PREDATION

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THE WAY OF THE DINOSAUR:
CONVERTING PREDATION FOR NUMENERA AND THE STRANGE

CYPHER SYSTEM   NUMENERA   THE STRANGE

INTRODUCTION

MonteCook
Games

Predation uses the same Cypher System that underlies The Strange and Numenera. Although all three settings have mechanical differences, they share an identical core resolution mechanic: all game difficulties are rated from 1 to 10; characters use Effort, skills, and assets to reduce that difficulty; and a d20 is rolled to determine success or failure.

As with other Cypher System games, each character is composed of three parts: a descriptor, a type, and a focus. Those three parts can be assembled into a simple sentence describing them, as for the character Junren:

"Junren (character name) is an **Empirical** (descriptor) **Tec** (type) who **Plays God** (focus)."

That said, *Predation* provides an additional element: your dinosaur companion. But that doesn't change the fact that most other individual elements of the games are similar; several descriptors and foci can be found in

Throughout this supplement, you'll see page references to various items accompanied by one of four symbols. In each, you can find additional details about the item, place, creature, or concept. It isn't necessary to look up the referenced items; it's merely provided for those who want additional information on the topic.

These are page references to the:

⬤ *Cypher System Rulebook*

◆ *Numenera* corebook

Ⓢ *The Strange* corebook

🐉 *Predation*

two or all three settings (as well as in other settings, like *Gods of the Fall* and *Unmasked*). But even where types, creatures, cyphers, descriptors, and foci differ the general form in which they are presented, and the way they fit into the game as a whole remain the same.

This means that for the most part, it's the settings themselves that are truly different. Of course, if you're reading this, you likely already know that, and it's probably because you're interested in using *Predation* with either Numenera or The Strange, or both. You are familiar with Numenera and The Strange, right?

WHAT IS NUMENERA?

Numenera is a science-fantasy game set a billion years in the future, where technology is so advanced that it seems like magic. Eight great civilizations have come and gone, leaving their bizarre relics scattered about the planet. Now, somehow, humans have returned. They're making a new world for themselves amid the ruins of what's come before; they're creating the Ninth World.

WHAT IS THE STRANGE?

The Strange is a science fiction game that postulates that there are otherworldly realms where many Earth fictions—novels, comics, movies, myths, and even RPGs— become real. So you can travel to Sherlock Holmes's London, then to a place where rebels try to save the galaxy from an evil empire, or to a place where Lovecraftian horrors lurk at your doorstep. As your characters adapt to each new world each time, their equipment and abilities change to match their new world, which keeps things interesting!

PREDATION COMES TO NUMENERA AND THE STRANGE

If you want to convert *Predation* to The Strange and Numenera, read on.

LOOT PREDATION

Rather than incorporating *Predation* into The Strange and Numenera in its entirety, you could just loot the parts you like most. In this case, *Predation* does not "coexist" with Numenera and/or The Strange in some connected cosmology. Instead, treat *Predation* like a source book for new foci, descriptors, special abilities, cyphers, and artifacts to supplement your games of Numenera or The Strange (and vice versa, of course).

For instance, if you want to grab the *Predation* descriptor Slick for your Numenera game, go ahead; your Slick Jack who Leads will work just great. Likewise, if you want the *Predation* focus Plays God for a character in The Strange, congratulations—your Intelligent Paradox who Plays God in your

game of The Strange is sure to find a way to come out ahead.

PREDATION AS A STRANGE RECURSION

The easiest way to use *Predation* in your game of The Strange is to make the setting a recursion—a fictional world that exists in its own reality.

Recursors are always stumbling across new recursions. The Estate might even be aware of Grevakc (which is where and "when" the setting occurs). To a resident of the Grevakc recursion, the dark energy network would probably be considered as some as-yet-unexplained time anomaly.

