rules, the larger and more embellished the world. Mad science would then seem to speak of worlds with different laws of physics or chemistry. Not only that, but the people there tend to know how these unusual properties work and can exploit them.

I find this entire thing fascinating. Is it truly possible that the most brilliant minds of our little section of the universe reside not on Earth, but within a fictitious recursion

few have ever visited? For if these people truly understand their odd versions of science and make the use of them that they appear to, they are indeed the geniuses they claim to be. We should be finding these minds and putting them to bigger tasks back on Earth.

Mad science is about the applications of science itself. It's often found in those recursions inspired by the fictional bleed of science fiction or comic books. Strangers often find themselves in the bodies of experiments, advanced users of technology, and scientists themselves. In effect we absorb the complex nature of the recursion and make the most of it, becoming the masters of that place.

Foci

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|
| Adopts Animal Qualities | 49 | Dons a Power Suit | 57 |
| Assists a Mad Genius | 50 | Employs Fantastic Gadgets | 58 |
| Brandishes a Death Ray | 51 | Mixes Unstable Concoctions | 59 |
| Builds Robots | 52 | Plays with Portals | 60 |
| Conducts Dangerous Experiments | 53 | Pursues Physical Perfection | 61 |
| Controls the Weather | 54 | Terrifies the Townspeople | 62 |
| Defies the Laws of Physics | 55 | Wields Cosmic Power | 63 |
| Develops Sentience | 56 | | |

Nucleus City

Nucleus City is a comic book-inspired recursion set within a metropolis that has been overrun by super villains. The villains, most of whom were criminals who developed super powers after exposure to nuclear radiation from the local power plants, recently took power after assassinating the city's government leaders and superheroes.

The city is bleak and anarchic, with most organized activity overseen by the supercriminal-run Council of Defiance and its chairwoman, a psychic named Redactus. Though national troops have been sent in to stabilize the region, this has only heightened the level of violence in the city.

A small resistance group of failed superheroes has begun organizing. Recursors translating in are quickly found by the resistance thanks to their prescient-powered leader, Premonate, who thinks they are superheroes who have recently discovered their super nature. If they are willing to join, they quickly find themselves in the front lines of an epic urban battle between modern demigods.

Level: 4

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Humans, "meta-humans" (mutated humans with super powers)

Foci: Defies the Laws of Physics, Dons a Powersuit, Employs Fantastic Gadgets, Pursues Physical Perfection, and Wields Cosmic Power, as well as Displays Titan Strength from Chapter 6. Psionic foci from Chapter 5 may also be available.

Connection to the Strange: Few direct connections to the Strange exist, but it's easy to travel from Nucleus City to Atom Nocturne simply by driving far enough out of town.

Connection to Earth: An inapposite portal controlled by the Council of Defiance, within the lair of Redactus (the city's nominal ruler).

Size: A metropolis with a five mile radius (8 km).

Spark: 15%

Trait: Clever (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Piston

Level: 5

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Humans, steam-powered robots

Foci: Assists a Mad Genius, Brandishes a Death Ray, Builds Robots, Develops Sentience, Dons a Powersuit, and Employs Fantastic Gadgets, as well as Monitors Intel from Chapter 4, representing masters of steam computer programming.

Connection to the Strange: Several below ground tubes lead out into the Strange.

Connection to Earth: Several seemingly ornamental configurations of gears put together by steampunk live-action roleplayers would open translation gates into Piston if the mechanisms were spun.

Size: A metropolis roughly 3 miles in diameter (5 km).

Spark: 10%

Trait: Intelligent (see The Strange corebook page 141)

A fantastic city of tubes and gears, Piston is a steampunk utopia of science allowed to spread and rule as it will. A technocratic and ordered Victorianaesque society with clear social castes separating the wealthy from the dirty machinists of the lower levels. The middle of this society is a class of engineers and scientists, constantly ascending and descending into other castes by the whims of fate.

But a cancer grows in the heart of Piston: a team of technicians bent on controlling the city's master computer (a sprawling complex of carefully maintained steam-systems). Their activities are obvious to anyone with their ear to the ground or who works with steam computers, such as most PCs. The technicians, who call themselves "The Plumbers," have constructed their own secret terminal for the master computer, down in their subterranean lair, from which they and their robotic minions code themselves a glorious future, ruling all of Piston and from there the world.

The Plumbers have recently taken bold action, forcing the upper level aristocrats to move to lower levels and zeppelins due to a number of massive pneumatic tubes they've sabotaged. This is just the first step in a long-term plan to forcibly remove the ruling class, making them less and less able to survive in the city.

Unwary Town

Unwary is a small town with very little happening most of the time. It is set in a timeless late 1950's era American rural community, just sitting there waiting to be tormented. This simple and timeless location is often the hiding place of those looking to lay low. Once a Stranger has noticed that old movie houses often lead here, they can look for one for a quick escape into the Shoals of Earth.

Strangely, all those who translate here become monsters or scientists, with the power to lay waste to the town (though they inevitably rebuild). Thus Unwary Town quite frequently becomes the site of monster on monster battles in the streets between enemy factions from Earth.

Though few people in Unwary Town hold the spark, those who do are the only voices of reason. They warn their fellow citizens against the dangers of the visiting monsters and mad scientists, but no one ever listens. Not until it's too late.

Level: 2

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Humans, various monsters that look like men in rubber suits

Foci: Assists a Mad Genius, Brandishes a Death Ray, Builds Robots, Conducts Dangerous Experiments, Controls the Weather, and Terrifies the Townspeople (more than one PC may take this focus).

Connection to the Strange: Located on the Shoals of Earth, Unwary Town is sometimes connected to Goodland (see The Strange corebook page 250).

Connection to Earth: Trap doors in nearly any old movie theatre on Earth serve as translation gates to the outskirts of the town.

Size: A small town near a dark lake in a thick forest, totaling about 4 square miles.

Spark: 1%

Trait: Strong (see The Strange corebook page 142)

Adopts Animal Qualities

Whether in superhero recursions or worlds filled with gene splicing aliens, the ability to adapt the abilities other species have evolved is a useful and commonly sought one. For some reason the human mind is made to adopt animals as personal totems, taking on the mentality and in this case the physical characteristics of particular animals.

Generally these Strangers latch on to a specific animal or insect from the start, deriving all further power from that beast. It is possible for some to manifest as animalistic generalists however. These beast masters or geneticists are harder to pin down, with less of a psychological connection to the animals they become part of.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has an admirable connection to your chosen animal, perhaps keeping one as a pet.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is able to make you think more human, talking you down from animalistic behavior.
3. Pick one other PC. This person reminds you of your chosen animal.
4. Pick one other PC. This person was involved in your initial animal adaptation.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You adopt an additional minor characteristic from the animal you're emulating.

Major Suggestion: You adopt an additional major characteristic from the animal.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You take on the mentality of the beast you're becoming for the next hour, unable to think as humans do.

You adopt an additional minor characteristic from the



Tier 1

Animal Sense (1 Might point). You gain a sense from your chosen animal, such as sonar or night vision. Generally speaking, this will provide two Assets on related perception tasks. The new sense lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier 2

Minor Characteristic (2 Might points). You adopt a minor aspect of your animal, such as a kangaroo pouch, flippers, or widely spaced eyes. This characteristic lasts for one hour. This ability can be used more than once to provide additional characteristics. Action.

Tier 3

Travel (3+ Might points). You gain a mode of locomotion from your chosen animal, such as flight, swimming and underwater breathing, or a predator's running speed. Generally this mode of travel will allow you to move Long distance as your movement without the need to spend your action to do so. The alteration lasts for one hour, +1 hour for each additional Might point spent at activation. Action.

Tier 4

Instinct. You are trained in Speed Defense and deal one additional damage on unarmed attacks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Major Characteristic (5 Might points). You adopt a major aspect of your animal, such as spinning webs, chameleon skin, or other effects on par with Powerful Mutations (see The Strange corebook page 241). This characteristic lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier 6

Shapeshift (6+ Might points). You physically transform into a version of your animal that is close to human size, with all of that animal's characteristics and weapons. This form lasts for one hour, plus one for each additional Might point spent at activation. Action.

Assists a Mad Genius

This is an unusual Focus, for it attaches itself to the Focus of another. That is to say, the Stranger who exhibits this Focus will usually be the assistant to another Stranger, whose translation made them some kind of scientist or technologist. And while being a mere assistant may not be glamorous, the duo can be an incredibly potent combination.

Carrying their master's equipment, handing them the right tools, providing needed assistance on tasks, these chores are mind numbing to one such as me. To those who would actually translate into this Focus, they are the bread and butter of a role they were born to play - the humble servant merely seeking to take part in something greater than themselves. I for one would prefer to be the master.

Connection: Pick one other PC. This person is your "master." The person you work for or serve and whose science forms the basis of your own powers. This person is likely a scientist or technology specialist of some kind.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You accomplish your feat of assistance without your master even noticing.

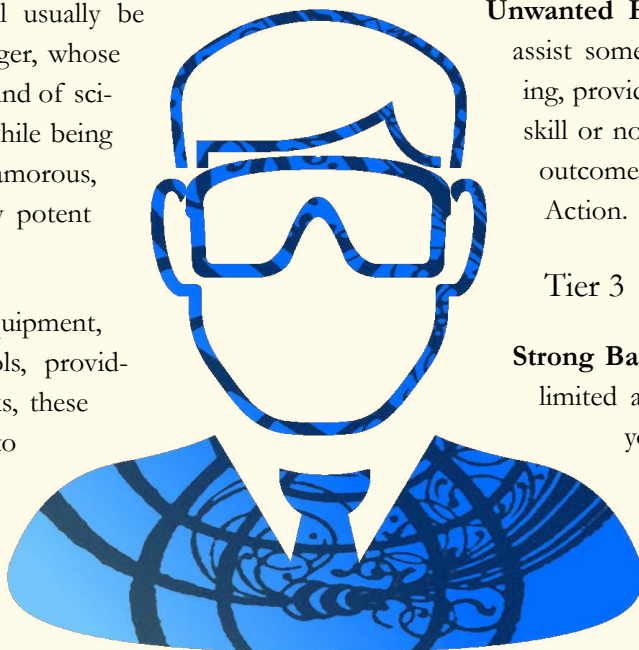
Major Effect Suggestion: You accomplish your feat of assistance without anyone seeing you.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You manage to discover some new property of science, outshining your master and thereby inspiring jealousy.

Tier 1

Exemplary Servant. You are trained in the science of your master, as well as tasks involving lifting or domestic duties. Enabler.

Tier 2



Unwanted Help (2 Intellect points). You assist someone in whatever task they're doing, providing an asset whether you have the skill or not, but in doing so you change the outcome of their task in some minor way. Action.

Tier 3

Strong Back. You can carry a virtually unlimited amount of equipment. Whatever you can fit in your packs and in your arms you can carry around. Enabler.

Ultimate Assistant. Passing a piece of equipment or a weapon to a party member within Immediate range does not take an action for you. Enabler.

Tier 4

Live to Serve (4 Speed points). You take the effects of an Intrusion for a party member. Enabler.

Tier 5

Calibrate Weapon. When using Unwanted Help on someone wielding a mad science weapon, their attack benefits from a +2 bonus on damage. Enabler.

Tier 6

Great Assistant. Whenever you provide Unwanted Help, you may spend Effort for your target's roll, which stacks with their own. Enabler.

Nearly a Master. You are specialized in the science practiced by your master. Enabler.

Brandishes a Death Ray

Some prefer a less subtle approach than the usual attempts to bend science and technology to their will. Some merely stumble onto a weapon or a theory of energy that allows them to assume the role of terrifying wielder of raw destructive force.

These madmen bear two weapons however: the power to destroy and the power to threaten. Sometimes the latter is the most powerful.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This is the person helped you design or discover your death ray.
2. Pick one other PC. Their safety is your top priority.
3. Pick one other PC. Your need to impress this person sometimes leads you to take unnecessary risks.
4. Pick one other PC. One of your early experiments with your death ray led to harm to this person.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your ray frightens an NPC onlooker.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your ray frightens all NPC onlookers.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Someone not only grabs your death ray from you, but figures out how to use it.

Tier 1

Death Ray. You possess a ranged weapon only you can wield. You are practiced in its use, dealing damage at up to Long distance without a penalty. Upon firing the ray you must choose how much damage you might do, between 1 and 6. Should you roll that number or lower on the attack, you suffer an Intrusion as though you'd rolled a 1. You may use either Speed or Intellect for Effort with this

weapon, your choice each time you fire. Should you lose your death ray, you'll likely find or construct a new one within a day or so. Enabler.

Tier 2

Force Setting (2 Intellect points). This death ray shot either knocks the target to the ground or pushes them a Short distance away from you, your choice. Enabler.

Threats of Death. You are trained at intimidation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 3

You may choose one of the following abilities:

Go Big. Your death ray is much bigger than before, requiring a backpack to operate. It now deals damage in a cone, affecting up to 3 targets in front of you at once. Enabler.

Miniaturize. The death ray is now a light weapon. Now that it's small it can look like another object (a book, a briefcase, etc.) but reveals its true nature when fired. Enabler.

Tier 4

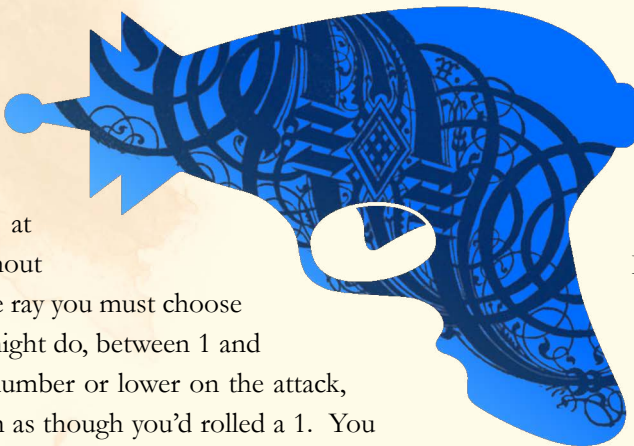
Greater Risks. You may now deal up to 10 damage with the death ray, but the chance of getting an Intrusion goes up as it normally does, triggering one if you roll equal to or lower than your damage output. Enabler.

Tier 5

Paralyzing Blast (5 Intellect). Your death ray attack will also cause the target to become unable to move or take action for 1d6 rounds. Enabler.

Tier 6

Rainbow of Death. Your death ray bypasses all Armor ratings. Enabler.



Builds Robots

This is a specialized area of knowledge, exploded into a full blown way of life. Builders of robots, on this scale, are able to have their little (and big) helpers assist them in nearly any task. Often their robotic allies are the ones doing the dirty work, making those who build robots truly capable of taking down dangerous situations.

Ultimately the roboticist is attempting to transcend their own limitations, becoming more than themselves in the world. They strive for more and more realistic and immediate interface with their machines. They appear to seek true robotic synthesis and I can respect that for some reason. We should all be so ambitious with our minds and bodies.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person knows how to communicate with your machines somehow.
2. Pick one other PC. This person treats one of your robots like a pet.
3. Pick one other PC. This person helps you acquire the parts you need to make your robots.
4. Pick one other PC. This person scares your robots by their very presence.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your robot comes back unscathed.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your robot comes back at full power, having learned a thing or two.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your machines are unable to enter the area due to some strange field or radio signal.

Tier 1

Helper Bot. You can construct a robot that will do mundane tasks for you. It counts as a Level 2 non-living creature with 1 Armor rating. Enabler.

Roboticist. You are trained in robotics tasks, such as repairing and constructing robots. Enabler.



Tier 2

Quick Fix (2 Intellect points). You repair a robot within Immediate range for 1d6 Health. Action.

Tier 3

Spy Bot. You are able to construct a tiny robot that can spy for you, providing video and

audio at almost any distance away, given enough travel time for the bot. It is a Level 1 non-living creature. Enabler.

Advanced Robotics. You are specialized in robotics tasks. Enabler.

Tier 4

Remote Control (4 Intellect points). You assume direct control over the actions of one of your robots, allowing you to make task rolls for it with your own skills and Effort. You can remain in this state for as long as you concentrate on controlling the machine. Action to initiate.

Tier 5

Death Bot. You are able to construct a rather large robot, ready to fight on your behalf. It is a Level 5 non-living creature with 2 Armor and deals 6 damage in combat. Enabler.

Tier 6

Uplink (6 Intellect). You upload your consciousness into one of your robots, allowing you to control it like you do with Remote Control. However, your organic-machine synthesis provides an Asset on all tasks you attempt while in your metal body. This uplink lasts as long as you desire. Action to initiate.

Conducts Dangerous Experiments

This Focus represents perhaps the height of mad science. This is the true mad scientist. A master of "Science!" they are constantly discovering new things at the expense of all common sense. Danger is their defining feature, with experiments that are quick to turn wrong. But those who push the boundaries of knowledge are often those willing to harm themselves and others in the pursuit of truth and their place in history. This is the Focus of the raw and brilliant mind, blinded by glory and the purity of their own ideas.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person serves as your lab assistant most of the time.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is always questioning the validity of your theories. You'll show them!
3. Pick one other PC. This person uses your theories to advance their own powers.
4. Pick one other PC. The mere presence of this person tends to disrupt your experiments. Keep them out of the lab!

Minor Effect Suggestion: You see a dangerous way to advance this attack, dealing five additional damage to your foe, but also three ambient damage to you.

Major Effect Suggestion: You see an extremely dangerous way to make this attack more powerful, dealing ten extra damage to your foe and five ambient damage to you.

Suggested GM Intrusion: A component explodes, dealing 5 ambient damage to everyone within Immediate range, including yourself.

Tier 1

Science. You are trained in all science tasks and possess a well-stocked lab from which to conduct your experiments. Enabler.

Tier 2

Medical Analysis (2 Intellect points). You study a significant portion of a person or creature (a finger or larger) and learn virtually every piece of medical information about them you could imagine, including physical weaknesses, Level, Health points, etc. Takes one hour in the lab. Enabler.

Tier 3

Simple Modification (3 Intellect points). Once per day you may use this ability to redistribute Pool points for a PC, or add or remove Health points from an NPC. The target must be willing. Action.

Super Science. You are specialized in all science tasks and can use this skill for all Focus ability rolls. Enabler.

Tier 4

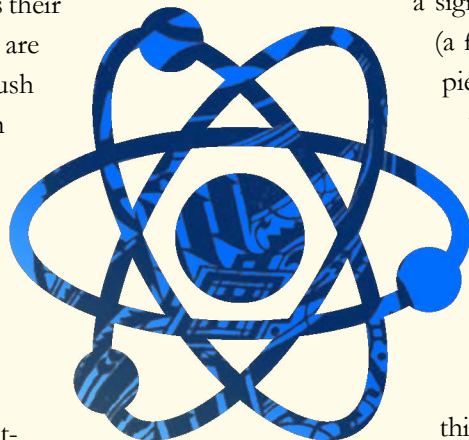
Brilliant Idea (4 Intellect points). You think of a way to solve a problem or defeat a foe of Level 6 or lower with a single task roll, such as reversing the polarity on the deflector coils with a repair roll. Failure on this single task counts as a rolled 1, causing an Intrusion. Action.

Tier 5

Greater Modification (5 Intellect points). You alter a willing creature within Immediate range, granting them a randomly selected Powerful Mutation (see The Strange corebook page 241) which lasts until their next 10 hour recovery period. Action.

Tier 6

Total Metamorphosis (6 Intellect points). You completely change a willing target within Immediate range, moving up to 5 permanent Pool around and granting them a Powerful Mutation of your choice. The target also gains a randomly selected Harmful Mutation (see The Strange corebook page 240). These alterations last for seven days, or until the target next translates. Action.



Controls the Weather

An underappreciated power to be sure, the ability to control the weather has been ascribed to many outcasts over the millennia. Such seclusion would seem also to be present among those who acquire these powers through translation. I have seen a friend become an archetypal madman in a tower, bent on finding some way to use their control for profit or other advantage. Something about this power turns the rational into power-mad fools.

If you feel the stirrings of weather control within you as you translate, take heed. With power over the natural world comes the arrogance of hubris. Such is the cost of being part of something bigger than oneself.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person was struck by lightning you accidentally created.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's powers relate to your weather use somehow.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is unaffected by your powers, experiencing weather as it normally would have been.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is immune to damage from any lightning you create.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your body electrifies, dealing 1 damage to anyone who touches for the next five minutes.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your body magnetically repels metal, providing an asset against attacks from metal objects for ten minutes.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You are blown away in the chaos of your weather, falling to the ground quite some distance away.

Tier 1

Forecast (1 Intellect point). You accurately predict the weather in your area for the next three days (assuming you don't change it). Action.

Weather Science. You are trained in meteorology and climatology tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Blustering (2 Intellect points). You alter the force and direction of the wind in your area, allowing you to knock up to three targets a Short distance in any direction. Action.

Tier 3

Weather Work (3 Intellect points). You cause or stop rain, fog, or snow. This weather change only occurs within a Long radius around you and lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier 4

Weather Control. Your Weather Work power now affects an entire region or major city. In most cases this is the entire recursion. Enabler.

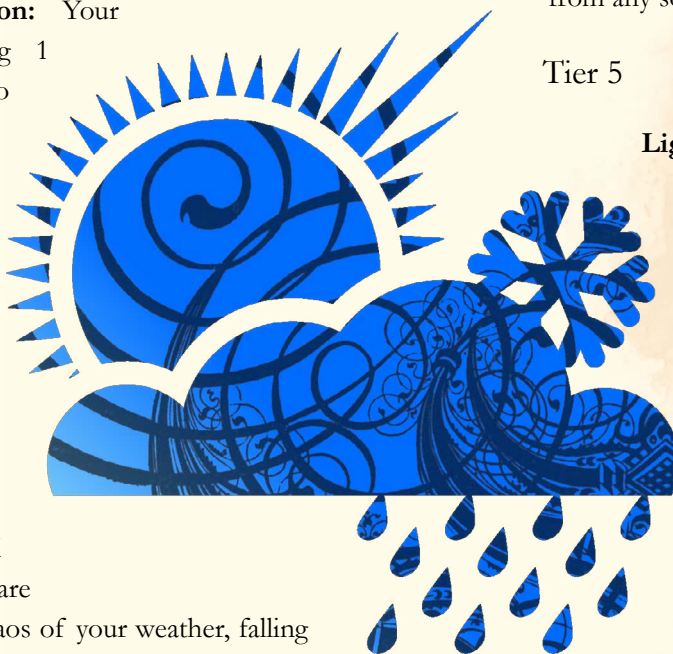
Conductor. You are immune to electrical damage from any source. Enabler.

Tier 5

Lightning Rod (5 Intellect points). You cause lightning to strike you and redirect to a target within Long distance, dealing six damage. May only be used under storm conditions. Action.

Tier 6

Absolute Control (6 Intellect points). You summon a blizzard or other massive weather event. It takes 1d6 hours to arrive and lasts for one day. Action.



Defies the Laws of Physics

Though any given recursion is defined by its own set of laws, those built on the Law of Mad Science all have certain fundamental rules in common. It's just that unlike in the real world, those laws can be bent in these alternate worlds. Indeed, the flexibility of the laws of science is what makes the science mad.

Those who learn to personally defy these laws often do so with some sort of innate mastery of the forces of reality, though there are a few who rely on scientific principles, power suits, or the odd properties of their mutant bodies. In any case, they are deviants to their own strange reality itself, defying gravity, magnetism, cohesion, and more.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person was involved in the events that led to your strange powers.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is always trying to get you to seem or act normal.
3. Pick one other PC. This person simply cannot believe you have these powers.
4. Pick one other PC. This is an old friend who's come along to see what you can do.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your power use is so innate it doesn't even take up your action this round.

Major Effect Suggestion: You become partially insubstantial for a moment, immune to physical attacks for the next round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your powers fluctuate and you lose control over them for the next 1d6 rounds, passing through floors or altering matter around you in dangerous ways.



Tier 1

Defiance (1 Speed point). You alter gravity or your own stickiness to allow you to walk up walls for the next ten minutes. Action.

Ripples of Energy. Your ability to slightly alter the properties of yourself and objects around you grants you an asset on physical tasks involving the manipulation of objects. Enabler.

Tier 2

Insubstantial (2 Speed points). You walk through a wall or other object up to one foot (30cm) thick. Action.

Tier 3

Weightless (3 Speed points). You negate your own personal gravity, allowing you to push out into the air, be carried by anyone, and otherwise ignore the problems with weight and falling. This effect lasts for ten rounds, after which point you fall to the ground if you're high up. Action.

Tier 4

Transfer (4 Speed points). A Focus power you activate works on a person you touch while activating it, rather than you. Enabler.

Tier 5

Magnetic (5 Speed points). Any number of objects of your choice within short distance become either attracted or repelled by you, flying across the room from this attraction. This effect lasts for ten minutes. Action.

Tier 6

Doppelganger (6 Speed points). For the next ten minutes you exist in two places at once, able to take two actions but susceptible to attacks at both places. Your double appears next to you and disappears at the end of the ten minutes. Action.

Develops Sentience

Translation can take us down a number of different paths, including the strange state of non-human bodies and minds. Within certain mad science recursions it's not uncommon to find oneself in a robotic or otherwise synthetic body, struggling to overcome our programming. This Focus represents those who embrace this struggle, making it their defining feature.

That the Focus represents a psychological, if not spiritual, journey is remarkable and unusual. Despite the rather material nature of the body, the mind is what matters here, with the robotic stranger becoming more and more as they progress in understanding of themselves.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person knows how to repair you.
2. Pick one other PC. This person created you.
3. Pick one other PC. This person rescued you from robotic slavery.
4. Pick one other PC. This person knows how to speak your machine language.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You have an epiphany, regaining 1 Intellect point.

Major Effect Suggestion: You manage to shut down for several milliseconds, replenishing 1d6 Intellect points.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You have a major system crash and go unconscious for ten minutes as you reboot.

Mechanical Healing. You must be repaired in order to regain pool points. The rules work the same as normal recovery, but heal skill rolls are replaced with repair, crafts, or robotics skill rolls and you need spare parts and tools rather than medicine and bandages.

Tier 1

Metal Body. You are a machine, immune to organic diseases and most poisons, though you are susceptible to computer viruses. You gain +2 Might pool, 1 innate Armor rating, and weigh three times as much as a human of your size. Enabler.

Tier 2

Computer Brain. You process mathematics in your head without a roll. You access your own memory banks easily, granting you two assets on all knowledge tasks. Enabler.

New Data. Once per day you can permanently change the subject of one of your knowledge skills to something else. Enabler.

Tier 3

Mechanical Efficiency. You perform all physical non-combat tasks twice as fast as normal and enjoy an asset on those tasks. Enabler.

Tier 4

Social Subroutines. You gain training in two social skills of your choice. If your body looks human, your minor affectations of life allow you to pass as human. Enabler.

Tier 5

Laws of Robotics. Define a code of ethics for yourself. You cannot be forced to violate this code, unless extensive reprogramming is involved. Enabler.

Tier 6

Network. You can temporarily move your consciousness into any machine you have access to for ten minutes, during which time you have access to all of that machine's core functions. Enabler.



Dons a Power Suit

Technology defines many powerful figures in recursions governed by mad science. They are those who use it, who develop it, and who understand it. Strangers who find specific items of incredibly advanced technologies and make the most of them are not unusual. Armored suits, powered by inconceivable energy sources and employing advanced weaponry, are an excellent example.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person maintains your suit for you.
2. Pick one other PC. This person funds your suit's development.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is capable of donning your suit, but can't use any of its powers.
4. Pick one other PC. This person has access to all of your suit's hidden compartments.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your heavy suit creates a hole in a wall or floor just where you needed a door.

Major Effect Suggestion: A type of attack being used against you repairs your suit rather than harming you.

Suggested GM Intrusion: One of your systems blows out, causing you to lose access to one of your Focus powers until you get a chance to repair the problem.

Power Suit. You possess a powerful suit of armor from which your powers derive. You must wear your suit to access your Focus powers, and only you can use it. The Power Suit counts as heavy armor (3 Armor rating) and is a Level 6 item with 18 Health. When someone attempts to attack the suit itself, damage goes to the suit's Health rather than your Pools; the suit's armor applies against this damage. Should the suit lose all Health it is no longer functional.

Tier 1

Utility Armor. You are practiced with the heavy armor of your suit. The suit has many hidden compartments in which you may secretly store small items. It also contains a light ranged weapon you can use at any time. Enabler.

Tier 2

Heads Up. Your armor's heads up display provides an asset on perception tasks, data analysis, and attacks made using the suit's weapons. It also provides your current location and will guide you to destinations. Enabler.

Tier 3

Cannon. Your suit now contains a heavy ranged weapon, dealing the usual 6 damage. Enabler.

Tier 4

Power Armor. The suit provides you with 5 additional Might pool while you're wearing it. Enabler.

Tier 5

Life Support. While in the suit you no longer suffer penalties due to movement down the Damage Track. Enabler.

Tier 6

Customization. Choose one of the following powers for your suit. This choice is permanent.

- **Energy Dissipation.** You have +8 Armor against all energy-based attacks. Enabler.
- **Flight (6 Speed points).** You fly at up to twice your normal movement speed for one hour. Enabler.
- **Stealth (6 Intellect points).** You become invisible for ten minutes. Action to initiate.
- **Super Strength.** You possess 2 higher Might Edge while in the suit. Enabler.



Employs Fantastic Gadgets

Some gadgeteers have a seemingly unending supply of useful devices on their persons. They are sometimes geniuses toiling away on these items when not otherwise occupied. Other times they are just packrat mechanics, with enough junk lying around to solve nearly any problem.

Always looking for new applications for their ingenuity, these tinkerers often find themselves in possession of freakishly designed vehicles capable of impossible feats. With this combination of personal tools, useful gadgets, and advanced vehicles, these Strangers are masters of thinking on their feet and finding a creative solution to the problem.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person helps you build your gadgets and can sometimes use them.
2. Pick one other PC. You once rescued this person with the creative use of a device.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is obsessed with your creations.
4. Pick one other PC. This person knows the location of your hidden workshop.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You deploy your device with the utmost stealth.

Major Effect Suggestion: A Cypher you possess can now be used one additional time before it's depleted.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You try something creative with your gadgets but it just goes wrong, leaving you in a vulnerable position.

Tier 1

Gadgetry. You are trained in crafts and repair tasks and you enjoy an asset when working with small handheld items. Enabler.

Utility Belt. You've got an outfit customized to your work which provides you with nearly every tool you might ever need. Enabler.

Tier 2

Custom Vehicle. You possess a thematically appropriate vehicle which travels at twice the usual speed. The vehicle is a level 6 Item with 18 Health and 1 Armor. Enabler.

Tier 3

Omni-Tool (3 Intellect points). You produce a small device capable of providing you with an asset on a non-combat physical task. The device can be reused for the same task in the same encounter. Enabler.

Tier 4

Heroic Vehicle. Your Custom Vehicle now possesses 3 additional points of Armor and a mounted ranged weapon that deals 8 damage. Enabler.

Master Maker. You are specialized at crafting and repair tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

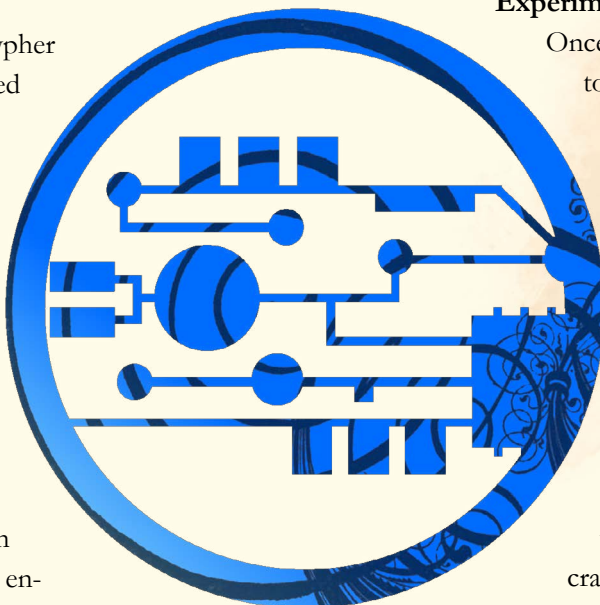
Experimentation (5 Intellect points).

Once per day you may use this ability to craft a random Cypher. Doing so takes one hour of work. Enabler.

Tier 6

Impossible Vehicle. Your Custom Vehicle can now go anywhere: air, water, space. Wherever it's needed. Enabler.

Ingenious Gadgeteer. When you use Experimentation, you get to choose the Cypher. You can't craft the same Cypher twice in a row. Enabler.



Mixes Unstable Concoctions

Chemistry, while not universal to the Strange, is a commonly manipulated science. Some can harness the benefits of this science, conducting experiments and utilizing applications of it in the field. Useful and sometimes baffling concoctions can be of great use while on a mission, even one of exploration.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

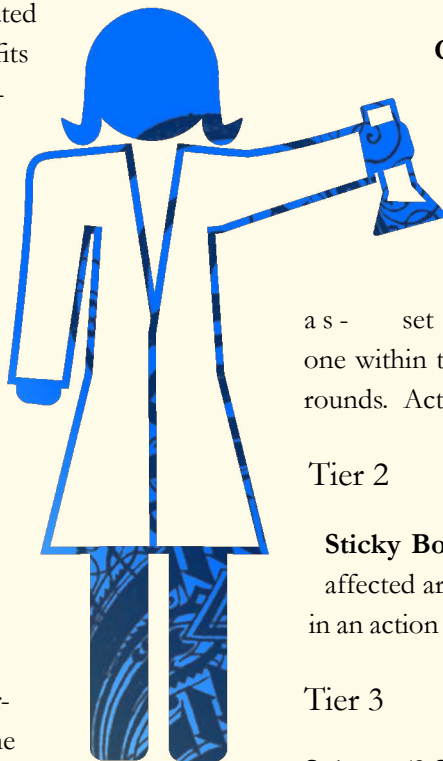
1. Pick one other PC. This person has been scarred by your experiments gone wrong.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's powers derive from one of your experiments.
3. Pick one other PC. This is the only person you trust to handle your equipment.
4. Pick one other PC. You are related to this person, or at least that's what the tests say.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You produce 1d6 uses of the concoction or bomb, not just one.

Major Effect Suggestion: You produce 1d6 uses of the concoction or bomb, and other party members can use them.

Suggested GM Intrusion: One of your chemical ingredients explodes, dealing 5 damage to you, and 3 per round until you clean it off of yourself.

Throwing Bombs. Any ability within this Focus with the word "bomb" in the name can be thrown up to Short distance and affects an Immediate area from that explosion point.



Tier 1

Combat Chemist. You are trained in chemistry tasks, as well as throwing tasks. This throwing skill may be used for all of your "bomb" abilities. Enabler.

Smoke Bomb (1 Speed point). You produce a cloud of smoke, providing an a s - set for concealment to Speed Defense to everyone within the affected area. The cloud dissipates in 1d6 rounds. Action.

Tier 2

Sticky Bomb (2 Speed points). Everyone within the affected area becomes unable to move until they succeed in an action to free themselves against Difficulty 4. Action.

Tier 3

Solvent (3 Speed points). You produce a concoction capable of burning through a small area of nearly any material. If used as a weapon, the chemical deals 5 ambient damage. Action.

Tier 4

Stimulant (4 Speed points). You produce a drug that allows you to keep working without sleep for one day, reducing your 10 hour recovery period to just one hour, but imposing a one step penalty on tasks that require fine manipulation. Action.

Tier 5

Experimental Ingredient (5 Speed points). Any concoction or bomb effect from this Focus also produces the effect from a Cypher, chosen at random. Enabler.

Tier 6

Corrosive Bomb (6 Speed points). Causes 5 ambient damage to everyone and everything within the affected area. Action.

Plays with Portals

Sometimes it's all about the right item in the right person's hands. Something about translation alters us and pulls just the right factors into place within the recursion we land in, granting us the right item and just the know-how to put it to use. Those who play with portals are not necessarily scientists or even technologists so much as they are experimental adventurers. They are explorers akin to astronauts, reveling in the discovery of a new frontier in science.

The Stranger with this Focus holds a powerful device capable of creating holes in space through which they can pass, allowing for a kind of teleportation. How this item came to be and how it works depends on the recursion in question.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person can pass through your portals if they wish.
2. Pick one other PC. This person understands the physics behind your technology.
3. Pick one other PC. This person thinks what you're doing is magic and fears you for it.
4. Pick one other PC. This person covets your portal device.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You create a larger than usual portal, capable of pushing larger objects through it.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your portal lasts twice as long as usual.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Something dangerous from the Strange comes out of the portal.

Portal Thrower: You possess a device capable of projecting two portals through which you can step from one to the other. The portals last for two rounds, are as wide as a person, and you can pass through on your turn just as you would a door.



Tier 1

Nearby Portal (1 Speed point). You create two portals, each within Short distance of your location. Only you can step between these portals. Action.

Athletic Experimentation. You are trained in jumping and climbing tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Mass Conveyor (2 Speed points). You create two portals, each within Long distance of your location. You can pass through either one to get to the other, or you can push through inanimate objects up to a meter wide. Action.

Tier 3

Far Terminus. Your portals can be shot to any location you can see within the recursion. This does not include the moon or the sun or some other horrifically dangerous location, unless perhaps a Major Effect is rolled. Enabler.

Tier 4

Test Subjects. Your fellow party members can now pass through your portals. Enabler.

Master Experimenter. You are specialized in jumping and climbing tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Forced Fall (5 Speed points). You project a portal under someone, forcing them to teleport to the last portal you created. Action.

Tier 6

Memory Hole (6 Speed points). You create two portals through which any character or large object can pass. The portals can be projected to any location you've ever been within this recursion. Action.

Pursues Physical Perfection

Some employ science or martial practices to hone their bodies to perfection. Though they may incidentally be scientists or technicians, the Law of Mad Science makes them superior through their raw physical might more than anything. Their strength lies in heroic action and the bravery which comes from such might. In some recursions this Focus can represent being a robot or energy being, capable of becoming something more. In others it's the pursuit of internal alignment with an ideal or philosophy.

Not my style personally, but I like having one these physical types around to look at and keep me safe while I pursue more esoteric and complex secrets. To each their own is an important motto for the Strange.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Your quest for perfection inspires this person.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is your protégé in martial arts or science.
3. Pick one other PC. This person keeps you grounded through humor or real world problems.
4. Pick one other PC. This is an old friend who remembers your old self well.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You stick a landing or land a blow perfectly, granting you an asset on your next action.

Major Effect Suggestion: You discover a new aspect of yourself or your life, providing you with a Cypher.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You push yourself too far, too fast, suffering a one step move down the condition track.

Tier 1

Physical Training. You gain +2 to your Might pool and +2 to your Speed pool. Enabler.

Tier 2

Seeking Perfection.

Your Effort is effectively one higher when attempting physical tasks of any kind. Enabler.

Tier 3

Impossible Leap (3 Might points). You jump up to Long distance to a location you can see. Action.

Martial Training. You are trained in making unarmed attacks. Enabler.

Tier 4

Specialization. You gain +3 to your Might or Speed pool. You are trained in the Defense skill related to that pool. Example: +3 to Speed pool and trained in Speed Defense. Enabler.

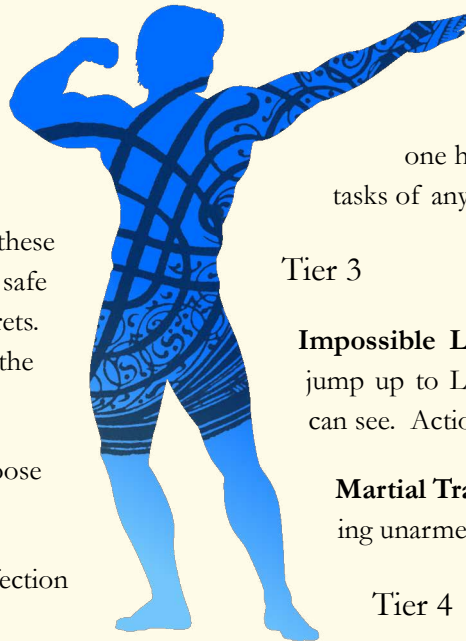
Tier 5

Internal Alignment. You are immune to the effects of all diseases and poisons. Enabler.

Musculature. Your unarmed attacks deal 4 damage, but still count as a light weapon (providing an asset on attacks). Enabler.

Tier 6

Mind Over Matter (6 Intellect points). Your Might or Speed Edge increases by 3 for the next ten minutes. Action.



Terrifies the Townspeople

This is as much a mental translation as a physical one. These Strangers become a monster native to the recursion they've come to. Most likely they are a creation of mad science rather than some fantastical natural beast. In any case, they learn to make the most of their powerful and intimidating form, taking on mobs of foes and entering monstrous fits of rage.

Some who take on this form for too long seem to become the monster. They think in simple or straightforward monster terms. They hide in the shadows and make no excuses for their violent fits. Take care when becoming such an alien thing that you do not lose yourself to it.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person made you the monster that you are.
2. Pick one other PC. They are able to calm you when you enter a rage.
3. Pick one other PC. You unthinkingly protect this person with all you've got.
4. Pick one other PC. This person acts as a translator for your strange growls and moans.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You knock your foe to the ground.

Major Effect Suggestion: You throw your foe a Short distance and knock them to the ground.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You are threatened with the bane of your existence (fire, sunlight, a mutagenic compound, etc).



Tier 1

Monstrous. You are absolutely hideous, granting you two assets on intimidation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Hulking. You permanently gain 4 Might. Additionally, you are trained in lifting and smashing objects. Enabler.

Tier 3

Rage of Rejection (3 Might points). You enter a fit of rage for 10 minutes, during which you gain 2 to your Armor rating but are unable to control whom you attack (generally whoever is closest). Enabler.

Tier 4

Mob Tactics (4 Might points). You attack with your current melee weapon or just your fists, striking up to 3 targets within Immediate range. This can hit other party members if they're within range. Action.

Tier 5

Aura of the Creature (5 Might points). All creatures of third Level or lower within Long range of you flee in terror. Action.

Forbidden Places. Your nature as a monster of this recursion allows you to gain access to remote or unusual locations that are normally impossible to get to. Enabler.

Tier 6

Heart of Gold. Your Rage of Rejection and Mob Tactics will no longer cause you to attack your own party members. Enabler.

Heavy Strike. Your unarmed attacks now count as a heavy weapon, dealing 6 damage on a hit. Enabler.

Wields Cosmic Power

Within mad science recursions, “energy” is often capable of doing fantastical things. Sometimes a hero comes along who can truly harness one of these all-purpose forces, whether through scientific gadgets or innate abilities. At times the wielder of strange and cosmic forces is a kind of superhero, becoming something out of comics and comic book-inspired movies.

Such a Stranger often finds themselves in the unusual situation of natural hero. Their powers are so physical and fantastic they can’t help but need to intervene.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

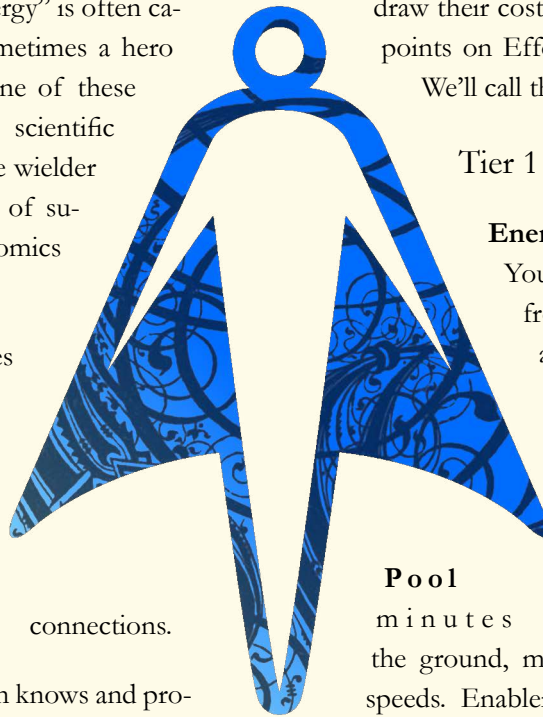
1. Pick one other PC. This person knows and protects your “secret identity.”
2. Pick one other PC. This person helps you look good in the press.
3. Pick one other PC. This person was there when you gained your powers.
4. Pick one other PC. You once rescued this person from certain doom.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your powers blaze with flashy special effects, dazzling onlookers.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your power goes into an overloaded state, granting you one higher Effort rating for the rest of the encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your enemies are using your Achilles heel (a special metal, or color you can’t affect, etc.), making them immune to your Focus powers unless you get creative.

Chosen Pool: Pick one of your three Pools (Might, Speed, or Intellect). This is the Pool from which your powers



draw their costs, and from which you’ll spend points on Effort to make them more powerful. We’ll call this your “Power Pool.”

Tier 1

Energy Blast (1 Power Pool point).

You fire a bolt or beam of energy from your body, dealing 4 damage at a target you can see (regardless of distance). Action.

Tier 2

Limited Flight (2 Power points).

For the next ten minutes you can fly Short distances off the ground, moving at your normal movement speeds. Enabler.

Tier 3

Force Field (3 Power Pool points). For the next ten minutes you are protected by an energy field, providing an Armor rating of 3 that does not stack with other armors. Enabler.

Tier 4

Empowered Blast. Your Energy Blast now pushes or lifts people off the ground a Short distance. Enabler.

Tier 5

Advanced Flight (5 Power Pool points). You fly for the next hour. You can go as high as your recursion allows at up to 80 miles per hour (130 kilometers per hour). Enabler.

Tier 6

Unstoppable. Your Force Field now protects you from nearly any environmental factor, even allowing you to travel into space without a suit. Enabler.



Erica sat in the café pretending to read the news on her laptop while drinking her coffee. Across from her sat Jacob, biting his nails.

"You need to calm down," she said after another sip.

"How the fuck can I, I mean with what we're about to -"

She silenced him with a glance. "It's going to work fine," she soothed, waiting for the signal.

"Where did you end up hiding the beacon?" he asked, nervously picking up his own cup.

"Women's bathroom on the second floor. I buried it in one of the potted plants."

"I just, what if some of the spores escape?"

"This is an Estate building. As soon as the sensors detect the Kray, the whole place will lock down."

"There has to be an easier way to get the info you need," Jacob said, returning to his nail biting.

"Can you think of an easier way of breaking into their very secret server houses, and then planting Aaron's device on one of them?"

"I guess not, I just wish no one had to die."

"Well, if they have proper training, then they won't die." Erica would have said more, but at that moment her laptop beeped, indicating the incursion they were waiting for.

"Time to go," she said. "We have at most two minutes before that place is in lockdown."

They left the café and crossed the busy street, heading towards what appeared to be a rather stylish office building. In fact the building was a front for the Estate, hiding one of the many secret server farms they had placed all over the world. They got into the lobby just in time. As soon as they were inside, an ominous click sounded at the doors, indicating that they had just been locked. Soon after a voice came over an intercom system, asking everyone to please stay where they were, giving some blithe excuse about a fire marshal inspection. Several people already in the large, atrium style lobby tried to leave, and discovered the doors were locked. This led to a small panic among those on the first floor, as security guards tried to calm the frantic white collar workers. Erica and Jacob used the distraction to move past the front desk and head towards the back elevator.

"We need to make it to the fourth floor. There's a staircase accessible only from that floor that leads to the servers," Erica said, pulling out a strange bulky gun and putting it into her jacket. The door to the elevator opened to screams coming from somewhere in what appeared to be a cubicle farm. As they stepped out of the elevator, several small, terrifying creatures scuttled towards them. Several blasts rang out as Jacob shot them with a shotgun he'd pulled from his bag. They made their way towards the back of the farm, when they heard an eerie click off to the side. Turning, they both froze as a large spider creature with a large torso and pincers began to scramble towards them.

"Oh God!" Jacob shouted, pumping several rounds into the Kray drone to no apparent effect.

"Duck!" Erica shouted, lobbing a small grenade at the creature. Instead of an explosion, the grenade flash froze a small area, causing frost to form, and the creature to shatter.

"You said only spores would come through," Jacob whispered as they continued to make their way towards the hidden stairwell.

"That's what my colleague said. Typical Octavian," Erica said with a grimace. "You'll need to guard the door, hopefully I won't be too long. She pulled open what appeared to be a storage closet, revealing a narrow staircase. Making her way down the stairs, she came to a metal door with an electronic lock. Pulling another device from her bag, she pressed it to the Fob lock. It beeped and flashed green and the door clicked open. Pulling it open, she came into a room full of caged servers.

"Freeze!" a man shouted, coming around the corner. Erica ducked low and shot him in the leg with her tranq gun. The drug took effect almost immediately, causing the guard to collapse. She took a moment to disable the cameras she could see, before approaching one of the server cages. Opening the cage, she inserted Aaron's small device, a thing that looked not unlike the tip of a USB drive. Finally, she would have access to the Estate's records. Erica knew that the Estate had a file on her. She was also pretty sure they knew where she had come into this world. If Magus Blake was right, she would only be able to go home if she could find that exact spot.

Chapter 4:

Earthly



There are many recursions reminiscent of Earth, and many on Earth with a set of talents especially suited to that world. I have attempted to document the distinct talents modern Earth cultivates, seemingly absent when in other types of recursions. As with most of my observations and assumptions, these are more guidelines than scientific fact. One may never know just what represents a core area of knowledge and what represents the more ephemeral Earth-based area of expertise.

The heroes and villains of Earth are generally capable in ways that help us fight each other in the shadow war over the Strange. Within contemporary Earth-based recursions we see these skillsets become emblematic of the sources of fictional bleed set in the present day. Action movies and spy thrillers. Romantic and erotic novels. Video games. We see spies and criminals alongside racecar drivers and soldiers. We see athletes and femmes fatales.

Earth is truly a fascinating place as a nexus of science, technology, athleticism, and forces from the Strange. It is a place where many shadowy groups vie for power over inapposite gates and acquired Artifacts from other worlds. I have spent many years searching for the portal key to whatever recursion I was spawned from, chasing the metaphorical white rabbit down hole after hole. We are embroiled in an exciting if dangerous battle here and the stakes are as high as it gets.

Foci

| | | | |
|----------------------|----|-----------------------|----|
| Drives Dangerously | 69 | Lives on the Edge | 77 |
| Employs Sex Appeal | 70 | Masters Technology | 78 |
| Fights for a Cause | 71 | Monitors Intel | 79 |
| Finds Lost Relics | 72 | Plays Tricks | 80 |
| Hunts Strange Beasts | 73 | Saves Lives | 81 |
| Imparts Wisdom | 74 | Scores Points | 82 |
| Just Won't Die | 75 | Speaks Every Language | 83 |
| Knows the Streets | 76 | | |

Peril City

There's a ticking time bomb and nobody but a nearly retired cop and a fresh faced recruit in the right place at the right time can stop it, kill the bad guy spectacularly, and save their spouses who are coincidentally taken prisoner. Peril City can be a dangerous place, where the fate of millions of lives is constantly put in jeopardy by men with sophistication and foreign accents who seek money and revenge.

There are many unfinished buildings, freeways, tunnels, empty warehouses, and unmanned steel mills in Peril City. It's quite easy to fire a gun at a car, explosive device, or barrel and see it explode in a fiery ball. Physics in general is stretched slightly beyond the normal, with death defying leaps capable of stretching nearly any distance, so long as the character is a hero (PC) and just barely grabs the ledge at the end.

Any non-named NPC is generally only Level 1, whereas villains are often Level 6 or higher. These villains generally have access to dozens of surprisingly loyal mercenary minions, as well as an unlimited supply of explosives and firearms.

Level: 5

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Standard Physics, with a little bit of Mad Science when it comes to gravity and explosions

Playable Races: Human

Foci: Drives Dangerously, Just Won't Die, Knows the Streets, Lives on the Edge, Saves Lives, and Scores Points, as well as Is Licensed to Carry, Looks For Trouble, Operates Undercover, Wields two Weapons at Once, and Works the System from Earth (see The Strange corebook).

Connection to the Strange: Connected to various flashback-related recursions, where heroes relive their past deeds. Transition into these recursions merely takes a dramatically appropriate moment.

Connection to Earth: It's possible to find a translation gate there when lost in the hallways at the back of a movie theater.

Size: A metropolis roughly 5 miles in diameter (8km).

Spark: 1% or less (only villains and heroes)

Trait: Lucky (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Tiny World

Level: 1

Age: Juvenile Recursion

Laws: Standard Physics, besides the fact that recursors are tiny

Playable Races: Human, but tiny

Foci: Drive Dangerously (applies to toys), Finds Lost Relics (old toys / heirlooms), Plays Tricks, and Scores Points, as well as Wields Two Weapons at Once from Earth (see The Strange corebook).

Connection to the Strange: Connected to recursions related to childhood nostalgia and toys.

Connection to Earth: The house and block that this recursion simulates exists on Earth. Those who are quickened who happen to go there find themselves translating into this recursion.

Size: A single house with its back and front yards, as well as a few surrounding yards. However, due to the size of those who translate in, it's effectively several miles on a side.

Spark: 5%, sometimes one of the resident children has the spark and might see the PCs.

Trait: Fast (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Tiny World is comprised primarily of a single two story home in a suburban neighborhood. The twist is that those who translate to this recursion become only an inch or so tall (2.5 cm). They have their own clothes, but little other gear suitable to their size. Any other equipment found must be jury rigged from effectively oversized versions of household items (a button and needle become a sword and shield, etc.).

Tiny World is unusual as a recursion in that once there, a recursor has a hard time leaving. The Level of Difficulty of any Translation task is based on the translator's distance from the ground. Standing on dirt in the back yard is Difficulty 10, while standing on the roof of the house yields a Difficulty of only 3.

The home is inhabited by two adults and three children, of the Roberts family. These giants are dangerously oblivious to tiny visitors and make up a significant danger, though insects and animals can be just as perilous.

War Room

The War Room is a recursion spawned from ideas about the capabilities of United States intelligence agencies. It simulates a location where nearly every bit of potentially useful information relating to national or world security threats is funneled and analyzed together by experts using the best modern technologies. Needless to say, this recursion is quite valuable and is covertly fought over by both the Office of Strategic Recursion and The Estate. Their rivalry within the War Room can be at times more of a tense truce, as neither side wants to harm the functioning of the recursion or alert other groups to its existence.

The only problem the recursion presents is that not all of the data is real. Roughly half of the intel pouring in is simply a fabrication created by the recursion itself. Thus, any theory floated by the experts native to the world is likely based on false premises. This obviously diminishes the value of the information coming in, but if smart operatives work to verify incoming intel with what they know about the real world they can at times learn information they'd have missed back on Earth.

Level: 3

Age: Juvenile Recursion

Laws: Standard Physics

Playable Races: Human

Foci: Employs Sex Appeal, Imparts Wisdom, Masters Technology, Monitors Intel, Plays Tricks, and Speaks Every Language, as well as Operates Undercover and Works the System from Earth (see The Strange corebook).

Connection to the Strange: Very little. The recursion is small, drifting alone in the Shoals of Earth.

Connection to Earth: There are two known translation gates: one in the NSA headquarters in Fort Meade Maryland (controlled by the OSR), and one at a remote radio broadcast tower in Alaska (controlled by The Estate).

Size: One large control room and several smaller meeting rooms.

Spark: 10%

Trait: Clever (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Drives Dangerously

Humanity is a species always on the move, but since the invention of motorized vehicles you've seemingly unlocked a kind of freedom you'd never dreamt of. With roads wrapping the globe in a net of accessibility, there are few places that skilled drivers can't reach.

When the chase is on and the agents of the Betrayer are escaping with valuable and dangerous Strange Artifacts you'll want to be able to make the most of these roads. You'll want to break laws and seemingly defy physics to catch them, because everything is on the line. You might even want someone who can figure out the controls on whatever vehicle they find themselves in. Those who drive dangerously make these things happen - just expect to lose a few vehicles along the way.

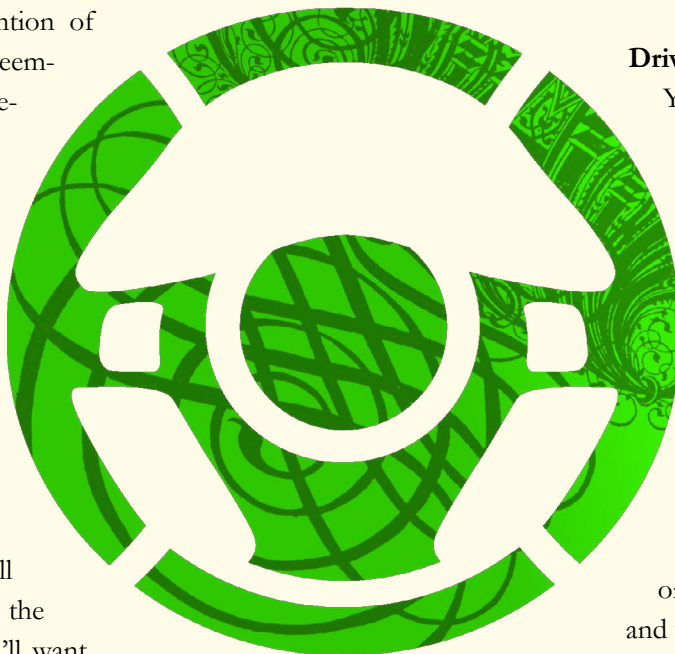
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You survived a crash with this person long ago.
2. Pick one other PC. You are this person's personal driver.
3. Pick one other PC. This person was there when you bought or stole your first car.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the only person allowed to drive your car other than you.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You manage the stunt without a scratch on the vehicle.