GREVAKC TYPES AND COMPANIONS IN THE STRANGE

The base types available for players vary between *Predation* and The Strange. The Strange characters are Spinners, Paradoxes,

GREVAKC RECURSION ATTRIBUTES

Level: 6

Laws: Mad Science

Playable Races: Human

Foci: As presented in *Predation*, the *Cypher System Rulebook,* and if available, *Expanded Worlds*

Skills: As presented in *Predation* and the *Cypher System Rulebook*

Connection to Strange: If someone travels far enough, they'll eventually find themselves reentering the same area from the other side, because as a recursion, Grevakc is "closed." However, here and there cracks sometimes allow creatures within to escape into the dark energy network.

Connection to Earth: Sometimes time anomalies spring up that are actually translation or inapposite gates. However, unlike as might be expected, they lead to present-day Earth, not some far-future fictional one.

Size: Estimates vary widely.

Spark: 10%

Trait: Sharp-Eyed. For any creature with the spark attempting to search for anything, the difficulty is modified by one step to its benefit.

and Vectors; *Predation* characters are Karns, Tecs, Pteryx, and Osteons. That's all right—it's mostly a surface difference. Don't get too concerned about it. If your players started in The Strange and have established characters, there's no reason those characters can't translate to Grevakc and continue to function normally using the rules for their type in the new setting.

But what if you want to give PC recursors the opportunity to gain a *Predation* companion on their visit? That's easy enough. Simply allow them to make use of the option to gain a companion as described in Chapter 6, either as a consequence of play, or possibly in exchange for one first-tier ability of the character's type during translation.

TRANSLATING OUT OF GREVAKC

PC recursors with companions who translate out of Grevakc lose access to that creature (except under extraordinary circumstances that you devise for purposes of advancing the campaign arc). If the PC translates back to Grevakc, the companion reappears with no memory of having been parted from the character.

GREVAKC FOCI AND DESCRIPTORS IN THE STRANGE

All the foci in *Predation* can be used when playing The Strange. For the most part, all the foci in *Predation* operate under the law of Mad Science. That said, you could decide that a given focus functions under Standard Physics, or even Substandard Physics. For instance, the Predates focus could just as easily be modified to work with Substandard Physics. In the end, of course, it's the GM's choice.

Likewise, all the descriptors in *Predation* can be used when playing The Strange.

GREVAKC CYPHERS AND ARTIFACTS IN THE STRANGE

In *Predation*, cyphers are conceived of as bits of code embedded in the characters' DNA, transferred via time anomaly. In the wider cosmology of The Strange where Grevakc is a recursion, DNA-based cyphers normally "precipitate" out to become actual items that take on the context of the new recursion, which might mean no change if translating into another Mad Science recursion.

Unlike cyphers, artifacts do not normally translate, and thus remain in Grevakc unless a recursor uses an inapposite gate to leave the setting.

GREVAKC CREATURES IN THE STRANGE

Dinosaurs are already endemic in many recursions of The Strange because their popularity in fiction means they've seeded several recursions, going all the way back to Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Pellucidar* and on up to the present. That said, most of the dinosaurs in Grevakc are a class apart from what we find in the fossil record. Though some of the dinosaurs presented work in Mad Science, Standard Physics, and Substandard Physics recursions, the

> THE EASIEST WAY TO "CONVERT" *PREDATION* TO NUMENERA IS TO LET THEM BOTH EXIST SIMULTANEOUSLY, SEPARATED NOT BY SPACE, BUT BY TIME.

most gene-tweaked should probably remain restricted to Mad Science recursions.

As an alternative to using the creatures exactly as they're described in *Predation* in a recursion of The Strange, you could decide that they represent a class of creature that some mysterious group (or even alien race from somewhere else in the dark energy network) has fashioned in order to colonize other recursions, or even more dramatically, Earth itself. In this case, inapposite gates (or one central, very large inapposite gate) might periodically dispatch increasingly dangerous dinosaurs to act both as intelligence gatherers and "shock troops" to shake up society and cause institutions to eventually fall (especially when the supersauri begin to show up!), all as part of a first wave of colonization from the mysterious group.