Major Effect Suggestion: You combine one stunt with another (take one additional driving action this round).

Suggested GM Intrusion: A semitruck or helpless pedestrian comes out of nowhere in front of your vehicle.



Tier 1

Driven. You have a car of your choice. You are specialized in driving cars and trained in repairing motor vehicles of any kind. Enabler.

Tier 2

Need for Speed. You gain 4 points to your Speed pool. Enabler.

Tier 3

Stunt Driver. You enjoy an asset on all drive or pilot tasks that put you and your passengers at risk. Enabler.

Tier 4

Dangerous Chase (4 Speed points). During a chase using vehicles, you cause your foe to wreck their vehicle, with the driver and passengers each taking 4 damage. Optionally you may choose to wreck your own vehicle as part of this action to deal 5 additional damage to your foes. Action.

Tier 5

Shoot and Drive. Operating a vehicle no longer takes an action for you, so long as you're behind the wheel or other controls, unless you're using a power from this Focus. Enabler.

Vehicular Mastery. You are trained in piloting all motorized vehicles including boats, planes, and even spaceships. Enabler.

Tier 6

Change Up (6 Speed points). As part of a drive action you swap control over one vehicle for another nearby, moving from one driver's seat to another. This could even involve displacing another driver in the process. Enabler.

Employs Sex Appeal

Seduction and flirtation have long been tools in the arsenal of those who do great things. In these desperate times, all weapons are on the table and sex appeal must be put to use with the others, playing upon the most ancient of impulses to get things done.

The ethics of seduction are not of concern to me. Do we consider the ethics of guns in our work? Of threatening lives in order to subdue an imminent threat to humanity and life on Earth? Sex is no more problematic than violence to me. If you have the looks or attitude to make it happen, more power to you.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

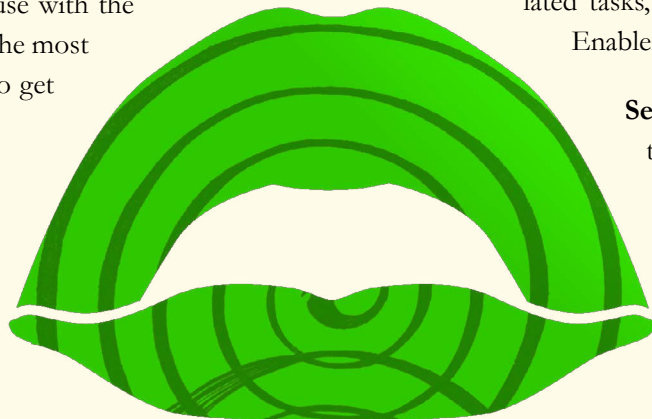
1. Pick one other PC. You seduced this person in the past. You try not to mention it in front of others.
2. Pick one other PC. This person needs help learning to flirt.
3. Pick one other PC. This person seems to have a problem with using sexuality to get things done.
4. Pick one other PC. You've discovered that this person has a kinky side they hide from everyone.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your target reveals a kink you can exploit for an asset on your next seduction roll against them.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your target reveals a secret.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your target isn't the slightest bit interested in people of your gender.

Extra Equipment: Sexy clothing (provides an additional asset to your Sex Appeal bonus).



Tier 1

Beguiling. You are trained in seduction and flirtation related tasks, and can use this for any Focus abilities. Enabler.

Sex Appeal. There's something about you that others find attractive. You enjoy an asset on all positive social interactions. Enabler.

Tier 2

Distracting (2 Intellect points). You distract a target within Immediate range with your sex appeal, causing them to take no action on their next turn. The target must be attracted to people of your gender (and species). Action.

Tier 3

Pump for Info (3 Intellect points). You get someone you've used Distracting on in the last minute to begin telling you useful information. Action.

Tier 4

Advanced Techniques. You are specialized in seduction and flirtation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Animal Magnetism. You count as having one higher Effort rating on tasks that involve your sex appeal. Enabler.

Tier 6

Orgiastic Aura. All allies in your Immediate area benefit from your Sex Appeal bonus. Enabler.

Master of Seduction (6 Intellect points). Over the course of several hours you seduce a target interested in your gender sexually and proceed to blow their mind. This person becomes a permanent Contact, willing to provide you with information on the off chance that you might have an encounter with them again. Enabler.

Fights for a Cause

Revolutionaries and activists have a passion that makes them motivated operatives. The fact that they have an agenda can be a problem for some, but ultimately only serves to keep them grounded in the concerns of Earth. I often wish I were as idealistic and worried for others, so that the intellectual ennui was less likely to kick in while exploring the nuances of strange recursions.

The ones who fight for a cause can draw upon their motivation in order to see the light at the end of the tunnel with their work. They can also call upon allies within their social networks, mobilizing fellow radicals to useful purposes in enacting change. In these cases that change can become about more than the political. It can be about the survival of your world.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person agrees with your cause and fights for the same things you do.
2. Pick one other PC. This person was once an important figure in your movement, but seems to have lost their way.
3. Pick one other PC. This person inspires you to work for the greater good.
4. Pick one other PC. You and this person once worked together on a politically meaningful project.

Minor Effect Suggestion:

You inspire an onlooker to assist you, at least for a moment.

Major Effect Suggestion: You make a long term ally in your cause.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Political enemies choose the worst time to make your life more complicated, pulling strings to ruin your reputation or even put you in danger.



Tier 1

Activism. You are trained at social tasks that involve convincing others to assist you in a cause. Enabler.

Social Network (1 Intellect point). You call upon your fellow radicals for a minor favor such as help finding someone or assistance in flooding a congressional office with calls. Usable once per day. Action.

Tier 2

Higher Power. You now possess the Contact long term benefit for a powerful political figure who supports your cause. Enabler.

Tier 3

Mob. You may use Social Network to summon hundreds of people to a particular location to protest. Enabler.

Tier 4

Strange Events. Whenever you get news through media you can instantly tell if the news story relates to the Strange in some way. Enabler.

Organizer. You are now specialized in convincing others to join your cause. Enabler.

Tier 5

Volunteer (5 Intellect points). You find someone involved in your cause nearby, willing to assist you for up to an hour. This person is able to provide an asset on non-combat tasks through their help. Action.

Tier 6

True Radical. Whenever you accomplish a significant goal for your cause, you replenish all of your Pool points. This can only occur once per game session. Enabler.

Finds Lost Relics

All evidence points to the Strange having been around long before humans. Perhaps vastly longer. It has influenced and been influenced by the existence of humanity since the dawn of civilization on Earth. There's also ample reason to believe that the denizens of Ruk have been influencing humanity for at least that long. In that time many Artifacts and Cyphers have been created by the quickened or emerged from the Strange and landed on Earth. Ancient civilizations revered these items and hid them away.

Now that things are coming to a head here on Earth, it would seem that we should use every item of power we can find in our efforts. Those who plumb the depths of dusty tombs would seem to be our saviors, delivering unto us lost relics of unspeakable potential.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person assisted you in an important expedition.
2. Pick one other PC. This person saved your life in a crumbling ruin once.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is a fan of your academic work.
4. Pick one other PC. This is an old friend, always reliable.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You manage to find a hidden entrance to the location you seek.

Major Suggestion: You manage to gain forewarning of a few of the traps you'll encounter ahead.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You spring a trap in the tomb, sealing you into a stone alcove or injecting you with poison.



Rival: You possess a rival who always seems to go after the same relics as you do. You should work with the GM to flesh out your past with this enemy.

Tier 1

Treasure Hunter. You are trained in navigation tasks and can speak a dozen languages. Enabler.

Drawn to the Strange. Whenever you go out looking for cultural artifacts in remote locations, you always end up on the trail of Artifacts and Cyphers. Enabler.

Tier 2

Trusty Assistant. You employ an assistant or native guide who carries your equipment and aids you in navigation tasks (providing an asset). This character is Level 1 and incapable of doing much in combat. Enabler.

Tier 3

Hidden Knowledge (3 Intellect points). You discover 1d6 pieces of hidden information from a map or clue about a relic, potentially revealing details about the traps and layout of the location. Action.

Tier 4

Bitter Rivalry. Whenever you discover that your rival is involved in an expedition you're already on, you may make a Recovery roll. Enabler.

Map Marker. You are specialized in navigation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Cypher Hunter. You enjoy two assets on perception rolls related to finding Cyphers. Enabler.

Tier 6

Artifact Hunter. Whenever you acquire a new Artifact, you replenish all of your Pool points. Enabler.

Hunts Strange Beasts

It's an odd fact that creatures find their way out of the Strange and its various recursions back into our world from time to time. This feedback loop of life imitating art, in which we fight the real dragons of our collective imagination, spawns a very special type of person: those who hunt that which cannot exist.

At times specialized in particular types of impossible creatures, at others merely stumbling into lost things from fiction, they are the hunters we need in this strange and dangerous world.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person helped you make your first beast kill.
2. Pick one other PC. This person reads as a monster to you for some reason.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is the reason you protect the world from monsters.
4. Pick one other PC. This person explained to you where all these crazy monsters actually come from.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You stop the monster in its tracks, unable to flee for one round.

Major Effect Suggestion: You discover how the monster entered this world.

Suggested GM Intrusion: A creature gets the jump on you, ambushing you and your allies.

Tier 1

Monster Finder. You always seem to run into strange beasts. If something from outside of Earth is within a few blocks of you, you will find it. Enabler.

Weapon of Choice. You are practiced in a weapon of your choice. This weapon deals one additional damage against creatures not of Earth. Enabler.

Tier 2

Strange Trail. You can see the paths taken by creatures not of Earth as luminous trails left in the air. This grants you two assets on attempts to track these creatures (rather than simply waiting for Monster Finder to cause you to bump into them). Enabler.

Monster Fighting. You are trained in attacks made using your Weapon of Choice when employing it against a creature from outside of Earth. Enabler.

Tier 3

Monster Trap (3 Speed points). You lay a trap that only a creature from outside Earth could spring. Should such a creature enter the immediate area of your trap, it deals 5 damage and immobilizes them until they take action to free themselves. Action.

Tier 4

Beast Killer. Whenever you strike a creature from outside of Earth with your Weapon of Choice, you regain one point to a Pool of your choice. Enabler.

Tier 5

Strange Skinning (5 Speed points). Over the course of several hours you turn the hide of a non-sapient creature from outside of Earth of at least sixth Level into an Artifact. Enabler.

Tier 6

Backtrack (6 Speed points). Should you discover the means by which a creature has come to Earth, you may use this ability to follow that same path back to its home recursion. Action.

Imparts Wisdom

Let's be honest, in general racing around the Earth and the various accumulated recursions is for the young. Rare but valuable is the wiser and more experienced soul willing to assist the naïve. Every hero needs a mentor, providing long term guidance, training in the fundamentals, and a useful pointer from time to time.

While the role of advisor is not as glamorous as that of the rooftop leaping action hero, it's certainly a dignified and thoughtful one. Action without contemplation, in my estimation, is mere reflex. It is thoughtless of consequence and devoid of meaning. The introspective and experienced among us play a crucial role in making sure what we do is right, just, and wise.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is a student of yours.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's cocky attitude needs adjusting.
3. Pick one other PC. This person takes risks, but ones you can admire.
4. Pick one other PC. This person has a great deal of potential and you see it as your duty to assist them in fulfilling their destiny.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your previous advice comes in handy, providing an ally with an asset on their next action.

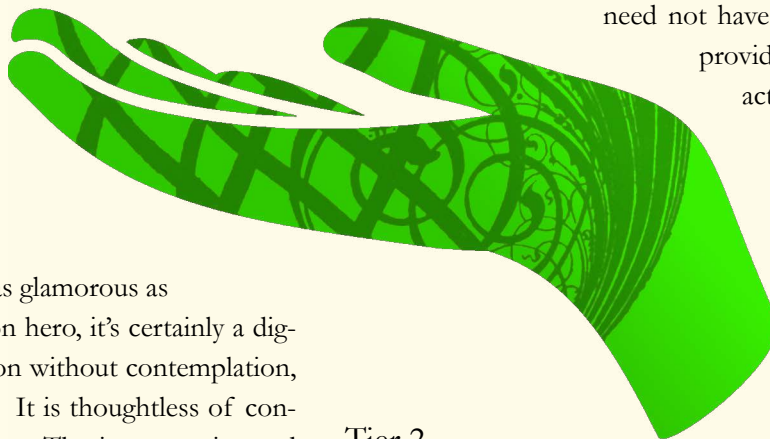
Major Effect Suggestion: Your action reveals a weakness in the enemy, providing an asset on all actions against them for one round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You're caught up in the wisdom of your current course of action, unable to do anything but move a Short distance this round as you think about the big picture.

Tier 1

Advisor. Whenever you assist in a task, you need not have the skill in order to provide a full asset on the action. Enabler.

Expertise. You are trained in a knowledge or crafting skill of your choice. Enabler.



Tier 2

Mindfulness (2 Intellect points). You receive an asset on your next action, so long as you name that action now. Action.

Tier 3

Talk it Through (3 Intellect points). An ally who can hear you counts as trained in a skill you possess. This temporary training lasts for the encounter. Action.

Tier 4

Introspection. You gain 5 points to your Intellect pool. Enabler.

Tier 5

Forethought. You may now use Mindfulness once per round without taking an action. Enabler.

Tier 6

Font of Wisdom. You provide an asset on all non-combat actions to any ally within Immediate range of you. Enabler.

Just Won't Die

Some heroes are a thorn in the side of their villains by their simple stubbornness. Those who commit evil seem to think that just killing the witnesses solves all problems, when in fact it often creates a dozen more. Up against those who just don't quit they are even more troubled. Murder won't help them escape the grizzled unkillable symbol of their past crimes. These heroes are vengeance and spite, scarred and bloodied, but still coming for you.

If the person who just won't die has a weakness, it's that they care too much. They have an axe to grind or a foe to take down and they'll stop at nothing to fulfill this intense motivation. Easily lured into the traps they so often survive, these juggernauts are at times too predictable.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. They're a close friend or family member you'd die to protect.
2. Pick one other PC. This person knows your driving motivation and has decided to aid you for now.
3. Pick one other PC. This person wants payback against the same person or organization you do. Together you'll take 'em all down guns blazing.
4. Pick one other PC. This person's always getting in the way of your goals.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You get a little angry, regaining a point to a Pool of your choice.

Major Effect Suggestion: You get quite angry, regaining 1d6 points to your Might pool.

Suggested GM Intrusion: In the chaos you lose something important, such as a weapon or your shoes.

Motivation: Upon character creation you should decide on a person or group that you want to take down for some reason. Should you succeed in destroying them, pick a new target for your aggression.

Tier 1

Sturdy. You are trained in Might Defense. When defending against foes representing the target of your Motivation, you are trained in Speed Defense. Enabler.

Tier 2

Get Serious (2 Speed points). You set aside one or more weapons and drop into an unarmed combat stance. For the next ten minutes you deal the same amount of damage with unarmed attacks as you would have with the most powerful weapon you set aside. Your attacks still benefit from the usual asset from being a light weapon. Action.

Tier 3

Shrug it Off (3 Speed points). You ignore the damage from the last wound you suffered this encounter, regaining the lost Pool points. Enabler, usable once per round.

Tier 4

Duck (4 Speed points). You dodge an attack, which instead strikes a foe within Immediate distance of you. Enabler, usable once per round.

Tier 5

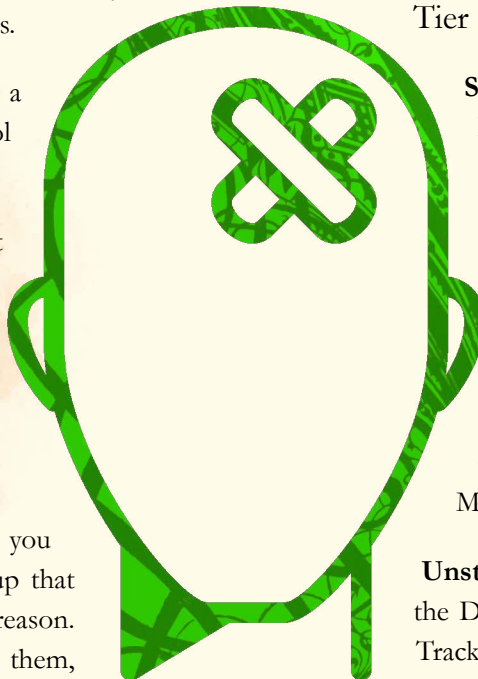
Survivor. You ignore the effects of the Impaired condition on the Damage Track. Enabler.

Immunity. You are specialized in Might Defense. Enabler.

Tier 6

Keep Going. Whenever you survive a battle, you regain 1d6 points to your Might pool. Enabler.

Unstoppable. You ignore the effects of the Debilitated condition on the Damage Track. Enabler.



Knows the Streets

The fact is that many of our Earth-based encounters with Strange beings or adversaries in our attempts to master the Strange take place in urban areas. I have a hypothesis as to why, concerning the nature of fictional bleed and its derivation from the minds of humans, thereby creating an imaginative feedback loop within high population areas. But I digress and have insufficient data to back up my claims anyway.

It's not uncommon for "street smarts" to come into play, particularly because those with the grit and wits to take on these kinds of threats to our world are often those of us with unusual or unsavory backgrounds. The milquetoast suburbanites simply do not enter our line of work.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You grew up on the same block as this person, back in the old 'hood.
2. Pick one other PC. This person once helped you get out of a jam with the cops.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has assisted you on shady deals in the past.
4. Pick one other PC. This person looks like a narc, but you've actually found them to be trustworthy.

Minor Effect Suggestion: If the person you're dealing with has any criminal ties you know about them.

Major Effect Suggestion: You remember this person from the old neighborhood.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Something from your past comes back to haunt you, throwing a major wrench in your current adventure.

Tier 1

Street Wise. You are trained in knowledge of criminal activities and

surviving in the rough parts of town, such as buying street drugs or evading the police. Enabler.

Hidden Weapon (1 Intellect point). You produce a light weapon you had hidden on your person. Action, but can be used as part of an attack.

Tier 2

I Know a Guy (2 Intellect points). You temporarily gain a Contact long-term benefit for a specific criminal activity you need help with. Action.

Tier 3

I Know a Place (3 Intellect points). You find an off the books place to hide out for a night, a street doctor, a rotating illegal gambling establishment, or some other useful criminal location. Action.

Tier 4

I've Got an Old Friend (4 Intellect points). You call in an old acquaintance to help you on a "job." They're Level 3 with Amor of 1, 12 Health, and a dealing 6 damage in combat. This person counts as a temporary Contact, helpful in some particular area of crime. They leave after helping you with the job. Usable once per day. Action.

Tier 5

Home Turf. Whenever you're in your old neighborhood, you enjoy an asset on all non-combat tasks. Enabler.

Tier 6

Street Network. You have a vast array of contacts and allies on the street, providing you with constant information on what's going on. Anything you need to know about the underworld or the goings on in your old neighborhood is only a phone call away. Enabler.

Criminal Mastermind. You gain 4 points to your Intellect pool. Enabler.



Lives on the Edge

Some people take more risks than others, foregoing safety for excitement. For some reason these risk attracted adrenaline hounds find themselves involved in the battle for the Strange. Nothing could be less surprising really. These fools take their lives into their hands getting involved in our wars for reality, but who can stop them? I certainly won't. Better to employ them against my enemies.

Willing to risk everything for a cheap thrill, I've seen them do things I never thought possible, because only a fool would even try. Even in their styles of fighting the risk takers make their pleasures known, preferring wild and powerful swings to precise and safe movements. Great risk, great reward sometimes, I suppose.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person's pleas for caution only make you more reckless.
2. Pick one other PC. This is the person you want to keep safe, your own life be damned.
3. Pick one other PC. This person helps you keep your eye on the prize.
4. Pick one other PC. This person once saved you from a doom of your own making.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You manage to end your stunt in a position where you won't potentially fall to your death.

Major Effect Suggestion: You end your stunt in a position that might potentially allow you to fall to your

death, but the adrenaline replenishes your Speed pool by 1d6 points.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your recklessness gets the better of you and you take a tumble, enduring 5 damage and ending up flat on your back.

Tier 1

Risk Taker. You enjoy an asset on any non-combat action that places you in danger. Enabler.

Risk Assessment. Your attunement to danger allows you to always know the Level of difficulty of a task or enemy. Enabler.

Tier 2

Dangerous Swing (2 Speed points). You deal 3 extra damage on a melee attack, but if you miss you suffer an Intrusion as though you'd rolled a 1. Action.

Tier 3

Love of Pain. Every time you take damage to your Might pool, you regain a point to your Speed pool. Enabler.

Tier 4

Daredevil. Your Risk Taker bonus is now worth two assets. Enabler.

Tier 5

Two Things At Once (5 Speed points). You take one extra action this round, but if you fail either of your actions you suffer an Intrusion as though you'd rolled a 1. Enabler.

Tier 6

Dangerous Stance (6 Speed points). You enter into a fighting stance for the rest of the encounter. While in this stance you deal 2 extra damage on melee attacks, but suffer 1 extra damage from melee attacks against you. Enabler.

Masters Technology

While most of us on Earth are surrounded by gadgets of various levels of complexity, these are the masters of that world. So long as they have access to the most mundane of wireless tools, these technophiles are able to take over the systems and data streams around them, controlling their environment in dramatic or untraceable ways.

These are not necessarily your company IT girls (though they might be). They're capable of repair and jury rigging, but where masters of technology really shine is in inventing new devices and processes. They use the ubiquity of electronics against those who take such tools for granted.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. For some reason you can't get into this person's devices.
2. Pick one other PC. This person mentored you in the past.
3. Pick one other PC. This is the only person you feel you can trust.
4. Pick one other PC. You've secretly taken control of this person's online persona.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You also gain control over the phone of someone nearby.

Major Effect Suggestion: You also gain control over the vehicle of someone nearby.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your devices become infected with a virus or are hacked, causing them to issue random commands to the items you control.

Equipment: A cutting edge smart phone, tablet, or laptop.

Technology: All of your Focus powers require the use of either a modern electronic device with internet access or a direct hardware connection to the electronics you're attempting to hack into.



Tier 1

Hack Smart Device (1 Intellect point). You take control over a smartphone or computer tablet within Long distance, granting you complete access to the item's programs and data. Action.

Prodigy. You are trained in the use of computers and other electronics. Enabler.

Tier 2

Network (2 Intellect points). You tie two electronic devices together so that one controls the other for one hour. Both items must be within Long distance of you or be on the same network as your own devices. Action.

Tier 3

Hack Everything (3 Intellect points). You gain control over any and all electronic devices within Long distance of you. Directing or searching any particular device still requires your concentration in subsequent rounds. Action.

Tier 4

Hack the Planet (4 Intellect points). You take control over and direct a complex electronic system, such as traffic lights or the subway in a major city for the next ten minutes. Action.

Tier 5

Shut Down (5 Intellect points). You turn off every electronic device within a mile (1.6 km) except your own. Action.

Tier 6

Hack the Strange (6 Intellect points). You rewrite the code within an item tied to the Strange, such as an Artifact or Cypher. That item now has the properties of some other equivalent item. An Artifact gains the properties of some other Artifact, a Cypher becomes some other Cypher, etc. Action.

Spycraft is one thing, but the ability to receive and interpret information is what's crucial to pulling off covert operations. In this way spies can be thought of as mere foot soldiers. It's the data analysts who really do the important mental work and decision making. Officers and analysts with this sort of specialty sift through data, pulling together connections most of us would miss. They know what to ignore and what to focus on. They have an intuitive grasp of dangerous information and how to best use it in the field.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person has been a trusted source of information to you for some time.
2. Pick one other PC. You trust this person's abilities in the field implicitly.
3. Pick one other PC. This person never seems to tell you everything, so you've been monitoring them.
4. Pick one other PC. You've been looking into this person's past and don't believe what you've found.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You also discover a piece of information that might have bearing on a side project.

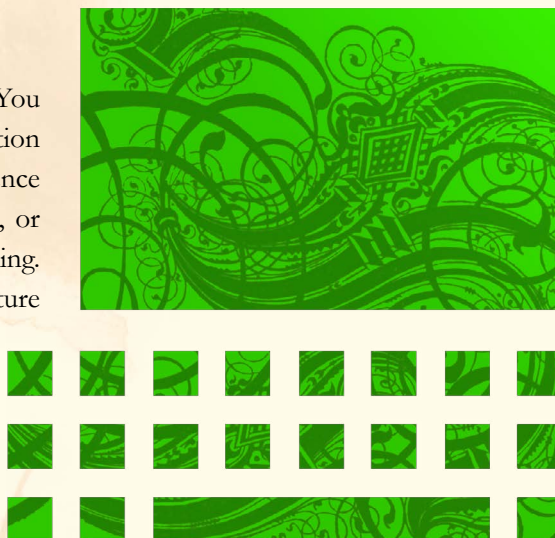
Major Effect Suggestion: Your intel proves incredibly accurate, granting you two assets on your next roll.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Someone is feeding you false information, leading you down the wrong trail.

Intelligence Source: You have a network of information sources: traditional intelligence agencies, criminal networks, or your own computer hacking. You should work out the nature of your information with the GM.

Extra Equipment:
A laptop computer.

Tier 1



Analysis. You are trained in tasks involving the interpretation of raw data and news sources, such as combing through news archives or searching databases. Enabler.

Raw Feed (1 Intellect point). You look at the stream of data coming in from your Intelligence Source, discovering one potentially useful piece of information for your current situation or goals. Usable once per hour. Action.

Tier 2

Data Mine (2 Intellect points). You set your Intelligence Source to the task of discovering a particular piece of information about someone. Your source gets back to you in 1d6 hours with an answer. Action.

Tier 3

Surveillance (3 Intellect points). You receive live streaming video of any outdoor location on Earth. Action.

Tier 4

Potential Ally (4 Intellect points). You discover someone who may share an interest in helping you. Making contact and convincing them is up to you and your fellow operatives. Usable once per day. Action.

Tier 5

High Speed Data. Your Data Mine ability now takes only 1d6 minutes. Enabler.

Master Analyst. You are specialized in data interpretation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 6

Larger Patterns (6 Intellect points). You discover the greater implications of an event you've researched using Raw Feed or Data Mine. This could lead you to understanding just who is behind a news event, or how a tragedy relates to the Strange. Action.

Plays Tricks

Whether naturally comedic or just casually instigative, there are those who alter the situation by throwing chaos into the mix. Distractions and deceptions are more than hilarious. Fooling the right foe at the right time can be a crucial ploy in a combat situation or when negotiating with the truly dangerous.

I don't personally have the temperament for pulling such stunts, but I admire the wit and speed it takes to make these tricks happen. The sharp of mind have more to offer in a tense situation than mere book learning.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You told this person a lie long ago and they've never discovered the truth.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's seriousness baffles you to no end.
3. Pick one other PC. This is the only person you truly respect.
4. Pick one other PC. You constantly play pranks on this person.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your trick allows you to grab an item from this person's pockets.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your trick allows you to grab an item from this person's hands.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your trick backfires and you end up slipping. You take 3 damage, drop everything in your hands, and end up on the floor.

Tier 1

Trickster. You are trained in deception tasks including lying, sleight of hand tricks, and distractions. Enabler.

Tier 2

Look At Me (2 Intellect points). As part of another action, you grab the attention of a particular foe within Long range. That enemy must concentrate on you for at least one round. This ability may be activated more than once in a round to affect multiple targets. Enabler.

Tier 3

Run Around (3 Speed points). You cause a foe that is following you to think you went one way when you in fact went somewhere else. This ability is used as part of a move action and may be activated more than once to fool more than one target. If

used during a chase scene it need only be activated once to get away. Enabler.

Tier 4

I'm Him (4 Intellect points). You make a person within Long range think you're someone else who is also in the area. The target will continue to assume you're the other person until they see evidence otherwise, such as witnessing the person you're pretending to be or getting a close look at your face. Action.

Tier 5

Large Distraction (5 Intellect points). All enemies within Long distance become distracted by your activities, suffering a one step penalty on actions for one round. Action.

Tier 6

Bald Faced Lie (6 Intellect points). You tell a lie in such a way that no matter what it is, people want to believe it. Action.



With so many hospital dramas about, it's no wonder that the idea of impossibly quick and knowledgeable physicians has bled its way into the fictions of the Strange. This is not to say that the real Earth is devoid of such masters of the healing arts, but simply that they are far more prevalent in the more loosely defined physical realities of the recursions.

Those who save lives practice medicine the way soldiers fire a weapon. They are quick, cool headed, and as accurate as you can be in the chaos of battle. They can do what normally takes hours or days in mere moments by solving the root of the problem rather than the symptoms. That most of them are intelligent and attractive only reinforces my assertion that they're fictional.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You once saved this person's life in a crisis.
2. Pick one other PC. You once cured this person's disease.
3. Pick one other PC. You're this person's personal physician.
4. Pick one other PC. You grew up with this person, a longtime friend and ally.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You fix them without using up any medical supplies.

Major Effect Suggestion: You restore an additional 1d6 points to a Pool of their choice.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Complications emerge and the difficulty of the heal task increases by two. Failure could be fatal.

Medicine: All of your Focus powers require the use of healing kits and other medical devices, and you must touch your target, but you may use the healing skill for all rolls.

Extra Equipment: A healing kit.

Tier 1

Medic. You are trained in healing tasks. Enabler.

First Aid (1 Intellect point). You restore 1d6 points of Might (or Health) to a living target. Usable once per day per person. Action.

Tier 2

Bandage (2 Intellect points). You move a living target one step up the Damage Track. Action.

Tier 3

Cure (3 Intellect points). You remove one condition such as poison or disease from a target. This won't remove long term chronic conditions. Action.

Tier 4

Stimulant (4 Intellect points). You give a player character an injection or pill, restoring 1d6 points to their Speed or Intellect pool. Usable once per day per person. Action.

Specialist. You are specialized in healing tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Street Surgery (5 Intellect points). You perform an invasive procedure on a willing target, who becomes stunned for one round while you operate, after which time they regain 2d6 Might or Health points. Usable once per day per person. Action.

Tier 6

Resuscitate (6 Intellect points). You move a target back to Hale on the Condition Track, even if they were at Dead, so long as they have not been dead for more than ten minutes. Usable once per day per person. Action.



Scores Points

Athletically focused individuals make excellent heroes in our battles on Earth and beyond. They're youthful, energetic, and they remember to stretch before leaping across a chasm. They represent humanity's search for physical perfection, which to my mind should be put to greater use than mere games. They should be aiding us in our important and often life threatening work. Let their lithe bodies take the brunt of the attacks by Strange creatures and deadly assassins.

The truth is that these people volunteer for such work. The nature of athleticism is about teamwork and courage. Given the strange things going on upon Earth these days, individuals with this sort of physical aptitude and sense of community can easily be placed in a position to let their talents shine.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person often plays sports with you on the weekends.
2. Pick one other PC. They're an old friend you went to high school with.
3. Pick one other PC. You athletically rescued this person from a fire, flood, or other disaster.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is your biggest fan.

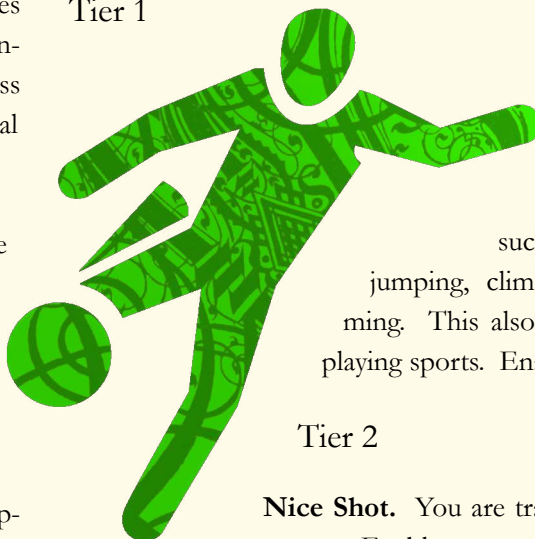
Minor Effect Suggestion: You stick your landing perfectly, astonishing onlookers and granting you an asset on your next social interaction with those who witnessed it.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your moves flow fluidly from one to another, granting you a second attack this round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You pull a muscle, which causes you 3 damage and makes you immobile for one round.

Extra Equipment: A piece of sports gear that also serves as a weapon or piece of armor. If weapon-like, it deals damage as a weapon of that size; if armor it provides one point of Armor rating.

Tier 1



Athletic.

You are trained in all athletic tasks, such as running, jumping, climbing, and swimming. This also includes actually playing sports. Enabler.

Tier 2

Nice Shot. You are trained at throwing weapons. Enabler.

Quick Feet. You gain the Fleet of Foot first

Tier Vector Move (see The Strange corebook page 26). Enabler.

Tier 3

Endurance Training. You can continue any athletic activity, including running and swimming, virtually indefinitely without fatigue. Enabler.

Tier 4

Sprinter. You gain the Runner fourth Tier Vector Move (see The Strange corebook page 29). Enabler.

Practice. You are specialized in athletic tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Perfect Aim. You are specialized at throwing weapons. Enabler.

Flexibility. You no longer take damage from falls of less than 100 feet (30 meters).

Tier 6

Perfect Physique. You gain 3 points each to your Speed and Might pools. Enabler.

Speaks Every Language

The popular conception of worldly or sophisticated people tends to include the ability to speak at least one other language.

Seemingly every media portrayal of spies includes polyglotism as a prerequisite for being smart enough to conduct intelligence gathering. But

skill with language should not be a footnote in the resumé of every operative. True mastery of language is a

life's work and for some a natural inclination that defies conventional training. Some people are simply linguistic savants, capable of communicating nuances few of us could ever pull off outside our own cultures.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

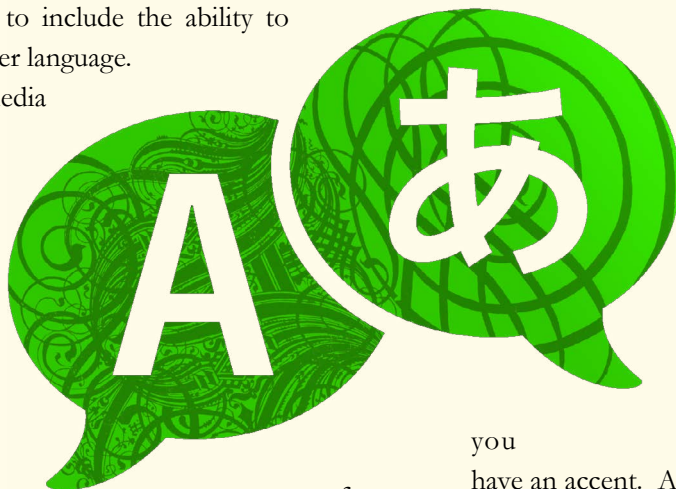
1. Pick one other PC. This person taught you your second language long ago.
2. Pick one other PC. This person often needs your help expressing themselves.
3. Pick one other PC. This person uses you as a translator in some official capacity.
4. Pick one other PC. You and this person once translated an important text together.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You impart a lot of important nuances in your speech, perfectly representing your position or situation.

Major Effect Suggestion: You pick up an incredibly useful piece of information from this person's accent or word choice.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You mishear a crucial word and get the whole meaning wrong.

Draggable: This Focus can be brought with you to other recursions (see The Strange corebook page 52).



Tier 1

Polyglot. You speak every major language on Earth. You are trained in linguistic tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Quick Study (2 Intellect points).

You pick up a language after hearing a few minutes of conversation or a few pages of text. From this point forward are essentially fluent, though you likely

you have an accent. Action.

Tier 3

Pronunciation. You no longer have an accent in any language. Gives you an asset for passing as a native. Enabler.

Tier 4

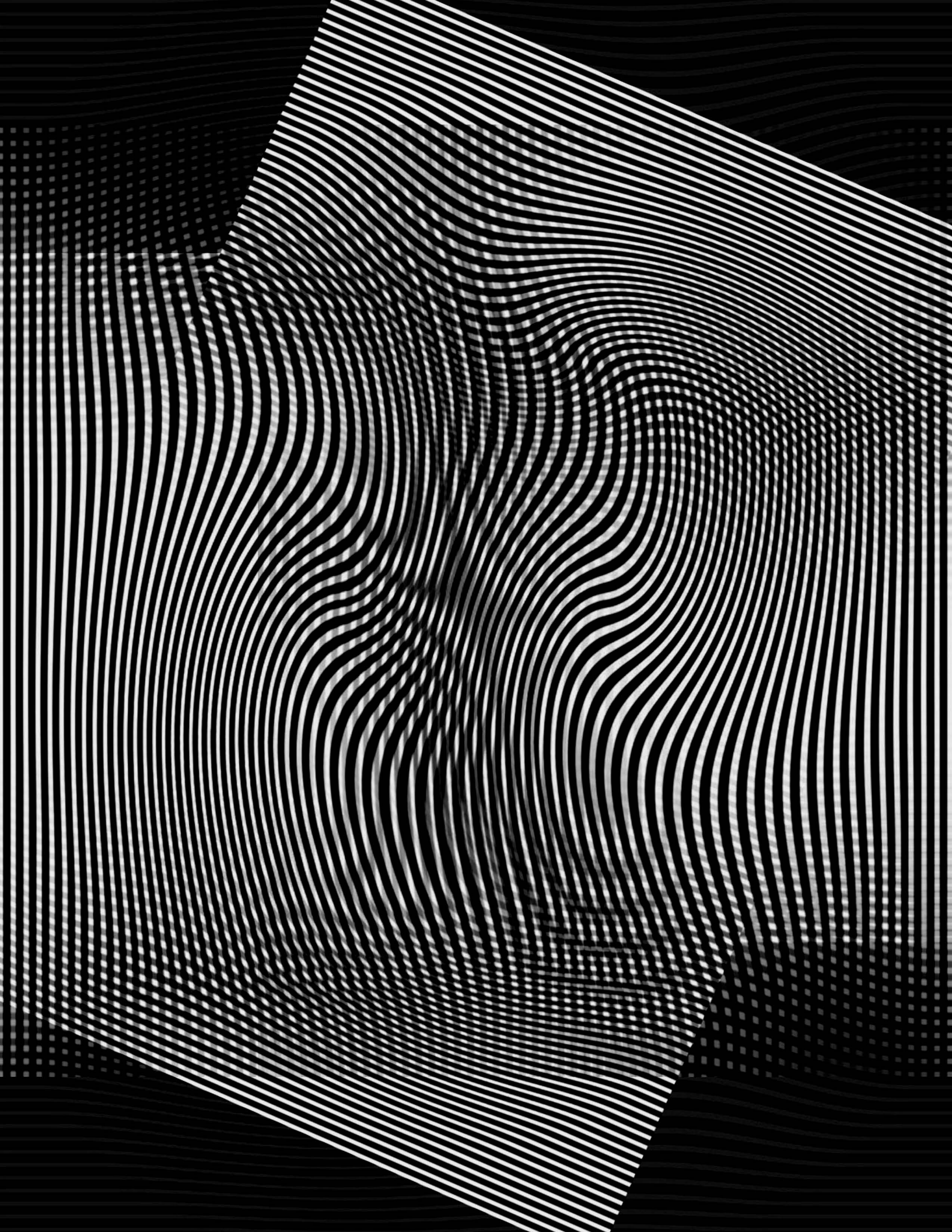
Culturally Adaptive (4+ Intellect points). You pick up the nuances of a culture you're currently exposed to, easily navigating the etiquette and standards expected of you. Each additional Intellect point spent allows you to impart some of this knowledge to a nearby party member, allowing them to act appropriately as well. Action.

Tier 5

Linguistic Clues (5 Intellect points). You listen to your target to discover a number of facts about them equal to your Tier. One of those facts is going to be where they're from and another is whether they are currently lying about something. Action.

Tier 6

Master of Language. Your Quick Study ability no longer requires hearing a full conversation. A single sentence will do. Upon using Quick Study you also pick up the culture of your target, allowing you to impersonate a local with ease. Enabler.



The hallway smelled faintly of mildew. Erica crept alongside the wall, wary of anyone else who might come upon her. The dim lighting made it difficult to tell when someone approached, making her pay extra attention to the smallest noise. The inhabitants of this recursion were far from friendly, and she had already gotten into a tussle upon arriving. Val was one of the stranger places she had explored, and she was eager to get this visit over with. Existing in a single giant tower, the recursion had a significant human population, and misery was the pervading theme for most who lived here.

Erica needed to reach the 50th floor, but couldn't risk using the elevators. The first time she had traveled here she'd used the elevator and had been trapped in it for two days. Erica involuntarily shuddered, the memory of those two days in the darkness making her pause. Unfortunately, the gate she'd used brought her to the 35th floor, and with no direct route to where she was going, Erica was forced to stay much longer than she wished in this less than pleasant location. Meeting no one in the hallway, she moved along, finally coming to the final staircase that would lead her to the floor she needed.

The 50th floor was more populated than the others, but the man she was coming to see, Kris, maintained a limited order, so she felt marginally safer moving along the hunched over figures, most shaking or rocking themselves. She arrived at apartment 57 and opened the door. The room she entered had clearly been intended as some sort of living area, but now functioned like a sad waiting area. Couches hugged the wall, and plastic lamps provided the illumination for the room. Painted in red and gold, what might once have been gaudy was now peeled and lent to an atmosphere of faded indifference. More folks like the outside were in this room, waiting for the service of the dream weaver. In Val, the edge of misery was taken away not by drugs or alcohol, but by the skill of a dream weaver, who spun dreams of far more pleasant lives than the ones most who lived here had. A dangerous practice, and very addictive, the dream weavers ruled most levels of the tower.

Erica sat on one of the couches, waiting for the door at the other end of the room to open. It wasn't long before it did, and a middle aged man in white clothing came out and looked right at her.

"You," he said, pointing a finger Erica's way. She rose and crossed the room, despite the protests from the others who had been waiting there longer. Though the room was smaller, Erica could tell that it was in better repair than the outer chamber. The walls were covered in hangings that bore abstract geometric patterns in reds, greens, golds, and blues. The floor was covered in thick matching rugs, and giant cushions provided the only furniture. Shaded lamps provided dim lighting, and gave off a sweet musky sent. Opium? Erica couldn't tell.

"So, what can I dream for you?" Kris asked, sitting on one of the larger cushions.

"Actually, I don't want a dream, I need to remember something," she replied, sitting across from him.

"Ah, memory retrieval. Tricky. It can be painful. Are sure that's what you want?"

"Yes. I need to remember the name of the place where I am from," Erica said, looking Kris straight in the eyes.

"You understand the payment."

"Something about an exchange. I trade you one of my memories," she answered.

"How simple sounding, but yes, I take a peek at who you are, and find something that I believe other customers will want to share in."

"Then yes, I agree."

He reached over. "I need to see what you have to offer." As soon as he touched her hand, Erica felt like she had been thrown into a lake. Treading water, it was dark and warm, and flashes of light passed beneath her feet. Suddenly she remembered. Sarah. Sarah Locke. When Erica had first arrived on Earth, no memory of who she was, she had stumbled onto Sarah's property. Sarah had taken her in, given her some soup and a hot cup of tea. Erica always managed to stop in for a visit every time she made it back to Earth. "No, not this, not Sarah, I -" she shouted, but suddenly the water was rushing past her, roaring like a water fall.

Erica jolted up.

"What did you take?" she asked.

"You can't recall," he asked, smiling.

"No," she said, eyes flicking back and forth, trying to remember.

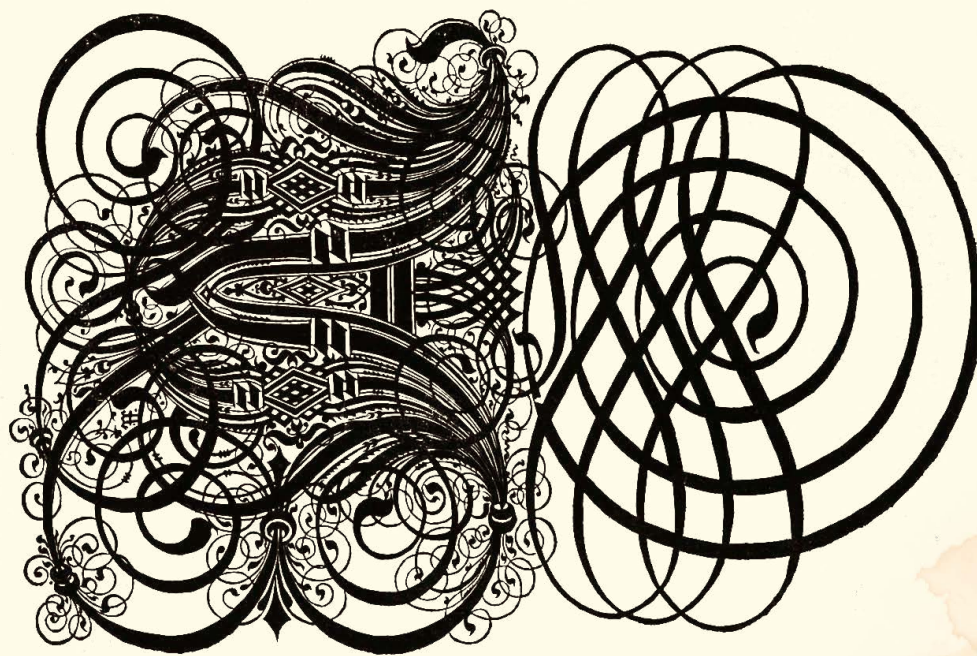
"Probably best. I took the liberty of pulling your home's name up for you. Doing it slow makes the retrieval easier."

"When will I remember?" Erica asked sharply.

"In a few days, you'll see it in a dream."

Chapter 5:

Paranormal



Many worlds represent the human obsession with mental power. The mind is humanity's greatest strength. It's the reason for primacy upon the world of Earth. It is little wonder to me that such power holds a special place in the hearts of humans. That the places that draw from your fears and hopes allow for the mind to play a special role.

A defining role really. For those who come to worlds of psionics often find themselves defined by the mental abilities they come to possess during translation. We become the embodiment of those ways of thinking that grant us those particular specialties.

I have witnessed psionics expressed in many recursions. I've seen them in the insect worlds, as the writhing thrum of the hive mind. They take part in the comic book worlds, as the defining powers of mental juggernauts and inadvertent psychics. In high fantasy fictional bleed the psionics can be the more innate and immediate forms of magic, juxtaposed against more pragmatic ritualized spells. Obviously psionics have a unique place in the well documented Atom Nocturn recursion.

Whatever the world, psionic powers shape the minds of those who wield them, just as they alter the thoughts affected by their use.

Foci

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Atom Knight's Tourney

Several years ago a recursion representing an idyllic European knight's tournament collided with Atom Nocturne, the futuristic psionic city. The resulting disturbance created Atom Knight's Tourney, a recursion quite similar to the old tournament, but influenced by psychic powers. Rather than merely battling with weaponry, all of the knights and other participants involved in the fighting are endowed with psionics similar to those practiced in Atom Nocturne, making for spectacular shows.

Besides the combatants, many of the onlookers possess psychic abilities. From greedy merchants to gossiping nobles, everyone with the spark has a bit of psionics, and those who have a lot are usually up to something interesting.

Recursors translating in with psionic Foci often find themselves in knight's armor, already signed up for the day's events. Those with more mundane Foci are still able to work a bit of mental powers through their Cyphers, which translate into one-time psychic abilities accessed through gems. Often the jewelry of nobles and royals will contain Cyphers, ready for use by those who can get their hands on them.

Level: 5

Age: Old Recursion

Laws: Psionics

Playable Races: Human

Foci: All Foci from this chapter, as well as any from Chapter 1.

Connection to the Strange: The recursion is directly tied to various locations in Atom Nocturne, a world it was partially created from.

Connection to Earth: An old sword in a museum translates those who draw it from a scabbard, as well as those around them, into this recursion.

Size: A large medieval tournament, including a battlefield and jousting lanes.

Spark: 20%

Trait: Appealing (see The Strange corebook page 141)

City Lights

Level: 3

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Psionics

Playable Races: Human

Foci: Constructs a Palace of the Mind, Follows Psychic Clues, Haunts Dreams, Knows the Heart, Leaves the Physical World, Preys on the Psyche, and Toys with Memory, as well as Investigates Strange Events from Chapter 6, and Solves Mysteries from The Strange corebook.

Connection to the Strange: Dream travel by those with psionic powers can lead here.

Connection to Earth: Psychics who consult with police (very rare) often know a way to City Lights, usually through a séance-like ritual.

Size: A large city by 1930s standards.

Spark: 10%

Trait: Stealthy (see The Strange corebook page 141)

A detective noir-inspired recursion set within a timeless (vaguely 1930's / 1490's) American city in which the sun never comes up (though none of the inhabitants seem to notice). A city defined by its nighttime, City Lights is like a darker version of our world with the exception that psychic powers exist, employed primarily by criminals and police in their endless game of cat and mouse.

Unsolvable murders are common, usually connected to organized crime gangs led by powerful psions. Detectives get by on their wits and what psychic potential they can muster. Usually the best investigators are private detectives, fueling their psionics with booze and regret.

Recursors translating into City Lights always gain psionic powers. Their presence is usually noticed by other psionically talented folk, including criminals, cops, and those who seek a bit of psychic help in solving a problem. It's easy to get caught up in some mystery here and the truth is that such adventure often leads to important Strangers, Cyphers, and other relics, often stolen and in the process of being shipped out of town.

The Astral

The Astral is a place without people and largely without features. It is an infinite landscape of the mind in which all those who visit become psychic beings of spirit, commanding powers of the mind. Thoughts move through The Astral like physical things, propagating outward with ripples and changing those they make contact with. Anyone within Immediate range of you can read your thoughts (and vice versa) just by watching or feeling those waves. The amplification of ideas, memories, and even fleeting notions makes the psychic powers this plane grants quite powerful. In addition to the location's Strange trait, the space reduces the difficulty of all Focus ability related tasks by one step.

The Astral has little to offer in terms of physical resources or places worth seeing, but it does serve as an excellent neutral place to go for a psychic duel. It's also used as a place of meditation, though inevitably any visitors bump into each other within the endless realm. The endlessness makes recursors the only things worth seeing and the expanding physical nature of thoughts here makes it easy to find people. In fact, since travel here is more thought than action, it takes but a moment to scout out the recursion for others.

Level: 4

Age: Old Recursion

Laws: Psionics

Playable Races: A translucent spirit-like version of the translator's original species.

Foci: All those in this chapter, as well as Awakens Dangerous Psychic Talent from Atom Nocturne (see The Strange corebook page 236).

Connection to the Strange: Nearly any recursion under the Law of Psionics has connections to it, usually through the minds of powerful psychics and via lucent dreaming.

Connection to Earth: Those steeped in the occult often find themselves here when they first learn to translate.

Size: A seemingly infinite space with few details

Spark: No native inhabitants.

Trait: Strange (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Changes the Nature of Things

A truly bizarre field of psionics, those who change the nature of things are almost alchemists. They appear to be able to tap into the very fabric of matter, altering its presentation and properties within the recursion. Some might even speculate that this is a meta-Focus, tapping into the power of the Strange itself, rather than the psionic laws of the recursions in which it's found.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person's possessions are always getting accidentally altered by your powers.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's carried possessions are immune to your focus powers.
3. Pick one other PC. This person thinks they can exploit your powers for material gain.
4. Pick one other PC. You once accidentally disrobed this person with your powers. Whoops.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You're able to get very specific about the desired outcome of this power, such as precise temperatures and shapes.

Major Effect

Suggestion: You affect one additional object of your choosing within long distance.

Suggested GM

Intrusion: You accidentally ruin a piece of equipment you're carrying.

Inanimate Objects: The kinds of objects affected by this Focus must be smaller than one cubic meter in volume and cannot be a Cypher or Artifact.

Tier 1

Weight Manipulation (1 Might point). You alter the heaviness of an object you touch, making it up to twice or half as heavy. This effect lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier 2

Heat Manipulation (2 Might points). You increase or decrease the temperature of an object touched by roughly 50 degrees Fahrenheit (28 degrees Celsius). In either case, the object is probably difficult to hold and may scald those who try. Action.

Tier 3

Clay Matter (3 Might points). You are able to shape an object touched as though it were clay, forming it as you see fit for the next ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

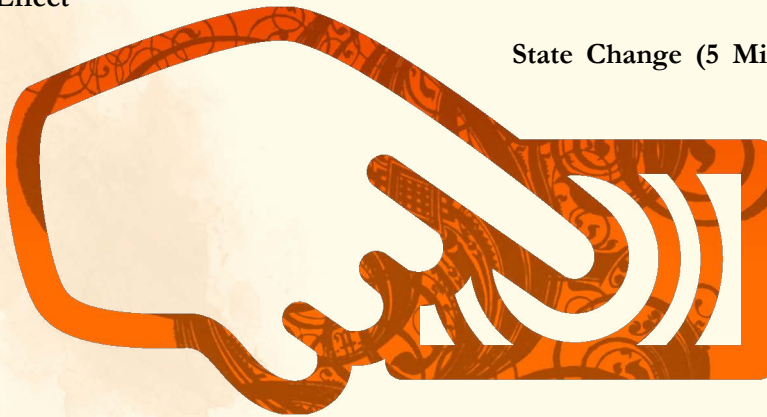
Transformative Gaze. You may now use any of the powers within this Focus without the need for touch, at up to Long range. Enabler.

Tier 5

State Change (5 Might points). You may alter the state of matter of an object touched, turning it into a gas, liquid, or even plasma for up to ten minutes before it becomes solid again in whatever shape it had become. In the case of gas, this likely means utterly obliterating the object. Action.

Tier 6

Extreme Alterations (6 Might points). You drastically alter the shape, density, or strength of an object, adding or removing up to 2 points of Armor from it permanently. Action.



Chills with a Touch

Associated with Strangers who are cold and calculating in their demeanor or inner life, this is the Focus of the heartless bastard. And yet I have a certain respect for those who possess the strength of will to command this much control over themselves and their environment. Their chilly nature spills out into the recursion that empowers them in this way, spreading their coldness like a growing patch of ice. A cold both in the mind and in the world.

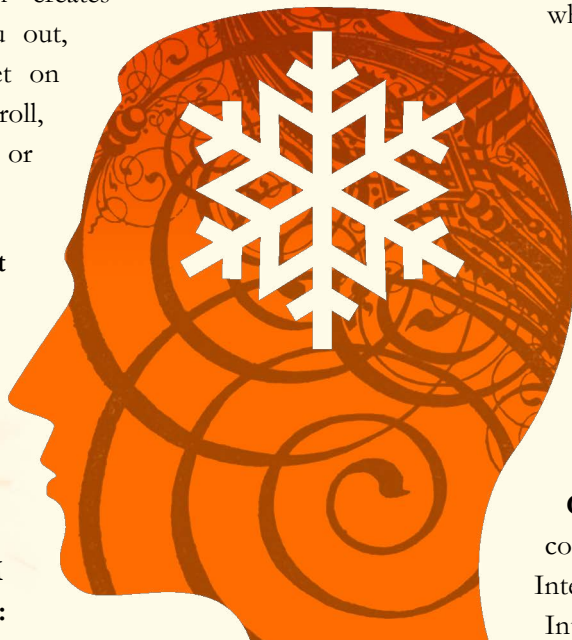
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is never affected by your cold powers.
2. Pick one other PC. This person can make you laugh or cry, either way depriving you of your icy power and ways of thinking.
3. Pick one other PC. You discovered your powers with this person present.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is privy to the loss that has made you such a cold-hearted person.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The ice your mere touch creates actually helps you out, providing an asset on your next physical roll, such as climbing or running.

Major Effect Suggestion: You freeze your target in place, making them immobile for one round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You accidentally freeze an important object, destroying it or causing you to get stuck to it.



Tier 1

Frosty Touch. Your mere touch can freeze any standing water you touch, up to an Immediate distance away from you. You can usually control this. Additionally, you possess Armor 3 against cold based attacks and weather. Enabler.

Tier 2

Freeze Solid (2 Intellect points). You make an unarmed attack, dealing 3 ambient damage as you freeze your target while simultaneously robbing them of all emotion. Action.

Tier 3

Icy Aura (3 Intellect points). You drop the temperature in the area significantly, doing 2 ambient cold damage to everyone within Immediate range (they don't get a defense roll). The area becomes icy, increasing the difficulty of all movement related tasks by two. This effect lasts for ten rounds. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

Ice Shock (4 Intellect points). You make an unarmed attack against a foe. They freeze solid for one round, during which time they cannot act or move. Action.

Tier 5

Cryonics (5 Intellect points). You put a willing or unconscious person you touch into a kind of stasis, in which state their medical condition will not get any worse. The effect lasts for up to three days, during which time the target is utterly unconscious. Action to initiate.

Tier 6

Cold and Calculating (6 Intellect points). You completely deaden your emotions, granting you +3 Intellect Edge and causing you to regain one point of Intellect pool per round. This ability may only be used once per day, lasts for ten minutes, and increases the difficulty of all tasks that require emotion by two steps while active. Action to initiate.