PREDATION AND NUMENERA: SAME UNIVERSE, TEMPORALLY SEPARATED

Numenera's Ninth World is set one billion years in Earth's future. *Predation's* Grevakc is set 65 million years in Earth's past. In this context, both settings exist in the same universe, but are temporally separated by a vast gulf of deep time. From the perspective of a modern-day human, the Cretaceous Period is an unknowable gulf. But to a Ninth World human, an additional 65 million years is a mere blip in the vast, inscrutable sea of history that separates them from when humans first walked the planet.

To make the connection actual and not merely philosophical, let's assume that some brilliant Tec on Grevakc manages to fashion

Numenera characters are Jacks, Glaives, and Nanos, as well as Seekers and Glints.

a time portal. The Tec is likely hoping to reconnect with the era of their origin, but of course they overshoot by about a billion years, give or take. It's up to you to decide whether that time portal is a one-time traversal that deposits an entire Grevakc city and nearby areas into the Beyond; a portal that remains open, allowing two-way traffic; or occasional time anomalies that begin to ripple across the Ninth World that sometimes disgorge Grevakc explorers, or allow Ninth World explorers to travel into the deep past; or some combination of these options.

GREVAKC TYPES AND COMPANIONS IN THE NINTH WORLD

As was true for The Strange, base types available for players vary between *Predation* and Numenera. In a blended game, your player can choose types from either setting, assuming you have a logical in-game reason for them to do so.

In addition, you could allow Numenera characters who travel back to Grevakc (or adventure for a long period in a region of the Ninth World newly colonized by Grevakc time travelers) to gain *Predation* companions. Simply allow them to make use of the option to gain a companion as described in Chapter 6 of *Predation* in exchange for one first-tier ability of the character's type.

GREVAKC FOCI AND DESCRIPTORS IN THE NINTH WORLD

All the foci in *Predation* can be used when playing Numenera. No special rules or special cases argue otherwise.

Likewise, all the descriptors in *Predation* can be used when playing Numenera.

GREVAKC CYPHERS AND ARTIFACTS IN THE NINTH WORLD

Time anomaly–transferred cyphers are obviously different from the standard odd bits of prior world tech that typify cyphers in Numenera. That said, there's no reason you couldn't introduce both types of cyphers if your game includes both settings. Cypher limits still apply. Does that suggest some ancient technological connection between both? That's a question whose answer is lost in the depths of time (and maybe even time paradox).

In any case, for characters residing in the Ninth World to gain (or regain) *Predation*-style cyphers, you'd have to introduce time anomalies to the Steadfast and the Beyond, at least in certain places. Which might be fine for you. On the other hand, you could devise some alternative way to refresh *Predation*-style cyphers. Perhaps an artifact that the players can either visit or carry with them actually instigates a temporary time anomaly.

ARTIFACT: ANOMALY GENERATOR

Level: 1d6 + 4
Form: Small handheld device
Effect: Creates a time anomaly somewhere randomly (usually on the ground, but not always) within long range. The anomaly might appear behind a wall or otherwise not be immediately apparent to the user. The anomaly lasts for up to an hour and then fades.
Depletion: 1 in 1d10; upon depletion, the artifact creates one last anomaly and disappears through it.

GREVAKC CREATURES IN THE NINTH WORLD

If you've decided to connect the two settings via time anomalies as suggested, then of course creatures from one setting might be found in the other, depending on the manner of temporal connection you used. To the average Ninth World human, the 10-foot-tall (3 m) feathered anzu or the horrific 12-foot-high (4 m) supersauri are just more unexplainable but dreadful creatures that you might encounter if you leave the safety of your isolated city or clave.

Even if you've gone with the "loot *Predation*" option and just want to use some of the creatures presented in the new setting in your Numenera game without worrying about the rest of the setting, not much other context needs to be provided to make them work. *Predation* creatures are already weird and sometimes inscrutable. In particular, the nerezza, which is bioengineered to be small, silent, and apocalyptically deadly, will startle PCs out of their preconceptions, and then send them screaming in surprise and fear. Which is exactly what a Numenera game master wants when springing a new creature on their players!