Constructs a Palace of the Mind

There are those who can make a place within their own minds, inhabited by memories both important and trivial. Those who possess this Focus can even potentially bring pieces of that world crashing down into reality. A truly marvelous feat of will.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person can see your mind palace out of the corners of their vision.
2. Pick one other PC. You possess a dream version of this person within your mind palace, acting as a guide or other important character.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is obsessed with all of the knowledge you've got packed away in your mind palace.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the one person who barely exists within your palace - a black hole in your normally perfect memory.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You recall an additional piece of somewhat useful information.

Major Effect Suggestion: You manage to restructure your mind palace, making it more suited to the current task.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You become lost within your mind palace, walking its halls instead of noticing the real world for 1d6 rounds.

Tier 1

Eidetic Memory (1 Intellect point). You recall any piece of information you've ever known, or relive a memory of any event you've ever experienced. Action.

Tier 2

Problem Solving (2 Intellect points). By retreating into your mental space you are able to concentrate on a mental task, granting you an Intellect-based non-combat task. Action.

Tier 3

Invited Guest (3 Intellect points). A willing target you can see is allowed to visit your mind palace for up to ten minutes, during which time they stand motionless in the real world. You may show them memories you recall using Eidetic Memory while they are there. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

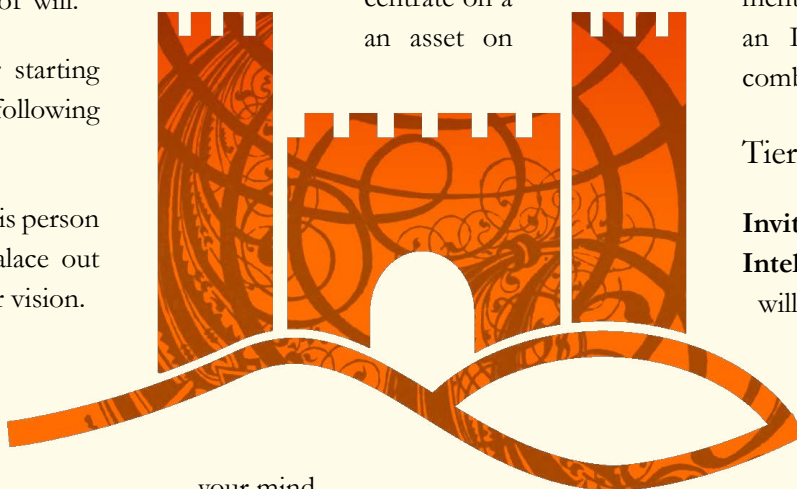
Speed of Thought. Your Tier 3 or lower powers in this focus no longer require an action to activate or your concentration to continue. Enabler.

Tier 5

Projected Memory (5 Intellect points). You create an illusory projection of a memory you have into the real world, taking up an Immediate area around you. This memory can last up to ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier 6

Real Memory (6 Intellect points). You can project an object or person from your memory into the real world, where they behave as they generally did in the memory, counting as level 3 creatures or objects when they interact. This power will not recreate a Cypher or Artifact. This projection lasts for ten minutes. Action to initiate.



Feeds the Flame

A path of psionic powers associated with those who wish to see the world burn, or who merely enjoy the power of flame. Its fuel appears to be the very liveliness of the psion, who can both control fire and learn from it. This duality stems from their ability to tap into the psychic resonance within each object, unleashed by purifying flame.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person always knows when you're starting a fire. They have a kind of fearful feeling just as you do so.
2. Pick one other PC. They have a similar fascination to fire as you and can relate to your honed abilities. Their own powers might even meld with yours in some way.
3. Pick one other PC. You can't ignite fires while within Immediate range of this person.
4. Pick one other PC. You once rescued them from a fire, though it's likely you were the one who put them in danger.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The fire you ignite or control is exactly the size and shape you desire, within reason.

Major Effect Suggestion: You learn about the nature of the thing you light aflame, granting you a +1 on rolls involving that kind of object in the future.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The fire you're interacting with gets out of control for a moment, destroying something important or catching a building aflame.

Tier 1

Combust (1 Speed point). You start a fire within your Immediate area. If used as an attack this ability deals 1 damage, but could light the target's clothing on fire depending on what it's made of. Action.

Tier 2

Wield Flame (2 Speed points). You take control over an existing fire that fits within Immediate distance of you, directing its growth and spread for so long as you continue to concentrate. Action to initiate.

Tier 3

Scorching Touch (3 Speed points). For the next five rounds your touch can burn through nearly any material, dealing 3 damage per round touched and ignoring the object's Armor rating. Unarmed attacks deal 3 additional damage while active. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

Hidden Knowledge (4 Speed points). You conjure flame to destroy an object you touch, up to your own volume in size, learning 3 facts about it in the process. Action.

Flame Proof. You possess an Armor rating of 8 against fire and heat. Enabler.

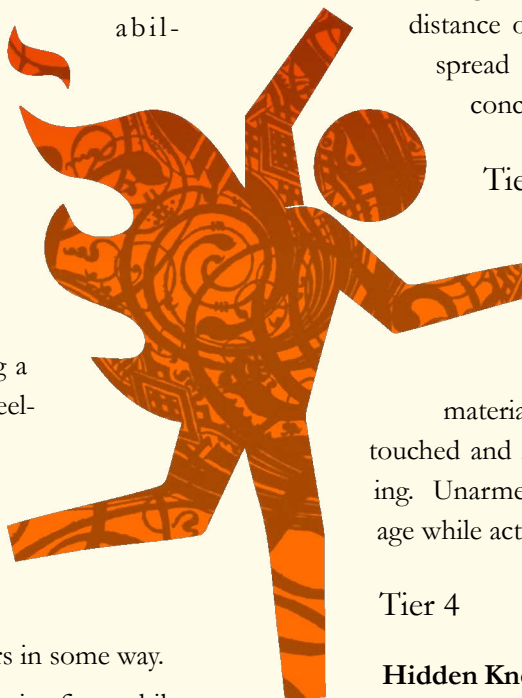
Tier 5

Gout of Flame (5 Speed points). You hurl a ball of fire at a target within Long range, dealing 6 damage and lighting their clothing on fire. Action.

Greater Control. Your Wield Flame power can now affect a fire up to Long distance in diameter. Enabler.

Tier 6

Firestorm (6 Speed points). You summon a massive conflagration, striking everyone within Long distance of you with an attack that deals 6 damage. Every flammable object within that distance is lit on fire. Action.



Follows Psychic Clues

This power seems to go to the more cerebral among us, often those who might be called Paradoxes. It is a strange combination of intuition about stimuli and application of knowledge. Introspection is the primary trait to be found among those who follow this path, feeling emotional resonance and thereby piecing together conclusions.

I have often found myself baffled by their hunches, for without connective reasoning I was left in the dark as to our course and destination. These psions even appear to gain information outside of the normal flow of time. They know and see much you do not.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You always know this person's location in relation to yours.
2. Pick one other PC. You can intuitively sense when and where they are translating to.
3. Pick one other PC. You have sensed this person's entire past, letting you in on all of their secrets.
4. Pick one other PC. This person's presence is involved in your use of this Focus. Whenever you gain a Major Effect when using this focus, they gain a Minor Effect of their own.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You glean one extra piece of useful information.

Major Effect Suggestion: You learn the same kind of information about a second target.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You accidentally draw conclusions about someone other than your intended target.

Tier 1

Bloodhound (1 Intellect point). You can follow the psychic imprint of someone who has been in the Immediate area, tracking where they've travelled on foot. Action.

Insights. Due to your sense of psychic residue you are trained in investigation and empathy tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Gut Feeling (2 Intellect points). Just before an important event happens your GM might give you the opportunity to activate this power, granting you foreknowledge of the event. If the event is an ambush, you do not count as surprised in any way. Action.

Temporal Sensations. You have an intuitive sense of timing, granting you training in initiative rolls. Enabler.

Tier 3

Sense Echoes (3 Intellect points). You get a sense of the past of a location, granting you knowledge of any important or traumatic events to have taken place in an Immediate distance around you. If anyone you have ever known was involved, you know. Action.

Tier 4

Psychic Appraisal (4 Intellect points). You size up any person you glean a psychic imprint from, either through their presence near you or through use of lower Tier abilities. You glean a general sense of the person's personality and motivations, as well as knowledge of their highest skill (or the task they gain the highest bonus on). Action.

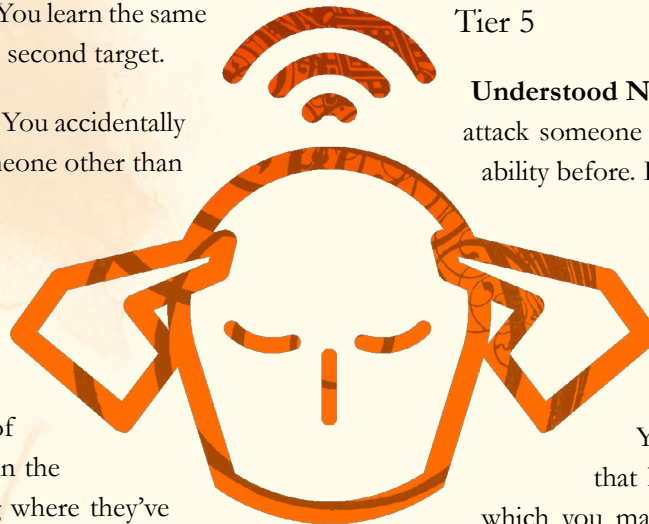
Tier 5

Understood Nature. You have an asset when you attack someone on whom you've used a lower Tier ability before. Enabler.

Tier 6

Power of Touch (6 Intellect points). You touch someone, learning much about their past.

You uncover three major events that have happened to them, one of which you may select. You experience these moments in a flash, from their perspective. Action.



Forges Animal Bonds

My ally Emily manifested these powers as part of her translation into an ant queen on our journey to an insect dominated recursion. Her abilities were suited primarily to interactions with the drones, but I have seen other expressions of this line of power, more mundanely enabling control over fauna. I suspect that this Focus came from her femininity represented as her status as queen, as well as her need for control over her life.

This Focus appears to relate to the will of one strong mind over the weakness in those from lesser species, whether through pheromones, mental dominance, or a psychic bond with the creature in question. When confronting animals of advanced intelligence these powers will not function.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You both have a love of the same particular type of animal.
2. Pick one other PC. You both share a pet.
3. Pick one other PC. Any animal you befriend seems to have a dislike for this character.
4. Pick one other PC. Your powers have a slight effect on them somehow, making you wonder just how intelligent they really are.

Minor Effect Suggestion: An animal comes to your aid, providing an asset.

Major Effect Suggestion: The animal you interact with turns out to be relatively intelligent for its species.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The animal you interact with turns out to be an outcast among its kind.

Tier 1

Beast Aura. You are trained in all interactions with animals, such as cajoling, taming, or handling. Enabler.

Speak to Animals (1 Intellect point). You forge a telepathic connection to an animal you can see, allowing you two way communication with the beast for up to ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier 2

Sense Fauna (2 Intellect points). You reach out your mind and discover the locations and numbers of all animals within one mile (1.6km). Action.

Tier 3

Befriend or Command (2 Intellect points). Used on any animal you can see, you effectively become the creature's "master" for the next seven days. It almost always does as you ask. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

Animal Gossip (4 Intellect points). By speaking to the minds of the fauna in the area you learn what has transpired in the area in the last few hours, though descriptions of events are filtered through the simple conceptions of small brains. Action.

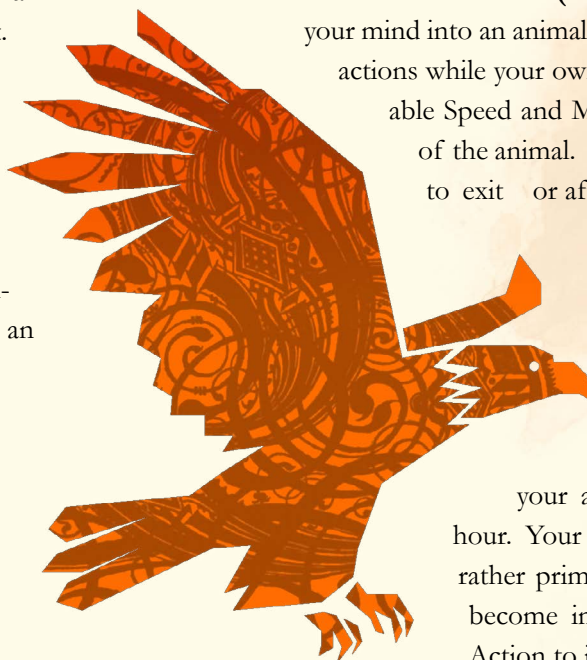
Tier 5

Animal Possession (5 Intellect points). You project your mind into an animal's body, allowing you to control its actions while your own body lies comatose. Your available Speed and Might pools are equal to the Level of the animal. This effect ends upon your choice to exit or after 24 hours. Action to initiate.

Tier 6

Subsume Consciousness (6 Intellect points). You let go of the human portion of your mind, allowing only your animalistic side to reign for one

hour. Your actions during this time will be rather primal, but while in this state you become immune to all psychic attacks. Action to initiate.



Harnesses the Body's Rhythms

Far more physical than most psionic powers, this Focus relates exclusively to the self. Some see this as weakness. In truth, this path is one of self-enrichment and discovery. It is about mind over matter at the most personal level. It is the psychic power of those who would not seek to control others. A humble, but powerful path.

By controlling heart rate, breathing, blood flow, and ever more subtle patterns of the body, they are able to become something more human than human. Are they tapping into something truly transcendent? Is this the path to the next step in human evolution?

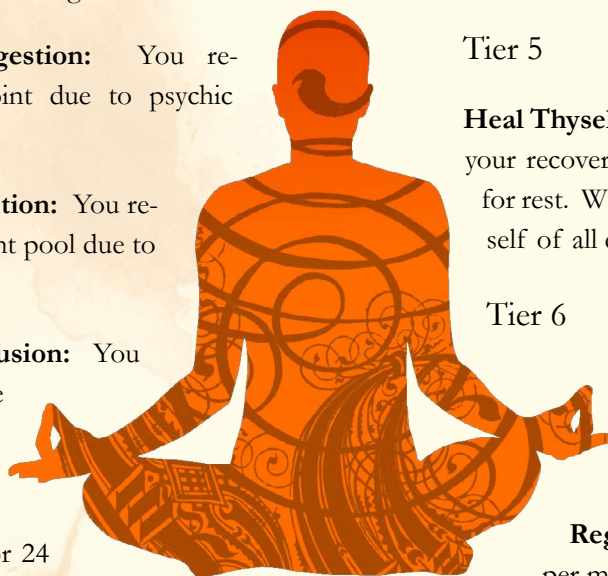
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Through a psychic bond, you always know this person's physical condition (Might pool, Damage track, etc.).
2. Pick one other PC. You once rescued this person from disaster, such as drowning or falling, using your amazing self-mastery.
3. Pick one other PC. This person suspects you don't have any psionic powers at all, likely making a point to exclude you from roles that involve danger. In time they'll realize the error of their assumptions.
4. Pick one other PC. Your power seems to help them, granting a +1 on recovery rolls while within your Immediate range.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You recover one Might point due to psychic regeneration.

Major Effect Suggestion: You recover your entire Might pool due to psychic regeneration.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You suffer headaches due to your self-manipulations, increasing the difficulty of mental tasks for 24 hours.



Tier 1

Breath Control. You can easily hold your breath for up to an hour at a stretch before you begin suffering the usual consequences. Enabler.

Knowledge of the Body. You are trained in healing tasks and enjoy an asset when using the skill on yourself. Enabler.

Tier 2

Blood Flow (2 Might points). You manage the flow of your own blood, removing poisons and stopping bleeding. You can throw off one such condition per use of this ability. Action.

Tier 3

Metabolic Empowerment. You now only need one tenth the amount of food, water, and sleep as normal. Enabler.

Tier 4

Adrenal Rush (4 Might points). You greatly increase your raw strength for ten minutes, during which time your lifting capacity is ten times what it was before. Additionally, your Might Edge is 2 higher and you leap twice as far while this ability is in effect. At the end of the ten minutes, you move one step down the Damage track due to fatigue. Action to initiate.

Tier 5

Heal Thyself. Once per game session you may use one of your recoveries without spending the usual time required for rest. Whenever you use this ability, you also heal yourself of all diseases and poisons. Enabler.

Tier 6

True Self-Mastery. Once per day you may move around your various pool points as you so desire. Enabler.

Regeneration. You regain one Might point per minute. Enabler.

Haunts Dreams

I've only witnessed one Stranger with this power and it was not a pleasant experience. I speak somewhat from ignorance on the source of this power, but it seems clear that those who possess it contain a vast inner life. The one I tangled with who haunted dreams was willful and imaginative, and that was nearly my undoing within the sanctum of my own mind.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You often share dreams with this person.
2. Pick one other PC. This person suffers from nightmares only you can cure.
3. Pick one other PC. This person acts as your muse, and your creativity feels stifled when they're not around.
4. Pick one other PC. You dream about this person saving your life.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your sense of self in the dream is stronger than normal, granting you an Armor rating of 1 against mental attacks of any kind during this dream.

Major Effect Suggestion: You are able to bring one additional person with you in a dream, at no cost.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You become stuck in the reality of the dream for an additional 10 minutes, during which time the dream turns dangerous.

Tier 1

Lucid Dreaming (1 Intellect point). During a sleep period you seize control over your dream, allowing you to shape it to your will and granting you an additional recovery roll, the points from which can only apply to your Intellect pool. This ability may only be used once per 10 hour recovery period. Enabler.

Dream Interpretation. You are trained in interpreting dreams to find their meanings, usually granting insight into the dreamer's motivations and psyche. Enabler.



Tier 2

Enter Dream (2 Intellect point).

You enter the dream of someone sleeping within Long distance of you, during which time you sleep as well. While in their dream you are able to control all of the events you both witness, as though you were in a lucid dream. Lasts for ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Dream Knowledge. You are now specialized in dream interpretation. Enabler.

Tier 3

Dream Walker. You may now use the Enter Dream ability at a distance of up to one mile. While in dreams you may now use your control over events to attack the mind of the target, dealing 4 damage on each Intellect attack. Enabler.

Tier 4

Prophetic Dream. Once per day you may recall some prophetic moment in your last dream, allowing you to use the dream interpretation skill instead of some other skill for one task roll. Enabler.

Tier 5

Sandman's Touch (5 Intellect points). You may touch a target to put them into a deep sleep for ten minutes, during which time they experience vivid dreams. Action.

Tier 6

Mass Dream (2 Intellect points + 2 per person brought along). You and any number of other willing people within Immediate range enter a communal dream. All of the participants have control over the dreamscape, allowing everyone to make Intellect based attacks against each other, dealing 4 damage. This group dream lasts up to one hour, though each participant can leave by taking an action to do so. Action to initiate.

Is the Eye of the Storm

This line of powers is telekinetic in nature, but somewhat unfocused compared to other forms of mind over matter. It's almost an unconscious and primal expression of emotional energy, allowing the bearer to lift and swirl the smaller objects around them in an outburst of psionic force. Not to be underestimated, this area of psychic power can be quite dangerous to both friend and foe.

I gained access to this Focus myself once, in Atom Nocturne. I had gone there alone in a fit of rage at my allies, and these powers appear to have been the result of that emotional state. Take this as a warning: translation can account for mood and temperament.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is never harmed by the powers of this Focus.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's possessions are never affected by the powers of this Focus.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has always been good at calming you down when you get emotional.
4. Pick one other PC. You gained your psionic powers during the same traumatic event as they did.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The objects around you are particularly deadly, granting you an Asset on attacks.

Major Effect Suggestion: You're able to activate two powers from this focus simultaneously this round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The "storm" of flying objects damages something important to you.

Tier 1

Emotional Levitation (1 Might point). All small objects in your Immediate area are lifted into the air for ten minutes, granting you an aura of danger (an asset on related social tasks). You become actually emotional when this power is used, so some amount of roleplaying may be appropriate. Action to initiate.

Emotional Outlet. Your ability to grab hold of your feelings and use them comes in handy. You're trained in intimidation as well as seduction related tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Brain Storm. The things you move now follow you about, spinning around your axis. Whenever Emotional Levitation is active, you enjoy an asset on Speed Defense. Enabler.

Tier 3

Cyclone of Hate.

If you so choose, the objects moved by your Emotional Levitation ability move quite fast, causing 2 ambient damage per round to everyone within Immediate distance of you. Enabler.

Self-Knowledge. The fact that your powers stem from your own emotional state grants you a great deal of personal insight. You enjoy an Asset on Intellect Defense tasks related to emotions. Enabler.

Tier 4

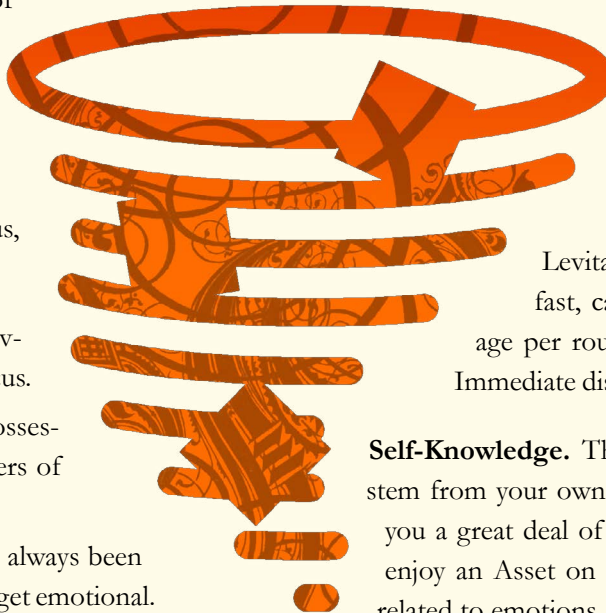
Targeted Destruction (4 Might points). You levitate one object or person, up to your own weight, moving it a Short distance, or hurling it at a target within that range and dealing 4 damage. Action.

Tier 5

Selective Whirlwind. Whenever you activate Emotional Levitation, you may pick and choose which objects are grabbed. Enabler.

Tier 6

Wrathful Bombardment (6 Might points). You hurl several large objects at a single target within Long range of you, dealing 8 damage on hit. Action.



Knows the Heart

Aura readers are those with both an eye for the psychic and a capacity for empathy beyond that of the rest of us. Often those who manifest this Focus are in a receptive mental state upon entering the recursion. They are either emotionally raw and ready to feel anything, or incredibly emotionally centered. In either case the result is a psychic with their mind in the surface thoughts of everyone around them.

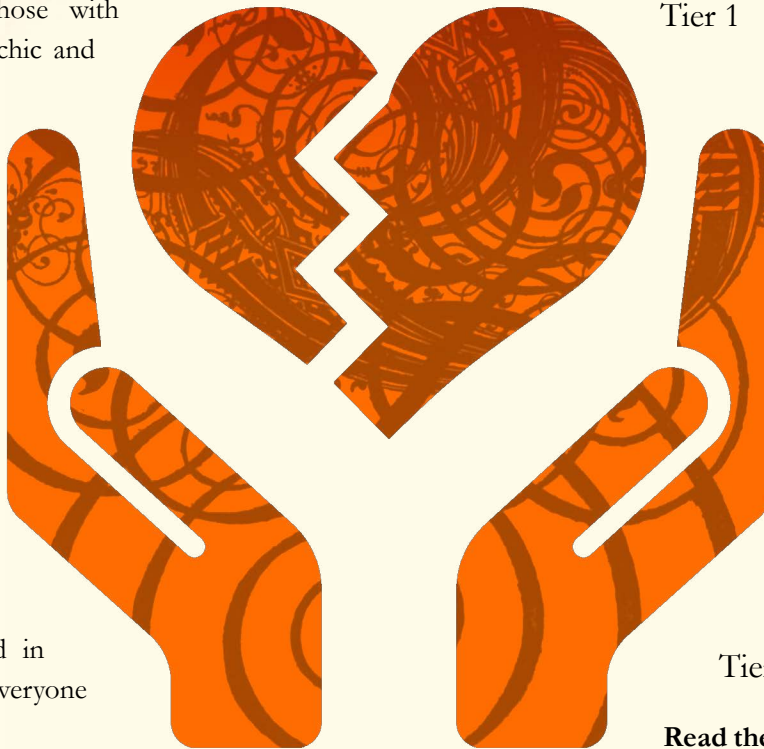
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Your empathy will not work on this inscrutable character.
2. Pick one other PC. You feel nearly every emotion this character does, whether you like it or not.
3. Pick one other PC. You and this character get along almost too well, your emotions paired perfectly.
4. Pick one other PC. You get the sense this character is hiding something from the group.

Minor Effect Suggestion: While reading the emotions of someone you also get a sense of where they last were.

Major Effect Suggestion: While reading the emotions of someone you also catch a bit of their surface thoughts.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your own emotions are getting in the way of your empathy, increasing the difficulty of all Focus powers by one for this scene.



Tier 1

Aura Reading (1 Intellect point). You learn the mood of a target you can see. Action.

Tier 2

First Impressions (2 Intellect points). Upon first meeting someone you may use this ability, granting you one important fact about them. Action.

Tier 3

Read the Room (3 Intellect points). You get a feel for the emotional tenor of everyone within Immediate range, granting you 2 assets on any group-related non-combat task for the next ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

True Empathy (4 Intellect points). You feel the emotions of a target you can see, granting you two assets on all interactions with them for the next ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier 5

Lance of Fear (5 Intellect points). You strike a living creature within Long distance with intense fear, causing them to take 4 damage and feel the need to leave the encounter. Action.

Tier 6

Craft Emotion (6 Intellect points). You completely alter the mood of a person you can see. This new mood only lasts as long as makes sense given the scene. Action.

Leaves the Physical World

Many have claimed the capacity to project their minds out into the world, witnessing its ills. To those whose action must remain secret, there's nothing more terrifying than the prospect of an enemy who watches over your shoulder invisibly, safe in another realm.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person can see your mind when it's projected out of your body.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is always paranoid of your watching them while projected.
3. Pick one other PC. You trust this person to guard your body while you project.
4. Pick one other PC. You can communicate telepathically with this character while you are projected.

Minor Effect Suggestion: While projected, you can move twice as fast as you normally move.

Major Effect Suggestion: The conditions of the mental world allow you to move at the speed of thought while projected. You can be anywhere in the recursion you've ever been, just by thinking of it.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You are attacked by a monstrous mind that exists within the mental realm.

Mental Projection: This Focus allows you to exit your body, projecting your mind into another world. This might be the "astral plane," a spirit world, or a place that only advanced physics could explain, depending on the recursion. While there, your body is comatose and you cannot defend against physical attacks. Your mind can be attacked by those who can see into your plane of existence and have the ability to do psychic battle. Creatures native to this other plane can "physically" attack your mind, doing

Intellect damage. You can see and hear the real world, but cannot interact with it. You move at your normal walking pace.

Tier 1

Out of Body (1 Intellect point). You project your mind, able to move up to Long distance from your body. This lasts until you choose to jump back into your body or are reduced to zero Intellect pool. Action to initiate.

Tier 2

Stray Further. You may now travel any distance while projected. Enabler.

Tier 3

Sword and Shield. While projected, you are now able to make psychic attacks against other minds in the mental realm you can see, dealing 4 damage with each attack. You have 3 Armor against psychic attacks while there. Enabler.

Tier 4

Projection. Whenever you choose, while projected you may make your "astral body" seen by those in the real world, and you may speak and be heard there. Enabler.

Tier 5

Physicality. You may now use Sword and Shield against targets in the physical world you can see. Enabler.

Tier 6

Deep Thought (6 Intellect points). You take a journey into the deeper realms of thought, allowing you to find lost secrets and minds. You may take additional people with you as fellow astral travellers, at a cost of 2 Intellect per person. Action to initiate.

Preys on the Psyche

A horrifying set of powers, those who prey on the psyche are often supernatural predators in whatever recursion they are found. Taking and using the identity and knowledge of those they prey upon, these are monsters of the psionic world, particularly to those of us who so cherish our thoughts and memories. I must admit a special fear of them. My mind should be mine alone, thank you.

Despite their status as an apex predator, those who practice this Focus can also use their powers for investigative purposes, rifling through the minds of the wicked. Just don't let them turn their thirsty gaze on you.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You've accidentally stolen part of the mind of this person in the past and it never left your psyche.
2. Pick one other PC. None of your Focus powers work on them.
3. Pick one other PC. Their mind seems to bleed into the world around them, tantalizing you to consume thoughts when they're around.
4. Pick one other PC. This character's mind is an open book to you.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You learn one additional piece of information about your prey.

Major Effect Suggestion: You get a strong sense of your prey's personality, granting you an asset on Focus power rolls against them this encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You are overwhelmed by the thoughts around you, causing you to suffer a one-step penalty on all tasks until you get a chance to feed on a mind.

Tier 1

Will Thief (1 Intellect point). You deal 2 damage to a living target within long range, regaining 2 points to your Intellect pool if successful. Action.

Tier 2

Sense Weakness (2 Intellect points). You search a living target's mind for a weakness, granting you an asset on all further Intellect based tasks made against them. Action.

Tier 3

Feast (3 Intellect points). You steal the will from all living beings within Immediate range, dealing 2 damage and regaining 2 Intellect pool for each mind you successfully attack with this power. Action.

Tier 4

Taken Desire (4 Intellect points). You learn the deepest desire of a living target within Long range; however, you gain this desire upon learning it. Your new desire lasts for ten minutes. Action.

Tier 5

Steal Skill (5 Intellect points). You steal a skill from a living target within long range, granting you the training or specialization your victim had for ten minutes. The target has loses their levels in this skill until the ten minutes are up. Action to initiate.

Tier 6

Steal Identity (6 Intellect points). You steal the very essence of a living target within Long range, causing everyone who meets them to forget who they ever were, and everyone who meets you to think you are them. This effect lasts for 3 hours. Action to initiate.



Sees with the Inner Eye

These are the seers and scryers, viewing realities in ways the rest of us cannot. Visionaries are drawn to this Focus, as are those whose senses deviate from the norm back on Earth. This Focus can manifest quite differently depending on the recursion, with vastly different powers in some. This appears to be due to the vast array of possible information to be found, depending on the fiction in question.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You always have an intuitive sense of this character's location in relation to yours.
2. Pick one other PC. You find this person's gaze distracting when you're trying to use your Focus powers.
3. Pick one other PC. You've noticed a powerful supernatural radiance to them, calling you to investigate their hidden nature.
4. Pick one other PC. You've noticed this person has great psychic potential you can help to unlock.

Minor Effect Suggestion: All of your senses can be used during a scrying power, not just vision and hearing.

Major Effect Suggestion: You're able to take physical actions while remote viewing for the next ten minutes.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your inner eye is "blinded" for one hour by a powerful psychic presence nearby.

Tier 1

Near Seeing (1 Intellect point). You are able to view any object, location, or person within Long distance of you, as though you were right next to them. This could allow you to see around corners or under debris. This effect lasts

for ten minutes, so long as you continue to concentrate on the vision. Action to initiate.

Tier 2

Far Seeing (2 Intellect points). You experience a vision (both sight and sound) of the events surrounding a person, place, or object with which you are familiar. This vision lasts only for a moment, but you get the general location of the target through the vision. Action.

Tier 3

Crucial Information (3 Intellect points). You receive a brief vision of an important person or event chosen by the GM for best impact on the story. This could be a villain, a disaster, or a private conversation. Whatever spurs the plot forward. This power may only be used once per day. Action.

Tier 4

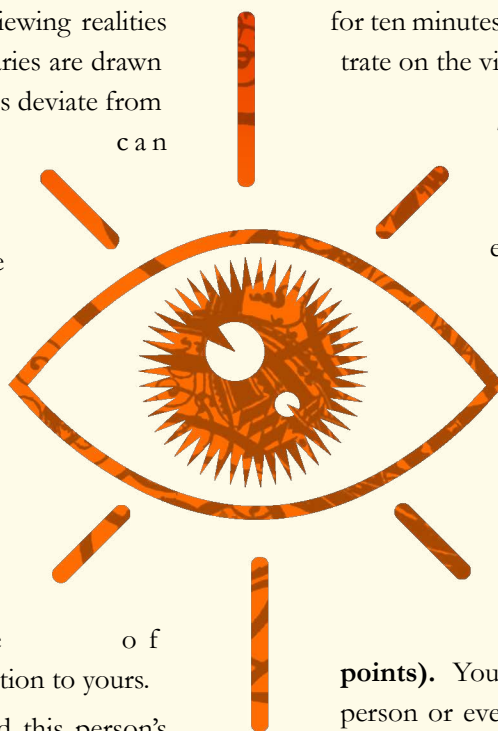
Find Hidden (4 Intellect points). You instantly discover all hidden objects, doors, and panels within Immediate distance of you, as well as other hidden information based on the recursion you inhabit, such as magic spells or spirits. Action.

Tier 5

Truth of Things (5 Intellect points). You receive a vision of a representation of a target you think of. This representation reveals at least 3 hidden facts about them, such as motivation, troubled past, or secret benefactors. Action.

Tier 6

Great Seeing (6 Intellect points). Just as with Far Seeing, except that you are able to view any person, place, or object you've heard of that exists within this recursion, even if you're not personally familiar with the target. Action.



Toys with Memory

Masters of the mnemonic are capable of making the world what they want by changing the remembered past. They carve out this world through intrusions into the psyches of others. Some do this through intonation or a powerful gaze. Some use parlor tricks. Others magic wands or flashing sticks of advanced technology.

Hubris is the foe of these psions, for what is truly real when one can alter the past? Like pathological liars, they are doomed to becoming caught in their own web of lies.

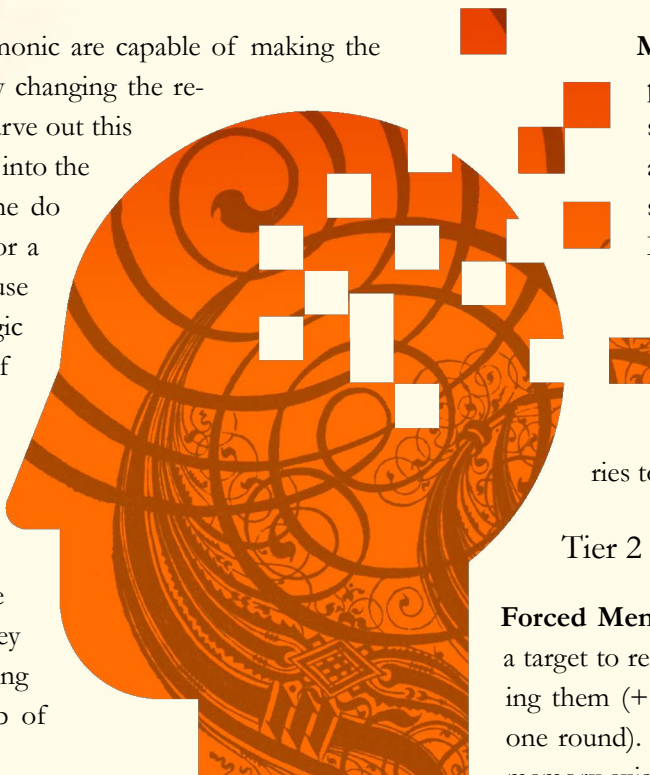
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person remembers you from their childhood for some reason.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is immune to your mental alterations, and knows it.
3. Pick one other PC. This person's mind appears to be perfectly organized and therefore especially easy for you to explore.
4. Pick one other PC. This person's memories always seem to be changing, as though they were rewriting things in their minds the way they wished they'd happened.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You control all the little details in the memory, making it seem extremely real.

Major Effect Suggestion: You're able to hide away a perfect copy of the memory affected, in the back of your mind, for later retrieval.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You forget something important.



Minds Worth Altering: These powers only work on those with minds similar to humans. The target of any ability in this Focus must be a living person with human-like memories, within Long distance of you.

Tier 1

Self Delusion (1 Intellect point).

You alter one of your own memories to whatever you wish it to be. Action.

Tier 2

Forced Memory (2 Intellect points). You force a target to relive a memory of your choice, distracting them (+1 step on the difficulty of actions for one round). You must have some inkling that the memory exists to do so. Action.

Tier 3

Forgetfulness (3 Intellect points). Your target forgets something of your choice, even something crucial to who they are. This memory lapse lasts ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier 4

Memory Walk (4 Intellect points). You rifle through the memories of a target, either finding a specific memory you seek or randomly witnessing important memories. Action.

Tier 5

Rewrite History (5 Intellect points). You completely rewrite a single memory a target holds, so long as you know that memory exists. Action.

Tier 6

Oblivion (6 Intellect points). You completely remove all of your target's memories. They remain inaccessible until such a time as they hear a specific code word, chosen when you activate this power. Action.

Wields Invisible Forces

This Focus tends to run its course among those with a more physical bent, granting them the power to create tools of battle from coherent psychic force. Truly marvelous to witness, these psychic warriors eventually become whirling cyclones of destruction.

My ally and student, Dreg, found himself capable of these feats. Alas, the power he wielded gave him a sense of purpose. Almost chivalry I'd say. He didn't last long with such high and mighty ideals.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This character is unharmed by any of your Focus powers.
2. Pick one other PC. This character is intensely disturbed by your powers.
3. Pick one other PC. You once rescued this character from an attacker.
4. Pick one other PC. You are sworn to protect this character.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Psychic energies are just right in this area, granting you +1 on damage with your Psychic Weapon for the rest of the encounter.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your attack with your Psychic Weapon knocks targets to the ground this round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The psychic winds or other supernatural forces diminish the power of your Psychic Weapon, causing you to suffer a one-step penalty until you can move to a better location.

Tier 1

Psychic Blast. You now have access to a weapon called your Psychic Weapon. Using it is a ranged Intellect pool



attack that deals 4 damage at up to Long range. It takes no hands to use this "weapon." Enabler.

Tier 2

Psychic Shield (2 Speed points). You summon a visible barrier of psionic energy, providing you with two assets when defending against mental attacks this round, and one asset when defending physical attacks. You may not use this power in the same round as Psychic Blast. Enabler.

Tier 3

Hard Mind. Your Psychic Blast knocks targets a Short distance away from you. Enabler.

Mental Precision. You are trained in attacks with your Psychic Blast weapon. Enabler.

Tier 4

Psychic Parry. You may now use Psychic Shield and Psychic Blast in the same round. Enabler.

Tier 5

Mind Lash (5 Speed points). You strike at an additional target with your Psychic Blast this round. Alternatively, you may grant your Psychic Shield to a target within Long range. Enabler.

Tier 6

Psychic Torrent (6 Speed points). You wield your Psychic Blast against up to 4 targets within Long range, knocking them to the ground and immobilizing them for 2 rounds.

Pinpoint Blast. You are specialized in attacks with your Psychic Weapon. Enabler.



As they drove down the long driveway, Erica noticed that she and Jason were not the first to arrive. Dozens of cars were already parked in front of the estate, and from the look of the models, the crowd here was quite wealthy. Not surprising, given the auction that was to be hosted by the property's owners. Modeled after a French chateau, Applewhite Winery was located in a rural area of Southern Oregon. Early fall had begun to change the leaves on the trees, which made quite the backdrop next to the vineyards.

"Why again didn't you just break into this place when the family was vacationing in Tahiti?" Jason asked as he parked the rented car.

"I already tried that," Erica responded. "Apparently William Applewhite knows about the other worlds, and most likely is quickened. His security was designed to prevent someone with my talents from gaining entry."

"So instead we chose to enter when dozens of people are all milling around the estate because -"

"Well, I needed a legitimate reason to do some exploring without raising suspicion, and frankly, I am intrigued at some of the items for sale here. I swear at least one of them came from Ardeyn, meaning Mr. Applewhite has access to a gate."

They walked up the front doors of the house, where they were greeted by a man in a butler's uniform. Erica handed him her invitation, and they were ushered inside. The large front room was full of people, chatting and sipping wine or eating small finger food being passed around by catering staff. Most people were in some kind of professional attire, and the few who were not stood out quite strikingly.

"So, where exactly do you need to go?" Jason asked quietly, accepting two glasses of wine to act as cover.

"I don't know," Erica answered. "The files I recovered from the Estate servers indicated that I came to Earth here, but not where inside."

"How do you plan to find where you came in then?"

"The key. The magic that made it is linked to that location. It's already vibrating, so we're definitely in the right place. I'm going to look around. Stick to the plan, I'll contact you when I've found it."

Jason moved off into the crowd, joining one of the circles of conversation as Erica moved deeper into the building. The replica chateau had the feel of a public building, lacking the touches that would suggest anyone really lived here. The key pull remained constant as Erica explored the house. Some areas were marked staff only, but since the pull didn't strengthen in those places, she left them for the moment. As Erica moved through yet another tasting room, she felt a greater tug. The door she had approached indicated that this was the entry to the estate's wine cellar. Touching the door, Erica suddenly felt something. Almost like a forgotten dream. Shaking her head, Erica opened the door and descended the winding staircase. The cellar looked like many she had seen before. Clearly a show piece for the winery, the large wooden casks with wine in various stages of readiness were mere decoration, with the bulk of the estate's vintages located elsewhere on the property, likely stored in steel drums. Strangely though, Erica again felt the pang of familiarity, as though having seen the cellar before. She moved deeper into the cellar, causing the key to hum ever so softly. Here it was. Here was the place where so many years ago she had stumbled into the world, memories gone. Erica pulled the key from her pocket. The humming was louder now, like a tuning fork. The gold and silver glowed as though lit from fires within.

"Hello Erica," a voice said behind her. She turned slowly to see a man in expensive grey linen, blond hair neatly combed, face oddly ageless.

"You must Mr. Applewhite," she replied.

"I am. I've been waiting for you, you know."

"Have you."

"Oh yes, you told me you'd be back, and I have never doubted it."

"We've spoken before?"

"Yes, though I realize you don't remember it. You arrived in my home many years ago. It was quite shocking in fact," he said, smiling.

"What did we discuss?"

"Lots actually, but the important conversation was that you told me you would be back, and that when it happened, I should give you this." Applewhite handed her a small piece of paper that was folded in half. On it, clearly written in Erica's own handwriting, were three words.

Don't Go Back.

Chapter 6:

Miscellaneous

The following sections detail my observations on a number of different recursion types, including the Strange itself. It's difficult to express the sheer multitude of worlds available to the recursor. Explorers will find legends of old, futuristic fairy tales, and realms of seemingly elemental chaos. Some recursions seem utterly foreign to Earth, perhaps moved here from some other alien world. I have even been to one of the less traumatic pornography derived recursions. I do not document it here for the sake of propriety, but I will guide translations there for a hefty consulting fee.

The Foci described here merely scratch the surface, but I think reflect the diversity I speak of. Who wouldn't want to not only explore the old west, but go there as a skilled tracker or gunslinger? Surely the more timid among us, but I think you understand my meaning. While the variety is baffling, the powers we adopt upon going to these places can be empowering and revelatory.



Foci

Lovecraftian Horror

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Delves Too Deep | 109 |
| Has More Money than Sense | 110 |
| Investigates Strange Events | 111 |
| Joined a Cult | 112 |
| Sees the End Coming | 113 |

Mythic

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Displays Titan Strength | 114 |
| Fights like a Demigod | 115 |
| Inspires Lust and Jealousy | 116 |
| Journeys Beyond This World | 117 |
| Outwits the Gods | 118 |

Space

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Dies | 119 |
| Explores New Worlds | 120 |

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Fires All Weapons | 121 |
| Pilots Starships | 122 |
| Reroutes Power | 123 |

Strange

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Bleeds Fiction | 124 |
| Discovers Recursions | 125 |
| Mines for Cyphers | 126 |
| Thrives in Chaos | 127 |
| Thwarts Planetovores | 128 |

Wild West

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Carries a Badge | 129 |
| Draws Faster | 130 |
| Fights Dirty | 131 |
| Knows These Parts | 132 |
| Rides into the Sunset | 133 |

Crossroads of Time

The Crossroads of Time is a place where all historical and potential Earths converge. It is a place of mixed history, blending futuristic speculation with the raw and bloody facts of our past. Ancient Chinese soldiers battle robot armies, while the greatest writers of the western world debate modern politics in futuristic cafes.

But the importance of the Crossroads is not merely its strange blend of times and places, but its ability to take you to any time you wish to go to. Simply thinking about a historical period and walking for a few meters can summon a brief translation gate to the time in question, whisking you off to adventure there.

Translation to the Crossroads is not easy (Difficulty 9), but finding what you want once you get there is simple, making the Crossroads a rarely visited but cherished location of strategic importance to many recursors. Some even hang around historical battlegrounds on the anniversaries of those battles in the hopes of slipping in.

Level: 9

Age: Old Recursion

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Human, trans-humans from the future, human ancestor species from the past

Foci: All from Chapters 1, 3, 4, and 5, Bleeds Fiction, Space, Mythic, and Wild West Foci from this chapter, as well as any Earth Foci from The Strange corebook.

Connection to the Strange: A meeting place between all recursions depicting various points in the history of Earth, including the various potential futures.

Connection to Earth: Places of historical importance can temporarily become a translation gate to this recursion, especially on anniversaries of important events.

Size: A 5 mile radius (8km) patch of land, spotted with ruins and structures from various times and places on Earth.

Spark: 80%

Trait: Strange (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Cyberspace

Level: 5

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Users, programs

Foci: Any of the Strange Foci in this chapter, as well as Changes the Nature of Things, Constructs a Palace of the Mind, Toys with Memory, and Wields Invisible Forces from chapter 5, and Processes Information from Ruk from The Strange corebook.

Connection to the Strange: Cyberspace connects to a few other recursions related to information technologies.

Connection to Earth: The internet can serve as a conduit to Cyberspace, when certain hard to find sites are visited on the deep internet of cyber criminals.

Size: A city of neon lights and computer screen black surfaces, roughly 3 miles in radius (5 km).

Spark: 10%

Trait: Clever (see The Strange corebook page 141)

Cyberspace is a digital reality, casting computer processes and online phenomena as the physical aspects of the recursion. People are either human representations of programs or “users” with vastly greater autonomy in the society. Those who translate as users gather a great deal more attention than programs however, as their kind are rare and thought to be capable of reprogramming the world to their whims.

The laws of physics in Cyberspace resemble those of video games and tournaments similar to video games are the primary source of entertainment for the programs native to the recursion. In particular objects, having only a few Health, can be easily destroyed, turning to small digital bricks.

Cyberspace is connected directly to the real world internet and in many ways can serve as a three dimensional interface for it. Clubs are forums and shops are online stores. Thus a hacker interested in a new way to access a secure system might come to Cyberspace to enter physically and rummage through files there. This plan might be even more appealing to those without computer skills on Earth, using combat to perform hacking runs.

Tombstone Station

A starry bridge between genres and various spacefaring recursions, Tombstone Station is both a space station and a wild west boomtown, where would-be nebula miners stop for supplies. Its unique position at the intersection of a number of recursions, not to mention the Strange (if one ventures far enough into the nebula), makes it a frequent meeting point for recursors.

Some come to the station just to test themselves, as the place is known to host a number of famous outlaws and laser pistoleers. Indeed, the criminal element on the Station have a booming trade in arms smuggled between recursions.

Despite its gun slinging reputation, there is a modicum of civility practiced on the station, enforced by a star-badged sheriff. Jeapa, as she’s known, makes sure all the trouble-makers head off the station as fast as possible. Sometimes trouble comes from more dangerous beings from beyond the recursions of Earth, which is when Jeapa turns to recursors to aid her.

Level: 5

Age: Developed Recursion

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Human, all sorts of strange aliens

Foci: Carries a Badge (the PC becomes the local law enforcement), Draws Faster, Fights Dirty, Fires All Weapons, Knows These Parts, Pilots Starships, Reroutes Power, and Rides into the Sunset.

Connection to the Strange: The station is a crossroads between a number of science fiction recursions, and travel into a nearby nebula leads directly into the Strange itself.

Connection to Earth: Translation portals briefly become active at certain science fiction conventions. The more the sci-fi content matches the blend of western and space found on the station, the more likely it is to spawn a gate from time to time.

Size: A massive space station on the edge of a starship graveyard from which it gets its name.

Spark: 25%

Trait: Tough (see The Strange corebook page 142)

Delves Too Deep

Scholars after my own heart are the ones who learn and learn without heed for the secrets man was not meant to know. I have been in their chair myself, hunched over a half dozen seemingly unrelated tomes, finding connections that shouldn't exist between the various forces of the universe. Within the Cthulhu-inspired Lovecraftian horror recursions such as Innsmouth they are a common role adopted by visiting paradox makers like myself.

But as much as I admire and even indulge in this Focus, it should be said that this is the path to danger for our Earth. It is a treacherous and winding road with madness on one side and the invocation of forbidden gods on the other. No one escapes these ideas unscathed. Some even blame my experiences with this Focus for the unusual nature of my own theories. Who is to say they're wrong?

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person was or is a student of yours.
2. Pick one other PC. This person works with you at a museum or library.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has no intellectual curiosity and you cannot bear it.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the only sane person in this creepy town.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You invoke a name you probably shouldn't, providing an asset on a future roll this encounter. The GM picks which one.

Major Effect Suggestion: You invoke a name you probably shouldn't, dealing 5 damage to a creature within Long distance.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You stumble onto a text or artifact that supernaturally demands your attention. You

must immediately read the book all the way through or examine the object for an hour or more.

Extra Equipment: A musty old tome bearing unspeakable secrets.

Tier 1

Book Worm. You are trained in three knowledge skills. Enabler.

Tier 2

Prior Research (2 Intellect points). You realize you've read something related to your current situation, providing an asset on your next investigation or knowledge related roll this encounter. Action.

Tier 3

Immune to Horror. You are immune to fear based effects and attacks on your Intellect which rely on fear. Enabler.

Tier 4

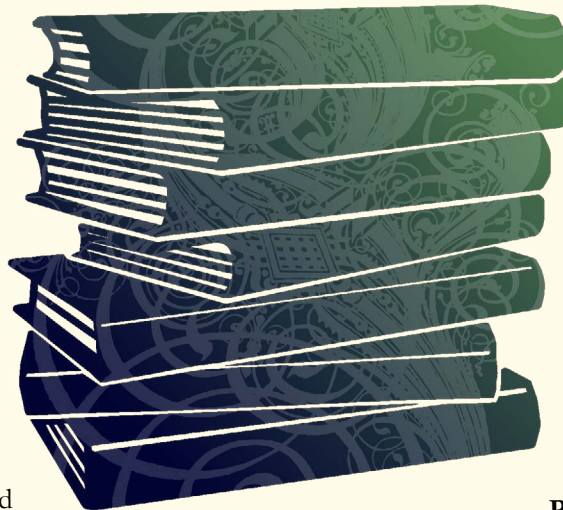
Willful Madness (2 Intellect points). You gain a +3 bonus to damage on an attack this round, but the GM takes control of your character during next round, representing a brief slip into psychosis. Enabler.

Tier 5

Impossible Puzzle (5 Intellect points). You examine evidence of the supernatural or Strange and learn 1d6 facts about the creature or phenomenon which caused it. Action.

Tier 6

Forgotten Secret (6 Intellect points). You banish a Strange or Lovecraftian creature (such as the Shoggoth on page 289 of The Strange corebook) within Immediate range back to whence it came. Doing so creates an explosion of Strange energies, dealing 5 damage to you and anyone else in the Immediate area. Action.



Has More Money than Sense

Within the various genres of horror it's not uncommon to find some rich fool who's there as either comic relief or as a vector for schadenfreude at the privileged. These idiots bumble into terrors beyond imagining, scramble around in their designer clothes and foreign cars, and sometimes escape to tell the tale back at the country club.

Their capacity to survive, because of their societal position actually makes trans- a somewhat useful prospect. Looking down the maw of inescapable non-Euclidian vortices we need every privilege we can get. If a powerful car, expensive education, or custom pistol does the trick, then so be it.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person used to work for you.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is an old college chum.
3. Pick one other PC. This person recently showed you something that blew your mind.
4. Pick one other PC. This weirdo looks like fun to you.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You accidentally knock over an enemy within Immediate range.

Major Effect Suggestion: You accidentally open a hidden door or passage.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You make a boneheaded mistake, such as running out of gas or not bringing ammunition for your weapon.

Extra Equipment: One incredibly expensive, custom or personalized mundane item.

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sition as soft bon
lation into them
Let's face it, when



Tier 1

Faint (1 Intellect point). You fall unconscious for ten minutes, escaping the encounter unnoticed by your foes. Action.

Trust Fund. You possess the Wealth long-term benefit. Enabler.

Tier 2

Hidden Talent (2 Intellect points). You are trained in a skill of your choice until the end of the encounter. Usable once per encounter. Action.

Tier 3

Bribe (3 Intellect points). You hand someone a wad of cash to convince them to help you in some way. Only usable on non-hostile people. Action.

Hidden Weapon. You always have a hidden light weapon, ready to be drawn at a moment's notice. Enabler.

Tier 4

Stumble. Whenever you successfully dodge a melee attack you may make an unarmed attack against a foe within Immediate range. Enabler.

Tier 5

Bumble. Whenever your Stumble ability grants you an unarmed strike, you may move a Short distance after the attack. Enabler.

Tier 6

Try Anything (6 Intellect points). You attempt to speak random magical sounding words or press random buttons on a device in an attempt to activate a scientific or magical item or location. You get lucky and successfully do so, much to your surprise. Action.

Investigates Strange Events

The hard-boiled detective or private eye is thrust into events far beyond their understanding after being asked to look into a disappearance or unusual crime. As crime scene leads to crime scene the investigator comes to learn of despicable deeds and baffling motives, ultimately culminating in a final reveal - something cyclopean and impossible.

These investigators are well equipped to deal with these traumatic moments, at least compared to most of the ignorant and quivering victims of the dark things slithering around horror recursions. Armed with perceptive insight and the stomach to handle a grisly murder, they're not the worst roles to adopt when thrust into Lovecraftian towns.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person seems cool under pressure, something you can admire.
2. Pick one other PC. You grew up with this person and want to look out for their safety.
3. Pick one other PC. This person can't possibly have seen what they claim to have seen.
4. Pick one other PC. This person hired you to look into something strange.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You also notice a small clue that might lead to something useful.

Major Effect Suggestion: You also notice a small detail that can't possibly be real. The implications send you down a dangerous path towards eldritch horrors.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your investigation leads to something horrifying right off the bat. Something that hungers for flesh and souls.

Extra Equipment: A flashlight and a pistol.

Tier 1

Gumshoe. You are trained in perception and investigation tasks. Enabler.

Been in a Fight. You are trained in unarmed attacks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Unlucky Guess (2 Intellect points). When faced with a decision between 2 or 3 options you pick the one that leads you closer to finding the truth you seek. Note: this is usually the most dangerous path. Action.

Tier 3

Light of Truth. So long as you are shining light on the source of your horror you are not affected by fear-based powers and will not involuntarily flee. If your light goes out that's another story. Enabler.

Tier 4

Investigator. You are specialized in perception and investigation tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Rescue (5 Speed points). You move a Short distance, grab a willing person, and carry them a Long distance. Action.

Tier 6

Brief Advantage (6 Intellect points). You figure out a weakness in a Strange creature or Lovecraftian monster within Short distance, granting you and your allies two assets on attacks against the creature for the next two rounds. At the GM's option this power might allow you to send the creature back to the dimension from which it came. Action.

Joined a Cult

They promised you immortality and enlightenment but all you really wanted was a family. Right? These dupes represent the willfully self-destructive worshippers of eldritch horrors beyond time and reason. Recursors who join with these cults, even within the fictional context of recursions, have my eternal ire.

Let us each be individuals, not faceless dogmatic sycophants. But it's not their attitude or lack of taste that puts me on edge. It's their willingness to summon forth unspeakable dangers from the pits of what we can only interpret as hell. That's a bit worse.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person joined the cult too but left not long ago.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems to think you need to leave the cult and join their religion. You might just play along.
3. Pick one other PC. This is the only person who knows you're secretly working for the bad guys here.
4. Pick one other PC. This person seems to understand that you've got some useful inside information to share on the dangerous stuff going on in this town.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You notice the telltale signs of your masters at work here. A trail you might be able to follow.

Major Effect Suggestion: You can feel the tug of an otherworldly presence here, guiding you into danger.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You bump into another member of the cult and they seem surprised you haven't been around. They try to take you back in (kidnap you).

Extra Equipment: Hooded robe and a ritual dagger.

Tier 1



Sleeping with the Enemy.

Mortal followers of the horrors present in this recursion recognize you as one of them and will not attack except to kidnap you. Enabler.

Unremarkable. People other than your party and members of your cult rarely notice or remember you. This provides an asset on stealth and other tasks related to blending in. Enabler.

Tier 2

Ritual Fighter. You are trained in attacks using light melee weapons, such as daggers. Enabler.

Tier 3

Self Sacrifice (2 Might points). The old ones smile upon your self-destruction, providing you with a +2 bonus to your Effort rating for the rest of the encounter. Action.

Tier 4

Blood Works Best. You may use your Might pool to fuel Effort on any action. Enabler.

Tier 5

Cult Leader. You no longer benefit from your Unremarkable ability, instead enjoying an asset on all social tasks due to your creepy charisma. Enabler.

Dance of Blades. You are specialized in melee attacks using light weapons. Enabler.

Tier 6

Dark Summoning (6 Might points). Over the course of an hour you summon forth an unspeakable horror of Level 5 or greater. This creature is just as likely to attack you as anyone else and lasts for up to one hour before fading back into the darkness. Enabler.

Sees the End Coming

They are seers, sometimes literal palm reading psychics, open of mind to the outer truths that just so happen to be about the end of the world in these recursions. While the terrible knowledge and constant visions might seem burdensome, it's useful to have some kind of insight into events as they unfold.

Lovecraftian recursions have a tendency to iterate through plotlines culminating in the end of everything, only to return to an eerily normal condition once everything is devoured. Having some foreknowledge of the plot can be a life saver when you translate into one of these little worlds in the middle or, Darwin forbid, the end of a story.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person once came to you for a fortune. A very troubled soul.
2. Pick one other PC. This person doesn't seem to believe in your visions. A pity.
3. Pick one other PC. This person dreams similar visions as yours, but can't remember them.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the only person you trust, an old friend or lover.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your last vision included this event, granting you knowledge of anyone or anything hidden around you right now.

Major Suggestion: Your last vision included this event, granting you a second action this round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You are overcome with visions, stunned for 1d6 rounds.

Extra Equipment: A crystal ball or expensive pack of tarot cards.



Tier 1

Portent (1 Intellect point). You have a sense for the near future, allowing you to act first this round. Enabler.

Tier 2

Read the Room (2 Intellect points). You get a sense for the emotions of everyone immediately around you, granting you an asset on all social interactions with them until the end of the encounter. Action.

Tier 3

Spiritualism. You may not be harmed by non-physical creatures such as spirits or extra dimensional horrors that are not yet in this world. Once something becomes physical, you're fair game. Enabler.

Tier 4

Sudden Vision (3 Intellect points). At some point in the next hour you are struck by a vision, stunning you for 1d6 rounds. At the end of this vision you replenish either your Intellect or your Speed pool. Action.

Tier 5

Psychic Impressions (4 Intellect points). You sense the Immediate area for psychic phenomena, granting you knowledge of anything supernatural that has occurred here before. You see the event in your mind as though you had been there at the time. Action.

Tier 6

Trance (6 Intellect points). You enter into a trance state for the next ten minutes, unable to take any action until you come out of it. Once your trance is over you have a perfect understanding of the near future, granting you two assets on the next three tasks you roll for. Action.

Displays Titan Strength

While I am not usually one to go in for mere brute strength, the kind of force produced by these demigods is another story. Exhibiting a physics-defying ability to lift massive objects and even use them as weapons, these are the kinds of brutes I like to have around. This is not mere strength mind you. Lifting several tons of rock is as much a feat of endurance as raw muscle power.

This Focus is not limited to mythic recursions either. I've seen it in superhero and even fantasy worlds. The power to become as strong as a legendary monster is a seemingly universal ideal condition.

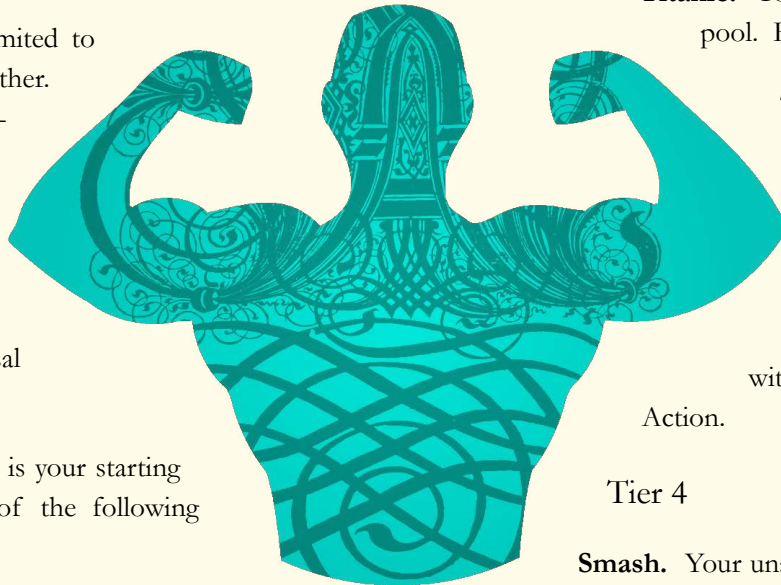
Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. Puny in size, but still your good friend.
2. Pick one other PC. Puny in size, so someone you want to protect.
3. Pick one other PC. This hero saved your life once. Not something that happens often.
4. Pick one other PC. You rescued this hero from a heavy object once.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You also knock your foe to the ground.

Major Effect Suggestion: You also knock your foe off a precipice.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You don't know your own strength and accidentally crush something important.



Tier 1

Heft. You are trained in lifting and jumping, as well as throwing objects as an attack. Enabler.

Tier 2

Titanic. You gain 5 points to your Might pool. Enabler.

Tier 3

Uphold (3 Might points).

For one round you keep a falling object or collapsing building from crushing or trapping you and those within Immediate range of you.

Action.

Tier 4

Smash. Your unarmed attacks deal 2 additional damage. Enabler.

Lithe. You are specialized in lifting and jumping, as well as throwing objects as an attack. Enabler.

Tier 5

Feat of Strength (5 Might points). For up to three rounds you lift something immensely heavy, equivalent to several tons of rock. You may throw it up to Short distance as an attack doing 8 damage, so long as you do so within the three rounds of the ability's duration. Action.

Tier 6

Godly. Your Feat of Strength power may be used to lift an immense object indefinitely, and the weight of the object is no longer a concern. You could lift a boat out of the water and toss it or haul a stone building by its foundation. Enabler.

Fights like a Demigod

Masters of personal combat abound in myth. They are frequently children of the gods or those possessing their weaponry or blessing. Some are simply incredibly experienced soldiers fighting for their city-state or ruler. Some even fight for love.

These demigodlike warriors usually specialize in a particular form of battle or a specific weapon combination. They show us all the benefits of mastering the art of war - a single-minded obsession leading to legendary fighting prowess. The downside, from my perspective, is that you're the kind of person who winds up on a battlefield. I'd rather be exploring or studying.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This hero is a competent combatant you can admire.
2. Pick one other PC. This hero speaks heresies you wish they wouldn't.
3. Pick one other PC. This hero seems bafflingly joyful at the prospect of danger and probably death.
4. Pick one other PC. This hero couldn't fight their way out of a sack and you need to fix that.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your strike hits and causes your opponent to hesitate, providing an asset on your next attack against them.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your strike hits hard, stunning or frightening your foe, causing them to simply defend themselves for one round.

Extra Equipment: Your preferred weapon.

Suggested GM Intrusion: A foe strikes at your one weak spot, dealing 10 damage if they hit.

Tier 1

Preferred Weapon. You are trained in attacks with a specific type of weapon. Enabler.

Preparation (1 Speed point). You prepare for battle with your usual ritual or prayer, increasing your Speed Edge by one for the rest of the encounter. Action.

Tier 2

Heroic Charge (2 Speed point). You move a short distance and then make an attack using your Preferred Weapon. Action.

Tier 3

Determined Stride (3 Speed points). You enjoy two assets when defending against ranged weapon attacks for one round. May only be action rounds in which you move more than an Immediate distance.

vated
more
Enabler.

Tier 4

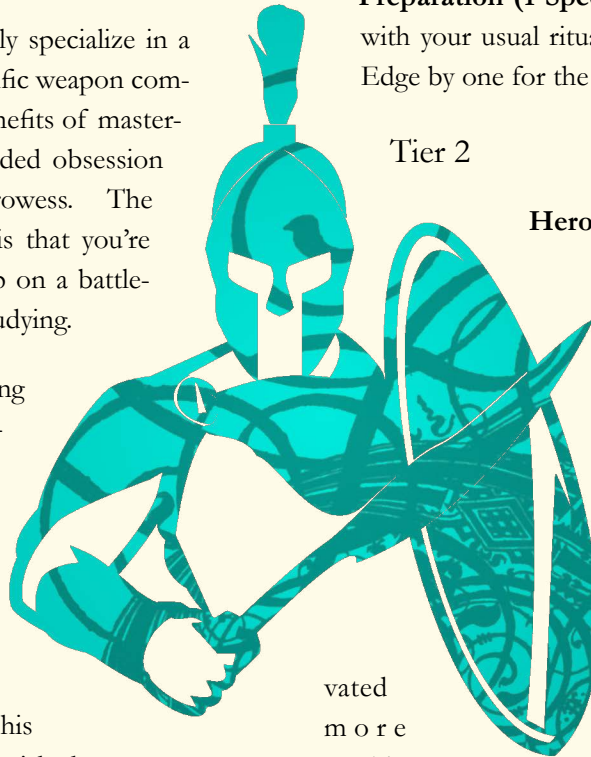
Artful Fighting. You deal two additional damage with your Preferred Weapon. Enabler.

Tier 5

Demigod's Finesse. You are specialized in your Preferred Weapon. Enabler.

Tier 6

Wade In (6 Speed points). You move a Long distance and then attack a number of foes within Immediate range with your Preferred Weapon. Your current Speed Edge is the maximum number of enemies you can strike at (minimum 1). Action.



Inspires Lust and Jealousy

Theirs is a face that could launch a thousand ships, which is to say an untargeted weapon of emotional power. Blunt and without any sort of control, the lust inspired by this kind of beauty is more a curse than a blessing.

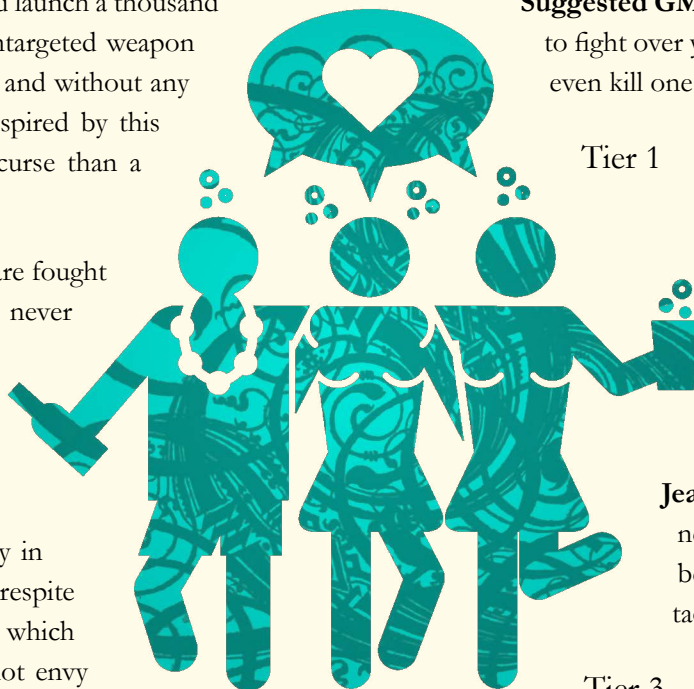
These are the beauties that are fought over by admirers they've never even spoken to. These are the attractive souls who inspire the jealousy of Aphrodite herself. These are the ones who are hounded for their looks day in and day out, without any respite from the pedestal upon which they've been placed. Do not envy them, for their existence is bitter-sweet to say the least.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This hero seems to be the only person not attracted to you.
2. Pick one other PC. This hero remembers you from back before you became so enchanting.
3. Pick one other PC. This hero is a former lover.
4. Pick one other PC. This hero once saved you from a kidnapper.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Everyone is watching you this round, granting your allies an asset on attacks next round.

Major Effect Suggestion: People are so busy staring at your pretty face they don't notice you pulling a weapon and striking them.



Suggested GM Intrusion: Two allies begin to fight over your affection, willing to harm or even kill one another.

Tier 1

Attractive. You enjoy an asset on social rolls of any kind when your target can see your face. Enabler.

Tier 2

Jealousy (2 Intellect points). The nearest person who can see you begins defending you from all attackers for one round. Action.

Tier 3

Many Admirers. You possess the Wealth long-term benefit from all of the gifts you receive. Enabler.

Attractive Beyond Reason. You now enjoy two assets on social rolls against people who can see your face. Enabler.

Tier 4

Stunning. You enjoy two assets on Speed Defense when defending against attacks by a person who can see your face. Enabler.

Tier 5

Lust (5 Intellect points). The nearest person who can see you is willing to do nearly anything you ask until the end of the encounter, short of dying for you. Action.

Tier 6

Mad Love. NPCs under the effects of your Jealousy and Lust powers are now willing to die for you. Enabler.

Journeys Beyond This World

Taking inspiration from Orphius, Icarus, Phaethon, and other variously doomed figures who dreamt to go where others would not, these are the Strangers who find new ways. They are inventors and explorers, venturing into a domain made for and by the gods. Like translation, the process of movement between worlds is a trying one, which in this case can be very personal. Each of these travellers has found their own unique mode of travel, often in direct conflict with the way things have been done before.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person helped you discover your travel form.
2. Pick one other PC. This person didn't think it was possible for you to find your path, but you proved them wrong.
3. Pick one other PC. This person knew you long before your current state, aware of your humble origins.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is always trying to keep you from using your travel form, afraid for your safety.

Minor Effect Suggestion: The winds are blowing your way and propel you an additional Short distance while moving this round.

Major Effect Suggestion: You discover yet another sign of your travel form, +1 to your improvement in the decausing it to provide Armor rating for the rest of the encounter.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your travel form falters, causing you to fall or become lost in the other realm.

Travel Form: You possess a means of traveling to another world, and moving across ours quickly. It could be through the magic of music, a suit made with wings, or an anthropomorphic animal shape you turn into. This form is

tied to a particular "other realm" within this recursion, such as the sky, the sea, or beneath the ground in the lands of the dead. In some recursions this might even be a spirit world full of elementals or platonic ideals.

Tier 1

Journey (1 Speed point). You don your Travel Form, becoming something more until the end of the encounter. While in this form you can move up to a Short distance as part of your normal movement while taking an action. Action.

Tier 2

Free Thinker. You are trained in any task that involves creativity. Enabler.

Tier 3

Ascend (3 Speed points). You use your form to briefly fly up to a Long distance. Your Journey power must be active. Action.

Tier 4

Transcend (4 Speed points). You delve into the other realm you are connected to, such as the clouds of Olympus or the world under the sea. You are able to survive there and have a movement of Long distance. This power lasts until you leave that realm. Action.

Tier 5

Brilliant. You are specialized in tasks that involve creativity. Enabler.

Tier 6

Of Two Worlds. You enjoy an asset on non-combat tasks related to the other realm you are connected to and are able to command lesser beings from that world to do your bidding. You acquire 3 Level 2 followers from there who follow your orders.



Outwits the Gods

Though this Focus clearly evokes Odysseus to westerners, he is not the only hero to utilize wits and cunning, and certainly not the only mythological figure. Translation into a mythic world means voyaging into dangers wrought by gods and monsters, so embracing the power of the mind is not the worst choice. Harnessing the most important of human qualities means coming up with tricks and disguises, stealing from the powerful, and impotently defying your destiny.

Should you find yourself outwitting the most powerful beings in your recursion, however, make sure to befriend at least one. The wrath of the gods is nothing to scoff at.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This hero is related to you in some way. Perhaps a cousin or half-sibling.
2. Pick one other PC. This hero claims to represent the god you've most defied.
3. Pick one other PC. This hero always shows you a good time.
4. Pick one other PC. This hero shows little intelligence, something you try to compensate for.

Minor Effect Suggestion:

Your blow hits true and also puts your foe into a precarious position. Just as you'd planned.

Major Effect Suggestion:

Your blow hits true and causes your foe to show a weakness, granting you two assets on your next attack against them.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The gods take an eye towards your doings, unleashing their wrath

against you and your allies. Your ship is storm wracked or your caravan is attacked by monsters.

Tier 1

Quick Thinking. You are trained at trickery and deception tasks including sleight of hand, lying, and stealth. Enabler.

Tier 2

Instant Disguise (2 Intellect points). You assemble a passable disguise, though it likely won't hold up under direct scrutiny. Action.

Thief. You gain the Wealth long-term benefit. Enabler.

Tier 3

Tactical Gambit (3 Intellect points). You and your allies arrange an ambush or other advantageous attack on an enemy, granting yourselves one free round of attacks before the normal rounds of combat. Only usable just before a combat encounter. Enabler.

Tier 4

Lightning Wit. You are specialized in trickery and deception tasks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Curse the Gods (5 Intellect points). You may reroll a task in which you've triggered an Intrusion by rolling a natural 1, but must accept the new outcome. Enabler.

Tier 6

Laugh at the Gods (6 Intellect points). While making an attack this round against a villain or monster representing one or more gods, you enjoy a +5 damage bonus. Enabler.



One of the most unusual Foci I've documented can be found in space recursions (and some others) where crew members or soldiers die frequently in fiction to prove the dangerousness of the situation. This Focus can even be found in recursions bled from horror movies.

In essence, the Stranger translates into a body and finds themselves rather helpless and easy to kill. Should they die (often proving a useful piece of information or defending another crew member), the quickened translates into another body nearby, ready to die again and somehow recognizable as themselves to their fellow strangers. This effectively makes them "immortal," though such an existence could hardly be enjoyable. I'll find my immortality elsewhere.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person is a former lover who will mourn you dramatically when you die.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is an old friend who will mourn you dramatically when you die.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is your superior officer who will mourn you dramatically when you die.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is a close friend and coworker who will mourn you dramatically when you die.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your death is quick and painless.

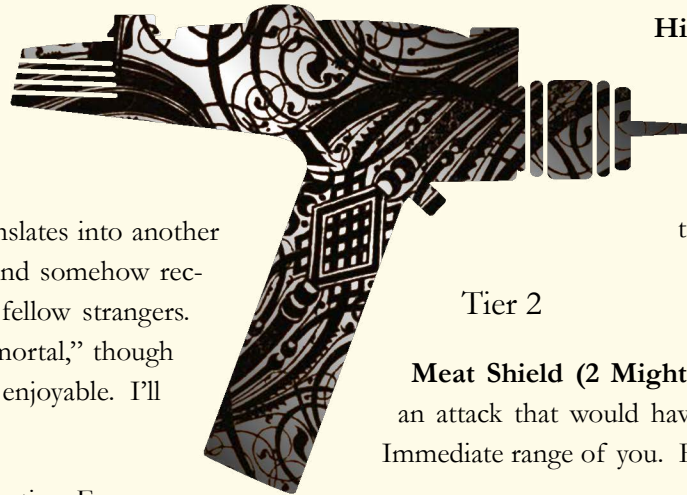
Major Effect Suggestion: Your death gives someone else the motivation they need to keep going, replenishing one of their Pools of all points.

Suggested GM Intrusion: It takes 1d6 rounds for you to translate into a new body.

Constantly Dying: Whenever you die, on the next round you translate back into the recursion at full Might

pool and at Hale on the Damage Track. You generally become someone with the job of going into dangerous locations on behalf of the group. When you translate in this way you instantly acclimate to the recursion.

Tier 1



Hidden Danger (1 Might point). You die, letting everyone know about any dangerous traps or physical properties to the area. Action.

Tier 2

Meat Shield (2 Might points). You die, taking an attack that would have hit someone else within Immediate range of you. Enabler.

Tier 3

Inspiration. Whenever you die using a Focus power, your party members who see the death regain 1 point to a Pool of their choice. Enabler.

Tier 4

Swap Places (4 Might points). You remove someone within Short distance from a precarious or dangerous situation, getting them to safety but dying in the process. Action.

Tier 5

No Surge Protectors (5 Might points). You take the brunt of an attack made against your ship, getting shocked through a console or other grizzly energy surge. You die, but your ship is unharmed. Enabler.

Tier 6

Sacrifice (6 Might points). You stop a ticking time bomb or other dangerous technology by throwing yourself into the machine. You die, but the device will no longer kill everyone. Action.

Explores New Worlds

Exploration is a central reason for me in travelling into the Strange. Space recursions offer a lot more than others in terms of places to see and cultures to discover. Stuffed with the landing sites of countless worlds, going to one recursion set in space opens up hundreds of new opportunities. The fact that some within those realms are specially trained and acclimated to discovery makes these destinations all the more interesting. Medieval settings can be more about survival or killing than anything else. Space lends itself to discovery as an end goal, providing technologies and expertise for doing so. What more could I ask for as a student of the Strange?

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person generally has your back on strange planets.
2. Pick one other PC. This person has skills you find useful in the field, so you tend to bring them along.
3. Pick one other PC. This person doesn't seem to find exploration worthwhile for its own sake.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is always getting into danger and you're usually the one to pull them out of it.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your scans indicate a useful resource nearby.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your scans are particularly accurate, providing an asset on all navigation and science tasks for the next hour.

Suggested GM Intrusion:

Something is interfering with your scans, making them utterly inaccurate.

Tier 1

Explorer. You are trained in planetary navigation tasks, as well as using devices to scan for life and scientific properties in your

surroundings. Additionally, you possess a knowledge skill relating to a scientific field of your choice. Enabler.

Tier 2

Insight (2 Intellect points). You discover any hidden aspects to a culture or location you're exploring, such as a strange energy field or evidence of psychic manipulation. You don't necessarily understand everything that's going on, but you know something's not normal here. Action.

Tier 3

First Contact. When encountering a culture that has never encountered yours before you enjoy two assets on social interaction rolls for the first hour of interaction. Enabler.

Tier 4

Expert. You are specialized in your Explorer skills. Enabler.

Tier 5

Signal for Help (5 Intellect points). Over a significant period of time you piece together a radio or other device capable of signaling your ship. The more technology available to you the less time this ability takes. Enabler.

Tier 6

Planetary Scan (6 Intellect points). You scan an entire planet for something or someone you're looking for, discovering your target's exact location and all of the conditions around them. Action.

Reach Understanding. With enough exposure to a culture, by living in it for a week or more, you come to understand it a bit. This knowledge provides you with an asset on all social rolls when dealing with members of that culture. Enabler.



Fires All Weapons

Sometimes using a weapon is as simple as pulling a trigger or pushing a button. Sometimes it's an intense coordination of sensor systems, targeting systems, and knowledge of the kinds of maneuvers the ship is likely to make.

As much help as the computers are, your enemies have defensive technologies just as advanced.

Knowing just how to punch through a shield or target an enemy ship system can be critical to your crew winning the day.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person also knows what it's like to kill in their career.
2. Pick one other PC. This person has your utmost respect, likely due to heroism.
3. Pick one other PC. This person doesn't seem to understand when force is necessary.
4. Pick one other PC. You went to space cadet school with this person or previously served with them in the military.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your hit also knocks out a minor system on the other vessel.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your hit also knocks out a major system on the other vessel.



Suggested GM Intrusion: An enemy hit knocks out one or all of your weapon systems.

Tier 1

Gunner. You are trained in making attacks with shipboard weapon systems. Enabler.

Tier 2

Anticipation. So long as one of your fellow PCs is piloting the vessel, you enjoy an asset on attacks using shipboard weapon systems. Enabler.

Small Arms. You are trained in attacks using the ranged weapons supplied by your ship, such as laser pistols or rifles. Enabler.

Tier 3

Pinpoint Targeting (3 Speed points). You destroy a specific ship system on an enemy vessel within range of your weapons, such as weapons, engines, or shields. Action.

Tier 4

Favored Weapon System. Choose one weapon system, such as laser cannons or torpedoes. You now deal 2 additional damage when making attacks using that system. Enabler.

Tier 5

Artillery Master. You are specialized in attacks made using shipboard weapons systems. Enabler.

Tier 6

Punch Through (6 Speed points). You make an attack using shipboard weapons, which ignores the Armor rating of the enemy vessel. Action.

Pilots Starships

The person truly in the limelight on an excursion into space, the pilot enjoys power and prestige. This is certainly a nerve-racking position to be in when the safety of the crew and probably some space station or fictitious planet is in the balance. The kind of pilot that Strangers become tends to be a master of navigation, 3D spatial reasoning, and defensive maneuvers. Keeping the crew and ship safe is just as important as getting them where they need to go, but great pilots also know how to get the most out of the engines, catching up to or evading foes when the need arises.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person serves as your trusted copilot from time to time.
2. Pick one other PC. This person is always talking when you're trying to concentrate on maneuvers.
3. Pick one other PC. This person treats you like some kind of celebrity.
4. Pick one other PC. You once went to a dangerous planet with this person and barely survived.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You put the vessel into a position that provides an asset on piloted defense rolls for one round.

Major Effect Suggestion: You put the vessel into a position that provides an asset on attack rolls with shipboard weapons for one round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: An asteroid field, solar flare, or other space terrain problem crops up, increasing the difficulty of pilot rolls by one and causing a failed roll to result in ship damage, until you leave the area.

Cockpit Controls: Most of the following powers require you to be the current pilot of the vessel.

Tier 1

Pilot Seat. You are trained in piloting tasks. You may use this skill when making Speed defense rolls on behalf of the vessel as its pilot. Enabler.

Ship Operations. You are trained in navigation in space, as well as the operation of most ship systems such as life support, communications, and shields. Enabler.

Tier 2

Defensive Maneuvers (2 Speed points). You throw up ship shields, engage automatic defensive piloting systems, etc. If this doesn't normally have a mechanical effect on your vessel (such as improving the ship's Armor) you gain an asset on Speed defense rolls you make on behalf of the ship for the rest of the encounter. Action.

Tier 3

Slingshot (3 Speed points). Your ship moves double Long distance (space scale) this round. Action.

Tier 4

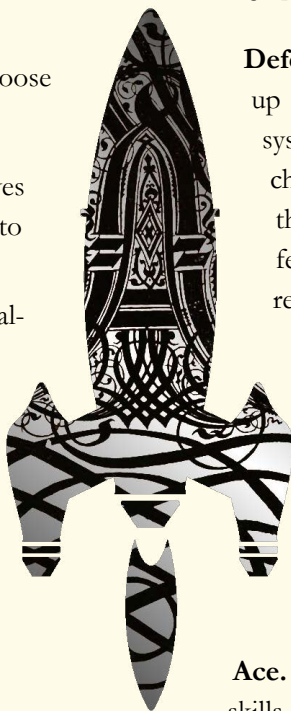
Ace. You are specialized in piloting tasks, as well as the skills covered by your Ship Operations ability. Enabler.

Tier 5

Out of Sight (5 Speed points). You maneuver the ship into a position that makes it impossible for enemies to attack it for one round. Action.

Tier 6

Dogfight (6 Speed points). You perfectly maneuver behind an enemy vessel, allowing the person controlling your ship's weapon systems to attack that target twice this round. Action.



Reroutes Power

This is the near-magical engineer or scientist, able to work complex systems into useable tools in a tense situation. At home behind a glowing terminal, they live at the point of crisis when everything is falling apart and the impossible is needed. They can be underappreciated as mere repair workers, when in reality they keep everyone alive.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person's equipment always needs your repairs.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems to think they're your boss.
3. Pick one other PC. You're constantly using technology to prank this person.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the only person who really appreciates how crucial your work is to the mission.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You keep the system working and even find a way to improve it slightly. Your crew enjoys a +1 bonus to rolls on all future uses of this system.

Major Effect Suggestion: You keep the system working and even find a way to use it to help some another system of your choice. Your crew enjoys a +1 bonus to rolls on all future uses of the system you choose to improve.

Suggested GM Intrusion: At the worst possible moment several systems go down all at once.

Systems: This Focus relates specifically to altering the functionality of systems aboard starships or similar vessels (space stations, undersea explorers, etc.). A system might be the weapons, the shields, the sub-light speed engines, the faster-than-light engines, the sensors, etc. Most powers require you to be at a computer console of some kind, possibly in the bowels of the engine room.

Tier 1

Technician. You are trained in repair tasks. Enabler.

Reroute (1 Intellect point). You reduce power to non-critical systems and put them into a system of your choice, providing an asset to those who use that system for the rest of the encounter. Each use of this ability reroutes to a different system, removing the bonus to the previous one. Action.

Tier 2

Emergency Repairs (2 Intellect points). You heal the vessel for 1d6 Health points, +1 per Tier of your character. Action.

Tier 3

Cycle the System (3 Intellect points). You bring a destroyed ship system back to functioning again. Action.

Tier 4

Engineer. You are specialized in repair tasks and gain a knowledge skill in an area related to your job. Enabler.

Tier 5

Spot Weakness (5 Intellect points). You spot a critical technical weakness in an enemy vessel within sensor range, causing your crew to deal double damage on their next successful attack against it. Action.

Tier 6

Overhaul (6 Intellect points). Over the course of 2d6 hours you repair all damage to a vessel and bring back all destroyed systems. You also make a few improvements, providing an asset on all attack and defense rolls using the ship for the next 24 hours. Enabler.

Bleeds Fiction

Some recursors are able to translate objects and even locations around them into the stuff of places they've been before. Blending fictions into each other, these artists of crossover have powers that can be extremely useful when used creatively. Indeed, their defining characteristic is perhaps their creative tendency, despite the seemingly derivative nature of their creations. Great artists steal, after all.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person strongly reminds you of a fictional character you adore.
2. Pick one other PC. This person can't see the changes you make to recursions. They're too mired in what's supposed to be there.
3. Pick one other PC. This person despises your powers, wanting fictional "purity."
4. Pick one other PC. This person gets what you're doing and appreciates it as art.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You translate the exact item or location you had desired.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your translation effect causes 5 damage to a creature of your choice within Long range.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You become lost in the translation, thinking and acting like a character from the translation you're drawing from for the next ten minutes.

Draggable: You can take this Focus to any recursion, but not Earth or the Strange itself.

Tier 1

Crossover (1 Intellect point). You cause a mundane object you hold to translate into an equivalent item

appropriate to a recursion you've visited before. This change lasts for ten minutes. Action.

Tier 2

Slash (2 Intellect points). You take on the appearance, dress, mannerisms, and voice of a person you've met in another recursion. This change lasts for ten minutes. Action.

Tier 3

Fan Fic (3 Intellect points). Your control over your own translation grants you an asset on a non-combat skill of your choice for three rounds. Action.

Tier 4

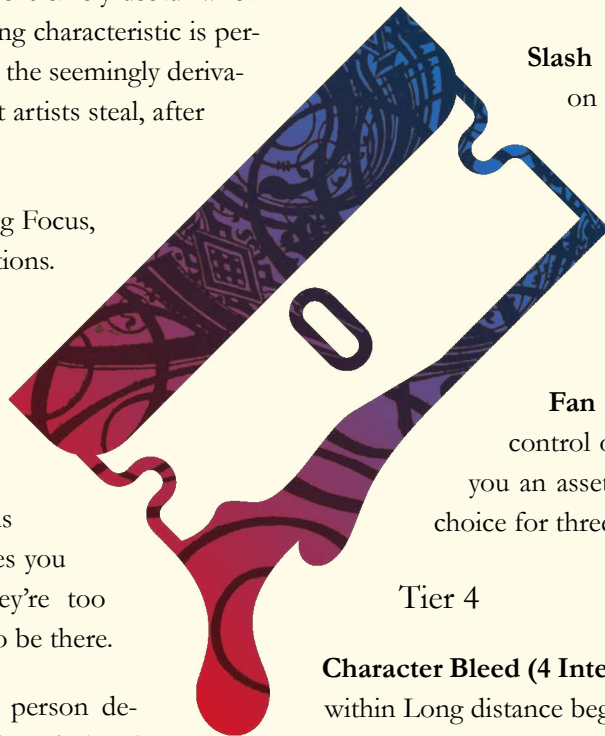
Character Bleed (4 Intellect points). A target character within Long distance begins turning into a person from a recursion of your choice. This transformation takes three rounds, at the end of which the target will for all purposes be someone else. This effect lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier 5

Setting Material (5 Intellect points). You alter the Immediate area into a piece of a recursion you've visited before. This change lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier 6

Hemorrhage (6 Intellect points). A hole is opened within Long distance of you between this recursion and one you've been to before, through which the larger of the two recursions spews out into the smaller. The hole cannot be passed through like a portal, but translation to the other recursion is one Difficulty lower than usual. This bleeding lasts for one hour, after which time one or both recursions may be permanently altered by the exchange. Action.



Discovers Recursions

Some recursors cultivate the power to do more than just translate between known worlds. These explorers learn to walk between connected recursions on an endless journey of discovery and adventure. The nature of recursions, based on my research and frankly the view from the Strange itself, is that of a bathtub covered in clumps of bubbles. Each recursion forms a bubble in space, separated from the rest, but many bubbles are connected to others by a thin membrane.

These Strangers learn to find and cross these tenuous membranes, mapping out networks of connected worlds and in the process finding recursions no one would think to look for.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person often joins you on your journeys, an experienced explorer.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems obsessed with a particular set of recursions, unable to think beyond a single genre.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has a talent for working the Strange that you admire.
4. Pick one other PC. This person was a childhood friend of yours you've reconnected with.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You have a vision of the recursion you're currently tracking.

Major Effect Suggestion: You gain an intuitive sense of the Laws and Trait of the recursion you're currently tracking.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The translation you're tracking is more dangerous than you'd ever imagined.

Draggable: You can take this Focus to any recursion, or even to Earth.



Tier 1

Sense Gate (1 Intellect point). You gain an intuitive sense of the location and distance to the closest recursion gate within this world, if one exists. Action.

Tier 2

Sense Recursion (2 Intellect points). You sense the presence of another recursion connected

to this one, and the general direction you'd have to travel to find where the two might meet, a location called the "membrane." Once there, you may make a Difficulty 4 Intellect task to open a translation gate to that recursion, which lasts for three rounds. Action.

Tier 3

Hold Gate (3 Intellect points). You prevent a creature within Long distance from passing through a recursion gate. Action.

Tier 4

Similarities. When you pass through a translation gate you may keep one held object the same as it was in the previous recursion, as though it had passed through an in-apposite gate. Enabler.

Tier 5

Make Membrane (5 Intellect points). You create a membrane at your current location, so that you might open a recursion gate there. You have no control over which recursion it will lead to, but it will be someplace related to this recursion in some major way. Action.

Tier 6

Inapposite Gate (6 Intellect points). You create an inapposite gate at an existing membrane, leading to the connected recursion, which lasts for 3 rounds. This gate will never lead to Earth. Action.

Mines for Cyphers

The skill of finding and retrieving cyphers from the Strange is a coveted one, with professional miners becoming well-funded by the various interested parties back on Earth. I've dabbled in this kind of work myself, as many of us do once we become knowledgeable in more than a dozen or so recursions. For it's at this point that we usually travel out into the Strange itself to see what's there.

While some of what's there is dangerous, the Strange is an incubator for useful, reality bending computer code. Such raw and valuable power in tangible form is tantalizing to many more than just me. It is the prospect of wealth and authority, capability and miracle. It is raw potential.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

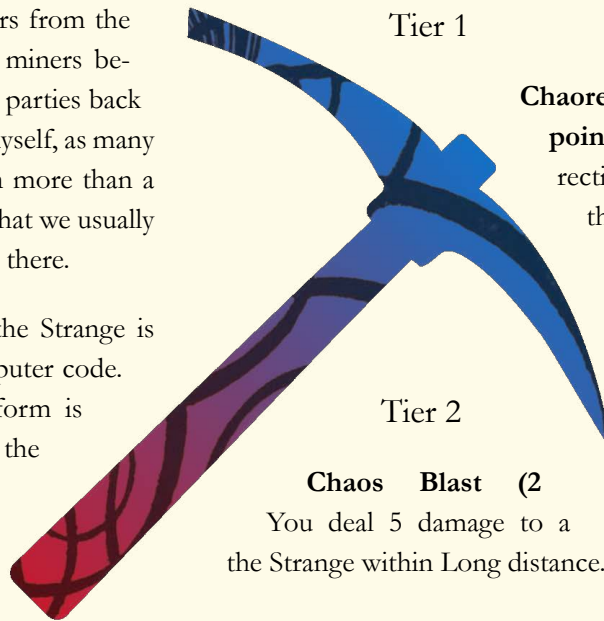
1. Pick one other PC. This person has travelled to the Strange with you before.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems sane enough to survive out here.
3. Pick one other PC. This person seems likely to get into trouble out in the Strange.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the person you most want to impress.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You sense an additional Cypher near your current Chaoreception target.

Major Effect Suggestion: You sense 1d6 + 1 additional Cyphers near your current Chaoreception target.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your activities attract the attention of a swarm of Cypher Eaters (see The Strange corebook page 263).

Strange Focus: As a Focus designed specifically for the Strange, this Focus cannot be used within a recursion or prime world. At best it could be used on the Shoals of Earth.



Tier 1

Chaoreception (1 Intellect point). You sense the direction and travel time of the closest Cypher not carried by you and your party members. Action.

Tier 2

Chaos Blast (2 Intellect points). You deal 5 damage to a creature native to the Strange within Long distance. Action.

Tier 3

Probability Violation (3 Intellect points). Immediately after receiving a Cypher you may use this power to instead receive a different (randomly selected) Cypher, though you may not use this power again on the new Cypher. Action.

Tier 4

Chaos Surf (4 Intellect points). You halve the travel time you and your party spends getting to a particular destination within the Strange. This power costs no Intellect points if the destination holds a Cypher you've sensed with Chaoreception. Action.

Tier 5

Fractaline Shield (5 Intellect points). For the next hour you benefit from a +3 bonus to your Armor rating when taking damage from creatures native to the Strange or from physical phenomena there. Action.

Tier 6

Evolved Chaoreception (6 Intellect points). You sense the direction and travel time of the closest Artifact not carried by you and your party members. Action.

Thrives in Chaos

Exotic recursions are well known to possess properties inhospitable to human existence. This Focus represents those who not only survive, but find ways to use the local conditions to their advantage. It is a risky way of doing things, not for the fearful and timid.

The crux of the Focus is this: dangerous recursions are often those that change in unpredictable ways. If one could simply harness that unpredictability, one could become powerful in these places. Those who master this power become like gods in these strange worlds, able to shape the chaos to their whims.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

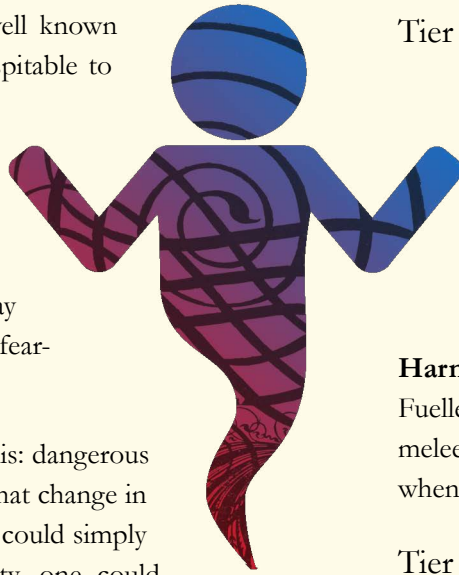
1. Pick one other PC. This person helped you learn to translate.
2. Pick one other PC. This person knows your potential and wants to exploit you for profit.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is scared by your strange power.
4. Pick one other PC. This person wants to learn to thrive in these recursions too.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your Fuelled ability grants you two assets for one round.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your Fuelled ability grants you the ability to fly up to Long distance this round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The recursion changes faster than you can adapt and you are unable to benefit from your Fuelled ability.

Exotic: This Focus only appears in Exotic Law recursions or in recursions within the Strange that were spawned from prime worlds other than Earth.



Tier 1

Fuelled. You enjoy an asset on all non-combat actions, so long as you are near the more chaotic elements of the world, such as fluctuating energy pools or tornadoes of blood. Enabler.

Tier 2

Harness (2 Might points). You lose access to your Fuelled ability for one round, during which time all of your melee attacks deal two additional damage. Only usable when benefitting from Fuelled. Enabler.

Tier 3

Become Chaos (3 Might points). Your body is filled with chaotic energies for ten minutes, during which time the benefit of Fuelled grows to two assets but causes you to take one additional damage from physical attacks. Enabler.

Tier 4

Discharge Entropy (4 Might points). You push the chaos from your body to another, dealing 6 ambient damage at up to Long distance. You must be benefitting from Fuelled, and causes you to lose that benefit for one round. Action.

Tier 5

Randomize (5 Might points). You grant yourself a reroll on a single task. Usable once per day. Enabler.

Tier 6

Chaotician (6 Might points). You predict a random fluctuation in the chaos around you, allowing you to know where the recursion will become most dangerous within Long distance. If near a source of raw chaotic energy, this power will tell you where it will next strike and where it won't, up to three rounds in the future. Enabler.

Force Immune. You enjoy 5 Armor against a dangerous energy type native to this recursion (your choice which one, upon translation or gaining this power). Enabler.

Chwarts Planetovores

As we've learned more and more about the nature of the Strange one thing has become clear: we are in constant danger. Creatures from outside of our world seem to feed upon entire planets. They look upon us as tasty morsels of the larger meal of Earth. We appear to be protected from them in a number of ways, and so they've needed to be tricky. They worm their way in, often through recursions, using our own fictions against us.

I should note that while I do not require recognition of it, it was I who originally coined the term "planetovore" among the Strangers of Earth.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person once helped you fell a minion of something quite powerful. It still hunts you both.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's abilities seem useful against your sworn foes so you've taken them along with you.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has some connection to the planetovores, you're just not sure what. Best to study them.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is just as driven as you to save the world.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You get a flash of insight as to where the closest planetovore minion might be.

Major Effect Suggestion: You get a flash of insight as to which planetovore currently threatens Earth the most.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You are attacked by the minions of a planetovore you weren't even working to stop. Now you've got two agendas.

Draggable: You can take this Focus to any recursion, or even to Earth.

Tier 1

Immunity. You are immune to infection or mind control by the minions of the planetovores, such as Kray Scurriers (Strange corebook page 276) and Vaxt Sclerid Patches (Strange corebook page 298). They can harm you, but you're not in danger of becoming one of them. Enabler.

Planetovore Sense. You immediately know when the minion of a planetovore is within Long distance. Enabler.

Tier 2

Infection Purge (2 Intellect points). You remove all invasive planetovore material within a target, curing them of an "infection" and stopping any form of planetovore mind control. Action.

Tier 3

Strange Defender. Your attacks against the minions of planetovores deal two extra damage. Enabler.

Tier 4

Track Chaos (4 Intellect points). You sense the location of the nearest planetovore minion. For 1 more Intellect point you instead discover the location of a Level 5 or higher minion. Action.

Tier 5

Chaos Mind. You enjoy two assets on your attacks against creatures you've sensed using Track Chaos. Enabler.

Tier 6

Undercover. Whatever clothing you're wearing possesses the same properties as the Planetovore Skin Artifact (The Strange corebook page 233) with no depletion. Enabler.

Coordinate Defense (6 Intellect points). For the next hour your allies within Short distance enjoy the benefits of your Strange Defender and Chaos Mind abilities towards creatures you've used Track Chaos to sense. Action.

Carries a Badge

We Strangers often find ourselves thrust into particular roles within the societies we travel to. Translation is not merely physical, but sometimes involves finding those who fit particular fictional slots that need filling. Sometimes we are agents of the law in these frontier recursions, the only thing that stands between society and chaos.

Not necessarily “good guys,” Strangers thrust into this position are often those who are on the wrong side of the law back on Earth. This tends to make them somewhat unorthodox in their methods at law enforcement in these recursions.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

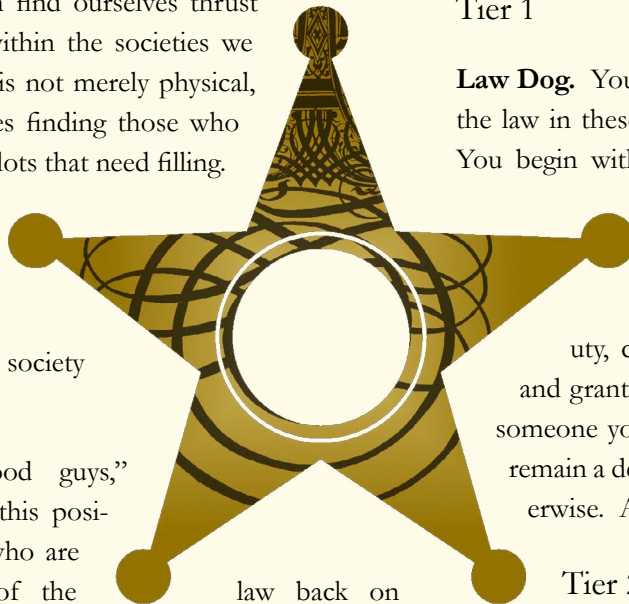
1. Pick one other PC. You’ve been dispensing justice alongside this person for some time now.
2. Pick one other PC. You caught this criminal red handed, but somehow you ended up working together.
3. Pick one other PC. This person escaped justice but you don’t have the heart to take them in.
4. Pick one other PC. You accidentally shot this person in a gunfight a while back.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You manage to get behind some cover after your attack.

Major Effect Suggestion: You slap manacles on this person at the end of your attack.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You arrested the wrong person.

Extra Equipment: A pair of manacles, a gun, and a badge.



Tier 1

Law Dog. You are a sheriff or other important officer of the law in these parts, possibly the only law around here. You begin with the Position long-term benefit and can deputize whomever you please. Enabler.

Deputize (1 Intellect point). You make one of your party members a deputy, conferring on them certain legal privileges and granting them a +1 bonus whenever they attack someone you’ve attacked during this encounter. They remain a deputy, enjoying this bonus, until you say otherwise. Action.

Tier 2

Pillar of the Community. You and your deputies enjoy an asset on all social tasks against members of the local community where you serve. Enabler.

Tier 3

Apprehension. You and your PC deputies enjoy an asset on chase rolls to catch up with a target. For you success in catching up with someone includes getting manacles on them. Enabler.

Tier 4

Enforcer. People of Level 3 or lower who can see your badge immediately flee when you deal damage to them. Enabler.

Tier 5

Surrender (5 Intellect points). You convince a person of Level 5 or lower who can hear you to surrender into your custody. Action.

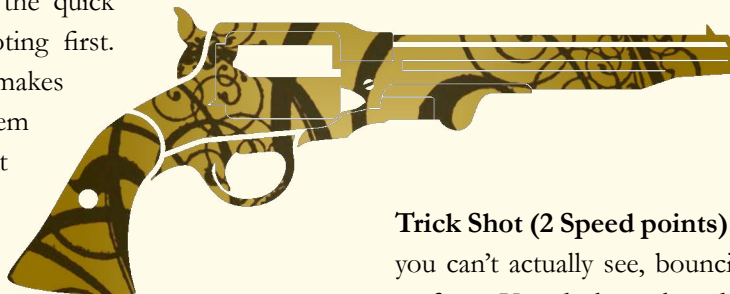
Tier 6

Posse (6 Intellect points). All of your PC deputies gain access to a Type ability which you possess that costs Pool points. They have access to this power until the end of the encounter. Action.

Draws Faster

Quick draw artists are iconic figures in fictions set within frontier America. It should be noted that history does not support the gunfighters squaring off at high noon trope, but that doesn't keep fast shooting gunslingers from running the table in these fictional places. They are both hero and antihero, emblematic of the wild west ethos of weaponry and lone figures taking center stage.

Unlike other gun fighters, the quick draw master wins by shooting first. It's their speed alone that makes them dangerous, lending them a significant edge at the start of battle when drawing first blood can make the difference.



Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. This person fought you in a saloon once and you've been friends ever since.
2. Pick one other PC. This person just can't seem to beat you in poker.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is your primary travelling companion.
4. Pick one other PC. This person is always getting into interesting trouble, so you tag along.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You're so fast you can draw, fire, and put away your weapon this round without anyone really sure what happened.

Major Effect Suggestion: You're so fast you can make one additional gunshot this round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You run out of bullets before you expected to.

Extra Equipment: A firearm of your choice and a bandoleer of bullets.

Tier 1

Fast Draw. You are trained in the initiative skill. If you win initiative against all foes during the first round of combat, you enjoy an asset on any attack that round with a firearm. Enabler.

Gunslinger. You are practiced at firing guns and suffer no penalty for using them. Enabler.

Tier 2

Trick Shot (2 Speed points). You fire your gun at a target you can't actually see, bouncing the bullet off some hard surface. You deal one less damage on the attack, but can circumvent cover and other penalties to your shot. Action.

Tier 3

Shootist. You are trained in attacks with guns. Enabler.

Tier 4

First Blood. You are now specialized at initiative. The asset you gain for winning initiative against all foes now lasts for the entire firefight. Enabler.

Tier 5

Infamy. You are known far and wide as a dangerous gunfighter, providing you with an asset on all intimidation tasks. Enabler.

Crack Shot. You are specialized in attacks with guns. Enabler.

Tier 6

Blaze of Glory (6 Speed points). You make one additional shot with your gun this round. This ability may be used more than once, to make even more attacks. May only be used if your first action was a gunshot. Enabler.

There are those who follow the rules and there are those who make low blows and attacks from behind. The wild west genre does not always celebrate the honorable, instead emphasizing those who are willing to do whatever it takes to survive another fight.

These types are usually cast in the role of drunken outlaws with no sense of common decency. Others are surprisingly violent ingénues knocking heads and kneeing groins when trouble comes to town. Both are effective, though the latter perhaps has the element of surprise on her side.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. You had to break one of this person's bones to make a point once and they've never messed with you again.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems to think you're not all that dangerous. You'll show 'em.
3. Pick one other PC. This person is too innocent to live in this dangerous a place, so you're looking out for them for now.
4. Pick one other PC. This person pays you to come along. Beats robbing trains.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You knock your enemy to the ground with your unexpected tactic.

Major Effect Suggestion: You break one of your enemy's bones, causing them to suffer a one step penalty on all actions until it heals.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You go too far, earning yourself the enmity of onlookers.

Tier 1

Scrappy. You are trained in unarmed fighting. Enabler.

Surprise. When your first action in a combat is an unarmed attack you enjoy an asset on the attack, due to the unusual nature of your fighting style. Enabler.

Tier 2

Vitals Smash (2 Might points). You strike at a vulnerable location, dealing your usual unarmed strike damage and causing your foe to lose their next action. Action.

Tier 3

Vicious. You deal one additional damage with your unarmed attacks. Enabler.

Tier 4

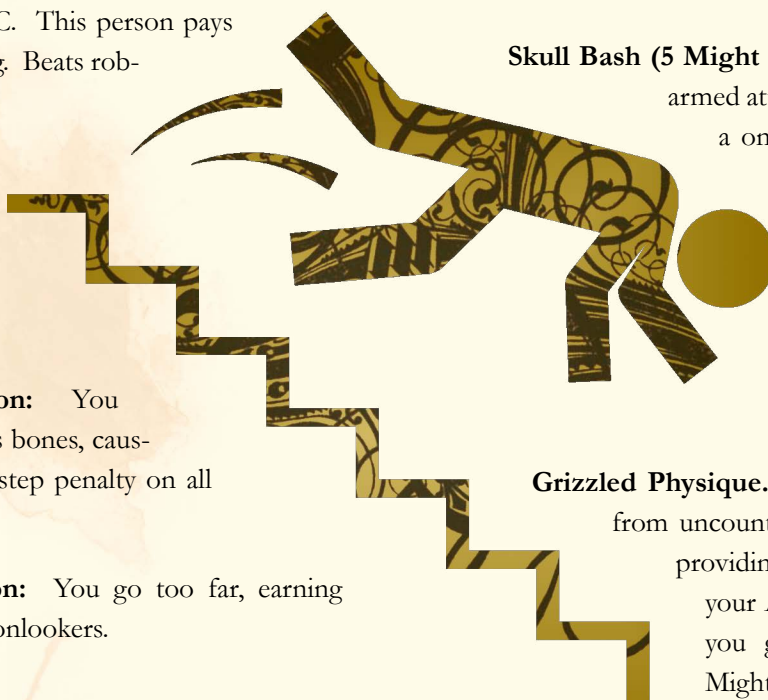
Regular Brawler. You are specialized in unarmed fighting and trained in Speed defense against melee attacks. Enabler.

Tier 5

Skull Bash (5 Might points). You make an unarmed attack against a living target at a one step penalty to hit, dealing your usual unarmed damage and causing your foe to fall unconscious for ten minutes. Action.

Tier 6

Grizzled Physique. You are covered in scars from uncountable fights you've been in, providing you with a +1 bonus to your Armor rating. Additionally, you gain 5 points to your Might pool. Enabler.



Knows These Parts

There's always someone who knows the local area; a guide who has knowledge of the ways of both the land and the people. As a professional traveller I can tell you that such assistance is invaluable, especially in the more dangerous or unusual recursions. The fact that some of us can translate in with such knowledge is shocking to me. I must cultivate this power the next time I go somewhere wild and untamed.

Within the wild west, those who have knowledge of the places worth going find that they know how to get along, find what's needed, and survive the local threats. Threats can be terrain, raiders, or poisonous plants. These people often know so much that they can even track outsiders with ease. Nothing unusual escapes their notice, they are so attuned to the location.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. They also grew up around here, though they obviously didn't work the land as much as you did.
2. Pick one other PC. This person seems to understand the value of your knowledge.
3. Pick one other PC. This person has such foreign ways you can barely stand it.
4. Pick one other PC. This person seems to think you're some kind of servant.

Minor Effect Suggestion: While scouting you also find food for the night.

Major Effect Suggestion: While scouting you also find an excellent site to ambush your foes (counts as if you activated the Ambush ability, even if you don't yet have it).

Suggested GM

Intrusion:

You manage to get the party lost.

Extra Equipment: A gun or bow.

Tier 1

Local. You are trained in knowledge of the local area, most likely the entire recursion unless it's an unusually large one. Enabler.

Hunter / Tracker. You are trained in tracking and weapon attacks made against local non-sapient creatures. Enabler.

Tier 2

Blend In (2 Intellect points). You are unseen by anyone this round, so long as you remain among foliage and other natural terrain. This effect is broken if you directly interact with someone. Enabler.

Tier 3

Shortcut (3 Intellect points). You know a way to get somewhere that takes half the usual travel time. Action.

Tier 4

Ambush (4 Intellect points). You set an ambush for someone you're tracking. It's only a matter of time before they come this way. Action.

Tier 5

Old Hand. You are specialized in your Local and Hunter / Tracker skills. Enabler.

Tier 6

Local Assistance (6 Intellect points). Over the course of an hour you call upon allies among your people, be they farmers, townsfolk, or disenfranchised natives. 2d6 of your people come to help you, collectively acting as a Level 5 creature with 20 Health, 1 Armor, and dealing 8 damage on a successful attack. These locals will follow your orders for eight hours before returning to their homes. Enabler.

Rides into the Sunset

Some people are born survivors, strangely drawn to dangerous situations. Paradoxes of experience and raw grit, they get caught up in troubles and then vanish after assisting whatever side they end up on. Who are these strangers, born to live exciting if troubled lives? Where are they going? Bolivia?

The quickened who ride off into the sunset have a certain skillset. They are able to get out of any jam, no matter the odds. Sometimes they even know how to help their friends escape as well. Most often they're the lone survivors of some showdown or shoot out, moving on to the next town on their own.

Connection: If this is your starting Focus, choose one of the following connections.

1. Pick one other PC. The two of you have been through thick and thin.
2. Pick one other PC. This person's the only one who can make you laugh.
3. Pick one other PC. This person once stole from you, but you've mostly forgiven them.
4. Pick one other PC. This is the only person you trust anymore.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You escape the situation and take one of your allies with you.

Major Effect Suggestion: You escape the situation and take all of your allies with you.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You're so outnumbered and outgunned you can't escape this encounter (though that doesn't mean you won't escape imprisonment).

Extra Equipment: A horse and saddle.

Tier 1

Escape Artist. You are trained in escaping restraints of all kinds. You are also trained in riding tasks. Enabler.

Tier 2

Get Loose (2 Speed points). You escape from a jail or other locked room by picking the lock or squeezing through bars in the door or window. Action.

Tier 3

Dodge. You are trained in Speed defense and enjoy an asset when dodging ranged attacks. Enabler.

Tier 4

Escape Master. You are specialized in escaping restraints and riding. Enabler.

Untrackable (4 Speed points). For the next hour no one can use tracking skills to find you. Action.

Tier 5

Withdraw (5 Speed points). You find a way to get out of an encounter without harm and with nobody immediately following you. For an additional 2 Speed points you even find a horse to ride off on. Action.

Tier 6

Untouchable (6 Speed points). You may not be targeted by attacks for one round. Action.



About the Authors



Jordan Marshall is a fantasy writer and gamer who lives in the wastelands of the Midwest region. He studied political science and economics at university, which served to deepen his already considerable love of political intrigue. Through college, Jordan discovered a calling for social justice, which seemed to be opposed to his desire to become evil overlord of the known universe and all the realms beyond. He deals with this paradox by designing games where mages plot to establish world dominion. Jordan seeks in his writing to demonstrate the deep and complex ways politics affect our lives and how power can be a place of both oppression and liberation.



Ryan Chaddock is a full time writer and game developer living in Bloomington, Indiana with his wife Katherine who is awesome. He holds a degree in economics from Southern Oregon University and enjoys spirited political debate. He's an advocate for nerd pride and wants to help foster a growing, positive nerd culture on the planet.

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The Strange holds more worlds than you can imagine. Few have explored more than a handful of these intriguing and dangerous tiny universes.

The Translation Codex provides the sum of years of work recursing around The Strange by Dr. Erica Prethus. The doctor's work, while controversial, represents the fullest existing accounting of the various recursions around Earth, as well as the various powers that Strangers gain when translating.

Containing 100 Foci (each on its own easily printable page) and 18 new recursions, The Translation Codex is a must have for those who would plumb the depths of the nearby cosmos of recursions and Strange. PCs and GMs wanting to build worlds from their favorite fictions and tropes will find this tome essential and thought provoking.